

National Invitational Symposium on Child and Youth Mental Health  
September 17 and 18, 2007

Lessons in Establishing Policy Frameworks

## ***POSITIVE FUTURES***

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Optimizing Mental Health for Alberta's  
Children and Youth:  
A Framework for Action (2006-2016)

### LESSONS IN ESTABLISHING POLICY FRAMEWORKS

#### ***Positive Futures***

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- Released by the Minister of Health and Wellness on September 11, 2006
- 10 year strategy to support a common and integrated approach to optimize the mental health of children and youth aged 0-24 and their families
- Aligns with the *Provincial Mental Health Plan for Alberta*
- Adapted from the draft *Policy Framework: Mental Health for Alberta's Children and Youth* developed in 2001 by the cross-ministerial Children's Mental Health Framework Steering Committee made up of nine ministries and the Alberta Mental Health Board

LESSONS IN ESTABLISHING POLICY FRAMEWORKS

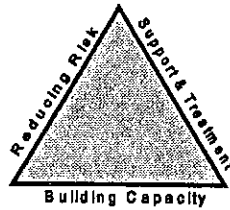
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VISION:

"Alberta's children and youth will have optimal mental health"

- Building capacity to enhance/increase factors that promote mental health and well-being
- Removing or reducing risks to well-being and mental health
- Providing support and treatment to children, youth and their families



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PRINCIPLES

- The mental health of children and youth will be positively impacted in environments where they are safe, well nourished, stimulated, loved and have opportunities to learn and play.
- Respect for autonomy, dignity, culture, spirituality, and diversity of all children, youth and their families will be demonstrated.
- Programs and services specifically designed for children and youth to optimize their mental health will be available.
- Services will be available, accessible and reflect community requirements.
- Optimal mental health for children and youth will be achieved through effective collaborative action based on common goals.
- Children, youth and their families will have opportunities to influence the processes that impact their mental health.

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**Participating Ministries and Organizations**

**Positive Futures Implementation Planning Task Group (PFTG)**

- Ministry of Health and Wellness including the Alberta Mental Health Board and Alberta Alcohol and Drug Abuse Commission
- Ministry of Children's Services
- Ministry of Education
- Solicitor General and Ministry of Public Security
- Ministry of International, Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Relations
- Ministry of Seniors and Community Supports
- Ministry of Justice and Attorney General
- Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing
- Ministry of Employment, Immigration and Industry

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Document Review – service trends, policy statements

Literature Review – provincial, national and international strategies and promising practices in delivery of children's mental health services

Program and Services Inventory – regional and provincial levels

PFTG Expertise

**Generated Options for Goals and Key Strategies**

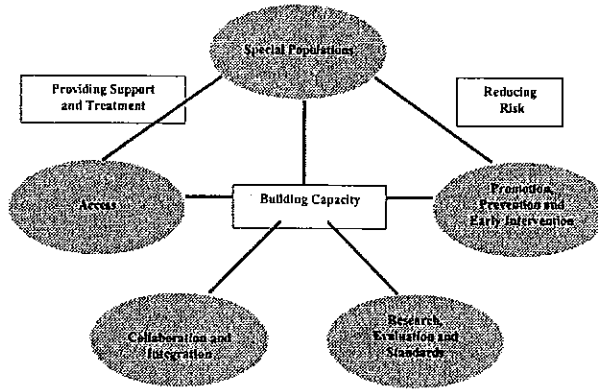
Stakeholder Engagement Process

- > Confirm goals
- > Identify any missing elements
- > Review and provide input into key strategies and potential significant actions for each goal

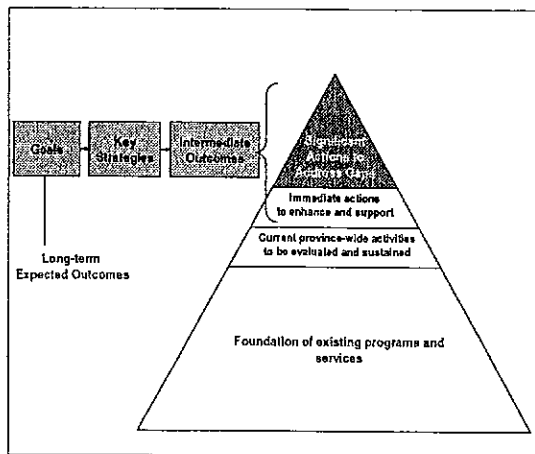
Sub-task Groups (PFTG and Ad-hoc)

Develop each goal in detail with key strategies, outcomes, significant actions and lead roles

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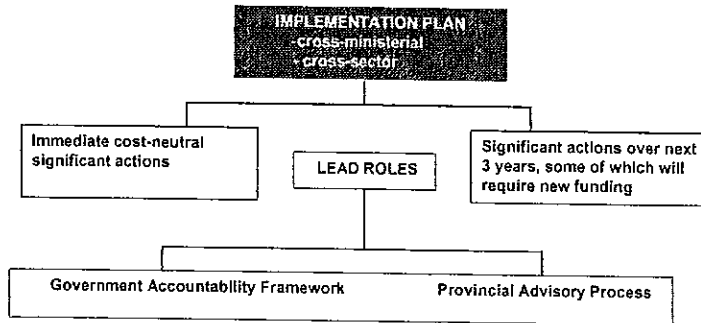


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PROCESS FOR IMPLEMENTATION



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MAJOR CHALLENGES

- > Scope (impact of health determinants and protective factors)
- > Downstream vs Upstream
- > Harmonizing the various ministries' priorities
- > Collaboration vs integration
- > Mandated collaboration
- > Funding / re-engineering (eg, coordinated intake)
- > Government funding cycles
- > Program inventory data

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LESSONS LEARNED

- > Children's mental health "is" everyone's business
- > Provincial program inventories are costly and difficult to establish with accuracy
- > Collaboration requires support and integration requires commitment
- > Perception that clinicians prioritize treatment over promotion and prevention is inaccurate – widespread support for upstream strategies
- > Lessons still to be learned with challenges of implementation