



**School District No. 83
(North Okanagan – Shuswap)**

Supporting Students with Diverse Needs

**A Parent/Guardian
Guide to Inclusive Education**



June 16, 2020

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INTRODUCTION & ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

School District No. 83 (North Okanagan – Shuswap) values the relationship between school and home. By working together, we maximize the success of our students.

We hope that this resource guide will support you, as a parent &/or guardian, by helping you understand how Inclusive Education supports are provided to students in School District No. 83. The information in this document is consistent with the guidelines and criteria of the Ministry of Education for Special Education services within the province.

We would like to acknowledge the work of School District No. 40 (New Westminster) for providing the foundational work that created this guide.

We would also like to acknowledge the privilege of working and learning on the traditional and unceded territory of the Secwepemc people.

We hope that you find this resource guide useful. If you have any questions or feedback that will help improve this guide, please feel free to contact us.

Inclusive Education

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INCLUSIVE EDUCATION SUPPORTS in SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 83

Our District is committed to the philosophy of inclusion which is founded on the belief that all students should be educated in their neighbourhood schools, in regular classrooms and in age appropriate settings to the maximum extent possible. We embrace the notion that diversity is the norm, not the exception, and we celebrate the gifts and talents that we believe all students possess.

Providing programs and services within neighbourhood schools are based on tiers of support including curricular adaptations to instructional practice that will meet the needs of individual students. The School District believes that classroom teachers are best supported through a school-based collaborative problem-solving model where assistance may be brought to the classroom level from the School-Based Team and District Specialists who are part of the Inclusive Education team.

While decisions around student programming are always made on an individual basis, we hope that you will find this resource document helpful as a reference guide in your journey with your child through our educational system. This document is meant to serve as a starting point for the on-going home and school communication and consultation focused on the success of your child. We believe that when there is a strong home and school relationship, student success is maximized.

Please consider this as our invitation for you to learn more about how Inclusive Education supports are offered in School District No. 83, so that we may work together to create positive and collaborative educational programs and experiences for all children.

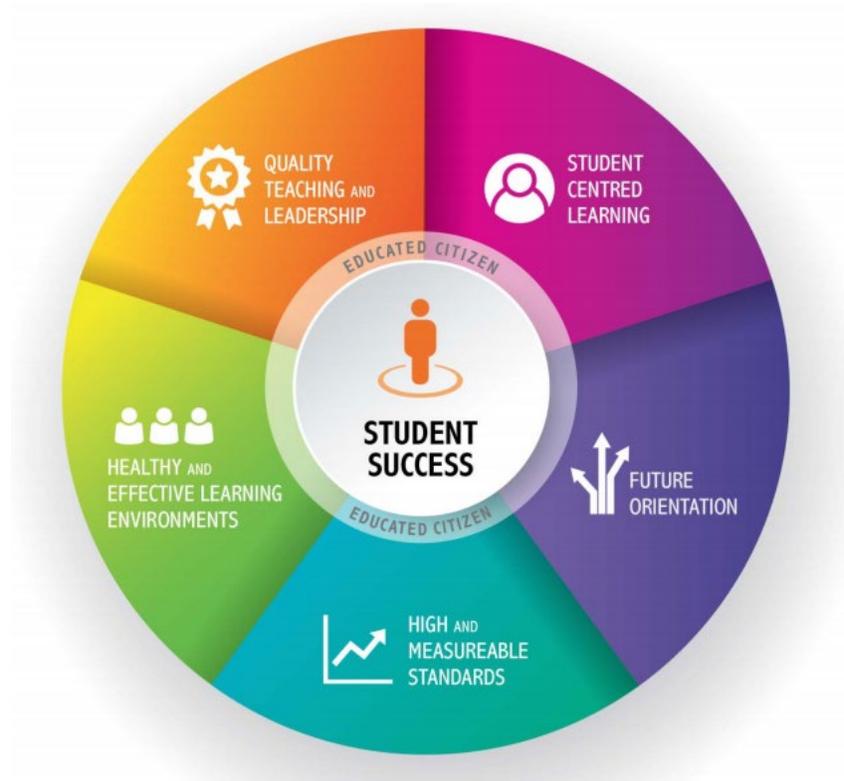
If you have any questions about your child's educational program, please let us know.

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B.C. MINISTRY OF EDUCATION - POLICY FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

Creating educated citizens is the primary focus of British Columbia’s Policy for Student Success. Success is not simply defined by how well students score on assessments or what letter grades they receive in specific subject areas. Success is defined by how well all students are succeeding in life, regardless of their background or where they live in B.C. This commitment depends on using evidence to make decisions, having the courage to adjust and improve programs and policies to optimize learning for students, enabling equity of access to quality education for every student, aligning resources and energy into programs and strategies that clearly demonstrate better outcomes, and leading through innovative approaches.



1. Quality teaching and leadership – Great teachers and educational leaders have always been the key to student success. The critically important role of teachers in a student’s life will be constantly evolving to adapt to the rapidly changing context in children’s lives. Teachers will act as guides and coaches for learning for all students, including those with diverse learning needs. School leaders and teachers will focus on practices proven to achieve results, including experiential learning and technology in their classrooms, personal learning opportunities for every student, robust assessments, and time allocated for collaboration with other educators and professional development.

2. Student-centred learning – Students benefit from more flexibility and choice of how, when, and where their learning takes place. This requires maintaining provincial-level consistency in policy design and funding allocation, while enabling the most flexibility as possible to organize and deliver programs within schools. This will become increasingly important as B.C. takes a more inclusive approach to education, ensuring all students – regardless of ability or background – benefit from a learning environment tailored to maximize their potential. It also means offering a greater variety of pathways to graduation and more opportunities for hands-on learning.

3. Future orientation – Because the pace of social, economic, and environmental change is increasing, there is a greater need to enable all students to have essential skills, adaptability, global competencies and citizenship, and ultimately successful transition to employment. Our education system will enhance our efforts to prepare all students for lifelong learning, encourage the use of technology, and be prepared for graduation with practical expectations informed by employers and post-secondary institutions.

4. High and measurable standards – Having a modern and well-developed curriculum that reflects our values and expectations for skills, knowledge, and competencies will be effective for students only if it is complemented by rigorous and consistent learning standards and province-wide assessments. Evidence and international best practice conclude that using information on learning outcomes, especially feedback to learners from assessments, is critical to student success. British Columbia will endeavour to maintain our already high standards on learning outcomes, with a focus on literacy and numeracy, which evidence indicates offers all learners, regardless of background, the best opportunity to succeed in life and contribute to prosperous economy.

5. Healthy and effective learning environments – We will foster inclusive learning environments where all students feel that they are safe and belong – physically and emotionally –and where all students are inspired to explore their personal strengths and interests. To offer healthy learning environments where students, families, and educators can focus on supporting students achieve their learning outcomes, we will continue to enhance the construction of modern learning environments, enable flexible and virtual learning delivery, and enhance our efforts on physical literacy and best practices on nutrition.

Ref: https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/kindergarten-to-grade-12/understanding_the_bc_policy_for_student_success.pdf

INCLUSIVE EDUCATION:

“All students should have equitable access to learning, opportunities for achievement, and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their educational programs.”

(B.C. Ministry of Education)

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/education-training/k-12/teach/teaching-tools/inclusive-education>

School District No.83 (North Okanagan-Shuswap) is committed to providing an inclusive learning environment where all students are meaningfully included and embraced as part of their school’s learning community. Students are placed in a regular classroom and included in typical class activities with peers of their age to the greatest extent possible.

Inclusive learning environments provide opportunities for all students to experience success and where curriculum is planned, developed and implemented with the aim of teaching to the diverse learning needs of *all* the students in a class. We embrace the notion that diversity is the norm, not the exception, and we strive to celebrate the gifts and talents that we believe all students possess.

We are a learning organization committed to continuously reviewing, refining, and reflecting upon our practice to provide the best possible outcomes for students.

1. **SERVICE DELIVERY**

There are specific Ministry criteria and documentation requirements that must be met in order for a child to be designated as a student with special needs. The specific requirements are outlined in *Special Education Services: Category Checklists – 2010* and can be found on the Ministry of Education website in the [Special Education Services Manual](#). Please refer to this Ministry website for specific descriptions of each category as well as examples of diagnoses.

The Category designations are:

Level One:	Category A Category B	Physically Dependent Deaf/Blind
Level Two:	Category C Category D Category E Category F Category G	Moderate to Profound Intellectual Disability Physical Disability or Chronic Health Impairment Visual Impairment Deaf & Hard of Hearing Autism Spectrum Disorder
Level Three:	Category H	Students Requiring Intensive Behaviour Intervention or Students with Serious Mental Illness
High Incidence:	Category K Category P Category Q Category R	Mild Intellectual Disability Gifted Learning Disability Students Requiring Moderate Behaviour Support or Students with Mental Illness

Categories A through H are known as “*low incidence*” Special Education designations because there is a relatively low incidence of students in these categories compared to the general school population.

Categories K through R are known as “*high incidence*” Special Education designations because there is a comparatively higher prevalence of students in these categories.

Supplemental Funding provided to school districts by the Ministry of Education:

- **Level One** (Categories A and B) provide **\$43,000*** for each full-time student
- **Level Two** (Categories C, D, E, F and G) provide **\$20,400*** for each full-time student
- **Level Three** (Category H) provides **\$10,300*** for each full-time student
- **High Incidence** (Categories K, P, Q, R) provides **NO ADDITIONAL FUNDING** for students.

*Subject to change

The funding provided by the Ministry is allocated to the District which is, in turn, distributed to schools. School District No. 83 allocates funding to schools through a student needs assessment (Individual Needs Assessment for Designated Students, also known as INADS). This funding is to be used to provide specialized supplemental services to enable students with diverse learning needs to access educational programs. This may come in the form of specialized teachers, programs and/or education assistants. Ministry funding is *not* attached to specific students.

Supplemental Services:

Specialized supplemental services may include one or more of the following (depending on the level of student need and the Ministry designation):

- Certified Educational Assistants (typically shared support)
- Youth & Family Workers/Education Support Workers
- Inclusive Education Staff (i.e. Teacher of the Visually Impaired, Teacher of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing, Occupational or Physiotherapists, Behaviour Consultant, School Psychologists, SLPs, etc.).

The programming offered through these supplemental services will vary depending on the educational needs of each student. Some students may receive support within the classroom; others may receive some services outside the classroom in one-on-one or small group settings. Sometimes indirect service and resources are provided to the Classroom Teacher with no direct service to the student. The *Individual Education Plan* (IEP) will outline the supports for your child.

District Itinerant Staff provide support based on referrals made to them by the Learning Resource Teacher and/or the School Based Team. The level of individual student need is always the focus of discussion when allocating supplemental services.

For example, while two students may be similar in that they both meet the criteria for Category G (Autism Spectrum Disorder), their needs may be markedly different. One student may be on the high functioning end of the spectrum while the other may be lower functioning and will therefore require a higher level of support.

The Individual Needs Assessment for Designated Students (INADS) helps determine what supports are necessary for each designated student. The goal is to support the development of independence and self-efficacy.

2. INDIVIDUAL EDUCATION PLANS (IEPs)

The *Individual Education Plan (IEP)* is the main document that outlines how the school and other community agencies (where appropriate) will support your child's learning needs. All students with a Ministry designation must have an IEP. Our district creates IEPs that are based on the Core and Curricular Competencies, as outlined in the B.C. curriculum. These are known as CBIEPs (**Competency-Based Individual Education Plans**).

The CBIEP:

- Is a plan for your child's program that outlines the type of extra supports your child needs to be successful;
- Is a set of learning outcomes, goals and objectives that are different from/in addition to the expected learning outcomes;
- Developed collaboratively with you and the staff who support your child at school;
- Helps teachers understand your child's needs so that they can provide meaningful learning opportunities that take your child's needs into consideration;
- Reflects the core and curricular competencies in the B.C. curriculum;
- Helps to ensure continuity in your child's program in the event that you move and your child needs to change schools.

Your child will have a case manager who will coordinate the development and implementation of your child's CBIEP. You will be included as part of this process. The CBIEP meeting is the time for you to provide meaningful input into the goals, objectives and supports for your child. You will also review and discuss your child's progress in relation to the goals and objectives in the CBIEP.

IEP meetings are typically held once each year with the purpose of updating the goals in your child's IEP. You can also expect an update once or twice during the school year, typically coinciding with the school's regular reporting periods. Your child's case manager may encourage you to prepare for the IEP meeting by completing a "Learner Profile" which helps us understand your child's strengths and challenges. IEP meetings can contain a great deal of information. Many parents bring a notebook to keep track of questions, ideas and concerns. When you come to your child's IEP meeting, you might wish to write your thoughts and questions down in advance.

You, as parents/guardians are the experts with regards to your children; your input is valued and important at the IEP meeting. Private home-based specialists or therapists are welcome to attend the IEP meetings and expanded School-Based Team meetings. Although home and school environments differ significantly, consistent strategies used in both places can support your child's growth. Your child's case manager will incorporate the input from you and your external team members, and build a plan that will be effective and consistent between home and school.

3. **ADAPTATIONS and MODIFICATIONS**

As a province, we are in the process of shifting our language from older terminology (*Adaptations and Modifications*) to newer terminology (*Universal, Targeted and Essential Supports*). You may hear both sets of terminology used interchangeably.

A student working on core and curricular competencies at any grade or course level may be supported through the use of adaptations (*universal, targeted or essential supports*). Students may also have Supplemental Goals or Replacement Goals, which are focused on building skill in a domain in which they are struggling.

Supplemental	Replacement
Goals <i>in addition</i> to the grade level curriculum	Goals that are <i>instead of</i> grade level curriculum
Students DO NOT have and cognitive disability	Students DO have a cognitive disability
e.g. A reading fluency goal in addition to the Language Arts curriculum	E.g. Developmentally appropriate literacy goal in place of Language Arts curriculum

Universal Supports: good for all learners

- Different teaching strategies such as visual cues and/or breaking tasks into smaller parts;

Targeted Supports: a choice for all learners to use

- Different ways of demonstrating learning such as oral assessments, visual representation and/or extra time;

Essential Supports: specific support that is essential for one student

- Different formats for resources to enable students to receive information, such as Braille and/or text-to-speech software;
- Environmental adaptations such as using headphones, sitting near a teacher or having sensory breaks.

Adaptations are described by the
Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines as:

“teaching and assessment strategies especially designed to accommodate a student’s needs so he or she can achieve the learning outcomes / standards of the subject or course and to demonstrate proficiency of concepts”

This resource is available at:

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/ppandg.htm

If your child is receiving *targeted* or *essential* supports, they may be working on core or curricular competencies from a different grade level than their peer age class. When this is the case, the student will be:

- assessed and will receive credit for the grade level course/subject they are working on;
- **and** the report card will reflect their success at that grade/level.

It is possible for a child who is in a grade 7 classroom to be working on core or curricular competencies at the grade 5 level in specific subject areas.

Graduation and Modified Programs:

Students who are accessing *universal*, *targeted*, or *essential supports* are typically working towards the same *Dogwood Graduation Diploma* as their peers. A *Dogwood Graduation Diploma* recognizes the successful completion of the B.C. curriculum.

If your child is working on core or curricular competencies at a level lower than their peer age group, they may (but not always) take longer to achieve their *Dogwood Graduation Diploma*. Students may have supplemental goals in their IEP, but will still be making progress on core and curricular goals, just at a slower pace. In such cases, students may complete their graduation in an adult learning centre, and will receive a transcript listing the courses completed and credits earned towards graduation. Students may remain in the public school system for an extra school year, provided they have not turned 19.

Modified Programs:

Modified programming is for students whose learning needs are such that they are unable to meet the requirements of the core and/or curricular competencies. These students will typically have replacement goals as part of their educational program.

For example:

- students with limited awareness of their surroundings;
- students with fragile mental/physical health;
- students who are significantly medically and cognitively challenged.”

A student’s program cannot be modified without consultation with parents/guardians.

A modified program is described by the ***Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines*** as one where:

“Instructional and assessment-related decisions are made to address a student’s educational needs that consist of individualized learning goals as opposed to provincial learning outcomes”.

If your child is on a modified program, they are assessed in relation to the goals and objectives established in their Individual Education Plan (IEP). Some students spend an extra year in public school to complete the goals in their IEP.

If your child is on a modified program, they will not be eligible for the standard *Dogwood Graduation Diploma*. Instead, they will receive a *School Completion Certificate* (also known as an *Evergreen Certificate*) that recognizes their accomplishments in attaining their *Individual Education Plan (IEP)* goals.

In some cases, students are on a partly modified program (e.g. students with physical disabilities who cannot take Physical Education). If your child is on a partly modified program, it may still be possible for them to receive a *Dogwood Graduation Diploma*. Please talk to your child’s Secondary School Counsellor for more information. In the majority of cases, the decision to officially modify a child’s program is not made until the end of Grade 9.

For more specific information regarding the B.C. Graduation Program, please see the Ministry website: <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/graduation>

4. PERSONAL WORKSPACES

School District No. 83 is committed to providing students with educational programs in an inclusive setting. Inclusion does not mean all students remain in the traditional classroom setting 100% of the time. For many students, individual or small group pull out is an integral part of a student's individualized educational program. There may also be instances where, in addition to Resource Room settings, the individual needs of some students require that be provided with "personal workspaces."

The purpose of the use of these spaces is to:

- Decrease sensory input if a student is feeling over-whelmed;
- Support student self-regulation;
- Provide a quiet workspace to complete tasks and work on IEP goals;
- Provide a space for individual sensory, occupational therapy and/or physiotherapy programming.

Students using personal workspaces are:

- Always supervised by a staff member (often working side by side or in close proximity and in visual range);
- Never locked in a room alone or prevented from leaving.

5. HOME – SCHOOL COMMUNICATION

If you have a question or concern about your child's IEP or educational program, you should talk to your child's Classroom Teacher.

The classroom teacher(s) are ultimately responsible for the educational program for your child so it is vitally important that they know directly from you what questions or concerns that you may have. Depending on the needs of your child, the Learning Resource Teacher may be more "front line" with your child's educational program and therefore could be a good first contact. This can be discussed with your child's school team.

You can typically contact your child's classroom teacher or Learning Resource Teacher at the school by telephone or through e-mail (email addresses can be found on the school website).

You may wish to work with your child's classroom teacher to set up a daily communication system between home and school. Daily communication might include:

- For school staff to inform you of school activities and any unusual occurrences and,
- For you to inform the school of activities at home and anything unusual that may affect the school day (for example, situations where your child hasn't slept well).

In the rare situation that you find that your questions or concerns have not been addressed by the classroom teacher or Learning Support Teacher, your next point of contact is the School Principal or Vice-Principal. If you feel you require discussion beyond the school level, you can contact the District Principal (Inclusive Education) or the Director of Instruction (Inclusive Education).

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

All confidential documents (e.g. medical documents related to any diagnosis, formal assessment results, the *Individual Education Plan (IEP)* and any other documents) are stored in a specialized folder that is part of the student's regular file. This information is held securely in our on-line student information system (MyEdBC).

If a student moves to a new school within our school district, all your child's records are sent directly to the new school to promote continuity of service.

If a student moves to a public school in another district, all your child's records are transferred to the new school when they contact us and request a record transfer.

7. DISTRICT POLICY ON RESTRAINT AND SECLUSION

School District No. 83 has a specific Administrative Procedure regarding the use of physical restraint and seclusion. Please refer directly to *Policy 1040: Physical Restraint and Seclusion in Schools* located at:

<https://sd83.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/To-be-revised-Policy-Binder-and-Index-2018-2019-as-of-July-30-Upload.pdf>

8. CURRICULUM-BASED ASSESSMENTS VS. FORMAL STANDARDIZED ASSESSMENTS

Curriculum-based Assessments

Curriculum-based assessments are conducted by classroom teachers to identify areas of student strengths and/or weaknesses. Examples include school-wide reading and writing assessments and on-going classroom assessment activities.

If a teacher is concerned about the level of achievement and/or rate of skill acquisition, they may make a referral to the *School-Based Team*. The *School-Based Team* will offer additional strategies and accommodations for use in the classroom. Where there is a need for further information, the *School-Based Team* may refer your child for specialized assessment at the school or district level.

If you are concerned about your child's level of achievement and/or rate of skill acquisition, you should consult your child's Classroom Teacher.

Formal Standardized Assessments

Level A and Level B school-based formal assessment includes standardized assessments of:

- Achievement;
- Adaptive skills;
- Visual-motor integration; and,
- Receptive and expressive language processing.

These assessments are called “standardized” because the administration process is consistent and the resulting scores are compared to other representative students the same age called the “norm group.” Level B assessments are typically administered by Learning Resource Teachers or other specialists, and require the completion of specialized post graduate university coursework and/or in- service training.

Level C assessment is further specialized and is administered by the District School Psychologists to determine your child's ability in various domains, such as:

- Verbal comprehension;
- Perceptual reasoning;
- Fluid reasoning;
- Working memory;
- Processing speed.

Level C assessments are also standardized and require post-graduate level university coursework in clinical and/or school psychology. District School Psychologists are qualified to provide Level C assessments. They determine whether a child has an intellectual or learning disability that will require specialized supports and programming. In addition, Level C assessment can assist teachers and parents/guardians in understanding the child's learning profile.

Together, Levels A, B, and C assessments make up a complete psychoeducational assessment. Not all students require a complete psychoeducational assessment for school programming. For some students, Level A and/or Level B assessment provides adequate information for student programming.

A **Psychoeducational Assessment** can also be referred to as an **Educational Assessment**. This assessment will be completed by a Certified School Psychologist or Registered Psychologist. These assessments will typically include standardized assessments of cognitive skills, academic achievement, adaptive functioning, and behaviour, as required. Results of these assessments may be diagnoses of intellectual impairments or Learning Disabilities.

Process for Requesting a Formal Assessment:

It is the *School-Based Team* that initiates the referral for formal assessment based on your child’s performance in school (please refer to the section “*School-Based Team*” on page 21 for more information).

If, as a parent, you have concerns and believe that a formal assessment should be considered, the first step in getting your child assessed would be to contact your child’s Classroom Teacher who may then bring your child forward to the *School-Based Team* for problem-solving and possible school-based assessment.

Private Formal Assessments

The school district will accept assessments that have been conducted privately, as long as the formal assessment has been completed by a qualified and registered psychologist (College of Psychologists of BC Registrants or out of province assessments registered in their province), is complete, and the report meets the guidelines and criteria of the Ministry of Education for a designation in one of the special education categories. School District staff (District Principal and/or School Psychologist) makes the final determination with regards to whether or not a student meets the Ministry criteria to be designated as a child with special needs.

9. **PROBLEM-SOLVING**

It is always our goal to work with parents/guardians in the best interests of our students. More often than not, issues that come up are the result of miscommunication. Please let us know right away if you have any concerns so we can work together to address them. We want to keep the lines of communication open and we value our relationship with you.

It can be overwhelming for parents/guardians to hear for the first time that school staff believe their child may have some unique needs. In cases such as these, it may be helpful for you to ask questions such as:

- What are the specific reasons that school staff believes my child may have some different learning needs?
- Help me understand why there is the belief my child is struggling more than their peers.
- What is the next course of action that school staff would recommend?

If you wish to seek out a diagnosis or formal assessment (either private psychoeducational or medical) to ascertain any identifiable special needs, the school and district would be able to support and assist you through the process. We understand that this may be completely new to you, and we are here to help.

During the time it takes to seek out a diagnosis or administer formal assessments, the school may begin providing extra supports to help your child. Providing support to students, including the provision of adaptations, does not require a diagnosis or designation.

There may also be situations where parents/guardians disagree about a child's needs. In cases such as these, an *Expanded School-Based Team* meeting may be helpful (please see the section "*Expanded School-Based Team*" for more information). Ultimately, parents/guardians have the right to refuse the services for their child.

In some situations, the school-based team may determine that a student with a diagnosed special need may not require an IEP. The Ministry recognizes such cases, as long as:

- the student requires little to no adaptations to materials, instruction or assessment methods;
- the expected learning outcomes have not been modified;
- the student requires 25 or fewer hours of remedial instruction by someone other than the classroom teacher, in a school year.

(Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines. p3)

In some situations, parents/guardians may have concerns about their child's progress and a specific diagnosis has not been obtained. The *Expanded School-Based Team* is available to discuss learning assistance opportunities for your child.

Can I bring a support person to school meetings?

Yes. We want parents/guardians to feel comfortable and have their voice heard at meetings with school and district staff. Support persons may include a Supported Child Development consultant; private therapist(s); a District Parents' Advisory Council member, family worker, advocate, etc.

Private Home-based Specialists, Therapists, and Other External Supports

You are welcome to invite your private home-based specialist or therapist to school meetings to provide input into your child's program. However, it is important to recognize that recommended therapeutic interventions can differ depending on the agency involved. Please be aware that some interventions are effective in very controlled environments (i.e. clinical or one-to-one settings), and may not be advisable or feasible a classroom setting. Home-based specialists may not work directly with students in our schools, but are welcome to provide professional input during school meetings.

10. ROLE DESCRIPTIONS

a) Learning Resource Teacher

The *Learning Resource Teacher*:

- consults with the Classroom Teacher on all matters related to the *Individual Education Plan (IEP)*;
- works with you, as the parent, and the *School-Based Team* to develop the *Individual Education Plan (IEP)*;
- works closely with the Classroom Teacher to implement, monitor and review the *Individual Education Plan (IEP)*;
- provides direct service to students in classroom, small group, and individual settings as appropriate; and,
- oversees the work of the Certified Educational Assistants along with the Classroom Teacher

The Learning Support Teacher is the person who understands your child's strengths and needs and, working with you, the classroom teacher(s) and the *School-Based Team*, how to best support your child.

b) School Counsellor

The *School Counsellor* is an integral member of the School-Based Team and facilitates your child's educational program and personal development by providing a variety of individual, group or classroom-based services; for example:

- Group or classroom-based services may include prevention programs (e.g., child abuse prevention, substance abuse awareness, etc.);
- Individual-based services may include support to students with issues that are affecting their social-emotional wellbeing. An example may include helping the child through challenging peer relations or conflict situations.

Elementary Itinerant Counsellors support students struggling with behaviour regulation and a range of social-emotional needs including anxiety, depression, self-regulation and trauma. They also facilitate the referral to other support services or outside agencies.

Secondary School Counsellors may also provide advice and assistance with the selection of courses leading to a successful transition to post-secondary settings.

c) Certified Educational Assistants (CEAs)

CEAs work under the direction of the Classroom or Learning Resource Teachers to:

- implement the learning accommodations and strategies developed by the Classroom and Learning Resource Teachers (as outlined in the Individual Education Plan);
- prepare materials for specific children, where appropriate, such as picture exchange communication systems or countdown strips; and,
- document a child's strengths, achievements and needs for review as part of the IEP planning process

While the CEA is a very important member of your child's school team, if you have any questions about your child's educational program, you should talk directly to your child's Classroom Teacher(s). They may then consult with the Learning Resource Teacher and *School-Based Team*.

Classroom Teacher(s) are ultimately responsible for the educational programming of your child in their classroom so it is vitally important that they know directly from you what questions or concerns you may have. Depending on the level of need of your child, the Learning Resource Teacher may be more "front line" with your child's educational program and therefore could be a good first contact. This can be discussed with your child's school team.

Assigning Certified Educational Assistants (CEAs) to Students

Educational assistants are not formally assigned to individual students. They are assigned to schools based on overall student need; the LRT and School Principal determine CEA schedules.

CEA staffing is part of the spring staffing process for all schools in the District. In May, the Director of Instruction reviews the Individual Needs Assessment for Designated Students (INADS) that has been completed for each designated student in schools. This provides the preliminary allocation of CEA hours that is assigned to schools. The Director of Instruction then meets with the School Principal and Learning Resource Teacher to discuss needs at both the individual student level, and the school level. This is called the "*INADS Review Process*". Adjustments to the preliminary allocations to schools may be made in September, based on students who are *actually* in attendance at the school (students often move in/out of the District over the summer).

Following the spring staffing process, opportunities are provided in May and June to discuss preliminary class compositions for the coming school year. The School Principal makes the final decision on the class placement and deployment of the CEA allocation provided to the school, although this is typically done collaboratively with the Learning Resource Teacher.

The level of individual student need is always the focus of discussion when allocating CEA time to classrooms. For example, while two students may be similar in that they both meet the criteria for Category G (Autism Spectrum Disorder), their needs may be markedly different. Our focus is always on building independence and self-efficacy. One student may require significantly more or less direct support than the other. A special needs designation does not guarantee CEA support.

Changes in CEAs:

Your child's Learning Support Teacher or Principal is likely to be the one to inform you of any change of CEA for your child. While we do our best to prevent changes of CEAs during the school year, sometimes it is inevitable as staff go on leaves for various reasons. The District encourages schools to have more than one CEA working directly with students in order to foster reduced dependency on one staff member and tolerance for change (although seldom would there be more than one CEA working with a student at any given time).

Occasionally there may be a change to your child's CEA due to illness. For students with complex special needs, schools try to ensure that there is a "back-up" CEA who knows your child's program in the event of the illness of the "regular" CEA. This is to maximize consistency in your child's educational program. There are also CEA Binders in the schools that highlight the key features of your child's *Individual Education Plan* (IEP) for the replacement CEA. When there is a more permanent change of CEA (due to a leave, change of job, or resignation), the position is filled according to qualifications and seniority, in accordance with the CUPE Collective Agreement.

d) Youth & Family Workers (YFW)/Education Support Workers (ESW)

The Youth & Family Worker (Gr. 9-12)/Education Support Worker (K-8) is trained to work with students with a range of social-emotional and/or mental health challenges. Most often, YFWs or ESWs are assigned to support students in *Category R: Moderate Behaviour Intervention* or *Category H: Intensive Behaviour Intervention / Serious Mental Illness*.

YFWs and ESWs provide support to students individually or in small group settings, in and outside the classroom throughout the school day. They work with classroom teachers, counsellors and the Learning Resource Teacher to support students in attaining the social-emotional and/or behavioural goals of the child's *Individual Education Plan*.

e) School-Based Teams

The *School-Based Team* meets regularly to:

- Play a formal role as a school-based problem-solving team to assist Classroom Teachers in developing and implementing instructional, environmental and/or behavioural management strategies for students who do not have an *Individual Education Plan* (IEP);
- Problem-solve, review and/or coordinate resources for students who already have an IEP;
- Assist with access to additional resources in the District or the community where needed.

The *School-Based Team* typically includes:

- The Principal (or Vice Principal)
- Learning Resource Teacher
- Classroom Teacher
- School Counsellor
- Other staff as required (i.e. CEA, Indigenous Support Worker, Indigenous Outreach Worker, YFW/ESW, etc.)

For students without a formal *Individual Education Plan* (IEP) the parent will be contacted about any recommendation at the *School-Based Team* that goes beyond regular classroom strategies or accommodations.

For students with a formal *Individual Education Plan*, the parent will be informed of all significant changes related to their child's educational program (made at the *School-Based Team* level or through other means) through the regular IEP review cycle and communication process.

g) “Expanded” School-Based Team

The *School-Based Team* may be expanded to include:

- Parent/guardian and the child (in the case of older students);
- Outside service providers contracted by the family;
- Inclusive Education staff
- Representatives from community services or government ministries. Community services that may send representatives include the Ministry of Children and Family Development, community-based counselling service providers, etc. depending on the nature of the child’s needs.

The role of the *Expanded School-Based Team* is similar to the *School-Based Team* in that it is a collaborative problem-solving and planning team. The only difference is that a broader range of expertise and available resources is brought to the team.

The school invites parents/guardians to an Expanded School-Based Team meeting when there is an aspect of the child’s programming that is of concern and requires the expertise of a wider group of individuals in order to effectively problem solve. Since you know your child best, your involvement in this process is very important.

f) District Inclusive Education Staff:

The Inclusive Education team is comprised of highly specialized professionals who travel from school to school throughout the District to consult with school staff and provide direct or indirect service to students. Inclusive Education staff are available to consult with Learning Resource Teachers and Classroom Teachers in the development of CBIEP goals, objectives and accommodations for your child. In some cases, Inclusive Education staff may offer direct services to your child within their area of expertise. Referrals to these professionals come through the Learning Resource Teacher and the School-based Team. Students are assigned these services based on the suitability of the service for the student, and the priority of individual student need.

- **Elementary Itinerant Counsellors:** support students struggling with a range of social-emotional needs including anxiety, depression, self-regulation and trauma. They also facilitate the referral to other support services or outside agencies;
- **English Language Learner (ELL) Teachers:** specialize in strategies and supports for English Language Learners and provide support to LRTs and Classroom Teachers;
- **Teacher of the Deaf & Hard of Hearing (TDHH):** provides support to students who are deaf or hard- of-hearing;
- **Physiotherapist:** support students who have significant physical or sensory-motor limitations that impact their activity and participation in school.
- **Occupational Therapist:** provides services to students with orthopedic, neurological, muscular, spinal, joint or sensory dysfunction as well as those with cognitive and complex neuro-behavioural conditions;
- **School Psychologist:** provide formal educational assessment services and consultation related to student learning needs;
- **Speech and Language Pathologist:** identify and support students whose educational and/or social progress is adversely affected by communication difficulties.
- **Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments (TSVI):** provides support to students who have a range of vision, orientation and mobility impairments.
- **Healthy Schools/Self-Regulation Consultant:** supports school teams with student wellness and strategies to help students improve focus and attention in school.
- **Behaviour Consultant:** offer specialized support to *School-Based Teams*, Classroom Teachers and support staff working with students exhibiting challenging behaviours;
- **Trauma Consultant:** provides support to school staff, students and families for students who are struggling with the impact of trauma.
- **Healthy Lifestyles Coach:** drug and alcohol counselling support.

11. TRANSITIONS

Transition planning is the preparation, implementation and evaluation required to enable students to make major transitions during their lives – from home or pre-school to school; from class to class; from school to school; from school district to school district; and from school to post-secondary, community or work situations. As your child moves through the K-12 education system, there will be a number of transitions to navigate.

a) Kindergarten Transition

If your child is supported through the Shuswap Children’s Centre, you will be invited to a Kindergarten Transition meeting for a joint meeting with SCC and School District No. 83. The District Principal of Inclusive Education is the primary person managing the transition to school for Kindergarten students with diverse learning needs.

Parents/guardians are also encouraged to attend “*Ready, Set, Learn*” and Kindergarten orientation events in the school that are held each spring for all children attending Kindergarten in the fall. Please ask your child’s school when this event will take place when you register your child for school. Parents/guardians of in-coming Kindergarten students are encouraged to register their child as soon as registration opens in early October (the year prior to entering Kindergarten).

b) Transitioning from One Grade to the Next:

Each spring, schools begin looking at their projected enrolment for the following September. Before the end of the school year, plans are already underway for the placement of students with special needs in classrooms.

Your school principal (or sometimes vice-principal) works closely with your child’s Learning Resource and Classroom Teacher(s) to determine which classroom will best suit the learning needs of your child for the following school year.

The exact classroom placement is finalized during the first week of school in September.

c) Changing Schools within School District No. 83

If your child is going to the next level of school within our school district (e.g. middle school or high school), transition planning is initiated by staff in the early spring (or sometimes earlier if your child has complex special needs).

Transition planning involves your child’s Learning Resource Teacher connecting with the receiving school’s Learning Resource Teacher to share the *IEP* and the specific learning needs of your child. Arrangements are often made for your child to visit the receiving school in the spring and to meet the new Learning Resource Teacher, Principal and other school staff. The receiving school’s staff will generally contact you for information about your child’s learning needs prior to starting school.

As with all transition planning, school staff work closely to determine which classroom will best suit the learning needs of your child the following school year. The receiving school's Learning Resource Teacher will invite you to an *IEP* meeting as early as possible in the fall to meet and consult with you on your child's educational program.

d) Changing Schools Outside of School District No. 83

If your child is going to a new school outside our district, our staff work cooperatively with the new school to provide the information needed to plan a smooth transition.

e) Transitioning from Grade 12 to the Community

Transitioning your child into adulthood requires coordination and planning. It is important that parents/guardians prepare for this transition well before the child turns 19 years of age. In some cases, there are arrangements that need to be made with *Community Living BC (CLBC)* and other agencies to ensure that a smooth transition takes place. It is recommended by the Ministry of Education that this planning begin when your child turns 16 years of age.

School staff can assist with your child's transition by including specific goals within your child's CBIEP. There is also a parent information meeting that takes place annually at the high school where individuals from community-based agencies answer questions and provide information related to this important time in your child's life.

The Ministry of Children and Family Development has two documents that may assist parents/guardians in the planning process:

- Your Future Now: A Transition Planning and Resource Guide for Youth with Special Needs and Their Families
http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/family-and-social-supports/support_guide.pdf
- Cross-Ministry Transition Planning Protocol for Youth with Special Needs
http://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/family-and-social-supports/children-teens-with-special-needs/2012_ytpp_protocol.pdf

APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY of TERMS

Accommodations are individualized strategies and resources provided to students so they can learn according to their educational needs. More formalized accommodations take the form of adaptations and/or modifications depending on the level of student need.

Adaptations are teaching and assessment strategies especially designed to accommodate a student's needs so he or she can achieve the learning standards of the subject or course and to demonstrate mastery of concepts. Essentially, adaptations are "best practice" in teaching. Most adaptations can be provided to any student who needs them; a special education designation is not required. A student working on learning standards of any grade or course level may be supported through use of adaptations.

Assessment is a systematic process of gathering information in order to make appropriate educational decisions for a student. It is a collaborative and progressive process designed to identify the student's strengths and needs, set goals, and results in the identification and implementation of selected educational strategies.

Collaborative consultation is a process in which people work together to solve a common problem or address a common concern. A successful collaborative process is characterized by the following features: it is voluntary; there is mutual trust and open communication among the people involved; identification/clarification of the problem to be addressed is a shared task; the goal is shared by all participants; each participant's contribution is valued equally; all participants' skills are employed in identifying and selecting problem-solving strategies; and there is shared responsibility for the program or strategy initiated.

A **guardian** of a person (in the wording of the *School Act*) "...when used in reference to a student or child, means guardian of the person of the student or child within the meaning of the *Family Relations Act*".

Inclusion describes the principle that all students are entitled to equitable access to learning, achievement and the pursuit of excellence in all aspects of their education. The practice of inclusion is not necessarily synonymous with integration and goes beyond placement to include meaningful participation and the promotion of interaction with others.

An **Individual Education Plan (IEP)** is a documented plan developed for a student with special needs that describes individualized goals, adaptations, modifications, the services to be provided, and includes measures for tracking achievement.

Integration is one of the major strategies used to achieve inclusion. With integration, students with special needs are included in educational settings with their peers who do not have special needs, and provided with the necessary accommodations determined on an individual basis, to enable them to be successful there. The principle of "placement in the most enabling learning environment" applies when decisions are made about the extent to which an individual student is placed in regular classrooms, or assigned to an alternate placement.

Learning Standards (core or curricular competencies and content) describe what students are expected to know, understand, and do at each grade level in each subject area of the BC Curriculum. <https://curriculum.gov.bc.ca/>

Mainstreaming is a term which was in use during the early years of the movement toward integration of students with special needs, but which has been replaced by the term "integration" (see definition for integration above).

Modifications are instructional and assessment-related accommodations made to address a student's educational needs that consist of individualized learning goals and outcomes that are substantially different than learning standards of a course or subject. Modifications should be considered for those students whose special needs are such that they are unable to access the curriculum (i.e., students with limited awareness of their surroundings, students with fragile mental/physical health, students medically and cognitively/multiply challenged.) Using the strategy of modifications for students not identified as special needs should be a rare practice.

Parent (in the wording of the School Act) "...means, in respect of a student or of a child registered under section 13, a) the guardian of the person of the student or child; b) the person legally entitled to custody of the student or child; or c) the person who usually has the care and control of the student or child."

<http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/legislation/schoollaw/revisedstatutescontents.pdf>

Positive Behaviour Support Plan refers to a collaboratively developed plan for staff working with a particular student to understand and then replace a challenging behaviour with a more acceptable one

A **School-Based Team** is an on-going team of school-based personnel which has a formal role to play as a problem-solving unit in assisting Classroom Teachers to develop and implement instructional and/or management strategies and to co-ordinate support resources for students with special needs within the school.

Special educational needs are those characteristics which make it necessary to provide a student undertaking an educational program with resources supplemental and/or different from those which are needed by most students. Special educational needs are identified during assessment of a student; they are the basis for determining an appropriate educational program (including necessary resources) for that student.

Strategies are specific techniques that are implemented to support student learning needs.

Transition is the passage of a student from one environment to another at key points in his or her development from childhood to adulthood.

Glossary of Terms taken from the Ministry of Education website at:

http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/specialed/special_ed_policy_manual.pdf#page=5

APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY RESOURCES for PARENTS/GUARDIANS

ACT – Autism Community Training

604.205.5467 <http://www.actcommunity.ca>

ACT provides excellent information and training, in accordance with international best practices. Their goal is to enable parents/guardians, professionals and para-professionals to support children and adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder to live productive, satisfying lives within their families and communities.

ANXIETY CANADA

<http://www.anxietycanada.com>

Anxiety Canada provides a rich resource of self-help information and programs, as well as resources for parents and caregivers. Our mission is to increase awareness, promote education and improve access to programs that work.

ARMSTRONG BOYS & GIRLS CLUB

(250) 546-9900 <https://www.boysandgirlsclubs.ca/club-location/north-okanagan/armstrong/>

Email: armstrong@obgc.ca

3385 Pleasant Valley Rd, Armstrong, B.C.

Focuses on four core programming areas: physical activity, health and safety; leadership, growth and empowerment; learning and career development; and family and communities.

AUTISM SOCIETY OF BC

604.434.0880 <http://www.autismbc.ca>

Autism Society of BC strives to promote understanding, acceptance, and full community inclusion for people with autism in British Columbia while providing support for the realization of the rights and informed choices of individuals with autism and their families.

AUTISM SPEAKS

<http://autismspeaks.org>

[100 Day Kit for Young Children](#)

BC CONFEDERATION OF PARENT ADVISORY COUNCILS

604.687.4433 <http://www.bccpac.bc.ca>

BC CPAC strives to advance the public school education and well-being of children in the province of British Columbia and carry on activities to promote and enhance meaningful parent participation in an advisory role at the school, school district, and provincial levels.

BC EPILEPSY SOCIETY

604.875.6704 www.bcepilepsy.com

A non-profit, charitable organization dedicated to serving the well-being of people living with epilepsy.

B.C. SCHOOL ACT

http://www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96412_02#section7

Individual Education Plan Order

CANADIAN NATIONAL INSTITUTE FOR THE BLIND (CNIB)

604.431.2121 www.cnib.ca

Provides adjustment to blindness services for all ages including counselling; orientation and mobility; free Braille and talking book library; and, eye safety programs. Works with people who are experiencing any degree of low vision.

CEREBRAL PALSY ASSOCIATION OF BC

604.408.9484 www.bccerebralpalsy.com

Services include education, advocacy, information and resources, lending library and a bi-monthly newsletter.

CHILD & YOUTH WITH SPECIAL NEEDS (CYSN)

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/youth-and-family-services/special-needs-supports-for-families>

Helps primary caregivers, parents or guardians who have children or teens with special needs to access extra support to maximize the quality of life for their child and family.

COLLEGE OF PSYCHOLOGISTS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA (CPBC)

<https://collegeofpsychologists.bc.ca/>

Should a parent/guardian seek out a private psychoeducational assessment, they must ensure that the clinician of their choosing is registered in the CPBC to meet Ministry of Education's practice guidelines for Psychologists working in BC.

COMMUNITY LIVING BC (CLBC)

604.664.0101 www.communitylivingbc.ca

Community Living BC (CLBC) delivers supports and services to adults with developmental disabilities and their families in BC. CLBC works to create communities where people with developmental disabilities have more choices about how they live, work and contribute.

DEAF CHILDREN'S SOCIETY OF BC

604.525.6056 www.deafchildren.bc.ca

Offers a family-centered approach to support deaf and hard of hearing children and their families by improving the ability of the family to develop and advocate for opportunities to maximize their child's development.

DOWN SYNDROME RESEARCH FOUNDATION

604.444.3773 www.dsrf.org

Mandate is to empower people with Down syndrome to achieve their potential; lead independent and fulfilled lives; and participate fully in the communities in which they live.

FAMILY NETWORK FOR DEAF CHILDREN

604.684.1860 www.fndc.ca

Goal is to gather and share information with deaf and hard of hearing youth, their families as well as the professional communities that support them. FNDC's primary goal is to gather and share information with deaf and hard of hearing

GIFTED CHILDREN'S ASSOCIATION OF BC

No phone number listed <https://giftedchildrenbc.wordpress.com/>

Dedicated to providing support and advocacy for gifted children and their families.

INTERIOR HEALTH CHILDREN'S ASSESSMENT NETWORK (IHCAN)

(250) 763-4122 <https://kelowna.cioc.ca/record/KNA0700>

Provides assessment and diagnosis clinic for children and youth living in the Interior Health region who demonstrate significant impairment in a number of domains of functioning, including development and learning, mental health, adaptive and social skills, or biomarkers such as prenatal substance exposure.

KELTY MENTAL HEALTH (B.C. CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL)

<https://kelymentalhealth.ca/>

Helps families navigate the mental health system, listens and offers peer support, and connects families to resources and tools.

LEARNING DISABILITY ASSOCIATION

604.873.8139 www.ldabc.ca

Provides effective programs and services throughout the years starting at pre-school. Services include recommended interventions, social skills development, tutoring and advocacy.

MINISTRY OF CHILDREN & FAMILY DEVELOPMENT

604.660.8180 www.gov.bc.ca/mcf/

Provides information and support services for people with developmental disabilities and their families. The *Child and Youth with Special Need Social Worker* can be reached at the New Westminster Children's Centre at 604.521.8078 (extension 329).

- [A Parent's Handbook: Your Guide to Autism Programs](#)

MINISTRY OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT: MENTAL HEALTH

(250) 832-1719 www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/mental_health/

Provides community mental health services for children under 19 years of age. They offer a multi-disciplinary approach to community service with the objective being to help families with children who are experiencing mental health difficulties. Services may be direct and indirect through contracts, consultation to individuals, families, agencies and the general public.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION: SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES MANUAL

The purpose of this manual is to provide a single point of reference regarding legislation, ministry policy and guidelines to assist Boards of Education in developing programs and services that enable students with special needs to meet their educational goals.

[Special Education Services: A Manual of Policies, Procedures and Guidelines.](#)

MUSCULAR DYSTROPHY CANADA

604.732.8799 www.muscle.ca

Muscular Dystrophy Canada’s mission is to enhance the lives of those affected with neuromuscular disorders by continually working to provide ongoing support and resources while relentlessly searching for a cure through well-funded research.

NORTH OKANAGAN NEUROLOGICAL ASSOCIATION (NONA)

(250) 549-1281 www.nona-cdc.com

Also known as the NONA Child Development Center. NONA offers autism services, infant development, family support, key workers, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, speech language therapy and supported child development for children ages birth to 6 yrs.

A PARENT’S HANDBOOK: YOUR GUIDE TO AUTISM PROGRAMS (MCFD)

SERVICES TO ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES (STADD)

1-855-356-5609

<https://www.communitylivingbc.ca/what-support-is-available/preparing-access-clbc-supports/services-to-adults-with-developmental-disabilities-stadd/>

Services to Adults with Developmental Disabilities (STADD) offers Navigator services for transitioning youth and their families in 145 communities across B.C. Navigators act as the primary point of contact for individuals in coordinating transition planning and access to supports and services through the transition period of 16-24 years old. Navigators help organize a youth’s transition planning team and develop a person-centered transition plan. STADD encourages and supports information-sharing between government and community resources, and leads the coordination of all involved. Once your child is deemed eligible for CLBC-services, you can request the services of a STADD Navigator or contact 1-855-356-5609 to self-refer.

SHUSWAP CHILDREN’S ASSOCIATION

(250) 833-0164 www.shuswapchildrens.ca

Shuswap Children’s Association supports children and their families to play, grow, and thrive. Through a family-centered approach and highly trained staff, the Shuswap Children’s Association provides a number of programs to support children with developmental delays, FASD, ASD, and helps with referrals to a variety of other community supports and services.

SHUSWAP FAMILY CENTRE

(250) 832-2170 <http://familyresource.bc.ca/>

Supports children and youth, individuals and families and provides referrals and connections for services in our community and area.