



REPRESENTATIVE FOR
CHILDREN AND YOUTH

ANNUAL SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS MONITORING REPORT

2023/24



March 31, 2024

Preamble

The Office of the Representative for Children and Youth (RCY) is responsible for advocating for improved effectiveness and responsiveness of services for children, youth, young adults, and families in British Columbia. The office does this work through individual and systemic advocacy efforts, walking alongside youth and families navigating services and independently monitoring the efforts of policy makers and service providers striving to meet their needs. Through this work, the Representative provides advice and recommendations to the Legislature, ministries and other public bodies and the public through investigations and special reports and assesses compliance with these recommendations over time.


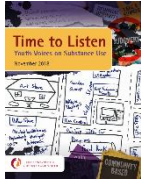
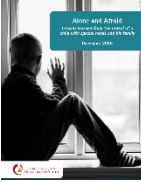
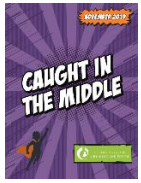



In March 2023, the office released its first annual summary of recommendations monitoring¹ which assessed government's progress towards implementing the Representative's recommendations over the course of the year. Results showed a high level of engagement in preplanning and planning activities by ministries and other public bodies, but only modest progress towards the successful implementation of recommended improvements. Later that year, the office released its first retrospective review of recommendations compliance, *Advocating for Change: Five Years in Review (2023)*². This report more closely examined the pathways of recommendations to implementation and identified several structural and political challenges that impact successful implementation, along with several enablers which support timely and effective progress towards change.

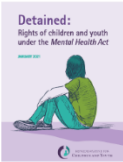
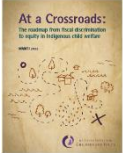


Taken together, the annual summary of recommendations monitoring data and the *Advocating for Change* five-year progress analysis offered the government a number of strategies to address challenges and enhance the likelihood of effective implementation of recommendations that come from both internal reviews and external independent bodies.³ The following is the 2023/24 annual summary of recommendations monitoring and implementation progress across 10 reports that are currently monitored by the office (listed below). This year's annual summary of recommendations monitoring aims to continue this conversation with a review of recommendations compliance and implementation progress from April 1, 2023 – March 31, 2024, along with reflections from the Representative on systemic issues that continue to challenge government efforts to improve services for children, youth, young adults, and families.

¹ Representative for Children and Youth. *Recommendations Monitoring Reports 2022/23*. (Victoria, B.C: Representative for Children and Youth), 2023

² Representative for Children and Youth. *Advocating for Change: Five Years in Review*. (Victoria, B.C: Representative for Children and Youth), 2023

³ While the focus of these 2023 reports was on recommendations made by the RCY, the child, youth and family-serving ministries also receive recommendations from other independent officers (such as the Ombudsperson and Auditor General) and through internal review and audit processes. In 2006, the Hon. Ted Hughes' Child and Youth Review report documented concerns with the Ministry of Children and Family Development's transparency about internal reviews, the recommendations that arise from them and the actual compliance of these recommendations. The Ministry has since developed its quality assurance systems and enhanced transparency, however implementation of suggestions and recommendations remains challenging.

Report	Published	Synopsis	Active recs
 <p>Room for Improvement: Toward better education outcomes for children in care</p>	Oct. 26, 2017	This report highlighted major discrepancies in educational achievement between children and youth in care and those who are not in care. The report gathered input from more than 1,200 individuals including youth in and from care, teachers, social workers and foster parents to help identify areas where children and youth in care can be better supported in their educational achievement.	6
 <p>Time to Listen: Youth voices on substance use</p>	Nov. 15, 2018	This report highlighted that, to effectively address youth substance use issues, the focus needs to be on helping youth to make safer choices around substance use, and on creating environments in which safer choices are possible and encouraged. The report offered a first-hand perspective of 100 young people in B.C. with lived experience and drew on lessons learned from an aggregate review of substance use-related injury and death reports.	5
 <p>Alone and Afraid: Lessons learned from the ordeal of a child with special needs and his family.</p>	Dec. 10, 2018	This report showed that B.C.'s system of services to support children with complex needs and disabilities needed to be overhauled. The report detailed the events that led to the removal of a child from his mother's care after police found him alone, distressed, severely underweight and in a state of profound neglect.	11
 <p>Caught in the Middle</p>	Nov. 26, 2019	Caught in the Middle is an investigative report examining the factors that led to the overdose death of a 17-year-old boy with complex needs who spent time in the child-serving systems of both B.C. and Alberta and was moved more than 40 times while in government care.	6
 <p>A Parent's Duty: Government obligation to youth transitioning into adulthood</p>	Dec. 15, 2020	The report highlighted the reality for youth transitioning out of the government care system and into adulthood. It raised concerns over services that are scarce, inequitable, rigid and a poor fit for many diverse young people who turn 19 while in government care.	7
 <p>Excluded: Increasing understanding, support, and inclusion for children with FASD and their families</p>	April 15, 2021	This report examined the experiences of children and youth with FASD and their families and revealed significant inequities in services, a general lack of understanding about this "invisible disorder" and structural racism against First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous children, youth and families.	11
 <p>Skye's Legacy: A Focus on Belonging</p>	June 10, 2021	This report told the story of a young person who died while in government care after experiencing multiple traumas, and urged the government to focus on better helping First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous children to realize the kind of deep and valuable connections that are too often damaged by the historic and ongoing effects of colonialism, ranging from residential schools and the Sixties Scoop to the current child welfare system.	3

	<p>Detained: Rights of children and youth under the Mental Health Act</p>	<p>Jan. 19, 2021</p>	<p>The report called for government to better protect the interests of children and youth involuntarily detained under the Mental Health Act, to explore the long-term impacts of involuntary detention on young people and to ensure youth are being made aware of their rights while detained.</p>	<p>14</p>
	<p>At a Crossroads: The roadmap from fiscal discrimination to equity in Indigenous child welfare</p>	<p>March 29, 2022</p>	<p>This report sought to map child welfare funding and service delivery in B.C. and highlight funding practices by MCFD. In doing so, RCY discovered that MCFD's current funding approach mirrors the previous funding approach of the federal government that was found to be discriminatory. It also pointed out the need for the ministry to update its fiscal management system so that public funds allocated to First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous child welfare can be aligned with stated spending objectives and declared government and ministry priorities regarding reconciliation.</p>	<p>3</p>
	<p>A Parent's Responsibility: Government's obligation to improve the mental health outcomes of children in care</p>	<p>Sept. 20, 2022</p>	<p>This report showed that young people in government care in comparable jurisdictions to B.C. have dramatically higher rates of mental health disorders than the general population. Despite the heightened mental health risks that children in care experience, there are no mental health services or supports dedicated to this population in B.C. The report was the first in a series of brief reports on mental health and wellness for children and youth.</p>	<p>6</p>
	<p>Missing: Why are children disappearing from B.C.'s welfare system?</p>	<p>April 27, 2023</p>	<p>This report tells the stories of children and youth who are lost or missing from the child welfare system as these stories continue to emerge as an area of concern across Canada, in some cases resulting in tragic and preventable injuries and deaths. <i>Missing</i> presents findings by RCY on children and youth who are missing, "running from," or "hiding from," the care system. It also examines how the child welfare system and other child-serving systems have created conditions that lead to children being lost in care.</p>	<p>9</p>

How does the RCY develop recommendations?

The RCY prepares investigative and special reports that draw out lessons learned from the critical injuries and deaths of children and youth, and RCY's advocacy and engagement work with children, youth, young adults and families. Many of these public reports make recommendations to government ministries and other public bodies to improve legislation, policy, practice and service delivery with the aim of preventing harm and enhancing the quality and effectiveness of government's systems of care so that young people are able to grow up safe, supported and connected. The recommendations monitoring process at the RCY was reimagined in 2017 and has continued to evolve. The RCY monitors the extent to which government ministries and public bodies are implementing the recommendations and how changes are being reflected in policy, practice and service delivery. Since the appointment of Dr. Jennifer Charlesworth as Representative in the fall of 2018, recommendations have aimed to balance the need for shorter term, observable but smaller

improvements to address immediate issues with the need for deeper and more transformative systemic and structural change to elevate the quality, effectiveness and impact of systems of care. Recommendations have also shifted from a focus on one ministry – MCFD – to multiple ministries and public bodies. This reflects the need for a whole-of-government approach to support children and youth who are most vulnerable. Guided by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, RCY’s recommendations seek to affirm the individual rights of children, youth, and young adults, the inherent rights of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities and address substantive issues of inequality and discrimination faced by marginalized groups in B.C.

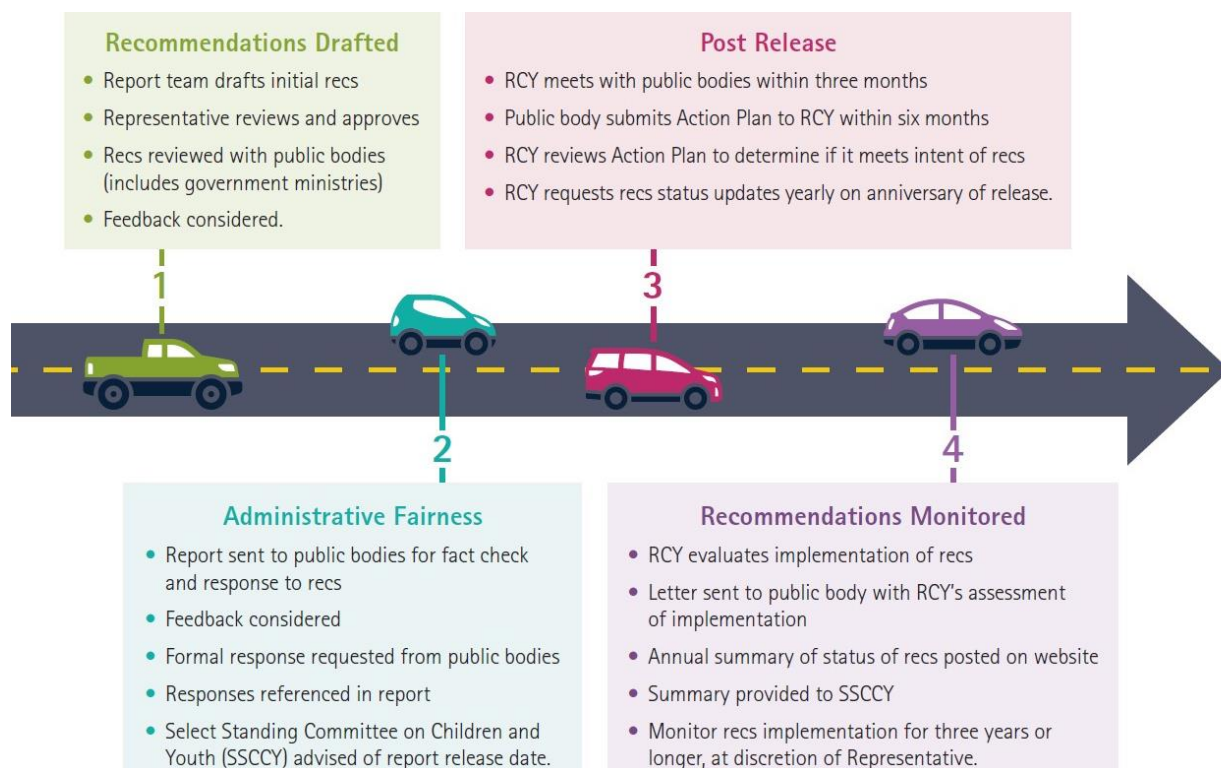


Figure 1: RCY's recommendations process

In 2019, RCY developed recommendations monitoring guidelines, with input from ministries, to monitor and assess action-planning and progress made towards the implementation of recommendations (Figure 1). Following the release of a report, RCY requests annual progress updates from each ministry and public body and then assesses evidence of progress from preplanning activities to implementations of changes. In addition to the assessment of self-reported progress by ministries and public bodies, the office collects monitoring data to measure the progress of change. Depending on the number of recommendations, amount of evidence provided and number of ministries and public bodies involved, this assessment can take several months to complete. This year, the office has also begun to consider trends from individual advocacy cases, reportable circumstance reports and community engagements to determine if progress reported by government is making an impact in the lived experience of children, youth, young adults, and families. Progress assessments are rated as follows:

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)
SOME PROGRESS	Some of the 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
COMPLETE	All activities that directly support the implementation of the recommendation are complete

Recommendations Progress 2023/24

This year’s annual summary of recommendations monitoring, includes recommendations across 10 reports that are currently monitored by the office, including the first annual review of the recommendations of two new reports; *At a Crossroads: The roadmap from fiscal discrimination to equity in Indigenous child welfare (2022)*⁴ and *A Parent’s Responsibility: Government’s obligation to improve the mental health outcomes of children in care (2022)*⁵. This annual update also includes learnings from *Missing: Why are children disappearing from B.C.’s welfare system? (2023)*⁶ which has undertaken a unique six-month progress review on six of its nine recommendations.

Overall progress by report and service type

Between April 1, 2023, and March 31, 2024, the office assessed the annual progress of 72 recommendations. Of the 72 recommendations assessed (appendix A), **15 per cent were assessed as Complete, 11 per cent were assessed as having made Substantial Progress, 39 per cent were assessed as having made Some Progress and 35 per cent were assessed as having made No Progress** (appendix B).

⁴ Representative for Children and Youth. *At a Crossroads: The roadmap from fiscal discrimination to equity in Indigenous child welfare*. (Victoria, B.C: Representative for Children and Youth), 2022.

⁵ Representative for Children and Youth. *A Parent’s Responsibility: Government’s obligation to improve the mental health outcomes of children in care*. (Victoria, B.C: Representative for Children and Youth), 2022

⁶ Representative for Children and Youth. *Missing: Why are children disappearing from B.C.’s welfare system?* (Victoria, B.C: Representative for Children and Youth), 2023

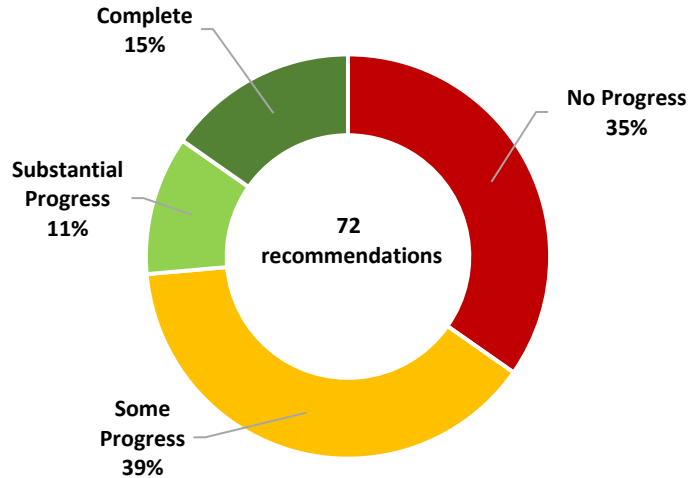


Figure 2: Overall progress of 72 recommendations for 2023/24

In comparison to the previous annual summary of recommendations monitoring, we have seen a shift of only one per cent, from 14 per cent in 2022/23 to 15 per cent of recommendations completed in 2023/24. While this would suggest limited change from 2022/2023, the current assessment does include an additional nine recommendations, from the two most recently released reports, where we would expect to see less progress. If we were to make a direct comparison to the recommendations assessed in last year's annual summary of recommendations monitoring, the office has assessed an additional two recommendations as complete, representing a four per cent increase over last year's rating. In addition, the 2022/2023 annual summary of recommendations monitoring had 25 or 40 per cent of recommendations rated as no progress, this has decreased to 17 or 27 per cent which suggests shifts in a positive direction. However, despite these improvements, it is still alarming that 40 out of 54 recommendations that are not yet completed have not shifted from their previous annual assessment ratings. This highlights the slow and challenging pathway of change for government (Figure 3).

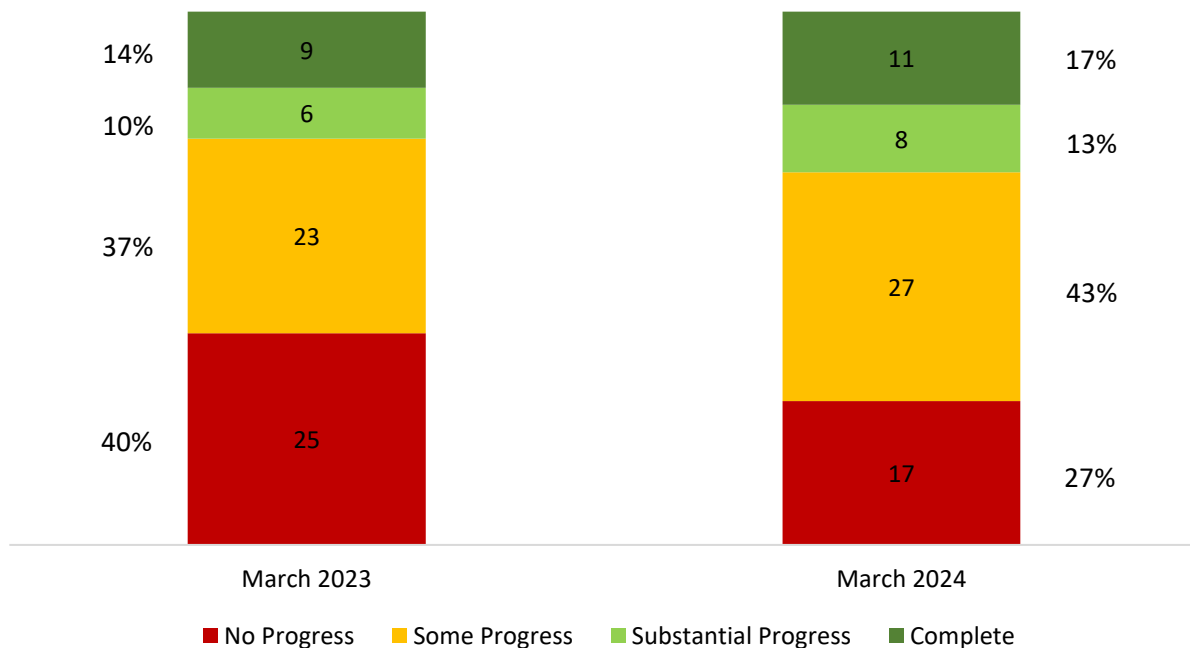


Figure 3: Comparison of the 63 recommendations presented in the 2022/23 annual summary of recommendations monitoring one year later.

The 72 recommendations currently monitored by the office call for legislative, policy, practice and service delivery improvements across several priority service types including: children and youth with disabilities, child welfare, child and youth mental health and addictions, education and youth transitioning to adulthood. Overall, child and youth mental health services had the highest number of recommendations assessed across the 10 RCY reports in 2023/24, with two out of 24, or eight per cent complete; disability services had the second highest number of recommendations with 1 out of 16, or six per cent complete; and education services had the third highest number of recommendations with four out of 13, or 31 per cent complete (Figure 4). Progress toward the implementation of recommendations and engagement in the recommendation’s development and monitoring process varied across the different service types as Figure 4 illustrates.

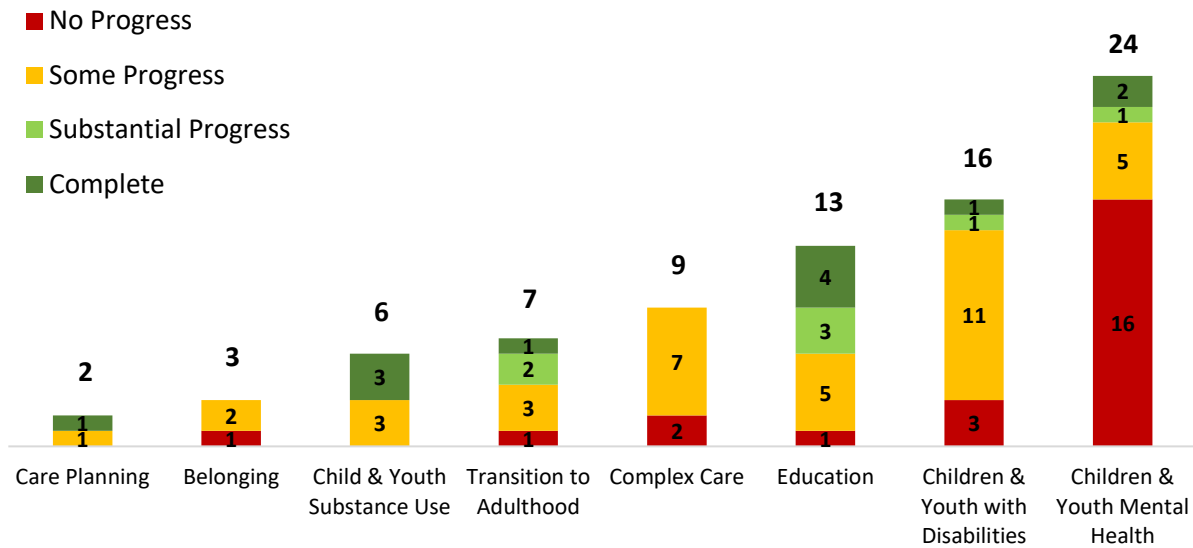
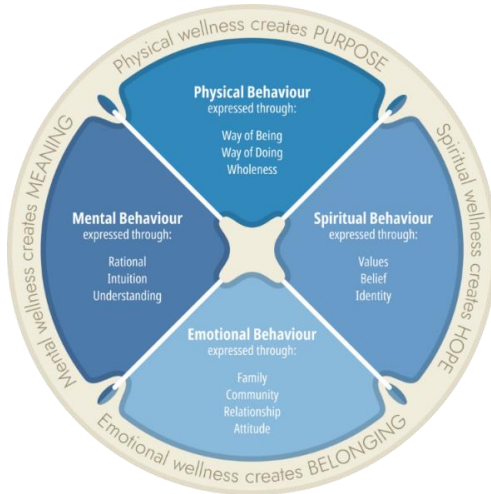


Figure 4: Recommendation implementation by service type.

*Note – recommendations may be associated with more than one service type, for this reason this figure will sum to more than 72 recommendations.

Since her appointment as the Representative, Dr. Jennifer Charlesworth has, and continues to advocate for a whole-government approach to address fragmented service delivery and piecemeal strategies that result in gaps and cliffs for children, youth, young adults, and their families, as specifically noted in *Advocating for Change (2023)*⁷. RCY recommendations advocate for a whole-government approach that coordinates information-sharing, service pathways and wraparound care for children and families to transform services into one coordinated child, youth- and family-serving system. The objective behind RCY recommendations is for ministries and other public bodies to work effectively together to support the whole child, youth, family and communities. This approach aligns with Indigenous perspectives on wellbeing. The Indigenous Wellness Framework offers a visual representation of how wellness of the whole- child is viewed across the physical, spiritual, mental, and emotional behaviours that collectively contribute to purpose, hope, meaning and belonging.

⁷ Representative for Children and Youth. *Advocating for Change: Five Years in Review*. (Victoria, B.C: Representative for Children and Youth), 2023



“First Nations’ views of health tend to be holistic, seeing connections between health, food, work, culture, family, and community. The Ancestors taught that understanding the land, leadership, sustainable use of resources and the ability to provide for family and community were essential to survival.... This holistic approach continues to be held by many First Nations and is becoming widely accepted among non-Aboriginal peoples as well.” – **First Nation Health Authority**⁸

Image 1: The *Indigenous Wellness Framework*⁹

RCY embraced this whole child lens in *Skye’s Legacy* (2021)¹⁰ which taught us about the importance of belonging for the wellbeing of children and youth; every child needs to have deep connections and to feel a sense of belonging to culture, community, family and place in order to thrive and develop a positive sense of self. Skye’s story illustrates how the system might best help young people, particularly First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous children and youth who are in government care and often dealing with the effects of intergenerational trauma. Despite the recognition of this whole-child approach and the shift to belonging in practice and policy, MCFD’s response to the recommendations in this report have been limited and delayed by a focus on other strategic priorities.

The importance of taking a whole-government approach has been acknowledged and accepted by public bodies, but ministry mandates and strategic frameworks still reflect a siloed approach to planning and implementation that can be seen in uneven progress and a lack of cross-ministry collaboration.

Advocacy for a whole- government approach is also evident in recommendations from *A Parent’s Duty: Government’s Obligation to Youth Transitioning into Adulthood* (2020)¹¹ where six ministries were called to improve the quality of supports for young people transitioning out of care:

⁸ First Nations Health Authority – Implementing the Vision: BC First Nations Health Governance. Reimagining First Nations Health in B.C. Accessed March 22, 2024:

https://www.fnha.ca/Documents/FNHC_Health_Governance_Book.pdf (fnha.ca)

⁹ The Indigenous Wellness Framework. Accessed March 22, 2024: <https://thunderbirdpf.org/about-the-iwf/>

¹⁰ Representative for Children and Youth. *Skye’s Legacy: A Focus on Belonging*. (Victoria, B.C: Representative for Children and Youth), 2021.

¹¹ Representative for Children and Youth. *A Parent’s Duty: Government’s Obligation to Youth Transitioning into Adulthood*. (Victoria, B.C: Representative for Children and Youth), 2020

“...simply improving income security for youth transitioning into adulthood would not be sufficient without the complementary steps of ensuring better planning, the consistent availability of culturally appropriate adult guidance and support and better access to housing and mental health services.”¹²

Unfortunately, despite the development of a joint-action plan in recognition of the inter-related and inter-dependent goals of *A Parent’s Duty* recommendations, the progress to date has not been aligned across ministries and is limiting the impact on change. For example, this year’s annual update demonstrates substantial policy progress from MCFD with new rent supplements now available for youth. However, without the dedicated youth housing that is still in the planning stages at the Ministry of Housing, this new policy is having limited impact with only 1,102 (14 per cent) of the 7,851 eligible youth receiving supports. RCY Advocates have reported firsthand the housing crisis faced by youth and young adults with shelters at capacity and no youth housing options. This demonstrates the importance of ministries responding with collective urgent action as rent supplements are only helpful if there are actual homes to rent.

Overall progress since 2023 by Public Body

The majority of the recommendations monitored by the office are directed to ministries directly responsible for designated services: the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD), the Ministry of Health (MOH), Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions (MMHA), and Ministry of Education and Child Care (ECC). In recent public reports the Representative continues her call for the whole- government approach. Progress towards the implementation of recommendations and engagement in the recommendations development and monitoring process varies by ministry and by divisions/program areas within ministries (Figure 5). Across the monitoring reports in 2023/24, MCFD completed 16 per cent (seven of 44) recommendations directed to their ministry, MOH completed eight per cent (two of the 26 recommendations directed towards them), MMHA completed 10 per cent (two of 21) recommendations directed towards them and ECC completed 27 per cent (three of 11) recommendations directed towards them.

¹² Representative for Children and Youth. *A Parent’s Duty: Government’s Obligation to Youth Transitioning into Adulthood* (Victoria, B.C: Representative for Children and Youth), 2020.

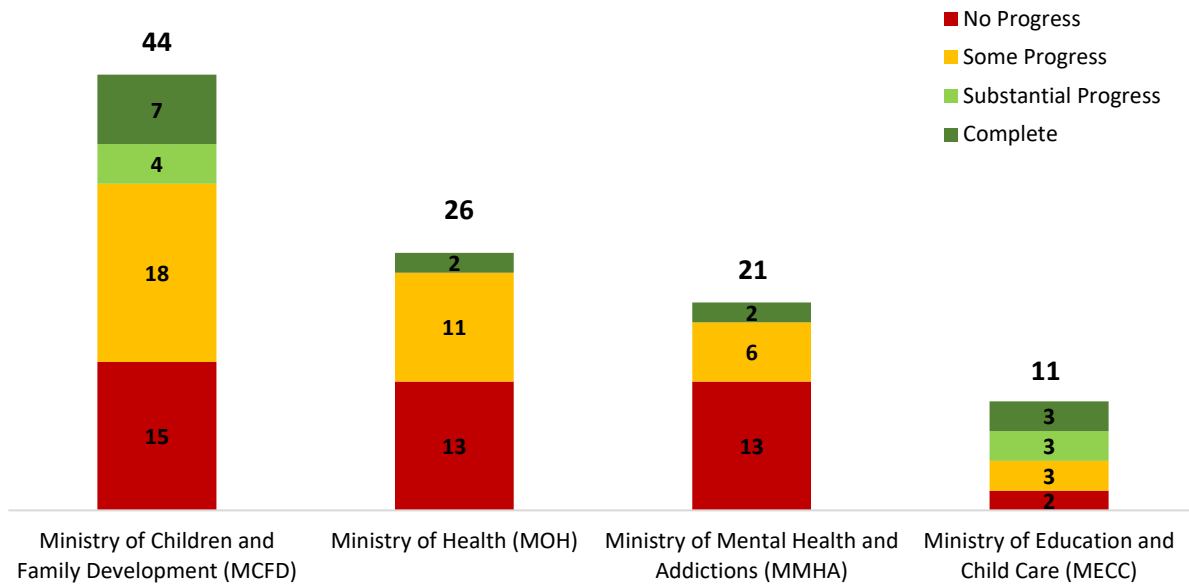


Figure 5: Progress by the public bodies who provide most designated services for children, youth, young people, and families.

*Note – recommendations can be directed to more than one public body, for this reason this figure will sum to more than 72 recommendations.

The implementation of improved services for children, youth and young adults is the primary goal for the Representative and for children, youth, young adults, families, and communities to feel the impact of recommendations. Government has made substantial budget commitments and achieved unprecedented legislative changes over the past number of years, however while these investments and shifts create fertile conditions for change in the lives of children, youth and families, the benefits are not fully realized with ministries only successfully implementing between eight-27 per cent of their action plans in response to the Representative’s recommendations.

This year’s annual summary of recommendations monitoring documents the same challenges to implementation as was reported in *Advocating for Change (2023)*¹³, including workforce shortages, limited leadership support for change, and a lack of collaboration structures to enable timely engagement and co-design. Most challenges reveal themselves at the latter end of recommendations implementation which is why RCY’s assessment of progress remains focused on implementation not planning. Dr. Cindy Blackstock and other Indigenous organizations that monitor systems reform, have called for such an action based, approach to measuring accountability:

¹³ Representative for Children and Youth. *Advocating for Change: Five Years in Review*. (Victoria, B.C: Representative for Children and Youth), 2023

“Words don’t change children’s lives. Real action by the government and equality would.”

- **Dr. Cindy Blackstock**¹⁴

“At what point, after all, is ‘making progress’ meaningful when so many Calls to Action remain unfulfilled.”

- **Yellowhead Institute, 2023**¹⁵

Despite the good intentions of ministries, for the most part, their progress to date has not yet translated into services that are readily available to children, youth, young adults and their families. In simplistic terms, commitments have not landed yet and province-wide change is not being felt in real time. This is where RCY’s independent review of progress in the context of advocacy work and monitoring activities of our office is vitally important to identify the disconnect between government promises and the lived experiences of children, youth and youth adults. The importance of this review can also be seen in how government self-reports progress.

This year, MCFD began reporting actions their ministry has taken in response to recommendations that have been issued by Independent Offices¹⁶, such as the Ombudsperson, RCY and Office of the Auditor General. However, the ministry’s action summaries do not align with progress assessments by Independent Offices. The ministry references ‘significant progress’ related to some recommendations, whereas only limited progress has been assessed by the Independent Offices. The difference in monitoring language may arise from the public bodies’ assessment of the effort, time, resources invested and preparation work underway, whereas the Independent Offices are most interested in implementation and impact, which for the RCY means felt change for children, youth and families.

¹⁴ Dr. Cindy Blackstock, Gitksan First Nation advocate, scholar, and Executive Director of the First Nations Caring Society of Canada

¹⁵ Yellowhead Institute. *Calls to Action Accountability: A 2023 status update on reconciliation*, December 2023, <https://yellowheadinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/YI-TRC-C2A-2023-Special-Report-compressed.pdf>

¹⁶MCFD’s reporting and monitoring portal accessed through: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/data-monitoring-quality-assurance/reporting-monitoring>

Summary of Barrier and Enablers of Progress

To create recommendations that are both meaningful and achievable, RCY is committed to understanding the challenges and successes of recommendations' implementation. In *Advocating for Change (2023)*¹⁷, RCY reported on 'barriers to action' and 'enablers of change' which were identified for the previous five- years of recommendations. When reflecting on the 2023/24 annual summary of recommendations monitoring, there are repeated themes noted throughout the progress updates.

Barriers to Action

There are several predominant characteristics of recommendations that are assessed as *no progress*, but two that show up most frequently:

- Recommendations that require multiple ministries to work together.
- Recommendations that have an Indigenous specific focus.

In the current annual summary of recommendations monitoring, RCY continues to see that the recommendations requiring multi-ministry collaboration face significant delays in the early action planning and development phases. Simply coordinating meetings or agreeing to terms of reference for collaboration can take the better part of a year. *Advocating for Change* identified that to achieve the desired whole- child approach to service delivery, this shift towards a whole- government approach is not only desired but essential and yet the structures to do this in a timely and efficient manner often do not exist. Further, the 2022/23 annual summary of recommendations progress revealed that delays or a lack of engagement from one ministry can result in delays for others, and that trend is repeated this year: if one ministry does not progress the work, the entire recommendation can be held up. The lack of cross-ministry progress in *Excluded (2019)*¹⁸, offers an example of this:

¹⁷ Representative for Children and Youth. *Advocating for Change: Five Years in Review*. (Victoria, B.C: Representative for Children and Youth), 2023

¹⁸ Representative for Children and Youth. *Excluded. Increasing understanding, support, and inclusion for children with FASD and their families* (Victoria, B.C: Representative for Children and Youth), 2021

Excluded: Increasing understanding, support, and inclusion for children with FASD and their families (2021)

Recommendation 5, NO PROGRESS.

That the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions (MMHA), in collaboration with MCFD, ICFSAs and the Ministry of Health, lead a review, and develop and implement a plan, to provide effective and accessible mental health services for children and youth with special needs, including FASD. This should include a review of evidence-based, culturally attuned, and promising practice models of therapy, intervention and care for children and youth with special needs including FASD, who have mental health impacts, as well as an assessment of current resourcing and resource gaps. The findings of this review and planning should be prioritized and built into MMHA's Pathway to Hope for implementation.

Following two years of review, this is an example of where cross-ministry work requiring a 'whole-government' approach, has stalled. Ministries remain in a 'planning and scoping' phase, as with most work related to children with special needs due to the 'reset' of the *Children and Youth with Support Needs Framework*. While the ministries are currently working in collaboration to identify opportunities to advance the work, they have yet to begin actual work on the recommendation to review practice models and develop and implement a plan to provide effective and accessible mental health services for children and youth with special needs, including FASD.

Barriers to progress related to recommendations with a specific Indigenous focus were also noted in *Advocating for Change* which identified 'meaningful engagement' as an ongoing challenge for government with First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and Urban Indigenous peoples. This challenge remains in the current annual summary of recommendations monitoring and is particularly relevant given B.C.'s implementation of the *DRIP Act* and government's commitment to meaningful and ongoing consultation. Again, it appears that despite political commitments, the structures to enable timely engagement and informed consent are limited and as a result, equitable access to systems change for Indigenous children, is falling further and further behind. The lack of progress on *At a Crossroads (2022)*¹⁹, is an example of this:

¹⁹ Representative for Children and Youth *at a Crossroads: The roadmap from fiscal discrimination to equity in Indigenous child welfare*. (Victoria, B.C: Representative for Children and Youth), 2022

At A Crossroads: The roadmap from fiscal discrimination to equity in Indigenous child welfare (2022)

This report sought to map child welfare funding and service delivery in B.C. and highlight funding practices by MCFD. In doing so, RCY discovered that MCFD's current funding approach mirrors the previous funding approach of the federal government that was found to be discriminatory by the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal. It also pointed out the need for the ministry to update its fiscal management system so that public funds allocated to First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and Urban Indigenous child welfare can be aligned with stated spending objectives and declared government and ministry priorities regarding reconciliation.

The First Nation Leadership Council (FNLC) has endorsed RCY's recommendations and repeatedly called for action and yet, at RCY's first-year review period, there has been NO progress made. MCFD reports they have been working with Indigenous Services Canada, as requested by First Nations Leadership Council in 2022, to improve transparency and address the fiscal inequities identified in RCY's report. However, no investments to address the immediate fiscal discrimination and urgent needs to provide substantive equality for all First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous children, while long term planning is underway, has taken place. Further, the MCFD has not provided an action plan to outline how they will achieve the short- and long-term recommendations the Representative has called for.

Enablers of Progress

Of RCY's 'complete' recommendations in the current annual summary of recommendations monitoring, there are no common characteristics that stand out as unique to recommendation success. What this shows is that, not unlike what was noted in *Advocating for Change (2023)*²⁰, the enablers have less to do with the characteristics of the recommendations, and more to do with action planning and political will to prioritize the advice of the Representative. This was most evident in the monitoring assessment for *Missing (2023)*²¹ which includes 6 recommendations that had six-month timelines, due to the immediate safety risks identified by the office in the report. Within six months, with the commitment of the Minister and pressure from the legislative assembly and public, half of these recommendations made substantial progress and the remaining are well underway. As was noted in *Advocating for Change* under certain circumstances "swift and decisive action taken by government ... demonstrates that timely and responsive change is possible when it is a public priority".

²⁰ Representative for Children and Youth. *Advocating for Change: Five Years in Review*. (Victoria, B.C: Representative for Children and Youth), 2023

²¹ Representative for Children and Youth. *Missing: Why are children disappearing from B.C.'s welfare system?* (Victoria, B.C: Representative for Children and Youth), 2023

Next Steps

While it is important that we continue to highlight the issues raised within this annual summary of recommendations monitoring report, it has shown that the barriers identified in *Advocating for Change (2023)*,²² remain true, and for the most part mechanisms to overcome the barriers have not been established. The progress that has been made by the government this year has happened despite these challenges and would be significantly improved if enabling strategies were made a priority. The immediate response to the *Missing (2023)*²³ recommendations is a clear example of this and shows that collaboration and timely implementation of change is possible when good intentions are met with institutional will.

The RCY continues to deepen our understanding of and raise awareness about recommendations compliance and implementation challenges. This includes more frequent engagement with government leadership to support acceptance of recommendations and more initiatives to raise awareness about the disconnection between government planning and the lived experiences of children, youth, young adults, and their families in B.C. This has also included expanding monitoring efforts to include a cross-RCY advocacy lens to better understand the experiences of children and youth in the system. The RCY is also leading strategic convenings that bring diverse public bodies together – often with service providers, youth and families - to enhance awareness, accelerate progress towards long term systemic transformation and secure collective commitment to timely implementation of changes.

An example of how front-line advocacy stories are helping the RCY to understand the impact of recommendation delays is through regular reviews of systemic issues. For example, in *Caught in the Middle (2019)*²⁴, the Representative has called for an overhaul of residential services to assess the need for residential care and treatment resources across the province to accommodate children with complex needs and to create sufficient resources to meet the assessed need in a timely way. Four years later, MCFD reports that some progress has been made and yet a recent review of individual advocacy concerns arising from residential care revealed multiple stories of children and youth who are adversely impacted by the ongoing residential resource crisis:

“Youth are reporting to our office that they are left unhoused or living in precarious situations where they do not feel supported. Advocates have observed that children and youth are living in environments where caregivers lack the necessary skills and training to understand and support the intersections of substance use, mental health and disabilities. Further, funding for services, training and clinical supervision to support caregivers continues to be systemically cut, or simply not included in contracts for residential care providers, which has significant negative impacts on the children in their care.”

- RCY Advocacy Team, 2023

²² Representative for Children and Youth. *Advocating for Change: Five Years in Review*. (Victoria, B.C: Representative for Children and Youth), 2023

²³ Representative for Children and Youth. *Missing: Why are children disappearing from B.C.'s welfare system?* (Victoria, B.C: Representative for Children and Youth), 2023

²⁴ Representative for Children and Youth. *Caught in the Middle*. (Victoria, B.C: Representative for Children and Youth), 2019

A similar disconnection between government’s self-reported planning progress and the lived experiences of youth people was identified in a deep dive requested by the Representative to better understand the progress made towards her recommendations in *Detained* (2021).²⁵ This report called for government to better protect the interests of children and youth involuntarily detained under the Mental Health Act, to explore the long-term impacts of involuntary detention on young people and to ensure youth are being made aware of their rights while detained. RCY researchers found that progress has been very uneven across ministries with Ministry of the Attorney General and the Mental Health Review Board taking swift action on rights-based policy and review recommendations while MOH and MMHA remain stuck in the preplanning stages of implementing their 12 recommendations to address involuntary detainment of youth. RCY monitoring showed hospitalization data for involuntary admissions continue to trend higher than voluntary admissions and involuntary detainment continues to be reported to our office through reportable circumstances:

“In the 2022/23 fiscal year, our office received at least 157 Reportable Circumstances for critical injuries where a young person (ages 8 to 18 years) was detained under The Act. Within these RCs, 57 per cent involved Indigenous young people. A total of 20 young people underwent multiple experiences of involuntary detainment– in some circumstances, youth were involuntary detained as many as 12 times within the one-year period reviewed.”

- **RCY Reviews and Investigations Team, 2023**

Expanding our monitoring efforts to include community engagement work has also been helpful to deepen our understanding of the impact of inaction and implementation delays reported in annual progress reports from government. In *Alone and Afraid* (2018),²⁶ the Representative called for comprehensive service improvements so all children with disabilities and their families receive culturally respectful, appropriate, and timely services and supports. Six years later, RCY has met with families and service providers in the four communities that are piloting a proposed new Children and Youth with Special Needs (CYSN) model, hosted focused group conversations with families across the province, and has surveyed families across B.C. Families predominantly report that they remain underserved, excluded, or left out from the current inadequate service model and RCY has learned that the system is still not meeting the needs of children. Government is currently undertaking another series of engagements and will be developing a new CYSN framework however, as one parent stated:

“There needs to be investments to improve supports in the current model. We can’t be waiting for services until a new model is defined. There needs to be action now.”

- **Parent,**

RCY CYSN Check-in Survey, November 2023.

²⁵ Representative for Children and Youth. *Detained: Rights of children and youth under the Mental Health Act*. (Victoria, B.C: Representative for Children and Youth), 2021

²⁶ Representative for Children and Youth. *Alone and Afraid: Lessons learned from the ordeal of a child with special needs and his family*. (Victoria, B.C: Representative for Children and Youth), 2018

“Almost three-quarters of the parents who responded to our survey, from every region in B.C., reported feeling no confidence or minimal confidence that their child would receive the services they need, whether in or out of school, within the next one to three years.”

- **Dr. Jennifer Charlesworth,**
Select Standing Committee for Children and Youth, December 2023.

These engagements demonstrate the disconnection between the government public commitments to address the Representative’s recommendations and the limited felt experience of change for B.C. children, youth, young adults and families due to delayed frameworks and progress being stuck in the planning stages. The Representative has asked the RCY team to explore this more deeply to understand why budget commitments are not translating to improved services for children and families in real time. It is her hope that measuring progress through the policy pathway will identify barriers to transformational change and improve accountability and effectiveness of policy planning.

For next steps, the Representative, is looking for new ways to enable change within and across the system, raising awareness about systemic issues with these expanded cross-RCY lens and calling in the system to hold everyone accountable to make more progress towards change for children, youth, young adults and their families. In partnership with the Morris J. Wosk Centre for Dialogue (“Wosk Centre for Dialogue”), RCY will be hosting a series of special convenings of the child-serving system to address complex systemic issues including youth substance use, and children and youth missing from care. The hope is to model an alternate way of knowing and gathering information to create meaningful engagement and together, find new solutions with government, children, youth and families, community organizations, Indigenous Rightsholders and other knowledge keepers in the circle. RCY Cultural Advisor, Wedlidi Speck advises that through this work of collaboration and truth telling, we will find our way forward:

“Through dialogue, we will learn what is being called in for our children and youth who are lost or missing. The wisdom of all is needed to understand and determine how we must respond and move this forward together.”

- **Wedlidi Speck,**
Head Chief of the Gixsam namima (clan) of the Kwagul tribe²⁷

The first of these convenings will centre on youth substance use and the Representative’s call for a comprehensive system of substance use services capable of consistently meeting the diverse needs of all youth. This call was issued five years ago in *Time to Listen: Youth Voices on Substance Use (2018)*²⁸ and while MMHA and MOH have made progress in expanding substance use services through new budget investments, there is still no plan or vision for a youth substance use system of care. Since 2018, the situation for young people who use substances has become increasingly dangerous in the context of the toxic drug supply and polarizing rhetoric and politicization of harm

²⁷ Representative for Children and Youth. *Missing: Why are children disappearing from B.C.’s child welfare system?* (Victoria, B.C: Representative for Children and Youth), 2023.

²⁸ Representative for Children and Youth. *Time to Listen: Youth Voices on Substance Use* (Victoria, B.C: Representative for Children and Youth), 2018.

reduction efforts. This will be the first provincial convening of this type to enable collective transformational systems change for children and youth in B.C.

Although RCY is excited to spotlight these initiatives, the Representative is also urging government to recognize the sense of urgency and dire need for collaboration and accountability that has now been identified for a second year in a row in the review of recommendations progress. The office has outlined key strategies to support progress towards change that should be adopted immediately. Once we know better, we must do better – children, youth and young adults are waiting.

Appendix A

Room for Improvement: Toward better education outcomes for children and youth in care (last update provided by public bodies: April 2023)	Ministries Involved	Last Review	Overall Rating
<p>Recommendation #1 That the Ministry of Education allocate specific funding to each school district based on the number of children and youth in care, funding that would be dedicated to support the learning of these students. This should be a priority of the ministry as it undertakes a review of the K to 12 education system’s current funding formulas.</p> <p>Ministry of Education to implement specific funding to school districts for children and youth in care by September 2018.</p>	Ministry of Education and Child Care	First Update	Substantial Progress
		Second Update	Substantial Progress
		Third Update	Substantial Progress
		Fourth Update	Substantial Progress
<p>Recommendation #2 That the Ministry of Education strengthen its accountability to improve and monitor supports for children and youth in care across the province, as well as tracking and reporting out on educational outcomes for these students.</p> <p>Ministry of Education to present Representative with draft plan to strengthen accountability for education of children and youth in care by January 2018.</p> <p>Ministry of Education to begin reporting publicly on educational outcomes of children and youth in care by September 2018.</p>	Ministry of Education and Child Care	First Update	Substantial Progress
		Second Update	Complete
		Third Update	Complete
		Fourth Update	Complete
<p>Recommendation #3 That the Ministry of Education implement the Auditor General’s 2015 recommendation that the ministry “collaborate with boards of education, superintendents, and Aboriginal leaders and communities to develop a shared, system-wide strategy with accountabilities to close the gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal student outcomes,” and that this strategy includes specific actions to improve education outcomes of Indigenous children and youth in care.</p>	Ministry of Education and Child Care	First Update	Substantial Progress
		Second Update	Substantial Progress
		Third Update	Substantial Progress
		Fourth Update	Complete

<p>Recommendation #4 That the Ministry of Education, school districts and MCFD work together to create positions dedicated to information-sharing, coordination and advocacy in support of education outcomes of children and youth in care. Ministry of Education and Ministry of Children and Family Development to have positions in place by September 2018.</p>	Ministry of Education and Child Care, School Districts, Ministry of Children and Family Development	First Update	Complete
		Second Update	Complete
		Third Update	Complete
		Fourth Update	Complete
<p>Recommendation #5 That MCFD ensure that an evidence-based approach is used to assess trauma-related needs for all children and youth coming into care and that, based on assessed needs, supports for recovery from trauma are implemented consistently across all care settings, including schools. Ministry of Children and Family Development to have assessments and subsequent supports in place by September 2019.</p>	Ministry of Children and Family Development	First Update	Some Progress
		Second Update	Some Progress
		Third Update	Some Progress
		Fourth Update	Some Progress
<p>Recommendation #6 That MCFD facilitate by legislation or other means the authorization of caregivers to make decisions involving the participation of children and youth in care in age- and developmentally appropriate activities, including school activities that require written permission. This authorization should apply a reasonable and prudent parent standard and protect caregivers who follow this standard from liability. Ministry of Children and Family Development to have this change made by September 2018.</p>	Ministry of Children and Family Development	First Update	Complete
		Second Update	Complete
		Third Update	Complete
		Fourth Update	Complete

Time to Listen: Youth Voices on Substance Use (last update provided by public bodies: June 2023)	Ministries Involved	Last Review	Overall Rating
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<p>Recommendation #1 That the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions ensure that a commitment to youth engagement is embedded in its Mental Health and Addictions Strategy, that the engagement accounts for the diversity of youth who use substances, and that youth feedback informs the implementation and evaluation of all substance use services.</p>	Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions	First Update	Some Progress
		Second Update	Substantial Progress
		Third Update	Complete
		Fourth Update	Complete
<p>Recommendation #2 That the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions, in partnership with the Ministry of Health, lead the creation of an accessible and youth friendly single source of information about all publicly funded substance use services available in the province. The information source to be available by March 31, 2020, and updated annually, at minimum.</p>	Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions, Ministry of Health	First Update	Some Progress
		Second Update	Some Progress
		Third Update	Complete
		Fourth Update	Complete
<p>Recommendation #3 That the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions and the Ministry of Health – in association with other relevant partners – lead the development of, and ensure funding of, a comprehensive system of substance use services capable of consistently meeting the diverse needs of all youth in the context of the broader multi-sectoral continuum of care, with specific attention given to the development of culturally relevant and culturally safe services and supports for First Nations, Indigenous, Métis and Inuit youth and their families. The health authorities have a comprehensive system of substance use services for youth in place by April 2022.</p>	Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions, Ministry of Health	First Update	Some Progress
		Second Update	Some Progress
		Third Update	Some Progress
		Fourth Update	Some Progress
<p>Recommendation #4 That the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions and the Ministry of Health lead the development of and implementation of a full spectrum of youth-specific harm reduction services, including the creation of youth-specific spaces for supervised</p>	Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions,	First Update	Some Progress
		Second Update	Some Progress

consumption that is embedded within a system of wraparound services and supports. The full spectrum of youth harm reduction services be in place by March 31, 2020.	Ministry of Health	Third Update	Some Progress
		Fourth Update	Some Progress
Recommendation #5 That the Ministry of Children and Family Development, in partnership with the Ministry of Health and other relevant youth-serving organizations, develop a comprehensive training program for foster parents that addresses the context in which youth use substances and supports the development of skills to cultivate open and safe dialogue about substance use with youth. The training program be finalized by October 1, 2019, with training for all foster parents to begin immediately thereafter.	Ministry of Children and Family Development, Ministry of Health	First Update	Some Progress
		Second Update	Complete
		Third Update	Complete
		Fourth Update	Complete

Alone and Afraid: Lessons learned from the ordeal of a child with special needs and his family (last update provided by public bodies: February 2023)	Ministries Involved	Last Review	Overall Rating
Recommendation #1 That MCFD undertake a comprehensive assessment of the actual need for CYSN services across B.C. and the capacity of the current system to meet those needs. This assessment to examine funding, staffing levels and workloads, program delivery and wait times. Findings to be used to inform comprehensive service improvements so all eligible children with special needs and their families receive culturally respectful, appropriate and timely services and supports. MCFD to complete the comprehensive assessment and plan by the fall of 2019, seek necessary funding enhancements and begin implementation of changes by April 2020.	Ministry of Children and Family Development	First Update	Some Progress
		Second Update	Some Progress
		Third Update	Some Progress
		Fourth Update	Some Progress
Recommendation #2 Pending completion of the comprehensive assessment, that MCFD take immediate steps to improve the current accessibility of CYSN services and supports by providing respite within a reasonable period of time, eliminating the need to choose between medical and respite benefits, and monitoring and ensuring follow-up with families not using autism funding.	Ministry of Children and Family Development	First Update	Some Progress
		Second Update	Some Progress
		Third Update	Some Progress

		Fourth Update	Some Progress
<p>Recommendation #3 That MCFD take the lead in working with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education to develop an integrated service delivery model that enables appropriate information-sharing between service providers. This model would ensure that children and youth receiving special needs services through MCFD can be supported by a case coordinator who is responsible for navigating access to, and provision of, all necessary services. The case coordinator to remain assigned to the child to ensure appropriate services and facilitate successful transition to adulthood.</p> <p>MCFD to lead development of a comprehensive plan by the fall of 2019 and seek funding and begin implementation of the plan by April 2020.</p>	Ministry of Children and Family Development, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and Child Care	First Update	Some Progress
		Second Update	Some Progress
		Third Update	No Progress
		Fourth Update	No Progress
<p>Recommendation #4 That MCFD ensure its children and youth with special needs training is mandatory for child protection staff.</p> <p>MCFD to ensure that all child protection social workers complete training by April 2020.</p>	Ministry of Children and Family Development	First Update	Some Progress
		Second Update	Some Progress
		Third Update	Some Progress
		Fourth Update	Substantial Progress
<p>Recommendation #5 That MCFD take steps to support child protection social workers to adhere to policy on response times to child protection reports and ensure children are seen during child protection investigations. This should include consideration of additional staffing, training and resources. MCFD to track adherence to these policies.</p> <p>MCFD to begin implementation of these changes by April 2019.</p>	Ministry of Children and Family Development	First Update	Some Progress
		Second Update	Some Progress
		Third Update	Some Progress
		Fourth Update	Some Progress
<p>Recommendation #6 That MCFD and the Ministry of Education develop practice guidelines and a joint protocol to address concerns of unexplained school absences and withdrawals</p>	Ministry of Children and	First Update	Some Progress

<p>with the view to supporting children, youth and families and addressing barriers to school participation. MCFD and the Ministry of Education to conduct this work in consultation with advocates/stakeholders from the Indigenous and special needs communities. MCFD and the Ministry of Education to complete this work by May 2019.</p>	<p>Family Development, Ministry of Education and Child Care</p>	<p>Second Update</p>	<p>Some Progress</p>
<p>Recommendation #7 That the Ministry of Education establish mechanisms to enable local school districts to identify and do timely follow up when a school-age student is not registered in an educational program. Ministry of Education to complete this work by September 2020.</p>	<p>Ministry of Education and Child Care</p>	<p>First Update</p>	<p>Some Progress</p>
<p>Recommendation #8 That the Ministry of Education determine how many students with special needs designations are being homeschooled and conduct a review to determine whether school districts should be offering additional support and guidance to these students. Ministry of Education to complete this work by September 2020.</p>	<p>Ministry of Education and Child Care</p>	<p>Second Update</p>	<p>Some Progress</p>
<p>Recommendation #9 That MCFD ensure identification and involvement of an Indigenous child or youth’s family, community and culture at the first point of contact with any MCFD service and continue this involvement on an ongoing basis. This should include, in consultation with Indigenous stakeholders and communities, the creation of guidelines for social workers working with Indigenous families, including resources to help them do this work. MCFD to complete this work by May 2019.</p>	<p>Ministry of Children and Family Development</p>	<p>Third Update</p>	<p>Some Progress</p>
		<p>Fourth Update</p>	<p>Some Progress</p>
		<p>First Update</p>	<p>Some Progress</p>
		<p>Second Update</p>	<p>Some Progress</p>
		<p>Third Update</p>	<p>Some Progress</p>
		<p>Fourth Update</p>	<p>Substantial Progress</p>

<p>Recommendation #10 That the Ministry of Health and MCFD develop a plan to ensure early identification, timely assessment and appropriate and accessible supports for children under six-years-old with signs of developmental delay. Plan to be developed by April 1, 2020 with implementation to begin immediately thereafter.</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Children and Family Development</p>	First Update	Some Progress
		Second Update	Substantial Progress
		Third Update	Some Progress
		Fourth Update	Some Progress
<p>Recommendation #11 That the Ministry of Health take steps to incrementally decrease the wait times to three months for completed assessments of autism and complex behavioural developmental conditions across the province. Wait times to be reduced to nine months by Sept. 30, 2019; to six months by Sept. 30, 2020; and to three months by Sept. 30, 2021.</p>	<p>Ministry of Health</p>	First Update	No Progress
		Second Update	Some Progress
		Third Update	Some Progress
		Fourth Update	Some Progress

Caught in the Middle (last update provided by public bodies: February 2023)	Ministries Involved	Last Review	Overall Rating
<p>Recommendation #1 That the Ministry of Children and Family Development bring forward to the next review of the Protocol by the Directors of Child Welfare recommendations to address shortcomings. These include the addition of cultural planning to the Protocol; clarification that when a child arrives from another province or territory without notice, the dispute resolution process may be triggered; clarification about delegation of guardianship responsibilities; and an amendment to Interprovincial Agreement forms to allow for detail regarding financial expenditures and payment mechanisms.</p>	<p>Ministry of Children and Family Development</p>	First Update	Complete
		Second Update	Complete
		Third Update	Complete
<p>Recommendation #2 That the Ministry of Children and Family Development fully dedicate an Interprovincial Coordinator who will work together with an adequately resourced network of regional analysts to support, track and monitor interprovincial cases. MCFD to put this network in place by December 2020.</p>	<p>Ministry of Children and Family Development</p>	First Update	Some Progress
		Second Update	Complete

		Third Update	Complete
Recommendation #3 That the Ministry of Children and Family Development create provincial practice guidelines or policies for interprovincial cases and develop an online training course that is required for staff who work on interprovincial cases. MCFD to complete this work by December 2020.	Ministry of Children and Family Development	First Update	Some Progress
		Second Update	Substantial Progress
		Third Update	Complete
Recommendation #4 That the Ministry of Children and Family Development direct staff to speak with children in care about their ethnicity and desired cultural supports/connections and record the child's self-identified ethnicity in the ministry's case management system. MCFD to complete this step by June 2020.	Ministry of Children and Family Development	First Update	Some Progress
		Second Update	No Progress
		Third Update	No Progress
Recommendation #5 That the Ministry of Children and Family Development ensure a trauma-informed method is implemented in resourcing decisions for children in its care who have experienced multiple adversities in their lives. MCFD to have this trauma-informed method to resourcing in place by June 2021.	Ministry of Children and Family Development	First Update	Substantial Progress
		Second Update	Some Progress
		Third Update	Some Progress
Recommendation #6 As part of the Ministry of Children and Family Development's overhaul of residential services, MCFD to assess the need for residential care and treatment resources across the province to accommodate children with complex needs and to create sufficient resources to meet the assessed need in a timely way. MCFD to complete this work by September 2021.	Ministry of Children and Family Development	First Update	Some Progress
		Second Update	Some Progress
		Third Update	Some Progress

Parent's Duty: Government's Obligation to youth Transitioning into Adulthood (last update provided by public bodies: February 2023)	Ministries Involved	Last Review	Overall Rating
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<p>Recommendation #1 The Ministry of Children and Family Development 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> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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> <p>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>Ministry of Children and Family Development</p>	<p>First Update</p>	<p>Substantial Progress</p>
<p>Recommendation #2 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</p>		<p>Ministry of Children and Family Development</p>	<p>First Update</p>

<p>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. 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>		Second Update	Substantial Progress
<p>Recommendation #3 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, 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. MCFD is to have developed a comprehensive plan by April 1, 2022 and fully implement that plan over the ensuing 18 months.</p>	Ministry of Children and Family Development	First Update	Some Progress
<p>Recommendation #4 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. MCFD is to complete the evaluation by December 31, 2021 and develop and implement an approved plan of next steps by April 1, 2022.</p>		Ministry of Children and Family Development	First Update
			Second Update

<p>Recommendation #5 Provide additional dedicated housing for youth aging out of care. 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, From Marginalized to Magnified: Youth Homelessness Solutions from those with Lived Expertise – 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>Ministry of Attorney General, Ministry of Citizens' Services, Ministry of Children and Family Development</p>	<p>First Update</p>	<p>Some Progress</p>
<p>Recommendation #6 The Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions, in partnership with the Ministry of Health 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 A Pathway to Hope. 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>Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Children and Family Development</p>	<p>First Update</p>
			<p>Second Update</p>

<p>Recommendation #7 In order to ensure high quality and equitable services, there must be ongoing data collection and evaluation. MCFD should engage the Ministry of Citizen Services and relevant ministries and public bodies to develop and implement a plan that enables:</p> <p>a. longitudinal data collection about young people who have aged out of care in British Columbia</p> <p>b. evaluation of post-majority services and supports and the public sharing of the evaluation results</p> <p>c. 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> <p>A cross-ministry plan is to be developed by April 1, 2022 with full implementation of that plan to begin thereafter.</p>	<p>Ministry of Children and Family Development, Ministry of Citizens' Services</p>	First Update	No Progress
		Second Update	No Progress

Detained: Rights of children and youth under the Mental Health Act (last update provided by public bodies: April 2023)	Ministries Involved	Last Review	Overall Rating
<p>Recommendation #1 That the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions work with the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Children and Family Development to conduct a review, after consulting with health authorities, First Nations, Métis Nation and urban Indigenous communities and leadership and other appropriate bodies, into the use of involuntary mental health care for children and youth to identify the conditions that are contributing to its increased use, and identify immediate opportunities to provide voluntary interventions or improve practices that would reduce involuntary admissions. Review to be complete by Jan. 1, 2022.</p>	<p>Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Children and Family Development</p>	First Update	No Progress
		Second Update	Some Progress

<p>Recommendation #2 That the Ministry of Health require health authorities to collect and report key information pertaining to children and youth admitted under the Mental Health Act in a way that is standardized across the province and reported regularly, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identity factors (ethnicity, gender identity) • Indigeneity – First Nations, Métis and Inuit identity • standardized length of stay data across all hospital settings • admissions of children on a voluntary basis at the request of their parents • requests for, and outcomes of, second medical opinions • detailed seclusion and restraint data • data related to extended leave • outcomes related to quality of care, effectiveness and patient satisfaction. <p>This work to be completed by June 1, 2022.</p>	Ministry of Health	First Update	No Progress
		Second Update	No Progress
<p>Recommendation #3 That the Ministry of Health, in partnership with the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions and the health authorities, review and reconcile s.20(a)(ii) of the Mental Health Act that permits the designated director to admit a child under 16 on a voluntary basis at the request of their parent or guardian with the mature minor doctrine. Review to be complete by Jan. 1, 2022.</p>	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions	First Update	No Progress
		Second Update	No Progress
<p>Recommendation #4 That the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions actively engage and consult with First Nations, Métis Nation and urban Indigenous health bodies and leadership to develop a process to enable a child or youth to notify their community or Nation of their involuntary admission. To be complete by Sept. 1, 2021.</p>	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions	First Update	No Progress
		Second Update	No Progress

<p>Recommendation #5 That the Attorney General in partnership with the Ministries of Health and Mental Health and Addictions, ensure that an independent body is notified every time a child or youth is detained under the Mental Health Act and that this body is mandated to provide rights advice and advocacy to children and youth. Independent body to be in place by Dec. 1, 2021.</p>	<p>Ministry of Attorney General, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions</p>	First Update	No Progress
		Second Update	Some Progress
<p>Recommendation #6 That the Ministry of Health in co-operation with the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions and the health authorities assess the appropriateness and accessibility of the information currently provided to children and youth and develop new information using multiple formats and media to better support young people to understand what's happening to them and what their rights and options are when detained under the Mental Health Act. Youth with lived expertise to be engaged to advise on the information that is most helpful and how best to make information available to children and youth. Information to be developed by Dec. 1, 2021.</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions</p>	First Update	No Progress
		Second Update	Some Progress
<p>Recommendation #7 That the Ministry of Health work with the health authorities to develop a process to ensure that First Nations, Métis or Inuit children or youth who are either detained under the Mental Health Act or are under 16 and admitted by their parent/legal guardian are offered services by hospital staff who assist Indigenous patients such as navigators, liaison nurses, nurse practitioners and Elders in residence. Process to be developed and operational by Jan. 1, 2022.</p>	<p>Ministry of Health</p>	First Update	No Progress
		Second Update	No Progress
<p>Recommendation #8 That the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions put forward amendments to the Mental Health Act after actively engaging and consulting with health authorities, First Nations, Métis Nation and urban Indigenous communities and leadership and other appropriate bodies, that will ensure children and youth who are detained under the Mental Health Act have the right to retain personal</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions</p>	First Update	No Progress

<p>items that do not pose a risk to their safety or the safety of others and continue practices that support their physical, emotional, mental, spiritual and relational wellbeing and their sense of identity. Amendments to be put forward by May 1, 2022.</p>		Second Update	No Progress
<p>Recommendation #9 That the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions and the First Nations Health Authority actively engage and consult with First Nations, Métis Nation and urban Indigenous leadership and communities to identify changes needed in order to ensure that First Nations, Métis, Inuit and urban Indigenous children and youth are provided with trauma-informed, culturally safe and attuned mental health services, including a diversity of treatment modalities specific to their unique culture, when detained under the Mental Health Act. Changes to be identified by Sept. 1, 2021 and implemented in full by Sept. 1, 2022.</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions, First Nations Health Authority</p>	First Update	No Progress
		Second Update	No Progress
<p>Recommendation #10 That the Ministry of Health, in partnership with the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions and the health authorities, undertake a comprehensive review of practices for: a) children under 16 who have been “voluntarily” admitted, and take all necessary legal and administrative measures to ensure that “mature minor” capacity assessments are carried out where treatment is proposed, that the results of those assessments are recorded, and that physicians understand their duty to comply with the views of a mature minor regarding treatment, subject only to the order of a court b) children assessed as mature minors who have been involuntarily admitted, and take all necessary legal and administrative measures to ensure that (i) despite the deemed consent provisions, the views of the young person are obtained, recorded and carefully considered before treatment decisions are made, and (ii) treatment information is conveyed in a manner that children and youth may understand. Review to be complete by March 1, 2022.</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions</p>	First Update	No Progress
		Second Update	No Progress

<p>Recommendation #11 That the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions put forward amendments to the Mental Health Act after actively engaging and consulting with health authorities, First Nations, Métis Nation and urban Indigenous communities and leadership and other appropriate bodies to ensure that, for children and youth who are detained under the Mental Health Act, isolation and restraint are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • only used as a last resort when all other interventions have been exhausted, and • only used in accordance with specific legislative or regulatory criteria including assessment, time limits, reviews, documentation and reporting requirements. <p>Amendments to be put forward by May 1, 2022.</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions</p>	<p>First Update</p>	<p>No Progress</p>
		<p>Second Update</p>	<p>No Progress</p>
<p>Recommendation #12 That the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions conduct an evidence-informed and outcomes-based review of extended leave for children and youth who are detained under the Mental Health Act to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assess the effectiveness of extended leave as a mental health intervention for children and youth, and • if extended leave is determined to be effective, review the need for additional legislative or regulatory criteria and oversight mechanisms, and review the extent to which children and youth are aware of and exercise their rights on extended leave. <p>Review to be complete by Jan. 1, 2022.</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions</p>	<p>First Update</p>	<p>No Progress</p>
		<p>Second Update</p>	<p>No Progress</p>
<p>Recommendation #13 That the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions put forward amendments to the Mental Health Act after actively engaging and consulting with health authorities, First Nations, Métis Nation and urban Indigenous communities and leadership and other appropriate bodies to create mandatory periodic Mental Health Review Board reviews for (i) involuntarily detained children and youth, and (ii) children under 16 who are admitted at the request of their parents, to ensure that such</p>	<p>Ministry of Health, Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions</p>	<p>First Update</p>	<p>No Progress</p>

reviews do not depend on the child’s knowledge or ability to make such a request. Mandatory reviews should only be conducted with the consent of the child or youth or their representative. Amendments to be put forward by May 1, 2022.		Second Update	No Progress
Recommendation #14 That the Mental Health Review Board pilot a new Review Board hearing process for children and youth that centres the young person and is trauma-informed and culturally attuned after actively engaging and consulting with health authorities, First Nations, Métis Nation and urban Indigenous communities and leadership and other appropriate bodies. Pilot to be operational by Oct. 1, 2022.	Mental Health Review Board	First Update	Some Progress
		Second Update	Substantial Progress

Excluded: Increasing understanding, support and inclusion for children with FASD and their families (last update provided by public bodies: May 2023)	Ministries Involved	Last Review	Overall Rating
Recommendation #1 That the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) fully fund and implement a CYSN service framework and plan, fully inclusive of children and youth with FASD. The formation of the service framework and plan must extensively engage Delegated Aboriginal Agencies (DAAs) and all appropriate partners. This framework must articulate a comprehensive and accessible array of CYSN services, delivered based on both an assessment of functional needs and diagnosis and, therefore, fully including children and youth affected by FASD. MCFD to begin implementation by Sept. 30, 2021 and complete full implementation of the CYSN service framework and plan over a three-year period ending March 31, 2024.	Ministry of Children and Family Development	First Update	No Progress
		Second Update	Some Progress

<p>Recommendation #2 Pending full implementation of Recommendation 1, that MCFD immediately include suspected or confirmed FASD, based on an assessment of functional needs, in the eligibility criteria for CYSN Family Support Services, thereby allowing children and youth with FASD and their families to access services available to others with specific neuro-developmental conditions. The ministry should seek appropriate funding to expand the capacity of these services to adequately support the number of newly eligible FASD families so that this recommended expansion of service eligibility does not lead to reduced services or longer wait lists for other CYSN families.</p> <p>MCFD to secure immediate funding enhancements and begin implementation of the expanded eligibility criteria by Sept. 30, 2021.</p>	<p>Ministry of Children and Family Development</p>	<p>First Update</p>	<p>No Progress</p>
<p>Recommendation #3 MCFD to complete a comprehensive review of evidence-based and promising practices specific to serving children and youth with FASD, including from the Key Worker Parent Support Program, for integration into the CYSN framework. In the meantime, MCFD to take immediate action to ensure that the KWPSP has consistent quality service across all regions of B.C. and is accessible to all families of children and youth with FASD.</p> <p>MCFD to take immediate action to ensure equitability and accessibility of the KWPSP by Sept. 30, 2021 and complete the best practice review by March 30, 2022.</p>		<p>Ministry of Children and Family Development</p>	<p>First Update</p>
<p>Recommendation #4 As a first step toward realizing fundamental changes in practice that address racism, stigma and bias, MCFD, in collaboration with DAAs, community service agencies and caregivers, to conduct a review of existing FASD awareness training and the training needs of all front-line staff working with children and youth with FASD. MCFD, working with DAAs, to use this review to support the development of evidence-based, culturally attuned and regularly updated training materials that ground a required training program for current staff across the range of MCFD service lines and, in particular, CYMH,</p>	<p>Ministry of Children and Family Development, Indigenous Child and</p>		<p>First Update</p>

<p>CYSN, child welfare and youth justice. This awareness training should then be incorporated into basic entry training for newly hired staff and made accessible to community service agencies and caregivers.</p> <p>MCFD to complete the reviews and curriculum development and begin training by March 31, 2022 and complete training of all relevant ministry and agency staff by March 31, 2023.</p>	Family Service Agencies	Second Update	Some Progress
<p>Recommendation #5 That the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions (MMHA), in collaboration with MCFD, DAAs and the Ministry of Health, lead a review, and develop and implement a plan, to provide effective and accessible mental health services for children and youth with special needs, including FASD. This should include a review of evidence-based, culturally attuned and promising practice models of therapy, intervention and care for children and youth with special needs including FASD, who have mental health impacts, as well as an assessment of current resourcing and resource gaps. The findings of this review and planning should be prioritized and built into MMHA’s Pathway to Hope for implementation.</p> <p>MMHA to complete the review and plan by March 31, 2022, with MCFD and Health beginning the implementation of new service approaches and enhanced services by Oct. 1, 2023, and completing implementation by March 31, 2024.</p>	Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions, Ministry of Children and Family Development, Ministry of Health	First Update	No Progress
		Second Update	No Progress
<p>Recommendation #6 That the Ministry of Health incrementally reduce wait times for complex developmental behavioural conditions (CDBC) diagnostic clinics, and also secure additional resources to provide for periodic follow-up assessments, at key development stages from infancy through to adolescence.</p> <p>The Ministry of Health to reduce wait times to nine months by March 31, 2022; to six months by March 31, 2023; to three months by March 31, 2024; and thereafter increase capacity to provide for follow-up assessments.</p>	Ministry of Health	First Update	No Progress
		Second Update	Some Progress

<p>Recommendation #7 That the Ministry of Health, in collaboration with the First Nations Health Authority and with guidance from the Task Team formed as a result of the In Plain Sight report, apply learnings from the review of systemic bias to referral pathways and assessment processes for CDBC diagnostic clinics. The changes/improvements should specifically address the issue of bias with regard to the referrals of First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous children and youth for FASD assessments and ASD assessments.</p> <p>Ministry of Health to complete the review and implement recommended improvements by March 31, 2022.</p>	Ministry of Health	First Update	Some Progress
		Second Update	Some Progress
<p>Recommendation #8 That the Ministry of Health conduct an assessment of existing FASD awareness training and the training needs of appropriate front-line staff working with children and youth with FASD, leading to the development of evidence-based, culturally attuned, Nation-specific and regularly updated training materials that ground a mandatory training program for current staff across the range of health services.</p> <p>Ministry of Health to complete the assessment of existing FASD awareness training by March 31, 2022. Sequentially, the Ministry of Health to identify appropriate priority front-line providers to receive training, by Sept. 30, 2022, and develop training and access to training by Sept. 30, 2023.</p>	Ministry of Health	First Update	Some Progress
		Second Update	Some Progress
<p>Recommendation #9 MCFD together with the Ministry of Citizens' Services to initiate the development of a cross-ministry plan, in collaboration with the ministries of Health, MMHA, Social Development and Poverty Reduction, and Education, and in association with DAAs, health authorities and Community Living BC, to routinely collect high-quality demographic and service data that allows for disaggregation, providing an essential foundation for more effective policy development, program provision and service monitoring for children and youth with special needs and their families, including those with FASD who are receiving services from these public bodies.</p> <p>The cross-ministry plan to be completed and implemented by April 1, 2022 and fully implemented by March 31, 2024.</p>	Ministry of Children and Family Development, Ministry of Citizens' Services, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Mental	First Update	No Progress

	Health and Addictions, Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction, Ministry of Education and Child Care	Second Update	No Progress
<p>Recommendation #10 That the Ministry of Education update its Inclusive Education Policy and supporting documents and incorporate information to increase awareness and understanding of the specific learning needs of children and youth with FASD and related disorders into the supporting documents.</p> <p>Ministry of Education to update Inclusive Education Policy and supporting documents and incorporate information to enhance awareness of FASD and related disorders by Sept. 1, 2021.</p>	Ministry of Education and Child Care	First Update	Some Progress
		Second Update	Substantial Progress
<p>Recommendation #11 That the Ministry of Education work with the British Columbia Council for Administrators for Inclusive Supports in Education (BC CAISE) to support staff training and development needs for educators and school staff who work with children and youth with FASD or suspected FASD, and their families, and build on evidence-based and promising practice approaches to better support inclusion and improved learning outcomes for children and youth with FASD.</p> <p>Ministry of Education to work with BC CAISE and partners to support the implementation of staff training and development to better support inclusion and improved learning outcomes for children and youth with FASD and related disorders by Sept. 1, 2022.</p>	Ministry of Education and Child Care	First Update	Substantial Progress
		Second Update	Substantial Progress

Skye's Legacy: A focus on belonging (last update provided by public bodies: October 2023)	Ministries Involved	Last Review	Overall Rating
<p>Recommendation #1 MCFD to conduct a systemic needs analysis of cultural and family support resources required to ensure that social workers are better supported to promote a sense of belonging and identity for First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous children and youth in care in relation to their families, culture and cultural community over time and at different stages in their lives and identity development. This review will inform the development of a longer-term resourcing and implementation plan. However, given the urgent need to address the significant over-involvement of the child welfare system in the lives of Indigenous children and families and poor outcomes for Indigenous children in the child welfare system, a substantive investment of new resources should be made immediately that can be considered a down payment on the resources identified for the longer term plan.</p> <p>Funding for immediate and substantive new resources to be secured and implementation to begin no later than April 1, 2022.</p>	Ministry of Children and Family Development	First Update	No Progress
		Second Update	No Progress
<p>Recommendation #2 That MCFD conduct a comprehensive review and revision of all relevant care-planning and case management standards, policies, practice guidelines and training materials with the goal of aligning those materials with the dimensions of belonging, as described in this report. (See Appendix F for areas the Representative has identified for possible policy amendments.)</p> <p>Revisions of all relevant materials to be completed by March 31, 2022.</p>	Ministry of Children and Family Development	First Update	No Progress
		Second Update	Some Progress
<p>Recommendation #3 In the interest of improving practice, that MCFD distribute Skye's Legacy: A Focus on Belonging to all staff who work with and plan for children and youth who are in care or who may come into care, and then meaningfully engage in discussions with those staff about belonging for children and youth in the context of case planning, decision-making and the development and implementation of care plans.</p> <p>These discussions should be informed by the Circle practices developed in the APPF in order to foster strength-based, holistic and restorative work that centres child and youth</p>	Ministry of Children and Family Development	First Update	Some Progress

<p>well-being and belonging and should be designed to promote thoughtful reflection and enhance understanding. This process of engagement should not be a one-time process and should occur regularly to support strong practice development and reflection. Report dissemination to be completed by Aug. 31, 2021 and initial Circle discussions to be completed by March 31, 2022.</p>		Second Update	Some Progress
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At a Crossroads: The roadmap from fiscal discrimination to equity in Indigenous child welfare (last update provided by public bodies: April 2023)	Ministries Involved	Last Review	Overall Rating
<p>Recommendation #1 Funding Models. (A) That MCFD, as lead ministry, seek and secure from government the authority and budget capacity to adopt the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal principles of funding and provide appropriate financial resources that allow for revised funding models that are culturally based and needs-based, provide for substantive equality for all First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous children living off-reserve and prioritize culturally based community wellness and prevention services. New Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ruling-based funding model to be developed by April 1, 2023 and implemented by April 1, 2024. (B) As part of such revision, and in relation to the 84 First Nations that are unaffiliated with an ICFS Agency, MCFD, in partnership with the 84 unaffiliated First Nations rights holders, negotiate a clearly identifiable distribution of funding transferred from Indigenous Services Canada, inclusive of any funds associated with the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, with the goal of making transparent the flow of funding from Indigenous Services Canada through MCFD to First Nations. Transparent and accountable transfer of funding from Indigenous Services Canada through MCFD to the 84 unaffiliated First Nations to be complete by April 1, 2023.</p>	<p>Ministry of Children and Family Development</p>	<p>First Update</p>	<p>No Progress</p>

<p>Recommendation #2 Fiscal Governance. That MCFD update its ministry-specific fiscal management tools and reporting practices in order to align public funds allocated to First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous child welfare to stated spending objectives and declared government and ministry priorities as stated in the Draft Principles that Guide the Province of British Columbia’s Relationship with Indigenous Peoples, in particular, 4.3 which states “putting in place effective mechanisms to support the transition away from colonial systems of administration and governance.” MCFD to update its fiscal tools and reporting practices by April 1, 2023.</p>	<p>Ministry of Children and Family Development</p>	<p>First Update</p>	<p>No Progress</p>
<p>Recommendation #3 Data Stewardship. That MCFD incorporate the Grandmother Perspective in relation to the data it collects, as described in the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner’s 2020 report on disaggregated data collection, in order to collect disaggregated race-based data to understand the diverse and greater needs of the First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous populations it serves. Specific data to be collected should include needs-based data to define the services and supports that are needed, finance and contract data on how funding was deployed, and outcome data. The purpose of such data collection, which should align with forthcoming provincial anti-racism data legislation, is to reduce and ultimately eliminate fiscal discrimination against First Nations, Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous children, youth and families, and achieve equity in funding and services for them. Such data collection should be done with the meaningful and respectful involvement of the communities affected. MCFD to begin collecting disaggregated race-based data by April 1, 2023</p>	<p>Ministry of Children and Family Development</p>	<p>First Update</p>	<p>No Progress</p>

<p>A Parent's Responsibility: Government's obligation to improve the mental health outcomes of children in care (last update provided by public bodies: October 2023)</p>	<p>Ministries Involved</p>	<p>Last Review</p>	<p>Overall Rating</p>
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<p>Recommendation #1. The Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) and Indigenous Child and Family Services Agency (ICFSA) Directors, in collaboration with the Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions (MMHA), co-lead comprehensive research to identify the prevalence of the range of mental health disorders amongst children in care in B.C., and thereafter utilize these disaggregated data to inform service planning. Research to be completed by Dec. 31, 2023.</p>	<p>Ministry of Children and Family Development, Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions and delegated Indigenous Child and Family Service Agencies²⁹</p>	<p>First Update</p>	<p>No Progress</p>
<p>Recommendation #2. MCFD and ICFSA Directors, in collaboration with the MMHA, co-lead the development and implementation of policies and processes for initial mental health screening by qualified professionals of all children who are at risk of admission into care, or who have been admitted into care, with periodic and situational screening after initial screening, as required. This screening is to be carried out in a trauma-informed and culturally safe and relevant manner – including the potential development of validated Indigenous-specific screening instruments over the longer term – with disaggregated data being centrally collected and analyzed to inform service planning on an ongoing basis. Screening processes to be implemented by Dec. 31, 2023</p>	<p>Ministry of Children and Family Development, Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions and delegated Indigenous Child and Family Service Agencies</p>	<p>First Update</p>	<p>No Progress</p>

²⁹ ICFSAs are not public bodies. They are developed by First Nations, Métis, and urban based Indigenous communities to design and deliver services for their members under the delegation of MCFD’s Provincial Director of Child Welfare.

<p>Recommendation #3. MCFD and ICFSA Directors, in collaboration with MMHA, co-lead the development and implementation of plans for targeted, voluntary assessment services (where indicated by screening) and evidence-based, voluntary mental health program services for children in care and children at risk of being brought into care, with particular attention to culturally appropriate and trauma-informed services for First Nations, Inuit, Métis and Urban Indigenous children. These plans should be incorporated into the operational planning for MMHA’s Pathway to Hope and MCFD’s Child and Youth Mental Health Service Framework.</p> <p>Plans to be completed by Dec. 31, 2023, with full resourcing included in Budget 2024/25 and implementation beginning by April 1, 2024</p>	<p>Ministry of Children and Family Development, Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions and delegated Indigenous Child and Family Service Agencies</p>	<p>First Update</p>	<p>No Progress</p>
<p>Recommendation #4. The development and implementation of the recommendations above regarding research, screening, assessment and program services be informed by and aligned with the ICFSA Directors’ Culture is Healing: An Indigenous Child and Youth Mental Wellness Framework.</p> <p>To be initiated by Dec. 31, 2022</p>	<p>Ministry of Children and Family Development, and delegated Indigenous Child and Family Service Agencies</p>	<p>First Update</p>	<p>No Progress</p>
<p>Recommendation #5. MCFD to provide capacity-building funding to the ICFSA Directors to support ongoing leadership, engagement and consultation to support the implementation of the Representative’s recommendations as contained in this report.</p> <p>Funding to be provided by Dec. 31, 2022</p>	<p>Ministry of Children and Family Development</p>	<p>First Update</p>	<p>Some Progress</p>
<p>Recommendation #6. As part of the planned reform of the Child, Family and Community Service Act, MCFD to include an amendment to the statutory rights of children in care so it is clear that these children have a right to health care, including mental health care.</p> <p>To be completed by Sept. 30, 2025.</p>	<p>Ministry of Children and Family Development</p>	<p>First Update</p>	<p>No Progress</p>

Missing: Why are children disappearing from B.C.'s child welfare system? (last update provided by public bodies: October 2023)	Ministries Involved	Last Review	Overall Rating
Recommendation #1. Develop and implement an interim plan to improve the collection of reliable information and data to enable the PDCW to more effectively identify, monitor and respond to children and youth who are lost or missing in B.C.'s child welfare system.	Ministry of Children and Family Development	First Update	Some Progress
Recommendation #2. Work with RCY to identify opportunities to enhance the quality and consistency of reporting on lost and missing children, inclusive of notifications when lost and missing children have been found.	Ministry of Children and Family Development	First Update	Some Progress
Recommendation #3. Immediately remove the requirement for missing children in the system of care to require additional safety concerns before a child is reported lost or missing and approach as high risk until a risk assessment is completed to ensure an equitable and robust response to the disappearance of all children and youth in B.C. to align MCFD policy with the B.C. Provincial Policing Standards concerning missing children	Ministry of Children and Family Development	First Update	Some Progress
Recommendation #4. Pending the development and implementation of a congruent whole-of-system response that addresses the push and pull factors contributing to children and youth being lost or missing in the child welfare system, adopt interim practice guidelines that support social workers and care teams to meaningfully engage with and respond to children and youth during and after incidents of them going missing. Interim practice guidelines to be informed by research evidence and effective practices employed in other jurisdictions.	Ministry of Children and Family Development	First Update	Substantial Progress
Recommendation #5. Immediately remove the requirement for youth to be 'habitually' missing before workers are directed to work with the child or youth to determine why they go missing.	Ministry of Children and Family Development	First Update	Substantial Progress

<p>Recommendation #6. Adopt the recommendations from In Harm’s Way? Serious Occurrences Report Vol. 2, 2017, to include information on: why the child left, what happened while they were away, if medical care was required, and what could be done to prevent them from needing to leave again. (Note: this should be sent as a resubmission and should not delay the initial reportable timeline)</p>	<p>Ministry of Children and Family Development</p>	<p>First Update</p>	<p>Substantial Progress</p>
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Appendix B - Overall progress of all recommendations in 2023/24

Level of Progress	Number of recommendations	Percentage
No Progress	25	35%
Some Progress	28	39%
Substantial Progress	8	11%
Complete	11	15%
Total	72	100%

Appendix C – Progress by Service Type for all recommendations in 2023/2024

Service Area	No Progress	Some Progress	Substantial Progress	Complete	Total
Care Planning		1		1	2
Belonging	1	2			3
Child & Youth Substance Use		3		3	6
Transition to Adulthood	1	3	2	1	7
Complex Care	2	7			9
Education	1	5	3	4	13
Children & Youth with Disabilities	3	11	1	1	16
Children & Youth Mental Health	16	5	1	2	24

Note - recommendations may include more than one Service Type, for this reason this table will sum to more than 72.

Appendix D - Progress by the Public Bodies in 2023/2024 who provide the majority of designated services for children, youth, young people, and families

Public Body	No Progress	Some Progress	Substantial Progress	Complete	Total
Ministry of Children and Family Development	15	18	4	7	44
Ministry of Health	13	11		2	26
Ministry of Mental Health and Addictions	13	6		2	21
Ministry of Education and Child Care	2	3	3	3	11
Ministry of Citizens' Services	2	1			3
Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction	1	1			2
Office of the Attorney General		2			2
Ministry Housing		1			1
Mental Health Review Board			1		1

Notes - recommendations may be directed at more than one public body, for this reason this table will sum to more than 72.