

Children's Services

ACCOUNTABILITY STATEMENT

The Business Plan for the three years commencing April 1, 2002 was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Government Accountability Act* and the government's accounting policies. All of the government's policy decisions as of February 26, 2002 with material economic or fiscal implications of which I am aware have been considered in preparing the Business Plan.

The Ministry's priorities outlined in the Business Plan were developed in the context of the government's business and fiscal plans. I am committed to achieving the planned results laid out in this Business Plan.

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Iris Evans, *Minister of Children's Services*
February 27, 2002

MESSAGE FROM THE MINISTER

“STRONGER PARTNERSHIPS FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES”

The key to Alberta's future rests with the opportunities we provide for children today.

Albertans want to see the continued development of a community that cherishes and cares for children, and encourages a sense of belonging to the Alberta family. There is nothing more important than supporting parents and communities as they provide the security, caring, and opportunities for children and youth to grow up healthy and happy, especially those that need help the most.

In May 2001, our Strategic Planning Forum brought our partners together to help define directions for services to children, youth and families over the next three years. In October, our second provincial Children's Forum united over 1,000 Albertans in sharing their expertise on key areas for continuing to improve services for children and families.

This business plan reflects what we heard during the two forums. It builds on our foundation of programs and services for Alberta's children and families. At the same time, it outlines our priorities for meeting the challenges and opportunities ahead:

- ◆ Implementing early intervention programs to help families give children and youth who need help a healthy start in life, and opportunities to learn, grow, and achieve their potential while reducing the need for crisis intervention.
- ◆ Improving standards and best practices for child care to support families in providing quality care for their children.
- ◆ Leading the transformation of child welfare by implementing an Alberta Response Model, a new way of helping families at-risk that will ensure children reside in permanent, nurturing homes. The model will ensure that supports are available through the community, particularly Family and Community Support Services, for parents and families in need to overcome at-risk circumstances. Child welfare case management will be re-engineered to promote in-home supports wherever a child's safety and well being can be assured, and on-going family conferencing.
- ◆ Increasing steps to reunite children and youth in care with their families or with other permanent nurturing homes. This includes expanding the role of agencies in adoptions.
- ◆ Working with Aboriginal peoples to advance the well-being of Aboriginal children, youth, families and communities.
- ◆ Strengthening the capacity and self-reliance of communities to deliver services that promote the well-being of children, youth and families.
- ◆ Realigning our services and expenditures so that we remain fiscally responsible while realizing the benefits to be gained by investing in children and thereby Alberta's future.

We will continue to work with parents, communities, and all our partners to provide effective, sustainable programs and services so that children in Alberta are well cared for, safe, successful at learning and healthy.

Honourable Iris Evans

THE MINISTRY: "WORKING TOGETHER TO PUT CHILDREN FIRST"

The primary responsibility for children lies with parents and care givers. Therefore, the Ministry works with families, communities, service providers, all Albertans, and all levels of government to put children and youth first.

The Ministry is a dynamic partnership among:

- ◆ *Department of Children's Services* -- provides leadership, and represents policies that guide services for Alberta's children and families.
- ◆ *Child and Family Services Authorities* -- help determine Ministry-wide directions, and deliver Ministry programs and services to best meet the local priorities and needs of children, families, and communities.
- ◆ *Family and Community Support Services* -- a provincial / municipal / Metis settlement funding partnership to deliver prevention and early intervention programs and services that ensure the well-being of children, families and communities.
- ◆ *Aboriginal Communities* -- the First Nations, Metis communities, and their delegated agencies working to strengthen Aboriginal support systems for children, youth, families and communities.
- ◆ *Youth Secretariat* -- advises the Minister on key issues facing youth and ways to address those issues.
- ◆ *Children's Advocate* -- also represents the rights and interests of children and youth receiving protection services.
- ◆ *Social Care Facility Review Committee* -- a citizen panel with a legislated mandate to visit provincially funded social care facilities and investigate complaints.
- ◆ *Other ministry and government partnerships* -- The Ministry leads the Alberta Children and Youth Initiative, and co-champions the Aboriginal Policy Initiative with other ministries. It promotes Alberta's position on child and family issues at federal and provincial/territorial levels. For example, the Ministry is involved in national child care initiatives and the child welfare caseload review. It also works with the Alberta Science and Research Authority (ASRA), universities, other ministries and community partners to promote policy relevant research on child, family and community issues.

ALBERTA GOVERNMENT AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES: SUPPORT FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Children's Services is committed to ensuring that children are well cared for, safe, successful at learning and healthy because the well-being of children is vital to Alberta's future.

The Ministry contributes to the Government of Alberta's goals for children, youth, and families by:

- ◆ Promoting the development and well-being of children, youth and families so that children have a healthy start in life and the opportunities they need to learn, grow, excel and achieve their potential;
- ◆ Keeping children, youth and families safe and protected so that children in need are safeguarded, and families are healthy and able to nurture their children's development;
- ◆ Promoting the capacity and self-reliance of communities to create caring places for families to live and raise children.

The Ministry's Business Plan supports families in helping children and youth become self confident adults capable and committed to contributing to Alberta's economic prosperity and social well being.

| GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA CORE BUSINESSES AND SELECTED GOALS |
|--|
| <p>People . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Our children will be well cared for, safe, successful at learning and healthy. ◆ Alberta students will excel. ◆ Albertans will be independent. ◆ Albertans unable to provide for their basic needs will receive help. ◆ The well-being and self-reliance of Aboriginal people will be comparable to that of other Albertans. <p>Prosperity . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Alberta will have a prosperous economy. ◆ Alberta's workforce will be skilled and productive. ◆ Alberta will have effective and efficient infrastructure. <p>Preservation . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Alberta will be a safe place to live and raise families. ◆ Alberta will work with other governments and maintain its strong position in Canada. |

| ALBERTA CHILDREN'S SERVICES CORE BUSINESSES AND GOALS |
|--|
| <p>Promoting the development and well-being of children, youth and families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Children and youth will have a healthy start in life and the supports they need to reach their potential. <p>Keeping children, youth and families safe and protected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Families will be safe, healthy, and able to promote children's development. ◆ Children in need will be protected and supported by permanent, nurturing relationships. <p>Promoting healthy communities for children, youth and families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The well-being and self-reliance of Aboriginal children, families, and communities will be promoted, supported and comparable to that of other Albertans. ◆ Communities will have the capacity to plan and deliver services that promote the well-being of Alberta's children, youth, and families. |

MINISTRY VISION, MISSION AND CORE BUSINESSES

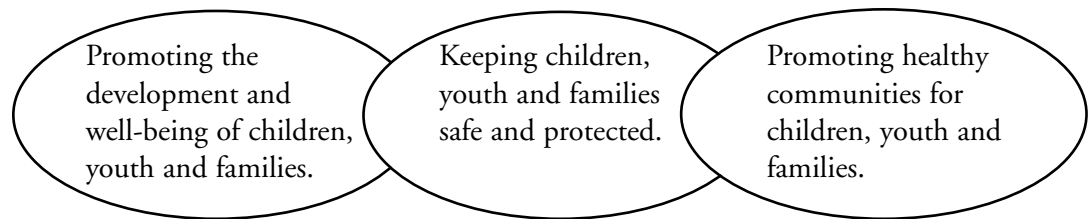
VISION: STRONG CHILDREN, FAMILIES AND COMMUNITIES

An Alberta where children and youth are valued, nurtured and loved, and develop to their potential supported by enduring relationships, healthy families, and safe communities. Alberta will be child, youth, and family friendly.

MISSION:

Working together to enhance the ability of families and communities to develop nurturing and safe environments for children, youth and individuals.

CORE BUSINESSES:



KEY PROGRAM AREAS:

| | | |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Early Intervention Programs | An Alberta Response Model | Family and Community |
| Early Childhood | to transform Child Welfare | Support Services |
| Development | Prevention of Family Violence | Aboriginal Policy |
| Child Care Programming | Protection of Children | Initiatives |
| Resources for Children with | Involved in Prostitution | |
| Disabilities | | |

OUR KEY FOCUS: AN ALBERTA RESPONSE MODEL

The Ministry is implementing an Alberta Response Model, a new way to help families at risk and ensure that children reside in permanent, nurturing homes. The Ministry will engage community-based resources, with an emphasis on Family and Community Support Services partnerships, to assist families at-risk to care effectively for children so that they will not need protective services. The Ministry will re-engineer the child welfare case management model to promote in-home supports whenever a child's safety and well-being can be assured, and will increase the number of children in care who are reunited with their families or are placed in other permanent nurturing homes. This includes expanding the role of agencies in adoptions.

PROGRAM DELIVERY

The delivery of programs for children, youth, and families will continue to be based on four pillars: (1) prevention and early intervention, (2) integration of services, (3) community-based delivery of services, and (4) improved services to Aboriginal children and families.

OUR PLANNING ENVIRONMENT

The majority of the 750,000 children in Alberta today are doing very well. However, some children still need our help through the support of families, communities and other partners. The needs that Alberta communities identified, and the Ministry's priorities for meeting these over the next three years follow.

| THE NEEDS COMMUNITIES IDENTIFIED | MINISTRY PRIORITIES |
|--|--|
| <p>◆ Number of children and youth living in high risk circumstances</p> <p>At some point in their lives, 10% to 20% of Alberta's children encounter high risk circumstances such as parental low income, low education, poor health, social isolation, and lack of supportive networks, and may need help to overcome these.</p> <p>One of every 100 children will be born with fetal alcohol syndrome or fetal alcohol effects, 6 with low birth weight, 10 to 20 may be in high risk homes, 15 may need help to be ready for school and 8 to 10 may need support to stay in school and make the transition to adulthood.</p> <p>Out-of-home child care is provided to 28,000 children each month. High quality programs are necessary to provide the supports children need to achieve their potential, particularly those at risk.</p> | <p>◆ Implementing early intervention programs, and improving child care standards</p> <p>The Ministry will implement early intervention programs to help families promote optimal child development, assist children and youth to overcome at-risk circumstances, and reduce the need for crisis intervention.</p> <p>Resources will be focused on the early screening of children and youth for risk factors and referral to appropriate services, early childhood development programs, resources for children with disabilities, mentoring and supports for adolescents making the transition to adulthood, and parenting programs. The Ministry will also increase standards for child care programs.</p> |
| <p>◆ Number of children and youth in care and the complexity of their situations</p> <p>The number of children and youth receiving protective services has grown by 61% over the last five years, as has the complexity of their circumstances.</p> <p>At present, 15,000 children and youth receive child protection services.</p> <p>Many of the 1,750 youth aged 16 to 18 receiving care through child welfare are at high risk, and may need support to make the transition to independent living.</p> | <p>◆ Transforming child welfare to improve outcomes for children and families</p> <p>The Ministry will implement an Alberta Response Model. The model will engage community-based resources to help families at-risk effectively care for their own children so that they will not need protective services.</p> <p>The model will also re-engineer child welfare case management to promote in-home supports for families whenever a child's safety and development can be assured, and increase the number of children and youth in care who are reunited with their families or are placed in other permanent, nurturing homes. The role of agencies in adoption will also be expanded.</p> |

◆ **Families requiring support to care for their children**

In a recent Canadian survey, almost 75% of parents responding said they needed information and other help from time to time to promote their children's optimal development.

Many parents need assistance with child care. Lone parent families have increased at a rate of 16% over the last five years, and 60% of single moms with a child under the age of six work outside the home.

There has been a rise in crisis and information calls to women's shelters over the last five years. On average, 6,000 children are admitted annually into women's shelters.

◆ **Helping to preserve families, and their ability to provide nurturing environments for their children's development**

In addition to an Alberta Response Model, the Ministry will work with all partners to ensure the seamless provision of services for children in need from age 0-18 and support services to help preserve families.

The Ministry will promote community-based parenting skills programs and parent resources, including communication tools to help parents access services for children with disabilities. The Ministry will implement home visitations, mentoring programs, and community response teams to help preserve families. The Ministry will also continue its education, training, and programs to prevent family violence, and provide treatment services where needed.

◆ **Circumstances of Aboriginal children, youth and families**

Approximately 50% of the Aboriginal people in Alberta are 19 years of age or younger.

38% of the child welfare caseload is comprised of Aboriginal children.

Aboriginal children and youth generally have lower school attainment than their non-Aboriginal counterparts.

Disability rates are twice as high, and suicide rates are five to six times as high.

◆ **Advancing the well-being and self-reliance of Aboriginal children, youth and families**

The Ministry will work with Aboriginal communities to assist them in developing the organizational, governance, and service delivery capacity to provide their own prevention, early intervention and protection services needed to improve outcomes for Aboriginal children and families.

The Ministry will also ensure that its services are culturally appropriate for Aboriginal children, youth and families.

◆ **Community support systems for children and families**

New approaches are needed to strengthen the capacity of the community-based delivery system to meet growing local needs within the framework of government policies through greater integration of services, and strategic alliances among all stakeholders, including the private sector.

◆ **Strengthening the capacity and self-reliance of communities to plan and deliver services to meet the needs of children and families**

The Ministry will increase supports to assist Regional Authorities, Family and Community Support Services, and community partners to work together to strengthen partnerships, integrate services, and promote volunteerism to provide preventative social programs that help make for healthy communities.

MINISTRY GOALS, STRATEGIES AND PERFORMANCE MEASURES

CORE BUSINESS 1. PROMOTING THE DEVELOPMENT AND WELL BEING OF CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Goal 1.1 Children and youth will have a healthy start in life and the supports they need to reach their potential

Outcomes Children and youth are physically, emotionally, socially, intellectually and spiritually healthy.
Children and youth meet individual developmental milestones.

Key Focus Implementing early intervention programs to help families promote the optimal development of children and youth, overcome at risk circumstances, and reduce the need for crisis intervention.

- Strategies*
- 1.1.1 Implement provincial, regional and community early intervention strategies for children and their families that include:
 - ◆ Facilitation of pre-natal supports for families to promote healthy birth and infancy,
 - ◆ Early screening of children at birth for risk factors, and at 18 months, 3 years and 5 years for developmental milestones, readiness for school at 5 years, and referral to appropriate community services where needed,
 - ◆ Early childhood programs to better meet the developmental needs of children,
 - ◆ Home visitation programs that provide supports for families at-risk,
 - ◆ Parenting supports such as mentoring and parenting skills programs.
 - 1.1.2 Strengthen standards and best practices for child care to support parents in providing quality care for their children.
 - 1.1.3 Continue to promote early childhood development programs in community-based child care settings to support children in developing to their potential.
 - 1.1.4 Realign the Resources for Children with Disabilities program so that families are referred to the most appropriate support in their communities to meet the needs of children with disabilities.
 - 1.1.5 Accelerate the development of a communication tool to assist parents, and the providers of services for children with disabilities to access community supports.
 - 1.1.6 Lead the development of a cross-ministry framework to address the needs of adolescents, and promote community supports for youth making the transition to adulthood.
 - 1.1.7 Implement a focused strategy to prevent Fetal Alcohol Syndrome / Fetal Alcohol Effect, provide support to high-risk mothers, strengthen approaches for assessing and addressing the needs of children affected, and provide supports for individuals affected and their families.
 - 1.1.8 Continue to assist other ministries in developing a provincial mental health framework to address the mental health needs of children, including those in care (Children's Mental Health Initiative).
 - 1.1.9 Collaborate with other ministries to review and enhance integrated health services for students with special needs (Student Health Initiative).
 - 1.1.10 Collaborate with ASRA and other partners to promote policy relevant research on child, family and community issues.

| PERFORMANCE MEASURES | TARGETS |
|--|---------|
| A. Percentage of community-based child care centres that provide a developmentally appropriate environment for children. | 100% |
| B. Percentage of families accessing Ministry programs who indicate positive outcomes for their children. | 85% |
| Additional Performance Measures Under Development for 2003 | |
| ◆ Percentage of children and youth in Ministry programs meeting developmental milestones. | |

CORE BUSINESS 2. KEEPING CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES SAFE AND PROTECTED

Goal 2.1 Families will be safe, healthy, and able to promote children's development

Outcomes Children, youth and families at risk overcome their circumstances.
Children, youth and families are safe, healthy, and self-reliant.

Key Focus Promoting the ability of families to provide safe and nurturing environments for their children's development, and reducing the number of children who are physically taken into protective care.

Strategies

- 2.1.1 Develop and implement an Alberta Response Model which will engage community-based resources, with an emphasis on Family and Community Support Services to help families at-risk effectively care for their own children so they will not need protective services.
- 2.1.2 Build on and strengthen the range of community-based parent resources and resiliency supports for children, parents and families, particularly mentoring programs.
- 2.1.3 Continue to implement home visitation and parenting skills programs, particularly for parents of young children and families at-risk.
- 2.1.4 Continue to pilot and implement mobile community response teams to assist children, youth and families in crisis.
- 2.1.5 Increase stakeholder awareness about the *Protection Against Family Violence Act* and family violence prevention strategies.
- 2.1.6 Together with Health and Wellness and other partners, develop and implement treatment programs for children who witness family violence, victims of family violence, and perpetrators.
- 2.1.7 Continue to support the provision of women's shelters for victims of family violence.
- 2.1.8 Work with Justice and other partners in the reform of family law.

| PERFORMANCE MEASURES | TARGETS |
|--|--|
| C. Percentage of children reported to be at-risk who received supports through community resources and did not require child protection services. (Reporting will be based on the pilot sites for the first year of implementation.) | Caseload growth contained, and reduced by 5% |
| D. Percentage of families at-risk who indicate that the community services received helped preserve the family and improve family well being. | 75% |
| E. Percentage of families receiving family violence services who report these are having a positive impact. | 75% |

CORE BUSINESS 2. KEEPING CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES SAFE AND PROTECTED

Goal 2.2 Children in need will be protected and supported by permanent, nurturing relationships

Outcomes Children and youth in need are protected from abuse.
Children and youth in government care are placed in secure, life-long relationships and stay connected to family and community.

Key Focus Transforming child welfare and improving outcomes for children and families. Increasing the number of children in care who are reunited with their families or placed in permanent, nurturing relationships.

- Strategies**
- 2.2.1 Develop and implement an Alberta Response Model to transform child welfare. Re-engineer the case management model to improve decision making in support of children and families through family conferencing, and as a first priority, promote in-home supports for families, and the reunification of children with families whenever a child's safety and development can be assured.
 - 2.2.2 Provide training to support social workers in implementing an Alberta Response Model.
 - 2.2.3 Work with the foster care communities, including First Nations and Metis settlements to promote kinship care, and other living arrangements for children and youth who are in need of care.
 - 2.2.4 Expand agency support to include adoptions, and other initiatives to provide children and youth in care with permanent, nurturing homes, and life-long connections to family and community.
 - 2.2.5 Provide transitional supports such as mentoring programs, peer supports and extended networks that enable youth leaving child welfare to make a successful transition to independence.
 - 2.2.6 Complete the Review of the *Child Welfare Act*.
 - 2.2.7 Continue to provide preventive and treatment services for the protection of children and youth under the *Protection of Children Involved in Prostitution Act*.
 - 2.2.8 Review the role of the Children's Advocate in the context of other advocacy.
 - 2.2.9 Under the Social Care Facilities Review Committee, continue to conduct legislated reviews and investigations of social care facilities as required to ensure safe environments for children.

| PERFORMANCE MEASURES | TARGETS |
|--|-----------------|
| F. Percentage of children free of abuse or neglect while receiving child protection services. | 100% |
| G. Percentage of children and youth in care who were reunited with their families or placed in other stable, long-term, living arrangements. | Increase by 10% |
| H. Percentage of children and youth receiving services under the <i>Protection of Children Involved in Prostitution Act</i> who are reconnected to parents or other family care and support. | 70% |
| Additional Performance Measures Under Development for 2003 | |
| ◆ The Ministry is developing additional measures congruent with the National Child Welfare Outcome Indicators. | |

CORE BUSINESS 3. PROMOTING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Goal 3.1 The well-being and self-reliance of Aboriginal children, families and communities will be promoted, supported and comparable to that of other Albertans

Outcomes Aboriginal communities have the capacity to meet the needs of children, youth and families.
 There is a reduced percentage of Aboriginal children represented in the child welfare caseload.
 Aboriginal children, youth and families receive culturally appropriate services.

Key Focus Helping Aboriginal communities to develop the governance, organizational, accountability, and service delivery capacity to promote the care of their children, youth, and families.

- Strategies*
- 3.1.1 Continue to develop and implement a ministry specific plan for implementing the Aboriginal Policy Initiative, including attention to the needs of Aboriginal children not served through Metis Settlements or First Nations agreements.
 - 3.1.2 Work with the federal government, First Nations and other Aboriginal communities to promote development and delivery of early intervention strategies to improve the well-being of Aboriginal children, youth, and families.
 - 3.1.3 Negotiate and maintain child welfare agreements to support First Nations communities in delivering child protection services to children, youth and families on Reserves.
 - 3.1.4 Through negotiated framework agreements, promote joint planning and action between the Ministry and the Metis Nation of Alberta Association respecting equitable participation and involvement of Metis peoples in programs, policies and standards that affect Metis children.
 - 3.1.5 In collaboration with First Nations delegated child welfare agencies, develop an accountability and performance measurement framework.
 - 3.1.6 Continue to develop and implement a plan for the recruitment and retention of Aboriginal staff in the Ministry.

| PERFORMANCE MEASURES | TARGETS |
|---|-----------------|
| I. Percentage of Aboriginal children free from abuse and neglect while receiving child protection services. | 100% |
| J. Percentage of Aboriginal children in care who are reunited with their families or placed in other stable, long term, living arrangements. | Increase of 10% |
| K. Percentage of Aboriginal community partners reporting an increase in the community's ability to meet the needs of Aboriginal children, youth and families. | 70% |

CORE BUSINESS 3. PROMOTING HEALTHY COMMUNITIES FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES

Goal 3.2 Communities will have the capacity to plan and deliver services that promote the well being of children, youth and families

Outcomes Communities are responsive to the needs, values and cultures of children and their families.
 Children, youth and families have opportunities to participate in decisions that affect them.
 Albertans are aware of and involved in addressing issues faced by children, youth and families.

Key Focus Strengthening the capacity and self-reliance of communities to plan and deliver services to meet the needs of children, youth, and families.

- Strategies*
- 3.2.1 Promote the capacity of Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) and Regional Authorities to deliver preventive and early intervention programs for children and families, increase integration of programs and services, and promote strong partnerships.
 - 3.2.2 Increase the information available to help Family and Community Support Services Association (FCSSA), municipalities and Metis Settlements strengthen programming through the Annual Report Data Base, the Measures Project, and the FCSSA public information and awareness initiatives.
 - 3.2.3 Develop a provincial strategy for promoting the involvement of the private sector in addressing the needs of children, youth and families.
 - 3.2.4 Develop and maintain the Youth Advisory Panel involving youth in identifying and addressing issues facing young Albertans.
 - 3.2.5 Facilitate regular provincial and regional forums and public discussion to work towards the well-being of children, youth and families, including the Children's Forum and the Youth Forums.
 - 3.2.6 Continue leadership of the Great Kids Awards to showcase the achievements of children and youth from diverse backgrounds.
 - 3.2.7 Develop and maintain a public education campaign on the needs and achievements of Alberta's children, youth and families, and the work being done by the Ministry.

| PERFORMANCE MEASURES | TARGETS |
|---|---------|
| L. Percentage of FCSS boards reporting that programs and services are effective in meeting priority needs of the community. | 80% |
| M. Percentage of community stakeholders reporting an increase in the community's ability to meet the needs of children, youth and families. | 70% |

CROSS-MINISTRY AND OTHER PARTNERSHIPS

CROSS-MINISTRY INITIATIVES

Alberta Children and Youth Initiative

Children's Services is the lead ministry of the Alberta Children and Youth Initiative (ACYI). The ACYI supports the healthy development of Alberta's children and youth through the joint efforts of provincial government ministries, local boards and authorities, families and communities, including First Nations and Metis settlements. ACYI initiatives currently include the prevention and treatment of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, Early Childhood Development, Protection of Children Involved in Prostitution, Children's Mental Health Initiative, and the Student Health Initiative.

Aboriginal Policy Initiative

Alberta Children's Services is a partnering ministry of the Aboriginal Policy Initiative which works with Aboriginal people, federal and municipal governments, industry and other interested parties to improve the well-being and self-reliance of Aboriginal people, and to clarify federal, provincial and Aboriginal roles and responsibilities.

Health Sustainability Initiative and the Seniors Policy Initiative

Children's Services is also a partnering ministry of the Health Sustainability Initiative which will strengthen collaboration and coordination of initiatives to improve the health and wellness of Albertans, and the sustainability of the health care system now and in the future. This will include improved prevention initiatives, service delivery, and public understanding about the health system. The Ministry also supports the Seniors Policy Initiative.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL INITIATIVES

The Ministry works with municipal, federal, provincial and territorial governments to advance Alberta's position on key children and youth initiatives such as:

- ◆ Working with municipalities to strengthen Family and Community Support Services.
- ◆ Promoting a national vision of childhood well-being through the National Children's Agenda.
- ◆ Supporting families and communities through the Early Childhood Development initiative.
- ◆ Promoting leadership in the work of the Prairie Northern Pacific Partnership on Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.
- ◆ Providing leadership to provincial/territorial directors of child care on issues that promote optimal child development.
- ◆ Providing leadership on federal/provincial/ territorial initiatives to reform and improve child welfare.
- ◆ Providing leadership on national initiatives for the protection of children and youth involved in prostitution between the social service and justice sectors.
- ◆ Working with Human Resources and Employment and our intergovernmental partners to implement and monitor the National Child Benefit Initiative in Alberta, and to improve supports for children with disabilities and their families.

ALL ALBERTANS: THE CHILDREN'S FORUM

In October, the Ministry held the second provincial Children's Forum, and over 1,000 Albertans united for children and youth. The general public, community-based organizations, the private sector, government, and individuals delivering services shared their expertise and identified key areas for improving services to children and their families. These included:

- ◆ Promoting parenting programs and supports.
- ◆ Supporting preventative programs to foster healthy beginnings for children, quality care, and optimal childhood development.
- ◆ Empowering youth to make healthy choices for themselves.
- ◆ Reuniting children and youth with their families as a priority, and supporting adolescents in making a transition to independent living.
- ◆ Promoting the knowledge, wellness and professionalism of people caring for children.

The Ministry will continue to address the recommendations from the Children's Forum through future business plans, and will continue to act on priority areas as part of government's commitment to help families and communities promote the well-being of Alberta's children, youth and families.

MINISTRY-WIDE CORPORATE STRATEGIES

The Ministry's corporate strategies support goal achievement across all three core business areas. Children's Services is a learning organization committed to staff development, strengthening the infrastructure required to deliver services, and promoting the cost effective management of resources to improve outcomes for children, youth, and families. Children's Services will:

1. Undertake policy research to ensure that up to date information is available to support and enhance decision making for planning, policies, programs, and service delivery.
2. Develop region-specific and ministry-wide environmental scanning to improve business planning.
3. Strengthen the accountability framework, including the planning process with regional authorities.
4. Develop a strategy to identify and share best practices across the province.
5. Co-ordinate and conduct program evaluations to continuously improve programs and services for children and their families.
6. Develop ministry-wide performance measures and an integrated performance measurement system to support continuous improvement and reporting of results.
7. Develop a strategy to attract, retain, develop and promote staff skills across the ministry in keeping with government's corporate human resource development strategy.
8. Implement a plan to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Ministry's Information and Communications Technology expenditures. This will include working with Child and Family Services Authorities to improve systems that enable detailed child welfare cost / benefit information for better accountability.
9. Review the shared services support for regional authorities, and implement changes to increase efficiency and cost effectiveness.
10. Prepare a Business Resumption Plan to respond to any emergencies that may arise.
11. Undertake and complete the designated Regulatory Reviews for 2002-05.

Expense by Core Business

(thousands of dollars)

| | Comparable 2000-01 Actual | Comparable 2001-02 Budget | Comparable 2001-02 Forecast | 2002-03 Estimates | 2003-04 Target | 2004-05 Target |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| EXPENSE | | | | | | |
| Core Business | | | | | | |
| Promoting the development and well-being of children, youth and families | 214,257 | 231,327 | 233,976 | 236,368 | 237,717 | 237,717 |
| Keeping children, youth and families safe and protected | 308,363 | 326,125 | 345,787 | 338,445 | 339,407 | 339,407 |
| Promoting healthy communities for children, youth and families | 64,541 | 90,146 | 68,270 | 100,586 | 101,257 | 101,257 |
| MINISTRY EXPENSE | 587,161 | 647,598 | 648,033 | 675,399 | 678,381 | 678,381 |

Ministry Statement of Operations

(thousands of dollars)

| | Comparable 2000-01 Actual | Comparable 2001-02 Budget | Comparable 2001-02 Forecast | 2002-03 Estimates | 2003-04 Target | 2004-05 Target |
|--|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| REVENUE | | | | | | |
| Internal Governmental Transfers | 1,200 | 1,200 | 1,200 | 25,000 | 25,000 | 25,000 |
| Transfers from Government of Canada | 113,527 | 111,141 | 123,386 | 136,615 | 146,609 | 146,406 |
| Other Revenue | 9,547 | 8,996 | 11,155 | 11,870 | 12,340 | 12,340 |
| MINISTRY REVENUE | 124,274 | 121,337 | 135,741 | 173,485 | 183,949 | 183,746 |
| EXPENSE | | | | | | |
| Program | | | | | | |
| Ministry Support Services | 13,926 | 15,989 | 15,700 | 13,622 | 13,622 | 13,622 |
| Services to Children and Families: | | | | | | |
| Program Support Services | 31,246 | 30,192 | 29,962 | 31,851 | 31,851 | 31,851 |
| Child Welfare | 331,724 | 343,034 | 369,622 | 365,589 | 366,573 | 366,573 |
| Services to Children with Disabilities | 55,849 | 55,106 | 61,400 | 62,069 | 62,576 | 62,576 |
| Child Care | 63,875 | 67,656 | 59,100 | 60,276 | 60,276 | 60,276 |
| Early Intervention | 26,816 | 56,172 | 35,969 | 51,230 | 52,721 | 52,721 |
| Prevention of Family Violence | 12,277 | 13,629 | 12,800 | 11,161 | 11,161 | 11,161 |
| Protection of Children involved in Prostitution | 3,061 | 5,600 | 4,800 | 5,622 | 5,622 | 5,622 |
| Child and Family Services Authorities Governance | 2,051 | 3,030 | 2,250 | 2,343 | 2,343 | 2,343 |
| Family and Community Support: | | | | | | |
| Family and Community Support Services | 37,864 | 42,641 | 42,215 | 57,476 | 57,476 | 57,476 |
| Community Capacity Building | 7,360 | 13,799 | 11,023 | 12,660 | 12,660 | 12,660 |
| Valuation Adjustments and Other Provisions | 1,112 | 750 | 3,192 | 1,500 | 1,500 | 1,500 |
| MINISTRY EXPENSE | 587,161 | 647,598 | 648,033 | 675,399 | 678,381 | 678,381 |
| Gain (Loss) on Disposal of Capital Assets | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| NET OPERATING RESULT | (462,887) | (526,261) | (512,292) | (501,914) | (494,432) | (494,635) |

Consolidated Net Operating Result

(thousands of dollars)

| | Comparable 2000-01 Actual | Comparable 2001-02 Budget | Comparable 2001-02 Forecast | 2002-03 Estimates | 2003-04 Target | 2004-05 Target |
|---|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Ministry Revenue | 124,274 | 121,337 | 135,741 | 173,485 | 183,949 | 183,746 |
| <i>Inter-ministry consolidation adjustments</i> | (1,430) | (1,200) | (1,430) | (25,230) | (25,230) | (25,230) |
| Consolidated Revenue | 122,844 | 120,137 | 134,311 | 148,255 | 158,719 | 158,516 |
| Ministry Program Expense | 587,161 | 647,598 | 648,033 | 675,399 | 678,381 | 678,381 |
| <i>Inter-ministry consolidation adjustments</i> | (230) | - | (230) | (230) | (230) | (230) |
| Consolidated Program Expense | 586,931 | 647,598 | 647,803 | 675,169 | 678,151 | 678,151 |
| Gain (Loss) on Disposal of Capital Assets | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| CONSOLIDATED NET OPERATING RESULT | (464,087) | (527,461) | (513,492) | (526,914) | (519,432) | (519,635) |