

A Parent's Duty: Government Obligation to Youth Transitioning into Adulthood **RCY Annual Review Year 1**

The Representative's report *A Parent's Duty: Government's Obligation to Youth Transitioning into Adulthood* was released in December 2020 and included seven recommendations. Tracking of recommendation implementation is normally undertaken on an annual basis; however, on occasion, circumstances can delay the assessment and/or posting. The *Parent's Duty* Year 1 Progress Report from the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), the Office of Housing and Construction Standards, the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions (MMHA), the Ministry of Health (HLTH) and the Ministry of Citizens' Services (CITZ) was submitted July 25, 2022.

RCY Assessment Definitions:

- **Complete** = All activities that directly support the implementation of the recommendation are complete
- **Substantial Progress** = Most of the activities that directly support the implementation of the recommendation are complete
- **Some Progress** = Some of the activities that directly support the implementation of the recommendation are complete
- **No Progress** = None of the activities that directly support the implementation of the recommendation are complete (pre-planning may be underway but there has been no progress in formal planning or implementation).

| Recommendation | Ministry's Response | RCY Assessment |
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| <p data-bbox="201 358 244 386">#1</p> <p data-bbox="279 315 760 342">Extend and improve transition planning:</p> <p data-bbox="279 386 951 521">MCFD should fully implement and proactively support and monitor effective practice in planning for transition into adulthood, beginning at least by age 14 for youth in continuing care and extending beyond age 19. Principles of this transition planning process should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="279 597 951 732">a) Developmentally appropriate processes, aligned with the non-linear and complex process of transitioning to adulthood, and supporting the shift from dependence to interdependence, with relationships at the centre. <li data-bbox="279 743 951 943">b) Contextualization of the experience of Indigenous youth transitioning to adulthood within the experience of colonization and supporting the reclamation of culture and identity as critically important elements of the lives of emerging First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous young adults. <li data-bbox="279 954 951 1089">c) Reciprocal processes, where youth agency is prioritized and youth are responsible and empowered to design a case plan representative of their goals, interests and support networks. <p data-bbox="279 1133 951 1300">MCFD is to have developed a comprehensive plan by April 1, 2022 that addresses policy and practice guidelines, staff training and processes and mechanisms for support and monitoring of practice, with full implementation of that plan in the ensuing 18 months.</p> | <p data-bbox="981 315 1432 342">Year 1 Evidence – Received July 2022</p> <p data-bbox="981 354 1768 553">MCFD is developing a new service delivery model for youth and young adults transitioning to adulthood from ministry care referred to as the Improving Youth Transitions Project. As part of this development work, MCFD has completed two prototypes of the Early Transition Readiness Planning (part of the Improving Youth Transitions Model).</p> <p data-bbox="981 597 1768 732">As part of this new model, MCFD will begin transition planning for youth potentially as early as 14 years of age and continue to serve young adults after their 19th birthday up to their 27th birthday.</p> <p data-bbox="981 776 1768 1154">Under the implementation of the two prototypes, the Navigator (Transition Coordinator) has worked with the support team/circle to involve the youth directly in their planning whenever possible. This has occurred via informal and formal in-person meetings with the youth to build relationships and gather information to support their planning needs. Youth have also been engaging in ongoing discussions with the Navigator (Transition Coordinator) to elicit youth input and feedback. This feedback has been gathered via a youth questionnaire that is reviewed at each planning meeting to ensure the youth's voice is kept at the centre of planning.</p> <p data-bbox="981 1198 1768 1398">To support the reclamation of culture and identity of First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous youth transitioning to adulthood, at the onset of planning and continuously throughout the planning journey, the Navigator (Transition Coordinator) in collaboration with the Guardianship Worker and youth have intentionally focused on exploring and identifying existing</p> | <p data-bbox="1795 315 2024 342">Year 1 Assessment</p> <p data-bbox="1795 354 2112 381">Substantial Progress</p> <p data-bbox="1795 435 2502 521">MCFD is in the process of developing the Improving Youth Transitions Project which, when fully implemented, has the potential to address the intent of Recommendation #1.</p> <p data-bbox="1795 581 2556 764">MCFD has provided evidence of activities that directly support the implementation of the recommendation, including a review of organizational structure to better utilize existing internal resources and implementing two prototypes of the service delivery model. MCFD is also collecting youth feedback on the process.</p> |

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| | | <p>relationships and cultural connections present in the youth's life as well as any possible/future relationships and cultural connections. As part of the Early Transition Readiness Plan, the Navigator (Transition Coordinator) has helped to facilitate and connect youth to cultural support and services. Engagement with local Indigenous agencies and organizations has also occurred to increase staff knowledge about the available resources and supports in community.</p> <p>MCFD also reports that new features will be introduced from 2022-2025 including:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1) a rent supplement program2) a no-limit earnings exemption for the Agreements with Young Adults program (AYA)3) transition workers4) extended medical benefits5) broader eligibility for young adults for improved supports, and6) unconditional income supplement. | |
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| | Recommendation | Ministry's Response | RCY Assessment |
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| #2 | <p>Provide ongoing adult guidance and support by implementing dedicated youth transition workers through community agencies.</p> <p>In partnership with community agencies, MCFD should develop and implement a plan to establish dedicated youth transition workers to assist and support youth transitioning from care into adulthood. This plan should result in the province-wide (including rural and remote communities) implementation of dedicated transition workers who engage with young people before they turn 19 and provide systems navigation support, case management and adult guidance up to the age of 27 years. These professionals should work alongside a young person's natural systems of support and assist in providing mentorship and developmentally appropriate support. Supports should include a focus on skills development with the goal of education and employment. Particular attention should be paid to engaging transitional support workers who are First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous, as well as non-Indigenous workers who have received cultural safety and trauma awareness training to work respectfully with these young people.</p> <p>MCFD is to have completed policy and planning by April 1, 2022 and have completed full implementation of that plan in the ensuing 18 months.</p> | <p>Year 1 Evidence – Received July 2022</p> <p>To fulfill this recommendation, MCFD is working towards the implementation of the Improving Youth Transitions Project, a new service delivery model for youth and young adults transitioning to adulthood from ministry care.</p> <p>Budget 2022 announced that 80 new transition workers will be hired to help youth and young adults navigate their transition from care successfully. Of these, 20 per cent of the funding for these workers will be allocated to Indigenous Child and Family Service Agencies (ICFSAs, formerly DAAs).</p> <p>Transition workers will connect with each young adult before the age of 19 – and as early as 14 years of age for those who are developmentally ready – to develop a transition plan for their transition into adulthood.</p> <p>Once the young person turns 19 the intention is for the transition plan to be in place, and the relationship will continue with the transition worker up to age 25. Transition planning post-19 may include determining program eligibility, identifying housing supports, administering the rent supplement program, approving programming, connecting young adults to adult services, and relationship building.</p> <p>For young people with support needs, the MCFD-Community Living BC (CLBC) Liaison Committee has formed a working group focusing on youths' transition from MCFD support and services to CLBC support and services known as the Transition Working Group. Services to Adults with Developmental Disabilities (STADD) is leading the development of the service delivery model and has started a Roles and Responsibilities</p> | <p>Year 1 Assessment</p> <p>Substantial Progress</p> <p>Progress towards implementation of the Improving Youth Transitions Project is underway by MCFD with policy and planning near completion and prototyping in two service delivery areas in progress. While provincial roll-out is still to come, MCFD has made the flexibility for the AYA program to include life skills programming – a feature that was introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic – permanent. In addition, MCFD has extended Temporary Housing Agreements and Temporary Support Agreements until they can be made permanent through legislation.</p> <p>The Representative notes that the materials provided by MCFD indicate that youth supports will be provided up to age 25 and is seeking clarification and rationale as her recommendation includes support up to age 27.</p> |

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| | | <p>sub-working group to support the implementation of Transition Workers.</p> <p>To support this work, a dedicated Youth Transitions Implementation and Service Delivery Team has been established.</p> <p>The Youth Transitions Implementation and Service Delivery Team will hire Youth Transition Workers classified at the level SPO 24 (see below for more on what this means) across the province to provide transition planning and service navigation to youth and young adults transitioning to adulthood.</p> <p>Although the Youth Transition Workers will be MCFD staff, the new service delivery model will be significantly informed by the work of agencies in community who are currently providing best practice in transition planning to youth and young adults. To increase recruitment of Transition Support Workers who are First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous, the Youth Transitions Implementation and Service Delivery Team also plans to hire Youth Transition Workers at the classification level of SPO 21. What this means is that the hiring of SPO 21 Workers will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allow hiring outside of the SPO 24 job profile which requires a degree• Increase recruitment of potential applicants across the province with different educational credentials• Create additional opportunities to hire from community and those with lived experience. | |
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| #3 | <p>Ensure continuing post-majority financial support.</p> <p>In order to support the same gradual and extended transition to adulthood that most young people enjoy, MCFD should implement universal and comprehensive financial support for young people aging out of all types of care and out of Youth Agreements by automatically enrolling them on their 19th birthday in Agreements with Young Adults (AYA), unless the young person chooses to opt out. Universal support should continue until the young person's 27th birthday without restriction, subject to reasonable constraints such as consideration of other income.</p> <p>MCFD is to have developed a comprehensive plan by April 1, 2022 and fully implement that plan over the ensuing 18 months.</p> | <p>Year 1 Evidence – Received July 2022</p> <p>MCFD, in partnership with Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training (AEST), is undertaking an extensive review of the major post-secondary funding sources to uncover gaps, overlaps and opportunities for improvement.</p> <p>These funding sources include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Learning Fund for Young Adults (LFYA) 2. Youth Education Assistance Fund (YEAFF) 3. Youth Futures Education Fund (YFEF) 4. Student Aid BC (SABC) funding supports 5. Agreements with Young Adults (AYA) 6. Provincial Tuition Waiver Program (PTWP) <p>Through Budget 2022, the temporary COVID-19 emergency measures – the AYA life-skills program flexibility – is now permanently maintained.</p> <p>WorkBC- Skills Training for Employment: Young Adults</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This training component of the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction's (SDPR) WorkBC program is run through AEST via its skills enhancement grants. • The training helps young adults, who are vulnerable because of previous trauma and, who are not employment ready, obtain sustainable employment. This may include current or former youth in care. • The program provides skills training and employment supports that are based on the needs of the participant, to help overcome barriers to employment. • MCFD's Strategic Initiatives Branch recently met with WorkBC staff to discuss the continuation of informational webinars for social workers in late | <p>Year 1 Assessment</p> <p>Some Progress</p> <p>The Representative is encouraged to see inter-ministerial work underway to identify gaps for post-secondary funding for children in care and the decision to make permanent the flexibility in the AYA life skills program.</p> <p>The Representative will continue to work with the ministry to support action planning that will support the core intention of this recommendation, to ensure universal and comprehensive financial support for youth aging out of all types of care through their 27th birthday without restriction.</p> |

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| | | May/early June 2021 to assist them in promoting WorkBC's life skills programming for youth and young adults from care | |
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| #4 | <p>Consider an extension of voluntary residential care.</p> <p>MCFD should evaluate the current emergency measures in place due to COVID-19 that allow young people to continue to stay in their foster home or staffed residential placements past their 19th birthday. Our Office anticipates that such an evaluation would reveal benefits and feasibility on an ongoing basis. If that is the case, the ministry should implement changes that would allow for continuing foster home or staffed residential care on a voluntary basis, with the length of extension based on the young person's readiness to transition out of care. Priority consideration should be given to youth and young adults who have disabilities and other physical and mental health needs who are not ready for independence at 19, and not eligible for Community Living BC services.</p> <p>MCFD is to complete the evaluation by Dec. 31, 2021 and develop and implement an approved plan of next steps by April 1, 2022.</p> | <p>Year 1 Evidence – Received July 2022</p> <p>MCFD's COVID-19 Emergency Housing Measures - Temporary Housing/Support Agreements were put in place in March 2020. The ministry is offering Temporary Housing Agreements (THA) and Temporary Support Agreements (TSA) to support youth in care who are transitioning to independence during the COVID-19 pandemic, which allows them to stay in their living arrangement past their 19th birthday (until March 2022). Young adults who are ready to transition are being supported to do so.</p> <p>The ministry is undertaking an evaluation of the emergency measures to inform future planning and supports available to youth transitioning to independence</p> <p>As of April 1, 2022, the flexibility for the AYA program life skills programming introduced during the COVID-19 pandemic has been permanently maintained. In addition, Temporary Housing Agreements and Temporary Support Agreements have been extended indefinitely until they can be made permanent through legislation (planned for 2024/2025 implementation).</p> | <p>Year 1 Assessment</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>On April 1, 2022, MCFD extended Temporary Housing Agreements and Temporary Support Agreements until they can be made permanent through legislation in 2024/25.</p> |

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| #5 | <p>Provide additional dedicated housing for youth aging out of care.</p> <p>There is perhaps no greater challenge currently facing young people in B.C. transitioning into adulthood than finding appropriate, affordable and safe housing. We echo the recommendation made in the late Katherine McParland's report, <i>From Marginalized to Magnified: Youth Homelessness Solutions from those with Lived Expertise</i> – that the Ministry of Attorney General and Minister responsible for Housing should work with BC Housing to develop and implement an aggressive plan to work toward ending youth homelessness in B.C., with particular attention to young adults who have transitioned from care.</p> <p>As part of this plan, additional dedicated housing units should be provided for young people aging out of care. Units on a continuum of support – including with mental health and addictions supports where needed – should be available and eligibility requirements reduced.</p> <p>BC Housing is to develop a comprehensive plan by April 1, 2022 and begin full implementation of that plan thereafter.</p> | <p>Year 1 Evidence – Received July 2022</p> <p>In partnership with BC Housing, MCFD is leading the development of the B.C. Youth Housing Plan for youth/young adults to identify and prioritize opportunities to better meet the needs of youth transitioning to independence. This housing plan was informed by recommendations made to government, as well as research and engagement carried out by MCFD.</p> <p>The Housing plan responds by promoting housing stability for youth transitioning to adulthood through transition planning and the provision of housing options. This plan is intended to change the trajectory towards insecure housing and homelessness that so many youth and young adults from care experience.</p> <p>Youth are noted as a distinct needs group in the Provincial Homelessness Strategy which incorporates intersectional needs and cultural safety through partnerships, research and actions.</p> <p>MCFD is supporting the Ministry of Attorney General in developing a provincial homelessness strategy. Budget 2022 announced \$633 Million over three years to address homelessness. It includes, at implementation and planning stages, \$35 million for youth transitioning from care, including a new financial supplement, rent supplements, and improved supports and benefits until age 27.</p> <p>The Homelessness Strategy includes: housing, rent supplements, supports, encampment supports, programming, engagement and research inclusive and accessible to youth transitioning out of care into adulthood.</p> | <p>Year 1 Assessment</p> <p>Some Progress</p> <p>The Representative is encouraged to see the significant investment in and planning progress on the B.C. Youth Housing Plan and the Provincial Homelessness Strategy, but is concerned that more than 18 months after the release of <i>A Parent's Duty</i> and more than two years after the release of Katherine McParland's report <i>From Marginalized to Magnified</i>, progress towards implementation is slow.</p> |

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| | | For the Youth Transitions program, implementation and engagement is underway, including Indigenous Advisory circles. | |
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| #6 | <p>Provide an enhanced range of trauma-informed and culturally appropriate mental health and substance use services for young people transitioning from care into adulthood.</p> <p>The Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions (MMHA), in partnership with the Ministry of Health (HLTH) and MCFD, should develop and implement a plan for mental health and substance use services for youth in care who are transitioning to adulthood. The plan should be developed in consultation with appropriate First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous representatives as well as young people with lived experience.</p> <p>This plan should be integrated into <i>A Pathway to Hope</i>. It should specifically address the needs of the population of young people leaving care and the specialized services they need due to the inequities, adversities and trauma they have experienced in their lives before and while in care. The plan and all services should be trauma-informed and give particular attention and priority to First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous young people transitioning to adulthood.</p> <p>The plan is to be developed by April 1, 2022, with full implementation being completed within the ensuing two years.</p> | <p>Year 1 Evidence – Received July 2022</p> <p>Funding for 19 full time concurrent disorder clinician positions (CDC) is being rolled out from 2021/22 to 2023/24. As an initial investment in enhanced Mental Health and Substance Use (MHSU) services for young people between the ages of 17- and 26-years-old transitioning from government care into adulthood, implementation of this service will inform future service planning for this population.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDCs will be based in communities of need, preferably within Foundry centres, and will connect youth with other Foundry services such as Foundry Works, primary care, and peer support. These positions are being implemented by regional health authorities. • CDCs will provide culturally safe, trauma-informed care. • Implementation plans submitted to the ministries by the health authorities include how the service will support Indigenous people, how Indigenous representatives will be engaged, and how the services will link to other services. <p>MMHA, in partnership with HLTH, is meeting regularly with regional health authorities to ensure that Indigenous partners are engaged on an ongoing basis to ensure that First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous young people are prioritized for this service, and that the clinicians provide culturally safe, appropriate and accessible care for this population. Approaches to Indigenous engagement are specific and tailored to each health authority region.</p> <p>MMHA/HLTH worked with the MCFD partners on data collection and analysis to identify communities of need.</p> <p>MMHA intends to develop a plan to enhance mental health and substance use services for youth in care who are</p> | <p>Year 1 Assessment</p> <p>Some Progress</p> <p>The Representative notes progress towards this recommendation through the allocation of funding for concurrent disorder clinicians, and work towards enhancing mental health and substance use services for youth transitioning out of care into adulthood, but does not see progress towards the range of trauma-informed and culturally appropriate mental health and substance use services for young people transitioning from care into adulthood that is called for in the recommendation. MMHA and HLTH are currently in the preliminary stages of a current state analysis and are in the beginning stages of engagement planning.</p> |

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| | | <p>transitioning to adulthood.</p> <p>Intermediary steps include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A current state analysis of mental health and substance use services for youth in care.• Engagement with current and former youth in care, additional stakeholders and partner organizations.• A cross-jurisdictional analysis of mental health and substance use services for youth in care transitioning to adulthood. <p>The plan will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An alignment with the four goals of <i>A Pathway to Hope</i>; seamless and integrated care; equitable access to culturally safe and effective care; and Indigenous health and wellness.• A consideration of services across the continuum of mental health and substance use care, from prevention to specialized supports.• An emphasis on culturally safe and trauma-informed care.• Integration of Indigenous Gender Based Analysis considerations.• A roadmap for leveraging existing programs and investments to better serve youth in care. | |
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| #7 | <p>Collect longitudinal data and evaluate services.</p> <p>In order to ensure high quality and equitable services, there must be ongoing data collection and evaluation. MCFD should engage the Ministry of Citizens' Services (CITZ) and relevant ministries and public bodies to develop and implement a plan that enables:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> longitudinal data collection about young people who have aged out of care in British Columbia evaluation of post-majority services and supports and the public sharing of the evaluation results standardized data across the province that is reported regularly, including (but not limited to) the following disaggregated data: identity factors such as ethnicity and gender identity as well as indigeneity – First Nations, Métis and Inuit identity. <p>A cross-ministry plan is to be developed by April 1, 2022 with full implementation of that plan to begin thereafter.</p> | <p>Year 1 Evidence – Received July 2022</p> <p>MCFD has a project plan to develop longitudinal data linkages which include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing measures that can provide information on outcomes such as rate of high school completion and AYA uptake with 12 months of transitioning out of care into adulthood. Collaborating with CITZ's Data Innovation Program (DIP) to link former youth in care with data from other B.C. government programs and learn more about their exposure to health and other services. Data sharing from the newly developed youth transition programs with CITZ DIP. Explore the accessibility of other data sets. <p>This plan has been mapped out and includes the following research goals with regard to the AYA program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is the interaction between the BC Employment and Assistance program and the AYA population? What is the interaction between the educational system and the AYA population? What is the interaction between the health care system and the AYA population? <p>MCFD will engage with youth in summer 2022 on outcomes/metrics that are important to them with regard to the longitudinal data vision of recommendation 7.</p> <p>MCFD also plans to include Indigeneity indicators as well as other disaggregated data into its DIP analysis to allow for analysis across sub-cohorts.</p> | <p>Year 1 Assessment</p> <p>No Progress</p> <p>The Representative acknowledges pre-planning activities including the development of a project plan, but notes that engagement and a vision for longitudinal data and evaluative services is still pending.</p> |