

Contents

Child and Youth Advocate's Message1

Independent Review into Child Protection Services to Inuit Children2

Good Bye, Louise3

Education Responses to Children and Youth who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing3

National Child Day 20194

Outreach6

Supporting the Community10

Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates11

Video Contest12

Professional Development13

Meet Social Work Student - Lindsay Batt .14

Young Artist Program15

Child and Youth Advocate's Message

As the New Year begins, many of us often set our sights on change. We identify personal goals and put plans in place so that we can achieve them.

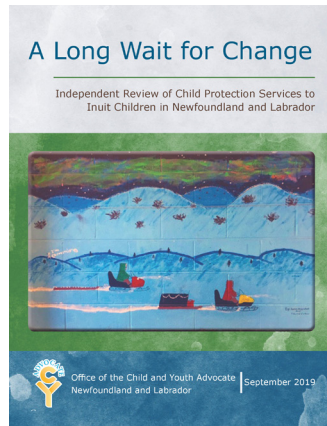
At my office, we look forward to change too. However, we are keenly interested in broader changes in the system of public services so that the best possible responses are provided to children and youth, and serve to uphold children's rights.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish you a happy new year. I hope 2020 greets you with health and happiness. And I hope 2020 is a time for meaningful change to improve the lives of vulnerable children and youth in Newfoundland and Labrador. My staff and I will work hard every day to advocate for necessary changes to support children's rights.



Jackie
 Jackie Lake Kavanagh
 Child and Youth Advocate

Independent Review into Child Protection Services to Inuit Children



“Inuit children are struggling in the child protection system”. This is the first line of the executive summary in *A Long Wait for Change*, a review into the province’s child protection system’s response to Inuit children. The Advocate released this report in Nain in September 2019. This independent review looked at several program areas of the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development including protective intervention, in care, foster care, youth services, kinship care and alternative placements.

We connected with 575 people through this review process. We visited Inuit communities as well as other Labrador and island communities where Inuit children and youth live. People who had strong ties to Labrador Inuit communities reached out to us from other parts of Canada in order to participate in this review and have

their voices heard. We truly appreciate the participation of Elders, young people, families, foster families, community leaders, professionals, as well as all levels of government including community governments, Nunatsiavut, as well as provincial and federal representatives. In addition to the individual meetings and community sessions, we also reviewed 213 case files and conducted a literature review. And of course the backdrop has been our experiences advocating for Inuit and other Indigenous children and youth over the years.

This comprehensive review identified 33 recommendations for change. The fundamental message is “Bold systemic change is required where young people are heard, relationships are reset, power is shared, communities are engaged, resources are enhanced, and Inuit knowledge and beliefs are

validated and incorporated into new ways of keeping children safe and supported”.

We will monitor all 33 recommendations and publicly report on government’s progress annually. To read the report, visit <https://www.childand youthadvocate.nf.ca/pdfs/IndependentReview2019.pdf>. The executive summary has been translated into Inuktitut and is also available electronically. Copies of the report are available through our office.

Good Bye, Louise



We are both happy and sad to announce that Louise Mercer, Individual Advocacy Specialist, will be retiring at the end of January. We are very happy for Louise and this new stage of her life, but we are very sad to see such a valued friend, colleague and children's advocate leave us. Louise's compassion, spiritedness, and absolute belief in the fundamental rights of all children have made wonderful contributions to the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate. Louise's social work career has offered her many opportunities and experiences; however, we are so glad she landed with us before finishing her career.

We will miss you Louise. Thanks for being such a valued and contributing member of our team.



Education Responses to Children and Youth who are Deaf and Hard of Hearing

The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate is committed to ensuring children and youth who are deaf and hard of hearing receive the best possible education and school experience in Newfoundland and Labrador.

In October 2019 the Advocate issued an invitation seeking feedback about educational services to children and youth who are deaf and hard of hearing. The Advocate invited young people and families with direct experience in the education system, as well as professionals and other stakeholders, to contact the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate in confidence to share experiences and ideas. These sessions and meetings continued up to Christmas. Thanks to all who have shared your experiences and ideas with us.

#NationalChildDay

November 20, 2019

Office of the Child and Youth Advocate
Newfoundland and Labrador



While National Child Day is celebrated in Canada on November 20 every year, we like to make a full week of it! We love this opportunity to celebrate children and to promote the rights of all children. These rights are in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. More countries have ratified the Convention than any other human rights treaty in history. While Canada ratified the Convention in 1991, work continues nationally, provincially and territorially on implementing these rights. And that is where we come in. Our job is to protect children's rights, and to advocate or investigate when we believe this has not happened.

A highlight of National Child Day (week) was being able to reach

so many young people and the organizations that serve them and to offer education sessions and activities about children's rights.

Young artist Lilah designed our 2019 National Child Day poster. We also made cards from the design, which could be printed from our website. At St. Teresa's Elementary School in St. John's, Principal Mr. Dwyer made sure every student received a National Child Day card with a special message and the student's picture attached. We were at their assembly...they loved it!

Over the course of the week, we visited many communities to provide education about children's rights. Thanks for the warm welcome go out to:

- Corner Brook Status of Women's Council
- Qalipu First Nation in Corner Brook
- Family Resource Centre in Corner Brook
- Community Youth Network in Corner Brook
- Vine Place Community Centre in Corner Brook
- Corner Brook Intermediate School
- Corner Brook Regional High School
- Gander Collegiate
- Smallwood Academy in Gambo
- Gill Memorial in Musgrave Harbour
- Sandstone Academy in Ladle Cove
- Lumsden Academy in Wesleyville
- Pearson Academy in Wesleyville



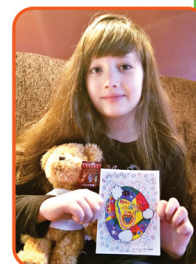
- Family Resource Centre in Dover
- Gander Boys and Girls Club
- St. Andrew's Elementary
- Brighter Futures AGM
- St. Teresa's School
- Me and Wee Book Club at the St. John's Status of Women's Council
- First Light's Turtle Island Child Care Centre, and
- City of St. John's annual Move It Event.



#NationalChildDay

Thank you, **Lilah** for sending in your artwork to our Young Artist Program.

It made our National Child Day 2019 poster look **AWESOME!**



National Child Day



November 20, 2019



Office of the Child and Youth Advocate
Newfoundland and Labrador



Office of the Child and Youth Advocate
Newfoundland and Labrador

Phone: (709) 753-3889
Toll Free: 1-877-310-3889

Outreach

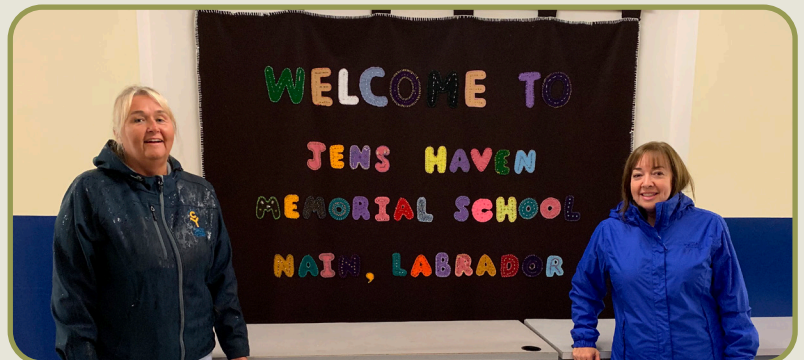
Over the summer and fall we have been busy meeting with folks all around the province. We enjoy being out and about sharing information about our office and about the rights of children and youth. It is important to us to learn about the many community services that support children and youth, and to hear your concerns when children's rights are not being met. Please accept our thanks for your interest in children's rights and for your hospitality.

Labrador

In September the Advocate visited Nain to release A Long Wait for Change. This is the independent, comprehensive review of child protection services to Inuit children and youth. We were honoured with President Lampe's and Minister Asivak's participation from Nunatsiavut. We were also very pleased to see Minister Lisa Dempster attend. Elder Rutie Lampe set a very special tone by lighting the qulik. We were pleased with the strong community turnout and interest in this work. Thank you to community members who took the time to speak with us about the report, and who powerfully validated our findings and recommendations.

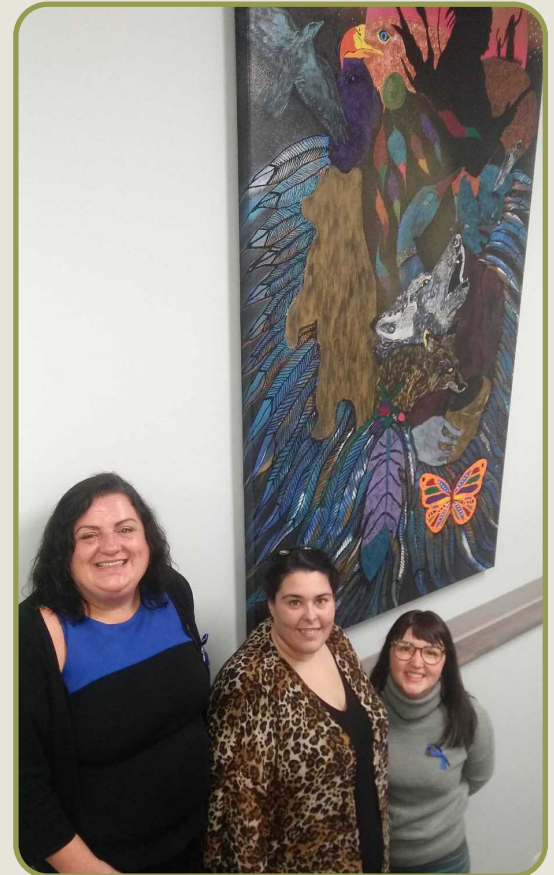
While in Nain we also visited with Principal Jacob Larkin at Jens Haven Memorial School. It is always great to see images of vibrant Inuit culture in the school.

In November the Advocate and staff visited the community of Sheshatshiu. Thank you Chief Hart and your staff and officials for the warm welcome. We also ran into Minister Lisa Dempster on that visit. The quilt which was created after the recent suicides was both beautiful and memorable.



Western

In November we visited Corner Brook and met with students at Corner Brook Intermediate and Corner Brook Regional High, as well as representatives of the Corner Brook Status of Women's Council, Qalipu First Nation, Family Resource Centre, Community Youth Network and Vine Place Community Centre. We had a wonderful visit to Corner Brook. Thank you all for your hospitality, and your interest in children's rights, as well as in our advocacy and investigative services.



Central

In November we visited many communities in the Gander Bay area. We met with students at Gander Collegiate who gave us lessons in American Sign Language (ASL). We also did sessions at Smallwood Academy in Gambo, Gill Memorial Academy in Musgrave Harbour, Sandstone Academy in Ladle Cove, Lumsden Academy and Pearson Academy in Wesleyville. What a delight to meet all the students and share information about the work of our office and children's rights. We also visited the Dover Family Resource Centre, participated in the GSA's Free to Be Me Conference in Gander and met with folks at the Gander Boys and Girls Club. Huge thanks to all for the fabulous week!



*Welcome
To
Lumsden Academy*



St. John's and Eastern Avalon

Over the summer we met with many children and youth in summer programs. We connected with young people at Holyrood Recreation, the Fluvarium, Froude Avenue Community Centre, City of St. John's, Public Legal Information of Newfoundland and Labrador's (PLIAN) Youth Justice Camps, and the Association For New Canadians. We had lots of fun at the Choices for Youth Family Fun Day. Our mascot Charlie thoroughly enjoyed meeting many new friends. We also participated in St. James' Diversity Fair as well as the Roots of Empathy celebration.



We were pleased to attend many annual general meetings of child and youth serving community groups such as Daybreak, Choices For Youth, Waypoints, Multicultural Women's Organization (MWONL), THRIVE, and Brighter Futures. We even joined MWONL for their annual Christmas party.



We presented at Memorial University's School of Social Work, Eastern Academy, St. Catherine's Academy on Salmonier Line, and St. John Bosco in Shea Heights. We participated in the Student Leadership conference in Clarenville and the GSA's Free to Be Me Conference in St. John's. It was so wonderful to meet all these students and talk about our work and children's rights.



Recently we met with Parent Groups at Stella's Circle and the Association for New Canadians. During the fall we also visited Daybreak, Easter Seals, and the Homework Club at East Point Elementary.



As we celebrated National Child Day we were delighted to visit St. Andrew's Elementary, the Brighter Futures Annual General Meeting, St. Teresa's School, the Me and We Book Club at the St. John's Status of Women's Council, First Light's Turtle Island Child Care Centre and the City of St. John's Move It event.



It is always moving to attend the Newfoundland and Labrador Youth Centre's annual Remembrance Day ceremony. Once again, we were honoured to attend, and were particularly impressed with the residents' participation in the ceremony.



Supporting the Community

It is always important to us to support community initiatives and projects.



#OrangeShirtDay #EveryChildMatters

Sometimes our community activities are sombre events. We wore orange shirts on September 30th to honour those who were and who are impacted by the residential schools experience.

We are always happy to support the great work of the **Bridges to Hope Pantry**. Jody Williams, Manager and a Volunteer accepted our Thanksgiving grocery donation.



First Light Pack the Tent Event

In November we collected donations for First Lights' Pack the Tent Event.

Breakfast Programs

Over the fall we spread the word and participated in the Breakfast Program at St. Teresa's School, Goulds Elementary and St. Andrews Elementary. Early mornings, but great fun!



Turkey Dinner

We kicked off the festive season by helping to serve turkey dinner to students at East Point Elementary. The school made great efforts for a special event for students.



Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates



Back Row:

Norm Bossé, NB, Treasurer; Diana Cook, ON; Annette King, YK; Lisa Broda, SK; Suzanne Arpin, QC; Christine Brennan, NS; Daphne Penrose, MB.

Front Row:

Jennifer Charlesworth, BC; Michelle Dorsey, PEI; Del Graff, AB, President; Jackie Lake Kavanagh, NL, Vice-President; Jane Bates, NU.

The Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates is made up of independent Advocates, Representatives, and Ombudsman across ten provinces and two territories, who work to ensure the rights of children and youth in Canada are respected. The Council works towards identifying specific issues impacting the well-being of children and youth that are common to all jurisdictions, and to collectively advocate at the provincial, federal and international levels.

The Council and its members have advocated at the provincial, territorial and federal levels of government on the issue of child and youth suicide in Canada. Sadly, suicide is the

second leading cause of death for young people ages 10-24 in Canada. The human cost of losing so many young people to suicide is a serious concern for the Council. On September 17, 2019 the Council released A National Paper on Youth Suicide at the National Conference of the Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates. The Council called for immediate action including: a national suicide strategy; a national data system, and the engagement of Indigenous expertise to move forward.

According to the National Paper, Canada has been ranked in the top five for youth suicide rates. Within Canada, the suicide rates are substantially higher

for Indigenous youth compared to their non-Indigenous counterparts. The mental wellness of Indigenous children, youth and their families has not been, yet must become, a top priority for government. While the suicide rate is disproportionately high among Indigenous youth, the Council recognizes the impact of suicide and suicidal behaviours amongst all youth, including LGBTQ2S+ and other racialized youth.

The Council will continue to monitor this issue and will be closely watching the response and actions of governments to this very serious issue in our country.



**Starring
YOU!**

First Ever Video Contest



Deadline:
January 31,
2020



Topic

“Children and Youth have a right to be free from discrimination”

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

Length

Your video should be a maximum of 2 minutes in length.

Age

If you are under the age of 21 years you can enter the contest.

Judging

Your video will be judged on creativity, originality and how clear you present your message on this topic.

Prize

Winners will receive a prize pack and will be featured on our website and other social media.

Consent Form

You must send a consent form with your video and one form for each person in your video.

(Consent Forms attached or visit www.childandyouthadvocate.nl.ca)

Remember

Your video concept and production must be completed by you.

You can enter as an individual or as a part of a team.

How to Enter

You may send us your video using email, mail or drop off in person.

*mp3, mp4 or links to the file on a site such as youtube, are acceptable.

Contact Us

Call: (1-877) 753-3888

Email: Office@ocya.nl.ca

Mail/In-person:

193 LeMarchant Rd,
Suite 100, St. John's, NL
A1C 25H

Professional Development

We are committed to continually learning so we can better serve young people in the province.

Over the summer and fall we participated in sessions and conferences focused on: assistive technology for students, the new **Children, Youth and Families Act**, Indigenous child welfare, understanding hearing loss, Jordan's Principle, stuttering, e mental health services, diversity and inclusion, parenting across cultures, psychological health and safety, information management, conflict resolution, and occupational health and safety.

Staff also regularly participate in bi-monthly webinars with the Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates (CCCYA) to explore new initiatives in advocacy services. British Columbia hosted the most recent session which focused on weaving Indigenous ways of being into investigations.

We were also delighted to participate in the International Summer Course on The Rights of the Child, the Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocate's Conference in September and an online certificate program on children's rights through Mount Royal University.



Thanks to Assistant Commissioner Parsons for recently inviting our staff to RCMP Headquarters to participate in a session on street and prescription drug abuse. This was very valuable learning. Thank you Sergeant Greene for delivering the session.



Meet Social Work Student - Lindsay Batt



I have always had an interest in advocacy and policy work as well as working with young people so this office seemed like a great fit for me and it turns out I was right!

While I observed all staff and various advocacy functions, I worked most closely with the Individual Advocacy Specialists.

I also participated on the newsletter committee and community outreach initiatives which made it very exciting to come to work each day.

I also participated in several professional development opportunities. These included a conflict resolutions webinar, a session on the new **Children, Youth and Families Act**, Drugs and Drug Culture webinar, Memorial's Visiting Aboriginal Elders Pilot Project, Vital Signs report webinar, Bridge the gApp:e-mental health presentation, and a webinar focused on understanding hearing loss.

I also visited various community agencies such as the Association for New Canadians, Tuckamore Centre, Choices for Youth, and Thrive. From these visits, I have learned more about the resources available in our community and the field of social work, as well as collaborating agencies and professions.

One of my favorite parts of our work was the outreach activities including the NL Youth Centre, various schools in Metro, participating in National Child Day activities. I also presented to BSW classes.

In my previous work experiences and in the social work curriculum we often learn about advocacy. From working with the OCYA I have learned much more about what exactly advocacy work looks like in practice. I have been so grateful for all of the staff who have been incredibly welcoming and supportive in my education. The lessons I have learned will certainly influence the rest of my education and my future practice.

- Lindsay Batt

CHILDREN YOUTH
NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

If you are a young person with a problem involving a foster home, group home, mental health service, justice system, or other government services, **we are here to listen and help.** We can:

- Help you get heard
- Help you learn about your rights
- Speak up for you
- Find someone who can help you
- Contact others involved
- Help you identify your options

CHILDREN YOUTH
NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

Si vous êtes un jeune aux prises avec un problème lié à un foyer d'accueil, à un foyer de groupe, à un service de santé mentale, au système judiciaire ou à d'autres services gouvernementaux, nous sommes là pour vous écouter et vous aider. Nous pouvons :

- vous aider à vous faire entendre
- vous aider à connaître vos droits
- parler en votre nom
- trouver quelqu'un qui peut vous aider
- communiquer avec les autres personnes en cause
- vous aider à déterminer vos options

CHILDREN YOUTH
NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

Eueshtanitshuien kamenupunue nete etanakuin eatsh mitshuapish, put nete tane kakeuenamakenets uassets, put uashtakuanuats kaiakushitsh kauauitshiakaniits, put ueueshinakune, put nenua kueka tshetshamau kepapempanitaua tshetshi uauitshiakent auen, tshepetuten tshuinatutatenai kie tshuiuitshintanai. Patshi:

- Uauitshitanai tshetshi petakuen
- Utuniatanai
- Meshkuaiaiauen tshetshi uitshineshk
- Kemaiaitsh auentshi kuetekets nenu etutaset
- Tsheka uauitshintanai tshenashentuapatamen tshetitshinakuen tshakuan

Young Artist Program

We are always looking for new artwork for our Young Artist Program. Your artwork is displayed on our Young Artist Wall of Fame, and may appear in our various print and electronic publications. We provide a prize pack of promotional items for all art submissions.

To submit your artwork for the Young Artist Program visit: <https://www.childandyouthadvocate.nf.ca/YoungArtistProgram.htm>



By Young Artist: Jenna - Corner Brook



Tshin auass kie mak ussinitshishu eka minupanin nete e kanuenimakuin, kie mak ka akushit katat, kie mak ka makunitunanut kie iat peikuan anite tshishe-utshimat utatusseutshuapit, ninan nitanan ute tshetshi uauitshitat. Nika tshi tutenan ume tshekuan:

- Tshetshi petakuin
- Tshetshi tshissenitamin tshekuan eshi-tapuetaquin
- Ninan tshetshi aimiat tshetshi uauitshitat
- Nika tshi mishkuanan auen tshetshi uauitshishk
- Nika tshi katshitinanait auenitshenat kutakat ka aikit
- Tshetshi uauitshitat tshetshi mishkamin kutak tshekuan tshipa uauitshikuin



Inosuttoguvit uKumaitsauteKaguvit ilautitsijumik tiguannik tigusikattajunut aniggagijaujumik, sugusunut aniggagijaujumut, isumakkt Kanuittailinnimut kiggatotinnik, maligatsatigut piusinginnik, upvalu asinginnik kavamait kiggatotinginnik, tamânevugut tusâgiamut amma ikajugiamut, imâk pisonguvugut:

- Ikajulluta ipvit tusattauniagavit
- Ikajulluta ilinnianiagavit pivitsagijannik
- Nillititausongullutit
- Napvâluta kinamikkaik ilinnik ikajugajattumik Kaujittillugit asingit ilauKataujut
- Ikajulluta ilinnik nalunaitsigiamut piniannigajattanik
- Kaujisapvigillugit isumâlotigijatit



Child and Youth Advocate

193 Lemarchant Road

St. John's, NL

A1C 2H5

Call: 753-3888

Toll Free: 1-877-753-3888

Email: office@ocy.nl.ca

www.childandyouthadvocate.nl.ca



Contact the Office of the
Child and Youth Advocate if
you or someone you know
needs our help:

Phone: (709) 753-3888

Toll Free: 1-877-753-3888

Fax: (709) 753-3988

Email: office@ocya.nl.ca

WebSite:

www.childandyouthadvocate.nl.ca

Twitter: @OCYANL

Or drop by our office:

193 LeMarchant Road, St. John's, NL

Monday - Friday from
8:30 am - 4:30 pm

**To receive a copy of
the newsletter, which
is published twice a
year, please contact
us and request to
be added to our
distribution list.**

