



Children and Youth with
Support Need Services

Children and Youth with Support Needs

Guide for Current Service Recipients



Table of Contents

Welcome & Purpose of This Handbook	2
Why are Children and Youth with Support Needs (CYSN) services changing?	2
Who is this handbook for?	3
How to use this handbook	3
Continuity of supports	3
Overview	4
What's New?	4
New Direct Funding Programs	5
Expanded Community Based Services	6
Government Working Together for Your Child	6
What Will Stay the Same	6
What Existing Ministry of Children and Family Development (CFD) Services will Be Impacted?	8
The BC Children and Youth Disability Benefit (the Disability Benefit) 9	
Purpose, Goals, and Intentions	9
Eligibility	9
How the Disability Benefit Can Be Used	12
Administration and Accountability Pathways	14
Reviews, Changes & Appeals	16
Transition and Phased Implementation of the Disability Benefit	16
The BC Children and Youth Disability Supplement (the Disability Supplement)	19
Purpose	19
Core Eligibility	19
Key Features	20
How can families in existing programs access the Disability Supplement?	22
Administration and Payment	22
Appeal Process	24
Understanding the Disability Benefit and the Disability Supplement	25
Examples	25
Expansion of Community Based Services	31
Purpose, Goals, and Intentions	31
Eligibility	32
Services	32
Transition and Phased Implementation	33

Welcome & Purpose of This Handbook

Why are Children and Youth with Support Needs (CYSN) services changing?

A simpler system with more support for families

We want all children and youth to have access to the supports they need to live full, happy lives. Over the past two years, we've worked closely with families, service providers, and advocates across B.C. to understand what isn't working and how to do better. Families told us clearly that too many children aren't getting the help they need, that support doesn't match the level of need, and that the system is too complex and stressful to navigate.

We listened—and we're taking action. With a major new investment over the next three years, B.C. is expanding and strengthening supports for children and youth with support needs. These changes are about putting more support into families' hands, expanding free community services, and making the system easier to understand and use. Families will receive step-by-step support as these new benefits and services are introduced.

Key changes

More support where it's needed most

- New and increased funding for children with the highest needs, including those who haven't received support before
- Additional income-tested help for middle and low-income families

A simpler system

- Less paperwork and fewer programs to navigate
- Clearer pathways so families can focus on their child, not bureaucracy

Expanded community services

- More free, community-based supports across B.C.
- Easier access to services close to home, including exploring how to bring services to where children are – such as school grounds

Choice for families

- Flexible options, including direct funding or coordinated community-based services

Who is this handbook for?

This handbook is intended to guide families currently receiving services from Ministry of Children and Family Development (CFD), and their service provider partners, as we transition into a Children and Youth with Support Needs (CYSN) service model. This document breaks down what's changing and what's staying the same. It also provides a more detailed overview of new benefits and services.

How to use this handbook

This handbook is a living document that will continue to be updated as we move through this transition together. Use it to get a snapshot of what the transition phase (2026) may look like for your family and check back in as we move into the implementation phase (2027) to learn more.

Continuity of supports

We are committed to ensuring continuity of supports. For this reason, we will spend the next year (April 2026 – April 2027) working with every family accessing existing Ministry of Children and Family Development CYSN services to ensure a smooth transition to new benefits and/or services. The benefits and/or services that you currently receive will remain in place until you are successfully transitioned to the new system of services.

We understand that distinct groups will be impacted differently, and we are committed to listening and addressing your concerns. If you have questions or concerns, please contact us.

For general questions about this announcement, please contact the Ministry of Children and Family Development by email at [**mcf.childrenyouthsupportneeds@gov.bc.ca**](mailto:mcf.childrenyouthsupportneeds@gov.bc.ca)

For questions regarding a child's Autism Funding, please contact the Autism Funding support team at 1-877-777-3530

For questions about available community resources and building a support team please contact Autism Information Services BC at 1-844-878-4700 or email [**AutismInformation@gov.bc.ca**](mailto:AutismInformation@gov.bc.ca)



**Children and Youth with
Support Need Services**



Overview

What's New?

The province is expanding the way that services are provided to children and youth with support needs, including children with autism¹. These changes are intended to make services in B.C. fairer, easier to access, and better coordinated.

¹ Many children have multiple concurrent conditions (such as anxiety, ADHD, and other developmental or mental health needs). The ministry uses person-first language (“children with autism”) to avoid presuming how any individual identifies.

Service is built around three main pillars:

-
- New Direct Funding Programs

 - Expanded Community Based Services

 - Government Working Together for Your Child



New Direct Funding Programs

The BC Children and Youth Disability Benefit

The BC Children and Youth Disability Benefit (the Disability Benefit) is a non-income-tested direct funding program administered by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (CFD) for children and youth (ages 0–19) who have the highest, enduring functional support needs. Funding is tiered based on the child’s level of need, and must be used for disability-related supports that aid a child’s daily life and functioning.

The Disability Benefit will be introduced in two phases:

Phase 1

Timeline: March 2026-March 2027

What Happens: Families currently receiving Autism Funding, At Home Program, and CYSN Family Support Services will gradually transition to the new Disability benefit, where eligible

Phase 2

Timeline: April 2027 onwards

What Happens: The new model will be fully rolled out

The BC Children and Youth Disability Supplement

The BC Children and Youth Disability Supplement (Disability Supplement) is an income-tested cash benefit designed to help families with the additional costs of raising a child with support needs. The Disability Supplement decreases gradually as household income grows, ensuring that support is targeted to those with lower-to-middle incomes.

A family will receive the Disability Supplement if:

1. The child or youth is eligible and receiving the federal Disability Tax Credit (DTC) and
2. The family meets income eligibility thresholds.

This Disability Supplement will be delivered through the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) in partnership with the Government of BC

Families who receive the Disability Benefit, delivered through CFD, may also qualify for the Disability Supplement, and vice-versa.



Expanded Community Based Services

British Columbia has a strong, province-wide network of community-based service providers, including Child Development Centres and Indigenous-led organizations, that deliver publicly funded pediatric therapies and developmental supports. In many rural, remote, and Indigenous communities, these organizations are deeply rooted locally and are often the primary—or only—source of services for children and families.

These community agencies employ multidisciplinary teams of highly qualified pediatric therapists and child development specialists, and they have long-standing relationships with schools, health authorities, First Nations and Métis communities, and other local partners such as Foundry. By working together, these partners help coordinate services so families receive the supports they need without having to navigate the system on their own.

BC will invest significantly in this network of community services. Expanded community-based services mean that children, youth, and families can access more free, local supports. Expanded services will include pediatric therapies, behavioural/mental health supports, family navigation/care coordination, and programming for older children (including youth and teens). Services will be delivered through community agencies across B.C. that specialize in child development.

By expanding community-based services, families will experience:

- Improved access to high-quality supports closer to home, reducing travel time and wait periods.
- Support across childhood and adolescence, not just in the early years or during short windows of eligibility.
- Less financial pressure, as more services are available at no cost or low cost, reducing reliance on out-of-pocket spending.
- Greater continuity of care, with services that are easier to access consistently over time.
- More choice, allowing families to combine community-based services with direct funding or private supports in ways that work best for them.



Government Working Together for Your Child

Government ministries are working together to make things easier for families. This means services will be better connected, and you won't have to navigate as many separate systems. We are working to bring services to where children are, including on school grounds, in child care, and in recreation programs. Our goal is to make sure supports for your child continue smoothly during the transition, without added stress or confusion for your family.

What Will Stay the Same

As the system is expanded, core supports for children and youth with support needs will remain in place and continue without interruption.

Diagnosis and assessment still matter

Diagnosis remains an important part of understanding a child's needs. Families will continue to access diagnostic and assessment services through existing pathways, including family doctors, specialists, and provincial diagnostic assessment clinics. Diagnostic information will continue to inform intervention and can help support access to planning, clarify school supports and accommodations, and support access to federal programs such as the federal DTC. Nothing is changing about the importance or role of diagnosis. Functional needs continue to be a core determinant of support, regardless of whether a child has a formal diagnosis.

Family support services continue

Both CYSN Family Support Services and pilot Disability Services, operating in the four pilot areas of the province, remain unchanged. The CYSN worker you are currently connected to will continue to support your families access to these supports under the existing policies, procedures, and eligibility criteria.

Respite remains available

CFD Direct Funded Respite and Agency Coordinated Respite will continue to be available to eligible families.

Health and medical supports stay the same

Health care, nursing supports, and At Home Program (AHP) Medical Equipment and Supplies benefits remain unchanged. Families will continue to use the same health-care pathways they do today, ensuring continued access to essential medical supports for children and youth with complex health needs.

Community-based services remain and are expanding

Families will continue to access free, community-based services delivered across British Columbia. All existing programs remain in place, including Infant Development, Supported Child Development, FASD Key Worker, and community-based occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech-language pathology, behavioural, and mental health supports.

School supports remain and become more connected

Inclusive education funding, supports, and processes in schools remain unchanged. Supports provided via the Disability Benefit and Disability Supplement do not replace or impact eligibility for supports in the school system

Core principles continue to guide services

Child-centred supports, continuity of care, and family-focused planning remain foundational and will continue to guide service delivery throughout the transition to expanded services.

What Existing Ministry of Children and Family Development (CFD) Services will Be Impacted?

School Aged Extended Therapies (SAET)

As part of the expansion, the School-Aged Extended Therapies (SAET) benefit will be transitioned into the new BC Children and Youth Disability Benefit (the Disability Benefit), creating a more consistent and flexible approach to supporting children across childhood.

Children who currently receive SAET through the At Home Program will be prioritized in the first transition group and will begin moving to the Disability Benefit starting in April 2026. All children currently accessing the SAET At Home Program are eligible for the Disability Benefit. Families will receive clear information and support throughout this transition to ensure continuity of services.

Autism Funding

The Autism Funding program will continue receiving invoices through to **March 31, 2027** to ensure families have time, support, and continuity as new benefits and services are introduced.

New families will continue to be onboarded to Autism Funding up to March 1, 2027. Diagnostic and eligibility processes will not change.

By April 1 2027, the Autism Funding Program will end and be replaced by the two new direct funding programs (the Disability Benefit - provided to families with children with the most significant disability; and the Disability Supplement - targeted toward lower-middle income families), and by significantly expanded community-based services.

During this transition period, families will work with the Ministry to determine their child's eligibility for the Disability Benefit. The Ministry will also work with these families to discuss expanded early intervention, behaviour and mental services in community as well as, how to access the Disability Supplement.

To help prepare for this transition, CYSN workers, the Autism Funding team, and Autism Information Services (AIS) will support and help with:

- ▶ Understanding the expansion and how the new benefits and services work
- ▶ Offering guidance to families on gathering materials for the federal DTC application, if applicable
- ▶ Setting up direct deposit for new direct funding benefits
- ▶ Assisting families in understanding the funding administration pathway that works best for them: invoice or bill payment, direct funding (direct deposit), or agency-coordinated direct payment support
- ▶ Identifying appropriate service options for new direct funding benefits
- ▶ Exploring and identifying service options that best meet their child's needs under the new system

The BC Children and Youth Disability Benefit (the Disability Benefit)

Purpose, Goals, and Intentions

The BC Children and Youth Disability Benefit (the Disability Benefit) provides direct funding to families of children and youth with the highest and most ongoing support needs. It isn't based on family income. **The amount of funding depends on your child's level of need:**

- Base level (\$6,500/year)
- Higher level (\$17,000/year)

Disability Benefit level determinations will be made using consistent, province-wide criteria, developed in partnership with child development professionals and shared transparently with families and service providers.

Eligibility

The Disability Benefit provides support for children and youth in BC, from birth to age 19, who have a long-term disability that results in significant and complex developmental support needs, based on diagnosis and/or functional impact.

There are two ways to qualify for the Disability Benefit:



Direct admission



Needs-based review

Having two pathways helps ensure that:

- Families can count on a consistent and predictable system, and
- There's enough flexibility to consider each child's unique situation



Direct Admit Pathway

This pathway is for children who already have a diagnosis that is strongly linked with high and ongoing support needs. Because these diagnoses are well understood and consistent, families can be approved more quickly and with fewer steps, using documentation the family has already acquired. This approach helps make access to support more predictable, consistent, and timely for families.

Children who automatically qualify include, but are not limited to, those with:

- Moderate to profound intellectual disability
- Medically and neurodevelopmentally complex children with genetically tested and/or clinically defined syndromic disorders associated with highest needs – including Down Syndrome, Angelman Syndrome, and others
- Concurrent Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and intellectual disability
- Autism with the most significant and pervasive needs, including those with:
 - Profound Autism²
 - DSM-5 Level 3 Autism
 - Autism (any level) AND intellectual disability (any level)
 - Eligibility for the At Home Program
 - Concurrent autism (any level) and one of the following:
 - Bipolar Affective Disorder (BAD)
 - Psychosis and Schizophrenia Spectrum Disorders
 - Catatonia
- Severe self-injurious behaviour (SIB) assessed and treated through BC Children’s Hospital neuropsychiatry and/or the SIB Clinic at the Pacific Autism Family Network
- Degenerative conditions with predictable decline (e.g., Duchenne muscular dystrophy, SMA types 1 & 2 etc.)
- Palliative conditions (life expectancy ≤ 6 months)
- Children whose gross motor function is similar to a child with cerebral palsy classified at GMFCS level 3-5
- Children participating in or eligible for the current At Home Program

² according to the 2021/22 Lancet Commission



Needs-Based Review Pathway

Sometimes a child may not have a specific diagnosis that automatically qualifies them for the Disability Benefit, but their combined needs create significant challenges in daily life. In these situations, a child may still be eligible for the Disability Benefit even without a direct-admit pathway.

Eligibility can be determined through:

- A professionally administered functional assessment
- Health-care provider attestation confirming prolonged disability and significant adaptive limitations
- Consideration of complexity, behavioural profile, and real-world functional impact

This pathway ensures children with rare, complex, or atypical presentations are not excluded and that clinical expertise is applied to determine eligibility based on functional impact, not just diagnostic labels.

This pathway is core to strengthening equity, allowing access for children who may not be easily captured through traditional diagnostic categories. Therefore, over the course of phase 1, CFD will engage and co-develop criteria with the sector/clinical experts to define the functional assessment process.

How the Disability Benefit Can Be Used

Levels of support

The Disability benefit provides funding for children and youth with high and ongoing functional support needs.

Funding amounts are tiered based on complexity of need:

- Base level (\$6,500/year)
- Higher level (\$17,000/year)

How Benefit Levels are Determined

The amount a family receives through the Disability Benefit is based on the complexity of a child's functional support needs, not income.

All eligible families will begin at the base benefit level (\$6,500 per year). Through a support planning process, a child's day-to-day needs, level of support required, and overall complexity will be considered to determine whether they qualify for the higher benefit level (\$17,000 per year).

Disability Benefit level determinations will be made using consistent, province-wide criteria, developed in partnership with child development professionals and shared transparently with families and service providers.

Support Planning

Once a child is confirmed eligible for the Disability Benefit, the family will work with relevant professionals to develop a support plan. This is not unlike what currently occurs for families with children in the Autism Funding Program.

The planning process is guided by the eligible/ineligible expenses policy and the alignment with functional goals policy.

During the transition phase, families moving from the Autism Funding program will use their current plan and will not be required to complete new planning documentation.

Eligible and Ineligible Expenses

The Disability Benefit funding must be used for disability-related supports that improve a child's functioning and daily life. Uses are guided by an approved Support Plan.

Eligible and Ineligible Expenses Policy

This policy will set the high-level categories or allowable, items, services, and expenses that a family can use the Disability Benefit funds to purchase. This policy will also outline the proportion of their funding that can be spent on certain categories. It is proposed that a family be allowed to use up to 20% of their funding on supports that do not fall into direct service or intervention categories. The ministry intends to work with key experts and individuals with lived experience to help define a clear list of eligible and ineligible expenses. Table 1 to the right provides an example of eligible and ineligible expenses.

Table 1. Examples of Eligible and Ineligible Expenses

Eligible Expenses

Services and intervention

- Respite
- Pediatric therapies
- Behavioural intervention
- Inclusion worker for childcare
- Family counselling
- Mental health services and supports (for child, siblings, primary caregivers)
- Some diagnostics or assessments (e.g., genetic testing not otherwise covered by MSP)

Equipment, supplies, training

- Assistive and Augmentative Communication Supports
- Certain medical travel expenses
- Certain training expenses
- Inclusive recreation programs
- Genetic testing
- Sensory clothing

Ineligible expenses

Services and intervention

- Unresearched intervention methods
- Services and service providers outside of B.C. – certain exceptions may be made for communities that directly border two jurisdictions

Items

- Unregulated medical devices, equipment, and supplies

Special Authorization

Services and intervention

- Services and service providers outside of B.C. – certain exceptions may be made for communities that directly border two jurisdictions

Items

- Safety equipment
- Home and vehicle modifications

Limits

- Exceptions to the limits on certain categories. E.g., families who want to spend more than 20% on non interventions services need to receive an exception and authorization to do so.

Administration and Accountability Pathways

Families will also be able to choose how they want to receive and manage their Benefit, with three flexible pathways. These pathways are designed to give families choice while ensuring that funding is used for disability-related supports. Families can use one pathway or combine them.

Three Pathways

Direct Payment Pathway

Families receive lump sum payments directly and are responsible for coordinating and directly paying service providers they hire.

Families using this pathway will:

- Create a support plan with professionals of their choice
- Hire and coordinate providers directly
- Keep receipts and records of expenses; manage employment

Audit: This pathway will be included in a targeted audit process.

Best for: Families who prefer to manage services themselves and want flexibility and feel confident in managing as an 'employer' including processing of federal government tax remittances.

Invoicing Pathway

This pathway works much like the current Autism Funding and School Aged Extended Therapies (SAET) model.

Families:

- Develop a support plan with a health professional
- Select service providers
- Have providers invoice the program directly

Audit: Families do not need to keep receipts or handle payroll. All oversight happens through the invoicing system. Purchases for non-intervention supports and services (e.g., equipment, supplies, travel) will be subject to audit and families will need to retain receipts.

Best for: Families who want flexibility in provider choice with much less administrative work.

Authorized Agency Coordinated Pathway

Families can choose a local pre-approved community-based early intervention provider (e.g. Child Development Centre) to coordinate and deliver supports on their behalf.

Under this pathway:

- Families identify the organization they have chosen to work with
- Agency receives the funding through the portal – in full or in part
- Agency plans with family and coordinates and delivers services
- Families stay in charge of deciding what supports their child needs, while spending less time on paperwork, hiring providers, and managing funding.
- Agency is responsible for all billing and record keeping, hiring staff, providing and monitoring services, and managing payroll

Audit: The agency handles all audit and administrative requirements instead of the family.

Best for: Families who prefer a fully coordinated and low-administration approach.

Oversight and Accountability

Oversight

The oversight model is designed to balance accountability with the family experience, recognizing that many families already carry significant administrative and caregiving demands.

- **Year 1:** Disbursements will be processed through Financial Support Services (FSS).
- **Year 2 onwards:** technical enhancements will streamline processes as they come online.

Existing systems (such as the My Family Services Portal and service provider portal) will be reused to help make the transition easier for families and service providers familiar with invoicing.

Audit Process

Note: Audits apply only to families using the Direct Payment pathway. Families using Invoicing or authorized agency pathways are not subject to audit of their receipts for those services.

- Audits confirm that spending aligns with:
 - The funding agreement;
 - The child's approved support plan; and
 - The eligible expense categories for the Disability Benefit.
- If an expense is unclear, families may be asked to show how it supports the child's functional goals, with input from the health professional involved in planning.

Reviews, Changes & Appeals

A new appeals process will be introduced to support families who want to ask questions or raise concerns about decisions made about their child's eligibility for the Disability Benefit. The goal is to make sure decisions about your child's supports are fair, consistent, and based on the best possible information. During Phase 1, the Ministry will be working with families, service providers, and experts to design a review and appeals process that is clear, accessible, and responsive to the needs of children and youth with disabilities.

Part of this work may include bringing in external professionals to help review complex cases and ensure all relevant information was considered. These reviews will not consider personal or family factors like income, housing, language, or family composition. The focus is entirely on your child's disability-related needs.

Transition and Phased Implementation of the Disability Benefit

Implementation of the Disability Benefit will be divided into two phases. **The first phase will be March 2026 – March 2027** and include the transition of the families into the new services. The second phase will be the full implementation of the Benefit, beginning April 2027.

To provide continuity of service and the least amount of disruption to existing families receiving services, transitional eligibility rules may apply. This means that there may be certain processes and decisions that are made in the interim transitional period that will not apply during full implementation.

Phase 1: Transition approach for children receiving At Home Program, Autism Funding Program, CFD Disability Services or Family Support Services

First Cohort – Children accessing the At Home Program (AHP)

The first group of children to transition to the Disability Benefit will be children and youth currently accessing the AHP. All children in the AHP over the age of 3 will transition to the new Disability Benefit.³

It is important to remember that access to medical equipment and supplies will remain in place and will not be changed. Families participating in the AHP will be contacted by Ministry staff to discuss changes to SAET and their child's transition to the Disability Benefit. We anticipate this process will begin in April 2026 and will take several months.

³ For children under the age of 3, the process will look slightly different. This is a very small group of children. The Ministry will work with you to support next steps.

Specific information and timelines about a child’s transition to the Disability Benefit will depend on several factors including:

- The age of a child – children under three will have an additional process.
- Whether or not a child is accessing SAET
- The authorization timeline for a child’s SAET funding
- Whether a child is accessing Autism Funding

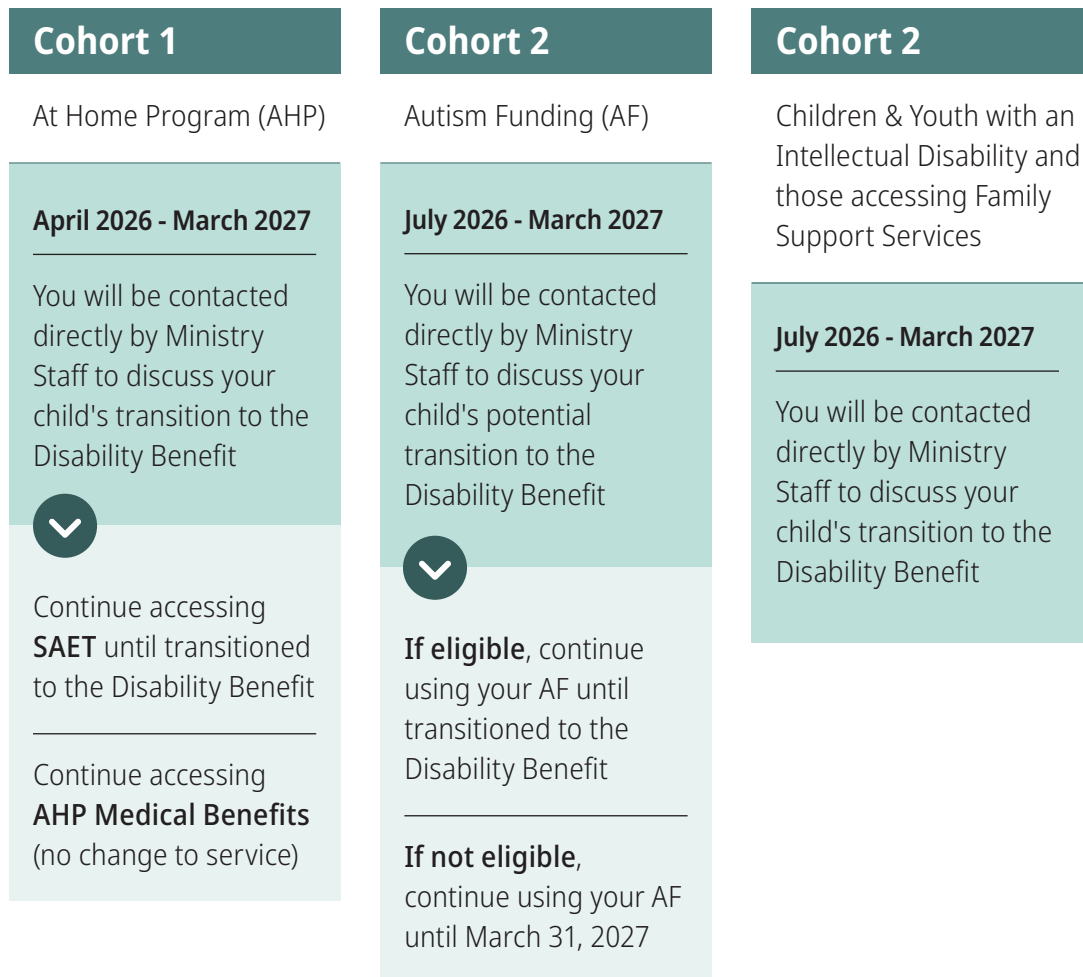
Second Cohort – Eligible children in the Autism Funding Program; children with moderate to profound intellectual disability, or those children receiving Family Support Services that meet Disability Benefit eligibility criteria

These families will be contacted by Ministry staff to discuss eligibility for, and transition to, the Disability Benefit. We anticipate this process will begin in July 2026 and will take several months.

Specific information about timelines for a child’s transition to the Disability Benefit will depend on several factors including:

- Whether or not a child meets a direct admit category for the Disability Benefit
- The timeline of their Autism Funding Agreement

Process Map of Phase 1 – Transition approach for children receiving At Home Program, Autism Funding Program, CFD Disability Services or Family Support Services



If your child or youth is not already accessing MCFD services:

- Autism Funding intake will remain open from Mar 2026 - Mar 2027
- The At Home Program intake will remain open from Mar 2026 - Mar 2027; after completing the intake process, eligible families will be directly admitted to the Disability Benefit



The BC Children and Youth Disability Supplement

(the Disability Supplement)

Purpose

The BC Children and Youth Disability Supplement (Disability Supplement) is an **income-tested monthly payment** designed to help families with the costs of raising a child with support needs with a focus on middle to low-income families. The new Disability Supplement provides a **maximum benefit up to \$6,000 per year per eligible child**, paid monthly. The benefit pays the most to families with the lowest household incomes.

Families decide how to use the money, without having to submit paperwork – giving families greater flexibility and autonomy and more time to spend supporting their children.

Core Eligibility

A family is eligible for the new **Disability Supplement** if **both** of the following apply:

- 1. The child is eligible for the federal Disability Tax Credit (DTC)**
 - Based on severe and prolonged functional impairment, not diagnosis
 - Requires certification by an eligible medical practitioner
 - Adjudicated by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA)
- 2. The family meets the income thresholds:**
 - Family households earning roughly \$50,000 per year (adjusted family net income) can expect to receive the full amount; the Disability Supplement phases out at different rates depending on the number of children eligible for the supplement (e.g., 1 eligible child = \$200,000 adjusted family net income; 2 eligible children = \$350,000 adjusted family net income).

Key Features

- **Maximum benefit:** up to **\$6,000 per year per child**, paid monthly
- Access to the new Disability Supplement relies on the federal DTC eligibility and is therefore **not based on diagnosis alone**, but on functional impairment and limitations recognized by a medical practitioner.
- **Income tested**
- **Administered by Canada Revenue Agency (CRA)**, not CFD
- Automatically paid to families who meet the receive the federal DTC and meet income thresholds.
- Families who do not have the federal DTC in place must **apply to the federal government and be approved** in order to receive the new Disability Supplement

What can the Disability Supplement be used for?

The Disability Supplement is **flexible household income support**. The money goes into the family's bank account automatically. Families decide how to use it, emphasizing greater flexibility and autonomy. **Families can use it for any costs related to raising a child with support needs, including:**

- Tutoring and extra curricular supports
- Extra disability-related costs not covered elsewhere
- Therapies
- Counselling for siblings
- Childcare
- Respite

How do families apply for the Disability Supplement money?

Families **do not apply** to the Ministry of Children and Family Development (CFD) for the Disability Supplement.

If a family:

- Receives the **federal DTC** on behalf of their child, AND
- Meets Disability Supplement Eligibility **income thresholds**

Then:

- Families are automatically enrolled to receive the Disability Supplement
- The CRA **automatically pays** the Disability Supplement **monthly**
- Maximum is **up to \$6,000 per year per child**, depending on income

The first monthly payment of the Disability Supplement to eligible families will be in July 2027, but families can take steps now to ensure they meet eligibility criteria for the federal DTC. If a family becomes eligible for the federal DTC after July 2027, payments of the Disability Supplement will not be retroactive.


Table 2. BC Children and Youth Disability Supplement


NOTE: The Disability Supplement amount your family receives depends on your adjusted family net income and the number of children or youth in your family who are eligible for the federal Disability Tax Credit (DTC).

For example, if your adjusted family net income is between \$50,000 - \$100,000 and you have one child who is eligible for the Disability Tax Credit, you can expect to receive a Disability Supplement of approximately \$4,000 to \$6,000 per year (about \$333 to \$500 per month).

Families with lower incomes receive a higher supplement, and families with more than one eligible child receive a supplement for each eligible child. The table shows examples of how annual and monthly amounts increase or decrease based on these factors.


Households with an adjusted family net income of \$50,000


 **One child:** \$6,000/year (\$500/month)


 **Two children:** \$12,000/year (\$1,000/month)

 **Three children:** \$18,000/year (\$1,500/month)


Households with an adjusted family net income of \$100,000


 **One child:** \$4,000/year (\$333.33/month)


 **Two children:** \$10,000/year (\$833.33/month)

 **Three children:** \$16,000/year (\$1,333.33/month)

Households with an adjusted family net income of \$180,000

 **One child:** \$800/year (\$66.67/month)

 **Two children:** \$6,800/year (\$566.67/month)

 **Three children:** \$12,800/year (\$1,066.67/month)

Please Note: Table 2. BC Disability Supplement provides examples of the approximate supplement calculations utilizing families with 1, 2 or 3 children eligible for the federal DTC at the different incomes.

How can families in existing programs access the Disability Supplement?

Families receiving support through At Home Program, Autism Funding, or CYSN Family Support Services/Disability Services (FSS/DS) will follow the same general steps to receive the new Disability Supplement.

What All Families Need to Know

- **First payments will begin in July 2027** for eligible families.
- Families should:
 - Apply for the federal DTC for their child or youth if they don't already have it.
 - Make sure they file their tax returns on time to avoid delay in receiving their benefits.
- Once a family is receiving the federal DTC on their child's behalf, no other application is required. Payments will be issued automatically by the Canada Revenue Agency (CRA).
- The Disability Supplement is income-tested, payment amounts will differ for each family. A family's Disability Supplement amount will be based on the previous year's income tax return.
- The Disability Supplement amount for July 2027 – June 2028 is based on your 2026 adjusted family net income.
- To avoid delays, families should ensure the CRA has up to date tax and account information (e.g., current BC address, direct deposit details).

Additional Information for Families Receiving Autism Funding

- Families may use their Travel, Training and Equipment (TTE) budget to help cover the cost of getting the federal DTC medical form completed.
- This applies only to fees from an eligible medical practitioner for completing and submitting Form T2201 (Part B).
- It cannot be used for fees from third-party consultants or organizations that help with federal DTC applications.
- Up to \$300 could be reimbursed, with submitted receipt, against the cost of the federal DTC form's completion by a medical practitioner. A Justification for Equipment (JFE) form is not required.

Administration and Payment

The Disability Supplement will be administered by the CRA. This is the same way the BC Family Benefit (BCFB) and Canada Child Benefit (CCB) are already delivered. Because the CRA administers these payments, CFD staff do not determine eligibility, payment amounts, or appeals for the Disability Supplement.

What is the Federal Disability Tax Credit?

The federal DTC is a federal, non-refundable tax credit that helps people with disabilities, or their supporting family member, reduce the amount of income tax they may owe.

If your child or youth has a severe and prolonged impairment, you may apply for the credit. If you are approved, you may claim the credit at tax time, which helps offset some of the additional costs related to your child's disability.

The federal DTC also opens the door to other federal programs, such as:

- The Child Disability Benefit (CDB)
- Registered Disability Saving Plan (RDSP)
- The Canada Disability Benefit

This is why applying for the federal DTC is very important.

How is the federal DTC linked to the new Disability Supplement?

The federal DTC is one of the key eligibility criteria for the Disability Supplement.

If CRA approves your child for the federal DTC:

1. CRA automatically connects the federal DTC to your household's tax account.
2. If your family meets income threshold eligibility for the Disability Supplement, you will be automatically enrolled.

How do you apply for the federal DTC?

Applying for federal DTC involves completing Form T2201 - Disability Tax Credit Certificate, which has two parts:

- Part A is completed by the family
- Part B is completed by a medical practitioner and describes the child's functional limitations

CRA reviews the completed form and makes an assessment. Current processing times for the federal DTC are 10-15 weeks.

Eligibility for the federal DTC is based on the effects of an impairment, not on diagnosis alone. Practitioners draw on their professional judgment, clinical history, and observation of day-to-day limitations when completing the form.

Eligible medical practitioners that can complete the federal DTC applications include doctors, nurse practitioners, optometrists, audiologists, occupational therapists, physiotherapists, psychologists and speech-language pathologists. Families can work with more than one practitioner if needed.

There is no fee to apply for the federal DTC, although some practitioners charge a fee to complete Part B. These fees are not regulated and commonly range from \$100–\$300.

Support available to help families navigate the federal DTC

Families do not have to navigate the federal DTC on their own. A range of supports are available to help answer questions and guide families through the process.

The CRA can answer questions and support families with the steps required to attain the federal DTC.

Some families also choose to seek help from third-party organizations when applying for the federal DTC. This may include low or no-cost non-profit sector organizations, or private sector “promoters”. These organizations may help with understanding eligibility and communicating with CRA and medical practitioners. Families should be aware that private-sector fees can range up to 40% of the value of the federal DTC if approved.

Families are encouraged to carefully review and vet any third-party agencies before paying for any services.

Appeal Process

Families found ineligible for the Disability Supplement due to a denied the federal DTC application should contact the CRA to discuss their application, request a review or submit new documents, or file an objection. The CFD has no oversight regarding the Disability Supplement, including eligibility decisions related to the federal DTC. Similarly, the Ministry of Finance (MoF) has no oversight over the CRA's decisions regarding the federal DTC.

Process Map of Phase 1 – Transition approach for children applying for the federal DTC

At Home Program, Autism Funding, Intellectual Disability

Anytime: Apply for the federal DTC on behalf of your child/youth for the Disability Benefit



July 2027: Receive your first payment if meet income eligibility and family is receiving the federal DTC on child's behalf



Understanding the Disability Benefit and the Disability Supplement

Examples

The child personas included in this package are designed to show how the new programs may work for children and families with different strengths, needs, and circumstances. Each persona reflects a real-world mix of functional needs, family situations, and community contexts, and demonstrates how supports could be tailored and combined to respond to what matters most for that child.

Persona 1 - Chloe

Chloe has Down syndrome. She has an intellectual disability and various physical challenges associated with her genetic condition including spinal deformity which requires bracing, physical therapy, and extensive adaptations. Chloe lives in Prince George – she has two parents with an adjusted family net income of \$110,000.

Current System:

- Chloe's family receives \$0 in direct funding.
 - Chloe is supported to access provincially funded early intervention therapies (physiotherapy, speech therapy, occupational therapy) through a local child development centre.
 - After the age of 6, these therapies are no longer available for her.
-

After Expansion:

- Chloe automatically qualifies for the **Disability Benefit** because of her diagnosis of Down syndrome. Her family will receive \$6,500 per year, every year, to assist with costs related to raising a child with support needs such as tutoring, respite, therapies, childcare, counselling for siblings, or other supports.
- Chloe's family works with her nurse practitioner, who provides Chloe's primary care, to complete the federal DTC application. Chloe's application is approved by the federal government.
- Once Chloe is approved for the federal DTC, she is automatically assessed for eligibility for the new **Disability Supplement**, with no additional application required. This assessment is not an assessment of Chloe, but of her parent's income.
- With an adjusted family net income of \$110,000, Chloe's family qualifies for \$3,600 per year in additional Disability Supplement funding to age 18.
- In total, Chloe will receive **\$10,100** each year to support therapies, tutoring, specialized recreation, and other supports—representing nearly **\$190,000** in support over her childhood (age 0-19).
- Chloe may be able to receive access to services in community, including expanded programming in areas of behaviour support, mental health, and 6-18 programming.

Persona 2 - Sam

Sam has autism⁴ (Level 2) with intellectual disability, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Sam struggles with social interactions and day to day self care – including reliable toileting. He lives in Vancouver with a single mom, Rena.

Rena's adjusted family net income is \$50,000 per year.

Current System:

- ▶ Sam has autism and is eligible for Autism Funding – this means he will receive \$22,000/year from age of diagnosis to age 5. At age 6, this amount will decrease to \$6,000 per year. If Sam was diagnosed at age 3, he would receive \$144,000 in Autism Funding support over his childhood.
- ▶ Sam also has access to provincially funded early intervention therapies (speech, occupational, behavioural, and physio therapies) through a local child development centre.

After Expansion:

- ▶ Sam automatically qualifies for the **Disability Benefit** because he has autism and an intellectual disability. His family will receive \$6,500 per year, every year, to support therapies, counselling, respite, and other eligible supports.
- ▶ Sam's mom already receives the federal DTC on Sam's behalf.
- ▶ Because Sam receives the federal DTC, he is automatically enrolled for the new **Disability Supplement**, with no additional application required. This enrollment includes an assessment of his parent's income, not of Sam's disability.
- ▶ With an adjusted family net income of \$50,000, Sam's family qualifies for \$6,000 per year in additional Disability Supplement funding (to age 18).
- ▶ In total, Sam's parent, Rena, will receive **\$12,500** each year to support therapies, tutoring, specialized recreation, and other supports—representing approximately **\$194,000** in support over his childhood (ages 3-19).
- ▶ Sam will have access to free community programming – including expanded programming in areas of behaviour support, mental health, and 6-18 programming.

⁴ Many children have multiple concurrent conditions (such as anxiety, ADHD, and other developmental or mental health needs). The ministry uses person-first language (“children with autism”) to avoid presuming how any individual identifies.

Persona 3 - Hailey

Hailey was born medically fragile – dependent on support to perform all aspects of daily living. As part of her rare genetic condition, she also experiences significant intellectual disability. She has two parents with an adjusted family net income of \$150,000 per year.

Current System:

- Hailey is eligible for the At Home Program where receives medical supplies as needed. As part of this program, Hailey has access to School Aged Extended Therapies when she turns 5. This provides Hailey's family with approximately \$5,600 for each of physical therapy, occupational therapy, and speech language therapy.
 - Over Hailey's childhood, she is eligible to receive \$218,000 in support plus all medical supplies.
-

After Expansion:

- Hailey is eligible for the **Disability Benefit** and based on the needs-based review process, will receive the maximum benefit allocation of \$17,000/year. This funding can be used to augment respite support, provide counselling for parents, and therapies and supports for Hailey.
- She remains eligible for medical supplies as needed through At Home Program Medical Benefits.
- Hailey's parents have been receiving the federal DTC since she was very young.
- Because Hailey receives the federal DTC, she is automatically enrolled for the new **Disability Supplement**, with no additional application required. This enrollment includes an assessment of her parent's income, and not of Hailey's support needs as she is already eligible for the federal DTC.
- With an adjusted family net income of \$150,000, Hailey's family qualifies for \$2,000 per year in additional Disability Supplement funding (to age 18).
- Hailey's family will now receive **\$19,000** per year to support Hailey, representing nearly **\$360,000** in support over her childhood (plus medical supplies provided through At Home Program Medical Benefits) (ages 0-19).
- Hailey may have access to **free community programming** – including expanded programming in areas of behaviour support, mental health, and 6-18 programming.

Persona 4 - Ollie

Ollie has autism⁵. He is highly verbal and does not have an intellectual disability. He struggles significantly in social interactions and requires intensive social skill development. He also has ADHD and requires modifications at home, school, and in all environments to ensure he remains self-regulated. Ollie's adjusted family net income is \$120,000 per year.

Current System:

- Ollie has autism and is eligible for Autism Funding – this means he will receive \$22,000 per year from age of diagnosis to age 5. At age 6, this amount will decrease to \$6,000 per year. If Ollie was diagnosed at age 6 (most common age of diagnosis in BC), he would receive \$78,000 in support over his childhood.
 - Ollie also has access to provincially funded early intervention therapies through a local Child Development Centre.
-

After Expansion:

- Ollie does not qualify for the **Disability Benefit**. While his disability affects his self-regulation and social interactions, his needs do not meet the eligibility threshold for this benefit, which is designed to support children with disabilities with the most significant need for support in daily living.
 - Ollie still requires early intervention and social supports.
 - Ollie's parents applied for, and receive, the federal DTC on Ollie's behalf at age 6.
 - Because Ollie receives the federal DTC, he is automatically enrolled for the new **Disability Supplement**, with no additional application required. This enrollment includes an assessment of his parent's income, and not of Ollie's support needs as he is already eligible for the federal DTC.
 - With an adjusted family net income of \$120,000, Ollie's family qualifies for \$3,200 per year in Disability Supplement funding (to age 18).
 - In total, Ollie's parents will receive **\$3,200** each year to support therapies, tutoring, specialized recreation, and other supports, representing approximately **\$42,000** in support over his childhood (ages 6-18).
 - Ollie will be prioritized for access to **free community programming** – including expanded programming in areas of behaviour support, speech language therapy, mental health, and 6–18-year-old programming.
-

⁵ Many children have multiple concurrent conditions (such as anxiety, ADHD, and other developmental or mental health needs). The ministry uses person-first language ("children with autism") to avoid presuming how any individual identifies.

Persona 5 – Elliot

Elliot is a 5-year-old child with autism⁶ and a significant intellectual disability. He is non-verbal and requires intensive, ongoing support across all areas of daily living, learning, and communication. Elliot lives with his parents, with an adjusted family net income of \$95,000 per year.

Current System:

- ▶ Elliot is eligible for Autism Funding, through which his family receives approximately \$22,000 per year until his sixth birthday to support behavioural intervention and therapy.
- ▶ At age 5, Elliot also becomes eligible for the At Home Program – School Age Extended Therapies (SAET). Through SAET, his family accesses approximately \$10,000 per year in therapy supports.
- ▶ Between age 5 and his 19th birthday, Elliot’s family is expected to receive approximately \$140,000 in SAET funding.
- ▶ In total, under the current system, Elliot’s family would receive approximately \$162,000 in direct funding supports over his childhood, excluding any medical benefits accessed through the At Home Program.

After Expansion:

- ▶ Elliot is eligible for the **Disability Benefit** and based on the needs-based review process, receives the maximum benefit of \$17,000 per year. This funding can be used flexibly to support behavioural intervention, therapies, respite, and other disability-related supports based on Elliot’s needs and his family’s priorities.
- ▶ Elliot is also eligible for the **Disability Supplement**, an income-tested benefit available to families who receive the federal DTC.
- ▶ With an adjusted family net income of \$95,000, Elliot’s family qualifies for an additional Disability Supplement of \$4,200 per year (to age 18).
- ▶ Combined, Elliot’s family will receive **\$21,200** per year in direct financial support representing approximately **\$292,000** in direct funding over his childhood (ages 5-19).
- ▶ Elliot may be able to receive access to services in community, including expanded programming in areas of behaviour support, mental health, and 6-18 programming.

⁶ Many children have multiple concurrent conditions (such as anxiety, ADHD, and other developmental or mental health needs). The ministry uses person-first language (“children with autism”) to avoid presuming how any individual identifies.



Expansion of Community Based Services

Purpose, Goals, and Intentions

Over the next three years, new investments will expand community-based services so that more families can access them. Expanded services will include behavioural/mental health supports, navigation/family support, programming for children/youth aged 6-18, and pediatric therapies. Services will be delivered through community agencies across B.C. that specialize in child development.

Expanded services are designed to be inclusive, responsive, and strengths-based, helping your child or youth to thrive at home, at school, and in their community.

By expanding community-based services, families will experience:

- Improved access to high-quality supports closer to home, reducing travel time and wait periods.
- Support across childhood and adolescence, not just in the early years or during short windows of eligibility.
- Less financial pressure, as more services are available at no cost or low cost, reducing reliance on out-of-pocket spending.
- Greater continuity of care, with services that are easier to navigate and access consistently over time.
- More choice, allowing families to combine community-based services with direct funding or private supports in ways that work best for them.

Eligibility

Services are available to children and youth aged 0-18. No diagnosis is required.

Services

Expanded Priority Service Areas

Expanded community-based services will focus on four priority areas, designed to respond earlier to children's needs, reduce wait times, and ensure the right level of support is available as needs change over time.

Behavioural and Mental Health Supports

Expanded services will support children and youth experiencing behavioural or mental health challenges, including aggression, anxiety, emotional regulation difficulties, social challenges, and school exclusion. Supports may include assessment-informed intervention, skill-building, caregiver coaching, and coordinated care for children with more complex or escalating needs. These services are intended to intervene earlier, stabilize families, and reduce the need for crisis-driven responses.

Navigation and Family Support

Navigation and family support services will help families understand what supports are available and how to access them across health, education, and community systems. These services reduce the burden on families to coordinate care on their own and support planning, referrals, and transitions as children's needs evolve. Navigation services will be particularly important for families with complex needs, those without a single diagnosis, and those living in rural or remote communities.

Programming for Children and Youth Aged 6–18

Expanded programming will increase access to age-appropriate services for school-aged children and youth, including therapeutic, behavioural, social, and recreational supports. Programming will be designed to build skills, promote participation, and support wellbeing across home, school, and community settings. Group-based and community-delivered models will be used where appropriate to support social development, reduce isolation, and serve more children sooner.

Pediatric Therapies

Pediatric therapy services—including speech-language pathology, occupational therapy, and physiotherapy—will continue and be expanded, with a stronger focus on integration with behavioural and mental health supports. These services support children's communication, mobility, self-care, and daily functioning, and are delivered in ways that align with children's goals and everyday environments, such as home, community, and school settings.

Service Delivery Approach

Services will be delivered by qualified and appropriately regulated professionals and support workers, using evidence-informed, team-based models of care.

Providers may include:

- Behavioural specialists
- Family support workers and navigators
- Mental health support professionals
- Occupational therapists (OTs)
- Physical therapists (PTs)
- Speech-language pathologists (SLPs)

Team-based approaches will allow professionals to work to their full scope of practice, extend the reach of specialized clinicians, and ensure children receive timely, coordinated supports that match the complexity of their needs.

Transition and Phased Implementation

Expansion of services will be phased over multiple years to ensure sustainable growth.

You can expect services to be rolled out according to the following timeline:

Spring 2026: continued expansion of existing early intervention therapies (occupational, physio, speech therapies and behaviour support)

Summer 2027: continued expanded behaviour and mental health supports

Winter 2027: expanded navigation and family support

Spring 2028: expanded programming for children and teens



Children and Youth with
Support Need Services

For more information and resources:
gov.bc.ca/ChildYouthSupports

