

February 19, 2019

BACKGROUND

THE B.C. CHILD OPPORTUNITY BENEFIT

Budget 2019 introduces the new B.C. Child Opportunity Benefit, which will provide parents up to \$28,800 over a child's upbringing to help ensure that they have the opportunities they need to thrive.

The B.C. Child Opportunity Benefit will give almost \$400 million annually to approximately 290,000 families across British Columbia. All families earning up to \$97,487 with one child under 18 and all families earning up to \$114,487 with two children under 18 will receive the benefit.

Budget 2019 replaces and expands the current Early Childhood Tax Benefit (ECTB) into the new B.C. Child Opportunity Benefit. The new benefit provides most families with substantially more annual support and is available three times longer than the previous benefit for each child.

Instead of ending at six years of age, the B.C. Child Opportunity Benefit continues up to the age of 18. The maximum annual benefit, at \$1,600 for a first child, is more than double the previous maximum benefit, and is designed to give more support to working and middle-class families. The maximum benefit increases to \$2,600 for two children and \$3,400 for three children.

This means:

- A family earning up to \$25,000 annually with one child will receive \$28,800 over the child's upbringing or \$1,600 annually.
- A family earning up to \$25,000 annually with two children will receive at least \$46,800 over the children's upbringing or \$2,600 annually.
- A family earning between \$47,500 and \$80,000 annually with one child will receive \$12,600 over the child's upbringing or \$700 annually.
- A family earning between \$55,500 and \$80,000 annually with two children will receive at least \$24,840 over the children's upbringing or \$1,380 annually.

The benefit is reduced by 4% of family net income over \$25,000 until it reaches \$700 for the first child, \$680 for the second child and \$660 for each subsequent child under the age of 18. The benefit is then phased out at a rate of 4% of family net income over \$80,000. The \$25,000 and \$80,000 thresholds will be indexed to inflation in future years.

Effective Oct. 1, 2020, parents will be eligible for the B.C. Child Opportunity Benefit when they apply for the Canada Child Benefit. Parents who are registered for the Canada Child Benefit before Sept. 30, 2020, will be automatically registered for the B.C. Child Opportunity Benefit and will receive both the new provincial benefit and the federal benefit in monthly payments.

The B.C. Child Opportunity Benefit builds on the B.C. government's work to make life better and more affordable for families, including historic investments towards universal child care, eliminating MSP premiums, and making sure every child has access to the opportunities they deserve.

Contact:

Media Relations
Ministry of Finance
250 387-1248