

2016-2017

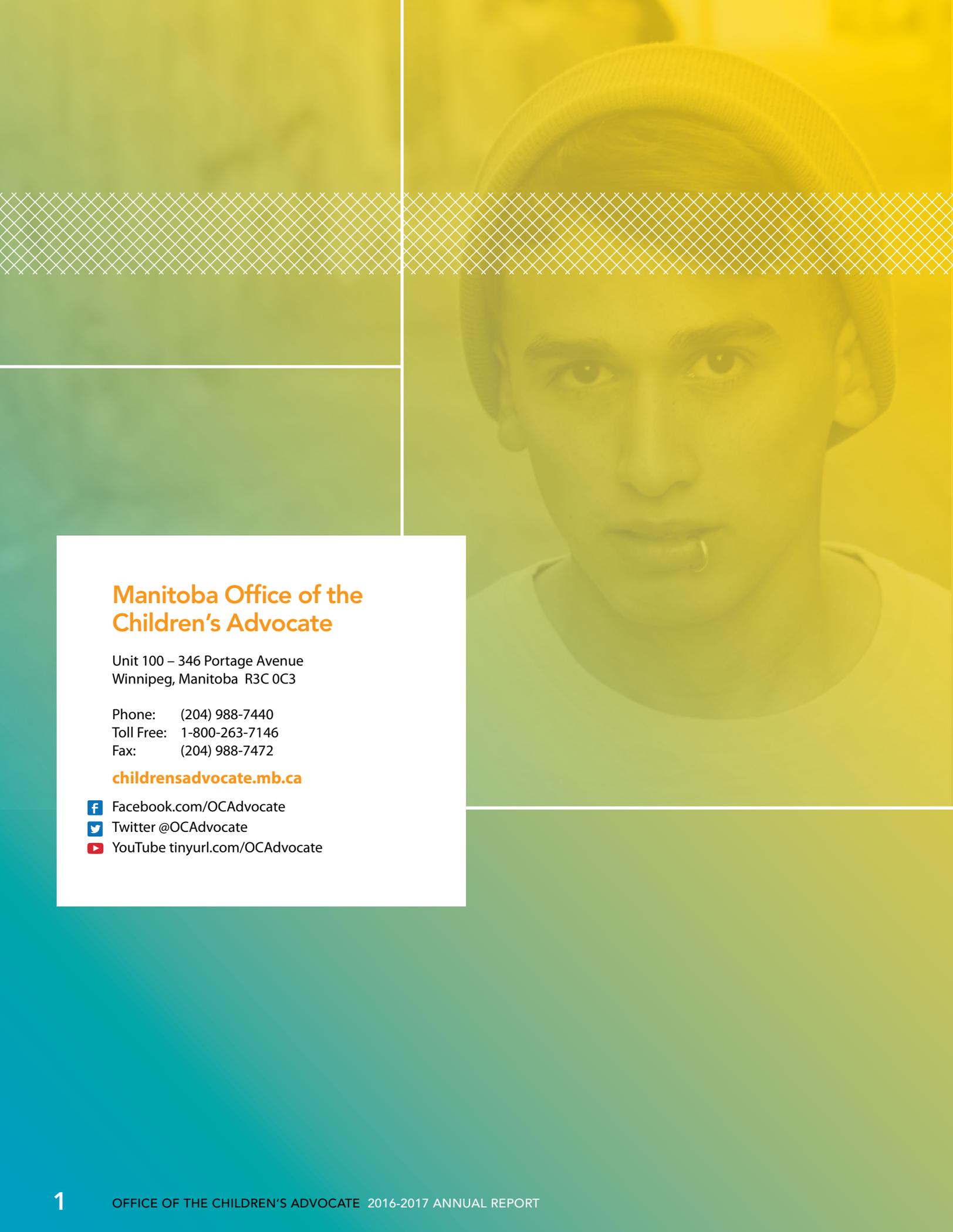
Manitoba Office of the Children's Advocate

ANNUAL REPORT

Creating the
Web of Advocacy



Children's
Advocate



Manitoba Office of the Children's Advocate

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About the Office of the Children's Advocate

A SPECIAL NOTE ABOUT THIS REPORT

At the time of this report's release, the mandate and name of the Office of the Children's Advocate (OCA) is about to change. In spring 2017, the Manitoba legislature passed new governing legislation for our office: *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act*. At the time of this report's release we are awaiting proclamation of our new mandate. Our new identity, once proclamation has occurred, will be the Advocate for Children and Youth Office. We anticipate this change in name and mandate to occur before the end of the current fiscal year, and we will inform Manitobans when this date has been set.

Vision Statement

A safe and healthy society that hears, includes, values, and protects all children and youth.

Mission Statement

To ensure the voices of children and youth involved with the child welfare system are heard. As an independent office, we advocate for systemic change for the benefit of children and youth under the *Child and Family Services Act* and the *Adoption Act*.

What We Do

The OCA is an independent office of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly. We are here to represent the rights, interests, and viewpoints of children and youth throughout Manitoba who are receiving, or are entitled to be receiving, services under the *Child and Family Services Act* (CFSA) and the *Adoption Act* (note that our enabling legislation will be changing in the coming months). We do this by advocating directly with children and youth or on their behalf with caregivers and other stakeholders. Our advocacy also involves reviewing services after the death of any young person when that young person or their family was involved with the child welfare system at the time of the death or in the year that preceded the death of young person.

The OCA is empowered to review, investigate, and provide recommendations on matters relating to the welfare and interests of these children and youth.

We also promote the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*. This guiding document, which Canada ratified in 1991, describes more than 40 central human rights specific to children.



Children's
Advocate

Guided by Best Interests

We carry out our role according to the best interests provisions of both the CFSA and the Adoption Act. This means that in all of the activities carried out by the staff of the OCA, the best interests and safety of children and youth are our top considerations.

The Importance of Having an Independent Children's Advocate

The independent status of the OCA is vital. It allows the children's advocate to freely challenge the system and work for change when practices, policy, or legislation are not meeting the best interests of children and youth.

"Independent" means that the government of Manitoba does not oversee the OCA. We are separate and apart from the child welfare system; we are not a child welfare agency.

Children are in particular need of advocates. They have a voice but virtually no legal power to make anyone listen to them. Our experiences speaking with children and youth in the child welfare system reveal that they sometimes feel they have no say in what happens to them.

Our Mandate is Expanding!

Before the release of this report, all three parties in the Manitoba legislature worked together and across party lines to pass legislation that will expand the role of our office. The new legislation is expected to come into force before the end of the 2017-2018 fiscal year. Under *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act*, our mandate will extend to children and youth receiving a number of publicly funded services, and our office will also expand its research, public education, and reporting activities in a number of important ways. The following chart outlines the changes:

ADVOCACY SERVICES

CURRENT MANDATE

Advocate may provide support to any child/youth (birth-17 years old) receiving or entitled to be receiving:

- child welfare or adoption services

NEW MANDATE

Advocate may provide services to any child/youth (birth-17 years old) receiving or entitled to be receiving “designated services,” including:

- child welfare or adoption services,
- disability services (within health, education, justice, or community services),
- educational programming for children with an individual education plan (IEP),
- mental health services,
- addiction services,
- victim support services (including victims of crime, witnesses in criminal proceedings, children/youth impacted by domestic violence, and children/youth who are sexually exploited or at risk of being sexually exploited), and
- youth justice services (community supervision, custody, and probation).

Plus, the Advocate may provide services to 18- to 21-year-olds, including:

- former permanent wards receiving CFS support beyond termination of guardianship,
- young adults with a mental disability who were involved with CFS prior to turning 18 and who are in receipt of disability services, and
- young adults who were in care of CFS prior to turning 18 and who have or are eligible for an IEP.

SPECIAL INVESTIGATION REVIEWS

CURRENT MANDATE

Advocate conducts a review when a child/youth (birth-17 years old) or their parents received, in the year preceding the child death:

- child welfare or adoption services.

NEW MANDATE

Advocate conducts a review when a child/youth or their family received, in the year preceding the child death, a “reviewable service,” including:

- child welfare services,
- adoption services,
- mental health services,
- addiction services, and
- youth justice services.

Plus, reviews are extended to include 18- to 21-year-olds who were former permanent wards with child welfare and who were in receipt of transition support services.

ADDITIONAL CHANGES

RESEARCH & PUBLIC EDUCATION

- Conducting research on reviewable and designated services in order to make recommendations for improvements
- Raising public awareness of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*
- Publishing an annual report, service plan, and goals and objectives for the office
- Analyzing information arising in our work and creating special reports to provide information to the public

MONITOR & REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS

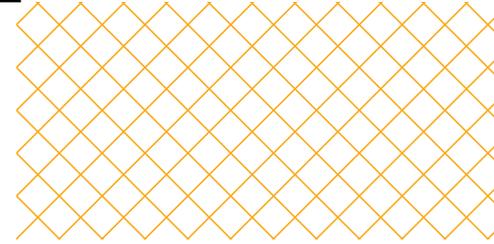
- Monitoring, analyzing, and reporting on progress made by public systems on the recommendations made by the advocate
- Reporting on levels of compliance that public systems are demonstrating with respect to recommendations made by the advocate in the best interests of children

SERIOUS INJURY INVESTIGATIONS & REPORTING

- Receiving reports from public systems that are required to report serious injuries of children, youth, and young adults to the advocate
- Investigating serious injuries and being empowered to make recommendations to keep young people safer

MESSAGE FROM THE ADVOCATE

Creating the Web of Advocacy



In accordance with Section 8.2(1)(d) of the Child and Family Services Act, I respectfully submit this document as my annual report for the time period from April 1, 2016, to March 31, 2017.

For the past two and a half decades, the Office of the Children's Advocate (OCA) has worked with Manitoba's children and youth towards the vision that a safe and healthy society is one that hears, includes, values, and protects all children and youth. This vision is the central thread that weaves throughout all of the services that our office provides. Each member of our team is committed to lifting up the voices of Manitoba's children and youth and to ensuring that adults and service providers understand the rights, thoughts, opinions, and experiences of children and youth.

Listening to young people and including them in decision making is key to providing quality services and demonstrates meaningful engagement. When young people are heard and their opinions included, there is a greater likelihood for plans to succeed and for outcomes to improve. Our goal is similar when we are investigating the history of public service delivery when a child has died. We build an understanding of the life and experiences of the child and their family. We tell the child's story from the perspective of how public services responded to the needs of the child. Their story tells us whether there were gaps in the services and systems that must be addressed.

From the time our office opened in 1993, our work has been tethered to the child welfare system. Children and youth have to be involved with child welfare in some way to qualify for our advocacy services, or for our office to be able to conduct reviews after the death of a child. This legislative barrier has meant that thousands of young people in Manitoba who would benefit from our support and review services were prevented from accessing our office. This barrier is not reflective of what happens in the lives of young people; it is rare that children and youth who contact our office are involved with only one public service. Our experience has shown that the best outcomes emerge when systems work together to adapt and respond to the unique needs of children and youth.

This year marks an extremely exciting moment in our history. In spring 2017, all of our province's political parties worked together and across party lines to pass *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act*. This new legislation is special. Not only did it receive support from all three parties in the legislature, it also demonstrates Manitoba's commitment to children's rights and the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*. The legislation recognizes the difference a professional advocate can make in the life of a child and allows children and families to access assistance when navigating a variety of public systems. In addition, the new mandate will provide an incredible opportunity for centralized data collection on publicly funded services and will allow us to look at the effectiveness and efficiency of those services.

When this legislation comes into force in the 2017-2018 fiscal year, our office will have the legislated responsibility to advocate and investigate across a spectrum of public services. Many more children, youth, and young adults, from birth to age 21, will have access to our advocacy support beyond child welfare and adoption services. They will be able to come to us if their concerns exist within additional public systems, including justice, education, mental health, disability, addiction, and victim support services. Our ability to investigate deaths of children, youth, and young adults will expand, as will our ability to make formal recommendations across a number of public service systems. Our office will become the central reporting and analysis point for serious injuries to children and youth across Manitoba, and we will be empowered to conduct more research on trends within child- and youth-serving systems and to share our findings with the public.



We chose *Creating the Web of Advocacy* as our theme for this year's report to underline how weaving supportive and coordinated networks together can lift up and support the young people who rely on public services. As we prepare for our new mandate, we are excited about forging new partnerships to create a stronger web. With our vision intact and a clear purpose, we are ready.

Daphne Penrose, MSW, RSW
Children's Advocate

Executive Summary

The OCA ensures that the voices of children and youth involved with the child welfare system are heard.

ANNUAL REPORT THEME:

Creating the Web of Advocacy

The theme of this year's annual report speaks to the expansion of our mandate in the 2017-2018 fiscal year. Children, youth, and young adults, from birth to age 21, will have access to our advocacy support within a broad spectrum of public services. This expansion will give us an opportunity to weave together a supportive and coordinated network of services that can lift up and support the young people who rely on public services.



Children's Advocate
Daphne Penrose,
MSW, RSW

SERVICE STATS

Advocacy Services

177 Cases Carried Forward from Last Year

2,581 Cases Opened

2,552 Cases Closed

206 Cases Carried Forward to Next Year

Special Investigation Review Services

38 Reviews Carried Forward from Last Year

53 Reviews Opened

47 Reviews Completed

44 Reviews Carried Forward to Next Year

ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

- To improve the accessibility of our services, we developed plans this year to open a satellite location in northern Manitoba. The office is set to open in the 2017-2018 fiscal year.
- We released a number of special reports as the result of emerging trends we have seen in the concerns that have come to our attention. One was a report examining the issues of trauma and resilience in children and youth involved with the child welfare system: *Don't Call Me Resilient: What Loss & Grief Look Like for Children and Youth in Care*. In another report, *On the Edge Between Two Worlds*, we gathered information from local Indigenous leaders to examine changes within our public systems that would better meet the needs of youth. We also released a report, *So Much Left to Do*, outlining the government's progress towards addressing the recommendations from the Phoenix Sinclair Inquiry. And finally, our work on our multi-phase research study into youth suicide continued into phase three as we partnered with other groups to create evidence-informed mental health and wellness resources.
- We made 42 public education presentations on the work of our office to community groups and organizations in Manitoba. This included presentations at the Prairie Child Welfare Consortium 8th Biennial Symposium, The Indigenous Youth Suicide Prevention Leadership Round Table, and the Manitoba Foster Family Network Conference.
- We made 123 trips outside of Winnipeg to every region of the province for case-related reasons and to ensure that children across Manitoba have access to advocacy services. We also travelled outside of the province 10 times to present at conferences and attend meetings.

SERVICE PLAN:

Preparing for Our New Mandate

The Advocate for Children and Youth Act, which is to come into effect in the 2017-2018 fiscal year, significantly broadens and strengthens the mandate of our office. Children, youth, and young adults will now be able to come to us with their concerns in the justice, education, mental health, disability, addiction, and victim support systems. Our ability to investigate deaths of children, youth, and young adults will also expand, as will our ability to make formal recommendations across the above public service systems. In addition, we will have new and expanded responsibilities in the areas of research, public education, tracking of recommendations, and serious injury reporting.

We've been working hard to prepare for these changes with the following activities:

- We've created internal workgroups in the new areas of our mandate. These groups have been defining our expanded scope and responsibilities, and consulting with system experts representing the public services that are affected.
- We will be reaching out to and consulting with Indigenous leadership throughout the province as part of our transitional work.
- We are meeting with federal government stakeholders, as many children within Manitoba live in communities where the federal government is responsible for funding or delivering services.

Sommaire

Le BPE veille à ce que les voix des enfants et des jeunes inscrits dans le système de protection de l'enfance soient entendues.

THÈME DU RAPPORT ANNUEL :

Formation d'une cordée de services de défense

Le thème du rapport annuel de cet exercice fait état de l'élargissement de notre mandat en 2017-2018. De la naissance à l'âge de 21 ans, enfants, adolescents et jeunes adultes auront accès à nos services de défense des droits dans tout un éventail de services publics. Cet élargissement va nous donner l'occasion d'établir un réseau solidaire et coordonné de services pouvant soutenir les jeunes qui comptent sur ces services publics et les aider à se hisser hors de leur situation.



La protectrice des enfants,
Daphne Penrose

STATISTIQUES SUR LES SERVICES

Services de défense des droits

177 dossiers reportés de l'an dernier

2 581 dossiers ouverts

2 552 dossiers fermés

206 dossiers reportés à l'année prochaine

Services d'examen des enquêtes spéciales

38 examens reportés de l'an dernier

53 examens entamés

47 examens terminés

44 examens reportés à l'année prochaine

POINTS SAILLANTS DES ACTIVITÉS

- Afin d'améliorer l'accessibilité de nos services, nous avons conçu des plans cette année pour ouvrir un bureau satellite dans le nord du Manitoba. Le bureau devrait ouvrir ses portes au cours de l'exercice 2017-2018.
- Nous avons publié un certain nombre de rapports spéciaux à la lumière des nouvelles tendances que nous avons observées parmi les sujets d'inquiétude qui ont été portés à notre attention. L'un de ces rapports a examiné les questions liées aux expériences traumatisantes et à la résilience des enfants et des adolescents dans le système de protection de l'enfance. Il est intitulé : *Don't Call Me Resilient: What Loss & Grief Look Like for Children & Youth in Care*. Dans le cadre d'un autre rapport intitulé *On the Edge Between Two Worlds*, nous avons recueilli des informations auprès de dirigeants autochtones locaux pour savoir quels changements, au sein de nos systèmes publics, permettraient de mieux répondre aux besoins des jeunes. Nous avons également publié un rapport intitulé *So much left to do*, faisant état des progrès du gouvernement à l'égard des recommandations issues de l'enquête sur le décès de Phoenix Sinclair. Enfin, nous avons procédé à la troisième phase de notre travail de recherche sur le suicide des jeunes en nous associant à d'autres groupes pour produire des ressources fondées sur des données probantes en matière de santé mentale et de bien-être.
- Nous avons présenté 42 exposés d'éducation publique sur le travail de notre bureau à des groupes communautaires et organisations du Manitoba. Nous nous sommes notamment adressés aux participantes et participants du 8^e symposium biennal du Prairie Child Welfare Consortium, de la table ronde de l'Indigenous Youth Suicide Prevention Leadership et de la conférence du Manitoba Foster Family Network.
- Nous avons effectué 123 déplacements à l'extérieur de Winnipeg et dans toutes les régions de la province pour des raisons se rapportant à certains cas particuliers et pour veiller à ce que, partout au Manitoba, les enfants aient accès à des services de défense des droits. Nous nous sommes également rendus 10 fois à l'extérieur de la province pour présenter des communications à des conférences et pour participer à des réunions.

PLAN DE SERVICES :

Préparatifs en vue de notre nouveau mandat

La nouvelle *Loi sur le protecteur des enfants et des jeunes*, qui doit entrer en vigueur au cours de l'exercice 2017-2018, élargit et renforce considérablement le mandat de notre bureau. Enfants, adolescents et jeunes adultes pourront désormais nous faire part de leurs inquiétudes concernant les services de justice, d'éducation ou de santé mentale, les services aux personnes handicapées, les services de lutte contre la toxicomanie et les services d'aide aux victimes. Notre capacité à enquêter sur les décès d'enfants, d'adolescents et de jeunes adultes sera également renforcée, de même que notre capacité à formuler des recommandations officielles aux systèmes de services publics mentionnés ci-dessus. De plus, nous assumerons des responsabilités à la fois nouvelles et élargies dans les domaines de la recherche, de l'éducation publique, du suivi des recommandations et du signalement des cas de blessures graves.

Nous avons travaillé de façon acharnée en prévision de ces changements dans le cadre des activités suivantes :

- Nous avons formé des groupes de travail internes dans les nouvelles sphères de notre mandat. Ces groupes ont défini nos attributions élargies et consulté des spécialistes représentant les services publics touchés.
- Nous allons nous tourner vers les dirigeants autochtones de toute la province et les consulter dans le cadre de notre travail de transition.
- Nous rencontrons les intervenants du gouvernement fédéral étant donné que de nombreux enfants du Manitoba résident dans des collectivités où le gouvernement fédéral est chargé du financement ou de la prestation de services.

Kisipátáćimowin

Anihi OCA ékéćináhocik ókik otayamihiniyáw awásisak éko oskátisak óma ká oci pamihicik awasisak ká otinacik ta pétáćoninik

Ká wanastániwak ké isi mámawi ayamihistamáćániwak

Anima ké isi ánimóćikáték anohc kákípe askíwak kisipátáćimowin óma káwí naki isíćikániwaki kékwána awa 2017-2018 sóniyáw ká akimit askíy ati ispaniki. Awásisak, oskátisak éko anihi kákí kisi oski opikicik, ispík ká oci nitáhikicik inikok 21 ta tatwáćínécik, kitakí nátéwak anihi otayamihistamáćéwa ta oci wíćihicik óma nanátaw isi anihi paminikéwina. Óma ká isi nakisíćikáték ékota ká oci wíćihikonán óma ta mámawastáyak éko ta mámawatoskatamak anihi paminikéwina inikok ta mino wíćihicicik inikok ta minomacihocik anihi oskátisak anihi ká pakosénimocik ékoté ta itotécik kisáspin nántaw isi wíćihitowin paminikéwina natawénitamwak.



Awásisa Ká
Ayamihistamawát
Daphne Penrose
MSW, RSW

TÁNIKOK KÁKÍ PAMINICIK

Ayamihistamáćéwin Paminikéwina

177 mámaw kákí níćánastániwaki
nóćitaniwak óma kákípe askíwak

2581 oski ayamihistamáćéwina
kí máćitániwana

2552 ayamahistamáćéwina
kí póni nóćitániwana

206 ayamihistamáćéwina
pátimá kítwán ati askíwaki
ta nóćitániwana

Kici natoni kiskénitamowina kákí kítwámi kinawáćikátéki paminikéwina

38 kítwám ká kinawáćikátéki mámaw
kákí níćánastániwaki ta nóćitániwaki
óma kakípe askíwak

53 kítwám ká kinawáćikátéki
kí máćitániwana

47 kítwám ká kinawáćikátéki
kí kísitániwana

44 kítwám ká kinawáćikátéki mámaw
kí níćánastániwana kítwám ati
askíwaki ta nóćitániwana

KICI KÉKWÁNA KÁKÍPÉ NÓCITÁNIWAKI

- Inikok ta nahisítániwak ta isi wéci kaskitáyan ta ápacitáyan óki nanátok pamikéwina, ki wanastánan wanénitamowina anohc ká askíwak ta takok nété anihi ká nókopaniki cakástécikana éko kí masinahikéwina óté kíwétinok Manitoba. Anima atoskékamikos iténitamwak ta páskiténikáték awa sóniyáw ká mátakimit 2017-2018 askiy písím.
- Ki pakitinénán nanátok kici kisipátácimona kákí ki miskamák éwápatamák óki ká má mikoskáténitamihikocik ká ati nókoki. Péyak anima kisipátácimowin ekí kinawápacikátéki anihi kékwán ká isi wanénitamihikocik éko ká oci maskawísíwénimocik ókik awásisak éko oskátisak ká kinawénimicocik anihi awásisa ká otinácik wíwawáw ta pamiyácik: *Don't Call Me Resilient: What Loss & Grief Lók Like for Children and Youth in Care*. Éko mina kotak kisipátácimowiw, *On the Edge Betwén Two Worlds*, kí máwasakonénán kiskénitamowina kayitáyásak ité ká isi wá wíciwékí ekí natotawáyákok tánisi kékí isi mwéskwatástániwaki anihi mwékwác ká isi paminicik ókik awásisak, oskátisak ká otinicik ta kinawéwimicik wina inikok ta nisitotakik éspanihikocik éko táki mino wícihikocik anima ká isi natawénitakik ta paminicik. Nístanán mina kí pakitinénán péyak kisipátácimowin masinahikan, *So Much Left to Do*, ékota masinahikátéwa awa kici okimáwin wanasowéwin tánikok ásay ésko paminak anihi píkwiskwéstamákéwin anima oci Phoenix Sinclair Inquiry. Éko iskawác, óma nitataskéwinán mítoni misiwé natonikéwina kákí nanatonikátéki tá kiskénitániwak óma ká ná nisiwanácihisocik oskátisak é ati nakisíhitániwak isi wíciwékíwina inikok kákí máci wíciwékémáyákok ókik kotakak ká paminácik anihi kákí otinimit táti wanas-táyák épayiténákoki kiskénitamowin mamitonénicikan mino yawina éko mino ayáwin ité kékí takoki ta náticik ta wícihiwécik anihi oci paminikéwina.
- Kí itotánán 42 (Néyomitanow Nísosáp) ité ká mawacikik kiskinawamakéwina ka nócitácik óma oci nitataskéwinan anté oci anima nitataskéwikamikónánis é natawi wapatináyákok ókik itáwina ká paminakik ta wícihiwécik mino ayáwin oci óta Manitoba. Ékoté ókik óma kákí natawi wápatinikéyák étataskéyák, anté Prairie Child Welfare Consortium 8th Biennial The Indigenous Youth Suicide Prevention Leadership Round Table éko anima Manitoba Foster Family Network Conference.
- Óma óté kí yá itotánán 123 itwá óki itáwina wanawítimáyik ká kistapinániwaki óta oci kici óténák Winnipeg éko óté itéké píci tipáskánik anihi oci kékwána ká oci kinawénimicik ókik éko mina ta kécináhonániwak ókik kakinaw ókik awásisak óta Manitoba ta takoninik ité ké natawéwitakik ta wícihikocik anihi itowa awásis paminikéwina. Éko mina óté aniki kotaka píci tipáskánik ká isi tipénitakik kí itotánán 10 (Mitátat) itwa máwaw ekí natawi wítamák kékwán oci ká itataskéyák éko ekí natawi natotamák ka máwawapinániwak.

PAMINIKÉWIN WANÉNITAMOWIN:

ká wanénístamák óma káwí mwéskwaciy isi itataskátamák kékwána.

Anima oski kici wanasowéwi masinahikan “Advocate for Children and Youth Act” ispi ká máci ápataki wanasowéwina oci 2017-2018 askiy, mistahi kékwána éko kékí isi paminamák nawac éko nisóikápawisténán kékí isi natawénitámak ta mino wíciwékíwák anikik awásisak. Awásisak oskátisak éko anihi ká ati kisi opikicik kitakí pé nátikonánik éko tapé wítamákow-ákok óma kékwána ká kinamáciskákocik ókik oci ká misihónániwak wanasowéwina, kiskinawámákéwin, mino mamitonénitamowin, máskisiwín, mácip-ikoskákowina ká náspici maciskákoyan wéká ekik ká kitimahicik wíkiwák ká isi paminikátéki. Óma ké isko kaskitáyák ta natonámák ta kiskénitamák kékwán wéci ná nipicik ókik awásisak, oskátisak éko anihi ká ati kisi opikicik táti miscétinwa ta isi itócikániwaki éko mina ta píkwiskwéstamákéyák anihi oci kakinaw paminikéwina. Éko mina, nika ayánán oski itataskéwina éko awasimé níwíwawisténan anihi nanátok itowa itataskéwina tápiskóc ká natonikátéki kiskénitamowina, kiskinawámákéwina tánté ési nóciwékíwák anihi píkwiskwéstamákéwina éko ká átotakik óma ispi awiyak nántaw ekí isi wíwakáspinatit.

Soki kí atoskáténán óma é manístamak óki káwí má mwéskwaciy itócikániwaki éko káwí nócitániwaki:

- Kí mácitánán óta ta tasi mamawataskátamák anihi oski itataskéwin kákí masinahikátéki ta isi paminikátéki. Ékwanik ókik ká máwawataskátakik kí ati wítamwak óma tánisi káwí itataskéyák éko kékwána ké níwawistamák, éko ta nátáyákok ta wítapimáyákok ókik ká nakacitácik ési paminikátéki anihi ká wíciwékémaki paminikéwina kákí nántaw isi pakamiskákoki.
- Nikakí natánánik éko kí kakwécimánánik Anis-inápéwak ká níkanakisocik óta misiwé píci tipáskánik óma isi oci káti itataskátamák kékwána éko.
- Niwítapimánánik mina kici okimáwin otataskénákanak inikok ké tasicik ókik awásisak óta Manitoba ká wíciwékíwák ité awa Kici Okimáwin ká kanawénitak ké isi tipahikátéki kékwána wéká ta paminak anihi ká natawénitakóki paminikéwina.

Niigaaniig Wiindamaagewin

Ingi OCA gaa-inindwaa izhichigewag gakina abinoojiiyag zhigwa oshki-ayaansag gaa-bimenimindwaa ji-noondawindwaa.

DINOOKAAN ZAGAKIBII'IGEWIN:

Giigidootamaagewin Maagoniganing

Noongom gaa-akiiwang, ninzagakibii'igewinaan ji-dazhindeg waa-izhichigeyaang 2017-2018 ekiiwang. Abinoojiiyag, oshki-ayaag gaye minik 21 ji-daso-biboonewaad, ninga-giigidootamawaawag ezhigaabawiyaang. Owe ge-ani-aanjichigeyaang niwii-dazhiikaamin aaniin ge-izhi-wiijiyangidwaaban oshki-ayaag gaa-naagjiyangwaa ji-wiijiyangidwaa.



Naagajiwindwaa
Abinoojiiyag
Daphne Penrose
MSW, RSW

ZAGAKIBII'IGEWIN

Wiiji'iwewin

177 naagajitamaang ningowaki
odaanaang onji

2,581 oshki-wiijiwindwaa

2,552 gii-booni-wiijiwindwaa

206 ningowaki niigaan
ge-wiijiwindwaa

Andooshkigewinan ezhichigeng

38 giitwaam ningowaki
gaa-gii-waabanjigaadegin

53 Oshki-waabanjiganan

47 giizhibii'igaadegin

44 Waabanjiganan ningowakii
niigaan achigaadegin

AYIZHICHIGEWINAN

- Nawach ji-wenjiseg niwiji'iwewinaan, ningii-izhichigemin ji-baakinamaang ozhibii'igewigamig giiwedonong omaa Manitoba. Da-baakisin ningoji ziigwang 2017 akoo 2018 ge-akiiwang.
- Ningii-miigiwemin gii-ozhibii'amaang mazina'igan wegonenan enendamaang ji-ganawaaban-jigaadegin. Bezhig ozhibii'igan aaniin ayizhi-webiziwaad abinoojiiyag zhidwa oshki-ayaansag gaa-gii-odaapinindwaa ji-naagajiwindwaa. *Don't Call Me Resilient: What Loss & Grief Look like for Children and Youth in Care* izhinikaade ozhibii'igan. Bezhig miinawaa *On the Edge Between Two Worlds* izhinikaade, ningii-ozhibii'aamin aaniin ekidowaad gaa-niigaaniwaad Anishinaabeg aaniin nawach ge-izhi-minosegin wiijiwindwaa ingi gaa-ganawenimindwaa. Ningii-miigiwemin ozhibii'igan, *So Much Left to Do*, izhisin wiindamaageng aaniin ogimaawin endoodamowaad aaniin ji-izhichigeng imaa Phoenix Sinclair gaa-gii-izhised. Ishkwaach idash, ningii-anokaadaamin aaniin ezhiseg iwe oshki-ayaag wenji-nisidizowaad, ningii-wiidanokiimaanaanig bakaan awiyag ji-zagakibii'igaadeg odinendamowiniwaan zhidwa ini gegoon eyaamagakin gaa-wiji'iwemagakin.
- 42 (niimidana-ashi-niizh) ningii-gaganoonaanaanig awiyag bebakaan awiyag odayaawiniwaang omaa Manitoba aaniin ayinanokiyaang. Daabishkoo ini Prairie Child Welfare Consortium 8th Biennial Symposium, The Indigenous Youth Suicide Prevention Leadership Round Table, zhidwa Manitoba Foster Family Network Conference gaa-ijigaadeg gii-onjiwag gaa-gii-bi-gaagiigidowaad.
- 123 dasing ningii-ayizhaamin agwajaya'ii Winnipeg miziwekaming omaa Manitoba, ji-gechinaawiyang abinoojiiyag ji-ayaawaad ji-giigidootamawindwaaban. Agwajaya'ii gaye Manitoba ningii-izhaamin 10 (midaaching) dasing ji-anda-gaagiigidoyaaang maama'oobing, zagaswe'iding gaye.

EZHI-WIJI'IWENG:

Onashowaad-amaang nindooshki-izhichigewinaan

Oshki-giigidootamaagewin Children and Youth Act onaakonigewin da-maajise 2017 akoo 2018 ge-akiiwang, nawach da-wiji'iwemagad wiji'iweyaang omaa nindanokiwaang. Mii zhidwa abinoojiiyag zhidwa oshki-ayaag da-odisigonaanig giishin gegoon noonde-gikendamowaad onashowewining, gikina'amaagewining, inendamowining, maakiziwin, adisigoowin gemaa wiijiwindwaa awiyag. Awashime ji-andooshkamaang abinoojiiyag zhidwa oshki-ayaansag gaa-nibowaad. Zhidwa miinawaa awashime ninga-gashkitoomin ji-andooshkigeyaang, ji-gikina'amaageyaang, zagakibii'amaang aaniin ekidong ji-doodamaang, dago maakaapingewinan wiindamaageng.

Enigok ningii-noojitoomin ono ji-meshkwajichigaadegin daabishkoo ono izhichigewinan.

- Ningii-onasaanaanig awiyag ji-anokaadomowaad ono oshki-izhichigewinan. Wiinawaa ingi odoonatoonaawaan aaniin ji-izhichigeng, wiidanokiimaawaa'awiya' gaye gaa-niigaaniid bebakaan wiji'iwewinan ge-wiijichigemaawaad.
- Ninga-gaganoonaanaanig gaa-niigaaniwaad Anishinaabeg misiwe Manitoba ani-onatoowaang ge-izhichigeyaang.
- Niwii-nagishkawaanaanig gaye gaa-niigaanabiwaad gichi-ogimaakaanag gaa-naagaji'aawaad, gaabimenimaawaad gaye gakina abinoojiiya' omaa Manitoba.

Tahkwaacimoowin

OCA otanohkaataan kehcinaac cinoontawiminc apinoonciishishan miina awaashishan kaa kanawenimiminc.

Oshihcikaatek Minsiwe Kanoocikewin

Tashincikaate noonkom taso ahki tipaacimoowinink kaakii nankinikaatek kitanohkiiwininaan shooniyaa wahki 2017-2018. Apinoonciishish, awaashish miina Oshkaatis, kaa nihtaa wikic minikohk kaa niishitana peshik ahkiiwinec, okakii aapacihton ninka nocikewininaan miina kotakiin wiicihi wewinan. Ohowe kaa nankicikaatek mishtahi paahpahkaan wiicihiwewinan ta aapatanoon ci ompininc miina ci wii cihinc oshkaatis wiicihiwewinan kaa aapacitooc.



Apinoonciishishan kaa kanoocikehtamawaac
Daphne Penrose,
MSW, RSW

WIICHIWEWIN EYAAKIN

Kanoociketamaake Wiicihiwewinan

177 otaanaank ahki kaa
ontaanoohaatekin

2,581 kiyaapi anohaatewan

2,552 kii kiishihcikaatewan

206 niikaan keni ahkiiwahk
keni anohaatekin

Wiicihiwewinan kaa naanaakata Wencikaatekin

38 kiyaapic otaanaank ahkiink
kaa win tanohaatekin

53 naanaakatawencikewinan
pahkinikaatewan

47 kiishihcikaatewan

44 niikaan ahkiink tani
anohaatewan

KAAKII AYISHIHCIKAANIWANK

- Ciwentahk ciwintinikaatek niwiicihiwe wininaan ninkii pahkinaamin wiicihiwe wikamik weti kiiwetinoonk Manitoba. Ta pahkinikaate tash 2017-2018 shooni yaa wahkiiwahk.
- Ninkii pakitinaamin tipaacimoowinan ewiintamaank kaakii inaapishiniyaank kaani ishisekin keכוןan. Peshik acimoowin ninkii naanaakatawentaamin okici macisewiniwaa miina kaashi shiipiskaatisic awaashish kaye Oshkaa tis kaa kanawenimaakaniwic: Kaawin Shiipishkaatisi inishin: An eshi naa kwahk wanihcikewin miina mawiwın apinoonciishish miina Oshkaatis kaa kanaweniminc. Miina kotak aacimoo win, Kishipiyaahiink Nahsaw Niishin Ahkiin, ninkii ontinaamin kikentamaa win Anishininiikaank aaniin keshi awashime mino wiicihinc Oshkaatis. Kaye ninkii pakitinaamin aacimoowin, Kiyaapi Mishtahi Anohkiiwin Ayaa, eni wiintamaank okimaa enanohkaatanh ihkitoowinan kaakii oncisekin Phoenix Sinclair Naanaakatawencikewin. Ekwa ishkwaaayaac, mishtahi ni nanaantonaa min aaniinihi kaawinci naanisisowaac Oshkaatisak aasha nisin ninkiishito min ekii wiitanohkii mankitwaa kotaki yak ewishitooyank kaa kihkencikaate kin emino shkaakemakahkin mamito nencikanink miina kotakiyan wiicihiwewinan.

KAAWII ISHI WIICHIWENAANIWANK:

Ewa weshiikan- tamaank nintooshkanohkii wininaan.

Toshki Apinoonciishish miina Oshkaa tis Okanoociketamaake Onaahkonike win, cimaacisek 2017-2018 shoonyaa wahkiink, mishtahi otoonci mankanash kinaan miina omashkawitooon nintanoh kiiwininaan. Apinoonciishish, Oshkaa tis miina Oshkiniikiwak ekwa ninkakii pinaasikaakoomin onci Onaahkonike win, kihkinwahamaakewin, Maamito nencikan, Maakiyayaawin, minikwe/ma shkikiike waapinewinan, naanta kaa miikaaninc wiicihiwewinan. Tanankici kaate kaye cinaanaakacihtooyaaank kaa nipoc Apinoociishish, Oshkaatis miina Oshkiniikiwak, kaye cikanootamaank piko keכון naanta kaa ishisenik owii cihiwewiniwaa. Kaye, tanankicikaate ni tanohkiiwininaan Nanaanta kikencike winink, Kihinwahamaakewinink, cikana wencikaatekin ihkitoowinan, miina awi ya kaa kihciinaapananinc aacimoowin.

Ninkihci anohkiimin ewaweshiikanta maank aantahcikewin ohowe ekii tootamaank:

- Ninkii kihkinwahamawaamin nintano kiiminaanak ohowe oshki anohkiiwin. Mii wahaweniwak kaa nisitotamooniwe waac kaa ishi nankicikaatek miina ke ishi papaamisiikantamahk, miina ciwii tanohkiimintwaa okikentamaak kaa wii tanohkiimaawaac wiicihiwewinini kaa pimowitooonci.
- Niwii nakishkawaamin kici okimaa ohowenini kaa pimowitoooc, ihimaa mishiin Manitoba Apinoonciishishak kaashi kapeshiwaac kici okimaa kaa pimowitoooc owiicihikoowininiin.

Farewell to Children's Advocate Darlene MacDonald



The entire OCA team would like to thank Darlene MacDonald for her leadership during her two terms as Manitoba's children's advocate. During her tenure, Darlene worked to ensure that our office was accessible and accountable to the children and youth we serve.

Collaboration was the cornerstone of her leadership. Darlene was always striving to make sure we sought out and considered the voices of young people and those who support them. She was a firm champion of a community approach to advocacy, believing that the responsibility for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of Manitoba's children and youth goes beyond the child welfare system. Every one of us has an important role to play.

Throughout her leadership, Darlene understood that the foundation of our mandate is that children and youth are entitled to special support and assistance. One of her goals was to raise awareness of Canada's commitment to the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*. The increased rate of children and youth contacting our office directly for advocacy services over the past several years is a testament to her efforts.

Over Darlene's six years as children's advocate, she persistently pushed the government to pass stronger legislation governing the OCA. Stronger legislation would enable more children and youth to access our services and would allow the OCA to become a truly independent body. Both goals came to pass in her final year in office. Thanks to Darlene's commitment on this issue, Manitoba's children and youth will have a stronger voice.



Overview of Initiatives and Activities

NEW LEGISLATION INTRODUCED TO EXPAND OUR MANDATE

Having urged government action since 2012, our office was pleased to finally see legislation introduced to broaden and strengthen the mandate of our office. *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act* also addresses several of the recommendations Commissioner Ted Hughes made in his 2014 inquiry report into the death of Phoenix Sinclair. The bill, which will come into force in the next few months, will empower the advocate by:

- expanding our mandate beyond the CFS system to help other children, youth, and young adults. The expansion will include children and youth who are receiving or eligible to receive a wide range of publicly funded services such as child welfare, adoption, disability, mental health, addictions, victim support, and youth justice services, as well as individual education plans.
- strengthening our public reporting abilities, which includes special reports that analyze services with the aim to increase transparency and improve the effectiveness and responsiveness of services. These special reports, as well as newly required goal-focused service plans and annual reports, will be released to the public, subject to certain limits on the disclosure of personal information.
- expanding our current role to reviewing and investigating deaths and serious injuries of children involved in the child welfare, mental health, addictions, and justice systems, as well as young adults ages 18 to 21 who required CFS or disability services to help them transition to adulthood.

Northern Office

As outlined in the travel section of this report, the vast geographic distances between population centres in our province present challenges to ensuring that all children and youth have access to our advocacy services. To improve accessibility, we developed plans this year to open a satellite location in northern Manitoba. The office is set to open in the 2017-2018 fiscal year.

Systemic Advocacy Study

The OCA participated in a University of Victoria School of Public Administration study conducted by a PhD candidate. The study compared systemic advocacy mandates and functions among Canada's eleven independent provincial/territorial child and youth advocates.

The Protecting Children (Information Sharing) Act

In response to an invitation by Manitoba's Minister of Families, our office reviewed and provided feedback on the proposed *Protecting Children (Information Sharing) Act*. The legislation allows for increased information sharing between organizations that provide services to children and youth at risk when sharing information would be in the best interests of children and youth.

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

The Manitoba government passed an order in council that provided the federally appointed commissioners of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls authority to examine work and analysis already completed in Manitoba. We were pleased to see that the materials made available by this order in council included six reports completed by the OCA.

Changing the Language of Suicide

The language we use to talk about suicide can shape how we view the issue and affect those traumatized by losing a loved one in this way. In an article published in the *Winnipeg Free Press*, the children's advocate made a case for moving away from phrases such as "committed suicide," "successful suicide," or "failed suicide attempt."

These phrases convey a sense of blame and judgement. Instead, the advocate promoted a fact-based, neutral approach to language about suicide. Against the backdrop of phase two of our multi-year youth suicide research study, the advocate called for language that is more neutral such as "died by suicide," "death by suicide," or "suicide attempt."

Other efforts our office made to promote thoughtful language around suicide included the production of the video *The Language of Suicide*, which can be viewed on the OCA's YouTube channel in four languages (English, Ojibwe, Oji-Cree, and Cree). Visit tinyurl.com/OCAdvocate to watch them.

Voices of Thunder

As part of our office's ongoing suicide research and prevention efforts, we teamed up with the creative duo Voices of Thunder (Mary Black and Gabriel Guiboche) and Broadway Neighbourhood Centre's Just TV program to create a video. The story is about one person's journey, using the power of his creative spirit, to move from addiction, trauma, and loss to healing, empowerment, and love. The video is on our YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/XOrtOUpsTPk>.

Art for Social Justice

Our office accepted an invitation from The University of Winnipeg Collegiate to display art in our storefront window that students had created as part of their studies. The project asked students to create artworks that answered the question: "What is Canada's greatest challenge or opportunity facing your generation?"



SPECIAL REPORTS

On the Edge Between Two Worlds

We invited eleven local Indigenous leaders to tell us, in their words, what needs to happen in our public systems to better meet the needs of all youth, but especially the needs of Indigenous girls. They shared stories, advice, and wisdom with our office on how to better respond to the needs of young Indigenous girls. Based on those narratives, we made four key recommendations to the government of Manitoba in a report entitled *On the Edge Between Two Worlds: Community Narratives on the Vulnerability of Marginalized Indigenous Girls*. Find the report online at tinyurl.com/MBAdvocateEdge. You can also find a video of the report's release event at Circle of Life Thunderbird House on our YouTube channel at <https://youtu.be/CsiuhzmGZLo>.

The Changing Face of Youth Suicide — Phase Three

Our phase three activities for our multi-phase youth suicide research study began during this year and are ongoing. This third phase turned to analyzing the collected data in the first two phases as part of developing evidence-informed resources for youth.

In phase one of the study (released in 2015), we completed a detailed examination of the histories of the 50 youth who died by suicide in Manitoba between 2009 and 2013. In phase two, we examined the child welfare histories of 100 randomly selected Manitoba youth during the same period as a comparison control group. You can find reports on these studies on our website in the resources section under "Special Reports."

One of the key findings from this study has been that youth at the highest risk for suicide often struggle with attending school consistently, and their attendance tends to drop off after age 12. Because we rely on school systems to deliver the bulk of suicide prevention information to youth, those who might have the biggest need for this information may not be receiving it. Supports for children ages 8-12 are scarce.

In phase three of our research study, we have partnered with the Canadian Mental Health Association to develop a resource for the gap in prevention services for middle-school-aged children. Thrival Kits™ are personal-sized or

classroom-sized containers that include items designed to encourage the individual or group to identify and describe their skills and strengths. Working from an understanding that an ability to articulate self-identity and describe where supports exist improve mental health literacy and are protective factors against suicide, Thrival Kits™ use creativity, reflection, and interpersonal skill development workshops to help youth understand who they are and what makes them unique and special. These kits are being pilot tested in a small number of grades 4-6 classes in the 2017-2018 school year. We intend to offer them more widely throughout Manitoba in the 2018-2019 school year.

Don't Call Me Resilient: What Loss & Grief Look Like for Children and Youth in Care

Abuse, neglect, witnessing domestic violence, living with caregivers who are struggling with addiction—these are events that can be traumatic for children and can bring their families to the attention of the child welfare system. If the situation at home becomes a safety risk, children may be taken into protective care, which can trigger the additional trauma of being separated from parents, siblings, community, and a familiar routine. Against the backdrop of stories from current and former youth in care, this report looks at emerging research on issues of trauma and resilience as well as information on ways to address trauma, including customary care, family group conferencing, life books, and other meaningful planning methods. Find the report online at tinyurl.com/MBAdvocateResilient.

So Much Left to Do: Status Report on the 62 Recommendations from the Phoenix Sinclair Inquiry

As of November 2016, nearly three years after the provincial government received the final report of the Phoenix Sinclair Inquiry, only 29% of the recommendations were complete. This report identified the recommendations that had activities underway, the ones that were not progressing, and those the government considered completed. Find the report online at tinyurl.com/MBAdvocatePhoenix

PRESENTATIONS, CONFERENCES, AND PANELS

We made 42 public education presentations on the work of our office to community groups and organizations in Manitoba this year. If your group would like a presentation, please call us at (204) 988-7440 or toll-free at 1-800-263-7146.

Awasis Agency of Northern Manitoba Conference

We were invited to participate as a facilitator at the Awasis Agency of Northern Manitoba staff conference to discuss topics related to the role of the OCA and its relationship with the CFS agency.



Also at this symposium, we co-hosted one of the session's youth panels where we interviewed participants and released three digital stories that youth created at a summer storytelling camp we hosted at Broadway Neighbourhood Centre's Just TV. You can watch these videos on the OCA YouTube channel tinyurl.com/OCAdvocate.

Indigenous Youth Suicide Prevention Leadership Roundtable

Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre and the Canadian Mental Health Association sponsored this roundtable on World Suicide Prevention Day. We attended to share some of the findings from phases one and two of our research project *The Changing Face of Youth Suicide in Manitoba and the Narrow Window for Intervention*.



National Indigenous Social Work Conference



We were honoured to be accepted to deliver a presentation on our special report *On the Edge Between Two Worlds: Community Narratives on the Vulnerability of Marginalized Indigenous Girls*.

Prairie Child Welfare Consortium 8th Biennial Symposium

Representatives from our office participated in this symposium held in Winnipeg. The deputy children's advocate was part of a panel discussion entitled *Moving Toward Reconciliation in Child Welfare*. We also presented a synopsis of our report, *On the Edge Between Two Worlds: Community Narratives on the Vulnerability of Marginalized Indigenous Girls*, and spoke about community and government reaction to the report since its release.

Manitoba Foster Family Network Conference

At the invitation of the Manitoba Foster Family Network (MFFN), we helped facilitate discussions with foster parents around the province on cross-cultural placements and cultural safety (actions that recognize, respect, and nurture cultural identity). We asked foster parents to add their thoughts and experiences regarding the questions we posed in our special report about services for Indigenous girls. We plan to visit more locations throughout the province as part of this collaboration on a different topic later in 2017 and 2018.

TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As part of our commitment to continuous improvement, members of our staff attended the following training and professional development opportunities:

Child Welfare, Adolescents and the Youth Justice System: Failing to Respond Effectively to 'Crossover Youth' — webinar led by Nicholas Bala and Sheena Scott

International Summer Course on the Rights of the Child at the Université de Moncton. The course focused on Article 19 of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*: The right to protection from all forms of violence, injury or abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, maltreatment or exploitation

'If I feel like this, how does the child feel?' Child Protection Workers, Supervision, Management and Organizational Response to Parental Violence — webinar led by Dr. Susan Hunt

Working with First Nations, Inuit and Metis: Spotlight on First Nations — webinar from the Mental Health Commission of Canada

Cultural Safety for Indigenous Peoples: A Determinant of Health — webinar from the National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health

Racism, Reconciliation, and Indigenous Cultural Safety — webinar featuring Senator Murray Sinclair, presented through San'yas Indigenous Cultural Safety Training

Childhood Trauma and Illicit Drug Use in Adolescence: A Population-Based National Comorbidity Survey Replication-Adolescent Supplement Study — webinar through PART (Practice and Research Together)

Youth Engagement — Shaking the Movers, New Brunswick — webinar through the Canadian Council of Child & Youth Advocates (CCCYA)

COMMITTEE PARTICIPATION

Participating on organizational and community committees allows our office to share its resources and expertise and remain in touch with issues and activities related to the welfare of children and youth. The following are the committees we have participated in over the year:

- Sexually Exploited Youth Community Coalition
- Children's Inquest Review Committee
- Health Sciences Centre-Child and Family Services working group
- Voices Youth in Care Advisory Council
- Youth Suicide Prevention Strategy Education Initiatives Task Team
- Youth Agencies Alliance
- Provincial Suicide Prevention Leadership Committee
- Canadian Council of Child & Youth Advocates National Workgroups:
 - Mental Health
 - Youth Engagement
 - Website
- Children and Youth with Complex Needs Committee
- Children's Coalition
- Children's Therapy Initiative

SERVICE PLAN:

Preparing for Our New Mandate

In addition to our ongoing workload under our existing mandate, our office has been working hard to prepare for the pending legislative changes as outlined on page five of this report.

To prepare for the changes, we have created internal workgroups in the areas of youth justice, disabilities, education, mental health, addictions, and victim support services.

These workgroups have been defining the scope and responsibilities under the new mandate. We have also been consulting with system experts and meeting with ministers, deputy ministers, assistant deputy ministers, and executives who represent the new areas of our responsibility.

Further, so that we can continue to offer advocacy supports throughout the province in these new areas of service, we will be reaching out to and meeting with Indigenous leadership as part of this transitional work.

We have also been developing relationships with federal government stakeholders because there are many children within Manitoba who live in communities where the federal government is responsible for delivering or funding services. We are committed to ensuring that all children and youth, regardless of where they live in the province, have their right to equal access to quality services protected.

While the legislation is anticipated to come into force over the next few months, these collaborations and relationships will continue to develop and evolve as we come to better understand the needs of children, youth, and young adults across the spectrum of public services.

Where We Travel and Why

Manitoba covers a vast region spanning 649,947 square kilometres, and in northern regions, population centres are spread out. For CFS agencies covering areas north of Winnipeg, geographic distances present service delivery challenges. As an office representing the rights of children and youth across Manitoba, we share this challenge. Ensuring that all of our advocacy and investigative services are provided throughout the province means an investment in staff time and travel.

This year, we travelled to every region of the province, making a total of 123 trips outside of Winnipeg. As you can see from the chart below, the purpose of our travel is most often case related.

Purpose of Travel	Number
Case-Related*	94
National Committee Meetings	5
CFS Agency/Authority Event	5
Community Outreach	1
Conference/Training**	7
Other Community Event	1
Presentation Request***	8
Quality Assurance	2
Grand Total	123

* Case-Related also includes trips that were multi-purpose, with case-related being a primary reason for travel

** Conference/Training (including two events where a community outreach OCA booth was also included)

*** Presentation Request (including one event that also included a CFS agency/authority event and youth engagement)

Where We Travelled

Region	Total Visits	%
Central	15	12%
Eastman	19	16%
Interlake	16	13%
Northern	19	16%
Out-of-Province	10	8%
Parkland	3	2%
Westman	41	33%
Grand Total	123	100%

*A significant portion of overall travel was to the Westman region due to a systemic file investigation that required multiple trips.

Communities Visited

Central Region

Alonsa
Carman
Gaa-ginooshkodeyaag (Long Plain First Nation)
Portage la Prairie
Rosenort

Eastman Region

Makadewaagamijiwanoonsing (Black River First Nation)
Pwerview–Pine Falls
Okwewanashko-ziibiing (Roseau River Anishinabe First Nation)
Zaagiing (Sagkeeng First Nation)
Ste. Anne
St-Pierre-Jolys
Steinbach

Interlake Region

Ashern
Baaskaandibewi-ziibiing (Brokenhead Ojibway First Nation)
Gimli
Oshki-ishkonigan (Peguis First Nation)
Selkirk
Stonewall

Northern Region

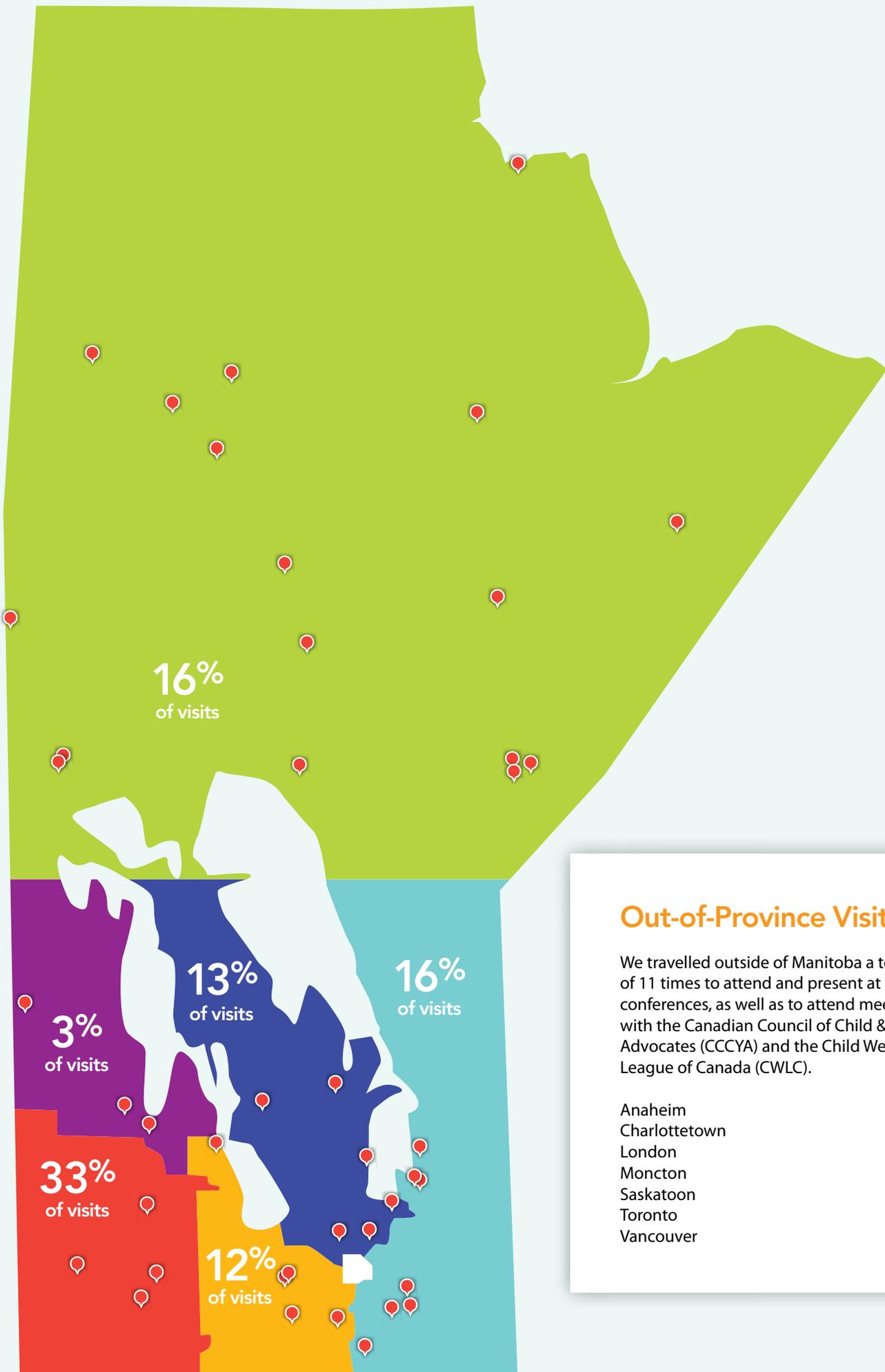
Bunibonibee Cree Nation (Oxford House)
Churchill
Pimicikamak (Cross Lake First Nation)
Flin Flon
Kistiganwacheeng (Garden Hill First Nation)
Leaf Rapids
Marcel Colomb First Nation (Lynn Lake)
Nisichawayasihk Cree Nation (Nelson House)
Kinosawi Sipi (Norway House Cree Nation)
Opaskwayak Cree Nation
O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation (South Indian Lake)
Kisematawa (Shamattawa First Nation)
Minithayinikam (St. Theresa Point First Nation)
Tataskweyak Cree Nation (Split Lake)
The Pas
Thompson
Waasikamaank (Wasagamack First Nation)

Parkland Region

Dauphin
Ochre River
Swan River

Westman Region

Brandon
Ditibineya-ziibiing (Rolling River First Nation)
Souris
Virden



Out-of-Province Visits

We travelled outside of Manitoba a total of 11 times to attend and present at conferences, as well as to attend meetings with the Canadian Council of Child & Youth Advocates (CCCYA) and the Child Welfare League of Canada (CWLC).

Anaheim
 Charlottetown
 London
 Moncton
 Saskatoon
 Toronto
 Vancouver

Quality Assurance Department

Our aim is to ensure that the services and activities of our office remain at a high standard and responsive to the needs of children and youth. The quality assurance department's primary objective is to look within our organization for areas of service enhancements.

Advocacy Services Program Review

In March, we completed phase two of our advocacy services program review. Whereas phase one gathered information to examine the historical development of the program and how we deliver these services, phase two looked more closely at the processes involved in advocacy work, service delivery, and the future direction of the program. The executive summary of both phases of the review are online at <https://tinyurl.com/MBAdvocateAdvocacy>

Review of Service Delivery Databases

We began this review in the 2016-2017 fiscal year, and it will continue into 2017-2018. The review will examine the information that both of our service programs collect via their respective databases. We will also assess our needs with respect to the broader and more complex mandate that will soon take effect. Through this examination, we will evaluate possible improvements to and efficiencies in the way we gather data to enhance our understanding of the systemic issues affecting children, youth, and families.

Review of Services

ADVOCACY SERVICES

We started the 2016-2017 year with 177 active cases in our child and youth advocacy services program. During the year, we opened an additional 2,581 cases. Throughout the year we resolved and closed 2,552 cases, which left 206 active cases at year-end that we carried into the 2017-2018 fiscal year.

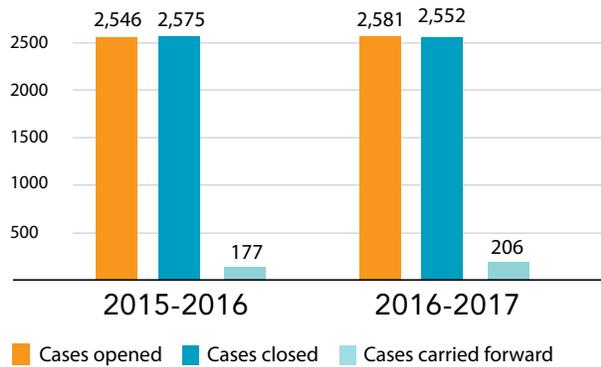
Advocacy services cover a wide range of activities that include the following:

- Reviewing child welfare involvement
- Establishing contact with the appropriate CFS agency
- Meeting with children and youth to help them express their views and understand the decisions being made by stakeholders in their care plan
- Attending meetings to provide direct advocacy support for a child or youth

More complex cases might include matters where the issues identified are multi-dimensional or involve a lack of community or family resources to meet the identified needs. We have been involved in cases where there are significant interpersonal or environmental breakdowns that require intervention by one or more service providers.

During the year, the total requests for service we receive is higher than the number of cases we open. Our office promotes self-advocacy and wherever possible provides tools and information to help individuals be confident self-advocates. When Manitobans contact us looking for help, and their query seems quickly resolvable, we provide the requested information and further follow-up may not be required. Calls to our office that are more complex or that may take additional time to address are opened as cases that require additional support. In 2016-2017, the 2,581 cases we opened emerged from 3,012 total requests for service.

Cases Opened

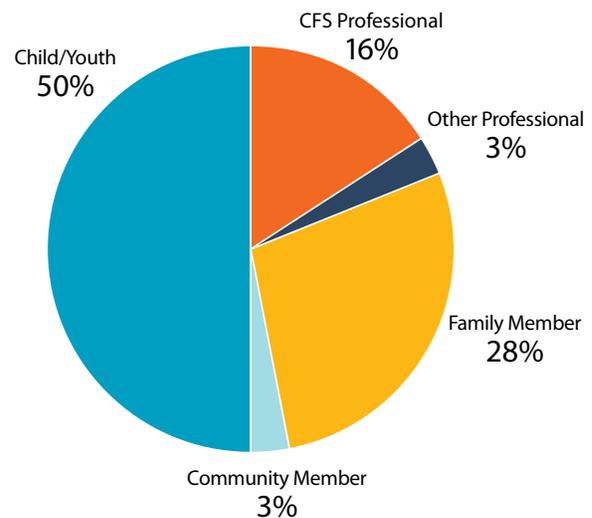


*Note: Not all requests for service result in a case opening.

A file opening does not represent the number of children served as part of that case or reflect its level of complexity. For example, when we have contact with a sibling group, we open just one file under the name of the oldest sibling, even though we may provide advocacy services to all of the children.

Who Contacted the OCA for Advocacy Services

Children and youth as well as their family members are the ones most likely to contact the OCA for services, as illustrated in the chart below. These statistics have remained relatively consistent compared with the last fiscal year. Of note is the continued increase in the number of children and youth contacting us. About 50% of our referrals today come directly from youth.



*Note: The family member category includes natural family, extended family, foster family, and legal guardians.

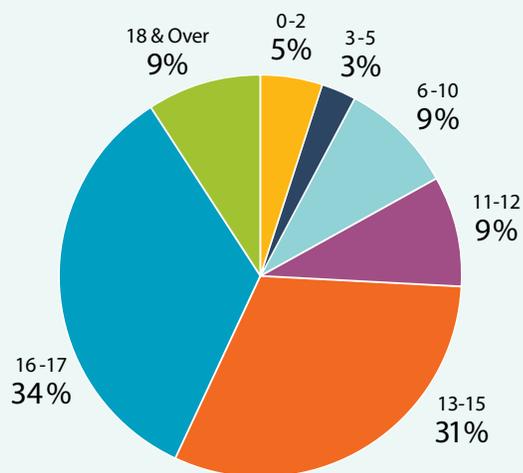
Mariah's Story

As an 18-year-old who was a permanent ward of a rural Manitoba CFS agency, Mariah was anxious about her future. She was unhappy living in her placement and was having a lot of conflict with peers in her home community. Mariah contacted our office upset that her guardian agency would not consider her request to move to Winnipeg. She wanted to remove herself from the conflict, finish high school, and pursue post-secondary education in the city. The agency wanted to maintain Mariah's connection with her family and denied her request to move.

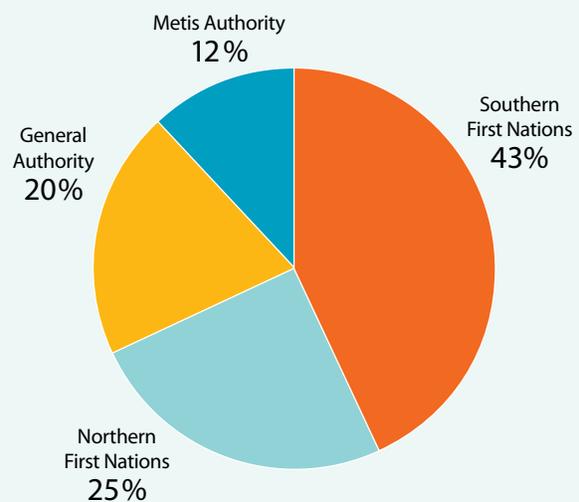
We worked with Mariah to explore a possible move to Winnipeg while encouraging the agency to consider her rationale for the request. We were able to provide information about available placement resources and community resources should a move to Winnipeg be possible. Eventually, the agency agreed to the move on a trial basis. Mariah worked very hard to make the move a success. She later re-accessed our services to advocate for an extension of her care. Mariah continues to do well in her post-secondary studies.

THE CHILDREN AND YOUTH WE SERVE

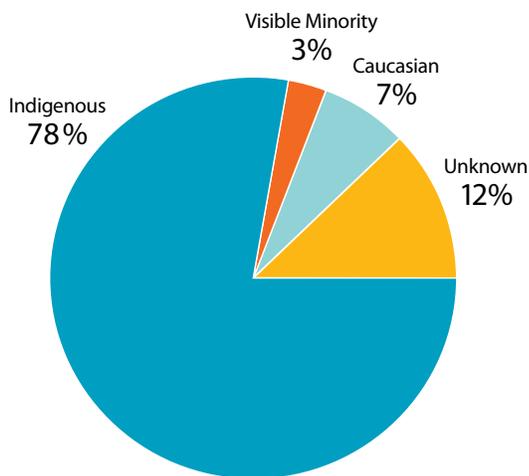
Age of Child or Youth



Responsible CFS Authority



Racial Background

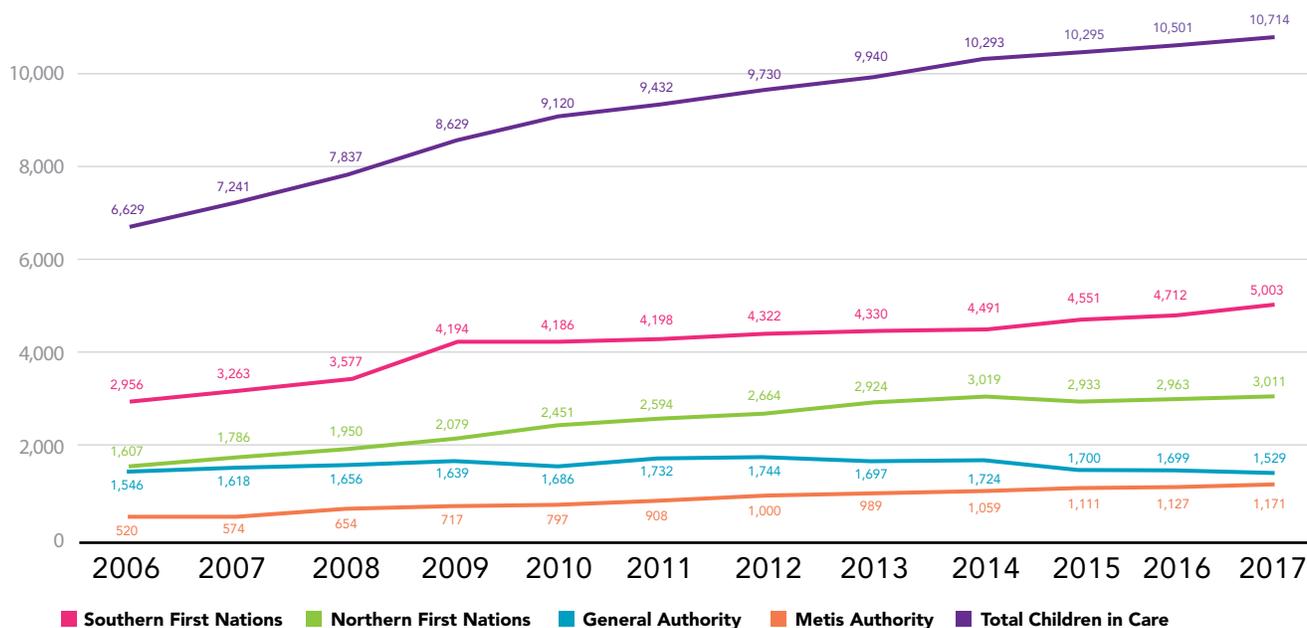


The Roots of Overrepresentation

With the 2015 release of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s final report, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future*, many Canadians began to understand the tragic legacy of the government’s policies designed to eradicate Indigenous knowledges and ways of life. These policies included the residential school system. Children were forcibly separated from their families and communities, and suffered cultural degradation and physical and sexual abuse. As the commission’s report detailed, Indigenous peoples have experienced deep-rooted trauma over multiple generations as a result. First Nations and Metis families experience higher rates of suicide, family violence, substance abuse, mental health issues, and parenting challenges.

In Manitoba, Indigenous children comprise approximately 26% of the child population but represent nearly 90% of children in care. We see a correspondingly high number of Indigenous children and youth reflected in our service statistics.

Children and Youth in Care



Data are from the Manitoba Department of Families



Felicity's Story

At 11 years old, Felicity had spent most of her life in care. At age 10, her northern Manitoba CFS agency moved her to a group home in Winnipeg. The OCA became involved after concerns emerged about a lack of contact from Felicity's social worker, a lack of case planning, limited family visits, and delays in access to therapy. Our office had ongoing involvement with the agency to resolve these concerns. Despite these gaps in service, Felicity was doing well in her group home.

Felicity's mother, who lived in another province, was working on addressing the issues that led to the placement of her children in care. She was making progress, and case planning turned to a possible reunification between Felicity and her mother in her mother's home province. A specialized residential facility was located in that province to assist with Felicity's transition to her mom's care.

Prior to the move date, Felicity would celebrate her 12th birthday. Unfortunately, the group home she was living in was licensed only for children ages 6-12. Felicity was informed she would have to leave her supports at the group home for an interim placement during this critical time. She was very close to her care team and was distressed about having to leave with only two months remaining until her move out of province. Our office advocated on Felicity's behalf. We recommended that the group home apply for a variance of their Conditions of Use License from the City of Winnipeg and urged the Child and Family Services Division to vary the license under the Residential Child Care Facilities Licensing Regulations. Both variances were successful, and Felicity was able to stay in her group home until she moved out of Manitoba.

Top CFS-Related Concerns by Category

Each advocacy case may include multiple concerns. Case planning, quality of care, and the issue of child rights have dominated the top issues we have seen over the past several years.

Top Concerns	Percentage
Case planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of case planning • Lack of permanency planning • Lack of planning for family • Poor reunification planning • Change of worker • Lack of child participation • Lack of parental/family participation • Lack of service standards • Lack of appropriate protection planning • Disagreement with/refusal of CFS services 	37%
Quality of care (applies to children in care only): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of health care • Lack of education programming • Lack of privacy • Lack of clothing • Lack of food • Lack of recreation • Lack of access to cultural traditions • Lack of mental health intervention/treatment • Inappropriate use of intrusive measures • Inappropriate discipline • Lack of appropriate care resources • Too many placement moves • Unapproved absence of child • Lack of access to/visitation with child in care • No contact with peers 	24%
Rights (e.g., provision, prevention, protection, participation): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority determination protocol • Lack of information • Lack of participation • Lack of consideration • Lack of knowledge of advocacy • Lack of legal advocacy 	12%
Responsiveness/timeliness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Authority determination protocol • CFS unresponsive • CFS over-responsive • Administrative delays • Service delays 	10%
Accessibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of information • Refusal of services • Ineligibility • Lack of service/resource • Resource limitation 	5%
Transition planning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of transition planning • Ineligible for adult services • Ineligible for employment and income assistance • Lack of concrete resources • Lack of support services 	4%
Child maltreatment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suspected child abuse of child in care • Suspected child abuse of child not in care • Suspected child neglect of child in care • Suspected child neglect of child not in care 	3%
Special/complex needs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of diagnostic assessment • Lack of resources • Poor coordination • Funding issues • Jurisdictional issues 	2%
Accountability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate review process • Fear of retribution • Worker conduct 	2%
Abuse Investigations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response • Time frame • Resolution 	1%
Total	100%

*Numbers may not total 100% due to rounding to the closest whole number.

SPECIAL INVESTIGATIONS REVIEW

The special investigations review program began the fiscal year in April 2016 with a total of 38* outstanding reviews. We were notified of 148 Manitoba child deaths that occurred during the 2016-2017 fiscal year. Of those 148 reported deaths, 53 met the criteria for review. We completed 47 special investigation reviews, and had 44 to carry over to 2017-2018.

**Our 2015-2016 annual report indicated 37 cases carried forward to 2016-2017. Due to a late child death notification from that year, the number was actually 38.*

Child Deaths in Manitoba

The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner (OCME) determines the manner of death of each child according to an established protocol. Our reporting on manner of death is unofficial and may differ slightly from the OCME's final determination. The official manner of death is not always available when we receive the notification of a child's death.

Child deaths that meet the legislative criteria for special investigation reviews include those where the child or the child's family had an open file with a child welfare agency at the time of the death, or where the child or the child's family had received child welfare services in the year preceding the child's death.

Manner of Child Deaths in Manitoba 2016-2017

Manner of death	Manitoba Deaths		Reviewable Deaths		Child in Care Deaths	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Natural	84	57%	24	45%	4	31%
Medically Fragile	34		10		3	
Prematurity	31		7		0	
Disease	15		7		1	
Other	4		0		0	
Accidental	21	14%	10	19%	3	23%
Motor Vehicle	11		6		2	
Drowning	7		2		1	
In the Home	2		1		0	
Other	1		1		0	
Suicide	9	6%	5	10%	2	15%
Homicide	1	1%	1	2%	0	0%
Undetermined	33	22%	13	25%	4	31%
Total Deaths	148	100%	53	100%	13	100%

*Numbers may not total 100% due to rounding to the closest whole number.

Year over year, our office consistently notes that the majority of deaths of Manitoba children are from natural causes. Of the 53 child deaths meeting the criteria for our review, 45% were classified as natural.

What is an "undetermined" death?

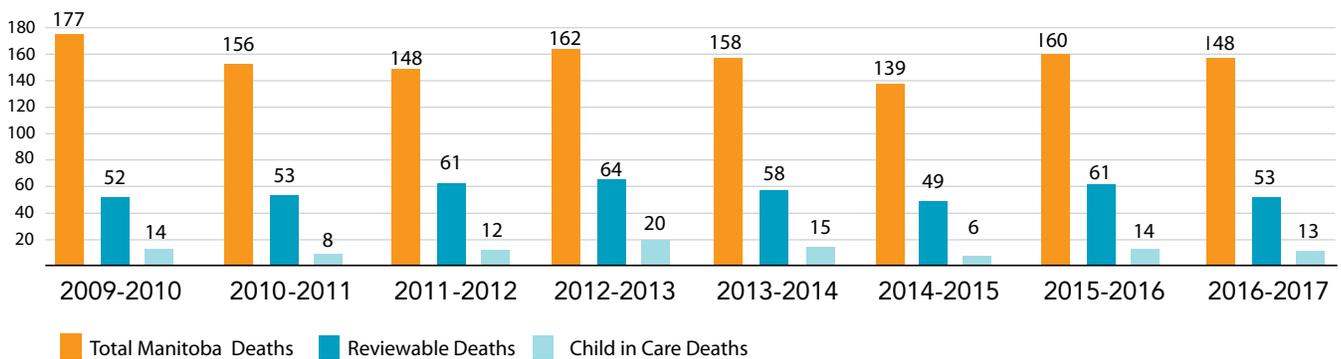
When the chief medical examiner's investigation is unable to determine how the death occurred, the manner of death is categorized as undetermined, even if the physical cause is known. This category includes sudden unexplained infant death (SUID) and sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).

Reviewable Deaths by Authority

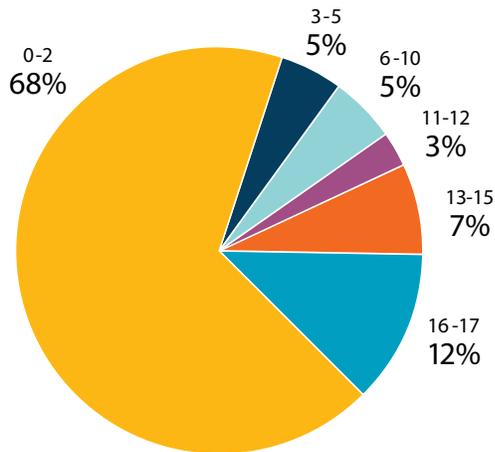
General Authority	10	19%
Metis Authority	3	5%
Southern Authority	20	37%
Northern Authority	21	39%
Total	54	100%

*One investigation involved two different authorities

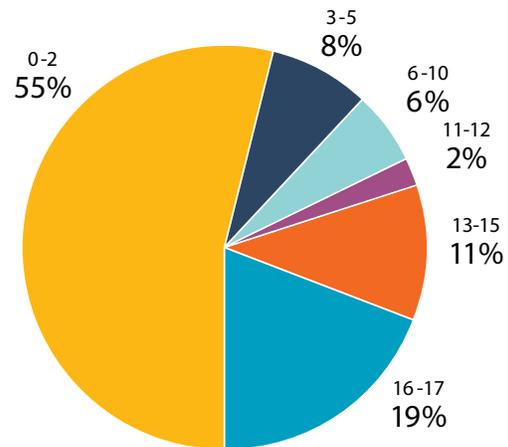
Yearly Comparison of Manitoba Child Deaths



Manitoba Deaths by Age



OCA Reviewable Child Deaths



Note: Numbers may not total 100% due to rounding to the nearest whole number.

MB Deaths by Age

■ Ages 0-2 years	100
■ Ages 3-5 years	7
■ Ages 6-10 years	7
■ Ages 11-12 years	5
■ Ages 13-15 years	11
■ Ages 16-18 years	18
Total	148

OCA Reviewable Child Deaths

■ Ages 0-2 years	29
■ Ages 3-5 years	4
■ Ages 6-10 years	3
■ Ages 11-12 years	1
■ Ages 13-15 years	6
■ Ages 16-18 years	10
Total	53

WHAT IS A SPECIAL INVESTIGATION REVIEW?

“Special investigation review” is the name given to the review our office conducts following the death of a child in Manitoba. The purpose of the review is to identify ways the programs and services that were provided, or which should have been provided, may be improved to enhance the safety and well-being of children and youth and to reduce the likelihood of a death occurring in similar circumstances in the future.

The review is conducted by a special investigator from our office and begins with collecting and analyzing relevant information from sources such as child welfare files, files from other social services, police reports, fire commissioner reports, medical records, school records, and other sources.

The investigative process includes opportunities for feedback, dialogue, and collaboration with various stakeholders, including professionals who provide services to children and families. Our reports examine public service delivery to Manitoba families through

the eyes of the child and we often invite and encourage family and community participation. The length of time it takes to complete an investigation can vary from a few days to several months, depending on the complexity of the case and the number of services involved.

Once the final report is complete, we submit it to the Minister of Families, to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner, and to the Manitoba Ombudsman, who is currently responsible for following the progress on any recommendations that our office makes.

Top Concerns	Percentage
Case Management: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal status • Response • Response time • Intake • Risk assessment • Planning • Service delivery • Evaluation • Family visits 	46%
Abuse Investigations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response • Time frame • Collaboration • Interviews • Resolution 	13%
Safety Risks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water safety • Child sexual exploitation • Firearm safety • Suicidality • Domestic violence • Unsafe sleeping environment • Client engagement 	9%
Accountability: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervision • File recording • Reporting practices 	9%
Coordination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharing of information between collaterals • Inter-jurisdictional and inter-sectoral issues • Coordination/service delivery • Uses of CFS technology: Child and Family Services Information System (CFSIS), intake module 	5%
Systemic: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding • Caseloads • Staffing resources • Legislation • Prevention 	5%
Training: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post-traumatic stress • Family group conferencing • Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder • Suicide awareness/prevention • Critical incident stress debriefing • Family violence 	4%
Other Service Providers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental health • Addictions • Employment and Income Assistance • Justice • Education • Publicly funded social services 	4%
Accessibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of information • Refusal of services • Ineligibility • Resource limitation 	2%
Youth Engagement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Not meeting with youth to develop meaningful relationship • Lack of follow-through by agency—no attempt to engage youth 	2%
Total	100%

*Numbers may not total 100% due to rounding to the closest whole number.

Findings and Recommendations

The findings we make in our investigations may be positive or they may describe service gaps that result in our office making recommendations that could improve situations for children and youth involved in the child welfare system.

This year, our reviews included 22 recommendations in 47 reports, which we shared with the Minister of Families, the Manitoba Ombudsman, the Chief Medical Examiner, and relevant child welfare authorities, agencies, and organizations. We also made five recommendations to agencies providing public services outside of the OCA's current mandate. As such, these external systems are under no obligation to respond to our recommendations for improvements. This will change with the expansion of our mandate, which will come into force over the next few months.

We Were There!

It is our honour to attend community activities throughout the province. This year, we attended 45 events. These opportunities help us to keep abreast of developments and initiatives in our province's child welfare agencies and other community organizations. Many of these events celebrate and recognize youth, are an opportunity to build relationships, and give us an opportunity to raise awareness about the role of the OCA.



Our office is a proud member of the Canadian Council of Child & Youth Advocates



The Wavy Guy loves attending picnics and festivals across the province



We love having a monthly guest spot on the award-winning radio show, System Kidz!



Dr. Cindy Blackstock and Spirit Bear are joined by our team in the ongoing fight for the protection of children's rights in Canada



Our mascot, The Wavy Guy, meets Winnipeg Mayor Brian Bowman at Free Hug Day at The Forks



Our staff presents on stories of loss and grief at a conference in Brandon



Every year, our team collects plush toys to give to youth in care at the Voices: Manitoba's Youth in Care Network Christmas party



Our team joined in to celebrate the 21st birthday of Voices: Manitoba's Youth in Care Network



Our staff participated and spoke at an event hosted by Meet Me @ the Bell Tower to honour the work of Leslie Spillett



Staff join Aboriginal Youth Opportunities and other community members at a Meet Me @ the Bell Tower event



At an age-of-majority celebration for youth hosted by one of the provincial child welfare authorities

FINANCIAL REPORT

Operating:	\$3,040,000.00
Salaries:	\$974,000.00
Total:	\$4,014,000.00

OFFICE OF THE CHILDREN'S ADVOCATE STAFF

Darlene MacDonald Children's Advocate
Corey La Berge Deputy Children's Advocate

Management

Ainsley Krone Manager, Communications, Research, and Public Education
Angie Balan Manager, Quality Assurance
Carolyn Burton Manager, Finance and Administration
Dorothy McLoughlin Manager, Special Investigations Review Program
Kirstin Magnusson Manager, Advocacy Services Program
Patty Sansregret Manager, Special Projects

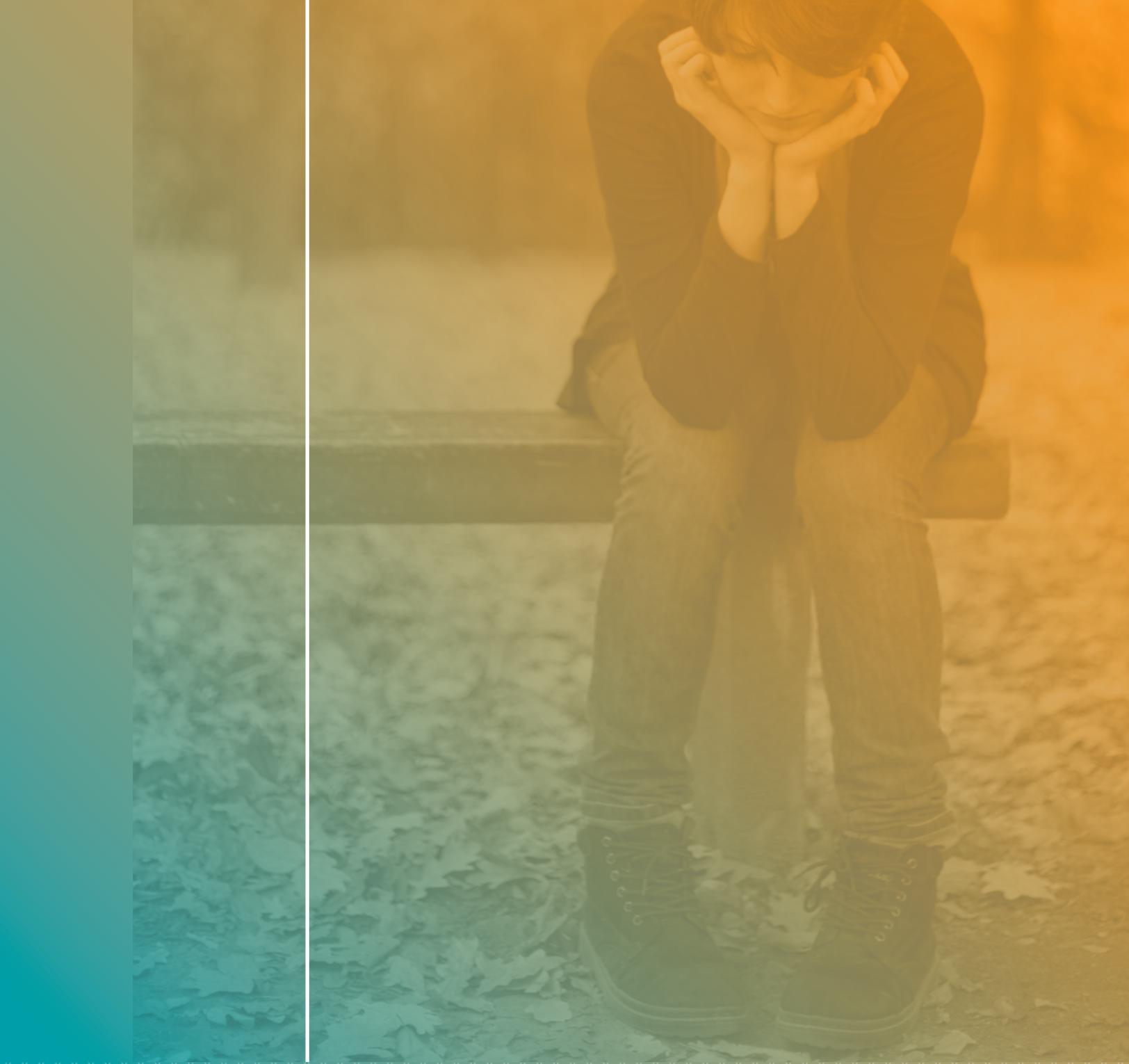
Staff

Ada Uddoh Special Investigator
Alison Carrey Quality Assurance (from February 2017)
Carolyn Parsons Advocacy Officer (retired May 2016)
Dawn Gair Intake Assessment Officer
Debra De Silva Intake Assessment Officer
Denise Wadsworth Special Investigator
Doug Ingram Advocacy Officer
Erin Leonzio Intake Assessment Officer
Erin Ryan Administrative Assistant
Gerald Krosney Advocacy Officer
Janine Bramadat Special Investigator
Joanne Lysak Special Investigator
Justine Grain Special Investigator
Krista Rey Advocacy Officer
Laurie Freund Senior Clerk
Leigh Enns Special Investigator
Lynda Schellenberg Special Investigator
Mae Choo-Mah Intake Assessment Officer (from October 2016)
Naomi Corder Intake Assessment Officer (from June 2016)
Paula Zimrose Intake Assessment Officer
Reji Thomas Administrative Assistant
Ryan Begley Special Investigator
Sandra McKelvey Special Investigator
Sarah Arnal Advocacy Officer
Tanis Hudson Special Investigator
Thelma Morriseau Advocacy Officer



Students

Connor Wielgosz Red River College (June-August 2016)



Manitoba Office of the Children's Advocate

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