



May 1, 2026

Statement by the Child and Youth Advocate (Acting) Commending Government's Commitments in Budget 2026

I am pleased to see Government's commitment to children and youth in the 2026 budget delivered by the Minister of Finance and President of Treasury Board on April 29, 2026.

For the first time since 2012, a financial enhancement to support foster families and kinship care providers is being provided. While I believe that a child's right is to be kept with their own family whenever possible, I also understand that there are circumstances where separation is necessary, and a well-supported foster and kinship system is critical to ensuring children have safe and competent care. Increasing the numbers of family-based placements for children is reflective of Government's commitment to ensuring the best interests of children are upheld and, certainly respects a rights-based approach to matters affecting young people.

In June 2025, I began a comprehensive review of permanency planning for children and youth in the care of the Department of Social Supports and Well-Being. At the time, I expressed concerns that such delays not only result in significant economic costs to the Province, but more importantly, demonstrates a failure to recognize the rights of children and youth, as well as a failure to act in their best interests.

Government's focus on children and youth includes increasing the numbers of young people adopted in Newfoundland and Labrador by 100% and reducing wait times for an adoption for those who have made application to adopt children. I believe this is an ambitious, but achievable goal, and demonstrates Government's commitment to permanency planning for these young people. The Budget reflects four new Social Work positions in this area, in addition to the new training program and other work that has already been implemented.

The best interests of the child is the primary consideration in all actions concerning children and youth, as stated in the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**. I look forward to Government's success in this rights-based direction and to see these commitments come to fruition.

Media Contact:

Wilma MacInnis

(709) 753-3888

wilmamacinnis@ocya.nl.ca