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[Home](#) > [Media Room](#) > [News Releases](#) > Fact Sheet - To promote the health, well-being and school readiness of children

Fact Sheet

To promote the health, well-being and school readiness of children

News Release: [Harper Government Supports Nunavummiut Children](#)

Through the Public Health Agency of Canada's Aboriginal Head Start Strategic Fund, the Government of Canada invests \$3 million annually in support of initiatives that benefit the Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities (AHSUNC) program.

Today's funding announcement of over \$1 million will support a project led by the Nunavut Arctic College in partnership with the Government of Nunavut Department of Education to increase the quality and the availability of early childhood care and programming such as AHSUNC; and to establish an approach that will build early childhood development capacity across three regions in Nunavut.

About the Project

The Nunavut Arctic College will:

- Provide community delivery of foundational Early Childhood Development courses and First Aid/CPR training to increase the number of qualified early childhood development educators;
- Develop a pan-regional approach to building early childhood development opportunities and capacity across Nunavut.

Aboriginal Head Start Strategic Fund

The Aboriginal Head Start Strategic Fund (the Fund) was created as an enhancement to the AHSUNC program to support time-limited, strategic initiatives that benefit the program. Annual investments will be provided through the Fund until 2015.

Priorities of the Fund are to enhance the reach and improve the quality of AHSUNC programming by building early childhood educators capacity through increasing access to accredited early childhood development courses; developing culturally and linguistically appropriate resources; and developing new models of program delivery.

Aboriginal Head Start in Urban and Northern Communities Program

The AHSUNC program was established in 1995 to support the spiritual, emotional, intellectual and physical development of Aboriginal children, while also supporting their parents and guardians as their primary teachers.

AHSUNC sites provide structured half-day preschool experiences for Aboriginal children focused on six program components:

1. Aboriginal culture and language,

2. Education and school readiness,
3. Health promotion,
4. Nutrition,
5. Social support, and
6. Parental involvement.

The Aboriginal Head Start Urban and Northern Community program has demonstrated that locally controlled and designed early intervention strategies can provide Aboriginal children with a positive sense of themselves, a desire for learning, and opportunities to develop fully as successful young people.

By addressing the general health concerns of the Aboriginal population, the program's project sites have significantly benefited the health, well-being and school readiness of participating Aboriginal children and their families.

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