

Ministry of Children & Family Development

# CHILDREN & YOUTH WITH SUPPORT NEEDS



Resources for Staff

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# || CYSN RESOURCES FOR STAFF

**i** *This resource package is to provide leadership and staff with the tools, information, and resources to support them as we move through this change, as well as equipping them to be able to respond to and support the children/youth and families they serve.*

*Please note this package will be continually updated as the change progresses to adapt to new information as it arises and will be posted and maintained on iConnect.*

*If you have any requests for information or resources you believe would be helpful, please send to [mcfchange@gov.bc.ca](mailto:mcfchange@gov.bc.ca)*

## OVERVIEW

**i** *This is a significant transformation for CYSN staff, the children/youth, and families they serve, service providers and communities. This section provides an overview of how and why MCFD is moving forward with these changes*

### Key Points

- Partnered delivery: CYSN services are accessible to all BC families through a family connections hub model. Services are provided by both contracted family connections hub staff and where required, subcontractors
- Assessments and Functional Needs: Need is determined through intake, screening, and where required, discipline specific clinical assessments
- Tool Standardization: Standardized provincial tools drive consistency across BC in terms of eligibility as well as service delivery.
- Integrated Service Plan: Each child will have an integrated My Support Plan across CYSN Goal Focused Services and Disability Services to enable coordinated service delivery.
- One Primary support coordinator: One primary support coordinator coordinates with all providers in the child's network of care.
- Service Integration: The program design integrates services of all the core and enabling services offered through CYSN: Disability Services, Goal-Focused Services through the family connections hubs, and Provincial Services.

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## Who Contributed?

- During 2019-20, we actively sought feedback from Indigenous and non-Indigenous parents, caregivers, service providers, health care professionals and organizations, and self-advocates about how we could do better for children and youth with support needs, and their families. Over the past 2 years, we have used the input we received from 1500 people during that consultation phase to design a new CYSN system.
- Established the 15-member Minister's Advisory Council for CYSN; members include an Indigenous Elder, a youth representative and representatives from a variety of CYSN umbrella organizations.
- While there is still much to learn – and more to do – as we work to implement a new CYSN service delivery model thoughtfully and carefully that is rooted in the voices and experiences of children and youth with support needs, and their families, we have been able to take a few small steps down this path.

## What We Heard

- We know that B.C.'s current Children and Youth with Support Needs (CYSN) system isn't working for many families, and that some children and youth with support needs – for example those with FASD, Down Syndrome or brain injury – aren't able to access the kinds of services and supports they need to help them reach their goals.
- Our existing diagnosis-based system excludes children who have significant functional needs impacting their day to day lives.
- The current system of services requires many children/youth and families to navigate multiple complex systems.
- Families of children with complex needs, including those with Autism Spectrum Disorder, can feel overwhelmed.
- Historical and experiential trauma may prevent Indigenous families from approaching the ministry for help.
- Covid has amplified the significant challenges families face with the current CYSN System in meeting the needs of their children and youth.

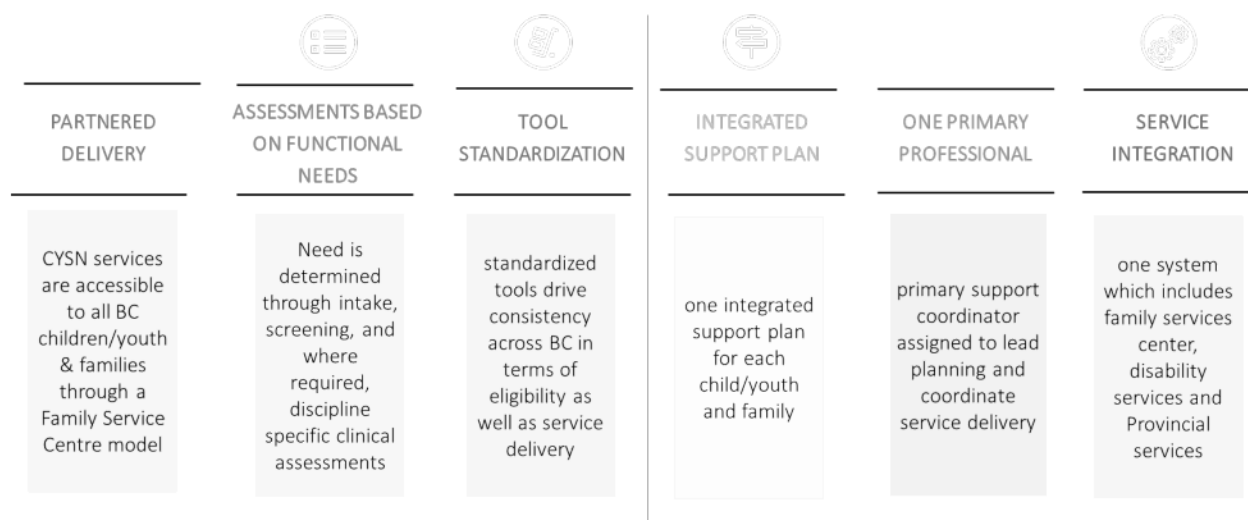
## MCFD Vision

MCFD's goal is that children, youth, and their families in every part of B.C. will have access to culturally safe, gender inclusive, non-discriminatory, and trauma-informed support services that help them meet their social and developmental goals.

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## CYSN Strategic Shifts

These six strategic shifts form the foundation the CYSN transformation process.



## A New Service Delivery Model

In the new model, MCFD will directly work with families and coordinate both disability services for children and youth with more complex needs – including service management, respite and in-home supports, parenting and professional supports and transition planning -- and provincial services, including information services, medical equipment and supplies, and provincial contracted services including the Community Brain Injury Program, and Provincial Outreach and Medical Supports.

The family connections hubs will provide families a single access point for developmental services – this includes needs-based screening, developmental monitoring, information, education, and guidance – as well as goal-focused services such as family support, service planning or behaviour supports, intervention services and therapies which may include occupational, physical or speech/language.

It is at the family connections hub that a family receiving goal-focused services would be assigned a Primary Support Coordinator - a primary professional – a point person who would coordinate all services with the family. This is different from our current state where families are not provided this coordination and support unless they are deemed eligible for a CYSN social worker

For CYSN social workers and teams, the new model – at a high level -- will mean a continued relationship with the more complex families with whom you work most closely, or those transitioning to adult services, along with some families receiving hub services – which may include speech/language, occupational and physical therapies, and behavioural consultation and intervention -- and supports available through the family connections hubs.

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**i** *Changes are not happening overnight, but rather over a period of years to help ensure a seamless transition to the new model for children, youth, and families.*

| A NEW SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL  | Developmental and Goal-Focused Services  | Disability Services   |
|---|--|---|
|   | <p>Delivered through family connections hubs (<i>no MCFD referral or involvement</i>)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In person, outreach and virtual</li> <li>• services that support <b>healthy development</b> of children/youth - needs-based screening and developmental monitoring</li> <li>• services that support <b>child/youth quality of life</b> - interventions (behaviour support, CYCW) and therapies (OT, PT, SLP)</li> </ul> | <p>Delivered through MCFD</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For children/youth who have functional limitations that impact their day-to-day life</li> <li>• services that support <b>enhanced quality of life for children/youth and their families</b> - respite / in-home support, parenting and professional support</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Three streams:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developmental and Goal Focused Services</li> <li>• Disability Services</li> <li>• Provincial Services</li> </ul> </li> <li>■ Support coordination</li> <li>■ Services provided based on support needs rather than diagnosis</li> </ul> | Provincial Services  |   |
|   | Delivered through MCFD   |   |
|   | health benefits, mobility equipment, biomedical equipment and related supplies   |   |
|   | information services and youth transition consultation   |   |
|   | Provincial Deaf and Hard of Hearing Services   |   |
|   | (includes Provincial Family Services and Victory Hill Dorm)  |   |

## Early Implementation Areas

Early implementation areas will be operational beginning with the Northwest and Central Okanagan in the Okanagan by 2023

Service Providers in the Early Implementation Areas will have the opportunity to begin engaging in the Request for Proposals (RFP) process in 2022.

Provincial Autism funding program is expected to remain operational in early intervention areas and across the province.

The Autism Funding program will no longer take new intakes as of September 2024 and the program will sunset in early 2025 to allow children/youth & families time and choice to transition.

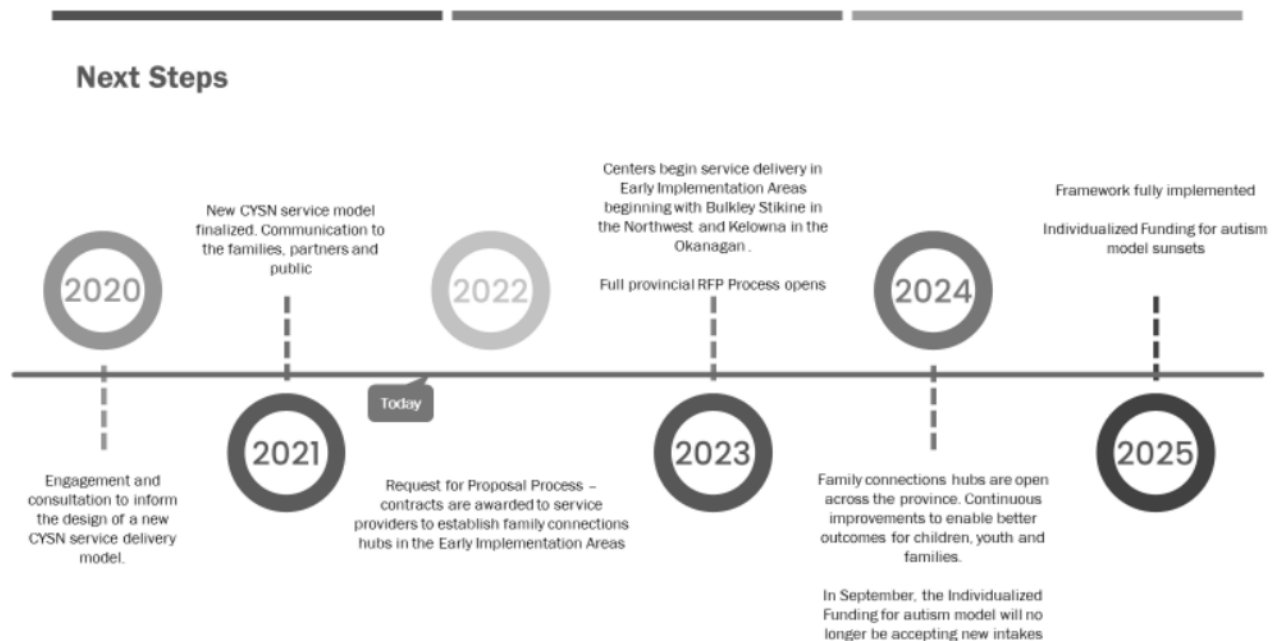
## Benefits for Children, Youth and Their Families

- Easy to access services based on each child and youth's functional needs.

## || CYSN RESOURCES FOR STAFF

- Programs and supports will promote social inclusion overall quality of life.
- Access to services that are culturally safe and trauma-informed and reflect the needs of their children/youth, families, and communities.
- Services and programs will be consistent with government's commitment to anti-racism and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.
- Children/youth and families can expect consistent core services and quality of services across communities.

### Next Steps



### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR YOUR DAY-TO-DAY WORK?

#### TODAY

- Nothing is changing immediately
- Your role will involve fielding calls and questions, directing questions and issues to the appropriate channels and providing feedback to your supervisor and the project team

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## IN THE FUTURE

### CYSN Social Workers

- CYSN workers will continue to coordinate services for children/youth with complex needs and their families.
- Some families will receive some or all of their services at the family connections hub for developmental and goal-focused therapies, creating more capacity for CYSN Social Workers to serve the children/youth and families they work with

### CYSN Social Workers in the Early Implementation Areas (EIA)

- CYSN social workers in the EIA will begin the transition and working with family connections hubs staff beginning in 2023

### Deaf and Hard of Hearing

- No direct changes to the services provided
- Deaf and Hard of Hearing staff will work with family connections hub staff

### At Home Medical Benefits

- At Home Medical Benefits will be modernized and be a stand-alone program.
- Families accessing School Aged Extended Therapy Benefit (SAET) Services will have the option to continue to access SAET or access therapy services offered through the family connections hubs. SAET will no longer receive new intakes in fall 2024 and SAET will sunset along side Autism Funding in Spring 2025.
- At Home Program Respite and basic direct funded respite is collapsed and Respite services continues to be offered for eligible families through Disability Services provided by the CYSN social worker.
- As part of the modernization of the Medical Benefits portion of the At Home Program there was a \$10-million funding increase to the equipment benefits portion of At Home Program Medical Benefits.
- Beginning in April 2022, families will be eligible to receive more financial support to purchase specialized equipment, such as wheelchairs, walkers, and beds
  - For example, under the current At Home Program, equipment walkers and standing frames that helps with hip development and bone strength are funded to a maximum of \$3,200. With the increased funding, families may be eligible to have the full cost of these pieces of equipment covered as basic, medically necessary equipment

### Autism Information Services

- The AIS role will be expanded to have a broader scope where staff will support families, service providers, community, and ministry partners in accessing information and navigating services for children and youth with support needs.



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- Information services will support the network of family connection hubs through providing referrals to the hubs requested by families.

### Autism Funding

- The Autism Funding Program will remain open for new intake until September 2024 and the program will sunset in March 2025 as autism services will be fully operational through the family connections hubs
- Within the Early Implementation Areas, we will continue to provide autism services, as parents have the option to either continue with the Autism Funding program – or choose to transition to a local family connections hub

### STADD

- In the new model, STADD navigators will continue to provide transition services and support to eligible youth & families
- Assistance with youth transition planning will be offered through the family connections hubs and Disability Services.
- STADD navigators will provide information and consultation supporting the network of family connection hubs, where hub professional are seeking information or consultation on youth transition planning.
- STADD navigators will continue to provide transition planning for youth and families who are eligible for Disability Services and are working with a CYSN social worker

# **|| CYSN RESOURCES FOR STAFF**

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**



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2pm.pdf

## **LETTER TO SERVICE PROVIDERS**



263232 Service  
Provider Letter.pdf

## **LETTER TO FAMILIES AND CAREGIVERS**



263232 CYSN  
Parents Letter.pdf

## WHERE TO GET MORE INFO

### STAFF

Where to go for more Info



#### Info Sessions

Info sessions are being facilitated to provide an overview of the CYSN Framework, the vision, the changes and what those changes mean for you and your clients. There is also opportunity to raise questions

There will be ongoing sessions to provide updates and opportunities for questions as the project progresses - stay tuned



#### iConnect

Make sure to bookmark the new dedicated iConnect pages for CYSN Transformation - these pages will provide the most current info, progress updates, FAQ's and other helpful resources as the project progresses



#### Questions?

Please note as the work progresses on the project we will be sharing additional info on a regular basis. In the meantime, if you have a question after reviewing the info resources above, send it to [MCFfeedback@gov.bc.ca](mailto:MCFfeedback@gov.bc.ca)



### Children/youth & Families & Service Providers

Where to go for more Info

#### CYSN Resource Line 1-833-882-0024

Encourage clients and service providers to call the CYSN Resource Line - they can provide information and answer questions



#### BC Gov Website

Encourage clients and service providers to visit the government website - this is where families and service providers can find up to date information.



[www.gov.bc.ca/ChildYouthSupportNeeds](http://www.gov.bc.ca/ChildYouthSupportNeeds)

#### Info Sessions

Upcoming info sessions will be posted on the website



## External FAQs

### Why is this change happening?

- Today's system is not working and places extraordinary stress on families, who struggle to piece together services and support for their children.
- Children, such as children with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, Downs Syndrome, and brain injuries, qualify for too few supports. In many rural and remote areas, children and youth and their families have no services or supports at all.
- Under the new approach, family connections hubs will provide children, youth, and their families quick access to information, expert intervention, and therapies.
- These supports and services will be available from birth to age 19 and will be based on a child's or youth's individual needs, regardless of whether they have a referral or diagnosis.
- As a first step, hubs will open in two areas – the Northwest and Central Okanagan – starting in 2023 before being launched provincewide in 2024.

### My child is currently on a waitlist for an autism assessment. Should I continue pursuing – and paying for – a diagnosis if it's not going to be needed to access funding?

- In the future system, children will receive services quickly because they will no longer need a diagnosis.
- However, receiving a diagnosis is still beneficial as it provides information on the prognosis and, in some cases the cause of a disability.
- Families are encouraged to seek a diagnosis if possible because it may also help children and youth access services through other ministries and partners, including the education system and Community Living BC.
- Today services and supports for children and youth with support needs and their families are only available after the diagnosis is made, which can take months or years, delaying access to critical services and supports early in a child's life.
- Through the planned family connections hubs, they will access early intervention therapies and services that are critical to supporting optimal growth and development for children and youth who have – or who are at risk of – developmental delay or disability.

### What services will be provided at family connections hubs?

A range of supports and services will be provided that support the needs of children, youth, and their families that will be based on their needs, which will include:

- Development and goal focused services
- Disability services

**Commented [MSM1]:** Pls hyperlink to the information found under Types of Services on [Family connections hubs to support families, children and youth with support needs - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)

#### Will parents still have choice in their therapist?

- This match is important for children and youth. If the match for that primary professional is not compatible for the child or youth, a solution will be found for the family. This could include the hub providing a different professional or service, or where necessary an additional assessment.

#### How will families be involved in deciding what their child needs?

- Children and youth will be at the centre of decision-making in the family connection hub approach. Families know their children best, will be a central voice in their child's collaborative team, and play a key and ongoing role in decision-making and goal setting.
- Parents and caregivers will participate in the initial interview and any follow-up assessments.
- They will work closely with their child's professional team to create meaningful goals for their child and will collaborate with their primary professional at the family connections hub in developing the support plan for their child/youth.
- In addition, each hub is expected to create a welcoming, inclusive, trauma-informed, culturally safe, and respectful environment for all Indigenous families, as well as those of different cultures and traditions, and LGBTQ2S+ children, youth, and families.

#### How will a family receive respite and in-home supports?

- Respite and in-home supports are among the supports provided through disability services.
- When a family is eligible for disability services, a Child and Youth with Support Needs worker from the ministry will join the hub support team and become their primary coordinating professional.
- Many families are already working with Children with Support Needs workers and this will continue in the new system.

**Commented [MSM2]:** Pls hyperlink to Types of Services – disability services: [Family connections hubs to support families, children and youth with support needs - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)

#### How does the new system support children and youth with specialized therapy needs?

- Family connections hubs will provide a range of culturally safe, and trauma informed specialized therapies – including behavioral supports, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, and speech-language therapy.
- Specialized services will be coordinated, tailored and flexible and, most importantly, based on need and not a diagnosis.
- The ministry is exploring how provincially contracted specialized services can play a role and support the family connections hubs and their professionals.
- Children and youth needing supports such as adaptive, mobility and medically necessary equipment and supplies will be able to access them through the ministry's provincial services with a focus on supporting their functional and health needs.

**What if the family needs a specialist that is not available at their family connections hub?**

- The family connections hub will work with the family to identify what services they need to meet their goals and connect them with service providers outside of the hub where needed.

**How are needs met or services available for children and youth who are high functioning?**

- All children and youth with support needs will be able to access developmental and goal-focused services at the family connections hub.
- Services provided will be based on the needs of the individual child or youth, which will be identified through a collaborative process between families and the clinical expertise of professionals working at family connections hubs.
- Services may include needs-based developmental screening and monitoring, therapies, behaviour support, mental health supports and educational services,
- No child or youth will be turned away from service or support if they have identified needs.

**Will professionals come to school or homes?**

- In-home services, either virtually or in-person may be available depending on the needs of the family and the capacity of the professionals.
- As with the current state, the ability of service providers to provide services in schools will vary on the policies of the local school districts.

**What about travel to get to the family connections hubs?**

- It will be an expectation of the hub that services will be provided in way that best meets the needs of the children and youth and their families.
- Families will be supported through a blend of outreach or virtual services when going to a family connections hub is not possible.

**How will waitlists for services be reduced by establishing family connections hubs?**

- The ministry will develop service request and service response guidelines for the family connections hubs to ensure consistent approaches are used throughout the province. This will ensure children, youth and their families are not left behind any longer.
- There are several service response strategies the ministry will explore including:
  - Establishing regular check-ins with children, youth, and families throughout the service journey to monitor progress of the support plan and goals
  - Adapting service delivery to provide group services and supports when reasonable and possible

- Increasing the use of allied professionals such as therapy assistants and interventionists.
- Family connections hub staff will monitor and report on caseloads including the number of children and youth receiving services, number of children and youth waiting for services and the wait times to receive services.
- This new data collection in the early implementation areas will allow a better ability to monitor service response by the hubs and help inform service response for full province-wide implementation in 2024.

#### **What if a family doesn't agree with certain therapies?**

- Family connections hubs will work collaboratively with the families ensuring the goals of children or youth are met.
- Parents and caregivers are experts on their children and their input will be important in the goal development and review process.
- Families should discuss their concerns, ideas and needs with the primary professional and they will work together to find a solution.
- Each family connections hub must offer a fair and transparent dispute resolution and appeal process to ensure that if families have a concern it can be addressed.

#### **How will there be enough skilled professionals to meet the demand for service?**

- The availability of qualified professionals and organizational capacity is essential to reliable, high-quality service delivery and to successful implementation of the family connections hubs.
- To ensure that the expertise exists to staff the new hubs, the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) conducted significant research into the current state of service delivery.
- MCFD analyzed the current services including:
  - Child Development Centres, (CDC) which provide most of the services (although not through the same delivery model) as the family connections hubs
  - Other MCFD contracts providing services to children and youth with support needs
  - Services offered to children with autism (separate from other services directly contracted by MCFD)
- Based on the ministry's research, the current complement of professionals found in today's contracted services and existing service providers providing autism intervention will make up the professionals in the new system.

#### **What kinds of qualifications and experience will staff at the family connections hubs require?**

- While there will be core services provided in all family connections hubs, it is expected that services, supports and staff will be tailored to meet the needs of the children and youth and families being served, as well as the needs of the community and region.
- We anticipate a need for professional designations in speech/language, physical and occupational therapies, as well as board-certified behaviour consultants at every family connections hub in B.C.



**What is the relationship between family connections hubs and public health or education?**

- There are overlaps and the ministry is having cross-ministry discussions with the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Education to work out the details around the linkages and relationship between the family connections hub and Health and Education systems to ensure service and supports are provided to children and with youth with support needs.
- MCFD staff host a biweekly meeting to discuss the impacts of changing CYSN services to partner ministries. The meetings have staff from the Ministry of Education, Health Social Development and Poverty Reduction and the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions.

**What is the funding model for the new approach to services for children and youth with support needs and their families?**

- Government will make investments in supporting the transition, early implementation, and provincial implementation of the new approach to service delivery for children and youth with support needs and their families.
- The provincial government is in the middle of the budget process now and details about the investments for services for children and youth with support needs will be provided when the budget process is completed.
- In 2021/2022, the Province is investing \$440.6 million to provide services to children and youth with support needs including:
  - A \$13-million increase for direct services to children with support needs and their families
  - Over a \$2-million increase to funding for deaf and hard-of-hearing services — the first increase for these services in over 10 years.
  - Over \$4 million for staff recruitment and retention at community agencies that serve these children and families.
- In addition, the ministry has increased funding for children and youth with support needs services annually since 2017.
- Starting in April 2022, we are also investing \$10 million in the medical equipment benefits portion of the At Home Program, which will help save out-of-pocket costs for families whose children require in-home medical equipment to support their needs.