

BUDGET 2020

GOVERNMENT OF ALBERTA | 2020-23

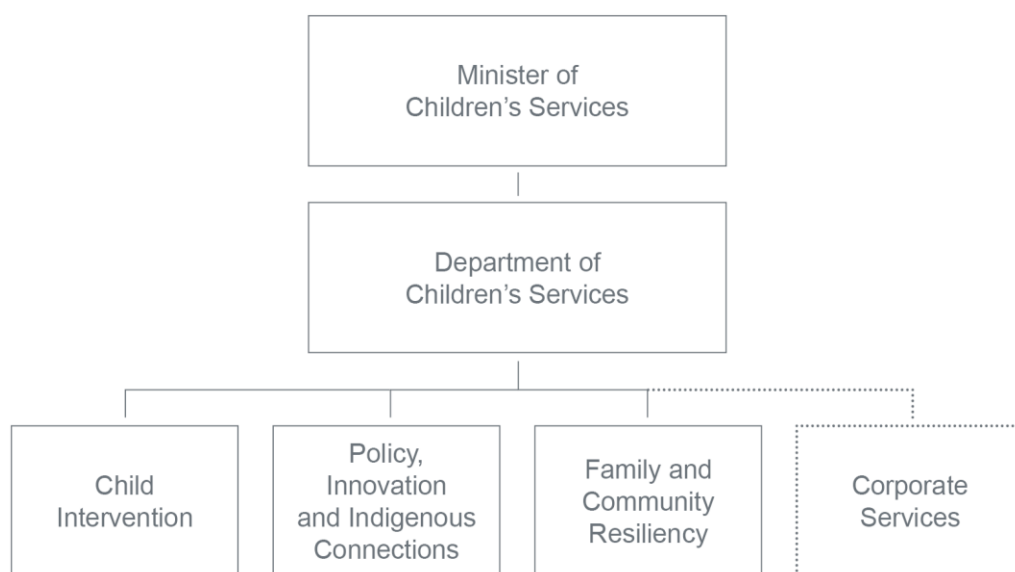
Ministry Business Plan Children's Services

Children’s Services

Business Plan 2020–23

Ministry Mandate and Structure

The ministry is responsible for a continuum of supports and services for children, youth and families from early childhood programs, to prevention and early intervention supports, to intervention services, including kinship and foster care, to adoption and post-intervention services. The range of programs and services provides a shared focus on the safety and well-being of children and youth.



A more detailed description of Children’s Services and its programs and initiatives is available at: <https://www.alberta.ca/childrens-services>.

The Ministry of Children’s Services is committed to the ongoing review of programs and services to ensure that the best possible outcomes are being achieved for Albertans. As part of this ongoing review, the ministry is committed to reducing red tape to make life easier for hard-working Albertans and businesses. This includes reducing regulatory burden and unnecessary processes to encourage economic growth and job creation; and make Alberta one of the freest and fastest moving economies in the world. The ministry is committed to working towards achieving the one-third reduction in the number of regulatory requirements in its statutes, regulations, policies and forms by 2023.

Ministry Outcomes

- Children and youth are protected
- The growth and development of children are supported through accessible, affordable and quality child care
- The well-being, resiliency and cultural connections of children, youth and families are nurtured and enhanced

Outcome 1

What We Want To Achieve

Children and youth are protected

The ministry is strengthening the child intervention system to ensure the healthy development of children, youth and families and ultimately reducing the total number of children in care. The ministry works with Indigenous leaders, communities, families and other partners to reduce the over-representation of Indigenous children and youth receiving services. By nurturing connections to their families, culture, spirituality and communities, the emotional well-being of children and youth is sustained.

Key Objectives

- 1.1 Improve child intervention practices by implementing safety-oriented, evidence-based, culturally appropriate approaches and models, which include the phased implementation of an improved intake process, which provides specific tools to enhance the assessment of risk and safety.
- 1.2 Support children in care to develop long-term, nurturing relationships by increasing their connections to family, significant persons and Indigenous communities.
- 1.3 Improve available services for young adults transitioning out of the child intervention system.
- 1.4 Work in partnership with ministries and communities to combat human trafficking, child exploitation and domestic violence; this includes implementing a new partnership and funding model for Child Advocacy Centres.
- 1.5 Review the Adoptions program with the intent of reducing red tape and making the processes more efficient and timely for families.
- 1.6 Enhance existing technologies, such as Child Intervention Case Information Online, to support greater efficiency for front line caseload management through an Enterprise Content Management (ECM) system.

Initiatives Supporting Key Objectives

- In 2020-21, \$602.0 million is allocated to children and youth in care who receive services under the care of the Director, with a focus on creating safety and well-being and on enhancing parental capacity, family functioning and wellness.
- In 2020-21, \$94.0 million is allocated for families receiving services to support children and youth remaining safely in their family home.
- In 2020-21, \$67.0 million is allocated to supports for permanency to provide financial support to families who adopt or obtain private guardianship of a child in permanent care.

Performance Metrics

1.a Performance Measure: Percentage of cases opening to Child Intervention without involvement in the last year *(This percentage includes children and youth who remain at home as well as those in care. Data for these performance measures are available from a live dataset and are subject to change.)*

In 2018-19, 85 per cent of Indigenous children and youth who had a new file opened had no involvement with Child Intervention in the last year.

In 2018-19, 89 per cent of Non-Indigenous children and youth who had a new file opened had no involvement with Child Intervention in the last year.

TARGETS Indigenous Non-Indigenous

2020-21:	85%	90%
2021-22:	85%	90%
2022-23:	86%	91%

1.b Performance Measure: Percentage of children in-care placed in family-based care *(Family-based care includes Parental Care, Kinship Care, Foster Care and Permanency Placements.)*

In 2018-19, 85 per cent of Indigenous children in-care were placed in family-based care.

In 2018-19, 84 per cent of Non-Indigenous children in-care were placed in family-based care.

TARGETS Indigenous Non-Indigenous

2020-21:	86%	86%
2021-22:	87%	87%
2022-23:	87%	87%

1.c Performance Indicator: Children receiving Child Intervention services as a percentage of the child population in Alberta *(Data on the child population in Alberta is from Statistics Canada Table 17-10-0005-01: Population estimates on July 1st, by age and sex. This estimate is from a live source and results are subject to change year over year.)*

	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Number of children receiving Child Intervention services	15,636	14,834	15,564	15,624	16,123
Children in Alberta	900,381	919,922	938,410	948,261 ¹	958,367 ¹
Percentage	1.7%	1.6%	1.7%	1.6%	1.7%

¹ These values have been revised to incorporate the updated numbers in the Statistics Canada Table 17-10-0005-01.

1.d Performance Indicator: Percentage of Indigenous children in kinship or foster care who are placed with Indigenous families

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

Outcome 2

What We Want To Achieve

The growth and development of children are supported through accessible, affordable and quality child care

Children, youth and families are supported to engage fully in their communities, which includes parents' ability to pursue post-secondary education and take part in the workforce. The ministry is committed to maintaining access to affordable, quality child care programs, and promoting culturally appropriate community-based early childhood services, parenting resources and supports.

Key Objectives

- 2.1 Improve access to child care by supporting initiatives that encourage affordability and quality in the child care system.
- 2.2 Create digital opportunities for families to access information and benefits related to child care more easily and efficiently.
- 2.3 Enhance and promote diversity in licensed and approved child care services, including supports that are culturally inclusive and for children with unique needs.
- 2.4 Review the *Child Care Licensing Act* with the intent of reducing red tape, supporting choice for parents, and maintaining focus on the safety and well-being of children.

Initiatives Supporting Key Objectives

- In 2020-21, \$180.0 million is allocated to the Child Care Subsidy program to provide subsidies to low-income families with children who need licensed or approved child care services.
- In 2020-21, \$123.0 million is allocated to provide funding for the certification of child care staff based on educational qualifications; support the recruitment and retention of qualified and educated staff through professional development and tiered wage top ups; and the licensing, support and monitoring of child care programs under the *Child Care Licensing Act*.
- In 2020-21, \$10.0 million is allocated to provide specialized child care funding and support to families and licensed child care programs so that children with unique needs have access to quality child care environments that meet their needs.

Performance Metrics

- 2.a Performance Measure: Percentage change in the number of licensed and approved child care spaces** *(The current investment through federal transfers, which provided incentives for space creation, will be renegotiated by 2020-21. Therefore, without clarity on future federal investments, it is projected that the rate of increase of child care spaces will return to normal year-over-year growth, which is influenced through a combination of market forces and government supports.)*

In 2018-19, there was a 5 per cent increase in the number of licensed and approved child care spaces.

TARGETS

2020-21:	4%
2021-22:	3%
2022-23:	3%

2.b Performance Indicator: Licensed and approved child care spaces *(The number of spaces available reflects March data – a point-in-time count.)*

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Number of spaces available	105,310	109,482	116,714	124,824	131,624
Per cent increase year over year	5.8%	4.0%	6.6%	6.9%	5.4%

2.c Performance Indicator: Licensed and approved child care enrollment *(The enrollment reflects March data – a point-in-time count.)*

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Number of children enrolled	86,280	88,929	93,132	100,929	105,800
Per cent of total enrollment	81.9%	81.2%	79.8%	80.9%	80.4%

2.d Performance Indicator: Average annual Child Care Subsidy caseload *(The subsidy caseload is an average over 12 months of subsidies paid to families.)*

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Average annual Child Care Subsidy caseload	23,869	24,509	25,114	27,031	28,259

Outcome 3

What We Want To Achieve

The well-being, resiliency and cultural connections of children, youth and families are nurtured and enhanced

Children, youth and families are supported through a continuum of government and community-based prevention and early intervention services that support the well-being of children and youth; develop and strengthen caregiver knowledge, capacity and skills; promote the development of social connections and family supports; and enhance connections with Indigenous communities. The ministry works in partnership with other ministries to break down barriers and address challenges vulnerable children and youth may encounter such as addiction, mental illness, domestic violence, and sexual exploitation.

Key Objectives

- 3.1 Implement new Family Resource Networks, which will provide equitable access to a range of prevention and early intervention supports for children and youth up to age 18 and their families, including providing supports to enhance parenting skills and knowledge in their home environment.
- 3.2 Develop strategies to support safe, healthy and resilient children and families, including mentoring opportunities for children and youth who have experienced trauma.
- 3.3 Support the successful transition for youth out of care into adulthood, focusing on educational attainment, career exploration and employment readiness.
- 3.4 Collaborate with Indigenous communities, leaders and partners to strengthen relationships and develop strategies to support Indigenous children, youth and families while ensuring all staff and service delivery partners have enhanced Indigenous cultural awareness.

3.5 Work with ministries to increase access to supports for Indigenous families who have children with disabilities.

Initiatives Supporting Key Objectives

- In 2020-21, \$30.0 million is allocated to support families and mitigate the need for child intervention services through early intervention services with a continuum of supports for children and families through Family Resource Networks and Indigenous led prevention and early intervention programming.
- In 2020-21, \$39.0 million is allocated to community-based prevention and Indigenous connections programs that support communities to build capacity in prevention and early intervention activities and strengthen relationships with Indigenous communities to develop strong collaborative partnerships.
- In 2020-21, \$13.0 million is allocated to support vulnerable youth transitioning to adulthood, who have previous or current child intervention involvement, through mentoring support and through the Advancing Futures program.

Performance Metrics

3.a Performance Measure: Percentage of youth receiving supports from the Advancing Futures program who successfully complete their planned studies

In 2018-19, 85 per cent of youth receiving supports from the Advancing Futures program successfully completed their planned studies.

TARGETS

2020-21:	85%
2021-22:	86%
2022-23:	86%

3.b Performance Indicator: Percentage of young adults who transition out of Child Intervention at age 18 and access additional supports through Support and Financial Assistance Agreements

	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Indigenous	87%	87%	92%	90%	90%
Non-Indigenous	86%	87%	90%	90%	91%

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

(thousands of dollars)

	Comparable			2020-21 Estimate	2021-22 Target	2022-23 Target
	2018-19 Actual	2019-20 Budget	2019-20 Forecast			
REVENUE						
Services to First Nations Reserves	37,107	45,678	45,678	45,678	45,678	45,678
Other Federal Transfers	73,922	72,593	72,593	72,593	72,593	72,593
Premiums Fees and Licenses	138	50	50	50	50	50
Other Revenue	7,842	5,730	5,730	5,730	5,730	5,730
Consolidated Total	119,009	124,051	124,051	124,051	124,051	124,051
EXPENSE						
Ministry Support Services	6,502	6,591	6,242	6,086	6,086	6,086
Child Intervention	803,434	871,376	852,657	867,069	874,462	876,661
Child Care	408,246	423,794	422,704	393,986	408,686	425,886
Early Intervention Services for Children and Youth	107,860	108,413	101,936	95,780	95,780	95,780
Policy, Innovation and Indigenous Connections	10,587	9,002	9,130	9,715	9,715	9,715
Alberta Child Benefit	169,064	179,000	179,000	45,500	-	-
Alberta Child and Family Benefit	-	-	-	230,000	310,000	310,000
Ministry Total	1,505,693	1,598,176	1,571,669	1,648,136	1,704,729	1,724,128
Inter-Ministry Consolidations	(13,833)	(12,000)	(12,000)	(12,000)	(12,000)	(12,000)
Consolidated Total	1,491,860	1,586,176	1,559,669	1,636,136	1,692,729	1,712,128
Net Operating Result	(1,372,851)	(1,462,125)	(1,435,618)	(1,512,085)	(1,568,678)	(1,588,077)
CAPITAL INVESTMENT						
Child Intervention	141	84	84	483	101	-
Consolidated Total	141	84	84	483	101	-