

Danielle Larivee CS Minister Correspondence Re: Post Budget Teleconference

Correspondence to ALIGN from Danielle Larivee CS Minister April 4, 2018

Thank you to everyone who joined our post-budget teleconference. For those of you who couldn't make it, I'm pleased to be able to provide the following summary of the conversation. You can also access an audio recording of my remarks by clicking [here](#).

Children's Services first year as a standalone ministry was filled with challenging, exciting work and I am very proud of what we have been able to achieve. Budget 2018 supports our ongoing focus to improve the lives of young people and their families. Every child, regardless of whose care they are in, deserves to grow up in a safe, loving, nurturing environment.

In Alberta, we continue to see significant growth in the number of children and youth, which directly impacts many of the frontline services and supports Children's Services provides to children and families. Our government is committed to protecting vital supports for children, youth and families by investing in frontline services to ensure they have opportunities to thrive and reach their full potential.

I am pleased to have this opportunity to share details on investments our government is committing to Children's Services in Budget 2018.

Budget 2018 makes an additional investment of **\$144 million** for total funding of **\$1.35 billion** in Children's Services. In most cases funding increases are targeted to address caseload and the greater complexity of needs presented by the children and families we support.

Funding has increased for child intervention services by **\$57.8 million** for total funding of **\$ 820 million**.

- **\$44.5 million** of which is targeted for caseload growth to support intervention services to assist at-risk children and youth.
- With an increased caseload, we will increase supports for frontline workers so children and families receive the focused attention they need. This includes implementation of new training initiatives for child intervention staff and caregivers.
- **\$1.9 million** to increase basic maintenance funding for foster and kinship caregivers and those with a Supports for Permanency Agreement.
- Funding to support collaboration with First Nations to define the role of the band designate.
- Funding for contracted agencies to maintain the level of services Albertans receive under our various child intervention programs (details will be rolled out once budget has passed).

Access to affordable, quality child care continues to be a very real concern for many families in Alberta and a priority for our government. Budget 2018 allocates an increase of **\$71.9 million** for child care with total funding of **\$392.7 million**.

- **\$6.1 million** increase to maintain stable subsidy thresholds and subsidy rates.
- **\$19.4 million** additional funding to address the increase in the number of programs participating in accreditation as well as wage top ups for frontline positions to support high-quality learning environments for children.
- **\$45.6 million** in federal transfers to support the expansion of the Early Learning and Child Care pilot.

Children's Services will continue to invest in programs to support families in their homes and communities, creating better outcomes for children and families and ultimately reducing the need for more intensive, crisis-based services in the future. Budget 2018 includes an additional **\$5.1 million** for prevention and early intervention services for total funding of **\$107.6 million**.

- **\$1 million** to develop an Indigenous Youth Suicide prevention plan in collaboration with Indigenous communities, Alberta Health and Alberta Health Services.
- **\$2 million** in increased investments to support collaborative pilots with the federal government and First Nations that help families support their child's optimal well-being and development.
- **\$460 thousand** is identified as an increase to base operating grants and will help Parent Link Centres' with the increased costs associated with delivering programming to families.
- **\$220 thousand** is identified as an increase to support home visitation agencies.
- **\$1 million** is identified to address an increased demand for front line services under the early intervention program.

In addition to the \$1.35 billion total investment in Children's Services, Budget 2018 continues to invest in the Alberta Child Benefit because our government knows this is a game changer for lower-income families. \$175 million has been allocated for Alberta Child Benefit, which provides direct financial assistance up to \$2,820 per year.

We continue to focus our efforts on strengthening our partnerships with Indigenous peoples and working with them to build a system that responds to the needs of Indigenous children, youth and families. The ministry is working with families and communities, agency partners and most importantly First Nations and other Indigenous peoples to co-create a public action plan in response to recommendations of the Ministerial Panel on Child Intervention. I will be sharing details of how you can participate very soon. The co-created action plan will be released in June. These steps are part of our commitment to correct historical wrongs and find a path to true reconciliation between Indigenous Albertans and this Ministry.

Thank you for your continued commitment to making a difference in the lives of Alberta children, youth and families. Your partnership, co-operation and collaboration are instrumental to our ability to create a better future for Alberta's next generation and generations to follow. More details on Budget 2018 are available [online](#) and I look forward to continued

discussions about this and the important work of Children's Services. I invite you to follow the department's twitter presence at [@AB_Children](#) or reach out to me at any time directly via my office.

Sincerely, Danielle Larivee Minister