

**Office of the Child and Youth Advocate
June 2, 2009**

**Child and Youth Advocate Releases
*Lost in Transition:
A Review of the Transitioning of Children and Youth In Care***

The Child and Youth Advocate, Darlene Neville, today released the Report ***Lost in Transition: A Review of the Transitioning of Children and Youth In Care.***

The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate undertook this Review after hearing a number of disturbing accounts by children and youth related to the transitions they had experienced while In Care.

Key Findings of the Review identified system-wide and practice related deficiencies. Resource constraints in terms of the number of social workers and caregivers; turnover of social workers; the number and types of placements available; and level of training available were seen to be compromising the best efforts of those on the front-line trying to provide appropriate transitioning services to children and youth.

Essential documentation was missing or incomplete in a staggering percentage of files reviewed. In many cases, existing policies and procedures were not being followed. In other cases there were obvious gaps in policy direction. While some respondents from the Regional Integrated Health Authorities suggested that the lack of documentation in the files did not prove that the appropriate processes of care had not occurred, children and youth who were interviewed confirmed that many of the gaps In Care suggested by the file review, reflected their own experiences when they were transitioned. The lack of involvement of children and youth and their caregivers in the transitioning process, and failure to follow through on basic issues such as involving the child or youth in the move and ensuring that their belongings accompanied them to their new placement, stood out as largely preventable omissions.

Taken together, the Findings of the Review confirmed that the experience of transitioning for children and youth In Care as it now stands is a traumatic one which further contributes to their vulnerability in society.

Lost in Transition: A Review of the Transitioning of Children and Youth In Care is available online at www.childandyouthadvocate.nl.ca.

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