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YUKON SUPPORTS FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME SOCIETY PROGRAMMING

WHITEHORSE – Health and Social Services Minister Brad Cathers today has announced that the government will provide the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society of the Yukon (FASSY) with \$162,000 in the coming year, to ensure the continuation of some of its key programs.

“FASSY and the folks who work there have a very strong commitment to their clients and their client’s families,” Cathers said. “They work very hard and they provide a very valuable service to a segment of the population that is too often forgotten.”

Minister Cathers said FASSY requested additional funding to cover the shortfall when their federal funding ran out.

“They were obviously concerned about having to reduce or drop programming that they provide,” Cathers said.

FASSY will receive \$15,000 for administration costs; \$70,000 for a prevention worker; and \$77,000 for adult diagnosis. The group will also receive additional funding this year (up to \$200,000) to allow it to continue its one-on-one support program, “With a Little Help from My Friends.” At the same time the group, with assistance from the Yukon government, will continue to work with the federal government to secure funding.

“We are pleased the government has come through for us,” FASSY chair Richard Johnson said. “Our one-on-one program has been very successful and if we had had to cut that program because of a lack of funding it would have been extremely detrimental to our clients. Individuals afflicted with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) that we work with have great difficulty adjusting and meeting everyday normal living expectations and their social network cannot offer any assistance in this area.”

Johnson said the support for adult diagnosis will also be good for the organization.

“Too many adults don’t have a diagnosis and as a result cannot get appropriate services. Just like for anything else, a proper diagnosis allows for a more precise picture of the problem and for the development of appropriate services. Many of the services that we have today don’t meet the mark for adults with FASD and so our clients continue to present social issues and are often, regrettably, negatively stigmatized in our community. Funding for adult diagnosis will definitely help them to have a better life,” Johnson added.

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