



THE VOICE OF CHILD

DEVELOPMENT AND THERAPY

SERVICES IN BC



BCACDI
The BC Association for Child Development and Intervention





“BCACDI has been an invaluable resource to me as a leader of an agency providing child development and early intervention services. Membership is an excellent way to stay updated on the latest developments in the field, including new practice models and ways to improve services. BCACDI also provides access to new research and allows members to participate in exciting research projects. In addition, I also appreciate the connections and collaboration with government representatives, who are creating and implementing the policies that determine how our sector operates and receives funding. BCACDI gives a collective voice to members to advocate for services for children and families.”

— *Dominic Rockall,
Nanaimo CDC ED*

CHANGING THE FUTURE, ONE CHILD AT A TIME

The BC Association for Child Development and Intervention (BCACDI) was established to ensure every child or youth who requires extra support has timely access to the targeted services to help them achieve their full potential. Early intervention and support for children and youth are critical for better health outcomes, improved school performance and healthier, more fulfilling adult lives. We know that every dollar invested in early intervention saves the broader community \$10 by reducing future health-related costs and enhancing active participation in society as a whole. This is why BCACDI’s work matters to everyone.

Made up of 35 member agencies from BC and the Yukon, the BCACDI community provides child development and therapy services to children and youth with special needs and their families. These include, but are not limited to, the Ministry of Children and Family Development’s (MCFD) Early Intervention Therapies Program, Infant Development Program, Supported Child Development, School Age Therapy Program and services for children and youth with Autism Spectrum Disorder. These agencies assist more than 15,000 clients across BC through their highly and specifically skilled teams, helping them manage their health and overcome developmental and social barriers.

VALUE OF MEMBERSHIP

Fundamentally, the association's mission is to:

- Advocate for quality child development and therapy services that are inclusive and accessible to all children and families in BC and the Yukon.
- Provide a forum for communication, information sharing, professional development and problem-solving.



This mission manifests in several key advantages for our members:

Professional Collaboration – BCACDI's member agencies believe in a proactive, cohesive advocacy approach to addressing the issues and challenges impacting service delivery to children and youth with support needs. Through membership, agencies network, share and learn from one another to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery and agency operations.

- **Networking** – BCACDI provides networking opportunities for member agencies. Executive Directors (EDs) can meet with their peers and attend member meetings to discuss particular topics and initiatives, hear guest speakers and share strategies for success. Government representatives attend with the specific intent of eliciting critical sector perspectives on existing and considered policies.
 - **Continuing Education** – Workshops for EDs providing specific education or training on relevant topics (e.g. Leader Wellness, Supporting Staff Mental Health, Compassionate Leadership)
 - **Exclusive Member Intranet** – A proprietary forum where all meeting and workshop notes are accessible and where EDs can share resources and pose questions to their peers for timely feedback.
 - **Sub-committee Engagement** BCACDI invites sub-sectors of membership to discuss specific topics (e.g. an autism sub-committee for agencies offering autism-specific programming).

- **Mentorship Opportunities** – Board Member EDs reach out to new member EDs to help transition them to the organization. In addition, an informal “Friend Match” program has experienced EDs mentoring and providing support to newer EDs when requested.
- **Staff Recruitment and Retention** – BCACDI member agencies share staff recruitment and retention strategies on how to best support staff through education, training and career opportunities. Clinical leaders regularly connect to share which training and workshops have proven most beneficial to their teams. In addition, BCACDI member agencies collaborate on flexible and innovative recruitment and retention solutions for staffing. For example, larger member agencies with a more flexible staffing complement will often provide support to smaller agencies in more rural and remote areas that have challenges with recruitment.
- **Student Supervision** – BCACDI recognizes the importance of providing a quality learning experience for those professions and occupations that work in the early years sector. Our member agencies are staffed with highly experienced and knowledgeable clinicians who provide clinical learning opportunities for students in training, thus, helping the next generation of early years professionals enter the sector ready to support children and youth.



“BCACDI creates a community of sector leaders that fosters collaboration, innovation, standardization, capacity building across the sector and a shared commitment to quality and client-centred services..”

*— Joshua Myers MSW, RSW
Executive Director
BC Centre for Ability*

Research and Education – BCACDI is a leader in researching and identifying best practices that serve children and youth with support needs. We provide member agencies with access to continuing education opportunities, professional development and mentoring opportunities where we share our findings and expertise to keep agency members abreast of the latest findings and methods of care and intervention.

RESEARCH PROJECTS

- **Tapping into Tech** – BCACDI is the co-lead investigator on this current study exploring how community voices can leverage technology to address ECD inequities for BC disabled and medically complex children and families. The project focused on children with early health and development issues in BC’s northern, Indigenous and rural communities. This two-year participatory project has the potential to have a lasting impact on BC’s ECD system through the improved use of communication and information technologies.

“Membership has created a community of practice among the BCACDI member agencies. The sharing of information and the mentoring of Executive Directors, as well as the inclusion of Board members, has built a solid ‘force for good’ with forward movement.”

*— Dr. Rhonda Nelson
Executive Director
Starbright CDC*

“As the leader of a CDC in a rural area, I rely on the network BCACDI has created. In addition to facilitating being able to reach out to colleagues across the province for support, the professional development organized by BCACDI for both leadership and CDC service providers is an essential component of staying current, as is the advocacy that enables us to respond to changing trends in the sector.”

*— Lynn Mathiesen,
ED of the Quesnel Child
Development Centre:*

- **Structural Barriers to the Implementation of Culturally Safe, Trauma-Informed Practice** – As co-investigator, BCACDI Investigated the structural barriers that impact the service delivery of culturally safe, trauma-informed care. Results were shared with members and the government.



- **Association Data Project** – BCACDI led this research effort, working with member agencies to collect and leverage data to determine if access to services was achieved efficiently and to standardize definitions for measuring wait times. These findings continue to inform advocacy efforts and new investment.
- **Child Health BC Project** – BCACDI helped recruit families and agencies to participate in the Bright Coaching research project - a developmental coaching system to empower families or preschoolers with suspected developmental delays.

EDUCATION

- **Early Years Conference** – BCACDI serves on the planning committee for this seminal conference for early childhood educators and child development experts. It takes place every two years with over 500 participants from around the world, and our involvement ensures topics of importance to our members are on the conference agenda.

- **Pediatric Update Symposium**
– BCACDI leads the planning for this symposium for rehabilitation professionals (occupational therapists, physiotherapists, speech-language pathologists) to ensure our member agencies’ education and training concerns are addressed.
- **Training Plan Project** – This is an MCFD-funded effort to create a training plan for those providing front-line services in the areas of infant, child and youth development. The intent is to develop competencies in the following areas: Indigenous cultural competency, the legacy of colonization and intergenerational trauma impacts, the link between adverse childhood experiences on brain development, and the skills to facilitate a trauma-informed practice.
- **Cultural Safety Process** – A newly-launched project to provide EDs with training to adopt Cultural Safety Practices at their centres.
- **Specialized Sitter Training** – Online training module provides individuals with the knowledge and skills to supervise (babysit) children and youth with special needs.
- **Infant and Early Mental Health Promotion (IEMHP)** – IEMHP operates from Toronto’s Hospital for Sick Children and promotes the development of infants (0-3 years) through education, information dissemination, networking and advocacy. BCACDI members have discounted access to IEMHP resources and training.

Government and Organizational Alliances – With a dedicated Provincial Advocate, BCACDI is well-positioned to raise and keep the issues and priorities of member agencies at the forefront of government agendas ensuring funding and support for children and youth with developmental support needs. There is power in numbers - and a collective voice is louder.

BCACDI is actively involved in various governmental groups and councils, as well as other provincial organizations, providing sector feedback and advocacy on policies and initiatives impacting early childhood development and intervention, including:

- **Collaborative Contracting Reference Group (CCRG)**
- **Community Social Services Sector Reference Resource Group (CSSRRG)**



- **BC Healthy Child Development Alliance**
- **First Call Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition**
- **Kids Can't Wait Leadership Committee**

BCACDI actively engages with other like-minded organizations in BC (e.g., BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, Federation of Community Social Services of BC, Inclusion BC, Family Support Institute) and across Canada (e.g., Empowered Kids Ontario) to explore our programs and services, highlighting how BCACDI provides a unique forum for collaboration and knowledge-sharing.



MEMBERSHIP OPTIONS

FULL MEMBERSHIP is available to non-profit organizations incorporated under the Society Act, whose primary purpose is to provide treatment and developmental services to children who require extra support.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP is available to non profit societies, incorporated under the Society Act.

**Membership is granted based on the sole discretion of BCACDI's Board of Directors. All member agencies' purposes and objectives must align with BCACDI's constitution.*

