

## Vancouver Holds Parents Matching Preparation Seminar

John Abelseth  
March 5, 2016



On March 5, 2016 the Vancouver FFWPU hosted a Parents Matching Preparation Seminar at the pastor's residence in Burnaby, British Columbia. 12 parents attended this one-day seminar, representing eight families who are all in different stages of the matching process.

Presentations by John Abelseth included the Family Matching Process, Matching Resources, and Deepening the Parent Child Relationship. These presentations were intended to provide a basic and fundamental introduction to the matching process for families. The presentations introduced the participating parents to various topics, including the process of the matching, how to get started, how to access the Matching Candidate Application, how to find other resources on the Blessing and Family Ministry website, how to enable their child to post a profile on various matching websites, as well as how parents can search for possible candidates.

An introduction to the Family Matching Plan Worksheet and the many resources in the Family Matching Handbook were discussed, as well as other possible sources for support in the matching process.

One breakout session included lively discussions on various topics related to the Family Matching Process, various issues and difficulties parents experience, and some good ideas as to how to proceed when children are not certain if they are ready for the process.



Another presentation focused on what to expect when considering an international matching, how to

access the International Matching Website for Blessed Children, and some tips for parents to filter potential candidates to be more in line with the Family Matching Plan they have developed together.



Some participants showed interest in learning about the Adult Matching Process, but due to time restraints, not a lot of detail could be offered.

“We were very fortunate to have the support and experience of the couples from Seattle – David and Karen Rogers and John and Sandra Lowen – who are also certified Matching Advisors. The comparatively smaller group allowed for great discussions and lots of questions. Also, thanks to Mrs. Kambashi for hosting and organizing this event for parents, every person was well fed and felt taken care of!”

*John Abelseth*

*BFM Director of Canada*

## Family Matching Plan Worksheet

It is recommended that the parents and the **candidate** each fill out this worksheet separately, and then work together to create a single, unified plan. You may want to engage the support of a certified Matching Advisor to assist you in developing your plan. An effective planning process depends upon honest and open communication between the candidate, their parents, and any advisor supporting this matching plan.

1. Who will be a part of your matching team? What role will they each play? When and how will they be involved? (Below is a list of possible team members you may want to consider. Each person you choose to help in your process should be personally invited to help and given the parameters of their responsibility)

- Candidate:
- Parents:
- Family member(s):
- Support committee:
- Matching Advisor(s):
- Advocates:
- BFD Representative:
- Local pastors:
- District Pastor and/or their interview representative:

2. What process will you use when you enter the matching discussions with another family? It is important that your family is in agreement how they want to proceed, and that any family you work with also agrees on the process to avoid miscommunication and misunderstanding.

Family Matching Handbook

Some other plan you agree upon:

3. Before you begin looking for the “right person,” it is important to consider your own life goals, core values and the type of marriage you envision. We encourage each candidate to reflect upon and answer the following 6 questions to the best of your ability. Discuss these with your parents, and any members of your support team who can help you look at these more deeply.

- A. What kind of life are you planning for? Do you plan to remain a private person? Will you be active in your church or community? Are you passionate about particular hobbies or leisure activities? What will be your work-life balance? Do you plan to travel and be mobile in your younger years? How might your school plans affect your marriage and family plans? When would you anticipate settling down & having children? How important is having children to you? Just 1 or 2 kids, or will having and raising a family be your focus?

- B. What kind of marriage relationship fits into the life you anticipated above? Is it private? Public? Spiritually-based? Religious? Strongly Unificationist? Two professionals? Two career-focused people or one home & family-focused? Of course these may be flexible based upon the person you meet and commit to, but consider what your preferences might be.
- C. What qualities are most important in the person who will help you create the relationship you described above? Is he/she religious? More, less or the same amount as you are? A strong Unificationist, or simply someone who shares your basic values? Is he/she outgoing, verbal and expressive? Is he/she a quiet, supportive type of person? Is he/she strong, disciplined and accomplished? Is he/she career-oriented or more relationship/family-centered? What kind of family does he/she come from? What 3 character traits do you believe would inspire you the most in a spouse?
- D. Who are you? What are the most important core values by which you will live your life? What character strengths do you bring to a relationship? What areas of yourself do you think need improvement, that may need your partner's understanding and support. What is important for your partner to understand about you?
- E. Do you have any dealbreakers or absolute requirements? Consider what past relationship experience you are comfortable with in a partner, and any preferences concerning language, location, race, nationality, faith, physical appearance, or any challenges or complications you are comfortable with and open to in a partner.
- F. If you had a previous matching effort or Blessing experience, what lessons did you learn that can help you adjust and approach things more effectively this time?

4. Are there important questions that you need or want to know about any potential match from the very beginning? (Parents and the candidate can each make a list, compare and agree on them- You can refer to Appendix 2 in the Family Matching Handbook for ideas.)

5. How will we find potential candidates?

Suggestions from the candidate

Suggestions from parents

Attend Parents Matching Convocation

Matchbook

International Website for BC Matching

Suggestions from family and friends

Suggestions from Matching Advisors, advocates and others

Blessing workshops, DP workshops, Service Projects, other church activities

6. Once there is a suggested candidate, what do we do?

- Who does a suggestion go to first?
- How do we investigate or screen a suggested candidate?
  - Parent and/or support committee check, using their contacts and resources
  - Check with their local church leaders, advocates and Matching Advisors
  - Consult your list of important questions and deal breakers
- What do you want your parents or others **NOT** to do? ["Don't hand me a bunch of pictures and ask my opinion;" "don't approach a candidate's parents without talking to me first;" etc.]:

7. When and how does the candidate become involved?

- ⇒ The candidate's input can be sought at any point with anonymous questions for clarification.
- ⇒ We suggest timing be carefully considered. (Never introduce a suggestion during finals!), and that the process not be rushed. Waiting a little longer for the right time and clarity is always better.
- ⇒ We suggest focusing on the internal first; give profile information first, then family information and pictures very last.

Does the candidate want to wait until the parents consider and can fully recommend another candidate to them before they become directly involved?

Does the candidate want to be consulted about a potential match after the parents' initial screening but before they contact or talk extensively with the other candidate's parents?

Does the candidate want to look at a number of profiles and put them in order of preference?

Does the candidate want a more active role, or have a specific person to suggest or request?

Or is there some other agreed upon plan?

8. When does a suggested candidate become a recommendation? When and how do the two candidates begin communicating with each other? We strongly suggest that:
  - ⇒ Both young people become qualified candidates before communication begins. (They have completed the application process and completed their interviews.)
  - ⇒ Parents have completed the “Suggested Questions for Learning About a Matching Candidate” found in Appendix 2 of the [Family Matching Handbook](#) before they recommend any candidate to their adult child.
  - ⇒ Parents continue to communicate regularly with each other and with their son or daughter throughout the candidate communication phase, to monitor that the process is proceeding well.
  
9. **Meeting in person:** In the planning stage you may not have an idea of who the other is or where they live. It is good to have a general idea of how soon in your communication process you want to meet in person. We recommend the first meeting be well-planned, so it is not too long or intense: perhaps for 2-3 days at most; perhaps with support. Even long distance first visits should not be too long.
  
10. **Communication and reporting:** It is important that the candidate and parents continue to communicate throughout the process. While looking for recommendations, it is good for the candidate to send a brief Email to their core team each week or two to keep the search for your eternal partner as a priority and to keep them informed of any changes in your situation or outlook. Once two families begin to communicate with each other seriously, they may want to touch base each week or two to keep abreast of how things are developing. Choose a time, interval and method of communication that works for you.

**It is important that each candidate’s family openly share the process they have decided upon with the other, and agree on how to handle any differences in their process and plans. This will promote clear communication and avoid misunderstandings.**

**If the matching process between two candidates comes to an end, the reasons should be clearly communicated so that both candidates and their families can have closure, learn important lessons for how to improve their plan and be better prepared for the next opportunity. If needed, MAs can facilitate this process, and at the right time help the family update and improve their matching plan.**