



Statement

Oct. 31, 2024
For Immediate Release

October is Foster Caregiver Month, a time when we recognize the hard work and dedication of foster caregivers across the province. As we close out this month, I extend my gratitude to the hundreds of caregivers in B.C. who open their homes and their hearts to children and youth whose families are temporarily unable to look after them. Thank you for all that you do.

Foster caregivers have a unique and important role in the lives of children and youth, and their families. Living with and supporting young people day-in and day-out enables caregivers to gain invaluable insights into what the young people in their care need. Over the past year, RCY engaged and consulted with foster caregivers throughout B.C. for our work on [*Don't Look Away – How one boy's story has the power to shift a system of care for children and youth*](#). This report weaves together an investigation into the tragic death of a young boy while in government care and a review of the systems of care that have struggled to meet the needs of children and youth for decades. Foster caregivers generously shared their experience of supporting children, youth and their families and what was and was not working for young people and the fostering system.

I am very thankful to the foster caregivers who, through a number of consultations, were able to provide rich insight into their roles and share their stories with RCY. This helped to inform the direction and recommendations of the report.

We know through our day-to-day advocacy and review work that foster caregivers can provide the nurturance, connection and sense of belonging that children and youth need in order to thrive and reach their full potential. They can help young people create healthy connections to people, community, culture, place and a positive sense of their own identity. The work of foster caregivers has an everlasting impact on the lives of children. The smallest acts of kindness can pave the way for a better life for children in care.

I also want to take this opportunity to highlight the great work done by the [foster parent community supports](#) in the regions and the [BC Foster Parents Association](#). Your important work in providing meaningful resources, information and networking services to foster caregivers builds the foundation for them to help care for young

people. We encourage those who are curious about becoming a foster caregiver to check out these resources.

Here at RCY, we want foster caregivers across the province to know that we see you and that we appreciate the vital role that you play for young people in B.C. We are deeply grateful for the effort, kindness, compassion and flexibility you bring to your roles as care providers, and I want to sincerely thank you for your continued hard work.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jennifer Charlesworth". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Jennifer Charlesworth
Representative for Children and Youth