

Indigenous Child and Family Service Newsletter

Ministry of Children & Family Development | May 2022



This newsletter is meant to share information and support the ministry's commitment to ongoing consultation and collaboration with Indigenous Peoples, partners and governments to develop legislation and services consistent with the provincial *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* as well as the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*.

We will listen to the children, youth and families we serve, knowing their voices and experiences are central to the creation of services that truly meet their needs.

What's New

Youth Transitions Improved Supports

The ministry recently announced the development of new and increased supports for young adults transitioning to adulthood from care, up to the age of 27. We are creating distinctions-based Indigenous advisory circles to explore how to implement these improved programs and supports for youth transitioning from care.

We will collaborate with the Indigenous advisory circles to develop an Implementation Paper outlining the plan for these programs and services, including proposed policy and legislative changes.

We anticipate the Indigenous advisory circles will meet virtually for three half-day sessions until June 2022. Members will receive an honorarium. Sign up to receive updates on the website.

Youth Justice Service Framework

Indigenous youth continue to be overrepresented within the youth justice system.

Formal Youth Justice Services within the ministry are connected to a broader system that includes the social sector, police, courts, victims, communities, etc. We are transforming our services to positively influence the future outcomes of youth connected to justice or who could find themselves in conflict with the law if their services needs are unmet.

We want to engage with Indigenous Peoples to help inform a new approach to youth justice services, founded on cultural safety and trauma-informed care. Please join us in this important work to ensure youth have access to the services they need to support and guide them through the years to ensure healing and accountability.

Engagement Opportunity

- Advisory circles will meet virtually until June 2022
- Members will receive an honorarium
- For information contact mcfstrategic.initiatives@gov.bc.ca

Learn more at

engage.gov.bc.ca/youthtransitions

Engagement Opportunity

- Engagement will begin in spring 2022
- For information contact Dillon Halter at dillon.halter@gov.bc.ca

Learn more at

gov.bc.ca/youthjusticeframework

The Ministry of Children and Family Development gratefully acknowledges that it conducts its work on the traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples throughout British Columbia.

Social Work Oversight

The ministry has launched a broad engagement on the oversight of social workers in B.C.

Oversight is the guiding standards, requirements and public protections under which social workers carry out their work. It impacts Indigenous Peoples, leadership, partners and service providers who practice social work, employ social workers and access social work services in a variety of settings.

This engagement will help us to better understand Indigenous perspectives and priorities on this issue. We will explore issues related to equity, inclusion, anti-racism, and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.

Sign up to receive updates and information about upcoming engagement opportunities via email or on the website.

Engagement Opportunity

- Engagement is ongoing through June 2022
- For information contact mcf.socialworkengagement@gov.bc.ca

Find out how to get involved

engage.gov.bc.ca/socialworkoversight



Work in Progress

Children and Youth with Support Needs Transformation

Indigenous children and youth are underserved by the current array of services for children and youth with support needs. Through initial engagements with Indigenous families and service providers we learned there are ample opportunities to improve services and we want to ensure we are considering all possible options.

In the coming months, an Indigenous consulting firm will continue engagements with Indigenous Peoples and service partners to understand their vision for how services can be delivered for Indigenous children and youth with support needs and their families.

In addition, families, service providers, and community partners are invited to participate in a short online survey to share perspectives on specific aspects of the new model. The survey will remain open until September 9, 2022.

Engagement Opportunity

- Take the online survey until Sept. 9, 2022
- Watch for more information on upcoming engagement with Indigenous Peoples
- For information contact Stacey McGaghey at stacey.mcgaghey@gov.bc.ca

Find out how to get involved

gov.bc.ca/childyouthsupportneeds



Child and Family Services Legislative Reform

We are reforming child and family service legislation to improve services for all children and families.

The goals of this initiative are to:

- Change the legislative model to promote prevention supports and keep children within their families, communities and culture
- Align to other federal and provincial legislation
- Pursue short and long-term legislative amendments to support systemic transformation

First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples have made significant progress in restoring and revitalizing their systems of caring for children. The provincial system needs to catch up to **ensure that all children, youth, and families receive responsive, holistic, and collaborative care** regardless of where they access services.

The ministry is **seeking broad feedback on what should be prioritized in this reform**. We want to understand where you see current issues with the child and family service system and what changes you think need to be made to transform the system.

This is the **first phase of a multi-year process** and the start of many conversations to come.

Virtual sessions for Indigenous Peoples on these two topics are being hosted by Alderhill Planning in May and June.

Register online to participate.



All feedback and perspectives are welcome.

You do not need to have any understanding of child and family service legislation, policy, or practices to participate.

Engagement Opportunity

- Engagement is ongoing until Fall 2022
- Make a written submission by June 24, 2022
- Take the online survey, launching in May, until June 24, 2022
- For information contact Emily Horton at emily.horton@gov.bc.ca

Learn more about

- Child and Family Services Legislative Reform: engage.gov.bc.ca/reformchildfamilylegislation
- Specialized Homes and Support Services: engage.gov.bc.ca/specialized-homes-support-services-redesign

Register online to participate in a virtual engagement session on these two topics at

engage.gov.bc.ca/reformchildfamilylegislation

Specialized Homes and Support Services Redesign

We want to better support children and youth by intervening earlier and with better supports. We continue to engage with others as we develop new wrap-around services so families and caregivers can get support before a crisis.

We will start with early implementation in the Okanagan and North Fraser, gather further feedback, and make changes as needed before moving to a province-wide roll out. Indigenous partners, service providers, contract holders, staff, families and community members will help shape the proposed model.

First co-created child welfare agreement in B.C. history: Simpcw First Nation

The Simpcw First Nation now has its unique practices, customs, laws, language and traditions integrated into a new child welfare agreement, Tcwesétmentem: Walking Together Agreement, the first of its kind in B.C.

The ministry looks forward to meeting with other First Nations from across B.C. who are interested in co-creating their own unique community agreements.

Read more: news.gov.bc.ca/26597

For more information contact:

Todd Koverchuk

todd.koverchuk@gov.bc.ca

Policy and Practice Changes

The ministry regularly makes focused changes to policies and practices. Proposed changes will apply to specific practices and policies for identified and limited purpose within the scope of existing legislation. This could include issues raised by Indigenous communities, or updating policies and practices to align better with legislation. As we move forward with changes we will seek your input.

Confidentiality and Disclosure Information Guidelines

The ministry and Indigenous Child and Family Services Agency workers may request information from public bodies under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*, section 96. This is done when workers assess a child's need for protection, carry out guardianship responsibilities, or prepare for court hearings, for example.

Proposed changes to the *Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information Guidelines* will:

- Clarify when the use of section 96 is necessary
- Direct workers to seek consent first and tell the person when their information has been accessed and how it will be used, wherever safely possible.

Feedback will be accepted until **June 6, 2022**.

For Information

Learn more at gov.bc.ca/mcfdtransformation

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Engagement Opportunity

- See the proposed revision and complete guidelines at gov.bc.ca/mcfdtransformation
- To provide feedback or request more information contact mcf.standardspolicy@gov.bc.ca

We Want to Hear From You

Do you have feedback about this newsletter?

We would love to hear it!

Send it to us at mcf.engagement@gov.bc.ca