

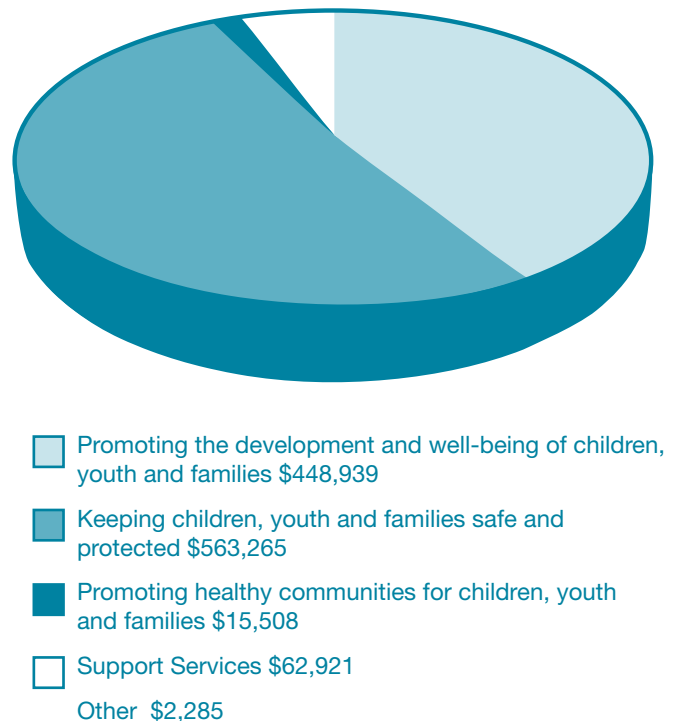
Alberta Children and Youth Services Highlights 2008-09

In 2008-09, the ministry invested approximately \$1.1 billion to promote the development and well-being of children, youth and families, keep them safe and protected and promote healthy communities.

Key Accomplishments:

- Worked to address the impact of crime on communities and find solutions, as part of Alberta's Safe Communities Initiative - a partnership of nine government ministries, law enforcement, community groups, municipalities, businesses and social agencies.
- Expanded supports for Aboriginal peoples and immigrants affected by family violence:
 - provided culturally sensitive training to frontline responders (social workers, police, and women's shelter staff) about how to help children exposed to family violence;
 - developed six victim-supports and outreach projects, specifically to help Aboriginal people and immigrant children; and
 - translated education and awareness resources into various languages.
- Provided funding for 79 more beds in women's emergency shelters across Alberta, to help women and their children affected by family violence.
- Launched Creating Child Care Choices - a comprehensive three-year plan to create 14,000 new child care spaces by 2011. In year one, the ministry:
 - supported the creation of 8,254 new spaces;
 - expanded the child care subsidy for low and middle-income families with children in Grades 1 to 6;
 - increased the preschool child care subsidy by 3.5 per cent and boosted the preschool kin child care subsidy by 26 per cent; and
 - provided employment incentives to child care professionals through wage top-ups, the Child Care Bursary, scholarships and enhanced child care equivalencies. Alberta has 445 more child care professionals working in the field than in 2007-08.

2008-09 Expenses* (in thousands)



* Excludes \$1,155 in inventory and equipment purchases

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Key Accomplishments

(continued from previous page):

- Introduced a new Child Care Licensing Regulation, increased Quality Funding Grants to child care programs participating in accreditation and developed an accreditation model for school-age child care programs to enhance safety and a high standard of care for children.
- Worked successfully with community partners to find permanent, loving homes for 550 children and youth in care through adoption and private guardianship - exceeding the ministry target for the year.
- Launched a provincial recruitment campaign to attract new foster parents and Aboriginal caregivers, which resulted in 239 new foster homes and 159 new kinship care homes.
- Celebrated the province-wide implementation of the Casework Practice Model — a new way of working with families that better supports staff to intervene early and prevent a crisis, by thoroughly assessing a family's situation and working with families and their support networks to build on their strengths and provide a safe and nurturing environment for their children.
- Created five additional Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder service networks to provide prevention, diagnosis, assessment and life-long supports for Albertans affected by the disorder. There are now 12 networks across the province, which help individuals impacted and their families.
- Supported 493 youth (who are or have been in government care) through the Advancing Futures Bursary to cover costs and provide guidance while attending post-secondary education, learning a trade, earning a licence, upgrading high school marks or earning a diploma.
- Established the new Alberta Mentoring Partnership Leadership Team with 28 other government and community agency partners, to give children and youth new opportunities to benefit from caring role models who can make a positive and lasting difference in their lives.
- Partnered with the Alberta Hotel and Lodging Association (AHLA) to develop an awareness campaign to help educate hotel and lodging accommodation owners, operators and employees about preventing child sexual exploitation, including the signs to watch for and what to do if they see something suspicious.

