



Child and Family Service Reform

Update for Fairness for Children Raised by Relatives

Ministry of Children and Family Development

June 2023

PURPOSE

- The Child, Family and Community Service Act and the Adoption Act form the foundation of our service system in BC.
- Changes to legislation are needed to improve services for all children and families.
- Goals:
 - Promote prevention and support connection
 - Align with the Federal Act and Declaration Act
 - Short- and long-term changes to support systemic transformation





HONOURING PAST WISDOM

- Reflecting on decades of advocacy in BC
 - Guiding Principles
 - A foundation of human rights, focus on building belonging and connection with inclusive and holistic services
 - Key Service Needs
 - Shifting towards prevention, while improving protection services and supporting youth transitions
 - Indigenous jurisdiction and partnership
 - Supporting jurisdiction through engagement and funding
 - Decisions and Accountability
 - Transparent processes that are subject to oversight, with clear policy and legislation.

2022 ENGAGEMENT

- 23 engagement sessions
 - Eight with partner organizations
 - Nine with people with lived experience within child and family services
 - Six hosted by Alderhill planning
- Engage BC Survey and MNBC Survey
- 14 written submissions and 19 supplementary submissions
- Input from within MCFD
- Analysis of Bill 38 engagement

- Data analysis early 2023, currently developing What We Heard Report.





BILL 38: INDIGENOUS SELF-GOVERNMENT IN CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AMENDMENT ACT

- Amendments to the *Child, Family and Community Service Act* and *Adoption Act*
- Removes legislative barriers to Indigenous Governing Bodies exercising their jurisdiction over child and family services
- Recognizes Indigenous Peoples' inherent rights to self-government and child and family services jurisdiction
- Aligns legislation with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Declaration Act
- Introduced many important changes, but we still have more work to do.

PROCESS LEARNINGS

Barriers to communication included:

- Limited internet access, inadequate time before or during engagements, need for a comprehensive and ongoing communication strategy and materials only available in English

Best practices included:

- Working with an Indigenous consultant, working with Elders, translating materials and providing accessibility supports, partnering with communities and organizations, and providing flexible funding

Key improvements:

- Building relationships with organizations and communities to deliver engagements
- Increased flexibility and accessibility of engagement activities



DRAFT WHAT WE HEARD THEMES

Colonialism, Inequity, and Fear

- Systemic racism and inequality are embedded in the child and family service system
- The adverse impacts of being in care affect whole communities
- Child and Family Service System is punitive and fear-based
- Relationships with Indigenous communities need to be rebuilt based on rights

Keeping Children Connected to Family, Community and Culture

- Cultural continuity leads to positive outcomes
- Collaboration with communities is key
- The ministry does not take a family-centred approach
- Services should focus on prevention

DRAFT WHAT WE HEARD THEMES

Services that Work for Children, Families and Communities

- Services are reactionary
- The voices of children and youth need to be centred
- Improved youth transitions
- Additional supports and resources for foster parents and kinship caregivers
- Greater resourcing for Indigenous communities
- Low barrier services
- Supports for staff to reduce burnout and turnover

Accountability and Systemic Reform

- Radical accountability and oversight
- Indigenous communities should have greater autonomy over decision making
- Systemic change can only occur through collaboration
- Shift legislation from protection to prevention
- Proactive and transparent information sharing

NEXT STEPS

- Continue to analyze input gathered
- Develop and approve What We Heard Report
- Share Report with partners for your input and validation
- Continue to improve engagement processes across policy and legislation





Thank you!

Resources

[Child, Family and Community Service Act Reform - Child and Family Service Legislative Reform \(gov.bc.ca\)](#)

[Alderhill - MCFD-CFCSA](#)

[Bill 38 – 2022: Indigenous Self-Government in Child and Family Services Amendment Act \(leg.bc.ca\)](#)

[Historic changes to B.C. child-welfare laws lay path to upholding Indigenous jurisdiction | BC Gov News](#)

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