

Indigenous Child and Family Service Newsletter

Ministry of Children & Family Development | February 2022



Welcome to the first edition of a ministry newsletter meant to support our 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* and 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

Children and Youth with Support Needs Transformation

We recently announced changes to the Child and Youth with Support Needs services. The current array of services dramatically underserves Indigenous Peoples.

There are many paths forward and we want to engage with communities on their vision for how services are delivered to meet community needs.

Working with Indigenous advisors and communities we will ensure all of our services are welcoming for Indigenous families. We will engage with Indigenous Peoples on your vision for these services.

Child, Family and Community Service Act Reform

This is a critical reform of child welfare legislation. The Act has not kept pace with the need for decolonization and contributes to the over representation of Indigenous children and youth in care.

This reform will:

- Promote positive changes to services
- Support Indigenous jurisdiction and shared decision making
- Align with the *Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families* (federal), and the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (provincial)

Indigenous Peoples must have every opportunity to drive these changes. We are working with Indigenous partners, including distinctions-based advisory circles (First Nations and Métis), so their knowledge and input can guide engagement as we develop new policy and legislation together.

Feedback opportunity

- Consultations with Indigenous Peoples will begin in early 2022
- For information contact Nimmi Takkar at nimmi.takkar@gov.bc.ca
- Learn more at www.gov.bc.ca/ChildYouthSupportNeeds

Feedback Opportunity

- Engagement will begin in early 2022
- For information contact Emily Horton at emily.horton@gov.bc.ca

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

Early Learning and Child Care

Through the Childcare BC Plan, we are creating thousands of quality, affordable child care spaces, building better facilities, and training more people to become early childhood educators.

We value your input and would like to know what you think is most critical as we continue to evolve early learning and child care.

We also want to hear from child care providers, community service partners, parent organizations, local governments, school districts and child care advocates.

There will be several ways to participate over the coming months including specific opportunities for Indigenous Peoples to design the path forward for distinctions-based child care for First Nations, Métis and Inuit families.

Feedback Opportunity

- Engagement began in December 2021
- For information contact the Childcare BC Engagement Team at childcarebc.engagement@gov.bc.ca
- Learn more or sign up for notifications at www.gov.bc.ca/childcarebcengagement



Specialized Homes and Support Services

Supporting children and youth by intervening earlier and with better supports is a priority for the ministry.

We will establish a responsive network of Specialized Homes and Support Services for children and youth needing more than what community-based and outreach services can provide them.

In addition to collecting feedback online, the ministry is also meeting regularly with Delegated Aboriginal Agencies representatives.

Feedback Opportunity

- Provide feedback online at www.engage.gov.bc.ca
- For information contact Emily Horton at emily.horton@gov.bc.ca



Work in Progress

Indigenous Child & Family Services Jurisdiction

We are currently meeting with five Indigenous Governing Bodies who are seeking to exercise jurisdiction for child and family services under the *Federal Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*. Along with representatives from the federal government, we are working with the Indigenous Governing Bodies to support the development of tripartite coordination agreements.

We continue to work with First Nations and Métis as they pursue their self-determined goals of increased authority, decision making and/or jurisdiction over child and family matters.

Policy and Practice Adjustments

The ministry regularly makes smaller focused changes to specific policies or practices in order to bring them into alignment with the federal Act, to provide clarity to staff and service providers, or address input and recommendations from those we serve and oversight bodies. As we move forward we will include information about those proposed changes and seek your input.

What Engagement Will Look Like

There is a lot of work we need to do to rethink and co-develop legislation, policy and service delivery to reflect a new approach to child welfare.

As we work to decolonize services in the best interests of Indigenous children and youth, we want our invitations for consultation to be accessible, predictable and transparent.

We are developing ways to ensure you have access to important information and how you can be engaged including:

- This newsletter describing priority initiatives
- A single website link with updated information
- Web-based opportunities to share your feedback
- Engagement sessions to engage and consult
- Special advisory circles for key systemic initiatives
- Direction/discussion papers and consultation drafts

For Information

- For information contact Denise Devenny at denise.devenny@gov.bc.ca



For Information

- Learn more at www.gov.bc.ca/mcfdtransformation

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