
NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2023CFD0045-001464
Sept. 15, 2023

Ministry of Children and Family Development

Province seeks public input on services for children, youth with support needs

VICTORIA – The B.C. government is asking people to share ideas through a new engagement portal about how to improve services for children and youth with support needs.

The online portal provides an accessible way to connect people with opportunities to provide input and recommendations to help shape the services they need.

“Too many children aren’t getting the services they need today, and we are committed to building an effective system of supports,” said Mitzi Dean, Minister of Children and Family Development. “We’re conducting this deeper engagement to learn from all perspectives. We’re providing as many avenues as possible for people to contribute their stories, expertise and recommendations. I want all British Columbians to know that we want your input.”

The portal outlines engagement opportunities underway throughout the province and invites families, service providers, advocates, experts, those with lived experience, First Nations and Indigenous Peoples to contribute their plan and vision for the future. These ideas will be shared on govTogetherBC, so everyone who is invested in shaping the model has the benefit of hearing the voices and recommendations of others: engage.gov.bc.ca/children-youth-support-needs

The Province has been directly engaging rights and titleholders through virtual sessions, as well as providing grant funding to First Nations to lead engagements. Virtual sessions were held in spring and summer this year, with more beginning this fall. Engagement sessions led by community partners, including Inclusion BC, the Family Support Institute and the BC Association of Friendship Centres, have also been ongoing. The findings will be shared with the Province.

All British Columbians are invited to share their ideas and experience through the online engagement portal open until Dec. 1, 2024.

Quotes:

Karla Verschoor, executive director, Inclusion BC –

“The Community-Led Collaboration Project launched one year ago. Thanks to a grant from the Ministry of Children and Family Development, we’ve worked in close partnership with B.C. communities to thoughtfully co-design an approach to engagement that prioritizes safety, inclusion and accessibility. We are grateful to the families and service providers who have come out over the last year to share their ideas and inform the future of services and supports for children and youth with disabilities or support needs in B.C.”

Angela Clancy, executive director, Family Support Institute (FSI) of British Columbia –

"Communities, families and individuals hold the key to a more inclusive and supportive future. FSI's Family Voices Project empowers them to actively participate in the decision-making process, influencing how they engage with and receive services and supports. The funding for this project will help us in respectful and meaningful engagement, and in delivering recommendations that will hopefully create a tangible impact on the lives of individuals who access services for children and youth with support needs."

Bonnie McBride, executive director, Inspire Kids FASD Family Support Society of BC –

"The grant funding provided to Inspire Kids by the ministry will enable our organization to engage with families affected by FASD (fetal alcohol spectrum disorders) in a peer-based and meaningful way. We will be able to grow our connections as a community and make an impact in the lives of youth with FASD right away. Inspire Kids thanks the minister and her team for their continued commitment to amplifying voices of youth with support needs in B.C."

Learn More:

To learn more about engagement opportunities, including providing a written submission, visit: engage.gov.bc.ca/children-youth-support-needs

For updates and inquiries, email: mcf.cysnengage@gov.bc.ca

Contact:

Ministry of Children and Family Development
Media Relations
250 387-3967

Connect with the Province of B.C. at: news.gov.bc.ca/connect