

Early Years Community Planning

FAQ

1. What is changing with the current system of community coordination?

- The Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) has historically funded organizations to carry out community coordination through Success by 6 and Children First initiatives.
- While community coordination has been successful in raising awareness and mobilizing local service providers, families continue to experience service gaps, and barriers to services have not been effectively addressed.
- The Ministry is concluding Success by 6 and Children First initiatives and re-directing funding into service that provides family navigation, family support, increased community belonging, support for Indigenous culture and language revitalization, and non-child care early learning.
- The function of service planning is being brought into government to allow for more effective strategic planning and service enhancements, at a significantly lower cost than the current system of community coordination.

2. How will the funding currently allocated to Success by 6 and Children First be used?

- All funding currently allocated to these initiatives will be redirected to services that directly support children and families.
- Direct services will include those that promote social belonging to address social isolation, support families experiencing vulnerabilities and multiple barriers, directly work with children to help them reach their developmental potential, support Indigenous culture and language revitalization, and help all families navigate the system of supports to make the connections they need.

3. How will early years service planning be conducted in the future?

- Government will assume responsibility for early years service planning. MCFD early years staff positions will be created across B.C. to carry out planning for local services, address service gaps, improve referral pathways to enhanced services, and ensure that all services are barrier-free in alignment with the Early Years Service Framework.
- Collaboration among community organization in local communities is expected to continue, and will always be an important pillar of good service planning.
- Government assuming responsibility for early years planning will allow for unprecedented use of government data and information systems, support from policy and procurement systems, and improved ability carry out real systemic changes and build strong cross-government linkages.
- In addition, government will be creating an equal number of Indigenous early years positions to support nation building, capacity enhancement, and planning for on and off-reserve First Nations and Metis peoples.

4. Why was the decision made to change how early years planning is conducted?

- In 2015, a local planning review investigated effectiveness of early years service planning, including the degree of overlap between Success by 6 and Children First. The review revealed a complex and inconsistent system of planning with significant duplication between initiatives, and a significant desire for change among stakeholders.

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- Efforts were made to strengthen the system of community coordination, including encouraging more collaboration between local organizations and government partners. However, the efforts have not yielded significant improvements.
- In late 2017, the United Way Lower Mainland (UWLM) and MCFD began discussions regarding the successes, challenges, and opportunities associated with the Success by 6 initiative in B.C. Both partners agreed that the model has achieved success in mobilizing service providers, credit unions, and others to raise awareness of the importance of the early years. Despite this success, both UWLM and MCFD independently concluded that community coordination was having a limited success in improving the system of supports available from government, and was of limited benefit to children and families currently in need.
- It was determined that government needed to assume responsibility for early years planning to ensure the system of supports is improved to address both long-standing and emerging needs of children and families.

5. How have community coordinators been involved in this change?

- In early 2018, the UWLM and MCFD gathered a group of approximately 65 Success by 6 and Children First coordinators to discuss changes. After this gathering, additional discussions occurred with interested coordinators regarding needed changes and next steps.
- Although discussions with coordinators continue, the Ministry has recognized it is difficult for coordinators to fully participate in discussions that will result in the discontinuation of their current positions. For this reason, the work has heavily relied on engagement with other partners and stakeholders.

6. Who else have you consulted to inform these changes?

- MCFD has worked with many arms of government and stakeholder groups including:
 - Internal ministry service delivery and policy staff;
 - Cross-government partners including other ministries and Health Authorities;
 - Indigenous partners such as the Métis Nation; and
 - Community service providers, including organizations that provide family mentorship and navigation services.

7. Some Success by 6 and Children First funding is issued to First Nations or other Indigenous organizations. Will these changes result in loss of funding to Indigenous communities?

- No. The flow of funding through the United Way will be ending, but this change will not result in loss of funding to Indigenous communities, funding will just flow differently.

8. Community coordination is valued by many community coordinators, is MCFD attempting to end this in favour of a government-only approach?

- MCFD recognizes that community coordination contributes to building healthy communities, and is not attempting to prevent this from occurring.
- It is important to note that community coordination existed before the creation of Success by 6 and Children First, and there are many other formal and informal community coordination activities that

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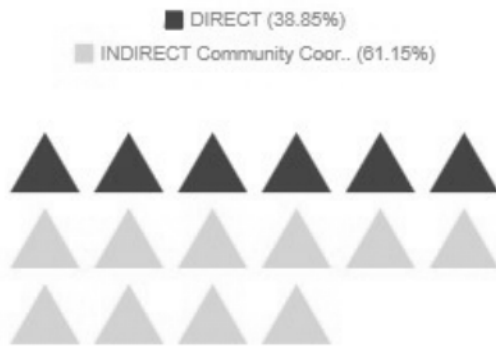
will continue to occur. For example, formal community coordination includes municipal level community planning, local intercultural planning tables, and Ministry of Health supported initiatives like Plan H and Healthy Families BC.

- MCFD expects that all organizations receiving Ministry funding will continue to actively connect and network with each other and with other government and community partners as a part of the work they do. This collaboration will be a key aspect of early years service planning conducted by government in future.
- 9. Community planning tables are used to leverage funding from other government, non-profit and private sources. Will this leveraging opportunity be lost?***
- MCFD does not expect that the ability of community organizations to act on opportunities from other government, non-profit and private sources will end as a result of these changes. Fifteen years of capacity building has left community organizations well poised to continue to access funding opportunities where they are available.
 - Government assuming responsibility for planning is also expected to improve the flow of early years information between government, non-profit, and private sectors, and enable stronger linkages between funding partners than were previously possible.
- 10. Will this change result in job loss for community coordinators?***
- In realigning Success by 6 and Children First funds to direct services, there will likely be a shift in employment opportunities in some communities.
- 11. Will existing Success by 6 and Children First funds be issued as part of a competitive procurement process, or just issued to existing government contractors?***
- MCFD intends to issue funding as part of a competitive process to ensure effective services are available to meet the needs of children and families in B.C. today. The ministry intends to proceed with these changes in a fair and transparent manner, and will ensure updates are provided as the process proceeds.

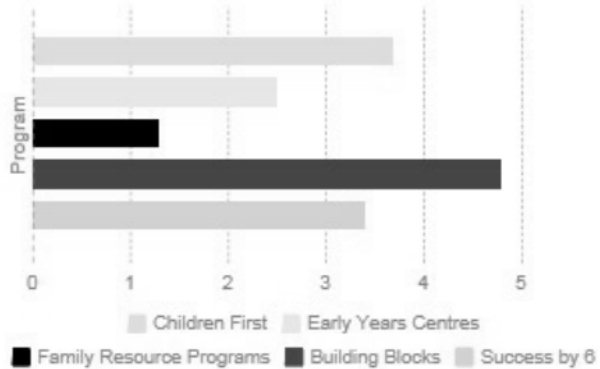
Implementation of Early Years Service Framework

CURRENT STATE

Current spending:



Spending by program (millions):



\$6M allocated to family support programs annually and over \$9M to community development(eg. early years planning tables)

FUTURE STATE

With implementation of the Early Years Service Framework how will funding be allocated going forward?



Over \$16M allocated annually to direct family programs and \$2.4M to planning and development

\$16M in funding allocated across the following key services:



Benefits to Families

- Improved access to free programs and services families need and want
- Improved pathways between services, such as to early intervention supports
- A more comprehensive and coordinated system of supports

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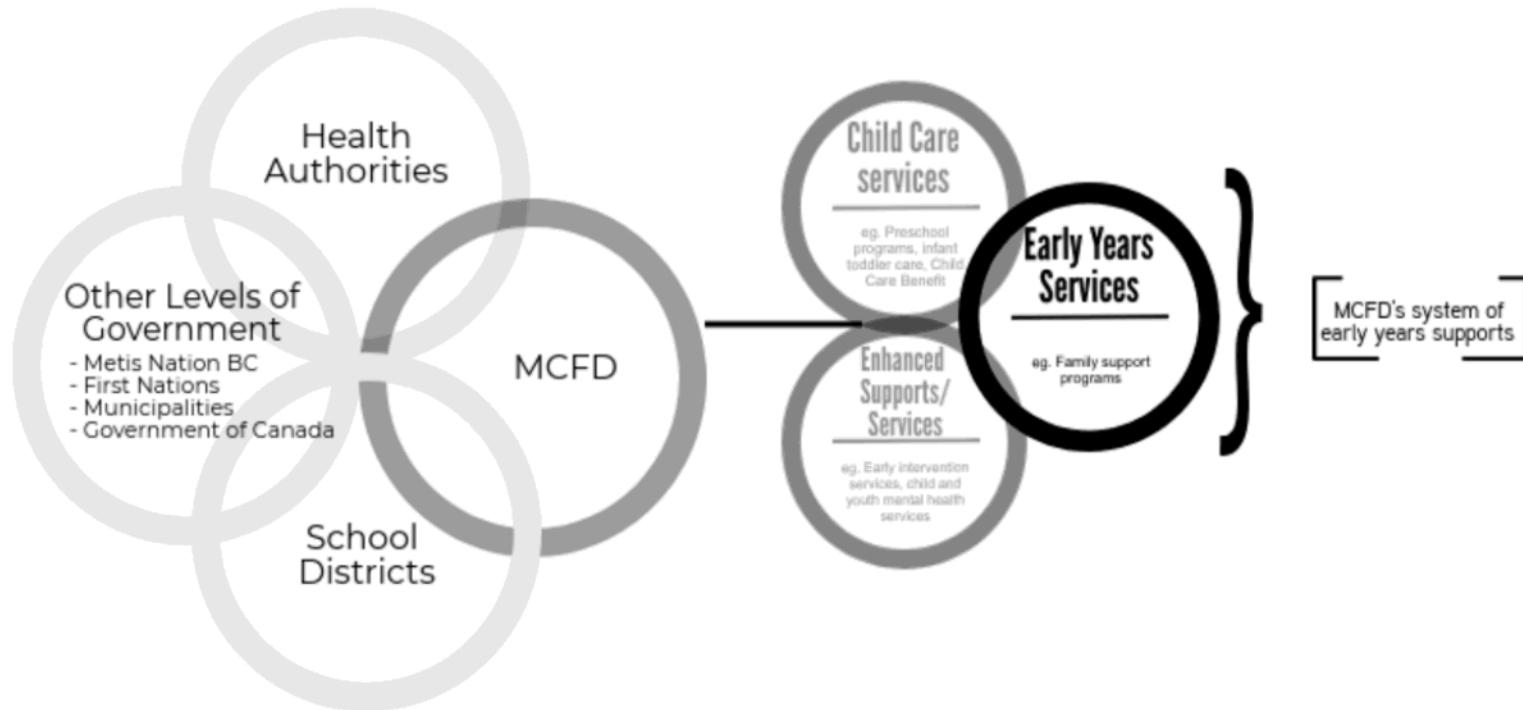
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Early Years Service Framework

Context/Scope



Key Drivers

- The absence of an MCFD 'service framework' with overarching policy to guide early years investments, namely in reference to the Early Years Services area discussed above, has resulted in a patchwork of inconsistent services.
 - Currently, families are confused about what services are available and where they should go to access supports;
 - Service Delivery Areas are unclear about where to allocate funds in the context of exceeding demand and pressures; and,
 - partners (including service providers, and levels of government) are confused about the role of MCFD in the early years landscape –

Is MCFD a broker of partners, a funder of service, or a community-development arm of government?

Our Starting Place

- Pre-2017 if you asked Ministry staff about what government services exist in the 'early years', answers would include (as examples) :

- ⑦ Children First
- ⑦ Success by Six
- ⑦ Building Blocks
- ⑦ Aboriginal ECD
- ⑦ Early Years Centres
- ⑦ Family Resource Program
- ⑦ Nobody's Perfect
- ⑦ Roots and Seeds of Empathy



**Highlighted Focus on
Programs/Contracts
vs. Services**

- It became clear that, MCFD, and government as a whole, was not clear about what the key services families want and need in the early years and how we invest in these services.

Building our Knowledge

- **Inventory Project - 2017**

- To better understand the 'current lay-of-the-land', MCFD launched a project in January 2017 to conduct an inventory of early years programs and services across not only MCFD but all of the provincial government and a number of federal partners (FNHA, PHAC).
- Inventory complete with over 200,000 data elements, including: budget by program, intended target group/ eligibility, intended outcome of program, delivery method, postal code of delivery, etc.
- With this information, we can examine policy questions such as what 'services' are we providing in the early years? What is the balance of investments across these services – is this the 'right' balance? Do our communities have 'equitable' access to universal and targeted supports? Etc.

- **Consultation/Engagement**

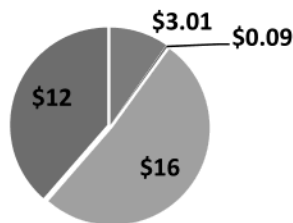
- Working closely with SDAs and procurement
- First Call members (500+), BCACDI, BC Association of Family Resource Programs
- Success by 6 and United Way of Lower Mainland
- Indigenous partners – including Metis Nation BC, etc
- Family Voices

What we Learned From Data:

- Burdensome Administration:** MCFD funds a range of “universal” and “targeted” early years supports. Investment in universal programs is approx. 22% of the Ministry’s investment in ‘early years’, universal early years contracts represent 60% of the total early years contracts held by MCFD (see table below). Disproportionately large volume of universal contracts relative to the investment. Additionally, over 30% of early years contracts are administered through provincial vs. regional contracts further complicating landscape.

	# of contracts	total investment
Universal	479	\$31M
Targeted	311	\$107M

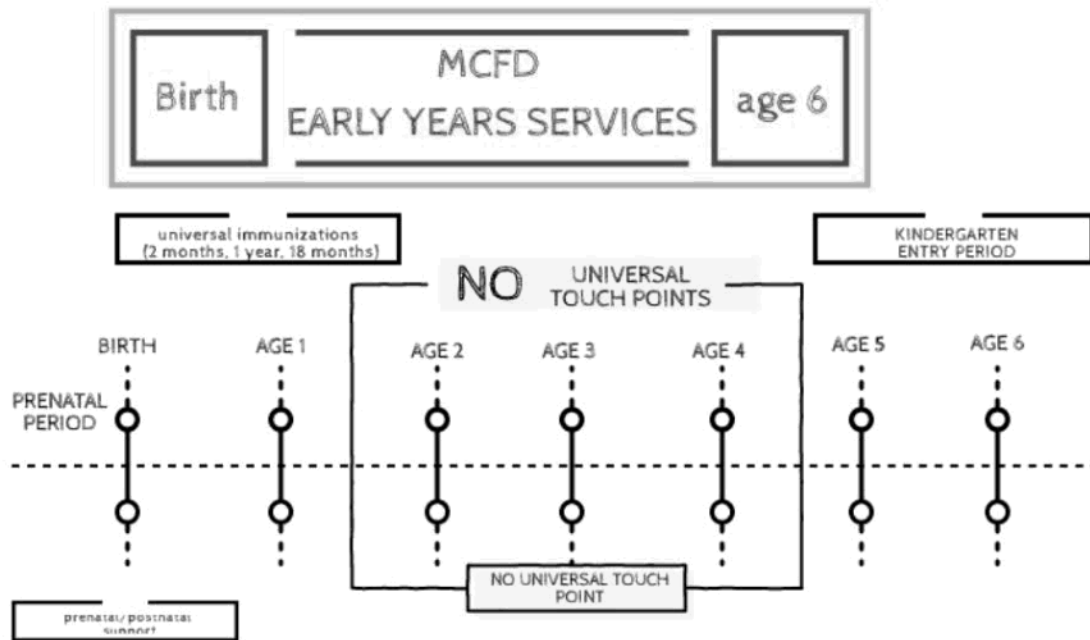
- Investment Unbalanced :** Analysis of ‘universal EY contracts’ often referred to as ECD investments demonstrate and over and under investment in key areas/services. the balance of investment is weighted heavily on non-direct services like ‘community development’ and requires re-evaluation



- an undisguishable combination of parent support, ECD, and community development
- ECD/early learning
- community capacity development and coordination
- parent support programs

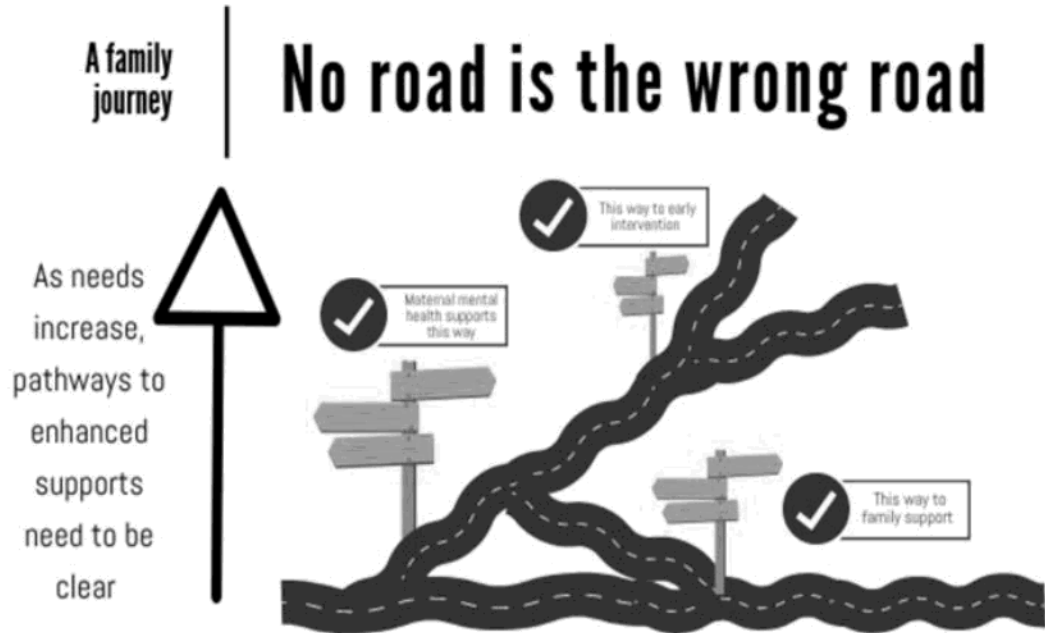
- Inequitable access:** With no overarching policy or service framework for these investments, there is a high degree of variability in how communities are supported through early years services.

What we Learned From System Partners:



What we Learned from Families:

- Rates of family loneliness are highest in history despite being more connected than ever before through technology;
- Families transition in an out of vulnerability and do not know where to go for help and service;
- Families journey through the early years in a messy way, and it is our job as service providers and policy makers to make this journey navigable for them;
- Family voice:



What we Learned from Indigenous Partners:

- Child Development is holistic and multidimensional
- Children exist within families, and the wellness of parents, grandparents, community all influence a child – supports need to serve families
- Strength-based approaches – all families have assets and strengths, all families face vulnerabilities at some point
- Cultural attachment is a key prevention service
- Need for Indigenous specific planning as well as distinction-specific supports (eg. Metis Navigation), nation building
- Re-visioning of services needs to build from what is working
- Early years supports seen as foundational to self-determination
- Re-visioning of services needs to build from what is working
- Early years supports seen as foundational to self-determination

The Answer: An Early Years Service Framework

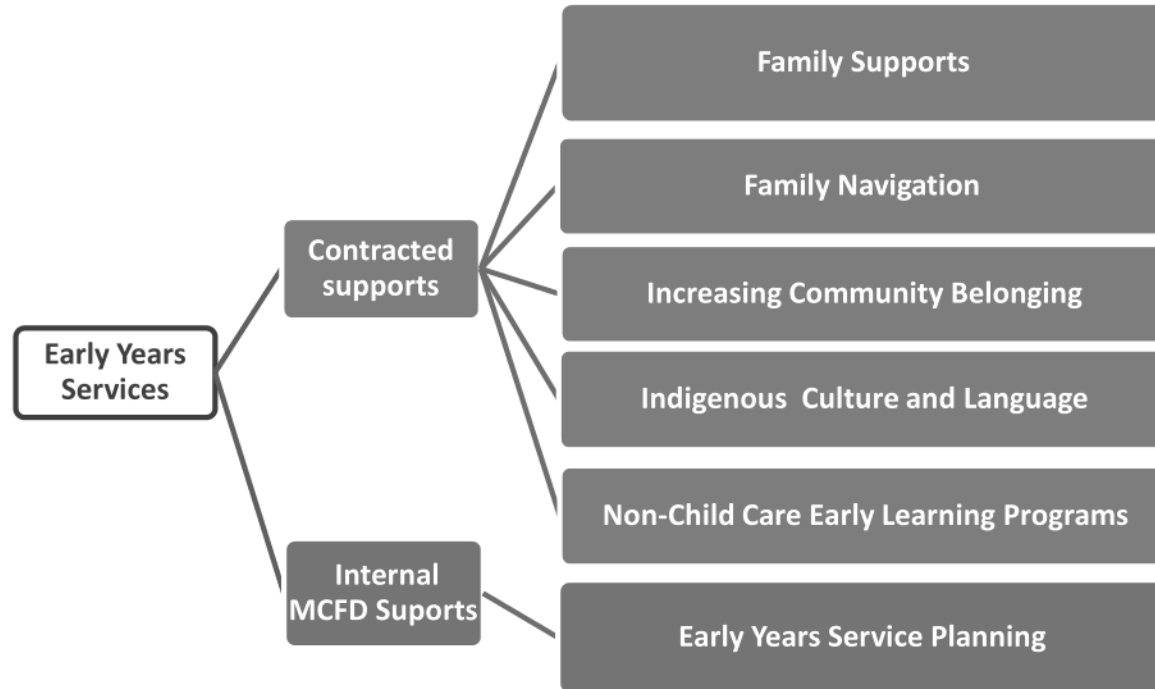
OUR VISION



Children and families have the supports and services they need, where and when they need them. MCFD early years services are intended to achieve the following goals

1. Keep well families well
2. Serve as a barrier-free access point, particularly for families facing acute or chronic vulnerabilities
3. Provide clear pathways to enhanced supports and services including Child & Youth Mental Health, Child & Youth Special Needs

An Early Years Service Framework



Early Years Service Descriptions



Providing Family Navigation

Services focused on connecting families in need to services that can be of assistance. This is not simply an information service, the provider has a deeper understanding of common family needs and vulnerabilities and helps to make effective direct connections. This service is key in ensuring referrals between universal and enhanced supports are made. Services may take form of: One-to-one in-person discussion Telephone communication E-mail or text message communication Case management

Supporting Indigenous Culture and Language Revitalization

Services that connect families to their Indigenous culture and language with the intention of supporting cultural connectedness and community wellness: Language/Cultural groups Community gatherings (baby blessing ceremony) Language nests Parenting programs



Providing Family Supports

Services focus on addressing the expected or unexpected challenges that a family may face (particularly families with enhanced vulnerability). Services include: Provision of language specific information and support Parenting education Provision of food and equipment (eg. Car seat, clothing, housing information) Unstructured, safe place to access professionals informally



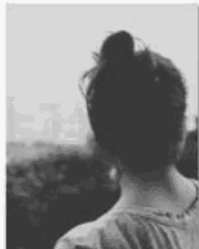
Providing Non-Child Care Early Childhood Development

Services specifically focused on child development in one or more of the following areas: physical, social, emotional, language and communication, cognitive, and spiritual. Services include: Physical and creative play, Exploration and risk taking Learning about social responsibility and empathy towards others Literacy and communication



Addressing Social Isolation

These services provide opportunities for parents to share experiences, expertise, guidance and emotional supports with other parents with the intent of reducing social isolation. Services may take form of: One-to-one peer mentoring Group meetings and gatherings focused on connecting families Phone, email, in person informal opportunities to meet/share conversations Parent support groups



Leading Early Years Service Planning

Ministry-led early years service planning including: Helping to identify vulnerable populations and service priorities for region; Assisting with procurement processes and management of community contracts as per service framework; Ensuring referral pathways between universal early years supports and enhanced supports operate effectively; keeping the circle of engagement strong and continuous.



Moving Toward Implementation

Implementation of the framework requires the following key shifts: :

- A shift in the responsibility for existing EY funding from Provincial Office to SDAs;
- Re-procurement of existing EY contracts to key services;
- A repurposing of funding currently allocated to community planning and development – including ending investment in the Success by 6 initiative;
- Introduction of new funding for SDAs to further improve the system of EY direct services;
- Continue to work in partnership with First Nations living at home (on-reserve), First Nations living away from home (off-reserve) and Metis Nation of BC to determine early years priorities in terms of services, coordination, and governance; and
- The creation of an EY Planning/oversight position in each SDA to re-align local service planning within MCFD, and help to ensure local services are effective, barrier-free, and create clear pathways to more enhanced supports

SDA based EY Service Planning Explained

New Early Years positions located in each SDA will be responsible for:

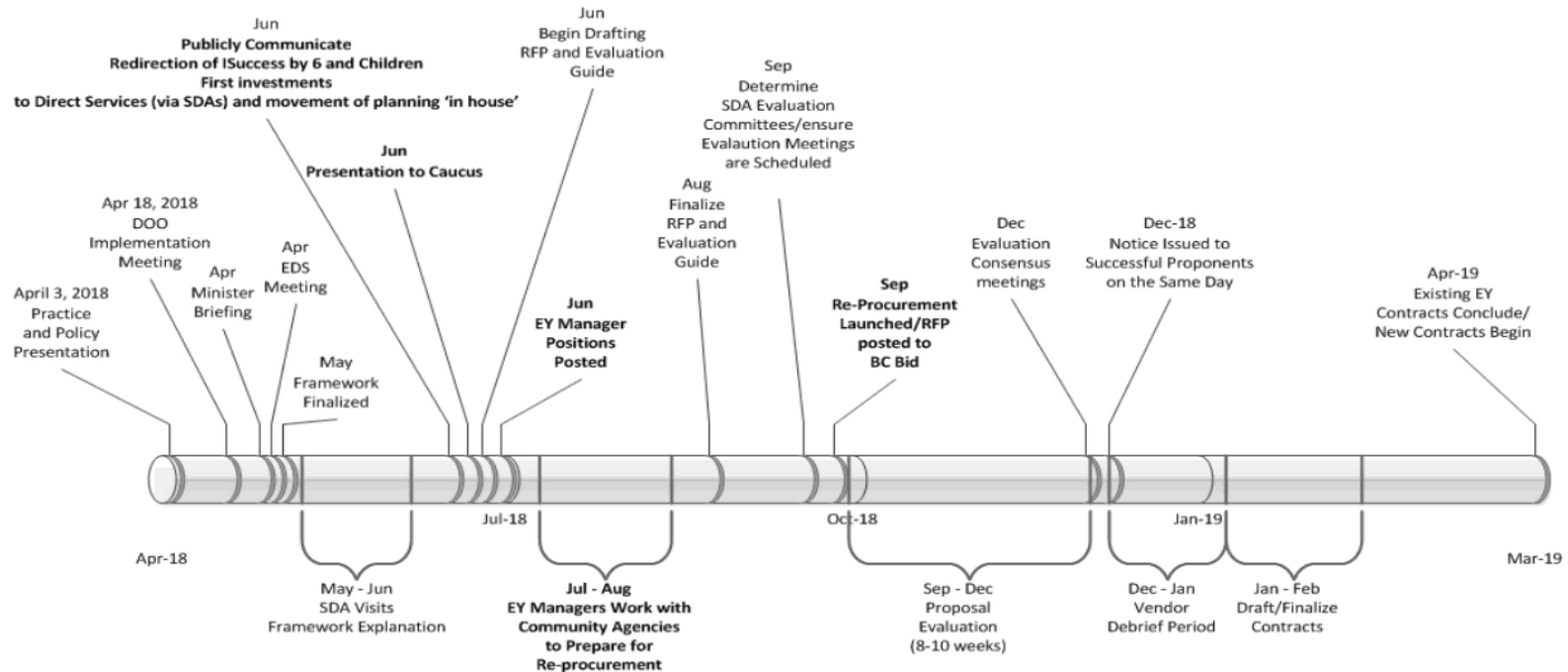
- Allocating resources to early years services in accordance with the framework
- Monitoring these investments to ensure child and families receive access to key services through contracted agencies (including community reach)
- Working in close partnership with contracted agencies to ensure barrier-free access to service and coordinated approach
- Working across the sector to ensure early years services serve as an effective referral pathway to enhanced supports
- Collaboration with other vested partners in region to address service efficiencies (i.e. health authority, school district)
- Work across service lines within the Ministry to ensure early years services are interdependent with other ministry supports/services

Key Milestones/Immediate Decision Points

- Endorsement of EY Service Framework by Ministers and support to begin implementation in partnership with SDA staff, procurement, and communications.
- **Move toward repurposing Success by 6 funds (June 2018) – WHERE WE ARE**
- Put in place EY Service Planning positions (SDAs) and Indigenous EY Service Planning positions (June 2018)

Implementation/Change Management

Timeline for Early Years (EY) Service Framework Implementation



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