

- Canada agreed to follow the [UN Convention on the Rights of the Child](#) (1991), which says **children with disabilities have the right to healthcare, education, and supports** to help them achieve the fullest possible lives.
- [Jordan's Principle](#) was developed in 2016, to make sure **First Nations children** can access the supports and services they need, when they need them.
- In 2025, the BC Representative for Children and Youth reported that **81% of families struggle** to navigate the disability service system.

Key Challenges

- The government has been updating the Children and Youth with Support Needs service delivery framework for the past 8 years. This delay is harmful to the lives of many children and youth who are **waiting for supports**.
- **Underfunding and a lack of coordination** in government services has led to:
 - Long wait times,
 - A patchwork of inadequate supports and services,
 - Preventable tragedies, and
 - Difficulties for families, especially when transitioning to adult services.
- Some **supports and services are based on diagnosis rather need**. In addition to this problematic approach to support, there are currently over 10,000 children waitlisted for diagnostic assessment programs in BC.

How to Make People's Lives Better

Ensure Access to Supports and Services

- Create a **Provincial Disability Strategy** with steps including:
 - Prioritize cultural safety.
 - Ensure collaboration and coordination among government-funded supports and services.
 - Provide access to fair and timely assessments, therapies, and supports.
 - Develop a well-supported process for the transition to adult services.
- Provide enough **flexible funding to community-based organizations** to meet the needs of children and youth with disabilities at the local level.

Focus on Inclusion

- Define and adopt a **shared understanding of inclusion** across ministries using the *UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities*.

Position Statement: Access to Supports and Services for Children and Youth with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

[Plain Language Version](#)