



# Status Report on Recommendations 2020-21

Office of the Child and Youth Advocate

October 2022



CHILDREN  
& YOUTH  
NEWFOUNDLAND  
& LABRADOR

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## Message from the Child and Youth Advocate

Dates help define us. They mark occasions, periods of time, poignant moments in the lives of people, they tell a story. Perhaps no other period in our recent history has impacted us so deeply and indelibly marked our lives as the COVID-19 pandemic. None more so than the children and youth of our province. It has been particularly difficult for children and youth who require public education, health, justice and social services. Undoubtedly the impact continues.



Yet despite the challenges, the shutdowns and restrictions, our work at the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate has continued with minimal disruption. Indeed we had to pivot quickly and work in new and different ways, but we maintained a strong presence under the most arduous of conditions. The formal investigations, individual advocacy, systemic advocacy and public education moved forward.

And we consistently and persistently pursued the recommendations that were made in the reports that were completed and released. In our efforts to be accountable and transparent, this office remains steadfast in the pursuit of all of the recommendations that are outstanding.

Our office is mandated by the **Child and Youth Advocate Act** to advance and protect the rights and interests of children and youth. The **United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child** provides guidance for children's universal rights.

As of March 31, 2021 a total of 251 recommendations have been issued since this office was opened in 2002. For this reporting period, 8 new recommendations were added to the list. This status report on recommendations shows that 78% of all recommendations have been implemented. There are currently no recommendations that have not been implemented. This number illustrates the effort made by government to make the changes necessary for the children and youth of our province. While 22% have been partially implemented, it is recognized that work is ongoing.

Thank you to those who have undertaken to ensure that necessary changes are made for the most vulnerable population, our children and youth. These changes are focused on improving their lives. It is through this commitment to creating more inclusive services that we create better outcomes and thus better futures for the next generation.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Karen Gray".

**Karen Gray**  
Child and Youth Advocate (Acting)



# Recommendation Monitoring Process

The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate (OCYA) conducts reviews and investigations which result in recommendations. These recommendations focus on improvements to ensure better responses and services respecting children and youth rights in the province. Section 24(1) of the **Child and Youth Advocate Act** authorizes the Child and Youth Advocate to request progress reports on these recommendations.

The Child and Youth Advocate requests annual written updates of government departments, agencies and public entities on their progress implementing recommendations. In addition to the written responses, follow up meetings may be required for clarification or additional information.

The OCYA assesses the progress update and assigns the recommendation to one of the following three categories: implemented, partially implemented, or not implemented. In the event that a recommendation involves multiple entities, the recommendation will remain in the partially completed category until all elements of the recommendation are implemented.

Updates on each recommendation are requested annually until the OCYA is satisfied that the recommendation has been addressed. The results are reported publicly and these reports can be found at: <https://www.childandyouthadvocate.nl.ca/publications/status-reports-on-recommendations/>.

## Definitions

The status of each recommendation is divided into one of three categories:

<b>Implemented:</b>	The recommendation has been completed to the satisfaction of the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate.
<b>Partially Implemented:</b>	The department or agency has made some progress on the recommendation; however, outstanding items remain to be addressed.
<b>Not Implemented:</b>	There has been no substantive progress on the recommendation.

This report is structured to identify the recommendations which are partially implemented or not implemented. This report also profiles some of the highlights and accomplishments in improvements for services and responses to children and youth.

# Overall Status

At March 31, 2021, 78% of all recommendations have been implemented, 22% have been partially implemented, and there are no recommendations that have not been implemented.





## Status of Recommendations

Investigations and Reviews	Implemented	Partially Implemented	Not Implemented	Total
A Soft Place to Land: Lessons for Client-Centered Care (October 2020)	1	7	-	8
A Long Wait for Change: Independent Review of Child Protection Services to Inuit Children in Newfoundland and Labrador (2019)	2	31	-	33
Special Report on Trans Youth in Newfoundland and Labrador (2019)	2	3	-	5
Seen But Not Heard (2019)	-	6	-	6
Surviving Child's Benefits: Who is Missing Out? (2019)	3	-	-	3
Chronic Absenteeism (2019)	1	3	-	4
No Second Chance (2018)	3	1	-	4
Making Waves (2018)	1	-	-	1
The Case for Specialized Health Care Responses to Recognize and Prevent Child Sexual Abuse (2017)	7	-	-	7
The Case for Culturally Responsive Services (2017)	3	1	-	4
A Stolen Life (2016)	5	2	-	7
<b>*Previous Reports</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>169</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>251</b>

All recommendations in previous reports have been implemented. The \*previous reports are: A Tragedy Waiting to Happen (2015), Sixteen (2013); Youth in Adult Holding Facilities: Case 2 (2013); Out of Focus (2012); Turning a Blind Eye (2012); CSSD Emergency Intake (2011); Youth Corrections - Decisions Regarding Open Custody Placements (2011); Youth in Adult Holding Facilities: Case 1 (2011); The Child Upstairs...Joey's Story (2011); An Investigation into Janeway Psychiatry Unit J4D Programs and Services (2010); Lost in Transition (2009); and Turner Review and Investigation (2006).

# Highlights and Accomplishments

We would like to recognize and share some of the highlights and accomplishments by various government departments and agencies in response to our recommendations. The following list does not identify all activities, but is meant to offer a glimpse of some of the valuable efforts to make concrete improvements to services and responses to children and youth in Newfoundland and Labrador.

## A Soft Place to Land (October 2020)

- The Department of Health and Community Services reported that it is reorganizing how services and supports for children and youth are delivered in the community across the four regional health authorities and are aligning these under the following four proposed provincial programs:
  - Mental Health, Behavioural and Social Emotional Support (MH-BASES);
  - Developmental Health Services (DHS);
  - Provincial Autism Services and Supports (PASS); and,
  - Supportive Services for Children Program (SSCP).
- Eastern Regional Health Authority reported that it addressed trauma informed care by:
  - Incorporating trauma informed care as part of education and training for Mental Health and Addictions staff and physicians.
  - Collaborating with the Emergency Program, including the Janeway ER, to ensure trauma informed care training is incorporated.
  - Participating in a provincial initiative with the other Regional Health Authorities and key stakeholders, including the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District and Children’s Seniors and Social Development, to implement a new provincial child and youth health framework called “Mental Health Behavioral and Social Emotional Development (MH-BASES).”
- Western Regional Health Authority reported that it provides trauma informed care training to front-line Mental Health and Addictions providers as a part of their orientation. This training is available to all staff on Western Health’s learning management system. In 2020-21 this trauma informed care training was also offered to social work staff with the Department of Children Seniors and Social Development.

- Central Regional Health Authority reported that it offers health promotion and prevention services for children and youth, ages 0-18 years. Specifically, Early Outreach Workers provide community-based services focusing on prevention and early intervention for youth and families in the following locations:
  - Brookfield
  - St. Alban's
  - Springdale
  - Twillingate
- Central Regional Health Authority reported that it, as well as the other Regional Health Authorities, is working with the province to implement the Life Promotion Suicide Prevention Plan, which aligns with the World Health Organization's guidelines for comprehensive suicide prevention strategies to include the following evidence-informed activities: awareness, stigma reduction, access to services, treatment, crisis intervention, postvention, training and education, means restriction, data monitoring, media, and oversight and coordination.
- Labrador-Grenfell Regional Health Authority reported that it implemented a standard Regional Suicide Risk Management Protocol for the assessment, treatment and monitoring of clients who present with suicidal ideation and/or a suicidal attempt to its health care facilities. This protocol includes documenting the assessment, treatment and monitoring plans and the transfer of care, in the client's health records.
- Labrador-Grenfell Regional Health Authority is also finalizing "Appropriate use of Safe Room in the Emergency Department" policy, which references only using the safe room for individuals under sixteen in exceptional circumstances.
- Labrador-Grenfell Regional Health Authority implemented a new initiative supporting the principles of Home Is Best. The Home Is Best philosophy is that home, with appropriate supports, is the best place for an individual to recover from illness and/or injury, and to manage chronic conditions.

Managers receive a daily report from Meditech identifying individuals across the life span:

- Admitted to/discharged from Emergency Departments and/or Inpatient Units throughout the region in the previous 24 hours, and;
- Who have been registered to the Mental Health & Addictions department in the 365 days prior.

The Home Is Best 'flagging' system supports Mental Health & Addictions clinicians to quickly identify and connect with individuals who may need support, understanding that early intervention and treatment dramatically impacts an individual's mental health and serves to promote overall good health.

- Western Regional Health Authority reports improvements to its referral process for Mental Health and Addictions, as well as a new centralized triage specifically for children and youth.
- Western Regional Health Authority implemented a process to transition children and youth psychiatry clients directly to adult psychiatry when clients reach a certain age, or it is determined appropriate to do so by the care team. Clients may be referred as early as age 15 and are prioritized to adult psychiatry above existing adult referrals. This transitioning process ensures there is continuity of care for youth as they transition to adult services. The youth client is always involved in care planning and care givers are included if deemed appropriate. The client will stay with the current Psychiatrist until the transition is complete. This group of clients will not be placed on a wait list for service.

## **A Long Wait for Change: Independent Review of Child Protection Services to Inuit Children in Newfoundland and Labrador (September 2019)**

- The Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development (CSSD) hired an Employee Safety and Wellness Strategist. This resource supports the Department's commitment to safety, health, self-care, wellness and disability accommodations by working with the regions. As part of their role, the Employee Safety and Wellness Strategist:
  - Is a member of the Newfoundland and Labrador Association of Public and Private Employees (NAPE) Committee and has analyzed survey data to help inform work plans to address safety and wellness concerns that impact recruitment and retention.
  - Completes frontline office visits and interviews social workers re: safety and wellness.
  - Develops assessment tools to better assess and mitigate risks during home visits.
  - Identified concern regarding cell coverage and check in / check on processes and distributed 50 safety devices to frontline staff that enable them to check in and call for help (effective January 2021). As well, all social workers across the province now have access to work cell phones.
  - Reviews procedures and resources available to improve psychological health and safety.
  - Is a member of the Employee Assistance Program Committee

- NAPE and CSSD established a Joint Committee Working Group to address concerns related to occupational health and safety, recruitment and retention, social work compensation, workload measurement training/support, etc.

## **Special Report on Trans Youth in Newfoundland and Labrador (May 2019)**

- Central Regional Health Authority's Client Navigator and Patient Experience Leader is working to create connections and partnerships with gender diverse young people and their families. Connections were made with Patient Experience Advisors, Community Advisory Councils and the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District. The Patient Experience Leader is tasked to bring together a diverse working group involving providers, clients and staff to foster efforts on diversity and inclusion.

## **Seen But Not Heard (April 2019)**

- The Department of Health and Community Services partnered with Strongest Families Institute to implement Parents Empowering Kids - The Early Years: an innovative, stepped-care e-approach to prevent behavior challenges and promote positive parenting in early childhood. The goal of this program is to provide universal promotion of positive parenting and early identification and prevention of behavioural disorders. This program is supported by the Public Health Agency of Canada and has been available to families living in Newfoundland and Labrador since fall 2020.

## **Chronic Absenteeism (January 2019)**

- Eastern Regional Health Authority's Mental Health and Addictions program placed Child and Youth Care Counsellors in the following schools: O'Donel High in Mount Pearl, St. Michaels Regional High on Bell Island, Frank Roberts Junior High in Conception Bay South, and Villanova Junior High in Conception Bay South.
- Child and Youth Care Counsellor from Eastern Health's CONNECT team working multiple days a week supporting Beaconsfield Junior High.
- The Department of Education expanded the Positive Actions for Student Success (PASS) program, allocating additional Student Success Teacher (SST) units and opening up eligibility to include students at the intermediate level. This increase and expansion into grades 7-9 is in recognition of the success of the program at the senior high level and based on research that early interventions are key in responding to students who are at risk of leaving the education system. During the last school year there were 34 SST positions working in 43 schools throughout the province. These SST teachers worked with over 1,800 students, approximately 21% of which were in Grades 7-9, spread across 13 schools.

## No Second Chance (October 2018)

- Eastern Regional Health Authority offered the Doorways Program in several schools throughout the region including John Burke High School, Crescent Collegiate, Laval High, Carbonear Collegiate, Roncalli High and Baccalieu Collegiate. The Health Authority is also working with four additional Schools (Clareville Middle, Clareville High, Pearce Regional High and Marystown Central High School) to provide virtual access to the Doorways Program or any other counselling services.
- Eastern Regional Health Authority assigned Youth Outreach Workers (YOWs) to several schools. These workers collaborate with school administration, Guidance Counselors, Instructional Resource Teachers (IRTs), and PASS programs to ensure the full scope of students' social/emotional needs are being met.
- Eastern Health has advised that there are some Child and Youth Care Workers (CYC's) working in the school system in the Eastern Health Region. Through the development of relationship, CYC's aim to connect students to appropriate school professionals depending on need (guidance counsellors, teachers, administration) and may help identify those at risk of chronic absenteeism and support those high-risk students to attend school. The RHA believes that an important feature of the CYC's working in the school system is their knowledge and skill in the field of mental health, and their ability to advocate and help connect students to appropriate services, outside the education system, if required.

## The Case For Culturally Responsive Services (April 2017)

- The Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills made a number of advances in supporting interpretation services for newcomers. This included the translation of public-health-related COVID-19 and other materials to seven different languages, most spoken by newcomers to the province, including newcomers who may not communicate in English. This included Amharic, Arabic, Spanish, Simplified Chinese, Swahili, Tagalog, and Tigrigna. Furthermore, the Department supported Health and Community Services and Regional Health Authorities in facilitating access to non-English speaking newcomers through the RIO Remote Interpreting Service, which has assisted newcomers in both ensuring confidentiality of their interaction with medical professionals, and provided an efficient solution for finding interpreters for languages for which local interpreters may be unavailable.



## Recommendations Partially Implemented

The following is a list of the recommendations which are partially implemented, some of which are at the beginning stages of implementation while others are nearing completion.

### A Soft Place to Land: Lessons for Client-Centered Care (October 2020)

Recommendation 2: The Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development work collaboratively with the Department of Immigration, Skills and Labour, the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation and community housing advocates to enhance access to and availability of supportive housing options for youth and emerging young adults with complex needs. Youth must also be included in this collaborative process.

Recommendation 3: Regional Health Authorities, and the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development ensure front line staff as well as service providers delivering front line services on behalf of the department receive appropriate professional development on trauma-informed care for children and youth.

Recommendation 4: The Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development coordinate with the Regional Health Authorities to ensure that all youth receiving services from the Youth Services Program are referred to or seen by a registered hospital social worker when requiring emergency medical treatment for physical or mental illnesses.

Recommendation 5: The Department of Health and Community Services engage the Regional Health Authorities to review their policies, practices, and training for assessing and responding to children and youth who present as suicidal and self-harming, in order to ensure the best possible health care services are grounded in best practice and guided by the principle of best interests for children and youth.

Recommendation 6: As team lead, the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development ensure full implementation of Recommendation 47 in Towards Recovery: The Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador for a provincial implementation plan for suicide prevention and furthermore with specific attention to the needs of children and youth in this plan.

Recommendation 7: Where a child or youth has had multiple Emergency Room visits for suicidal ideation or self-harming behaviors, all Regional Health Authorities establish and implement a mandatory records review process to ensure appropriate risk assessments and/or mental health assessments have been completed.

Recommendation 8: Regional Health Authorities immediately streamline services and policies to ensure a coordinated and uninterrupted transition from child/youth psychiatry to adult psychiatry and to other mental health services, and to consult with youth mental health consumers in this process.

## **A Long Wait for Change: Independent Review of Child Protection Services to Inuit Children in Newfoundland and Labrador (September 2019)**

Recommendation #1: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development ensure Inuit values, knowledge, and cultural practices are integrated in all policies, planning and services for Inuit children and youth.

Recommendation #2: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development seek the input and perspectives of Inuit children and youth in all plans that affect them and in a manner that reflects their age and developmental level.

Recommendation #3: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development provide Inuit children and youth who are in care with information about their background, circumstances, and family in a manner that reflects their age and developmental level.

Recommendation #4: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development ensure Inuit children and youth maintain relationships with important individuals in their lives, with special consideration for siblings whenever possible.

Recommendation #5: Government of Newfoundland and Labrador work with Indigenous governments and communities to establish and support activities and programs supporting Indigenous youth leadership opportunities and celebrating Indigenous youth role models.

Recommendation #6: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development ensure traditional Inuit values and healing practices are integrated into services, program options, safety plans and intervention plans for children, youth and their families. Nunatsiavut Government must be invited and supported to actively participate.

Recommendation #7: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development complete an audit on all out-of-community placements, and engage Nunatsiavut Government to ensure all placement options have been considered first within the child's family and/or community, and secondly within Nunatsiavut territory.

Recommendation #8: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development ensure all access visits are designed for the maximum benefit of the child, and that they take place in a child-friendly and culturally appropriate environment that promotes parent-child interaction.

Recommendation #9: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development ensure appropriate transition planning for children who have been removed from their parents and community. This must include specific and structured steps when children are removed and returned. Nunatsiavut Government must be invited and supported to actively participate.

Recommendation #10: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development broaden its mandate and range of responses to focus more on prevention and early intervention for children and families in the child protection system, and support Inuit community services and programs that contribute to prevention and early intervention.

Recommendation #11: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development consistently develop cultural continuity plans for children and youth and ensure these plans are meaningful, authentic and are enhanced by Inuit community resources. Plans must include measurable steps ensuring the child or youth in care is provided with opportunities for Inuit cultural activities, ceremonies, celebrations, practices, lifestyle, family and community contacts.

Recommendation #12: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development consistently engage parents, family members and foster parents in meaningful collaboration for all planning related to their children and youth, and those in their care.

Recommendation #13: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development enhance recruitment and explore new models of foster care which could potentially include placing parents and children together.

Recommendation #14: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development develop and evaluate outcome goals for child protection services in partnership with Nunatsiavut Government.

Recommendation #15: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development review and revise the scope, mandate and physical environment of the alternate family care group home in Nain to ensure a quality and safe placement option for Inuit children and youth. Include consideration for a visitation centre, emergency placements, parent coaching centre, healing facility, and transition-to-home placement centre for children and parents.

Recommendation #17: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development ensure timely and responsive delivery of PRIDE training program, at a minimum of once per year in Indigenous communities.

Recommendation #18: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development work to increase kinship care options and increase financial and social support for kinship caregivers.

Recommendation #19: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development ensure professionals and caregivers working with traumatized children and families receive mandatory education in caring for traumatized children and youth.

Recommendation #20: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development review and update the current level of financial supports to Inuit children, families and caregivers in the child protection system to reflect the northern Labrador reality. This must include addressing prices of goods and services, as well as transportation and delivery costs.

Recommendation #21: Government of Newfoundland and Labrador vigorously adopt and observe Jordan's Principle for Indigenous children and youth, and work with the federal government to access available federal resources to help address needs.

Recommendation #22: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development provide enhanced authority to frontline staff to use professional discretion in day to day decision making, including financial decisions, on behalf of children and families.

Recommendation #23: Government of Newfoundland and Labrador develop and deliver mandatory Indigenous cultural education to public servants in a tiered approach with Level 1 being required for all public servants, and Level 2 reflecting more advanced content for those directly working with Indigenous communities or making decisions and policies related to Indigenous communities. Indigenous representatives should be engaged in content development and delivery.

Recommendation #24: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development ensure training plans are in place for all social workers in Indigenous child protection settings and in addition to Recommendation 23, include community-based practical cultural learning experiences with community resources.

Recommendation #25: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development ensure each office in each community is staffed and equipped to respond on a daily basis to inquiries, requests, and complaints.

Recommendation #26: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development ensure that frontline social workers in Indigenous communities are supported with immediate access to quality clinical supervision and mentoring.

Recommendation #27: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development work with Nunatsiavut Government to recruit and educate Inuit staff to fill professional and paraprofessional roles with children, families, and communities.

Recommendation #29: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development actively engage frontline staff in Indigenous communities to develop and inform the recruitment and retention strategy in Recommendation 28, and to also inform the department on policies and practices in Indigenous communities, as well as a plan for employee self-care and well-being.

Recommendation #30: Government of Newfoundland and Labrador work with Nunatsiavut Government and other levels of government as necessary to address inadequate housing, food insecurity, and safe shelters for vulnerable Inuit children and their families.

Recommendation #31: Department of Justice and Public Safety engage justice system service providers to explore ways to improve access and timeliness of advice, services and decisions for family law matters in Labrador and ensure appropriate supports to implement the plan. This is particularly urgent where communities are served by circuit courts.

Recommendation #32: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development, at Nunatsiavut Government's request, actively support enhanced Inuit community capacity in order to prepare for transition to Inuit responsibility for child welfare services.

Recommendation #33: Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development monitor and evaluate the state of Indigenous children and youth involved in protection-related services in Newfoundland and Labrador, and report this annually to the Legislature.

## **Special Report on Trans Youth in Newfoundland and Labrador (May 2019)**

Recommendation #2: Regional Health Authorities, school districts, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, the Department of Health and Community Services, the Department of Justice and Public Safety, and the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development offer mandatory professional development and in-service training opportunities on gender diversity for professionals who work with children and youth.

Recommendation #3: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development review and revise curriculum for K-12 education to incorporate content on gender diversity and to ensure gender diversity is reflected in its materials.

Recommendation #5: The Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development ensure provincial access for gender diverse young people to shelter space that is safe and accessible.

## **Seen But Not Heard (April 2019)**

Recommendation #1: The Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development improve prevention and early intervention services to children and families at risk.

Recommendation #2: The Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development ensure that families requiring in-home parenting support and supervision are provided with qualified, trauma-informed support workers.

Recommendation #3: The Department of Health and Community Services and the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development collaboratively ensure full implementation of the child protection recommendations contained in *Towards Recovery: A Vision for a Renewed Mental Health and Addictions System for Newfoundland and Labrador*, specifically:

- Recommendation 1: Provide all young families with access to programs that focus on parental coping skills to increase resiliency, parenting skills and child development, and social and emotional competence of children.
- Recommendation 8: Some families with complex needs receive services from multiple government departments. Service managers at the regional level must be encouraged to develop mechanisms to work together to better meet the needs of these families.

- Recommendation 14: Through a stepped-care approach, develop and offer a range of mental health and addictions services integrated, wherever possible, within existing community and primary health care services throughout the province, including the Strongest Families Program for children, youth, and their families.

Recommendation #4: The Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development seek and create opportunities to collaborate with Memorial University and other service providers and experts to address the professional education of child protection social workers in the areas of child protection assessment and intervention with parents who have complex mental health diagnoses.

Recommendation #5: The Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development:

- a. Monitor and enforce compliance with the Standards and Procedures Manual for Staffed Residential Placements
- b. Develop procedures to effectively identify and address noncompliance to ensure the well-being of children
- c. Provide an annual compliance summary to the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate

Recommendation #6: The Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development ensure specific measures are taken for permanency planning to be an integral part of intervention with all children receiving child protection and in care services.

## Chronic Absenteeism (January 2019)

Recommendation #2: The Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, the school districts, the Department of Health and Community Services and Regional Health Authorities develop and implement policy specifically identifying how staff will effectively assess and respond to chronic absenteeism.

Recommendation #3: The Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, and the school districts, collaboratively develop and implement policies and protocols specifically defining the point at which chronic absenteeism situations require referral to the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development.

Recommendation #4: The Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, the Department of Health and Community Services, and the school districts develop agreements with the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development and the Regional Health Authorities defining how all these partners will collectively contribute to addressing chronic absenteeism.



## No Second Chance (October 2018)

Recommendation #4: The Department of Health and Community Services, the Regional Health Authorities and the Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development collaborate to enhance the availability of mental health and addictions services throughout the province for children, youth, and their families with a particular focus on children and youth deemed at risk and in receipt of protective services.

## The Case for Culturally Responsive Services (April 2017)

Recommendation #1: The Department of Advanced Education, Skills, and Labour, in consultation with all provincial government departments providing front line services to culturally diverse individuals and families, incorporate the following considerations into the Immigration Action Plan:

- (a) Cultivate and utilize culturally responsive interpretation services when needed;
- (b) Ensure mandatory training for designated front line professionals in the area of cultural competence, diversity, and inclusion.

## A Stolen Life (November 2016)

Recommendation #6: The Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development (formerly the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services), in consultation with Aboriginal governments, organizations and communities, propose changes to legislation that will recognize traditional custom adoption, and ensure the same standard of safety and permanency planning for all children and youth in the Province

Recommendation #7: The Department of Children, Seniors and Social Development (formerly the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services), in consultation with Aboriginal governments, organizations and communities:

- a. dedicate additional human resources of management and staff to the Labrador region to focus on ensuring that every child and youth throughout the Province receives the same standard of service.
- b. demonstrate improved service standards in the Labrador region through consistent monthly Quality Assurance Indicator Reports that equal those in all other regions.

## Conclusion

We believe in the importance of transparency and accountability in all the work we do. This is particularly important in keeping the public apprised of the status of the implementation of the recommendations we make. We acknowledge that the global pandemic of the past two years has impacted ways of working for all of us. However, despite this, government departments and agencies continued to make progress on the recommendations.

As noted in the Report, at March 31, 2021, 78% of all recommendations were implemented and 22% were partially implemented. There were no recommendations classified as “not implemented” as all recommendations were reported as having some progress towards addressing them. The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate will continue to monitor and follow up on all outstanding recommendations until we are satisfied that all have been appropriately addressed to benefit the children and youth in the province.



## **Office of the Child and Youth Advocate**

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