

## JOB DESCRIPTION ADVOCATE

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**Classification:** Advocate – Band 2

**Supervisor title:** Manager, Advocacy

### WHO WE ARE

The Representative for Children and Youth (RCY), an independent and non-partisan officer of the B.C. Legislature, works to influence positive change to B.C.'s child-, youth- and young adult-serving systems. Working under the authority of the [Representative for Children and Youth Act](#) and [Regulations](#), the Representative's Office provides advocacy support to people dealing with the service system and advocates directly on behalf of children, youth and young adults, monitors and reviews government services for children and youth and reviews and sometimes investigates deaths and critical injuries of children and youth who are receiving services.

We aspire to a legacy where children, youth, young adults and families served by the child and family serving systems receive **timely, appropriate and compassionate support and services** that they need, when they need it. We dream of a Province where all children and families thrive and where experiences of **stigma, shame, judgment and racism** have been eliminated.

RCY is committed to being a more culturally aware and agile organization, integrating Indigenous ways of knowing and being into our daily practice, and ensuring that our work highlights concerns and bright spots. We are committed to relationship, respect, reciprocity, relevance, responsibility and repair. We are guided by the principles of cultural safety, anti racism, we are a highly connected organization known for upholding rights and being respectful, responsive, responsible, reciprocal and a good ally. As Nations and communities work towards resumption of jurisdiction, RCY is appreciated for what we do and how we do it; we seek direction from and accompany those on their journey in a supportive way.

RCY Advocates provide intake, direct advocacy and outreach services to children, youth and young adults (19 – 26) accessing a designated or prescribed service under the *Representative for Children and Youth Act*. Intake and advocacy services include assessing service requests, providing information and referrals, engaging with relevant key party groups in early resolution, promoting and supporting self-advocacy and providing direct advocacy services where appropriate. Advocates also engage in community relations activities with various stakeholders across the province. RCY Advocates' day-to-day work may focus on different elements of service for extended periods (i.e., intake, assessing requests, direct advocacy or community engagement) as operationally needed.

## **ROLE DUTIES**

### **Individual Advocacy:**

- Provides intake services by assessing all service requests and providing information and referrals, coaching and promoting self-advocacy, and connecting with service providers.
- Works collaboratively with team to ensure timely responses to all advocacy requests for service.
- Provides children, youth and young adults with direct advocacy services which includes gathering views, attending meetings to support the young person, working collaboratively with the young person, helping to build understanding of individual rights, service delivery processes, legislation and mandate while encouraging and coaching effective self-advocacy in seeking or accessing designated services.
- Provides support, information and advice to families regarding information on child rights, service delivery process, legislation and mandate throughout the advocacy process.
- Gathers relevant information, identifies and assesses relevant issues, determines advocacy intervention actions, encourages dispute resolution between parties by agreement, and identifies suitable referrals to ministry, agency and/or service providers and/or dispute resolution processes.
- Initiates complaints and/or assists a child, youth or young adult to formally make a complaint if all attempts to resolve locally have not been successful.
- Prepares and enters comprehensive case documentation into the case management system, including detailed reviews, briefing notes, issue analyses and synthesis of facts and circumstances, actions taken and outcomes achieved.
- Provides education and appropriate policy and legislation advice to community advocates in resolving specific issues; advances a child centered advocacy philosophy to resolve issues.
- Participates in developmental work to improve advocacy practice and/or operations.
- Maintains an up-to-date knowledge of emerging trends/developments in similar services/programs. Collects information and other resources about advocacy, support and designated or prescribed services for children, youth, young adults and families.

### **Community Relations:**

- Identifies, recommends and implements ways to engage with children, youth, and young adults around the province.
- Facilitates workshops and presentations on child rights and advocacy, and attends events hosted by communities and partner organizations both in-person and online
- Provides expertise in delivering public information, rights education and community relations initiatives.
- Liaises and develops professional working relationships with government and non-government service providers including advocacy groups, Indigenous and other cultural groups and organizations, community groups and leaders, non-profit agencies and social workers specifically as they relate to designated services and supports for children, youth and young adults.

- Builds relationships with First Nations, Indigenous Child and Family Community Service and non-profit agencies working with First Nations, Inuit, Métis and Urban Indigenous children, youth, young adults and families.
- Engages with First Nation, Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous persons and community agencies in a manner which promotes cultural safety.
- Engages with all community key party groups from a trauma informed lens.
- Completes intakes when requests for advocacy services occur while in community while ensuring safety and confidentiality.
- Participates in strategic discussions regarding outreach and engagement and supports the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of RCY's outreach efforts.

#### **Other Duties:**

- Provides input and information in team discussions and/or to senior management regarding information/case management systems, systemic/emerging trends, priorities, public policy issues, intervention strategies, and case feedback.
- Identifies and reports to staff and senior management on deficiencies and service gaps in provincial and community-based supports and services for children, youth and young adults and recommends changes to the systems to address these concerns.

## **QUALIFICATIONS**

### **Education**

A bachelor's degree or graduate degree in a relevant discipline such as human services, social sciences, Indigenous governance, or law.

RCY recognizes and values the cultural and community knowledge and experience that is gained over time, therefore other forms of post-secondary education and /or training will be considered, such as:

- Structured, intentional teachings from Elders and Knowledge Keepers
- First Nations, Métis or Inuit community-based advocacy
- First Nations, Métis or Inuit leadership roles
- Professional development educational and learning opportunities

### **Experience**

- Five (5) years of \*recent, significant, and relevant professional experience working directly with children, youth and/or young adults in programs such as:
  - Working with families who have received child safety services, family services, guardianship services, child and youth support needs services, adoption services, youth justice services, child and youth mental health, substance use, Community Living British Columbia, and/or Agreements with a Young Adult/Strengthening Abilities and Journeys of Empowerment supports.

*(\*Recent is defined as relevant experience within the past ten (10) years)*

## **Knowledge**

- Knowledge of Indigenous cultures and the issues affecting Indigenous children, youth, and young adults.
- Demonstrated knowledge of challenges and barriers experienced by culturally diverse individuals while trying to access supports and services.
- Demonstrated knowledge of social policy issues and the challenges in delivering public services in British Columbia.
- Knowledge of child rights and the law associated with services and protections for children, youth and young adults in BC, and other provincial and federal legislation related to children's services.
- Knowledge of The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), and Section 70 of the Rights of the Child, Family and Community Services Act (CFCSA).

## **Skills & Abilities**

- Strong oral and written communication skills.
- Strong interpersonal skills, remaining calm under pressure, and effectively resolving conflicts.
- Proficiency in Microsoft Office applications.
- Ability to incorporate the principles of Two-Eyed Seeing in practical applications.
- Ability to plan, organize, prioritize work, and perform effectively under pressure and conflicting demands.
- Ability to interpret legislation and policy in order to apply it to advocating for children, youth and/or young adults.

**Please review the job posting on [RCY's careers page](#) for details regarding preferences and other specific requirements for this position.**

## **COMPETENCIES**

### **RCY Competencies**

**Cultural Agility** is the ability to work respectfully, knowledgeably and effectively with Indigenous people and people of all cultures. It is noticing and readily adapting to cultural uniqueness in order to create a sense of safety for all.

**Self-Discovery and Awareness** means understanding one's thoughts, feelings, values and background and how they impact the success of the interaction and relationship, or how they may influence one's work. It is recognizing one's own biases by tracing them to their origins, through reflection and by noticing one's own behaviour – and then intentionally seeking a way forward that positively impacts the interaction and relationship.

**Building a trust-based relationship** requires a fundamental understanding that "relationship" is the foundation from which all activities happen and that building a good relationship takes

time and commitment. It is a willingness to build a personal relationship in addition to a professional one, participating in open exchanges of experiences and culture. It requires a genuine, non-controlling approach and relies upon demonstrated integrity and transparency.

### **Position Specific Competencies**

**Indigenous-Centred Service Approach** is a desire to serve Indigenous peoples, focusing one's efforts on understanding their interests in order to increase the quality of the service and produce better outcomes.

**Analytical Thinking** is the ability to comprehend a situation by breaking it down into its components and identifying key or underlying complex issues.

**Commitment to Continuous Learning** involves a commitment to think about the ongoing and evolving needs of the organization and to learn how new and different solutions can be utilized to ensure success and move the organization forward.

**Impact and Influence** is the ability to influence, persuade, or convince others to adopt a specific course of action. It involves the use of persuasive techniques, presentations or negotiation skills to achieve desired results.

**For more information on competencies:**

[Competencies for Interviews & Hiring – Province of British Columbia](#)

[Indigenous Relations Behavioural Competencies - Province of British Columbia](#)