

FOR RELEASE

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GOVERNMENT OF YUKON SUPPORTS AUTISM YUKON

WHITEHORSE – A new non-government organization supporting families and individuals with autism spectrum disorders will receive \$61,000 in funding from the Department of Health and Social Services.

“This government supports individuals with intellectual disabilities and their families. Autism Yukon is well positioned to provide support, information and education on autism to families, professionals and other individuals working with people with autism,” Health and Social Services Minister Brad Cathers said.

The minister added that the funding is similar to what other non-government organizations receive. This infusion of funding will help the organization improve the quality of life for the residents it serves.

“Five years ago, there were virtually no services for people with autism in the Yukon,” Autism Yukon president Mike Nixon said. “The funding announced today means that parents will have an expanded role in the future.”

In addition to this new funding, the department also provides funding for direct therapy services for children with autism. In 2005/06, the department expects to spend \$320,000 in funding for therapy services for 12 children.

Minister Cathers said he was proud of the progress the government is making on a range of social issues and in ensuring that all Yukon residents can live in healthy, caring communities.

“We have to ensure that individuals with disabilities are part of the community. We work quite closely with - and fund - the Child Development Centre to provide services and support to a broad spectrum of children with disabilities. We also fund six additional non-government organizations to provide services to Yukon residents who need them,” Cathers said.

“The Yukon government has been very supportive of families with autism, and we want to recognize that fact today,” Nixon said. “We know this funding realizes the dreams and hard work of many of our member families. It is an exciting time for our society and hopefully, will be the start of a better world for our kids.”

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