

Advocate for Children and Youth Tables 2021 Annual Report

SASKATOON – The Saskatchewan Advocate for Children and Youth, Lisa Broda, tabled her 2021 Annual Report with the Saskatchewan Legislative Assembly today.

In this year's report, Broda reflects on another pandemic year and the difficulties Saskatchewan's young people have faced. "Young people continue to face significant challenges resulting from the pandemic and we continue to work hard to advance our priorities in bringing their voice to the public, promoting reconciliation for Indigenous children, and working to support entities that serve for meaningful change," said Broda.

The report features the advocacy and systemic work related to planning for Indigenous children and youth in care, advocating for resources to support young people in the education system, bullying, and the use of physical restraints in Saskatchewan schools. The report also highlights work on the Ministry of Social Service's Person of Sufficient Interest program and reflects on the Ministry's response to the concerns raised in the Advocate's two group home care reports. "More than ever, we must ensure child-serving and oversight systems are well provisioned in order to be effective, even in times of crisis such as during this global pandemic," stated Broda.

Broda highlights her office's efforts to creatively reach out to young people and enhance public education resources in anticipation of working directly with youth in the coming year. "As we anticipate our ability to travel again in this current year, we developed key rights-based awareness materials including our new interactive Self-Advocacy Workshop that will support young people in knowing their rights and knowing how to advocate for themselves," stated Broda.

Broda further recognizes the support and efforts made by both the Elder Advisory Council and Youth Advisory Council highlighting the substantial guidance both Councils provided to the office's work on the mental health report entitled *Desperately Waiting*, released earlier in 2022.

Members of the Youth Advisory Council also served a key role in advising the office on a submission to the United Nations and helped develop a video to promote National Child Day throughout Saskatchewan schools. "With the Elder and Youth Advisory Councils now supporting our work, our advocacy efforts are much more inclusive, sensitive, and effective," said Broda.

As Broda continues to also hold the position of President of the Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates, the 2021 report notes how national and international advocacy on children's rights benefits the young residents of Saskatchewan. "We live in a global world, and it is gratifying to know that broader efforts to advance children's rights can have a direct impact on children and youth here," stated Broda.

The Advocate for Children and Youth is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan who leads a team of professionals who work on behalf of the province's young people. Our vision is the rights, well-being and voices of children and youth are respected, valued, and supported to assist young people to reach their full potential.

For full details visit www.saskadvocate.ca to view the 2021 Annual Report.

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