

Indigenous Child and Family Service Newsletter

Ministry of Children & Family Development | May 2024



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.

All dates and timelines may be adjusted if needed.

Indigenous Child Welfare Director – Open for Applications

In collaboration with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people, the Ministry of Children and Family Development is introducing a new Indigenous Child Welfare Director (ICWD) leadership role within our ministry. The role offers guidance and practice oversight for services delivered to Indigenous peoples.

We are excited to announce that ICWD applications are now open. In recognition of the critical importance to this role of a lived understanding of Indigenous communities, history, values, legal orders, and cultural competencies, only Indigenous individuals will be considered. Please share this posting within your networks!

Learn More

To view the posting, please visit gov.bc.ca/ICWD

Strengthening Abilities and Journeys of Empowerment (SAJE)

As youth and young adults from care in British Columbia transition to adulthood, they now have access to increased support from Indigenous Child and Family Service Agencies and the ministry through the Strengthening Abilities and Journeys of Empowerment (SAJE) program.

After extensive engagement and consultation across the province, including with youth from care, legislative amendments took effect on April 4, 2024. These changes allow the SAJE program to offer more support on a permanent basis.

To learn more about these changes, such as expanded eligibility, updates to the newly named SAJE Housing Agreements and Support Agreements (SHA/SSA), income supports, and phasing out of Agreements with Young Adults (AYA), please visit: gov.bc.ca/SAJE



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

Further Legislative Changes to Support Indigenous Jurisdiction

The *Child, Family and Community Service Act* (CFCSA) and *Adoption Act* have been amended to further support Indigenous jurisdiction of child and family services.

Changes passed in April 2024 include:

- Broadening the scope of joint and consent-based decision-making agreements (section 6 agreements) so Indigenous governing bodies (IGBs) may share in the duties and powers of the CFCSA director;
- Reducing the procedural requirements of entering a joint and consent-based decision-making agreement, including removing the requirement for the Lieutenant Governor in Council to authorize the agreements; and
- Enabling an appeals pathway so IGBs exercising jurisdiction and using the Provincial Court for dispute resolution of Indigenous laws may appeal orders of the Provincial Court through the provincial appeals court system.



These amendments complement changes that were made in March, which include provisions for balancing the privacy of access to personal health information, including information held by third parties, with the need to protect children.

Input from Indigenous partners was critical to the development of this legislation.

We thank everyone who shared their perspective, wisdom and experiences and guided this work!

To learn more about these amendments, please email MCF.Connect@gov.bc.ca

Engagement Opportunity

Building on CFCSA changes that addressed the collection of personal health information and to support timely collection of that information by Indigenous authorities from a public body, the ministry is pursuing a proposed amendment to the CFCSA regulation. This amendment introduces an optional form to support the collection of personal health information, and though it is regulated, Indigenous authorities will be able to modify the form as necessary.

To contribute to the development of the optional form or ask questions about this proposed amendment, please contact MCF.StandardsPolicy@gov.bc.ca by June 14, 2024.



Services for Children and Youth with Support Needs (CYSN)

We invite First Nations Rights and Titleholders to attend virtual engagement sessions to co-develop a new provincial CYSN service approach for children and youth with support needs and their families.

These engagement sessions began in October 2023 and will continue through June 2024.

The next sessions are on Topic 5: What do we need to make this service approach/system a reality?

The following sessions on Topic 5 are open to interested First Nations rights and titleholders; please contact MCF.CYSNengage@gov.bc.ca to register:

- May 30, 2024 (1:00 pm – 3:00 pm PST) – via Zoom
- June 11, 2024 (10:00 am – 12:00 pm PST) – via Zoom

Engagement Opportunities

- Subscribe to receive updates at: engage.gov.bc.ca/children-and-youth-support-needs
- For more information, visit: engage.gov.bc.ca/govtogetherbc/engagement/children-and-youth-with-support-needs-first-nations-engagement or contact MCF.CYSNengage@gov.bc.ca

Services for Children and Youth with Support Needs: Engagement Capacity Funding Available

Provincial funding is available to B.C. First Nations communities to help support your capacity to engage with the ministry and others on unique community needs regarding supports and services for children and youth with support needs. Grant funding of \$25,000 is available to all 204 First Nations communities in B.C.

Funding requests are open until December 1, 2024. All that is required is a brief summary of how your community intends to use the funds, along with the full name and contact information of the person whom the grant letter will be addressed to.

To express interest in accessing this funding, please email MCF.CYSNengage@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

