

ANNUAL REPORT 2017



SASKATCHEWAN
advocate
FOR CHILDREN & YOUTH

Letter of Transmittal



LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

April 24, 2018

The Honourable Mark Docherty
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Legislative Building
2405 Legislative Drive
Regina SK S4S 0B3

Dear Mr. Speaker:

In accordance with section 39 of *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act*, it is my duty and privilege to submit to you and members of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan this Annual Report from the Advocate for Children and Youth for the year 2017.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Corey O'Soup".

Corey O'Soup
Advocate for Children and Youth

Table of Contents

Message from the Advocate	4
The Foundation of the Advocate's Work	5
A Foundation of Rights	6
The Advocate's Four Priorities	8
Fostering Relationships with First Nations and Métis Partners	9
Appropriate Education for All Children and Youth	11
Adequate and Timely Mental Health Services	14
Empowering Youth and Raising Their Voice	16
Advocating for Other Critical Issues	21
Budget and Staff	23
Appendices	24

Message from the Advocate

I am pleased to present this 2017 Annual Report that reflects the priorities and goals set out in our five-year Strategic Plan. This year's report signifies the integration of these priorities into all facets of our work. In conjunction with the release of this report, we are also launching our new logo, which is represented on the front cover. This new logo supports our strategic direction and symbolizes our commitment to support and empower Saskatchewan children and youth to reach their full potential.

Our fundamental goal is to be part of solutions that result in positive change in the quality of life for our First Nations and Métis children and youth. This report focuses on our four priorities to foster positive relationships, focus on education and mental health, and to ensure children and youth are supported to use their voice and to be advocates in their communities.

We continue to work collaboratively and use a solution focused approach to advocate for change. Meaningful change requires a commitment from all levels of government - federal, provincial, First Nations, and local - to support all of Saskatchewan's young people, particularly our First Nations and Métis children and youth who have been historically denied fair and equal treatment. While this year's report is a summary of systemic issues that children and youth continue to face, it also offers several alternatives to positively influence outcomes. My hope is that this report not only reflects our work, but can also be used as a resource for the people of Saskatchewan. Highlighted are activities and initiatives that others are doing, within their own communities, to raise awareness and make a change. Our office urges governments and leadership to consider the expansion of promising practices so that supports and services are accessible for all children and youth in Saskatchewan.

In this past year we've seen models and programs that can be quite easily adapted to address the barriers that children, youth, and their families face in our province. We've seen that change does not have to be complex nor come with a significant price tag; even smaller incremental steps can make a difference. The key is to move forward with action. I challenge each of you to initiate a conversation, create partnerships and implement solutions. It's time to be change-makers! The young people of our province deserve nothing less.

Respectfully submitted,



Corey O'Soup

Advocate for Children and Youth



The Foundation of the Advocate's Work



The Advocate for Children and Youth is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly of Saskatchewan.

Our mandate is defined by *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act*. We do:

- **ADVOCACY**
on behalf of children and youth receiving services from a provincial ministry, direct or delegated agency or publicly-funded health entity.
- **INVESTIGATIONS**
into any matter concerning, or services provided to, children and youth by a provincial ministry, direct or delegated agency or publicly-funded health entity.
- **PUBLIC EDUCATION**
to raise awareness of the rights, interests and well-being of children and youth.
- **RESEARCH AND ADVISE**
on any matter relating to the rights, interests and well-being of children and youth.

These functions are all interconnected and support the overarching goal to create systemic change for the benefit of the young people in Saskatchewan.

OUR MISSION:

Empowering children and youth to be change-makers.

OUR VISION:

The rights, well-being, and voice of children and youth are respected and valued.

OUR VALUES:

- Place children and youth first
- Respect First Nations and Métis language and culture
- Embrace reconciliation
- Provide accessible, fair, appropriate and timely services
- Inclusive of all

OUR FUNDAMENTAL GOAL:

To be part of solutions that result in positive change in the quality of life for First Nations and Métis children and youth.

A Foundation of Rights



Our work is guided by the following principles:

UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD (UNCRC) ¹

All people have human rights. Children and youth require special protections because many decisions are made on their behalf by adults. In 1991, Canada ratified the UNCRC – a legally-binding international instrument that guarantees these special protections.

The UNCRC has 54 articles protecting children's rights by setting standards in health care; education; and legal, civil and social services.

The 4 core principles of the UNCRC are:

- Non-discrimination
- Best interests of the child
- Right to life, survival and development
- Respect for the views of the child

SASKATCHEWAN CHILDREN AND YOUTH FIRST PRINCIPLES

Our office distilled the 54 articles of the UNCRC into those most applicable to Saskatchewan. These principles were adopted by the provincial government in 2009 and include the following:

- Those rights defined by the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*.
- Participate and be heard before any decision affecting them is made.
- Have their best interests given paramount consideration in any action or decision involving them.
- An equal standard of care, protection and services.
- The highest standard of health and education possible to reach their fullest potential.
- Safety and protection from all forms of physical, emotional and sexual harm, while in the care of parents, governments, legal guardians or any person.
- Be treated as the primary client, and at the centre of all child-serving systems.
- Have consideration given to the importance of their unique life history and spiritual traditions and practices, in accordance with their stated views and preferences.

UNITED NATIONS DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS PEOPLES (UNDRIP) ²

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is guided by the purpose and principles of the Charter of the United Nations which recognizes and affirms Indigenous people's inherent rights. The UNDRIP references 46 articles that speak about rights to:

- Land
- Culture and language
- Self-determination
- Non-discriminatory or oppressive practices
- Protection of elders, women, and children
- Right to survive and develop
- Liberty and freedom
- Participate in any decision that affects Indigenous people

Articles 21 and 22 specifically reference that particular attention shall be paid to the continuing improvement of the social and economic conditions as pertains to the special needs of elders, women, youth and children. It also references that the 'State', in conjunction with Indigenous peoples, take measures to ensure Indigenous women and children are afforded special protections.

TOUCHSTONES OF HOPE FOR INDIGENOUS CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES ³

The *Touchstones of Hope*, as created by the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society, are a guide to reconciliation in a variety of sectors in which children are served.

The *Touchstones of Hope* promote relating, restoring, truth telling and acknowledging.

The process is based on 5 principles:

- Self-determination
- Respect for culture and language
- Importance of structural intervention
- Non-discrimination
- Holistic approach

1. United Nations General Assembly. (1989). *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*. New York, NY: Author. Available at: <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/ProfessionalInterest/Pages/CRC.aspx>

2. United Nations General Assembly. (2007). *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. New York, NY: Author. Available at: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfi/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf

3. For more information on the *Touchstones of Hope*, see: <https://fncaringsociety.com/touchstones-hope>



The Advocate's Four Priorities



While we continued to have our hand on the pulse of many issues over the past year, we placed a more cohesive focus on the four key priorities laid out in the Advocate's strategic plan:

- Foster positive relationships with our First Nations and Métis partners.
- Ensure our education system is appropriate for all children and youth and meets the unique needs of First Nations and Métis children, youth and their families.
- Ensure children and youth have access to adequate and appropriate mental health services.
- Ensure children and youth are supported and empowered to use their voice and to be advocates within their communities.

We believe an investment in each of the above four areas will have positive impacts in our province. Not only do we want to provide every possible opportunity to our children and youth, they have the right to each of these things. Having healthy young people, whom are educated and involved in planning that impacts them, helps them on a path to becoming prosperous and engaged adults. This, in turn, will have a direct impact on reducing the number of children in foster care (See Appendix C), reducing the number of young people involved in the criminal justice system, and will boost the province's economic future.

Through working collaboratively with governments, communities and, most importantly, children and youth, we advocate for strategies from a prevention and early intervention lens. Solutions to our longstanding concerns are not as simple as apprehending children; rather, it's educating, it's investing in, and it's supporting families. Holding governments and decision makers accountable is necessary, however, providing a path forward is also a crucial part of our work.

**UNCRC
ARTICLE 8:
PROTECTION
AND PRESERVATION
OF IDENTITY**

**UNCRC
ARTICLE 28:
EDUCATION**

**UNCRC
ARTICLE 24:
HEALTH
AND HEALTH
SERVICES**

**UNCRC
ARTICLE 12:
RESPECT
VIEWS OF
THE CHILD**

FOSTERING RELATIONSHIPS WITH FIRST NATIONS AND MÉTIS PARTNERS

Our office has re-committed itself to engaging with First Nations communities and embracing reconciliation. This commitment is reflected in our values and priorities as outlined earlier in this report. First Nations and Métis children and youth continue to be overrepresented in the child welfare and youth justice systems. They continue to graduate at lower rates than their non-First Nations counterparts. First Nations communities continue to be challenged with addictions, violence and poverty stemming from colonial history and the impact of residential schools and the Sixties Scoop. It is time that our province prioritizes better outcomes for our First Nations and Métis people. This cannot be achieved without the engagement of the leadership and membership of First Nations communities.

Our office is working to strengthen these relationships at all levels. Two advocacy staff have been dedicated to work exclusively with First Nations communities. In addition to supporting various activities, these staff teach about the role of our office and provide education on children's rights. The Advocate, along with his staff, has personally met with



Advocate staff honouring residential school survivors on Orange Shirt Day - September 30, 2017

Chiefs, Councillors, and officials from all First Nations Child and Family Services agencies. Over the last year, our office has attended meetings or events on 26 First Nations communities. We will continue our efforts until we achieve our goal of meeting with Chief and Council of every First Nations community and Tribal Council in the province.

Through these community engagements we are able to gain a better understanding of the issues being faced both collectively and by each community. We then advocate to reduce barriers

and to provide equality for First Nations children, youth and their families. One issue often cited by band members and community professionals is jurisdictional barriers to service provision. For instance, a provincial program will not provide supports or medical equipment to a child who resides on-reserve. If that child moves from their First Nation community to a town or city, the federal program will not provide funding for services.

Jordan's Principle, a federally funded initiative, ensures that children and youth receive the services and/

or equipment they need, regardless of whether they live on or off-reserve. The philosophy of Jordan's Principle is that the required service will be provided and any disagreements over funding will be resolved later.⁴ One downfall of this initiative is that information about Jordan's Principle and the funding it can provide is not widely known by all families who could benefit from such an intervention.

In a recent special report released in December 2017 entitled *Shhh...LISTEN!! We Have Something to Say!* Youth

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION (TRC) – THE WAY FORWARD

Awareness, understanding and respect are crucial to meaningful engagement with First Nations people and communities. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) has said that reconciliation is "about establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country. In order for that to happen, there has to be awareness of the past, acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behavior."

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. (2015). *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*. Winnipeg, MB: Author, pp. 6. Available at: http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Exec_Summary_2015_05_31_web_o.pdf



Advocate staff engaging youth - March 2017

Voices from the North⁵, we called upon the Government of Saskatchewan to formally adopt Jordan's Principle and to work in partnership with First Nations governments, leaders and communities to leverage the resources available under Jordan's Principle. We look forward to further discussions with the province of Saskatchewan in this regard.

This special report also served as a catalyst for our office to build relationships with our First Nations and Métis communities. Sadly, suicide is one of the issues that plagues our province, especially our First Nations communities. We were welcomed into 12 communities in Northern Saskatchewan to meet with youth, families, professionals, and leadership to engage in discussions about youth

suicide. Information gathered informed the content of our report. This work has led our office to receive additional invitations from other communities. We look forward to developing more partnerships to achieve long term, sustainable changes that will have a positive impact on the future of our children and youth.

4. Government of Canada. (6 April 2018). Jordan's Principle. Ottawa, ON: Author. Retrieved from <https://www.canada.ca/en/indigenous-services-canada/services/jordans-principle.html>

5. Advocate for Children and Youth (Saskatchewan). (5 December 2017). *Shhh...LISTEN!!! We Have Something To Say: Youth Voices from the North*. Saskatoon, SK: Author. Available at http://saskadvocate.ca/sites/default/files/u11/listen_we_have_something_to_say_nov_2017.pdf

**UNCRC
ARTICLE 2:
NON-
DISCRIMINATION**

**UNCRC
ARTICLE 3:
BEST
INTERESTS
OF CHILD**

**UNCRC
ARTICLE 6:
GOVERNMENTS MUST
DO ALL THEY CAN
TO ENSURE THAT
CHILDREN SURVIVE
AND DEVELOP TO
THEIR FULL
POTENTIAL**

INCREASING AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING

Since 2012, our staff have been trained in the *Touchstones of Hope for Indigenous Children, Youth and Families*.^{*} As indicated earlier, the Touchstones of Hope offer a process to guide reconciliation. In 2017, our office participated in Inclusion Continuum training[^], which promotes acceptance and creates awareness of where one is on the spectrum of inclusion. Our staff also took part in the KAIROS Blanket Exercise⁺ and a discussion of Gord Downie's *Secret Path* (2016).[#] The Blanket Exercise is an interactive, role playing experience that teaches Canadian-Indigenous history of pre-contact, colonization, treaty-making and resistance. *Secret Path* is a musical and illustrative project that highlights the mistreatment of First Nations children within the Canadian residential school system. This project has been the subject of many public discussions, including a panel conversation broadcasted by CBC.[°]

All of the above opportunities serve to increase awareness and understanding of the issues and history impacting First Nations people. This knowledge is invaluable and necessary to support the actions required to bring about change. Our office encourages others, especially professionals at all levels of child-and youth-serving systems, to undergo any of the above training as part of the journey to fulfilling the TRC's Call to Action #57, which calls for public servants to be educated on a range of issues and concepts relating to First Nations history, law and human rights.

^{*} First Nations Child and Family Caring Society (FNCFCFS). (2016). *Touchstones of Hope: Reconciliation in Child Welfare*. Ottawa, ON: Author. Retrieved from <https://fncaringsociety.com/touchstones-hope>

[^] Indigenous Works. (n.d.). Inclusion Continuum. Saskatoon, SK. Author. Available at <https://indigenousworks.ca/en/products/item/inclusion-continuum>

⁺ KAIROS Canada. (2017). *About the Blanket Exercise*. Ottawa, ON: Author. Available at <https://www.kairosblanketexercise.org/about/>

[#] Downie, G. and Lemire, J. (2016). *Secret Path*. Toronto, ON: Simon & Schuster Canada.

[°] CBC Arts. (2016). *Gord Downie's The Secret Path*. Toronto, ON: Author. Available at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yGd764YU9yc>

APPROPRIATE EDUCATION FOR ALL CHILDREN AND YOUTH

As an educator, the Advocate believes education is the key to addressing many of the social ills that our young people and their families experience. Children and youth, particularly those of First Nations and Métis ancestry, are entitled to an education and to ultimately participate fully in our society. This begins with early childhood programs to ensure children get a good start in life; guaranteeing they are school ready.

Once in school, innovative and creative ways are required to keep students engaged while fostering an environment that ensures the best outcome for their learning and development. There continues to be far too many children and youth in Saskatchewan not registered in school or not attending on a regular basis.

Our education system must address the special needs of children and youth by properly resourcing schools. Of crucial importance, is ending the funding disparity between on reserve and provincial schools. The exceedingly low graduation rates amongst our Indigenous youth must be addressed. The provincial graduation rate for our First

Nations, Métis, and Inuit youth 2016/17 is cited to be a shameful 43.2 percent as compared to 85.4 percent graduation rate for non-Indigenous youth. This must be systematically addressed as this inequality is simply unacceptable. Embedding language and culture in schools as part of inclusivity for First Nations and Métis children is part of addressing these inequities. Systematic engagement must be part of the school experience for children and youth as part of an effective strategy to help children and youth reach their full potential.

This year our office has worked more closely with the education system to build relationships and to teach students and those working within the system about the mandate of our office and about the rights of children and youth. We have presented to senior officials in 14 school divisions and to staff and students in 45 schools, both on and off reserve. Increased awareness has led to our office providing advocacy for students and contributing to the development of individualized case plans. We will continue on this path to meet our goal of connecting with as many schools as possible to ensure the educational needs of their students are being met.





Special Report Release - Shhh.....LISTEN!!! We Have Something to Say!
Youth Voices from the North - December 2017

PROMISING PRACTICE:

INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE PROGRAMS IN SASKATCHEWAN SCHOOLS

It is encouraging that Indigenous language and culturally responsive programs are priority initiatives for several school divisions and Tribal Councils throughout the province. From the Ile-La-Crosse's Cree and Michif language programs, the Northern Light's Cree and Dene language and culture programs, to the cultural classrooms and Core Cree instruction in Regina, and the *Nêhiyâwiwin* Cree language and culture programs and Cree Immersion in Saskatoon. Furthermore, Prince Albert Grand Council, Meadow Lake Tribal Council, and Touchwood Agency Tribal Council have incorporated language and culture programs within their band schools.

One of the largest Cree language programs for children and youth has been developed at St. Frances School. Currently, St. Frances School serves students from 57 neighbourhoods in Saskatoon, Whitecap Dakota First Nation, and Corman Park. Over 95% of the 607 pre-kindergarten to grade 8 students are of First Nations or Métis descent. The school hosts a dual language program by integrating Cree Bilingual and English with a focus on *nêhiyaw* language and culture. The incorporation of an Indigenous language program within St. Frances is due to the *māmawohkamātowin* partnership between Saskatoon Tribal Council and Saskatoon Greater Catholic School Board.

Teaching language and culture within schools is a crucial component in meeting the unique needs of First Nations and Métis students, including growing the culture and identity for these children, youth, and families. In addition, honoring First Nations and Métis history within curriculum promotes inclusivity and reconciliation.

UNCRC
ARTICLE 29:
EDUCATION
TO REACH
FULLEST
POTENTIAL

UNCRC
ARTICLE 30:
CULTURAL
IDENTITY



PROMISING PRACTICE:

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION - FOLLOWING THEIR VOICES

Following Their Voices (FTV) was created as a means to increase graduation rates amongst First Nations, Métis and Inuit (FNMI) students. The program is based on research that was conducted with First Nations and Métis engaged and non-engaged students, parents/caregivers, teachers and school administrators about what is needed in order to be successful as a First Nations or Métis student in school. The 'voices' of these groups of people were profound in terms of the issues they identified. Their words and insights, along with international research, and guidance and advice from Elders and Knowledge Keepers formed the foundation of this initiative.*

A key message learned from all of the research conducted is that deficit theorizing or blaming was a significant barrier to the success of FNMI students. Parents indicated that school is not good for their children, administrators blamed their teachers, and teachers blamed the students. Relationships in the classroom were identified by the students as most important to doing well in school, and included the importance of caring relationships, high expectations, sharing power, and honoring students as human beings and as Indigenous peoples. FTV prioritizes each of these factors.

FTV was piloted in six schools across the province from January to June 2015 and was fully implemented in these same six schools in the 2015-2016 school year. The success of the program has resulted in yearly expansion. Schools have seen increased attendance, credit attainment, marks, and graduation rates. For the 2017-2018 school year, FTV was implemented in 26 schools throughout the province, both on and off reserve.^

As part of the critical learning cycle, there is a team of supports. Facilitators attend classrooms to observe, input from participants is regularly conducted via surveys, and opportunities for feedback and discussion are ongoing.

A cultural component is an integral part of every school implementing FTV. Culture can be incorporated in several ways such as learning about the history of Indigenous peoples, teaching First Nations languages, including Elders or building a sweat lodge. This validation of the language and culture of FNMI students nurtures a positive identity.

Wesmor Community High School in Prince Albert was one of the six original schools that piloted FTV. Ninety percent (90%) of their student population is of Indigenous ancestry. Culture and land-based teachings are embedded in several courses at Wesmor, such as Wellness and Wildlife Management. Resource materials are from a First Nations lens and authors. The block system is used for their students to expedite credit attainment (focusing on fewer classes for shorter duration of time versus taking multiple classes for the entire school year). Teachers set goals to learn what they can do or how they can change their practice to better engage with their students. Gina Sinoski, the principal of Wesmor stated, "when teachers do FTV, they will always do FTV." Learning comes easier when students are engaged, the environment is welcoming, and student-teacher relationships are genuine.

* For more information on Following Their Voices, see: <https://www.followingtheirvoices.ca/#/ftv/document/5>

^ For a list of participating schools, see: <https://www.followingtheirvoices.ca/#/ftv/document/21>



Youth book club made possible by Venture Heights school's generous donation of books.

ADEQUATE AND TIMELY MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

Saskatchewan children and youth are facing immense pressure and risks resulting in an increase in mental health concerns for our young people. Saskatchewan's mental health system is failing our children, and this is particularly true in our northern and remote communities where there is a lack of adequate services and where suicide rates are approximately double that of the Canadian population. The recommendations of the Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan developed four years ago has made little impact in addressing the barriers and access issues cited in the report. Timely services that include a broad scope of supports to ensure that our young people's overall health needs are met must be provided. The lengthy wait times for psychiatric and psychological services must be rectified. Waiting several months and, at times, years for these services is simply

unacceptable. Accepting the current standards of mental health care not only compromises our young people's rights, but our children and youth are literally dying while waiting for service.

Addressing the issue of the lack of mental health services for our children and youth need not be complicated. This simply requires some good models and a will to work towards something different. Our office has been strongly advocating for the Ministries of Health and Education to consider the Mental Health Capacity Building in Schools model as a structured response to addressing the lack of services and to assist with capacity building related to health and wellness in schools. Research evaluation of the model consistently demonstrates that this initiative has been successful at building connections between schools and communities and is an integral part of the school community leading to increased services for youth. Based on our site visit to Alberta and review of this

initiative, it is our impression that this is a promising model that may offer a coordinated system between health and education offered through schools, that will better serve children, youth, and their families. We are encouraged that the Ministries of Health and Education are examining this model for its applicability in Saskatchewan.

Over the last year, our office has conducted presentations

and met with officials in six regions of the Saskatchewan Health Authority. To have a positive impact on the mental health of our children and youth, a high standard of care must be prioritized and young people must be placed at the center of all planning. Our office will influence this by continuing on the path of increasing our presence in the health system to advocate for, and educate on, the rights of children and youth.

PROMISING PRACTICE:

SCHOOL WELLNESS TEAM

The School Wellness Team (SWT) was developed to bridge the gaps between health and education services for students, to provide timely, holistic and appropriate care to students and their families in three of the core community schools in Saskatoon. The School Wellness Team is a Primary Health Team, funded by the Saskatoon Health Region and works to address the Ministry of Health's strategic priorities, Better Health, Better Care, Better Teams and Better Value. The School Wellness Team is made up of several different health professionals, such as a nurse practitioner, occupational therapist, a mental health counselor, a speech language pathologist, a speech language pathologist assistant, a primary health team facilitator and a community program builder. These professionals strive for Better Health by early identification and early intervention for students in the area of medical care, visual acuity, hearing and language development. Better Health contributes to better academic outcomes for children and youth. The team addresses Better Care by recognizing a student's right to care at the right time, by the right services, in the right setting; SWT is accessible to students as they are working with the children within the school that the child attends, however, when needed, home visits or transportation to appointments are provided by the team. Better Teams is addressed by SWT engaging with the students, their families and school personnel, as well as collaborating with other organizations and agencies available to children, youth and their families. This engagement assists in creating the best team possible for the child and youth and their needs. Better Value is achieved by SWT by providing preventative and early intervention programming that may otherwise be inaccessible to the student or family.

The School Wellness Team has been successful in providing therapies, treatment and medical assessments to the students of the three schools the team serves.

* Saskatchewan Health Authority. (27 March 2014). Primary Health Care: School Wellness Team. Available at: https://www.saskatoonhealthregion.ca/locations_services/Services/Primary-Health/Pages/Schoolwellness.aspx

Changes we want to see in our community

- emphasis on mental health to help eliminate the stigma associated:
 - more workshops for knowledge + awareness (from professionals) p
 - * classroom presentations
 - making it "ok" to talk about suicide + mental health.
 - more mental health support people to help address underlying issues.
 - * peer discussion on suicide (talking circles) in classrooms
 - * more counsellors
 - more parental involvement in regards to everything to help fill the gap + eliminate the stigma.
 - parental support
 - inter-agency communications - coordinate
 - Leadership to talk to various agencies

PROMISING PRACTICE:

NORTHERN CARING CAMPERS GRIEF CAMP – AIR RONGE

The Northern Caring Campers Grief Camp operates for a 24-hour period at the Air Ronge Gordon Denny Community School. The camp offers guided therapeutic activities to address grief and loss for youth aged 12-17 years (note: sibling groups may be considered for programs if suffering from same loss). Referrals are received from schools, Child and Family Services, and Child and Youth Mental Health. Campers attend due to a variety of losses identified such as murder, suicide, illness and injury and are screened to confirm support from family or professional caregivers afterwards.

Partnerships are a key factor for the success of this camp which rests on the Prince Albert Mental Health model. Other support includes mental health and addiction workers, Northern Lights School Division staff, and volunteers assist with the organizing.

The goal of the camp is to reduce the residual effects of loss for the youth. Camp activities focus on the premise that in life we will experience loss and teaching positive coping mechanisms to help prepare the youth to cope with the current identified loss as well as future loss.

Included in the camp is a Parent Debriefing session so that caregivers and parents learn about the activities their child participated in and receive some information about ways to support their child. Following the parents group, youth and parents come together for a final celebration.

We understand from the youth, parents, staff and volunteers, this grief camp has been an extremely positive support for youth in the North.

PROMISING PRACTICE:

MENTAL HEALTH CAPACITY BUILDING IN SCHOOLS

The Alberta model, Mental Health Capacity Building (MHCB) in Schools Initiative*, has the primary focus of delivering an integrated, school-based community mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention program. It seeks to facilitate easier access to services and reduce the need for more intensive mental health and crisis services in the long term. It is based on research and best-practice, and works to promote positive mental health in children, youth, families as well as support individuals in the community who interact with children and youth. It serves children and youth under age 19, and their families.

The programs are locally developed, coordinated and implemented through collaboration with Alberta Health Services operations and existing partnerships, school jurisdictions, students, parents, community agencies and other regional service providers.

MHCB team members work within school settings to:

- Deliver mental health promotion and prevention programming including presentations to students, staff, parents and/or other community members that increase wellbeing, resilience, protective factors, promote early identification of issues and address risk factors;
- Build capacity in others, who work with children, youth and families, to deliver wellness presentations and programming;
- Organize and facilitate school and community-wide mental health events and awareness campaigns;
- Facilitate access to students for other community partners (eg. school police liaison officers);
- Connect students to community mental health supports and services;
- Collaborate with service providers in the community to maximize service efficiencies and to advocate for unmet mental health needs for children and families;
- Share and exchange knowledge and resources between MHCB Programs through the MHCB Community of Practices established across the province.

This initiative began in 2006, with 5 pilot sites around the province. Now there are 37 projects in 85 communities and 182 schools with an outreach to 74 additional schools, throughout Alberta. Having a coordinated system between health and education, offered through the schools, better serves children, youth and their families, while also building connections between schools and their communities.

* Alberta Health Services. (n.d.) *Mental Health Capacity Building (MHCB) in Schools Initiative*. Available at: <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/amh/Page2754.aspx>

EMPOWERING YOUTH AND RAISING THEIR VOICE

Ensuring children and youth are engaged in matters that affect them and supporting their voice is critical for change. Our young people know best what challenges they face, what impacts their lives, and what they need. We gain a stronger understanding and can increase our empathy by gathering the perspective of children and youth on matters of relevance to them. Listening to children and youth is a very effective tool for empowering children and youth to be change-makers. This is easily accomplished by respecting their right to be heard and providing spaces and opportunities to nurture their evolving capacities. Youth engagement is proven to “promote health and decrease risk.”⁶ In addition, as the Committee on the Rights of the Child recently stated, “...positive and supportive opportunities during adolescence can be

used to offset some of the consequences caused by harm suffered during early childhood and build resilience to mitigate future damage.”⁷

As indicated, this last year, our office spent significant time in northern Saskatchewan to engage and listen to the youth on what they need to address suicide in their communities. Our staff presented to over 1,000 youth, in 12 communities. As outlined in our *Shh... LISTEN!! We have Something to Say! Youth Voices from the North* report, the youth calls to action told us that bullying and substance misuse needs to stop, that they are needing emotional support, safety and security, prosocial activities, and resources to support wellness and coping. By listening to young people, supporting them and working alongside them, we will assist in the positive change they seek for their future.

Our office will continue to support youth driven initiatives and empower

youth to be the best determinants of their success. Through our regular visits to group homes, youth custody and youth treatment facilities, our office also continues to coach children and youth in their self advocacy efforts.

6. Manion, I. (2017). *A World Without Silos for Youth Mental Health!* Canadian Conference on Promoting Healthy Relationships for Youth: Breaking Down the Silos in Addressing Mental Health and Violence. PREVnet, February 15-17, 2017.

7. Committee on the Rights of the Child. (2016). *General Comment No. 20 on the implementation of the rights of the child during adolescence*, Geneva: United Nations CRC/C/GC/20

**UNCRC
ARTICLE 42:
WORK TO CREATE
AWARENESS ABOUT
UNCRC RIGHTS**

**UNCRC
ARTICLE 13:
FREEDOM OF
EXPRESSION**

**UNCRC
ARTICLE 12:
RESPECT
VIEWS OF
THE CHILD**



PROMISING OUTCOMES

YOUTH'S PERCEPTIONS OF CHILDHOOD: YOUNG PEOPLE'S PARTICIPATION IN ENVISIONING COMMUNITY CHANGE

This youth engagement project was conducted by Caitlyn Wood in partial fulfillment of her graduate degree at Ryerson University. Her project aimed to further understand childhood experiences in the Northern Village of La Loche, Saskatchewan.

This project took the form of a community-based research study and research questions were co-constructed with community partners. The participants of this study were 11 youth between the ages of 13- and 19-years-old who attended the local high school. Students photographed images in their school and community to respond to the following questions: 1) What is your life like? 2) What is good about your life? 3) What makes you strong? 4) What needs to change? and 5) What should childhood look like? Participants took one photo per question and returned to discuss their photos in greater detail.

The data revealed four major themes. These were youth's collective valuing of: i) relationships – those with the people, their animals, and the land, ii) health and well-being – both mental and physical, iii) knowledge – including learning in school and learning about one's own culture and language, and iv) the importance of community and culture. It is important to note that the themes identified by youth were not mutually exclusive and separate categories. For example, the theme of 'relationships' cannot be altogether separated from the concept of 'health and well-being,' nor can 'knowledge' be separated from 'community and culture.' The themes are represented in a diagram demonstrating their connectedness, where the largest circle is the representation of the whole and the smaller circles represent the themes that emerged through the analysis process (see Figure 1).

The youth made the following recommendations:

1. Greater access to both physical and mental health supports– inclusive of traditional Dene and Métis approaches to health and well-being.
2. Greater opportunity to amalgamate their culture and learning within their school and classroom.
3. Greater opportunity to spend time outdoors and connect to the land.
4. An increase and focus on events within the community that can bring people together

This research was conducted by Caitlin Wood, M.A., whose late brother Adam Wood, died while teaching at La Loche Dene High School. It was completed under the supervision of Dr. Aurelia Di Santo and Dr. Lynn Lavallée.

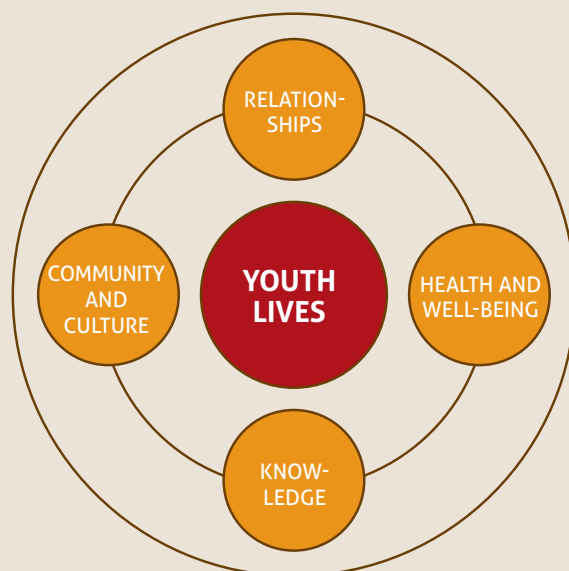


Photo credit: Caitlyn Wood

PROMISING PRACTICE:

OSKI-PIMOHTAMWAK OTAYISĪNIWIWAW (they are into their new journey to knowledge)

By incorporating youth participation and voice, this Adult 12 Class at Bert Fox Community High School has found a way to engage the unengaged. Now into their second year, they are using Indigenous ways of knowing, experiential learning, and strength-based philosophies, so students can earn credits and complete their Grade 12 diploma.

Oski-pimohtahtamwak otayisiniwaw is based on co-construction with the students. Open dialogue occurs between the students and teacher. Students are given choice and voice, which allows them the opportunity to own their education. The teacher adapts the curriculum to meet the needs of each student. It is evident in the layout of the classroom and the friendly banter among peers that the classroom is more like a home and the students are more like family. Students credit the class for building up their confidence, allowing them to be themselves – free of judgment and giving them a sense of pride every day.

Students are also taught important life lessons, such as leadership skills as they mentor younger students and have been trained as facilitators for the Blanket Exercise. These students have facilitated the Blanket Exercise over 30 times to more than 1,000 people. These young people are a key contributor to the reconciliation efforts in the community of Fort Qu'Appelle.

With its creative approach to education, students in this class have experienced success both in the classroom and in their community.

Quote from Youth: *"Oski-pimohtahtamwak otayisiniwaw is a good program for myself and others who haven't done that good in high school. It's like getting a second chance to succeed at something."*

Quote from Youth: *"...we are the next Oski Generation. We will bring positive change to the world and we will continue doing it until the end of our days."*

For more information, see <http://theyareintotheirnewjourneytoknowledge.blogspot.ca/2017/12/saskatchewan-advocate-for-children-and.html>



Saskatchewan Advocate, Corey O'Soup with students from Bert Fox Community High School - November 2017

PROMISING PRACTICE:

ENGAGING YOUNG LEADERS – ÎLE-À-LA-CROSSE

The North West Métis Cultural Committee (NWMCC), located in Ile a la Crosse, has partnered with STOPS to Violence to establish an active, dynamic youth group. This initiative launched two years ago and is focused on youth leadership development to increase the skills, knowledge and confidence for youth to address interpersonal violence and abuse in their region.

To date, the project has brought together over 30 youth in the area to participate in learning, personal development and community projects. The NWMCC is strategic and intentional in ensuring a youth driven, peer approach to the project. The project takes an Indigenous cultural approach based on developing leadership competencies in youth, collaborative input and planning, shared decision making, and active leadership roles in the community for youth, supported by adult mentors.

The results from phase one showed 70 – 93% of the participants indicated growth in confidence and preparation with regards to leadership and confidence in themselves and how they interacted with groups. Phase 2 results showed that 92 to 100% of participants indicated improved self-awareness, confidence, and ability to positively influence others and become actively involved with their role in reducing violence in their communities.

Following their participation in the program, several youths are now actively involved in their communities, participating on boards, holding fundraising events and mentoring children and youth in the school. Personal growth has also allowed many of the youth to apply the skills and knowledge they have developed into their personal relationships, parenting approaches and in being positive role models and mentors to other children and youth in their communities.

For more information on STOPS to Violence, see www.stopstoviolence.com

PROMISING PRACTICE:

LLOYDMINSTER YOUTH COUNCIL

The Lloydminster Youth Council (LYC) was established in March of 2015 by a group of adult allies who wanted to support the youth in Lloydminster. The LYC is made up of 20 youth, from grades 9-12, who have a commitment to be change-makers within their community. The LYC is governed by six Steering Committee Members; two of which are appointed to be Coordinators. These Coordinators serve as a bridge between the students and the Steering Committee. The adults are 'guides on the side' and are active with things like submitting grant proposals and seeking funding options. The youth on the LYC plan and lead their weekly meetings, develop and manage their campaigns, and hold events on their own.

Through this, youth are empowered to plan events that are attractive to their peers and campaigns regarding topics that are of interest to them. Events (such as dances, talent shows, and pool parties) are drug and alcohol-free, affordable or free, and they provide food, gift cards, or door prizes to help encourage attendance.

The youth have also organized a series of drug awareness initiatives, including a campaign (#180ALERT), hosting a youth forum and making a video. The Public Service Announcement video had over 17,000 hits on YouTube and received attention from the Premier's Offices in Alberta and Saskatchewan. The video is used in schools across Alberta and was recognized by the Yorkton Film Fest. This encouraged them to create another video on diversity. "The Tie that Binds" won second place at the film fest that marked Canada's 150th anniversary and showcased Canada's diversity.

LYC is currently working with City Council to ensure that youth voice is represented in various capacities across the city. In the fall of 2017, the Youth Council launched their "Paint the Town Positive" campaign. They performed acts of kindness such as, bringing meals to families in need, acknowledging special people with treats, visiting with seniors, cleaning-up after meals at a senior's long-term facility, hosting birthday parties, supporting local businesses and shoveling snow. From their experiences in the campaign, LYC youth realized that these seemingly small gestures can make a significant difference in the lives of the people they are connecting with.

The Lloydminster Youth Council is an excellent example of young people who are committed to making a difference in their community and empowering other youth in the process.

To view video's made by the LYC, see:

"Paint the Town Positive": <http://bit.ly/2EhosJv>

"It's Not Just a Pill" (Project #180ALERT Drug Awareness Video): <http://bit.ly/2E6GDhO>

"The Tie that Binds": <http://bit.ly/2nL7qsK>



Lloydminster Youth Council

PROMISING PRACTICE:

ACCESS OPEN MINDS – STURGEON LAKE FIRST NATION

ACCESS Open Minds (ACCESS OM) is a national research and evaluation network initiated in 2014 that supports youth engagement in transforming existing mental health services for young people.* Efforts to close the gap of youth mental health services are being undertaken at 14 service sites across Canada. The Sturgeon Lake First Nation site is one of six Indigenous communities participating in ACCESS OM. Their focus is peer support, cultural support and clinical support. The objective is for youth who are suffering with mental health needs to be seen by a professional in the first 72 hours. The Mental Health Clinician is part of the team; providing assessments of the youth and completing the site evaluations. Mental health training, cultural and wellness opportunities, volunteer work and fundraising activities are an integral component of the program.

After initially having no youth respond, the coordinator, Clifford Ballantyne, took to a more meaningful approach to “[...] meet the youth where they were... engaging the youth, playing basketball and soccer in the different villages.”^ Eventually, their renewed focus on building relationships and spending quality time with the youth paid off. A group of youth became involved and started to attend meetings with Clifford. Now, the youth plan activities such as crafts, baking, movies, sledding, and attending round dances to provide opportunity to participate in prosocial activities. In 2017, the doors of the Sturgeon Lake First Nation youth centre opened; a major undertaking lead by the ACCESS OM youth. “Youth from the community were encouraged to take charge of the project, selecting the paint colours and flooring. Students in carpentry classes helped build the deck which now surrounds the front of the building.”+

The youth centre has facilitated bringing the youth together with many older youth asking, “*what can we do for the younger youth?*” Giving power to these young people has a ripple effect in them wanting to be the changemakers, by making a positive difference with the young children in their community.

Quote from a youth: *“I think Access is more than just a youth space, I think of it more as a family... work together, play together, learn together.”*

* The network was developed by TRAM – Transformational Research in Adolescent Mental Health – a partnership of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the Graham Boeckh Foundation. Both partners contributed \$12.5 million for the duration of five years of the project.

^ Lozinski, P. (1 June 2017). Building a Future. *Prince Albert Daily Herald*. Available at: <https://paherald.sk.ca/2017/06/01/building-a-future/>

+ Eneas, B. (20 June 2017). Sturgeon Lake First Nation opens new youth space. *PANow*. Available at: <http://panow.com/article/677517/sturgeon-lake-first-nation-opens-new-youth-space>



Clifford Ballantyne
Youth Leader with Access Open Minds

Advocating for Other Critical Issues



Our office continues to address individual and thematic systemic issues through our advocacy, investigations, research, and monitoring of the recommendations made by the Advocate. In 2017, our office managed over 1,800 files. Similar to previous years, the majority of our calls come from parents and extended family regarding concerns with the Ministry of Social Services or the Ministry of Justice (See Appendix A – Chart 1 and Chart 2).

Unfortunately, our office continues to field a large amount of calls related to case management issues as the majority of our callers disagree with the ministry's or agency's assessment or planning for the child or youth (See Appendix A – Chart 3). Some of our calls are also related to the caller being dissatisfied with the conduct of those assigned to work with them, including being subjected to disrespectful behaviors and/or having limited contact. Lack of visitation with biological family, lack of services and supports, and concerns with the quality of care being provided both in the child welfare and youth custody systems continue to be persistent issues raised with our office (See Appendix A – Chart 3).

Sadly, we continue to see trends related to child deaths and injuries similar to other years. The Advocate is notified (See Appendix B) by the Ministry of Social Services and the Ministry of Justice; Corrections and Policing of all deaths and critical injuries involving children and youth who are receiving, or who have recently received, family services or young offender services.

First Nation and Métis youth continue to be

over-represented in the child protection and justice systems. Therefore, it is not surprising that we continue to see these children and youth disproportionately represented in the notifications that we receive. This year, 79% of the deaths and 65%⁸ of the critical injuries we were notified to involved children or youth of First Nations or Métis ancestry. This ongoing trend reflects the importance and the urgency with which all public services must do better to ensure positive changes in the quality of life for First Nations and Métis children and youth.

We also note the prevalence of deaths involving children under one year of age where sleep-associated risk factors were identified as potential contributing factors by the Office of the Chief Coroner. Of the 8 deaths of children in this age range reported to our office, unsafe sleeping practices were present on 6 occasions where the cause of death was classified as “undetermined” by the Coroner. These account for 32% of all deaths reported to our office in 2017 and represent a significant increase over recent years. Our office has long advocated for strengthening processes to prevent deaths related to unsafe sleeping practices and for addressing barriers to greater social determinants of health where applicable. We know

8. In the case of injuries, information on ethnicity is not always reported to our office. Accordingly, we estimate the percentage of First Nations or Métis youth among the critically injured to be significantly higher than what is represented here. This percentage is calculated based on the number of youth who experienced a critical injury (43), not on the number of critical injuries reported (47), as some youth experienced more than one critical injury.

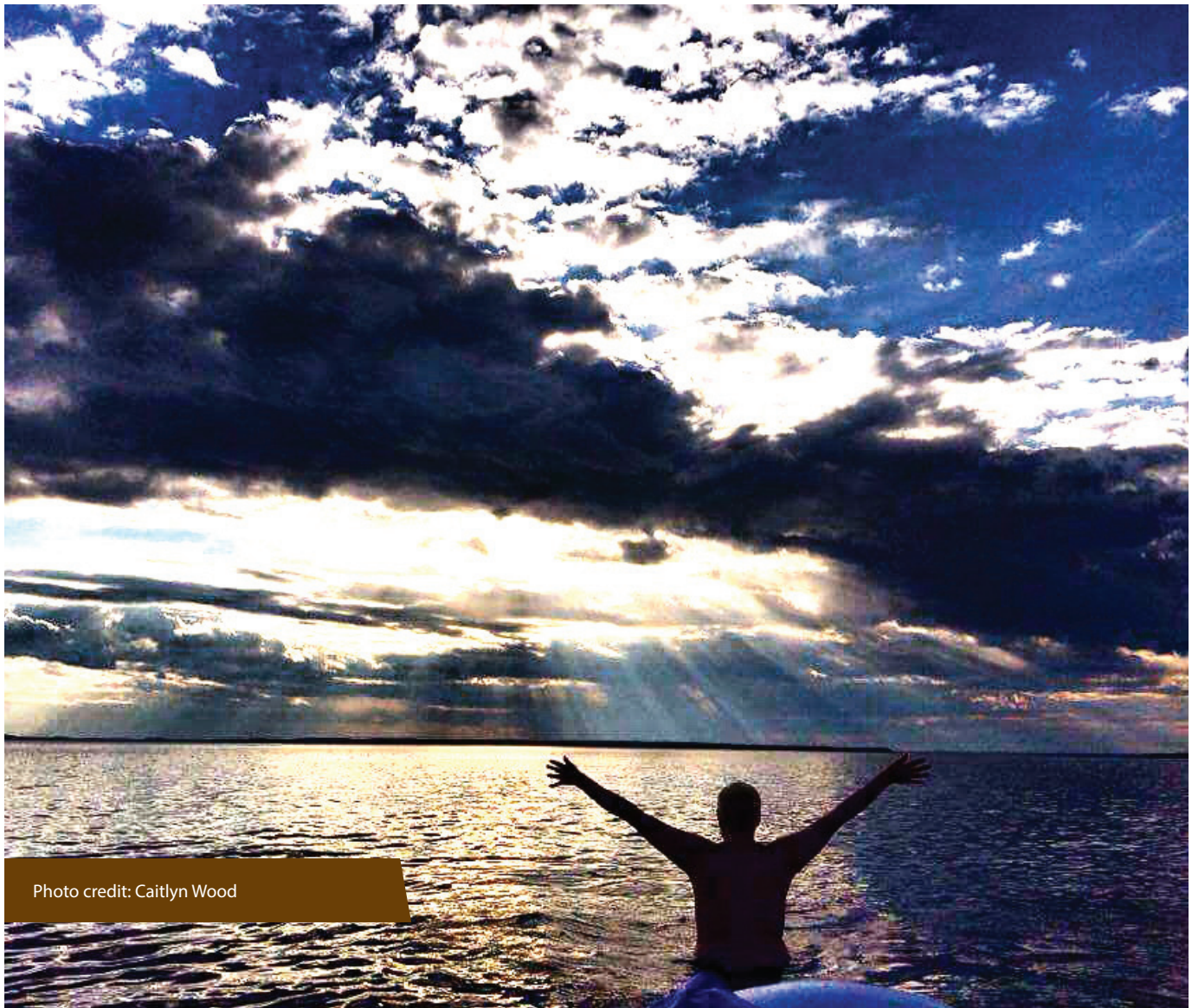


Photo credit: Caitlyn Wood

there have been substantial efforts by the Ministry of Health, the health regions, and the Ministry of Social Services to educate parents on safe sleeping practices. We will continue to monitor this issue moving forward and work toward redressing this preventable issue.

Over the last year, our office completed 27% more public education presentations. In addition to efforts highlighted previously in this report, our staff also completed class presentations for university and post-secondary institutions and facilitated sessions

for employees new to the ministries of Social Services and Justice. Educating professionals in child and youth serving organizations, especially employees early on in their career, will have a positive impact on their case management and client relationships and, ideally, will reduce the number of concerns our office receives in this regard. In 2017, our office experienced an increase in calls from professionals, which includes those working within government ministries, community-based organizations, and First Nations communities. Our presentations foster

an increased awareness about children's and youth's rights while also providing a vehicle for relationship building, collaboration and advocacy, as is supported by the increase in calls from professionals (See Appendix A - Chart 1).

These partnerships are crucial for creating meaningful, positive change. Our staff advocate tirelessly for timely resolution in individual situations, but long-term impacts for the above long-standing issues will truly only be achieved with investment in, and transformation of, current programs, policies, and practices.



Budget and Staff



Budgetary Expenditures	2016-17 Budget	2017-18 Budget
Personal Services	\$1,837,000	\$1,865,000
Contractual Services	\$371,000	\$421,000
Advertising, Printing & Publishing	\$38,000	\$38,000
Travel & Business	\$102,000	\$102,000
Supplies & Services	\$8,000	\$8,000
Capital Assets	\$22,000	\$22,000
Budgetary Total	\$2,378,000	\$2,456,000
Statutory Expenditures		
Personal Services	\$228,000	\$228,000
Statutory Total	\$228,000	\$228,000
Total	\$2,606,000	\$2,684,000

ADVOCATE AND STAFF (AT DECEMBER 31, 2017)

Advocate for Children and Youth: Corey O'Soup

Deputy Advocate, Advocacy: Leeann Palmer

Deputy Advocate, Investigations: Lisa Broda

Advocates:

Shaylee Balfour (term)
Joanne Denis
Jamie Gegner (on leave)
Darren Hubick
Chandra LePoudre
Meredith Newman
Jacqueline Peters (on leave)
Cheryl Starr
Marcia Steuart

Investigators

Connie Braun
Marci Macomber
Joni Sereda (term)
Karen Topolinski

Director of Administration:

Bernie Rodier

Communications Coordinator:

Dan Harder

Administration Supervisor:

Caroline Sookocheff

Executive Administrative Assistant:

Wanda George

Administrative Assistants:

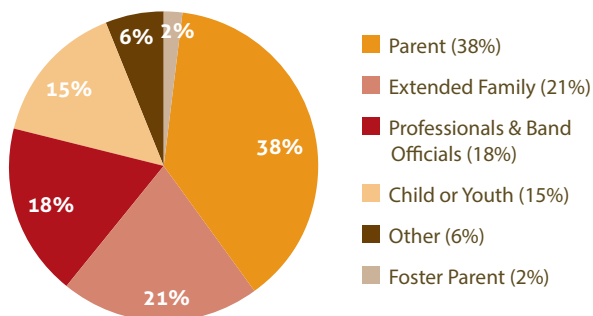
Michelle Beattie
Penny Fairburn (term)
Cheryl Heneghan
Kara Howarth (term)

Appendices

Appendix A

CHART 1

Who Contacted the Advocate for Children and Youth in 2017*



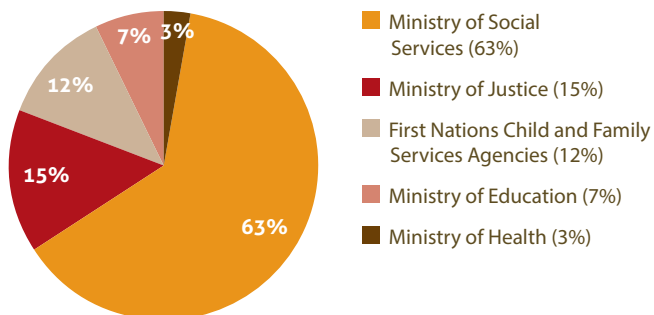
* Advocacy files only

Parent includes parents, stepparents, non-custodial parents, legal guardians, caregivers, alternate caregivers, and persons of sufficient interest.

Other includes interested third parties such as babysitters, neighbors, or anonymous callers.

CHART 2

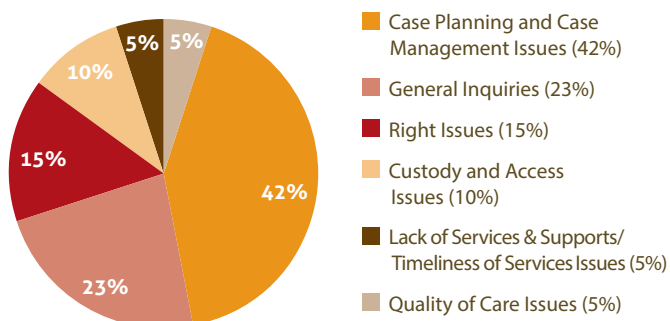
Ministries or Agencies the Advocate for Children and Youth Received Calls About in 2017*



* Advocacy files for ministries and agencies within our jurisdiction

CHART 3

Most Common Issues for the Advocate for Children and Youth in 2017



General Inquiries represents issues that require a referral to another resource or agency. Custody and Access Issues are beyond the mandate of our office. They also require referral to other resources or agencies.

Appendix B

2017 CHILD DEATH DATA

Gender	Deaths	Total:19 ⁹
Male	12	
Female	7	
Ethnicity	Deaths	Total:19
First Nations and Métis	15	
Non-First Nations or Métis	4	
Unknown	0	
Age	Deaths	Total:19
0 to 5	10	
6 to 10	3	
11 to 15	1	
16 to 18	5	
19+	0	

2017 CHILD DEATH CAUSES: IDENTIFIED CAUSES

Gender	Male	Female	Total:19
Cause Not Available Yet ¹⁰	4	0	4
Undetermined	3	3	6 ¹¹
Suicide	1	1	2
Medically Fragile	0	0	0
Homicide	0	0	0
Motor Vehicle Accident	1	1	2
Hit By Motor Vehicle	1	0	1
Fire	0	0	0
Illness	1	1	2 ¹²
Drowning	1	0	1
Drug/Alcohol Toxicity	0	1	1
Other	0	0	0

9. This total includes one female who died in 2014 (illness), but the Ministry involved and the ACY did not become aware of/ were not notified of her death until 2017.

10. When available, information reported as to the cause of death is determined from the Coroner's Reports, which are pending for a number of 2017 deaths. In the absence of a Coroner's Report, cause of death may be obtained from information reported by the Ministry involved. The category of "Cause Not Available Yet" is used when the ACY has not received reliable information on the cause of death. This is to be distinguished from the category of "Undetermined", which is used by the Coroner where the cause of death has been reviewed by the Coroner, but cannot be determined.

11. All six of these deaths involved children 10 months of age or younger and were identified by the Office of the Chief Coroner as having sleep-associated risk factors present at the time of death.

12. This includes one death that was reported to the ACY by the Ministry of Social Services, however was later determined by the Ministry not to meet the criteria for notification to our office once additional information was received. The death continues to be included in this chart as it is meant to reflect work done by the ACY during the 2017 calendar year and follow-up was done in this case to assess for advocacy issues.

2017 CRITICAL INJURY DATA

Gender	Critical Injuries	Total:47 ¹³
Male	30	
Female	17	
Gender	Critical Injuries	Total:47
First Nations and Métis	29	
Non-First Nations or Métis	2	
Unknown ¹⁴	16	
Age	Critical Injuries	Total:47
0 to 5	10	
6 to 10	1	
11 to 15	14	
16 to 18	21	
19+	1	

2017 CRITICAL INJURIES: IDENTIFIED CAUSES

Gender	Male	Female	Total:47
Suicide Attempt ¹⁵	5	6	11
Self Harm	3	1	4
Motor Vehicle Accident	2	0	2
Hit by Motor Vehicle	0	0	0
Drug/Alcohol Toxicity (Accidental)	0	0	0
Stabbing	7	0	7
Shooting	0	1	1
Physical Assault	3	0	3 ¹⁶
Sexual Assault	0	1	1
Burn	1	0	1
Fall	0	1	1
Suspected Non-accidental and/or Child Abuse	1	2	3 ¹⁷
Other Accident	1	2	3 ¹⁸
Illness	4	3	7
Other	3	0	3 ¹⁹

13. The totals reflected throughout the critical injury charts reflect a total of 47 injuries involving 43 youth. One First Nations male youth experienced three critical injuries related to incidences of self-harm. One First Nations female youth attempted suicide or expressed significant suicidal ideation on three occasions. These totals also reflect 4 injuries that occurred in 2016, but were reported to our office in 2017 (2 cases of illness, 1 stabbing and 1 case of suspected non-accidental and/or child abuse). They are reported in the year notification was received as this report is meant to reflect the work of our office and advocacy follow-up occurs when a notification is received.

14. The ACY receives limited information when notified of deaths or injuries. In many cases, information on the ethnicity of a child or youth may not be available to our office.

15. This category also includes significant incidences of suicidal ideation for which medical assessment or treatment was sought.

16. This includes a youth who experienced organ failure after ingesting a drink given to him by another individual while being unaware of its contents. The drink contained a variety of substances, both licit and illicit. Charges were laid.

17. This includes one infant suspected to have been shaken and/or thrown into a crib, one child suffering from malnutrition and multiple injuries, and one child who suffered from dehydration and malnutrition resulting from neglect.

18. This includes an accidental, self-inflicted gunshot wound, an unintentional poisoning and an injury to a child's eye believed to have resulted from play.

19. This category includes three youth charged with/believed to be involved in causing injury or death to another person. While these circumstances do not meet the criteria for notification to our office under the Ministry of Social Services' "Serious Occurrence Categories, Reporting and Review Policy", these matters were reported as the Ministry felt they required further review.

Appendix C

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL SERVICES - CHILD AND FAMILY PROGRAM STATISTICS

	December 31, 2013	December 31, 2014	December 31, 2015	December 31, 2016	December 31, 2017
Children in out-of-home care ²⁰	4,492	4,596	4,715	4,946	5,248
Children in care ²¹	2,846	2,852	2,931	3,072	3,268
Non wards ²²	1,646	1,744	1,784	1,874	1,980
Ministry Foster Homes					
Foster Homes ²³	584	551	498	490	504
Foster homes with more than four foster children ²⁴	48	59	43	35	33
Children living in foster homes with more than four foster children	282	338	251	220	207

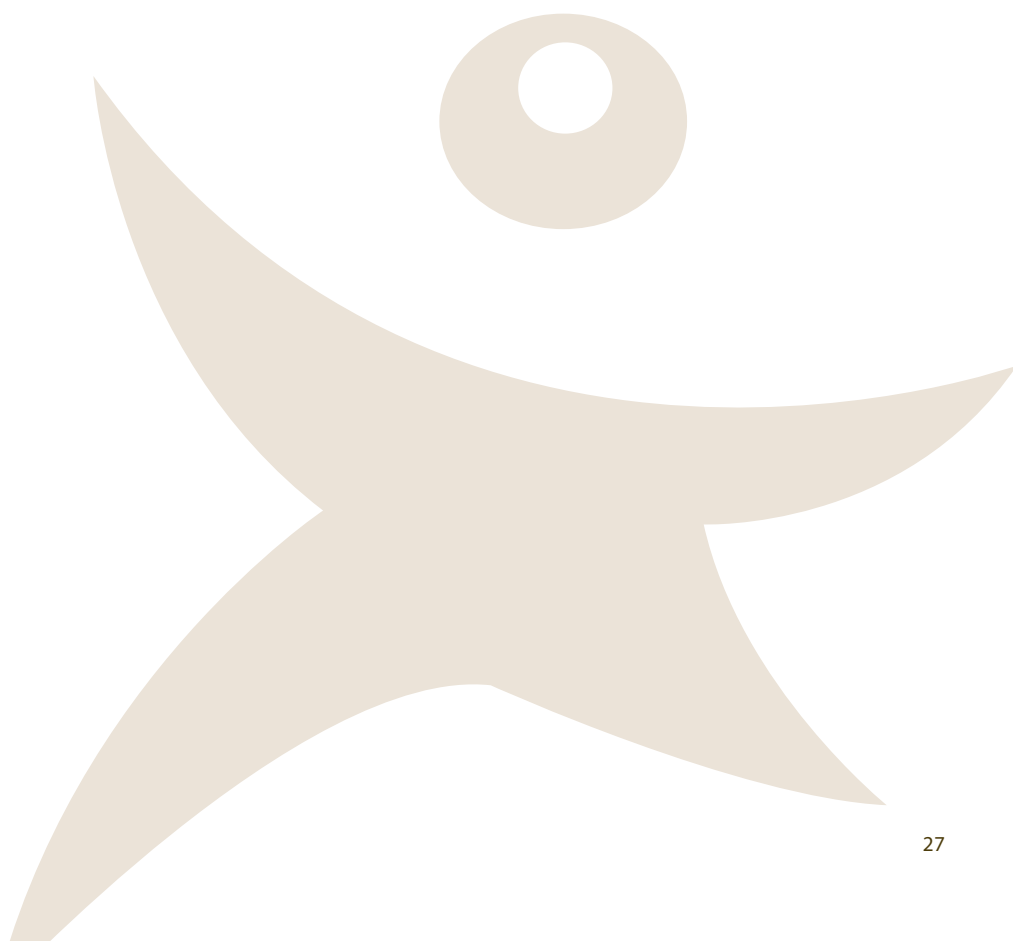
20. This number includes all children who are in the care of the Minister and those children taken into care off-reserve whose case management has subsequently been transferred to a First Nations Agency.

21. These children are on apprehended, temporary, long term or permanent ward status. This number also includes children in care under an Agreement for Residential Service as agreed to between the child's parent and the Ministry.

22. This number includes children/youth who are placed by court order in the custody of a designated Person of Sufficient Interest caregiver.

23. Foster Homes – include approved providers with Regular Foster Care, Therapeutic Foster Care, or both Regular and Therapeutic Foster Care.

24. Children refers to children in care.



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SASKATCHEWAN
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