



REPRESENTATIVE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Orientation to the RCY For Prospective Deputy Representative Applicants



Orientation

- **About the RCY:**

- Origins
- Mission and mandate
- Structure
- Shifting context

- **About the Deputy Position**

- Why this role?
- Scope and priorities
- Knowledge, skills and ways of being

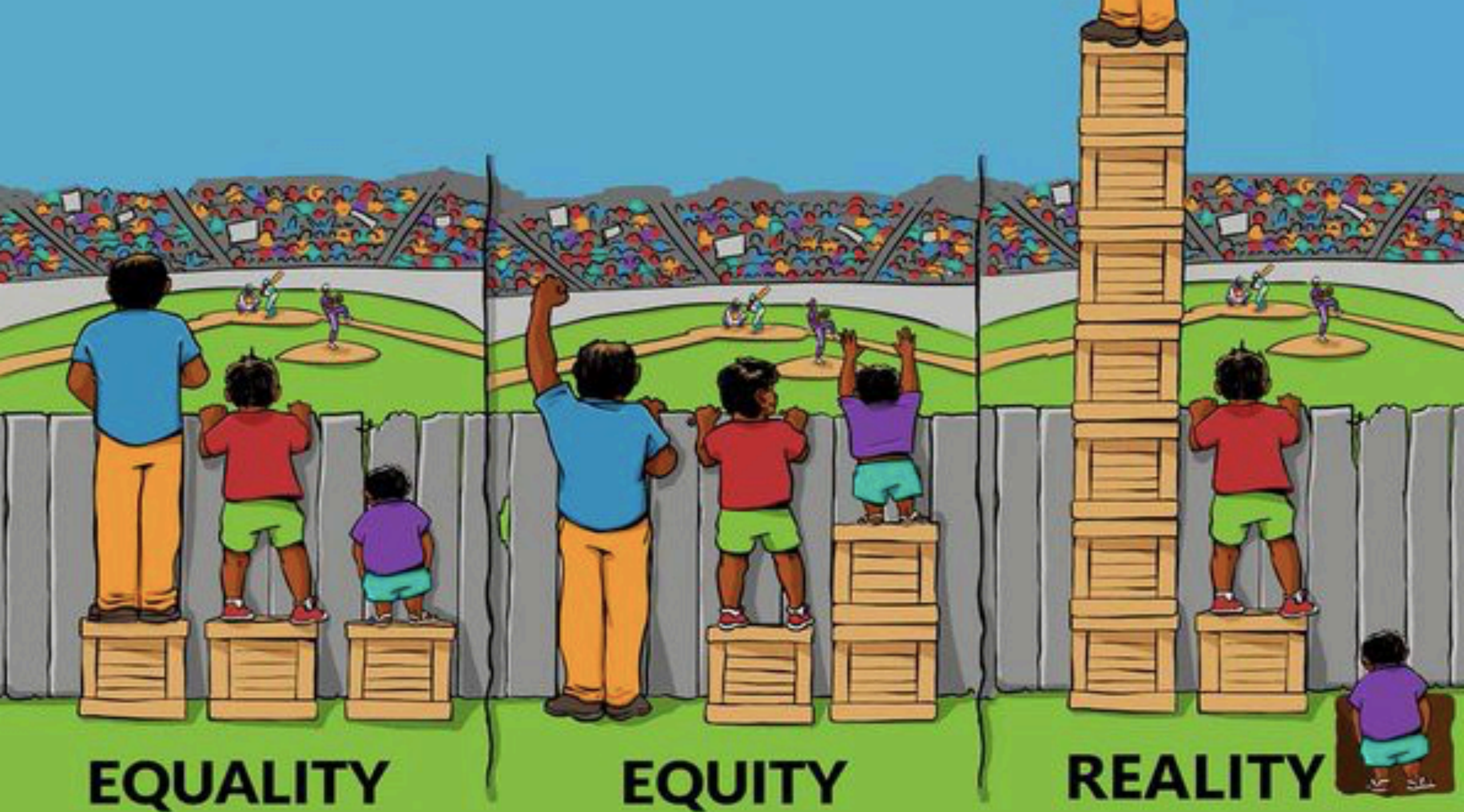
- **Spotlight on Advocacy**

- Team
- Individual advocacy
- Systemic advocacy
- Expanded mandate

- **Spotlight on FNMIR**

- Team
- Engagement
- Monitoring and research

- **Recruitment process**



Our Origins – Honourable Ted Hughes

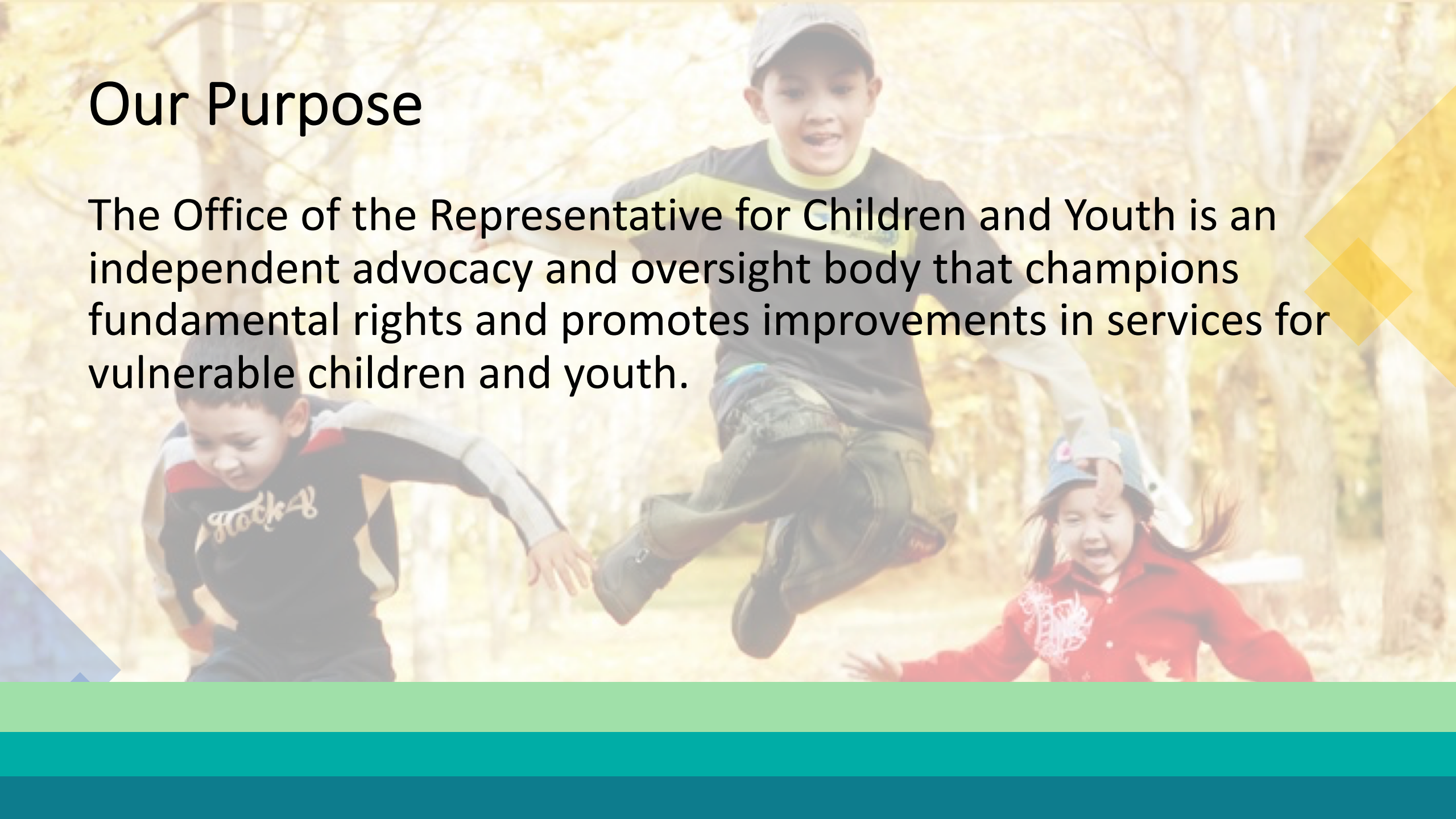


Our Origins

- Honourable Hughes recommended that the Representative work to *“assist, encourage, and sometimes prod the government to be more aware and responsive to the individual concerns of children, youth and families ... and*
- *To recommend changes that will address broader problems in the child welfare system.”*
- He stressed the importance of the independence of this Office and felt it was critical for RCY to be *“an independent voice for vulnerable children and youth in B.C.”* In recent discussions he emphasized independence, not isolation.

Our Purpose

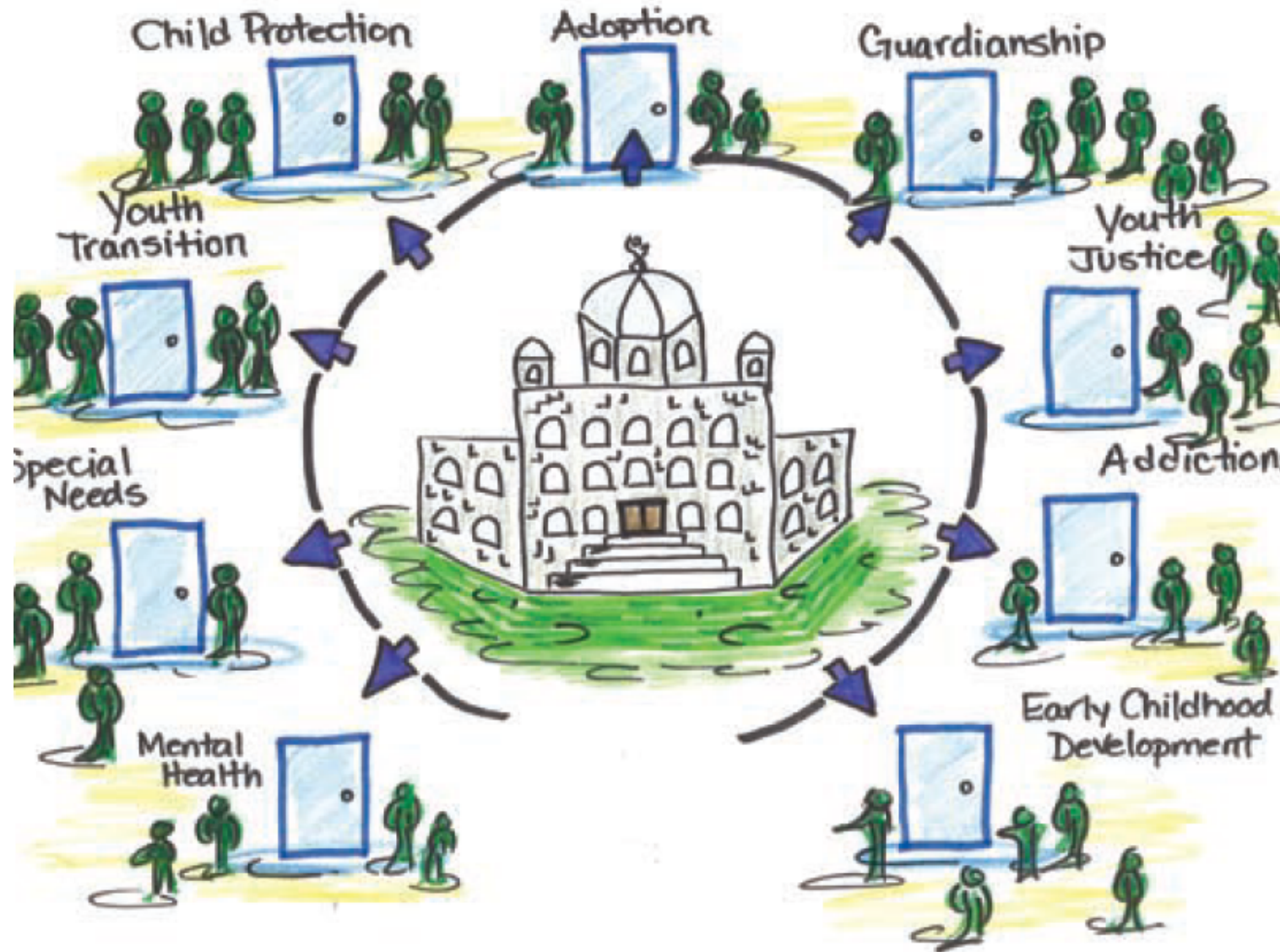
The Office of the Representative for Children and Youth is an independent advocacy and oversight body that champions fundamental rights and promotes improvements in services for vulnerable children and youth.



Designated and Reviewable Services

Under the Representative for Children and Youth Act, **‘designated services’** are services under the Adoption Act, Child Care Act, Child Care Subsidy Act, Community Living Authority Act, CFCSA and Youth Justice Act + ECD and child care, mental health, addictions services and transitions for youth and young adults. These are the focus for **advocacy services**.

‘Reviewable services’ are services under the CFCSA and YJA + mental health and addictions services. These are the focus for **critical injury and death reviews**.

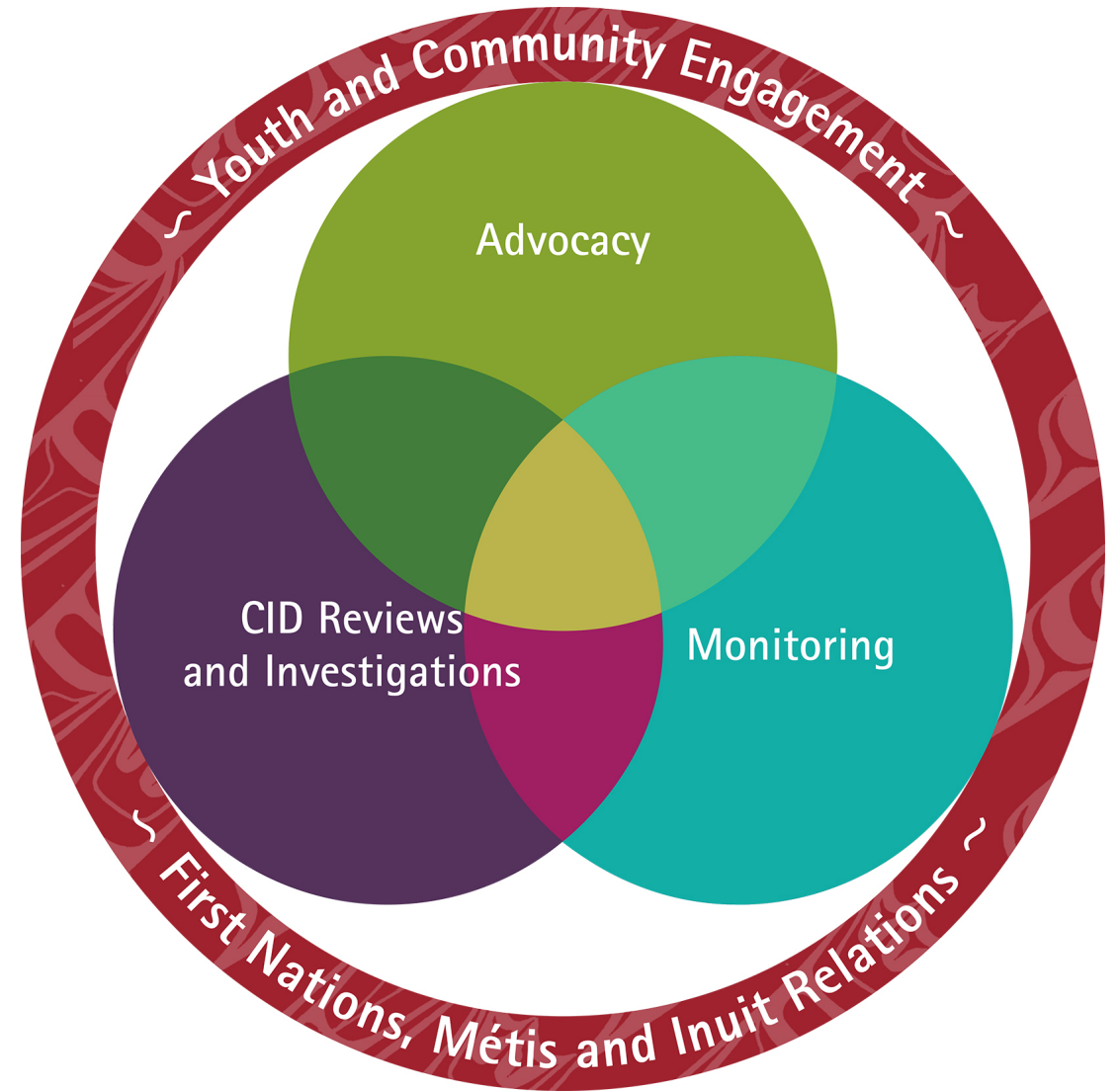


Who we are

- 70 staff
- 3 locations + some telework
- Diverse backgrounds

What we do

- Mandated
- Aligned
- Corporate
 - OHRC shared services





Evolving Context for the Work

- An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis children, youth and families (Bill C-92)
- UNDRP legislation
- TRC Calls to Action
- MMIWG Calls for Justice
- CHRT Rulings
- GCEJ Report
- Agreements and commitments between RCY and FNLC, MNBC, DAAs, and others



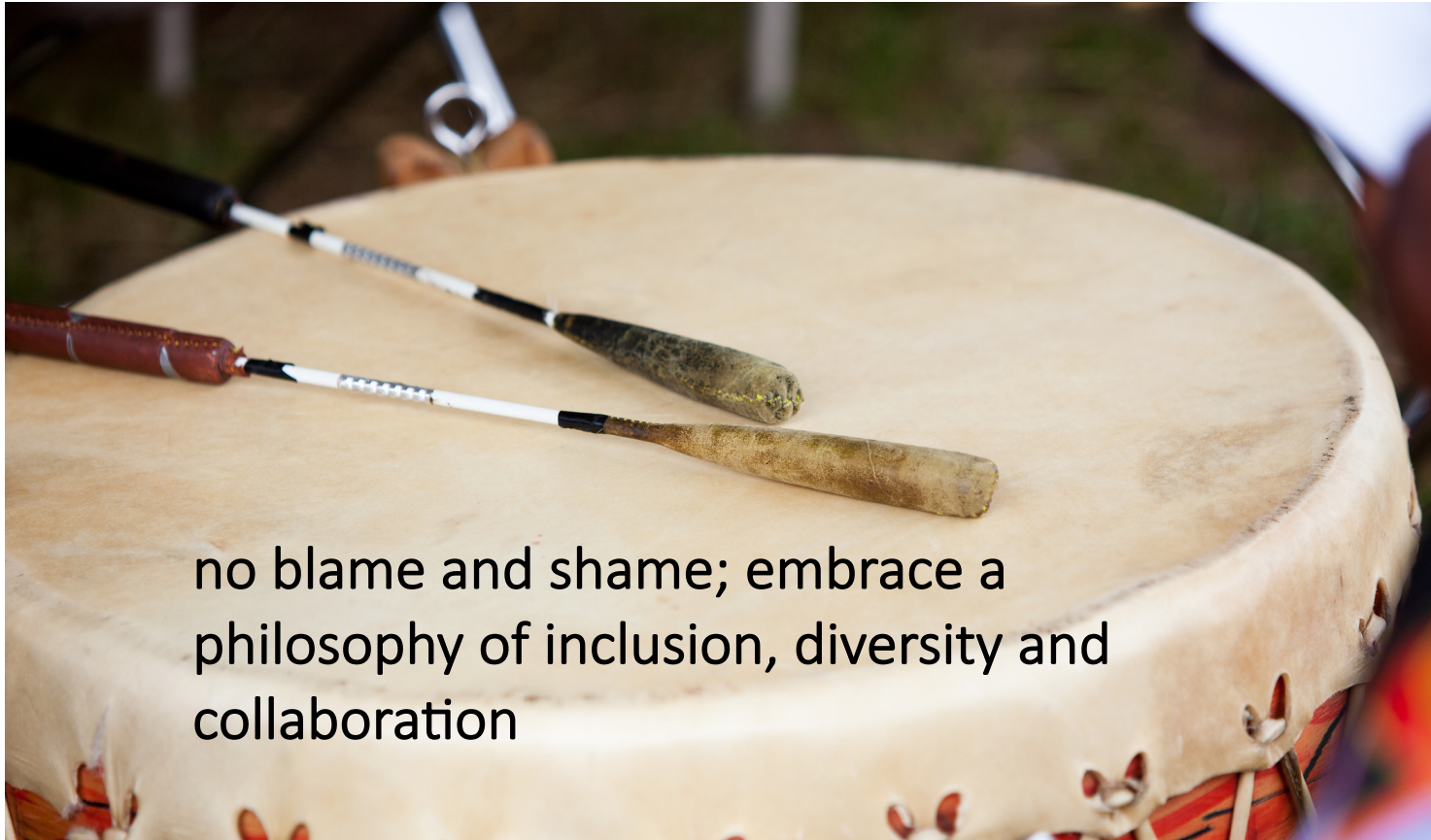
CALLING IN THE CIRCLE ON CULTURAL SAFETY



HARLEY EAGLE

Fostering Cultural
Safety =
Cultural
*awareness,
understanding,
humility and agility*





no blame and shame; embrace a philosophy of inclusion, diversity and collaboration

Internal work

- Recruitment priorities
- Retention strategies
- Cultural safety assessment
- Cultural safety - developmental approach and actions
- Multiple modes of learning about Indigenous ways of knowing and being
- Examining all our practices through a lens of cultural humility – and committing to changing ourselves personally and organizationally
- Supporting staff through supervision, training and inclusion
- Calling in – not calling out



External work

- Building, sustaining and amplifying relationships with First Nations, Metis and urban Indigenous leadership
- Seeking counsel
- Saying 'yes' when asked to be in community; being present
- Bearing witness; being curious and open to critique
- Consulting on our reports
- Telling the story in mainstream contexts



Holding the Tensions

- First Nations, Metis, Inuit and urban Indigenous children and youth are significantly overrepresented in the child welfare and youth justice systems
- The RCY is a creation of a colonial system; we carry significant power
- How do we do our work in a way that is more culturally attuned and responsive?
- How do we hold the tensions of being part of a big system, while trying to fundamentally change it?
- How might we seek guidance and direction from Indigenous children, youth, families, leaders and communities about what changes are called for?

Strategic Priorities

- Improve services to children, youth and young adults who are in receipt of, or eligible for, designated or reviewable services
- Champion the rights of children, youth and young adults
- Promote services and supports that will address and reduce the over- involvement of the child welfare system in the lives of First Nations, Métis, Inuit and urban Indigenous children and youth, and their families and communities
- Support First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities in reassuming jurisdiction over child and family services.
- Engage children, youth and young adults to inform the work of RCY
- Become a more culturally attuned and culturally responsive organization
- Work with integrity in an informed, effective and collaborative manner





Top 15 Concerns

In 2018/19, the Rep engaged with hundreds of youth, adults and other stakeholders at more than 200 events.

TOP 3 CALLS TO ACTION HEARD BY THE REP:

- Focus on preventative services
- Improve supports for transitions to adulthood
- Extend social and financial supports to youth from care after age 19

YOUTH TOP 5

Listen to youth in matters that affect them, especially on quality of care

Provide early assessments & access to services before aging out

Seek youth direction on permanency & what is most important to them

Foster opportunities for children, youth & young adults to have positive life experiences

Ensure caregivers & service providers are doing their jobs & hold them accountable

INDIGENOUS LEADERS & SERVICE PROVIDERS TOP 5

Support self-determination and jurisdiction over child, youth and family services

Focus on relevant and meaningful cultural connections, especially for those who are disconnected

Promote culturally appropriate services & connections for children & youth with substance use & mental health concerns

Take action to protect young people who are being sexually exploited

Listen to community and family members; seek to understand contexts & what is necessary for child and family well-being

FAMILIES & CAREGIVERS TOP 5

Provide more support and access for children & youth with special needs

Support improved services for children & youth with FASD

Increase response to children & youth with complex needs; shift from silos to coordinated responses

Facilitate navigators to help children with special needs, mental health or substance use issues

Improve transition planning for young people who are eligible for CLBC services

Community guidance:

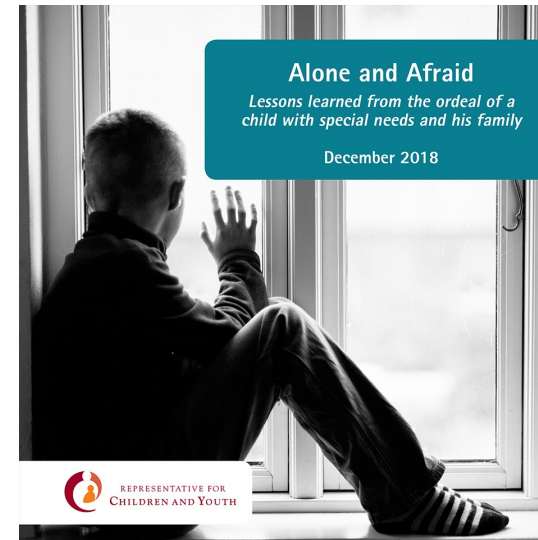
- Focus on preventative services (support for families, early interventions, services for C&Y with special needs)
- Improve supports for transitions to adulthood
- Extend social and financial supports to youth from care after age 19
- Listen to and honour youth voice
- Support cultural connections
- Support FN and Metis community self determination

How do we effect change?


Aims: Inspire, Invigorate, Agitate and Advocate

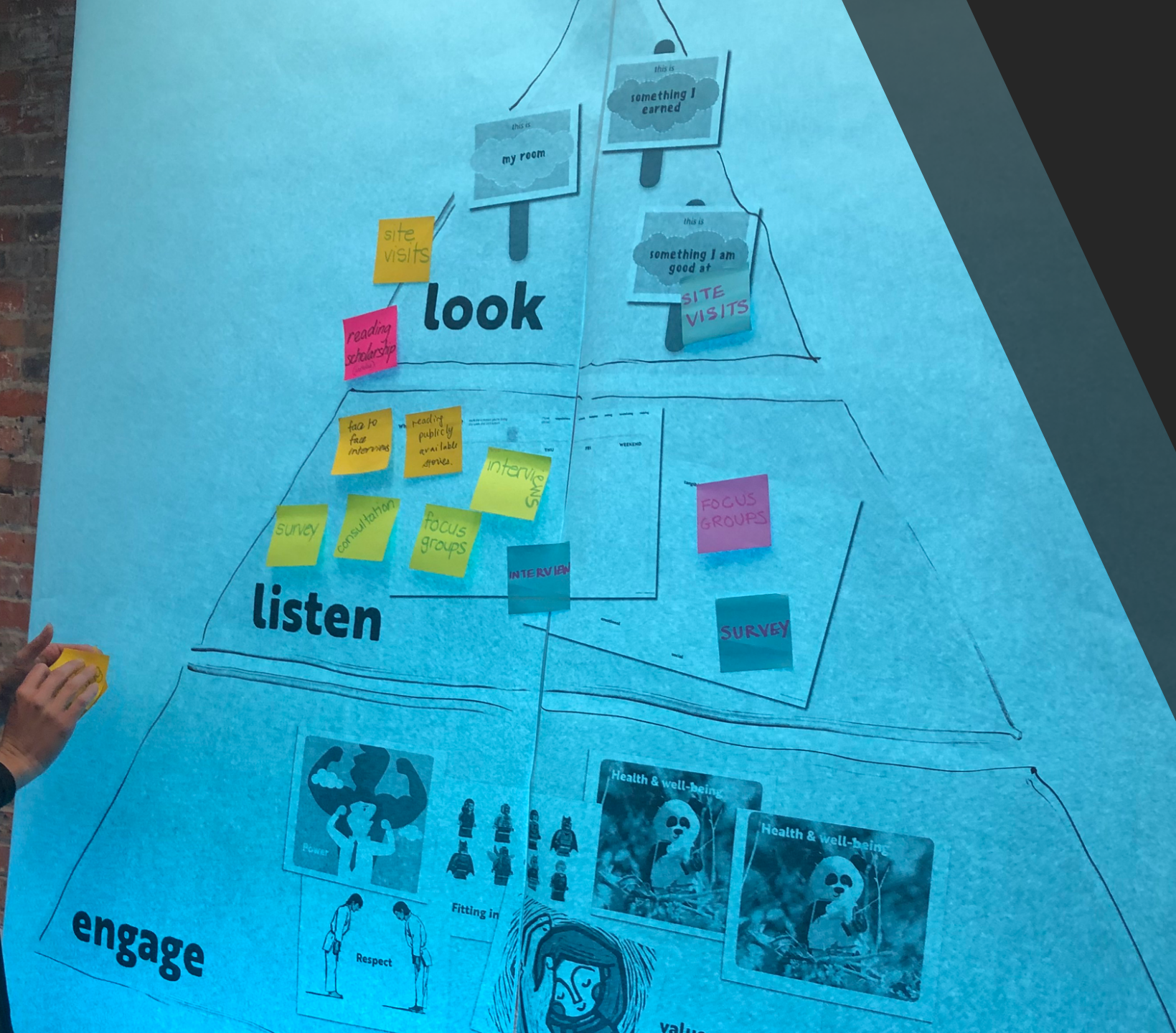
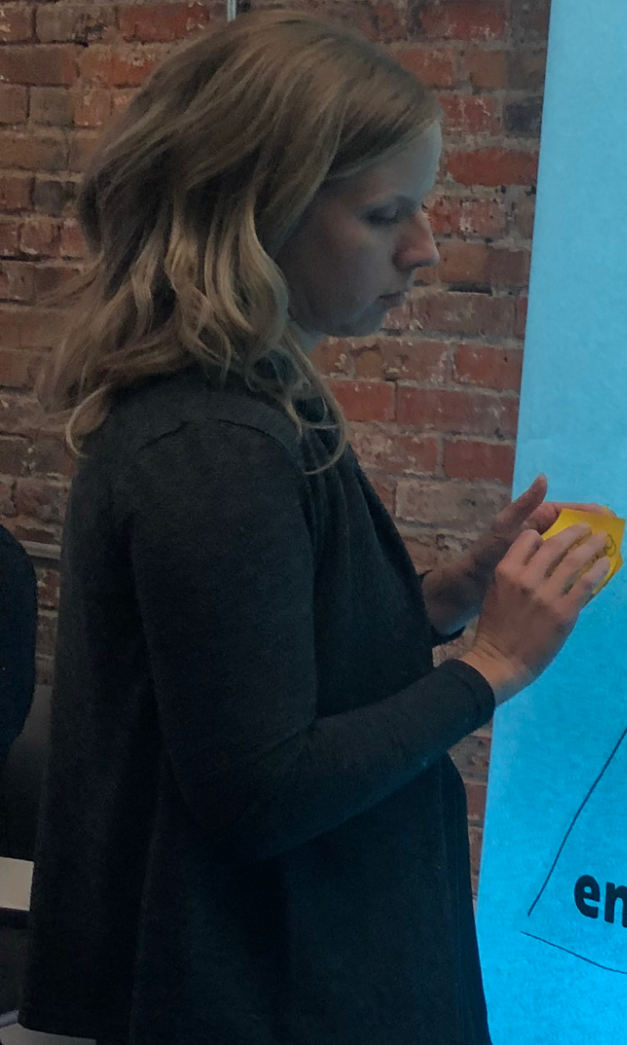
- Reports
- Reviews
- Information sharing e.g. promising practices, trends
- Public Statements
- Media
- Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth Presentations
- Internal Advocacy – “Quiet conversations”
- Convening, hosting, facilitating challenging conversations
- Symposia
- **Allyship – supporting the work that others are doing; standing behind or alongside**

Recent Reports



Current Projects

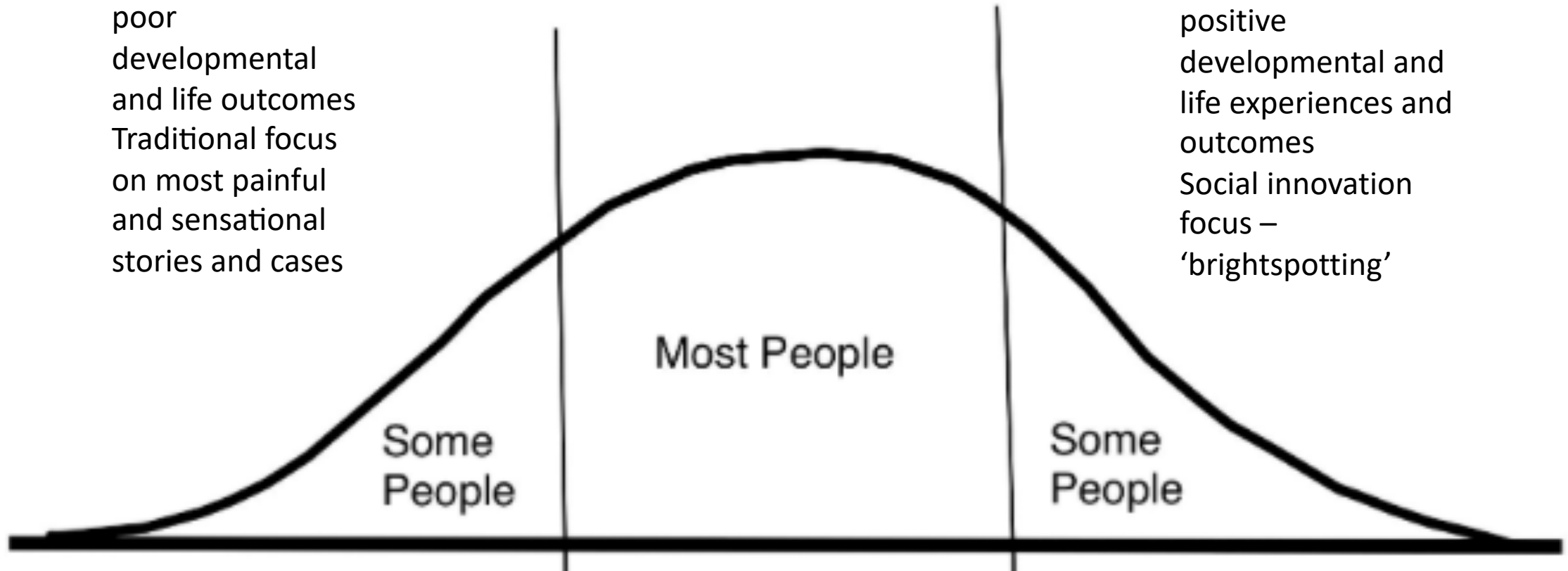
- **Investigation** – Indigenous youth and **intergenerational trauma**, sexual exploitation, substance use and **lack of access to services**
 - Youth **Homelessness** Report – with Katherine McParland
 - Youth **Substance Use** Services Report
 - Child **Participation** Reports – Mental Health Act detentions, High conflict Family Law and CFCSA
 - **Stories by Numbers** Reports (Descriptive Statistics)
 - **FASD** Project
 - **Care Plan** Review
 - **Early Years** Project
 - Youth **Transitioning** Into Adulthood Project
- 



Finding and amplifying the Brightspots

Vulnerability with
poor
developmental
and life outcomes
Traditional focus
on most painful
and sensational
stories and cases

Vulnerability with
positive
developmental and
life experiences and
outcomes
Social innovation
focus –
'brightspotting'



POSITIVE AND CONSISTENT RELATIONSHIPS

- To connect often with a caring adult at school
- School staff who understand what it is like to be in care
- Social workers and foster parents who support education
- Peer support



UP-TO EDUCATOR TRAINING

In each school, there are educators with whom students form good relationships, naturally go to for help, and feel comfortable talking about their problems. Therefore, providing training to this unique group in how to recognize mental disorders and link to within school resources and community health care providers may promote better early identification and improved access to mental health care for young people who need it.



Parent & Family Empowerment: why adults need to be in charge with Dr. Vanessa Lapointe

Resiliency Requires a Caring Parent Who is in Charge
A key goal of developing resiliency and helping children grow to become their best selves is a need's opportunity to depend on the leadership of a caring adult. It is in this state of dependency that the work of child development unfolds.

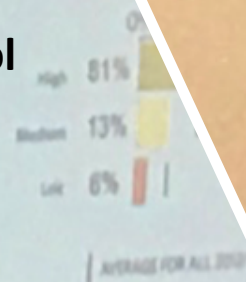
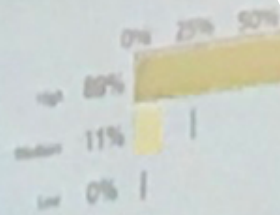
Children need an "in charge" adult, including using "we" when appropriate.
In addition, and "I" statements.
"I like the concept of 'individual' has been understood in different ways historically and why we need to understand it more today."
"The best and most impactful work I've done is Dr. Vanessa's course 'We're It, We're It, We're It'."
"The importance of a healthy, effective approach to discipline that respects your child's developmental needs... and works!"

Thursday, November 9th 6:30 - 8:30 pm
Begbie View Elementary
Multi-Purpose Room



High school mentors are matched with little buddies in a program that serves to benefit both.

Brightspot: Revelstoke School District's Innovative Actions in Response to the Room for Improvement Report



Role of the Deputy Representatives

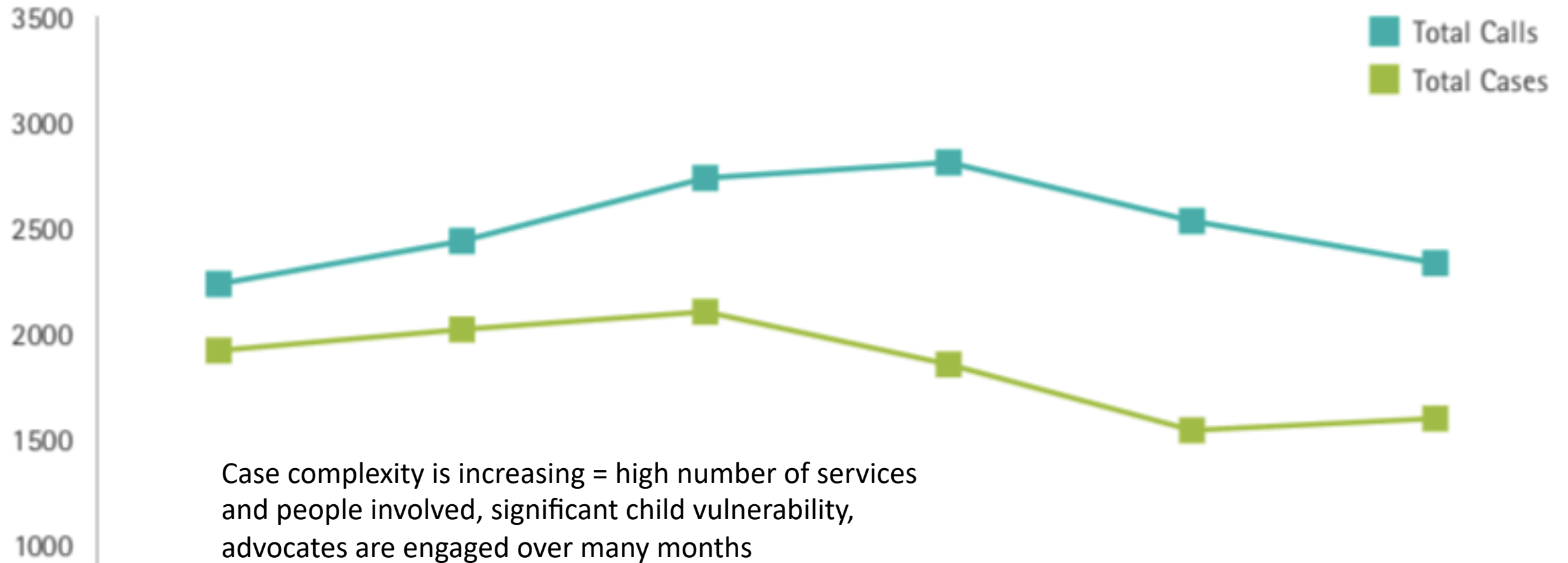
- Work closely with the Representative and Executive team to enact vision and strategic priorities and provide strategic, non-partisan advice
- Accountable for performance of their teams in alignment with priorities, objectives and outcomes
- Manage within budget
- Meet with and present to community groups, stakeholders, youth and young adults and Select Standing Committee on Children and Youth
- Advocate for service and program reform to better serve children, youth and young adults
- Discover and highlight brightspots

Role of the Deputy for Advocacy and First Nations, Metis and Inuit Relations

Advocacy

- Work closely with the Executive Director to support the Advocacy Team
- Steward expansion of the advocacy mandate
- Support systemic advocacy and bring forward systemic issues for Representative and Executive Team consideration
- With the Representative and ED, guide and support implementation of Youth and Community Engagement Plan

Figure 1 – Total Advocacy Calls and Total Advocacy Cases by Fiscal Year – 2013/14 to 2018/19



Expanded Advocacy Mandate

Part One:

- Regulation change to enable RCY to advocate for young people who are in receipt of or eligible for Agreement with Young Adults (AYA) or Tuition Waiver Program (TWP)

Part Two:

- Legislative changes as recommended by the SSCCY to increase the age and scope of advocacy services for young adults



LEADING WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE

Youth Engagement Guidelines for the Child Welfare Sector



Youth engagement: Partnering with young people and involving them meaningfully, ethically, and sustainably in all matters that affect their lives and those of their community. Involvement can include planning, decision-making, delivery, and evaluation phases (both operations and governance). Success in youth engagement is best measured by ongoing feedback from engaged youth about whether it is meaningful, ethical, and sustainable.

Role of the Deputy for Advocacy and First Nations, Metis and Inuit Relations

First Nations, Metis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous Relations

- Internal work
 - Work closely with Executive Director to support FNMIR team
 - Provide advice, guidance and counsel within the RCY
 - Provide leadership on cultural safety initiatives and Indigenous ways of knowing and being within all aspects of the RCY's work
- External work
 - Develop, nurture and sustain strong and respectful working relationships with communities, organizations, authorities, leadership, elders, knowledge keepers; fulfill agreements negotiated with leadership bodies

Questions
about the
role?



Recruitment Process

- Applications accepted to February 10th
- Initial screening – those who have demonstrated in their application that they meet the core requirements of the position will proceed
- Invitation to participate in next phase – completion of a written assignment
- Further review and selection of people who will be invited to an interview
- Invitation to in-person interview with members of the RCY and external FN and Metis advisors and selection of top candidates
- Top candidates invited to visit RCY and meet with members of executive, staff – opportunity for 2-way assessment of fit
- Top candidates invited to final meeting with Representative
- Recommendations brought forward, references checked, offer made

Questions about the
role or recruitment
process may be
directed to Linda
Shout,
Linda.Shout@rcybc.ca





REPRESENTATIVE FOR
CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Website: www.rcybc.ca



BC's Representative for Children and Youth *and*
RCYBC Youth



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Rep4Youth



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