

# **Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) Outcomes Model: How we are making a difference**

**March 2012**

**Government of Alberta ■**



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## Introduction

### Provincial Outcome Measures Timeline

#### 2000

Environmental scan to determine local FCSS outcome measures capacity

Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) is an 80/20 funding partnership between the Government of Alberta and participating municipalities or Métis Settlements. Under FCSS, communities design and deliver preventive social programs to promote and enhance well-being among individuals, families and communities.

In 2000, an environmental scan identified that local FCSS programs did not have the capacity to monitor outcomes of program delivery, nor was there a common database or information system to store and aggregate the results on a provincial level.

#### 2001

Established the Making a Difference (MAD) Outcome Evaluation System

In 2001, the FCSS Association of Alberta piloted a “Program Logic Model” with seven local FCSS programs. The overall intent was to provide an opportunity for local FCSS service providers to learn the practice, gain an appreciation for and an ability to identify outcomes occurring as a result of their services. A further intention was to teach the skill of using the data for “continuous quality improvement” and to guide best practices. The Making a Difference (MAD) Outcome Evaluation System was initiated with two basic components: to build capacity to develop program logic models and to support outcome data collection with survey development and analysis tools.

Local FCSS Programs report outcomes

Involvement in the initiative was encouraged but not required by local FCSS programs. The use and understanding of outcome measurement by local FCSS programs has grown and provincial annual reports have been produced.

#### 2009

Established FCSS Outcome Measures Steering Committee

In spring 2009, a Provincial FCSS Outcome Measures Steering Committee was established to oversee the initiative and address identified gaps and needs. Priorities identified by the Steering Committee based on FCSS program directors’ feedback included training, regular communication, use of consistent definitions, outcomes reporting, and development of outcome templates and resource tools.

#### 2010

Developed outcome measures training curriculum

A training curriculum was developed in 2010. FCSS relevant and consistent outcome measurement training, along with follow-up support and coaching, is provided by Outcome Measures Trainers (OMTs) with FCSS experience.

#### 2012

Created FCSS Outcomes Model

The FCSS Outcomes Model (The Model) is intended to guide and inform local FCSS programs. The Model includes charts providing provincial outcomes for individuals, families and community. The charts depict:

- how local FCSS programs choose programs and projects to address any of the provincial outcomes based on the priorities identified at the local level;
- how the provincial outcomes and the indicators of success fit with the five strategic directions identified in the FCSS Regulation; and
- how these provincial outcomes and the indicators of success contribute to the high-level outcomes of social well-being of individuals, families and community and the over-arching provincial goal for local FCSS programs.

The Model, based on the program logic model used in outcome measurement training, provides a framework within which local FCSS programs can choose and then effectively measure the impact of programs and services on the social well-being of individuals, families and communities.

**Information for Local Programs**

**GLOSSARY**

**Program Logic Model**

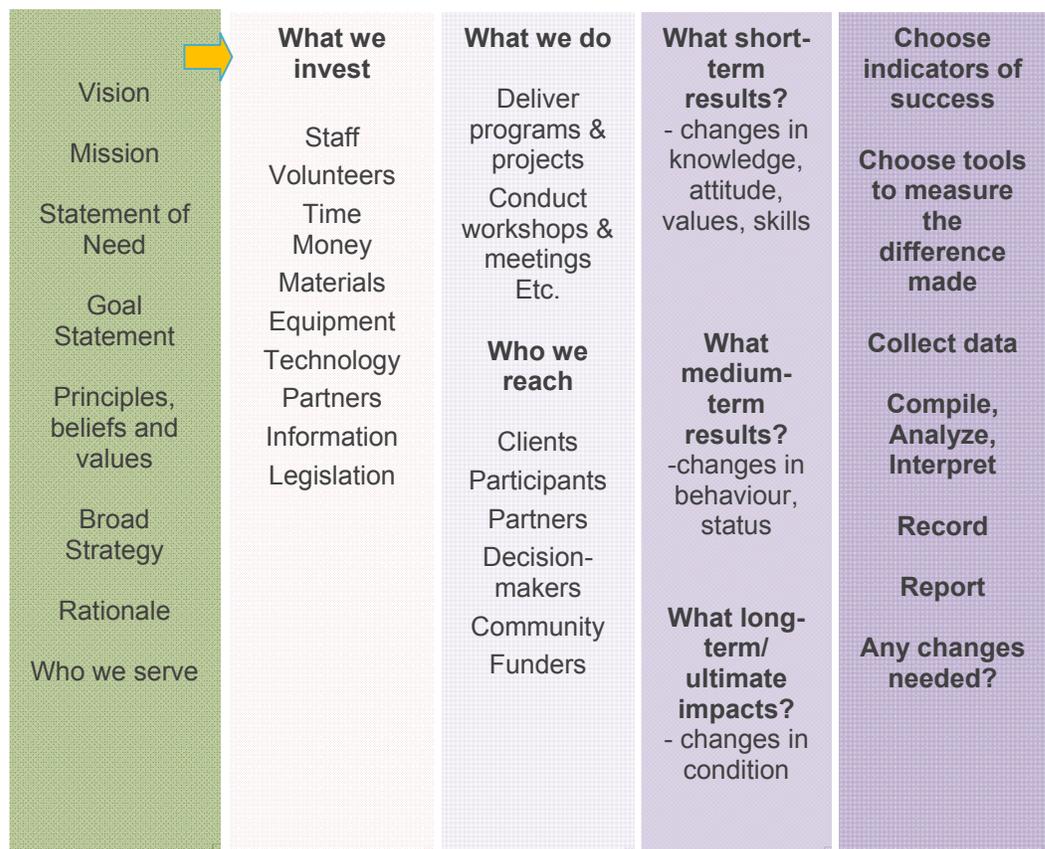
A program logic model (PLM) illustrates a program’s theory of change, showing how day-to-day activities are intended to produce the results or outcomes the program is trying to achieve. The FCSS Outcomes Model flowchart connects resources, activities and outcomes, capturing program logic through a series of “if-then statements”: If these things are done, then these results will occur.

## The FCSS Outcomes Model: Considerations

The FCSS Outcomes Model, based on a program logic model framework, provides the vision, mission and overarching goal statements of FCSS articulated from a provincial perspective. FCSS principles, beliefs and values are also considered, along with the broad strategies used by local FCSS programs to serve specific and general populations within Alberta.

Local FCSS programs follow the same initial process when developing their own program logic models.

### FCSS Outcomes Model



**GLOSSARY**

**Vision statement**

An inspirational and aspirational description of what an organization would like to achieve or accomplish in the medium-term or long-term future.

**Mission**

A statement that defines what an organization is, why it exists, its reason for being.

**Statement of Need**

The community need the program or project will address.

**Goal statement**

What you hope to achieve with your program/project, i.e., the overall change or desired impact.

**Assets**

Resources of a person, business or community

## The FCSS Outcomes Model

### *Vision:*

Alberta’s diverse people building strong communities through positive, caring interaction and mutual respect.

### *Mission:*

FCSS is a partnership between the Government of Alberta, municipalities and Métis Settlements that develops locally-driven preventive social initiatives to enhance the well-being of individuals, families and communities.

### *Statement of need:*

Individuals, families and communities in Alberta may not always have the resources or capacity to enhance their own social well-being. Unless the strengths, skills and abilities of individuals, families and communities are enhanced, life challenges can impact their social well-being.

### *Overarching provincial goal statement:*

FCSS enhances the social well-being of individuals, families and community through prevention.

For FCSS, prevention occurs by strengthening resiliency through identifying and enhancing individual, family and community assets.

- Prevention may involve enhancing the strengths, skills, and abilities of individuals, families and the community so they are more resilient and better able to deal with a stress or challenge that may result in future problems.
- Prevention may involve building individual or environmental safeguards that enhance the ability to deal with stressful life events, risks, or hazards and promote the ability to adapt and respond constructively.
- Prevention may involve addressing protective and risk factors.
- Protective and risk factors can exist both within individuals and across the various settings in which they live, such as the family, peer group, school, and community.

**GLOSSARY**

**Broad Strategy**

In general terms, how the program/project will address the specified community need.

**Rationale**

The evidence that would support your approach, e.g., research, best practices, etc.

***Principles, beliefs and values:***

- A community’s most valuable asset is its people. Investments made in developing and supporting people pay dividends in all areas of community life.
- All people are valuable and we value all people and their capabilities.
- Each of us can make valuable contributions to our communities, and communities need the contributions of all of us.
- Working together allows us, as citizens, to contribute directly to our community, which in turn is linked to positive outcomes for individuals, families and community.
- Each municipality and Métis Settlement has unique programming needs and is best able to determine what its own needs are and propose solutions to meet them.
- Municipalities and Métis Settlements can support individuals, families and communities by providing well-designed preventive social programs.
- FCSS programs help people to help themselves.
- FCSS programs create and maintain community connections by mobilizing and engaging the community and using partnerships to address local issues.
- FCSS programs learn from experience, each other and research.
- FCSS programs are accountable.

***Broad strategies:***

The Government of Alberta through Alberta Human Services enters into a unique 80/20 funding partnership with participating municipalities and Métis Settlements.

Local FCSS programs use a variety of broad strategies to enhance the social well-being of individuals, families and community.

***Rationale:***

If local FCSS programs set priorities based on the social issues and needs in their communities and provide services directly or fund programs and projects accordingly, then it is more likely that individuals, families and communities will have access to preventive services that enhance their social well-being.

***Who we serve:***

Ninety-nine percent of Albertans live in communities served by local FCSS programs. FCSS programs and projects may help individuals, families, or the community as a whole.

**GLOSSARY**

**Inputs**

Inputs are what we invest.

**Strategic directions**  
The five regulatory statements in the FCSS Regulation identified as SD1 – SD5.

## The FCSS Outcomes Model: Inputs

Inputs are what we invest, i.e., the resources available for provincial FCSS and local FCSS programs in Alberta along with relevant legislation and legal requirements.

The inputs of the Government of Alberta for FCSS include:

- provincial legislation, i.e., an Act and Regulation, and policies and procedures, e.g., financial reporting requirements;
- contributing 80% of the funding to municipalities and Métis Settlements;
- Ministry staff, facilities, technology, websites, resources, equipment and supplies; and
- funding to the Family and Community Support Services Association of Alberta (FCSSAA).

The inputs of municipalities and Métis Settlements for FCSS include:

- contributing 20% or more of the funding;
- local staff, facilities, technology, websites, resources, equipment and supplies; and
- delivery of programs and projects, or funding to local organizations and agencies to provide services.

### FCSS Mandate

Provincially, the FCSS program receives its mandate from the *Family and Community Support Services Act* and Regulation. Local FCSS programs and projects are required to conform to these legislative and regulatory requirements.

FCSS programs must:

- a) be of a preventive nature that enhances the social well-being of individuals and families through promotion or intervention strategies provided at the earliest opportunity, and
- b) do one or more of the following:
  - (SD1)** help people to develop independence, strengthen coping skills and become more resistant to crisis;
  - (SD2)** help people to develop an awareness of social needs;
  - (SD3)** help people to develop interpersonal and group skills which enhance constructive relationships among people;
  - (SD4)** help people and communities to assume responsibility for decisions and actions which affect them;
  - (SD5)** provide supports that help sustain people as active participants in the community.

These five statements from the FCSS Regulation 2.1 (1) (a and b) are known collectively as strategic directions (SD).

**GLOSSARY**

**Outputs**

Outputs are what is done.

**Activities**

What the program or project does to achieve its goal(s).

According to the FCSS Regulation 2.1 (2) (a to d), services provided under a local FCSS program must not:

- a) provide primarily for the recreational needs or leisure time pursuits of individuals;
- b) offer direct assistance, including money, food, clothing or shelter, to sustain an individual or family;
- c) be primarily rehabilitative in nature; or
- d) duplicate services that are ordinarily provided by a government or government agency.

Locally, municipal or Métis Settlement councils choose whether to establish a program and enter into an agreement with the Government of Alberta to jointly fund the program. Local FCSS programs then decide how FCSS funds are used to meet their needs, provided funding decisions are consistent with provincial legislation.

## The FCSS Outcomes Model: Outputs

Outputs include what is done, i.e., activities and processes as well as specific information about who is reached, i.e., target groups and program participants.

**Activities:** The provincial FCSS office within Alberta Human Services advocates on behalf of FCSS within the provincial government, coordinates provincial initiatives in partnership with the FCSS Association of Alberta, and supports the work of local FCSS programs. The provincial office also ensures that annual reporting and other accountability requirements are met.

Local FCSS programs use a variety of activities and processes to work toward the outcomes stated in their program and project logic models. Activities and processes include the services provided or actions undertaken by the program or project.

**Who we reach:** As of April 1, 2011, a total of 320 municipalities and Métis Settlements were organized within 206 local FCSS programs in Alberta.

Local FCSS programs reach individuals including children, youth, adults and seniors, as well as families and the community as a whole. Local FCSS programs work with community organizations and agencies and other partners from the public, business and not-for-profit voluntary sectors.

Information  
for Local  
Programs

GLOSSARY

**Outcomes**

The benefits or changes for individuals, families, communities or populations during or after participating in program or project activities.

## The FCSS Outcomes Model: Outcomes

Outcomes are the benefits or changes for individuals, families, communities or populations during or after participating in program or project activities. Participants have a change of:

1. **Knowledge:** understanding of a science, art or technique;
2. **Attitude:** a feeling or emotion toward a fact or state;
3. **Values:** beliefs of a person or social group in which they have an emotional investment (either for or against something);
4. **Skills:** developed aptitudes or abilities;
5. **Behaviour:** action, function or reaction in a particular way;
6. **Condition:** social circumstances in a community or locality, e.g., bullying, crime, environmental concerns, family violence, substance abuse; and/or
7. **Status:** the relative position or standing of people in a society, e.g., level of education, income, occupation.

The chart on the next page shows the over-arching provincial goal of FCSS along with the five strategic directions and a set of high-level provincial outcomes and indicators of success for individuals, families and community.

Note: Individuals include children, youth, adults, older Albertans/seniors, Aboriginal people, newcomers, people with disabilities, etc.

## The FCSS Outcomes Model: Chart of Outcomes and Indicators





Information  
for Local  
Programs

## The FCSS Outcomes Model: Measure and Report Outcomes

Many local FCSS programs are reporting on their outcomes to the province on an annual basis using existing guidelines and reporting tools. As the FCSS Outcomes Model is implemented, reporting requirements will be similar to what was required in the past.

The ultimate goal is to develop a report template accompanied by common indicators and survey questions that can be used by local FCSS programs. The provincial FCSS office will use the outcomes information you report to create a picture of what is happening in Alberta. They want to demonstrate what difference was made for individuals, families and the community when your programs and projects were implemented. The provincial FCSS office will then be able to showcase the collective impact that FCSS is making to enhance the social well-being of individuals, families and community through prevention in Alberta.

## Glossary

**Ability:** The quality of being able to perform; a quality that permits or facilitates achievement or accomplishment.

**Activities:** What the program or project does to achieve its goal(s). Activities include the services provided or actions undertaken by the program or project.

**Assets:** A useful or valuable quality, person, or thing; an advantage or resource.

**Broad Strategy:** In general terms, how the program/ project will address the specified community need.

**Capability:** A talent or ability that has potential for development or use.

**Capacity:** The ability to do something.

**Developmental assets:** Forty common sense, positive experiences and qualities that help influence choices young people make and help them become caring, responsible, successful adults. The Search Institute has frameworks of developmental assets for:

- Early childhood (ages 3 – 5 years)
- Grades K – 3 (ages 5- 9)
- Middle childhood (ages 8 – 12)
- Adolescents (ages 12 -18)

**Evaluation:** How to determine how well a program has achieved its goal(s).

**Goal statement:** The achievement hoped for by a program/project, i.e., the overall change or desired impact.

**Inputs:** The resources used to support program activities and achieve program goals such as money, staff and staff time, volunteers and volunteer time, facilities, materials, equipment, technology, partners and information. Inputs also include constraints on the program, such as laws, regulations, and requirements of funders.

**Local FCSS program:** A municipality (or group of municipalities) or Métis Settlement enrolled in the Provincial FCSS program.

**Mission:** A statement that defines what an organization is, why it exists, its reason for being. At a minimum, a mission statement defines who the primary target populations are, the products and services produced, and describes the geographical location in which an organization operates.

**Outcomes:** The benefits or changes for individuals, families, communities or populations that result from participating in a program or project activities. For FCSS purposes, outcomes specifically relate to changes in knowledge, attitudes, values, skills, behaviour, condition, status or other attributes.

For a particular program, there can be various "levels" of outcomes, with initial short-term outcomes leading to medium and long-term ones. For example, a youth in a mentoring program who receives one-to-one encouragement to improve academic performance may attend school more regularly, which can lead to getting better grades, which can lead to graduating.

In general, short-term outcomes occur within one year, medium-term outcomes take several years and long-term outcomes take a decade or longer. However, these time-frames may be shortened when programs build in a step-wise fashion. Short-term outcomes may be measured immediately, medium-term outcomes in three to six months and the long-term outcomes at one year. The determination of the time frame for the outcomes depends upon the program or project being implemented.

**Outcome indicators:** The specific items of information that track a program's success on outcomes, generally in the form of a cluster of questions or survey.

**Outputs:** The direct products of program activities. Outputs usually are measured in terms of the volume of work accomplished, for example, the numbers of classes taught, counseling sessions conducted, educational materials distributed, and participants served. Outputs have little inherent value in themselves. They are important because they are intended to lead to desired outcomes or benefits for participants or target populations.

**Participants:** Participants are those who are engaged in the activity and are making a significant contribution to achieving the goals and outcomes as outlined in the program they are attending.

**Personal well-being:** People's sense of how they are feeling within themselves and experiencing their lives.

**Program logic model:** A systematic and visual way to present and share understanding of the relationships among the resources used to operate a program, the activities planned, and the expected changes or results to be achieved.

**Project:** A service or activity that local FCSS programs deliver or support.

**Protective factors:** Protective factors are those qualities or situations that help alter or reverse expected negative outcomes. Stress-resistant or “invulnerable” individuals have common protective factors operating as two broad sets of developmental strengths:

- external factors such as family, peers, school and community, and
- internal factors or personality characteristics such as empowerment, self-control, cultural sensitivity, self-concept and social sensitivity.

**Rationale:** The evidence that would support an approach, e.g., research, best practices, etc.

**Resilience:** The capability of individuals and systems (families, groups and communities) to cope with significant adversity or stress in ways that are not only effective, but tend to result in an increased ability to constructively respond to future adversity.

**Risk factors:** Risk factors are disabling, cultural, economic, or medical conditions that deny or minimize opportunities and resources for optimal human development. Risk factors can be internal (within the person) or external (involving the family, school/work, and community).

**Social engagement:** A diverse range of activities individuals participate in for their own enjoyment or benefit or to provide benefit to others in the wider community.

**Social support:** The activities individuals undertake, within the context of social relationships, to share information, and provide emotional or physical support.

**Social well-being:** How people experience their connections with others and the strength of those relationships.

**Statement of need:** The community need or issues the program or project will address

**Strategic directions:** The five regulatory statements in the FCSS Regulation identified as SD1 – SD5.

**Vision statement:** An inspirational and aspirational description of what an organization would like to achieve or accomplish in the mid-term or long-term future. It is intended to serve as a clear guide for choosing current and future courses of action.

## FCSS Outcomes Model Example: Parenting Teens Program

<b>Program/Project Title:</b>	Parenting Teens Program
<b>Statement of Need:</b> What community need or issue?	Some parents in our community have challenges parenting their teens and need support to parent their teens effectively.
<b>Overall Goal:</b> What long-term change or impact?	Parents and teens have positive relationships.
<b>Broad Strategy:</b> How will the program address the issue?	Parenting program for parents and teens
<b>Rationale:</b> What evidence? (if/then)	If parents understand how to parent their teens more effectively, then parents and teens are more likely to have positive family relationships. See <a href="http://www.pfsc.uq.edu.au/research/evidence/">http://www.pfsc.uq.edu.au/research/evidence/</a> for evidence supporting the Positive Parenting Program (Triple P)
<b>Who is served?</b> Target Group(s)	Parents of teen(s) Teens
<b>Inputs :</b> Resources	Staff, volunteers, time, money, materials, equipment. technology, partners, information
<b>Outputs:</b> Activities and processes	Parent training sessions, family mentoring, family activities, information and referral to support parents and teens
<b>Outputs:</b> Who will you reach?	Parents, teens, partners
<b>FCSS Overarching Provincial Goal Statement:</b> FCSS enhances the social well-being of individuals and families through prevention. <b>How does the program or project contribute?</b>	Helps to improve family relationships of parents and teens.
Which of the <b>5 strategic directions</b> (SD 1-5) fits your program or project best? SD3 fits best	<input type="checkbox"/> #1 help people to develop independence, strengthen coping skills and become more resistant to crisis; <input type="checkbox"/> #2 help people to develop an awareness of social needs; <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> #3 help people to develop interpersonal and group skills which enhance constructive relationships among people; <input type="checkbox"/> #4 help people and communities to assume responsibility for decisions and actions which affect them; <input type="checkbox"/> #5 provide supports that help sustain people as active participants in the community.
<b>Short term outcomes:</b>	Parents understand parenting of teens.
<b>Indicators of success:</b>	Knowledge of positive parenting, positive family communication, positive family relationships, ways to deal with family stresses
<b>Data collection methods:</b>	Pre-test, post-test of parents
<b>Compile, analyze, interpret data; Review results</b>	
<b>Report results</b> (including stories)	

**Parenting Teens Program** continued

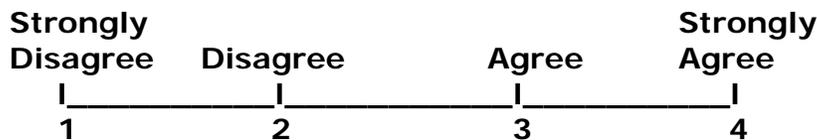
<b>Medium-term outcomes:</b>	Parents and teens have a positive relationship.
<b>Indicators of success:</b>	Parents report positive parenting practices, positive family communication, ways to deal with family stresses. Teens report improved relationship with parents.
<b>Data collection methods:</b>	Pre-test, post-test of parents and youth
<b>Compile, analyze, interpret data; Review results</b>	
<b>Report results</b> (including stories)	
<b>Long term outcomes:</b>	Not applicable

**Example of pre-test/post-test survey questions for parents:**

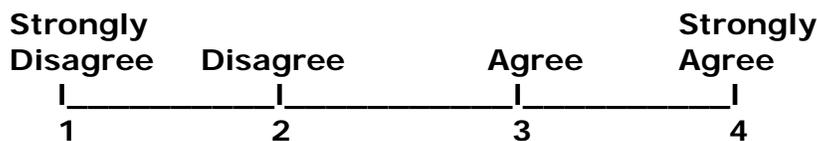
You choose one or more of the survey questions that fits the indicators and outcomes of your Parenting Teens program.

The following statements are about families and family relationships. For each one, please choose the answer that best describes your family.

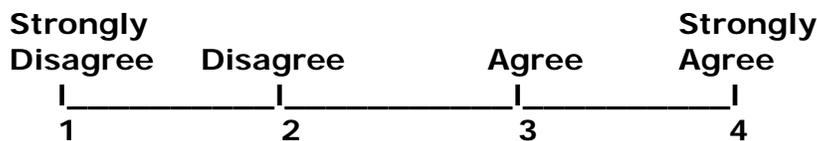
1) In times of crisis, we can turn to each other for support.



2) We are able to make decisions about how to solve problems.



3) Individuals in our family are accepted for who they are.



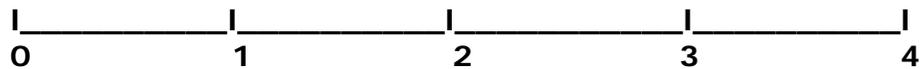
**Example of pre-test/post-test survey questions for teens:**

**You choose one or more of the survey questions that fits the indicators and outcomes of your Parenting Teens program.**

For each of the following statements, choose the answer that best describes how your parent(s) have acted toward you **in the past 6 months**.

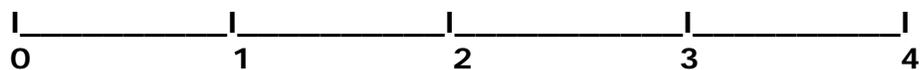
1) My parents praise me (say good things about me).

Never          Rarely          Sometimes          Often          Always



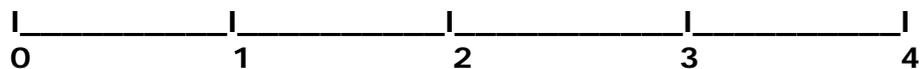
2) My parents listen to my ideas and opinions.

Never          Rarely          Sometimes          Often          Always



3) My parents and I solve a problem together whenever we disagree about something.

Never          Rarely          Sometimes          Often          Always



The examples of the survey questions are drawn from Statistics Canada. For more survey questions, visit [http://www.statcan.gc.ca/cgi-bin/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=displayInstrBySubTheme&Item\\_Id=97413&CE\\_Id=327&CE\\_Start=01010001&PIItem\\_Id=97413&PCE\\_Id=326&PCE\\_Start=01010001&lang=en&db=imdb&adm=8&dis=2](http://www.statcan.gc.ca/cgi-bin/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=displayInstrBySubTheme&Item_Id=97413&CE_Id=327&CE_Start=01010001&PIItem_Id=97413&PCE_Id=326&PCE_Start=01010001&lang=en&db=imdb&adm=8&dis=2) then click on **National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth - Cycle 8 Survey Instruments 2008-2009 - Book 2 - Youth Questionnaires** for survey questions of youth and go to page 26, question G10.  
or  
**Communities 2005, Adult Questionnaire Communities 2005** for survey questions for parents and go to page 17: Family Functioning.

## Sources

### Prevention:

Stephen Small and Marina Memmo: Contemporary Models of Youth Development and Problem Prevention: Toward an Integration of Terms, Concepts, and Models; *Family Relations*, 2004, Vol. 53, No. 1; 3-11.

### Personal well-being:

The National Accounts of Well-being developed in Europe. More information is available at: <http://www.nationalaccountsowellbeing.org/>

### Resiliency (also protective factors and risk factors):

Stephen Small and Marina Memmo: Contemporary Models of Youth Development and Problem Prevention: Toward an Integration of Terms, Concepts, and Models; *Family Relations*, 2004, Vol. 53, No. 1; 3-11.

### Social well-being of children and youth:

The Learning Partnership: From Risk to Resilience: Final Report for the Canadian Council on Learning. 2009. The report is available at: <http://www.research4children.com/public/data/documents/FromRisktoResilienceTheNationalDialogueonResilienceinYouthpdf.pdf>

### Social well-being of community:

The Canadian Index of Well-being. More information is available at: <http://www.ciwi.ca/en/TheCanadianIndexOfWellbeing.aspx>

### Examples of survey questions for the Parenting Teens Programs:

The examples of the survey questions are drawn from Statistics Canada:

For more survey questions, visit

[http://www.statcan.gc.ca/cgi-bin/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=displayInstrBySubTheme&Item\\_Id=97413&CE\\_Id=327&CE\\_Start=01010001&PItem\\_Id=97413&PCE\\_Id=326&PCE\\_Start=01010001&lang=en&db=imdb&adm=8&dis=2](http://www.statcan.gc.ca/cgi-bin/imdb/p2SV.pl?Function=displayInstrBySubTheme&Item_Id=97413&CE_Id=327&CE_Start=01010001&PItem_Id=97413&PCE_Id=326&PCE_Start=01010001&lang=en&db=imdb&adm=8&dis=2)

Then click on:

**National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth - Cycle 8 Survey Instruments 2008-2009 - Book 2 - Youth Questionnaires** for survey questions of youth and go to page 26, question G10.

or

**Communities 2005, Adult Questionnaire Communities 2005** for survey questions for parents and go to page 17: Family Functioning.

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