

Office of the Child and Youth Advocate



**CHILDREN
& YOUTH**
NEWFOUNDLAND
& LABRADOR

Annual Report

2018-19



Cover Photo: "Cute Friends" - Kendell and Julie

Article 31 of the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child:**

Children have the right to play and rest.

Young Artist Program Photo Credits:

Rayna- Page 5

Astrid - Page 39

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Message from the Child and Youth Advocate

I am pleased to present the Annual Performance Report for 2018-19. This report has been prepared in accordance with the **Transparency and Accountability Act** provisions for a Category Two entity. As Child and Youth Advocate, I recognize my obligations under the **Act** and I am accountable for the results in this report.

In addition to our ongoing individual advocacy work and investigations, we worked hard on community outreach and engagement, as well as inclusion and diversity awareness in 2018-19. With a provincial mandate and scope, it is important to create access and understanding throughout the province about children's rights and our office's advocacy services. Our work on conducting the independent review into Inuit children's experiences in the child protection system brought together all of our mandated services of individual and systemic advocacy, reviews and investigations, and public education and awareness about children's rights.

I am honoured to be in a position to advocate for young people in Newfoundland and Labrador every day. I know my staff also share this belief and commitment. We will continue to do our very best to represent the rights of Newfoundland and Labrador's children and youth, and to find and create opportunities for them to be empowered and heard in matters affecting them.



Jackie Lake Kavanagh
Jackie Lake Kavanagh
Child and Youth Advocate

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Overview

Mandate

The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate (OCYA) is an Independent Statutory Office of the House of Assembly of Newfoundland and Labrador. We work independent of any government department in fulfilling our mandate.

We protect and represent the rights, interests and view points of children and youth under the age of 19 years in Newfoundland and Labrador. In instances where a young person has been in a care or custody arrangement, the age of service is extended up to their 21st birthday.

We help young people speak up for themselves, we speak up with them, or we speak up for them. The voices and rights of young people are very important to us, and guide our advocacy work on a daily basis. We advocate for changes and accountability that promote the interests and well-being of children and youth in Newfoundland and Labrador. We may do this through individual advocacy, systemic advocacy, investigations and reviews, as well as public education about children's rights. The governing legislation for our office is the **Child and Youth Advocate Act** and our advocacy work is guided by the **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child**.

Financial Information

The budget approved for Fiscal Year 2018-19 was \$1,821,900.



What We Do



Vision

The rights and interests of every child and youth are protected and respected, and each child and youth has access to the government services they require in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Values



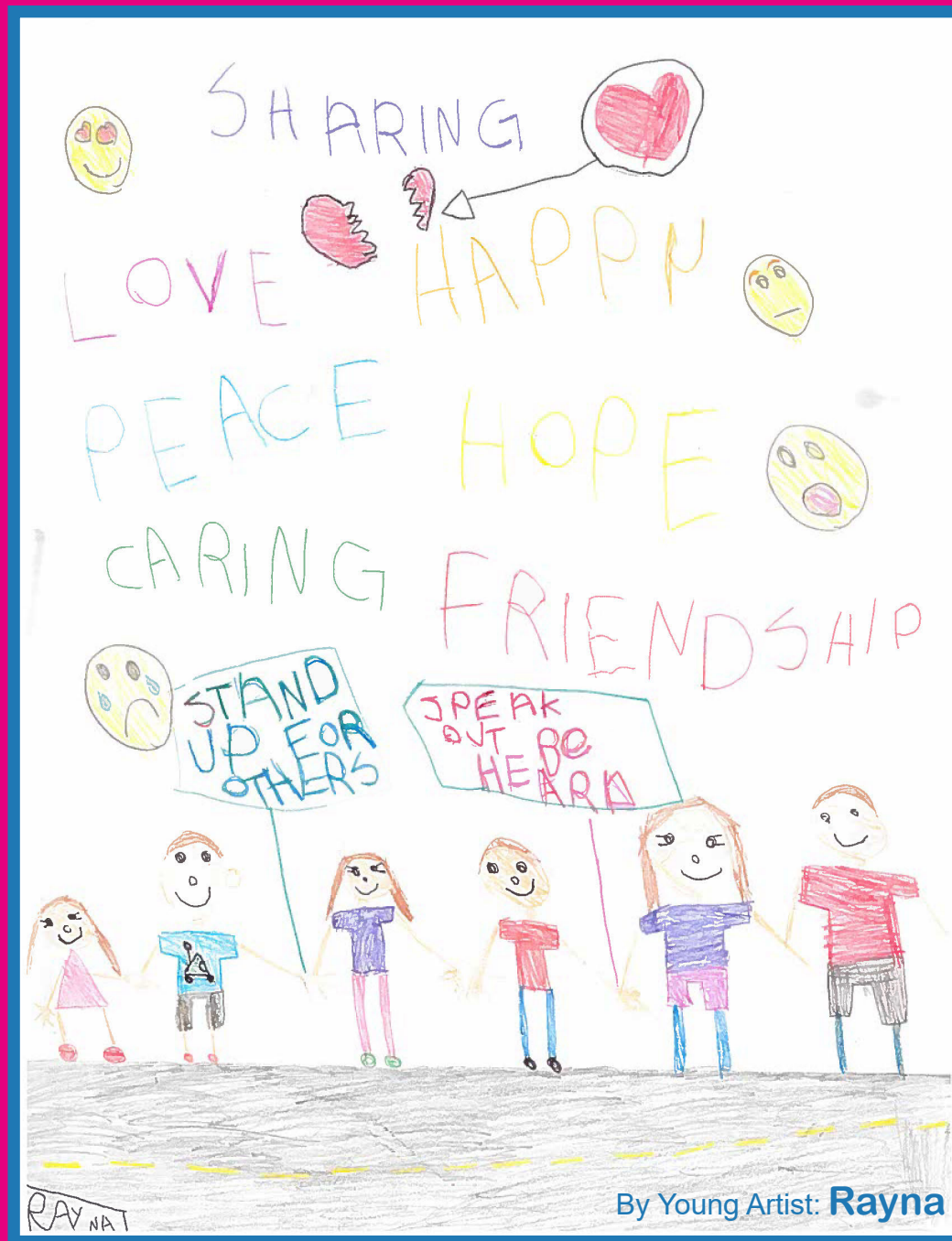
Staff

In addition to the Child and Youth Advocate, we have 13 staff members. Our team brings many diverse backgrounds to our work together for children and youth. These professional backgrounds include social work, nursing, education, law and psychology. Team members have worked in a variety of practice settings including public service, community organizations and private practice. Our administration staff serve important support roles to ensure advocacy and investigative staff can dedicate their efforts directly to issues affecting children and youth every day.



You have the right to
be heard
in things that affect
you

Article 12:
**United Nations Convention on the
Rights of the Child**

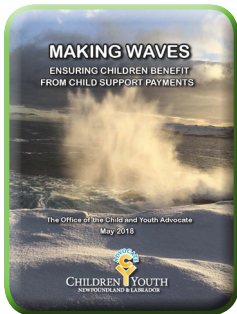


Highlights and Accomplishments

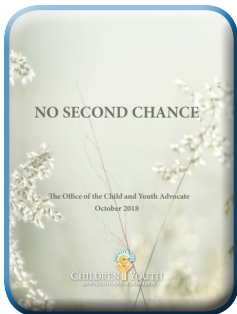
Ground We Covered in 2018-19



Investigation Reports

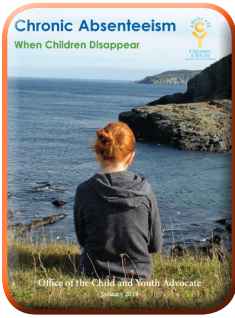


Making Waves – Ensuring Children Benefit from Child Support Payments (May 2018) addressed the government practice of clawing back court-ordered child support payments from Income Support amounts. Income Support covers basic costs of living for the entire family. The Advocate made one recommendation to the Department of Advanced Education, Skills and Labour to eliminate the recovery of child support payments from Income Support Program calculations. The full report can be found by visiting: <https://www.childandyouthadvocate.nf.ca/pdfs/OCYA-InvestigativeReportMakingWaves.pdf>

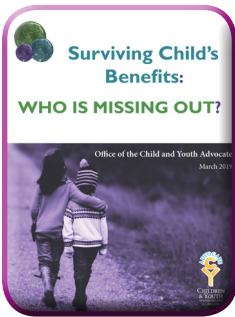


No Second Chance (October 2018) is the story of a young child who endured many tragic events in a short life, and whose involvement with child protection and mental health services did not see the child's needs met before an untimely and tragic death. The Advocate identified three primary systemic areas for improvement involving monitoring of court ordered conditions, access to mental health services, and the importance of proper risk assessments and child safety plans. The full report can be found by visiting: <https://www.childandyouthadvocate.nf.ca/pdfs/NoSecondChanceReport2018.pdf>





Chronic Absenteeism: When Children Disappear (January 2019) involved a systemic review focused on chronic absenteeism, factors influencing it, impacts on students, and promising strategies to address the problem. This review shows how children who are absent have needs and require responses from many different government services, not just schools. The Advocate made four recommendations to government departments and agencies that have shared responsibility for solutions. The full report can be found by visiting: <https://www.childandyouthadvocate.nf.ca/pdfs/ChronicAbsenteeismJan2019.pdf>



Surviving Child's Benefits: Who Is Missing Out? (March 2019) addresses whether all children and youth in Newfoundland and Labrador receive Canada Pension Plan Surviving Child Benefits when their parent dies. This Review concludes that some children of deceased parents in Newfoundland and Labrador do not receive Canada Pension Plan's Surviving Child's Benefit. In some cases, these funds are treated as provincial government revenue and never directly reach these children, who are among the most vulnerable. The Advocate recommended government discontinue this practice and set up mechanisms to ensure this benefit is protected for these children and youth. The full report can be found by visiting: <https://www.childandyouthadvocate.nf.ca/pdfs/WhosMissingOutonSurvivingChildsBenefitsMarch2019.pdf>



Status Report on Recommendations 2017-2018 was released in September 2018. This type of report is issued annually and reports progress and status on our recommendations. We believe this is important for public accountability and to keep our recommendations in public view until they are addressed. Government departments and agencies have made significant progress on the recommendations outlined in this report. And while there had been significant progress to March 31, 2018, five percent of the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate's recommendations remained outstanding. We would like to acknowledge the considerable effort and significant progress made by government departments and agencies to make important improvements that benefit young people in Newfoundland and Labrador. This is not accidental, and we appreciate the seriousness and commitment with which our recommendations are received. The full report can be found by visiting: <https://www.childandyouthadvocate.nf.ca/pdfs/StatusReportOnRecommendations2017-2018.pdf>

Independent Review of Child Protection Services to Inuit Children

Indigenous children throughout Canada are struggling in the child protection system. Sadly, Newfoundland and Labrador faces this reality as well. So when the Nunatsiavut Government asked the Advocate if she would conduct an independent review of Inuit children's situation in child protection, the natural answer was "yes". In April 2018 she launched a comprehensive, Independent Review of the treatment, experiences and outcomes of Inuit children and youth in the Newfoundland and Labrador child protection system.

The review process included multiple visits for community sessions and interviews in Inuit communities in Labrador as well as other communities in Labrador and on the island where Inuit children are in care. We also completed a comprehensive file review, and a literature review. We made every effort to ensure the voices of those affected were heard through this process, especially the voices of young people. In total we connected with approximately 575 people. Most people were from Labrador, but some were also from the island. Some people who once lived in Labrador Inuit communities but who had moved to other parts of Canada also contacted us.

Thanks to the communities of Hopedale, Makkovik, Nain, Rigolet, Postville, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Northwest River, and others that welcomed us and helped support this work.

We are grateful to the Elders, young people, families, foster families, community leaders, extended family members, and service providers in each community who came out to speak to us. Your stories touched us deeply. The participation of professionals who were involved in this work also enriched this Review.

The release of this review is scheduled for the Summer of 2019 and will include a series of recommendations to guide the needed changes in order to support better outcomes for Inuit children and their families.

Engagement and Outreach

Part of our job is to provide education and awareness about children and youth rights. While we are located in St. John's, we are provincial in scope and try to reach as many communities as we can. Education and awareness can take many forms and this is truly the fun part of our jobs. We find our work is enhanced when we reach out to others in the community because we always learn from each other. In 2018-19, we met with children, youth, parents caregivers, and professionals in various settings, and participated in a variety of community events that benefit children and youth.

School Outreach

We met with students at schools throughout the province to discuss their rights, organize some interactive and fun learning activities, and explain the role of our office. We visited Menihek High School's Social Justice Committee (Labrador City), Laval High (Placentia), Vanier Elementary (St. John's), Sacred Heart Academy (Marystown), Point Leamington Academy (Point Leamington), Holy Name of Mary Academy (Lawn), Cloud River Academy (Roddickton), Jens Haven Memorial School (Nain), and Copper Ridge Academy (Baie Verte). We also reached children and youth as we volunteered at Breakfast Programs. We were delighted to help serve breakfast at Larkhall Academy (St. John's), St. Andrews Elementary (St. John's), and Learys Brook Junior High (St. John's). We also visited two schools to pilot our new Self Advocacy Workshop: Crescent Collegiate (Dildo) and Waterford Valley High (St. John's).

Other Outreach to Children and Youth

We attended various activities, groups and conferences where we spoke with children and youth participants. We connected with children and youth at the Allied Youth Provincial Conference (St. John's), Holy Heart Gender Sexuality Alliance (GSA), Camp Rainbow, Fluvarium Adventure Day Camp, City of St. John's Summer Program, City of St. John's X-Cellent Leader Day Camp, Shea Heights Day Camp, Holyrod Recreation, Camp Eclipse, Public Legal Association of Newfoundland and Labrador's Youth Justice Camp, Radhoc Youth Leadership Group, Trans Support NL Youth Group, Canadian Hard of Hearing Association, YWCA Power of Being You Conference, Brighter Futures Shea Heights, Boys and Girls Club Botwood, Main Street Youth Centre Community Youth Network in Grand

Bank, Get Moving Family Event in St. John's, FUN Clubs (Association For New Canadians), Family Resource Centre in Roddickton, cultural gathering for Inuit Youth in Care, LEARN Science Class (Association for New Canadians), Community Youth Network (CYN) in Springdale, and residents at the Newfoundland and Labrador Youth Correctional Centre in Whitbourne.

We also continued our regularly scheduled outreach with youth at Thrive and Choices for Youth in St. John's.

Future Professionals

We were happy to have the opportunity to present to post-secondary students at the School of Social Work, MUN Centre for Collaborative Health Professional Education, and Eastern Academy (Child and Youth Care with Addictions Support Worker Program students). We also provided placements for social work students.

Parents and Adults

We met with parents and other adults about the advocacy services we offer. These connections included Daybreak Parent Group (St. John's), Brighter Futures Play Group (Burin), Multicultural Women's Organization (St. John's), and Momma Moments Program (St. John's).

Professionals

We met with many professionals to discuss the mandate of our office, children's rights, and to discuss issues of shared interest/concern. Specifically, we met with representatives of the Janeway Children's Health and Rehabilitation Centre, Labrador City Housing and Homelessness Coalition, Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development, Family Justice Services, Labrador City First Steps Family Resource Centre, Indigenous Service Centre in Labrador City, Labrador West Health Center, Autism Involves Me (AIM) and autism friendly hotel (Port aux Basques), Bay St. George Women's Centre, Community Education Network (CEN) and Community Youth Network (CYN), Multicultural Women's Organization of Newfoundland and



Labrador, Burin Peninsula Voice Against Violence, Burin Peninsula Mental Health and Addictions Team, Smallwood Community Centre, Brighter Futures, Stella's Circle, Cloud River Academy in Roddickton, Rotary Club of St. John's East, and Hope Valley Treatment Centre in Grand Falls-Windsor.

We also met with professionals in the Nunatsiavut communities of Hopedale and Nain. In these communities we met with representatives of the Nunatsiavut Government's Department of Health and Social Development, a Nunatsiavut Government Ordinary Member, and the provincial government departments of Children, Seniors and Social Development, and Health and Community Services.

Community Events

We always enjoy supporting and participating in community initiatives. We were happy to:

- ✧ Attend the City of St. John's Youth Week Luncheon
- ✧ Attend the Big Brothers Big Sisters Bowl for Kids Sake
- ✧ Attend the Cultural Humility Session offered by First Light (formerly the St. John's Native Friendship Centre)
- ✧ Highlight National Indigenous Peoples Day
- ✧ Walk in the Pride Parade with our bright new banner
- ✧ Participate in the Buckmaster Circle Community Centre's 25th Anniversary
- ✧ Organized activities recognizing National Child Day including the launch of our first poster contest on the right to education, awarded the winners of the name the bear contest, and celebrated with the Brighter Futures play group in Shea Heights
- ✧ Attend the Multicultural Women's Organization of Newfoundland and Labrador Christmas party




- ✦ Tweet on Bell Let's Talk Day in support of mental health
- ✦ Support Pink Shirt Day
- ✦ Attend the pancake breakfast in support of the NL Housing and Homelessness Network
- ✦ Participate in Sharing Our Cultures



Information Materials


We developed and distributed new and updated information materials about children's rights and our advocacy services.

- ✦ We developed a poster to explain to children and youth what happens when they contact our office.
- ✦ We designed a series of Rights Cards to educate children, youth, professionals and the general public about the rights of children and youth. We tweeted these on a weekly basis.
- ✦ We engaged residents of the Newfoundland and Labrador Youth Correctional Centre to help us update the In Custody brochure.
- ✦ We released and distributed newsletters in Spring and Fall of 2018.



What Happens When I Contact the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate?


Step 1
Call us and ask for help



If you are a young person, you can call, email or drop in to our office. There is no referral needed. We offer a friendly, accepting and supportive space. You can bring a support person with you if it makes you feel more comfortable.

Call Us: 1-877-753-3888
Email Us: Office@ocya.nl.ca
Visit Us: 193 LeMarchant Rd, St. John's


Step 2
We'll ask you for some information



We need to know a few things so we can help you:

- ☞ the reason you are calling;
- ☞ if you have contacted anyone else and what happened;
- ☞ what you would like to happen; and
- ☞ your contact information.

Step 3
We'll talk to you about how we can help



We can:

- ☞ help you get heard;
- ☞ help you learn about your rights;
- ☞ help you prepare for meetings;
- ☞ find you someone who can help;
- ☞ contact others involved; and
- ☞ help you to identify options.

Anyone can contact us!



Did you know it's your right to:

have your **Rights Protected**, no matter where you live, what language you speak, what your religion is, or what your culture is



Article 2: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Name the Bear Contest

In the spring of 2018, we announced our Name the Bear contest. Thanks to all of you who submitted names for our office bear. We received a lot of great ideas so we had a hard time picking a winner.

Two young people won our Name the Bear contest. We would like to thank Avery Jackman and Brianna Keefe for the winning name, Charlie.

Avery used the following description for the name:

C - children

H - have

A - a

R - right to be

L - loved &

I - included

E - everyday

We awarded the two winners of the contest on National Child Day in our travels to Marystown and Botwood on November 20, 2018.



Poster Contest

We launched our first ever poster contest on National Child Day, November 20, 2018. We wanted to get children involved and increase awareness about the rights of children and youth. We also saw this as an opportunity to raise awareness about the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate. The contest focused on the Right to Education and we asked children and youth to create a poster which shows us what this means to them. We received over 300 amazing submissions. Two contest winners will be chosen from two age groups. The contest winners will have their artwork displayed on posters as well as t-shirts for their classmates. The announcement of the winners will happen in Spring 2019. We will display the many entries in our office and also use them in some of our resource materials.



The flyer is titled "FIRST EVER Child and Youth Advocate Poster Contest". It features the logo of the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate (OCYA) in Newfoundland and Labrador, which consists of a stylized 'C' and 'Y' with 'ADVOCATE' written above them. The text is arranged in a clean, modern layout with various colored callout boxes. The main title is in large, bold letters. Below the title, there are three callout boxes: a purple one for "Do you like to create art?", an orange one for "Who can enter?", and a red one for "How do you enter?". To the right, a green callout box asks "Prize?". At the bottom right, a green circle contains the text "Entries due January 31, 2019". The footer includes a toll-free phone number.

FIRST EVER

Child and Youth Advocate

Poster Contest

Do you like to create art?

To celebrate "National Child Day" we want you to design a poster about your **Right to Education**. Create a poster that tells us what school means to you! Think about the things you like best about school, such as your favourite subject, activities you enjoy, having fun with your friends, or how your teacher helps you. Use your imagination!

Who can enter?

Children and Youth under 21 years of age.

How do you enter?

Send us your art work with your name, address, age and phone number.

By email to:
Office@ocya.nl.ca
(with subject "Poster Contest")

In Person or by Mail at:
Poster Contest
Office of the Child and Youth Advocate
193 LeMarchant Road, St. John's, NL A1C 2H5

Prize?

The winner will receive a prize package and have their winning entry featured on a poster and a limited number of the Child and Youth Advocate t-shirts.

Entries due January 31, 2019

Call Toll Free: 1-877-753-3888

Young Artist Program

Our Young Artist Program is an ongoing program for anyone under the age of 21. We accept artwork all year long and display it on our Young Artist Wall of Fame. We would love to showcase young people's artwork on our website, social media, newsletters, reports and other resource materials about children's rights. We are interested in artistic creations such as drawings, paintings, pictures and poetry. If you would like to learn more, please visit <https://www.childandyouthadvocate.nl.ca/YoungArtistProgram.htm>. Every submission receives a prize pack and there is no closing date.



Young Artist Program

We would love to showcase your original artwork!

Who can participate?
Anyone under the age of 21

How will my art be used?
It will appear on our website, on social media, on our wall of fame and in our various print materials

How do I submit my artwork?
Online by visiting: <https://www.childandyouthadvocate.nl.ca/YoungArtistProgram.htm>
Send by mail to: Young Artist Program
Office of the Child and Youth Advocate
193 LeMarchant Road
St. John's, NL A1C 2H5
Call us to find out more: 1-877-753-3888

We are interested in:

- Drawings
- Paintings
- Pictures
- Poetry

Follow Us on Twitter @OCYANL

Office of the Child and Youth Advocate

Continuous Learning/Education

We believe it is important to always learn new things as we strive to ensure the rights of children and youth. We participated in professional development sessions on many topics including: youth engagement, family based care, conflict resolution, youth homelessness, the Blue Door Program, Kids Help Phone, integrated models of care, harassment free workplaces, restorative justice, mental health, gender diversity, cultural humility, autism, occupational health and safety, cannabis legalization, information management, trauma informed practice, intercultural humility, youth homelessness, restorative justice, self-advocacy, integrated youth services, psychological health and safety, and leadership.

Staff also attended the Choices for Youth Social Innovation Summit and the Provincial Conference on Housing and Homelessness.

We were pleased to host community representatives so that we could learn more about some services in the community including: the Human Rights Commission, Coalition against the Sexual Exploitation of Youth (CASEY), Public Legal Information of NL (PLIAN), the Journey Project, and the Autism Society.

We were delighted to participate in the National Indigenous Gathering, Allies 4 Youth Conference, the International Summer Course on The Rights of the Child, the Jordan's Principle Summit and the Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse in Inuit Nunangat Forum.

Our efforts to build our knowledge and skill provided opportunities to participate in incredible learning opportunities, but also to connect with inspirational leaders sharing this advocacy road in Newfoundland and Labrador, and throughout the country.



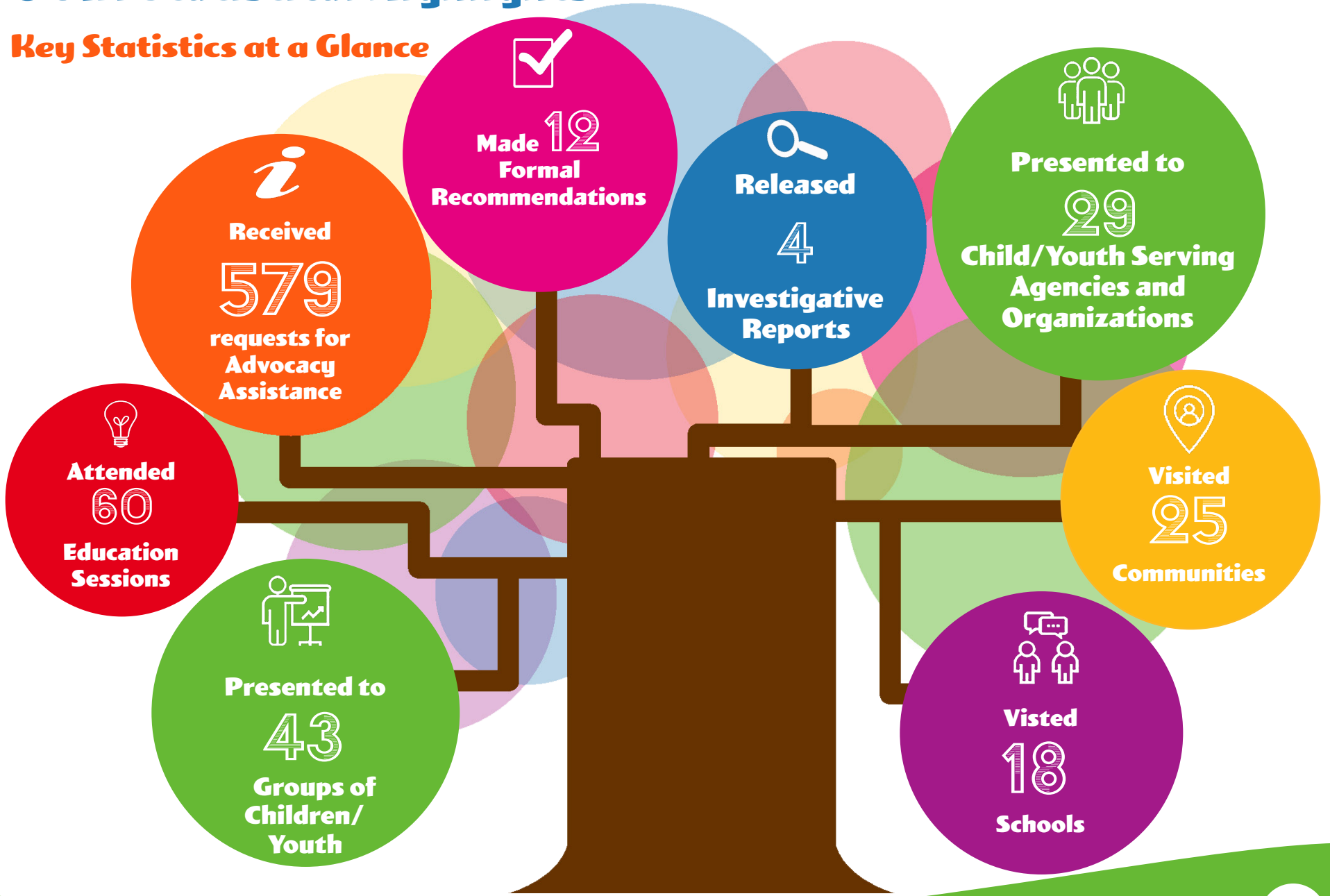
Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates (CCCYA)

The Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates is an association of children's advocates from across Canada who have mandates to advance children and youth rights, and to promote their voices. Through Council, advocates identify areas of mutual concern, share best practice, information and resources, facilitate joint learning opportunities for staff in all jurisdictions, and work to develop ways to address issues at a national level. As a small jurisdiction, Newfoundland and Labrador benefits greatly from Council's network and resources. In October 2018, Jackie Lake Kavanagh was elected to a two year term as Vice President of the Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates.



OCYA Statistical Highlights

Key Statistics at a Glance

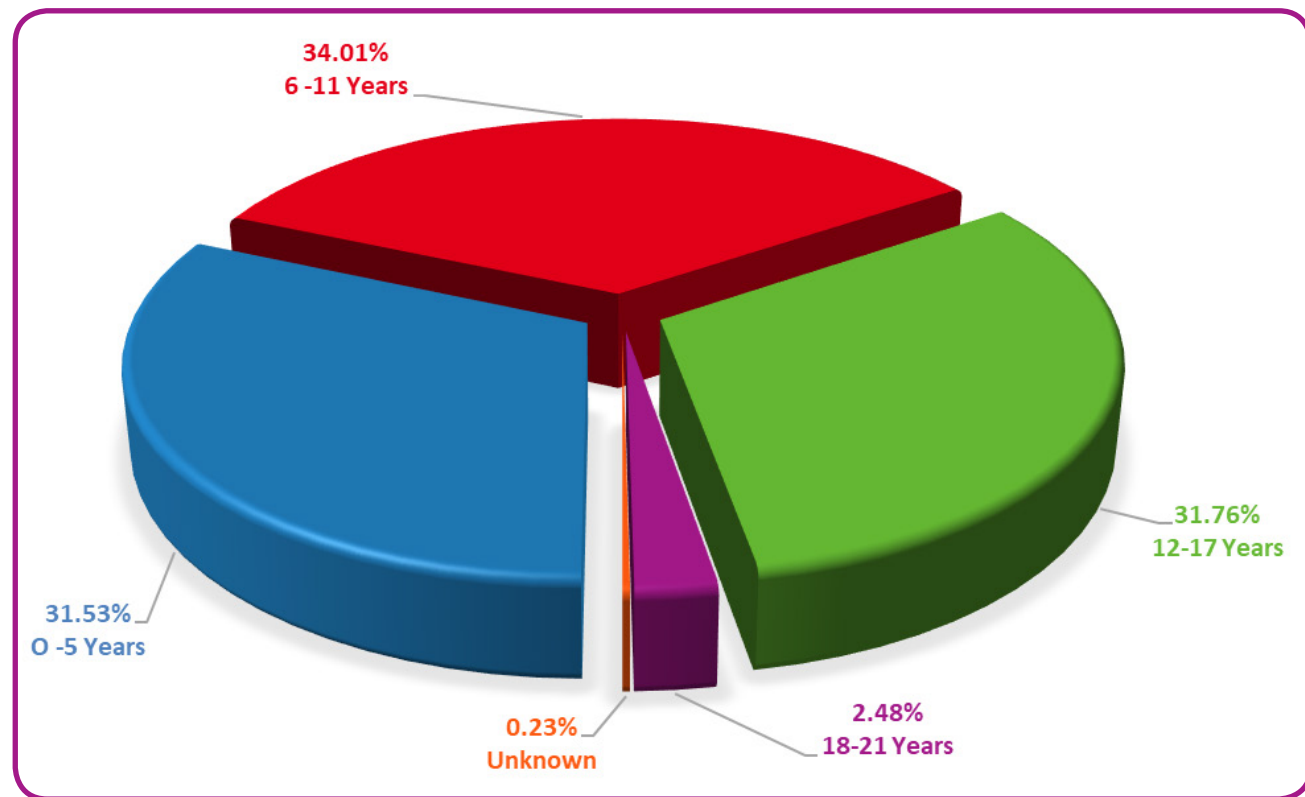


Service Delivery and Performance

We responded to approximately 579 requests for service/individual advocacy. This is in addition to 78 requests carried forward from the previous year. The following charts and tables will help you understand this work better.

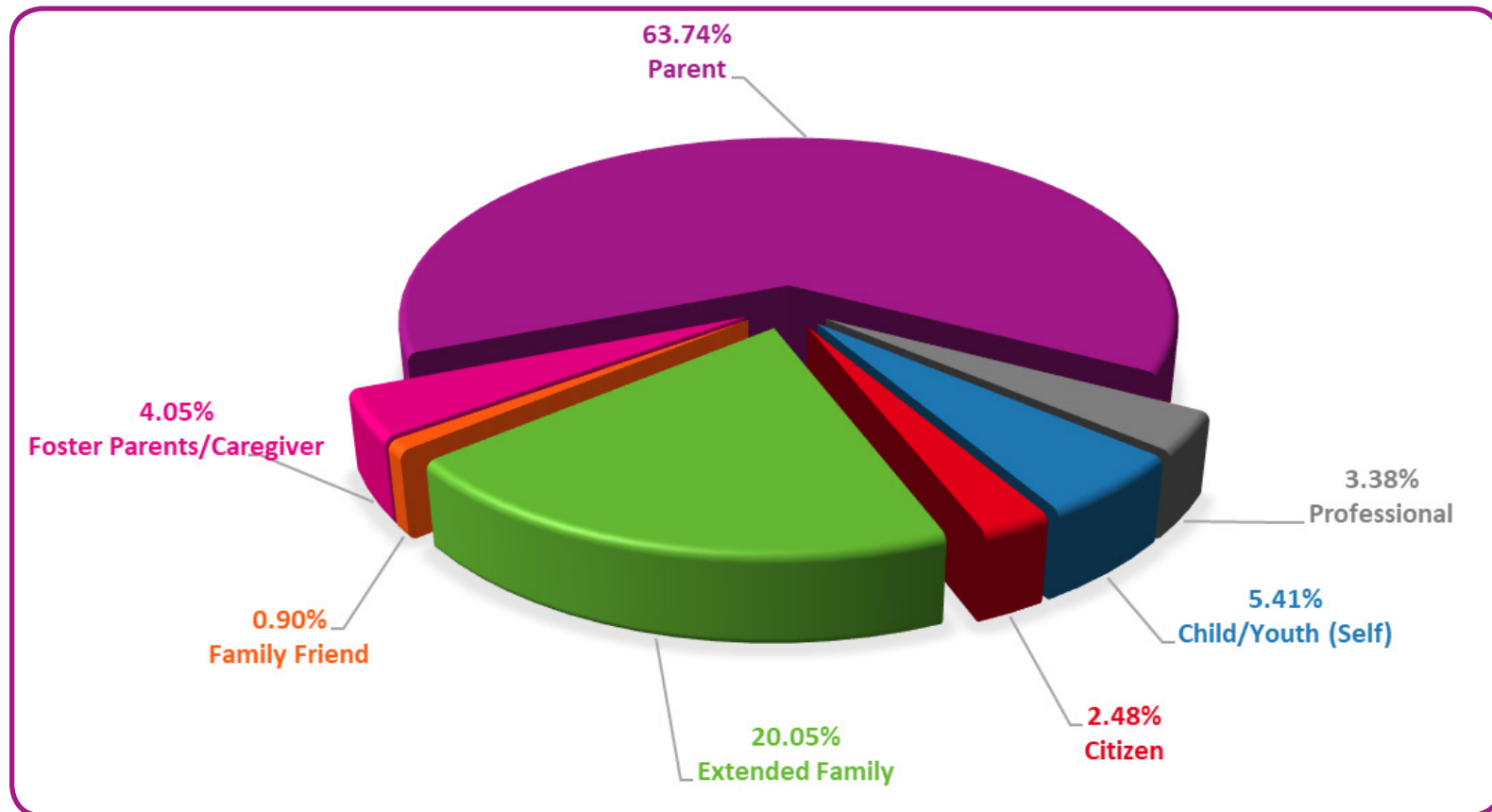
Age of Client

This chart identifies the age of the client who was the subject of the request for advocacy assistance. Consistent with previous years, younger children are the subject of most requests for advocacy assistance. Over 65% of the requests received were for children aged 0 - 11 years. This is a consistent trend. The 12-17 age group has increased from 21.68% last year to 31.76%. Consistent with previous years, older youth requests remain at a lower rate, however, the number is slightly higher from 2.1% last year to 2.48% this year.



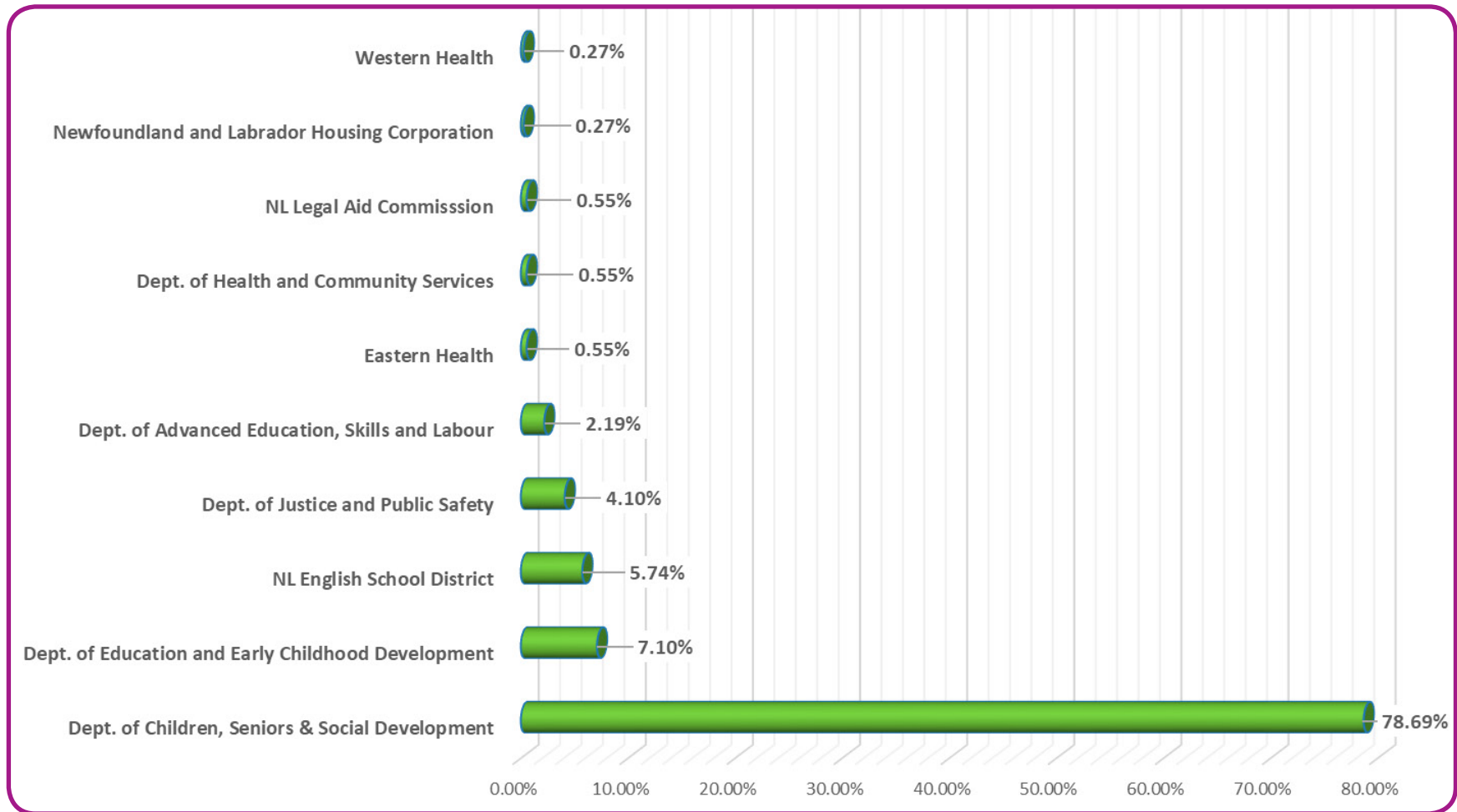
Person Requesting Advocacy for Child/Youth

This chart identifies the person requesting advocacy assistance on behalf of a child/youth. Parents continue to be the primary group requesting advocacy services for their children. Consistent with previous years, extended family are the second highest group reaching out to our office.



Departments or Agencies the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate Received Calls About in 2018-19

This graph represents the department or agency which was the focus of the concern or complaint. Consistent with previous years, with the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development is the highest department or agency of focus.



Mandatory Reporting

In March 2018, the **Child and Youth Advocate Act** was amended to require the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development, and the Department of Justice and Public Safety to report all child and youth deaths and critical injuries to the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate. The legislation defines a critical injury as "an injury, including a physical or psychological injury, which may result in the death of a child or youth or may cause serious or long-term impairment of the health of a child or youth".

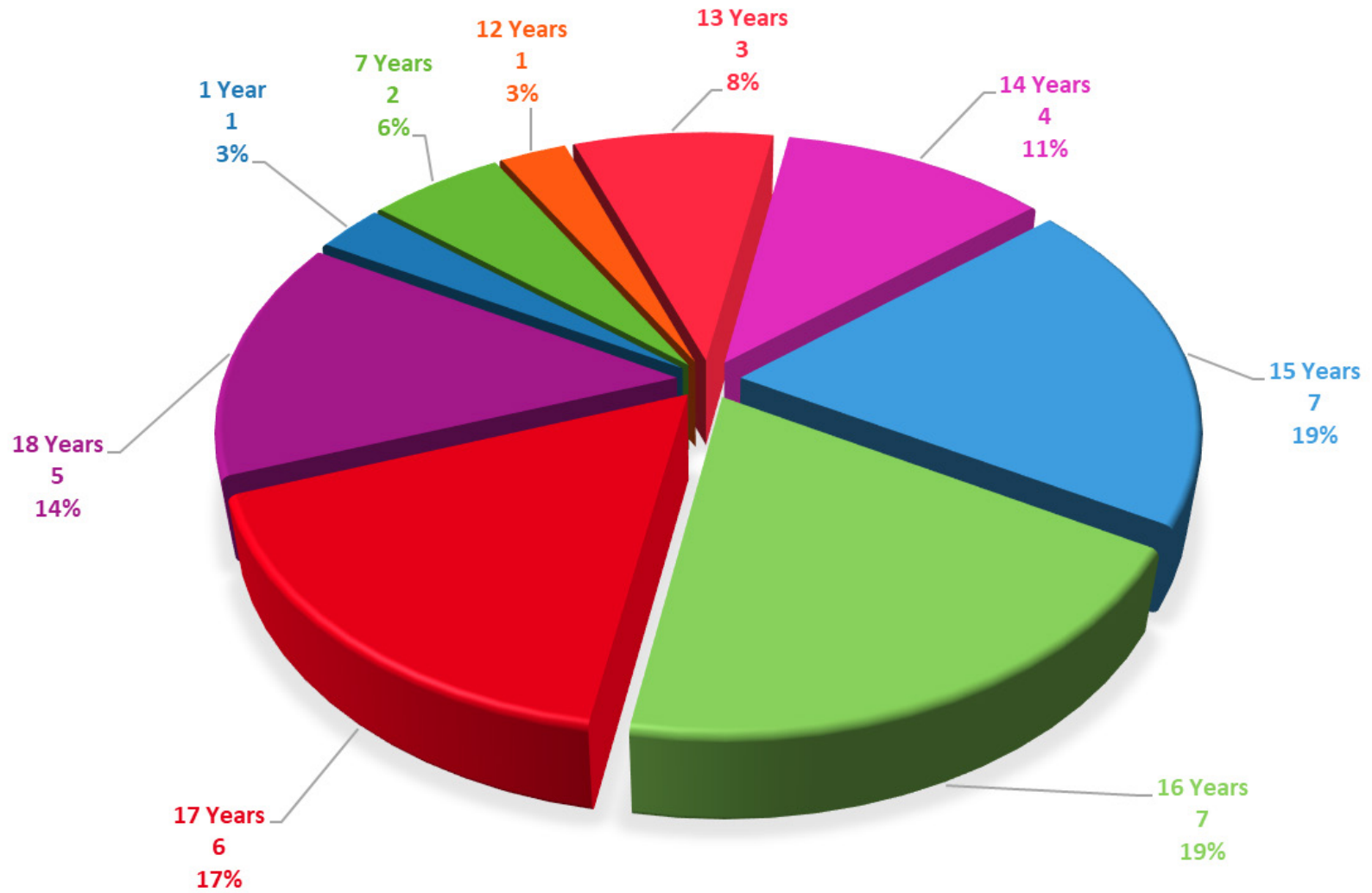
For the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development, this involves children/youth involved with protective intervention, kinship, in care, youth services, and community youth corrections programs. For the Department of Justice and Public Safety, this involves children/youth in custody and the Newfoundland and Labrador Youth Correctional Centre, or those temporarily held in custody at a holding facility. Departments are also required to report when a death or critical injury occurs within twelve months of receiving the designated services.

Mandatory Reporting was implemented on March 5, 2018 and there were six critical injuries and two deaths for that month. This is reflected in the following charts. From April 1, 2018 up to and including March 31, 2019, the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development reported 30 critical injuries and seven deaths. The Department of Justice and Public Safety reported one critical injury. All Reports were received within the required timeframes. We requested additional information on nine cases.

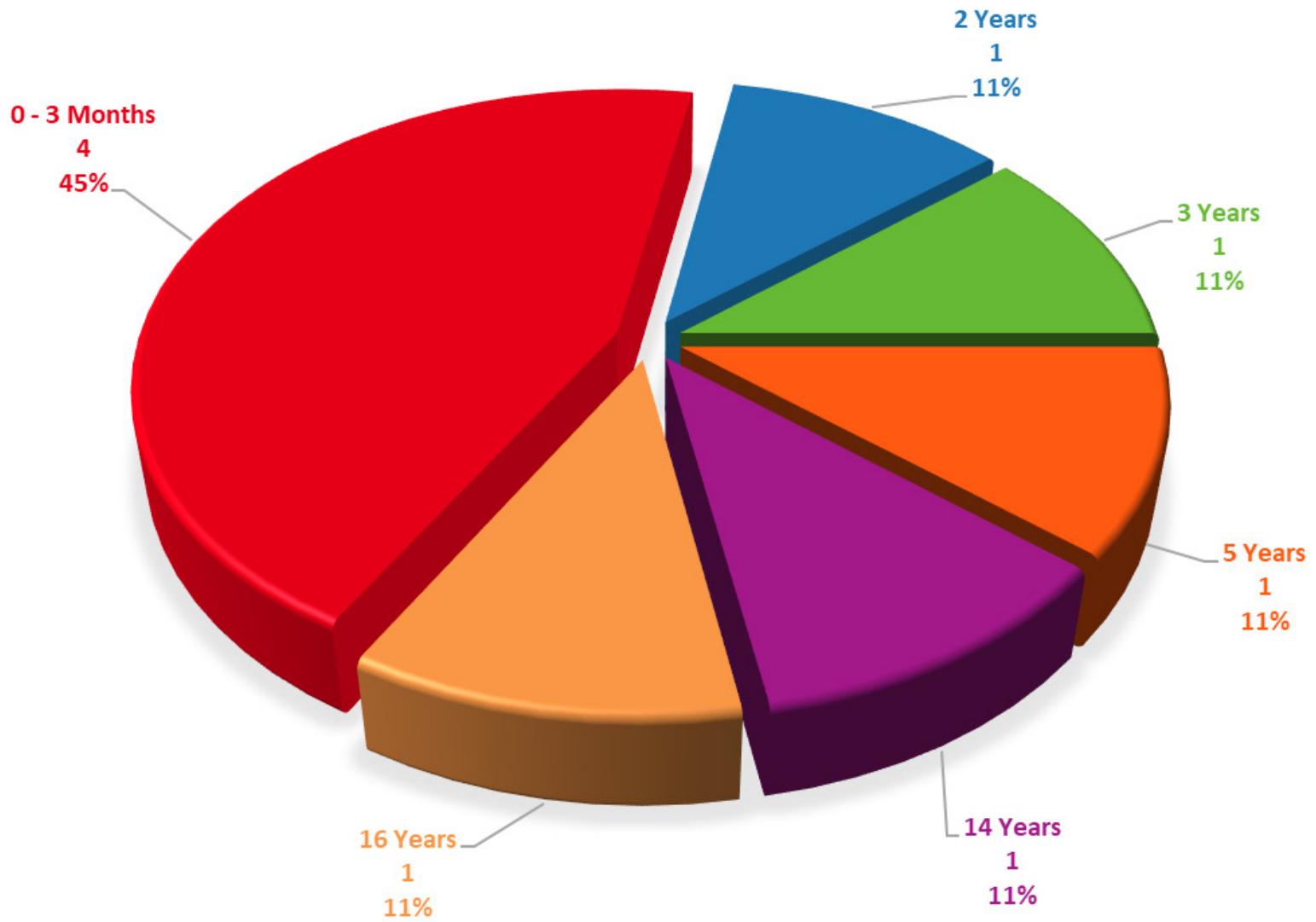
The causes of critical injuries or deaths are reported as:

- ✧ Medical: a medical condition results in the critical injury or death (e.g., allergic reaction, heart failure)
- ✧ Accidental: an accident results in the critical injury or death (e.g., motor vehicle accident, drowning)
- ✧ Attempted Suicide: where the critical injury or death results from a person harming themselves in an attempt to cause their own death.
- ✧ Undetermined: the cause of the critical injury or death cannot be determined.

Critical Injury by Age

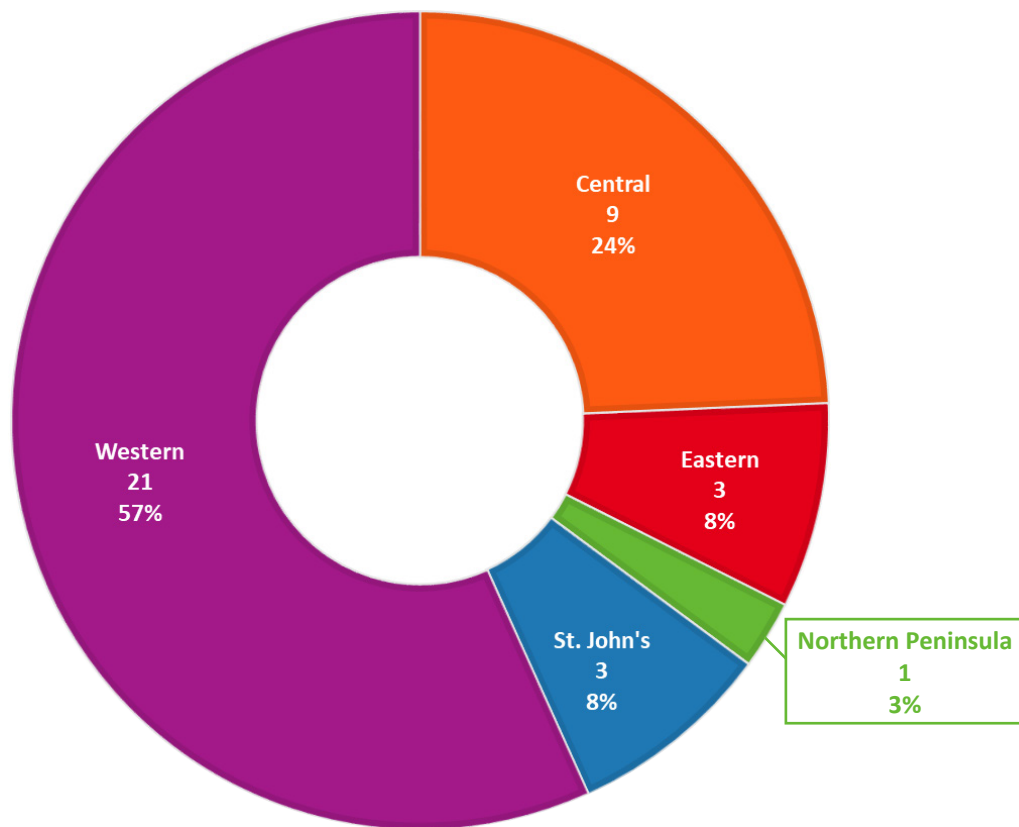


Death by Age

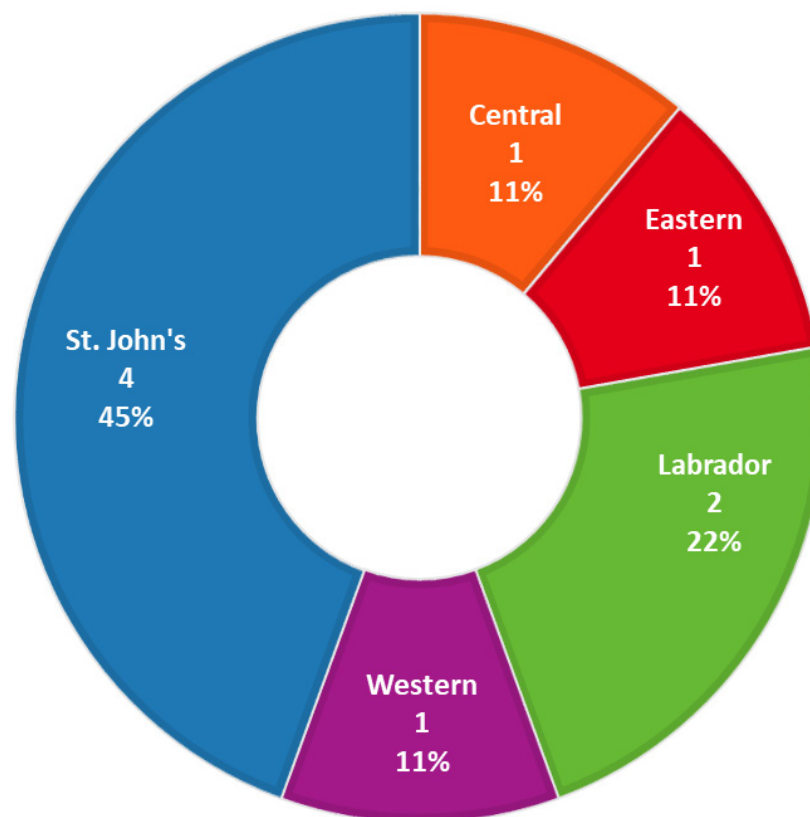


During the reporting timeframe, the western region saw the most critical injuries of all regions, with 21 incidents (57%) reported. St. John's had the highest number of reported deaths, with four deaths (45%) reported.

Critical Injury by Region

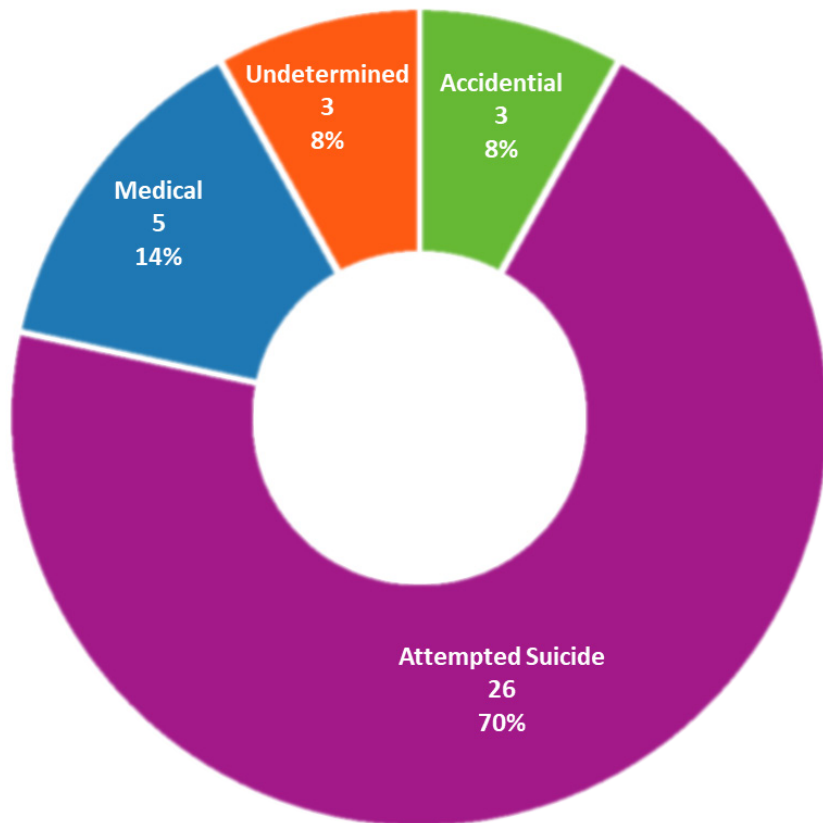


Death by Region

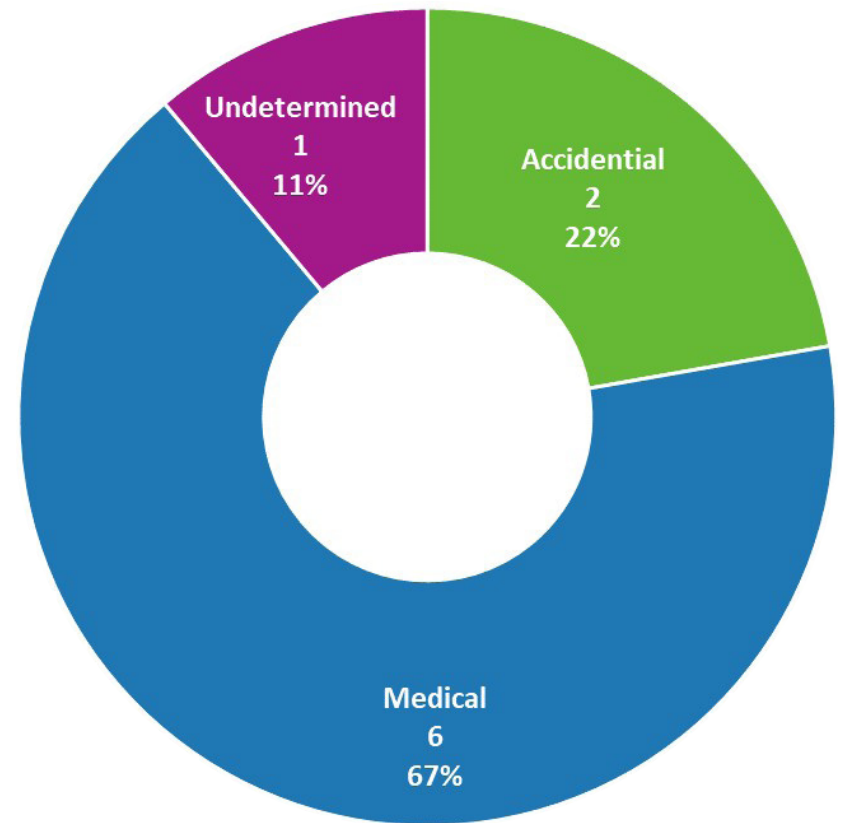


During the reporting timeframe, attempted suicide accounted for the most critical injuries, with 26 incidents (70%) reported. The most frequent cause of death was medical, with six deaths (67%) reported as due to medical issues.

Critical Injury by Cause



Death by Cause





Report on Performance

Issue 1: Community Outreach and Engagement

We recognize the importance of continual education and training opportunities for staff in order to support their advocacy work. These opportunities enhance staff knowledge and skills, as well as providing opportunities to engage with others who also work with and support children and youth. Connections to children, youth and those who work to support them are integral to the work of the office.

Goal:

By March 31, 2020 the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate will have increased community outreach and engagement.

Objective 2:

By March 31, 2019 the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate will have researched and implemented education initiatives that support a continuous learning environment related to child and youth rights, and issues impacting young persons.

Indicators	Accomplishments
<p>1 Offer OCYA staff continual training and education opportunities related to identified systemic needs, rights and issues impacting children and youth.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Offered continual training and education opportunities to staff related to identified systemic needs, rights and issues impacting children and youth. ✓ Explored and assessed learning opportunities relevant to issues and areas of practice. ✓ Topics included, but were not limited to, the following: Mental Health First Aid, Suicide Prevention, Mental Illness and Mental Health, Cultural Awareness, Excellence in the Provision of Family-based Care for Children and Youth, Autism, Family Systems and Kinship Care, Working with trans youth and their families, Impact of Trauma on Brain Development, Trauma Informed Practice, Sexual Exploitation of Youth, and Restorative Practices. ✓ Staff attended the Provincial Conference on Housing and Homeslessness in Gander, Atamiskakewak National Gathering in Saskatchewan, Allies for Youth Connections conference in Alberta, International summer course on United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in Moncton, Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse in Inuit Nunangat Forum in Ottawa, and Jordan's Principle National Summit in Winnipeg. ✓ Staff participated in bi-monthly webinars with the Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates to share information and explore new initiatives in advocacy services.

Indicators	Accomplishments
<p>2 Monitor and track continuing education needs and opportunities provided to staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Monitored and tracked education needs and opportunities for staff. Management and staff shared information about professional development opportunities and were encouraged and supported to attend such offerings. ✓ Staff attended 60 professional development sessions. ✓ In addition to training and education opportunities related to rights and issues impacting children and youth, staff also participated in training related to Occupational Health and Safety, Information Management, Compassion Fatigue, Fostering a Harassment Free Workplace, Cannabis and the Workplace, Social Media, Effective Report Writing, Psychological Health and Safety and Mental Health at Work.

Discussion of Results:

We believe continuing education is vital to our work for several reasons:

1. It ensures we offer the highest standard of advocacy services to young people;
2. It enables us to critically analyse systemic issues in a more holistic way; and,
3. It provides us with a strong base in conducting investigations and reviews and in the resulting recommendations.

Continuing education is a vital piece of our advocacy role. During 2018-19, the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate researched and implemented education initiatives that support a continuous learning environment

related to child and youth rights, and issues impacting young persons. Staff participated in over 60 such learning opportunities.

In addition to learning about the subject matter, these professional development sessions provide opportunities for staff to network and make connections with other individuals and organizations that work to support young persons, and to grow our education and awareness services. We are committed to continual learning, as through our learning we can better engage and understand the needs of young people.

Objective 3 for 2019-20:

By March 31, 2020, the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate will have participated in collaborative project initiatives with identified stakeholders.

Indicators:

- ✧ Independent Review of Child Protection Services to Inuit Children and Youth completed and final report released
- ✧ Community sessions held to present on findings of the Independent Review of Child Protection Services to Inuit Children and Youth
- ✧ Stakeholders engaged to inform the development and updating of select resource materials

Issue 2: Enhanced Inclusion and Diversity Awareness

We value and celebrate diversity and inclusion. We welcome and actively pursue opportunities to engage with diverse groups throughout the province, particularly those groups who support and advance the rights of children and youth or who have the ability to do so. The population of our province is becoming more diverse and it is important that we collectively ensure that programs, services and initiatives are responsive to and inclusive of all children and youth.

Goal:

By March 31, 2020 the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate will have promoted and enhanced awareness of social and cultural inclusion, and diversity for children and youth.

Objective 2:

By March 31, 2019 the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate will have developed and implemented a diversity outreach plan that targets diverse and minority groups of children and youth in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Indicators	Accomplishments
<p>1 Consult with established child and youth focused networks, agencies and service providers of diverse and minority groups.</p>	<p>✓ Youth focused networks, agencies and service providers of diverse and minority groups were consulted, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✧ Association for New Canadians ✧ Multicultural Womens Organization ✧ Trans Support NL Inc. ✧ Holy Heart Gender Sexuality Aliance ✧ Nunatsiavut Government ✧ Foster Families Association

Indicators	Accomplishments
<p>2 Develop and implement an outreach plan and applicable engagement activities with diverse and minority groups of children and youth.</p>	<p>✓ An outreach plan and applicable engagement activities with diverse and minority groups of children and youth were developed and implemented based on our consultations with youth focused networks, agencies and service providers of diverse and minority groups. We held these engagement activities with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✦ Inuit children in Labrador communities and on the island ✦ Friends of United Nations (FUN) Clubs (Association for New Canadians) ✦ LEARN Science Class (Association for New Canadians) ✦ Children connected with the Multicultural Womens Organization ✦ Camp Rainbow (camp for gender diverse youth ages 7-16) ✦ Camp Eclipse (leadership retreat for LGBTQ+ youth and their allies aged 16-25) ✦ Trans Youth Group

Discussion of Results:

Our work with Inuit children and youth over the past year has been a source of both inspiration and a renewed commitment to do more on behalf of Indigenous children. Whether we met with Inuit youth to gain their insights and input for our independent review of child protection services to Inuit children, or involved children in learning about their rights through school or youth centres, or whether we simply hung out and played volleyball in their gym, it was all time well spent. We learned a lot, and we hope they did too.

We made great connections with youth who are new residents to the country and province thanks to the Association for New Canadians (ANC). We engaged youth at the Friends of United Nations (FUN) Clubs at MacDonald Drive Junior High, Brother Rice Junior High and Learys Brook Junior High. We also visited with youth at the LEARN Science Club at Holy Heart Senior High School. We had great sessions with these students discussing the role of our office and young people's rights. It is important that these new youth understand their rights and that we are here to support them.

We were especially delighted when students and ANC staff came to visit us at our office. We had a wonderful afternoon together learning about rights and needs.

We also met with children and their parents of the Multicultural Women's Organization for children's rights activities and awareness. Our Young Artist Wall of Fame proudly displays the children's art.

We were also pleased to hold focus groups with gender diverse youth to inform a special report that will be released early in FY 2019-20. We met with the Trans Youth Group and youth attending Camp Eclipse to discuss issues important to gender diverse young people and their experiences. We also shared information about the advocacy services we offer, and the rights of all young people.

It was wonderful to meet with young participants at Camp Rainbow and share information about our office and children's rights.

In March 2019, we had a wonderful 3 days celebrating inclusion and diversity at the 20th Annual Sharing Our Cultures event at the Rooms. Our mascot, Charlie Bear, came to visit and was very popular. We distributed promotional and informational materials about children's rights, and our services. 800 Grade 6 students participated in the event. The vision of Sharing Our Cultures is to connect culturally diverse school youth, foster belonging and acceptance among all school children, be relevant within the schools and province, and contribute towards an inclusive and cohesive society. We say to this: "Count us in!"

Objective 3 for 2019-20:

By March 31, 2020, the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate will have researched, evaluated and implemented education and communications tools, including promotional materials, which promote and respect inclusion and diversity in areas including language, culture, sexual orientation and gender identity.

Indicators:

- ✧ Finalized research and released report on Issues of Trans Youth
- ✧ Offered and promoted the Self Advocacy Workshop to diverse and minority groups
- ✧ Continued to develop and deliver resource materials about the rights of children and youth
- ✧ Utilized various social media platforms to promote the rights of children and youth
- ✧ Developed and distributed multi-lingual resource and promotional materials
- ✧ Engaged young people from diverse communities to ensure messages of inclusion are reflected in resource materials

Opportunities and Challenges

As an advocacy organization for children and youth, it is our responsibility to amplify the voices of those who may otherwise not be heard. We support children and youth to exercise their rights and we also identify systemic issues that impact these rights.

It's important to us that children and youth know about their rights. We love spending time with young people to share the work of our office and to talk with them about their rights. We look forward to our continued outreach throughout Newfoundland and Labrador to discuss the role of our office and educate young persons about rights. We are excited that we will be offering our new Self Advocacy Workshop (You Can Speak Up) for youth throughout the province. In this new workshop, we build on communication skills, focus on rights and responsibilities, and identify supports and resources in communities so youth can learn some new things to help them be effective self-advocates when the need arises.

In the past year, our office released four investigative reports which made recommendations to government regarding policies and practices that were infringing on the rights of children and youth. By the time this annual report was being finalized, we were already seeing some positive change as a result of these recommendations. While we have seen examples of positive change, we are not done yet. There are still many areas where enhancements are needed to better protect and support the rights of children and youth in Newfoundland and Labrador.

We will be releasing the Independent Review of Child Protection Services for Inuit children and youth in the summer of 2019. This review and the resulting recommendations will provide an opportunity for positive changes now and in the future. We are grateful to all those who took the time to share their stories with us. We heard you and admire your strength. We will continue to stand with you and continue to advocate for the rights of Indigenous children and youth.



During the past year, we also had the privilege to work with gender diverse youth and produce a report informed by their stories, views and experiences. The Report builds awareness, amplifies the voices of these youth, and highlights challenges in several key areas, such as school, medical, and social support services. We commend these youth for their courage. We will continue to advocate with these young people to support their ability to fully exercise their rights. We look forward to seeing Government's progress regarding the report's recommendations.

We are also so pleased with the strong multicultural connections we have made in the community. It has been an informative and rewarding experience. We look forward to continuing to build on these relationships in the upcoming fiscal year.

We feel honoured to do this work and will continue our efforts to turn challenges into opportunities for positive change for the children and youth in Newfoundland and Labrador.

You have the right to
**be free
and
protected**

from all forms of
abuse

Article 34:
**United Nations Convention on the
Rights of the Child**



By Young Artist: **Astrid**

Financial Statements

Expenditure and revenue figures included in this document are based on information provided in the **Report on the Program Expenditures and Revenues of the Consolidated Revenue Fund for Fiscal Year Ended 31 March 2019**.

	Estimates		
	Actual \$	Amended \$	Original \$
01. Salaries	1,196,961	1,215,100	1,215,100
Operating Accounts			
Employee Benefits	2,828	3,500	3,500
Transportation and Communications	112,112	141,100	141,100
Supplies	10,527	14,000	14,000
Professional Services	153,618	184,000	184,000
Purchased Services	193,361	244,900	244,900
Property, Furnishings and Equipment	15,191	19,300	19,300
02. Operating Accounts	487,637	606,800	606,800
Total:	1,684,598	1,821,900	1,821,900



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