



Office of the Child and Youth Advocate
PROVINCE OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

**Press Statement re: Investigation by
Carol A. Chafe
Child and Youth Advocate**

December 12, 2011

Good Morning.

I have a prepared statement that I will be giving. After my statement, I would be happy to take general questions but will not answer questions specific to this matter.

This Office, the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate, is an Independent Statutory Office of the House of Assembly. The role of my Office is to protect and advance the rights and interests of children and youth. This is achieved through a variety of advocacy services. My authority to advocate for children and youth is clearly outlined in *The Child and Youth Advocate Act*.

On November 27, 2011, I became aware of the very unfortunate fatal fire on Springdale Street and the resulting arrest of a 16-year-old male youth. As when any issue regarding children and youth comes to my attention, it prompted the immediate gathering of information to assist me in my preliminary assessment and to help determine what, if any, role my office has in this matter. After my review I have come to the conclusion that a full investigation of the services provided to this youth is warranted.

Therefore, in accordance with Section 20 of *The Child and Youth Advocate Act*, I have provided notice to the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services; the Department of Justice; the Department of Health and Community Services; and Eastern Health of my intent to fully investigate this matter.

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I would like to clearly state at this time that the focus of my investigation is the services provided to this youth and in no way involves the actual investigation of the fire or any criminal charges or court proceedings that follow. The main question that I am seeking to answer is: "Did the services provided by the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services; the Department of Justice; the Department of Health and Community Services and Eastern Health meet the needs of this youth and were his rights to services upheld?"

The investigative process is a very comprehensive one that involves research, requests for information and documents from applicable departments, review of such documents, conducting of interviews, compiling and analyzing of information and the writing of a final report with any identified recommendations.

I am outlining this process to you today to provide perspective on the complexity of conducting such an investigation which requires time and thoroughness. As always, once an investigation begins, there is often new information received which leads to further requests for information and so on. Therefore, at this time, I cannot provide a definitive timeframe for the completion of this investigation, but would like to assure you it will be done in a timely manner.

Thank you for your time today and as I previously mentioned, I welcome any general questions on the process of investigation, but for obvious reasons, I will not be able to answer specific questions in relation to this investigation.