



**Victoria Family Court & Youth Justice Committee**

Re: Representative for Children and Youth Final Report, October, 2016

November 16, 2016 **Agenda Item 8 d.**

For the ease of the committee I have tried to summarize 10 requests made in the Representative's report, 5 which she deemed 'Urgent'.

- 1) Increase access to independent advocates who assist children, youth and their families to find better services and outcomes.
- 2) Reduce the number of aboriginal and other children in care, with the goal of having no more aboriginal youth than their proportional population.
- 3) Ensure that services adequately support youth who have continuing custody orders, sufficient to ensure academic achievement equivalent with other youth (based on the six-year completion rate).
- 4) Continue to coordinate and strengthen services for children and families affected by domestic violence.
- 5) Find ways to increase adoptions, especially for aboriginal youth (Report coming from Grand Chief John)

**Urgent Requests:**

- 1) Extend Foster Care to age 25 for youth in school.
- 2) Improve Indigenous Child Welfare Services to address intergenerational trauma and the harmful effects of colonial policies by providing more money for services.
- 3) Support high needs children with mental health and substance use programs as well as Therapeutic Foster Care Programs. Ensure children, youth and young adults exhibiting signs of behavioral, emotional, mental health or substance use issues are assessed within 30 days and begin receiving treatment within 30 days.
- 4) Introduce a Government Wide Children's Plan to enshrine a cross ministry child-centred philosophy that ensures children, youth and families get needed resources.
- 5) Demonstrate accountability and commitment to children by increasing funding for child, youth and family services and addressing shortfalls in programming including adhering to the legislated commitment to meet with the Representative for Children and Youth at least four times per year.

Respectfully Submitted,

Cynthia Day, Chair