Infant Development and Supported Child Development Program
Policy Revisions:

Frequently Asked Questions

Why were the programs' policies revised?
The update of IDP and SCDP policy was a commitment under the 2012/13 Operational and Strategic Directional Plan. The policy revisions are the result of significant collaboration between IDP and SCDP coordinators and consultants and the CYSN Policy team.

The SCDP policy was a priority for review as it was released as a "working draft" in 2005 for the then-new program. There was explicit intention to update the policy once the program had been operational for a few years. The IDP policy and procedures manual was last updated in March 2004 and included policies and procedures that are more properly the responsibility of the employing agency, such as hiring procedures, orientation for staff, etc.

What is different in the IDP policy?
The 2004 IDP policies and procedures manual included extensive procedures that are more appropriately the responsibility of the contracted agency. Exclusion of such procedures and a concise approach to standards reduced the manual from 288 pages to 22 pages.
With the following exceptions, there are no substantial additions to IDP policy which will affect practice:
- o New minimum standards for developmental screening and assessment instruments are included in both SCDP and IDP policies.
- o There is a greater requirement for collaborative and culturally safe working relationships with Aboriginal service providers.
- o Minimum and preferred qualifications for employment are defined.

What is different in the SCD policy?
Best practices informed the revision of the SCDP policy and the development of standards, with an aim towards greater clarity and consistency. There is a greater focus on providing culturally appropriate services for Aboriginal children and families. Additionally, a number of "grey areas" have been clarified and there is greater emphasis on the full range of services provided by SCD programs, with extra staffing supports as only one component of the available services. Please see the table attached to this document.

What about policy for ASCD?
ASCD consultants participated extensively in the development of the SCD program policy in order to ensure that the importance of culturally safe and appropriate services is embedded in SCD policy. ASCD programs may use the SCD policy as a reference for their practice.

Why are there new standards for screening and assessment?
As you may be aware, the Ministry of Children and Family Development recently completed a literature and cross-jurisdictional review in order to ensure that IDP and SCD policies are evidence-based and supported by research. This review identified the need to establish consistent minimum standards for developmental assessment and screening tools in order to ensure accurate, reliable and effective assessments. Those standards have been developed with the support of an Advisory Table, which also recommended a number of tools for use in BC.

What instruments were recommended by the Advisory Table?
The following instruments are recommended for use in BC. Some of these tools are already in use by many programs here in BC.

- Developmental Screening:
    - Ages and Stages Questionnaire (ASQ)
    - Ages and Stages Questionnaire – Social-Emotional (ASQ-SE)

- Criterion-Referenced:
    - Assessment, Evaluation and Programming System (AEPS)

- Developmental Assessment:
    - Battelle Developmental Inventory (BDI)
    - Developmental Assessment of Young Children (DAYC)
    - Brigance Inventory of Early Development

The three recommended developmental assessment instruments will be tested for practicality and utility in IDP, AIDP, SCD, ASCD programs in the province.

Will my program have flexibility in terms of which tool I use?
As family-centred and child-focussed practitioners, a range of tools and approaches is needed to effectively meet families' needs. The standards set forth the minimum criteria for screening and assessment instruments. While the Advisory Table recommended the tools noted above, others may be used as long as they meet the standards. Additionally, programs may find that some developmental assessment tools are more practical than others and this may influence the availability of training and related resources.

How will we get trained in new assessment tools?
A working group has been formed to further explore the available instruments and consider how to best introduce them to practitioners throughout the province. Some programs in the Lower Mainland and Interior will be participating in this early implementation process. This will inform the planning for training and further implementation.

How do the new standards for assessment affect our practice?
The new standards for screening and assessment tools <u>do not</u> mean that all or most children should be formally tested. The new standards are not intended to change practice in relation to making a decision whether or not a child should be formally tested. Rather, the new standards ensure that practitioners are using evidence-based and research supported tools should they decide that a formal assessment is needed.

Are we allowed to continue using the Gesell?
The Gesell does not meet the minimum standards. We are working with the Regional Advisors and programs to develop a training framework that is sustainable and practical. In the meantime, please continue to use the screening and assessment tools for which you have been trained.

Will Gesell training continue to be available until we are ready to use a new tool?
Funds for training and professional development are managed at the Service Delivery Area (SDA) level. The Regional Advisors and MCFD staff work together to make decisions about training that is offered. This may include Gesell training if that is seen to be a priority within the overall local plan for training and professional development. However, please note that the Gesell will be phased out over time.

Will there be money for programs to be trained on any new instruments?
Funds for training and professional development will be maintained at their current level. Each SDA will continue to make decisions about priorities for utilizing this funding.

Overview of Changes to SCD Program Policy:

Policy Section	Changes to Standards
Eligibility The Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) will provide the Supported Child Development program to eligible children through contractual arrangements between MCFD regions and community agencies.	Added: "Recognizing that Aboriginal children and families are best served by Aboriginal Supported Child Development programs (ASCD), the SCD has a protocol or other formal agreement in place with ASCD, in communities where the program exists, to ensure that referrals for Aboriginal children are directed to ASCD in a timely manner." Rationale: - Recognizes the importance of culturally appropriate and safe services for Aboriginal families - Supports building capacity for Aboriginal SCD programs
SCD Services Agencies contracted to deliver the SCD program will provide a range of supports to meet the individual needs of each child served.	Added: - Specific criteria and standards for screening and developmental assessment tools. - Purposes of screening or assessment - Updated descriptions of the types and levels of services that may be provided to child care providers, replacing the "Ranges" - Additional specific criteria for in-own-home services - Community training as a specific SCD service - Updated language on coordinating with Nursing Support Services - More specific language on the interface with schools, i.e. children not attending school, and delayed kindergarten entry Rationale: - Support best practices in screening and assessment - Place greater emphasis on the range of services available, with less focus on long-term extra staffing supports. - Promote inclusive child care - Consolidate references throughout the old manual to community training. - Provide greater consistency

Policy Section	Changes to Standards
Services for Aboriginal Children Agencies contracted to deliver the SCD program will use a cultural safety approach when providing services for Aboriginal children and their families.	Added: • Cultural safety framework • Holistic approach • Building capacity in ASCD is a shared responsibility Rationale: • Updates standards and guidelines based on emerging understanding of cultural safety • Recognizes the growth in ASCD since 2005
Determining Priority for Service Agencies contracted to deliver the SCD program will determine priorities for resource allocation when funding is not available to fulfil the request for services at the time that the request is received. The agency will maintain a waitlist to track unmet service requests and to inform the determination of which individual(s) will receive services when resources become available.	Added: • "Determining priority for service" rather than "waitlist." • Clarified and simplified language Rationale: • Provides greater consistency • Greater alignment with the ministry's approach to determining priorities for service.
Transitions Agencies contracted to deliver the SCD program provides support to eligible children through key transition points.	Added: • Additional clarity with regards to time frames and responsibilities for transitions. Rationale: • Greater clarity of expectations to improve transition planning.
Staffing Qualifications Agencies contracted to deliver the Supported Child Development program will ensure that program staff have the skills, knowledge, and experience to deliver the program effectively and in accordance with the program's intent, principles, and goals.	Removed: • Detailed job descriptions Rationale: • Job descriptions fall under the responsibility of the contracting agency.
Administrative Agencies contracted to deliver the Supported Child Development program will perform a range of administrative duties to ensure effective program	Added: • Requirements for a financial management plan; transparent and consistent process for managing complaints and appeals; a quality assurance framework; and, protocol agreements with key partners.

Policy Section	Changes to Standards
management, integrity, and accountability.	Rationale: • Provide clearer expectations for the administration of the program and resources.
Local Advisory Committee The organization establishes and maintains a Local Advisory Committee for the Supported Child Development program that includes parents and other community partners.	Removed: • Detailed requirements as to the composition and procedures of the Local Advisory Committee. Rationale: • Allows LAC to be more responsive to local communities.