



March 4, 2014

From: First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition
To: Disability White Paper (via email)

In your review of existing policy and supports for people with disabilities in BC, please note this additional concern about the invisibility of children with disabilities in BC's current public policy:

The definition of persons with a disability in the Employment and Assistance for Persons with Disabilities Act does not include those who are under 18.

Current BC policy recognizes that adults with disabilities who are unable to work can qualify for a higher rate of income assistance than those who are classified as expected to work. Yet parents, especially single parents, who are raising children with disabilities are often unable to work or are under-employed as a direct result of their care-giving responsibilities for a special needs child. The additional medical and therapeutic costs for raising children with disabilities are not recognized in the income assistance rates, as they are for adults with disabilities.

Neither is there an exemption for these necessary medical or therapeutic expenses from income, when a parent receives money for them from a non-custodial parent or other third party. This is discriminatory and undermines the health and development of children with disabilities whose parents are in receipt of income assistance.

Thank you the opportunity to have input into the disability white paper and your consideration of these concerns.

Sincerely,

Adrienne Montani
Provincial Coordinator
First Call: BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition
604.873.8437
amontani@fsgv.ca
www.firstcallbc.org