

Part III

Under this section, the State party is to briefly (3 pages maximum) up-date the information provided in its report with regard to:

a) New bills or enacted legislation

Government of Canada

Criminal Law

Youth Criminal Justice Act (April 1, 2003): The *Youth Criminal Justice Act* provides a more fair and effective youth justice system with special protections for the rights of young people, and that reduces over-reliance on incarceration and emphasizes rehabilitation and reintegration. The Comprehensive Youth Justice Renewal Initiative is discussed under newly implemented policies. Please refer to Part 1-B for further information.

Criminal Code amendments (either in force or before Parliament) include the following provisions:

- make it an offence to communicate with a child through the computer for purposes of abduction or to commit a sexual offence;
- make new child pornography offences of transmitting, making available and accessing child pornography;
- proposed increase the sentences for sexual offences against children, failure to provide for the necessities of life and child abandonment;
- expansion of the definition of written child pornography;
- proposed enhanced measures to facilitate child victim/witness testimony;
- proposed establishment of national sex offender registry;
- creation of child sex tourism offence; and
- specific prohibition of female genital mutilation.

Civil/non-criminal law (enacted or pending)

Family law: Bill C-22 proposes *Divorce Act* reforms that will serve to encourage parenting arrangements that are specifically designed to respond to the unique needs of each child.

Aboriginal Communities: While the four statutes (either enacted or currently before Parliament) described below are not directly targeted towards children, the Government of Canada believes that they will give First Nations and Inuit peoples the powers they need to build a better future for themselves and their families.

- *The First Nations Governance Act* will enable First Nations people to create community governance systems to reflect their needs.
- *The Specific Claims Resolution Act* seeks to establish a more fair and efficient resolution to a number of historic grievances.

- *The First Nations Fiscal and Statistical Management Act* is a First Nations led initiative which will establish a series of national institutions to improve the ability of First Nations governments to address the social and economic well-being of their communities.
- *The Framework Agreement in First Nations Land Management Act* will provide First Nations with the necessary tools to harness their natural resources, develop their economy and improve their infrastructures.

Citizenship & Immigration: A new Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) and Regulations were implemented in June 2002, incorporating references to the best interests of the child throughout. The new immigration legislation includes provisions:

- Promoting family reunification by extending the age of dependent children eligible for family sponsorship up to 22 from 19 and by exempting spouses, common law partners and dependent children from medical inadmissibility.
- Promoting family reunification by allowing family members abroad to be processed for permanent residence in Canada at the same time as protected persons (including Convention refugees) in Canada.
- Authorizing school attendance of minor children in Canada regardless of immigration status (except for the children of visitors prohibited from studying).
- Incorporating the best interest of the child as an element of decisions to grant permanent residence on humanitarian and compassionate grounds, to grant administrative appeals overturning removal orders from Canada, and decisions concerning the retention of permanent residence status in the context of a breach of residency obligations
- Affirming the principle that a minor is detained only as a measure of last resort and listing special considerations that must be considered in the application of this principle including the availability of alternative arrangements.
- Protecting children by barring sponsorship for immigration by persons convicted of a sexual offence against a child. Persons are also barred from sponsoring for immigration purposes if they are in arrears of court-ordered child or spousal support payments.
- Defining the best interest of the child in the context of inter-country adoption consistent with child protection measures and safeguards derived from international Convention obligations.
- Extending provisions for designating a representative for minors to apply in all quasi-judicial proceedings before the Immigration and Refugee Board.
- Creating a new inadmissible class to bar entry to Canada of persons who engage in people trafficking.
- Making trafficking in persons an offence punishable by life imprisonment, a fine of up to \$1 million or both.

In addition to these positive changes in the IRPA, recent changes to the *Canada Student Loans Act* will allow protected persons as defined in the IRPA to obtain student loans, thereby enhancing access to education for youth.

A proposed new Citizenship of Canada Act, currently before Parliament and anticipated to come into force in 2004, includes provisions that would facilitate access to Canadian citizenship for children born outside Canada who are adopted by Canadian citizens. Under the terms of this draft legislation, adopted children who are minors may qualify for citizenship without first

obtaining permanent resident status, provided the adoption is in the best interests of the child, creates a genuine parent-child relationship, is in accordance with the laws of the place where the adoption took place and the laws of the country of residence of the adopting citizen and was not intended to circumvent the requirements under any enactment for admission to Canada or citizenship.

Health: The Government of Canada has put in place programs and legislation supported by research activities to protect children from environmental threats. In December 2002, revisions to the *Pest Control Products Act* mandated Health Canada to specifically consider, when assessing risks, the potential effects of a pesticide on the developing fetus, infant, and young child.

Progress is also being made in the assessment of health risks of environmental contaminants conducted under the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999* (CEPA, 1999). This legislation is shared between Health Canada and Environment Canada, and takes into account specific aspects of exposure and effects as they relate to infants, toddlers and children.

Bill C-13 (Assisted Human Reproductive Technologies) proposes comprehensive legislative reform to: protect the health and safety of Canadians using assisted human reproduction (AHR) to help them build their families; prohibit unacceptable activities such as human cloning; and to regulate AHR activities and related research. The Bill also establishes the Assisted Human Reproduction Agency of Canada (AHRAC) which will license, monitor and enforce the AHR Act and regulations.

Transportation : Tabled in Spring 2003, the amendments to the *Canada Transportation Act* included a policy statement which recognizes that transportation services without undue obstacle to the mobility of persons with disabilities are essential to serve the needs and maintain the well-being of Canadians.

Provincial and territorial legislation

Government of Alberta

A new *Family Law Act*, Bill 45, has been introduced to make family law simpler and easier for Albertans to understand by combining four family law Acts (the *Domestic Relations Act*, the *Maintenance Order Act*, the *Parentage and Maintenance Act* and part of the *Provincial Court Act*) under one single piece of legislation. The bill amends and clarifies existing laws and draws them all under the new *Family Law Act*. Most amendments fall into the following areas: guardianship; parenting (formerly custody and access); contact with a child; child support; spousal and adult interdependent partner support; and parentage.

The *Protection Against Family Violence Act* received Royal Assent on April 30, 1998, and came into force on June 1, 1999. The Act protects spouses and common-law partners, their children and other family members who reside together and are related from family violence by authorizing the court to issue protection orders. Family violence is defined as: injuring or threatening to injure a family member; damaging or threatening to damage property; not allowing a family member to leave a home; and sexual abuse.

The *Protection of Children Involved in Prostitution Act* was proclaimed on February 1, 1999 and later amended on March 15, 2001. The Act allows social workers and police to apprehend child prostitutes under the age of 18 and place them in a protective safe house for up to 5 days and provides for fines and jail terms for “johns” and pimps who are found to be using juvenile prostitutes. The maximum fines rises to \$25,000 and the maximum jail term is two years less a day. The 2001 amendments authorize a court to order a longer confinement, while at the same time enhance the child’s procedural rights respecting notice and reviews of court applications.

The *Premier’s Council on Alberta’s Promise Act* was proclaimed in 2003. It is set to expire on March 31, 2008, unless continued by an order of the Lieutenant Governor in Council. Alberta’s Promise encourages and recognizes partnerships between the business community and not-for-profit agencies helping children. Alberta’s Promise is based on commitments to provide: a healthy start; safety, growth and development; interaction, mentoring and inspiration; participation and volunteering; and leadership and innovation.

The *Child Welfare Amendment Act* received Royal Assent on May 16, 2003, with proclamation likely in 2004. The new Act will be referred to as the *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*. The Act amends Alberta’s child welfare legislation, with an emphasis on: the safety and well-being of children, increased involvement of families in decision-making processes, parental responsibility, permanent homes for children in government care, adoption, services for Aboriginal children and families, expanding the role of the Children’s Advocate, supporting youth as they are transitioning to adulthood and increased accountability for services being delivered to children and families.

The *Family Support for Children with Disabilities Act* received Royal Assent on May 16, 2003, with proclamation likely in 2004. This legislation was previously contained within the *Child Welfare Act*. The new Act will provide separate and distinct legislation to cover services for children with disabilities. It clarifies eligibility for the Resources for Children with Disabilities program, requires service plans to reflect the complex needs of children, focusses programs for children with disabilities on early intervention and family supports and promotes better service coordination.

Government of British Columbia

The *Office for Children and Youth Act* was passed in the legislature on May 15, 2002. The Act was proclaimed on September 27, 2002 and the new Office for Children and Youth was established on September 30, 2002. This legislation combines the functions of the previous *Children’s Commission Act* and the *Child, Youth and Family Advocacy Act*. See Part 1-B-7 for a description of the Child and Youth Officer functions.

The definition of “student record” in the *School Act* was amended in 1999 to protect the interests of children who are the subject of an investigation by child protection services. The effect of the change is to not allow unrestricted rights of access to students’ records under the *School Act*.

In 1999, francophone education programs in BC were consolidated by the Conseil scolaire francophone de la Colombie-Britannique (CSF), which is essentially a provide-wide school board for francophone students. CSF programs are available to children whose parents have

minority language education rights under section 23 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (viz., the first language learned and understood is French or they received their primary school education in Canada in French).

The *School Amendment Act*, 2002, established an open boundary school system that allows students to enrol in any school in the province provided space is available. This allows parents and children to choose a school or program that may meet students' individual needs.

The *School (Protection of Parent Volunteers) Amendment Act* of 2001 guarantees that parents of students attending schools are entitled to volunteer their services.

The *Skills Development and Labour Statutes Amendment Act* of 2001 restores education as an essential service under the *Labour Code* to ensure that no child's right to an education is denied during school strikes or lockouts.

The *Public Education Flexibility and Choice Act* of 2002 enshrined primary class size limits in order to help ensure a safe and productive learning environment for primary students.

The Ministry of Human Resources introduced the BC Employment Assistance Program in April 2002 to assist people moving into sustainable employment and to provide income assistance to those in need.

In September 2002, the *Employment and Assistance Act* and the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act* were brought into effect, repealing the BC Benefits legislation. The new Acts continue to provide income security and basic dental and vision care benefits to children of low-income families.

The *Child, Family and Community Services Act* outlines the following rights for children in care:

- s.70 (1) Children in care have the following rights:
- (a) to be fed, clothed and nurtured according to community standards and to be given the same quality of care as other children in the placement;
 - (b) to be informed about their plans of care;
 - (c) to be consulted and to express their views, according to their abilities, about significant decisions affecting them;
 - (d) to reasonable privacy and to possession of their personal belongings;
 - (e) to be free from corporal punishment;
 - (f) to be informed of the standard of behaviour expected by their caregivers and of the consequences of not meeting their caregivers' expectations;
 - (g) to receive medical and dental care when required;
 - (h) to participate in social and recreational activities if available and appropriate and according to their abilities and interests;
 - (i) to receive the religious instruction and to participate in the religious activities of their choice;
 - (j) to receive guidance and encouragement to maintain their cultural heritage;

- (k) to be provided with an interpreter if language or disability is a barrier to consulting with them on decisions affecting their custody or care;
 - (l) to privacy during discussions with members of their families, subject to subsection (2);
 - (m) to privacy during discussions with a lawyer, the child and youth officer or a person employed or retained by the child and youth officer under the *Office for Children and Youth Act*, the Ombudsman, a member of the Legislative Assembly or a member of Parliament;
 - (n) to be informed about and to be assisted in contacting the child and youth officer the *Office for Children and Youth Act*, or the Ombudsman;
 - (o) to be informed of their rights under this Act and the procedures available for enforcing their rights.
- (2) A child who is removed under Part 3 is entitled to exercise the right in subsection (1) (l), subject to any court order made after the court has had an opportunity to consider the question of access to the child.
- (3) This section does not apply to a child who is in a place of confinement.

As part of the Child in Care Service Standards, a new standard was developed focussing on child safety:

The child's physical and emotional safety needs are met throughout the time a child is in care.

Regional Policy: Appropriate action is taken to ensure the safety of children in care, which includes:

- ensuring that the child is provided with a safe and supportive living arrangement;
- responding promptly to information from others that indicate the child's safety may be at risk and taking necessary steps to address the safety concern;
- participating with the child's caregiver in considering and reviewing plans for overnight care and supervision of the child by someone other than the caregiver;
- ensuring that when children are transported in a motor vehicle, they are properly secured in a certified restraint system (in accordance with the *Motor Vehicle Act* and Regulations and Canadian Motor Vehicle Safety Standards) and seated in the back seat whenever possible, especially if they are under twelve years of age; and,
- ensuring that the child has the necessary equipment to safeguard against accidents or injury when participating in available leisure, recreational or sports activities.

Government of Manitoba

On August 9, 2002, *The Child and Family Services Authorities Act* was passed. As part of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry – Child Welfare Initiative (AJI-CWI), this far-reaching initiative establishes four Child and Family Services authorities in Manitoba: the Métis Child and Family Services authorities, the First Nations of Southern Manitoba Child and Family Services authority, the First Nations of Northern Manitoba Child and Family Services authority, and the

general Child and Family Services authority. Each has responsibility to administer and provide for the delivery of child and family services to families who identify with the respective authority. The comprehensive institutional and regulatory structure envisioned by the initiative is being prepared, and it is anticipated that the new regime will be operational in the fall of 2003.

The Inter-jurisdictional Support Orders Act was passed in 2001 and came into force January 31, 2003. It significantly streamlines the process by which family support orders are obtained, varied and recognized in inter-jurisdictional cases between Manitoba and jurisdictions with which the province has reciprocity for support establishment and enforcement purposes.

The Improved Enforcement of Support Payments (Various Acts Amended) Act was passed in 2001. It contained a number of amendments to enhance the ability of the Maintenance Enforcement Program to collect support payments and support arrears.

A number of amendments to the *Child Support Guidelines Regulation* to *The Family Maintenance Act* came into force on July 1, 2001. Some incorporated earlier amendments to the *Federal Child Support Guidelines* (to the *Divorce Act*); others dealt with issues such as clarifying the ability to obtain payments for extra-curricular activities.

In 1999, changes to *The Child and Family Services Act* introduced the requirement for an independent investigation by the Department of Family Services and Housing when a person providing work or services to a child and family services agency or a child care facility was alleged to have abused a child.

In 2002, amendments to *The Child and Family Services Act* were passed enabling persons in same-sex common-law relationships to adopt children (as opposite-sex common-law couples can); these amendments took effect January 1, 2003.

Significant revisions to the Court of Queen's Bench Rule specifically applicable to proceedings in the Family Division took effect in November 2002.

Bill 17, *The Public Schools Amendment Act* (Appropriate Educational Programming), was introduced by the Manitoba Government in April 2003. This amendment to the *Public Schools Act* will ensure that all students in Manitoba are entitled to receive appropriate educational programming that fosters students' participation in both the academic and social life of the school. This legislation will assist all students, particularly those with special needs, in receiving the appropriate educational services they require.

Government of New Brunswick

New Brunswick Advisory Council on Youth Act was passed and is awaiting proclamation. The legislation formalizes the role and responsibilities of the existing advisory council on youth.

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

The *Child and Youth Advocate Act*, SNL 2001, c. C-12.01, came into effect in 2003. The mandate of the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate is to ensure protection of the rights and

interests of children and youth, to ensure access to services and that complaints with respect to those services receive appropriate attention, to provide information and advice to government and agencies of government about the availability, effectiveness, responsiveness and relevance of services to youth and children and to act as an advocate for the rights and interests of children and youth. The Child Youth Advocate was appointed by the House of Assembly on September 16, 2002. The Advocate can review, mediate, advocate and inform the public and make recommendations to government on matters relating to children or youth whether or not a request or complaint is made to the Advocate.

The *Child, Youth and Family Service Act*, SNL 1998, c. C12.1, repealed the *Child Welfare Act* and came into force in 2000. The Act recognizes the need for enhancements of services to youth and families, investment in prevention and early intervention strategies, client participation in decisions which affect them, partnerships in the communities in supporting the safety, health and well-being of children and timely responses to children who are maltreated.

The Act provides an abilities to support children, youth and their families in a preventative fashion. There no longer has to be evidence or demonstrated risk of maltreatment before services can be provided. The Act provides for youth care agreements and family and residential services for youth aged 16 and 17 and, as well, an ability to remove youth from a high risk environment in exceptional circumstances.

The Act ensures court decisions are made in a timely fashion consistent with the child's development. The time limits for children in care support early permanency planning for children. The Act also provides an ability to engage in alternative dispute resolution processes as an alternative to the court system. The Act allows for prevention and early intervention and provides the basis for the development of a continuum of services, which was not provided for under the previous Act.

The *Smoke-Free Environment Act*, SNL 1993, c.S-16.1, was amended in January 2002 to further restrict smoking in public places and to strengthen enforcement efforts. There is now a complete ban on smoking in restaurants and other public places frequented by children.

In May 2003, a new *Adoptions Act*, SNL 1999, c. A-2.1, came into force. The new legislation allows for openness agreements, meaning that birth parents and adoptive parents may agree to an ongoing exchange of information or contact. The new Act also provides for greater openness in the release of adoption information. Those individuals adopted under the new Act, upon reaching 19 years of age, will be able to apply to Vital Statistics for a copy of their original birth registration and a copy of their Adoption Order. As well, birth parents of adopted people who are 19 years of age or older may apply to Vital Statistics for a copy of the adopted person's birth registration and Adoption Order to learn the person's adoptive name. For adoptions finalized under the former Act, individuals can file a disclosure veto to prevent identifying information from being released through the birth registration or Adoption Order.

The new *Adoptions Act* provides that all children 12 years of age or older must give consent to their adoption. Children under 12 years of age will have knowledge of the adoption process and their views must be considered.

Amendments to the *Schools Act*, SNL 1997, c. S-12.2, in 1997, established a Francophone school board for the Province.

Government of Ontario

The *Victims' Bill of Rights, 1995* (VBR) set out the principles for treatment of victims in the criminal justice process and made amendments to the *Ontario Evidence Act* that provided reforms, which would make it easier for child and vulnerable witnesses to testify in civil court by:

- Changing rules related to the competency of child witnesses
- Eliminating the need for corroboration of child's testimony
- Providing accommodation measures such as screens and closed-circuit TV
- Providing options for reviews of the admissibility of hearsay evidence for child witnesses

The VBR created the Office for Victims of Crime (OVC), a permanent advisory agency that provides advice to the Attorney General on issues pertinent to the protection of victims of crime, services standards and ways to reduce further victimization.

Also, amendments to the *Child and Family Services Act* were made on March 31, 2000, which included a change to section 1, the purpose of the Act. The paramount purpose of the Act is to promote the best interests, protection and well being of children, which is consistent with article 3 of the Convention.

Government of Québec

Support for families component

On May 25, 2001, the National Assembly passed the *Loi sur le régime d'assurance parentale* (parental insurance program act), which will allow self-employed persons to receive benefits.

In December 2002, the National Assembly adopted the *Loi contre la pauvreté et l'exclusion sociale* (act against poverty and social exclusion), which seeks to bridge the gap between the haves and the have-nots, in particular by improving conditions that threaten the well-being and development of children.

Government of Saskatchewan

The Emergency Protection for Victims of Child Sexual Abuse and Exploitation Act, passed and proclaimed in force in 2002, allows a peace officer, a child protection officer or a prescribed person to apply for an Emergency Protective Intervention Order where there are reasonable grounds to believe a child is under 18 years of age and sexual abuse of the child has occurred, or contact between the child and another person has occurred and there are reasonable grounds to believe that further contact between the child and the other person will result in sexual abuse of the child. The Act expands police powers to search vehicles and seize evidence of child abuse found in those vehicles. Breaching the terms of Emergency Protective Intervention Orders will be an offence under the *Criminal Code*, punishable by up to two years in prison. An amendment

to *The Highway Traffic Act* gives police the ability to charge someone who is, without lawful excuse, repeatedly driving through or parking in areas frequented by prostitutes, including areas where children and youth are exploited through prostitution. The driver of the vehicle and all passengers in the vehicle can be charged. If convicted, the offender will be subject to a fine of up to \$5,000.

Amendments to *The Child and Family Services Act* were passed by the legislature in early June 2003. Proclamation is expected in the fall of 2003. The amendments are significant in that they will provide a framework for extensive kinship care policy development. The amendments will provide a comprehensive approach to kinship care arrangements as an alternative to taking children into the care of the Minister. Specifically, these amendments will serve to:

- establish a clear direction of priorities in court orders: family preservation, kinship care, and state care as a last resort;
- clearly establish that children in kinship care arrangements are in the custody of the kinship caregiver and are not wards of the government;
- establish consistent time frames for length of temporary orders;
- ensure all pertinent documentation is seen by the court — including a home study of the prospective caregivers;
- reduce the need for permanent and long-term orders and provide a permanent alternative to traditional adoption;
- prioritize the use of family group conferencing (informal group session involving those who have a significant interest in planning for the child) as a tool for planning;
- broaden the notion of inclusion for planning for the child to any person who has an interest in the child's safety and well-being;
- provide support and direction to practice around placement of children with kin; and
- provide an alternative to the use of *The Children's Law Act* where long-term custody issues are generated by child protection issues.

The Youth Justice Administration Act has been enacted and will come into force on August 1, 2003. This legislation is related to the implementation and operation of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* in Saskatchewan.

b) New institutions

National/federal institutions

In 2000, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), Canada's premier federal agency for health research was developed. The mission of the Institute is to promote and facilitate research in several areas of health, including children's health and Aboriginal Peoples' health.

The Policy Centre for Victims Issues and the National Crime Prevention Centre: Together, the Policy Centre for Victims Issues and the National Crime Prevention Centre aim to prevent crime and assist victims.

The objective of the First Nations Aboriginal Peoples Statistical Institute is to develop into the authoritative source of information on Social, Economic and Fiscal conditions of First Nations people and institutions.

The National Aboriginal Health Organization was created in March 2000 to influence and advance the health and well-being of Aboriginal Peoples through carrying out knowledge-based strategies.

Government of Alberta

The Alberta Children's Services Ministry was formed in May 1999, to promote the safety, well-being and development of Alberta's children and youth. The Ministry works in partnership with Child and Family Services Authorities (CFSAs) to deliver services at the local level to children and families across Alberta. It ensures strategic government direction, sets provincial policies and standards, monitors and assesses the CFSAs, and allocates their funds.

The Youth Secretariat was formed in 1999 to provide a mechanism through which issues impacting youth at risk can be identified and addressed. The chair of the Secretariat is appointed by the Premier and is accountable to the Minister of Children's Services. In addition, the Youth Advisory Panel was established to ensure youth participation and feedback on planned activities.

Formation of the Alberta Children's Initiative, later renamed the Alberta Children and Youth Initiative (ACYI) occurred in 1999. This is a collaborative framework that promotes government ministries working together to achieve common goals related to the well-being of children, youth and families.

The Alberta Centre for Child, Family and Community Research was established in 2003.

In anticipation of new sentencing options on the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*, Alberta piloted Youth Attendance Centres in Edmonton and Calgary. These non-residential facilities house a variety of programs to address the non-residential sentencing option, however, this option is only available in the two cities where the Youth Attendance Centres are located.

Government of Ontario

In addition to the Office for Victims of Crime, the Victim Services Secretariat was established as a single point of administration and coordination of services for victims of crime throughout the criminal justice system.

c) Newly implemented policies***Federal-Provincial-Territorial Policies****Multilateral Framework on Early Learning and Child Care*

In March 2003, Federal, Provincial and Territorial Ministers Responsible for Social Services agreed on a framework for improving access to affordable, quality, provincially and territorially regulated early learning and child care programs and services. Under this multilateral framework, the Government of Canada is providing \$900 million over five years to support provincial and territorial governments' investments in early learning and child care.

Early Childhood Development Agreement

In September 2000, Canada's First Ministers established the Early Childhood Development Agreement, recognizing the importance of children's early years in shaping long-term outcomes. Under the Agreement, the Government of Canada is transferring \$500 million per year to provinces and territories to improve and expand their ECD programs and services in four key areas: healthy pregnancy, birth and infancy; parenting and family supports; early childhood development learning and care; and community supports.

Federal Policies*Early Childhood Development*

As part of the federal Early Childhood Development (ECD) strategy, a new national partnership structure will play a key role in the improvement and expansion of existing ECD programs and services for First Nations and other Aboriginal children: intensify efforts to address Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (through the additional 15 million); work with First Nations and other stakeholders to explore a single window service delivery to better ensure integration, coordination, accountability and reporting. Health Canada will support the involvement of five national Aboriginal organizations to participate in the ECD initiative. An annual budget of \$325,000 has also been identified to create and coordinate an Aboriginal ECD Service Providers Network.

Aboriginal Children

The Aboriginal Justice Strategy provides funding, including funding in regards to spousal violence, most of which is cost-shared with provinces and territories, to community-based justice programs. These programs are aimed at reducing the rates of crime and incarceration among Aboriginal people, assisting Aboriginal people to assume greater responsibility communities and making the mainstream justice system more sensitive to the needs and culture of Aboriginal communities.

In 1998, two new initiatives were created under the Government of Canada's *Urban Aboriginal Strategy*, a component of *Gathering Strength: Canada's Aboriginal Action Plan* (1998). *Gathering Strength* provided the spark to develop the *Aboriginal Languages Initiative (ALI)* and

the *Urban Multipurpose Aboriginal Youth Centres Initiative (UMAYC)*. ALI's objective is to help revitalize, maintain and promote Aboriginal languages for future generations of Aboriginal peoples and to increase the rate of intergenerational transmission.

UMAYC provides services to address a wide range of Aboriginal youth issues and needs. The initiative provides urban Aboriginal youth with accessible, Aboriginal community-based, culturally relevant and supportive projects, and professional and peer counselling, to improve their economic, social and personal prospects.

International Development

To guide CIDA's activities in child protection, an Action Plan on Child Protection was launched in 2001. This document, which takes a rights-based approach, identifies children in need of special protection, including child labourers, children affected by war, street children, sexually exploited children, children with disabilities, children from ethnic minority groups and children in conflict with the law or in the care of the state. In 2002, Canada released *Canada Making a Difference in the World: A policy statement on Strengthening Aid Effectiveness (2002)*, which articulates how Canada will take measures to ensure effectiveness in its international cooperation.

Government of Alberta

Policies and Procedures that guide the administration of youth justice in the community and in youth custody facilities have been revised to reflect changes in legislation from the *Young Offenders Act (YOA)* to the *Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA)*.

Government of British Columbia

Diversity in BC Schools — 2001: The school system must strive to ensure that differences among learners do not impede their participation in school, their mastery of learning outcomes, or their ability to become contributing members of society.

The school system is directly responsible for creating and maintaining conditions that foster success for all students and for promoting fair and equitable treatment for all. These conditions include:

- a. equitable access to and equitable participation in quality education for all students
- b. school cultures that value diversity and respond to the diverse social and cultural needs of the communities they serve
- c. school cultures that promote understanding of others and respect for all
- d. learning and working environments that are safe and welcoming, free from discrimination, harassment and violence
- e. decision making processes that give a voice to all members of the school community
- f. policies and practices that promote fair and equitable treatment.

Criminal Records Checks — 2002: The *Criminal Records Review Act* makes criminal records checks mandatory for persons working with children in organizations that are licensed by, operated by, or receiving operating funds from the provincial governments. The purpose of the *Criminal Records Review Act* is to help protect children from physical and sexual abuse by requiring individuals to whom the Act applies to undergo a criminal records check. This policy provides information concerning the Act and its application to public and independent school authorities.

Government of Manitoba

In September 1999, Manitoba's newly-elected government identified investing in Manitoba's youngest citizens as one of its top priorities. In early 2000, the Premier created the Healthy Child Committee of Cabinet to develop and lead child-centred public policy across government, towards the best possible outcomes for all of Manitoba's children and youth.

Child Care

Manitoba released its Five-Year plan for Child Care in April 2002. The Plan's goals are to maintain and improve quality, improve accessibility and improve affordability.

Parenting supports and assistance

As part of Manitoba's commitment to strengthening communities, the Province introduced the Parent-Child Centred Approach in March 2000. This community development approach brings parents, community organizations, school divisions and health professionals together through regional coalitions to support parenting, improve children's nutrition and literacy, and build community capacity for helping families within their communities. Each Parent-Child Coalition plans community activities based on local needs.

Protection from abuse and neglect

In 1999, *The Child and Family Services Act* was amended to require an independent investigation by the Department of Family Services and Housing when a person providing services to a child and family services agency or a child care facility is alleged to have abused a child.

As part of Manitoba's focus on early childhood health promotion, Manitoba launched a Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS) Prevention Strategy in the late 1990s. A cornerstone of the strategy is the Stop FAS program, a three-year mentoring program for women at risk of having a child with FAS. The critical component of Stop FAS is personal care and support provided by mentors over a long period of time to promote gradual, lasting change among program participants. The strategy also includes supporting the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission in its provincial public awareness and education campaign to prevent FAS.

In addition, the Province introduced an Injury Reduction Campaign in March 2001 with the goal of reducing intentional and unintentional injuries to children.

Manitoba has also undertaken a number of housing related initiatives as a means of protecting children from violence, abuse and neglect. The Manitoba Housing Authority funds a number of shelters for victims of domestic violence. When families are ready to move out of the crisis shelter environment, they may move into transitional housing units established by the Province. However, as the number of units that can be reserved for this purpose is limited, a "Priority Placement Policy", which gives victims of domestic violence top priority for placement in the housing units, has been adopted.

Adoption

In 1999, changes to *The Child and Family Services Act* introduced a financial subsidy program to assist parents to adopt special needs children who are in the care of a child and family services agency. The program reduces financial barriers in providing for the needs of these high-risk children.

Children with disabilities

The period 1994-1999 saw many enhancements to Manitoba's services for children with disabilities. Through its Children's Special Services program, Manitoba continued to provide supports to families that enabled them to maintain their children with developmental or physical disabilities, or both, in their own homes to the greatest extent possible, to promote the development of normalized community arrangements, and to focus on the integration of children with disabilities into all aspects of community life. Work is currently underway on a Policy and Procedural Manual that incorporates a family-centred approach to decision making and operates within a family-centred philosophy.

In 1995, a partnership involving the provincial government departments of Family Services and Housing, Education and Youth, and Health was established to develop a Unified Referral and Intake System that would support children who needed assistance performing special health care procedures when they were apart from their families and caregivers. This initiative has played an important role in enabling children with special health care needs to participate safely in community programs.

In 1998, Manitoba initiated the Provincial Outreach Therapy for Children project, which was designed to provide outreach therapy services to children with lifelong disabilities. The initiative was delivered as a joint venture by the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities and the Rehabilitation Centre for Children. A consultative and collaborative approach to service provision was adopted whereby therapy could be provided at a child's home, school or child care setting. The initiative continues today, and services available through the initiative include occupational therapy, physiotherapy and speech/language therapy for preschool children in Winnipeg and in rural and northern Manitoba, as well as occupational therapy and physiotherapy services for some school-age children in rural and northern Manitoba.

In 2001, the departments of Family Services and Housing, Education and Youth and Health proceeded with the development of an integrated plan for delivery of therapy services to all children needing therapy in the province. The therapies included speech and language therapy, physical therapy, occupational therapy and audiology. In 2002, the departments proceeded with

the implementation of a Children's Therapy Initiative and four demonstration projects were approved. The demonstration projects were innovative in addressing the therapy needs of all children in the province and were based on the principles of prevention and early intervention. The projects also provided a seamless transition for children and their families as they moved through the services continuum.

In addition, Manitoba, through its Children and Youth Secretariat also funded an Applied Behaviour Analysis pilot program in 1999 which was delivered by St. Amant Centre. The Applied Behaviour Analysis program is a widely recognized, research-based intensive behaviour intervention program for children with autism spectrum disorders. Based on research which has shown the program to be most effective when initiated in the preschool years, Manitoba established a permanent Applied Behaviour Analysis program for preschool children in the fall of 2002.

Maternal and child health

As part of Manitoba's commitment to early childhood health promotion, the Province launched a Midwifery program in June 2000. Through Regional Health Authorities, midwifery services are now available to families. Midwives care for women during pregnancy, labour, birth and the first six weeks after birth. Mothers also receive childbirth education, breastfeeding support and access to maternal and infant care programs. In 2000-2001, four Regional Health Authorities provided this program and in 2001-2002, the number expanded to six.

In the fall of 1998, Manitoba launched the BabyFirst Program to provide supports to overburdened families with children up to three years of age. Through BabyFirst, regular visits by public health nurses are supplemented by weekly home visits from specially trained home visitors who encourage and support all family members. This may include helping solve problems and referring families to other community services.

Introduced in the late 1990s, the Women and Infant Nutrition Program was designed to help meet the nutritional needs of pregnant women and children under one year of age in families in receipt of provincial income assistance. The program provided nutritional information and counselling to social assistance and low-income working families. As an incentive towards participation and nutrition improvements, the program also offered a monthly supplement to expectant mothers and mothers of infants up to one year of age if the families were in receipt of social assistance.

In July 2001, the Government of Manitoba significantly expanded on the Women and Infant Nutrition Program by introducing Healthy Baby: Manitoba's Prenatal Benefit and Community Support Programs. Through Healthy Baby, a prenatal nutritional benefit was made available to all low- and moderate-income pregnant women in the province, including Status Indians living on-reserve. In addition, Healthy Baby introduced a network of community-based programs and services for pregnant women and new mothers which provided information on important topics like prenatal and postnatal care, eating the right foods, healthy lifestyle choices and parenting.

Social security

Additional benefits for low-income families with children were introduced in the late 1990s with the introduction of the National Child Benefit. As a joint initiative of Canada's federal, provincial and territorial governments, the initiative was designed to help children in low-income families get off to a good start in life. Under the National Child Benefit, the Government of Canada increased the income support it provided to low-income families with children. In turn, provinces, territories and First Nations adjusted the income support provided to families receiving income assistance and reinvested the funds in new or enhanced benefits and services for low-income families.

Work on the National Child Benefit initiative has continued, and Manitoba's investments and reinvestments in programs and services for low-income families with children have increased. Since July 2000, Manitoba has introduced a number of important changes in its policies respecting the National Child Benefit which have benefited families receiving assistance. In July 2000, for example, Manitoba stopped recovering increases in the National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS) from families on assistance. In July 2001, Manitoba took further action and stopped recovering the NCBS for children six years and under. In January 2003, recovery stopped on the NCBS for children eleven years and under, and effective January 2004, Manitoba will stop the recovery of the NCBS for all children on social assistance.

Adequate standard of living

Manitoba ensures that housing needs are met through shelter assistance programs including Shelter Allowances for Family Renters, the Rent Supplement Program, and the Complementary Assistance Program. These programs are provided to persons in need of housing assistance, including low- to moderate-income families and individuals; persons with disabilities; seniors; and women, children, and youth seeking shelter from family violence. The Shelter Enhancement Program, a Federal/Provincial cost-shared program, also provides financial assistance to non-profit corporations to repair and improve existing shelters for women, children, and youth who are victims of family violence, and to assist in the acquisition or construction of new shelters and second stage housing where needed.

The Winnipeg Housing and Homelessness Initiative (WHHI) is a federal/provincial/municipal initiative which provides a single access point for a number of housing related programs. The WHHI is responsible for the delivery of Affordable Housing programs targeted to increase the supply of affordable housing for low- to moderate-income households, and for the Neighbourhood Housing Assistance Program that provides assistance to community-based organizations and individuals in support of locally planned and delivered initiatives for homeownership and renovation in targeted neighbourhoods. In addition, the Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative provides funding for local community groups to offer supportive services and facilities for the homeless and is a key element of the three year National Homelessness Initiative supported by Manitoba and launched by the Government of Canada in 1999.

Learning and development

To enhance children's readiness to learn in school, Manitoba has offered the Early Start Program in selected areas of the province since the late 1990s. Designed for families with preschool children who need support to ensure healthy early childhood development, Early Start is a three-year home visiting service offered through many licensed child care programs that provides parenting and literacy programs for families, and supports related to the early physical, mental and emotional development of children.

Aboriginal children

Recent estimates suggest that as many as 80 percent of Manitobans served by child and family services agencies are Aboriginal.

In 2000, through negotiations with First Nations and Métis representatives, Manitoba entered into agreements with the Manitoba Metis Federation (representing the Métis); the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, (representing southern First Nations); and Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (representing northern First Nations) to develop a plan that would result in First Nations and Métis communities developing and delivering Aboriginal child welfare services. These agreements, as well as the Child and Family Services Protocol which was subsequently signed by all four parties, served to establish a joint initiative under a common process to expand off-reserve jurisdiction for First Nations, establish a province-wide Métis mandate and restructure the existing child care system through legislative and other changes.

The new *Child and Family Services Authorities Act*, establishes four authorities responsible for administering and providing for the delivery of child and family services in Manitoba. These authorities include a First Nations Northern; First Nations Southern; Métis and General Authority. The Act is expected to be proclaimed in the fall of 2003. It is expected that the detailed plan that includes changes to legislation, funding and service structure will be substantially implemented by March 2004.

Sexual exploitation

In late 2002, Manitoba introduced a strategy to address the underlying problems of sexually exploited youth through a multi-system, multi-year commitment and a mentorship approach. A multi-disciplinary committee made up of representatives of government and private agencies active in this area directs the implementation of the strategy. The strategy has a three-part approach: first, to develop and implement awareness/training programs for agency management and direct service workers involved with high-risk/vulnerable youth; second, to develop and implement an integrated approach to service delivery; and finally, to support both prevention and intervention initiatives that include an evaluation component.

Trafficking in children

Since 1999, Manitoba has participated in two national moratoriums on adoption from countries where there was documented evidence of corruption and trafficking of children. Manitoba has

also agreed to be party to negotiations with Vietnam to implement ethical and legal procedures for the adoption of Vietnamese children.

Government of New Brunswick

In July 2002, the Department of Education's Anglophone sector developed *Guidelines and Standards — Educational Planning for Students With Exceptionalities*.

Policy 703 — Positive Learning Environment was implemented in April 1999 and revised in September 2001. This policy provides a framework for activities of the Department of Education, school districts and schools which will create positive learning and working environments in the public education system by proposing a vision which is shared by all partners in education; establishing a process for fostering positive learning and working environments; identifying best practices for discipline when a positive environment alone is not enough; and setting limits for behaviour and identifying the responsibilities of all partners in the school system.

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

Safe & Caring Schools Initiative — Fall 2001

The Department of Education is committed to being proactive in addressing issues of violence in schools and developing a safer caring environment. To assist in achieving these goals, the Department began the implementation of a Safe & Caring Schools Initiative in the fall of 2001.

To address concerns around the issue of bullying in schools, the Department sponsored a provincial forum on school bullying in May 2002. The forum consultations have resulted in a province-wide commitment to this Safe & Caring Schools Action Plan. The implementation of this action plan will be monitored by the Safe & Caring Schools Advisory Group, consisting of key communities and education partners.

Childhood Development Initiative

In June 2001, the Province announced the first year of a 36.6 million five-year Early Childhood Development Initiative. "Stepping Into the Future" was designed to specifically help children to reach their potential and help families support their children within strong communities. The funding focusses on four key areas: healthy pregnancy, birth and infancy; parenting and family supports; early childhood development, learning and care; and community supports. Six new Family Resource Centres opened in Nain, Labrador West, Port Saunders, Baie Verte, Springdale and Placentia. Funding for the five existing programs was enhanced. The Family Resource Centres are community-based and provide a variety of programs for young children and families such as Healthy Baby Clubs, parenting workshops and literacy programs.

Teen Tobacco Team

The Teen Tobacco Team, established in 2000, was established to demonstrate that Government not only promotes anti-tobacco messages to youth but is also interested in hearing what youth

have to say. Team members from all across the province speak on behalf of all young people in the province and advise the Minister of Health and Community Services on issues related to youth smoking.

Government of Ontario

The *Ontario Curriculum* (K-12) has been developed and implemented during the past seven years. Human Rights Education is found throughout the curriculum. Students begin to learn about rights and responsibilities as early as Grade 1. By the end of Grade 1, students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of rights and responsibilities in a way that shows respect for the rights and property of others. In Grade 5, students are expected to demonstrate an understanding of the rights of Canadians, including those specified in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, and to demonstrate an understanding that for every right (e.g. the right of democratic governance), there is a responsibility (e.g. the responsibility to vote). A mandatory course in civics requires all Grade 10 students to learn about democratic decision-making and demonstrate an understanding of citizenship within a global context, while a mandatory history course includes Canada's role as a world leader in human rights. Grade 11 and 12 courses in history, law and politics encompass a study of human rights.

Native Language Policy documents for Grades 1-12 were developed; several resource guides to teaching of First Nations languages were also developed.

The *Early Reading Strategy* (starting 2001) and *Early Math Strategy* (launched in 2002) are aimed at improving achievement in reading and mathematics among children from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 6. These strategies help ensure that all students gain the solid foundation they need in reading and math. The Strategies provide support to teachers, parents and students, while requiring school boards and schools to set targets for improvement as measured by an annual provincial assessment of all Grade 3 and 6 students.

Graduate in Ontario by Achieving Literacy Standards, 2003, is the next step in the Ontario government's plan to ensure every student achieves his or her potential. This strategy will benefit students in Grades 7-12 who may be at risk of not achieving their educational goals and also need extra help in reading, writing and math and in their transition from school to the workplace, college or university.

The *Rural Education Strategy*, beginning in September for the 2003-2004 school year, recognizes the cost of keeping open small schools in single school communities, and the cost of improving access to quality education in small, rural, and northern schools. The province also provides additional resources to help boards with the cost of operating small and/or widely dispersed schools in remote and rural areas through the Geographic Circumstances Grant.

The *Special Education Guide for Educators, 2002*, is a key information resource on all aspects of provincial special education legislation and policy. The Ministry of Education is working on the development of program standards for each exceptionality (gifted or with any learning disabilities, see above).

The government acknowledges that some students may not be able to complete all the requirements for the Ontario Secondary School Diploma. The Ontario Ministry of Education provides an Ontario Secondary School Certificate or a Certificate of Recognition for students who leave school before earning the diploma.

Government of Québec

Support for families component

An additional \$50 million investment under the *Programme de services de garde éducatifs à contribution réduite* [reduced-contribution educational childcare services program] was announced in the 2002 budget speech for the creation of early childhood centres, adding 5,000 more places to the 2003-2004 plan, for a total of 160,000 places currently available. This means things are on course to achieve the objective of 200,000 places in 2006. A study to evaluate the quality of childcare services was recently carried out and the first analysis report is expected in 2004.

In 2002, with the backing of the Québec government, a hundred or so municipalities adopted a family policy.

Education component

The Québec ministry of education also adopted a number of policies:

- *New Approaches, New Solutions: Fostering Success for Secondary School Students in Disadvantaged Areas*

Policy adopted in May 2002 to give students a second chance to get an education, regardless of their socio-economic circumstances.

- *Policy on Special Education: Adapting Our Schools to the Needs of All Students*

Policy adopted in January 2000 that supports success for as many students as possible and seeks to prevent difficulties and adjustment problems among children with disabilities or learning or behavioural problems.

- *Policy and Action Plan on Educational Integration and Intercultural Education: A School for the Future*

Policy adopted in November 1998 recommending that educational structures in schools be broadened to foster the integration of new arrivals to Quebec.

- *Québec's Public Schools: Responding to the Diversity of Moral and Religious Expectations*

Bill 118, enacted in June 2000, recommends an open public school, in the neighbourhood, that fosters social cohesion while conveying to young people the underlying values of Quebec society and teaching them to live better together.

- *A New Direction for Success. The Guidance-Oriented School: An Evolving Concept.* Policy accompanying the 2002-2003 Supporting Montreal Schools Program

This program offers school children from the most disadvantaged parts of Montreal Island progressive and ongoing educational development based on their specific characteristics and needs and designed to ensure their success.

- In December 2001, the new *Loi sur la santé publique* [public health act] was adopted, replacing the 1972 *Loi sur la protection de la santé publique* [protection of public health act]. This new legal framework gives the department the tools to effectively perform its four main public health roles. It gives concrete expression to the preventive approach required in the health and social services network. The new act includes targeted measures for children to improve their health and well being throughout the various stages of their development.
- Adaptation of the youth protection system to Aboriginal realities. New legislation applying to Aboriginal communities for children whose safety and development is or may be deemed to be compromised. Bill 166 was presented in the National Assembly in December 2000 and enacted in June 2001. It introduces a new provision amending the *Youth Protection Act* (section 37.5), whereby the government may conclude an agreement with an Aboriginal nation or any other Aboriginal group to create a specific youth protection system. Section 37.5 of the Act sets out the framework in which the government can conclude such agreements.

Government of Saskatchewan

With the coming into force of the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* (YCJA) on April 1, 2003, new policies with respect to the implementation of the legislation and delivery of services have been developed. A new case management model has been introduced to address supervision and rehabilitation requirements. The case management model dedicates strategic attention to risk factors that are identified through a newly implemented, standardized assessment tool being used by Youth Workers.

Training regarding the YCJA has been delivered to police forces, prosecutors, legal aid, Youth Workers, First Nations and Métis organizations, community-based organizations, government departments, and Youth Justice Court Justices. Key to the training was information about the principles of the legislation and the objectives of greater community participation in the development and delivery of programs to reduce offending and the provision of services to offenders.

A key element of the YCJA is expanded opportunity for “Extra Judicial Measures” to reduce reliance on the traditional court system to resolve conflicts related to offending behaviours of youth. New policies and procedures have been developed, and training delivered to all agencies and individuals involved in the provision of Extra Judicial Measures programs. The training included representatives from 22 First Nations Bands or Aboriginal community organizations.

d) Newly implemented programmes and projects and their scope

Federal programmes and projects

Employment Insurance maternity and parental benefits: Effective December 2000, the Government of Canada extended Employment Insurance maternity and parental benefits from six months to one year. Maternity benefits remain at 15 weeks while 35 weeks of parental benefits are now available to both biological and adoptive parents. Access to these benefits has been improved with a reduction in the number of hours worked required to qualify for the benefits. In 2001-2002, the Government of Canada invested over \$2 billion in these benefits.

Housing: In 2001, the Government of Canada, provinces and territories agreed on a framework to increase the supply of affordable housing across Canada for low and moderate income households, including families with children. The Government of Canada has committed over \$1 billion to this initiative. Programs include renovating existing homes, converting commercial properties to residences and renovating shelters for women and children.

Youth Justice: The Government of Canada has committed close to \$1 billion over five years for cost-sharing agreements that will help provinces and territories implement youth justice renewal. The comprehensive Youth Justice Renewal Initiative under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* aims to:

- Rehabilitate young people who commit offences and safely reintegrate them into society;
- Ensure that a young person is subject to meaningful consequences for his or her offences; and
- Help prevent crime by addressing the circumstances underlying a young person's offending behaviour.

The National Child Benefit for First Nations was implemented in July 1998 to address the issue of Aboriginal child poverty in Canada. It enables First Nations to develop innovative programs to tailor the National Child Benefit to their communities. A total of \$48.76 million has been allocated to this program.

Child Disability Benefit: The Government of Canada introduced the Child Disability Benefit in its Budget 2003. The Child Disability Benefit provides up to \$1,600 annually to low- and modest-income families for a child qualifying for the Disability Tax Credit. Fifty million dollars annually has been allocated for this new benefit.

Compassionate Family Care Benefit: Effective January 2004, a new compassionate family care benefit under the Employment Insurance program will be available to provide income support

and corresponding job protection under the Canadian Labour Code for those who take time off from work to care for a gravely ill or dying parent, child or spouse. It is estimated that 270,000 workers per year will benefit from this new benefit.

Official Languages: In 2003, the Government of Canada introduced an Action Plan for Official Languages that includes investments in 3 specific initiatives to support early childhood development in minority official language communities. The budget for this initiative to promote and protect minority official languages is \$22 million over five years.

The Social Development Partnerships Program provides funding for early childhood learning and care (ECLC); objectives of this program include to promote the creation and dissemination of effective practices and innovative solutions in ECLC, and to strengthen the capacity of organizations in the social non-profit to address the needs of young children.

National Homelessness Initiative: In December 1999, the Government of Canada launched the *National Homelessness Initiative* (NHI) to foster effective partnerships and investments to alleviate and prevent homelessness across Canada. This included \$305 million in funding under the NHI's cornerstone program, the *Supporting Communities Partnership Initiative* (SCPI) which is designed to help communities across Canada, in partnership with all levels of government and not-for-profit and private stakeholders, to plan and implement comprehensive local strategies addressing the needs of homeless men, women, children and youth. The initiative serves the needs of homeless youth and women with children fleeing situations of family violence who seek shelter and appropriate support services such as crisis counselling and residence relocation.

A total of \$161 million in additional funding was also made available to address the needs of particularly vulnerable and/or over-represented groups within the homeless population, namely Aboriginal persons (\$59 million), youth (\$59 million) and victims of family violence (\$43 million).

Federal Strategy on Early Childhood Development for Aboriginal Children: Under this strategy announced in October 2002, the Government of Canada is investing \$320 million over five years to enhance early childhood development programs and services for Aboriginal children.

Data Collection on Adolescents in Canada. The Health Behaviours in School-Aged Children Survey (HBSC), done in partnership with government and academia is a 36 World Health Organization Cross-National Collaborative Study in which Canada has participated for four cycles (1989-1990, 1993-1994, 1997-1998, 2001-2002). It provides a source of Canadian data on youth health attitudes, behaviours and environments.

Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP) . The expansion of the CPNP was announced in the February 1999 Budget. New funding enhanced the existing annual budget of 21 million by providing an additional \$75 million over three years with a distribution of 10 million the first year, \$30 million the second year and \$35 million in the third year and ongoing years.

\$122 million has been allocated over five years for the child protection component of the SDP (the Action Plan on Child Protection).

Health Canada's Centres of Excellence for Children's Well-Being Program; The program was launched in October 2000 to ensure that knowledge about children and their healthy development is broadly distributed among families, community-based organizations, educators, health professionals, NGOs and governments. The funding allocated to the Program is \$20 million to five Centres over five years (2000-2005). The work of each centre focuses on an issue of national significance: early childhood development; children and adolescents with special needs; youth engagement; child welfare; and children and youth in prairie communities. The program gives special consideration to the unique needs of Canada's Aboriginal children, their families and communities.

The Centre for Children and Adolescents with Special Needs (Lakehead University, Thunder Bay) is one of five Centres of Excellence for Children's Well Being funded by Health Canada. It researches the opportunities and challenges for children with special needs in rural and northern communities where an important portion of the population is made up of Aboriginal children and youth.

Voices and Choices: Planning for School Health is a web-based strategic needs assessment and planning model for school communities that engages students in identifying their health-related needs and in developing strategies (policy and program) to improve their health and the health of their school environment.

SchoolNet: Launched in 1993, Canada's *SchoolNet* supports the integration of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into primary and secondary schools (including First Nations schools under federal jurisdiction) and into public libraries. The program has evolved through several distinct phases. Initially, the focus was on establishing connectivity in Canadian public schools and libraries. In 1999, Canada became the first nation in the world to provide an Internet connection to at least one classroom in every one of its public schools. At the same time, there was a major effort to recycle used computers and provide them to educational institutions. This was followed by efforts to broaden ICT penetration by extending Internet connectivity to many computers and to multiple classrooms.

The second phase in the evolution of *SchoolNet's* program activities was to focus on capacity- and skill-building as a way of furthering ICT integration. To this end, initiatives focused on helping schools enhance their ICT infrastructure and especially to develop the ICT skills of teachers and students.

More recently, *SchoolNet* is working on identifying, showcasing and sharing leading practices in ICT-based teaching and innovation in the classroom. In addition, work is being done on the development of policies and standards (e.g. around learning object repositories) to facilitate teachers' access to high-quality materials that enhance the school curriculum.

SchoolNet manages a specialized program directed at First Nations schools. Its objective is to provide Internet access, computers, and mentoring in ICT applications to First Nations schools under federal jurisdiction. Similarly, *SchoolNet* manages another program specifically focused on francophone schools, helping them to develop content and maintain international linkages with *la Francophonie*.

The following is a brief summary of key SchoolNet programs and initiatives:

- *Computers for Schools* supports connectivity by providing schools and libraries with recycled computers;
- Satellite infrastructure is being used to connect remote schools and libraries;
- Policies and partnerships are being developed to improve availability and affordability of Internet access in remote parts of Canada;
- *GrassRoots* promotes and facilitates the integration and use of ICT by Canadian youth through their development of innovative multimedia online projects, (many of which are usable as learning content by other schools, classes or learners);
- The *Network of Innovative Schools* provides schools with resources to implement and share best practices in the innovative use and integration of ICT;
- The *SchoolNet Portal* supports nation-wide on-line sharing of innovative practices and high quality Canadian on-line resources and tools;
- *SkillNet* is an online career planning service;
- *Canada's Campus Connections* provides access to 1,400 online courses as well as other complementary educational services;
- The *EduSpecs* and *EduSource* initiatives are working to establish pan-Canadian (and international) norms for repositories of learning objects to support the interoperability of learning systems.

In addition to specific programs, *SchoolNet* is involved in a number of supporting initiatives such as:

- Evaluating and measuring the impacts of ICT in schools through projects such as: conducting a census of ICT connectivity in schools; assessing uses for high-speed connectivity in remote communities; and creating 'maps' of online learning activities and e-learning research projects in Canada;
- Raising awareness of the importance of ICT to Canada's social and economic development, by participating in events such as Canada's Information Technology Week;
- Branding Canada as a world leader through the marketing of Canada's *SchoolNet* and Canadian expertise in ICT and learning technology;
- Using the *SchoolNet* National Advisory Board to foster dialogue and collaboration with other levels of government as well as educational experts; and
- Providing opportunities for youth to participate in discussions on ICT through their involvement in the *SchoolNet* Youth Advisory Board.

The Government of Canada regards *SchoolNet* as a highly successful program that has helped Canada become one of the most connected nations in the world while supporting the development and commercialization of innovative internet applications and content by Canadians. As such, *SchoolNet* continues to play a key role in implementing the government's Connecting Canadians agenda as well as its Innovation Strategy.

SchoolNet was allocated an additional \$15 million in the February 2003 federal Budget. This complements funding allocated in the 2000 and 2001 Budgets that extended the program.

SchoolNet's Funding: Prior to the February 28, 2003 Budget announcement, total funding allocated to *SchoolNet* from 1995-1996 to 2003-2004 has been approximately \$203 million.

YEARS (APPROX.)

Fiscal Years	Amount of Funding
1995-1996	9700000
1996-1997	9800000
1997-1998	9900000
1998-1999	23808000
1999-2000	28726000
2000-2001	30953000
2001-2002	30000000
2002-2003	20000000
2003-2004	20000000
2002-2003	10000000
2003-2004	10000000

International Development: A total of \$122 million has been allocated over five years for the Action Plan on Child Protection. The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) has initiated a number of new projects in developing countries, with a strategic focus on child labour and children affected by armed conflict. An example is the Africa-Canada Youth Program, which is a \$30 million initiative and is an important component of the Canada Fund for Africa. In February 2003, the Government of Canada confirmed its commitment to increasing its levels of Official Development Assistance.

In September 2000, CIDA co-hosted with the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade (DFAIT) the International Conference on War Affected Children (Winnipeg, Manitoba). This conference discussed the diverse and complex realities faced by children in conflict situations, including the use of child soldiers.

Government of Alberta

A project to establish a unified family court was implemented to improve access to the justice system and provide a more positive experience for family law litigants.

One hundred youth justice committees were established across Alberta, providing an alternative to the formal court process and the possibility of time in custody for offenders.

A four-year Family Law Pilot Project was established under Legal Aid to examine the quality and cost effectiveness of using staff lawyers to provide family law legal services (divorce, child welfare, custody disputes, other family law cases).

A high-risk offender Web site was implemented to identify convicted high-risk offenders who could cause great harm.

The 1st Children's Forum was held in 1999, with subsequent forums held in October 2001 and May 2003.

The review of the *Child Welfare Act* was announced May 23, 2001.

In 2003, Alberta New Identities for Victims of Child Abuse (NIVA) Program assists individuals and their children who are escaping high-risk life-threatening domestic violence relationships by providing them with temporary protective measures.

The federal *Youth Criminal Justice Act* includes provisions for provincial and territorial jurisdictions to offer programmes necessary for certain sentences, or to "opt out"; advising youth justice court judges that the sentences are not available. Alberta has chosen to offer most services that contain this provision, including non-residential orders, intensive support and supervision, and intensive rehabilitative custody and supervision.

The first province-wide Amber Alert system in Canada is now in place in Alberta. Amber Alert is a voluntary, cooperative programme between law enforcement agencies and local broadcasters to send an emergency warning to the public when a child has been abducted and a life is in grave danger. Amber Alerts will be sent to broadcasters over Emergency Management Alberta's (EMA) Emergency Public Warning System (EPWS), the same system that provides immediate notice of impending floods or serious storms.

Alberta's Youth Justice Committee Program was recognized with a gold award from the Institute of Public Administration of Canada (IPAC) in August 2002. IPAC is a non-profit organization that provides networks and forums dedicated to fostering excellence in public service. A five-member jury selected Alberta youth Justice committees for the gold award from among 132 federal, provincial and municipal government entries.

Government of British Columbia

Under the *Employment and Assistance Act* and the *Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act*, the Ministry of Human Resources invested \$100 million in programs to support clients' efforts toward independence and introduced Job Placement, Training for Jobs, Pre-employment Supports for Persons with Disabilities and Community Assistance Programs to assist clients into employment.

The Ministry also introduced the Employment and Assistance Appeal Tribunal in 2002 to streamline the appeal process. The independent Tribunal ensures that decisions are made in an open, fair and timely manner.

- The Ministry's new programs began to achieve results in the 2002-2003 fiscal year as the number of BC Employment and Assistance clients receiving income assistance in British Columbia declined by 26 percent. Correspondingly, the number of children in income assistance families declined by almost 34 percent.

- The most recent Ministry exit survey found that 67 percent of former income assistance clients, who had remained independent for at least six months, had found employment. Research shows that clients who leave income assistance tend to have higher income.
- The decline in the number of children in income assistance families is a positive trend. Research also shows that children from income assistance families are approximately six times more likely than children from working families to need assistance as adults; children whose parents work are more likely to complete high school and be actively involved in the labour market.

Government of Manitoba

In 2000, the Court of Queen's Bench Automated Court Orders project was implemented for MEP court proceedings, enhancing MEP's ability to record repayment orders and take enforcement action in appropriate cases.

In July 2000, Manitoba established reciprocity with Austria for support establishment, variation and enforcement purposes. At the same time, there was an expanded arrangement for the same purposes with the U.S.A. (including all of the states, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia and the U.S. Virgin Islands).

In 2001, the Comprehensive Co-mediation Program (previously a pilot project) recommenced operation, providing parents with a mechanism to mediate, at no cost, both parenting and support/property issues on separation and divorce.

Commencing in September 2001, Family Conciliation began to provide a free brief consultation service to the court to address assessing the wishes or concerns of children. This service is in addition to the longstanding provision of free court-ordered custody and access assessment reports.

The Family Division of the Court of Queen's Bench expanded its judicial case management program in November 2002 to cover all family proceedings (except child protection cases and those in other limited categories).

In 2002, an updated version of the free *Family Law in Manitoba* public information booklet was released. Many thousands of these booklets are distributed annually to the public.

Government of New Brunswick

Due to the new youth legislation (YCJA), there are a number of new and enhanced community-based youth support programs that provide services and programs to youth and their families. The purpose is to address both the needs of the youth and reduce the reoffending risk in the community.

New Brunswick has Tuition Agreements with First Nations, a Maliseet Language Committee, a Mi'kmaq Language Committee, an Aboriginal Education Curriculum Development Advisory Committee, and School District-First Nations Aboriginal Education Advisory Committees.

A number of programmes have been created under the programme *Greater Opportunities for New Brunswick Children: An Early Childhood Development Agenda*:

- *Prenatal Benefit Program*: The goal of this programme is to improve the health of pregnant women and their newborns by providing pregnant women with the funding and information required for healthy food and lifestyle choices during pregnancy.
- *Infant-Parent Attachment Pilot*: This community-based pilot project provides screening and intervention for parents that are at risk of developing insecure infant-parent attachment within the first year of their child's life. This project builds on the existing Public Health Priority Assessment (PHPA) screening tool and the home-based early intervention services.
- *Children's Support Program (Child Witnesses of family violence)*: This program provides funds for one staff person for each of New Brunswick's 12 transition houses. These staff persons provide a safe and supportive environment for children and through play-based strategies, give children a place to express themselves, learn new skills and more.
- *Communities Raising Children (CRC)*: A community engagement initiative to assist parents and families with children ages 0-5. CRC's goals are to support parents in their primary role of parenting through a spectrum of accessible parent information as well as support services; and to support communities in becoming engaged in dialogue and action on behalf of their children and families.
- *Excellence in Parenting*: The overall goal of this initiative is to develop a range of province wide skill-building and support initiatives that directly support parents in their role as "caretakers of our future". To develop this initiative, a committee has been established with representatives from Family and Community Services, Mental Health, Public Health, the Department of Education, Family Resource Centers, and Early Intervention Programs. The mandate of this working group is to "design and implement a delivery model of parenting education and information that provides knowledge, skill training, support and recognition to parents in an efficient, accessible, comprehensive manner."
- *Early Language Pilot Program*: This is a community-based prevention pilot program aimed at preventing or alleviating language difficulties in children from birth to age five. Through this program many community connections have been made.
- *Enhanced Early Childhood Initiatives*: Included in these enhancements are the increased \$ per space for Early Intervention and Integrated Day Care Services, and the Support Worker Program which provides funding to child day care facilities to pay for additional hours of support worker time for children with special needs in order to support the family's labour force activities.
- *Enhanced Child Day Care Services*: Included in these enhancements are the Quality Improvement Funding Support Program (QIFS) which makes funding available to child day care facilities to improve working conditions for staff who work directly with

children, Training Initiatives designed to support the accessibility and affordability of formal training and ongoing professional development opportunities for staff working in the province's child day care facilities and Opening the Door to Quality Child Care and Development Pilot Project which is an on-site consultation model focussed on assisting child day care facilities in improving quality.

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

Kinderstart Program

Kinderstart is a transition to school program developed in 2002 by the Department of Education. It consists of a series of eight one-hour orientation sessions for children and their parents/caregivers in the year prior to kindergarten entry.

Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation

Launched in 2002, the Centre for Distance Learning and Innovation will assist the province's K-12 schools to capitalize on the tremendous advances in information and communication technologies. CDL uses a Web-based approach to deliver a new form of distance education called e-learning. This technology permits students from any number of schools in different districts to enroll together in a given course. Most communications are through an Internet-based system incorporating email, audio-conferencing, Internet, fax and conference forums. The program ensures equal access to educational programs for rural students.

Newfoundland and Labrador Youth Advisory Committee

The Newfoundland and Labrador Youth Advisory Committee is comprised of up to 15 youth from throughout Newfoundland and Labrador aged 15-29 years and four adults mentors, appointed to advise the Minister of Youth Services and Post-Secondary Education on provincial government youth related policies, programs and services.

Government of Ontario

There has been an expansion in the number of child-friendly courts that offer support, counselling and building features designed to reduce the traumatic effects on child witnesses who have to appear in criminal trials.

A high-risk offender flagging system has been implemented which results in relevant material about individual "flagged" high-risk offenders (many of whom offend against children), being collected in a central repository so it will be readily available to Crown counsel, and ultimately the courts, for subsequent cases involving the same offender. This helps ensure the fullest of information for assessing the risk level of and appropriate proceedings in respect of an offender.

In 1999, by order-in-council, the Honourable Sidney Robins was appointed to conduct a review to identify and prevent sexual misconduct in Ontario schools and to prepare a report to the Attorney General, which he did in February 2000.

In recent years, the Ministry of the Attorney General has funded the Youth Justice Committee Program, which was authorized under the former *Young Offender's Act* and is now authorized under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act*. Youth Justice Committees bring together young persons alleged to have committed non-violent offences, their parents, victims and trained members of the community to negotiate an appropriate way for the young person to make amends for his or her actions.

The Victim Services Secretariat (VSS) currently funds 45 Victim/Witness Assistance Programs (V/WAP), which provide victims and witnesses of crime with information and support throughout the criminal court process:

- V/WAP staff work in cooperation with community child witness support programs to provide for integrated and increased support for child witnesses.
- In jurisdictions where there is no community Child Witness Preparation program, V/WAP staff prepare children to testify in court.
- V/WAP staff assess the child's reactions, fear and ability to testify in court.
- V/WAP staff may make recommendations to the Crown about the use of testimonial aids and the use of practical aids such as a microphone and booster seat.

VSS currently funds two child witness preparation programs:

- The Toronto Child Abuse Centre Child Victim/Witness Support Program provides individual and group preparation and support; has developed a Court Kit to help prepare child witnesses for court; and has developed a Web site for children going to court.
- The London Family Court Clinic Child Witness Project provides individual assessment and court preparation; and has several publications, including "What You Should Know after the Verdict: Information for Young Victims of Crime and their Families," which explains the aspects of the legal system that can come into play after a verdict, including both civil and criminal aspects.

VSS currently funds 30 Domestic Violence courts programs, where teams of specialized personnel, including police, Crown Attorneys, V/WAP staff and others work together to ensure priority is given to safety and needs of domestic assault victims and their children.

The goals of the DVC are to:

- Prosecute domestic violence cases more effectively
- Intervene early in abusive situations
- Provide better support to victims
- Increase offender accountability

VSS has implemented a number of grants programs to promote innovation in victim services, and to address the diverse needs of different types of victims, including children. Grants have been approved for projects, including:

- Family, Youth and Child Services of Muskoka project will bridge the gap in services for sexually abused children and their families in the District of Muskoka.
- Gatehouse Child Abuse Advocacy Centre project will help to reduce the trauma of re-victimization experienced by adults survivors of childhood abuse.
- Toronto Child Abuse Centre project will pilot a follow-up service for children and families in the Child Victim Witness Program by providing additional information and support for children/youth and caregivers who are struggling with the court process and/or the final outcome.
- Canadian Centre for Abuse Awareness project will conduct a series of round-table conferences to identify and document systemic legislative issues contributing to direct victimization and re-victimization of child crime victims.
- Nishnabe-Aski Police Service - Sioux Lookout project will conduct joint police/victim service provider workshops on sexual assault, domestic violence, physical and sexual child abuse and victims issues in seven remote fly-in communities.
- Services aux enfants & adultes de Prescott-Russell project will provide multi-sectoral training focusing on the effects on children and youth who witness domestic violence.
- Nova Vita Women's Services project will develop a program based on the principles of MCFCS "Children Who Witness Domestic Violence" program.
- Creche Child and Family Centre project will educate child welfare workers on domestic violence issues through the delivery of workshops.
- South Riverdale Community Health Centre project will undertake an evaluation of existing domestic violence protocols, train agencies, provide education and raise awareness of domestic violence within families with young children, specifically with children up to 6 years old.

The Office of the Official Guardian in the Ministry of the Attorney General is now called the Office of the Children's Lawyer.

The Children's Lawyer provides free legal representation for minors where the court directs representation in child protection proceedings; where a child is admitted to a secure treatment program; and where a minor is consenting to the surrender of his or her child for adoption. The court may also direct the Children's Lawyer to provide a report with respect to the proposed settlement of a claim involving a minor or to represent the legal interests of children in custody and access matters.

In September 2000, the Premiers and Prime Minister of Canada agreed to an Early Childhood Development Initiative. The communiqué stated: "Every child should be valued and have the opportunities to develop his or her unique physical, emotional, intellectual, spiritual and creative potential. First Ministers affirm their commitment to the well-being of children by setting out their vision of early childhood development as an investment in the future of Canada." On May 10, 2001, the Ontario government launched its Early Years Plan that connects parents and that focusses on their children's early development. Many of the program Ontario funded were new initiatives that did not previously receive government funding. Other programs experienced increases to the government funding they received the year before.

The largest of the universal programs is the *Ontario Early Years Centres* initiative. A key of the Ontario's Early Years Plan is to increase public awareness of the importance of a child's early

years for healthy development. These Centres, situated across the province, offer a mix of supports that address common needs, such as literacy programs, nutrition programs and resources for parents and caregivers. They also provide other services tailored to the unique needs of each community. In so doing, the Ontario Early Years Centres meet, in part or in whole, the ideals set out in articles 4, 6, 18 and 24.

In addition, Ontario has designed 15 universal programs to ensure that every child, including the province's most vulnerable, has the opportunity to achieve his or her potential through healthy development in childhood as set out in article 6 of the Convention.

- One such program, *Healthy Babies, Healthy Children*, is a prevention/early intervention initiative designed to help families promote healthy child development and help their children achieve their potential. Building on the success of the existing program, this universal program extends the screening and assessment services delivered.
- The *Maternal Newborn and Early Child Development Resource Centre Initiative* expands an existing provincial resource centre that provides training, consultation and information to the community by including new topics such as early child development, nutrition, tobacco reduction and healthy pregnancy. This initiative is intended for health care providers and community health professionals.
- The *Electronic Record for Prenatal and Postnatal Health* initiative was designed to establish an electronic version of the Antenatal Record, which consists of records used by physicians and midwives to track the medical history of clients during pregnancy. The initiative includes a strategy for electronic transmission of records to hospitals which is designed to enhance the level of care provided a woman and child during the peri-natal process.
- The *Early Years Challenge Fund (EYCF)* is a matching program that challenges businesses, volunteer and charitable groups to help communities develop new programs for all parent and young children.
- The *Promote Healthy Pregnancy and Child Development* initiative, among Ontario's 37 boards of health, strengthens community capacity to support healthy pregnancy and child development. This initiative is a population-based, health promotion/primary prevention strategy which focusses on children up to the age of six and their parents or caregivers, expectant parents and community service providers.
- The *Public Education and Awareness* initiative promotes and distributes public education materials about early child development and parenting. Materials are sensitive to diverse literacy, linguistic and cultural backgrounds.
- The *Breastfeeding Promotion Initiative* produced a media campaign and educational materials to promote breastfeeding.
- The *Prevention of Neural Tube Defects* initiative developed and distributed educational materials, and created a community awareness campaign about the importance of women

taking folic acid for healthy infant development during pregnancy. The emphasis of all of the previously mentioned campaigns were on public awareness, in whole or in part, to women of childbearing age, pregnant and new mothers, fathers and fathers-to-be, the general public, boards of health, community partners, and providers of preconception and prenatal care.

- The *Program Effectiveness Measurement* initiative enables the collection and analysis of data, which is used to track progress in improving early years programs.
- The *Child Outcome Measurement* initiative measures child outcomes in Ontario, with a particular focus on children up to the age of six.
- The *Perinatal and Child Health Survey Strategies* initiative collects baseline measures for a broad range of outcomes and risk factors related to maternal, pregnancy and infant health.

These universal initiatives are designed to help planners and services providers at local and provincial levels determine what services are required for young children.

One of Ontario's 13 targeted programs is the *Community Health Centres* initiative. This program is for families that have children with particular needs so that they can get the best start in life and embodies the principles, set out in articles 23 and 24. It builds on supports to parenting and health child development, especially in rural, northern, inner city and culturally diverse areas. The focus is on health promotion and illness prevention, promoting equal access to health services, and encouraging links among health and social service providers — approaches that harmonize with the goals of the Ontario Early Years Plan.

Children's Mental Health is another targeted initiative that extends services to children under the age of six. Early intervention and treatment aims to reduce more costly and intensive involvement in the future. This initiative helps to better identify children with mental health issues and at the same time provides intervention and treatment services in community settings. This initiative addresses the goals set out in articles 23 and 24 of the Convention.

The *Infant Development Program* helps children under six years of age that are at risk of delays in development or diagnosed with a developmental disability.

The *Aboriginal Fetal Alcohol Syndrome/Effects (FAS/FAE)* program is delivered by 22 Aboriginal program delivery organizations. The program provides nutrition education combined with a focus on parenting skills development. These programs serve Aboriginal children and families living on and off reserve. The *Aboriginal Child Nutrition* program provides nutrition education combined with a focus on parenting skills development. These programs serve Aboriginal children and families living on and off reserve.

The *Support for At-Risk Pregnant Women* project provides outreach and early intervention to at-risk pregnant women before the baby is born. Toronto Public Health and their satellite sites deliver this initiative designed for pregnant women and youth, and their children who are homeless or in temporary housing.

The *Prenatal HIV Testing* initiative increases awareness of the importance of HIV testing pregnancy as part of routine prenatal care. This initiative serves pregnant women and women considering pregnancy, as well as programs delivering prenatal services.

The *Prenatal and Postnatal Nurse Practitioner Services* project is being delivered by 10 selected Public Health Units. It improves access to prenatal and postnatal services in isolated and under-served areas by funding Public Health Units to support nurse practitioners.

The *Learning, Earning, and Parenting (LEAP)* program assists young parents to complete high school by providing help with tutoring, parenting skills, child care, school expenses and job finding.

The *Expansion of the Early Literacy Agenda* promotes, initiates and develops child and family literacy. Funding was provided for Early Literacy Specialists who: distributed Early Literacy Kits, conducted train-the-trainer workshops with early years professionals, built collaborative relationships with local early years professionals and programs to bolster community efforts in supporting early literacy and language development of children and their parents.

The *Intensive Early Intervention Initiative* expands the existing program to increase access to Intensive Behavioural Intervention (IBI) services for children (3-5 years) with autism. Nine regional providers deliver the program directly or provide funding to families to purchase the service from private providers.

The *Pregnant Women with Addictions* program provides addiction treatment and other services such as childcare, life skills and parenting to pregnant women across the province.

The *Injury and Family Abuse Prevention* initiative involves Public Health Units working with communities to strengthen their ability to prevent injury and violence. The aim is to create safer environments to reduce infant and childhood injuries and to increase identification and response to family abuse. The initiative will operate out of 37 Public Health Unit sites and some satellite sites. The initiative is a population-based, health promotion/primary prevention strategy for expectant parents, children up to the age of six and their parents and caregivers and community service providers such as midwives, physicians, and early childhood educators.

The *Infant Hearing Communication* program is a public education and awareness campaign. It supports the Infant Hearing Screening and Communications Development Program that screens infants for hearing problems and focusses on early identification and treatment of newborn/infant hearing problems. The targeted public education strategy is aimed at new prospective parents, parents receiving services through the Infant Hearing Program, health professionals, such as physicians, public health nurses, and prenatal instructors who interact with parents of newborns/infants and prospective parents, and the general public.

The *Sexual Assault Treatment for Children* program provides services and treatment to children who have been sexually assaulted. These services are provided through hospital-based sexual assault treatment centres.

Early Childhood Development (ECD) Expenditures***10 Early Childhood Development (ECD) initiatives funded by the Government of Canada through the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Public Health Division***

ECD Initiative	Year 1 2001-2002	Year 2 2002-2003	Year 3 2003-2004	Year 4 2004-2005	Year 5 2005-2006
Infant Hearing	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000
Injury and Family Abuse Prevention	\$3,654,000	\$5,353,000	\$10,153,000	\$10,153,000	\$10,153,000
Prenatal and Postnatal Nurse Practitioner Services	\$250,000	\$750,000	\$1,250,000	\$1,250,000	\$1,250,000
ECD/Parenting Public Education	\$175,000	\$175,000	Project complete	Project complete	Project complete
Prevention of Neural Tube Defects	\$135,000	\$135,000	Project complete	Project complete	Project complete
Breastfeeding Promotion	\$150,000	\$150,000	Project complete	Project complete	Project complete
Electronic Record for Prenatal and Postnatal Health	\$135,000	\$135,000	Project complete	Project complete	Project complete
Perinatal and Child Health Survey Strategies	\$2,000,000	\$2,140,000	Project complete	Project complete	Project complete
Promote Healthy Pregnancy and Child Development	\$2,147,000	\$3,153,000	\$4,223,000	\$4,223,000	\$4,223,000
Support for At-Risk Pregnant Women	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$70,000	\$70,000
Totals	\$9.74	\$12,661,000	\$16.59	\$16.59	\$16.59
TOTALS (Y1-5)	\$72.45				

Federal funds will be transferred to the provinces and territories according to the following schedule:

- \$300 million in 2001-2002 (Ontario's share approximately \$114 million; Public Health Division share: \$9.74 million)
- \$500 million in 2002-2003 (Ontario's share approximately \$153 million; Public Health Division share: \$12.94 million)
- \$500 million in 2003-2004, 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 (Ontario's share approximately \$192 million; Public Health Division share: \$16.59 million annually).

Government of Saskatchewan

The Saskatchewan Provincial Youth Advisory Committee (PYAC) is an advisory body, with members gleaned from young people aged 14-29, from every region of the province, who are representative of all Saskatchewan youth (male/female, Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal, rural/urban, those with disabilities). PYAC is available to all government departments and agencies for advice and consultation on a variety of issues, not simply those related to youth. However, more focus will be paid to the issues of youth retention and attraction, as well as youth employment and support for young entrepreneurs. PYAC is designed to run for the next two years, after which it will be reviewed.

As part of a collaborative response to high levels of auto theft in Regina, a creative and proactive alternative measures program was implemented in the Spring of 2002. The program, Help Eliminate Auto Theft (HEAT), was developed through the collaborative efforts of a multi-sectoral group including police, government, community, First Nations and community-based agencies, as an option for youth charged with a first auto theft related offence. HEAT incorporates a range of new, evidence-based approaches, many of which have not been available to alternative measures programmes. These include the use of the newly implemented Saskatchewan risk assessment tool, community justice conferences, restitution programs, traditional Aboriginal approaches, cognitive skill training and corporate recognition for successful youth. In the first 13 months of the program, 74 youth have been referred to HEAT. Only 9 youth have reoffended while involved with the program.

The Aboriginal Round Table of the Regina Youth Justice Forum has completed the recruitment and training of volunteers for the Regina Aboriginal Youth Justice Committee. This new program is ready to accept referrals from the community, the police and the Crown to resolve conflicts resulting from potential criminal behaviours of children and youth. The Committee will also accept community referrals involving children under 12 years of age with parental approval. The interventions provided by the Aboriginal Youth Justice Committee incorporate the "best practices" of existing Extra Judicial Measures and traditional approaches of First Nations and Métis. This new program is intended to increase the confidence of Aboriginal peoples in the justice system and to increase the likelihood that youth can effectively resolve conflicts in the communities. Through efforts of the Regina Aboriginal Round Table, four new Aboriginal Justices of the Peace have been appointed.