

# EARLY YEARS SERVICE FRAMEWORK | FAQ

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## ***1. I have not heard much since the letter from the Minister of Children and Family Development about changes to the funding for Children First and Success by 6 – what is happening?***

The Ministry funding that is currently being invested in these initiatives will be re-invested to enhance services that directly support children and families as of April 1, 2019. A Notice to Vendors for forthcoming procurement has been posted online at [www.bcbid.gov.bc.ca](http://www.bcbid.gov.bc.ca)

Direct services for families with young children include those that support and promote community belonging to address social isolation, supports to families experiencing vulnerabilities, supports to access Indigenous culture and language, and support to families to navigate the system of supports and make the direct connections they need.

## ***2. I keep hearing that funding is going into early years direct services for families – what does this mean?***

An early years direct service is an activity that engages, supports or works with a child between the ages 0 and 6, or a family member such as a parent or a guardian, and it is typically face-to-face.

Direct services are outlined in the Early Years Service Framework, and a Request for Proposals will be launched in November 2018 to procure services in alignment with the Framework.

## ***3. What types of direct early years services will the ministry be funding?***

The Early Years Services Framework outlines five key direct service categories that will guide investments in the ministry's early years services:

1. Providing Family Navigation Services
2. Supporting Families Services
3. Providing Non-Child Care Early Learning Services
4. Promoting Community Belonging Services
5. Supporting Indigenous Culture, Language Revitalization, and Cultural Competency Services

As one might imagine, these services are not mutually exclusive.

Further detail about these service categories can be found within the framework.

([https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/family-and-social-supports/child-care/provincial-office-for-the-early-years/mcfd\\_early\\_years\\_service\\_framework.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/family-and-social-supports/child-care/provincial-office-for-the-early-years/mcfd_early_years_service_framework.pdf))

## ***4. The Minister's letter indicated there would be new positions within the ministry to support early years planning – what is the status of these positions?***

Each of the 13 Service Delivery Areas (SDA) are hiring an Early Years Director of Operation who will manage and plan for early years services across communities within an SDA in alignment with the

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Early Years Services Framework. Some of these positions have already been filled. The Ministry expects all of these positions to be in place by late 2018.

In some parts of the province, the Early Years Director will hold responsibility for other portfolios in addition to the Early Years – such as Children and Youth with Special Needs programs/services.

All of these individuals will participate together in a Community of Practice. It is through this Community of Practice that early years challenges and opportunities will be discussed and policies and programs developed to address these emerging needs across the province.

## ***5. There is a Notice to Vendors to post a Request for Proposal – what does this mean?***

A Notice to Vendors is a public notification that provides information to vendors that a Request for Proposals (RFP) will be issued soon to provide more direct services to children, ages 0 to 6, and their families within each of the 13 service delivery areas in the province. It is a way to provide transparent communication and give notice to interested Proponents, so they can begin to plan for submission of a proposal and look at the *Early Years Service Framework*. The Notice to Vendors is posted online at [www.bcbid.gov.bc.ca](http://www.bcbid.gov.bc.ca).

## ***6. Are all Ministry early years services being re-procured?***

No, several other programs (e.g. Building Blocks, Family Resource Program, Aboriginal Early Childhood Development, etc.) will remain status quo. Funding that was traditionally used for coordination and year by year programming (e.g. Success by 6) is part of this procurement planned for direct services.

## ***7. The Notice to Vendors to post an RFP says there will be 13 RFPs – does that mean only 13 organizations can apply for the funding?***

The reason there are 13 RFPs is because there are 13 Service Delivery Areas (SDA) in the province; we are customizing each RFP to address the needs and opportunities unique to each SDA.

We recognize that consistency of services across the province is important, but that communities have varying geographic, population and service needs that need to be addressed.

As such, each SDA will customize its Request For Proposals to address regional and local factors, allowing for a varied number of contracts in each area and a varying focus on different cities/towns and communities within each SDA.

## ***8. When will the 13 Request for Proposals be posted and how will I know?***

The RFPs will be posted on BC Bid on the same day, and we expect these to be posted in November 2018. We encourage all interested parties to monitor BC Bid for the release of the RFP. The link to BC Bid is [www.bcbid.gov.bc.ca](http://www.bcbid.gov.bc.ca).

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## 9. What does it mean to customize a RFP and why is this happening?

The Ministry expects that each region will provide services according to the *Early Years Service Framework*. However, each SDA is unique based on population levels, geography and the current make up of direct services. There cannot be a cookie cutter approach to service provision.

To that end, each SDA will review their information – such as program and population data, summaries of past regional community plans, and other information from health and education partners – and make decisions on the best way to reach the families within a region. This will be reflected in the RFP.

As with many other Ministry services, the customization will likely result in RFPs for varying amounts to serve communities of varying sizes. It is also likely to mean that services will be delivered slightly differently in different areas of the province to ensure unique local populations are served effectively.

## 10. What will be consistent across RFPs?

The Early Years Services Framework outlines five key direct service categories that will guide investments in the ministry's early years services:

1. Providing Family Navigation Services
2. Supporting Families Services
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5. Supporting Indigenous Culture, Language Revitalization, and Cultural Competency Services

These 5 services will be procured together, given the overlaps between them. These services will be delivered predominantly through family-drop in style programming.

The RFPs will be issued for services that serve as a barrier-free access point, delivered in alignment with the *Early Years Service Framework*. The *Early Years Service Framework* notes that a lack of consistent access point for families is a particular issue in British Columbia, which is intended to be addressed through the forthcoming RFP. Please note the specific services categories outlines in Question 3 above.

The RFPs will also all align with the *Early Years Service Framework* principles, including the following: families should be viewed as being at the centre, and involved in all aspects of their children's services; families may transition in and out of vulnerability during their children's early years, and addressing these vulnerabilities can result in the better long-term developmental outcomes; and, services are co-located with the other services families may need wherever possible in order to reduce the challenges that come with having to access services at multiple different locations. Additional detail about these principles can be found within the framework.

[https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/family-and-social-supports/child-care/provincial-office-for-the-early-years/mcfd\\_early\\_years\\_service\\_framework.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/family-and-social-supports/child-care/provincial-office-for-the-early-years/mcfd_early_years_service_framework.pdf)

## ***11. When will new early years services be in place?***

It is expected that new services will be in place by April 1, 2019.

## ***12. How much funding can we expect to see in our community for new services?***

This will vary by the population served and geographic considerations of the Service Delivery Area. More specific details on the amount of funding will be provided in each of the RFPs when they are posted to BC BID.

Provincially, over \$8M in funding will be allocated.

## ***13. The timing feels tight and very quick. Why?***

We recognize that the timing of this shift to more direct services and the consequent posting of RFPs may feel quick to some service providers.

Our process began in early 2017 when we started formally gathering information and consulting various stakeholders. After further internal and external engagement, in June 2018 we released the *Early Years Service Framework* and the Minister shared the letter outlining the shift of Success by 6 and Children First funds to direct services.

We have been careful not to rush the process, but also recognize a prolonged timeframe would likely see more challenges to the provision of services because of uncertainty for service providers.

## ***14. What about the Indigenous early years Success by 6 funding - what will happen with this investment?***

The Ministry will end its current \$3.4M investment in the United Way of the Lower Mainland for the Success by 6 community planning initiative as of March 31, 2019. Approximately \$1.2M of this investment has been traditionally allocated by Success by 6 to Indigenous communities both on and off-reserve.

As of April 1, 2019, MCFD will invest the \$1.2 M in the expansion of the Aboriginal Infant Development Program (AIDP) in order to maximize direct and prevention focused services for Indigenous families and communities.

AIDP is a child and family wellness and preservation program open to all Indigenous families (i.e. it does not require a diagnosis or referral). AIDP offers programming such as home-visiting, baby welcoming ceremonies, traditional parenting programs, language and cultural teachings for families, and parent and tot drop-ins. It also offers a pathway to early intervention therapies such as speech/language, occupational and physical therapies.

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### ***15. Will communities compete against one another for AIDP funding? Is this part of the RFP in November?***

This new investment will focus on oversubscribed programs and communities that do not currently receive AIDP. Over the coming months, Ministry staff will work with the Provincial AIDP Office and the AIDP Regional Advisors and MCFD Service Delivery Areas to identify, prioritize, and fill gaps in AIDP services.

The \$1.2M lift to AIDP is separate from the RFP under the Early Years Service Framework.

### ***16. I understand the Ministry has provided multi-year funding to the Family Support Institute of BC (FSI) as part of implementation of the Early Years Service Framework. What is that funding intended to support? I thought FSI served families with children with disabilities – how does this fit with the framework?***

The Peer to Peer program offered by FSI provides one-on-one support to all families within the province who have children aged from birth to six years of age, thus expanding their reach from solely supporting families of children with disabilities. This reflects a growing need – call volume to FSI program has increased in recent years by families with young children unable to navigate the sea of services across BC and in need of peer mentorship. These families do not have children with extra support needs.

This service aligns with the Early Years Services Framework goals of supporting wellbeing of all families and providing connectedness with other families and services, and allowing families to access services regardless of where they live.

Peer mentors provide families information, emotional and practical support and guidance to access community resources that facilitates their strengthening of their parenting capacity.

This service will provide support to families on various topics such as accessing services and programs to meet their needs, provide parenting advice for problematic behaviours, and advocate for parents unfamiliar or uncomfortable working with professionals.

Family Support Institute of BC was uniquely positioned to deliver this service given their infrastructure and the hundreds of FSI peer mentors involved in serving families throughout BC.

### ***17. What is happening with Early Years Centres?***

The Ministry is currently reviewing the Early Years Centre Initiative to consider how the initiative supports the intentions of the Early Years Service Framework. The Ministry expects to communicate a decision regarding the continuation of contracts in November, 2018.

***18. How is the community involved in sharing information about the priorities and needs of our families going forward?***

There are many ways in which community organizations are providing their input and receiving updates. Regional community early years coordinators are being asked to partake in a knowledge-transfer process, providing information that reflects their current priorities and projects that provide direct services in their community. This information has been summarized, along with community plans and shared to the Ministry Service Delivery Areas to help inform them of the range of priorities identified by the community.

As well, the newly created Early Years Directors are expected to collaborate with community agencies, First Nations, Indigenous and Métis communities and organizations and other government partners (i.e. health authorities, school district, Public Health Agency of Canada, First Nations Health Authority, Métis Services) within their area to ensure Ministry services are complementary to other supports and services provided and that local needs and priorities are considered in Ministry early years service planning.

***19. I have a Child Care Resource and Referral (CCRR) Contract – is this Ministry re-procuring this contract as well? I heard there was a lift coming province wide to the CCRR program – how do I access this funding?***

No, the CCRR contracts are NOT a part of the RFP for early years' services. There are no plans to re-procure the CCRR contracts in 2019/20. Through Budget 2018 and the Childcare BC Plan, the Ministry is committed to working closely with CCRRs to improve our child care system.

In recognition of the need to better support and enhance CCRR programs, the province will move forward with a service delivery alignment review and funding lift to existing CCRR contractors. The \$5M in new funding will be effective April 1, 2019.

The details of the provincial budget lift will be determined with input from CCRR programs. Individual funding allocations are under review and will be finalized in advance of contract renewal in March 2019.