
BACKGROUND

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Ministry of Children and Family Development

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CYMH PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

KEY FACTS:

- The Child and Youth Mental Health Plan launched in 2003 is the first of its kind in Canada and established B.C. as a national leader in the area of child and youth mental health.
- One in seven children and youth in B.C. will experience a mental disorder serious enough to cause significant distress and impair their functioning with their peers and family at home and at school.
- The most common mental health problems in children and youth are anxiety and depression. Anxiety disorders include generalized anxiety, social anxiety, fears and phobias, panic attacks, obsessive-compulsive disorder and post-traumatic stress disorder.
- Depression is characterized by feelings of hopelessness, changes in appetite and sleep and, in extreme cases, suicidal thoughts and attempts. Suicide is the second leading cause of death among young people in B.C. and Canada.
- Mental health problems that begin in childhood or adolescence are often the beginning of difficulties that continue into adulthood. The good news is that the majority of children can be helped early and effectively, avoiding lifelong hardship and disability.

KEY STATS:

- Today, nearly 20,000 children and youth receive MCFD outpatient, community mental health services annually – almost double the number who received services in 2004.
- The Child and Youth Mental Health budget has more than doubled since implementation of the five-year CYMH plan: in 2008/09, it is more than \$87 million – an increase of \$17 million over 2007/08 and an increase of \$48 million or 120 per cent since 2000/01.
- Approximately 300 new mental health positions in B.C. were created over the last three years. Most of these positions have been filled and recruitment continues for Aboriginal and difficult-to-fill positions in some regions.

KEY PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES:

- A self-help tool for youth, *Dealing with Depression: Anti-Depressant Skills for Teens*, is available on the ministry website at www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/mental_health.
- Kids in Control groups in the Fraser Region to teach effective coping skills to children and youth living in families with parental mental illness.

- Through a partnership with the Knowledge Network and the Children's Health Policy Centre, four one-hour documentaries have been developed on depression, anxiety, early psychosis and behaviour problems in children and youth as part of a broader public-education campaign. To view the documentaries online, go to www.knowledgenetwork.ca/takingcare/intro.html.
- Group treatment programs and services delivered outside of traditional office settings have broadened the continuum of services and allow more children and youth to access help.
- New multicultural outreach services in Fraser and Vancouver Island regions for families who have difficulty accessing CYMH services due to language and cultural barriers.
- Improved planning and collaboration across the broader health and social services community related to delivery of child and youth mental health services through the CYMH Network, a cross-ministry committee.
- Approximately 90,000 Grade 4 and 5 students in B.C. have been provided the opportunity to participate in the FRIENDS program, an evidence-based anxiety prevention and risk reduction program presented in co-operation with the Ministry of Education and participating school districts.

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