



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

gov.bc.ca/ChildYouthSupports

Phone (local): 236-478-2800

1-800 / Canada and USA: 1-844-442-2800

MCF.ChildrenYouthSupportNeeds@gov.bc.ca

