

# FSCD TALKING POINTS

## *Explaining the issue to a decision-maker*

*We have provided a loose outline with key points that you can use at your meetings. We suggest that you personalize your approach and begin with a brief version of your family's story and the positive impact FSCD has had or could have on your lives.*

- The Family Support for Children with Disabilities (FSCD) program has become unresponsive and bureaucratic and is failing to provide children with disabilities and their families with timely access to adequate support.
- Province-wide, families are struggling, feeling abandoned, and growing increasingly desperate due to long wait times.
- FSCD was created in 2003 to empower parents and strengthen the family's ability to promote their child's healthy development and participation in society, and to prevent families from going into crisis and children from going into government care.
- Reimbursements and services provided by FSCD are for the extraordinary costs and services required because of the child's disability, not for typical parental responsibilities.
- If and when it can be accessed, FSCD provides critical and life-changing supports to enable families of children with disabilities to sustain themselves, and for them and their children to participate and contribute to our communities.
- 746 families responded to Inclusion Alberta's survey and described many challenges accessing FSCD. They reported having waited up to three years before gaining access to the full range of FSCD services.
- It has been three years since government released information and data on FSCD. Government will not share how many new FSCD agreements have been entered into on a yearly basis and how long families are waiting to have caseworkers assigned or agreements processed. When families ask how long they should expect to wait, they are told no timelines can be provided. Wait times in Health Care are available, why not in FSCD?
- Families are left in a state of flux, unable to plan how to meet their child's needs as they have no idea how many months or years until they reach the front of the queue. Inclusion Alberta estimates families are waiting three years after applying before accessing the full range of services that FSCD was created to provide.
- Without the support they need, families experience negative impacts such as parents losing their jobs because their child has no support to attend childcare, financial hardship, children missing developmental opportunities during critical

early years, and escalating physical and mental health challenges for all members of the family.

- Failing to provide access to developmental supports in critical early years means more costly supports will be required later in childhood and adulthood, including in the education system, healthcare system, mental health care system, and adult disability-related supports.
- Families need the government to reduce wait times by increasing FSCD funding and to address gaps in FSCD services for rural and Indigenous families.