

Engagement and Co-Development on CYSN with First Nations Rights Holders

Overview

The Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD or the Ministry) is guided by the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (the Declaration Act) and the commitment to co-develop legislation, policy, and programming with First Nations Rights Holders. As part of this commitment, the Ministry will engage in a 12–18-month engagement and co-development process that explores: *a system of services for Indigenous children and youth with support needs that aligns with Rights and Titleholders' vision for their children, families and communities*. The Ministry will plan and deliver all CYSN engagements in an inclusive way, using an intersectional lens with particular focus on GBA+ and anti-racist practice. In addition, this approach is guided by the Aboriginal Policy and Practice Framework and will follow the principles and processes described below:

Distinctions-Based: The engagement is part of a larger distinctions-based engagement process that includes First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples. Engagement will be conducted in a manner that acknowledges the specific rights, interests, priorities and concerns of each, while respecting and acknowledging these distinct Peoples with unique cultures, histories, rights, and laws.

Direct relationship (Provincial Government and Rights Holders): Engagement and co-development will be undertaken directly by the Province with First Nations Rights Holders. The Ministry will take a government-to-government approach to co-development with Indigenous Rights and Title holders when fulfilling commitments under the Declaration Act.

Financially supported: The Ministry will provide resources to First Nations communities to support participation in the engagement and co-development process.

Iterative and guided by interests of partners: The engagement and co-development process is designed to be iterative, with phases of engagement and learning that allows for continued refinement of ideas and policies. Each phase builds from the previous phase and creates a continuous learning and co-development path.

Multiple ways to engage: The engagement and co-development process will provide multiple ways for Rights Holders to provide their recommendations and feedback. These will include online, written, virtual, and face-to-face engagements.

Engagement and Co-Development Phases

Immediate Action:

1. **govTogetherBC page:** Online presence established to serve as a single point of information for partners on engagement opportunities, next steps, etc. The govTogetherBC page will provide a high-level overview of work and the principles guiding co-development (above). See appendix A for govTogetherBC content, which includes a date for the first virtual meeting, an info sheet on the intention of engagement and principles guiding the work, and some key questions to contemplate in advance of first virtual meeting. Launch March 24, 2023.
2. **Approach overview:** Shared with the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) and other partners (e.g., Disability Collaborative). The overview includes this document, govTogetherBC content, and proposed letter to Rights Holders.
3. **Newsletter to Rights Holders:** Letter outlines the intention to co-develop engagement and includes the link to information on the govTogetherBC page. To be sent April 4, 2023.

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Phase 1: Gathering the Circle

Clarifying partners' interests and priorities (Spring 2023)

- May 4, 2023 – Host an information and learning session in partnership with the [UBC Learning Circle](#) on CYSN and engagement opportunities.
- May 10, 2023 – Hold first engagement meeting (2 hours) to inform path forward. Open to all interested Rights Holders (meeting details posted to govTogetherBC with initial package and included in letters to Rights Holders).
- Spring and early summer – Host subsequent meetings facilitated in small group discussions around initial questions:
 - What does an engagement and co-development process that meets your needs look like?
 - What do we need to talk about and explore together when it comes to creating a vision for CYSN services for Indigenous children and youth with support needs and their families?
 - What are we not talking about that needs to be explored?
 - What elements would make up a successful system of CYSN services for Indigenous children and youth with support needs and their families?

Products/Outcomes

Shared via govTogetherBC, posted July 2023:

- Summary of key priorities for co-development engagements/sessions
- Next virtual sessions dates
- Invitation (via govTogetherBC to add email to list for more focused working group sessions)

Phase 2: Listening, Assessing and Finding Solutions

Priority specific engagement and striking topic specific working groups (Summer – Fall 2023)

- Outside of govTogetherBC (and based on the invitation to more in-depth working group sessions), Ministry to lead multi-meeting working groups around key topics (based on key priorities as per phase 1)
- Continue to leverage govTogetherBC to share information about working group sessions and the intention to share a What we Heard/What we Learned Report

Products/Outcomes

Shared via govTogetherBC, posted November 2023:

- What we Heard/What we Learned report.
- Launch online opportunity to provide feedback.
- Provide dates/invitation for virtual sessions for input and feedback.

Phase 3: Creating Security, Belonging and Well-being

What did we hear and did we hear it correctly (Winter 2023 – Spring 2024)

- Host virtual sessions on the What we Heard/What we Learned report and invite co-development of changes.
- Collect additional feedback via govTogetherBC and email (ensuring those who do not or cannot participate in meetings can have their voices heard)

Products/Outcomes

Shared via govTogetherBC, posted March 2024:

- Release revised What we Heard/What we Learned report based on the above inputs.
- Provide dates/invitations for virtual sessions to provide input and feedback to engage in next iterative phase of co-development with focus on: What do we need to be able to realize this vision?

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Phase 4: Keeping the Circle Strong

What do we need to be able to realize this vision?

- Reengage working group of self-selected rights holders (as identified in Phase 2) around action planning to realize the vision.
- Host virtual session(s) on the 'What do we need to be able to realize this vision?' question.
- Collect additional feedback via govTogetherBC and email (ensuring those who do not or cannot participate in meetings can have their voices heard)
- Share a draft Action Plan and invite refinement/co-development of changes.

Products/Outcomes

- Co-developed Action Plan for government and partners (Fall 2024)

Overall timeline considerations

The exact timeline will be driven by the needs and interests of partners and may be impacted by:

- The timing of other Ministry engagements with Indigenous Peoples,
- How many First Nations wish to be involved in the process—more partners will likely require a longer timeline,
- The broader CYSN engagement currently underway with other distinctions-based groups.