



News Release

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ADOPTION AND PERMANENCY NUMBERS FLAGGING FOR B.C.'S CHILDREN AND YOUTH IN CARE

VICTORIA – The provincial government is faltering in its efforts to find permanent homes for the children and youth in its care – particularly for Indigenous children and youth – shows a report released today by the Representative for Children and Youth.

Only 84 B.C. children and youth in care were adopted during the first six months of this fiscal year, well behind the pace of the previous two years, according to the *B.C. Adoption and Permanency Options Update*, the fourth follow-up to the RCY's 2014 report *Finding Forever Families: A Review of the Provincial Adoption System*.

Of those adopted to date, only 16 are Aboriginal children and youth. This is far off the pace of 2015/16 and 2016/17, when there were 55 and 40 Aboriginal children and youth adopted, respectively, during the first six months.

“These statistics are very disappointing,” said Representative Bernard Richard, “because they are not just numbers. These are children and youth, waiting for a family to nurture them and provide them with a sense of belonging. Three years ago, an RCY report noted that there were more than 1,000 B.C. children and youth in care waiting to be adopted. This remains the case today and it’s simply not good enough when we’re talking about young peoples’ lives.”

The decline in adoption placements this fiscal year follows a period of marked improvement for the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) in the two years immediately following RCY’s initial report. But as current numbers show, despite higher investments in adoptions, that improvement has stalled. Even counting transfers of custody as well as adoptions, as MCFD is now doing, it appears far fewer children and youth in care will find permanent homes this fiscal year than last.

“Government must keep its commitment to B.C.’s most vulnerable children,” Richard said. “It must do a better job of finding them families – whether it’s through adoption, transfer of custody, or custom adoption for Indigenous children. This must be a priority.”

The full report is available at: <http://www.rcybc.ca/adoptionupdate2017>

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