

# **No Wrong Door User Guide**

## **Sarnia-Lambton**



May 2023

**The intent of No Wrong Door is to make it easier for families living in Lambton County to connect with services needed by their children/youth aged birth to 21 years, enhancing the transition between supports.** This is achieved by developing a system whereby service providers use a common form and process at the point of initial contact by the family. In any instance where an organization first contacted was not the appropriate service provider, the referral will then be quickly forwarded for an equally quick response by the appropriate organization.

In 2013, the No Wrong Door Project was funded by Ontario's Ministry of Children and Youth Services, through its Community Action Research INNOVATION FUND. The local application was endorsed by the Lambton Children's Planning Network (LCPN).

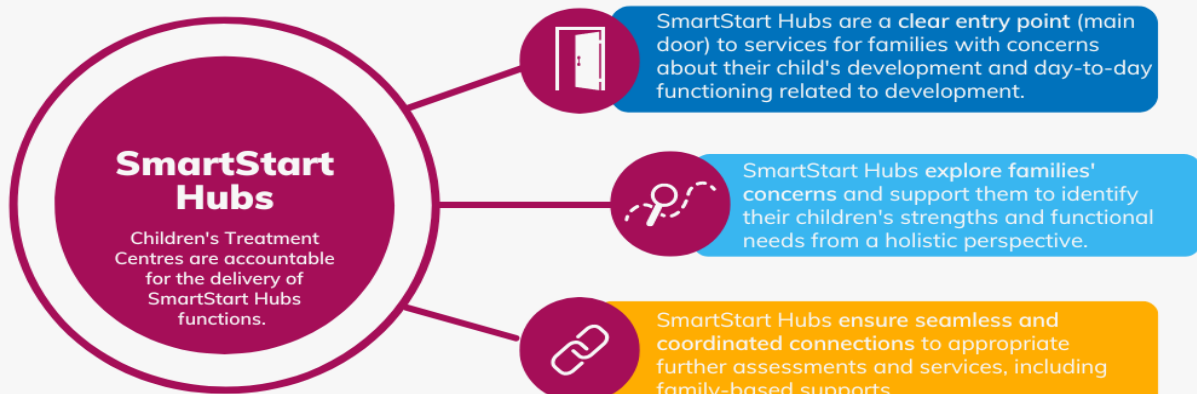
In 2014, the youth sector expressed an interest to be included in the No Wrong Door initiative, so the LCPN undertook the process of gathering interest, and information, and changed the mandate to include all children birth to 21 years.

The No Wrong Door initiative is presently managed by a No Wrong Door working group. The Parent and Professional Resource Centre-Lambton College is acting as the lead agency.

In 2022, it was announced that Children's Treatment Centres across the province, including Pathways Health Centre for Children in Lambton County, were to establish SmartStart Hub services to connect families with child development services. SmartStart Hubs are an entry point to children's special needs services that support the early identification of children's and families' strengths, goals and needs, and help children and families get the help they need sooner. It should be noted that SmartStart Hubs will not be the only way to access children's services, nor do families have to go through the Hub to access other programs and services.

Recognizing the fit between Lambton's No Wrong Door philosophy and processes, and the SmartStart Hubs directives, and given that No Wrong Door had not been updated for several years, it was determined that a natural step for the community would be to undertake a review of No Wrong Door to update and align processes and resources.

## What are SmartStart Hubs?



## The project steps included:

**Initially**, the following organizations of the Lambton Children's Planning Network, called the Project Partners, contributed to the development and testing of the No Wrong Door Process. and signed a Memorandum of Understanding endorsing the project.

- Sarnia-Lambton Supervisors Network
- Ontario Early Years Lambton- Kent- Middlesex
- Ontario Early Years Sarnia-Lambton
- Sarnia-Lambton Children's Aid Society
- St. Clair Child and Youth Services
- Pathways Health Centre for Children
- Lambton Public Health

Front-line intake staff formed a working group to inform the process. This working group continues in 2023 (Frontline Access Network).

A No Wrong Door Referral form was developed and broadly distributed to facilitate entry to services.

- The form collects "basic family information" for typically developing children/youth and those with special needs and a brief summary of the family story which will help staff to determine the need for additional supports.
- The form serves as the first step for referral to participating agencies.
- The No Wrong Door process does not replace each agency's intake process, it ensures that optimal information is gathered to make a simple and straightforward connection to partner agencies.
- Legal advice regarding written and informed parental consent was provided by Fleck Law.

Resource and reference materials were developed and provided to agencies involved in the No Wrong Door process.

Training was provided for partner agencies.

**In 2023**, a full review of the process was completed, engaging partners and updating all resource and reference materials, including SmartStart Hub information.

A Community Connection for information sharing regarding No Wrong Door and SmartStart Hubs was arranged.

An online training module was developed and is available on the Pathways Health Centre for Children [www.pathwayscentre.org](http://www.pathwayscentre.org) and EarlyON [www.earlyonlambton.ca](http://www.earlyonlambton.ca) websites.

*The Lambton Children's Planning Network would like to thank the Durham Region for its work on the No Wrong Door initiative.*

# No Wrong Door: An Integrated Approach to Servicing Families

The No Wrong Door User Guide is for anyone whose organization may be a first point of contact for families in Sarnia-Lambton regarding the development and well-being of children/youth. The Guide will lead you through the steps of the No Wrong Door process, from information-gathering to identifying the organization most suited to a family's needs.

You will learn how to:

- Quickly and clearly identify the need of the child, youth and family
- Determine which local agency has the expertise to assess the child, youth and family need
- Determine how to best address those needs by choosing from the following options:
  - Providing the family with information so they can link to a service, in cases where no referral is required.
  - Initiating a referral on behalf of the family (with consent) when the service requires a referral; or
  - Providing the family with the information so that the family can make a self-referral to a service when that service requires a referral

The No Wrong Door Process will help you assist children, youth and families to navigate services in a seamless manner. Front-line workers are the ones who will make this process a success!

## How the Process Works:

When a family attends your program or you are contacted by phone with questions or concerns about their child/youth's development and well-being, and what services are available in their community to assist them, you will provide those families with immediate assistance.

Parents will complete the No Wrong Door referral form in person or you will complete it for them over the phone. Through discussion, and the use of the "Reference Guide for Professionals" that explains services available in Sarnia-Lambton, you will help the family identify the service that best meets their child/youth's needs. You will explain the process for connecting with the agency. This may include linking families to activities and programs that they can participate in with their child or youth (EarlyON Child and Family Centres, Library, Recreation, Girls and Boys Club, After School Programs) or a formal referral to a local agency (Mental Health, Speech and Language). If you don't know where to make the referral send it to the SmartStart Hub at Pathways Health Centre for Children, where the intake department will complete a deeper dive and determine next steps, including referrals to the most appropriate agency.

Once the form has been completed either by the parent/guardian or youth, and it is determined that a referral is the appropriate course of action, the form will be submitted to the respective agency intake worker or to the SmartStart Hub at Pathways.

Once the form is received by the Intake Worker, follow-up will take place according to the respective agencies' protocol for referrals.

**Please note\*** **It is strongly suggested that referral from agency to agency take place, rather than providing contact information for families. The concern is that they will not follow through with making a self-referral.**

The No Wrong Door Partners want to make this process as easy as possible for parents, taking the onus off the family, and making it easier for them to connect with the services they need.

## Scenarios

*A caseworker is meeting with a Kinship family to discuss their eight-year-old granddaughter, whom they are providing care for. When the caseworker first met the child, in addition to the trauma that the child displayed, he noticed that the child had dental issues, and her speech was not clear. The caseworker will discuss the support offered through the SmartStart Hub at Pathways Health Centre for Children to the grandparents and suggests making a referral.*

*An EarlyON educator welcomes a family to the centre and introduces the services offered at the EarlyON Centre. The mother mentions that her 3-year-old was receiving speech services in Alberta. She asks where these services are provided in Sarnia. The educator lets the mother know that she can make a referral on her behalf, using the NWD form to the SmartStart Hub at Pathways Health Centre for Children.*

*A family visits a Healthy Babies drop-in. The mother has been attending weekly with her 3-month-old and 2-year-old child. The PHN has noticed that the 2-year-old screams, and hits his mother; when she indicates that it is time to go. The mother gets very uncomfortable when trying to support the child. The 2-year-old is increasingly more physical with her mother, kicking and screaming. The PHN asks if she can help. The mother nods. The PHN asks if the mother has any support at home and she does not. They complete a NWD referral to the SmartStart Hub at Pathways Health Centre for Children. The PHN suspects that there may be additional developmental issues with this child.*

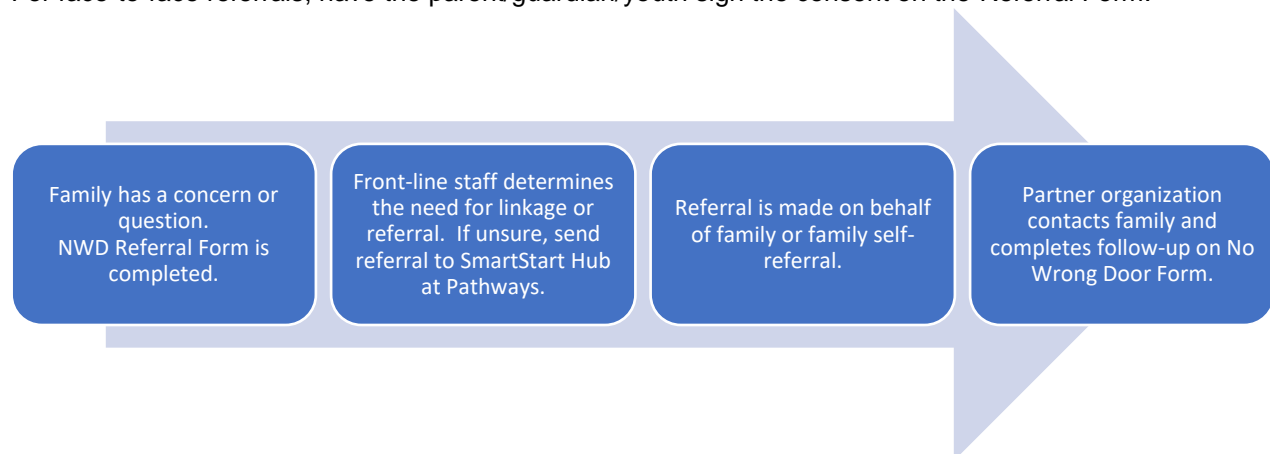
*An 8-year-old child attends the before and after school program offered at the Boys and Girls Club. The child mentions to a staff person that she is being teased at school. The child starts to cry and says she has no friends. The staff person follows up with the parent, sharing information about easy access to a session at SCCYS by calling St. Clair Child and Youth Intake. The parent seems unsure, so he walks through the NWD referral process. The parent agrees to the referral.*

*A youth is seeking information about gender identity and is seeking information within the community. The youth demonstrates the capacity to self-refer. The service provider provides the youth with the No Wrong Door Referral Form for completion and forwards the completed form to Rebound's Spectrum Program.*

## Consent

Referrals over the phone do not require signed consent. It is extremely important that the legal guardian/consenting youth understands that they are consenting to have the form forwarded to the partner agency. You must read the statement on the consent form **“The written reason for referral is accurate and has been discussed and explained to me. I give permission for this information to be shared electronically in a secure manner with the service delivery agency identified above. I understand that a paper and/or electronic file may be created and I may be contacted for research and evaluation purposes. I can withdraw consent at any time. I understand that the agency identified above will contact me directly to arrange an intake interview.”**

For face-to-face referrals, have the parent/guardian/youth sign the consent on the Referral Form.



If the family would prefer, they can complete the forms directly. For these families, you are encouraged to refer them to the SmartStart Hub at Pathways Health Centre for Children website [www.pathwayscentre.org](http://www.pathwayscentre.org) or the EarlyON website [www.earlyonlambton.ca](http://www.earlyonlambton.ca)

While talking to the family, you may sense some reluctance on their part to contact agencies that require referral but who are not part of the No Wrong Door process. With the family's agreement and your organization's approval, you can support the family by calling the organization while you are together with the family, then handing the phone over to the family to carry on the conversation. If you do so, you will utilize your organization's policies and procedures, including consent.

While anyone connected to a child/youth, may bring forward a concern or question. **Only** a parent/legal guardian or youth can provide consent for a referral to be made.

While it is expected that most parents or legal guardians will be seeking assistance for the first time, they may have received services before, and may be receiving services currently from a service provider. If the families or guardians are currently receiving services, you may still end the initial contact by referring them or directing them to another organization, depending on the need identified.

## People who will use No Wrong Door process within Participating Organizations

As noted at the outset, the people who will use this Guide and facilitate the linkage, referral or self-referral are those who are the initial point of contact within participating organizations.

It will be your job to gather the information set out on the forms, especially related to the needs of the child/youth, then to identify the most appropriate service provider. The most appropriate provider may be your own organization. If not, refer to the **Reference Guide for Professionals** document.

## Method of Contact

Families may contact you by phone or in person.

## Forms format

PDF versions can be found at [www.pathwayscentre.org](http://www.pathwayscentre.org) or [www.earlyonlambton.ca](http://www.earlyonlambton.ca)

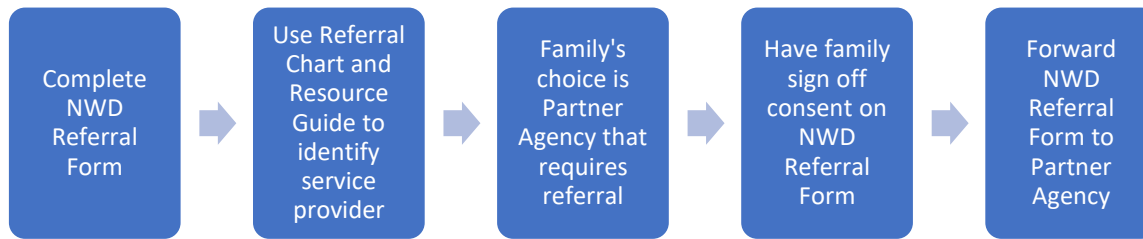
The No Wrong Door Referral form can be completed in hard copy or by using a fillable electronic file.

## Forms and Charts and their Usage

The NWD Referral Form has been developed to help you gather the information you need. For phone inquiries, you will complete the Referral Form for eligible families. For face-to-face contact, assist the family to complete the Referral Form and have them sign off on the consent section of the form.

Using the **Reference Guide for Professionals**, determine the most appropriate service provider for the referral. Share the information with the person making the inquiry. Where there is more than one option available, you will share that information as well. With your help, the family will make a determination as to which service provider to proceed with.

## Referral Pathway



## No Wrong Door Referral Form

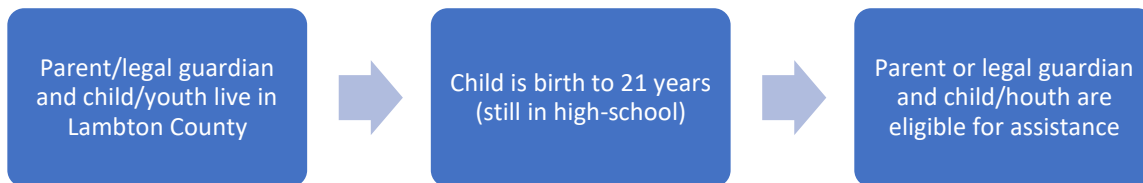
The No Wrong Door Referral form contains six short sections:

### Section 1: Family

The NWD Referral Form begins with a request for basic information about the family. When receiving a third-party call, provide the contact information of the agency, as consent can only be provided by the parent, legal guardian, or youth.

### Section 2: Child/Youth

Obtain the child/youth's date of birth. All children birth to 21, residing in Lambton County are eligible under the No Wrong Door protocol. Conclude filling in this section by obtaining the child/youth's name.



### Section 3: Reason for Contact/Reason for Referral

The conversation now moves to the central issue: The reason the person contacted you. This could include a perceived problem, concern, question, need, or area where further development would be of benefit to the child/youth. You can initiate a discussion by posing an open-ended question like: "What is it that made you call/come in today?", or "What concerns are you looking for help with today?" If the parent/guardian or youth discloses a diagnosis, include it, but do not seek out the information.

Use the No Wrong Door **Reference Guide for Professionals** to establish a connection between the concern and the service needed.

### Section 4: Consent

Check off the appropriate box that indicates whether the consent is written or verbal.

### Section 5: Completed By

Identify who you are and your organization, along with your signature and the date. The process ends at this point for the families that will undertake a linkage or self-referral, and you should go to the Next Steps section below for final action to be taken.

## Section 6: Follow-up

**In order to close the circle for the family we suggest that once the agency has received the NWD Referral and has made contact with the family regarding next steps, they contact the referring agency to close the circle.**

## Next Steps

Once the form or forms are completed, it is important that you describe the next steps to the family so they understand what lies ahead:

1. For services offered by the No Wrong Door Project Partners that require a referral for service:
  - a. You will forward the No Wrong Door Referral and Consent to Share forms to the designated organization, and provide a copy of both forms to the family, upon request.
  - b. The receiving agency will be responsible for contacting the family within a reasonable time frame.
  - c. If they do not receive a response within a reasonable time period, the family should contact you again, and you will follow up with the organization on their behalf.
  - d. The organization the family is referred to will ask its own questions, require its own consent form to be completed, and may require a referral from a doctor, or other documentation, before determining whether it is able to provide services. It may also advise that services are not available immediately.
2. For services offered by Partners who do not require a referral for service for all other organizations:
  - a. Provide contact information and service description. The family will be responsible for initiating contact.
  - b. At the family's request, you can support them to initiate the linkage or self-referral process. It will be up to the family to carry on from there. If your organization's policies do not allow you to facilitate this first contact, direct the family to an agency listed on the Family Resources Chart.
3. If you don't know where to make the referral or what services the family may require, send the No Wrong Door Referral Form to the SmartStart Hub, where Pathways Intake will contact the family to gain the information necessary to get the family to the right door.

## Privacy

Privacy is an important consideration when interacting with families and guardians, and needs to be promoted and protected throughout the No Wrong Door process. All organizations, both No Wrong Door Partners and others in the community, have their own policies in this area. The expectation of those involved with the No Wrong Door initiative is that each organization's policies will be followed by its employees throughout the No Wrong Door process.

## Crisis Situations

**In those instances of initial contact when it becomes clear that the family is in crisis (e.g., abuse may be occurring), you will utilize the policies of your own organization to determine your next steps.**