

Ministry of
Children and Family
Development

2007/08
Annual Service Plan Report



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Message from the Minister and Accountability Statement

I am pleased to present and report on Ministry progress and achievements for 2007/08.

The dedicated staff of the Ministry, working with our community-based service providers, continue to work towards achieving our vision of a province where children and youth are healthy and safe in their families and communities, and are supported to achieve their full potential.

Much of the Ministry of Children and Family Development's efforts over the past several years have been focused on building a stronger and more respectful relationship with Aboriginal and First Nations peoples — and most importantly, recreating a child welfare system that has too often been in conflict with Aboriginal families and communities.

This is an ongoing and groundbreaking process that is dependent upon forging stronger and more collaborative relationships between the Ministry and Aboriginal peoples. To that end, the Ministry entered into the first urban-based full delegation agreement with the Vancouver Aboriginal Child and Family Services Society for guardianship and child protection services. In addition, the Ministry has entered into an agreement with the Cowichan Tribes child and family services agency (Lalum'utul' Smun'eem) for adoption of Cowichan children, the second such agreement in all of Canada.

We will keep moving forward in collaboration with the First Nations Leadership Council, other Aboriginal leaders and community representatives to pursue our mutual aspirations for improved outcomes for Aboriginal children, youth and families.

As part of our ongoing efforts to ensure bright futures for all children, including those with special needs, we established a cross-ministry framework for children and youth with special needs. The intent of this framework is to ensure that services are easily accessible — that families get the right services at the right time. Collectively, the Ministries of Health, Education and Children and Family Development provide more than 90 programs and are investing more than \$525 million annually for these programs and services. The framework provides a foundation to improve and better co-ordinate these services.

Through the fifth year of implementation of the Child and Youth Mental Health Plan for B.C., annual investment of more than \$87 million is now in place to improve outcomes for children and youth coping with the challenges of mental illness. This plan is the first of its kind in Canada. Over the past five years, there has been a shift in how children's mental health is approached, with a greater emphasis on prevention, early intervention, and a strengthening of family and community support. The Plan has enabled almost twice as many children and youth to access mental health services.

The Ministry's newly released action plan, *Strong, Safe and Supported: A Commitment to B.C.'s Children and Youth* and the accompanying operational plan — both of which were developed during 2007/08 — chart a path forward that places a strong focus on early intervention and a child centered, strengths-based approach to support and protect vulnerable children and youth through a strong, integrated system.

I want to thank the dedicated staff of the Ministry of Children and Family Development as well as our community-based services providers. These men and women work tirelessly each day on behalf of children and youth, knowing that their efforts can create change that lasts a lifetime. A great deal of good work has been accomplished, much is underway, and there is more to do. I look forward to our continued journey together.

The Ministry of Children and Family Development 2007/08 Annual Service Plan Report compares the actual results to the expected results identified in the Ministry's *2007/08–2009/10 Service Plan*. I am accountable for those results.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Christensen', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Honourable Tom Christensen
Minister of Children and Family Development

June 20, 2008



Message from the Minister of State for Child Care and Accountability Statement

I am pleased to present and report on progress and achievements for 2007/08 child care activities. While government, in partnership with community groups and stakeholders, has made great strides in strengthening child care across the province, we also recognize there is still more work to be done. I am honoured to be the Minister of State for Child Care, a program area that is critical to the healthy development of young British Columbians.

We continue to build a child care system that reflects the unique needs of British Columbians — that provides a range of options for families, quality care for children and support for B.C.'s many child care providers. The total child care budget for 2007/08 was \$288.3 million.

As part of our ongoing efforts to make child care more accessible and affordable for families, the Province commenced investment of \$12.5 million with a goal to fund 2,000 new, licensed child care spaces by 2010 in family child care, independent and non-profit group care. With 2,200 new child care spaces funded, we have exceeded our target. The Province also provided incentives for child care providers to make use of neighbourhood hubs and under-utilized public spaces such as schools for the location of child care.

Child care providers are essential to a responsive and sustainable child care system, and the Province is doing its part to support recruitment and retention through a variety of initiatives including student bursaries and the new one-year early childhood educator certificates. The new one-year licence lets graduates fulfil their required 500 hours of experience while working as a fully qualified staff member. We have also initiated two new pilot programs — the Early Childhood Educator Loan Assistance Program and the Early Childhood Educator Incentive Grant Program — and I look forward to the results of these programs.

We have protected and maintained significant enhancements to programs that support some of B.C.'s most vulnerable children and families and those with low and moderate incomes. Child care subsidies support almost 50,000 individual children annually. Approximately 5,800 children with special needs are receiving Supported Child Development services so they can grow, learn and play alongside their peers.

In our shared responsibility with Community Living British Columbia and the Ministries of Health and Education, over 5,000 children and youth diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder received intervention services in 2007/08.

I am the Minister of State for Child Care and, under the *Balanced Budget and Ministerial Accountability Act*, I have been responsible for achieving the following results:

- Develop and implement an action plan to maximize the benefits of federal contributions for child care and prepare a strategy for transition to an appropriate level of provincial funding.
- Collaborate with the Ministers of Advanced Education, Health and Education to explore the potential of a pilot program for parents of children with Autism.

These results were achieved and implementation is ongoing.



Honourable Linda Reid
Minister of State for Child Care

June 20, 2008

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Highlights of the Year

The Ministry of Children and Family Development is pleased to report on its performance for the fiscal year 2007/08. In addition to reporting on specific indicators of performance, the Ministry would like to highlight the following achievements towards building better relationships and improved outcomes for children, youth and families throughout British Columbia.

Aboriginal Services

On December 12, 2007, the Vancouver Aboriginal Child and Family Services Society signed a five-year delegation agreement with the Ministry. The Society is the first urban-based and provincially funded Aboriginal agency in Canada to achieve full delegation for child protection services. This Society is a non-profit agency providing a range of services to over 300 Aboriginal children, youth and families in Vancouver and Richmond.

The Vancouver Aboriginal Child and Family Services Society and the Vancouver Coastal Region are ensuring an effective transition of guardianship and child protection services to the delegated Aboriginal agency. The Society's and Ministry's Joint Implementation Team were finalists in the Premier's Awards for Innovation and Excellence.

The Cowichan Tribes child and family service agency, Lalum'utul' Smun'eem, signed an Adoption Enabling Agreement in December 2007, which enables the Cowichan agency to assume responsibility for adoptions of Cowichan children. This historic agreement is the first in British Columbia, and the second of its type in Canada.

In January 2008, increased funding was provided to the Métis Commission for Children and Families, which will assist with the expansion and provision of support and advocacy services for Métis service providers throughout the province.

On January 24, 2008, Premier Gordon Campbell announced that the B.C. Government supports Jordan's Principle. Under Jordan's Principle, when a dispute arises between two government parties regarding payment for services for a Status Indian child, the service is provided without delay or disruption and is initially paid for by the government of first contact. In this way, the needs of the child are met immediately and ultimate responsibility for the payment is worked out at a later date. We will work in co-operation with First Nations across the province and the federal government to bring this principle into effect in B.C.

Two Regional Planning Committees became Interim Authorities in 2007/08 under the *Community Services Interim Authorities Act*. The Vancouver Island Aboriginal Transition Authority was created on June 8, 2007, and the Fraser Region Interim Aboriginal Authority was created on August 15, 2007.

Child Care and Early Childhood Development

The Ministry continued to support the development of neighbourhood hubs across the province. These hubs offer a range of co-located, integrated services including early childhood development, child care and family support programs, and make use of existing neighbourhood space that is accessible to families. As of March 31, 2008, 22 new hubs were operational and a total of 32 have been funded in communities throughout the province.

Through the Success By 6^o and Children First initiatives, the Ministry has developed community-based partnerships aimed at ensuring all children get the tools and resources they need to be ready to enter school. Success By 6^o has 20 initiatives reaching approximately 200 communities, 50 cross-sectoral tables and has funded more than 500 projects. The 45 Children First initiatives in over 30 communities across B.C. provide comprehensive, effective community supports for children aged 0-6 and their families by facilitating cross-sectoral partnerships and building capacity within communities. The coalitions work locally and collaboratively to develop a “village” that best supports the growth of young children.

Together with the Ministries of Education, Advanced Education and Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation, the Ministry has supported the Urban Aboriginal Literacy Strategy, which aims to increase literacy among Aboriginal families. This strategy has initially focused on enhancing literacy programs and services at the 24 Friendship Centres.

In 2007/08, the Ministry launched two new initiatives for early childhood educators, the Incentive Grant Program and the Loan Assistance Program. These two initiatives are in addition to the bursary funding provided to help address the shortage of licensed early childhood educators working in licensed child care facilities. These programs encourage new students to enter the field as well as supporting those early childhood educators who have left the field and may be thinking of returning.

In 2007/08, the Ministry awarded \$12.5 million for the creation of new child care spaces. Through this funding, over 2,200 new licensed child care spaces will be open by 2010. Through the Child Care Operating Fund, the Ministry is providing funding to assist with the operational expenses of over 87,000 licensed child care spaces — more than ever before.

Child, Youth and Family Services

The handbook, *Responding to Child Welfare Concerns: Your Role in Knowing When and What to Report* was made available to the general public and translated into five additional languages. The publication emphasizes and reinforces the duty to report suspected child abuse and neglect as part of a continuing effort to keep children and youth safe from harm.

In 2007/08, the Ministry implemented the Shaken Baby Syndrome prevention program involving training in and distribution of *The Period of PURPLE Crying* material. This is designed to educate caregivers about normal infant crying and its ability to frustrate parents, as well as

inform caregivers about the dangers of shaking an infant and to provide advice on responding to crying babies. Together with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry has continued to support the Books for BC Babies initiative, which ensures that a suitable book and information for parents are provided to all babies born in B.C. In 2007, a literacy DVD “*I Love When You Read*,” was included in Books for BC Babies kits.

Through the implementation of the Child and Youth Mental Health Plan, children, youth and families have easier access to mental health services due to increased service capacity. The last year of a three-year recruitment initiative was completed in 2007/08, and resulted in a substantial increase in mental health service staff levels over its term. Since the plan’s implementation in 2003, nearly 20,000 children and youth with mental health challenges have received mental health support annually.¹

The Ministries of Children and Family Development, Education and Health collaboratively developed and began implementing the Children and Youth with Special Needs Framework for Action to guide B.C. towards an integrated and accessible continuum of quality services supporting children and youth with special needs and their families.

The Ministry, in collaboration with other provincial ministries and in consultation with families, service providers, and clinical experts, produced a ten year plan: *Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder: Building on Strengths*, aimed at reducing this form of preventable brain damage.

Youth Agreements

An additional \$2.3 million in annual funding was allocated to strengthen the existing Youth Agreement program for vulnerable 16-18 year olds who require assistance in the transition to adulthood. The additional funding increases the availability of contracted youth workers, high rent subsidies and landlord/mentor arrangements. Subsequently, a \$5 million program, beginning July 1, 2008, will provide financial and other supports to former youth in care as part of a planned transition to adulthood.

¹ www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/mental_health/pdf/CYMH_web_final.pdf

Purpose of Ministry

The Ministry of Children and Family Development promotes and develops the capacity of families and communities to care for and protect vulnerable children, and supports healthy child and family development to maximize the potential of children and youth in B.C.

The Ministry is responsible for regional and province-wide delivery of services and programs. The Ministry operates through five regions: North, Interior, Vancouver Coastal, Fraser and Vancouver Island (refer to Ministry Contact Information). The Ministry's responsibilities include: family development, early childhood development, services for children and youth with special needs, child care, child protection, residential and foster care, adoption for children and youth permanently in care, community child and youth mental health, programs for at-risk or sexually-exploited youth, and community youth justice services. In addition, the Ministry is responsible for specialized provincial services including youth custody, youth forensic psychiatric services, the Maples Adolescent Treatment Centre and services for the deaf and hard of hearing.

The Ministry is also responsible for supporting Community Living British Columbia to achieve its mandate to deliver programs and services to children and adults with developmental disabilities.² Where there is a joint mandate, the Ministry and Community Living British Columbia work together to ensure there is a co-ordinated approach to supporting children and youth with special needs and their families.

The Ministry's service delivery partners include: contracted community organizations, family foster homes, communities, delegated Aboriginal child welfare agencies, school districts, health authorities and other ministries. In 2007/08, approximately 47 per cent of the Ministry's funding supported contracts with community-based service delivery providers.

The Ministry's legislative mandate includes: the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*, the *Adoption Act*, the *Youth Justice Act*, the *Child Care BC Act*, and the *Child Care Subsidy Act*.

² [Link to Community Living British Columbia Annual Service Plan Report.](#)

Strategic Context

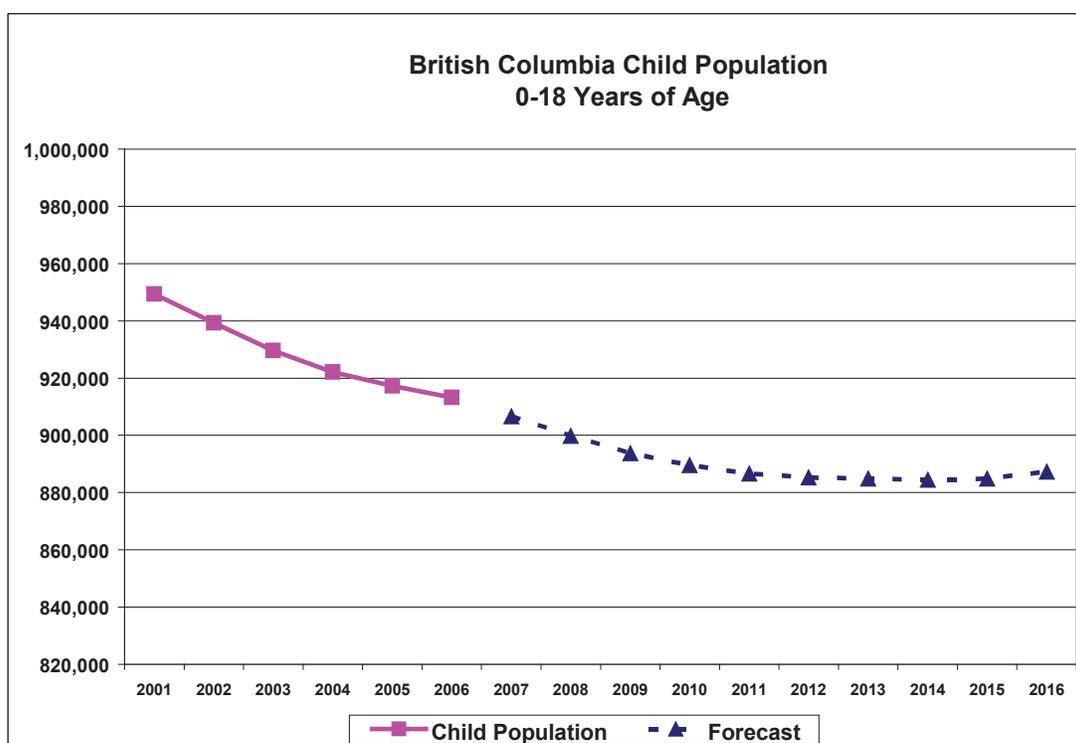
Demographic Changes in British Columbia³

The following trends in and projections for British Columbia's population may affect the demand for Ministry services:

Children and youth population

The total population of children and youth (aged 0-18 years) in British Columbia was 913,261 in 2006, representing 22.2 per cent of B.C.'s total population.

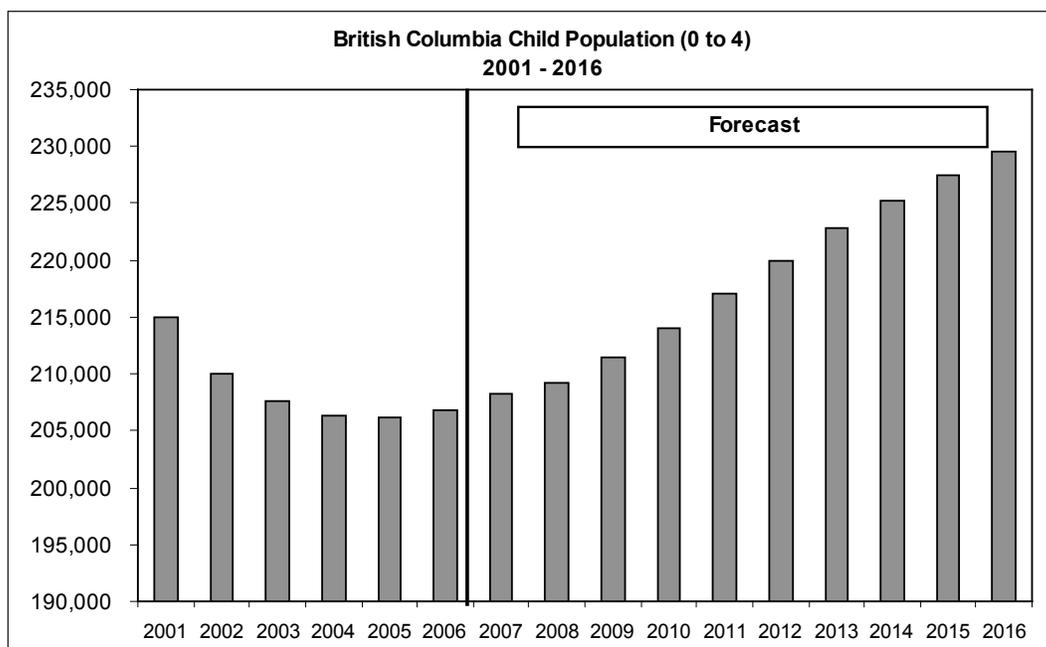
B.C.'s child and youth population declined by 3.8 per cent between 2001 and 2006. It is forecast to drop below 900,000 in 2008 and to continue to decrease until 2015. Beyond 2015, the provincial child and youth population is forecast to increase.



Data Source: BC Stats PEOPLE 32

The population of children aged 0-4 began to rise in 2006 and is projected to increase by approximately one per cent per year from 2006 to 2016. Over time, the increasing number of very young children in B.C. is likely to increase demand for Ministry services.

³ Data Sources: Statistics Canada 2006 Census and BC Stats.



Data Source: BC Stats PEOPLE 32

Immigrant children and youth

British Columbia welcomed 177,800 new immigrants between 2001 and 2006. Most of these newcomers (74.7 per cent) settled in the Vancouver census metropolitan area, including the municipalities of Vancouver, Richmond, Burnaby and Surrey. Of the new immigrant arrivals, the child and youth population aged 5-16 represented 9.3 per cent of Greater Vancouver's school-aged population, which could increase demand for culturally sensitive services and a refocusing of services for immigrant families in urban centres.

Aboriginal children and families

The Aboriginal child and youth population increased by almost 10 per cent between 2001 and 2006 while the Aboriginal youth population (age 15-18) increased by 23.5 per cent. The substantial rise in the Aboriginal youth population relative to the change in the number of Aboriginal children in care over the period suggests a decrease in the per capita number of Aboriginal children in care from 2001 to 2006. The number of Aboriginal youth in custody and on probation substantially decreased during the same time period.

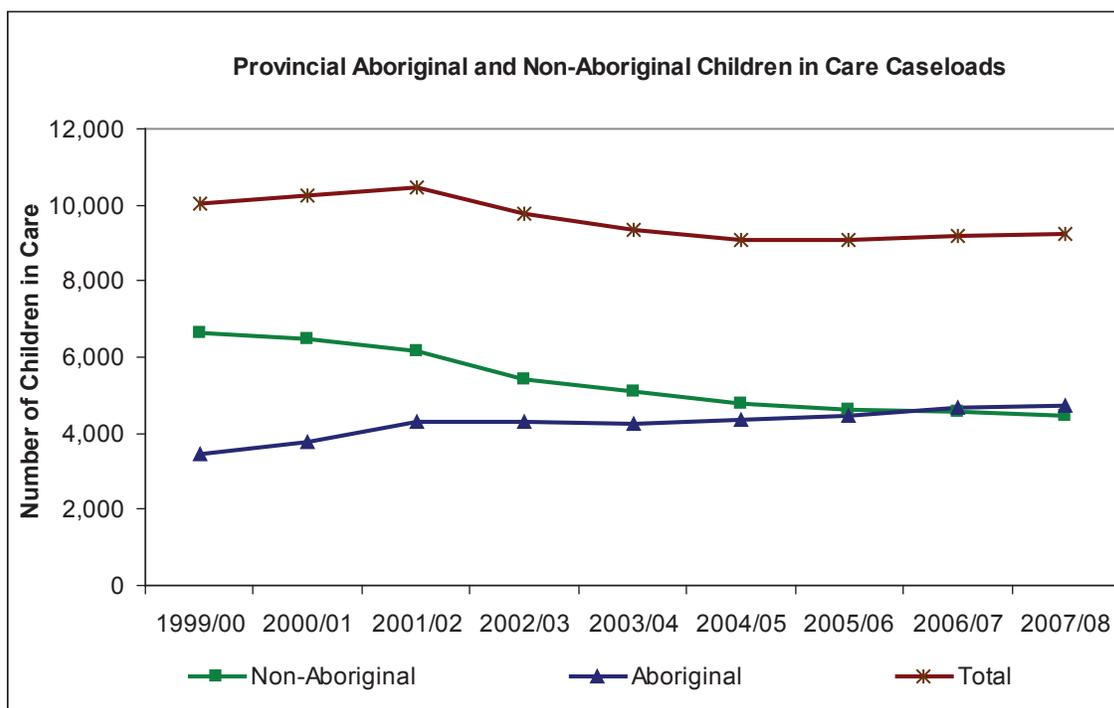
Table 1: Aboriginal Child and Youth Population (Age 0-18) in B.C., 2001 and 2006

Year	Age Group				Total
	0-4	5-9	10-14	15-18	0-18
2001	15,445	17,900	18,655	13,470	65,470
2006	16,195	18,005	21,045	16,635	71,880
% Change	4.9%	0.6%	12.8%	23.5%	9.8%

Source: Statistic Canada 2001 Census and 2006 Census.

Aboriginal children continue to be disproportionately represented among children in the Ministry’s care. Approximately eight per cent of children in B.C. and approximately 52 per cent of the 9,237 children in the Ministry’s care are Aboriginal.

More children already in care are now accurately being identified as Aboriginal. This may be due to the shift towards more culturally appropriate services, and increased confidence that self-identification will result in a better outcome. As a result of increased self-identification, and because Aboriginal children in care are on average younger than non-Aboriginal children in care, the proportion of Aboriginal children in care is likely to increase.



Data Source: Management Information System and Social Worker System (MIS/SWS).

Note: Figures reported are fiscal year averages (April to March).

Intergovernmental Relations

In December 2007, the Ministry and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada negotiated an increase in the foster care, group care and administration rates paid by the federal government for services to Aboriginal children who fall under the federal government's responsibility but are in the care of the Ministry or delegated Aboriginal agency. This funding will increase the capacity of delegated Aboriginal agencies to provide services to clients on reserve.

On January 31, 2008, the federal government announced that, effective April 2007, it would retroactively fund out of care services for children and families on reserve.

Integration and Collaboration with Other Ministries

Improved co-ordination and collaboration with other ministries, particularly the Ministries of Education and Health, are a priority. Experience with the Child and Youth Mental Health Plan has demonstrated the value of greater collaboration. Similarly, improved cooperation through the Children and Youth with Special Needs Framework for Action will improve services and outcomes for children and youth with special needs.

The government's Chief Information Officer is leading the cross-government Social Sector Integrated Information Management Initiative. The vision for this initiative is to have the right information to the right people at the right time in a secure, privacy protecting manner and to support integrated delivery of social services, including operational, front line information and aggregate information for decision-makers at the program, ministry and sector level. As part of this initiative, the Ministry of Children and Family Development continues to work collaboratively with the Ministries of Employment and Income Assistance, and Labour and Citizens' Services on the planning and implementation of the new Integrated Case Management system. The Ministry of Children and Family Development expects to begin implementing the new case management system in 2010.

External Reviews of the Ministry's Services

The Ministry received reports, comments and recommendations from the Auditor General and the Representative for Children and Youth concerning various aspects of operations. These reviews have addressed educational outcomes for children in care, the system of services for children and youth with special needs, and the implementation of the Child and Youth Mental Health Plan for B.C.

The Ministry also continues to build on the progress to date on the recommendations from the 2006 *B.C. Children and Youth Review (Hughes Review)*. External reviews and their recommendations continue to guide discussion and decision-making in the Ministry relating to enhancements to child and family services.

Integrated Quality Assurance

To ensure that children and youth have the best opportunity to be strong, safe and supported, government must take an integrated, child centred approach to meeting basic and universal needs. The Ministry's goal is to ensure the best quality services are consistently applied to all clients, regardless of location and circumstances. To support this work, the Ministry is implementing an integrated quality assurance system that supports continuous organizational learning and a culture of improvement.

While continuous improvement has been ongoing for many years in the Ministry, over the past few years there has been an unprecedented scope of change in the way the Ministry does business to arrive at the best outcome for children, youth and families. A great deal of collaboration and consultation involving Ministry staff and Ministry partners has taken place since 2006 to develop approaches that reflect the commitment to the *Hughes Review*, build on achievements already made and, as we move forward, focus on better lifelong outcomes for children and youth while remaining responsive to imminent needs.

As a result of the ongoing transformation work, on April 15, 2008, the Ministry produced an action plan and a detailed operational framework. The action plan is the impetus for the government to move forward with a strong focus on early intervention and a strengths-based approach to supporting and protecting vulnerable children and youth — through a strong, integrated system.

Report on Performance

Performance Plan Summary Table

Goal 1: The identification and strengthening of effective services for children, youth, families and communities in B.C. within a strengths-based, developmental approach.	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
1.1 Supports to children, youth, families and communities recognize their strengths and enhance their development.		
Per cent of children who enter Kindergarten "ready to learn".	75%	70.4% NOT ACHIEVED
Number of children whose families receive a child care subsidy.	24,480	24,841 ACHIEVED
Per cent of socio-economically disadvantaged children whose grade level is as prescribed for their age.	88%	87% NOT ACHIEVED
Rate of recurrence of child neglect and/or abuse by family.	19.9%	20.9% NOT ACHIEVED
1.2 Children, youth and families have access to a wide range of support services that are more holistic and integrated.		
Per cent of children with adoption plans who have been placed.	18%	18.2% ACHIEVED
Rate of youth in custody based on a proportion of all 12-17 year olds (per 10,000).	Maximum 6.0 per 10,000	4.0 per 10,000 ACHIEVED
1.3 Culturally appropriate services are strengthened and enhanced.		
Number of children safely placed with extended family or in community as an alternative to coming into care.	700	742 EXCEEDED
Goal 2: The Ministry supports Aboriginal people to design regional models and implement services for Aboriginal children, youth, families and communities.	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
2.1 Aboriginal communities and agencies have greater opportunities to design and deliver services.		
Per cent of Aboriginal children in care who are served by delegated Aboriginal agencies.	36%	31.9% NOT ACHIEVED
Goal 3: A fully regionalized model of governance and delivery of services.	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
3.1 Regional governance models are developed by and for communities that align with unique community-based strengths, priorities and challenges.	Community Engagement Indicators Under Development	

Goal 4: Transform the Ministry of Children and Family Development as an organization to support Goals 1, 2, and 3.	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
<p>4.1 Strengthened relationships with internal and external partners, stakeholders and communities.</p> <p>Per cent of agencies required to be accredited, that achieve accreditation.</p>	100%	<p>99%</p> <p>SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED</p>
<p>4.2 Ministry employees are fully engaged, healthy and contributing to transformation in their work environment.</p>		<p>Staff Engagement Indicators Under Development</p>

Goals, Objectives, Strategies and Performance Results

In this section, the Ministry's goals and objectives from the *2007/08–2009/10 Service Plan* are presented, along with the strategies the Ministry employed and results achieved, including performance measure results. The section also explains variances from the planned targets.

In 2007/08, the Ministry continued its transformation as an organization to support its goals with engagement of children, youth, families and communities being a key component in supporting the safety, health and well-being of children and youth.

By continuing to review and, where necessary, change the way child and family development services are delivered, the Ministry is striving for a more community-driven, culturally relevant, strengths-based and integrated service system, as outlined in the Ministry's *2008/09–2010/11 Service Plan*.

The Ministry relies on several reporting systems to track its performance progress. As the Ministry's needs, resources and priorities change in response to new and/or better performance information, the performance measures evolve and improve. The Ministry continues to work with stakeholders regarding the improvement of existing measures and the development of new ones.

The Ministry continues to collect, monitor and make available additional statistics and reports on trends and outcomes associated with services for children, youth and families. For further information visit our website at: www.gov.bc.ca/mcf.

Goal 1: The identification and strengthening of effective services for children, youth, families and communities in B.C. within a strengths-based, developmental approach

The Ministry provides a wide range of services that meet the diverse and complex needs of children, youth, and families. The Ministry recognizes and builds on the inherent strengths in children, youth and families to provide or arrange services and supports to meet these needs, including child protection services.

The Ministry recognizes that the family has the primary responsibility for the healthy development of children and youth. Families and their communities provide life long attachments to keep children healthy, safe and respected.

Objective 1.1: Supports to children, youth, families and communities recognize their strengths and enhance their development

Relying on the strengths inherent in each child, youth, family and community, the Ministry works in partnership with other ministries to design and strengthen early childhood development programs, and services for children and youth with special needs in B.C., to provide families with information and to increase service choice and flexibility. Additionally, in partnership with Community Living British Columbia, the Ministry supports services for children and youth with special needs and their families.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- assisting in the development of a provincial early childhood development evaluation framework that can be used throughout B.C.;
- enhancing community-based family support programs to increase the number of families that are strengthened and better able to support their children and youth;
- working in partnership with the Ministry of Children and Youth Services in Alberta, through the Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement, to establish a seamless transition between the two provinces for early childhood educators; and,
- providing additional support and educational planning through schools and caregivers to help socio-economically disadvantaged children succeed at school.

Progress towards this objective

- In 2007/08, approximately 5,000 children and youth benefited from direct autism funding (an increase from approximately 400 children and youth served in 1999/00). Through a provincial grant and federal contribution, a national autism research chair has been created at Simon Fraser University to build capacity and improve both treatment and intervention options for children and youth diagnosed with autism.
- The Ministry and the Ministries of Education and Health supported the Phoenix Academy of Learning Society on a pilot project basis. The first school of its kind in B.C., the Phoenix Academy of Learning Society is a specialized independent school that provides a safe environment for children and adolescents with Autism Spectrum Disorder to socialize, gain self-worth, progress academically and participate in extra-curricular activities.
- The Ministry, in collaboration with the Ministry of Advanced Education, committed to providing up to \$2,500 each to an estimated 350 students each year toward the outstanding B.C. student loans of new graduates who work as early childhood educators in the licensed child care sector.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2004/05 Baseline	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
Per cent of children who enter Kindergarten "ready to learn"	72.1% ¹	N/A ²	N/A ²	75%	70.4% NOT ACHIEVED

Data Source: Human Early Learning Partnership, www.ecdportal.help.ubc.ca.

Notes:

¹ The 2004/05 Early Development Instrument results have been revised by the Human Early Learning Partnership as a result of more thorough analysis of the data. The revised baseline is 72.1 per cent, the original percentage was 75 per cent.

² Data are collected every three years.

Discussion of Results

The Early Development Instrument reflects children's readiness to learn, reveals the differences in their development across neighbourhoods, and assesses how well communities are supporting young children and their families.

The measure rates students on performance in: physical health, language/cognitive skills, social competence, emotional maturity, and communication and general knowledge. These factors provide a comprehensive picture of the status of B.C. children's school readiness. Data are collected using the Early Development Instrument, which is a teacher-rated assessment of Kindergarten students' "readiness to learn."

The revised 2004/05 provincial baseline is 72.1 per cent. The 2007/08 result is 70.4 per cent. The result suggests that the readiness of children for Kindergarten in B.C. fell during the three years between surveys. The reason this occurred is unclear and the results are still being analyzed.

Ministry Response

Research shows that many factors contribute to a child entering Kindergarten “ready to learn,” from family health and income status to community resources, child care availability and the existence of community early childhood development programs. The Ministry is committed to understanding why the Early Development Instrument results are changing in B.C. and to learn what is working in communities that have improved their scores.

The Ministry continues to implement initiatives to support developmental readiness of B.C.’s children, such as:

- Enhancing community-based Family Resource programs with particular attention given to smaller, rural areas, to increase the number of families that are better able to support their children and youth.
- More than 500 Roots of Empathy programs and 26 Seeds of Empathy centres. These increase emotional competence and empathy and reduce levels of aggression and violence among school (Roots of Empathy) and preschool (Seeds of Empathy) children. In 2007/08, the Roots programs reached over 16,700 students in 668 classrooms.
- Forty-three Aboriginal Early Childhood Development programs, including language revitalization initiatives.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
Number of children whose families receive a child care subsidy	21,704	22,612	23,248	24,480	24,841 ACHIEVED

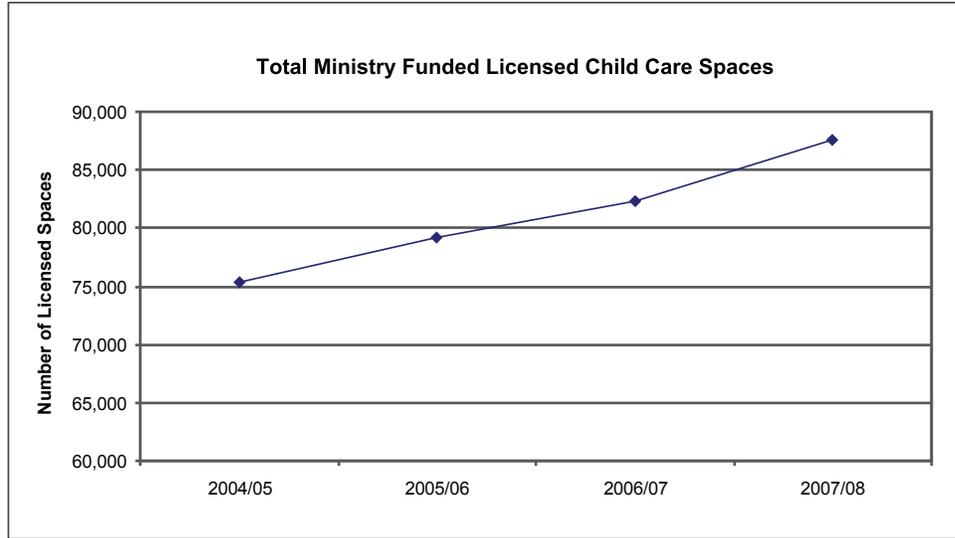
Data Source: Management Information System.

Note: Data collection enhancements have resulted in a change to the 2006/07 result. The 2006/07 actual was previously reported as 23,286 in the 2006/07 Annual Service Plan Report.

Discussion of Results

This measure reflects the accessibility of child care for families with low or moderate incomes. On average in 2007/08, 24,841 child care subsidies were paid to families each month. The Ministry achieved its planned target for the year.

There has been an upward trend in the average number of children whose families receive subsidies since 2004/05. Child care subsidy is a demand driven program that is dependent on applications from families. All eligible families who apply receive funding. Child care subsidies are supporting almost 50,000 individual children annually. Total direct child care subsidy expenditures increased by 6.7 per cent or \$8.4 million in 2007/08.



Data Source: Child Care Operating Funding Program Database.

The number of Ministry funded licensed child care spaces has also increased. In 2007/08, the total number of Ministry funded licensed child care spaces rose by 6.4 per cent or by just over 5,200 spaces. There has been an increase in the number of licensed spaces approved for funding through the Child Care Operating Funding Program each year since 2004/05. The number of funded providers is dependent on the number applying for funding.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Actual ²	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
Per cent of socio-economically disadvantaged children whose grade level is as prescribed for their age ¹	N/A	86%	87%	88%	87% NOT ACHIEVED

Data Sources: Ministry of Children and Family Development Management Information System and Social Worker System, Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance and Ministry of Education.

¹ Socio-economically disadvantaged children are those that are in one or more of the following categories: Ministry of Children and Family Development: Children in care; Children in out of care placements, Individuals with youth agreements, and Children under supervision orders; Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance: Children of Income Assistance recipients; Children in the Home of a Relative.

² Children in Kindergarten included in the measure after 2005/06.

Discussion of Results

This measure indicates how well socio-economically disadvantaged children are keeping up in school. The measure shows the percentage of disadvantaged school-aged children in a grade level that is appropriate for their age. For example, children six years old before the end of December of the school year are generally in grade one.

Targets for the measure reflect the Government's ten year commitment to eliminate the gap between socio-economically disadvantaged children and other children, with respect to grade level and appropriate age. Each year for the next eight years the measure's target will increase by one percentage point.

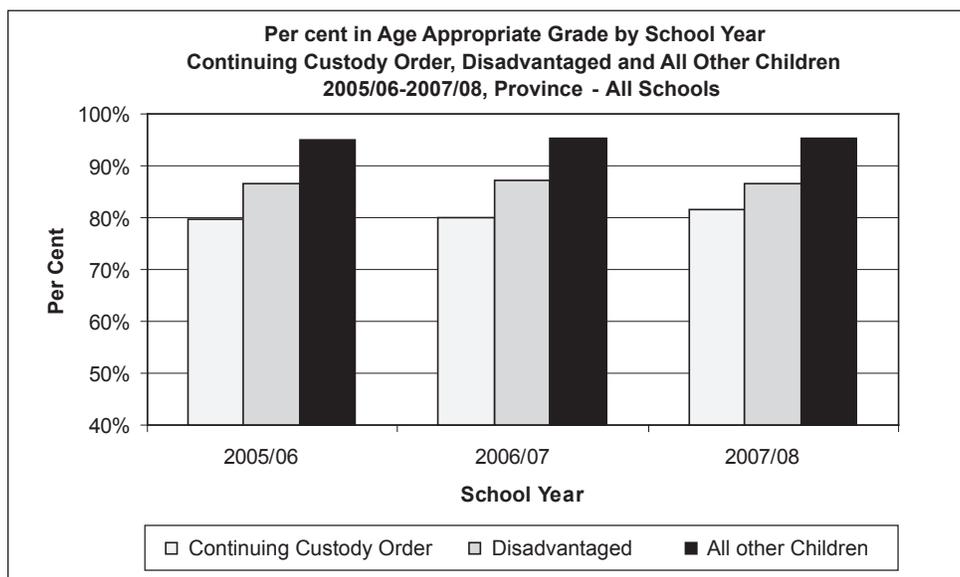
For the 2007 school year, the actual result was 87 per cent, unchanged from the previous year. Ninety-five per cent of all other children are in a grade level as prescribed for their age, also unchanged from the previous year.

Ministry Response

Improving the educational outcomes for children in care is a Ministry priority. While the Ministry cannot directly affect the educational outcomes for every child included in this measure, it contributes to the accomplishment of government's goal by working to improve educational outcomes for children in its care. An area of focus for the Ministry is children in its long term care — children under a continuing custody order.

One of the first steps towards changing something is being able to measure and understand the current situation. Work undertaken during 2007/08 with the Ministry of Education means that the Ministry is now able to track an array of educational outcomes for children under a continuing custody order, including whether these children are at the grade level prescribed for their age.

For the 2005/06 through 2007/08 period, the data show that children under a continuing custody order are less likely than all socio-economically disadvantaged children to be in their “age appropriate grade”. The proportion of children under a continuing custody order in their age appropriate grade is 87 per cent (8.4 per cent lower than non-socio-economically disadvantaged children).



Data Sources: Ministry of Children and Family Development Management Information System and Social Worker System; Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance; and Ministry of Education.

Notes: In the chart above, “disadvantaged” includes children in Kindergarten after 2005/06. “All Other Children” excludes disadvantaged children as well as children under “Continuing Custody Orders”.

The Ministry and the Ministry of Education are continuing work on improving information sharing among social workers, foster parents, teachers and school districts, and will develop cross-ministry guidelines to improve communication and co-ordination between educators and social workers.

In order to further improve planning, monitoring and co-ordination, the Ministry will continue to produce an annual public report on the educational attainment levels of children in care.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
Rate of recurrence of child neglect and/or abuse by family	19.7%	18.1%	20.9%	19.9%	20.9% NOT ACHIEVED

Data Source: The Management Information System and Social Worker System.

Notes: Neglect is a failure by the parent or guardian to provide for a child’s basic needs; it may include failure to provide food, shelter, basic health care, supervision or protection from risks, to the extent that the child’s physical health, development or safety is, or is likely to be, harmed. Abuse is defined as physical or sexual maltreatment or emotional neglect.

Discussion of Results

This measure is directly linked to the outcome of ensuring child safety in the community and within the child's family. When it has been established that a child has been or is at risk, the Ministry works with families to reduce future harm by providing services that will best address the needs of the child and family. The measure describes the proportion of families who neglect and/or abuse their children within 12 months of a previously confirmed incidence of child neglect and/or abuse.

The actual recurrence rate did not change from its 2006/07 level of 20.9 per cent. However, a closer look at the measure reveals that significant improvement occurred in the number of recurring incidents.

The recurrence measure compares the number of recurring incidents to the number of children needing protection. In 2007/08, the number of recurring incidents dropped to 721 incidents from 962 in the previous year. This 25 per cent reduction coincided with a 25 per cent reduction in the number of children needing protection.

While the rate of recurrence did not change, fewer children were neglected or abused by their families within 12 months of a previously confirmed incident, and fewer children were found to be in need of protection.

Fiscal Year	Number of recurring incidents (1)	Number of children needing protection (2)	Rate of Recurrence = (1) / (2)
2004/05	802	4,068	19.7%
2005/06	937	5,187	18.1%
2006/07	962	4,615	20.9%
2007/08	721	3,456	20.9%
Change from 2006/07	(241) (25%)	(1,159) (25%)	—

Data Source: Management Information System and Social Worker System.

Ministry Response

The Ministry is continuing to increase the use of Family Development Response as an alternative to investigations in less severe cases where the risk to a child is low and can best be managed by timely assessments and services without investigations. The Ministry is also enhancing its child protection decision-making model to place more emphasis on strengths-based assessment while still addressing risk.

The result of these activities will be the implementation of an improved assessment and intervention model for child protection that supports collaborative, strengths-based practice, promotes alternatives to investigation and court processes, and uses research-validated tools to help assess the likelihood of future harm.

Objective 1.2: Children, youth and families have access to a wide range of support services that are more holistic and integrated

The Ministry continues to support community-based initiatives as part of a holistic, integrated service delivery system. The Ministry is working to improve resiliency and community supports; promote healthy pregnancy, birth and infancy; and improve support for parenting and families.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- supporting children and families involved in the adoption process in order to facilitate placements of children in care for adoption;
- supporting recruitment and educational events for families to support and strengthen their ability to care for adoptive children;
- implementing year 5 of the Child and Youth Mental Health Plan for B.C., in cooperation with the Ministries of Health and Education;
- developing, in partnership with stakeholders, a strategy to improve access to services for children, youth and families in rural and remote areas of the province;
- participating on the Premier's Task Force on Homelessness, Mental Illness and Addictions to increase transitional housing in the province;
- continuing to increase the effectiveness of community-based alternatives to youth custody through innovative, non-custodial approaches;
- continuing to work with Aboriginal communities and justice system partners to reduce the over-representation of Aboriginal youth in custody; and,
- working with the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General to address issues related to the sexual exploitation of youth, including human trafficking.

Progress towards this objective

- To date, approximately 90,000 B.C. students in grades four and five have benefited from the FRIENDS program, an evidence-based anxiety prevention program, and over 3,000 teachers have received FRIENDS program training.

- Since it began in 2005, the Voluntary Services for Sexually Exploited Youth Program has provided over 400 children and youth who are dealing with issues of sexual exploitation with individual support services including: one-to-one support, food, clothing, detox residential treatment, life skills training, safe house beds and other services.
- Together with the National Crime Prevention Centre and the Assistant Deputy Ministers' Committee on Prostitution and Sexual Exploitation of Youth, the Ministry provided funding to community groups to address sexual exploitation in their communities. As well, the Ministry and the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General support B.C.'s Migrant Services Program which provides care and protection to trafficked, resettled, and refugee children and youth.
- The use of alternatives to keep children and youth safe without having to go through a full judicial process — such as Family Group Conferencing, Family Development Response, traditional decision-making processes, and Child Protection Mediation — continued to grow in 2007/08. The use of Family Group Conferences and Child Protection Mediations grew by approximately 55 per cent and 25 per cent respectively. Approximately 94 per cent of all Child Protection Mediations in the province result in some or all of the issues being settled.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
Per cent of children with adoption plans who have been placed	19.5%	17.7%	15.2%	18%	18.2% ACHIEVED

Data Source: The Adoption Management System.

Note: Data enhancements have resulted in changes to historic numbers for "total number of children placed for adoption". The actual results have been adjusted to reflect these changes.

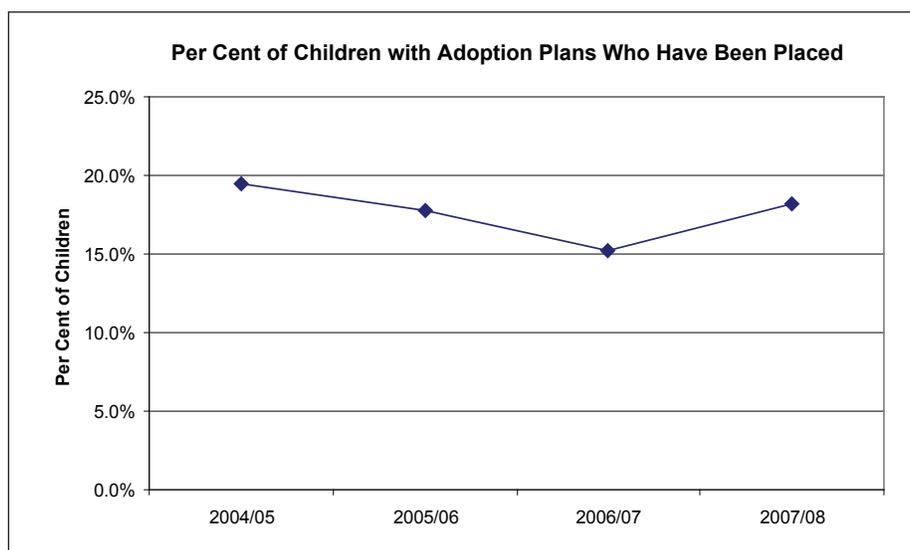
Discussion of Results

The Ministry's priority is to seek a permanent family home for all children who would otherwise remain in Ministry care until they reach adulthood. The number of adoptions of children who have been in the care of the Ministry illustrates how many of these children now belong to a permanent family. In 2007/08, of the 1,763 children in care with a plan of adoption, 320 were placed for adoption.

	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	Change from 2006/07
Children with plan of adoption	1,581	1,602	1,770	1,763	(0.4%)
Total number of children placed for adoption	308	284	269	320	19.0%

Data Source: Adoption Management System.

Note: Data enhancements have resulted in changes to historic numbers for "total number of children placed for adoption" reported in the 2006/07 Annual Service Plan Report. The 2004/05 Actual was previously reported as 307, the 2005/06 as 282 and the 2006/07 actual as 260. The actual results for "Per cent of children with adoption plans who have been placed" have been adjusted to reflect these changes.



Data Source: Adoption Management System.

The number of adoption placements increased in 2007/08. Compared to 2006/07, 51 additional adoption placements occurred. As indicated in the following table, the number of Aboriginal placements grew 13.5 per cent in 2007/08, while the percentage of these children placed into Aboriginal homes dropped to 50.5 per cent.

	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	Change from 2006/07
Total Aboriginal placements	135	87	89	101	13.5%
Number placed in Aboriginal homes	73	52	57	51	(10.5%)
Per cent of Aboriginal placements in Aboriginal homes	54.1%	59.8%	64.0%	50.5%	—

Data Source: Adoption Management System.

In 2007/08, over \$900,000 in additional funding went towards hiring auxiliary staff, increasing contracted services with licensed adoption agencies, and to pilot projects on innovative adoption practices to address adoption backlogs. The investments made during the year to reduce the backlog in adoptions contributed to the 19.0 per cent increase in the total number of children placed for adoption and resulted in the performance target being met.

As well, the Ministry increased the value of its contracts with the Adoptive Families Association of BC, which improves the agency's ability to provide pre- and post-adoptive support for families in the adoption program. These supports are helpful in meeting the ongoing needs of children who have been adopted and their families.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
Rate of youth in custody based on a proportion of all 12-17 year olds (per 10,000)	4.7 per 10,000	4.1 per 10,000	4.3 per 10,000	Maximum 6.0 per 10,000	4.0 per 10,000 ACHIEVED

Data Source: Management and Analysis Reporting System, Youth Justice Institution and Community Datamart and BC Stats.

Discussion of Results

This measure gauges the degree to which the youth justice system relies on custody and provides an indication of the availability and effectiveness of community-based alternatives to custody. The measure is the annual average of the daily population of youth (aged 12-17 years) in custody per 10,000 of all 12-17 year olds in B.C.

In 2007/08, an average of 4.0 youth for every 100,000 B.C. youth aged 12-17 years were in custody. Achievement of this target is due, in part, to the provision of community-based programs and the establishment of province-wide Intensive Support and Supervision Programs (80 agency and 20 custody one-to-one workers, with a program capacity of approximately 800 youth).

These factors, coupled with the implementation of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* in 2003, have reinforced a pre-existing downward trend in the use of custody from 2003/04. There has been a decline in the rate of both the non-Aboriginal and the Aboriginal youth in Youth Justice Custody Centres since 2001/02.

Objective 1.3: Culturally appropriate services are strengthened and enhanced

The best way to enhance the safety and well-being of young people is to rely on the strengths of healthy families and communities. The Ministry is putting substantial effort into providing culturally appropriate services for the province's diverse population of children, youth and families.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- supporting new community-based Aboriginal service systems to better reflect Aboriginal cultures, traditions and languages;
- utilizing an Elders' Advisory Council to ensure that the voice of Aboriginal people is heard in the design and delivery of services and working with Aboriginal Planning Tables to ensure inclusive planning and appropriate services for Aboriginal children, youth and families;
- working with Early Intervention Therapy stakeholders and Aboriginal community representatives to develop practice guidelines that foster multi-disciplinary teams and assessment strategies for children and youth requiring intervention support services;
- continuing to provide information to support the service and cultural needs of children who are deaf or hard of hearing and their parents, through the Deaf Access Office and a consultative social worker who provides advice to all social workers throughout the province;
- supporting the involvement of ethno-cultural committees in Ministry planning to reflect the cultures, traditions and languages of all ethnicities in British Columbia; and
- providing information resources for parents and families that are accessible to more cultures, including translated print resources.

Progress towards this objective

- To ensure that the voice of Aboriginal elders is heard in the design and delivery of services with Aboriginal communities, the Elders' Advisory Council concluded planning of a project to research traditional approaches to raising a child and culturally appropriate best practices.
- The website for Provincial Services for Deaf and Hard of Hearing is now available in sign language, and the brochure *Provincial Services for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing* was translated into Punjabi and written Chinese, and posted on the Ministry website. The Ministry also funded the printing of the booklet *Can Your Baby Hear? A Guide for Parents of Newborn or Young Babies*. This booklet was translated into five other languages: Written Chinese, Punjabi, French, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

- The *Options for parents and families: Collaborative Planning and Decision-Making in Child Welfare* pamphlet has been translated into Chinese, Tagalog, French, Korean, Persian, Punjabi, Spanish and Vietnamese. These inform parents of their right to be involved in decisions about their children and ways parents can be involved in the planning process.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
Number of children safely placed with extended family or in community as an alternative to coming into care	668	642	623	700	742 EXCEEDED

Data Source: The Management Information System and Social Worker System.

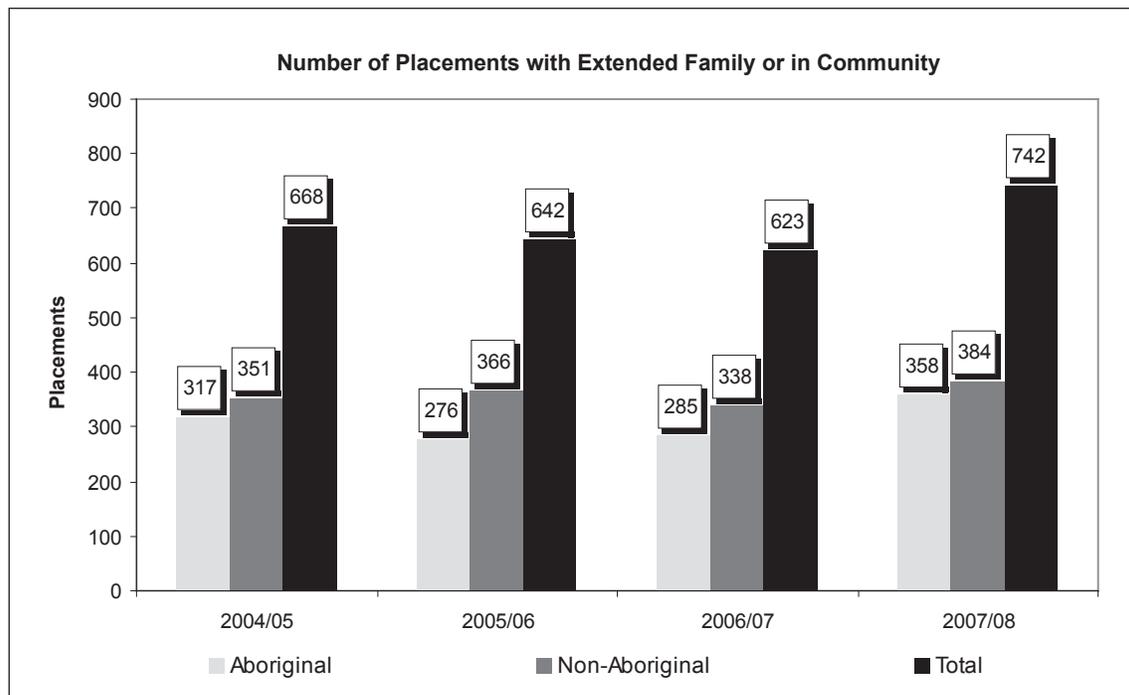
Discussion of Results

This measure reflects the importance of maintaining the continuity of family and community relationships for vulnerable children. It captures the use of a variety of options for keeping children and youth out of care, as well as for children and youth leaving care (through placements with kin or a person with significant ties to the child).

The number of placements with extended family or in the community rose by 119 from 623 in 2006/07 to 742 in 2007/08. This 19.1 per cent increase means that the 2007/08 performance measure target was exceeded and placements with extended family or in the community are now at the highest level ever achieved.

The increases in placements occurred for both Aboriginal (73) and non-Aboriginal (46) children. Successful placements are dependent on:

- the availability of relatives able to take care of the child or children;
- parents/families consenting to another relative taking care of their children; and
- the desire and ability of the extended family to take on the added responsibility.



Data Source: Management Information System and Social Worker System.

The count for the measure does not include children served by delegated Aboriginal agencies. The targets for the measure are based on historical trends.

Goal 2: The Ministry supports Aboriginal people to design regional models and implement services for Aboriginal children, youth, families and communities

The Ministry supports Aboriginal people to provide for the safety and well-being of their children and the governing of services to support children and families. Policy and practice in child and family development services must strive to reflect Aboriginal culture if those services are to be truly effective with Aboriginal children and youth.

Objective 2.1: Aboriginal communities and agencies have greater opportunities to design and deliver services

The Ministry continues to support Aboriginal people to lead the design, implementation and governance of services for Aboriginal children, youth, families and communities. By learning from and responding to its Aboriginal partners, the Ministry is working to support Aboriginal peoples to exercise jurisdiction in delivering child and family services consistent with local and cultural values.

The Ministry supports Aboriginal communities in the creation and development of Aboriginal delegated Aboriginal agencies providing direct services to those communities. Aboriginal delivery of services to their children is expected to result in improved outcomes for Aboriginal children and youth.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- supporting Aboriginal planning processes to enable development of regional models;
- identifying, documenting and showcasing Aboriginal best practices with children, youth and families;
- continuing to support new delegated Aboriginal agencies and expanding the scope of existing Aboriginal agencies in order to support the safe transfer of children in care to the care of delegated Aboriginal agencies; and
- reviewing employment criteria and strengthening curriculum and training for First Nations and Métis child and family service practitioners to bring more Aboriginal people into the service delivery system.

Progress towards this objective

- The Prince George Aboriginal Children and Family Commission and the Ministry completed a Memorandum of Understanding that identifies how the Ministry will work and engage with the Commission members in the planning, design and delivery of services in the Prince George area. This represents an historic agreement between a diverse group of First Nations, Aboriginal organizations and the Ministry.
- A Provincial Roots Coordinator was hired to provide advice and guidance on best practices to regional Roots practitioners, and to support Roots Are Forever events and gatherings.
- As of February 2008, the Haida Child and Family Services Agency obtained delegated responsibility for resource development and family support services to children and families in their respective communities (Old Massett Village Council and Skidegate Band).

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
Per cent of Aboriginal children in care who are served by delegated Aboriginal agencies	30.7%	30.6%	30.4%	36%	31.9% NOT ACHIEVED

Data Source: The Management Information System and Social Worker System.

Discussion of Results

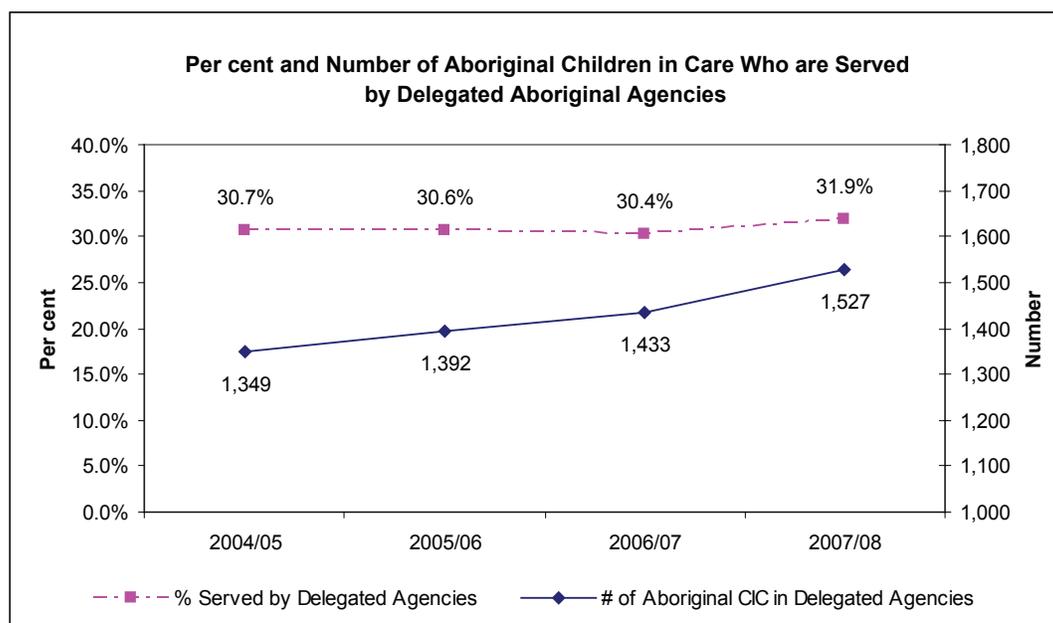
In 2007/08, 31.9 per cent of Aboriginal children in care were served by delegated Aboriginal agencies. The Ministry did not meet its planned target of 36.0 per cent.

The per cent of Aboriginal children in care served by delegated Aboriginal agencies improved in 2007/08, rising by 1.5 percentage points over 2006/07. Delegated Aboriginal agencies served 94 more Aboriginal children in 2007/08, while the number of Aboriginal children in care increased by 67.

	2004/05	2005/06	2006/07	2007/08	Per cent change over last fiscal
Number of Aboriginal children in care	4,394	4,542	4,721	4,788	1.4%
Number of Aboriginal children in care served by delegated agencies	1,348	1,392	1,433	1,527	6.6%
Increase in number served by delegated agencies	117	43	41	94	—

Data Source: Management Information System and Social Worker System.

The steady increase in the number of Aboriginal children in care transferred to delegated Aboriginal agencies over the four year period 2004/05 to 2007/08 is shown in the following graph.



Data Source: Management Information System and Social Worker System.

Geography, local capacity and the location of agencies can create significant challenges with respect to transfers of Aboriginal children to delegated Aboriginal agencies. For example, in the North, Aboriginal children in care are geographically dispersed and many are not located near their home communities. This means that creating viable delegated Aboriginal agencies is a challenge, as is determining which agencies should provide services to which children.

Ministry funding to delegated Aboriginal agencies increased from \$35.8 million in 2006/07 to \$45.7 million in 2007/08 (approximately \$9.9 million in additional funding).

Ministry Response

Transferring responsibility for Aboriginal children in care to a delegated Aboriginal agency involves the Ministry delegating its services to Aboriginal agencies having the capacity to assume responsibilities. The Ministry is continuing to work with existing agencies on building capacity and planning for the transition of those services.

The Ministry's North Region and the Northwest Inter-Nation Family and Community Services Society successfully negotiated the transfer of 29 children in care files to the Society. On April 1, 2008, the Vancouver Aboriginal Child and Family Services Society became the first urban Aboriginal agency to receive full child protection delegation. This agency will receive a transfer of approximately 1,000 case files in 2008/09.

Goal 3: A fully regionalized model of governance and delivery of services

The Ministry is committed to working in partnership with families and communities to develop and support appropriate programs and services. Children, youth and families are best served when they are included and participate in decisions that affect them directly, through partnerships with communities and those individuals the Ministry serves.

Objective 3.1: Regional governance models are developed by and for communities that align with unique community-based strengths, priorities and challenges

The Ministry continues to support the delivery and administration of services at the regional level. The closer to the community that services are delivered and governed, the better the Ministry can meet the needs of children, youth, families and communities.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- decentralizing decision-making, resources and services to the regional and community levels;
- supporting the development of community and regional plans based on a continuum of services;
- providing collaborative planning options and processes to engage families and community members. Examples include family group conferences to bring children, youth, families, extended families and professionals together to plan for keeping a child safe and the use of traditional cultural practices for planning and resolving disagreements;
- providing leadership with Ministry partners to establish or expand five community hubs to support early child development and learning that offer integrated services for families;
- supporting extended family and community members to care for vulnerable children and youth through kinship care agreements and other alternatives to foster care;
- enhancing community-based family support programs such as Family Resource Programs that provide parent education, support and opportunities for families to learn parenting skills and enhance their resiliency; and
- developing in partnership with stakeholders, a strategy to improve access to services for children, youth and families in rural and remote areas of the province.

Progress towards this objective

- Collaborative Practice Forums were held in communities throughout the North Region, bringing together community agencies, foster parents, interested citizens, clients and Ministry staff. The Ministry also provided a grant to the Law Foundation for projects to increase the availability of Family Group Conferencing, Child Protection Mediation and traditional decision-making practices for Aboriginal children and families.
- Five new neighbourhood hubs started in Enderby, Barriere, Vernon, Golden and Penticton to assist children, youth, and families in accessing needed services, often by co-locating companion services in one centre. The Ministry's North Region staff worked with the B.C. Association of Family Resource Programs to enable multi-service agencies to provide services to existing isolated program sites located within a one-hour radius of the multi-service agency.
- The Ministry established Community and Regional Tables that provide direction, support and guidance to regional decision-making and services. The chairs of the former regional planning committees have been invited to bring their expertise to these tables and to help the Ministry's regional leadership.

- There has been a continuing effort to support decentralized decisions and provide greater regional control over the planning and delivery of programs and services. Reflecting this, the Regional budget share of the Ministry's total budget increased from 38.3 per cent in 2006/07 to 40.9 per cent in 2007/08.

Goal 4: Transform the Ministry of Children and Family Development as an organization to support Goals 1, 2, and 3

The Ministry continued to improve the integrated system of services designed to meet the needs of children, youth and families in B.C. In order to respond quickly and appropriately to their needs, the Ministry relies on fully engaged and healthy staff working in an environment that encourages continuous learning, respect, accountability and excellence in leadership.

Objective 4.1: Strengthened relationships with internal and external partners, stakeholders and communities

Relying on accountability, quality assurance, monitoring, evaluation and performance-based contracts, the Ministry continues to build successful relationships with Aboriginal communities, municipalities, other provincial ministries, service providers, school districts and community agencies.

The Ministry's success in working with accredited community agencies as well as with children, youth and families — to ensure the excellence of service — confirms that service providers are following internationally-recognized standards.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- supporting organizations to achieve and maintain accreditation;
- working with the government's Chief Information Officer on a case management project to improve service delivery and planning;
- encouraging youth participation in a Youth Advisory Council to ensure their perspectives are included in the design and delivery of services; and
- reviewing and implementing effective complaint resolution procedures which are based on problem-solving and restorative practices.

Progress towards this objective

- Guided by the government’s Chief Information Officer, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, in collaboration with the Ministries of Labour and Citizens’ Services, and Employment and Income Assistance, completed procurement of Integrated Case Management software to replace obsolete technology. The system will reduce administrative workloads and improve information-sharing, resulting in better outcomes for children and youth.
- The Youth Advisory Council consulted with youth stakeholders on youth engagement practices, programs and service delivery agencies. The Council also contributed an article to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child anniversary book entitled “*18 Candles — Celebrating the Convention*”.
- The Ministry revised its regional Complaint Resolution Policy. This policy includes provincial standards, building on existing efforts to ensure that clients throughout the province receive a consistently high standard of service when accessing the complaint resolution process.

Performance Results

Performance Measure	2004/05 Actual	2005/06 Actual	2006/07 Actual	2007/08 Target	2007/08 Actual
Per cent of agencies required to be accredited, that achieve accreditation	39%	70%	93%	100%	99% SUBSTANTIALLY ACHIEVED

Data Source: Accreditation database and reporting from agencies.

Discussion of Results

Since 1999, Ministry policy has required contracted service providers receiving \$500,000 or more annual Ministry funding to be accredited. This measure is an indicator of quality assurance in the delivery of its considerable number of contracted services.

Ninety-nine per cent of agencies that receive significant Ministry funding achieved accreditation, contributing to quality assurance, quality improvement, and province-wide consistency in the services provided by the contracted sector.

The number of agencies required to be accredited varies from year to year as changes in agency contracts move them above or below the \$500,000 threshold. There has been a significant increase in the proportion of accredited agencies in the last four years, from 86 (approximately 39 per cent of all required agencies) in 2004/05 to 203 agencies (approximately 99 per cent) in 2007/08.

British Columbia leads the way in the growing international trend in using objective third-party accreditation as a means to ensure stringent performance standards are met and exceeded.

Objective 4.2: Ministry employees are fully engaged, healthy and contributing to transformation in their work environment

The Ministry is working to support its professional, talented and dedicated staff, who serve British Columbia's most vulnerable children, youth and families. To provide this support, the Ministry promotes innovation, continuous learning and dynamic leadership, as well as recognizing strengths in a culture of respect, integrity, fairness, transparency, consistency and equality.

Strategies

Key strategies for this objective include:

- providing professional development opportunities to staff with an emphasis on front line staff, community service managers, practice analysts and leaders to build the specific skills and experience they need to develop fulfilling, rewarding career paths;
- emphasizing respect, trust, innovation, well-being and teamwork in all of the Ministry's activities to ensure that all staff can participate as fully as possible in decision-making regarding the Ministry's service delivery and the work environment; and
- incorporating recruitment and retention activities consistent with government's Corporate Human Resources Plan to ensure sufficient human resources, including recruitment and retention of Aboriginal staff within the Ministry's provincial and regional offices.

Progress towards this objective

- Program specific supervisory training was provided to front line staff working in child welfare, child and youth mental health, and youth justice. Training sessions on collaborative, client-centred skills were held throughout the Vancouver Island region. Core training focusing on front line service delivery was provided to staff in delegated Aboriginal agencies as well as to staff in agencies that provide services on behalf of the Ministry.
- Regional Strategic Plans were developed based on community and staff engagement that builds on local knowledge and expertise. The Deputy Minister and Regional Executive Directors engaged in regional "town hall" meetings, to solicit feedback on the progress and direction of the Ministry's efforts to make service delivery more responsive to local needs.
- The Ministry partnered with the University of Northern BC to hire Aboriginal front line workers with Social Work or Child and Youth Care degrees to train them in Child Welfare specialization (seven candidates completed the program in 2007/08). A Ministry Student Employment Program was established to provide students undertaking or completing post-secondary studies with a work experience in the Ministry to encourage them to consider a career in the BC Public Service.
- The Ministry continued to improve its employee engagement results, with internal survey scores increasing by eight per cent over the past two years.

Report on Resources

The Ministry provides a wide variety of regionally and provincially delivered services and programs to protect and support vulnerable children and youth and to support healthy child and family development. The Ministry also provides funding to Community Living British Columbia for them to deliver supports and services to adults and children with developmental disabilities.

This section provides information by core business areas on the Ministry's operating expenditures, full-time equivalent staffing and capital expenditures for 2007/08.

Resource Summary Table

Core Business Areas	Estimated ¹	Other Authorizations ²	Total Estimated	Actual ³	Variance
Operating Expenses (\$000)					
Ministry Operations Vote					
Child and Family Development	704,733		704,733	704,961	228
Early Childhood Development, Child Care and Supports to Children with Special Needs	429,862		429,862	425,179	(4,683)
Provincial Services	61,267		61,267	62,691	1,424
Executive and Support Services	23,668		23,668	26,248	2,580
Total Ministry Operations	1,219,530	0	1,219,530	1,219,079	(451)
Community Living Services Vote					
Ministry Monitoring — Community Living Services	674		674	557	(117)
Transfers to Community Living British Columbia	646,440		646,440	646,499	59
Total Community Living Services	647,114	0	647,114	647,056	(58)
Adjustment of Prior Year's Accrual				(1,489)	(1,489)
Total Ministry	1,866,644	0	1,866,644	1,864,646	(1,998)
Contingencies (All Ministries) and New Programs Vote					
Climate Action Dividend ⁴	0	960	960	960	0
Total Contingencies and New Programs	0	960	960	960	0

Ministry of Children and Family Development

Core Business Areas	Estimated ¹	Other Authorizations ²	Total Estimated	Actual ³	Variance
Full-time Equivalents (Direct FTEs)					
Ministry Operations Vote					
Child and Family Development	3,114		3,114	3,089	(25)
Early Childhood Development, Child Care and Supports to Children with Special Needs	312		312	293	(19)
Provincial Services	621		621	590	(31)
Executive and Support Services	234		234	244	10
Total Ministry Operations	4,281	0	4,281	4,216	(65)
Community Living Services Vote					
Ministry Monitoring — Community Living Services	5		5	5	0
Total Community Living Services	5	0	5	5	0
Total Ministry	4,286	0	4,286	4,221	(65)
Ministry Capital Expenditures (Consolidated Revenue Fund) (\$000)					
Ministry Operations Vote					
Executive and Support Services	19,517	0	19,517	8,438	(11,079)
Total Ministry Operations	19,517	0	19,517	8,438	(11,079)
Other Financing Transactions (\$000)					
Ministry Operations Vote					
Executive and Support Services — Human Services Providers Financing Program					
Receipts	36		36	133	97
Disbursements	0		0	0	0
Net Cash Source (Requirements)	36	0	36	133	97

¹ The "Estimated" amount corresponds to the *Estimates* as presented to the Legislative Assembly February 20, 2007.

² Other "Authorizations" include Estimates, Statutory Appropriations and Contingencies.

³ Variance is the "Actual" minus the "Total Estimated". Where spending is less than budgeted, the Variance is displayed with a bracket.

⁴ Climate Action Dividend is a government-wide initiative funded from the Contingencies (All Ministries) and New Programs Vote.

Explanation of Resource Summary

Operating Expenditures

The annual Ministry budget is based on assumptions contained in the Ministry's *2007/08–2009/10 Service Plan*. Overall, the Ministry met its budget target for 2007/08.

The over expenditure of \$2.58 million (or 11 per cent over budget) in Executive and Support Services was mainly due to initial planning and project management costs for the integrated case management system and costs of the corporate human resources plan.

Capital Expenditures

The under expenditure of \$11.08 million (or 57 per cent of the capital budget) was due to the transfer of both the Integrated Case Management software cost as well as capitalized costs attributable to the Information Systems Technology joint project over to the Ministry of Labour and Citizen's Services, in order to comply with government's core policy requirement that one Ministry be the owner of the system.

Significant Year over Year Resource Changes:

Government continues to build on its investments to maintain services for vulnerable children and youth and to enhance existing supports to children and youth with special needs with:

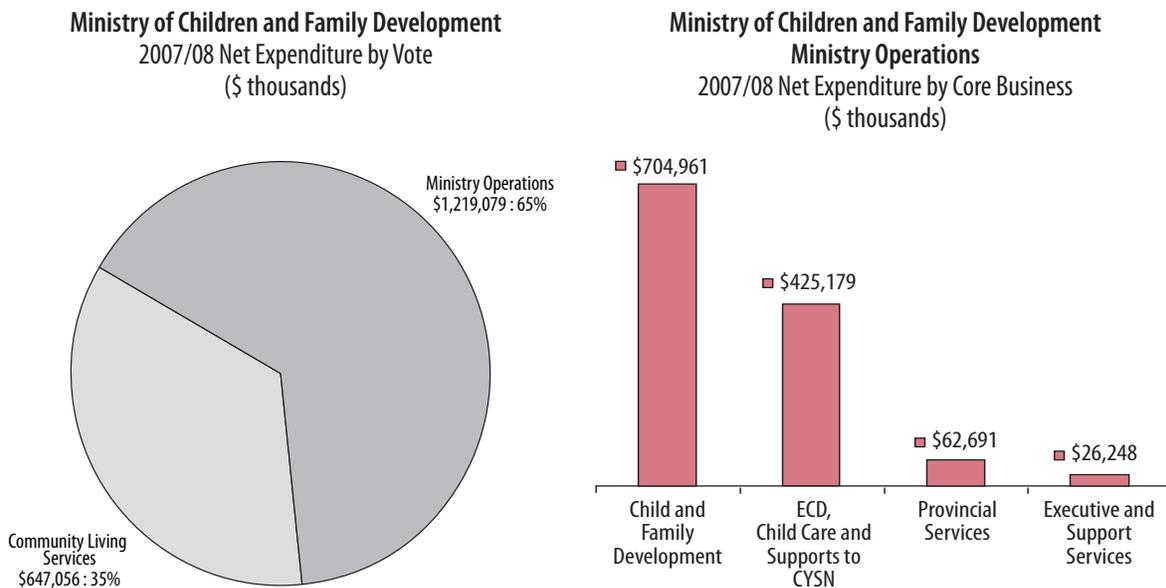
- \$16.80 million additional funding for the continual support of the Child and Youth Mental Health Plan;
- \$8 million additional funding for planning and implementation of regional Aboriginal authorities;
- \$31.10 million additional funding to enhance programs and supports for children and youth at risk;
- \$22.63 million additional funding for increased access to services and supports for children and youth with special needs;
- \$6.86 million new funding for foster parents for the increased financial pressures faced by caregivers who provide residential services for children in care of the Province. This builds on additional supports previously provided for mileage allowance to foster parents to reflect higher transportation costs;
- \$8.35 million new funding to support the Ministry's contracted community and social services providers and \$6.1 million to support Community Living British Columbia;
- \$22.43 million additional funding for growth related to health and safety for adults with developmental disabilities in Community Living British Columbia; and

- \$2.85 million new funding for care of multi-disordered discharges from Riverview Hospital for care under Community Living British Columbia programs and services.

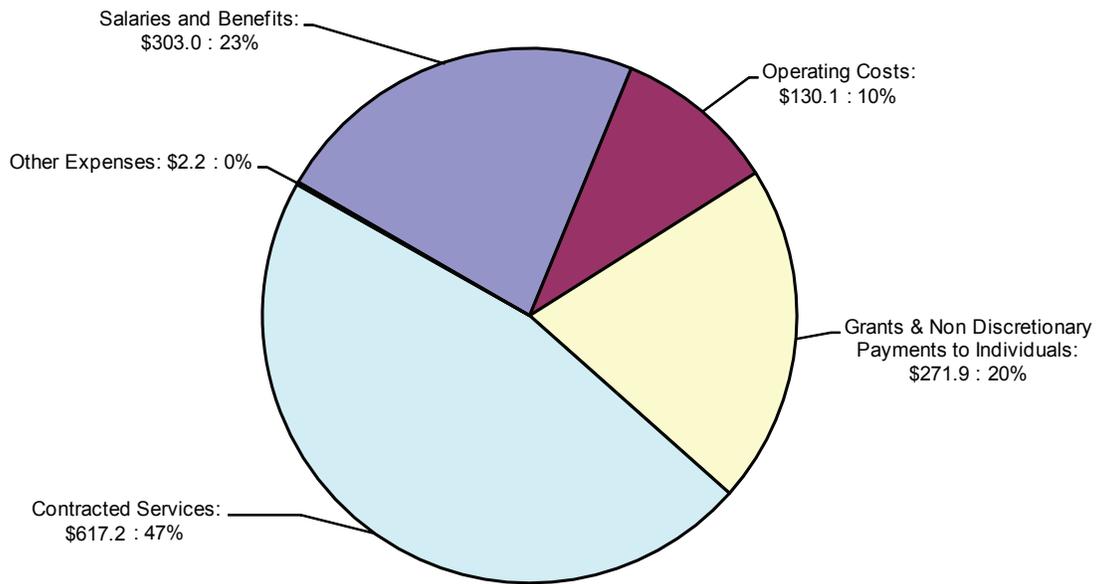
New federal funding of \$33.11 million from the 2007 Federal Budget was provided for child care and related program expenditures. This was recorded in 2007/08 as a recovery to expenditures made. The funding was a transition payment to support the development of new child care spaces.

The Contingencies (all Ministries) and New Programs vote provided \$0.96 million for the government-wide Climate Action Dividend program. Through this program, \$100 will be made available to every adult and child who was a resident of British Columbia on December 31, 2007. This applies to approximately 9,600 children in care of the Ministry and Community Living British Columbia.

Ministry Expense by Business Area



Ministry of Children and Family Development — Operations
2007/08 Gross Expenditure by Type
(\$ millions)



NOTE: This chart excludes Recoveries of \$105.3 million.

Annual Service Plan Report Appendices

Appendix A: Program Information

Helpline for Children in British Columbia

Phone 310-1234, free from anywhere in the province anytime. To use the telephone device for the deaf and hard of hearing, dial: 1 866 660-0505. The Helpline for Children provides round-the-clock access to professionals to respond to concerns that a child under the age of 19 years may be abused. Calls can be anonymous — and abuse can be stopped. For online information view: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/getting_help/help.htm.

Adoption Site — information on adopting one of B.C.'s waiting children

For information on adopting a child, phone toll-free in B.C.: 1 877 ADOPT 07 (1 877 236-7807) or phone a nearby Ministry office. For information view: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/adoption/index.htm.

Be a Foster Parent — B.C.'s foster parents make a positive difference for vulnerable children in need

For information, phone the B.C. Federation of Foster Parent Associations' Fosterline at: 1 800 663-9999 (outside B.C. phone: 1 604 660-7696) or the Federation of Aboriginal Foster Parents toll-free at: 1 866 291-7091. For online information view: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/foster/.

Child Care B.C. Helpline — information on child care

For information and referrals for B.C. child care programs and services for parents and child care providers phone: 1 888 338-6622. For online information view: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/.

Autism Site — information for parents on Autism Spectrum Disorders

For online information on Autism programs including step by step information on accessing funding and an updated parent handbook view: www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/autism/index.htm.

Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) Site

For information on the Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP), an interdisciplinary research partnership related to early child development view: www.earlylearning.ubc.ca/.

Community Living British Columbia

For information on services for children and adults with developmental disabilities, phone: 1 877 660-2522. For online information view: www.communitylivingbc.ca/.

Appendix B: Ministry Contact Information

General Ministry enquiries:

Client Relations: 250 387-7027 (in Victoria), or Toll-Free: 1 877 387-7027
or E-mail: MCF.CorrespondenceManagement@gov.bc.ca

Mailing Address:

PO Box 9770 Stn Prov Govt
Victoria BC V8W 9S5

Ministry's Regional Offices

Fraser

Mailing/Physical Address:

101 - 10221 – 153rd Street
Surrey BC V3R 0L7
Telephone: 604 586-4100
Facsimile: 604 586-4153

Interior

Mailing/Physical Address:

400 – 1726 Dolphin Avenue
Kelowna BC V1Y 9R9
Telephone: 250 470-0888
Facsimile: 250 470-0890

North

Mailing/Physical Address:

462 - 1011 Fourth Avenue
Prince George BC V2L 3H9
Telephone: 250 565-4367
Facsimile: 250 565-4427

Vancouver Coastal

Mailing/Physical Address:

900 - 865 Hornby Street

Vancouver BC V6Z 2G3

Telephone: 604 660-2433

Facsimile: 604 660-4005

Vancouver Island

Mailing Address:

PO Box 9727 Stn Prov Govt

Victoria BC V8X 5J2

Telephone: 250 952-4707

Facsimile: 250 952-4282

Physical Address:

140 - 4460 Chatterton Way

Victoria BC V8W 9S3

Appendix C: Hyperlinks to Additional Information

About Us

www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/about_us/index.htm

Contact Us

www.gov.bc.ca/mcf/contacts.html

Fraser Region Interim Aboriginal Authority

www.fraa.ca/

Ministry's Homepage

www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/

Ministry Regions

www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/regions/index.htm

Ombudsman

www.ombud.gov.bc.ca/

Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia

www.trustee.bc.ca/

Representative for Children and Youth

www.rcybc.ca/content/home.asp

Vancouver Island Aboriginal Transition Authority

www.viatt.ca/

