FCSS Accountability Framework

Live Training - Frequently Asked Questions

Definitions and Scope

Community outreach programming: what is the difference between a referral activity and a program activity?

The key distinction lies in the depth of engagement and tracking requirements. Referral activities are typically one-time interactions, such as providing someone with contact information or directing them to a service.

In contrast, program activities under the Community Outreach Programming category often involve dedicated personnel delivering hands-on support, such as navigation services. These activities often include ongoing engagement, and participants should be tracked to reflect the depth and continuity of support. While referrals may occur within these programs, they do not need to be tracked individually, as interaction and engagement are already captured through the key performance measure of participant interactions.

What counts as a "partner" in FCSS reporting?

A community partnership is defined as a collaborative working relationship, either formal (e.g., written agreements) or informal, between local FCSS programs and other organizations. These may include non-profits, schools, health services, community centres and businesses that contribute meaningfully to service delivery or community outcomes.

Key Clarifications:

- Organizations should be counted once, even if involved in multiple distinct initiatives.

- Funded organizations delivering indirect services are not considered partners.

- Individual schools within the same school board should be counted as separate partners if they are directly involved.

- Businesses should be included if they play an active role in collaboration or support.

- Municipal departments should not be counted as partners if they are engaged in collaborative work.

- Other local FCSS programs should be counted as partners when involved in joint initiatives.

What is a "collaborative working relationship"?

A collaborative working relationship is a formal or informal relationship between committed organizations that utilizes joint efforts to achieve common goals.

What is the difference between direct and indirect service delivery?

Direct service delivery refers to services that are provided directly by the FCSS program or its staff. Indirect service delivery refers to services that are delivered by individuals or organizations funded through FCSS grants. These partners carry out programming or supports on behalf of FCSS but are not FCSS staff themselves.

Is "Family and Sexual Violence" a single category, or two distinct categories: Family Violence and Sexual Violence?

Family and Sexual Violence are two distinct concepts that fall under the same Provincial Prevention Priority.

Information and referrals: is one family considered one unit?

For information, one family is considered one unit.

For referrals, the scope of the referral needs to be considered. If a family attends their local FCSS and receives two referrals for services that benefit the family as a whole (such as family counselling and the food bank), it would be considered one referral interaction. Whereas if a family attends their local FCSS and the grandmother is referred to a senior's support group, and the child is referred to a children's day program, it would be considered two referral interactions.

Surveys

Can we modify the language of survey questions?

FCSS programs may use plain language or adapt the wording of survey questions, as long as the intent of the question remains unchanged. This flexibility allows programs to ensure

questions are clear, accessible, and appropriate for their audiences. Programs are also encouraged to be innovative in how they administer surveys, whether through paper forms, digital tools, interviews, or creative engagement methods, so long as the data collected aligns with the intended performance measures.

Can we survey children in child and youth programs?

FCSS programs delivering child and youth programming may choose to survey children directly or survey their parents, caregivers, or other relevant partners. Programs should use their judgment to determine the most appropriate approach based on the age, developmental stage, and context of the participants. Survey questions and methods should be tailored to suit the audience, ensuring they are age-appropriate and effective in capturing meaningful feedback.

Can we use a four-point Likert scale in our surveys?

FCSS programs are asked to use a five-point Likert scale for survey questions. This standardization ensures consistent data collection across all programs, allowing standardized when analyzing and aggregating results.

Can I use direct quotes from participant feedback in impact narratives?

FCSS programs may use direct quotes from participant feedback in their impact narratives, providing the quotes are relevant and reflect the intent of the narrative. However, it's important to work with your municipality to understand any communications or privacy requirements that may apply, especially regarding participant consent and public use of personal feedback. If needed, quotes can be lightly edited for clarity, but the original meaning should remain unchanged.

Reporting

Why can only one prevention priority be selected per activity?

While many FCSS activities, such as navigation services and interagency collaboration, naturally support multiple prevention priorities, selecting one primary priority per activity

ensures consistent, clear, and comparable data across programs. This approach helps avoid complications in analysis, diluted insights, and inconsistent reporting.

How do I report if my program does not align with the Provincial Prevention Priorities?

We encourage FCSS programs to consider the following when categorizing Prevention Priorities:

- What is the program trying to promote or prevent?
- What skills does the program aim to build in its participants? What are these skills promoting or preventing?

Not every program is going to clearly match one specific single Prevention Priority. We ask that the most appropriate category be chosen.

If your program does not appear to align with one of the Prevention Priorities, you have additional questions or would like additional support with this, please book a program consultation with a member of the FCSS team at scss.fcssadmin@gov.ab.ca.

Do I need to track where referrals are going?

For provincial government purposes, FCSS programs are not required to track referral destinations. While we recognize the value in understanding where referrals are being made, the current reporting requirement focuses on capturing referral interactions, not the specific organizations or services referred to. This approach keeps data collection manageable while still reflecting the role of FCSS programs in connecting individuals to supports. You may wish to check with your municipality to see if it wants referral destinations to be tracked.

Is there an upper limit on the number of prevention strategies we can select?

There is no strict upper limit, but FCSS programs are generally encouraged to select between 2 to 4 prevention strategies. This range helps ensure that programs remain focused and strategic, while still capturing the breadth of their work. Selecting too

many priorities can dilute the clarity of your program's intent and make reporting more complex.

Can I report activities together if they have similar outcomes and objectives?

FCSS programs may report multiple activities together under a single activity item if they share the same prevention priority and prevention strategies. For example, if you offer a series of individual workshops for seniors (such as lunch-and-learns on topics like healthy relationships, mental wellness, and staying socially connected) and all of these support the prevention priority of "aging well in community" through prevention strategies like "promoting active engagement" and "developing and maintaining healthy relationships", you can report them collectively as one activity. This approach helps streamline reporting while still accurately reflecting the intent and impact of the programming.

How do we report participants in a jointly delivered program across multiple municipalities?

If your FCSS program is **jointly delivered by multiple municipalities**, there are two recommended options for reporting participant counts:

1. **Split participants proportionally by funding contribution**
   If each municipality contributes a different amount of funding, you may divide the total number of participants based on each municipality's share of the funding.
   Example: If Municipality A contributes 50%, Municipality B 30%, and Municipality C 20%, and the program served 100 participants, you would report 50, 30, and 20 participants respectively.

2. **Split participants equally across municipalities**
   If funding is shared equally or proportional reporting isn't feasible, you may divide the total participant count evenly across the municipalities involved.
   Example: If three municipalities jointly deliver a program and 90 participants were served, each municipality could report 30 participants.

Should volunteers be counted as attendees at community events?

Volunteers should not be counted as attendees. The description of an event attendee is: *"Anyone who attends or takes part in any way in a community event."* This refers specifically to individuals who are engaging with the event as its intended audience. Volunteers, staff, and others involved in delivering or supporting the event are not considered attendees for reporting purposes.

Does a volunteer appreciation event count as a community event?

A volunteer appreciation event for FCSS volunteers is not categorized as a community event. Instead, it should be reported under the activity type of "Community Development and Capacity Building" → "Volunteerism," as it supports volunteer capacity and engagement.

While participants at these events include volunteers, they should not be counted as attendees for the purpose of community event reporting. Volunteer contributions are captured separately through "unique volunteer counts" and "volunteer hours," not through participation in appreciation activities.

How do I report unique volunteers that support multiple FCSS-funded programs?

We understand that tracking unique volunteers across organizations and programs can be challenging. We recommend that you continue to do the best you can in this regard.

Alternatively, you may wish to adopt a "volunteer interaction" metric for counting volunteers in which you count each instance of volunteer engagement as an interaction, rather than trying to track unique individuals.

How do I report volunteers that are funded through FCSS capacity building, while they are volunteering at a non-FCSS funded program?

Volunteers that are funded through FCSS Capacity Building should only be counted when they are volunteering for FCSS programs.

Our program doesn't quite fit the healthy relationships description: is there a better category for it?

FCSS programs that promote social cohesion or involve addressing social discourse issues and do not better fit the description of other categories should be reported under Group-Based Social Connection/Social Well Being Programming.

Our school-aged program doesn't fit into a "drop-in" or "camp" model: where should it be categorized?

FCSS programs that do not fit these categories because of their registration model may fall into the "Skill Building" or "Healthy Relationships" program categories.

Community groups: do I have to specify which Indigenous populations are attending the program?

If your program is intended for First Nations, Métis, or Inuit peoples primarily, there will be a new option to specify this under the Community Groups section. If your program is for Indigenous peoples generally, you do not need to indicate a sub type and are not required to ask program participants details about their Indigenous status.

Funded Agency Support

Can we share the training package and recorded sessions with indirect service delivery partners?

Sharing the training package and recorded sessions with indirect service delivery partners is encouraged. This helps ensure consistent understanding of key concepts and expectations across all organizations contributing to service delivery.

Is there a form that lists requirements for funded agencies that I can share directly with them?

Sharing of the training package and supplementary material created by individual FCSSs is encouraged. Included in this is the checklist. Please inquire with the FCSSAA for additional support in this area.

Other

Do I need to complete a community needs assessment, and what does it involve?

Currently, FCSS programs are not required to complete a community needs assessment. However, we encourage programs to conduct one to better understand local needs and inform service planning. For now, we are simply asking whether a needs assessment has been completed, and if so, what year it was conducted.

A community needs assessment is a process used to identify the strengths, gaps, and priorities within a community. It may include:

- Surveys or interviews with residents
- Focus groups or community consultations
- Data analysis from local sources
- Engagement with community partners

The goal is to gather meaningful input that can guide program development and ensure services are responsive to community needs.

We intend to provide training and tools to support programs in conducting needs assessments. In the meantime, programs are encouraged to explore approaches that suit their local context and capacity.