



May 8, 2020

Ref: 248913

Dear Ministry and Community Partners:

Re: Ministry of Children and Family Development's (MCFD) update on Child and Youth Mental Health Services during COVID-19

I want to reach out to our partners in these unprecedented times to provide an update on the delivery of Ministry of Children and Family Development's Child and Youth Mental Health (CYMH) services. The COVID-19 pandemic is impacting the mental health and wellness of children, youth and their families. It is critical that our services continue during this stressful time. Here is what is important to know.

Community Based Child and Youth Mental Health Teams

CYMH community teams across the province are now offering services via telephone or virtual care. Most CYMH offices remain open to offer walk-in counselling. However, clients are encouraged to access virtual counselling. CYMH is still accepting new clients. Our public facing webpage recommends that clients call the [closest CYMH clinic](#) rather than attending in-person. It is the easiest way to find out how to access services. In an effort to ensure the public is well-informed about how to get mental health support, we have posted the following information on-line:

- gov.bc.ca/ChildYouthMentalHealthCOVIDSupports
- gov.bc.ca/ChildYouthMentalHealthCOVIDResources

School Mental Health Team

Our school mental health team is continuing to support district educators around the province. Our *Everyday Anxiety Strategies for Educators* (EASE) is available for teachers to use within their virtual classrooms. Our team has also adapted these resources to create *EASE at Home*, for grades K-3 and grades 4-7. Each resource package contains five sets of daily activities for parents/caregivers to help children manage their worries and anxieties. Click on [EASE at Home](#) to access the resources.

Youth Forensic Psychiatric Services (YFPS)

Ministry staff at Youth Forensic Psychiatric Services will continue to assess the need for in-person, telephone or video appointments through their eight outpatient clinics. YFPS has restricted public access to buildings at the in-patient assessment unit in Burnaby. More information can be found [here](#).

The Maples Adolescent Treatment Centre (The Maples)

The Maples Adolescent Treatment Centre has restricted access to the 24/7 secured buildings in order to limit the risk of exposure to our youth and staff. In-person visits have been temporarily suspended (with exceptions) and replaced with increased phone and video contact where applicable.

I encourage you to share the information and links contained in this letter with colleagues, as well as with families who may need mental health support.

COVID-19 is a worldwide pandemic that affects us all. You are a valued partner and our Ministry appreciates all you do to keep children, youth and families well. We will get through this together.

Sincerely,



Teresa Dobmeier
Assistance Deputy Ministry
Service Delivery Division



Cheryl May
Assistant Deputy Minister
Policy and Legislation Division