

ADVOCATE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH SPECIAL INVESTIGATION REPORT, MAY 2014
TWO TRAGEDIES: HOLDING SYSTEMS ACCOUNTABLE
MINISTRY RESPONSE/ACTION PLAN MAY 2015 STATUS UPDATE

ACY RECOMMENDATION	MINISTRY RESPONSE/ACTION PLAN	YTCCFS RESPONSE/ACTION PLAN
<p>Recommendation 1: That the Government of Saskatchewan develop and implement well-resourced early childhood development and poverty reduction strategies to advance the goals of its Child and Family Agenda.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation and it is in progress.</p> <p>The Advisory Group on Poverty Reduction has met four times and will continue to meet through to June 2015. The group is tasked with identifying gaps in current Saskatchewan programs and services, and will make recommendations to Government which will inform the development of a poverty reduction strategy. Ideas and advice are being sought from community and key stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-on-one meetings are occurring with organizations involved in activities that address the wide variety of factors underlying the causes of poverty. Examples include the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission and the Provincial Ombudsman. • The Advisory Group hosted a one-day roundtable on April 28th with organizations and individuals from across the province actively involved in poverty reduction at the local level. • The public will have the opportunity to provide input and ideas through an online survey available at www.saskatchewan.ca/have-your-say/poverty-reduction. <p>The Advisory Group is scheduled to submit its recommendations to the Minister of Social Services by the end of June, 2015.</p>	<p>Not applicable – see Ministry Action</p>
<p>Recommendation 2: That the Ministry of Social Services and Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services Inc. ensure high quality child protection casework by implementing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A formal process to measure staff competence in the use of Structured Decision Making (SDM®) tools; • A formal process to measure competencies in 	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation and it has been implemented.</p> <p>The Ministry continues to work closely with the Children’s Research Centre (CRC) to ensure enhanced knowledge and competence around the SDM tools.</p> <p>The Ministry’s Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) also reviews the use of</p>	<p>YTC CFS accepts this recommendation and it has been implemented.</p> <p>YTC CFS continues to work closely with the Children’s Research Centre (CRC) to ensure enhanced knowledge and competence around the SDM tools.</p> <p>Structural changes to the operations of YTC have taken place</p>

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<p>supervision; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A standardized supervision tool to assess whether casework policy standards are met. 	<p>SDM tools by staff in the Ministry and the First Nations agencies to ensure that the tools are being utilized correctly, as well as within appropriate timeframes.</p> <p>The Ministry has developed and implemented a standardized Supervision Tool to enhance oversight of staff casework.</p> <p>A joint Ministry and First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) mandatory training session for supervisory staff took place on August 27, 2014 facilitated by the CRC¹ on the assessment and writing of Structured Decision Making® (SDM) Safety Plans.</p>	<p>to ensure appropriate focus on both child protection and prevention services for children and families.</p> <p>YTC CFS has hired an Agency Quality Assurance manager and is in the process of completing an internal review.</p> <p>YTC is using the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) supervision tool. YTC is pursuing full accreditation through CARF in 2015.</p>
<p>Recommendation 3: That the Ministry of Social Services contract with the Children’s Research Centre to complete a SDM® workload estimation study that determines standards for caseload size in Saskatchewan. Once the study is completed, implement the recommended standards.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation and it is in progress.</p> <p>The Ministry of Social Services has entered into a contract with the Children's Research to conduct a workload estimation study in the 2015/16 fiscal year.</p>	<p>Not applicable – see Ministry Action</p>
<p>Recommendation 4: That the Ministry of Social Services amend policy to require a case conference with all key service providers involved with a family within the initial Assessment and Case Plan timeframe (90 days) and thereafter as necessary.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation and it has been implemented.</p> <p>The Ministry has amended this policy as per this recommendation.</p>	<p>Not applicable – see Ministry Action</p>
<p>Recommendation 5: That the Ministry of Social Services strengthen its policy to ensure that scheduled family visits are maintained. The following standards should be embedded in policy:</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation and it has been implemented.</p> <p>The Ministry has strengthened its visitation policy and standards as</p>	<p>Not applicable – see Ministry Action</p>

¹ The National Council on Crime and Delinquency’s Children’s Research Center (CRC) was established in the United States in 1993. The CRC works with child-serving agencies to improve direct practice and organizational operations through models, such as Structured Decision Making®, that integrate evidence-based assessments, family-centred engagement strategies and implementation science.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Documented supervisory review when a visit is cancelled; • Rescheduling cancelled visits as soon as possible when in the best interest of the child. 	per this recommendation.	
<p>Recommendation 6: That the Ministry of Social Services, in consultation with the Children’s Research Centre, amend their Safety and Risk Assessment tools to ensure they support the assessment of each parent’s household when parents live apart but there is joint legal custody.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation and it has been implemented.</p> <p>The Ministry’s current policy addresses this recommendation. The Safety and Risk Assessments includes the assessment of both households when parents live apart, but there is contact with the child in both households</p> <p>The Ministry, in consultation with the Children’s Research Centre, has concluded that the current tools and SDM policy address the intent of this recommendation.</p>	Not applicable – see Ministry Action
<p>Recommendation 7: That the Ministry of Social Services research and implement methods for evaluating the quality of case practice and the outcomes of services for children and families.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation and it has been implemented.</p> <p>The Ministry’s QAU conducts annual file audits of all Ministry Service Areas and FNCFS Agencies to measure compliance to a number of policy standards and the quality of services provided. The Ministry agrees that there is a need to incorporate more qualitative measures in our processes.</p> <p>The Ministry recognizes that outcome measurements are a vital component of the Ministry’s commitment to improved service delivery. The Ministry has conducted research on evaluating quality case practice and outcomes for families and has implemented a number of outcome measurements into our evaluation and program review processes.</p>	Not applicable – see Ministry Action

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<p>Recommendation 8: That the Ministry of Social Services conduct compliance reviews on First Nations Child and Family Services agencies on a yearly basis, rather than the current practice of every three years.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation and it has been implemented.</p> <p>Effective January 1, 2014, the Ministry has increased the frequency of program reviews (compliance audits) with the FNCFS Agencies to yearly.</p>	<p>Not applicable – see Ministry Action</p>
<p>Recommendation 9: That the Ministry of Social Services ensure Child Death and Critical Incident Reviews are comprehensive and include a review of services provided to the child by other service systems. The Ministry of Social Services should consult with these bodies about the development of protocols for information sharing when conducting these reviews.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation and it has been implemented.</p> <p>The Ministry of Social Services conducts reviews on all deaths of children currently in care or in receipt of services in the 12 months prior to death, and of critical injuries of children in Ministry care.</p> <p>The purpose of the Ministry’s internal Child Death and Critical Injury Review process is to examine whether the services provided by the Ministry/FNCFS Agency to the family or child leading up to the death/critical incident were not only provided in accordance with the Ministry’s policies and responsibilities, but were also services of sufficient quality.</p> <p>The Ministry has formally consulted with officials from other service systems regarding the development of protocols for sharing information when conducting reviews.</p>	<p>Not applicable – see Ministry Action</p>
<p>Recommendation 10: That Regina Qu’Appelle Health Region examine whether the criteria for initiating incident reviews of various types need to be adjusted, in light of their experience with Derek’s case.</p>	<p>The Regina Qu’Appelle Health Region accepts this recommendation and it has been implemented.</p> <p>Mental Health and Addictions Services, Regina Qu’Appelle Health Region has instituted a new critical incident reporting process which requires this type of incident to be reviewed.</p>	<p>Not applicable – see Ministry Action</p>

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<p>Recommendation 11: That the Ministry of Social Services and the Ministry of Health and their related agencies conduct joint critical incident reviews for children and youth served by both the Ministry of Social Services and the Mental Health and Addictions system within the preceding twelve months.</p>	<p>The Ministries of Social Services and Health accept this recommendation and it is in progress.</p> <p>The Ministry of Health held a Value Streams Mapping (VSM) Event in Regina, SK from March 23 to 26, 2015, attended by representatives from Social Services, Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services, Health, Education, Regina Police Service and RCMP.</p> <p>An Action Plan was devised that included the Ministry of Social Services and the Ministry of Health developing a decision-making tool and protocol to determine situations that require joint reviews and the process to complete joint reviews. A representative from each ministry will work together to develop joint review protocol, implement the protocol, and track how many joint reviews are completed following implementation of the protocol. The project is expected to be complete by the end of September 2015.</p>	<p>Not applicable – see Ministry Action</p>
<p>Recommendation 12: That the Ministry of Social Services and Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services Inc. develop the protocols identified in their Agreement but not yet in place. Of these, the following protocols should receive immediate priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff training, development and support; • Child abuse investigations; and • Integrating health, education and family services. 	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation and it is in progress.</p> <p>Officials from YTC CFS and the Ministry continue to work on the development and finalization of protocols. The working group continues to discuss the protocols and is scheduled to meet in May.</p>	<p>YTC CFS accepts this recommendation and it is in progress.</p> <p>Officials from YTC CFS and the Ministry continue to work on the development and finalization of protocols. The working group continues to discuss the protocols and is scheduled to meet in May.</p>
<p>Recommendation 13: That the Ministry of Social Services increase its knowledge and understanding of Yorkton Tribal Council First Nations Child and Family Services Inc.’s operations to better support their capacity to deliver quality</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation and it has been implemented.</p> <p>The Ministry has worked very closely with YTC to provide case practice reviews, intensive on-site support, training, and clinical</p>	<p>Not applicable – see Ministry Action</p>

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services.	<p>supervision to support their delivery of quality services.</p> <p>Through the assignment of a dedicated First Nation and Métis Services consultant to work with YTC CFS, the Ministry has increased its knowledge and understanding of YTC CFS's operations and capacity to deliver quality services.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 14: That Yorkton Tribal Council First Nations Child and Family Services Inc. fully develop its database system to make all current and historical information accessible to staff that require it.</p>	Not applicable – see YTC CFS Action	<p>YTC CFS accepts this recommendation and it has been implemented.</p> <p>YTC CFS has developed and fully implemented a case management database system.</p>
<p>Recommendation 15: That Yorkton Tribal Council First Nations Child and Family Services Inc. develop policy to create and clarify a working relationship between prevention and protection programming.</p>	Not applicable – see YTC CFS Action	<p>YTC CFS accepts this recommendation and it has been implemented.</p> <p>YTC CFS developed a written procedure regarding interactions between prevention and protection programs. YTC CFS also implemented a Prevention Project Management System (PPMS), a computer system that allows YTC CFS to manage and share information regarding the prevention program.</p>
<p>Recommendation 16: That the Ministry of Social Services and Yorkton Tribal Council First Nations Child and Family Services Inc. provide written progress reports to the Advocate on the applicable recommendations within three months of the release of this report and every three months thereafter for a period of one year.</p>	The Ministry accepts this recommendation and it has been implemented.	YTC CFS accepts this recommendation and has been implemented.

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<p>Recommendation 17: That the Ministry of Social Services, Ministry of Health, and Regional Health Authorities jointly develop mental health and addictions services to ensure immediate access to mental health and addiction services for high risk families with child protection involvement.</p>	<p>The Ministries of Social Services and Health accept this recommendation and it is in progress.</p> <p>A joint Ministry of Health/health regions initiative has resulted in significant reductions in wait times for children and youth outpatient mental health and addictions services since it began in June 2012. As a result of this work, the majority of child and youth outpatient mental health and addictions clients currently fall within the benchmark times for waits according to their level of need. Prioritization for mental health services in the health regions currently is based on the level of need and risk.</p> <p>The Ministry of Health led the development of a Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan with an inter-ministerial and cross-sectorial approach to address complex issues presented by mental health and addictions challenges. The Ministry of Social Services is a participant in the development of a multi-ministry implementation plan for the Mental Health and Addictions Action Plan that will inform future actions.</p> <p>The Ministry of Health held a Value Streams Mapping (VSM) Event in Regina, SK from March 23 to 26, 2015 that included representatives from Social Services, Health, Education, Regina Police Service and RCMP. At this event, an “Improvement Implementation Plan with Measures” and an action plan were developed. The VSM event indicated that participants were satisfied with prioritization of mental health and addictions services in health regions being based on level of need and risk as long as sufficient and necessary information is provided to inform assessments.</p>	<p>Not applicable – see Ministry Action</p>

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	<p>To support informed assessments, the Ministry of Health will collaborate with Social Services and Regional Health Authorities to develop a standard referral form by September 2015 for Social Services to use when referring families with child protection involvement for mental health and addictions services.</p>	
<p>Recommendation 18: That the Ministry of Social Services, the Ministry of Health, and Regional Health Authorities expand outreach and intervention programs for children with FASD.</p>	<p>The Ministry accepts this recommendation and it has been implemented.</p> <p>Over the past three years, \$1.8 million in new FASD programming has been implemented, including community supports such as mentorship, family support programming, life skills and addictions programming, youth-targeted FASD prevention programming, and intensive FASD prevention programming for women at risk of having a child with FASD. Cognitive Disabilities Consultants are available throughout the province to assist with program and behavioral support planning for individuals with FASD.</p> <p>The Ministry of Education recently implemented Family Resource Centers at SIGN in Yorkton, Regina and Sandy Bay. Family Resource Centre Services focus on: parenting education to strengthen parenting skills that will foster nurturing environments; early learning to enhance child development with positive experiences and play; family wellness and support to identify and build skills and promote family health and wellness; and information and referrals to families to access supports for raising healthy children.</p> <p>The Ministry of Social Services has developed an intervention program to support families in caring for their children with Intellectual and cognitive disabilities, inclusive of FASD.</p>	<p>Not applicable – see Ministry Action</p>