

Inspiring
Healthy
Futures

A Vision for Canada's
Children, Youth and Families

2025-2027

Acceleration Agenda

Co-designing a Future Fit for Kids



Co-designing a Future Fit for Kids

Canada is at a decisive moment for children and youth. Despite Canada's relative prosperity, outcomes for young people continue to lag behind those of peer nations due to fragmented systems, uneven access to supports, and a lack of coordinated national leadership. Yet across the country, there is strong consensus on the changes required to achieve measurable, equitable improvement.

Inspiring Healthy Futures updated Acceleration Agenda outlines six national priorities that can drive meaningful progress. These priorities focus on system alignment, community strength, implementation of evidence, data modernization, and sustained leadership. Together, they reflect a shared national purpose: to build coherent, rights-based, child-centred systems in which every young person in Canada can thrive.

We are calling on leaders across sectors to:

- Align around the six national priorities and integrate them into strategic plans.
- Contribute to and adopt a shared national set of child well-being indicators.
- Participate in the national coalition to coordinate action across research, practice, policy, and community systems, including aligning research agendas with system-wide priorities.
- Use a shared communications narrative rooted in rights, equity, community strength, and economic value.
- Share innovations and build a learning ecosystem—not isolated pilots.

Canada has the knowledge, capacity, and collective will to create systems where every child and youth thrives. The Acceleration Agenda provides a clear, achievable path for the next 24–36 months. With coordinated leadership, long-term investment, and a commitment to equity and prevention, Canada can transform a fragmented landscape into a coherent system that reflects the rights, cultures, and aspirations of young people across the country.

The time to act—decisively and together—is now.

1. Build an Integrated Child and Youth Data and Evidence System

Canada cannot improve what it cannot see. Current data systems are fragmented, inconsistent, and insufficient for coordinated research and action. A modernized, integrated data ecosystem must provide comparable indicators across jurisdictions, real-time insights for communities, and governance that honours Indigenous data sovereignty.

What this makes possible:

- Better understanding of inequities
- Shared accountability across governments
- Faster responsiveness to emerging needs
- Evidence-informed investments and policy based on the latest research

What leaders can do:

- Commit to shared national indicators
- Modernize data platforms and interoperability for research and action
- Invest in organizational data capacity
- Support distinctions-based Indigenous data governance

2. Integrate Knowing, Learning, and Action

Canada has a strong and growing evidence base on what works for children and youth; the challenge is implementing and scaling it. Too often, innovations remain isolated pilots. Successful implementation requires cross-sector research that is deeply integrated into implementation, evaluation, and scaling.

What this makes possible:

- Moving proven models into routine practice
- Reducing duplication and fragmentation
- Strengthening quality and consistency across regions

What leaders can do:

- Establish long-term funding streams for research and implementation
- Support shared learning collaboratives
- Embed implementation science across organizations
- Align research priorities with system needs

3. Establish a Compelling Economic and Social Case for Investing in Children

Investments in children generate high returns across the lifespan, but preventive supports remain chronically underfunded. A unified economic narrative, grounded in rigorous research, is needed to influence budget decisions and long-term planning across jurisdictions.

What this makes possible:

- Sustained investment in early prevention
- Stronger alignment between fiscal planning and child well-being
- Public understanding of the costs of inaction

What leaders can do:

- Leverage modelling on ROI of child- and youth-focused investments
- Use economic framing in public and political communication
- Align research and advocacy efforts around a common narrative

4. Strengthen Capacity and Expand Access to Whole-Community Supports

Community is the primary determinant of well-being. Cultural, identity-based, and grassroots organizations provide connection, belonging, mentorship, and continuity. Yet they operate with short-term, precarious funding and limited infrastructure.

What this makes possible:

- Stronger prevention, resilience, and belonging
- Earlier intervention before challenges escalate
- Supports that reflect diverse identities, cultures, and environments

What leaders can do:

- Increase long-term, stable funding to community organizations
- Strengthen school–community partnerships
- Expand community hubs and navigation
- Recognize community-led approaches as essential services

5. Build Child-Centred Systems and Improve Transitions

Systems too often reflect institutional needs rather than developmental realities of childhood. Transitions—between child/youth and adult care, between systems, between life stages—are especially fraught.

What this makes possible:

- Reduced service gaps and crises
- More accessible, equitable, and developmentally aligned supports
- Systems that reflect children's rights and lived experience

What leaders can do:

- Redesign pathways around children's developmental journeys
- Embed youth- and family-centred principles in all policies
- Strengthen transitions across systems, stages, and jurisdictions
- Ensure services reflect cultural, disability-inclusive, and community realities

6. Increase Leadership and Coordination for a National Child and Youth Agenda

Transforming fragmented systems requires coherent national leadership. A cross-sector, multi-jurisdiction coalition can align priorities, measure progress, and sustain momentum across electoral cycles.

What this makes possible:

- Shared vision and unified national priorities
- Coordinated advocacy and public voice
- Clear accountability for results

What leaders can do:

- Endorse and help build a national coalition structure
- Align organizational strategies with shared national priorities
- Participate in shared measurement and agenda-setting
- Support coordinated action across sectors and systems.