

Child and Youth Advocate Releases Investigative Report “A Soft Place to Land: Lessons for Client-Centered Care”

Child and Youth Advocate Jackie Lake Kavanagh today released **A Soft Place to Land: Lessons for Client-Centered Care**. This case involved a young person who died by suicide while living in a group home. This investigation examined the services provided to this youth and offers lessons and recommendations about the importance of a truly client centered approach across service delivery systems.



This report looks at the struggles of a young person with a history of sexual abuse, and a host of complex mental health and addiction issues. Other issues included housing, residential services, criminal justice issues and education services. The investigation found that in some instances resources and services were unavailable. At other times, services were available but were not always appropriately coordinated and integrated across systems. Many requests for services were met with restrictions and eligibility requirements. The Child and Youth Advocate said, “While many people worked hard for this young person, systemic barriers significantly limited their progress. It is always important to be able to meet young people where they are, on their own ground.”

This report illustrates how trauma is often the root issue in these types of situations and recognizing this is critically important. Young people with complex lives and histories often do not subscribe to a neat menu of services and a one-size-fits-all approach. The Advocate said, “Their lives can be chaotic and their life stories can often tell us why. Therefore services need to be flexible and dynamic, and empower vulnerable young people to be an active partner in all plans for them. “

The report identifies eight recommendations. The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate monitors all recommendations it makes, and publicly reports on them annually.

This report is on the OCYA website:

<https://www.childandyouthadvocate.nf.ca/pdfs/AsoftPlaceToLandOctober2020.pdf>

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