



**BCACDI**  
The BC Association for Child Development and Intervention

## Investment in Early Intervention Services

Canada needs public policy that prioritizes young children and families, supports their development, stimulates the creation of supportive environments and helps strengthen the relationships that protect children from adversity –

**Canadian Paediatric Society**

25% and 30% of Canadian children do not arrive at kindergarten meeting all of the developmental benchmarks they need to thrive both now and into the future – **UBC Human Early Learning Project**

Early interventions targeted toward disadvantaged children have much higher returns than later interventions –

**James Heckmann, Noble Laureate Economist**

The returns to society for each dollar invested in this sector extend from \$1.80 to \$17.07 – **Rand Corporation**

The evidence is clear: There is a positive return on investment for resources directed towards early intervention programs. However, these programs and services are challenging to access for families due to lengthy waitlists. For example, the average wait time to access early intervention Speech Language Pathology services in BC is 8 months, with some families having to wait more than a year for service. Demand continues to outpace resources, and simply maintaining the status quo means:

- Fewer children will be served
- More children will be waiting for service, and families will be waiting longer

### **Solution**

1. Strengthen the investments made in services for children and youth with special needs to take advantage of the positive return on investment
2. Provide agencies with long term contracts to allow for effective planning to meet community needs
3. Indexed annual increases so agencies can meet increased operating costs without negatively impacting their ability to deliver service

### **Results**

BC's vulnerable children and families will have a system of services and supports they can access in a timely manner, resulting in improved health outcomes and a positive return on investment for Government and society. Timely access to such supports corresponds with BC's Early Years Strategy goal of access – Helping ensure early years programs and services are available to children who need them ([BCEarlyYearsStrategy](#))

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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