



Aboriginal Early Years Advisory Circle

FIRST NATIONS, URBAN ABORIGINAL AND MÉTIS EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

STEERING COMMITTEE

YEAR-END REPORT FOR 2010-11

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Executive Summary

In September 2008, the Ministry of Children and Family Development hosted a first Day of Dialogue with Urban Aboriginal, First Nations and Métis representatives, as well as federal government and provincial cross-ministry representatives. Participants at this first Day of Dialogue recommended the development of two related strategic plans, one for First Nations, and another for Aboriginal off-reserve, inclusive of Inuit, Métis and other Aboriginal people living in rural or urban communities.

In July 2010, at the conclusion of a second Day of Dialogue, \$5 million dollars was allocated toward the Aboriginal Early Childhood Development Reinvestment initiative, an initiative that responds to the draft BC First Nations Early Childhood Development Framework and the Aboriginal Early Years Advisory Council's 'Creating Pathways' Strategic Plan.

By August 2010, a Steering Committee was formed to oversee planning and management of this initiative and by October 2010 a series of four funding programs were created. These four funding programs were formed based on the priority areas identified during the July 2010 second day of dialogue session, each corresponding with the priority areas recommended in that session. The priority areas were:

1. Minor Capital
2. Service Planning / Capacity Building
3. Language and Culture
4. General Program Enhancements

It was further recommended that the percentage of funding allocated for each of these priority areas would be as follows:

- 50% to Existing Programs (i.e. Minor Capital and General Program Enhancements)
- 35% to Culture and Language Programs
- 15% to Capacity Building and Service Planning

Between October 2010 and February 2011, the 'Call for Applications' for each of these four funding programs were released, and in late February 2011, an additional one-time contribution of \$1 million dollars was provided by the Ministry of Child and Family Development toward this initiative. By mid-March 2011, all funds had been released and the process of project reporting began.

In addition, at the end of March, the Steering Committee hosted a special two-day forum in Richmond, BC to offer practical, hands-on professional development training to communities who were in the process of establishing new early childhood development programs and services and/or those who requested support in proposal writing. Thirty community members were sponsored for travel and accommodations, and over the course of two days, 8 workshops were delivered, covering topics such as asset mapping, proposal writing and strategic program and service planning.

By early April 2011, a Program/Host Agency Review was carried out to determine the effectiveness of the Steering Committee-Host Agency model, and to determine planning needs and direction for year two of the initiative.

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Introduction

The First Nations, Urban Aboriginal and Métis Early Childhood Development Steering Committee is pleased to offer this report on our first year of operations as a Steering Committee for the Aboriginal Early Childhood Development Reinvestment initiative.

We acknowledge and thank the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) for making this initiative possible; for working closely with the Steering Committee over this first year as we developed plans to implement year one of this initiative, for empowering the Steering Committee to oversee and control the resources of this initiative, and for their encouragement as we established longer term strategies in support of early childhood development programs and services for First Nations, Urban Aboriginal and Métis communities throughout British Columbia.

This is the first time First Nations, urban Aboriginal and Métis organizations have come together to form a Steering Committee for such an initiative, and as such, our first year was a year of discussion, analysis, planning and learning.

In this report we offer a chronology of the various elements of planning that helped to shape this initiative for its first year of operations. We share our vision, shared values and mandates, and provide an outline of the goals, objectives, strategies and deliverables we developed to implement this initiative in an efficient and effective manner.

We include a summary of how the funds were disbursed (i.e. according to the priorities and percentages established by representatives of First Nations, urban Aboriginal and Métis early childhood development organizations from around the province, and share the findings of an initial survey that was completed by applicants to our funding programs. These findings are in the form of priorities that helped to establish the Steering Committee's goals and objectives for our second program year.

Once again – we offer our sincere thanks to everyone that helped to make the first year of this initiative so successful, and those who continue to support this work into a new fiscal and program year.

Background

The development of a “comprehensive, innovative five-year Early Years Plan for Aboriginal children” was identified under Pillar 4, the Aboriginal Approach, of *Strong, Safe and Supported Action and Operational Plan* by the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

In September 2008, the Ministry of Children and Family Development hosted a first Day of Dialogue with Urban Aboriginal, First Nations and Métis representatives, as well as federal government and provincial cross-ministry representatives.

Participants at this first Day of Dialogue recommended the development of two related strategic plans, one for First Nations, and another for Aboriginal off-reserve, inclusive of Inuit, Métis and other Aboriginal people living in rural or urban communities. The first Day of Dialogue discussions also emphasized the importance of exploring the merging of the two plans into a single provincial strategic plan at a future date.

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As a result of the first Day of Dialogue an Aboriginal Early Years Advisory Circle (AEYAC) was established to support the development of a strategic plan for off-reserve Aboriginal early childhood development. The AEYAC prepared a 5 year strategic plan entitled “Creating Pathways: A Five Year Aboriginal Early Years Strategic Plan” which was presented to government and was also publicly distributed.

The First Nations Early Childhood Development Council (FNECDC), created in 2007, guided the development of the BC First Nations Early Childhood Development Framework. In November 2009, the FNECDC released their framework welcoming responses and further community feedback on questions contained within the document.

Building on the work of the September 2008 first Day of Dialogue, a second Day of Dialogue was held in July 2010 with members of the FNECDC and the AEYAC to explore the interest of the FNECDC and AEYAC in implementing a \$5 million dollar investment targeted for Aboriginal early childhood development and to work collaboratively to put these plans into action provided the two tables were interested in working together on the initiative.

Through the direction received by the participants of this second Day of Dialogue, the *First Nations, Urban Aboriginal and Métis Early Childhood Development Steering Committee* was formed.

This Steering Committee is comprised of members of the AEYAC and the FNECDC with the purpose of working cooperatively and collaboratively to enhance and support the quality of First Nations, Urban Aboriginal, and Métis early childhood programs and services in BC.

Funding priorities and recommendations that came out of the second Day of Dialogue were:

- 50% to Existing Programs
- 35% to Culture & Language Programs
- 15% to Regional Capacity Building & Service Planning

These priorities helped to shape the Steering Committee’s Interim Terms of Reference (to April 30, 2011) and the community-focused funding programs that would be offered this fiscal year.

Upon completion of the first year of the Aboriginal Early Childhood Development Initiative, the Steering Committee changed its name to First Nations and Urban Aboriginal Early Childhood Development Steering Committee to reflect their work in addressing priorities and recommendations contained in the FNECDC Framework and the AEYAC ‘Creating Pathways’ Strategic Plan.

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Steering Committee Membership

Members of the Steering Committee are from a wide range of First Nations and urban Aboriginal community organizations mandated to deliver early childhood development programs and services. Members were appointed by the FNECDC and the AEYAC (which included members/representatives of the Métis Commission and Métis Nation BC). Ex-officio members

FNECDC

1. Tyrone McNeill
2. Candace Robotham
3. Pam Lewis
4. Karen Isaac
5. Deborah Jacobs
6. Jeannette Jules
7. Craig Buchan (replaced Deborah Jacobs)
8. Mary Teegee (replaced Jeannette Jules)

AEYAC

1. Joan Gignac
2. Diana Elliott
3. Flo Lewis
4. Marcia Dawson
5. Deborah Canada
6. Victoria Pruden
7. Jessie Nyberg, Elder Representative

Ex-Officio Members

1. Dena Carroll, Ministry of Children and Family Development
2. Robyn Hovorka, Ministry of Children and Family Development

Host Agency Representatives

1. Paul Lacerte
2. Carl Mashon
3. Warren Clarmont
4. Tanya Clarmont

Terms of Reference

After much discussion, the Steering Committee developed a Terms of Reference that spelled out three priority (mandate) areas:

1. to create a system and infrastructure that will respond to the BC First Nations Early Childhood Development Framework and the Aboriginal Early Years Advisory Council's 'Creating Pathways' Strategic Plan; and enable funding from this initiative to flow to First Nations and Urban Aboriginal organizations while also strengthening the networks of people that deliver First Nations and urban Aboriginal early childhood development programs and services.
2. to develop programs and services that can be implemented and completed within the 2010-11 fiscal year timeframe.
3. to assess whether the Steering Committee and Host Agency model meets the overarching purpose of this initiative *"to enhance the quality of First Nations, Métis and urban Aboriginal early childhood and family programs, services and supports"*.

These priority areas helped to shape the goals, objectives, strategies and deliverables for the initiative, and enabled MCFD to see how their priority of *"a comprehensive, innovative, five-year Early years service plan for Aboriginal children"* could be met.

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Vision

The vision for the new First Nations, Urban Aboriginal and Métis Early Childhood Development Steering Committee is *to work cooperatively and collaboratively to enhance the quality of First Nations, Métis and urban Aboriginal early childhood programs, services and supports ensuring all of our work is culturally relevant, safe, accessible and integrated.*

Shared Values

The shared values of the First Nations, Urban Aboriginal and Métis Early Childhood Development Steering Committee are:

- To advance our traditional ways of knowing, seeing and being.
- To build flexibility into our systems, structures and processes.
- To ensure we are inclusive in our work by always keeping the 'child at the center' of our dialogue.
- To maximize resource allocation to our children, families, communities and Nations.
- To respect our autonomy and acknowledge our interdependence.
- To integrate our activities to better align with and improve our efforts.

Steering Committee Meetings

Beginning in August 2010, the Steering Committee began weekly meetings in Victoria and Richmond to establish the programs that would be offered under the AECD Initiative. Some meetings included professional facilitators, others were overseen by the two Steering Committee Co-Chairs.

Steering Committee members volunteered their time to approximately 25 in-person meetings and numerous conference call meetings between August 2010 and April 2011. It is estimated that some 1,500 to 2,000 hours of volunteer time was contributed. This translates to an in-kind contribution of time valued at \$120,000.

From these meetings, the following goals, objectives, strategies and deliverables were established:

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Goals, Objectives, Strategies, Deliverables

Goal	Objectives	Strategies	Deliverable(s)	Results
To augment/enhance existing programs & initiatives to ensure greater success.	<p>Build on existing programs & services that are already in place and working well.</p> <p>Enhance programs & services that may currently be below expressed levels of need.</p> <p>Maximize resources so other important initiatives can be considered, planned, delivered.</p> <p>Enable flexibility & support that directly benefits unique needs of communities.</p> <p>Enable enhancements to language & culture where there might not otherwise be support.</p>	<p>Discuss and develop program enhancement funding that can be carried out within 2010-11 fiscal year.</p> <p>Review priorities shared at the second day of dialogue; develop funding parameters and criteria to support distribution of funds for these priorities.</p>	Distribution of \$5 million dollars (plus one-time-only \$1 million contribution provided in Feb/11).	<p>Four funding programs developed:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Minor Capital 2. Service Planning / Capacity Building 3. Language & Culture 4. General Program Enhancement
To develop & implement new programs & initiatives to address gaps identified during the second day of dialogue.	<p>Enhance existing structures by offering more specialized & culturally relevant program & service support where little or none exists.</p> <p>Address gaps that might not otherwise be addressed through other avenues.</p> <p>Meet overall vision of this initiative – enhancing quality of programs & services.</p>	<p>Review other programs & initiatives with similar goals or purposes to ensure this initiative can enhance those efforts.</p> <p>Design programs & initiatives that support & empower communities & organizations to deliver quality ECD programs & services.</p>	<p>Funding programs that address identified gaps in program delivery & services.</p> <p>Funding program framework that can be updated & modified with annual priorities expressed by communities.</p>	<p>Four funding programs developed & implemented successfully.</p> <p>Initial steps taken to identify & begin to address gaps in programs and in services.</p>

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Goal	Objectives	Strategies	Deliverable(s)	Results
To increase capacity, particularly in the areas of language & culture.	<p>Address the urgent need for capacity building on several levels (i.e. language, culture, organizational, educational, social etc)</p> <p>Support & strengthen capacity of organizations to access additional resources & networks.</p>	Review other language & culture programs (i.e. BC Language Initiative & Aboriginal Language Initiative at First Peoples Heritage, Language & Culture Council) to ensure these funding programs complement & do not conflict.	Language & culture funding that enhances existing programs & initiatives.	Successful language & culture projects as identified by funded projects in their final reports.
To increase capacity in other key areas.	Promote & encourage community collaborations & networking.	Design capacity building resources and networks specific to First Nation & urban Aboriginal ECD programs & services.	Delivery of a two-day professional development / training forum.	Development of a professional development training forum that can be offered several times in the new fiscal year (i.e. with priority topics identified by communities).
To proactively plan, establishing & measuring outcomes related to improved child health and social well-being.	<p>Develop strategies & measures that can be referenced over the short, mid & long term.</p> <p>Enable regular updates / 'check-in' processes to measure levels of improvement in the quality of programs & services to First Nation, Métis and urban Aboriginal organizations.</p>	<p>Develop initial workplan for Steering Committee & for Host Agency.</p> <p>Update workplan based on lessons-learned & additional feedback provided by communities.</p> <p>Discuss & plan for research projects that will create baseline data & help to guide priority research over the short, mid & longer term.</p>	<p>2010-11 workplan that can be used as a reference for measuring completion of key activities and tasks.</p> <p>Workplan framework / model that can continue to guide the work of the Steering Committee & program staff.</p> <p>Research plan that can be implemented in new fiscal year.</p>	<p>'Check-in' report reflecting on accomplishments & recommendations for future.</p> <p>Workplan framework that can be updated & serve as a 'living' document.</p> <p>Recommendations for mapping, gaps analysis, research & strategies for determining outcomes in the new fiscal year.</p>

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Host Agency and Subsidiary Component Agreement

Once the Steering Committee's Interim Terms of Reference was signed off, the Steering Committee set about identifying a Host Agency through a Letter of Interest (LOI) process that included key management and operational areas the Steering Committee felt were important for a supporting Host Agency to have. There were three organizations that expressed an interest in serving as Host Agency, and after review by the Steering Committee the successful proponent was the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (BCAAFC). BCAAFC became the Host Agency in September 2010 for the period up to fiscal 2010/2011.

The Steering Committee then determined the content of a Subsidiary Component Agreement (SCA), which is necessary for MCFD to flow resources to the Host Agency. The SCA provided the Host Agency with a list of operational and administrative deliverables with ongoing direction for the initiative provided by the Steering Committee.

Staffing

One of the first tasks of the Host Agency was to hire a two-person project team to manage the day to day activities of the initiative. As the hiring process proceeded, interim project staff seconded from the Host Agency worked with the Steering Committee in developing a procurement process and implemented the initiative. By mid-December, a Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator positions were filled by term contract.

Development of Four Funding Programs

Based on the priority areas identified during the first Day of Dialogue, the Steering Committee and after much discussion and deliberation, the Steering Committee developed four funding programs with allocations that corresponded with the recommended priority areas:

1. Minor Capital
2. Service Planning/Capacity Building
3. Language and Culture
4. General Program Enhancements

By mid-October 2010, the application packages for all four funding programs were ready for distribution, and were released one at a time to allow adequate time between funding programs to assess applications and inform applicants of results.

Funding Program	Funding levels	Amount Allocated	# Applications Received	Funded	Not Funded
Minor Capital	Up to \$10,000	\$457,372	117	58	59
Service Planning	Up to \$15,000	\$102,831	27	9	18
Language and Culture	Up to \$20,000	\$1,771,650	129	111	18
General Program Enhancements	Flat rate \$7,500 per ECD program	\$3,119,145 \$240,000*	490 8	391 8	99 0

* General Program Enhancement Grants for eight member-organizations of the Métis Commission were funded through a separate agreement negotiated by the Métis Commission.

Summary of Funding Disbursed in 2010-11

Minor Capital *	\$ 457,372
Language and Culture*	\$ 1,771,650
Service Planning *	\$ 102,831
General Program Enhancements *	\$ 3,119,145
Sub-total grants	\$ 5,450,998
Add holdback payments (re: final reports)	\$ 253,300
Total Grants	\$ 5,704,298

Host Agency Admin	\$ 218,586
Steering Committee	\$ 101,321
Total Admin	\$ 319,907

Total AECD Funding including interest earned	\$ 6,024,205
Total Grants, Steering Committee & Host Agency	\$ 6,024,205
Balance	\$ 0
Value of Steering Committee's time (in-kind)	\$120,000

Source: Final AECD General Ledger, May 17, 2011

Applications Not Funded: Applications that were not funded in 2010-11 were due to one or more of the following reasons:

- Funds were fully expended by the time application was received
- Mandatory supporting documents were not submitted
- Incomplete application (questions not completed and/or original documents not received)
- Same program submitted more than one application (i.e. General Program Enhancements one grant per program)
- Applicant did not meet funding criteria
- Applicant was an ineligible organization
- Proposed activities and expenses were ineligible

*See Appendices for lists of funded projects

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Conclusion

Based on the successful distribution of the 2010-11 Aboriginal Early Childhood Development Reinvestment Initiative (\$5 million dollars plus an additional \$1 million during the 2010-11 fiscal year), a new commitment for \$5 million dollars has been made by the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

The Steering Committee is pleased to have completed the majority of the goals set at the beginning of this initiative; however, the shorter fiscal and program year (8 months from September 2010 to April 2011) meant that several goals were not met in 2010-11 and will therefore be carried over to the 2011-12 fiscal and program year. These include:

1. Mapping / Needs Assessment / Gaps Analysis Project
2. Research (i.e. literature review, analysis of partnership opportunities, research ethics, other areas of research where there is potential to collaborate and support early childhood development programs and services)

Based on the results of the survey conducted with the General Program Enhancement grant, the priority funding areas for 2011-12 are:

1. Capital Enhancement (minor and major capital)
2. Language and Culture (enhancing existing language and culture programs)
3. Service Planning / Capacity Development (planning for new programs/services; developing capacity for new programs/services)
4. Program Enhancement (enhancing existing programs)

And finally, based on the success of the initial Training Forum held at the end of March 2011, up to three Regional Training/Networking Forums will be offered in 2011-12. Dates, locations and other details about these training forums will be announced in late Fall 2011.

The First Nations and Urban Aboriginal Early Childhood Development Steering Committee looks forward to a new and exciting year, and welcomes ongoing feedback from First Nations communities and urban Aboriginal organizations working in the field of early childhood development.

To contact the Steering Committee, please email: coordinator@bcaafc.com