



May 1, 2017

## Child Intervention Panel

On behalf of the ALIGN Edmonton Chapter, we would like to share with the panel one of the practices within the current system that we believe is working in the best interest of children and families receiving services from Children Services. Collaborative Service Delivery (CSD), has made some significant strides in terms of how services are delivered to children and their families and in doing so has contributed to substantial positive outcomes including the reduction of children in care.

CSD, an initiative that evolved out of Outcomes Based Services Delivery (OBSD), began as a pilot in 2009. The concept is a shared practice model whereby community agencies and children services work collaboratively to support children and their families. The program focuses on the front end of service delivery providing wrap around comprehensive supports to families to ensure the safety of children while focusing on child and family well-being. The model is family centric giving families the right and responsibility to be actively involved in the services they receive and accountability in ensuring their children are cared for in a healthy way. In the Edmonton region this model was adopted region wide April 2015.

Minister Danielle Larivee stated on Thursday April 20, 2017 that the focus for the panel needs to be on reducing the number of children in care and making improvements for those who are in care.

We'd like to share some statistics that speak directly to these comments comparing data year over year from 2015/16 to 2016/17. During this time period, in the Edmonton region, the number of children coming into the care of the department was reduced by 7%. This means that these children were able to remain safely in their homes with their parent(s). The research suggests clearly that attachment issues and trauma are diminished when we are able to keep children with their parents. During this reporting period the number of children that were taken into kinship increased 10%. The research suggests that children thrive better in homes with similar traditions and customs. The OYCA has also made clear recommendations that we need to work harder to ensure indigenous children are being cared for by indigenous caregivers, we believe we are making advances to this end.



Collaborative Service Delivery is a model that builds on the capacity of community agencies and children services to work in partnership to apply their particular skills and experience with some of Alberta's most vulnerable children. The model is family centric engaging families and extended family to support their children, reducing the number of children that grow up in the system. The approach also mitigates risk. By working in partnership within multi-disciplinary teams decisions are made collaboratively increasing the understanding of both the safety concerns and the required steps to diminish risk while increasing family capacity and well-being.

Changes are required. It is not acceptable to suggest the status quo is good enough when children continue to grow up in care. It is also critical to maintain the pieces of the work that are having a positive impact on children and their families. CSD is one of the models building capacity and health within families.

Co-chairs of the Edmonton Chapter, ALIGN

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