



Guidelines for Referrals

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 three.

- Referrals come directly from a professional not from the client.
 - If you are new to referring to Spectrum, it is important to discuss the situation with Sally the Referrals Co-ordinator referrals@spectrummothers.ca or 236 838 3783 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)
 - *We are not a "first line of support" – we provide additional support*
 - Medical, social and mental health concerns
 - Expectations of the family
- Once the referral is approved, 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 needs or marginalized in other ways.
 - *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.
- Initially clients are offered three hours a week in order to assess the need. These hours can be increased to six a week. Client needs are assessed on a regular basis and reviewed with the referring agency, the family, caregiver and Referrals Coordinator, and a decision made as to how long 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.