

1. WAIT TIMES

DID YOU KNOW

DID YOU KNOW THAT THE AVERAGE WAIT FOR ACCESS TO THE EARLY INTERVENTION THERAPIES PROGRAM IS MORE THAN 6 MONTHS?

- Investing in early intervention services positively changes the trajectory of the lives of BC children and families, and research has demonstrated that spending money on such programs and services early in a child's life actually saves government money over the long run (i.e. - there is a positive return on investment).
- The Ministry of Children and Family Development's, such as the Early Intervention Therapies program, are an integral part of an overall coordinated system of care yet severely under-resourced when compared to similar services in acute care and for adults.



RECOMMENDATION:

Immediate increase in base contract funding for the agencies delivering the Early Intervention Therapies program.

QUESTION FOR BC POLITICAL PARTIES:

If elected, will your party increase base contract funding for the agencies delivering the Early Intervention Therapies program for children and youth with support needs?



BCACDI is a provincial non-profit organization, founded in 1996, which provides advocacy and opportunities for collaboration to member agencies throughout British Columbia. Member agencies are non-profit, accredited, and provide diagnostic, developmental, intervention and support services for children and youth with special needs and their families.

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2. INCLUSION IN CHILD CARE

DID YOU KNOW

DID YOU KNOW THAT THE AVERAGE WAIT TIME FOR ACCESS TO EXTRA STAFFING SUPPORT FOR FAMILIES WITH COMPLEX CHILDREN AND YOUTH TRYING TO ACCESS CHILD CARE IS MORE THAN 9 MONTHS?

- BCACDI is supportive of efforts to improve childcare access to BC families, but only if the efforts are inclusive of ALL families, such as those with children and youth with support needs. Investments in new space creation need to be matched with investments in the programs that help families with children and youth with support needs access these new spaces.
- Childcare accessibility is a critical part of an overall economic recovery and stimulation plan.

Children and youth with support needs are being turned away from spaces at childcare facilities and in many cases are being 'kicked out' of care, preventing parents from being able to participate in the workforce due to having to stay home to care for their children.

- Childcare spaces that are not effectively resourced and not inclusive to children and youth with support needs is a form of systemic discrimination.



RECOMMENDATION:

Increase base contract funding for the agencies delivering the Supported Child Development Program, and increase supports for programs supporting access to childcare for Indigenous children and youth. Let's ensure that childcare spaces in BC are accessible to all children and families.

QUESTION FOR BC POLITICAL PARTIES:

If elected, will your party increase base contract funding for the Supported Child Development and Aboriginal Supported Child Development programs?





3. MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

DID YOU KNOW

DID YOU KNOW THAT MANY OF THE CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES RECEIVING EARLY INTERVENTION OR SCHOOL AGE THERAPY SERVICES FOR THEIR FUNCTION, MOBILITY, AND COMMUNICATION CHALLENGES ALSO FACE MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGES AS WELL?

- There is a significant need for improved infant and youth mental health services in BC as part of an overall coordinated system of care, yet services are fragmented and provided by multiple funders and organizations.
- The Ministry of Children and Family Development collaborated with the BC Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions to implement pilots across BC enhancing infant and youth mental health services in communities through [BC's Pathway to Hope](#).



RECOMMENDATION:

Commit to expanding these pilots to all community-based organizations providing early intervention therapies and school age therapy services.

QUESTION FOR BC POLITICAL PARTIES:

If elected, will your party continue to support the expansion of community based infant, child and youth mental health services in BC?



4. DIAGNOSTIC WAIT TIMES

DID YOU KNOW

DID YOU KNOW THAT SOME SERVICES AND SUPPORTS IN BC CAN ONLY BE ACCESSED ONCE A CHILD OR YOUTH HAS HAD A DIAGNOSIS, YET THERE ARE LENGTHY WAIT TIMES FOR THE ASSESSMENTS REQUIRED TO GET A DIAGNOSIS?

- There are some programs and funding sources for intervention services that require a Diagnosis (e.g. – Autism Spectrum Disorder via the BC Autism Assessment Network).
- Lengthy wait times for diagnosis are preventing families from accessing vital early intervention services that will positively change the trajectory for their child and save government resources via the positive return on investment.
- Families with financial resources can purchase assessments through the private sector, resulting in two-tiered access to the funding for intervention services.



RECOMMENDATION:

Significant increase in the public health system's assessment services (e.g. - for Autism, FASD) to decrease wait times for families.

QUESTION FOR BC POLITICAL PARTIES:

If elected, will your party invest in diagnostic services for children and youth to decrease the wait times and make the process more equitable for BC families?



5. TRANSITIONS

DID YOU KNOW

DID YOU KNOW THAT WHEN A CHILD TRANSITIONS TO KINDERGARTEN AND WHEN YOUTH TRANSITION TO ADULT SERVICES THERE IS TYPICALLY A LACK OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN SERVICE PROVIDERS AND SERVICES DUE TO DIFFERENT FUNDING SOURCES AND SUPPORT SYSTEMS?

- For the majority of children entering kindergarten, they are forced to switch therapists and the level of support they receive decreases in intensity. This disruption comes at a time when the transition to school increases the need for effective and stable services and supports.
- Youth being supported by services often see their supports stop altogether once they reach the age of 19, and they are left to seek new providers and supports from the adult system. Again, this disruption occurs during a major life transition, the very time it is critical to have a consistent and stable support system.



RECOMMENDATION:

Extend early intervention therapies to 8 years of age and youth services to 24 years of age to provide several years where services overlap to allow for the communication and planning required to effectively support children and youth during these critical transition periods.

QUESTION FOR BC POLITICAL PARTIES:

If elected, will your party commit to extending eligibility of early intervention programs and youth services so that there are enhanced services and supports during the transition to Kindergarten and from youth to adult services?

