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For immediate release

BC SOCIAL WORKERS SUPPORT EVIDENCED-BASED SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

(Vancouver) The professional association for social workers in BC supports the call for an evidenced-based and rights-based approach to the development of services for children and youth with special needs (CYSN) found in a report authored by Dr. Pat Mirenda and released today by the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth.

“With the government pausing the implementation of their service framework for children and youth with special needs, there is an opportunity to re-imagine what is possible,” said BC Association of Social Workers President Michael Crawford. “Dr. Mirenda’s report should be used as a reference for the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) as they work with stakeholders to create the quality and quantity of culturally safe and trauma-informed services needed to meet the needs of children and youth”.

Dr. Mirenda’s report offers information and analysis based on her review of the relevant research to inform the BC government as they work to develop a revised system of care and services for CYSN. The report also offers key components of effective service delivery, including services for Indigenous children and families, and critiques the framework announced by MCFD in 2021 and halted by Premier Eby late last year.

“Families, Indigenous groups, and advocates were concerned about the MCFD framework for services to CYSN and the government rightly put implementation on hold,” said Crawford. “To get it right this round, MCFD will have to consult widely and meaningfully, and next week’s budget will need to include increased and long-term stable funding to ensure the new service framework reaches every child and youth with special needs and their families.”

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BCASW acknowledges that our office is in the unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations and that our members live and work in unceded territories across British Columbia. We also express appreciation to Métis and Inuit peoples across British Columbia.

Key Components of Effective Service Delivery for Children and Youth with Support Needs and Their Families: A Research Review and Analysis. - <https://rcybc.ca/reports-and-publications/>