

**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
INFORMATION NOTE**

**DATE:** March 4, 2020  
**CLIFF#:** 247628

**DATE OF PREVIOUS NOTE:** November 21, 2018  
**PREVIOUS CLIFF #:** 240658

**PREPARED FOR:** Honourable Katrine Conroy, Minister of Children and Family Development and Honourable Katrina Chen, Minister of State for Child Care

**ISSUE:** Moving Towards Inclusive Universal Child Care: Update on the Inclusion Pilot

**BACKGROUND:**

In December 2018, the Inclusion Pilot (the Pilot) was launched in 13 of the Prototype Sites. The purpose of the Pilot was to explore and evaluate additional approaches to funding inclusion of children with support needs within child care programs, as BC moves towards a universal inclusive child care system. The intention was to learn more about the strengths and challenges of different funding models within different child care settings. The two additional funding models include:

1. **The Inclusion Coordinator Funding Model**, which involves provision of funding to child care operators to hire an Inclusion Coordinator to work within their program; and
2. **The Inclusion Support Funding Model**, which involves child care operators collaborating with families to apply directly to government for inclusion support funding for an individual child.

The Pilot will end on March 31, 2020 and will not be extended. The Pilot Sites will transition back to the previous model of support through Supported Child Development (SCD) and Aboriginal Supported Child Development (ASCD) programs.

The preliminary learnings from the Pilot suggest that increasing the child care provider's capacity for providing inclusive child care is essential to meeting the growing demand and to creating quality child care environments that are truly inclusive. In both pilot models, the sole responsibility for inclusion was placed on the child care provider. Findings suggest that shared responsibility may be a better approach, given the varied capacity of child care operators and range of access to professional development opportunities across the province. A lack of access to a consultant with subject matter expertise has been identified as a significant limitation of both inclusion pilot models.

**DISCUSSION:**

As of April 1, 2020, SCD and ASCD programs will resume services for children who were previously on SCD/ASCD caseload prior to the Pilot while considering the most current needs of the child. SCD/ASCD will continue their regular intake processes for any newly identified children. If there are wait times for support, children are expected to be placed in a fair place on the wait list based on when they were identified during the inclusion pilot period.

In early 2020, MCFD staff met with SCD/ASCD programs to collaboratively discuss the transition of the Pilot back to SCD/ASCD programs. [s.13](#)

[s.13](#)

#### **NEXT STEPS:**

- MCFD staff are working with SCD/ASCD programs to determine the level of funding required to support specific children who would otherwise be waiting for SCD/ASCD enhanced staffing supports at the end of the Pilot.
- The ongoing evaluation of the Pilot will continue to inform the preliminary conceptual Model of Inclusive Child Care. This conceptual model will be workshopped by key stakeholders and families at the upcoming Inclusive Child Care Engagement Session, scheduled for April 8, 2020.

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

A. Inclusion Pilot Transition: FAQs – March 2020

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## Inclusion Pilot Transition: FAQs

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**1. When does the Inclusion Pilot end? Will it be extended?**

The Inclusion Pilot will end on March 31, 2020 and will not be extended at this time.

**2. What was the purpose of the Inclusion Pilot?**

The purpose of the Inclusion Pilot was to explore and evaluate different ways of funding child care programs for children with extra support needs.

The overall intention was NOT to find a model to replace the existing Supported Child Development (SCD) and Aboriginal Supported Child Development (ASCD) programs, rather, it was to learn more about the strengths and challenges of different funding models within different child care settings, and within the context of moving towards universal child care.

**3. How will Inclusion Pilot sites transition back to Supported Child Development (SCD) and Aboriginal Supported Child Development (ASCD)?**

In early 2020, Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) met with SCD/ASCD coordinators to collaboratively discuss the transition process from the Inclusion Pilot back to SCD/ASCD programs. SCD/ASCD coordinators will then meet with child care operators to engage in more detailed transition planning that is specific to individual children.

**4. How will children who were receiving SCD/ASCD supports prior to the Inclusion Pilot be supported in this transition?**

SCD and ASCD programs will resume services for children who were previously on SCD/ASCD caseload prior to the Inclusion Pilot, while considering the most current needs of the child.

**5. How will children who have been newly identified as requiring extra support during the Inclusion Pilot be supported in the transition?**

SCD/ASCD will continue their regular intake processes for any newly identified children. If there are wait times for support, children should be placed in a fair place on the wait list based on when they were identified during the inclusion pilot period.

**6. What were the two additional models of funding inclusive child care that were being piloted?**

- a) The Inclusion Coordinator Funding Model involved government providing funding to child care operators to hire an Inclusion Coordinator to work within their program. This role involved:
- Providing learning opportunities about inclusive approaches for all staff through modelling/shared knowledge
  - Providing an inclusion lens to program design
  - Providing an inclusion lens to physical space set-up
  - Enhanced staffing to child ratio to support the program as a whole, enabling increased opportunities for direct support to children that may need this. The enhanced ratio was intended to reduce reliance on direct 1:1 support for children with extra support needs and increase emphasis on shared support and full integration into the program.

- b) The Inclusion Support Funding Model involved child care operators collaborating with families to apply directly to government for inclusion support funding for an individual child. This funding included two streams: base funding that was intended to enhance the capacity of all staff in meeting the extra support needs of children in their care and creating a fully inclusive child care environment; and additional funding for children who would benefit from increased opportunities for direct support throughout the duration of the child's participation in the program.

**7. What are the preliminary learnings/findings of the Inclusion Pilot?**

The preliminary learnings from the inclusion pilot suggested that increasing the child care provider's capacity for providing inclusive child care is essential to meeting growing demand and to creating quality child care environments that were truly inclusive.

In both pilot models, the sole responsibility for inclusion was placed on the child care provider. Findings suggest that shared responsibility may be a better approach, given the varied capacity of child care operators and range of access to professional development opportunities across the province.

A lack of access to a consultant with subject matter expertise has been identified as a significant limitation of both inclusion pilot models.

**8. How was the Inclusion Pilot monitored and evaluated?**

Inclusion Pilot sites were required to submit quarterly qualitative and financial reports to MCFD, which then provided insights into how Inclusion Sites were using the funds to build capacity for Inclusive Child Care.

The Inclusion Pilot models are being evaluated as a component of a larger evaluation of the Universal Child Care Prototypes Sites. This ongoing evaluation conducted by Malatest, a third-party evaluator, will continue through the second quarter of 2020. Methodologies include interviews with child care operators, interviews with SCD and ASCD program leaders and focus groups with families.

If you have questions, please contact [MCF.ChildrenYouthSpecialNeeds@gov.bc.ca](mailto:MCF.ChildrenYouthSpecialNeeds@gov.bc.ca)



**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
INFORMATION NOTE**

**DATE:** March 6, 2020

**CLIFF#:** 247680

**PREPARED FOR:** Honourable Katrine Conroy, Minister of Children and Family Development and Honourable Katrina Chen, Minister of State for Child Care

**ISSUE:** Ministry's provincial practice and operational response to COVID 19 in BC

**BACKGROUND:**

The 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID19) situation is evolving daily. It is important that the Ministry has proactive and coordinated Practice and Operational Response Plan. This will ensure continuity of care for the following populations: children and youth both in care (CYIC) and in out of care options, children/youth in our 24/7 Provincial facilities, children and youth with special needs who are medically fragile, children and youth who have mental health needs that may experience increased anxiety (as a result of the information at school/in the media re COVID19), youth on independent living, youth agreements and young adults on the Agreements with Young Adults program with Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) and Delegated Aboriginal Agencies (DAA's).

The Ministry should provide direction and communication to residential care providers, contracted residential agencies, out of care providers and foster parents. In addition to providing direction and communication to Child Care Providers that are reliant on funding through Child Care BC programs (CCOF, CCFRI, ACCB and Prototype Sites).

Finally, it is critical that the Ministry have a staffing response that is coordinated and consistent with guidance from the Public Service Agency.

The Ministry has established an executive pandemic preparedness response committee to oversee the Ministry's preparedness and response to COVID19.

All communication and activity escalation measures will be informed by the Office of the Provincial Health Officer and the BC Centre for Disease Control.

**DISCUSSION:**

MCFD is to support all children and youth in British Columbia, Indigenous and non-Indigenous, to live in safe, healthy and nurturing families and be strongly connected to their communities and culture. The Ministry's approach is to deliver inclusive, culturally respectful, responsive and accessible services that support the well-being of children, youth and families in BC.

The Ministry supports children, youth and their families, emphasizing the principles of early intervention, prevention and cultural and community connections to keep families together, where possible, and connecting children and youth with permanent living arrangements when

needed. Services include those for early childhood development and child care, children and youth with special needs, child and youth mental health, child welfare, adoption, youth justice, and supporting youth transitioning to adulthood.

The Ministry has a statutory mandate to receive and assess child protection reports in BC and provide guardianship services to children in care. delivers a broad suite of services that includes residential care (foster homes, Specialized Care Homes, Contracted Residential agencies etc.), facilities and services and supports delivered directly and through contracts. Currently there are 5728 children and youth in care (see Appendix One for more in care data) who the Ministry is responsible for and 1548 children and youth in out of care living arrangements. There are 25 youth at the youth custody centers, and 15 children and youth at the Maples residential mental health facility.

### **Ministry Mission Critical Functions**

MCFD's priorities during a pandemic are to perform the identified mission critical functions and report on the major strategic risks and responses that are essential to maintaining operations. In addition, the Ministry needs to ensure that essential service levels are maintained with service providers.

#### MCFD mission critical functions

- Children in care (including Independent Living Agreements for youth):
  - Ensuring children in care have the services and supports they need to stay healthy
  - Any necessary direct funding, e.g. Independent Living Agreements
- Youth
  - Ensuring appropriate information provision
  - Funding and supports for Youth on Agreements and youth receiving Agreements with Young Adults funding
- Caregivers including contracted, foster, and out of care (including post-adoption assistance)
  - Supporting caregivers with information, services and supports
  - Payments
- 24-7 Facilities (including for children in care, children in therapeutic settings, youth in custody (open and closed):
  - Ensuring safety and security
  - Ensuring health and well-being
  - Fulfilling court-ordered requirements
- Child Protection Services:
  - Centralized Screening
    - Receiving calls associated with child protection
    - Coordinating information for children, youth and caregivers served by the Ministry
  - Intake, assessment, interventions and court appearances when required
  - Family support services and placement
  - Centralized telephony and IT

- Community Youth Justice Services:
  - Information and reports required by the Justice System; and
  - Provincial Director of Youth Justice Reviews.
- Community-based Youth Forensic Psychiatric Services:
  - Assessment and treatment services under the auspices of the Youth Criminal Justice Act for youth aged 12 – 17 years.
- Child and Youth Mental Health:
  - Community-based, specialized mental health services to children and their families.
- Child and Youth with Special Needs
  - Services and supports provided to medically fragile children and youth

### **Child Care**

On February 27, 2020 the Early Years and Inclusion staff sent information provided by the Ministry of Health on reducing the risk of transmitting respiratory illnesses, including coronavirus (COVID-19) to child care partners, including CCOF providers, Child Care Resource and Referral Centers (CCRRs) and Prototype Sites.

With respect to child care providers, the ministry is preparing comprehensive communications responses for internal staff to address immediately anticipated operational questions on Childcare BC funding programs. Concurrently, the ministry is preparing a proactive stakeholder communications plan in the event of voluntary or mandated child care facility closures.

### **Ministry's Response**

To communicate and maintain essential services, the Ministry has taken or plans the following actions:

- Established an executive pandemic preparedness response committee which will oversee the Ministry's response to COVID19 including:
  - establishing essential service level expectations and communications with service providers,
  - provide timely direction and decision to address emerging needs
- Build on the Business Continuity Plans to identify the procedures and required resources necessary to continue essential operations and services including:
  - Essential service planning,
  - Redeployment of human resources
  - Maintain non statutory services
- Established a cross divisional team to communicate up to date and accurate information for caregivers, out of care providers, Contracted Residential Agencies and contractors who provide supports/services to CYIC and in out of care options. Additionally, to monitor, track and ensure a best practice response in the event that a CYIC or a child or

youth in an out of care option or their caregiver contracts COVID-19. This team will report out to the executive preparedness response committee.

- The Exposure Prevention and Management procedures have been enacted in Maples and the youth custody centres.
- A process will be developed to report and track staff who have had confirmation of exposure or infection.

#### **NEXT STEPS:**

Executive preparedness response committee to have daily meetings. Provincial Practice Branch will lead and implement the response outlined in the: COVID19 Provincial Practice Response Plan (Appendix Two).

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

Appendix One: Children and Youth in Care Data

Appendix Two: COVID19 Provincial Practice Response Plan

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#### **Prepared by:**



## Appendix One: Children and Youth in Care Data

Included in the total information CYIC that fall outside of foster and Contracted Residential Resources – these show up in the chart below and are identified without color.

**IN CARE:** color coding aligns with below chart and shows what is within the total

Total CYIC:	5728
Total CYIC in Foster Care: includes yellow below	3983
Total CYIC in CRA: includes blue below	797

In Care Feb 29, 2020 of the total above.

	# of CYIC
<b>Aboriginal Resources</b>	<b>660</b>
First Nation Non-Agency Resource	4
First Nations Foster Home	587
First Nations Funded Other	34
First Nations Group Home	14
First Nations Other	21
<b>Adoption Residency Period</b>	<b>174</b>
<b>Contracted Resources</b>	<b>783</b>
<b>Level 1 Care</b>	<b>528</b>
<b>Level 2 Care</b>	<b>967</b>
<b>Level 3 Care</b>	<b>1080</b>
<b>Living Independently</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>Missing/Runaway</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Not Coded</b> <small>do not have a placement code –newly in care</small>	<b>112</b>
<b>Other Resources</b>	<b>253</b>
<b>Out of Care</b> <small>miscoded placement type</small>	<b>43</b>
<b>Parents/Relatives</b>	<b>180</b>
<b>Regular Family Care</b>	<b>360</b>
<b>Restricted Family Care</b>	<b>461</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>5728</b>

**Out of Care Options:** (does not include sec. 54 agreements)

Extended Family Program:	893
Interim Out of care:	59
Temporary Out of Care:	596
<b>Total OCO:</b>	<b>1548</b>

### Youth

Youth Agreement:	653 (41 with a service provider identified in data)
Youth Support Services:	74 (16 with a service provider in our data)

## **Appendix Two: COVID19 Provincial Practice Response Plan**

- Create a working group including: Provincial Practice Branch, Emergency Management, Aboriginal Services Branch, Service Delivery, Delegated Agencies, Specialized Intervention and Youth Justice, Strategic Priorities, BC Public Service Agency and Strategic HR
- Develop a communication strategy for stakeholders that includes accurate information from BC Health link and other key sources identified by the BC Chief Medical Officer (Appendix Three).
  - Communication strategy will include information on
    - COVID19 so residential care providers, foster parents, out of care providers, CRAs and partners to prioritize their own health/well-being as well as that of the children and youth they care for/provide services to
    - Including specific direction/recommendations i.e.: travel, relief plans
  - Direct contact with Indigenous Perspectives Society, BCFFPA, BCFYICN, Federation of Community and Social Services, Foster Parent Support organizations, Youth Advisory Council, RCY, CRAs and contractors
    - As information emerges it will be distributed
- Establish situation reporting, monitoring and tracking through the identification of a central point of contact (Director of Provincial Practice); Provincial Centralized Screening, for caregivers to call/report if they (or any of our CYIC) contract COVID19; and to ensure timely supports/services are in place
- Confirm plans are in place at our 24/7 facilities to ensure the children and youth are safe, secure, and healthy, and we are fulfilling any court ordered requirements
  - Residential Services:
    - Residential and out-patient treatment programs for children and youth with mental health needs;
    - Residential environment for students attending the BC Provincial School for the Deaf;
    - Safety and security of youth residing in Youth Custody Centers; and
    - Youth Forensic Psychiatric Unit in-patient assessment, which includes a secure hospital and mental health facility.
- DOPs will be the key point of contact for SDA/DAA for accurate and up to date information
- DOPs will provide up to date accurate information to support SDA and DAA to update their Business Continuity Plans and their Business Continuity Planning Guide for Pandemic Influenza as required
- PDCW will regularly inform MCFD executive and MCFD GCPE which in turn will link in to the cross-government communication response.
- PPB and Aboriginal Services will develop internal coverage planning to ensure continuity of clinical consultations and practice support across the province (in the event of PPB or ABS staff illness)

**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
INFORMATION NOTE**

**DATE:** March 16, 2020  
**CLIFF#:** 247695

**DATE OF PREVIOUS NOTE (if applicable):** [Date]  
**PREVIOUS CLIFF # (if applicable):** [CLIFF #]

**PREPARED FOR:** Minister Katrine Conroy and Minister of State Katrina Chen

**ISSUE:** Quesnel child care space creation challenges

**BACKGROUND:**

The City of Quesnel is experiencing a shortage of child care spaces far greater than the BC average. In addition, three local facilities will have to close due to evictions, building demolitions, and unsafe conditions. The costs of relocating these spaces are above and beyond what the BC Maintenance Fund will cover, and the operators fear they will be unable to reopen elsewhere without additional funding.

The community has a shortage of rental spaces. One child care facility has been searching for suitable rental spaces for over a year and hasn't found anything that suits their needs or budget.

Quesnel is wrapping up their child care planning process, and the report has identified an immediate gap of 86 spaces to achieve the provincial average of 18% child care spaces to child population. The greatest need identified by the report is for infant toddler spaces.

**DISCUSSION:**

The child care operators, School District, or local government can apply for the New Spaces Fund to build new spaces to accommodate the child care demand in the community. However, there are limited land options available to the public sector and non-profit applicants.

A site identified by the community planning process as a prime central location is the former Junior School site, which has been transferred back to the Crown – FLNRO. The site currently hosts one of the only Infant-Toddler centres, Lots of Tots, in an aging portable on the north side of the property. This central location is large enough to accommodate a new child care centre.

The Quesnel and District Child Care Society currently operates a small 3-5-year-old child care centre. They have the desire to expand, and a parent Board that could manage the expansion to include new infant toddler spaces. Their current location is small, and cannot accommodate expansion, and the building needs serious repair or replacement.

The local college, College of New Caledonia, offers ECE on a 3-year rotation, so the staffing shortage could be addressed with a recruitment and training plan as there is at least local access to the program. The child care planning process that the community undertook last year has created community awareness of the lack of ECEs and there is willingness to promote the program and ECE as a career.

The School District intends to apply to the New Spaces Fund to be able to have adequate funds to complete “tenant improvements” and provide age appropriate play structures for new spaces they plan to include in their new High School Neighbourhood Learning Centre. Michelle Kirby will be meeting with the School District senior staff to build awareness and understanding of the grant process, and how the project can be developed.

#### **NEXT STEPS:**

Partnerships and Engagement Manager, Michelle Kirby has talked with the Economic Development Officer for the Town of Quesnel, the School District Director of Instruction and Secretary Treasurer, and the Child Care Resource and Referral Office, and will coach the community on their next steps towards application to the New Spaces Fund.

The issue of Crown Land access and leasing remains outstanding and requires attention.

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**MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT  
BRIEFING NOTE**

**DATE:** March 25, 2020

**CLIFF#: 248261**

**PREPARED FOR:** Honourable Katrine Conroy, Minister of Children and Family Development

**ISSUE:** Provision of funding supports to youth aging out of care or participating in the Agreement with Young Adults (AYA) Program, during the COVID 19 pandemic.

**BACKGROUND:**

As part of the response to the COVID 19 pandemic, the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) is working to identify how to best support youth and young adults across two cohorts, including those youth and young adults served by Delegated Aboriginal Agencies (DAAs):

**Youth that are scheduled to 'age-out of care' over the next 6 months<sup>1</sup>:** Ensure these youth (510 individuals<sup>2</sup> – approx. 40% of whom are Indigenous) can continue to be supported and not asked to transition to full independence during a pandemic (this includes youth in foster placements, youth in contracted residential agencies, youth living in an out-of-care placement, youth under Youth Agreements (YAG), and youth in Independent Living Agreements (ILA)).

**Young adults participating in the Agreements with Young Adults (AYA) program:** Allow these youth (960 individuals) to continue to receive support despite an inability to participate in educational/life skills/rehabilitation/vocational programing as a result of COVID-19 without incurring a loss to the 48 months maximum outlined by the program (active participation in education/training is a statute-required condition for AYA support)

Timely financial measures are needed to prevent these cohorts of vulnerable youth and young adults from experiencing adverse socio-economic and health related impacts of the pandemic. The intention of these supports includes:

- Allowing youth to maintain their current living arrangements thereby reducing the pressure on the youth to find/change housing during the pandemic; and,
- Provide financial bridging to youth and young adults given broader economic impacts of the pandemic thereby reducing risk of poverty and health inequities.

These interim measures will provide a focus on safety, the maintenance of good health and reinforcement of physical distancing efforts.

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<sup>1</sup> **In Care:** Voluntary Care Agreement, Special Needs Agreement, Interim or Temporary Custody Order in favour of the director, Continuing Custody Order (including Independent Living Agreement)

**Out of Care:** Extended Family Program, Interim or Temporary Custody Order in favour of a person other than a director, Permanent Transfer of Custody to a person other than a parent (54.01, 54.1), Youth Agreement.

<sup>2</sup> These numbers may increase during the pandemic, as more youth may come into contact with the system due to the additional stresses experienced by families.

Page 14 of 17

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Page 15 of 17

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Page 16 of 17

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**DECISION and SIGNATURE**

Katrine Conroy  
Minister

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