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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Children and Family Development

### **Funding empowers B.C. parents tackling child behaviour issues**

VANCOUVER – Happy kids mean happy families, and that’s why the B.C. government has provided \$1.49 million to the Canadian Mental Health Association BC Division (CMHABC) to support the ‘Confident Parents: Thriving Kids’ program, which helps parents address behavioural problems in kids aged three to 12.

Each child and family is unique; ‘Confident Parents: Thriving Kids’ is customized for each family to empower parents to be the main change agent for their children’s behaviour. The program is offered at no cost to B.C. families, and coaches are available to meet by telephone with parents during the day, and on evenings and weekends to accommodate each family’s busy schedule.

More than 1,000 B.C. families accessed the program last year, with encouraging results. Parents noted improvements in their child’s behaviour, including increased cooperation, understanding and positive interaction with family, friends and teachers. The benefits of ‘Confident Parents: Thriving Kids’ aren’t just for kids — parents also report increased confidence in their own response to behavioural issues, as well as happier, healthier family interactions.

With the help of the provincial government, CMHA has been delivering positive parent training for families since 2011. ‘Confident Parents: Thriving Kids’ will use this new funding to reach more B.C. families in all corners of the province and ensure that they continue to have early access to supports proven to prevent, reduce and reverse moderate behavioral problems at home, school and in social settings.

Parents looking for new ways to improve their parenting skills or address behavioural issues can request a referral for ‘Confident Parents: Thriving Kids’ through their family physician or nurse practitioner.

#### **Quotes:**

#### **Stephanie Cadieux, Minister of Children and Family Development –**

“Confident parents raise strong and happy children, and the next generation of British Columbians can greatly benefit from the supportive and flexible model of the Canadian Mental Health Association’s ‘Confident Parents: Thriving Kids’ program. The program is supporting parents, one family at a time, and this investment in B.C. kids today will help create a stronger future for all British Columbians.”

#### **Terry Lake, Minister of Health –**

“We have seen strong evidence that early intervention works wonders for both children and their parents. By supporting programs that emphasize positive relationship-building, we’re

ensuring that children grow up happy and healthy, which greatly reduces the strain on the health system.”

**Bev Gutray, chief executive officer, Canadian Mental Health Association –**

“We all know that the experiences we have in childhood profoundly affect our adult lives. Left untreated, mild to moderate behaviour problems in childhood can become worse, with serious implications for adulthood. This investment by the Ministry of Children and Family Development and the Ministry of Health is an excellent example of a renewed focus on preventing mental ill-health and early intervention. If we can reach families before problems get worse, we can help improve life chances for B.C. kids today.”

**Dr. Jason Feniak, paediatrician, Cranbrook –**

“This program has had a very positive impact on the children and families that have completed it. Parents who have come in physically, mentally and emotionally drained have told me they enjoy being parents again after completing the program. I am very thankful for this program. It is one of the main tools in my toolbox when I am referred children with problem behaviours. Rather than 'fixing' the child, this program enables parents to guide their children to better behaviour.”

**Program participant, parent of a 5-year-old boy, Quesnel –**

“The program has given me positive suggestions, as well as an opportunity to respond, rather than react. I can now hope to become confident with my parenting skills. My kids notice these changes and respond really well — I don't even need to raise my voice anymore. The program has helped unite us as a family.”

**Ivy Morgan, coach, Canadian Mental Health Association BC Division –**

“I've had the pleasure of watching the program transform the lives of B.C. families. Parents see improvements within family relationships, better listening and increased follow through from their children, and a more hopeful mood for themselves while they do the 24/7 job of being a parent. Every family is different and I really love the part of my job when I can work with the strengths of a family and translate that into lasting, positive impacts.”

**Quick Facts:**

- ‘Confident Parents: Thriving Kids’ is delivered by telephone during the day, as well as evenings and weekends, to accommodate the reality of busy work and school schedules.
- Parents can be referred to the program through their family physician or nurse practitioner.
- The program is delivered in six-, 10- and 14-week modules depending on the needs of each family.
- Since the program began in 2015, there have been more than 1,585 program referrals by 408 different physicians in 78 communities throughout B.C.
- Four out of five parent participants have seen an improvement in their child's behaviour and report increased confidence in their parenting and coping skills.
- Based on a strong, evidence-based model, the program is expected to help reduce future costs to B.C.'s health care, education and the criminal justice systems through early

intervention.

**Learn More:**

To find out more about 'Confident Parents: Thriving Kids', visit: [www.cmha.bc.ca/how-we-can-help/children-families/confident-parents](http://www.cmha.bc.ca/how-we-can-help/children-families/confident-parents)

For information about mental health supports and services for B.C. children and youth, visit: <http://ow.ly/o9Hw300CVPh>

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