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The nature of family life in British Columbia has changed significantly over the last fifty years, both reflecting and helping to bring about changes in our society as a whole.

By understanding the changes that have taken place and anticipating the changes that are likely to come, government can ensure that the role we play is targeted, effective and meaningful for the citizens of the province.

Families are the cornerstone of B.C. society, but the nature of what a family looks like has changed dramatically over time. This report paints a picture of the changing nature of families in British Columbia and how the government has responded.

With the social change following the Second World War, government began to develop a role as a positive force in the daily lives of average citizens. This role has continued ever since, and British Columbians now often look to government as a major force in helping them meet the challenges of modern family life.
RISING INCOMES, INCREASING CHALLENGES

Over the past fifty years, British Columbian families have seen an increase in the level of family incomes, thanks to both increased wage levels and a dramatic increase in the proportion of women in the workforce.

Both parents now work in the vast majority of B.C.’s two-parent families, and in a growing number of these families it is the woman who is the higher earner.

Increased income levels bring increased challenges, particularly around finding enough time to spend with our families, and finding appropriate child care outside the home.

Lone parent families have consistently had much lower incomes than two-parent families. Child care is a major challenge for these families, as it is for many families.

For single-parent families, the cost of child care has often outweighed the economic benefit of entering into the workforce at all.

Child care and time pressures will continue to challenge B.C. families, as the level of family debt has reached historic levels and continues to grow.

As the province comes out of the recent recession, these issues are the most pressing concerns for families and are areas where government has been most active.

INCREASING INCOMES; INCREASING TIME PRESSURES

Incomes in British Columbia have grown dramatically over the past fifty years, and particularly over the last decade.

After significant growth in the 60s and 70s, by the 1990s family income rates were actually slightly below incomes of 20 years earlier, driven in part by the two recessions in the 1980s and 1990s.
Throughout the ups and downs, B.C. continued to have among the highest incomes in Canada, due to higher increases in wages and tax reforms that helped to put more money in the pockets of B.C. families.

Since 2000, after-tax family income has increased significantly, particularly in B.C., where we continue to have amongst the highest incomes in Canada.

British Columbians are working more. While the total combined hours of work for dual earner couples in Canada has remained fairly stable since the mid-1970s (about 77 hours per week), the percentage of people who work overtime hours in a typical week has risen significantly over the last decade.

Our government recognizes that the best thing it can do to help is to put more money in the pockets of British Columbians, and has worked to reduce the tax burden that families face.

**WOMEN EARNING MORE**

Balancing the competing demands of work and family has grown more and more challenging over the last 50 years.

Although the single-earner nuclear family (where it was almost always the dad that worked) was the dominant family model in the 1960s, women started to enter the workforce in greater numbers especially in British Columbia, where almost half of married women were working at the end of the decade.

By the 1980s, dual-earner families were the most common form of family and by the end of the decade, almost three-quarters of married women worked.

Now, more than 80% of women are in the workforce and women’s earnings are essential to the economic security of most households.

Women are now more frequently the primary source of a family’s income: in B.C., almost one-third of couples count the woman as the sole earner. Where both partners work, the woman is the higher earner in more than one in five couples.
This trend is likely to continue, as men accounted for about three-quarters of those who lost their jobs across Canada during the 2008–2009 recession.

Now, both parents work in more than two-thirds of couples. Where there are children under three, both parents work in more than 75% of families.

The increased number of dual-earner families, additional time spent at work, and increased child care needs, have led many families to report feeling severe time stress.

**THE CHALLENGES OF LONE PARENTS**

The proportion of lone parent families has grown over the past fifty years, due in large part to an increase in divorce rates from the 1960s to the mid 1980s.

Lone parent families have always struggled more than couple-led families, and those led by women have consistently been more likely to be poor.

During the recession of the 1980s, female lone-parent families faced particularly difficult financial challenges. But as parents overall have higher levels of educational attainment, the economic fortunes of lone parent families has also improved.

B.C.’s tax structure helped to reduce the income insecurity of lone parents and by 1992, B.C. lone parent families paid much less in income tax than married couple families.

British Columbia has helped lower income families by reducing MSP premiums. Starting in 2010, the HST provides tax relief for residential rent and basic groceries, and a family of four with an income of $30,000 will pay $535 less because of the HST credit.

The Rental Assistance program also helps more than 8,800 lower income families by providing an average of $350 per month in subsidies, meaning an average annual relief of more than $4,000 per family.
EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION — A FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE

Over the past fifty years, the quality and range of B.C. early childhood education programs has increased substantially.

DEVELOPING A CHILD-CENTRED SYSTEM

Historically, families and communities have shared responsibility for raising children. Yet in the early part of the 20th century, few Canadian children would have participated in formal early learning programs such as nursery school or kindergarten. In the 1950s, only 1% of eligible Canadian children were enrolled in kindergarten.

By 2009, 95% of five year olds in British Columbia were enrolled in kindergarten. The expansion of kindergarten programs was driven by attention to the role of schools in reducing social inequities.

Many of the nursery school programs developed through World War II had a custodial rather than an education focus, providing children a safe place to be while their mothers were engaged in war support work.

In the 1960s, as mothers of pre-school children entered the workforce, their children were still most commonly cared for by the grandmother, the father who was at home, neighbours or friends. More organized child care was only starting to develop.

By the end of the 1980s, half of young children of working parents were cared for by a non-relative, and almost one in five was in a child care centre. For the first time, there was a higher demand for licensed child care than there were spaces available. One result was that almost one-fifth of seniors reported providing supplemental child care to their grandchildren. Government recognized that changing work patterns meant changing child care challenges.

Government has tried to ease families’ burden by focusing on child care, and we now fund more than 97,000 licensed child care spaces, a significant increase over the last decade.
More families are eligible for child care subsidies. In 2009, over 52,000 children received a child care subsidy. Subsidy rates have increased by an average of over twenty-five percent since 2001. B.C. is working to provide a range of choices for parents.

Unlike some provinces, which limit subsidies to use in group child care centres, in B.C., subsidies can be used in family care, allowing parents to choose the child care setting which works best for their family. Over the next three years, $26 million in new funding for child care will bring the total child care budget to $300 million — a 42% increase since 2001.

**PARENTING SUPPORTS**

While services were being developed to support families where both parents had to, or wanted to, work outside the home, attention was also being paid to supporting all parents to take a more active role in their child’s healthy development.

In 1988, B.C. adopted the Nobody’s Perfect program, which was designed to empower parents by increasing their knowledge and understanding of their children, which would in turn, support children’s healthy development. B.C. has continued to provide a range of parenting programs and supports, for example, Ready Set Learn programs provide parents with three year olds information on how to support their child’s early learning. More recently, B.C. was the first jurisdiction in Canada to introduce the Triple P parenting program, which aims to promote children’s development and manage their behaviour in a constructive, non-hurtful way.

In 2006, B.C. launched StrongStart BC centres which provide school-based, high quality early learning program for children five and under. StrongStart BC programs provide opportunities for parents and caregivers to observe and practice activities that support early learning, and to make connections with other families attending the centre. Since their creation, StrongStart BC centres have been steadily expanded, including outreach programs in rural and remote communities. Government has committed to creating more StrongStart BC programs where needed, in addition to the over 300 already operating throughout the province.

*In the 1950s, only 1% of eligible Canadian children were enrolled in kindergarten; by 2009, this number had increased to 95%.*
B.C. is also building on the more than $1 billion we invest each year on early learning and childhood development services, supports and initiatives. This includes support for all-day kindergarten for five year olds, the early learning program Ready, Set, Learn, and resources for LEAP BC, which encourage literacy, physical activity and healthy eating. Starting next year, government will be developing tailored education programs for children in grades 1 to 4, so that within 5 years every child that finishes grade 4 will meet grade 4 outcomes in reading, writing and math.

**IT TAKES PARTNERSHIPS TO RAISE A CHILD**

The B.C. government funds the development of initiatives to strengthen community capacity to address early childhood development. B.C. has been recognized as an international pioneer in its work to develop a community infrastructure to support collaborative planning for young children.

In 2002, government formed an alliance with the Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP), a consortium of B.C. universities conducting interdisciplinary research on early childhood development. One key HELP project is the Early Development Instrument (EDI), which provides information on school readiness based on five early childhood development indicators.

The most recent results of the EDI indicate that close to a third of kindergarten students across B.C. are behind in key areas when starting school. The B.C. government is actively tracking this issue, and working with early childhood experts to develop appropriate interventions. Since 2003, Success By 6 and Children First initiatives have reached close to 250 communities across the province, bringing together hundreds of key leaders from all sectors.

From 2003 to 2009, the B.C. government has provided a contribution of $23 million to Success by 6, which has been matched by local cash and in-kind donations and supported 1,900 volunteers to engage with early childhood development professionals to build child-friendly communities, and support the healthy growth and development of young children and their families.
FEWER CHILDREN, STAYING HOME LONGER

Our families have grown smaller in B.C., and although we have fewer children, they are staying at home for a much longer time than they ever have before.

In the early 1960s, at the end of the baby boom, the average number of children a woman had in British Columbia was 3.9. The fertility rate began to fall, and in the early 1970s it dropped below the replacement rate of 2.1, where it has remained ever since.

The fertility rate in British Columbia has always been lower than the Canadian average — it is now at 1.5, below the national rate of 1.7.

In 2006, 58% of 20-24 year olds — and over one in ten 30-34 year olds — still lived with their parents.
Women are having children later in life, which contributes to smaller family sizes. In 1961, women had their first babies at 23.5; by 2004 they waited until the age of 28. By 2006, families had an average of only 1 child and the average B.C. family size was 3.1.

Families are now much smaller, due to the widespread availability of contraception, women’s increased participation in the labour force and a more competitive labour market that requires a longer investment in education. Almost half of B.C. families (44%) now only have two members (i.e. no children) which is higher than, but similar in trending, to the Canadian percentage of two-person families.

Importantly, Canadian youth now leave home at a later age, and come back more often to live in the family home. In 1981, only about 20% of B.C. youth aged 20 to 29 were living with their parents. By 2001, this had increased to more than 40%.

By 2006, 58% of 20–24 year olds, 26% of 25–29 year olds and over one in ten 30–34 year olds (11%) still lived with their parents in B.C. This is more common in urban areas and among children of immigrant families.

There are also more “boomerang” children, who leave home and then return. The most common reason they do so is help with their pursuit of education (35%), followed by general financial pressures (20%). This increase began during the recession in the 1980s and 1990s, but Canadian youth have continued to stay at home to pursue higher education, even during economic boom times.

The key reasons adult children return home are finishing school without finding work and losing work. Government has responded with increased funding through the Skills Development and Skills Development Apprentices programs.

These programs provide individuals with the skills training they need to re-enter the labour market, or combines paid work-based training with technical training in a classroom setting. Every year, thousands of B.C. residents receive training to help them find work in fields where there are skills shortages.
There are now almost 40,000 apprentices, youth and pre-apprenticeship training participants, more than double the number in 2004.

Education has become more and more important to B.C. families. In 1961, only 68% of B.C. youth aged 15-19 attended school and it was still possible for many people without high school education to find good entry level jobs and work their way up within a company. By 2006, only 12% of the B.C. population 25 to 64 had less than a high school education. The pursuit of higher education continues to impact decisions about when people form families.

Given the importance and cost of post-secondary education, many B.C. families consider college and university as big but worthwhile investments for their children. While tuition in B.C. is amongst the lowest in Canada, B.C. is also helping students across the province who choose to remain home during their studies to have more educational choices in their communities, helping families save the added costs of travel, meals and residence. Since 2001, $2.1 billion has been invested in capital expansion at public post-secondary institutions, the largest post-secondary expansion in history.

The delayed transition to independence may be a positive one for parent-child relationships, and for children’s stronger start into their adult lives. However, children who delay starting work will have smaller savings because of a shorter work life, and parents may be more financially stretched in their old age because they spent a longer time supporting their children.
THE RISING PROPORTION AND PROFILE OF ABORIGINAL FAMILIES

Since the 1960s, the Aboriginal population (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) of British Columbia has grown at a faster rate than the non-Aboriginal population, and has consistently been a much younger than average group. In 1961, the Aboriginal population (not including Métis) was 2.5% of the total population of B.C., and was very young: one-third were under the age of 9 (versus one-fifth of the total B.C. population).

Aboriginal family patterns changed during the 1950s and 1960s, from wider kinship units to separate conjugal families. Responsibility was shifting to the conjugal family for finding a home and caring for the very young and very old. Policies to force assimilation had significant impacts on Aboriginal families during this time.

Through the 1960s and 1970s, child protective services were first extended to First Nations people on reserve, and thousands of First Nations children were taken and adopted out from their communities without the consent of their families. While Aboriginal communities gradually began to have greater control over their education systems, residential schools continued until the 1970s.

During the 1980s, Aboriginal communities began to raise awareness around the need for an Aboriginal service delivery system. By the early 1990s, attitudes — and the child welfare system — had changed dramatically. The Child, Family and Community Service Act supported Aboriginal communities to establish their own child and family service agencies with delegated child welfare authority, explicitly recognizing the vital importance of culture and heritage and the need to preserve ties to family and community.

Since 2005, B.C. has worked to develop a New Relationship with First Nations, implementing a vision for improved government-to-government relations founded on respect, reconciliation and recognition of First Nations rights and title. In addition, multiple ministries have worked to deliver services through Aboriginal managed organizations.
Canada’s first-ever Tripartite First Nations Health Plan ensures First Nations are fully involved in decision-making regarding the health of their peoples. Aboriginal people now have greater access to off-reserve housing, employment supports, community centres, and family development services delivered through Aboriginal organizations.

The Aboriginal birth rate did not fall as dramatically as for non-Aboriginals in the 1980s. This led to an increase in the proportion of Aboriginal people in B.C., and has also contributed to a much younger than average Aboriginal population. By 1991, Aboriginal people made up 5.2% of the population of B.C. Almost a quarter (24%) of the Aboriginal population was under 15, and 42% was under 24 (compared to non-Aboriginal rates of 20% and 33%). By 2006, the Aboriginal population in B.C. had grown to almost 200,000, or 4.8% of the total population. Of these, 55,000 (28%) were under 15, an increase of 4% from 1991. In 2006, the Aboriginal fertility rate across Canada was 2.5, compared to 1.6 for non-Aboriginal Canadians. These trends are forecasted to continue.

Government has responded to increasing proportions of Aboriginal children and youth and to ongoing inequities and challenges faced by these children. The Ministry of Education has signed Aboriginal enhancement agreements with more than 50 school districts to improve Aboriginal student success.

Since the 1960s, B.C.’s Aboriginal population has grown at a faster rate — and been much younger — than the non-Aboriginal population.
New K-12 curriculum which reflects Aboriginal culture and better engages Aboriginal students builds on a range of culturally appropriate programs designed to support healthy child development in the early years.

Roughly one third (35%) of Aboriginal children in Canada live in lone parent families, compared to 17% of non-Aboriginal children. Another 7% live with a grandparent or other relative, and 58% live with both parents. Across Canada, approximately 12% of Aboriginal children in care are in the care of First Nations child welfare agencies. The most commonly substantiated form of maltreatment leading to First Nations children entering care is neglect, whereas exposure to domestic violence is the most common cause for non-Aboriginal children.

In 2000, there was a high concentration of Aboriginal people living on low incomes in urban centres. The low income rate among Aboriginal Canadians was 42% compared with about 17% among non-Aboriginal Canadians. Government is responding to social, cultural and economic inequities of Aboriginal people. Based in nine communities across the province, the Aboriginal Homeless Outreach Program engages homeless Aboriginal people living on the street with culturally-appropriate supports and services. The BladeRunners program, delivered through the Aboriginal Community Career Employment Services Society and other partners in more than 20 communities, helps at-risk youth gain essential skills, reconnect with community and transition to long-term employment.

Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) teams have also helped Aboriginal people and other British Columbians who are not well-served by traditional, office-based services. Teams made up of various health and social care professionals provide mental health outreach and care to people on a 24/7 basis, and cover a range of services like housing, physical health assessments, income support, employment and crisis planning. With an investment of $7.5 million, there are ACT teams in place in Victoria, Nanaimo, Vancouver and Prince George.

While there is still work to be done, B.C. has made progress in working to address the social and economic gaps between Aboriginal people and other British Columbians.
IN Immigration Fuels Our Population Growth

In the past fifty years, British Columbia’s population has grown from 1.629 million people to 4.531 million and our growth rate has consistently been above the Canadian average. In 1961, British Columbians accounted for less than 1 in 10 Canadians; now almost 15% of Canada’s population is British Columbian.

Fifty years ago, natural growth accounted for much of our population increase but as birth rates began to fall, we struggled to attract enough people to the province. Now, immigration is by far the most important source of much of our population growth.

Percentage of B.C.’s population growth by source, 1961 – 2009

New immigrants face challenges including recognition of credentials and work experience as well as language barriers.
Changes in immigration policies through the 1960s and 1970s meant that more people from a wider range of home countries began to come to the province. In the 1960s, more than 80% of immigrants came from European countries. In 1981, only about 3% of B.C.’s population was a visible minority.

Now, about three-quarters of immigrants to B.C. come from Asia and almost one in four British Columbians is a visible minority, a proportion that is forecast to rise over the years to come.

Throughout British Columbia, and particularly in the Lower Mainland, increasing immigration means a changing face for the province. The vast majority of immigrants to B.C. move to the Lower Mainland, where they now account for almost half of the population of Vancouver.

Greater immigration has also brought more people for whom neither English nor French is a first language: in B.C., almost one in five people speaks another language in the home. Thousands of B.C. children are navigating dual cultures and languages, in addition to the learning and development all children experience.

Government recognizes the challenges that immigrant families face, and has increased investments in English as a Second Language programs as part of the suite of settlement supports provided through Welcome BC.

B.C. funds settlement workers to help children and their families integrate into their new schools, as well as 87 Welcoming and Inclusive Communities projects which help communities support newcomers. Targeted programs, such as the Early Childhood Development Refugee Pilot Project, reach families who had traumatic experiences before arriving in Canada and need additional support to adapt to life in their new communities.

Recent immigrants’ families are about the same size as Canadian-born families, but children stay at home longer among immigrants. About 18% of recent immigrant families have three or more children, compared to 16% of Canadian-born families.
Among recent immigrant families, three out of four have at least one child of any age living at home, compared to just over half of Canadian-born families, and 9% of immigrant families headed by seniors still have children at home, compared to 1% of Canadian-born.

Until the 1980s, most immigrants quickly matched and exceeded the incomes of similarly skilled native-born Canadians. The outlook for immigrants changed in the 1980s, as new immigrants experienced sharp declines in earnings, a decline which persisted through the 1990s and is still evident today.

Recent immigrants face challenges relating to the recognition of credentials, lack of proficiency in official languages, and a declining value placed on foreign work experience.

Among lone-parent families, 64% of immigrants are employed, compared to 71% of non-immigrants. Of these, more than four-fifths are the sole source of income for their families, a higher ratio than non-immigrant sole parent families.

In married immigrant families, both men and women are about ten percent less likely to be employed than non-immigrants, and are also more likely to be the only source of the family’s income.

For women, lower participation in the labour market means that if they leave relationships due to violence, they face additional financial barriers. B.C. has responded to this issue, funding the Bridging Employment Program, which serves people who have been exposed to violence and abuse, and includes targeted programs for immigrant women.

Employment programs across B.C. are expected to provide culturally relevant programming for immigrants, but specialized services exist as well, such as the B.C. Employment Program services on the Lower Mainland. Skills Connect helps immigrants upgrade skills and gain work experience.

To date, the program has assisted over 6,500 skilled immigrants find jobs in B.C. with an employment success rate of more than 78%.
AN AGING POPULATION, REQUIRING DIFFERENT MODELS OF CARE

British Columbia’s population has changed in many ways, and one of the most dramatic is in how much we have aged.

In 1961, due to the recent baby boom and an increased number of young immigrants after World War Two, our population was young: averaging about 25 years old at the beginning of the decade. Since then our population has consistently grown older, with the median age reaching 34.4 years in 1991 and 40.5 years in 2008.
The most recent demographic projections indicate that the median age will reach 44.0 years during the 2030s, and increase to 45.6 years by 2040.

A larger proportion of our population is made up of seniors. As of July 1, 2006, seniors accounted for an estimated 13% of the country’s population, almost double the proportion of 7% at the outset of the baby boom in 1946. B.C.’s population is older than the Canadian average. Until the 1990s, about 10% of the population in B.C. was aged 65 or older. The 1997 rate of 13% is forecast to grow to 17% by 2021 and according to projections, seniors could account for more than one out of every four individuals in the population by 2056.

Seniors are the biggest consumers of health services and health services are the biggest budget pressure that British Columbia faces. As this demographic broadens, the demand on our health dollars and overall economic well-being will also increase.

Government committed $137 million this June to further strengthen B.C.’s primary care system and support patients and doctors. Through this, we will see increased coordination between the primary care system and the specialist care system and seniors with chronic diseases such as diabetes will have increased access to innovative models of care like group medical visits. B.C. has also established 18 ActNowBC seniors community parks, specifically designed to help seniors stay mobile, physically active and healthy.

The concerns of seniors have changed. If poverty had a face in Canada in the 1960s, it was the single, marginalized elderly person, living without the support of family. Even in 1981, about one in five seniors lived in poverty.

Due to improvements to programs like the Guaranteed Income Supplement, Old Age Security and Canadian Pension Plan, seniors experienced strong after-tax income growth through the 1980s and 2000s, and individual savings from dual earner couples also increased incomes as more of these couples entered retirement. The poverty rate for seniors has dropped considerably, from one in five in 1980, to one in ten in 1989 and one in twenty by 2007.
Over time, caring for seniors has become a bigger challenge for B.C. families. By the 1980s, more families started caring for both children and grandparents at the same time. Although still uncommon, the number of three generation households increased by nearly 40% between 1980 and 1995.

Now, the multi-generational house is increasingly common, with one in five seniors across Canada sharing a home with their adult children and grandchildren.

B.C. is one of only a few provinces with provisions protecting employees who need unpaid leave in order to provide care to a member of their immediate family, including parents.

While the additional affection and support for grandchildren are important enrichments for family life, it is also recognized that caring for a frail, elderly parent increases stress and responsibility for the generation “sandwiched” in the middle.

Aboriginal and immigrant families tend to rely on this informal support more than other Canadians, who are more likely to look to long term care for their parents.

Smaller family sizes mean that the responsibility for caring for aging parents is also split among fewer adult children, and this is made worse by the distances family members often live from each other. Caring for aging parents is overwhelmingly the work of women — accordingly to a recent survey of B.C. family caregivers, more than 75% of caregivers are women.

The impact of balancing care giving and paid employment is particularly stressful for employed women, who more than men, tend to juggle care giving responsibilities and employment.

And while the proportion of Canadians reporting large support networks of close relatives and friends increased through the 2000s, many seniors are more and more isolated. One in five people aged over 75 say they have no close relatives or friends.

Government is responding with a modern, flexible approach to seniors’ needs through a range of options that includes residential care, assisted living and supportive housing.
Since 2001, B.C. has built 13,780 new and replacement beds and supportive housing units. Wait times for access to residential care have dropped from a full year in 2001 to a median wait time of between 15 and 90 days today, and by restructuring our residential care system, the lowest income seniors are now paying $29.40 per day, the lowest rate in Canada.

Seniors who are able to live independently are better able to afford to do so, with an expansion of the Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) program. SAFER now reaches over 15,400 seniors’ households each year, 3,250 more households than 2001, with an average monthly payment of $153.

Housing options for seniors will continue to improve as around 1,300 new housing units are being created under the new Seniors’ Rental Housing initiative, a joint partnership with the Government of Canada, to create affordable seniors housing in smaller communities. The initiative includes homes that are modular, manufactured or site-built wood-frame construction to promote B.C. wood product use.
LOOKING FORWARD

Over the last few decades, families have become a key focus of public policy. While there are still some indicators of concern and areas where we can do better, in many ways children and families in British Columbia are better off now than they have ever been.

Children are now more likely to have been planned by their parents, to survive infancy and childhood, to complete more years of schooling and to have fewer siblings - parents’ time and attention goes to fewer kids.

Parents are better educated and have their children later in the life cycle when their earning power is greater. Our communities are more diverse, and more welcoming of diversity, including in family structure.

We know that time spent with families is a key indicator of personal happiness and health, yet all indications are that Canadian families will continue to work more. Child care will continue to be a priority for our families, as both lone and dual parent families participate more fully in the workforce, and as women assume a growing importance in contributing to their family’s income.

We will welcome more immigrants to British Columbia, from a wider range of cultures and backgrounds, and with more complex challenges to fully adapt to life in our province. Education will continue to be a key goal for families as they navigate the challenges of an increasingly diverse and specialized labour market. And more and more families will begin to experience and cope with the challenges of retiring from the workforce and adjusting to new incomes and activities in their lives.

B.C. will continue to support children and families as they negotiate their work/life balance, through a range of supports over a family’s life course including parenting supports, primary health care, early childhood education programs, rental assistance subsidies, income tax reductions, culturally appropriate services, and supports for aging seniors.
Moving forward, government is developing outcomes that will act as a baseline on the health and well-being of children and youth in the province.

Once a baseline is established, we will report regularly on the status of these outcomes and our progress in improving them. Look for our initial Children's Lens report outlining these outcomes.

For more information visit the following websites:

Ministry of Children and Family Development  
www.gov.BC.ca/mcf

Ministry of Education  
www.BCed.gov.BC.ca

Ministry of Health Services  
www.health.gov.BC.ca/library/publications

Ministry of Social Development  
www.gov.bc.ca/hsd/index.html