

CHILD AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT SERVICE STANDARDS

- **Child and Family Service Standards**
- **Children in Care Service Standards**



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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the Child and Family Development Service Standards is to promote consistent high-quality service for vulnerable children, youth and families while enabling flexibility in the way services are provided to meet the unique needs, capacities and resources of communities.

The standards provide the mandatory framework for service delivery and apply to anyone providing service under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act (CFCSA)*, including those delegated to deliver services under the CFCSA as well as contracted service providers. Specifically, the Child and Family Service Standards apply to family support services and agreements, youth services and child protection services under the act. The Child and Family Service Standards also make reference to the Standards for Youth Support Services and Agreements, which articulate required practice when providing a youth service response under s.2.1 of the CFCSA. The Children in Care Service Standards apply to meeting guardianship responsibilities for children in care.

The standards are not based on a particular service delivery model. Rather, they are designed to be flexible enough to work within a variety of service delivery approaches.

Why the standards were revised

The standards were revised in order to promote and support a change in child welfare practice in British Columbia. The revised standards are consistent with the Ministry of Children and Family Development's strategic shifts, best practice as identified through current research, and international accreditation standards.

How the standards were revised

The process of revising the standards began with a comparison of previous practice standards with the Council on Accreditation (COA) Standards to identify gaps and areas for further development. The revised standards were developed based on the ministry's strategic shifts, national and international research, and input from ministry staff, members of Aboriginal child welfare groups, including delegated Aboriginal agencies, and service providers.

The review process included a peer review by child welfare experts and stakeholders, including representatives of delegated Aboriginal agencies, the Child Welfare League of Canada, the COA, the Federation of Child and Family Services, the British Columbia Federation of Foster Parent Associations, and the University of Victoria.

Key themes of the standards

Several key themes weave through the standards. They include:

- strengthening the direct involvement of children and families in planning and decision making
- keeping Aboriginal children connected with their families and communities, and strengthening collaborative working relationships with Aboriginal communities
- promoting and maintaining stability and continuity of lifelong relationships for children
- involving community in actions to protect children and support families
- decision making based on thorough strength and risk-based assessments
- alternative responses to child protection reports
- offering and promoting collaborative planning and alternative dispute resolution processes as preferable to court-ordered decisions.

Format of the standards

Each standard includes the following areas:

- **Standard Statement**—Describes the level of practice required to meet outcomes associated with specific services.
- **Intent**—A brief description of the purpose and spirit of the standard, written in less formal language than the standard statement and policy.
- **References**—Information and links to key related material (e.g., legislation, COA and other standards, policies, and protocols).
- **Policy**—Practice for achieving the standards. It is anticipated that as regions gain capacity to draft policy, they will modify and enhance the policy or develop region-specific policy consistent with the provided policy to fit their community’s specific needs, strengths and resources.
- **Administrative Procedures**—Administrative steps required to support the standards and policy (e.g., computer procedures and forms).
- **Additional Information**—Other related documents, such as reference guides, research and links to relevant Web sites.
- **Key Definitions**—Key terms used in the standards or policy (e.g., “stability and continuity of lifelong relationships”). These terms also appear in the glossary.

Language of the standards

The language used in the standards is written in the active voice (e.g., “Honour and follow all protocols...”). This allows the standards to be directive without using phrases such as “you must” or referring to the person has delegated responsibility for providing the service, such as the “social worker” or “supervisor.”

With the exception of the administrative procedures, there is minimal use of procedural language in the standards. The language focuses on the intended outcomes of the service, rather than process or the steps to reach the outcomes. One result of this approach is that there is no reference to decision-making authorities or approval levels (e.g., supervisor or manager). The approach taken in the standards affords greater flexibility in practice and allows the standards to fit a variety of service delivery models currently existing in communities and in the future. Regions are required to have accountability processes in place that include approval procedures for critical decisions. Additional information on accountability and quality assurance processes and requirements is provided in the Quality Assurance Standards and policy.

The standards use specific phrases to describe certain common concepts. For example, child welfare literature commonly refers to “permanence” or “permanency planning.” The standards refer to “stability and continuity of lifelong relationships,” a concept similar in meaning to permanence, but broader and more descriptive. Also, because of the historic use of the term “permanence,” the word can have unintended meaning, such as separation from family and extended family. These and other technical terms that may be unfamiliar to the reader are defined in the glossary.

Using standardized, culturally appropriate assessment tools

The policy paper “Assessment Tools to Promote Collaborative Practice and Service Delivery” provides a set of tools (i.e., a “toolbox”) for assessing the strengths, risks, needs and capacities of children and families. The assessment toolbox contains tools that support best practice and decision making in a wide variety of services, including assessing strengths and risks in responding to child protection reports, comprehensive planning for children in care, and assessing prospective adoptive parents. Each assessment tool in the paper has been evaluated according to a consistent set of principles and criteria, and the strengths and limitations of the tools are described.

Where the standards and policy requires the use of “standardized, culturally appropriate assessment tools,” this refers to tools in the assessment toolbox. The standards are written to allow flexibility in the use of tools, depending on the service provided and the circumstances of the child and family, while maintaining reasonable consistency in the use of tools. Deputy directors can provide information on what tools are available in their regions.

Effective date of the standards and how the standards will be revised

Each standard has an “effective date” and a “proposed review date.” The standards will be reviewed and revised at least every 12 months. Revisions will be based on feedback from and consultation with ministry staff, service providers and stakeholders, and those receiving services. Revisions will also be made in response to changes in legislation, new research and ministry and regional priorities.

Reference guides and additional information

In addition to the standards, a number of reference guides and sources of additional information are available on specific topics. These include:

- *Parental Contributions to a Child's Care*
- *Custody to a Person Other Than a Parent Under the Director's Supervision*
- *Agreements with Child's Kin and Others*
- *Administrative Procedures: Alternative Dispute Resolution and Court Proceedings Under the Child, Family and Community Service Act*
- *Medical Benefits Guide for Children in Care*
- *Guidelines for Provision of Youth Services.*

Putting the standards into practice

The standards have been written to allow flexibility in practice and service delivery while promoting consistent, high-quality services in every community. Writing a single set of standards that applies to services delivered in the broad spectrum of human circumstances and with a wide variety of resources and service delivery approaches creates challenges.

At times there may be conflicts between certain requirements and what is best for children and families. Where exceptions to the standards are required, however, it is important that they be based on the principles of the CFCSA as well as the needs and circumstances of those served, and that the intent of the standard always be met. The intent statements in each standard can assist with the process of translating the standards into practice.

GLOSSARY

Aboriginal child: defined in the Child, Family and Community Service Act as a child:

- who is registered under the Indian Act (Canada)
- who has a biological parent who is registered under the Indian Act (Canada)
- who is a Nisga'a child
- who is under 12 years of age and has a biological parent who
 - is of Aboriginal ancestry, and
 - considers himself or herself to be Aboriginal, or
- who is 12 years of age or over, of Aboriginal ancestry, and considers himself or herself to be Aboriginal.

Aboriginal community: for the purposes of the standards, “Aboriginal community” is defined more broadly than the definition under the CFCSA. A child’s Aboriginal community is one to which the child has a connection through culture, heritage or descent. It includes the community or communities with which the child identifies.

assessment: the process of collecting information on children and families in order to make informed decisions. Different supports, programs and services may be chosen depending on the outcome of the assessment.

care provider: a person who cares for a child under one of the out-of-care living arrangements available under the CFCSA, including sections 8, 35(2)(d), and 41(1)(b).

caregiver: a person with whom a child is placed by a director and who, by agreement with the director, has assumed responsibility for the child’s day-to-day care.

child: a person under 19 years of age; includes a youth.

child with capacity: a child who is capable of understanding issues that affect him or her and who is able to give or refuse informed consent. An assessment of a child’s capacity is based on the child’s:

- age
- developmental level and maturity, and
- ability to understand the nature, complexity and effect of the decision or course of action.

critical injury: a serious injury or condition that may result in the child’s death or may cause serious or permanent impairment of the child’s health, as determined by a medical practitioner.

cultural plan: a framework required for developing an action plan for an Aboriginal child in care, which describes how a child’s connection to the Aboriginal community is promoted and preserved, and may include:

- the identification and involvement of a person from the child’s Aboriginal community to be his or her cultural contact or mentor
- ways in which the child’s participation in culturally specific activities, including traditional customs and cultural activities that are unique to the community, will be promoted or preserved, and

- the identification of actions to facilitate the child’s access to the Aboriginal community’s oral history (including story telling), language, songs and dances, and involvement in ceremonial activities, arts and crafts or sports events and activities.

discrimination against a child: when a child experiences prejudice or is harmed on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, physical or developmental disability, culture, ethnicity, religion or race.

extended family: includes relatives related by blood or marriage and includes second and third generations. Extended family also includes persons who have a significant and/or meaningful relationship to a child or adult but are not related by blood or marriage, such as “godparents” or persons to whom the child refers to as “aunt” or “uncle.”

Family or extended family in Aboriginal cultures includes relations and community people involved in “raising” a child and the people with whom the child was raised. It is a connection to the elders and ancestors.

family conference plan of care: (as defined by the CFCSA) plans developed through a family conference that will protect the child from harm, serve the best interests of the child, take into account the wishes, needs and role of the child’s family and the child’s culture and community. Plans of care contain information required under CFCSA sections 20 and 21.

family development response: an approach to child protection reports when, according to an assessment, the risk of harm can be managed through the provision of intensive, time-limited support services. It includes a strengths-based assessment of the family’s capacity to safely care for a child, and provision of support services, instead of a child protection investigation.

formal and informal kinship care: terms used in the Council on Accreditation (COA) Standards to refer to arrangements where a child is cared for by relatives.

formal kinship care: living arrangements where children in care (by court order or agreement) are placed by a person delegated under the CFCSA with relatives approved as “caregivers” under the CFCSA.

informal kinship care: all out-of-home living arrangements not included in formal kinship care. Informal kinship care arrangements may or may not include support from a person delegated under the CFCSA. These arrangements include:

- the “child in home of relative program” (BC Employment and Assistance Act)
- agreements with a child’s kin and others, and
- court orders placing a child in the interim or temporary custody of a person other than the parent under the director’s supervision.

formal supports: resources within or outside the community that obtain their funding either through public (provincial or federal government) or private sources for specific, agreed-upon purposes. Formal supports provide individuals within and across all communities with professional public and private services in many domains, ranging from health to education and emergency public services.

informal supports: natural resources or “helpers” within the community that are not typically funded by government and that are part of or result from available resources and capacities within the community.

natural helpers: persons in a community who provide others with respected advice and help, or persons whose counsel and help is sought by others. Examples of natural helpers are religious leaders, elders, volunteers, family members, neighbours, and community leaders. Natural helpers may form informal networks including mutual aid and self-help groups.

parent: defined in the Child, Family and Community Service Act as:

- the mother of a child
- the father of a child
- a person to whom custody of a child has been granted by a court of competent jurisdiction or by an agreement, or
- a person with whom a child resides and who stands in place of the child's mother or father.

Note: The standards always refer to a child's parents in the singular ("a parent"). "A parent" is assumed to include all parents of a child.

plan of care: an action-based planning tool for children in care, used to identify specific developmental objectives based on continuous assessments of the child's evolving needs and the outcomes of previous decisions and actions. Care plans are completed by the child's worker with the involvement of the child, the family, the extended family and Aboriginal community if the child is Aboriginal, the caregiver, service providers and significant people in the child's life.

Public Guardian and Trustee: a public official appointed to carry out functions under the Public Guardian and Trustee Act and various other statutes, including the Infants Act. The Public Guardian and Trustee performs three broad categories of functions:

- protecting the legal rights of people with mental disabilities
- administering the estates of people who have died, usually where the deceased left no will and has no family member in the province willing or able to administer the estate, and for missing persons, and
- protecting the rights and interests of children and youth.

record: Schedule 1 of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act defines *record* as "books, documents, maps, drawings, photographs, letters, vouchers, papers and any other thing on which information is recorded or stored by graphic, electronic, mechanical or other means, but does not include a computer program or any other mechanism that produces records."

resiliency: a concept that is parallel to capacity. Resiliency is the ability of the child, family or community to succeed or cope even in the face of significant adversity. This ability changes over time, and is enhanced by protective factors in the individual, family, community and environment.

serious incidents: circumstances involving a child who:

- is in life-threatening circumstances, including illness, serious accident or abduction
- has suffered a serious injury
- is continually running away to a situation that places him or her at high risk of death or injury
- is lost, missing or runaway in circumstances that would place the child at risk of death or serious injury (See Children in Care Service Standard 14: When a Child is Missing or Has Run Away)
- is a victim of abuse or neglect in a director-approved resource, day program, containment centre, institution or other non-ministry resource

- is a victim of abuse or neglect while in the director’s care, regardless of the location or relationship to the person responsible for the abuse or neglect
- has observed, been involved in, or been exposed to a high-risk situation or disaster, such as fire or multiple abuse situations in a school, which may cause emotional trauma
- is missing for more than 10 days, or
- has been involved in crimes of violence, including homicide, serious assault, arson, armed robbery or major property damage.

smoke free environment: smoking does not take place at any time in enclosed spaces where children in care would be exposed to second-hand smoke or the residual toxins from second-hand smoke. This includes the foster caregiver’s home and vehicle. This does not restrict spiritual activities relating to the use of tobacco.

special needs: a child with special needs has documented significant impairment associated with an ongoing physical, cognitive, communicative and/or emotional/behavioural condition that requires specialized care and support. One criteria for making a special needs agreement (SNA) is that the child has special needs.

stability and continuity of lifelong relationships: a term that describes a basic need in all children for continued or new relationships with family and significant people, including extended family and community connections. Children who have this need met have an increased potential for developing meaningful relationships with others into adulthood. This includes relationships with parents, siblings, extended family, friends, caregivers and others with a connection to the child through family, culture, faith, identity or community.

Stability and continuity of lifelong relationships is a primary consideration in planning and providing services for children. All services should promote stability and continuity of lifelong relationships by:

- promoting and facilitating regular ongoing contact with those significant to the child
- maintaining or, where required, developing enduring and stable living arrangements for the child as quickly as possible
- minimizing disruption of caregivers or care providers, and
- fitting services to meet the child’s age, developmental level and sense of time.

standardized culturally appropriate assessment tool: a professionally developed and recognized framework for assessing strengths and problem areas in a family that takes into consideration the family’s culture, including values, beliefs, habits, practices or customs, religion, and patterns of communicating and interacting within the family and community. Inherent in its use is the active, ongoing involvement of the family and, where appropriate, extended family members and other significant people identified by the family, as well as the sensitivity and competence of the assessor.

support services agreement: a written agreement that specifies services and timeframes and includes the parent’s consent. The required information can be recorded on a Support Services Agreement form (Form CF2606) or another document that specifies the services and timeframes and includes the parent’s signature.

visibility in the community: the amount of contact a child has with community members, including family members, neighbours, schools, public health nurses, agencies and others who are aware of the presence of a child in that community and who have an interest in his or her safety and well-being.

youth: a person who is 16 years of age or over but under 19 years of age.

youth service response: a differential response to youth in need of assistance through CFCSA s.12.1 and s.12.2 that involves screening, assessment, short-term planning and utilization of youth support services, such as youth-family mediation, mentorship, safe housing and outreach services. A youth services response may also provide comprehensive longer-term service planning for a youth receiving services for mental health issues, or receiving services through a youth agreement. Out-of-care supported living services may in turn use any number of youth services, such as one-to-one youth support workers, group supports and youth housing supports, including safe housing.

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CFS STANDARD 1: SCREENING AND BEST APPROACH TO SERVICE DELIVERY	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>A person with the required educational qualifications, delegated authority, experience and competence screens a child's or family's eligibility for services to determine the best response, ensuring that services are coordinated and integrated.</p> <p>When services are requested by or for an Aboriginal child or family, work in partnership with the Aboriginal community and the identified delegated agency in the assessment, planning and delivery of services.</p> <p>When determining the best approach to service delivery, collaborate with community service providers and others who may have a role in supporting the child and family in keeping the child safe and healthy in his or her community.</p>
INTENT	<p>This standard emphasizes the importance of completing a careful assessment of all calls and requests for services as the basis for making good decisions about services that will fit a family's needs. A careful assessment involves the family and community, taking into account their strengths, needs, culture and beliefs, and focuses on the outcome of strengthening the family's capacity to safely care for the child.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.2 Guiding Principles • <i>BC Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect</i>: Part III, "Support and Intervention Services," and Part IV, "Collaborative Planning and Information Sharing": http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/child_protection/pdf/handbook_action_child_abuse.pdf • COA: S10.2.03, S10.2.05, G8.1.02, G8.1.03, G1.2.02
POLICY	<p>Offer services that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • are based on an assessment of the context and needs of the child and family • build on the strengths and capacities of the family, extended family and community • are provided in a climate of understanding and respect for the family's cultural background and traditions, socio-economic circumstances, ethnicity and spiritual beliefs, and • fit the child's or family's specific needs and are the least disruptive service alternatives available. <p>Provide timely information on the services that are available in the community, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the process for accessing the services • whether services will be delayed • whether another service or organization is more appropriate, and if so, a description of it and the referral process, and • what further action may be taken in response to the call. <p>Working in partnership with delegated Aboriginal agencies When responding to a request for services or a child protection report, if the child or family is Aboriginal, request the assistance of an Aboriginal service provider or identified delegated agency.</p>

CFS STANDARD 1: SCREENING AND BEST APPROACH TO SERVICE DELIVERY	
	When responding to requests for services or child protection reports, honour and follow all protocols with Aboriginal agencies.
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	Document all calls and include information on what action was taken in response to the call or request.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with Communities to Support Children, Youth and Families: A System of Care—Companion Document • Working with Communities to Support Children, Youth and Families: A System of Care—Discussion Document • Integrated Case Management Policy: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/publications/integ_manage.htm
KEY DEFINITIONS	

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CFS STANDARD 2: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FROM ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>To preserve and promote a child's Aboriginal heritage and connection to his or her Aboriginal community, the following must be involved in all significant decisions when determining the child's Aboriginal connections, heritage and descent, and when assessing, planning and providing services for the child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the child • the child's family • the child's extended family • the child's Aboriginal community • the identified delegated agency and any other community agencies involved with the child and family, and • any significant people identified by the child and his or her family or Aboriginal community.
INTENT	<p>This standard acknowledges the importance of promoting and maintaining a child's Aboriginal heritage and connections with his or her Aboriginal community. Involving the Aboriginal child's family, extended family, community and others acknowledges their traditional responsibilities and roles in identifying resources for the child and in ensuring that services are sensitive to and build on the strengths of the child, family, extended family and Aboriginal community.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.1(1), s.2, s.3(b), s.4(2) • CFCSA Regulations: Schedules 1 and 2 list Aboriginal organizations and designated representatives at: http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/reg/C/ChildFamily/527_95.htm • UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 30: http://www.unicef.org/crc/index.html • COA: S10.6.03
POLICY	<p>From initial contact and throughout the period of involvement with a child and family, involve the Aboriginal community to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify the strengths within the Aboriginal community and heritage of the child and family • identify extended family members • identify, plan and deliver services that are culturally appropriate and accessible • provide information to help strengthen and support the Aboriginal child's home and in turn help ensure his or her safety and well-being • participate in the development and implementation of plans of care that will preserve the child's cultural identity • ensure that review processes are sensitive to cultural perspectives and are carried out in ways that are culturally appropriate • identify and develop an appropriate out-of-care living arrangement for the child, and • reunify Aboriginal children who have been removed from their homes and communities with their extended families and communities.

CFS STANDARD 2: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FROM ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

When a child's Aboriginal community is not known

In situations where a determination needs to be made about a child's Aboriginal ancestry, address questions to:

- the child
- the parent
- the child's extended family, and
- an Aboriginal delegated agency or off-reserve Aboriginal, Inuit or Métis organization that will assist in identifying the child's heritage and Aboriginal connections.

In addition, review any other available records that may assist in determining the child's Aboriginal ancestry.

When the child's Aboriginal community cannot be identified, follow existing protocols, or where a protocol does not exist, consult with an Aboriginal delegated agency or other Aboriginal organization closest to where the child lives.

When questions arise about whether a child is Aboriginal or how to involve an Aboriginal community where a protocol does not exist, consult with the appropriate regional staff or designated director, or closest delegated agency.

On learning that a child previously not known to have Aboriginal heritage may be Aboriginal, contact and involve the Aboriginal community or identified delegated agency.

When a child may be Métis

When questions arise about whether a child is Métis, explore the child's potential Métis heritage by consulting:

- the child
- the parents, or
- the Métis Commission.

If a child or parent objects to Aboriginal community involvement

If a child or a parent objects to the Aboriginal community's involvement, discuss the reasons for the objection and revisit opportunities to actively involve the Aboriginal community on an ongoing basis.

If the child or the parent continues to object to the Aboriginal community's involvement, determine whether it is in the child's best interests to involve the Aboriginal community, by considering whether:

- involving the Aboriginal community would be a barrier to making an agreement with the parent and the agreement is necessary to ensure the child's safety
- other Aboriginal community services are available in the family's community or area that would preserve the child's cultural identity
- there are other services in the community that would help preserve the

CFS STANDARD 2: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES FROM ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES	
	<p>child's cultural identity, and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> involving the Aboriginal community could result in physical or emotional harm to the child or parent. <p>Providing a child's Aboriginal community with notice under the CFCSA If a child's identified community receives services from a delegated Aboriginal agency, involve the agency in the planning for the child and family and advise the agency of any notice served to the designated representative under the CFCSA.</p> <p>If a child is a member of an Aboriginal community located outside B.C., notice of a hearing under the CFCSA must be served on the representative of the child's community. However, with the parent's consent, or the child's consent if 12 years of age or over, the Aboriginal organization in B.C. may be involved.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	<p>Enter information on the child's Aboriginal status and community in MIS SWS.</p> <p>For information on providing Aboriginal agencies with required notice, see CFCSA Regulation Schedules 1 and 2: http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/reg/C/ChildFamily/527_95.htm</p>
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICS User Manual Métis Commission: http://www.metiscommission.com/ Métis Community Services: http://www.metis.ca/ Métis Family Services: http://www2.vpl.vancouver.bc.ca/dbs/redbook/orgpgs/1/1997.html
KEY DEFINITIONS	<p>Aboriginal child: defined in the <i>Child, Family and Community Service Act</i> as a child who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is registered under the Indian Act (Canada) has a biological parent who is registered under the Indian Act (Canada) is a Nisga'a child is under 12 years of age and has a biological parent who <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is of Aboriginal ancestry, and considers himself or herself to be Aboriginal, or is 12 years of age or over, of Aboriginal ancestry, and considers himself or herself to be Aboriginal.

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CFS STANDARD 3: PROTOCOLS

STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>A designated director develops and maintains regional and local protocols related to the delivery of child and family services, including collaborative decision making and information sharing with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • police • school districts • health authorities • First Nations, Aboriginal communities, designated Aboriginal representatives and delegated Aboriginal agencies, and • other relevant agencies and organizations. <p>Honour and follow all protocols related to the service provided, including provincial, inter-jurisdictional, regional and local protocols that reflect commitments negotiated among communities, agencies and organizations.</p>
INTENT	<p>This standard reflects the importance of regional and local protocols as the foundation for establishing positive collaborative working relationships with service providers and others involved in providing child welfare services. Protocols put into writing the agreements made with others related to the provision of services for the child and family. Honouring and following protocols demonstrates a commitment to others to work together to provide the best possible services.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Services Requirements for Regional Child and Family Development Authorities and Aboriginal Authorities: • BC Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/child_protection/pdf/handbook_action_child_abuse.pdf
POLICY	<p>Develop, maintain and follow additional protocols related to the unique characteristics of specific communities.</p> <p>Establish working relationships with organizations that are parties to the protocols.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
KEY DEFINITIONS	

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CFS STANDARD 4: COOPERATIVE PLANNING AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESSES	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>Develop all plans to address the safety and well-being of a child in partnership with the family, extended family and community and with the involvement of the child.</p> <p>When agreement on an issue cannot be reached, offer and promote an alternative means of resolving the issue, taking into consideration the views and culture of the child and family, as preferable to a court-ordered decision.</p> <p>Processes for resolving issues include traditional dispute resolution processes, family conferencing, mediation and other alternative dispute resolution processes consistent with a family's and community's views and culture.</p>
INTENT	<p>This standard promotes planning and working cooperatively with others to enhance a family's commitment to keeping a child safe. Where agreement on an issue can not be reached, traditional dispute resolution processes, family group conferencing, and mediation are offered to support the involvement of the child's family and community in developing a plan to keep the child safe. The plan builds on the family's and community's strengths and capacity.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.20, s.22, s.23 • COA: G9.1
POLICY	<p>Before making a referral to a cooperative planning or dispute resolution process, seek out the views of the child and family and explore existing or potential methods of resolving disputes.</p> <p>A referral to a traditional dispute resolution process, family conference, mediation or other alternative dispute resolution (ADR) process should not prevent or delay actions to protect a child's immediate safety.</p> <p>Traditional ADR processes Aboriginal communities and others may use traditional processes for resolving disputes. These processes may involve people occupying traditional roles as problem-solvers, and may be effective in reaching agreement on issues involving a child's safety and care arrangements.</p> <p>When a child or family has a connection to a community that uses traditional ADR processes, consider using these processes first.</p> <p>Circumstances where traditional ADR processes may <i>not</i> be appropriate include exceptions described in the general criteria for referring an issue to family conference, mediation or other ADR processes (see below). If a facilitator(s) is personally involved or may have a potential conflict of interest, determine whether it is appropriate to continue with the facilitator, or whether another facilitator is available to work with the child and family.</p> <p>General criteria for referring an issue to a traditional dispute resolution process, family conference, mediation or other ADR processes When seeking agreements with families on issues related to the safety and well-being of children, offer and promote traditional dispute resolution</p>

CFS STANDARD 4: COOPERATIVE PLANNING AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESSES

processes, family conferences, mediation and other ADR processes as preferable to court-ordered decisions.

Issues that are not appropriate for these processes are limited, and include:

- the decision to conduct a child protection investigation
- the decision about whether a child needs protection and why, and
- decisions about resources or services that are not available.

Referring an outstanding issue to a family conference, mediation or ADR process may not be appropriate when there is a significant power imbalance or a potential for harm to any person during the process (e.g., sexual abuse or exploitation of a child, or family violence). If possible, physically exclude from the process individuals who pose significant risk to any person and explore other ways of obtaining the person's views.

Family conference

If available, offer and promote a family conference approach to a parent or extended family member when a plan needs to be developed to assist the family in keeping the child safe. This includes but is not limited to when a child needs protection.

Use a family conference to assist in developing a plan for:

- strengthening and supporting the family in caring for the child as part of a family development response
- supporting the youth in living successfully in the community, or
- reunification of the child with family or extended family.

Family conference for Aboriginal families

When offering a family conference to an Aboriginal parent or extended family, involve the Aboriginal community in the process to ensure that all family and extended family members are invited to assist in and are supported in assisting in the development of plans.

Mediation

Mediation can assist with reaching agreement on outstanding issues related to a plan and the types of services to be used to ensure a child's safety and well-being.

Use approved mediators on the Child Protection Mediation Program roster (see CFCSLIST Mediation Roster at):

http://www.mediator-roster.bc.ca/listall_cp.cfm

Issues appropriate for mediation include:

- the contents of a support services agreement to ensure a child's safety and well-being in the parent's home
- development of a plan for a child to reside with extended family or a person known to the child under informal or formal care arrangements

CFS STANDARD 4: COOPERATIVE PLANNING AND DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCESSES	
	<p>(e.g., kin agreement, custody to other person, restricted foster care)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a child's plan of care • the terms and conditions of an order by consent • the terms and conditions of a supervision, access or any other order.
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	<p>The regional Family Group Conference Coordinator logs referrals for family group conferences and tracks the status and outcome of conferences.</p> <p>Referral process for mediation: http://icw.mcf.gov.bc.ca/manuals/docs/cfdev/cfs/fgc_reference_guide.pdf</p>
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
KEY DEFINITIONS	

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CFS STANDARD 5: PROVIDING SERVICES THAT RESPECT A CHILD'S CULTURE AND IDENTITY	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>Throughout the period of involvement with a child, family and extended family:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • respect the views, cultural and ethnic heritage, socio-economic circumstances, spiritual beliefs and identity of the child, family and extended family • support the child in understanding and cultivating his or her heritage, spiritual beliefs and identity, and • consult and involve the family's cultural or ethnic community as identified by the child and family in the planning and delivery of services.
INTENT	<p>This standard requires that all services delivered to a child and family be planned and delivered in a way that is respectful of their language, customs, social views, spiritual beliefs, culture and identity (e.g., gender or sexual identity). The practice required to achieve this standard involves consulting with and involving people who are part of the child's or family's identified community in planning and delivering services.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.3, s.4 • COA: G1.3.01
POLICY	<p>When providing children and families with services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seek to understand and consider the family's cultural beliefs, values, norms, fears and practices in all decisions and service provision • consult with organizations or individuals who are knowledgeable about the child and family identity • when necessary, use the services of a language and cultural interpreter to assist in assessment and planning • be respectful of the socio-economic circumstances and community norms and standards • consider and involve multiple community affiliations in the planning and delivery of services (e.g., Aboriginal community, the deaf community) • acknowledge and support the sexual and gender identity of the child and/or family • use materials that are translated into the language of the child and family, when available, and • collaborate with different cultural and spiritual groups in planning and delivering services.
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<p>MCFD's cultural diversity Web page provides information on providing culturally competent services: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/publications/cultural_competency/assessment_tool/tool_definitions3.htm</p>

**CFS STANDARD 5: PROVIDING SERVICES THAT RESPECT A CHILD'S
CULTURE AND IDENTITY**

**KEY
DEFINITIONS**

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CFS STANDARD 6: PROMOTING AND MAINTAINING CONTINUITY OF LIFELONG RELATIONSHIPS	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>From initial contact and throughout the period of involvement with a child, family and extended family, always consider how actions and decisions made may affect the child's need for stability and continuity of lifelong relationships.</p> <p>In partnership with the child, family, extended family, Aboriginal community and identified delegated agency if the child is Aboriginal, and any other significant people, continually take steps to promote these relationships by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • regularly exploring all options for the child to live safely with family, extended family or others who have a significant relationship to him or her, or • if these living arrangements are not possible, finding alternative out-of-care living arrangements that will provide the opportunity to maintain and develop lifelong relationships.
INTENT	<p>Promoting and preserving stable, enduring relationships for a child is central to maintaining the child's well-being.</p> <p>This standard applies to every service provided for the child, from supportive services to guardianship services. It reinforces the need to maintain positive significant relationships for the child throughout the time services are provided, and requires that the impact on the child's ongoing relationships be considered before actions are taken or decisions are made. This is an ongoing process, rather than a single event.</p> <p>Furthermore, the standard requires that when decisions about living arrangements are made or reviewed, every effort be made to have the child cared for by people who have a significant lifelong relationship with the child, including family or extended family.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.2, s.4, s.71 • COA: S10.3.02
POLICY	<p>Consider the child's need for stability and continuity of lifelong relationships throughout the period of involvement with a child and family, including when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determining the most appropriate response to a request for service or child protection report (by obtaining information about the child and family and relationships with extended family and community) • planning and providing services for a child, family and extended family • developing, reviewing or supporting a plan for the child to live outside the family home • conducting an investigation (by exploring significant relationships, potential living arrangements and care options with the family and extended family) • if the child is Aboriginal, involving the extended family and Aboriginal community in determining how to ensure continuity of community relationships, heritage and culture for the child within the Aboriginal community.

CFS STANDARD 6: PROMOTING AND MAINTAINING CONTINUITY OF LIFELONG RELATIONSHIPS	
	<p>For more information on promoting and maintaining continuity of lifelong relationships when a child comes into care, see Child and Family Service Standard 20: Placements When a Child Comes into Care.</p> <p>For additional service requirements for children in care, see Children in Care Standard 10: Meeting a Child's Need for Stability and Continuity of Lifelong Relationships.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	Enter all important contacts, relationships and relevant community information on MIS SWS.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	ICS User Guide
KEY DEFINITIONS	<p>stability and continuity of lifelong relationships: a term that describes a basic need in all children for continued or new relationships with family and significant people, including extended family and community connections. Children who have this need met have an increased potential for developing meaningful relationships with others into adulthood. This includes relationships with parents, siblings, extended family, friends, caregivers and others with a connection to the child through family, culture, faith, identity or community.</p> <p>Stability and continuity of lifelong relationships is a primary consideration in planning and providing services for children. All services should promote stability and continuity of lifelong relationships by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promoting and facilitating regular ongoing contact with those significant to the child • maintaining or, where required, developing enduring and stable living arrangements for the child as quickly as possible • minimizing disruption of caregivers or care providers, and • fitting services to meet the child's age, developmental level and sense of time.

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CFS STANDARD 7: SUPPORT SERVICES TO STRENGTHEN CAPACITY	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>Provide services that build on strengths and promote resiliency within the children, youth, families and communities who require them. Provide information about and referrals to natural helpers and support services, and when required, arrange for support services through written, goal-oriented agreements.</p> <p>If the child is a youth, in addition to the above, consider providing youth-oriented services specifically designed to promote strength and develop resiliency in the youth.</p> <p>If the child or family is Aboriginal, see Child and Family Service Standard 2: Children and Families from Aboriginal Communities, for additional considerations and service requirements.</p>
INTENT	<p>This standard reflects current research showing that a trusting relationship with a child or youth and/or family and an agreement to work together to resolve issues is essential for working effectively and achieving positive outcomes for the child or youth and/or family. The standard also promotes services that identify and build on existing strengths and resiliency, rather than services that address only risks and deficits.</p> <p>Information about and assistance in accessing informal supports such as networks and self-help groups are explored and provided first, where these fit the youth or family's needs and circumstances. If additional formal or specialized services (e.g., treatment or counseling) requiring the director's involvement are necessary, they are specified in written agreements (e.g., support services agreement) that include the goals of the agreed-upon services.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.5, 12.1, 12.2 • CFCSA Regulation: s.8 • Standards for Youth Support Services and Agreements: http://icw.mcf.gov.bc.ca/provserv/yse/v/docs/ia/stand_youth_sup_serv.pdf • COA: S10.5
POLICY	<p>Promote the strengthening of a youth's, family's, extended family's, and community's capacity by using natural helpers (e.g., friends, elders, spiritual leaders, extended family), informal supports (e.g., extended family, community members, volunteer-based agencies, spiritual or faith groups) and formal supports (e.g., employment, education and addiction services).</p> <p>Referral to available community supports and specialized services When responding to requests for support services, provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information about available services and existing networks • information about the importance of natural helpers, extended family and community members as support • assistance in connecting to community-based support services, including volunteer-based services and mutual aid support groups, and • if necessary, referrals to specialized services.

CFS STANDARD 7: SUPPORT SERVICES TO STRENGTHEN CAPACITY

Written support service agreements with youth

For more information on youth-oriented support services and written agreements with youth, see the Standards for Youth Support Services and Agreements.

Written support service agreements with parents

Make a written support service agreement when:

- services are available and fit a child and family's needs, and
- the person delegated to enter into the agreement will remain involved in planning and arranging for the delivery of services.

Consider offering a support service agreement to a parent when the parent and person delegated to make an agreement agree to support services that:

- are part of a family development response to a child protection report (see Child and Family Service Standard 14: Family Development Response)
- result from alternative dispute resolution processes or mediation to meet the child's needs in the family
- are provided as part of a plan to keep the child safe, or
- are provided when ending protective services (see Child and Family Service Standard 21: Ending Child Protection Services to a Child and Family).

Planning and completing the agreement

Collaborate with the family, extended family and other involved community members in planning and completing the agreement, by:

- gathering relevant information about the family's strengths, needs and vulnerabilities
- considering the views of the child
- whenever possible, obtaining the parent's or the child's consent to the disclosure of information to the extent necessary for the provision of support services
- meeting with the parent and agreeing on the type and duration of the support services to be included in the agreement
- agreeing on the notice required to end the agreement, and
- signing the agreement with the parent before the provision of services, for a maximum initial term of six months.

If a child or parent is Aboriginal

If a child or parent is Aboriginal, inform the parent of services available through the Aboriginal community. Involve the Aboriginal community or identified delegated Aboriginal agency in planning, unless:

- the parent or child with capacity objects to the involvement, or
- the community or agency does not have the capacity to become involved.

CFS STANDARD 7: SUPPORT SERVICES TO STRENGTHEN CAPACITY	
	<p>Providing services on an emergency basis When services are required on an emergency basis for up to 30 days, they may provide with the parent’s verbal consent, with a signed agreement to follow.</p> <p>Reviewing and renewing the agreement Reach agreement with the parent on the process for reviewing the agreement, including the frequency of reviews. Review agreements every six months at minimum.</p> <p>After review, a support services agreement may be renewed for terms of up to six months each.</p> <p>At the request of anyone involved with the agreement, including the child, parent, involved Aboriginal community, or service provider, review the agreement to determine whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the agreement continues to meet the needs of the child and family, or • there is a significant change in the circumstances of the child, family or extended family that may require a change to the agreement. <p>Ending the agreement Consider ending the agreement by giving the required notice if the child and family no longer need the services under the agreement.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	<p>Give copies of the agreement to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • everyone who signed the agreement and • those involved in the provision of services under the agreement.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working with Communities to Support Children, Youth and Families: A System of Care—Companion Document: 3. Services to Strengthen Families • A Guide to the Privacy Charter: http://icw.mcf.gov.bc.ca/regions/interior/docs/bp/v01_guide_to_privacy_of_information.pdf • Guidelines for Provision of Youth Services: http://icw.mcf.gov.bc.ca/manuals/docs/provserv/guidelines_youth_services.pdf • Research Review of Best Practices in Provision of Youth Services: http://icw.mcf.gov.bc.ca/manuals/docs/provserv/best_practice_youth_services.pdf
KEY DEFINITIONS	<p>support services agreement: a written agreement that specifies services and timeframes and includes the parent’s consent. The required information can be recorded on a Support Services Agreement form (Form CF2606) or another document that specifies the services and timeframes and includes the parent’s signature.</p> <p>youth: a person who is 16 years of age or over but under 19 years of age.</p>

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CFS STANDARD 8: INFORMAL KINSHIP CARE	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>If a parent is unable to care for a child, give priority to supporting a safe alternative living arrangement with a relative or person who is known to the child or who has a cultural or traditional responsibility to the child, which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encourages the parent’s involvement in decision making and planning to the greatest extent possible • supports the care provider in caring for the child, and in supporting the child in maintaining his or her relationships with siblings and family, and • continues until the child returns home or an alternative living arrangement is made that achieves continuity of lifelong relationships.
INTENT	<p>This standard reflects the value of arranging for a child to live with a person known to the child or who has a cultural or traditional responsibility to care for the child when the child is temporarily unable to live with a parent.</p> <p>In addition to the emotional benefits for the child, such living arrangements help:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • maintain and strengthen the child’s connections with extended family and community • encourage the parent to maintain contact with the child and to be actively involved in planning for the child’s care • increase the likelihood of reunifying the child with the parent • and promote the stability and continuity of relationships for the child. <p>The existing capacities of the child’s family, extended family and others who have a significant relationship with the child are respected and built upon. Informal care arrangements that can both achieve stability and continuity for the child until the child can return to the parent’s care, and do so without the need for the director’s continued involvement, are preferable to formal care arrangements.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.2(e), s.3(e), s.5, s.8 • COA: Informal Kinship Care—S21.23 to 21.29, G9.9 • Working with Communities to Support Children, Youth and Families: A System of Care—Companion Document: 8.4 Kinship Care Home • MHR BC Employment and Assistance Manual: 11.4 (Child in Home of a Relative)
POLICY	<p>When a child temporarily cannot live at home, consider alternative living arrangements, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an arrangement to live with a relative, supported through the BC Benefits program—Child in Home of a Relative (CIHR) Program—where financial assistance is required and further involvement by the worker is not required • an informal kinship care arrangement for the child to live with extended family or someone with a significant relationship to the child, and, if necessary, with support services, or • a written agreement with the child’s kin or other person known to the child for the provision of financial and direct support for the living arrangement.

CFS STANDARD 8: INFORMAL KINSHIP CARE

Criteria for making a written agreement with a child's kin and others

Consider making a written agreement with a child's kin or other person known to the child when:

- the parent is temporarily unable to care for the child
- the agreement meets the child's need for stability and continuity of lifelong relationships
- the circumstances of the family prevent the parent from caring for the child
- financial support is required to support the proposed living arrangement
- the agreement is needed to resolve the circumstances that have resulted in the parent being unable to care for the child
- the care provider supports the parent's ability to maintain regular contact with the child, and
- reunification of the child with the family is expected.

The child's parent identifies the proposed care provider and living arrangements. Where the parent does not propose a care provider, involve, with the parent's consent, a variety of people who know the child and family to identify possible alternative living arrangements and to plan for the child.

Note: The *Provincial/Territorial Protocol on Children and Families Moving Between Provinces and Territories (April 2002)* does not apply to children in living arrangements made under s.8 of the CFCSA. There are no arrangements between provinces to manage, supervise or financially support these agreements.

If the child is Aboriginal

If the child is Aboriginal, advise the parent of services available through the Aboriginal community or identified delegated Aboriginal agency. Involve the community or agency in planning the agreement unless:

- the parent or child with capacity objects to the involvement, or
- the community or agency does not have the capacity to become involved.

(See Child and Family Service Standard 2: Children and Families from Aboriginal Communities.)

Assisting a parent in selecting a care provider

When an out-of-care living arrangement is proposed for a child, assist the parent in selecting a person who can safely care for the child. This includes helping the parent to:

- gather relevant information to determine the ability of a proposed care provider to safely care for the child
- identify the potential strengths and weaknesses of a proposed care provider, and
- identify any supports required to ensure the success of the living arrangement.

CFS STANDARD 8: INFORMAL KINSHIP CARE

Determine the ability of the proposed care provider to safely care for the child, by considering whether the person:

- is able to safely care for the child
- has the readiness, capacity and commitment to provide care, and
- agrees with the plan to care for the child.

In order to ensure that the child will be safe with the proposed care provider:

- complete a review of any records of previous involvement with the proposed care provider
- discuss the proposed living arrangement with the care provider to ensure that he or she understands and agrees to the plan for the child
- complete a criminal record check on the proposed care provider and on any person over 18 years of age who lives in the home or may have significant or unsupervised access to the child
- obtain two references for the proposed care provider, including wherever possible one by a member of his or her extended family, to confirm the proposed care provider's ability to safely care for the child (obtain references verbally if appropriate and document the references), and
- determine whether the home environment will adequately meet the child's basic needs, by seeing the home or obtaining information from one of the following who can make this determination:
 - band social worker
 - public health nurse, or
 - another person in the proposed care provider's community able to accurately provide this information.

Making an agreement before completing a full care provider review

An agreement may be made for up to 60 days pending the completion of the requirements listed above. Before completing the agreement, ensure the safety and well-being of the child by:

- obtaining references, and
- contacting local police to determine whether they have reason to believe that a child may need protection while residing with that person.

Before the 60-day period has ended, complete the review of records and the criminal record check, and see the home (or obtain information from someone who can see the home and determine whether the home environment will adequately meet the child's basic needs).

Declining to make an agreement with a proposed care provider

If the results of a review of past records and references, a home visit and a criminal record check indicate that a proposed care provider would not provide a safe place for a child, discuss the concerns with him or her and with the child's family.

If the parent continues to allow the unsuitable care provider to care for the child:

CFS STANDARD 8: INFORMAL KINSHIP CARE

- do not make an agreement to contribute financially to the child's care, and
- advise the parent that an assessment and possible investigation of the child's need for protection in that home will occur immediately.

Preparing to make an agreement

Before entering into an agreement with a child's kin or other person:

- to the extent possible, given the child's level of development:
 - consider the child's views and sense of safety regarding the proposed living arrangement, and
 - ensure that the child understands the reasons for and details of the proposed living arrangement (e.g., when the child will visit his or her family, and when he or she can expect to return home)
- ensure that the parent entering into the agreement with the care provider has custody of the child, by having the parent:
 - demonstrate that he or she is the child's primary caregiver
 - provide a valid custody order or agreement, or
 - with a valid custody order or agreement, acknowledge that the person entering into the agreement is the child's primary caregiver
- ensure that care of the child has been transferred from the parent to the care provider
- ensure that the care provider understands his or her obligations to meet the child's day-to-day needs
- advise the care provider to report the death of or critical injuries and serious incidents involving the child (see Child and Family Service Standard 25: Notification of Death, Critical Injuries and Serious Incidents)
- ensure that the care provider understands the importance of the child's need for stability and continuity of lifelong relationships
- ensure that the care provider understands and supports the goal of reunifying the child with his or her family
- determine how the child will access medical, dental and optical coverage (see Reference Guide: Agreements with Child's Kin and Others)
- discuss the financial support for the child provided by the director and/or the parent, and
- discuss potential formal and informal support services that may be required to support the proposed living arrangement.

Completing an agreement

Complete an agreement specifying:

- the transfer of care from the parent to the care provider
- the parent's and the care provider's obligations in meeting the day-to-day care and guardianship responsibilities for the child
- the terms of the agreement
- the time period in which the agreement is in effect, up to a maximum of 12 months

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- the notice required to end the agreement
- the amount of financial support for the care provider under the agreement, and
- if required, the parental contribution to the child's care.

Have all parties sign the agreement.

Give copies of the signed agreement to the child, parent and care provider.

Supporting an agreement

Support a child's living arrangement through an agreement by:

- promoting and supporting the goal of reunification, including supporting the child's parent and exploring shared care options with the parent and the care provider
- promoting and supporting the child's connections to family, community and culture, by:
 - encouraging the child to maintain contact with parents and providing support for parental contact
 - providing the child with information about parental activities and progress towards family reunification or other options to ensure stability and continuity of lifelong relationships
 - providing assistance for the child in maintaining relationships with siblings through visits and shared activities wherever possible, and
 - providing assistance in addressing family conflicts
- determining the child's and care provider's needs and stabilizing the child's living arrangements
- connecting the care provider with natural helpers and informal supports, and providing, if necessary, formal support services such as respite, counseling or reunification services, and
- identifying and preparing extended family members who may be a resource for the child and care provider, either as temporary respite or as an alternative care provider if the child needs to be moved.

Reviewing and renewing an agreement

Review an agreement:

- at the request of the child, parent, care provider, or, if involved, a representative of the child's Aboriginal community, and
- at intervals relevant to the child's level of development.

Agreements may be renewed for periods of up to 12 months where:

- the conditions for making an agreement remain in effect (see "Criteria for making an agreement with a child's kin and others")
- no other alternative living arrangement (e.g., CIHR) is available or appropriate to meet the child's needs
- the agreement meets the child's need for safety, stability and continuity of lifelong relationships, and

CFS STANDARD 8: INFORMAL KINSHIP CARE	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the total duration of the agreement, including all renewals, does not exceed the following maximum timelines: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 12 months, if the child or the youngest child who is the subject of the agreement was under five years of age on the date that the agreement was made – 18 months, if the child or the youngest child who is subject of the agreement was five years of age or over but under 12 years of age on the date that the agreement was made, or – 24 months, if the child or the youngest child who is the subject of the agreement was 12 years of age or over on the date that the agreement was made. <p>If it becomes evident that reunification is not a likely option, inform the parent and the care provider of legally recognized options that will fulfill the child’s need for stability and continuity of lifelong relationships, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • guardianship through the Family Relations Act • adoption • custom adoption, if the child is Aboriginal. <p>Ending an agreement An agreement ends when any of the following apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the parent resumes care of the child • the child no longer resides with the care provider • the required written notice is given by the parent, the person delegated to enter the agreement, or the care provider • the criteria for the agreement no longer apply (see above, “Criteria for making a written agreement with a child’s kin and others”) • other actions are taken under the CFCSA relating to the care or custody of the child • the agreement expires. <p>An agreement is automatically terminated when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the youth reaches 19 • the child dies, or • the youth marries.
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enter all important contacts, relationships and relevant community information on MIS SWS. • Advise the parent and the care provider that the person caring for the child may be eligible for the Child Tax Benefit and that if the care provider applies, the parent’s Child Tax Benefit may be affected.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICS User Guide • Residents of B.C. with inquiries about the Child Tax Benefit can call 1-800-387-1193.

CFS STANDARD 8: INFORMAL KINSHIP CARE

**KEY
DEFINITIONS**

DATE OF RELEASE: April 5, 2004 EFFECTIVE DATE: April 19, 2004
PROGRAM AREA: Child and Family Development Service – Transformation Division
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CFS STANDARD 9: CARE AGREEMENTS

<p>STANDARD STATEMENT</p>	<p>Consider a care agreement for a parent who is unable to care for a child, when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • support services and informal kinship care are unavailable or inadequate for the child's needs, and • the parent agrees to a plan of care for the child that includes maintaining regular contact and involvement with the child. <p>In addition to the above, when a child needs protection, consider a care agreement as the preferred alternative to a court-ordered decision, if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a person delegated to make a care agreement and the parent agree that the child needs out-of-home care • through collaborative planning or alternative dispute resolution processes, a plan can be developed to resolve the circumstances that cause the child to need protection, and • reunification of the child and family is expected. <p>In developing a care agreement, when determining the period of the agreement, respect the child's sense of time, and recognize and consider developmental milestones that may occur.</p> <p>If the child is Aboriginal, see Child and Family Service Standard 2: Children and Families from Aboriginal Communities, for additional considerations and service requirements.</p>
<p>INTENT</p>	<p>This standard establishes the parameters within which voluntary care agreements and special needs agreements are made. Where a parent is temporarily unable to care for a child, informal kinship care arrangements are explored and supported before the child is placed in care by agreement. When a child needs protection and informal care arrangements are unavailable or inadequate to meet the child's needs, including the need for stability and continuity of lifelong relationships, care agreements are considered and promoted as preferable to removal.</p>
<p>REFERENCES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.6, s.7 • COA: S10.4.03
<p>POLICY</p>	<p>When a child temporarily cannot live at home and support services and informal kinship care are unavailable or inadequate to meet the child's needs, consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a voluntary care agreement, or • a special needs agreement. <p>Criteria for a voluntary care agreement</p> <p>Consider making a voluntary care agreement (VCA) with a child's parent when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the services in the agreement would promote the family's capacity to care for the child within the timeframes allowed under the CFCSA, and • reunification with the parents is expected and meets the child's need for continuity and stability of relationships.

CFS STANDARD 9: CARE AGREEMENTS

If a child needs protection, a VCA may be entered into as a means to keep the child safe when the parent agrees to services and a plan of care to assist in resolving the circumstances that cause the child to need protection. If the child is a youth, before entering into a VCA, consider using a youth service response as the preferred response to keep the youth safe.

Criteria for a special needs agreement

Consider making a special needs agreement (SNA) with a child's parent when:

- the child has special needs, and
- the agreement addresses or meets the child's need for security, stability and continuity of lifelong relationships.

Before offering a SNA, determine whether the child has special needs through an assessment completed by a qualified professional in the area of child development, such as a:

- psychologist
- psychiatrist or pediatrician
- physician
- psychiatric nurse, mental health or infant development worker
- special education teacher, or
- other health care professional who has knowledge of or has recently assessed the child.

Considerations for both VCA and SNA

If the child is Aboriginal

If the child is Aboriginal, advise the parent of services available through the Aboriginal community or delegated Aboriginal agency. Involve the community or agency in planning the agreement unless:

- the parent or child with capacity objects to the involvement, or
- the community or agency does not have the capacity to become involved.

(See Child and Family Service Standard 2: Children and Families from Aboriginal Communities.)

Preparing an agreement

Before entering into an agreement:

- to the extent possible, given the child's level of development:
 - consider the child's views about and sense of safety in regard to the proposed living arrangement
 - ensure that the child understands the reasons for and details of the proposed living arrangement, and
 - explain the rights children in care are entitled to and provide information on those rights
- ensure that the parent entering into the agreement has custody of the child, by having the parent:
 - demonstrate that he or she is the child's primary caregiver

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- provide a valid custody order or agreement, or
- with a valid custody order or agreement, acknowledge that the person entering into the agreement is the child's primary caregiver
- arrange for ongoing sharing of confidential information among all parties involved
- confirm how the parent and other significant people in the child's life will maintain contact and involvement with the child
- agree on the timeframe for the agreement within the maximum timeframes established under the CFCSA
- determine the parent's contribution to the child's care (see Child and Family Service Standard 10: Parental Contribution to a Child's Care)
- confirm that the services being offered in the agreement are available, including the out-of-home living arrangement
- confirm the transfer of guardianship authority from the parent, and
- confirm the notice that must be given by the parent or the worker to end the agreement.

Completing an agreement

Complete the agreement with the parent, and the child when appropriate, specifying:

- the transfer of care from the parent to the caregiver
- a description of the initial plan of care and plan for parental contact
- where the child will reside
- the time period of the agreement, and
- the parental contribution to the child's care, if any.

Supporting an agreement

Support a child's living arrangement through an agreement by:

- promoting and supporting the goal of reunification, including supporting the child's family
- promoting and supporting the child's connections to family, community and culture, by:
 - encouraging the child to maintain contact with family and providing support for family contact
 - providing the child with information about parental activities and progress towards family reunification or other options to ensure stability and continuity of lifelong relationships
 - providing assistance for the child in maintaining relationships with siblings through visits and shared activities wherever possible, and
 - providing assistance in addressing family conflicts
- determining the child's needs and stabilizing the child's living arrangements, and
- identifying and preparing extended family who may be a resource, either as temporary respite or as an alternative care provider.

CFS STANDARD 9: CARE AGREEMENTS	
	<p>Reviewing and renewing an agreement Review an agreement with a parent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at the request of the child, parent, or, if involved, a representative of the child's Aboriginal community • at intervals relevant to the child's level of development, or • before the agreement expires or is extended. <p>Consider renewing the agreement with the parent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • after a review of the agreement • when consistent with the child's plan of care and best interests, and • according to timeframes established under the CFCSA. <p>If the parent does not resume care of the child when the agreement ends, the term of the agreement may be extended for a maximum of 30 days in order to amend the plan for the child.</p> <p>Ending an agreement An agreement ends when any of the following apply:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the parent resumes care of the child • the child is not willing or able to reside with a caregiver • the required written notice is given by either the parent or the person delegated to enter the agreement • the criteria for making the agreement no longer apply (see above, "Criteria for a voluntary care agreement" or "Criteria for a special needs agreement") • other actions are taken under the CFCSA relating to the care or custody of the child • the agreement, including a 30-day extension, expires. <p>An agreement is automatically terminated when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the youth reaches 19 • the child dies, or • the youth marries.
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	Enter all important contacts, relationships and relevant community information on MIS SWS.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	

CFS STANDARD 9: CARE AGREEMENTS

KEY DEFINITIONS

special needs: a child with special needs has a documented significant impairment associated with an ongoing physical, cognitive, communicative, and/or emotional/behavioural condition that requires specialized care and support.

youth service response: a differential response to youth in need of assistance through CFCSA s.12.1 and s.12.2, which involves screening, assessment, short-term planning and utilization of youth support services, such as youth-family mediation, mentorship, safe housing and outreach services. A youth service response may also provide comprehensive longer-term service planning for a youth receiving services for mental health issues, or receiving services through a youth agreement. Out-of-care supported living services may in turn use any number of youth services, such as one-to-one youth support workers, group supports and youth housing supports, including safe housing.

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CFS STANDARD 10: PARENTAL CONTRIBUTION TO A CHILD'S CARE	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>Support the parent in maintaining responsibility for contributing to a child's care, and make a written agreement with the parent detailing the contribution.</p> <p>If unable to reach an agreement with a parent on the amount or kind of contribution, offer and promote alternative dispute resolution processes for reaching agreement.</p>
INTENT	<p>When a child is in care or has an out-of-care living arrangement, the parent is encouraged to contribute either financially or in kind to the child's day-to-day care.</p> <p>This standard is consistent with a guiding principle of the CFCSA: that the protection and care of a child rests primarily with the parents. The standard reinforces the important role that financial and other contributions have in ensuring continuation of the parent's ongoing connection with and active commitment to the child.</p> <p>Maintenance contribution is often a contentious issue; resolution through the use of alternative dispute resolution processes is preferable to court-ordered decisions.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.97 • Reference Guide: <i>Parental Contributions to a Child's Care</i>: http://icw.mcf.gov.bc.ca/manuals/docs/cfdev/cfs/refguide_parent_contribution.pdf
POLICY	<p>Parents remain responsible for contributing to the care of a child unless the child is under an interim or continuing custody order.</p> <p>Kinds of parental contribution and support Parental contribution includes financial support as determined by an income test.</p> <p>Once the financial contribution is assessed, consider acknowledging in-kind contributions, such as clothing; transportation; school, recreational or activity fees; and other contributions related to the child's care.</p> <p>Determining a parent's financial contribution Determine a parent's financial contribution by applying the Federal Child Support Guidelines. (See administrative procedures.)</p> <p>Complete a review of parental contribution yearly if services are provided for terms beyond 12 months or circumstances have changed that permit waiving the parent's contribution.</p> <p>Advising a parent of payment and enforcement procedures Advise a parent of the payment and enforcement procedures for financial contribution. (See Reference Guide: Parental Contribution to a Child's Care.)</p>

CFS STANDARD 10: PARENTAL CONTRIBUTION TO A CHILD'S CARE

Waiving a parent's financial contribution

Consider waiving a parent's financial contribution when:

- the parent provides written confirmation that the total family income is derived from BC Benefits, Employment Insurance Canada or the Canada Pension Plan
- the services are required for less than 30 days, or
- the calculated financial contribution is under \$25.00 per month
- in the case of a youth agreement, requiring the parent to contribute is not in the youth's best interests.

When the contribution is waived because services are required for less than 30 days, review the decision after 30 days. Where the services extend for longer than 30 days, apply for maintenance and backdate the maintenance to the first date of service provision.

Selecting an appropriate alternative dispute resolution process

If a child is in care by a court order and agreement is reached on an alternative dispute resolution process for determining the parental contribution, refer the matter to a mediator on the approved mediation roster. (See the CFCS list in the MCFD Intranet for the roster of approved mediators):

http://www.mediator-roster.bc.ca/listall_cp.cfm

When out-of-home care is provided without a court order, and an alternative dispute resolution process is needed to determine parental contribution, use community-based alternative dispute resolution services that are respectful of the culture and family, including services provided by volunteer-based organizations.

Applying for a maintenance order

If a child is in care by a court order, or is the subject of a voluntary care agreement, special needs agreement or youth agreement, and an agreement with the parent on financial contribution cannot be reached using mediation or other alternative dispute resolution processes, consider applying for a maintenance order. (See administrative procedures.)

Advising a parent of the need to reapply for the Child Tax Benefit

Provide the parent with all information about the loss of and reinstatement of the Child Tax Benefit when a child enters and leaves care or a youth agreement ends, and assist the parent with the Child Tax Benefit reinstatement process.

See Reference Guide: *Parental Contribution to a Child's Care* at

http://icw.mcf.gov.bc.ca/manuals/docs/cfdev/cfs/refguide_parent_contribution.pdf

CFS STANDARD 10: PARENTAL CONTRIBUTION TO A CHILD'S CARE	
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	<p>Completing an agreement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the agreement with the parent (Form CF2615). • Provide the parent and the Financial Services Branch (MCFD) with copies. • File a copy in the child's and parent's file. <p>Applying for a maintenance order</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete and file Form 2 (Application for an Order) with the provincial court. • Obtain a date and time for a hearing from the registry. • Serve notice of the time, date and place of the hearing on the parent and any others requiring notice. • Provide the parent with information about the terms of the order, including the amount of financial contribution requested in the order. • Consult with contract legal counsel about the evidence required for the hearing. If you want to shorten or extend the timeframe for service or apply to dispense with the requirement for notice, consult with contract legal counsel. <p>Loss and reinstatement of Child Tax Benefit On return of a child to a parent's care, or when a youth agreement ends, provide the parent with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • written information about how to reapply for the Child Tax Benefit, and • the Child Tax Benefit Application kit.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	Residents of B.C. with inquiries about the Child Tax Benefit can call 1-800-387-1193.
KEY DEFINITIONS	

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CFS STANDARD 11: WHEN A CHILD IS AT IMMEDIATE RISK OF HARM	
STANDARD STATEMENT	When information indicates that a child is at immediate risk of harm, on receiving that information take the necessary steps to ensure the child's immediate safety and health.
INTENT	<p>In keeping with the overriding principle of the CFCSA—that the safety and well-being of children is paramount—this standard reinforces the need to take direct and immediate action to address circumstances where a child may be at immediate risk of harm. These actions are always unique to the child's circumstances and are taken in collaboration with other community service providers, such as police.</p> <p>The placement of this standard before the standard on “Assessing a child protection report and determining the most appropriate response” is purposeful. It provides the opportunity to first take action to resolve immediate safety issues before determining, in a thoughtful manner, the most appropriate ongoing response (e.g., family development response, investigation, no further action) that best fits the child's and family's circumstances.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.25, s.26, s.27, s.28, s.29 • Infants Act: s.16 • COA: S10.3.03
POLICY	<p>When a child may be at immediate risk of harm, take immediate action and provide the necessary services to ensure his or her safety and health.</p> <p>Steps to ensure a child's immediate safety include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing intensive in-home support services (e.g., homemaker services) • remaining with the child until the parents can be located • if the child agrees, taking him or her to stay with someone who will keep him or her safe • if the parent agrees, arranging for the child to stay with extended family or another person known to the child who can provide a safe place for the child • taking charge if required and taking the child to a safe place (e.g., day care, family home, hospital), • if the parent is available and consents, entering into a voluntary care agreement to place the child in an out-of-home living arrangement (e.g., foster home), or • removing the child. <p>If personally unable to see the child, ask one of the following to see the child immediately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a police officer • a public health nurse, or • another person who can determine whether the child's safety or health is in immediate danger.

CFS STANDARD 11: WHEN A CHILD IS AT IMMEDIATE RISK OF HARM	
	<p>If the steps to ensure the child's safety include taking charge of the child, consent to necessary health care if the child who has been taken charge of has health needs that require immediate attention and a health care provider recommends treatment without delay. If at all possible, take the child to a health care provider who knows the child.</p> <p>Consent to necessary health care is limited to the child's right to consent to treatment under the Infant's Act.</p> <p>If the child is Aboriginal, work with the involved Aboriginal community or identified delegated agency to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify a safe place for the child, or • if necessary, identify an Aboriginal community member to see the child and determine whether the child is at immediate risk of harm. <p>If the child is a youth, consider a youth service response if this response will meet the youth's need for immediate safety. See the Standards for Youth Support Services and Agreements for more information on responses to youth in high-risk situations.</p> <p>After taking steps to ensure the child's immediate safety, determine what further response is required. (See Child and Family Service Standard 12: Assessing a Child Protection Report and Determining the Most Appropriate Response).</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<p>Standards for Youth Support Services and Agreements—Screening and Assessment, and Youth Agreements: http://icw.mcf.gov.bc.ca/provserv/ysevr/docs/ia/stand_youth_sup_serv.pdf</p>
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CFS STANDARD 12: ASSESSING A CHILD PROTECTION REPORT AND DETERMINING THE MOST APPROPRIATE RESPONSE	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>Assess every report received about a child’s need for protection, and determine the most appropriate response within five calendar days of receiving the report.</p> <p>Appropriate responses include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • taking no further action • referring the family to informal and formal support services • providing a family development response • if the child is a youth, providing a youth service response • conducting a child protection investigation. <p>If a child is at immediate risk of harm, see Child and Family Service Standard 11: When the Child Is at Immediate Risk of Harm.</p>
INTENT	<p>This standard requires that relevant information about a child and family be gathered within a timeframe appropriate to the reported circumstances. The information is used to determine the most appropriate response and requires the use of standardized assessment tools that have been developed and endorsed by leading practitioners and researchers to inform clinical judgment.</p> <p>An appropriate response takes into account the child’s developmental level and vulnerability, and family and community strengths and capacities. The focus of the response is not on process but on achieving the best outcome for the child while promoting safety and minimizing the trauma associated with disruptive interventions.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.13, s.14, s.15, s.16, s.27, s.96 • COA: S10.2.03, S10.2.05, S10.2.07, G8.1.02, G8.1.03, G1.2.02 • Guidelines for Provision of Youth Services: http://icw.mcf.gov.bc.ca/manuals/docs/provserv/guidelines_youth_services.pdf
POLICY	<p>Obtaining information from a reporter When receiving a report about a child’s need for protection, obtain from the reporter:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information relating to the basis of the reporter’s belief that the child may need protection • the name, present location, description of and contact information for any child the reporter believes may need protection • the names of and contact information for the child’s family and others who may be involved • the current circumstances of the child • the names of other people, organizations or agencies who may be familiar with the child’s circumstances, and • the reporter’s relationship to the child and family.

CFS STANDARD 12: ASSESSING A CHILD PROTECTION REPORT AND DETERMINING THE MOST APPROPRIATE RESPONSE

Providing a reporter with information about timeframe, outcome and responsibility

Discuss with a reporter:

- the estimated timeframe for the response
- if and how the reporter will be advised of the outcome of the assessment of the information received, and
- the reporter's possible ongoing responsibility as a resource to the child and family.

Confirm that the reporter's identity is confidential and will not be disclosed without the reporter's consent unless required in a court proceeding.

Gathering additional information related to a report

If additional information is needed to determine the most appropriate response, consider contacting the parent. If the subject of the report is a youth, consider speaking to the youth. Seek the parent's consent before to speaking to the youth, unless parental consent is not in the youth's best interests.

With the parent's consent, consider contacting the following for additional information:

- the child or other children (unless the child made the report)
- others who may have information needed to assess the report and determine the most appropriate response.

When individuals or organizations have been identified as having relevant information relating to a report, obtain this information whenever possible.

Assessing information related to a report

To assess a report, review:

- the information provided by the reporter
- all past records and other relevant and accessible information, and
- information provided by contacted individuals who provided relevant information about the child's circumstances.

If, after a review of all available information, it appears that the child may need protection as described in s.13 of the CFCSA, determine the most appropriate response to the report.

Determining the most appropriate response to a report

After completing a thorough assessment of all available information, use a standardized, culturally appropriate assessment tool to inform the decision about the most appropriate response, to ensure the child's safety and well-being and promote the family's and community's capacity to care safely for the child.

Appropriate responses could include:

- taking no further action

CFS STANDARD 12: ASSESSING A CHILD PROTECTION REPORT AND DETERMINING THE MOST APPROPRIATE RESPONSE	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • referring the family to natural helpers, or informal or formal community-based support services • a family development response (see Child and Family Service Standard 14: Family Development Response) • investigating the child's need for protection (see Child and Family Service Standard 16: Conducting a Child Protection Investigation). <p>Responding to a child protection report involving a youth If the subject of a child protection report is a youth, provide a response that will keep the youth safe and that fits his or her needs while building his or her capacity. In most circumstances, conducting a child protection investigation will not be the best response for a youth.</p> <p>When determining the best response to a child protection report involving a youth, consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the youth's age • the youth's developmental level and capacity • the youth's strengths and needs, and • whether services that fit the needs of the youth are available in the youth's community. <p>A child protection investigation may be the best response for a youth who is developmentally delayed.</p> <p>See the Standards for Youth Support Services and Agreements for additional information on youth assessments, planning, integrated service response, and alternatives for youth through a youth service response.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Record the intake on MIS SWS. • Complete the review of information available on MIS SWS through a Prior Contact Check (see instructions in the ICS User Guide). • Where a file exists outside the office where the call is taken, contact the person with the most recent information about the child or family to discuss the report, and record the information provided. • If the family has recently moved to B.C., contact the child welfare authority from the family's home community and request and record any information they might provide. • Record the results of the assessment and the response taken in the electronic and physical files.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards for Youth Support Services and Agreements: http://icw.mcf.gov.bc.ca/provserv/ysew/docs/ia/stand_youth_sup_serv.pdf • Best Practice Approaches to Violence Against Women in Relationships

**CFS STANDARD 12: ASSESSING A CHILD PROTECTION REPORT AND
DETERMINING THE MOST APPROPRIATE RESPONSE**

KEY DEFINITIONS	youth service response: a differential response to youth in need of assistance through CFCSA s.12.1 and s.12.2, which involves screening, assessment, short-term planning and utilization of youth support services, such as youth-family mediation, mentorship, safe housing and outreach services. A youth services response may also provide comprehensive longer-term service planning for a youth receiving services for mental health issues, or receiving services through a youth agreement. Out-of-care supported living services may in turn use any number of youth services, such as one-to-one youth support workers, group supports and youth housing supports, including safe housing.
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CFS STANDARD 13: INFORMING THE POLICE	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>Immediately inform the police if information is received indicating that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a child has been physically harmed • a child has been sexually abused or sexually exploited, or • a criminal act may have occurred that affects the immediate safety of a child.
INTENT	<p>The intent of this standard is to promote and support a collaborative working relationship with police in cases where it is possible that criminal charges will be laid.</p> <p>Informing police is the first step in clarifying roles and responsibilities when both the director and police are jointly investigating circumstances where a child may be a victim of a crime. Coordinating joint investigations reduces the trauma for a child associated with interviewing, medical exams and other investigative activities.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>BC Handbook for Action on Child Abuse and Neglect</i> http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/child_protection/pdf/handbook_action_child_abuse.pdf • Criminal Code of Canada: http://lois.justice.gc.ca/en/C-46/index.html • COA: S10.3.06 • Regional protocols with police
POLICY	<p>If at any point it is believed that a child has been physically harmed, sexually abused or sexually exploited, or that a criminal act may have occurred that affects the immediate safety of a child, immediately:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inform the police of all information relevant to a potential criminal investigation • discuss with police the need for a coordinated joint investigation • follow all local and provincial protocols relevant to joint investigations, and • inform the police of the assessment of and planned response to the report. <p>When required, coordinate with the police the involvement of services to support the victim, where available.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	
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CFS STANDARD 14: FAMILY DEVELOPMENT RESPONSE	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>When a decision has been made to provide a family development response as the best response to a child protection report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conduct an assessment of the family’s situation, using standardized, culturally appropriate assessment tools • involve the child, family and extended family in the process, and • develop a plan to support the child and family that involves community service providers and addresses the child’s safety and health throughout the process. <p>If the child is Aboriginal, see Child and Family Service Standard 2: Children and Families from Aboriginal Communities, for additional considerations and service requirements.</p>
INTENT	<p>This standard supports the provision of an alternative response in circumstances where identified risks of harm to a child can be managed through the provision of intensive, time-limited support services rather than an investigation. A thorough assessment of strengths and risks within the family, and an ongoing goal-oriented relationship with the child and family, are fundamental components of this response.</p> <p>The family development response requires that the family be engaged and that both informal and formal community services be directly involved to address identified risks. The focus of this response is on achieving the outcome of building family capacity to safely care for the child by strengthening connections with extended family, natural helpers and community helping networks.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.16(2), s.5 • COA: S10.3.04 • “Assessment Tools to Promote Collaborative Practice and Service Delivery”: http://icw.mcf.gov.bc.ca/manuals/docs/cfdev/cfs/assess_tools_collab_pract.pdf
POLICY	<p>Initiating a family development response</p> <p>Initiate a family development response when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • it has been determined through a standardized, culturally appropriate assessment tool that the nature of the harm and level of risk to the child may be appropriately addressed through a family development response (see Child and Family Service Standard 12: Assessing a Child Protection Report and Determining the Most Appropriate Response) • the family agrees to participate in the assessment of its strengths and risks, and • the family agrees to participate in support services to meet its needs as identified through an assessment of strengths and risks, including the ongoing involvement of the person initiating the family development response.

CFS STANDARD 14: FAMILY DEVELOPMENT RESPONSE

	<p>Monitoring the provision of ongoing services Throughout the period in which services are provided, regularly reassess the family's strengths and risks to ensure that the child is safe and that the services continue to meet the family's needs.</p> <p>If the family development response services are provided by a community service agency, ensure that an agreement is in place about roles and responsibilities in monitoring the family development response. An agreement includes information about how and when child protection reports will be referred to a person delegated to respond to reports under the CFCSA.</p> <p>If risks cannot be managed through a family development response If the reassessment indicates that the risks identified cannot be effectively addressed through a family development response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • report the circumstances to a person delegated to investigate the matter, and • make an agreement with the person conducting the investigation on further responsibilities and roles for involvement with the family. <p>Ending a family development response Before ending a family development response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensure that an assessment of the family's progress shows that the parents are able to keep the child safe without further involvement of services provided through the family development response • involve the family in the decision to end the response • advise extended family, delegated agencies and community service providers involved with the family of the decision to end the response, and • give the family information about further informal and formal support services available in the community.
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	Record the decision to provide a family development response on ICS. An electronic and physical family service file remains open during the period of the family development response to store all records created as a result of the response.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
KEY DEFINITIONS	family development response: an approach to child protection reports when, according to an assessment, the risk of harm can be managed through the provision of intensive, time-limited support services. It includes a strengths-based assessment of the family's capacity to safely care for a child, and provision of support services, instead of a child protection investigation.

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PROGRAM AREA: Child and Family Development Service – Transformation Division

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CFS STANDARD 15: YOUTH SERVICE RESPONSE	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>When a decision has been made to provide a youth service response as the best response to a child protection report:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conduct a further assessment of the youth's situation to assist the youth in addressing immediate risks and needs through a short-term safety plan • develop a longer-term service plan (if required) through identifying the youth's needs, strengths and personal/family/community resources. <p>If the youth is Aboriginal, see Child and Family Service Standard 2: Children and Families from Aboriginal Communities, for additional considerations and service requirements.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.12.1, s.12.2 • CFCSA Regulation: s.8 • Standards for Youth Support Services and Agreements: http://icw.mcf.gov.bc.ca/provserv/ysew/docs/ia/stand_youth_sup_serv.pdf • Youth Immediate Needs Assessment and Safety Plan (cf0704): http://icw.mcf.gov.bc.ca/forms/CF0706FILL_JUN04.pdf
POLICY	<p>Initiating a youth service response For information on initiating a youth service response, see Child and Family Service Standard 12: Assessing a Child Protection Report and Determining the Most Appropriate Response.</p> <p>Immediate needs assessment, safety plan and interim supports If providing a youth service response, assess the youth's immediate risks and basic needs, which include but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • food • clothing • shelter • safety • a contracted support worker • a protective intervention order • medical or other clinical treatment. <p>Based on the immediate needs assessment, develop and implement a short-term safety plan to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • address identified needs and risks, and • support the youth during an interim period in which further assessment and planning can take place (plans may include reunification with or repatriation to family or home community). <p>Longer-term comprehensive youth service planning Longer-term comprehensive youth service plans, such as youth-family reintegration plans and out-of-care supported independent living plans (e.g., youth agreements) may include:</p>

CFS STANDARD 15: YOUTH SERVICE RESPONSE	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • youth housing supports (where available), such as longer-term residency in a safe house • youth-family mediation • contracted youth support workers. <p>If providing a youth services response, see the Standards for Youth Support Services and Agreements on “Screening and Assessment” and “Youth Agreements” for more detailed information on eligibility screening, assessment, planning and case management.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	<p>See the Youth Services section of the MCFD Systems User Guide for MIS SWS administrative procedures related to support services to youth and youth agreements: http://icw.mcf.gov.bc.ca/rasp/sysops/user_guide/docs/sect/24Youth.pdf</p>
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION/ RESOURCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guidelines for Provision of Youth Services • Research Review of Best Practices in Provision of Youth Services
KEY DEFINITIONS	<p>youth: a person who is 16 years of age or over but under 19 years of age.</p>

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CFS STANDARD 16: CONDUCTING A CHILD PROTECTION INVESTIGATION	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>After a thorough assessment of the information in a child protection report, if a decision is made to investigate, begin immediately if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the child’s safety or health may be in immediate danger, or • the child is vulnerable to serious harm because of age or developmental level. <p>In all other circumstances, when a decision is made to investigate, begin a thorough investigation appropriate to the report within five calendar days.</p> <p>Each investigation includes, at minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seeing the child and all other vulnerable children in the home • interviewing the child and all other vulnerable children in the home, where developmentally appropriate and with supports if necessary • directly observing the child’s living situation • seeing and interviewing the parent • reviewing all relevant and necessary information related to the report, including existing case records and files, and • obtaining information from people who may have relevant knowledge of the family and/or child. <p>Throughout the investigation, consider and provide services that ensure the child’s safety, including out-of-home care options, and if the child is Aboriginal, work in partnership with the appropriate Aboriginal community or agency.</p> <p>Complete the investigation within 30 calendar days of beginning the investigation.</p>
INTENT	<p>This standard provides timelines and minimum requirements for an investigation undertaken in response to a child protection report.</p> <p>An investigation is a process of responding in a timely way to serious child protection concerns where a thorough assessment indicates that risks to the child cannot be managed through any other response (e.g., family development response, referral to community, youth services response). Working collaboratively with families is preferable, but not always possible.</p> <p>The focus of an investigation is on thoroughly gathering and assessing the information about the alleged incident and risks of future harm. Direct interviews with the child and family are essential to the investigation process, and where required, are coordinated with police and other involved agencies and persons.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.13, s.16, s.17, s.18, s.19, s.25, s.26, s.27 • Infants Act: s.16 • COA: S10.3.04

CFS STANDARD 16: CONDUCTING A CHILD PROTECTION INVESTIGATION

POLICY

Determining an immediate response

Base a decision to immediately investigate a child's need for protection on:

- the severity of harm to the child
- the age and vulnerability of the child
- whether there is current injury or harm to the child, and
- the likelihood of immediate harm to the child.

A child may be considered highly vulnerable when he or she:

- is five years of age or under
- is not visible in the community (e.g., is not attending daycare, public health, preschool, school), or
- has a medical condition or developmental disability or displays behaviours that may affect his or her immediate health or safety.

Consider protective factors in the child's life by considering the relationships and resources available to the child and his or her ability to access them.

Conducting an investigation when an immediate response is not required

When an immediate response is not required, begin a thorough investigation within five days.

If the child requires a medical examination

Further to the minimum requirements for conducting an investigation as described in this standard, arrange for a medical examination of the child as required according to the child's circumstances (e.g., when the child may have been physically harmed or sexually abused, or if the child has a medical condition that needs treatment).

Whenever possible, obtain the parent's consent before the medical examination. If the parent refuses or is unable to give consent for the child's medical examination, consider:

- authorizing a medical examination under s.17 of the CFCSA, or
- removing the child and authorizing a medical examination.

If the child has capacity to consent to medical treatment, the child's decision to accept or reject medical treatment may not be over-ridden.

Working with a family and involved extended family throughout an investigation

To the fullest extent possible, consistent with ensuring a child's safety, involve the family in planning and decision making throughout an investigation, by:

- providing the reasons for the investigation
- explaining how the investigation will proceed
- asking the parent who else might play a role in keeping the child safe during the investigation

CFS STANDARD 16: CONDUCTING A CHILD PROTECTION INVESTIGATION

- determining who will be contacted and whenever possible obtaining the parent's agreement to contact
- seeking information from the parent about who else could contribute information to assist with the investigation, and
- attempting to work cooperatively with the parent to seek agreement on how to ensure the child's safety, using mediation or other alternative dispute resolution processes if necessary, unless this might jeopardize the child's safety or the investigation.

Involve the extended family and others who might play a role in keeping the child safe during the investigation.

Before seeing and interviewing a child

Make every effort to inform the parent before seeing and interviewing a child, unless this might jeopardize the child's safety or the investigation.

Obtain and consider relevant background information about the child and his or her family, including:

- the child's developmental level
- the child's emotional and behavioural state, and
- family and extended family relationships.

If the child is Aboriginal, contact the involved Aboriginal community or identified delegated agency according to established protocols, when planning to interview the child.

If unable to see or interview a child

If a child cannot be interviewed within a timeframe that will ensure his or her safety, arrange for another responsible person to see the child, and work with the person to ensure the child's immediate safety. Consider the following as possible alternatives for seeing or interviewing the child:

- police
- public health nurse
- band social worker, or
- another responsible person.

Moving a child

When a child must be moved to be interviewed, obtain the consent of the parent or the child, unless action has been taken to take charge of or remove the child.

When a child or family cannot be located

When a child is considered to be in immediate danger and the child or family cannot be located, make every effort to locate them, including:

- involving the police if the child is highly vulnerable, and
- arranging for information alerts to be placed on provincial and, where required, inter-provincial, federal and other information systems.

CFS STANDARD 16: CONDUCTING A CHILD PROTECTION INVESTIGATION	
	<p>Provision of services during an investigation Consider natural helpers and informal and formal supports in the community as a means to keep a child safe during an investigation. If necessary, have the parent identify resources and people who can provide out-of-home care options for the child.</p> <p>Complete the investigation within 30 calendar days of commencement (see Child and Family Service Standard 17: Concluding the Investigation).</p> <p>When information is obtained during an investigation that indicates that the child does not need protection, the investigation may be ended, and, when required, an alternative response may be chosen.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	Place an alert on MIS SWS when a child or family cannot be located.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
KEY DEFINITIONS	

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CFS STANDARD 17: CONCLUDING A CHILD PROTECTION INVESTIGATION	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>A child protection investigation is concluded when all information is gathered to determine whether a child needs protection and what steps, if any, are required to address the child’s need for protection.</p> <p>Complete each investigation within 30 calendar days.</p> <p>At the conclusion of the investigation, make all reasonable efforts to report the result of the investigation to the person who made the report.</p> <p>Inform the following of the results of the investigation and what further actions, if any, will be taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • each parent who is involved in the child’s care • the child • the Aboriginal community or identified delegated agency if the child is Aboriginal, and • extended family, community members, informal and formal support service providers and others involved with the family and who may play a role in keeping the child safe. <p>Do not disclose the results of the investigation if doing so could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • endanger the child’s safety or cause physical or emotional harm to any person, or • interfere with a criminal investigation into the matter.
INTENT	<p>This standard provides timelines for completing a child protection investigation and requirements for reporting the results of the investigation.</p> <p>The purpose of a child protection investigation is to determine, in a timely way, whether there are reasonable grounds to believe that the child needs protection. The information gathered informs decisions about what further actions are needed to ensure the child’s ongoing safety and well-being, including court actions. The investigation is concluded when sufficient information is gathered to make a plan to keep the child safe.</p> <p>The results of the investigation are shared with others who need the information to support and reinforce their roles and responsibilities in protecting and caring for the child. This information includes assessments, decisions made, and actions taken and planned.</p>
REFERENCES	CFCSA: s.16
POLICY	<p>To conclude an investigation, decide whether the child needs protection, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • considering the relevant information collected during an investigation • examining the strengths and risks of the family, using a standardized, culturally appropriate assessment tool • considering what role natural helpers and informal and formal supports can play in keeping the child safe, and

CFS STANDARD 17: CONCLUDING A CHILD PROTECTION INVESTIGATION	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consulting with others who are familiar with or have specialized knowledge of the child's circumstances. <p>Informing about the results of an investigation Inform those who are entitled to be notified of the results of the investigation as soon as possible after concluding the investigation. Disclose information either verbally or in writing, in accordance with the requirements of Part 5 of the CFCSA.</p> <p>When informing people about the results of the investigation, discuss their willingness and ability to play an ongoing role in keeping the child safe.</p> <p>If a criminal investigation is underway or being contemplated, consult with police to determine whether disclosing information will jeopardize the investigation.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
KEY DEFINITIONS	

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**CFS STANDARD 18: DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A PLAN
TO KEEP A CHILD SAFE**

<p>STANDARD STATEMENT</p>	<p>When a child needs protection, develop with the family and extended family, and involving the child, a plan that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensures the child’s safety and well-being • is based on family strengths and risks identified using standardized, culturally appropriate assessment tools • whenever possible, through collaborative planning and alternative dispute resolution processes, establishes an agreement with the family about the need for natural helpers and informal and formal support services to keep the child safe • addresses the child’s need for stability and continuity of lifelong relationships, and • to the fullest extent possible supports and strengthens the family’s, extended family’s and community’s capacity to care for the child. <p>On a regular and ongoing basis, and when there is a significant change in the circumstances of the child or family:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete a reassessment of family strengths and risks that addresses the developmental needs of the child, and • review the results of the reassessment with the child, family, extended family and others involved to determine whether changes to the plan are required.
<p>INTENT</p>	<p>This standard reinforces the importance of involving a family and community in developing a plan to build family and community capacity to keep a child safe. The plan is based on an assessment of identified strengths and risks and strives to engage the family in a trusting, cooperative working relationship.</p> <p>The most effective plans are those in which the family is actively involved in the decision making and actively participates in the development of strategies, solutions and services that work toward ensuring the child’s safety and well-being. The plan includes processes for regularly reviewing the effectiveness of the plan and identifying required changes.</p>
<p>REFERENCES</p>	<p>COA: S10.3.04, S10.4.03, S10.5.01, S10.5.02</p>
<p>POLICY</p>	<p>As soon as possible after determining that a child needs protection, develop a plan to keep the child safe based on a culturally appropriate assessment of the strengths and risks of the child, family, extended family and community. Ensure that the plan outlines what steps are being taken to address the child’s safety and well-being.</p> <p>If the child is a youth, consider using a youth service response in the plan to keep the youth safe (including, for example, youth-family mediation or safe housing).</p>

CFS STANDARD 18: DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A PLAN TO KEEP A CHILD SAFE

Components of a plan

A plan for a child in need of protection addresses:

- strengths of the child and family that mitigate the safety risks to the child
- identified risks to the child's safety
- how the identified goals for the child and family will be met
- the child's need for stability and continuity of relationships
- strategies for keeping the child safe, including services to support or strengthen the family's capacity to care safely for the child, and
- timeframes for review of the plan.

Strategies for keeping the child safe are based on a careful assessment of identified strengths and risks, and can include:

- providing information about and facilitating access to natural helpers and informal and formal support services, if adequate and available (for additional information on the provision of services, see Child and Family Service Standard 7: Support Services to Strengthen Capacity)
- informal kinship care (for additional information on using kinship care to keep a child safe, see Child and Family Service Standard 8: Informal Kinship Care)
- family conferencing, to facilitate development of a safety plan
- if the child is a youth, providing a youth service response, including youth-family mediation, safe houses, and outreach/support workers
- voluntary or special needs care agreements (see Child and Family Service Standard 9: Care Agreements)
- a supervision order without removal
- removing a child and placing with relatives or people known to him or her, or if necessary with another caregiver.

When developing the plan, involve, collaborate with and consider the views of:

- the child, family and extended family
- if the child is Aboriginal, the appropriate Aboriginal community or identified delegated agency
- other significant persons known to the child and family, and
- service providers who can play a role in keeping the child safe.

Reassessing a plan to keep a child safe

On a regular and ongoing basis, reassess the plan to determine whether it is sufficient to keep the child safe.

Reassess the plan when there are significant changes in the circumstances of the child or family, including:

- a change in family composition (e.g., a child, youth or adult moving out of or into the family home; a death in the family)
- a change in the physical or mental health of the child, family or extended family

**CFS STANDARD 18: DEVELOPING AND IMPLEMENTING A PLAN
TO KEEP A CHILD SAFE**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • changes of significant support persons or in available resources (e.g., a close friend moving away; loss of or gaining employment) • involvement in criminal activities that pose a risk to the child. <p>When determining whether the plan is adequate to keep the child safe, consider both the strengths and risks of the child, family, extended family, community and Aboriginal community. Offer and provide services and supports that build on the strengths of the child, family and community. Give ongoing consideration to whether the plan meets the child's changing physical and developmental needs.</p> <p>Reviewing the results of a reassessment</p> <p>Review and discuss the results of a reassessment of a plan to keep a child safe with those who were involved in the reassessment, including the child and others who play a role in keeping the child safe.</p> <p>Whenever possible, give a written copy of a revised plan to keep a child safe to those who are involved in implementing the plan.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
KEY DEFINITIONS	

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CFS STANDARD 19: REMOVING A CHILD	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>When a child needs protection, consider removal only when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the child is in immediate danger, or • after fully exploring support services, alternative care options and approaches (including alternative traditional dispute resolution processes, family conferencing and mediation), there are no other means to keep the child safe.
INTENT	<p>This standard reflects the legislative grounds for removing a child: unless a child is in immediate danger, all options for keeping the child safe other than removal must be fully explored and implemented where available and adequate.</p> <p>The standard recognizes the intrusive and disruptive nature of this action, and the associated policy describes necessary legislative requirements and accountabilities once this action has been taken.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.5, s.6, s.8, s.28, s.29.1, s.30, s.31 • COA: S10.1.01, S10.4.02
POLICY	<p>When a child needs protection but is not in immediate danger, fully explore less disruptive measures to keep the child safe, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • informal or formal support services, including a support services agreement with the parent (see Child and Family Service Standard 7: Support Services to Strengthen Capacity) • an agreement with the parent on a plan to address the child's immediate safety • an arrangement for the child to reside with extended family or someone with a significant relationship to the child, and if necessary with support services (see Child and Family Service Standard 8: Informal Kinship Care) • if the child is a youth, a youth service response, including, for example, a youth services agreement • an agreement with the parent for the child to reside in an out-of-home living arrangement (see Child and Family Service Standard 9: Care Agreements) • a referral to traditional dispute resolution, family conferencing, mediation or other alternative dispute resolution processes to assist in developing a plan to keep the child safe (see Child and Family Service Standard 4: Cooperative Planning and Dispute Resolution Processes) • taking charge of the child • a supervision order under s.29.1 of the CFCSA • an agreement with the parent to ensure that a person who has caused the child's need for protection has left or will leave the home. <p>Where contact between a child and another person is likely to result in harm to the child, consider applying for a protective intervention order under s.28 of the CFCSA.</p>

CFS STANDARD 19: REMOVING A CHILD	
	<p>Notifying a parent of a child's removal As soon as possible after a child has been removed, if the child's parent was not present, make all reasonable efforts to contact the parent and explain the reasons for the removal. Wherever practicable, provide this information in writing.</p> <p>Provide the parent with information about what will happen next, including the date and time of the presentation hearing, if known.</p> <p>Advise the parent about where to obtain legal services.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
KEY DEFINITIONS	

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CFS STANDARD 20: PLACEMENTS WHEN A CHILD COMES INTO CARE	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>Give priority to placing a child with extended family, consistent with the child's best interests and need for stability and continuity of lifelong relationships.</p> <p>In addition to the above, if a child is Aboriginal, always give priority to placing the child within the child's Aboriginal cultural community. If the extended family or community cannot safely assume the child's care, give priority to placing the child with another Aboriginal family outside the child's Aboriginal cultural community.</p> <p>If these placement priorities are not possible, make every effort to place the child in a location:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • where he or she can maintain contact with relatives and friends • in the same family unit as the child's brothers and sisters • that will allow the child to continue in the same school, and • that will allow continued contact with his or her cultural community. <p>If an Aboriginal child is placed in a non-Aboriginal home, provide him or her with opportunities to maintain positive contact and involvement with the Aboriginal community or establish relationships with an alternative Aboriginal community or urban Aboriginal organization close to where the child lives.</p>
INTENT	<p>This standard reflects the need to maintain stability and continuity of relationships to the extent possible when a child comes into care.</p> <p>The standard is based on the evidence that there are significant benefits in placing a child with familiar caregivers, keeping siblings together, and maintaining relationships within the child's school, community and culture. Benefits for the child include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a reduction of the trauma of leaving a parent's care • greater psychological and emotional stability • a greater sense of belonging and acceptance • an increased possibility of facilitating family reunification, and • preservation of family, cultural and community values. <p>The intent is to respect, utilize and build on the existing capacities within the child's family and extended family and others who have a significant relationship with the child.</p> <p>If the child is Aboriginal, the child's identity is maintained and promoted through ongoing connections with and, wherever possible, continued care by extended family or members of the Aboriginal community.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.4, s.35(2)(d), s.41(1)(b), s.42.2(4)(a), s.42.2(4)(c), s.42.2(7)(d) or s.49(7)(b), s.71, s.93(1)(g)(ii) • COA: S21.23 to S21.29 • Children in Care Service Standard 12: Supporting and Assisting a Child with a Change in Placement

CFS STANDARD 20: PLACEMENTS WHEN A CHILD COMES INTO CARE

POLICY

To the fullest extent possible, make decisions about where to place a child through a consultative process that includes the child, family, extended family and other adults who have a significant relationship with the child.

Whenever possible, make decisions about where a child will live before the child moves, in order to ensure that the child, family and new caregivers are properly prepared for the transition. Make placement decisions in a timely manner based on the developmental level of the child.

In placement decisions, the child's best interests are paramount. Select a placement that is most likely to serve the child's best interests, including the need for stability and continuity of lifelong relationships, based on an assessment of his or her circumstances.

Giving priority to placement with a relative

When making placement decisions, give priority to placing the child with extended family, consistent with the child's best interests. In doing so, consider how the needs, personality and developmental level of the child match the abilities, capacities and resources of the extended family.

Maintaining contact with relatives and friends

Consider placing a child in a placement that will promote the maximum contact between the child and parents and other family members. Whenever possible, select caregivers who:

- live in close geographic proximity to the child's extended family and friends, and
- are willing to promote the child's regular contact with extended family and friends, consistent with his or her needs.

When a child's best interests are served by living with caregivers who do *not* live close to the child's family and/or friends:

- make efforts to involve family and extended family in decisions about the child
- assist the child in maintaining contact with family, extended family and friends, subject to court-ordered access restrictions, and
- offer support services to the family and extended family to help maintain or enhance their ongoing involvement with the child.

Keeping siblings together

Make efforts to keep siblings together to:

- reduce the trauma of separation, and
- promote continuity and stability of this lifelong relationship.

If siblings live in separate placements, arrange for frequent and regular contact between them.

CFS STANDARD 20: PLACEMENTS WHEN A CHILD COMES INTO CARE

	<p>Keeping a child in the same school Make efforts to find a placement for a child in a location that will allow him or her to continue to attend the same school.</p> <p>Preserving a child's culture and identity Make efforts to preserve a child's culture and identity, by choosing a caregiver who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • respects the views, cultural and ethnic heritage, socio-economic circumstances, spiritual beliefs and identity of the child, family and extended family • is willing to work with the child's family and extended family to promote the child's culture and identity • is willing to promote and support ongoing contact with members of the child's cultural community, and • is willing to help the child develop a strong self-image that incorporates his or her culture and identity. <p>If the child is Aboriginal If the child is Aboriginal, work in partnership with the involved Aboriginal community or identified delegated agency to choose a caregiver for the child. Consider all adult members of the child's extended family or other persons within the Aboriginal community as possible caregivers for the child. Actively follow up with suggested or recommended members of the child's family or community to determine whether they are willing or able to care for the child.</p> <p>Give priority to placing each Aboriginal child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • with his or her extended family or within his or her Aboriginal community • with another Aboriginal family, or • if these placement options are unavailable, in accordance with the other placement priorities described in this standard. <p>Placements in alternative out-of-care living arrangements For information on s.8 of the CFCSA, "Agreements with a Child's Kin and Other," see Child and Family Service Standard 8: Informal Kinship Care.</p> <p>For information on s.35(2)(d), s.42.1(6)(b), s.41(1)(b), s.42.2(4)(a), 42.2(4)(c) and s.49(7)(b) of the CFCSA, court orders giving custody to a person other than a parent under the director's supervision, see the reference guide "Custody to a Person Other Than a Parent Under the Director's Supervision."</p>
<p>ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES</p>	<p>Enter all important contacts, relationships and relevant community information on MIS SWS.</p>

CFS STANDARD 20: PLACEMENTS WHEN A CHILD COMES INTO CARE	
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reference guide, "Agreements with Child's Kin and Others" • Reference guide, "Court Orders Giving Custody to a Person Other Than a Parent Under the Director's Supervision"
KEY DEFINITIONS	

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**CFS STANDARD 21: ENDING CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES
TO A CHILD AND FAMILY**

<p>STANDARD STATEMENT</p>	<p>When an assessment and review indicates that a child no longer needs protection, involve the following in the decision to end protection services and inform them of the decision:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • each parent who is involved in the child’s care • the child • the involved Aboriginal community or identified delegated agency if the child is Aboriginal, and • extended family, natural helpers in the community, providers of formal support services, and others involved in the plan to keep the child safe. <p>If the child or family requests or agrees to receive additional services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • refer to natural helpers and informal and formal supports in the community, or • provide services through a written agreement (see Child and Family Service Standard 7: Support Services to Strengthen Capacity). <p>For additional information on planning to keep a child safe, see Child and Family Service Standard 18: Developing and Implementing a Plan to Keep a Child Safe.</p>
<p>INTENT</p>	<p>This standard reinforces the need to involve a family, extended family and community in making the decision to end formal child protection services, and the importance of communicating this decision to all those who are involved in the service plan.</p> <p>Before ending child protection services, informal community-based services are offered and the required supports put in place to sustain and further build the parent’s capacity to safely care for the child.</p>
<p>REFERENCES</p>	<p>COA: S10.5.04, S10.5.05, S10.5.06</p>
<p>POLICY</p>	<p>Deciding to end child protection services</p> <p>Child protection services provided for a child and family may be ended when a reassessment of the strengths and risks of a child, family and extended family shows that the circumstances that necessitated the provision of the services no longer exist, and that identified risks can be managed safely with the strengths and capacity of the family, extended family and community.</p> <p>Base the decision to end child protection services on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a review of the circumstances that led to the child needing protection • information obtained by consulting with others who know the child and family and who may play a role in keeping the child safe • information obtained by consulting with others who may have specialized knowledge or expertise specific to the circumstances of the child and family, and

**CFS STANDARD 21: ENDING CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES
TO A CHILD AND FAMILY**

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a reassessment of the strengths of and risks to the child, family and extended family, using a standardized, culturally appropriate assessment tool. <p>Planning for ending child protection services When planning to end child protection services, ask the child, parent, family, extended family and involved Aboriginal community about people or resources that may provide them with informal or formal support.</p> <p>Involve the child, parent, family, extended family and involved Aboriginal community in determining what, if any, services will be provided when child protection services end. Provide:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information on available services and existing support networks, and the importance of natural helpers, extended family and community members as support • assistance in connecting to community-based support services, including volunteer-based services and mutual aid support groups • if necessary, referrals to specialized services, and • formal services, through a written support service agreement, if informal support services are not available or adequate. <p>If voluntary services are provided through a written agreement, see Child and Family Service Standard 7: Support Services to Strengthen Capacity.</p> <p>When child protection services have ended, inform the child, family and others who have a role to play in supporting the family and keeping the child safe.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	If the agreement included the parent's financial contributions to the service, complete and forward the Termination of Support Services Agreement (S2612) to the Financial Services Division.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
KEY DEFINITIONS	

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CFS STANDARD 22: RETURNING A CHILD TO A FAMILY	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>When a decision is made to return a child to his or her family, develop a plan that supports the return based on the best interests of the child and that involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the child • the family • extended family members, if involved • the involved Aboriginal community or identified delegated agency if the child is Aboriginal • the child’s caregiver or care provider, and • other community members, agencies and service providers who have a role in supporting or providing services to the child and family. <p>For additional information on planning to keep a child safe, see Child and Family Service Standard 18: Developing and Implementing a Plan to Keep a Child Safe.</p>
INTENT	<p>The intent of this standard is to reinforce the importance of including everyone involved with a child and family in the decision to return a child home and planning for that return. It recognizes the crucial role that family, extended family and community members play in the child’s ongoing safety and care.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.4 • COA: G9.8 • Children in Care Service Standard 15: Planning for a Child Leaving Care • Child and Family Service Standard 10: Parental Contribution to a Child’s Care
POLICY	<p>Deciding to return a child to a family Base the decision to return a child to his or her family on a review of the service plan or plan of care.</p> <p>Planning to return a child to a family Planning for a child to return to his or her family includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reviewing the reasons why the child came into care or was placed in an alternative out-of-care living arrangement • reviewing the child’s plan of care or service plan to ensure that objectives relating to the safety and well-being of the child have been achieved • providing required informal or formal support services and information on community resources to strengthen the capacity of the family to safely care for the child • ensuring that the child and family are provided with all relevant information and documents, including birth certificate, health care card, and medical and school reports • ensuring that the child and family receive the assistance needed to facilitate the child’s transition to the care of his or her family • informing the parent about the steps that need to be taken to reinstate

CFS STANDARD 22: RETURNING A CHILD TO A FAMILY

	<p>benefits for the child, such as health care coverage and the Child Tax Benefit</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensuring that the child has all of his or her personal belongings when he or she returns to the family. <p>In developing and reviewing the plan, involve the family, extended family, involved Aboriginal community, and other community members, agencies and service providers who may have a role in keeping the child safe.</p> <p>Ensure that the plan addresses the child's best interests and reflects his or her legal status and circumstances.</p> <p>For additional information on planning for a child in care to leave care, see Children in Care Service Standard 15: Planning for a Child Leaving Care.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	When a child service (CS) file is open and a child has returned to his or her family's care, close the electronic and physical files.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
KEY DEFINITIONS	

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CFS STANDARD 23: TRANSFERRING OR ENDING SERVICES

<p>STANDARD STATEMENT</p>	<p>When transferring responsibility for providing a child and family with services, or ending services, involve the child and family in planning for the change and inform them of the change.</p> <p>In addition, if responsibility for providing services is being transferred to another person, service area or delegated agency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inform the child and family about how to contact the person who will be responsible for providing services • review the service plan to ensure continuity of services required for keeping the child safe • inform other involved extended family members, persons or agencies, and • follow all existing protocols and case transfer procedures. <p>For additional information on involving others in planning for transferring or ending services, see Child and Family Service Standard 18: Developing and Implementing a Plan to Keep the Child Safe.</p>
<p>INTENT</p>	<p>The intent of this standard is to ensure that a child and family are fully involved in the decision to transfer or end services provided by the director. Furthermore, those who have ongoing roles and responsibilities in providing the child and family with services receive all relevant information about the change to or conclusion of the service plan.</p>
<p>REFERENCES</p>	<p>COA: G9.7.02, G9.7.03, G9.7.06</p>
<p>POLICY</p>	<p>Responsibility for providing services may be transferred to another person, service area or delegated agency, or services may be ended, when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a child and family relocates to another geographical location • persons providing informal or formal support services are unable to continue providing services • the child and family requests a change in service and the services are still needed to keep the child safe and to strengthen the family's capacity to care safely for the child, or • the child and family requests that services be ended. <p>Transferring responsibility for provision of services When transferring responsibility for providing services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • collaborate with the child, family and service providers in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – determining the timelines for transfer, and – preparing to support an integrated service plan • seek the views of the child and family, and encourage participation in planning the transfer • ensure that the child and family has the contact information for the person(s) who will be providing services

CFS STANDARD 23: TRANSFERRING OR ENDING SERVICES

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wherever possible, arrange telephone or face-to-face contact with the person accepting responsibility for the provision of services, in order to transfer full information about the child and family in a timely manner • with the informed consent of the child and family, ensure that necessary information, including assessments and service plans, is shared with those who will be providing services • wherever possible, with the consent of the child and family, inform extended family, the involved Aboriginal community, and involved agencies of the changes in service provision • ensure that the information in the files is complete, accurate and up to date. <p>Ending services When planning to end services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • plan collaboratively with the child, family, extended family and others to determine what, if any, further informal community-based services are required, and • complete a reassessment of the strengths and risks of the child, family and extended family to ensure that the family has capacity to safely care for the child and has a network of informal support. <p>When services have ended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • wherever possible, with the consent of the child or family, inform extended family, involved Aboriginal community, and involved agencies that services have been ended, and • ensure that the information in the files is complete, accurate and up to date. <p>For information on ending child protection services, see Child and Family Service Standard 21: Ending Child Protection Services to a Child and Family.</p> <p>Resolving any disagreement about transferring or ending services Resolve any points of disagreement about transferring or ending services and the child’s safety through alternative dispute resolution processes.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
KEY DEFINITIONS	

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CFS STANDARD 24: CASE DOCUMENTATION	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>Document all significant information and actions taken during service provision, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • requests for or referrals to services, and actions taken in response to them • child protection reports, and actions taken in response to them • assessments, service provision and investigations, and actions taken in response to them • major decisions, reviews, and results of family conferences, mediation, traditional alternative dispute resolution processes and other conferences, and • any other relevant information and actions taken during service provision.
INTENT	<p>This standard requires that all services provided and significant actions taken by a person delegated under the act be documented. Records are thorough, accurate and complete and are accessible on request to those who have received services.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: Part 5 • COA: G9.5, G9.5.05
POLICY	<p>Ensure that information contained in files and case records is relevant, accurate, objective and complete.</p> <p>Review and update documentation about assessments, actions taken and services provided for each child and family within established procedures and timeframes.</p> <p>Include all records about a child or family, including file recordings, correspondence, assessments, court documents, medical documents and reports, and other professional reports about the child or family in the file.</p> <p>Ensure that the child's or family's case files are kept confidential and in a secure location at all times.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For records and forms procedures, see: http://icw.mcf.gov.bc.ca/forms/ • Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act
KEY DEFINITIONS	<p>record: Schedule 1 of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act defines <i>record</i> as "books, documents, maps, drawings, photographs, letters, vouchers, papers and any other thing on which information is recorded or stored by graphic, electronic, mechanical or other means, but does not include a computer program or any other mechanism that produces records."</p>

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CFS STANDARD 25: NOTIFICATION OF DEATH, CRITICAL INJURIES AND SERIOUS INCIDENTS	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>Immediately inform the designated director when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • there is a death or critical injury of, or serious incident involving, any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – a child in care – a child who is the subject of an agreement with a child's kin or other person, – a child placed in the interim or temporary custody of another person under the director's supervision, or – a child receiving respite services • there is a death or critical injury of a child who has received services within the past 12 months. <p>Inform the child's family members and take action to support the family and extended family as appropriate to the circumstances and as soon as possible.</p> <p>If the child is Aboriginal, immediately inform the child's Aboriginal community or identified delegated agency.</p> <p>The designated director undertakes an initial review to determine what actions to take, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undertaking a more extensive review, coordinated with other agencies that are required to investigate or review • involving the Aboriginal community in the review if the child is Aboriginal, and • ensuring that those involved receive feedback and the opportunity to discuss the findings.
INTENT	<p>This standard requires that the designated director be fully informed of the death of or critical injury involving a child who receives services under the CFCSA, or of a serious incident involving a child in care, a child placed in the interim or temporary custody of another person under the director's supervision or a child receiving respite services. It provides opportunities to objectively review, receive feedback and learn from these incidents. It also provides opportunities for the designated director to support individuals, including staff, who are affected by these events.</p>
REFERENCES	
POLICY	<p>Informing and supporting the family and extended family</p> <p>When there has been a death or critical injury of, or serious incident involving, a child in care, a child who is the subject of an agreement with a child's kin and others, a child placed in the interim or temporary custody of another person under the director's supervision, or a child receiving respite services, as soon as possible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inform the child's family, extended family, community, and delegated agencies, and

CFS STANDARD 25: NOTIFICATION OF DEATH, CRITICAL INJURIES AND SERIOUS INCIDENTS

- take action to support the family and extended family as appropriate to the circumstances as soon as possible.

Support options may include:

- referral to available community supports (see Child and Family Service Standard 7: Support Services to Strengthen Capacity)
- working with the child’s family and community to assist in planning and coordinating a response that will help them cope with the situation and prevent further incidents from occurring
- financial or in-kind assistance for travel costs associated with medical treatment within available resources, and
- in the case of the death of a child in care, and within available resources, financial assistance for the family to attend the funeral.

Notifying the designated director of the death, critical injury or serious incident

Immediately notify the designated director of:

- the death or critical injury of, or serious incident involving, any of the following:
 - a child in care
 - a child who is the subject of an agreement with a child’s kin or other person,
 - a child placed in the interim or temporary custody of another person under the director’s supervision, or
 - a child receiving respite services
- the death or critical injury of a child who has received services within the past 12 months.

Submitting an initial report of death, critical injury or serious incident

Submit an initial report to the designated director within 24 hours of learning of a death, critical injury or serious incident.

Designated director’s initial response

Within two working days, the designated director reviews the report and indicates whether:

- an additional written report is required, and
- specific information should be included.

Submitting an additional report about a death, critical injury or serious incident

Within 10 working days of being informed that an additional written report is required, prepare the report and submit it to the designated director.

Prepare the additional report in coordination with others who have or may have a role in providing information about the circumstances, including:

- the child’s family, extended family and community
- agencies or individuals that are or were directly involved in providing the child with services

CFS STANDARD 25: NOTIFICATION OF DEATH, CRITICAL INJURIES AND SERIOUS INCIDENTS	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agencies that have a responsibility for investigating the incident, and • if the child is Aboriginal, the child’s Aboriginal community. <p>Prepare the additional report in coordination with any other agencies, including the police, coroner or school, that are involved in investigating the incident.</p> <p>Ensure that the child’s family, extended family, and agencies or individuals that were directly involved in the incident or in providing services have the opportunity to discuss the content of the additional report.</p> <p>Designated director’s response to a required additional report Within five working days of receiving a required additional written report, or at any time after receiving the initial report, the designated director will indicate whether a further review is required, the nature of the review, and whether a referral will be made to an external review body.</p> <p>Involving the Public Guardian and Trustee Where there has been a death or critical injury of a child in care or a serious incident that may affect the immediate safety or health of a child in care, consult with the Public Guardian and Trustee about the role they may play in protecting the child’s financial or legal interests. (See Children in Care Service Standard 7: Involving the Public Guardian and Trustee).</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	<p>Initial written report of death, critical injury or serious incident Complete the initial written report of the death, critical injury or serious incident using the “Initial reportable circumstance” template in Word. (To access the template, select “Ministry template,” then select “CFCS other templates,” and “Initial Reportable Circumstance.”)</p> <p>Additional written report of death, critical injury or serious incident There is no required prescribed template for required additional written reports.</p>
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
KEY DEFINITIONS	<p>care provider: a person who cares for a child under one of the out-of-care living arrangements available under the CFCSA, including sections 8, 35(2)(d) and 41(1)(b)</p> <p>caregiver: a person with whom a child is placed by a director and who, by agreement with the director, has assumed responsibility for the child’s day-to-day care.</p> <p>critical injury: An injury that may result in the child’s death or may cause serious or permanent impairment of the child’s health, as determined by a medical practitioner.</p> <p>serious incidents: circumstances involving a child who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is in life-threatening circumstances, including illness or serious accident • is lost, missing or continually running away to a situation that places him or her at high risk of death or injury

CFS STANDARD 25: NOTIFICATION OF DEATH, CRITICAL INJURIES AND SERIOUS INCIDENTS

- is missing for more than 10 days
- is a victim of abuse or neglect by an approved caregiver, caregiver's staff or caregiver's child
- is the victim of abuse or neglect by a care provider or care provider's family in an out of care placement
- has been exposed to a high-risk situation or disaster which may cause emotional trauma
- has been involved in crimes of violence or major property damage, or
- has been abducted

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CIC STANDARD 1: PRESERVING THE IDENTITY OF AN ABORIGINAL CHILD IN CARE	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>In partnership with the Aboriginal community and identified delegated agency, take ongoing action to establish or preserve the identity of Aboriginal children in care, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exploring a child's cultural connection, heritage, community or tribal history and descent • developing a cultural plan to promote the child's Aboriginal identity • making applications to pursue membership or entitlements, and • honouring and following the placement priorities for Aboriginal children in care (see Child and Family Service Standard 20: Placements When a Child Comes into Care).
INTENT	<p>It is essential to work in collaboration with the Aboriginal community in establishing and preserving an Aboriginal child's identity and connection to culture and heritage.</p> <p>The intent of this standard is to reinforce the requirement that delegated individuals responsible for planning and providing services for an Aboriginal child in care work actively with individuals in the Aboriginal community, such as extended family and elders. This includes decisions and actions relating to planning living arrangements, arranging social and recreational activities for the child, and developing culturally appropriate plans of care. It also includes finding ways to help the child explore and understand the history, geography, language, customs and spiritual beliefs of his or her community, and to develop lifelong relationships with people in that community.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.2, s.4, s.70, s.71(3) • Child, Family and Community Service Regulation • Indian Act • COA: G1.3, G1.3.01, S21.1.03, S37.6.03
POLICY	<p>Preserving a child's Aboriginal identity is an ongoing process. When working with an Aboriginal child in care, take ongoing action to preserve and promote the child's Aboriginal identity throughout the time he or she is in care.</p> <p>Preserve and promote the child's contact and involvement with the Aboriginal community by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determining the Aboriginal identity of the child • involving the child, the child's family, and the Aboriginal community in assessments, case planning and development of the plan of care • providing the child with information about his or her unique Aboriginal heritage, according to his or her developmental abilities • honouring and following the placement priorities for Aboriginal children in care • if unable to place the child within his or her extended family, Aboriginal community or another Aboriginal community, placing the child with a caregiver who has or is willing to develop an understanding of and sensitivity to the child's Aboriginal heritage and identity, and who is willing to support ongoing contact with the Aboriginal community, and

CIC STANDARD 1: PRESERVING THE IDENTITY OF AN ABORIGINAL CHILD IN CARE	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing the caregiver with information about the child’s Aboriginal heritage. <p>Ensure that an Aboriginal child in care is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • registered under the Indian Act, where entitled • registered with the Nisga’a Lisims Government, where entitled • considered for membership within his or her Aboriginal community, or • considered for membership within the appropriate Métis or Inuit community. <p>If an Aboriginal child is placed in a non-Aboriginal home If an Aboriginal child is placed in a non-Aboriginal home, in cooperation with the child, the family, the Aboriginal community and the foster parent, develop a cultural plan that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identifies the child’s Aboriginal community and the nature of that contact • provides information about the child’s cultural heritage • identifies actions to facilitate the child’s access to the Aboriginal community’s oral history, language, songs and dances, and involvement in ceremonial activities, arts and crafts or sport events and activities, and • identifies opportunities for the child to participate in cultural instruction and events of his or her choice.
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	<p>Registering a child for status under the Indian Act To apply for a child who was born on or after April 17, 1985 to be registered as an Indian under the Indian Act:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • obtain a certified copy of the child’s birth registration that shows the names of the child’s parents (this document can be obtained from the Division of Vital Statistics for the province or territory where the child was born) • write a letter of intent to register the child and provide the name of the parent with whom the child should be registered (children are registered with only one parent), and • send the copy of the birth registration and the letter to the First Nation office or the nearest office of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. <p>If the youth was born before April 17, 1985, contact Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to obtain the appropriate form.</p> <p>Registering a child for First Nation membership Membership in a First Nation may be decided by the First Nation itself or by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. Contact the First Nation, or Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, if there is uncertainty about who makes decisions on membership for that First Nation.</p> <p>Membership in other Aboriginal communities (Métis, urban-based, etc.) To determine eligibility and application procedures for membership in other Aboriginal communities (e.g., Métis, urban-based, etc.), contact the organization that represents the child’s Aboriginal community.</p>

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Development http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/index_e.html • Métis Commission: http://www.metiscommission.com/
KEY DEFINITIONS	<p>Aboriginal child: defined in the Child, Family and Community Service Act as a child who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is registered under the Indian Act (Canada) • has a biological parent who is registered under the Indian Act (Canada) • is a Nisga'a child • is under 12 years of age and has a biological parent who <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – is of Aboriginal ancestry, and – considers himself or herself to be Aboriginal, or • is 12 years of age or over, of Aboriginal ancestry, and considers himself or herself to be Aboriginal. <p>cultural plan: describes how a child's connection to the Aboriginal community is promoted and preserved, and may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the identification and involvement of a person from the child's Aboriginal community to be his or her cultural contact or mentor • ways in which the child's participation in culturally specific activities, including traditional customs and cultural activities that are unique to the community, will be promoted or preserved, and • the identification of actions to facilitate the child's access to the Aboriginal community's oral history (including story telling), language, songs and dances, and involvement in ceremonial activities, arts and crafts or sports events and activities.

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**CIC STANDARD 2: PROVIDING SERVICES THAT RESPECT
A CHILD'S CULTURE AND IDENTITY**

<p>STANDARD STATEMENT</p>	<p>Throughout the period of involvement with a child, family and extended family:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • respect the views, cultural and ethnic heritage, spiritual beliefs and identity of the child • demonstrate respect for the child's family and extended family by acknowledging the family's and community's strengths and values • support the child in understanding and cultivating his or her heritage, spiritual beliefs and identity, and • consult with and involve the child's cultural or ethnic community as identified by the child in the planning and delivery of services. <p>If a child in care is being harmed by discrimination or racism, including disrespect for or discrimination based on the family's circumstances, take action by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • educating the child about discrimination and racism • educating the child about the history and strengths of his or her culture • educating the caregiver about steps he or she can take to address the discrimination and racism experienced by the child • supporting the child and caregiver when dealing with issues of discrimination and racism, and • making a formal report or application to end the discrimination.
<p>INTENT</p>	<p>History, language, customs, spiritual beliefs, views and values are all elements of a child's culture and identity. This standard requires that services be sensitive to and respectful of these areas. This includes providing services that respect and support the child's understanding of and connection with the culture and community he or she identifies with (e.g., communities of interest such as the gay community). It involves including people from the child's community in the planning and delivery of services.</p> <p>Recognizing that children from minority groups are vulnerable to racism and discrimination, the standard requires that action be taken to address circumstances when racism and discrimination harm a child. Depending on the child's circumstances, this may range from educating the child to taking legal action to address the discrimination.</p>
<p>REFERENCES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.3(c), s.70(l), s.70(j), s.70(k) • Public Guardian and Trustee Act • Human Rights Code of British Columbia • COA: G1.3, G1.3.01, G1.3.02, G1.4.04, S21.1.03, S37.6.03
<p>POLICY</p>	<p>Involve service providers, caregivers and community members who are knowledgeable about and sensitive to a child's views, cultural and ethnic heritage, spiritual beliefs and identity in case planning and provision of services, whenever possible.</p> <p>Provide services and take actions that are sensitive to and respect the views, cultural and ethnic heritage, spiritual beliefs and identity of a child, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meeting with the child and considering his or her views

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exploring the possibility of extended family, friends and cultural groups or organizations providing cultural resources for the child • attempting to place the child with extended family or within the same culture (See Child and Family Service Standard 20: Placements When a Child Comes into Care) • placing the child with a caregiver who has or is willing to develop an understanding of and sensitivity to the child's cultural, racial and religious heritage, and is willing to support ongoing contact with members of the child's cultural, racial and religious community • providing the caregiver with information on the child's cultural heritage (See Children in Care Service Standard 13: Providing a Caregiver with Information), and • providing the services of a language and/or cultural interpreter to assist in assessment, planning and service delivery, when necessary and appropriate. <p>Support a child in care in understanding and cultivating his or her heritage, spiritual beliefs and identity, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determining the child's heritage and history • providing the child with information about his or her heritage and identity, according to the child's views and developmental level, and • encouraging and providing opportunities for the child to participate in the cultural and religious instruction and events of the child's choice, as well as helping the family to understand the child's right to make these choices when there is conflict or misunderstanding. <p>If a child in care is being harmed by racism or discrimination Where a child in care is being harmed by racism or discrimination, make efforts throughout the time he or she is in care to educate and provide services to prevent further discrimination or address the consequences of discrimination.</p> <p>Consult with and involve those who may play a role in addressing and ending the racism or discrimination, including the Public Guardian and Trustee.</p> <p>Where it appears that a child may have been a victim of a crime because of his or her race or identity, consult with and report the matter to the police.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	In circumstances where a child has been harmed by discrimination or racism, consult the Public Guardian and Trustee.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: http://www.unicef.org/crc/index.html • Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia: http://www.trustee.bc.ca/ • British Columbia Human Rights Tribunal: http://www.bchrt.bc.ca/

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A CHILD'S CULTURE AND IDENTITY**

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discrimination against a child: when a child experiences prejudice or is harmed on the basis of gender, sexual orientation, physical or developmental disability, culture, ethnicity, religion or race.

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CIC STANDARD 3: CASE DOCUMENTATION FOR A CHILD IN CARE

<p>STANDARD STATEMENT</p>	<p>Ensure that case documentation for a child in care is accurate and complete and includes information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the child’s views, including understanding of and attitude towards identity and heritage • the child’s history, genealogy and spiritual beliefs • the child’s care experiences, learning experiences and progress, achievements, milestones and significant events, including photographs • creative works and writings completed by the child • the child’s family history, medical history and current circumstances • services provided and actions taken for the child while in care, and • the child’s written plan of care.
<p>INTENT</p>	<p>This standard reflects the importance of keeping case records that are accurate and contain all relevant information relating to the services provided for the child, and of keeping these records confidential and secure.</p> <p>Creating objective and thorough records, including medical records, provides a record of the child’s history while in care that may be useful and important in the future. It also ensures that the director’s delegated authority has been properly documented and can be reviewed in the future.</p>
<p>REFERENCES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: Part V, Confidentiality and Disclosure of Information • COA: G9.5, G.9.6.06, G9.7.05, G9.8.04, S10.5.05
<p>POLICY</p>	<p>Keep information in a child’s file current and accurate. The file should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • information about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the child’s history, including information about his or her beliefs and identity – the experiences, learning experiences and progress, achievements, milestones, and significant events of the child while in care, including the provision of ongoing services for the child – the child’s family history, including current circumstances, medical history and visitation arrangements with the child – the child’s citizenship or immigration status – the child’s placement history • a description of the child, including a recent photograph • copies of records such as legal documents and the child’s birth certificate, social insurance number, and MSP personal health number • medical, educational and other professional assessments, correspondence and reports • the child’s plan of care, and • if the goal for the child is adoption, a certified copy of the registration of live birth. <p>Ensure that the child’s and family’s case files are kept confidential and in a secure location at all times.</p>

CIC STANDARD 3: CASE DOCUMENTATION FOR A CHILD IN CARE	
	<p>If the child is Aboriginal In addition to the requirements listed above, case documentation for an Aboriginal child in care includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether the child is Aboriginal, Métis or Inuit • the child's status registration number • the parent's place of residence at time of removal and the parent's band affiliation/membership, and • the child's cultural plan.
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	Update the child's snapshot profile in the electronic and physical file annually or whenever there is a change in circumstances of the child or family.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Questions about access to records can be directed to the ministry's Information and Records Services Branch. • Questions about the retention and disposal of records can be directed to the ministry's Records Officer. • Systems User Guide: http://icw.mcf.gov.bc.ca/rasp/sysops/user_guide/docs/sect/24Youth.pdf
KEY DEFINITIONS	record: Schedule 1 of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act defines <i>record</i> as "books, documents, maps, drawings, photographs, letters, vouchers, papers and any other thing on which information is recorded or stored by graphic, electronic, mechanical or other means, but does not include a computer program or any other mechanism that produces records."

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CIC STANDARD 4: ASSUMING RESPONSIBILITY FOR A CHILD IN CARE

<p>STANDARD STATEMENT</p>	<p>When assuming responsibility for a child in care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determine the level of guardianship authority, duties and responsibilities to the child • establish the parent's and extended family's involvement with the child and the parent's continued rights and responsibilities regarding health care, education and spiritual upbringing • determine whether the child is Aboriginal, and if so, identify his or her Aboriginal heritage and community or First Nation, and ensure that those who are involved have authority to speak on behalf of the Aboriginal community • identify the child's ethnic community • identify and promote existing relationships with siblings, extended family and community, and • develop an understanding of the history and current circumstances of the child and family, by involving the child, the family, the child's Aboriginal community if he or she is Aboriginal, any significant people in the child's life, and community members who have been or will be involved in the child's life.
<p>INTENT</p>	<p>This standard requires that when a child comes into care, the necessary first steps are taken to determine and understand the nature of guardianship responsibilities to the child.</p> <p>Guardianship responsibilities include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • understanding the history and current circumstances of the child and family • involving the parent and others, including cultural communities, in the day-to-day care and planning for the child, and • timely planning and decision making that supports reunification or the development of other plans to fulfill the child's need for stability and continuity of lifelong relationships.
<p>REFERENCES</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.70, s.71 • Indian Act • Family Relations Act • Provincial/Territorial Protocol on Children and Families Moving Between Provinces and Territories • COA: S10.3.02, S21.2.03, S21.7.03
<p>POLICY</p>	<p>When assuming responsibility for a child in care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review the court order, adoption consent or agreement and determine the scope of the director's guardianship authority, duties and responsibilities, as well as the role of the child's parent while the child is in care • determine the child's ethnic background, citizenship and immigration status

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • develop an understanding of the history and current circumstances of the child and family, including whether the child is Aboriginal or has siblings (develop this with the involvement of the child, the family, the Aboriginal community if the child is Aboriginal, and community members who have been or will be involved in the child's life), and • contact the child's previous worker, caregiver, family and any other persons who have had a significant involvement with the child to enhance understanding of the child's situation and specific needs. <p>Providing stability and continuity for a child in care When assuming responsibility for a child in care, provide stability and continuity for the child by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • determining the current status of the child's plan of care, including the overall goal and the services that are in place to support the overall goal • fully understanding the child's legal status and the extent to which the parents will continue to be involved with the child, and • developing an action plan that identifies the responsibilities of those involved in the case planning for the child to provide an out-of-care arrangement that will provide the opportunity for the child to maintain and develop lifelong relationships. <p>If the child is Aboriginal In addition to the above, when assuming responsibility for an Aboriginal child in care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inform and involve the child's parents, extended family, Aboriginal community and identified delegated agency in planning for and decision making about the child's care • record the child's status or membership number in the file or make applications to pursue membership or entitlements for the child • develop a cultural plan for the child, and • honour and follow the placement priorities for Aboriginal children in care (see Child and Family Service Standard 20: Placements When a Child Comes into Care).
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	When assuming responsibility for a child in care verify that the information contained in the child's file and on the information system is accurate and complete.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provincial/Territorial Protocol on Children and Families Moving Between Provinces and Territories: http://icw.mcf.gov.bc.ca/manuals/docs/cfdev/cfs/protocol_provincial_territorial_2006.pdf • Aboriginal band addresses and related information: http://www.gov.bc.ca/arr/services/down/guidetoservices_2006.pdf • Aboriginal delegated child and family service agencies: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/about_us/aboriginal/delegated/index.htm

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CIC STANDARD 5: ENSURING A CHILD’S SAFETY WHILE IN CARE	
STANDARD STATEMENT	In partnership with parents, caregivers, Aboriginal and ethnic communities and agencies, honour and respect a child’s physical and emotional safety throughout the time he or she is in care.
INTENT	This standard reinforces the overriding principle of the CFCSA—that a child’s safety and well-being are paramount—and the director’s statutory responsibility to ensure a child’s safety. This responsibility includes taking action to prevent harm to the child (e.g., providing training, safety equipment, and supervision) and responding promptly to circumstances where the child’s safety may be jeopardized.
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.4, s.70 • COA: G1.4, G1.10, S10.3.03 • UN Convention on the Rights of the Child: http://www.unicef.org/crc/index.html
POLICY	<p>Ensuring the physical safety of a child in care Take action to ensure the physical safety of a child in care, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring that the child is provided with a safe and supportive living arrangement • responding promptly to information from others that indicates that the child’s safety may be at risk, and taking the necessary steps to address the safety concern, and • ensuring that the child has the necessary equipment, training and, if applicable, licences to safeguard against accidents or injury when participating in available leisure, recreational or sports activities. <p>If information is received about abuse or neglect of a child in care in a foster care home or a residential resource, see the Protocols for Foster Homes for determining further action: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/foster/pdf/FHProtocols.pdf</p> <p>For information on actions to take when there is a death or critical injury of, or serious incident involving, a child in care, see Child and Family Service Standard 25: Notification of Death, Critical Injuries and Serious Incidents.</p> <p>Providing for the emotional well-being of a child in care Take action to provide for the emotional well-being of a child in care by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensuring that services for the child respect his or her views, cultural and ethnic heritage, spiritual beliefs and identity • promoting and providing opportunities for the child to have ongoing contact with his or her family (including parent and siblings), extended family, Aboriginal or cultural community, and friends • assisting the child in identifying significant people who can be contacted for assistance • including people from the child’s identified community in case planning and decision making

CIC STANDARD 5: ENSURING A CHILD'S SAFETY WHILE IN CARE	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promoting and providing opportunities for the child's participation in events or activities within their identified community • placing a child with a caregiver who has or is willing to develop an understanding of and sensitivity to the child's views, cultural and ethnic heritage, spiritual beliefs and identity, and • remaining vigilant in keeping the child's environment a safe place for him or her to practise spiritual beliefs and have his or her spiritual beliefs respected. <p>If an Aboriginal child is placed in a non-Aboriginal home If an Aboriginal child is placed in a non-Aboriginal home, in addition to the requirements listed above, develop a cultural plan for the child.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	Protocols for Foster Homes: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/foster/pdf/FHProtocols.pdf
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CIC STANDARD 6: ENSURING THE RIGHTS OF A CHILD IN CARE	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>Ensure that a child in care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • receives care consistent with the rights defined by s.70 of the CFCSA • is regularly informed of and educated about these rights and entitlements according to his or her developmental level, and • is aware of and assisted with the process of addressing and resolving circumstances where his or her rights have not been respected.
INTENT	<p>This standard reinforces the requirement to respect the statutory entitlements of a child in care under s.70 of the CFCSA. This includes informing a child in care of these rights and the procedures available for enforcing them.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.70 • COA: G1.4, G1.4.01–G1.4.04 • Standards for Foster Homes • UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
POLICY	<p>Ensure that a child in care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is fed, clothed and nurtured, respecting the child's identity and family background, and is given the same quality of care as other children in the placement (see Children in Care Service Standard 2: Providing Services That Respect a Child's Culture and Identity) • is consulted and consistently given the opportunity to express his or her views, according to his or her abilities, about significant decisions affecting him or her • to the extent possible given the child's level of development, is involved in and informed about and given a copy of the plan of care as the plan is developed and reviewed • has the means to keep his or her personal belongings secure • has reasonable privacy in daily routines, as would be provided by a reasonable parent in a family situation, according to the child's level of development and safety needs • is cared for in an environment that is free from corporal punishment • is informed of the standard of behaviour expected by his or her caregivers, and of the consequences if the standard is not met • is provided with medical and dental care when required • is provided with opportunities to participate in social and recreational activities according to his or her interests and abilities • is provided with the religious instruction and opportunities to participate in religious activities of his or her choice (see Children in Care Service Standard 1: Preserving the Identity of an Aboriginal Child in Care, and Children in Care Service Standard 2: Providing Services That Respect a Child's Culture and Identity) • is provided with guidance and encouragement to maintain his or her cultural heritage (see Children in Care Service Standard 2: Providing Services That Respect a Child's Culture and Identity)

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is provided with an interpreter if language or disability is a barrier to involving the child in discussions about his or her care (see Children in Care Service Standard 2: Providing Services That Respect a Child's Culture and Identity) • is given privacy during discussions with members of his or her family, subject to an access order • is given privacy during discussions with a lawyer, an advocate from the Child and Youth Officer, the Ombudsman, a member of the Legislative Assembly or a member of Parliament, and • is informed about and assisted in contacting the Child and Youth Officer. <p>When a child comes into care, inform him or her of these rights and assist him or her in understanding them, according to the child's developmental abilities. Review these rights with the child on a regular basis.</p> <p>In cases where the child reports that these rights have not been respected:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meet with the child and others involved to try to resolve the issue • if required, offer and promote an alternative dispute resolution process for resolving the issue • provide the child with information about the Child and Youth Officer, the Ombudsman or community or provincially based advocacy services, and • support the child throughout the period of time it takes to resolve the issue. <p>The rights of children in care, as defined in s.70 of the CFCSA, do not apply to a child who is in a place of confinement, which includes a youth custody centre under the Young Offenders Act or a mental health facility under the Mental Health Act.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Know Your Rights: A Guide for Young People in Care: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/child_family_service_act/pdf/KnowYourRights.pdf • Child and Youth Officer: http://www.rcybc.ca/ • Office of the Ombudsman of British Columbia: http://www.ombud.gov.bc.ca/ • Legislative Assembly of British Columbia—MLA Finder: http://www.leg.bc.ca/mla/3-1-1.htm • Client's Complaints Process: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/complaints/index.htm • Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks: http://modena.intergate.ca/fbcyicn/maframe.html

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CIC STANDARD 7: INVOLVING THE PUBLIC GUARDIAN AND TRUSTEE	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>When the Public Guardian and Trustee is appointed as the guardian of an estate for a child in care, the Public Guardian and Trustee is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provided with information about the child's circumstances • notified of any known event that could affect the child's legal or financial interests • consulted and involved in the child's case planning and the provision of services, as required to represent his or her legal and financial interests • contacted for any decision making about use of assets in a child's trust fund, and • notified immediately when a child in care for whom the Public Guardian and Trustee is guardian of the estate dies or suffers a serious injury.
INTENT	<p>This standard reinforces the statutory responsibility to notify and involve the Public Guardian and Trustee under the CFCSA for specific children in care.</p> <p>When a child is in care, the director assumes varying responsibilities as guardian of the person, but not of the child's estate. The Public Guardian and Trustee protects the child's legal rights and financial interests, and, if appropriate, may take action on behalf of the child to address circumstances when these rights and interests need to be upheld.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.50(1)(b), s.54.1, s.58(1) • Family Relations Act: s.23(1), s.29(3)(b) • Criminal Injuries Compensation Act • Infants Act • Adoption Act: s.24(2) • Public Guardian and Trustee Act • Wills Variation Act • Service Delivery Agreement Between the Ministry of Children and Family Development and the Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia • Child and Family Service Standard 25: Notification of Death, Critical Injuries and Serious Incidents
POLICY	<p>Involvement of the Public Guardian and Trustee</p> <p>The Public Guardian and Trustee becomes the guardian of a child's estate when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the court makes a continuing custody order under s.49 of the CFCSA • the child comes into care under s.29(3) of the Family Relations Act, or • when consent to the adoption of the child is given by the birth parent or other guardian who requested the director to place the child for adoption. <p>When a child is in temporary custody, after the Public Guardian and Trustee has been consulted, consider making an application to court for the appointment of the Public Guardian and Trustee as guardian of the estate of the child in care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when an event occurs that might affect the child's financial or legal

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	<p>interests, or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at the request of the Public Guardian and Trustee. <p>Informing and involving the Public Guardian and Trustee When the Public Guardian and Trustee is the guardian of the estate of a child in care, provide the Public Guardian and Trustee with a copy of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the continuing custody order, or • the temporary custody order when the court has made an order to appoint the Public Guardian and Trustee as guardian of the child’s estate. <p>When the Public Guardian and Trustee is appointed as the guardian of the estate of a child in care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • inform the Public Guardian and Trustee about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the child’s circumstances, and – any known event that could affect the child’s legal or financial interests • and involve the Public Guardian and Trustee in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the child’s case planning and the provision of services, as required to represent the child’s legal and financial interests – any decisions about the use of assets in the child’s trust fund, and – planning for a child who is being considered for a transfer of custody to another person under s.54.1 of the CFCSA. <p>When applying to transfer the custody of a child to another person under s. 54.1 of the CFCSA, provide the Public Guardian and Trustee with notice of the application as soon as possible, and at least 10 days before the court hearing. The Public Guardian and Trustee must provide consent for the order to transfer custody of the child to another person.</p> <p>Inform the Public Guardian and Trustee if a child in care for whom the Public Guardian and Trustee is guardian of the estate dies or suffers a serious injury.</p> <p>If the child in care is Aboriginal If the child in care has Aboriginal status and has parents who lived on reserve at the time of the child’s removal, Lands and Trust Services, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada may be trustee of some of the child’s financial matters. Contact the Public Guardian and Trustee to determine whether Lands and Trusts Services (Indian and Northern Affairs Canada) needs to be involved.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	<p>When involving the Public Guardian and Trustee in case planning, contact the designated trust managers from the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia.</p> <p>Informing the Public Guardian and Trustee of a death or serious injury Notify the Public Guardian and Trustee of a death or serious injury of a child in care, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • completing and submitting the CF2681 “Notification to the Public Guardian and Trustee of British Columbia” Form for the child, available at: http://icw.mcf.gov.bc.ca/forms/CF2681FILL_JAN05.pdf

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> providing copies of supporting documentation, such as court orders and medical reports, in hard copy.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For information about the role of the Public Guardian and Trustee under the CFCSA, see: http://www.qp.gov.bc.ca/statreg/stat/C/96046_01.htm#section51 Service Delivery Agreement Between MCFD and the Public Guardian and Trustee of BC: http://icw.mcf.gov.bc.ca/manuals/docs/cfdev/cic/cp_agree_public_guardian.pdf Practice Guideline: Notification to the Public Guardian and Trustee Procedural Change Advisory: http://icw.mcf.gov.bc.ca/manuals/docs/cfdev/cic/cic_notification_trustee.pdf Lands and Trusts Services (the department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada that is responsible for meeting the legal obligation of the Crown relating to the administration of the Indian moneys provisions of the Indian Act for bands): http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/esd/
KEY DEFINITIONS	<p>Public Guardian and Trustee: a public official appointed to carry out functions under the Public Guardian and Trustee Act and various other statutes, including the Infants Act. The Public Guardian and Trustee performs three broad categories of functions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> protecting the legal rights of people with mental disabilities administering the estates of people who have died, usually where the deceased left no will and has no family member in the province willing or able to administer the estate, and for missing persons, and protecting the rights and interests of children and youth.

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CIC STANDARD 8: INVOLVING A CHILD AND CONSIDERING THE CHILD'S VIEWS IN CASE PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING	
STANDARD STATEMENT	Involve and inform a child in care to the greatest extent possible in all case planning and decision making, according to the child's developmental level and taking into account his or her views.
INTENT	This standard reflects a basic right of a child in care under s.70 of the CFCSA, which is to be informed about his or her plan of care and consulted about significant decisions to the extent possible given developmental level. Any barriers to informing a child about and involving him or her in case planning and decision making are identified and addressed.
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.2(d), s.3(a), s.4(f), s.70(1)(b)(c) • COA: G9.1, G9.1.02, G9.6.06, S26.1.05, S27.1.05 • UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
POLICY	<p>Facilitate the involvement of a child in care in case planning by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • including the child in all stages of the planning process, according to the child's developmental abilities • consulting with the child throughout ongoing discussions and planning reviews • encouraging the child to fully express his or her views, and supporting him or her in doing so • including caregivers and others who have a significant relationship to the child, consistent with the child's views and best interests, and • informing the child of all care plans and decisions, according to the child's developmental abilities. <p>Take action to identify and address any barriers to informing and involving the child in all case planning and decision making. Possible actions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing the child with an interpreter where required • involving people who can promote a greater understanding of the child's views about cultural, identity or other issues.
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Federation of BC Youth in Care Networks: http://modena.intergate.ca/fbcyicn/maframe.html • Child and Youth Officer: http://www.rcybc.ca/
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CIC STANDARD 9: DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING A MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIP WITH A CHILD IN CARE	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>Develop a meaningful relationship with a child in care by maintaining frequent contact and celebrating milestones and achievements with the child.</p> <p>Frequency of contact with a child is based on his or her level of vulnerability, developmental needs and visibility in the community, and is consistent with the goals of the plan of care.</p> <p>At minimum, have in-person contact with a child in care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • as soon as possible after the child comes into care • when the child moves into a foster home, other residential resource or other living arrangement • when there is a significant change in the child's circumstances, plan of care or family • when there is a change in whoever is responsible for providing guardianship services, and • privately at least every 90 days.
INTENT	<p>This standard reflects the importance of developing a meaningful relationship with a child in care. Children in care experience many losses when they come into care, which adds to their vulnerability and loss of security. Maintaining regular in-person contact with a child in care assists in addressing this insecurity and further promotes the child's direct involvement in planning and decision making.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.4(c) • COA: S21.4.02, S21.6.04
POLICY	<p>Develop a meaningful relationship with a child in care by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • building the child's trust • engaging in open, honest and non-judgmental communication, and • participating in activities that the child enjoys. <p>Maintain regular contact with the child by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meeting the child in person and privately, both where he or she lives and outside the home • increasing the frequency of contact, depending on the child's circumstances, developmental needs or level of vulnerability • encouraging the child to initiate contact, and supporting him or her in doing so, and • meeting with the child on birthdays and other special occasions.
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	<p>Record information in the child's file about meetings with the child, including his or her views, significant events, and decisions or agreements reached with the child.</p>

CIC STANDARD 9: DEVELOPING AND MAINTAINING A MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIP WITH A CHILD IN CARE	
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	Discussion paper: "Vulnerable Children and Youth":
KEY DEFINITIONS	visibility in the community: the amount of contact a child has with community members, including family members, neighbours, schools, public health nurses, agencies and others who are aware of the presence of a child in that community and who have an interest in his or her safety and well-being.

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PROGRAM AREA: <u>Child and Family Development Service – Transformation Division</u>
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CIC STANDARD 10: MEETING A CHILD'S NEED FOR STABILITY AND CONTINUITY OF LIFELONG RELATIONSHIPS

STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>Throughout the time a child is in care, make it a priority to promote the stability and continuity of lifelong relationships for the child, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> actively supporting the child in maintaining positive attachments with parents, siblings, extended family, friends, caregivers and others, consistent with the child's best interests making every effort to prevent unnecessary delays in decision making by using collaborative planning and alternative dispute resolution processes to reach agreements on developing and implementing the plan of care reunifying the child with family or extended family, or if that is not possible, developing an alternative out-of-care living arrangement that will provide the opportunity to maintain and develop lifelong relationships, and exploring on an ongoing, regular basis whether reunification with family or extended family is possible.
INTENT	<p>Promoting and preserving stable, enduring relationships for a child in care is central to maintaining the child's well-being. This standard requires that, both before actions are taken and decisions are made, and throughout the time services are provided for the child in care, services be viewed in the context of how they will affect the child's relationships. This is an ongoing process rather than a single event.</p> <p>Furthermore, the standard requires that when decisions about living arrangements are made or reviewed, every effort be made to arrange for the child to be cared for by and have regular contact with people who have a significant lifelong relationship with the child, including family and extended family.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CFCSA: s.2(d), s.4(d), s.70(1), s.71 COA: S10.3.02, S21.1.02, S21.3.03
POLICY	<p>Promote continuity for a child in care by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> providing, promoting and supporting opportunities for the child to develop and maintain emotional attachments with parents, siblings, extended family and others who are significant in the child's life maintaining the child's connections with his or her cultural and ethnic heritage, spiritual beliefs and identity minimizing disruption in the child's life through strategies to promote stability identified in the child's plan of care, and for Aboriginal children in care, facilitating connections to the child's family and culture, and assisting the child in following family traditions. <p>Make every effort to meet the child's need for stability and continuity of lifelong relationships by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> using foster care as a temporary service for a child when no less disruptive measures are available actively planning for an alternative out-of-care living arrangement with persons who have a significant relationship to him or her.

CIC STANDARD 10: MEETING A CHILD'S NEED FOR STABILITY AND CONTINUITY OF LIFELONG RELATIONSHIPS

	<p>Actively explore these living arrangements on an ongoing basis and where there is a potential change in the child's placement.</p> <p>Explore alternative out-of-care living arrangements, including the following options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • informal kinship care, including an agreement with the child's kin and others • placement with a person other than the parent, under the director's supervision (s.35[2][d] or s.41[1][b]) • transfer to custody to a person who is not a parent (s.54.1) • supporting an application for custody under the Family Relations Act • adoption. <p>Promote stability and continuity of lifelong relationships for a child by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involving the child, family, extended family, the Aboriginal community if the child is Aboriginal, and significant people in the child's life in developing the plan of care • implementing strategies that will support the child's maintaining stability and continuity of lifelong relationships • identifying significant people in the child's life who may be interested in assuming custody • actively promoting and supporting visits by the child to family members and significant people in the child's life, consistent with his or her best interests and plan of care, and • informing and involving the caregiver in developing and implementing strategies to promote the child's stability and continuity of lifelong relationships. <p>If the child is Aboriginal If the child is Aboriginal, in addition to the above, work with his or her Aboriginal community to identify members of the extended family or community who are willing and able to provide care for the child, and address any barriers that would prevent that placement.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	Enter an access order for a child in continuing custody on the child's legal screen as an associate order.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieving Out-of-Care Permanency for Children in Care: A Draft Permanency Planning Model for British Columbia
KEY DEFINITIONS	<p>stability and continuity of lifelong relationships: a term that describes a basic need in all children for continued or new relationships with family and significant people, including extended family and community connections. Children who have this need met have an increased potential for developing meaningful relationships with others into adulthood. This includes relationships with parents, siblings, extended family, friends, caregivers and others with a</p>

**CIC STANDARD 10: MEETING A CHILD'S NEED FOR
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connection to the child through family, culture, faith, identity or community.

Stability and continuity of lifelong relationships is a primary consideration in planning and providing services for children. All services should promote stability and continuity of lifelong relationships by:

- promoting and facilitating regular ongoing contact with those significant to the child
- maintaining or, where required, developing enduring and stable living arrangements for the child as quickly as possible
- minimizing disruption of caregivers or care providers, and
- fitting services to meet the child's age, developmental level and sense of time.

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CIC STANDARD 11: ASSESSMENTS AND PLANNING FOR A CHILD IN CARE	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>Immediately and within a maximum of 30 days of a child coming into care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete an initial assessment of the child’s needs • begin an initial plan of care for the child, and • address the child’s health needs and urgent developmental needs. <p>Within six months of the child coming into care, complete a full assessment and written plan of care with the involvement of the child, the family and extended family, the Aboriginal community if the child is Aboriginal, the caregiver, and any significant person involved in the child’s care or life.</p> <p>Complete assessments and develop and implement a plan of care that promotes the child’s well-being and achieves the best possible outcomes in the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • health, emotional, spiritual and behavioural development • educational and intellectual development • culture and identity • family, extended family and social relationships • social and recreational involvement • social presentation and development of self-care skills related to assuming successful independent functioning, and • placement. <p>Review the child’s plan of care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at least every 90 days while the child is in care • more frequently based on the child’s developmental needs or if specified in the plan • if circumstances arise that make a review necessary • when there is a change in the overall goal, and • in preparation for the child leaving care. <p>If required, based on the review, revise the child’s plan of care.</p>
INTENT	<p>The intent of this standard is to ensure that every child who comes into care has a plan of care that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is holistic, current and relevant to the child’s unique circumstances and needs • reflects ongoing significant changes in the child’s development, and • takes into account the child’s family and community situation. <p>The plan of care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflects and is responsive to ongoing assessments of the child’s needs • ensures that services in place for the child support the overall goal and are focused on the best outcomes for the child, and • is developed in collaboration with the child, family, extended family and cultural community.

CIC STANDARD 11: ASSESSMENTS AND PLANNING FOR A CHILD IN CARE	
	The child's plan of care is a "living document" that is reviewed regularly or as significant circumstances change. The documentation accurately reflects the current needs of and goals for the child and the services in place to support them.
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.33.2(1)(b), s.35(1), s.42.1(5) • Adoption Act • Practice Standards and Guidelines for Adoption • COA: S5.2.05, S21.2.04, S21.2.05 • Service Delivery Agreement between MCFD and the Public Guardian and Trustee of B.C. • UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
POLICY	<p>Developing an initial written plan of care Immediately, or within a maximum of 30 days of a child coming into care, assess the child's needs and develop an initial plan of care that includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the overall goal for the child, including establishing stable and ongoing living arrangements (e.g., return to parent or extended family) • contact with the child's parent, siblings, family, extended family, community and others involved with the child • a description of the services required to implement the plan of care • health care needs and appointments • where the child will attend school, including, wherever possible, strategies to ensure that the child can attend the same school • maintaining the child's involvement in social, recreational and spiritual instruction and activities. <p>Developing a plan of care Within six months of a child coming into care, complete a thorough assessment of the child's needs and develop and implement a written plan of care that promotes the best possible outcomes for the child within the following developmental domains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • health, emotional, spiritual and behavioural development • educational and intellectual development • culture and identity • family, extended family and social relationships • social and recreational involvement • social presentation and development of self-care skills related to assuming successful independent functioning, and • placement. <p>When appropriate and consistent with the child's best interests, invite and support the participation of significant people in the child's life in developing a plan of care, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the child

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- the child's parents, family, extended family and community
- if the child is Aboriginal, a member of his or her Aboriginal community
- the child's caregiver
- an advocate for the child, and
- proposed care providers, caregivers or adoptive parents.

When developing a plan of care, ensure that the child in care:

- has health care needs met, including medical, dental, optical and hearing examinations
- is enrolled in a school, vocational or skills training program, or specialized educational program that meets the child's individual needs where he or she is of school age
- has a cultural plan, if the child is Aboriginal
- has consistent opportunities to participate in available and appropriate social and recreational activities according to individual abilities and interests
- has the appropriate autonomy, support and guidance to develop a positive identity, spiritual beliefs, and understanding of his or her cultural and ethnic heritage
- has opportunities to develop and enhance social skills and presentation,
- receives effective treatment and therapeutic support for persistent emotional and behavioural problems, and
- is cared for in a smoke free environment.

Reviewing a plan of care

At least every 90 days while a child is in care, complete a review of the child's written plan of care that includes:

- an assessment of whether the plan of care is effective in achieving the overall goal, particularly in relation to the child's need for stability and continuity of lifelong relationships
- a review of whether the services provided are effective in meeting the goals identified in the plan of care.

If required, based on the review, revise the child's plan of care.

Comprehensive review of a plan of care

Complete a comprehensive review of a child's plan of care every six months, or more frequently based on the child's developmental needs or if specified in the plan.

Complete a comprehensive review of a plan of care by:

- involving the child, and wherever possible the child's family and other significant people in the child's life, in the review of the plan
- reviewing the outcomes for the child within the developmental domains
- ensuring the services in place for the child address the child's needs as

CIC STANDARD 11: ASSESSMENTS AND PLANNING FOR A CHILD IN CARE	
	<p>identified in those domains</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> determining whether the services in place for the child address the child's overall goal, including the child's need for stability and continuity of lifelong relationships. <p>After the comprehensive review of the child's plan of care, if the overall goal for the child has changed, or if the services needed to address the goal have changed, document these changes on the child's written plan of care.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	<p>The current assessment and planning tools for a child in care include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Looking After Children Assessment and Action Record and Comprehensive Plan of Care (LAC), used when a child is in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> continuing custody of a designated director care under s.29 of the Family Relations Act, and long-term care under the Adoption Act the Comprehensive Plan of Care Assessment and Planning Guide for Children in Care (CPOC), used when a child is in care by agreement, interim order or temporary order. <p>Consistent with his or her best interests, keep copies of the child's assessments and plans of care in his or her file.</p> <p>Give copies or parts of the plan of care to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the child the caregiver the parent members of the family who are involved in the child's care the representative from the Aboriginal organization involved in the child's care or plan, and any other person who plays a role in the child's care.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<p>Health Supports for Children in Care: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/foster/pdf/health_supports_cic.pdf</p> <p>Orthodontic Benefits for Children in Continuing Custody http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/foster/pdf/cic_dental_guide.pdf</p> <p>Consent Forms for Aboriginal Children for Non-Insured Health Benefits</p>
KEY DEFINITIONS	

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CIC STANDARD 12: SUPPORTING AND ASSISTING A CHILD WITH A CHANGE IN PLACEMENT	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>When a child in care changes living arrangements, prepare the child before the move and support him or her throughout the transition, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keeping the child informed • assisting him or her in adjusting to the new living arrangement, and • providing information and opportunities to learn about the caregiver's family values, norms and routines. <p>If the child is Aboriginal, see CFS 20: Placements When a Child Comes into Care, for placement priorities.</p>
INTENT	<p>This standard reflects the fact that a change in a child's care arrangements may be disruptive and emotionally destabilizing. All efforts are therefore made to prevent and mitigate the trauma that a child may experience when making this transition. Involving the child throughout the transition and providing opportunities to work through feelings resulting from the move helps mitigate some of the harmful effects of removal and any subsequent change in the child's living arrangement.</p> <p>A necessary change in a child's living arrangement provides an opportunity to review available living arrangements within the child's extended family and community.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.70(f), s.71 • COA: G9.11.02, S21.1.03, S21.1.04, S21.2.01, S21.3.02, S21.3.06, S21.8.02, S37.7.03 <p>For additional considerations and service requirements, see Children in Care Service Standard 9: Developing and Maintaining a Meaningful Relationship with a Child in Care, and Child and Family Service Standard 20: Placements When a Child Comes into Care.</p>
POLICY	<p>Deciding to move a child in care</p> <p>When deciding to move a child in care, consider the needs, overall goal and best interests of the child.</p> <p>To the fullest extent possible, place a child in care who is being moved with a caregiver who:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • is most likely to meet the child's needs • has an appreciation of and sensitivity to the child's cultural and ethnic heritage, spiritual beliefs and identity • supports the child in understanding and cultivating his or her cultural and ethnic heritage, spiritual beliefs and identity • is willing and able to support and facilitate the child's move into a living arrangement that meets his or her need for stability and continuity of lifelong relationships • is willing to work with the child's family, extended family members, and Aboriginal or cultural community, if applicable, to support the child's connections to family (including parent and siblings), extended family and community, and

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supports the child in developing a strong sense of identity, resiliency, and self-care and independence skills, according to the child’s developmental abilities and capacity. <p>Involve the following in the decision about where to place the child:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the child • the child’s family, extended family and people with a significant relationship to the child to the fullest extent possible • the child’s current caregiver, where this is consistent with the child’s best interests • the proposed caregiver, and • the person delegated with responsibility for providing services to the child and caregiver. <p>If the child is Aboriginal In addition to the above, if the child is Aboriginal, involve the child’s Aboriginal community in identifying:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the strengths of the community and possible options for care of the child and family, and • members of the child’s family, extended family or community who are willing and able to assume the child’s care. <p>When placing the child, give priority to extended family or Aboriginal community members who are able to provide safe care for the child.</p> <p>Preparing a child in care for a move Whenever possible and appropriate, before moving a child in care, prepare him or her for the move as much as possible, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing a plan with the child, the family, and Aboriginal community if the child is Aboriginal, to assist the child during the transition • arranging for at least one visit to the child’s new home and, if possible, one overnight visit • discussing with the child, the child’s worker and the caregiver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – the caregiver’s expectations of behaviour – possible consequences of not meeting expectations – appropriate ways to express and resolve concerns, and – participation in family activities and household routines • developing a plan to support and promote the child’s connections with the previous family.
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	Record a change in the child’s placement on MIS SWS.

**CIC STANDARD 12: SUPPORTING AND ASSISTING A CHILD
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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
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CIC STANDARD 13: PROVIDING A CAREGIVER WITH INFORMATION	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>Provide a caregiver with information, at the time of placement and as information becomes available throughout the period of the placement, about the care and safety of a child and any information relating to safety risks posed to the caregiver or the caregiver's family.</p> <p>Provide the caregiver with this information, in writing, as soon as possible.</p> <p>When planning to move a child from a caregiver's home, include the caregiver and any other significant person in the child's life in planning for the transition, unless this would compromise the child's immediate safety.</p>
INTENT	<p>This standard reinforces the importance of providing a caregiver with all necessary information in a timely manner to fully support him or her in the role of foster parent. When the caregiver receives thorough information about the child and the child's family in writing as it becomes available, he or she is better able to prevent harm to the child and ensure the safety of others in the home. Involving the caregiver in the development of the child's plan of care and sharing the written plan with the caregiver promotes collaboration in achieving the goals described in the child's plan of care.</p>
REFERENCES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CFCSA: s.79(1)(j) • Protocols for Foster Homes • COA: S21.8.05, S21.14.03
POLICY	<p>Provide a caregiver with copies of the court order (made under the CFCSA), voluntary care agreement or special needs agreement, and the interim plan of care, when available.</p> <p>Provide the caregiver with relevant information, in writing whenever appropriate, about the child and family, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the child's full name, date of birth and legal status • information about the child's overall goal and plan of care, and the worker's expectations of the caregiver in supporting that plan • contact information for the person delegated to provide the child and caregiver with service • known medical and/or mental health history and needs (e.g., allergies) • any safety risks to the child, including the need to protect the child from contact with another person • any health or safety risks posed by the child toward the caregiver or any other person in the home • the child's daily care, including mealtime and bedtime routines, sleeping habits and food preferences • scheduled appointments with other service providers or professionals • the names of persons with access to the child and how access will be arranged • how contact with parents, family, extended family, friends and community members will be facilitated • the child's cultural and ethnic heritage, spiritual beliefs and identity

CIC STANDARD 13: PROVIDING A CAREGIVER WITH INFORMATION	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the child's school • the child's participation in sports, recreational clubs or activities • any allegations of abuse or neglect involving the child in previous placement settings, whether the allegations were investigated, and the outcome • notification procedures if the child is lost, goes missing or runs away, or if the child suffers a personal injury or is at serious risk of harm, and • any other information that will assist the caregiver in responding to the individual needs of the child. <p>Involve the caregiver in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assessments and case planning • preparing and supporting the child when moving or leaving care, and • providing opportunities for the child to establish stability and continuity of lifelong relationships.
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain all documentation and information in the child's file and case records. • Ensure that a copy of the information given to the caregivers is in the file.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	
KEY DEFINITIONS	

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CIC STANDARD 14: WHEN A CHILD IS MISSING OR HAS RUN AWAY

STANDARD STATEMENT

Take action appropriate to the child’s vulnerability using existing informal and formal community networks to locate a missing or runaway child in care and to safeguard the child from harm or the threat of harm.

Immediately inform and involve family and extended family, and the Aboriginal community if the child is Aboriginal, to obtain their assistance in locating the child and responding to his or her needs once found.

INTENT

The intent of this standard is to ensure that the steps taken to locate a child and minimize the risk of harm associated with his or her behaviours are those that a reasonable and prudent parent would take. It acknowledges the fundamental role that family, extended family, friends and a child’s community can play in locating and returning the child to a safe environment.

REFERENCES

Child and Family Service Standard 25: Notification of Death, Critical Injuries and Serious Incidents

POLICY

When a child is missing or has run away
 When a child is missing or has run away, notify as soon as possible:

- the designated director, if the child is at high risk of harm
- the child’s parent, unless this compromises the child’s safety, and
- others who may play a role in locating the child.

In addition, coordinate search activities with the police by:

- notifying and providing the police with a recent photo and identifying pertinent information, including a list of known associates and friends
- checking with the police about police efforts to locate the child, and
- contacting appropriate international agencies for those children who may have been abducted to another country.

In addition the above, develop and implement a plan to locate a missing or runaway child in care by:

- if the child is Aboriginal, contacting the child’s Aboriginal community to request assistance in locating the child
- seeking out possible friends who may know the child’s whereabouts
- contacting persons or going to places where the child may be located
- coordinating efforts with significant persons in the child’s life or persons who have knowledge or expertise that could be useful in locating the child, to ensure that all possible options for finding the child and ensuring his or her safety are considered, and
- contacting the appropriate designated director to consider using media assistance, when a review of the circumstances justifies releasing confidential information in order to ensure the child’s safety.

If a child in care habitually runs away
 For a child in care who habitually runs away under circumstances that place him or her at high risk of harm:

CIC STANDARD 14: WHEN A CHILD IS MISSING OR HAS RUN AWAY	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review the plan of care to develop strategies to address the high-risk behaviour • identify and involve individuals or community agencies that can assist in addressing the child's behaviour or minimize the risk associated with the behaviour • develop a safety plan in consultation with the child, and • determine who the child can contact to facilitate the return to care, and provide the child with that contact information. <p>When the child is located</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • immediately advise the police and the designated director, if a Reportable Circumstance report was made, and all others who were notified that the child was missing, that he or she has been located • ensure that the child is safe and adequately cared for, if found outside the community or residence, and arrange for the child to return to a safe living arrangement • review the circumstances surrounding the child's departure • determine the child's activities and experience while missing and, where appropriate, meet with the child to find out about the impact of the experience on the child • determine whether the child needs medical treatment or therapeutic support • determine whether the child has sustained an injury that should be reported to the police • notify the Public Guardian and Trustee of any personal injury sustained by the child to assess whether the child may be entitled to criminal injury compensation (see Children in Care Service Standard 7: Involving the Public Guardian and Trustee) • determine whether the circumstances require notification of the designated director (see Child and Family Service Standard 25: Notification of Death, Critical Injuries and Serious Incidents), and • determine whether the child's plan of care needs to be reviewed and revised.
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a child is missing or has run away, place an alert on the system, providing any relevant information, and providing instructions in case the child is located after hours or on the weekend. • Update the alert weekly if the child is not found.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • System User Guide: http://icw.mcf.gov.bc.ca/rasp/sysops/user_guide/docs/sect/24Youth.pdf • Hague Convention on the Civil Aspects of International Child Abduction

CIC STANDARD 14: WHEN A CHILD IS MISSING OR HAS RUN AWAY

**KEY
DEFINITIONS**

Missing or runaway children

who may be at high risk of harm include those who:

- have an acute physical or psychological condition
- have limited ability to care for themselves or to understand the possible consequences of their actions
- may have been abducted
- would not normally go missing, and there is no apparent precipitating reason for them to run away, and/or
- are known to have associations with people or places that have put them at significant risk of harm in the past.

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CIC STANDARD 15: PLANNING FOR A CHILD LEAVING CARE

<p>STANDARD STATEMENT</p>	<p>Before a child leaves care, support him or her in preparing for the transition. During the transition, support the child in adjusting to the change in care and living arrangements.</p> <p>If a child is leaving care to live with parents or in an alternative out-of-care living arrangement, support the child and parents or extended family throughout the transition by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • providing all relevant information, documents and assistance necessary to facilitate the transition to the new living arrangement • providing required informal or formal support services and information on community resources to strengthen the capacity of the family, extended family or care provider to safely care for the child • supporting contact with family, extended family, the Aboriginal community and identified delegated agency if the child is Aboriginal, and any other significant people in the child's life, and • supporting the child and the caregiver in adjusting to the change in their relationship. <p>See Children in Care Service Standard 10: Meeting a Child's Need for Stability and Continuity of Lifelong Relationships, for more information on the needs of children for stability and continuity of relationships when leaving care.</p> <p>If the child is Aboriginal, provide information and documentation about his or her rights, Aboriginal community membership and entitlements. See Children in Care Service Standard 1: Preserving and Promoting the Identity of an Aboriginal Child in Care, for more information.</p>
<p>INTENT</p>	<p>This standard reinforces the importance of supporting a child in making a successful transition from care to an ongoing living arrangement that is stable, secure and enduring.</p> <p>To maximize the likelihood of a successful transition for the child, strong connections and relationships among the child, family, extended family and community are promoted and facilitated. Adequate formal and informal supports for the family and others involved in caring for the child are in place, as well as support for the child, parent, caregiver and others involved in implementing the plan through the transition to the new living arrangement.</p>
<p>REFERENCES</p>	<p>COA: G9.10, G9.10.01–G9.10.09</p>
<p>POLICY</p>	<p>Preparing and supporting a child leaving care Prepare and support a child leaving care by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • involving the child, relevant family members, caregivers and other significant persons when planning for the transition • agreeing on and arranging for necessary and appropriate services and supports to assist the child and the family after the child leaves care

CIC STANDARD 15: PLANNING FOR A CHILD LEAVING CARE

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • if necessary or at the request of the child or family, arranging for a medical examination, and • ensuring that the child and caregiver have the opportunity to discuss the transition. <p>When the child leaves care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • coordinate and monitor the child's transition so that a return to care, interruption of necessary services or further disruption in the child's living arrangement is avoided to the greatest extent possible • ensure that the child has all of his or her belongings • provide the child, if appropriate, and the person assuming care, with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – essential documents, such as the birth certificate and health care card – the child's medical and educational history and other relevant information, including copies of medical and school reports, and other relevant documents • provide the child and the person assuming care with information about the reinstatement of health care coverage, and • if applicable, provide the person assuming care of the child with information about the application for or reinstatement of the Child Tax Benefit.
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	Close the child's electronic and physical case files after the child has left care, unless a youth agreement is made.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Useful Tips for Youth Leaving Care: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/child_protection/pdf/useful_tips.pdf • Facilitator's Guide to Useful Tips for Youth Leaving Care: http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/child_protection/pdf/facilitators_guide_final.pdf
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CIC STANDARD 16: PROMOTING RESILIENCY AND SKILLS FOR SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY LIVING	
STANDARD STATEMENT	<p>Before a youth leaves care because he or she is reaching the age of majority, assist him or her in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • finding an appropriate place to live • obtaining basic living essentials • obtaining adequate financial and social support • obtaining information about health care coverage, therapeutic support and emergency assistance when necessary • securing funding for post-secondary education or training • identifying or maintaining relationships with family members, natural helpers, informal and formal supports, cultural community and other significant people, and • if the youth has a trust fund, obtaining information about the fund from the Public Guardian and Trustee. <p>If the youth is Aboriginal, provide information and documentation about his or her rights, Aboriginal community membership and entitlements. For more information, see Children in Care Service Standard 1: Preserving and Promoting the Identity of an Aboriginal Child in Care.</p>
INTENT	<p>This standard requires that every effort be made to assist a youth in care, before he or she reaches the age of 19, in developing the capacity, skills, support and resources needed to face the challenges and adversities that accompany successful living in the community.</p> <p>The director works collaboratively with others to prepare the youth well in advance of leaving care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • through an ongoing process of building and assessing the youth’s independent living skills, and providing education and opportunities to test skills • by establishing and strengthening the youth’s connections with family, extended family, friends, community and informal and formal supports, and • by assisting the youth in obtaining basic living essentials such as food, clothing, shelter and stable income are in place before the youth leaves care.
REFERENCES	<p>Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessments: http://www.caseylifeskills.org/pages/assess/assess_index.htm</p>
POLICY	<p>Supporting a youth in developing self-care and independence skills Promote a youth’s resiliency, and support the youth in developing self-care and independence skills, from the time he or she is admitted to care to the time he or she leaves care. Provide opportunities for the youth to develop these skills in a manner consistent with his or her age, developmental level and culture.</p>

**CIC STANDARD 16: PROMOTING RESILIENCY AND SKILLS FOR
SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY LIVING**

	<p>Assessing a youth’s capacity for successful living in the community Regularly assess a youth’s capacity for successful living in the community and develop plans to build on the strengths and address the vulnerabilities identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • by using standardized, culturally appropriate assessment tools • according to the youth’s developmental level and plan of care, and • by involving others involved in the plan of care. <p>Assisting a youth in living successfully in the community Involve others included in the youth’s plan of care to provide information and support in obtaining:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • basic living essentials, such as clothing, food, furniture and household supplies • adequate financial and social support, including employment or financial assistance • a place to live • information about the youth’s rights and responsibilities as a responsible member of the community (e.g., a tenant, an employee, etc.) • informal or formal services or networks to support the youth in the community • health care coverage • community-, regionally and provincially based advocacy services, and • funding for post-secondary education or other training programs, including bursaries, scholarships and grants (e.g., Youth Education Assistance Fund). <p>Provide the youth with or assist the youth in obtaining identification and personal records (e.g., birth certificate, life book, social insurance number). Provide the youth with information about how to request access to his or her file after leaving care.</p> <p>If the Office of the Public Guardian and Trustee is holding funds in trust for the youth, meet with the Public Guardian and Trustee to account for and transfer funds to the youth at 19 years of age.</p>
ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES	
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	<p>For those youth who are not capable of managing their legal and financial issues after they have turned 19, the Public Guardian and Trustee will ensure that the youth has the necessary support, by establishing a Committee, Representative or Power of Attorney to manage his or her financial issues.</p>

**CIC STANDARD 16: PROMOTING RESILIENCY AND SKILLS FOR
SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY LIVING**

**KEY
DEFINITIONS**

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