

UBC CCS Family Newsletter Project

Presentation for Senior Educators

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June 2023



Background



Background

- CCS Leadership reached out for support in creating a more comprehensive CCS-wide family newsletter program and resource toolkit.
- Launched two surveys in 2021: families survey + educator survey.
- Due to reduced capacity in Marcom, project put on hold temporarily.
- Pleased to revive the project in Winter 2023.



Purpose



Goal

The goal of the CCS family newsletter program is to empower educators at all centres to more easily and regularly send out high-quality newsletters to their families, while also maintaining a cohesive and consistent approach across all CCS centres.



We know that many centres are already producing wonderful newsletters. This program can help enhance those efforts, provide additional resources, make newsletters easier and less time-consuming to produce, and help increase alignment across the department.

Newsletters: purpose and value

A newsletter program, with a common look and feel, guidelines, resources and best practices across CCS, is a great opportunity to:



- establish a consistent channel for providing families with valuable and timely news, information, updates and stories—and a window into their childrens' experience and education
- create stronger alignment for family-facing communications across CCS
- help strengthen and maintain trust, connection and community
- Enhance CCS's positive reputation with families

Our audience: families



**“ I like that the staff are trying
to keep us all connected!**

– families survey respondent



Audience-centred communications

Great communications are created with an emphasis on what works for our readership. They're primarily written, produced and delivered with a focus on:



- What is important, engaging, and interesting to the audience.
- The format or delivery method that is best suited to the audience.
- The types of devices the audience uses.
- When the audience is most likely to read/view the communication.
- Any important demographic considerations, such as location, age range, language, etc.

Doing so creates the best chance of our communications being opened, read, and understood so we can achieve our communications goals.

Audience-centred communications

That doesn't mean we don't communicate "need to know" information or provide content that's also important from our perspective.

Developing audience-centred comms simply helps us shift our perspective—to focus on communicating in a way that works well for our intended readers.



Families survey

In 2021, we surveyed families to help give us insight into what kind of newsletters will work best for them. From this survey, we received an incredible 271 responses.



We also asked CCS Educators, to complete a survey about what's working, what's not, and how to improve things moving forward.

Families survey

From these two surveys we learned a lot, which helped us determine the type of newsletter program that will best serve our families and make the newsletter production process more streamlined, consistent across CCS, and hopefully a bit easier for everyone involved.



Families survey: conclusions

- **Devices:** most parents/guardians are most likely to / would prefer to read CCS newsletters on their mobile phones.
- **Format:** most parents/guardians want to receive newsletters by email, with primary content in the body of the email – rather than as an attached document.
- **Timing:** most parents/guardians don't have a preference about when they receive newsletters and will check it out when they get it, any weekday, any time of day – but are most likely to spend time reading it after their childrens' bedtime.
 - This suggests they're likely to open it when received and scan for crucial info, but take to review more in-depth in the evening.
- **Frequency:** a preference for monthly newsletters, with a secondary preference for a newsletter once every two months.





It creates a sense of community.

– families survey respondent



Your family newsletter program



Recommended approach

Based on the survey data and current communications best practices, we are recommending a digital email newsletter program using the existing CCS listserv, but with a robust set of guidelines, resources and assets.



The plan

- **Method:** send newsletters by email—using the CCS listerv system.
- **Timing:** send newsletters any weekday or time of the day.
- **Frequency:** send a newsletter out once every two months. While many families would prefer monthly, we need to keep the program sustainable for educators.
- **Content:**
 - **Primary content*:** goes in the body of the email. Readers can easily access content on any device.
 - **Supplementary content*:** if there is any supplementary content to include, attach to email as a PDF, image, video, etc. Allows readers to go more in-depth if they desire. Alternatively, provide link to supplementary content in body of email, if it is stored online / in the cloud.



**definitions on next slide*

Content: definitions

- **Primary content:** shorter-form content, such as urgent, important, and need-to-know info/news/updates or brief highlights, stories, anecdotes, quotes, single images, etc.
- **Supplementary content:** longer-form content, such as reports, in-depth storytelling, photo collages, video, etc.



Resources from Marcom

- **Child Care Services Newsletter Guide:** comprehensive, CCS-specific guide for producing high-quality email newsletters—covering content, writing, reviewing/revising, building, formatting, images and graphics, review and approvals, sending, attachments, tools and resources, and more.
 - **Quickstart Guide:** one-page overview for quick reference.
 - **Style Guide:** one-page covering formatting guidelines.
 - **Example email:** desktop/laptop and mobile views.
- **Toolkit:**
 - Email header and footer graphics.
 - Storytelling/presentation template (Powerpoint).
 - Email template.



Process: create, review, and send + archive

- **Create:** Senior Educators are responsible for producing or overseeing the production of a newsletter for their centre. Process, guidelines and resources are detailed in the newsletter guide.
- **Review:** to help ensure accuracy, consistency and quality, etc. send draft newsletters to your Program Manager for review and approval:
 - Erin Bowman
 - Melanie Walters
 - Susan Damen
 - Nicole Farrell
- **Send:** once approved by Program Manager or updated based on Program Manager's recommendations, Educator sends the email via the centre's listerv (aka Zimbra).



Process: create, review, and send + archive

- **Archive:** Educators can BCC an email address we've set up (ccsnewsletter.archive@ubc.ca), so that there is a central record of all newsletters sent.
 - CCS Program Managers and Admin + Marcom to have access
 - If helpful, this gives CCS Admin ability to answer any questions they might receive about info in a newsletter + access to content for potential use in internal staff communications.
 - Establishes a central archive/record of all sent newsletters
 - Program Managers have access to final newsletters, to review for quality and consistency over the long term.
 - Marcom can review final newsletters at a planned check-in / program review after six months.



Newsletter guide and toolkit

Let's check out the newsletter guide and the toolkit.



Next steps



Next steps

- **Provide Newsletter Guide and toolkit**
- **Educators review and implement at their centre**
 - Review resources and share with educators who will be producing newsletters.
 - Determine newsletter schedule and start on first “new” newsletter.
- **Office hours**
 - Mike to host office hours in late-August and mid-fall at CCS Main Office. An opportunity for educators who are working on newsletters to drop in and ask questions.
- **6-month check-in:**
 - Check-in with Senior Educators
 - Review of archived emails
- **1-year families survey**
- **Tweak/enhance program, as needed, based on feedback.**



Questions?





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