



## **Guidelines for Referrals**

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***Please note the criteria for referral is any mother, living on the North Shore, who is a first time mother or has a newborn and other children under the age of five.***

- Referrals come directly from a professional not from the client.
  - It is important to discuss the situation with the Natalie the Referrals Co-ordinator [referrals@spectrummothers.ca](mailto:referrals@spectrummothers.ca) or 778 838 9268 before mentioning Spectrum to the family.
    - While some of our caregivers have ECCE or psychology training most do not. We are mothers helping mothers using our own experience to offer support and encouragement. All caregivers have current CRC and CPR training.
    - Caregivers do not necessarily have the skills and experience to work with mothers with pre-existing very serious mental health issues, very difficult social circumstances or with children with complex special needs.
- When making referral, please give as much information as possible.
  - Partner/spouse/other family members involved
  - Other agencies involved (names and contact information)
  - Medical, social and mental health concerns
  - Expectations of the family
- Once the referral is approved the mother can then be given the phone number. Natalie, the Referrals Coordinator, will call the family.
  - Many times when we follow up on referrals the mother does not want the help or is not ready to receive help. Due to limited resources and funding we want to ensure that services are provided to those who want them.
- Please assess the financial need of the family before referring
  - We are a charity supported by grants, donations and fundraising opportunities.
  - We give priority to families with financial need.
  - Families who meet the criteria and where finances are not a concern are always accepted as clients and are then given the opportunity to donate to Spectrum.
- Currently, support is initially offered for three months. At that time the situation will be reviewed with the referring agency, the family, caregiver and Referrals Coordinator, and a decision made as to whether support will continue.
  - While we are involved with the family the referring agency will be the 'go to' person should the caregiver have questions or concerns. They are the ones holding the 'release of information' documents.