

May 30, 2017

## Child Intervention Panel

On behalf of the eight Edmonton community Collaborative Service Delivery (CSD) lead agencies and Edmonton Area Child and Family Services, we would like to share with the panel what we believe is currently working in the best interests of children and families in the Edmonton region. We also have some concerns and suggestions that we believe will enhance the service children and families are presently receiving. It is our hope to be asked to present to the panel, during the process, to more fully share our views and answer any questions the panel may have of us.

In Edmonton there are eight community agencies that work in collaboration with the 10 Child and Family Service (CFS) Neighborhood Center's to provide services to children and families. Collectively, over the last year, we have supported over 3900 children, youth and their families to promote the safety and wellbeing of children within families and community. We will outline how our work has benefitted these children, families and the community as whole. As a group of fully accredited agencies we represent 415 employees. Our employees are formally educated, qualified and trained to address the complex challenges that issues such as child maltreatment, trauma, poverty, mental health and violence perpetuates.

The following are some of the concerns we'd like to share about the current system.

- That the shared practice framework won't be fully actualized and that our efforts could be undermined if the province moves away from this model.
- That currently the number of indigenous children in care is disproportionate to the number of non-indigenous children in the province. In Edmonton for example there are currently 1595 indigenous children in care as compared to 595 non indigenous children. Given that only 6 % of Albertans are indigenous this number is disproportionate.
- We collectively are concerned that DFNA's (designated First Nations Authority) are underfunded and create disparity in the services/support that children and their families receive if they live on reserves. This continues to impact the outcomes we are hoping to achieve.

The following are some of the components of the approach/model that have been going well.

- The collaborative model has impacted the outcomes we are able to achieve: more children are being raised by their parents and kin reducing trauma effects and attachment issues.
- Families are more involved in decision making, more involved in creating their own solutions. Families have told us that their experience is more aligned with their values and focused on their children's wellbeing.
- The Children's First Act has created more latitude to share information mitigating risk for children while increasing the number of adults in children's lives. CSD has taken full advantage of our capacity to share information and support children and their families.

- The model focuses on the indigenous experience encouraging better relationships with bands and the band designates due to the increased focus on family engagement processes and connecting children to their home communities.
- With our concern on indigenous over representation within children services we have intentionally enhanced the quality and continuum of services received by our children and families. This intention has increased the number of children raised with their parents and kin and improved reconnection to culture leading to an enriched experience and healing for the Indigenous children and families we have served.
- We utilize evidence based practices. Our focus is on child safety and child and family wellbeing as recommended by the Canadian Incidence Study (MacLaurin, Trocme, 2008, 2012). We have used these outcomes to measure our impact.
- The integration of service delivery between all agencies, and between the region and agencies, has built upon our capacity to respond to families in a strength based way, the coordination of services as received by families, increased expertise of practitioners and sharing information to reduce the number of times a family has to tell their story.

We have provided the CSD Manual and some illustrations of our work as appendix items for your information.

Please feel free to respond to this letter and/or our request at [pauline.smale@the-family-centre.com](mailto:pauline.smale@the-family-centre.com)

Sincerely,

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CEO  
The Family Centre

On behalf of:  
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