

Children's Services

Annual Report **2018–2019**

Note to Readers:

Copies of the annual report are available on the Alberta Open Government Portal website www.alberta.ca

Children's Services

Communications

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Preface

The Public Accounts of Alberta are prepared in accordance with the *Financial Administration Act* and the *Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act*. The Public Accounts consist of the annual report of the Government of Alberta and the annual reports of each of the 21 ministries.

The annual report of the Government of Alberta contains the consolidated financial statements of the province and the *Measuring Up* report, which compares actual performance results to desired results set out in the government's strategic plan.

This annual report of the Ministry of Children's Services contains the financial information of the ministry and a comparison of actual performance results to desired results set out in the ministry business plan. This ministry annual report also includes:

- **other financial information as required by the *Financial Administration Act* and *Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act*, as separate reports, to the extent that the ministry has anything to report.**

In December 2018, government announced changes to the 2018-19 ministry annual reports. Ministry and department audited financial statements previously included in the annual report of the Ministry of Children's Services have been replaced with the financial information of the ministry on pages 30 – 37.

Key information previously contained in the annual reports of each of the 21 ministries is now included in the audited consolidated financial statements of the province.

Message from the Minister



I was honoured to have been appointed on April 30, 2019 as Minister of Children's Services. Children deserve to be safe, supported and have a good start in life, no matter where they live in our province.

I look forward to working collaboratively with my colleagues in government, Ministry staff, partners and stakeholders, to ensure children are safe and supported in strong families and strong communities.

Albertans gave our government a strong mandate to get people back to work and strengthen the economy. We know that more job opportunities will lift many Albertans out of poverty and help them to provide for their families. In turn, a strong economy will enable government to better provide supports for those who need it most.

As Minister of Children's Services, I will engage Albertans of all backgrounds to provide necessary and comprehensive supports for families, communities, and vulnerable children and youth.

[Original signed by]

*Honourable Rebecca Schulz
Minister of Children's Services*

Management's Responsibility for Reporting

The executives of the ministry have the primary responsibility and accountability for the ministry. Collectively, the executives ensure the ministry complies with all relevant legislation, regulations and policies.

Ministry business plans, annual reports, performance results and the supporting management information are integral to the government's fiscal and strategic plan, annual report, quarterly reports and other financial and performance reporting.

Responsibility for the integrity and objectivity of the accompanying ministry financial information and performance results for the ministry rests with the Minister of Children's Services. Under the direction of the Minister, I oversee the preparation of the ministry's annual report, including the financial information and performance results. The financial information and performance results, of necessity, include amounts that are based on estimates and judgments. The financial information is prepared using the government's stated accounting policies, which are based on Canadian public sector accounting standards. The performance measures are prepared in accordance with the following criteria:

- Reliability – information used in applying performance measure methodologies agrees with the underlying source data for the current and prior years' results.
- Understandability – the performance measure methodologies and results are presented clearly.
- Comparability – the methodologies for performance measure preparation are applied consistently for the current and prior years' results.
- Completeness – outcomes, performance measures and related targets match those included in the ministry's Budget 2018.

As Deputy Minister, in addition to program responsibilities, I am responsible for the ministry's financial administration and reporting functions. The ministry maintains systems of financial management and internal control, which consider costs, benefits, and risks that are designed to:

- provide reasonable assurance that transactions are properly authorized and executed in accordance with prescribed legislation and regulations, and also properly recorded to maintain accountability of public money;
- provide information to manage and report on performance;
- safeguard the assets and properties of the province under ministry administration;
- provide Executive Council, the President of Treasury Board and Minister of Finance, and Minister of Children's Services the information needed to fulfill their responsibilities; and
- facilitate preparation of ministry business plans and annual reports required under the *Fiscal Planning and Transparency Act*.

In fulfilling my responsibilities for the ministry, I have relied, as necessary, on the executives within the ministry.

[Original signed by]

*Darlene Bouwsema
Deputy Minister of Children's Services
June 3, 2019*

Results Analysis

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Ministry Overview

The key accomplishments identified in this annual report are aligned with and support the strategic direction of the Government of Alberta, as well as the outcomes and key strategies outlined in the Children's Services 2018-21 Business Plan.

The goal of Children's Services is to support the safety of children in Alberta and provide the opportunities they need to thrive.

The ministry is responsible for providing a continuum of supports and services for children, youth and families from early childhood programs to prevention and early intervention supports to intervention services. Intervention services include foster and kinship care, adoption and post-intervention services.

In 2018-19, Children's Services worked towards three outcomes:

Outcome One: Children Thrive – All children thrive through nurturing relationships and safe, supportive environments.

Outcome Two: Resilient Families and Communities – Through greater collaboration, supports and services to families and communities are strengthened to support nurturing environments that enhance the development, well-being and resiliency of children and youth.

Outcome Three: Children are Safe and Supported – Children and youth in need of child intervention achieve safety and well-being.

Children's Services is composed of the following.

Office of the Deputy Minister

The Deputy Minister oversees the ministry under the direction of the Minister and is the liaison between the elected official and ministry employees. The Deputy Minister provides strategic advice, and oversees the ministry's day-to-day operations, budget, and program development.

Child Intervention

The Child Intervention division works in partnership with stakeholders and community-based agencies to lead and support programs and services for vulnerable children, youth and families. The division provides supports to children and families across the province, so children have what they need to remain safely at home whenever possible.

Child Intervention delivers services mandated by the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* (CYFEA), the *Drug Endangered Children Act* and the *Protection of Sexually Exploited Children Act*.

In Alberta, children, youth and their families receive services from seven regions with 86 offices in communities across the province. Child Intervention also has collaborative relationships with 17 Delegated First Nation Agencies and Indigenous Services Canada to support on-reserve child intervention service delivery. Child Intervention also works in partnership with community agencies that deliver supportive services.

Family and Community Resiliency

The Family and Community Resiliency division works with other government ministries and community partners to support early childhood development, including child care, and prevention/early intervention programs and services. The division works to enhance resiliency, reduce risk factors and strengthen protective factors in children, youth, families and communities.

Family and Community Resiliency supports accessible, affordable and quality child care options for parents and oversees licensing and monitoring of child care programs and certifying child care staff. Additionally, this division supports prevention-focused policy and programs for children and youth, including mentoring supports, transitional and education supports, addictions and mental health supports and suicide prevention.

Programs and services are delivered through seven regions, and/or in partnership with community agencies.

Policy, Innovation and Indigenous Connections

The Policy, Innovation and Indigenous Connections division supports the ministry and its partners in taking a holistic perspective towards the needs of Indigenous people and communities and in building and strengthening relationships across the province. A specific focus is on improving outcomes for Indigenous children and families in Alberta through cultural understanding, relationship building and strategic leadership.

The division focuses on integration across programs, particularly of lessons learned and best practices, strengthens ongoing activities, and promotes a culture of innovation. Quality assurance and continuous improvement are priorities for the ministry and the division supports the development and implementation of both strategies.

The division is responsible for promoting Indigenous cultural awareness throughout the ministry by enhancing the understanding of Indigenous people and communities, and working collaboratively with partners on initiatives relevant to children, youth and families.

Discussion and Analysis of Results

This section outlines the ministry's key achievements during 2018-19 and how this work has addressed the Outcomes and Key Strategies set out in the Ministry Business Plan for 2018-21, available at www.alberta.ca/government-and-ministry-business-plans.aspx

Definitions of Key Terms

Outcomes are broad statements describing what the ministry strives to achieve.

Key Strategies outline significant courses of action to be undertaken by the ministry to accomplish ministry desired outcomes.

Performance Measures indicate the degree of success a ministry has in achieving its outcomes. Performance measures contain targets, which identify a desired level of performance to be achieved in each year of the Business Plan.

Performance Indicators show progress toward achievement of ministry outcomes that a ministry may or may not have direct influence on. Indicators are used where attribution of results is not possible without exceptional research effort.

Outcome One

Children Thrive – All children thrive through nurturing relationships and safe, supportive environments

Positive experiences in the early years create the foundation for strong and healthy children. All children need nurturing relationships and safe, supportive environments to grow and learn. Positive day-to-day connections and interactions between parents, family members and caregivers help children thrive. The ministry recognizes the importance of providing support to children to develop competencies and coping skills that affect learning, behaviour and health.

The ministry's commitment to early childhood development is based on evidence that children who have a healthy start in life, including nurturing relationships and safe, supportive environments, are more likely to thrive in adulthood. Part of this rests on an interconnected early childhood system, including evidence-based prevention and early intervention services in communities to support children's healthy development and respond to risks for the vulnerable.

Children's Services is committed to improving Albertans' access to quality child care programs.

Key Strategies

- 1.1 **Improve access to quality, affordable child care.**
- 1.2 **Enhance and promote culturally appropriate, community-based early childhood services, parenting resources and supports including Francophone, Indigenous and new Canadian sectors of the population.**

In 2018-19, the ministry invested approximately \$408 million in the child care system to:

- provide child care subsidies to eligible lower-income families (\$184 million);
- enhance quality in licensed and approved child care programs and support recruitment and retention of qualified child care workers through accreditation (\$120 million); and
- support access for children and families through supports for children with special needs; support for family day home agencies and child care staff certification (\$104 million).

In 2018-19, the ministry invested \$120 million to support the growing number of programs participating in accreditation. Licensed day care programs, out-of-school programs and contracted family day home agencies participate in this program. These grants include:

- wage top-ups of up to \$6.62 per hour for certified child care staff;
- professional development funding of up to \$1,000 per year; and
- staff attraction incentives of \$2,500 per year for up to two years.

As of March 31, 2019, 93 per cent of day care programs, 86 per cent of out-of-school care programs and 94 per cent of approved family day homes were participating in accreditation.

Research demonstrates that a skilled child care workforce contributes to high quality care and learning environments for children. It is important that child care professionals have specialized training in early learning and child care to help shape healthy child development.

Currently, more than 16,000 certified educators work in the child care sector. Approximately 60 per cent hold at least a one-year post-secondary educational credential in early learning and child care or equivalent. In 2018-19, approximately 3,070 individuals without formal post-secondary training in early learning enrolled in the Alberta Child Care Orientation Course, which provides an overview of child development and leads to certification as a Child Development Assistant.

In 2018-19, the ministry revised the educational equivalencies for certification as child development workers and child development supervisors. These changes narrow the equivalencies to focus on educational credentials that have a foundation in child development and family studies. These changes also define the number of years of full-time post-secondary education required for certificate, diploma and degree programs to be consistent with Alberta's post-secondary credentials.

Early Learning and Child Care

In March 2019, there were 2,834 licensed and approved child care programs, an increase of 124 child care programs, or 4.6 per cent, since March 2018. Licensed and approved child care programs include day care, out of school care, and pre-school programs. Family day homes that belong to an approved family day home agency are considered approved child care programs.

In March 2019, there were 131,624 licensed and approved child care spaces, an increase of 6,800 spaces (five per cent) from March 2018. Of these spaces, approximately 120,000 are in licensed programs and nearly 12,000 spaces were in approved family day homes.

Children's Services offers several subsidy options to assist lower income families in offsetting the cost of child care.

The Alberta Child Care Subsidy program maintains one of the highest eligibility thresholds in Canada; families earning up to \$50,000 may qualify for full subsidy support. In 2018-19, the ministry provided a subsidy to 28,000 children, 80 per cent of whom received a full subsidy.

Through the Infant Care Incentive Program, the ministry subsidized infant care costs, paying a universal grant of \$150 per month to licensed day cares and approved family day homes to offset the higher cost associated with caring for infants under 18 months of age. In 2018-19, the ministry supported nearly 5,500 infant spaces under this program.

In 2018-19, the Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Centres initiative, with maximum fees set at \$25-a-day per child, was expanded to an additional 100 ELCC Centres, bringing the total to 122 Centres across the province. The expansion was possible because of the Canada-Alberta Bilateral funding agreement under the Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework, which resulted in \$45.3 million in federal transfers.

As of March 2019, there were a total of:

- 7,268 licenced ELCC Centre child care spaces, including 1,740 new spaces;
- 1,344 new enrollments in existing programs; and
- 618 new child care jobs province-wide.

Highlights from the Year One ELCC Centre Evaluation indicate:

- average parent fees to enrol one child in an ELCC Centre were \$474 per month compared to the provincial average of \$882 for a licensed child care spot; and
- lower income families who are eligible for child care subsidy are paying less than \$25 a day or no fees at all.

Awarding Excellence in Child Development

On November 30, 2018, 17 dedicated child development professionals were honoured for their outstanding commitment to quality child care and child development. The *Minister's Awards of Excellence in Child Development* recognize professionals who make life better for children and families.

Supports for Parents and Families

In 2018-19, Children's Services provided approximately \$25.5 million in operational grants to support 57 Parent Link Centres across the province. Parent Link Centres are a provincial network of community-based family resource centres providing prevention-focused supports to:

- increase families' strengths, minimize the impact of risk factors and support positive developmental and family wellness outcomes;
- help parents and caregivers build capacity to develop nurturing environments with free resources and supports; and
- enable parents to access developmental screening and referrals to other needed services in the community.

Parent Link Centres throughout the province delivered the Triple P-Positive Parenting Program to increase positive parenting skills and knowledge, and decrease the risk of child maltreatment. The program offers parents simple and practical strategies to help them confidently manage their child's behaviour, prevent problems from developing and build strong, healthy relationships. This evidence-based program is proven to work across cultures, socio-economic groups and in a variety of family structures.

Francophone practitioners and parents now have access to resources in French developed by Triple P International. Access is further enhanced for Francophone parents via the Francophone Parent Link Centre Network, which offers the program online in French. Triple P-Positive Parenting Program resources are also available in the following languages: Arabic, Berber, Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), Dutch, Flemish, Dutch/Flemish Hybrid, French (Euro, Universal, and Canadian), Greek, Japanese, Malay, Portuguese, Romanian, Indonesian, Spanish (US and Americas), Swedish, Turkish, Urdu, and Vietnamese.

Recognizing the need for prevention-focused services that support Indigenous children, families and communities, Children's Services provided \$1.5 million to Parent Link Centres that serve Indigenous populations to establish additional culturally-relevant supports, resources, and engagement strategies.

Parent Link Centres administered nearly 8,000 Ages and Stages Questionnaires (ASQ) and over 5,400 ASQ Social and Emotional development screenings, which resulted in flagging 1,165 child referrals for further developmental assessment and support.

Early Childhood Coalitions provide an opportunity for community members to come together to focus on early childhood. The Coalitions create Community Action Plans, based on community-level evidence, which outline goals and planned activities for knowledge mobilization, community engagement, and collaborative planning related to early childhood development in a given community.

In 2018-19, there were 98 active Early Childhood Coalitions in Alberta, with approximately 1,488 members, including citizens, service providers and representatives from Alberta Health Services, Children's Services, Community and Social Services, Education and Health.

Children's Services is placing increased focus on supporting vulnerable families before they are in crisis and require formal child intervention involvement.

Alberta's Home Visitation program serves families in their home to support healthy child development and family wellness, and to address challenges before they lead to critical child safety or well-being concerns. Home visitors help the family by providing information, supports and referrals and by facilitating goal setting.

In 2018-19, Children's Services provided \$12.6 million for Home Visitation, including an additional \$1.6 million to address Home Visitation wait list pressures and service delivery gaps, and to provide training and capacity building for Home Visitation workers. The additional funding was allocated to ten Home Visitation agencies and supported a grant to the Alberta Home Visitation Network Association for delivery of evidence-based core training for Home Visitation agencies. A total of 55 home visitors and 22 supervisors participated in four training sessions in the spring and fall of 2018.

Performance Measure 1.a

Percentage increase in the number of licensed and approved child care spaces

All licensed child care programs, including Day Care programs, Pre-School programs, Group Family Child Care programs, Innovative Child Care programs, Out of School Care programs and approved Family Day Home agencies, must provide adequate space for each child. Preschool and out-of-school care programs require 2.5 square metres of play space per child and day care programs require three square metres.

The measure describes the percentage increase in the number of licensed and approved child care spaces. The number of spaces within a child care program is the total net floor area divided by the number of required square metres per child, which is also the maximum number of children the program can have in their care at any given time. The percentage of space increase is directly related to the population growth, policy changes, as well as any government commitments of child care expanding programs, such as Early Learning Child Care (ELCC) Centres initiatives.

The percentage increase in the number of licensed and approved child care spaces from March 2018 to March 2019 is about five per cent. This is one percentage point above the target for 2018-19. The target of four per cent corresponds both to child population growth for the province of Alberta, as well as the Ministry's commitment to expanding the number of Early Learning Child Care (ELCC) Centres across the province. The percentage increase observed in the 2018-19 result is two percentage points less than that of 2017-18. The expansion of ELCC Centres is currently the primary driver of the increased spike of regulated child care spaces, but the expansion is as finances permit. As the current investment in ELCC Centres is finite over a period of three years, beginning in 2017-18, by 2020-21, the initial roll-out will have ended and the number of ELCC Centres will have stabilized across the province.

Percentage increase in the number of licensed and approved child care spaces					
Prior Years' Results				2018-19 Results	2018-19 Target
2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18		
6%	4%	7%	7%	5%	4%

Performance Indicator 1.a

Licensed and Approved Child Care (on March 31st of each fiscal year):

- Spaces
- Enrolment
- Percent enrolled

Child care is comprised of a number of options, ranging from day care, pre-school, and out-of-school care programs where care is provided in a larger group setting, to group family child care and family day homes where there are fewer children cared for in a home setting. Based on Alberta child care licensing regulations, pre-school and out-of-school care programs require 2.5 square metres of play space per child and day care programs require three square metres.

This indicator assesses the number of approved child care spaces, number of children enrolled, and the percentage of enrolment per given year. Spaces refer to the maximum number of children the child care can accommodate. Enrolment indicates the actual number of children in a child care program.

During 2018-19, 131,624 licensed and approved child care spaces were available. This is 5.4 per cent increase from the previous year. Of these spaces, 105,800 spaces were occupied with children (about 80 per cent). During the last five years, the percentage of enrolment relative to available spaces has varied between 80 per cent and 82 per cent. These results show that the supply of child care spaces consistently exceeds the number of enrolment; however, spaces may not be where parents need or want them.

Licensed and Approved Child Care					
	2014-15 ¹	2015-16 ¹	2016-17 ¹	2017-18	2018-19
Spaces	105,310	109,482	116,714	124,824	131,624
Enrolment	86,280	88,929	93,132	100,929	105,800
Percent enrolled	81.9%	81.2%	79.8%	80.9%	80.4%

¹The results for these years have been revised to address previous data errors.

Outcome Two

Resilient Families and Communities – Through greater collaboration, supports and services to families and communities are strengthened to support nurturing environments that enhance the development, well-being and resiliency of children and youth

All children deserve access to supportive environments to help them reach their full potential. Addressing inequality and closing the gap in social outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous children and families requires thinking differently and having real, community-driven conversations. Responses to challenges need to be undertaken in collaboration with communities to develop community-led and culturally grounded actions.

Youth need access to supportive relationships and environments throughout their teenage years to build resiliency and develop the skills needed to successfully transition into adulthood. Moving into adulthood can be challenging, particularly for youth transitioning out of care. Children's Services recognizes the potential of all youth and provides resources and supports to help them overcome challenges, reach their goals, and achieve success.

Key Strategies

- 2.1 Collaborate with Indigenous communities, leaders and partners to strengthen relationships and develop strategies to support Indigenous children, youth and families.**
- 2.2 Together with Indigenous leaders, implement the intent of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Truth & Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action.**
- 2.3 Formally support Jordan's Principle to meet the needs of First Nations children.**
- 2.4 Support the successful transitioning for youth out of care into adulthood.**
- 2.5 Improve mentoring opportunities for children and youth who have experienced trauma, including youth in care and Indigenous youth, focusing on career exploration, pre-employment skills and life skills.**
- 2.6 Develop and implement strategies to increase wellbeing and resiliency of children and families, including developing a Suicide Prevention Plan with community-driven, Indigenous approaches to address youth suicide.**

Supporting Indigenous Children, Families and Communities

Children's Services continues to establish and strengthen collaborative relationships with Indigenous communities, leaders and organizations.

In April and May of 2018, as part of the provincial engagement for the co-creation of a public action plan and consultation on amendments to the *CYFEA*, the ministry engaged with stakeholders and Indigenous communities. Of all the sessions' participants, 69 per cent were from Indigenous communities, agencies or organizations.

In 2018-19, the ministry released a new *Well-Being and Resiliency Framework* (Framework) in March 2019. The Framework guides the ministry in enhancing and increasing prevention and early intervention services and supports for infants, children, youth and families. The Framework reflects feedback gathered from consultations with stakeholders across the province.

Two complementary documents have been released alongside the *Well-being and Resiliency Framework*: the *kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin* (miyo) Resource and the Well-being and Resiliency Evaluation Framework. The miyo Resource discusses foundational beliefs and approaches of Indigenous peoples to promote well-being and resiliency, and outlines an evaluative process that honours an Indigenous worldview. The Evaluation Framework describes the desired results of the Framework and outlines ways to understand the meaning of and monitor progress towards the outcomes. These documents work together and build on one another to define and implement Alberta's approach for service delivery staff and agency partners.

Children's Services works with Indigenous communities to identify opportunities for capacity building for Indigenous people, which supports the principle of self-determination. In 2018-19, the ministry funded \$1.1 million through nine grants to support Indigenous communities to strengthen the capacity of organizations to improve the lives of children, youth and families. Children's Services also provided \$1.5 million through the Early Intervention in First Nation Communities Grants Program to support early intervention programming in 16 First Nations communities across Alberta.

Jordan's Principle is a child-first principle meant to ensure First Nations children, youth and families do not experience denials, delays or disruptions in government services due to conflicts over payment for services between federal and provincial governments. On November 15, 2018, the Government of Alberta, Government of Canada and First Nations Health Consortium signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to fully implement Jordan's Principle in Alberta. This MOU was the first of its kind in Canada. It created a First Nations-driven process where the First Nations Health Consortium and the federal and provincial governments work together to coordinate services so that, when a child needs support, there are no unnecessary delays.

On June 26, 2018, Children's Services released the Indigenous Cultural Understanding Framework (ICUF). The ICUF and its Learning Development Pathway identifies experiential Indigenous cultural training required for all Children's Services staff. The Pathway is a holistic learning journey for staff as they participate in various learning opportunities delivered within Indigenous communities, by communities.

The ICUF will increase knowledge and skills in employees to provide a better understanding of Indigenous histories, cultures, worldviews, challenges, and resilience. Children's Services staff will learn how best to foster respectful and collaborative relationships with Indigenous people. This knowledge will

affect behaviour and practice, leading to more respectful and meaningful approaches in serving Indigenous children, youth, families, and communities.

The ICUF also aligns with the Alberta Public Service Commission's Indigenous Learning Initiative (ILI) and fulfills the requirements of the Foundations Learning and Development Pathway for Children's Services. As of March 31, 2019, 2,349 Children's Services staff have completed the ILI training, or equivalent.

Supports for Youth to Succeed

Children's Services is committed to investing in prevention initiatives that support young people to succeed. Advancing Futures is a transitional support and funding program that assists youth aged 17 to 30 who have been or continue to be in care or receiving services under the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* to access post-secondary opportunities and obtain a career.

In 2018-19, Advancing Futures received 980 applications; of these, 791 students were approved to receive a bursary, an 8.5 per cent increase over 2017-18. This year, 85 per cent of youth who received supports completed their program of study. In addition to addressing financial needs, students participating in the program are linked to a program coordinator who also provides support with transitioning into adulthood, navigating through adult systems and developing life skills.

Recognizing the need for supportive relationships, Children's Services supports mentoring opportunities for youth at risk and/or youth who are or have been in the care of Children's Services. Along with the Ministry of Education and the Boys and Girls Clubs and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Edmonton and Area, Children's Services co-chairs the Alberta Mentoring Partnership (AMP), a collaboration of over 170 community mentoring organizations, government ministries, and youth representation working together to strengthen Alberta's capacity to support mentoring relationships for children and youth.

In 2018-19, Children's Services provided \$125,000 to the AMP to work with communities and organizations to develop, support and enhance mentoring programs for young people.

In 2018-19, Children's Services also granted a total of \$605,383 to community organizations for 10 mentoring programs. This funding allowed 2,204 young people facing adversity to benefit from caring supportive relationships that build better brain function and promote lifelong health and wellness. Of the young people impacted, 601 identified as Indigenous and 311 as other visible minorities. Some mentoring programs are tailored specifically to the needs of Indigenous youth through ceremony, involving traditional Knowledge Keepers, and incorporating Indigenous ways of knowing.

The ministry's specific Child and Youth in Care Mentorship Program coordinates the provision of mentors for youth involved with Child Intervention. Indigenous youth mentoring projects engage Indigenous youth mentors to support their culture and traditions. In 2018-19, 81 additional children and youth in care benefited from a mentoring opportunity through the mentorship program, bringing the total to 433 since the program began in 2014.

Survey results for the Child and Youth in Care Mentorship Program show the majority of mentees agree their mentor has helped them feel hopeful about the future (95 per cent) and that the program has helped them create healthy relationships (95 per cent); solve problems (89 per cent); increase their confidence to try new things (91 per cent); prepare for their future (88 per cent) and set goals (86 per cent).

Children's Services and the Ministry of Health co-led the creation of *Building Strength, Inspiring Hope: A Provincial Action Plan for Youth Suicide Prevention 2019 – 2024*, released in March 2019. The plan focuses on targeted prevention, intervention and post-intervention activities for priority youth populations, rural and Indigenous communities and settlements.

Over 600 individuals, including youth, engaged in the development of this provincial action plan including service delivery organizations, community organizations, subject matter experts in the field of suicide prevention, and provincial and federal government partners. It was especially important to work closely with Elders, members of First Nations communities and Metis Settlements, Knowledge Keepers, youth and families, and individuals with lived experience to build on existing initiatives already underway.

In response to feedback and the identification of gaps and barriers during development of the Action Plan, Children's Services dedicated more than \$2 million in 2018-19 to support youth suicide prevention. Grant funding focused on the five outcome areas outlined in the Plan: Supports and Services, Training, Awareness and Education, Research, Data and Knowledge, and Reduce Access to Means of Suicide.

In 2018-19, Children's Services provided support to community-based agencies to enhance access to trauma-informed mental health services and peer support for children, youth and families impacted by mental health challenges.

- Over \$2 million was provided to community-based organizations in Edmonton and Calgary to improve access to mental health specialists and brief intervention services for children, youth and families with child intervention involvement.
- Approximately \$200,000 was provided to the Canadian Mental Health Association of Alberta to support Caregiver Connections, a drop-in peer-support network for parents and caregivers concerned about their child or young adult's mental health.

Recognition of Student Achievement

The Duke and Duchess of Cambridge Scholarship commemorates the Royal visit of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge in 2011. The Scholarships are specifically for Advancing Futures students and acknowledge the academic performance of young scholars who have overcome challenging circumstances. In 2018-19, 25 applicants received Scholarships.

Performance Measure 2.a

Percentage of Advancing Futures Bursary youth who completed their educational studies

Advancing Futures is a transitional support and funding program that assists youth aged 17 to 30 who have been or continue to be in care or are receiving services under the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act* to access post-secondary opportunities and obtain a career. In 2018-19, the number of Advancing Futures Bursaries recipients increased by 8.5 per cent.

In 2018-19, 85 per cent of youth who received funding successfully completed their planned studies, a four per cent increase over 2017-18 and two percentage point below the target. The reasons youth may not complete their planned studies may include: medical leaves, mental health challenges, substance abuse, exposure to family violence, readiness, absenteeism, employment or a move to another province. Larger caseloads due to an increased interest in Advancing Futures may have influenced the ability to provide timely and adequate day to day support to youth in the program.

Percentage of Advancing Futures Bursary youth who completed their educational studies					
Prior Years' Results				2018-19 Results	2018-19 Target
2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18		
84%	84%	85%	81%	85%	87%

Performance Measure 2.b

Percentage of Jordan's Principle requests assessed within 48 hours or less

Jordan's Principle ensures all First Nations children can access the products, services and supports they need, when they need them. It can help with a wide range of health, social and educational needs. All First Nations children (0-19 years old) who live on or off reserve are eligible for the program. A referral to Jordan's Principle can be made for a single child or a group of children.

Alberta supports the implementation of Jordan's Principle by working within the timelines set by the June 28, 2017 Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ruling pertaining to the processing and tracking of Jordan's Principle inquiries. The ruling stipulates that the initial evaluation and determination of a Jordan's Principle request shall be made within 12-48 hours of its receipt. When a Jordan's Principle inquiry is submitted to Children's Services for navigational support, response times are tracked to ensure that initial evaluations can be completed in a timely manner.

In 2018-19, 15 inquiries were submitted to Children's Services by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and all 15 were responded to within 48 hours. Relative to the previous year, there was an increase in actual number of inquiries in 2018-19 likely due to the awareness created by the signing of the Jordan's Principle tripartite Memorandum of Understanding. The improvement of internal monitoring processes as well as continued coordination with ISC led to the ministry's ability to reach the target.

Percentage of Jordan's Principle requests assessed within 48 hours or less					
Prior Years' Results				2018-19 Results	2018-19 Target
2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18 ¹		
N/A	N/A	N/A	82%	100 %	100%

¹The result for this year is based on the data from June 2017 to March 2018. June is selected as the starting point in accordance with the time of implementation of the 48-hour timeline by the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal.

Outcome Three

Children are Safe and Supported – Children and youth in need of child intervention achieve safety and well-being

Every child deserves to grow up in a home where they are safe and nurtured. The ministry supports healthy families by offering targeted services and community-based supports so children can safely remain at home. The ministry intervenes to protect children and youth when necessary, seeking to provide them with a safe and nurturing environment, free from abuse and neglect that encourages the development of lifelong relationships. The ministry collaborates with parents and extended family to maintain familial, cultural and community connections and pursue reunification of families.

Indigenous children continue to be over-represented in the child intervention system. This over-representation highlights the need to partner with Indigenous leaders and communities to improve outcomes for Indigenous children and build on community strengths. Greater collaboration between government, communities and Indigenous partners is recognized to strengthen services and promote positive shared social outcomes.

Key Strategies

- 3.1 Continue to improve child intervention practice through the implementation of the Child Intervention Practice Framework and the Signs of Safety practice approach.**
- 3.2 Implement the Prevention and Early Intervention Framework to prevent child maltreatment and increase mental wellness.**
- 3.3 Support children in care to develop long-term, nurturing relationships.**
- 3.4 Enhance child intervention policies and practices to provide culturally appropriate and diverse supports and services for children, youth, and families.**

Improve Child Intervention Practice

The Minister of Children's Services is responsible for the *Child, Youth Family Enhancement Act* (CYFEA), which grants authority to provide services to children who are or may be at risk of being abused or neglected. In December 2018, the Government of Alberta passed amendments to CYFEA that improve child intervention practices and supports for children and families. The amendments to the legislation came into effect on February 28, 2019. This legislation expanded court access for First Nations and requires mandatory home studies and cultural connection plans for private guardianship applications. It also expanded financial supports for permanency and making Indigenous involvement a fundamental component of the system.

Through collaboration with service delivery providers and community partners, Children's Services continues to implement the *Child Intervention Practice Framework* (CIPF). The CIPF sets the foundation for child intervention practice initiatives including Signs of Safety (SofS), Family Finding, and Practice Strategies for Lifelong Connection.

In 2018-19, seven practice gatherings were held for child intervention practitioners, one in each of the seven regions across the province. These gatherings provided an opportunity for front-line workers to better understand practice initiatives, ways of using the practice tools, share insights and experiences, and reflect on how to better align casework with the practice approaches set out in the CIPF.

In alignment with the CIPF, Children's Services continues to implement the SofS practices across the province. The ministry continues to work with front-line service delivery workers and Delegated First Nations Agencies to ensure children and families receive consistent services across the province, regardless of location.

The SofS introductory training is required as part of the Child Intervention Practitioner Training for new staff, and approximately 94 per cent of workers have completed this introductory training. In a survey of child intervention workers, 95 per cent indicated that SofS practices guide their day-to-day practice. SofS logic continues to be embedded into forms, processes and practice to ensure sustainable safety planning, culturally sensitive practice, and lifelong connections for children, youth and families.

Children's Services is committed to supporting effective service delivery including quality assurance and ongoing monitoring and evaluation of child intervention services.

In collaboration with key stakeholders, Children's Services designed and piloted a Client Feedback Tool. The project initiated in September 2018 and data collection modalities were piloted at a number of worksites across the province between February-March, 2019. The tool is intended to provide insight into the client experience, empowering and honouring the voices of children, families and caregivers served, and will inform system improvements. The results from the pilot will be used to consider the creation of a, system-wide Child Intervention Client Feedback Tool.

In February 2019, Children's Services launched its first mobile application for child intervention workers called Case Connect. This mobile solution enables workers to enter case information on a laptop, tablet, and smart phone directly into the case management system while in the field. This eliminates the need to transcribe hand-written notes into the system, improves the timeliness of record entry, and improves accuracy by reducing transcription errors. Through reducing duplication and increasing efficiency, caseworkers spend more time working directly with children and families.

Support children in care to develop long-term, nurturing relationships

Children's Services recognizes the safety and well-being of children and youth is sustained through the preservation of lifelong connections to their families, culture and communities.

Practice Strategies for Lifelong Connections is a spectrum-wide approach to safety, well-being and connection for children, youth and families. It provides staff with tools and processes that focus on ensuring critical thinking in decision-making and that strong, meaningful connections in the physical, relational, legal and cultural domains are an active part of planning with families, children and youth.

In 2018-19, Children's Services fully implemented Practice Strategies for Lifelong Connections through integration into policy and staff training, which supports service delivery consistency across the province. This includes the implementation of an explicit process for staff to follow for supporting children and youth to transition to long-term placements.

The ministry continues to practice Family Finding, a structured approach in connecting children and youth to family and other community supports to create an ongoing, lifelong support network which can be sustained after caseworkers and service providers are no longer involved. This approach facilitates finding, engaging and nurturing connections for children and youth in care, and is a key tool within Practice Strategies for Lifelong Connections. Over the past year, six training camps have occurred across the province to guide caseworkers in the Family Finding approach.

Provide culturally appropriate and diverse supports and services for children, youth, and families

Kinship caregivers are extended family members or persons who have a significant relationship with the child and family, or is a member of the child's community. Kinship care is grounded in the belief that, whenever possible, children should live with extended family or those to whom they feel connected, such as a grandparent, aunt or close family friend. Kinship care is the preferred placement option as it allows children to maintain important familial and cultural ties, and is less traumatic for the child than being placed with strangers (foster or group care).

Children's Services engaged kinship caregivers, community partners, and staff working with kinship providers to review compensation, training, and other supports for kinship caregivers. The Kinship Care Assessment tool was enhanced and a pilot was launched in January 2019 to evaluate and improve the tool before rolling it out province-wide. This tool is currently being piloted by 14 sites across the province, including five Delegated First Nations Agencies, one Metis Settlement and eight departmental offices.

Children's Services provides a range of specialized services to support children and youth across Alberta who are survivors of abuse. Child Advocacy Centres (CACs) are child focused facilities in which professionals from the centre along with child intervention, law enforcement, prosecution, mental health, medical and victim advocacy sectors work together to investigate abuse, help children and families heal from abuse, and hold offenders accountable. Children's Services provided more than \$1.2 million in 2018-19 to support the seven CACs.

To support the safety and well-being of every child and youth in care, Children's Services provides training and supports to a continuum of caregivers, including kinship caregivers, foster caregivers, and adoptive applicants. Children's Services provided Foundations of Caregiver Support (FCS) training to all caregivers. FCS training provides a baseline of knowledge and understanding to all caregivers, to increase their capacity to improve positive outcomes for infants, children and youth. The modules provide

important information on the developmental needs of children, an understanding of trauma, grief and loss, and an introduction to the effects of colonization on Indigenous children, families and communities.

Through collaboration with community partners, over 1,600 service delivery agency staff and 1,100 caregivers completed the training over the last year. This training is a requirement for all child intervention workers, with over 75 per cent of staff completing the training in 2018-19.

Nearly one in three homeless youth in Canada identify as LGBTQ2S, and homeless LGBTQ2S youth face a higher risk of discrimination, violence, and abuse in the shelter system than their non-LGBTQ2S counterparts. LGBTQ2S youth are at a higher risk of mental health concerns, self-harm, and suicide compared to the general population. LGBTQ2S youth in care may also run away from foster homes and shelters, adding to the disproportionate numbers of homeless LGBTQ2S youth.

Within Indigenous culture, the term “Two-Spirit” describes individuals who house both the male and female spirit. Many Two-Spirit youth leave their communities for urban centres where they may face entrenched personal or institutional bias and bigotry. They may also lack the skills or training to find employment, familial support, and support within the larger LGBTQ2S community.

Over the past year, Children’s Services completed an assessment of services to children and youth that are sexually and gender diverse to develop and operationalize an approach to address the specific needs of these children and youth receiving child intervention services.

In collaboration with partner ministries, Children's Services has taken a variety of actions to support these children and youth, including:

- developed training for caregivers and staff to provide in-depth guidance for the unique conversations and considerations in addressing the needs of LGBTQ2S youth;
- funded new mentoring opportunities;
- added sexual and gender identity to matters that must be considered under the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*;
- created Gender Affirming policy for Child Intervention;
- identified enhancements to the electronic case management system to better capture sexual and gender diversity of children, youth and families served; and,
- identified health resources and supports required to better support LGBTQ2S children and youth in care.

Performance Measure 3.a

Percentage of Indigenous children and youth who did not return for additional services within 12 months

Performance Measure 3.b

Percentage of non-Indigenous children and youth who did not return for additional services within 12 months

These measures describe the percentage of files that opened for children and youth without child intervention history in the last 12 months. This includes children and youth receiving services in care and not in care.

In 2018-19, the percentage of Indigenous and non-Indigenous children and youth who did not return for additional services within 12 months are 85 per cent and 89 per cent respectively. This result suggests a relatively large percentage of vulnerable children who were previously involved with child intervention are being supported to live at home with their families, independent of the child intervention system.

Percentage of Indigenous children and youth who did not return for additional services within 12 months ¹					
Prior Years' Results				2018-19 Results	2018-19 Target
2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18		
78%	81%	84%	80%	85%	85%

Percentage of non-Indigenous children and youth who did not return for additional services within 12 months ¹					
Prior Years' Results				2018-19 Results	2018-19 Target
2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18		
87%	88%	90%	88%	89%	91%

¹Preliminary data for these performance measures are available from a live dataset at least one month after the end of the fiscal year. Since the dataset is a live source, the data and results generated from it are subject to change as more information is entered into the system. Data is considered preliminary for 26 months, after which the dataset is frozen for yearly reporting. As such, results for 2018/19 are preliminary and are subject to change.

Performance Measure 3.c

Percentage of in-care Indigenous children who are placed in family-based care

Performance Measure 3.d

Percentage of in-care non-Indigenous children who are placed in family-based care

These performance measures describe the proportion of Indigenous and non-Indigenous children and youth who are placed away from home in a family-based placement including parental care, kinship care, foster care and permanency placements.

Percentage of Indigenous and non-Indigenous children who were placed in family-based care remains unchanged from the previous year. Respectively, 85 per cent and 84 per cent Indigenous and non-Indigenous children have been placed in family-based care, slightly below the targets.

Percentage of in-care Indigenous children who are placed in family-based care					
Prior Years' Results				2018-19 Results	2018-19 Target
2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18		
84%	85%	85%	85%	85%	87%

Percentage of in-care non-Indigenous children who are placed in family-based care					
Prior Years' Results				2018-19 Results	2018-19 Target
2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18		
81%	82%	83%	84%	84%	85%

Performance Indicator 3.a

Children receiving Child Intervention services as a percentage of the child population in Alberta:

- Percentage
- Number of children receiving Child Intervention service
- Children in Alberta Percent

This indicator describes the percentage of children, ages 0-17 years, receiving child intervention services as a proportion of the total child population in Alberta. Monitoring the percentage of children and youth who are receiving child intervention services as a direct proportion of the total child population in Alberta helps the ministry track whether any progress has been made to the overall safety, security and well-being among children in the province.

In 2018, 16,123 children received child intervention services. This is 1.7 per cent of the total child population in Alberta. Despite the growth in child population in Alberta, the percentage of children that receive child intervention services has been steady during the last five years.

Children receiving Child Intervention services as a percentage of the child population in Alberta ¹					
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Percentage	1.7%	1.6%	1.7%	1.6%	1.7%
Number of children receiving Child Intervention service	15,636	14,834	15,564	15,624	16,123
Children in Alberta	900,381	919,922	938,410	949,448	962,327

¹Data for the "Number of children receiving Child Intervention Services" is available from a live dataset at least one month after the end of the fiscal year. Since the dataset is a live source, the data and results generated from it are subject to change as more information is entered into the system. The source for "Children in Alberta" is Statistics Canada Table: 17-10-0005-01 (formerly CANSIM 051-0001) – Population estimates on July 1st, by age and sex. Since the data set is an estimate and from a live source results are also subject to change year over year. Consequently, the values given may be different from the corresponding values reported in 2018-21 Business Plan.

Performance Indicator 3.b

Percentage of Indigenous children in foster/ kinship care who are placed with Indigenous families

This indicator shows the percentage of Indigenous children and youth receiving culturally appropriate services through foster care or kinship care. In 2018-19, 45 per cent of Indigenous children in foster/ kinship care were placed with Indigenous families, which is a one percentage point increase from the last year and a six per cent increase since 2014-15.

Percentage of Indigenous children in foster/ kinship care who are placed with Indigenous families				
2014-15 ¹	2015-16 ¹	2016-17 ¹	2017-18	2018-19
39%	40%	43%	44%	45%

¹The results for these years have been revised to address previous data errors.

Performance Measure and Indicator Methodology

Performance Measure 1.a

Percentage increase in the number of licensed and approved child care spaces

Methodology

The percentage of space increase is calculated using the space growth from March of the previous year to March in the current year. March data is used in these calculations as it represents the end of the fiscal year. This number is then divided by the number of spaces in March of the previous year as indicated by the following formula.

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{\text{spaces this March} - \text{spaces last March}}{\text{spaces last March}} \times 100$$

Source

Child Care Information System

Performance Indicator 1.a

Licensed and Approved Child Care: (on March 31 of each fiscal year)

- Spaces
- Enrolment
- Per cent enrolled

Methodology

This indicator assesses the number of approved child care spaces, number of children enrolled, and percentage of enrolment per year. Spaces refers to the maximum number of children that a child care centre can accommodate. Enrolment indicates the actual number of children reported attending a child care centre.

The percentage enrolled is calculated as follows.

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{\text{number of children that used child care services}}{\text{total number of available child care spaces}} \times 100$$

Source

Child Care Information System

Performance Measure 2.a

Percentage of Advancing Futures Bursary youth who completed their educational studies

Methodology

The data for this performance measure is based on the fiscal year start and end dates (April 1 to March 31). The data identifies students that have been approved for supports and a bursary, those who applied but never attended a program, those who withdrew during the year, and those whose award was terminated by the institution. Program completion is defined as students who finished their studies within the fiscal year or were in studies this fiscal year and will be continuing the following year.

This measure is calculated as follows.

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{\text{total recipients} - \text{withdrawn or terminated recipients}}{\text{total recipients}} \times 100$$

Source

Bursary Information Module

Performance Measure 2.b

Percentage of Jordan's Principle requests assessed within 48 hours or less

Methodology

All Jordan's Principle inquiry emails are tracked, including incoming times and response times, to determine if Children's Services response times are within the 48 hour (business days) timeline. Each quarter emails related to Jordan's Principle are summarized to calculate the response time. The percentage of the requests assessed is calculated as follows.

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{\text{total number of inquiries submitted} - \text{number of inquiries responded to within 48 hours}}{\text{total number of inquiries submitted}} \times 100$$

Source

Tracking of incoming emails from Indigenous Services of Canada and the response emails

Performance Measure 3.a and 3.b

3.a Percentage of Indigenous children and youth who did not return for additional services within 12 months

3.b Percentage of non-Indigenous children and youth who did not return for additional services within 12 months

Methodology

This performance measure is calculated separately for Indigenous and non-Indigenous children using the following formula:

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{\text{total number of children who opened a new file with Child Intervention and no previous closure within the last 12 months}}{\text{total number of children who opened a file with Child Intervention in a fiscal year}} \times 100$$

Only youth whose file closure occurred prior to his/her 18th birthday were used to calculate the results. The new file does not have to be related to the previous reason for service.

Note: Preliminary data is available from a live dataset at least one month after the end of the fiscal year. Since the dataset is a live source, the data and results generated are subject to change as more information is entered into the system. Data is considered preliminary for 26 months, after which the data is frozen for yearly reporting (i.e. Official data for 2017/18 is frozen on May 15, 2019).

Source

Child Intervention Case Information Online system

Performance Measure 3.c and 3.d

3.c Percentage of in-care Indigenous children who are placed in family-based care

3.d Percentage of in-care non-Indigenous children who are placed in family-based care

Methodology

The following formula is used to calculate the percentage of children in-care placed in family-based care. This calculation is performed separately for Indigenous and non-Indigenous children.

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{\text{average monthly number of children placed in a family-based placement}}{\text{average monthly number of children receiving services in-care}} \times 100$$

Source

Child Intervention Case Information Online system

Performance Indicator 3.a

Children receiving Child Intervention services as a percentage of the child population in Alberta:

- Percentage
- Number of children receiving Child Intervention service
- Children in Alberta

Methodology

This indicator describes the percentage of children and youth, prior to their 18th birthday, receiving Child Intervention services as a proportion of the total child population in Alberta.

The percentage is calculated as follows.

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{\text{number of children (0-17) who had an active Child Intervention legal authority during the calendar year}}{\text{number of children between the ages 0-17 in Alberta during the calendar year}} \times 100$$

Note: The reported number of children receiving Child Intervention services is subject to change as source information is entered into the system. Data for 2018 is current as of May 10, 2019.

Source

Child Intervention Case Information Online system and Statistics Canada Table: 17-10-0005-01 (formerly CANSIM 051-0001) – Population estimates on July 1, by age and sex

Performance Indicator 3.b

Percentage of Indigenous children in foster/ kinship care who are placed with Indigenous families

Methodology

A foster or kinship care is determined to be Indigenous if the home is denoted as Indigenous or caregiver's racial origin is identified as Indigenous in the Child Youth Information Module or Intervention Services Information System. The performance measure is calculated as follows.

$$\text{Percentage} = \frac{\text{total number of Indigenous children and youth in foster or kinship care who reside with an Indigenous foster or kinship care family}}{\text{total number of Indigenous children and youth in foster or kinship care}} \times 100$$

Source

Child Youth Information Module and Intervention Services Information System

Financial Information

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Ministry Financial Highlights

Statement of Revenues and Expenses (unaudited)

	2019		2018	Change from	
	Budget Restated	Actual	Actual Restated	Budget Restated	2018 Actual Restated
<i>(in thousands)</i>					
Revenues					
Services to First Nations Reserves	\$ 45,678	\$ 37,107	\$ 39,886	(8,571)	(2,779)
Other Federal Transfers	70,982	73,922	64,356	2,940	9,566
Premiums, Fees and Licences	-	138	-	138	138
Other Revenue	5,054	7,842	9,907	2,788	(2,065)
Internal Government Transfers	6,591	-	-	(6,591)	-
Ministry total	128,305	119,009	114,149	(9,296)	4,860
Inter-ministry consolidation adjustments	-	-	(2)	-	2
Adjusted ministry total	128,305	119,009	114,147	(9,296)	4,862
Expenses - directly incurred					
Programs					
Ministry Support Services	8,892	7,705	7,274	(1,187)	431
Child Intervention	801,243	811,839	771,650	10,596	40,189
Child Care	389,353	408,246	375,290	18,893	32,956
Early Intervention Services for Children and Services Provided to Other Ministries	107,682	109,098	100,973	1,416	8,125
Alberta Child Benefit	1,198	-	-	(1,198)	-
Ministry total	1,483,368	1,505,952	1,413,345	22,584	92,607
Inter-ministry consolidation adjustments	(10,800)	(13,833)	(12,492)	(3,033)	(1,341)
Adjusted ministry total	1,472,568	1,492,119	1,400,853	19,551	91,266
Annual Deficit	\$ (1,344,263)	\$ (1,373,110)	\$ (1,286,706)	\$ (28,847)	\$ (86,404)

Revenue and Expense Highlights

Revenues

Ministry revenue was \$119 million, approximately \$5 million higher than 2017-18 and \$9 million lower than Budget 2018.

Compared to 2017-18 Actual

Higher revenues are primarily due to increased federal transfers of Children's Special Allowance (CSA) and Child Disability Benefit (CDB) funding. The Government of Canada provides CSA and CDB funding to help with care and education of children up to 18 years of age and under the care of the province. Also, there was a marginal increase in revenues from Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Centres funded by the federal government. Under the Multilateral Early Learning and Child Care Framework, the province recognizes revenue for expenses incurred in creating child care spaces. As of March 2019, there was a total of 7,268 licensed ELCC spaces, including 1,740 new spaces.

Compared to Budget 2018

Under the *Administrative Reform Agreement*, the Government of Canada reimburses the province for services provided to persons who ordinarily reside on-reserve in child intervention and child care programs. The lower revenues are primarily due to lower than expected recoverable costs in the Child Intervention program for services provided to on-reserve clients.

Expenses

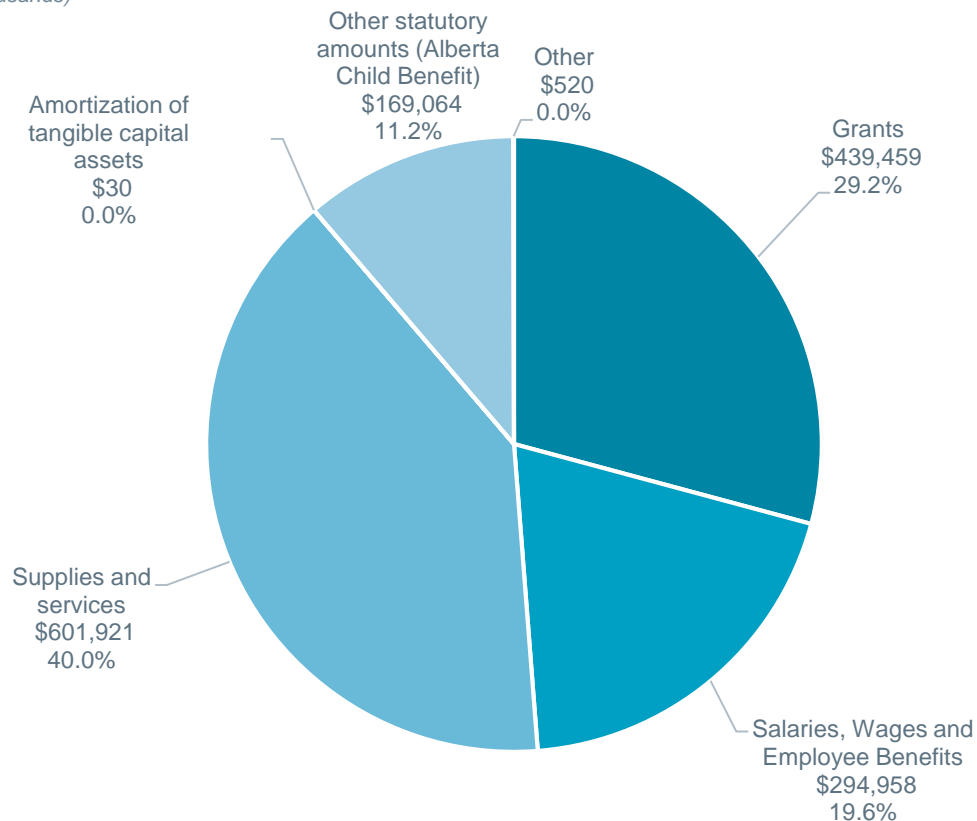
The total Ministry's operating expense was \$1.5 billion in 2018-19, \$93 million or 6.6 per cent higher than 2017-18 and \$23 million more than budget, mainly due to higher caseloads in Child Intervention and Child Care.

- Child Intervention expense was \$812 million, an increase of \$11 million or 1.3 per cent from budget and an increase of \$40 million from 2017-18. Caseload management is the primary factor for the increase. In 2018-19, more than 58,000 children and youth received Child Intervention services.
- Child Care expense was \$408 million, \$33 million higher than 2017-18 and up \$19 million from budget. The main contributor to the higher expense is caseload growth, as the number of child care subsidies provided to eligible lower-income families increased. In 2018-19, the ministry provided a subsidy to 28,000 children, 80 per cent of whom received a full subsidy.
- Alberta Child Benefit expense was \$169 million, estimated to support about 140,000 families.

Expenses – Directly Incurred Detailed by Object (unaudited)

The following information presents expenses of the ministry that were directly incurred by object. The objective of disclosure of expenses by object is to provide information that is useful in evaluating the economic impact of government acquiring or consuming various types of resources.

2019 Actual (unaudited) (in thousands)



- The ministry's largest operating expense was supplies and services, which totaled \$602 million (40 per cent) and was primarily on Child Intervention program. Included in Supplies and Services was approximately \$202 million in contract payments which were paid primarily to contracted service providers who provided services directly to Albertans on behalf of the ministry.
- The second largest operating expense was grants, which totaled \$439 million (30 per cent) primarily for Child Care program.
- Expenditures for salaries, wages and employee benefits totaled \$295 million (20 per cent) and were primarily on Child Intervention program.
- Alberta Child Benefit which helps lower-income families pay for child care totaled \$169 million (12 per cent).
- The remainder of ministry expenses were classified as amortization of capital assets (\$0.03 million) and other expenses (\$0.52 million).

Other Financial Information

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Trust Funds Under Administration

The Ministry administers trust funds that are regulated and other funds consisting of public money over which the Legislature has no power of appropriation. As the Ministry has no equity in the funds and administers them for the purpose of various trusts, they are not included in the Ministry's financial statements.

At March 31, 2019, the trust funds under administration were as follows:

	2019	2018
Child Resources Rebate Trust Fund	\$ 683	\$ 684

Statement of Remissions, Compromises, Write-offs

The following Statement has been prepared pursuant to section 23 of the *Financial Administration Act*. The Statement includes all Remissions, Compromises and Write-offs of the Ministry of Children's Services made or approved during the Fiscal Year.

	(in thousands)
Remissions under section 21 of the <i>Financial Administration Act</i> :	\$ -
Compromises under section 22 of the <i>Financial Administration Act</i> :	
Other	18
Bankruptcies:	-
Write-Offs:	
Child Care Subsidy - Children's Services	155
Other	66
Sub total	<u>221</u>
TOTAL	<u><u>\$ 239</u></u>

Lapse/Encumbrance

	Voted Estimate ⁽¹⁾	Supplementary Estimate ⁽²⁾	Adjustments ⁽³⁾	Voted Estimate	Voted Actuals ⁽⁴⁾	(Over Expended)
	(in thousands)					
Program - Operating Expense						
1 Ministry Support Services						
1.1 Minister's Office	\$ 905	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 905	\$ 789	\$ 116
1.2 Deputy Minister's Office	800	-	-	800	786	14
1.3 Strategic Services	2,834	-	-	2,834	2,020	814
1.4 Corporate Services	4,353	-	-	4,353	4,010	343
	<u>8,892</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>8,892</u>	<u>7,605</u>	<u>1,287</u>
2 Child Intervention						
2.1 Program Planning and Delivery	17,161	129	(2,000)	15,290	12,287	3,003
2.2 Child Intervention Services	520,681	3,047	3,000	526,728	531,895	(5,167)
2.3 Supports for Permanency	64,618	-	-	64,618	63,998	620
2.4 Foster Care Support	195,728	400	(1,000)	195,128	201,594	(6,466)
	<u>798,188</u>	<u>3,576</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>801,764</u>	<u>809,774</u>	<u>(8,010)</u>
3 Child Care						
3.1 Program Planning and Delivery	117	-	-	117	-	117
3.2 Child Care Subsidy and Supports	268,442	14,988	-	283,430	288,347	(4,917)
3.3 Child Care Accreditation	120,794	-	-	120,794	119,561	1,233
	<u>389,353</u>	<u>14,988</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>404,341</u>	<u>407,908</u>	<u>(3,567)</u>
4 Early Intervention Services for Children and Youth						
4.1 Early Intervention and Early Childhood Development	97,581	3,155	-	100,736	97,044	3,692
4.2 Youth in Transition	10,101	1,577	-	11,678	11,945	(267)
	<u>107,682</u>	<u>4,732</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>112,414</u>	<u>108,989</u>	<u>3,425</u>
5 Services Provided to Other Ministries						
5.1 Services Provided to Other Ministries	1,198	-	-	1,198	-	1,198
	<u>1,198</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,198</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>1,198</u>
Total	<u>\$1,305,313</u>	<u>\$ 23,296</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$1,328,609</u>	<u>\$1,334,276</u>	<u>\$ (5,667)</u>
Lapse/(Encumbrance) ⁽⁵⁾						<u>\$ (5,667)</u>
Program - Capital Investment						
2 Child Intervention						
2.1 Program Planning and Delivery	\$ -	\$ 225	\$ -	\$ 225	\$ 7	\$ 218
2.2 Child Intervention Services	-	-	-	-	134	(134)
Total	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 225</u>	<u>\$ -</u>	<u>\$ 225</u>	<u>\$ 141</u>	<u>\$ 84</u>
Lapse/(Encumbrance)						<u>\$ 84</u>

⁽¹⁾ As per "Expense Vote by Program", "Capital Investment Vote by Program" and "Financial Transaction Vote by Program" page 55 of the 2018-19 Government Estimates. Effective April 1, 2018 FOIP delivery services, IMT, EIE services and HR were transferred from each department to the Ministry of Service Alberta and Ministry of Public Service Commission (Order in Council No. 297/2018). The Voted Estimate have been restated as if the Ministries had always been assigned with its current responsibilities.

⁽²⁾ Per the Special Warrant (No. 001/2019) for Supplementary Supply Estimates approved on March 29, 2019 (Order in Council No. 084/2019). This disclosure is made pursuant to section 30 of the *Financial Administration Act*.

⁽³⁾ Adjustments include encumbrances, capital carry over amounts, transfers between votes and credit or recovery increases approved by Treasury Board and credit or recovery shortfalls. An encumbrance is incurred when, on a vote-by-vote basis, the total of actual disbursements in the prior year exceed the total adjusted estimate. All calculated encumbrances from the prior year are reflected as an adjustment to reduce the corresponding voted estimate in the current year.

⁽⁴⁾ Actuals exclude non-voted amounts such as amortization and valuation adjustments.

⁽⁵⁾ The \$5.7 million encumbrance is primarily due to caseload management cost pressure in Foster Care Support and Child Intervention Services.

Annual Report Extracts and Other Statutory Reports

Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act

Section 32 of the *Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblower Protection) Act* reads:

- 32(1) Every chief officer must prepare a report annually on all disclosures that have been made to the designated officer of the department, public entity or office of the Legislature for which the chief officer is responsible.
- (2) The report under subsection (1) must include the following information:
 - (a) the number of disclosures received by the designated officer, the number of disclosures acted on and the number of disclosures not acted on by the designated officer;
 - (b) the number of investigations commenced by the designated officer as a result of disclosures;
 - (c) in the case of an investigation that results in a finding of wrongdoing, a description of the wrongdoing and any recommendations made or corrective measures taken in relation to the wrongdoing or the reasons why no corrective measure was taken.
- (3) The report under subsection (1) must be included in the annual report of the department, public entity or office of the Legislature if the annual report is made publicly available.

Here is a summary of the activity in my office pertaining to your department from the period April 1, 2018, to March 31, 2019:

4 - Disclosures;

- 4 disclosures acted on
- 0 disclosures not acted on

4 - Investigations

1 of 4 - Investigations resulting in a finding of wrongdoing

- PIDA 2018 101
 - The wrongdoing in this file related to Section 3(1)(c) of the Act, “gross mismanagement of public funds or a public asset”. The specific wrongdoing cited by the disclosure was that significant resources were being used by the department in providing Intervention Record Checks to non-GoA entities without the necessary legal authority.
 - The recommendation in the report was for the department to ensure that steps are in place to discontinue the practice by the fall of 2018.
 - To respond to the recommendation, the department has developed a comprehensive plan, approved by the Minister of Children’s Services, to work with stakeholders to implement the recommended change in the practice in early 2019.

Alberta 