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Manitoba Advocate releases 2021 government compliance report card

Advocate notes slow progress made on recommendations with 8% completion rate so far

WINNIPEG, TREATY ONE TERRITORY, HOME OF THE METIS NATION – The Acting Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth, Ainsley Krone, has released her office’s annual government compliance report, which acts as a report card, summarizing incremental progress made by the province toward the intent of the Advocate’s 51 recommendations made between 2018 and 2020.

“Recommendations issued by my office are based on extensive investigations and research evidence that reflects the voices and experiences of children and youth who have been injured or who have died,” Krone said. “When implemented, these recommendations can improve public services to children, youth, and families.”

This year’s compliance report, *Kids Can’t Keep Waiting*, outlines individual assessments for each of MACY’s recommendation, as well as trends observed in compliance by special report, systemic issue, and primary government department. Of note in this year’s report:

- Only 8 per cent – or 4 of 51 – recommendations for service improvements have been implemented fully.
- Less than half (43 per cent) of recommendations have demonstrated substantive actions towards implementation.
- Manitoba Education is the department with the highest compliance levels at an overall compliance rate of 75 per cent compared with 42 per cent last year. Manitoba Education achieved ‘full compliance’ ratings for two of MACY’s recommendations this year focused on mental health promotion and safety in schools.
- Manitoba Health and Seniors Care continues to have the lowest average compliance rating at 25 per cent. This rating can largely be attributed to a lack of action reported towards addressing recommendations to prevent sleep-related infant deaths.
- Manitoba Justice has an average compliance rate of 45 per cent, while Manitoba Families has a 43 per cent compliance rate.
- Constraints related to COVID-19 responses and internal reorganization of department staff, divisions, branches, and units have slowed implementation of MACY recommendations, especially in Manitoba Health and Seniors Care.

“While compliance rates remain low across government, I do want to highlight the work of Manitoba Education, which implemented two recommendations and demonstrated enhancements to mental health promotion and safety in schools,” Krone said, referring to two recommendations laid out in [The Slow Disappearance of Matthew](#) report released in 2020.

“Progress is slow right now as the government devotes much of its resources to responding to COVID-19. Unfortunately, kids cannot continue to wait for service improvements in areas, such as mental health and safe sleep practices for infants,” Krone said. “As we emerge from this pandemic, I am

encouraged by recent conversations with the leadership of each department, which reflect a commitment to better outcomes for children and youth in Manitoba.”

To read the Advocate’s compliance report, visit: ManitobaAdvocate.ca/adult/reports-publications/special-reports/

About MACY: MACY is an independent, non-partisan office of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly. It represents the rights, interests, and viewpoints of children, youth, and young adults throughout Manitoba who are receiving or entitled to public services, including child and family, adoption, disability, mental health, addictions, education, victim supports, or youth justice. The office does this by advocating directly with children and youth, or on their behalf with caregivers and other stakeholders. Advocacy also involves reviewing public services after the death of any young person when that young person or their family was involved with a reviewable service as defined in *The Advocate for Children and Youth Act* (the ACYA). Additionally, the Manitoba Advocate is empowered under provincial law to make recommendations to government and other public bodies, conduct child-centred research, disseminate findings, and educate the public on children’s rights and any other matter under the ACYA.

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