

Office of the Child and Youth Advocate
February 9, 2018

Child and Youth Advocate Issues Statement Regarding Stephenville High School

The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate is very concerned about events that have recently transpired related to Stephenville High School. All students have a right to safety, and all students have a right to their education. There may be many ways to reach these outcomes for the benefit of all. However in discussions with senior officials with the NL English School District, it has become apparent to the Child and Youth Advocate that the current policies and legislation do not provide the District with sufficient ability to address issues such as those that have arisen in Stephenville.

We are currently in an environment that encourages proactive discussions about the many forms of sexual abuse, assault, and harassment, as well as the right to safety. People are encouraged to speak up. While we see many organizations develop new responses to this old problem, we must ensure that our school system is current with this discussion and equipped with appropriate policies, protocols, and legislation. Jackie Lake Kavanagh, Child and Youth Advocate, stated “Young people in Stephenville are stating publicly that they need and expect change. They have courageously named it. Collectively, we now need to listen and act to make necessary changes on a provincial level. The voices of young people will be critical in this change process.”

The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate can be reached by calling (1-877) 753-3888, emailing office@ocya.nl.ca and on Twitter @OCYANL.

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