

**Ministry of
Children and Family Development**

**2013/14 – 2015/16
SERVICE PLAN**

February 2013



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Ministry of Children and Family Development,
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Published by the Ministry of Children and Family Development

Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement



I am honoured to present the 2013/14 – 2015/16 Service Plan for the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

Dedicated to serving our province's most vulnerable children and families, the ministry continues to focus on the Families First Agenda, a plan that ensures families are at the forefront of the decisions we make.

This year's Service Plan sees the ministry moving forward to improve the quality of programs delivered to children and their families across key service areas: Early Years; Services for Children and Youth with Special Needs; Child and Youth Mental Health; Child Safety, Family Support and Children in Care Services; Adoption Services and Youth Justice Services.

A firm commitment to improve outcomes for the children and families accessing these services is borne out in our new performance management project. This will be a significant body of work for the ministry over the next two years as we increase public reporting on ministry performance and commit to an ongoing, meaningful examination of how well our existing programs and services are supporting the children and families of BC, followed by measureable action on improvement.

We have celebrated accomplishments and addressed challenges over the past year including the creation of the Provincial Office of Domestic Violence, the implementation of a joint Advocacy Protocol with the Representative for Children and Youth, and the implementation of a new Child Protection Response Model.

The ongoing implementation of the Integrated Case Management System (ICM) remains a key area of focus that has presented the ministry with significant challenges. The system is a large, complex multi-phase project that replaces numerous outdated information systems across a wide range of critical social programs. Implementation in 2012 has been a major undertaking for the ministry. System improvements and staff training continue to support this modern platform that will help us improve collaboration and coordination of services to children and families. I believe with the plan currently in place and efforts going forward, we will realize the benefits of ICM – a better system of information sharing that meets the needs of frontline staff and protects vulnerable citizens.

The *Ministry of Children and Family Development 2013/14 – 2015/16 Service Plan* was prepared under my direction, in accordance with the Budget Transparency and Accountability Act.

I am accountable for the basis on which the plan is prepared and for achieving the specific objectives in the plan.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scadieux".

The Honourable Stephanie Cadieux
Minister of Children and Family Development
February 6, 2013

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Purpose of the Ministry

Ministry Mission

The Ministry of Children and Family Development supports healthy child development by its commitment to a collaborative professional practice delivered across a range of services that strive to maximize the potential of children and youth and achieve meaningful outcomes for children, youth and families.

The foundation of the ministry's work is in providing effective services to support healthy, safe environments where children are connected to their family and community. The primary focus of the ministry is to support vulnerable children and their families using a client-centred approach to service delivery that builds on their existing resources and capacities. This client-centred approach focuses the ministry on delivering services in a respectful, compassionate, strengths-based and culturally appropriate manner that maximizes the potential of children, youth and families to achieve meaningful outcomes.

Ministry services are complementary and families may access a combination of services delivered through the following service lines:

- **Early Years Services** improve parent/caregiver and child outcomes by providing programs and services that are intended to improve school readiness rates, nutrition and health status, social and emotional behaviour, parent-child attachment and community engagement and, in the case of child care, support labour market attachment.
- **Services for Children and Youth with Special Needs (CYSN)** promote the healthy development of children with special needs, maximize their quality of life and assist families in their role as primary caregivers.
- **Child and Youth Mental Health (CYMH) Services** offer a wide range of mental health interventions to promote mental health, provide early intervention and intervene appropriately to address mental health concerns for children, youth and their families.
- **Child Safety, Family, Youth and Children in Care Services**
 - **Child Safety Services** receive and assess reports about child safety using the Child Protection Response Model. A Family Development Response (FDR) is the predominant response to collaboratively supporting families to address concerns when the circumstances do not involve severe abuse or neglect and families are able and willing to participate in collaborative assessment and planning. A more formal investigation is reserved for circumstances that involve severe abuse or neglect or

where the family is not able or willing to participate in collaborative assessment. Services are short term, ranging from 30 days for investigations to 120 days for FDR.

- **Family, Child and Youth Support and Care Services** provide prevention, early intervention and longer term intervention, support, and care services. The first area of focus is to provide support to enable parents to effectively care for their children, through referral to community services, offering support services or the provision of ongoing protection services; in circumstances where this is not possible, to support extended family to care for children and youth; and where necessary, to provide quality alternative living arrangements for the care and development of children and youth until they can return to their families or transition to independence as a young adult.
- **Adoption Services** find permanent care for children and youth who cannot return to the care of their birth parents and provide reunification supports for those who have been involved in a BC adoption and are searching for their birth families. In the coming year, Adoption Services will be more closely integrated with Family, Child and Youth Support and Care Services.
- **Youth Justice Services** promote the development of law-abiding behaviour primarily through an integrated, multi-disciplinary approach for youth who are in conflict with the law.

The ministry organizational structure has been incrementally realigned to better support accountability and provide a platform for effective organizational management and reporting. Ministry programs and services are coordinated through a provincial office located in Victoria and are delivered through 13 geographic Service Delivery Areas which are made up of 47 Local Service Areas. In some service lines, locally delivered services are enhanced through a number of provincially delivered services including:

- Child Care Operational Funding and Subsidy Funding Services (Early Years)
- Children and Youth with Special Needs Autism and Medical Services Funding (CYSN)
- Provincial Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing (CYSN)
- Child and Youth Mental Health *Friends* program (CYMH)
- The Maples Adolescent Treatment Centre Services (CYMH)
- Provincial Adoption Services (Adoption Services)
- Youth Education Assistance Fund (Child Safety, Family, Youth and Children in Care Services)
- Youth Custody Services and Youth Forensic Psychiatric Services (Youth Justice Services)



The cross-ministry Provincial Office of Domestic Violence, which was created to coordinate government's response to domestic violence, is also housed within the ministry with a focus on the identification of policies, practices and services across government that provide effective support to individuals and families experiencing domestic violence.

A critical focus for the ministry is working in partnership with Aboriginal communities to improve services and outcomes for Aboriginal children, youth and families with the vision of Aboriginal children and youth living in healthy families strongly connected to their culture, language and traditions. A key partner in providing services to Aboriginal children and families are Delegated Aboriginal Agencies (DAAs) which, through the development of agreements between the Province and First Nations communities, are given authority under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act* to provide child safety and family, child and youth support, care and adoption services. Further, the ministry works with Aboriginal communities and other government partners to improve access to quality prevention and early intervention services that are focused on strengthening Aboriginal families and reducing the number of Aboriginal children coming into care.

In delivering its services, the ministry works closely with a wide range of community social service agencies.

The ministry's partnerships, with the Federal Government, other provinces and territories, as well as other provincial ministries, enable the ministry to provide children and families with more integrated and coordinated cross-government services.

The work of the ministry is guided by the following legislation that outlines roles and responsibilities for the ministry, Delegated Aboriginal Agencies and contracted community agencies:

- *Child, Family and Community Service Act*
- *Adoption Act*
- *Youth Justice Act*
- *Youth Criminal Justice Act (Canada)*
- *Child Care BC Act*
- *Child Care Subsidy Act*
- *Community Care and Assisted Living Act*
- *Social Workers Act*

Strategic Context

The ministry works to ensure that children, youth and families in British Columbia are provided with the right services at the right time, in order to meet their needs. Current international, federal and provincial trends and issues create both challenges and opportunities that affect services for children, youth and families in the province – specifically, the economy, changing demographics, new technologies, and the need for open engagement influence the environment in which the ministry operates.

Economic Conditions

This is a period of slower economic growth, affecting governments and citizens everywhere. In this environment of fiscal restraint, the ministry continues to work on improving service design and focus, cost management, human resource management, and service information management processes, systems and analysis to ensure effective and efficient use of available resources.

The Economic Forecast Council estimates that British Columbia's real GDP grew by 2.1 per cent in 2012 and projects that the rate of real GDP growth will remain at 2.1 per cent in 2013, before increasing to 2.5 per cent in 2014. Risks to British Columbia's economic outlook include a return to recession in the US; the European sovereign debt crisis threatening the stability of global financial markets; slower than anticipated economic growth in Asia dampening demand for BC exports; and a weakening of the US dollar disrupting the financial markets and raising the cost of BC exports abroad.

The challenging economic environment for BC means the ministry must be innovative and responsive to the increasing caseload and workload challenges it faces. In response, the ministry is realigning and streamlining its management, policy and corporate support services. The focus is on reviewing and realigning services to better achieve key outcomes based on evidence-informed and effective delivery. The ministry is also incrementally implementing a range of change management strategies including the use of Lean, a continuous improvement approach, to support staff to standardize and improve the efficiency of procedures and processes across the ministry, and support the consistent delivery of programs and services across the province.

In partnership with the Union of BC Municipalities, the ministry will continue to work on delivering regional strategies focused on reducing poverty at the individual and community level. These locally developed strategies help ensure service systems work together to the benefit of those in need, and promote practical and effective approaches to reducing poverty using existing resources in innovative and more responsive ways.

Demographic Changes

The child and youth population of British Columbia is forecasted to gradually increase each year producing a greater demand for services.

In this context, Aboriginal people in BC represent the fastest growing and most youthful demographic in the province. Between 2001 and 2006, the Aboriginal population in BC grew by 15 per cent, more than three times the growth rate of the non-Aboriginal population. Children and youth aged 24 and

under made up almost one-half (46 per cent) of all Aboriginal people in the province, compared with 29 per cent of the non-Aboriginal population.

Improved outcomes for Aboriginal children and families, built from connection to culture, language and traditions, is a key area of focus for the ministry. Services for Aboriginal children, youth and families are developed and delivered in a manner that resonates with the vision and aspiration of First Nation and Métis peoples.

The ministry is adapting its approach to working with families to consistently provide effective professional helping relationships and ensure the safety and well-being of children and youth. The ministry will work with partner ministries, municipal governments and community agencies to support strengthening communities to care for and protect vulnerable children, youth and families. The ministry is working with partners across the sector (staff, Aboriginal and mainstream agencies, foster parents, children and youth in care, and the Representative for Children and Youth) to design and implement a more integrated community-based service system for children, youth and families.

Changing demographics in the workplace are naturally leading to increased retirements across the public service providing both a loss of expertise and the opportunity for new entrants to a social services career. In addition, the ministry must effectively support and develop its changing workforce within the context of increasing demand and fiscal restraint. There is a direct and positive correlation between workplace healthy lifestyle promotion, workplace wellness and the ministry's strategic direction to achieve operational and service excellence. In response there will be a strong focus on creating a healthy organizational culture across the sector. Additionally, organizational learning, growth and continuous improvement of practice will also be a key area of focus over the coming three years.

Technology, Open Data and Public Engagement

The ministry recognizes that existing and emerging technology generates new opportunities for how services are delivered as well as transforming the relationship between citizens and the delivery of services to children, youth and families.

In 2012–13, the ministry introduced the new Integrated Case Management System (ICM), a complex multi-phase project, to replace numerous outdated information systems across a wide range of critical social programs. Implementing a system of this size is a major undertaking for the ministry and will remain a key area of focus and effort over the next two years to bring it to a successful completion. The continued implementation of ICM will increasingly provide a modern platform that will strengthen performance reporting, analysis and management, and enable improved collaboration and coordination of services to children, youth and families.

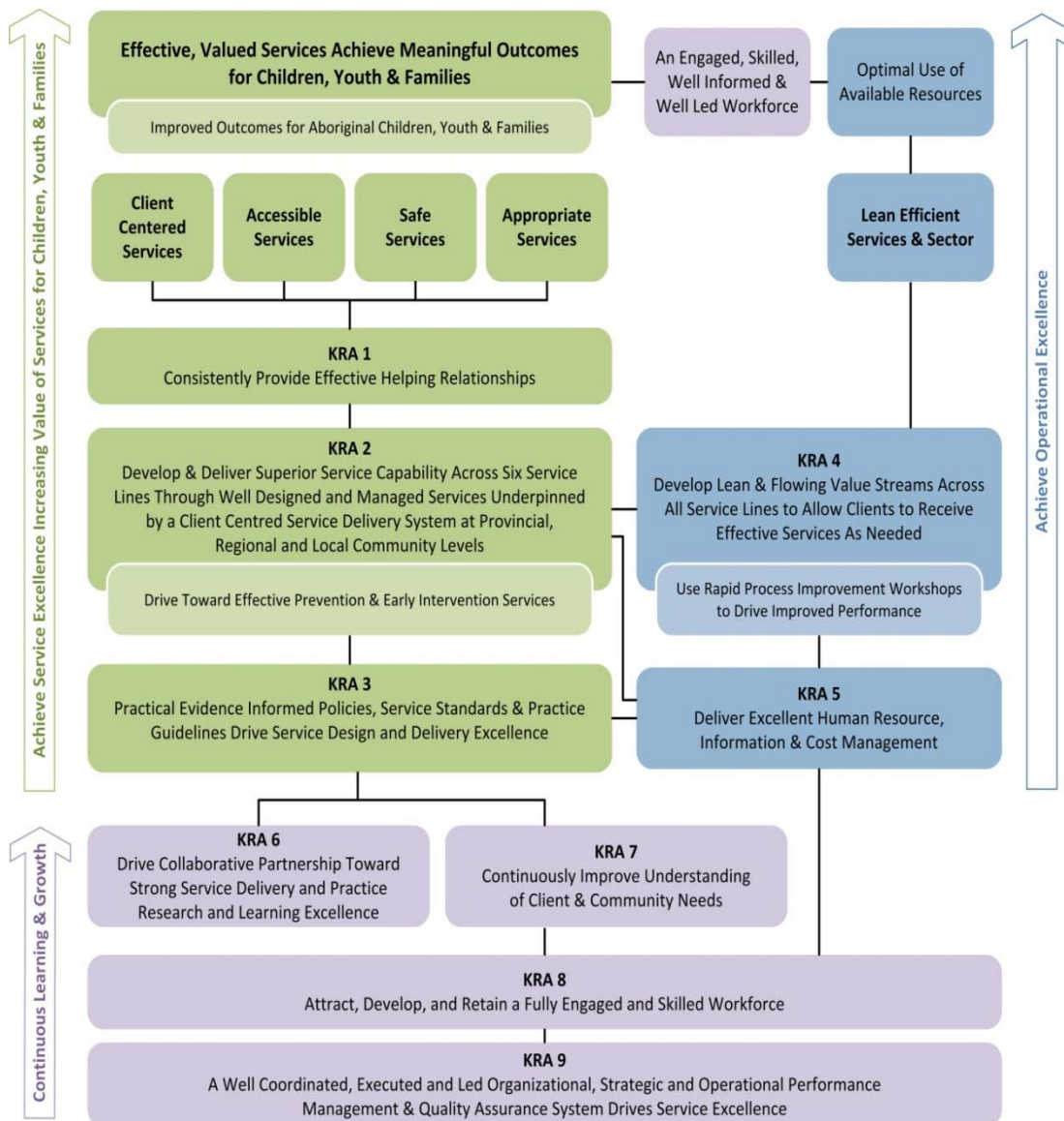
Open government is about the information we share, the spirit in which we share it, and the opportunities people have to participate in decisions that make a difference in their lives. Public engagement enhances our government's effectiveness and improves the quality of our decisions.

Over the coming two years, increased public reporting on ministry performance will support a stronger quality assurance system and enhanced transparency. The ministry will increasingly report out on performance across its six service delivery lines and five dimensions of quality: effective, client-centred, accessible, safe and appropriate services.

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Measures

The ministry’s goals are aligned to the three strategic themes of its strategy map: achieve service excellence, pursue continuous learning and growth, and achieve operational excellence. The strategy map sets out an overall plan for the ministry, built on key result areas (KRAs) that are linked in a cause and effect relationship, building from learning and growth, through key internal processes to support child, youth and family outcomes. This service plan continues to reflect the ministry’s work on its three year Operational and Strategic Directional Plan, published in May 2012.

Ministry Strategy Map



Goal 1: Achieve service excellence

Objective 1.1: Early Years

Children and families are supported with a strong network of coordinated, family-centred, culturally relevant and responsive early childhood development and child care services.

Research underscores that early experiences shape brain development and are a critical foundation for all future learning, behavior, and health with genes and the environment dynamically interacting to shape a child's developmental trajectory. Secure and stable social relationships with caring adults are critical to development with the "serve and return" communications relationship between parents and children forming the foundation of healthy development. Early years services and access to quality child care can provide a critical support to parents and their children.

Early Childhood Development (ECD): ECD programs in BC aim to assist parents, families and service providers in providing the best possible start for children from birth to six years of age. The programs currently serve a broad range of families from a variety of cultural backgrounds based primarily on individuals seeking services. Some programs are focused on the general young family population while others are focused on specific sub-populations: Aboriginal; immigrant; refugee; low-income; and those which are geographically and/or socially isolated.

Child Care: Child care programs are utilized and required by parents in a number of different circumstances. While the majority of child care is targeted at working parents, it is also needed by those who are attending school or participating in an employment-related program. In addition, child care supports parents who, due to a medical condition, are unable to care for their children full-time, and plays a supportive role for vulnerable and at-risk families by providing access to opportunities that enrich children's healthy development and improve mothers' and fathers' parenting skills. Preschool and child care services are also sought by parents to provide their children with rich learning experiences in their early years and positively affect their social, emotional, physical and cognitive development. While child care programs primarily serve families with children aged 0-12, some children with special needs who require extra support and are unable to care for themselves may be served through child care programs up to the age of 18.



Strategies

- Implement an integrated Early Childhood Development and Child Care service delivery system across all Local Service Areas that provides access to parenting and service information for families with young children, more targeted evidence-informed prevention and early intervention services

for higher risk children and their families, and more support for parents making choices about quality child care options.

Objective 1.2: Services for Children and Youth with Special Needs

Children and youth with special needs will experience optimal development, health, well-being and achievement through improved access to effective and coordinated services.

The term ‘children and youth with special needs’ (CYSN) refers to those children and youth up to 19 years of age who require significant additional educational, medical/health and social/environmental support – beyond that required by children in general – to enhance or improve their health, development, learning, quality of life, participation and community inclusion.

The approach to caring for CYSN has evolved over the last twenty-five years from an institutional, medical model to one based on family and community support. The focus is on assisting families to care for CYSN at home, and supporting the inclusion of CYSN in their school and community settings. These supports lead to greater resilience and lower stress for families as well as increased workforce participation and school attendance.

Research indicates that a combination of intervention and support services is required to ensure best outcomes for CYSN and their families. There has been a great deal of research on the effects of having a child with a disability - on parents and other family members - which could range from increased stress and stress-related negative health outcomes to increased pressure on family income.

To address stress experienced by parents of children with disabilities, services such as respite care can be used to reduce demands on parents. Also, access to additional family support services, such as parenting and professional supports, is key to the long-term stability of children and youth with special needs.

In addition to family support services, intervention services are required to adequately address needs of CYSN along the continuum. Evidence and best practice suggest that access to early intervention services is critical to the optimal development and growth of children and youth with special needs.



Strategies

- Develop a strategy to improve access to school-age therapy services building from an examination of alternate models for the organization and delivery of pediatric therapy services and a mapping of services in BC.
- Develop a more coordinated approach for children with concurrent mental health and behaviour conditions to better serve children who have complex needs.
- Continue incremental implementation of the Autism Outreach program to improve access to CYSN autism services in rural and remote areas of BC, focusing on improved support and training for parents and caregivers.
- Review and analyze how Aboriginal children, youth and families living on and off-reserve access CYSN services and identify opportunities for service improvements.

Objective 1.3: Child and Youth Mental Health Services (CYMH)

Children and youth achieve and maintain positive mental health and development through timely access to quality prevention programs, supports and treatment.

The ministry delivers services to children and youth from infancy to 19 years of age through community-based Child and Youth Mental Health teams, the Maples Adolescent Treatment Centre and Youth Forensic Psychiatric Services as well as substance-use services for youth involved with the justice system.

The mental health of infants, children and youth is integral to their overall healthy development and well-being. When children struggle with mental health challenges, it interferes with their ability to function and their relationships - at home, at school and in the community. Between 50 per cent and 74 per cent of mental disorders start in childhood and then persist into adulthood. The ministry's continuum of services includes mental health promotion, prevention, reduction of risk for mental health problems and earlier evidence-based interventions to support children and youth with mental disorders. These services can play an important role in improving children's mental health by decreasing the incidence of future problems or reducing their severity.

Strategies

- Improve access to quality services through increased effective and efficient service delivery across Local Service Areas.
- Strengthen the continuum of mental health services and supports at a provincial level.
- Strengthen mental health promotion, risk reduction initiatives, and earlier intervention support for children, youth and their families, including online information and access to group support.

- Review and improve the ministry’s approach to Aboriginal Child and Youth Mental Health Services, including, but not limited to, the role of culture and identity in overall mental health and wellness.
- Review existing treatment modalities to confirm that they are evidence based and effective and establish a menu of service approaches and treatment modalities that should be available to address major presenting illnesses and conditions.
- Explore and support opportunities for the use of technology, including how to provide services to rural and remote locations.

Performance Measure 1: Number of tele-mental health sessions.

| Performance Measure | 2011/12 Baseline | 2012/13 Forecast | 2013/14 Target | 2014/15 Target | 2015/16 Target |
|---|------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Total number of tele-mental health sessions | 24 | 65* | 75 | 90 | 110 |

Data Source: Children’s & Women’s Hospital

*Apr-Dec 6, 2012 actual total is 49

Discussion

Tele-mental health was started in the North in 2011 as a mental health pilot project to increase access to psychiatric consultation for children living in rural and remote areas. It supports direct clinical tele-health consultation for children and youth from CYMH who receive psychiatric consultation from psychiatrists located at BC Children’s Hospital in Vancouver. This project is now embedded in practice in the North and the longer term plan is to expand its usage across the province. This measure is an indicator of the growth of this practice.

Child Safety, Family, Youth and Children in Care Services

Objective 1.4: Child Safety Services

Effectively addressing child and youth safety and well-being reports.

A number of families need extra support to provide safe and nurturing care for their children. Under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*, child welfare workers assess every report about a child’s need for protection and respond through the Child Protection Response Model with a variety of approaches including: Family Development Response (FDR), Child Protection Investigation Response and Youth Services Response. Family Development Response is the preferred response when the circumstances do not involve severe abuse or neglect and families are able and willing to participate in collaborative assessment and planning. FDR, through building on the family’s strengths, focuses on how to keep children safe while the family stays together and works through challenges.

Strategies

- Continued implementation and evaluation of the Child Protection Response Model.

Performance Measure 2: Ratio of Family Development Responses to Investigations.

| Performance Measure | 2011/12 Baseline | 2012/13 Forecast | 2013/14 Target | 2014/15 Target | 2015/16 Target |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Ratio of Family Development Responses to Investigations | 0.46 | 0.5 | 0.7 | 0.9 | 1.0 |

Data Source: Management Information System/Social Worker System, Family Group Conferencing Information System and the Dispute Resolution Office.

Discussion

By building upon their inherent strengths, families can increase their capacity to safely care for their children.

Family Development Response (FDR) is used as an alternative to investigation. FDR is an approach that focuses on keeping a child safe while living in the family home and, through the provision of services, works to address safety issues by building on the family's strengths and support system. This response does not include determining findings of abuse or neglect but does involve an assessment of safety.

This performance measure compares the use of FDR to the use of investigations. The ratio rises as the use of FDR increases and the use of investigations decreases. For example, a ratio of 0.5 means that the number of completed FDRs was half the number of completed investigations. A ratio of 1.0 means that an equal number of FDRs were completed relative to the number of completed investigations.

Objective 1.5: Family, Child and Youth Support and Care Services

Children and youth will grow up in safe, stable environments that promote permanency and meet their emotional, cultural and developmental needs.

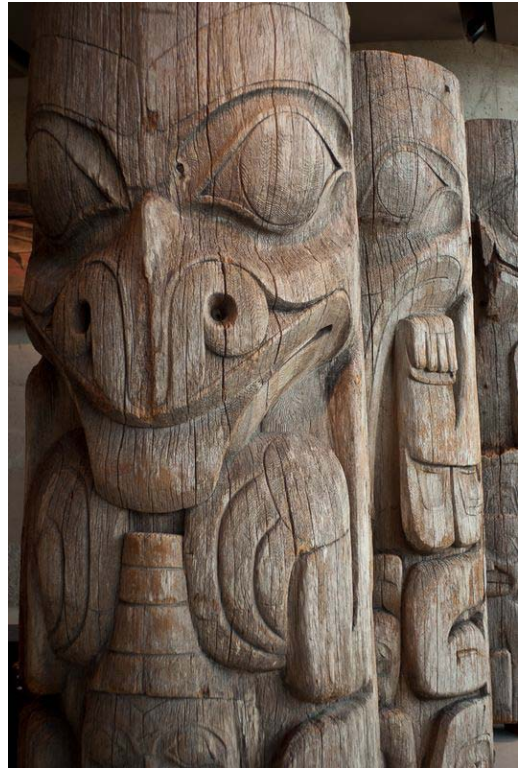
The ministry employs collaborative planning and decision-making processes to provide services and develop care plans for children and youth. These processes involve working collaboratively with the child or youth's immediate and extended family to ensure safety and effective planning. Services range from family service supports to supporting requests for kinship care placements, meeting the needs of children and youth in care, and providing permanency.

Improved services and outcomes for Aboriginal children and youth remain the major focus of any service improvement initiatives in this service line. The ministry will work with Aboriginal communities, supporting their efforts to strengthen their capacity to care for and protect their vulnerable children, youth and families.

The ministry will also continue planning and consulting with Delegated Aboriginal Agencies and other First Nations and Aboriginal partners in the development of a consistent policy and practice framework for all children, including Aboriginal children as well as actively working with Aboriginal community stakeholders to promote culturally appropriate permanency planning and culturally appropriate adoption of Aboriginal children in care.

Strategies

- Review and recommend improvements to family services at the Local Service Area (LSA) level, focusing on addressing identified high frequency needs of families seeking or referred for services.
- Continue focused work on strategies to reduce poverty. Continue implementation, action research and evaluation on work undertaken and identify opportunities for expansion across additional communities.
- Continue to focus on increasing effective community-based initiatives that support Aboriginal children and youth living in strong healthy families.
- Building on recommendations from the joint ministry/Federation of Community Social Services of BC 2010-12 review project, implement changes for a more integrated community-based service system for children and youth residing out of the parental home.
 - Ensure that children, youth and families receiving services are engaged in helping relationships based on clear, evidence informed standards.
 - Design and implement integrated team structures at the community level, including ministry and/or DAA teams, Community Social Service Agencies and foster parents, focused on providing quality care and better meeting the developmental needs of children and youth in care.
 - Link foster caregivers into a multidisciplinary hub to increase clinical and practice supports and oversight.
 - Develop and expand Post-Majority Services and Supports in collaboration with other ministries, non-governmental organizations, educational institutions, and the private sector to better support young adults transitioning from care or youth agreements up to age 24.



Performance Measure 3: Aboriginal children cared for through Aboriginal communities and providers.

| Performance Measure | 2011/12 Baseline | 2012/13 Forecast | 2013/14 Target | 2014/15 Target | 2015/16 Target |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Of the Aboriginal children having to leave their parental home, the per cent that receive services delivered by Delegated Aboriginal Agencies, Aboriginal foster care providers or Aboriginal friends and family | 58.6% | 60.0% | 61.0% | 61.5% | 62% |

Data Source: Management Information System/Social Worker System and Resource and Payment System.

Discussion

Aboriginal children are disproportionately represented in the child welfare system. Ensuring that Aboriginal children who have had to leave their parental home receive services through an Aboriginal service system strongly connects them to their culture and traditions. This may over time help to lessen the percentage of Aboriginal children in care.

Aboriginal children having to leave their parental home can receive culturally appropriate services either through a Delegated Aboriginal Agency or through the ministry. Of the Aboriginal children who had to leave their parental home, this measure is the proportion of those children who are being served by Delegated Aboriginal Agencies, or are receiving ministry services delivered by Aboriginal foster care providers or Aboriginal friends and family.

Performance Measure 4: Children in “out of home care” for at least two years who experience no change in placement.

| Performance Measure | 2011/12 Baseline | 2012/13 Forecast | 2013/14 Target | 2014/15 Target | 2015/16 Target |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Per cent of children in “out of home care” for at least two years who experienced no change in placement | 59.0% | 60.0% | 60.5% | 61.0% | 61.5% |

Data Source: Management Information System/Social Worker System and Resource and Payment System.

Discussion

Stability is essential for children to develop a sense of belonging and identity as they cope with separation from their families. Some placement changes are necessary and can be beneficial in terms of ensuring the right fit for the child or youth, but minimizing moves while in care increases their sense of stability, identity and belonging.

In this measure, “out of home care” includes children living with foster parents or with relatives for protection reasons. This measure is the proportion of these children who remain in the same placement for at least two years.

Performance Measure 5: Children under a continuing custody order whose grade level is as prescribed for their age.

| Performance Measure | 2011/12 Baseline | 2012/13 Forecast | 2013/14 Target | 2014/15 Target | 2015/16 Target |
|---|------------------|------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Per cent of children in care under continuing custody orders whose grade level is as prescribed for their age | 80.0% | 80.2% | 80.4% | 80.6% | 80.8% |

Data Source: Management Information System/Social Worker System and Ministry of Education enrolment data.

Discussion

Educational attainment is an excellent barometer of the overall well-being of a child. Furthermore, education is a key determinant of long term well-being and social inclusion. Additional challenges faced by vulnerable children and youth result in their being less likely in their adolescence to progress in school. The proportion of children and youth in care under a Continuing Custody Order (CCO) whose grade level is as prescribed for their age is a good measure of whether the system of support for children under a CCO ameliorates the impact of these additional vulnerabilities.

The ministry’s measure complements the Government Strategic Plan measure “Percentage of socio-economically disadvantaged children whose grade level is as prescribed for their age” by focusing on the component of socio-economically disadvantaged children that the ministry can most affect — children in care under Continuing Custody Orders.

(A Continuing Custody Order means that the Provincial Director of Child Welfare becomes the sole guardian of the child and the Public Guardian and Trustee becomes the guardian of the child’s estate.)

This measure is the per cent of children under a Continuing Custody Order in school and who are at most five years older than their grade. For example, a child six years of age before the end of December of the school year is typically in grade one.



Objective 1.6 Adoption Services

Children in permanent care with a plan for adoption will be provided with services and supports to facilitate timely adoption placements.

Children require a stable and continuous relationship with a nurturing person to maximize physical, social, emotional and intellectual development. If this relationship is not possible with the birth family or other extended family members, then permanency while in care is the next step. Adoption is one option within the permanency planning process.

Strategies

- Actively work with Aboriginal community stakeholders to promote culturally appropriate permanency planning and culturally appropriate adoption of Aboriginal children in care.

Performance Measure 6: Per cent of Aboriginal Children Adopted by Aboriginal Families.

| Performance Measure | 2011/12 Baseline | 2012/13 Forecast | 2013/14 Target | 2014/15 Target | 2015/16 Target |
|--|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Per cent of Aboriginal Children Adopted by Aboriginal Families | 65 | >65 | Improvement* | Improvement* | Improvement* |

Data Source: Adoption Management System

*Over previous year's rate.

Discussion

Aboriginal children continue to be disproportionately represented in continuing care, and remain in care for longer than non-Aboriginal children in care. Historically Aboriginal communities have objected to adoption of Aboriginal children outside of their Aboriginal families/communities and requested a moratorium on adoptions. The ministry is currently working with the First Nations community to address the complexities of developing and delivering culturally competent permanency services and supports to Aboriginal children in care. This measure speaks to the percentage of Aboriginal children who attain permanency through adoption by Aboriginal families.

Objective 1.7: Youth Justice Services

Youth who are in conflict with the law will be supported through an integrated, multi-disciplinary approach to develop law-abiding and prosocial behaviour.

Youth Justice Services have three components – Youth Custody Services, Youth Forensic Psychiatric Services and Community Youth Justice Services – which assist youth to learn constructive skills, behaviours and attitudes that support healthy developmental outcomes, increased resiliency and law-abiding behaviour. Community based interventions include: restorative justice measures, intensive support and supervision programs, forensic psychiatric assessment and treatment services, day attendance programs that address school/employment/social skills and contracted community residential treatment and rehabilitative placements.

Strategies

- Continue to improve gender-specific and gender-sensitive services for female young offenders.
- Continue to improve programs and services for Aboriginal youth involved in Youth Justice Services to better connect with their culture and community.

- Continue to enhance programs and services to engage and involve families of youth involved with Youth Justice Services.

Objective 1.8: Action on Domestic Violence

Increased coordination and development of services to improve and strengthen the prevention, early intervention and response to domestic violence.

The Provincial Office of Domestic Violence was created in March 2012 and is the permanent lead for the BC Government, focused on strengthening the services and supports available for children and families affected by domestic violence. The office is accountable for ensuring all provincial policies, programs and services related to domestic violence are effective and delivered in a coordinated way across government. It is also the responsibility of the office to monitor, evaluate and regularly report out on the effectiveness and progress of services, programs and initiatives aimed at addressing domestic violence.

Strategies

- Provide ongoing leadership and accountability for the implementation of the action plan, *Taking Action on Domestic Violence in BC*.
- Monitor the implementation of the three-year provincial plan to continually improve and strengthen the effectiveness of domestic violence policies, programs, and services.

Goal 2: Pursue continuous learning and growth

Objective 2.1: An engaged, skilled, well-led workforce, supported by collaborative partnerships, drives service excellence.

The ministry is committed to achieving this objective by working in partnership with Delegated Aboriginal Agencies, community based agencies, sectoral representatives and academic institutions.

The implementation of a strong performance management and quality assurance system will support continuous improvement within the ministry and ongoing public reporting of results.

Strategies

- Develop and implement an organizational research and learning system.
- Develop and implement a comprehensive learning, development and training plan to support quality service delivery.

- Continuing to implement and evaluate the clinical supervision training modules.
- Support training, implementation and evaluation of helping relationship practice across all direct service teams in provincial and regional ministry programs, Delegated Aboriginal Agencies, and contracted Community Social Service Agencies.
- Increase organizational cultural competency through experiential exposure to First Nation and Métis cultures, and mentorship by First Nation elders and members.
- Develop and implement a healthy workplace strategy.
- Implement Service Quality and Operational Evaluations for all services provided at the Local Service Area level.

Goal 3: Achieve operational excellence

Objective 3.1: Programs and services are provided with the best available human, information management and technology, and financial resources.

Operational excellence depends on strong human resources, information and cost management functions. The ministry has streamlined its management, policy and corporate support services with a focus on reviewing and realigning its services to better achieve key outcomes based on evidence-informed and effective delivery. The ministry is also incrementally implementing a range of change management strategies, including the use of Lean, a continuous improvement approach, to support staff to standardize and improve the efficiency of procedures and processes across the ministry, and support the consistent delivery of programs and services across the province.



Strategies

- Improve the ministry's information management, reporting and analysis capacity to provide enhanced public reporting.
- Continue to develop and implement evidence informed standards and practice guidelines to enable and guide service delivery.
- Strengthen the ministry's change management capacity, through the use of tools like Lean, to improve efficiency.
- Improve the ministry's cost management capacity.

- Implement a standardized contracting approach and routine quarterly reporting to strengthen procurement and contract management processes.
- Continue to develop and implement the Integrated Case Management system to support improved planning and information sharing among practitioners.

Resource Summary

| Core Business Areas | 2012/13 Restated Estimates ¹ | 2013/14 Estimates | 2014/15 Plan | 2015/16 Plan |
|--|---|----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Operating Expenses (\$000) | | | | |
| Early Childhood Development and Child Care Services ² | 258,042 | 264,121 | 275,711 | 310,012 |
| Services for Children and Youth with Special Needs ² | 286,596 | 292,328 | 287,384 | 287,384 |
| Child and Youth Mental Health Services..... | 78,569 | 78,707 | 78,846 | 78,846 |
| Child Safety, Family Support and Children in Care Services..... | 498,932 | 499,120 | 499,583 | 499,583 |
| Adoption Services..... | 26,522 | 26,543 | 26,563 | 26,563 |
| Youth Justice Services ³ | 46,390 | 46,127 | 46,265 | 46,265 |
| Service Delivery Support ² | 119,888 | 120,041 | 119,319 | 119,319 |
| Executive and Support Services | 18,128 | 18,052 | 17,973 | 17,973 |
| Total | 1,333,067 | 1,345,039 | 1,351,644 | 1,385,945 |
| Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000) | | | | |
| Executive and Support Services | 277 | 1,352 | 1,344 | 1,344 |
| Total | 277 | 1,352 | 1,344 | 1,344 |

| Core Business Areas | 2012/13 Restated Estimates ¹ | 2013/14 Estimates | 2014/15 Plan | 2015/16 Plan |
|---|---|----------------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Other Financing Transactions (\$000) | | | | |
| Executive and Support Services (Human Services Providers Financing Program) | | | | |
| Receipts | 31 | 31 | 31 | 31 |
| Disbursements | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Net Cash (Requirements) | 31 | 31 | 31 | 31 |

¹ For comparative purposes, amounts shown for the 2012/13 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2013/14 Estimates. Schedule A of the 2013/14 Estimates provides a detailed reconciliation.

² The ministry has received new funding for the following initiatives or pressures:

- Families First Early Years Strategy funding to implement the Early Years Office, integrate and re-profile Early Childhood Development programs and services, and create a Child Care registry;
- Office of Domestic Violence;
- Child and Youth Special Needs, one-time funding for caseload.

³ The gross budget for Youth Justice has been reduced due to a reduction in federal government spending on programs for young offenders, as announced on June 27, 2012.

*Further information on program funding and vote recoveries is available in the [Estimates and Supplement to the Estimates](#).

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Hyperlinks to Additional Information

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www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/about_us/pdf/CFD_FamilyRoots_booklet.pdf

Residential Services Review

www.fcssbc.ca/sf-docs/resrev/resrevfindings.pdf

Publicly Reported Performance Measures

www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/about_us/pdf/performance_2011.pdf

Educational Experiences of Children Under a Continuing Custody Order report

www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/foster/pdf/education_report_mar_2011.pdf

Integrated Case Management

www.integratedcasemanagement.gov.bc.ca

Key Partners:

Representative for Children and Youth

www.rcybc.ca/content/home.asp

Community Living British Columbia

www.communitylivingbc.ca/

Ombudsperson

www.bcombudsperson.ca/

Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia

www.trustee.bc.ca/