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## FOR THE RECORD

Ministry of Social Development

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### **Province supports young adults with disabilities**

Advocates are saying youth with developmental disabilities transitioning to adulthood are not getting supports from the Province. These are the facts on the range of supports for these young people:

- Young adults with developmental disabilities, like others in British Columbia with disabilities, can apply for and receive supports from the disability assistance program at the Ministry of Social Development.
- Disability assistance may include:
  - Monthly support and shelter assistance of up to \$906 a month, with a \$500 earnings exemption.
  - A low-cost annual bus pass through the BC Bus Pass program of \$45 each year.
  - Medical coverage, which includes Medical Services Plan and PharmaCare coverage with no deductible, as well as other health supplements such as dental and optical coverage
- These supports are independent of services through CLBC and are available from the time the young adult turns 18. Families can apply for these services six months before the young adult turns 18.
- The ministry also offers an employment program for persons with disabilities, which offers specialized services to help people with disabilities participate in their communities, pursue their employment goals as they are able, increase their self-reliance and build skills and experience that may lead to further employment.
- Families can also set up trusts and Registered Disability Savings Plans for their adult children, which can provide considerable benefits over the person's lifetime.
- People with developmental disabilities may also be eligible for benefits through the tax system, including the HST and GST credits and the Disability Tax Credit.

### **Transition Planning With CLBC**

- CLBC works in collaboration with youth and their families and other government organizations and ministries to support youth transitioning to adulthood.

- The Ministry of Children and Family Development and CLBC begin transition planning with families as early as the young person's 15th birthday and works with the youth, families and care providers to plan for adult transition.
- Once a young person is eligible for services, CLBC tells him or her and the family about next steps and the expected timeframe for further planning and service. Young people and families with the greatest urgency, such as those with health and safety issues, are given the highest priority for service.
- In all cases disability assistance is provided to eligible young people with a disability by the Ministry of Social Development as outlined above.
- Last year, CLBC provided services to an additional 766 people new to the agency and provided more services to 1,000 existing clients.
- As of March 31, 2011, 13,481 eligible individuals with developmental disabilities are registered for services with CLBC. This represents a six-per-cent increase over last year and a 35-per-cent increase over the last five years.
- The Province has invested a total of more than \$3.5 billion into CLBC since 2005.
- Government remains committed to fostering the growth of inclusive, supportive communities while supporting individuals with developmental disabilities to increase their independence and participation in community activities.

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