

For Immediate Release:

Child and Youth Advocate Comments on Portnoy Situation

The provincial Child and Youth Advocate, Darlene Neville, announced today that she has been attempting to ascertain from the Portnoys their wishes respecting involvement of the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate in their current situation. Neville indicated that her Office has received several phone calls and emails from local residents of the Marystown area requesting the involvement of her Office.

The Deportation Order regarding the Portnoys is a matter of Federal jurisdiction and therefore limits the impact the provincial Advocate's Office can have. Neville stated the Portnoy situation clearly demonstrates the need for a National Child Advocate. The Canadian Council of Provincial Child and Youth Advocates has supported the establishment of a National Child Advocate.

Although the Deportation Order is a matter of federal jurisdiction, the issue of children's interests and rights is always of concern to her Office. In this regard, Neville advises her Office has contacted the Eastern Regional Integrated Health Authority with a view to determining if services can be provided to the family to help alleviate their plight. A formal request for services for the family will be sent once the wishes of the Portnoy family have been determined. Letters of support will also be sent to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration Canada to request a review of the Portnoy's Deportation Order on humanitarian grounds.

For further information, please contact Darlene Neville, Child and Youth Advocate, at (709) 753-3888.

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