

Ministry of Children and Family Development

2025/26 Annual Service Plan Report

August 2026



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Minister's Accountability Statement



The Ministry of Children and Family Development 2025/26 Annual Service Plan Report compares the Ministry's actual results to the expected results identified in the 2025/26 – 2027/28 Service Plan published in 2025. I am accountable for those results as reported.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jodie Wickens". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jodie" and last name "Wickens" clearly legible.

Honourable Jodie Wickens
Minister of Children and Family Development
July 24, 2026

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Letter from the Minister

It is an honour to serve as Minister of Children and Family Development, and to present this 2025/26 Annual Service Plan Report, which demonstrates how government and this ministry is improving supports for children, youth, young adults and families.

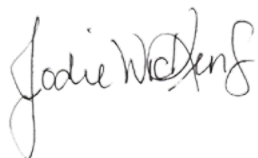
Over the past year, the ministry has been working to provide a whole-of-government lens on B.C.'s actions to strengthen family and child well-being. Led by the ministry in collaboration with partners across government, the Child and Youth Well-Being Action Plan and shared Outcomes Framework were drafted, a first step in the journey to strengthen and weave together the programs, services and supports that we know contribute to child, youth and families' well-being.

I am especially proud of the steps we are taking to build a more inclusive and responsive system for children and youth with support needs, supported by the announcement of [\\$475 million in new funding](#). Our new service model will help more families access timely supports strengthen services for children with the most complex needs and make it easier to navigate programs and services throughout the province. Also central to this work is the ministry's commitment to reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples. In the last year, meaningful progress has been made through the signing of coordination and community agreements that enhance decision-making authority and affirm Indigenous child and family services jurisdiction.

Additionally, together with Ministry of Health, we continued to work to align services for children and youth with mental health needs with the health system. This past year, the ministry continued to implement Specialized Homes and Support Services and took time to engage with staff and sector partners on opportunities learned from implementation. The ministry continues to support youth and young adults transitioning out of government care into adulthood through the Strengthening Abilities and Journeys of Empowerment program. As well, the ministry introduced the Youth Justice Services (YJS) Service Framework, marking a significant milestone in the collective effort to strengthen services for justice-involved youth.

It has been my privilege to have met with people from across the child and youth service and care community, listening carefully to their experiences, expertise, and ideas. These voices, and those of others with first-hand experience, continue to give me confidence that, together, we are moving in the right direction.

I want to express my heartfelt thanks to ministry staff, contracted agencies, Indigenous Child and Family Service Agencies and all our community partners, for their work and unwavering support of the well-being of children, youth and families across British Columbia.



Honourable Jodie Wickens
Minister of Children and Family Development
July 24, 2026

Purpose of the Annual Service Plan Report

This annual service plan report has been developed to meet the requirements of the Budget Transparency and Accountability Act (BTAA), which sets out the legislative framework for planning, reporting and accountability for Government organizations. Under the BTAA, the Minister is required to report on the actual results of the Ministry's performance related to the forecasted targets stated in the service plan for the reported year.

Strategic Direction

The strategic direction set by Government in 2024 and Minister Jodie Wicken's [2025 Mandate Letter](#) shaped the goals, objectives, performance measures and financial plan outlined in the [Ministry of Children and Family Development 2025/26 – 2027/28 Service Plan](#) and the actual results reported on in this annual report.

Purpose of the Ministry

Territory Acknowledgement: The [Ministry of Children and Family Development](#) (ministry) acknowledges the territories of First Nations around B.C. and is grateful to carry out our work on these lands. We acknowledge the rights, interests, priorities and concerns of all Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Métis and Inuit), respecting and acknowledging their distinct cultures, histories, rights, laws and governments.

The purpose of the ministry is to provide critical services and supports to British Columbia's vulnerable children and youth, and to their families, that contribute to their safety, well-being and sense of belonging. In doing so, the ministry also upholds the inherent right to Indigenous Peoples self-determination.

The ministry provides a network of care across B.C. that encompasses early childhood development, children and youth with support needs, child and youth mental health, adoption, child safety, family support and children in care services, youth justice, and helping youth transition from government care to adulthood.

The ministry emphasizes the principles of early intervention, prevention and cultural and community connections to keep families together, where possible, and connecting children and youth with permanent living arrangements when needed.

The ministry approaches its work through a [gender-based analysis plus lens](#), with the goal of delivering services that are inclusive, intersectional, responsive, accessible, trauma informed, and culturally safe, while upholding the vision of ensuring British Columbia's children and youth are safe and supported to achieve their full potential. The ministry respects the diverse

backgrounds and identities of children and youth including those who identify as Indigenous, Inuit, Métis, Black, a person of colour, 2SLGBTQIA+¹, and as a person with a disability.

The ministry delivers on its mandate by working in partnership with [Indigenous Child and Family Service Agencies](#), [Indigenous governing bodies](#) and other levels of government, partners and communities, cross-government and social-sector partners, and the federal government, as well as approximately 4,900 contracted community social service agencies, for example, Specialized Homes and Support Services providers, and other direct care providers, such as foster caregivers and extended family care providers.

The ministry has approximately 5,000 employees. Direct services are coordinated through a provincial office in Victoria and delivered through seven service delivery areas, a Provincial Centralized Services Centre and facilities, and through the 24 Indigenous Child and Family Service Agencies (ICFSA).

¹ An acronym for Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual and additional identities. There are many variations of this acronym.

Report on Performance: Goals, Objectives, and Results

The following goals, objectives and performance measures have been restated from the 2025/26 – 2027/28 service plan. For forward-looking planning information, including current and future performance targets, please see the [latest service plan](#).

Goal 1: Ensure every opportunity is available for Indigenous Peoples to achieve self-determination while continuously reducing the overrepresentation of Indigenous children and youth in the system of care

Objective 1.1: Continue to offer multiple pathways to support decision making authority and jurisdiction over child and family services, while working with the 204 First Nations in B.C. regarding timing and approach

This objective focuses on working with Indigenous Governing Bodies, First Nations, and Modern Treaty Nations, as well as the federal government to advance implementation of increased decision-making authority and to [uphold Indigenous child and family services jurisdiction](#).

Key results

- The ministry signed four [agreements to enable the exercise of First Nations decision-making authority and jurisdiction over child and family services](#), including:
 - A new tripartite Coordination Agreement (Tsilhqot'in Nation) in May 2025, bringing the total to five.
 - Three new section 92.1 Community Agreements (Tsilhqot'in Nation in July 2025, Lhtako Dene Nation in January 2026, and Huu-ay-aht First Nations in March 2026) bringing the total to nine.
- Returned children and youth in care to Cowichan Tribes under their [Indigenous law](#) in September 2025 following the sunset of Lalum'utul' Smun'eem, a former Indigenous Child and Family Service Agency.
- In October 2025, the ministry withdrew the last continuing custody orders for Splatshin children in care, returning them to their Nation to receive services under Indigenous law.
- Developed and delivered provincial orientations and practice resources with Indigenous Communities for new Coordination Agreements and Community

Agreements, supporting the ministry's ongoing efforts to work in partnership with the 204 First Nations in B.C.

- Continued co-development of a new provincial fiscal framework with First Nations through engagement with key Indigenous organizations, including virtual sessions and an in-person workshop held in 2025.

Summary of progress made in 2025/26

Indigenous Peoples have inherent rights to hold jurisdiction over their own children, youth, and families and to provide their own child and family services. Recognizing that Indigenous children and youth are best cared for by Indigenous Peoples and communities, the ministry continued to work in collaboration with First Nations on a range of agreements to enable the exercise of decision-making authority and jurisdiction over child and family services.

In 2025/26 this included three new section 92.1 Community Agreements: (Tsilhqot'in Nation in July 2025, [Lhtako Dene Nation in January 2026](#), and [Huu-ay-aht First Nations in March 2026](#)); as well as a new tripartite Coordination Agreement: [Tsilhqot'in Nation in May 2025](#).

To ensure staff understood and were prepared for the new Coordination and Community Agreements, the ministry, with Indigenous communities, developed and delivered Provincial orientation sessions for ministry staff, as well as provided practice resources. This work included 13 sessions to orient staff to two Coordination Agreements (373 attendees); four sessions to orient staff to the Bilateral Interim Coordinating Agreement²; and five sessions to orient staff to one 92.1 agreement (152 attendees).

The ministry also updated existing training and provided 16 training sessions for 599 staff on Notice of Significant Measures³ to ensure staff understand how this changes their work.

As a reminder for staff, the ministry held monthly Advancing Practice Circles for Practice Leadership on topics such as practice relating to the [Aboriginal Policy and Practice Framework](#) (APPF), a Partnership and Indigenous Engagement overview, as well as understanding 90.1 (Coordination) and 92.1 (Community) Agreements.

So that staff understand the importance and the details of working within a multi-jurisdictional environment, in fall 2025 the ministry developed and in February 2026 began delivering the Jurisdiction Practice Series; an eight-session series that was delivered both provincially and within service delivery areas to advance leading practice as it relates to Indigenous child welfare and jurisdiction. By March 2026, three provincial sessions were held with 107 attendees, with further sessions planned.

² Agreement came into effect in December 2024

³ A First Nation can be identified as an [Indigenous Governing Body \(IGB\)](#) authorized to receive notice of significant measures under section 12 of the Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis children, youth and families. Once notice is confirmed, the director provides notice of significant measures to the IGB regarding plans and decisions for children who are from an Indigenous community that is represented by the IGB. Significant measures are interpreted as being broader than court proceedings and are outlined in MCFD policy.

The ministry continued its work to fulfill action 4.16 of the [Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act Action Plan](#), to co-develop a B.C.-specific fiscal framework with First Nations. This work was advanced in consultation with key Indigenous organizations through in-person workshops and ongoing virtual co-development sessions. In FY 2025/26, efforts focused on broadening participation, including outreach to First Nations that had not previously been involved in co-development. Over 2025/26, the ministry hosted more than 25 virtual sessions and an in-person workshop with representatives from First Nations and key Indigenous organizations, supporting continued collaboration towards development of a fiscal framework.

Objective 1.2: Continue to address and reduce the overrepresentation of Indigenous children and youth in government care and the youth justice system

This objective outlines the ministry's commitment to working with Indigenous Peoples in the development of policy, practices, and services. The intention of this objective is to ensure that ministry services are delivered without racism or discrimination and to further the commitment to reduce overrepresentation of Indigenous children and youth in care.

Key results

- A Tripartite Steering Committee and a Technical Table were established October 2025 which includes the [First Nations Leadership Council \(FNLC\)](#), [Our Children Our Way Society \(OCOW\)](#) and the ministry with the purpose to guide the redesign and update of [Aboriginal Operational and Practice Standards and Indicators \(AOPSI\)](#).
- The ministry participated in the Our Children Our Way Society's MMIWG2SLGBTQQIA+ Steering Committee, which is dedicated to enhancing the well-being of Indigenous women, girls, 2SLGBTQQIA+ individuals, and Indigenous communities; ministry participation provides visibility into MCFD-initiatives related to MMIWG Calls for Justice within the child welfare and social worker context.
- [Introduced the Youth Justice Services \(YJS\) Service Framework](#) in January 2026, marking a significant milestone in the collective effort to strengthen YJS for justice-involved youth and their families.
- Developed and delivered training on upholding Indigenous jurisdiction to child welfare workers.
- Supported Aboriginal Service Innovations (ASI) funded partners through contract oversight and capacity building efforts delivered by a cross-divisional team. This included a responsive approach to agency needs and questions, bi-annual contract review meetings, and the establishment of bi-weekly virtual gatherings to provide updates, share wise practices among agencies, and provide a forum to address questions raised by agencies.

Summary of progress made in 2025/26

Over the last year, the ministry's Indigenous Child Welfare Division (ICWD) has operationalized and established a model to further the ministry's reconciliation journey and commitment to making changes in the system of care required to ensure that Indigenous children are safe, connected, and thriving within their families and Nations.

2025/26 was the first full year of the ICWD's authority and oversight. Building out the office included hiring, developing job profiles and organizational charts; defining operational processes; and expanding the service model to better reflect Indigenous-led approaches.

The ICWD provided structured support to ICFSAs preparing for changes resulting from jurisdiction implementation. This included transition planning, workforce considerations, and ensuring that service continuity remained stable as Nations assumed greater authority over child and family services.

The First Nations Leadership Council, OCOW, and the ministry have worked collaboratively to advance the update and provincewide adoption of AOPSI as the minimum standard of care for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children and families in B.C.

The ICWD worked directly with ICFSAs by providing practice and operational support and through engaging in collaborative planning to advance Indigenous-designed approaches.

Training on upholding Indigenous jurisdiction was developed and delivered to child welfare workers to prepare staff to apply legislative and policy requirements in collaboration with Indigenous communities, use restorative practice skills in their work, and connect children, youth, and families with appropriate supports and resources. Seven hundred staff (640 MCFD and 60 ICFA) completed the course in fiscal year 2025/26.

The release of the YJS Service Framework in January 2026 reflected ongoing government commitments, including advancing reconciliation, responding to overrepresentation of Indigenous and racialized youth, delivering culturally grounded services, expanding trauma-informed practice, and supporting successful transitions for youth. This framework provides the foundation and direction for how YJS defines, delivers, and evolves services to better meet the needs of youth and families.

In both the community and custody settings, Indigenous over-representation has been relatively consistent over the past decade. However, between fiscal years 2024/25 and 2025/26 there was a slight overall decrease (-15%) in the percentage of Indigenous youth involved with Youth Justice Services in BC.

In November 2025, the Iskum Journey was launched to understand a decade of integrating the [Aboriginal Policy and Practice Framework](#) (APPF)—a pathway towards restorative policy and practice that supports and honours aboriginal peoples' systems of caring, nurturing children and resiliency—into services and supports, as the ministry works to improve outcomes for Indigenous (and all) children, youth, and families. Iskum is a Chinook term that means "to gather".

Performance measure(s) and related discussion

Performance Measure	2024/25 Actual	2025/26 Target	2025/26 Actual
1a. Rate of children and youth (age 0-18) in care per 1,000 children and youth in the population			
All children and youth ¹	4.8	4.9	5.1
Indigenous children and youth ²	33.4	33.0	35.5
Non- Indigenous children and youth ³	1.7	1.8	1.8

Data source: MCFD's Integrated Case Management (ICM) System

¹PM 1a targets for 2026/27 and 2027/28 were stated in the 2025/26 service plan as 4.9 and 4.8, respectively.

²PM 1a targets for 2026/27 and 2027/28 were stated in the 2025/26 service plan as 32.3 and 31.3, respectively.

³PM 1a targets for 2026/27 and 2027/28 were stated in the 2025/26 service plan as 1.8 and 1.8, respectively.

This performance measure tracks the rate of Indigenous and non-Indigenous children and youth (age 0-18) in care per 1,000 children and youth in the population, including the overrepresentation of Indigenous children and youth in care.

The ministry did not meet this performance target for Indigenous children and overall. The target was 33 Indigenous children and youth in care per 1,000 Indigenous children and youth in B.C. and the actual was 35.5 Indigenous children and youth in care per 1,000 Indigenous children and youth in B.C. The target was reached for non-Indigenous children. Despite that, the number of children and youth in care remains at the lowest levels it has been in over 30 years. Of note, while there are more children and youth in care, the increase largely coming from an increase in "restricted care," which is where a child is placed with a relative or family friend, keeping them connected to their family and community.

As the ministry continues to work in collaboration with First Nations on a range of agreements to enable the exercise of decision-making authority and jurisdiction over child and family services and as Indigenous Governing Bodies (IGBs) are exercising jurisdiction over child and family services, the ministry anticipates that more Indigenous children and youth will remain with their families and communities, resulting in fewer Indigenous children and youth in government care.

Performance Measure	2024/25 Actual	2025/26 Target	2025/26 Actual
1b. Per cent of children assessed with a protection concern that can safely live with family or extended family			
All children and youth ¹	91.2%	91.7%	90.7%
Indigenous children and youth ²	85.6%	87.0%	84.4%
Non- Indigenous children and youth ³	94.5%	95.6%	94.5%

Data source: MCFD's Integrated Case Management (ICM) System

¹PM 1b targets for 2026/27 and 2027/28 were stated in the 2025/26 service plan as 92.3% and 93.0%, respectively.

²PM 1b targets for 2026/27 and 2027/28 were stated in the 2025/26 service plan as 88.4% and 89.7%, respectively.

³PM 1b targets for 2026/27 and 2027/28 were stated in the 2025/26 service plan as 94.7% and 94.8%, respectively.

The ministry did not meet this performance target. For Indigenous children and youth, the ministry missed the target by slightly less than three per cent; and for non-Indigenous children and youth, the target was missed by approximately one per cent. This result is attributed to the ministry's ongoing work to better identify when a child or youth has a protection concern, recognizing where services, other than removing a child or youth from their caregiver and placing them into care of the director may be more appropriate. As a result, a smaller percentage of children and youth have been identified with a protection concern, which has led to a decrease in the family preservation results.

Due to the change in practice, the ministry has adjusted this measure since the 2025/26 service plan was published to include children and youth identified with a safety concern at initial contact with the ministry. The expansion of this measure for future years will ensure a more accurate representation of the ministry's efforts to support family preservation when it is safe to do so.

The ministry's goal is to ensure that children and youth remain at home with their families when it is safe to do so. The importance of early and ongoing support for families who may be struggling not only helps keep families together when it is safe to do so, it also provides children and youth with the strong foundations they need to reach their full potential. To support this, the ministry has service contracts across the province with community social services providers to deliver supports to enable children and youth to stay at home. When all other service offerings fail and a child or youth cannot stay safely at home, then they are brought into care.

Goal 2: Design and implement a comprehensive child well-being plan and an outcomes framework that aligns services across ministries and agencies

Objective 2.1: In collaboration with other ministries and partners, lead the development and implementation of a comprehensive child well-being plan and outcomes framework that aligns services across ministries and agencies

Improving outcomes for children and youth requires a coordinated effort to explore what services are needed to support child well-being and how government and service providers can work differently to provide these services in a more responsive, proactive, and integrated way.

Key results

- Led cross-government work throughout fiscal 2025/26 to take a system-wide approach to child and youth well-being and to map and prioritize strategies focused on better outcomes for children and youth.
- Developed a draft cross-government Child and Youth Well-Being Action Plan and Outcomes Framework, including a shared vision for using an outcomes-based measurement to understand how cross-government actions contribute to child and youth well-being.
- Achieved cross-government agreement on broad well-being domains and a shared measurement direction to guide future reporting, evaluation, and analysis; this includes draft outcomes and sample indicators.

Summary of progress made in 2025/26

MCFD in collaboration with partners across government, co-developed and drafted a Child and Youth Well-Being Action Plan and shared Outcomes Framework. In fiscal 2025/26, this work provided a whole-of-government lens on the B.C.'s current actions to strengthen family and child well-being.

The Child and Youth Well-Being Action Plan is a five-year plan that brings together work across government to improve how children, youth, and families are supported—especially through prevention, early support, and better coordination between services. The Child and Youth Well-Being Outcomes Framework (the Outcomes Framework) will serve as the measurement foundation for monitoring our progress and understanding how children and youth are really doing.

In addition to work being done above, Youth Justice Services (YJS) began development of a YJS-specific outcomes framework in September 2025 that aligns with the Child and Youth Well-Being Outcomes Framework.

Performance measure(s) and related discussion

Performance Measure	2024/25 Actual	2025/26 Target	2025/26 Actual
2a. Where accountability rests solely with MCFD, the number of recommendations implemented responsive to the intent of the Representative for Children and Youth's (RCY) calls to action outlined in "Don't Look Away: How one boy's story has the power to shift a system of care for children and youth" ¹	N/A	1	3

Data source: The number of recommendations where accountability rests solely with MCFD are found in the RCY Don't Look Away report

¹PM 2a targets for 2026/27 and 2027/28 were stated in the 2025/26 service plan as 3 and 5, respectively.

The ministry met this performance measure. There are seven recommendations (Quick Impact Actions, QIAs) from the RCY's [Don't Look Away report](#) that the ministry is solely responsible for. In 2025/26 the ministry completed three of these QIAs.

There are 23 QIAs that the Don't Look Away report assigned to the ministry to lead or co-lead with ICFSAs. Fourteen of these QIAs have been completed. The ministry is committed to the recommendations in the report and moving the ministry towards its vision: British Columbia's children and youth are safe and supported to achieve their full potential.

Goal 3: Continuously evolve and improve policies and practices, so that children and youth in the system of care realize comparable outcomes to their peers

Objective 3.1: In collaboration with partners and service providers, continue to identify and implement improvements to policies, practices and services to ensure that the child welfare system meets a vulnerable child or youth's needs, nurtures a sense of love and belonging, and prioritizes cultural and family connections

This objective focuses on the work the ministry, along with our partners, is advancing to improve the child welfare system so that children and youth, from birth to 18 years old, can achieve comparable outcomes to their peers.

Key results

- Launched the [Cowichan Youth Emergency Shelter](#) pilot in April 2025, providing a 24/7 therapeutic, community-based crisis service in Duncan, including temporary safe placement for youth experiencing homelessness or living in unstable or precarious situations.
- Continued transitioning contracts to the [Specialized Homes and Support Services \(SHSS\)](#) model, added 15 new places of service, delivered training to six service delivery areas, and to all Indigenous Child and Family Service Agencies.
- Improved the ministry's procurement and contracting operations as part of SHSS and Contract Management Modernization to advance improvements through procurement and contracting operations supporting the SHSS implementation.
- In fall 2025, the ministry engaged care providers, Indigenous communities, and community partners as part of an ongoing review of kinship care services.
- Developed the [Kinship Care Provider Resource Guide](#) in 2026 to improve the quality and accessibility of information for kinship care providers.

Summary of progress made in 2025/26

This past year, the ministry continued to implement Specialized Homes and Support Services and took time to engage with staff and sector partners to learn from implementation.

Throughout the year, the ministry took several actions to build on safety and oversight, including completing a provincial practice audit to confirm that caregivers in contracted agencies and SHSS met the screening and approval policy requirements to work with children and youth in care.

As part of SHSS and Contract Management Modernization, the ministry introduced a evaluation and due diligence process that ensures that only capable and qualified service providers are pre-qualified. Only agencies who qualify through this process are eligible to receive SHSS contracts. Further, once a community need for a net-new home has been identified, the ministry moves through a process that is specifically designed to match best-fit service providers with the community in question. This ensures the ministry executes contracts with only capable and qualified agencies.

The Kinship Care Provider Resource Guide improves the quality and accessibility of information for kinship care providers, which outlines roles, describes the shared planning processes for children and youth well-being, and consolidates supports and resources.

During this fiscal year, the ministry also began early implementation of B.C.'s new [Foster and Care Provider Portal](#). Developed in partnership with Connected Services BC, the portal will digitize existing processes including caregiver referral, application, and screening. By improving the clarity and completeness of caregiver information, this work supports safer, more consistent screening and assessment of individuals who care for children and youth.

Throughout 2025/26, the ministry provided practice guidance for staff and caregivers working with children and youth impacted by the toxic drug crisis so that they can provide appropriate

support; resources included practice guidelines, updated web pages for staff and a one-page resource for caregivers and care providers supporting children and youth impacted by the toxic drug crisis.

In addition to this, the ministry distributed naloxone kits at 22 ministry sites and provided caregiver and youth training sessions with Indigenous agencies and community partners.

During the 2025/26 fiscal year, the ministry onboarded an additional 10 municipal police agencies for a total of 11 municipal police to the non-urgent child protection reporting web application; this provides policing staff flexibility and efficiency in reporting non-urgent child protection reports online and contributes to reducing call wait times, ensuring urgent calls are prioritized.

As well, the ministry supported increased awareness and representation of people with disabilities, Indigenous, BIPOC and 2SLGBTQIA+ identities via the delivery of workshops, iConnect web content and publication of the [Indigenous Youth recruitment video](#) (Dec 2025).

In fiscal year 2025/26, the ministry developed and delivered 16 provincial orientation sessions on the new [Safety Plan Agreement](#) legislation to approximately 2,500 staff and provided an additional 52 practice forums across service delivery areas to reinforce practice support and guidance. In parallel, the ministry initiated technical enhancements to enable capture of Safety Plan Agreements in the Integrated Case Management (ICM) System, strengthening monitoring, reporting and oversight.

Provided consistent oversight of private visits with children and youth in care and out of care by implementing a quarterly visit follow-up process for those with overdue visits. This includes end-of-quarter reporting on visit status, supported by 30- and 14-day proactive reminder reports to promote timely completion, ensuring children and youth are consistently seen, heard, and supported.

Objective 3.2: Youth and young adults have the tools, resources, and social supports to transition successfully to adulthood and adult services and are supported to achieve their full potential

This objective focuses on the expansion of ministry services to support youth and young adults from government care to have strong transitions to adulthood, adult services or to the greater community.

Key results

- Over the past fiscal year, [Strengthening Abilities and Journeys of Empowerment \(SAJE\)](#) delivered services and supports to over 4,000 young adults, a more than 50 per cent increase since 2023/24; this represents the highest number of young adults served in a single year.

- SAJE Navigators⁴ supported continuity of services by informing youth approaching age 19 about post-majority supports and connecting them with a SAJE Guide before leaving care.
- SAJE Guides provided transition planning and ongoing support to over 4,000 young adults with care experience to help them move successfully into adulthood. They offered planning assistance, financial supports, and facilitated access to a comprehensive range of services including health and wellness, education and training, life-skills development, and cultural connections to promote long-term stability, independence, and well-being.
- SAJE Online, a youth-designed portal, enhanced accessibility by enabling young adults to view their information and engage with the program in flexible ways.
- Distributed 100 naloxone kits in October 2025 to SAJE offices across B.C. and all SAJE staff completed naloxone training to ensure they were equipped to support young people in accessing naloxone and responding appropriately in emergency situations.

Summary of progress made in 2025/26

SAJE provides youth and young adults with dedicated planning support through SAJE Navigators and SAJE Guides. At the start of 2025/26, 122 young adults were registered for SAJE Online. An additional 460 young adults registered for the portal during the year, bringing the total number of young adults registered for SAJE Online to 582 at fiscal year-end, representing an increase of 377 per cent in registrations in 2025/26.

To support young adults leaving care, the program continued to offer eligible young adults age 19 to 27 access to income supports to assist with living costs, mental health and counselling benefits to help address trauma and life skills, training and cultural connections funding to support goal attainment and increased independence into adulthood.

Performance measure(s) and related discussion

Performance Measure	2024/25 Actual	2025/26 Target	2025/26 Actual
3a. Proportion of eligible 19-year-olds that have a Strengthening Abilities and Journeys of Empowerment (SAJE) Guide ^{1,2}	81%	80%	78%

Data source: Collaborate² and MCFD's Integrated Case Management System.

¹SAJE Guides provide planning support to eligible young adults from age 19 to 24 (25th birthday).

²PM 3a targets for 2026/27 and 2027/28 were stated in the 2025/26 service plan as 82% and 84%, respectively.

The ministry did not meet this target with a difference of two per cent; however, the number of eligible 19-year-olds has increased, and despite the drop in percentage, more eligible 19-

⁴ SAJE Navigators help youth and young adults ages 14–19 with care experience prepare for adulthood. They work with young people and their care teams in B.C. to develop transition plans, connect to services, supports, and benefits, and navigate systems. Through coordinated, person-centered planning, Navigators help strengthen connections to community, cultural, and government resources and reduce service gaps during important life transitions.

year-olds were supported by a SAJE Guide⁵ in 2025/26 than in 2024/25. Under the SAJE program, ministry Guides supported 808 eligible 19-year-olds in 2024/25 and 821 in 2025/26.

This performance measure seeks to ensure eligible 19-year-olds are supported as they transition out of government care through connecting eligible 19-year-olds to the SAJE program.

Goal 4: Strengthen and align children and youth with support and mental health needs services with the health system

Objective 4.1: Strengthen children and youth with support and mental health needs services

Accessible and responsive services and supports for children and youth with support and mental health needs are essential to meeting each child or youth's unique needs and supporting positive outcomes for families.

Key results

- Began implementation of a new and expanded [Children and Youth with Support Needs \(CYSN\)](#) service model, supported by [\\$475 million in new funding](#) over three years, announced in February 2026. The model includes the new [B.C. Child and Youth Disability Benefit](#), [B.C. Child and Youth Disability Supplement](#), and expanded community-based services, including mental health services for children with neurodiversity.
- Expanded mental health services by transitioning the complex care unit at the [Maples Adolescent Treatment Centre](#) to operate under the Mental Health Act in June 2025, which extends service eligibility from youth aged 12–18 to children and youth aged 7–18.
- Operationalized Maples Satellite Services in Vernon in August 2025 to increase access to bed-based mental health treatment, enabling youth in the Okanagan and Kootenays to receive care closer to home.
- Expanded [Children and Youth with Mental Health Needs \(CYMH\)](#) prevention and early intervention supports to parents, caregivers, and educators by launching a new series of resources in June and November 2025 to support children and youth who are neurodiverse with co-occurring mental health challenges and their families.

⁵ SAJE Guides provide planning support to eligible young adults from age 19 to 26 (27th birthday).

- Partnered with the Provincial Health Services Authority to support training under the Mental Health Act; this collaboration aims to enhance skills and knowledge of mental health professionals working with individuals facing complex mental health and substance use challenges including youth forensics clients.

Summary of progress made in 2025/26

The new and expanded Children and Youth with Support Needs (CYSN) service model will expand supports to more families, strengthening help for children with the highest and most complex needs, simplifying processes using existing systems, and building out community-based services in B.C.

The ministry also increased access to CYMH services in Quesnel (July 2025) and Fort St. John (August 2025) through the expansion of e-CYMH service delivery, ensuring more children and youth were supported.

The resource collection (mentioned above) to support children and youth who are neurodiverse with co-occurring mental health challenges includes a video series of parents, educators and youth with lived experience, as well as supplementary resources, strategies and tips. The aim of these resources is to increase awareness, reduce stigma and equip teachers, parents and caring adults with evidence-informed information and strategies to help them better understand and support the mental health of children and youth who live with both neurodevelopmental and mental health conditions.

Objective 4.2: Align children and youth with support and mental health needs services with the health system

Alignment of children and youth with support and mental health services with the health system provides a crucial opportunity to work towards breaking down our current siloed service approaches—approaches we have consistently heard that can create miscommunication across professionals, missed opportunities to provide timely, wraparound, and integrated care, and, at times, can result in crises for children and families.

Key results

- Established a cross-ministry project team with the Ministry of Health for the joint mandate commitment to identify priority areas for improving the child mental health care continuum.
- Worked with the Ministry of Health, engaged experts and service providers to support and help guide the alignment of services for children and youth with support and mental health needs with the health system; work completed to date includes creating relevant policy and research background materials, developing a service inventory, completing a jurisdictional scan, and a summary report on past engagements, and drafting an engagement plan.
- Secured budget to redesign CYSN services in February over the next three years, which includes strengthening services to expand access to behaviour and mental health supports through community-based agencies like child development centres

and make it easier for families to move smoothly between child and youth mental health and other services.

- Following the September 29, 2025 Order in Council formalizing Bill 23 ([Mental Health Amendment Act, 2022](#)), worked with the Ministry of Health and Health Authorities to advance implementation of Independent Rights Advice for youth admitted under the Mental Health Act and modernize related Mental Health Act forms.

Summary of progress made in 2025/26

Together, the Ministry of Children and Family Development and the Ministry of Health have established an internal cross-ministry project team to support their shared mandate commitment. Targeted engagement with an Expert Advisory Circle (EAC) has provided key considerations to inform components of a mental health and substance use service pathway.

The redesign of CYSN services announced February 2026 supports clearer pathways for children, youth, and families across mental-health and related care systems.

Performance measure(s) and related discussion

Performance Measure

In lieu of a performance measure for Goal 4, in the 2025/26 service plan, it was stated:

The ministry will work in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, utilizing the new child well being outcomes framework, to further develop and refine the most relevant outcomes for children and youth receiving CYSN and CYMH services as these strategies get implemented.

The ministry has been leading cross-government work to develop a [Child and Youth Well-Being Action Plan](#) that explores the services needed and how government and service providers can work differently to provide these services in a more responsive, proactive, and integrated way. Alongside this, the ministry is also leading cross-government work to develop an Outcomes Framework describing what well-being looks like for children and youth in B.C.

Financial Report

Financial Summary

	Estimated (\$000)	Other Authoriz- ations ¹ (\$000)	Total Estimated (\$000)	Actual (\$000)	Variance (\$000)
Operating Expenses					
Early Childhood Development	46,523	956	47,479	42,960	(4,519)
Services for Children and Youth with Support Needs	642,882	33,828	676,710	680,863	4,153
Child and Youth Mental Health Services	130,288	2,975	133,263	132,001	(1,262)
Child Safety, Family Support and Children In Care Services	1,327,711	120,188	1,447,899	1,448,776	877
Adoption Services	36,138	400	36,538	32,260	(4,278)
Youth Justice Services	55,524	1,328	56,852	45,641	(11,211)
Service Delivery Support	179,634	(10,025)	169,609	183,181	13,572
Executive and Support Services	24,136	2,926	27,062	29,730	2,669
Sub-total	2,442,836	152,575	2,595,411	2,595,411	0
Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual ²				(1,073)	(1,073)
Total	2,442,836	152,575	2,595,411	2,594,339	(1,073)
Ministry Capital Expenditures					
Service Delivery Support	2230		2230	2091	(139)
Total	2230		2230	2091	(139)
Other Financing Transactions					
Executive and Support Services (HSP Financing Program)	(31)		(31)	(31)	0
Receipts ³	(31)		(31)	(31)	0
Disbursements	0		0	0	0
Net Cash Requirements (Source)	(31)		(31)	(31)	0

	Estimated (\$000)	Other Authoriz- ations ¹ (\$000)	Total Estimated (\$000)	Actual (\$000)	Variance (\$000)
Summary					
Total Receipts	(31)		(31)	(31)	0
Total Disbursements	0		0	0	0
Total Net Cash Requirements (Source)	(31)		(31)	(31)	0

1 "Other Authorizations" include Supplementary Estimates, Statutory Appropriations and Contingencies. Amounts in this column are not related to the "Estimated Amount" under sections 5(1) and 6(1) of the *Balanced Budget and Ministerial Accountability Act* for ministerial accountability for operating expenses under the Act.

2 The Adjustment of Prior Year Accrual of 1.073 million is a reversal of accruals in the previous year.

3 Human Services Providers financing program receipts represent the repayment of one outstanding loan by a community social services provider. The funding for capital purposes was provided for under the *Human Resource Facility Act*.

Appendix A: Public Sector Organizations

As of July 31, the Minister of Children and Family Development is responsible and accountable for the following organization:

[British Columbia College of Social Workers](#)

The British Columbia College of Social Workers regulates the social work profession in British Columbia. Its mandate is to protect members of the public from preventable harm while they are interacting with registered social workers. The college maintains an online registry of all social workers authorized to practice as registered social workers.

Appendix B: Progress on Mandate Letter Priorities

The following is a summary of progress made on priorities as stated in Minister Jodie Wicken's 2025 Mandate Letter.

2025 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2026
In order to protect key services that British Columbians rely on, work with the Minister of Finance to review all existing Ministry of Children and Family Development programs and initiatives to ensure programs remain relevant, are efficient, and improve the lives of vulnerable British Columbians. This is important in the context of current Provincial budget constraints and overall efficiency in delivering the goals of safety and well-being for British Columbia's most vulnerable children and youth.	Ministry staff are focused on finding efficiencies that maintain existing service availability and levels. Several measures that do not impact services have been implemented, including reducing travel when attendance in person is not mandatory, reducing office and business expenses, and reducing or delaying staffing for non-front-line positions.

2025 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2026
Continue to implement BC's historic legislation honouring Indigenous jurisdiction over the care of children and families and continue to address and reduce the overrepresentation of Indigenous children in government care.	• The ministry signed agreements to enable the exercise of First Nations decision-making authority and jurisdiction over child and family services, including: ○ A new tripartite Coordination Agreement, bringing the total to five. ○ Three new Section 92.1 Community Agreements, bringing the total to nine. • Returned children and youth in care to Cowichan Tribes under their Indigenous authority following the sunset of Lalum'utul' Smun'eem, a former Indigenous Child and Family Service Agency. • Withdrew the last continuing custody orders for Splatshin children in care, returning them to their Nation. • Developed and delivered provincial orientations and practice resources with Indigenous Communities for new Coordination/Coordinating Agreements, supporting the ministry's ongoing efforts to work in partnership with the 204 First Nations in B.C. • Continued to advance the co-development of a new provincial fiscal framework.

2025 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2026
Continue leading work to design and implement a comprehensive child well-being plan and outcomes framework that aligns services across ministries and agencies, prioritizing a new service model that brings the most vulnerable children and their families to the front of the line to prevent crisis. This plan should include an outcomes framework to measure the needs, successes and well-being of children and youth.	• Led cross-government work to take a system-wide approach to child and youth well-being and to map and prioritize strategies focused on better outcomes for children and youth. • Developed a draft cross-government Child and Youth Well-Being Action Plan and Outcomes Framework, including a shared vision for using an outcomes-based measurement to understand how cross-government actions contribute to child and youth well-being. • Achieved cross-government agreement on broad well-being domains and a shared measurement direction to guide future reporting, evaluation, and analysis; this includes draft outcomes and sample indicators.

2025 Mandate Letter Priority	Status as of March 31, 2026
Lead work with the Ministry of Health, and with Indigenous peoples, key stakeholders and people with lived experience, to realign and improve services for children and youth with support and mental health needs.	• Secured \$475M in new funding in February 2026 over three years to implement a new and expanded Children and Youth with Support Needs (CYSN) service model, including the new BC Child and Youth Disability benefit, BC Child and Youth Disability supplement, and expanded community-based services, including mental health community-based services for children with neurodiversity. • Established a cross-ministry project team with the Ministry of Health for the joint mandate commitment to identify priority areas for improving the child mental health care continuum. • Worked with the Ministry of Health, engaged experts and service providers to support and help guide the alignment of services for children and youth with support and mental health needs with the health system. • Following the September 29, 2025 Order in Council formalizing Bill 23 (Mental Health Amendment Act, 2022), worked with the Ministry of Health and Health Authorities to advance implementation of Independent Rights Advice for youth admitted under the Mental Health Act and modernize related Mental Health Act forms.