



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

# Aboriginal Head Start On-Reserve (AHSOR) Program Expansion

### WHAT IS THE AHSOR PROGRAM EXPANSION?

The First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) has secured \$10.5M of funding from the province of BC to invest in the expansion of community-driven AHSOR programming. This funding will provide for more children to receive early childhood education and includes capital and program costs to be distributed over the next two years to support new and expanded programming.

The FNHA currently supports 122 AHSOR projects across BC. The expansion of the program will be carried out through a transparent, equity-based application process. Community projects will be assessed based on both need and readiness.



### WHAT IS THE GOAL OF THE AHSOR PROGRAM EXPANSION?

The \$10.5M in funding will support capital and program costs to create 350-500 new AHSOR spaces for children from birth to the age of 6 in BC First Nations communities. The new spaces can be in communities that currently do not have AHSOR programs or for additions to existing programs to serve additional children.

### HOW CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT THE AHSOR PROGRAM EXPANSION?

Communities seeking to initiate or expand their AHSOR programs are encouraged to attend a one-hour information webinar on April 25, 2018 at 10 a.m. PDT. A recording of the webinar will be posted on [www.fnha.ca](http://www.fnha.ca) the day after the event for those who are unable to join us live. To ensure that no community is left behind in the development phase, FNHA will host regional application development workshops between May 14 and 25 to provide direct program development to First Nations requiring this service.

### HOW WILL FUNDING BE ALLOCATED?

A transparent decision-making process will be used to allocate the \$10.5M. Since communities occupy a continuum of need, as well as readiness to undertake new programs, the plan is to begin the expansion process with communities that have the highest need and greatest readiness to start a new program – while extending support to communities that may require additional support to begin a new program.

The funding process uses a tiered approach - initially funding applicants that are ready to start programs right away and then supporting others to develop capacity, if the new program can be fully operational by March 31, 2020.

Depending on the applications received, the process will:

- Initially support applications that have the highest need and readiness to begin new programs
- Support applications that demonstrate high need but low readiness, if there are indications that with additional support the programs could be fully operational by March 31, 2020
- Depending on availability of funds, there will be a second round of applications to support the startup of programs that can be operational by March 31, 2020

#### **WHAT IS THE TIMEFRAME TO APPLY FOR AND RECEIVE FUNDING?**

Funding is available from April 2018 – March 2020. All AHSOR expansion projects being funded must be fully completed by March 31, 2020. Operational funding will be ongoing after 2020.

#### **HOW CAN I APPLY?**

The application form, along with additional information, will be distributed during the week of April 30th and will also be available on the FNHA website here.

#### **IS THERE A DEADLINE?**

June 18, 2018 at 4 p.m. is the application deadline.

#### **HOW MUCH OF FUNDING WILL GO TO CAPITAL PROJECTS VS EXPANDING PROGRAM OPERATIONS?**

There is no pre-determined budget for funding capital projects versus program operations. The maximum budget per capital project is \$600,000.

#### **WHAT ABOUT URBAN AND OFF-RESERVE COMMUNITIES THAT ARE INTERESTED IN ABORIGINAL HEAD START?**

There is a separate Aboriginal Head Start program expansion process for urban and off-reserve programs. That process is supported by the Aboriginal Head Start Association of BC (AHSABC). To find out more, visit [www.ahsabc.com](http://www.ahsabc.com).

#### **WHAT IS THE AHSOR PROGRAM?**

The AHSOR program model provides flexibility to design and deliver community-based programs either at a facility, similar to a preschool or childcare center, or through outreach and family support. The delivery model is decided by the community to best fit needs and priorities. Being flexible and responsive to community needs, the AHSOR model allows for shifts in program delivery modality when and as required.

AHSOR is a holistic, community-based program designed to enhance early childhood development, school readiness and overall family health and wellness for First Nations children birth to six years of age living in community. AHSOR programming recognizes that culture is a fundamental part of a child's healthy development and that caring, creativity and confidence flow from a strong grounding in community.