

*We've done a lot already to support kids and families—with more than 100 programs supported by government and delivered in communities. But we need to do more. And we need to do things differently—working together, based on the real, practical needs of children, youth, and families.*

*“Our Kids Are Worth It” is our plan to get there.*



### *Reporting Results*

We're evaluating all of our new projects, and we'll share our results. We'll also report on progress on all activities each year.

### *Charting Our Progress*

Real and lasting change takes time. The full impact of our effort will only be seen as our youngest children grow and develop. In the meantime, we've set outcomes to chart our progress, such as

- more active youth
- shorter waits for mental health services
- fewer student dropouts
- more youth volunteering
- fewer youth involved in crime

### *Finding Out More*

View our full strategy document, *Our Kids Are Worth It*, online at [www.gov.ns.ca/coms/](http://www.gov.ns.ca/coms/)

Get in touch if you have any questions about the plan or would like us to send you a copy.

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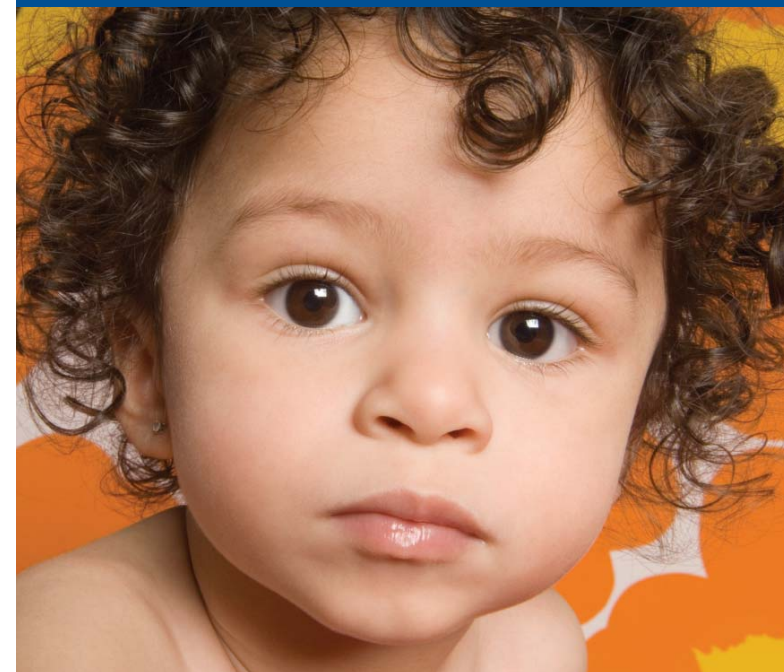
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# Our Kids Are Worth It

## Highlights from Our Strategy for Children and Youth



## *Building a Strong Foundation*

### *We are*

- creating a “well child system”—where teams of nurses, nutritionists, doctors, dentists, and others work together so babies and families can access a full range of services with one visit, at convenient times, in one place
- adding more child care spaces, particularly in rural communities
- linking efforts across government and with communities to reduce poverty, get kids active and eating well, and keep kids safe

## *Identifying Problems, Helping Early*

### *We are*

- checking more often on the development of babies, toddlers, and young children—for example, we are starting to assess the educational and social well-being of all grade primary students
- testing new ways to reach out to families—for example, with telephone coaching and by making home visits available to families for as long as they need

## *Co-ordinating Programs, Services*

### *We are*

- testing ways to bring the people and programs that serve kids and their families together (a) to develop comprehensive plans that deal with their full range of needs and (b) to make more services available in schools and other welcoming, accessible places
- working as teams across government focused more on the real and changing needs of children, youth, and families, and less on the mandates of government departments
- hiring new regional staff who will work with local advisory groups to improve the coordination of services in communities



### *Our Vision:*

*Children and youth are healthy, safe, nurtured, and responsible—and given the right opportunities to be the best that they can be.*

*Helping keep or getting young people back on track is a shared and daunting responsibility. Everyone must do their part.*

*We all want our kids to be happy and healthy—to grow up as responsible, caring adults. Ultimately, this is also the best way to prevent crime.*

## *Increasing Access, Closing Gaps*

### *We are*

- helping kids and families find the help they need through a new website, the Kids’ Help Phone, and new youth navigators to help at-risk teenagers
- measuring and shortening wait lists for mental health services
- working with partners to close gaps—for example, developing programs that help young children causing trouble to get back on track, that help homeless youth, and that are relevant and respectful to diverse cultures

## *Engaging Youth, Promoting Shared Accountability*

### *We are*

- expanding school programs that reinforce positive behavior, good attendance, and offer more choice for students—for example, courses linked to career and life skills development
- testing new ways to engage youth in their communities—for example, through adventure, art, or recreation—to bring a team approach to help youth and families at risk or in crisis
- ensuring that young people expect and receive serious and swift consequences if they break the law, and putting programs in place that are more likely to get young offenders back on track and keep communities safe