



# **Child Development Centre**

June 13, 2023



**Annual General Report  
2023**

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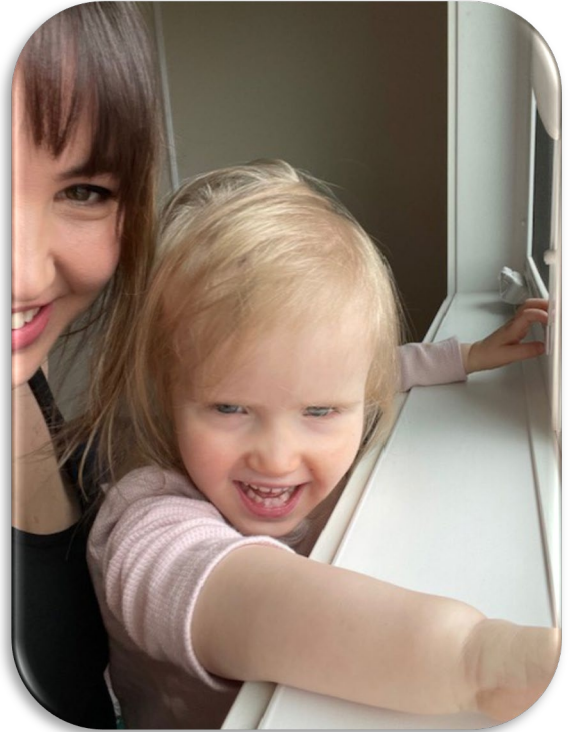
## **Our work is about children and their families.**

### **This is one family's story.**

We have been seeing the CDC therapists in some capacity since our daughter was 6 months old. We knew that something was different developmentally with our daughter but had no diagnosis at the time.

Every single person we have worked with at the Child Development Centre has been amazing. Shout out to our CDC team! When we couldn't get to the centre they came and saw Elo at our house. When we received her diagnosis, they took the time to learn about it and what specific things would help her grow and thrive. Eloise is now 3 years old and she is so close to walking, has new ways to communicate and has gained so much confidence. She has worked so hard and the supports we have received have helped her so much. We are so grateful for the kind, supportive, and knowledgeable staff at CDC. We know that when our daughter achieves a new goal or milestone they are right there cheering with us!

Getting a diagnosis was terrifying and very overwhelming. Our team at the CDC has been there every step of the way and helped us navigate this new world to get our daughter the absolute best supports available.



## **Our work**

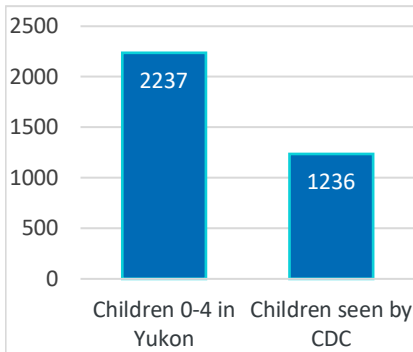
The Child Development Centre has been providing therapeutic services to children and their families since 1979 and our commitment to children and families in the territory is clear. We provided services to **1236** children this year and continue to partner with families, service providers and funders to deliver a quality service. Therapies include psychology, speech-language pathology, physiotherapy, occupational therapy and developmental/play therapy. Services are supplemented by the support of early childhood therapy assistants and a speech therapy assistant. We see children at the Centre, homes, childcare centres and in the community – wherever suits families best. Our Early Learning Program Support team continued to provide support to licensed early learning centres around environment, group dynamics, social-emotional development and supported childcare.

*"The services are judgement free, adapted to my child's needs and development to optimize his happiness and success."* Parent

# Our programs

## Data

Total children served August to June 2022.  
Yukon stats to December 2021.



73% of children seen in Whitehorse.

27% of children seen in communities.

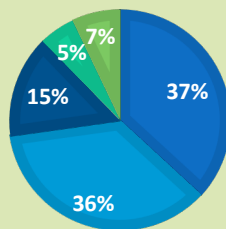
25% of all children receiving services identified as Indigenous.

### Comments from caregivers

- "Flexible and knowledgeable staff."
- "I like how respectful, patient and gentle all the therapists are...they never make her feel less than the amazing little girl she is."
- "The services meet my family and child where they are at and help us achieve our goals."

### CHILDREN WAITING FOR SERVICES IN WHITEHORSE

■ SLP 42 ■ DT 41 ■ OT 17  
■ PT 6 ■ PSYCH 8



- There are 104 children waiting for 114 services.
- Despite increased referrals, waitlists as of May have decreased compared to last year by 26% with the addition of therapists servicing Indigenous children and new processes.
- Therapists provided call backs for 56% of children not receiving services within 3 months. Will target next year.



### New referrals

We had 470 new referrals

- 1<sup>st</sup> phone calls and 1<sup>st</sup> visits offered during summer.
- 17.7% increase in referrals.
- Parents were largest source of new referrals, followed by health centres and doctors
- There were 24 new referrals for feeding, need for this service continues to grow.

### Performance Measures

- 98% of children achieved or partially achieved their goals.
- 88% of families said they learned something from therapists they can use at home with their child.
- 86% said their child is getting what they need from our services vs 70% last year.
- 93% of families were offered a first visit with a therapist within 35 days of referral.
- 99% of ECEs learned something from professional development sessions they could use in their work.
- 100% of ECE's goals rated with the ELPS team were achieved.

### Some of our community partners

Community health centres - First Nation governments – Yukon Government – Council of Yukon First Nations – Family Resource Unit – Child care centres – Partners for Children – Learning Disabilities Association of the Yukon – Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Programs – Early Learning and Child Care Unit – Health Canada – Yukon Education – Family and Children Services – Child and Adolescent Therapeutic Services – Children's Disability Services  
Yukon First Nation Education Directorate – Autism Yukon

## Services in rural communities

- Teams made **81** visits to **14** communities this year.
- We provided services to **367** children.
- We had six early childhood therapy assistants (ECTA) working in the communities providing support to children in between the team's visits. Five of the ECTAs provided support to children attending early kindergarten.
- We supported **19** children transitioning to kindergarten, with recommendations for **11** conferences with Education.
- Teams connected with First Nations and community agencies. Therapists attended community events and fairs, CPNP lunches and hosted parent learning groups such as Handle with Care.



## Services in Whitehorse

- We provided services to **987** children residing in Whitehorse.
- **39** children attended one or more sessions through the Therapeutic Preschool. Some of the sessions included a focus on augmentative and alternative communication, social communication, language, play, self-advocacy and kindergarten readiness.
- We support **52** children transitioning to kindergarten with recommendations for **31** conferences with Education.
- Pediatric clinics were held over **14** days with **53** children being seen.
- **234** children were seen for developmental checks in our Follow Along program.
- It Takes Two to Talk (a Hanen program to encourage early language skills) was offered to parents. We also co-facilitated Mother Goose with a focus on early language.
- We coordinated three parent drop-ins for families and children with a focus on Autism, medical complexities and prematurity.
- Staff collaborated with many agencies and participated in group meetings.

### Services for Indigenous children in Whitehorse

- We saw **213** children through Our Kwanlin Dün and Whitehorse programs.
- **41** of these children were seen through our Follow Along program
- We added **5.4** positions.
- We were able to see children in a timely manner.
- The team connected partnered with many agencies targeting parent and child connections.

## Diagnostic Services

- The preschool team completed **17** diagnostic assessments: **11** ASD, **4** ASD/Complex Behaviour and **2** complex behaviour. This represents seven additional assessments completed this year.
- There are currently **31** children on file waiting for a diagnostic assessment; two for FASD assessments and **29** for ASD assessments. All children continued to receive services while waiting.
- The diagnostic coordinator collaborated with a number of agencies and represented CDC at meetings such as the Alcohol and Consumption meeting with the Chief Medical Officer of Health, Inter-agency meetings, and Student Support Services.
- We hosted a joint advisory committee meeting for the diagnostics clinics in the territory.



## Early Learning Program Supports (ELPS)

- The team provided **308** visits to early learning centres in Whitehorse.
- They made **21** visits to centres in the rural communities and provided support to 65 ECEs.
- The team collaborated to create goals for individuals and provided follow-up support in the areas of behaviour guidance, sensory and movement, language, and programming. Three centres requested support for the physical environment.
- Parts of Handle with Care were used with **14** different programs.
- A total of **13** PD sessions were offered with 120 participants.
- The ELPS team is providing more specific assistance to supported childcare educators around goals and inclusion.



*"I've learned a lot tonight. Simple strategies that I can really apply on how I can communicate better with my toddlers."* ECE regarding PD session

*"There was a positive change in classroom environment. Our little girl is more consistent and able to communicate with her teacher and her peers."* Program Director

## Highlights

**Structural Renewal:** We successfully completed Phase 1 of our implementation plan by increasing administrative supports, ELPS staff and creating another team servicing Indigenous children in Whitehorse. We have also planned for phase two and are in the process of hiring for family partners; a new role that will provide key connections for families.

**Partnership with Education:** We received an increase to our transfer payment agreement which supports our programs, structural renewal plan and a new building. We continue to work closely to support early kindergarten, early learning centres and children moving into kindergarten.

**Our Building:** After another move to a temporary space we will be moving into our new space this summer. Our new building has more dedicated therapy spaces and is accessible.

**Jordan's Principle:** We received another year of funding to support therapeutic services for Indigenous children in Whitehorse and Kwanlin Dün. Our team expanded to include more therapists and we will have two family partners starting on this team in the fall.

**Collective Agreement:** We successfully negotiated another three-year agreement and will be working with our funders to support the changes that were agreed upon during this process.

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## Looking ahead

The Child Development Centre successfully completed the first phase of our structural renewal plan and we are looking forward to implementing phase 2. The implementation of this plan will positively affect families and early learning centres across the territory as well as the staff providing services. We saw a decrease in children waiting for services this year and believe the addition of 5 family partners in Phase 2 will only have a positive impact on accessing services in a timely manner. We have secured additional funding from Jordan's Principle and the Department of Education to support this implementation plan. This next year we will be working on plans for our final phase and will continue to work with funding sources to see this come to fruition.

We are excited to move into a permanent space at 206 Hanson Street in Whitehorse this summer and are thankful to the Yukon Government and Department of Education for their support and for the funding to make this possible. Being in one location will strengthen our efforts to work collaboratively as a team and with partner agencies to offer accessible and quality services to children and families throughout the territory.

We will be preparing for changes to the funding model for the Canadian Action Plan for Children (a funding program through the Public Health Agency of Canada). We believe the projects currently funded through this program will merit continued support.

The leadership team will continue to work with staff on caseload management guidelines and ways to decrease the administrative tasks for therapists.

We will continue to partner with The Early Learning and Childcare Unit in the Department of Education to support inclusion and specifically the supported childcare program.

## In conclusion

We are coming to the end of a challenging journey - working during a pandemic, being housed in different locations and facing disruptions stemming from multiple building moves. We are looking forward to the next chapter with a renewed sense of excitement and determination. The focus can now lay where it should be; on children and families.

I have been working at the Child Development for 30 years now. There have been many changes along the way and services have grown. But what has not changed is the dedication of the staff and board. I have spent the last year reflecting on both the challenges and achievements of this organization and at the core are these two groups of people. Challenges would not be overcome without perseverance and resiliency. Achievements would not be possible without creativity, caring and passion. This is CDC.

I am grateful for the staff that work here and in closing I want to acknowledge the long service of Tammy Reis and Anna Whyard who have both been at the Center for 10 years.

Respectfully submitted by Alayne Squair, Executive Director