



June 9, 2023

Child and Youth Advocate Issues Statement Regarding 2SLGBTQQIA+ Rights and Children's Rights

The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate is very concerned to hear of the increase in hate-motivated attacks on the 2SLGBTQQIA+ community, and on inclusive education in this province. We want to emphasize that 2SLGBTQQIA+ rights are children's rights.

The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate operates from a children's rights framework. Children's universal human rights are articulated in the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**. The **Convention** is the most universally accepted human rights framework in the world today. Children's rights are real and meaningful. When these rights are protected and respected, they help children have a better quality of life.

Children and youth have the right to an identity, the right to have their voices heard and taken seriously, the right to information that is important to their well-being, the right to protection from mistreatment, the right to the best healthcare possible, the right to a good quality education that helps them learn to live peacefully and respect other people, and the right to know their rights.

The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate affirms the statement recently made by The Human Rights Commission of Newfoundland and Labrador, that educating children and youth on their gender expression, gender identity, and sexual orientation is not only helping them identify themselves in this world, but is also raising awareness of human rights, and importantly, children's rights.

We applaud the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District (NLESD) for creating safe spaces for students to exercise their right to an identity. We strongly support inclusive education and encourage children and youth who feel they have

been treated unfairly in a protected area, such as in school, to contact our office for support. Our office is a positive space that welcomes and supports everyone.

For more information on children's rights, visit our website at:

<https://www.childandyouthadvocate.nl.ca/>

Contact information:

Office of the Child and Youth Advocate

193 LeMarchant Road

St. John's, NL A1C 2H5

Telephone: (709) 753-3888

Toll Free: 1-877-753-3888

Fax: (709) 753-3988

Email: office@ocya.nl.ca

Media Contact: Wilma MacInnis

Email: wilmamacinnis@ocya.nl.ca

Office Hours: Monday to Friday, 8:30 am to 4:30 pm