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POLICY AND PROGRAM RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMUNITY BASED PROGRAMS TO IMPROVE LIFE SKILLS FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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Children exposed to adversity are at increased risk of negative outcomes. Acquisition of life skills is thought to mitigate the risk of negative outcomes associated with adversity; consequently, organizations in Alberta have developed life skills programs. However, the relationship between programs with a life skills component and government strategic directions is unknown. This project sought to examine if the evidence on interventions that work to develop life skills in children align with strategic directions put forward by Alberta Government Family and Community Support Services (FCSS). An evidence scan was conducted on existing initiatives and findings were then compared to a framework synthesized from FCSS Provincial Priorities. FCSS priorities focusing on individual well-being had the greatest amount of supporting evidence compared to priorities focusing on family or community well-being. Findings from this project will inform community planning by identifying areas of opportunity for investment in programs with proven effectiveness.