



FOR RELEASE
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The Healthy Families program is expanding to help rural parents

WHITEHORSE—Expanding the Healthy Families Yukon program to Watson Lake, Pelly Crossing and Carmacks will help parents build nurturing relationships with their children as well as increase their knowledge of child development.

"The Healthy Families Yukon program is a culturally sensitive, intensive home-based family support service offered to expectant parents and parents of young children," Minister of Health and Social Services Doug Graham said. "Research supports the importance of early intervention programs. Expanding this program will assist parents at an important time of life."

The program is being implemented in Watson Lake and will soon start in Pelly Crossing and Carmacks. The service may include weekly home visits in the first nine to 12 months, with support available until the child is five years old.

The service is voluntary, free to parents and provides information on child development and parenting resources.

Healthy Families has been offering services in Whitehorse since 1999 designed to improve a child's experience of life by:

- building on parents' strengths;
- assisting parents to access other community resources as needed;
- enhancing family support systems;
- teaching problem-solving; and,
- promoting positive parent-child relationships as well as childhood growth and development.

Program staff work with the Child Development Centre, First Nations, the Department of Education, the Women's Directorate and the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program.

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