

GOVERNMENT OF NUNAVUT

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES

# 2022-2023 ANNUAL REPORT

DIRECTOR OF CHILD AND  
FAMILY SERVICES

FAMILY WELLNESS DIVISION



ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑦ ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑦ ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑦ ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑦ  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Director’s Message</b>	4-5
<b>Executive Summary</b>	6-7
<b>Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) Principles and Child Welfare Practices</b>	8
<b>Section 1: Nunavut’s Child and Family Services Framework</b>	9-15
Overview of the Child and Family Services Act	10
Family Wellness Offices	11-13
Child and Family Services	14
Continuum of Supports and Services for Children, Youth and Families	15
<b>Section 2: Protection of Children and Youth</b>	16-29
Report and Investigating Allegations of Child Abuse and Neglect	17-19
Critical Gaps in Collecting Data on Referrals	20-21
Apprehension and Return of Child Apprehended	22
Plan of Care Committee and Agreement	23
Statistical Data on Children and Youth Receiving Services in 2022-2023	24-29
<b>Section 3: Family Wellness Resources</b>	30-41
In-Territory Foster Care	31-32
In-territory Group Homes	33
Out of-territory Specialized Placements	34-36
Family Safety and Social Advocacy Initiatives	37-41



ᑭᑎᑎᓄᓄ ᓂᓄᓄᓄ ᓂᓄᓄᓄ ᓂᓄᓄᓄ  
 Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
 Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble



## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

**The Honourable Margaret Nakashuk, Minister of Family Services, Government of Nunavut**

Dear Minister Nakashuk,

I am pleased to present you with the 2022-2023 Annual Report of the Director of Child and Family Services (CFS) in compliance with the requirements of the *Child and Family Services Act and Regulations*. This report offers an overview of the services we provide to children, youth, and families across the 25 communities of Nunavut under the Family Wellness Division. It also highlights trends in service levels, which can serve as indicators of where improvements can be made and where we have positively supported many Nunavummiut through our expansive services of support.

It is important to note that although my name is listed in this report, I assumed the role as the Director of Child and Family Services after the period covered in this report. Therefore, this reflects the efforts and decisions made by my predecessor and the dedicated staff of the Family Wellness Division during that time.

However, it is essential to acknowledge and address the systemic issues detailed within the early findings of the 2023 Report from the Office of the Auditor General of Canada (OAG) on Family Wellness in Nunavut. The report comprehensively diagnoses the complex challenges facing the division of Family Wellness, including limitations in funding, staffing shortfalls, lack of adequate staff housing, office space constraints, postponed training initiatives, and the need for effective information management practices for the frontline workforce. Given its pivotal role in informed decision-making, the data within this report stems from the lived experiences of children, youth, and families in Nunavut. Consequently, the Director's Report will continue to play a crucial role in transforming child and family services into a more culturally aware system, centered on the integration of IQ Principles and ISV throughout Family Wellness service delivery. This report will provide insights into the progress of



ᐅᑎᑎᑕ ᐅᑎᑎᑕ ᐅᑎᑎᑕ ᐅᑎᑎᑕ ᐅᑎᑎᑕ ᐅᑎᑎᑕ  
 Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
 Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

our system transformation efforts and if these changes are aligning better with the needs of children, youth, and families. Ikajuqtigiinniġ, working together for a common cause, underscores our approach to addressing the multifaceted challenges outlined in the 2023 OAG report. We remain dedicated to collaborating with a variety of partners, including the Representative for Children and Youth (RCY), Inuit governments and organizations, to discover culturally appropriate and innovative approaches to service delivery territory wide. Our continuing collaboration with partners sharing common interests will enhance the design, delivery, and accessibility of services under the Child and Family Services Act.

Lastly, I would like to express my deepest gratitude towards the Family Wellness staff, caregivers, care providers, stakeholders and community partners for their ongoing support and relentless commitment to the wellbeing of children, youth, and their families.

Sincerely,

**Colby O'Donnell**

**Statutory Director of Child and Family Services**

**Department of Family Services**



ᑭᓄᓂᓄᓂ ᓄᓂᓄᓂ ᓄᓂᓄᓂ ᓄᓂᓄᓂ ᓄᓂᓄᓂ  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Family Wellness Division of the Department of Family Services (FS) in Nunavut plays a key role in safeguarding the well-being and safety of children, youth, and their families. The 2022-2023 Director's Annual Report of Child and Family Services provides an extensive recap of the services delivered by the Family Wellness Division in Nunavut under the *Child and Family Services Act, Nunavut Adoption Act, Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act, and the Federal Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth, and families* from April 1, 2022, to March 31, 2023.

This report offers a valuable chance to scrutinize the myriad of supports and services provided through CFSA, including preventive measures, family preservation, resources for family and community wellness, child welfare services, and adoptions. By observing data and tracing trends in service levels, we can identify areas where the Family Wellness system requires enhancements, while at the same time highlight areas that we have made a tangible impact on the lives of those we serve. Family Wellness is equally committed to ensuring that children, youth, and families have a say in decisions that directly impact them and their communities. The report also discusses the early findings of the 2023 OAG report, offering an in-depth examination of the intricate challenges facing the department.

During the fiscal year 2022-2023, Family Wellness services continued to necessitate collaboration and support across all levels. Despite facing notable challenges due to high staff vacancy rates, our commitment to innovation, resourcefulness, and perseverance, reflecting the IQ Principle of Qanuqturniq, enabled us to effectively respond to the needs of our communities.

Throughout the year, we received and assessed a significant number of referrals from various situations. In addition to that, we were able to support 545 children and youth providing prevention and protection services



ᑲᑲᑲᑲᑲᑲ ᑲᑲᑲᑲᑲᑲ ᑲᑲᑲᑲᑲᑲ  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

from the offices of Family Wellness across the territory, reflecting our ongoing efforts to prioritize their well-being and safety.

While specific numerical data regarding referrals for this recording period is not available due to several gaps and limitations in our information management system, our commitment to delivering effective and responsive services remains critical. We recognize the importance of data in assessing the needs of children, youth, and families in Nunavut communities as well as monitoring and evaluating the impact of our interventions. Therefore, our efforts continue to address the shortcomings of the current Case management system, enhance the validity and reliability of reporting, and ensure that stakeholders receive the most reliable and transparent information possible.

Continuing our dedication to family safety initiatives, we sustained operations for 5 shelters across Nunavut, with a newly constructed facility in the final stages of development in the region of North Qikiqtaaluk. In addition to that, the Division allocated approximately \$900,000<sup>1</sup> to fund social advocacy programs aimed at fostering culturally appropriate preventive measures, thus promoting the well-being of children, youth, and families in communities of Nunavut.

---

<sup>1</sup> In Canadian dollars



ᓄᓂᓂᓂ ᓄᓂᓂᓂ ᓄᓂᓂᓂ ᓄᓂᓂᓂ ᓄᓂᓂᓂ  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

## INUIT QAUJIMAJATUQANGIT (IQ) PRINCIPLES & CHILD WELFARE PRACTICES

Incorporating Inuit Qaujimaqatuqangit (IQ) Principles into child welfare practices is fundamental to ensuring culturally responsive and effective services for children, youth, and families in Nunavut. **These principles, deeply rooted in Inuit traditional knowledge and values, guide our approach to service delivery, emphasizing the importance of holistic well-being, community collaboration, and respect for cultural identity.** By integrating IQ principles into our practices, we prioritize the involvement of extended family and community networks in decision-making processes, recognizing their invaluable role in supporting children and youth in need.

Moreover, IQ Principles underscore the significance of resilience, adaptability, and interconnectedness within Inuit communities. In child welfare practices, this translates into a strengths-based approach that seeks to build upon the inherent strengths and resources of individuals and families. Through culturally relevant interventions and support, we aim to empower children, youth, and families to overcome challenges and thrive within their cultural contexts. By embracing IQ principles, we not only honor Inuit heritage and traditions but also foster greater trust, engagement, and positive outcomes for those we serve.



ᑭᑕᑎᑭᑏ ᑎᑭᑭᑏ ᑭᑭᑭᑏ ᑭᑭᑭᑏ ᑭᑭᑭᑏ ᑭᑭᑭᑏ  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

By embracing **IQ**  
**PRINCIPLES**,  
we not only honor  
*Inuit heritage and*  
*traditions but also*  
*foster greater trust,*  
*engagement, and*  
*positive outcomes*  
*for those we serve.*



Photo Credit: Isaac Demeester | Unsplash

## **SECTION 1: NUNAVUT'S CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES FRAMEWORK**

## OVERVIEW OF THE *CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES ACT C.S.Nu., c.C-50*

The roots of the *Child and Family Services Act (CFSA)* in Nunavut can be traced back to its inception within the broader context of the Northwest Territories (NWT). **Originally crafted during this period to safeguard the well-being of children and families within the territory, the Act underwent multiple changes to adapt to the unique cultural values and societal dynamics of Inuit communities following the establishment of Nunavut as a separate territory on April 1<sup>st</sup>, 1999.** Since its creation, the Act has undergone several amendments aimed at aligning its provisions with the specific needs and realities of Inuit society in Nunavut.

Enacted to uphold their rights and ensure their safety, the Act outlines provisions for intervention, support, and services tailored to the unique needs of vulnerable children and youth within Nunavut. It establishes measures for identifying and addressing situations where a child or youth may be at risk of harm or neglect, empowering authorized individuals under the provisions of the CFSA to intervene when necessary to protect the child's welfare. Moreover, the Act emphasizes the importance of providing support to families facing challenges, promoting the provision of resources, counseling, parenting programs and assistance aimed at strengthening familial bonds and promoting family wellness and stability.

Central to its ethos is the recognition of the cultural landscape of Nunavut, with the Act emphasizing the importance of culturally appropriate approaches in child welfare interventions. It acknowledges the significance of Inuit Societal Values and community involvement in the care and upbringing of children, as *incorporated in Section 2 of the Act.* Additionally, the Act extends its provisions to encompass services tailored to the unique needs of children and their families as well as youth transitioning to adulthood, outlining measures for supporting them in areas such as education, finances, housing, counselling, and employment which is aimed to build off of their current strengths.



ᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕ ᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕᑕ  
 Building *Nunavut* Together  
 Nunavut liuqatigiingniq  
 Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

## FAMILY WELLNESS OFFICES

With a commitment to strengthening capacity within the family unit and fostering community resilience, under the CFSA, **Family Wellness** offers a range of services through the Offices of Family Wellness across the 25 communities in the territory of Nunavut.

Integral to the delivery of these services are dedicated frontline staff, including **Community Social Services Workers (CSSW)<sup>2</sup>**, **Family Resource Workers (FRW)**, **Clerk Interpreters**, **Receptionist<sup>3</sup>**, **Case Aides**, **Social Programs Clerks<sup>4</sup>**, and **Foster Care Assistant<sup>5</sup>** and **Coordinators**.

These frontline staff members play a pivotal role in ensuring the well-being of children, youth, and families in Nunavut, offering vital support tailored to individual needs. Through their dedication and expertise, they contribute significantly to the resilience and strength of communities across the territory.

**In 2022-2023, there were approximately 68 frontline staff supporting children, youth, and families through Family Wellness in 21 communities of Nunavut.**

<sup>2</sup> Community Social Services Workers (CSSWs) received specialized training (including CORE, Stepwise and other relevant trainings) to become statutorily appointed as "Child Protection Workers" under the *Child and Family Services Act* in Nunavut.

<sup>3</sup> Term specific for Kitikmeot Region

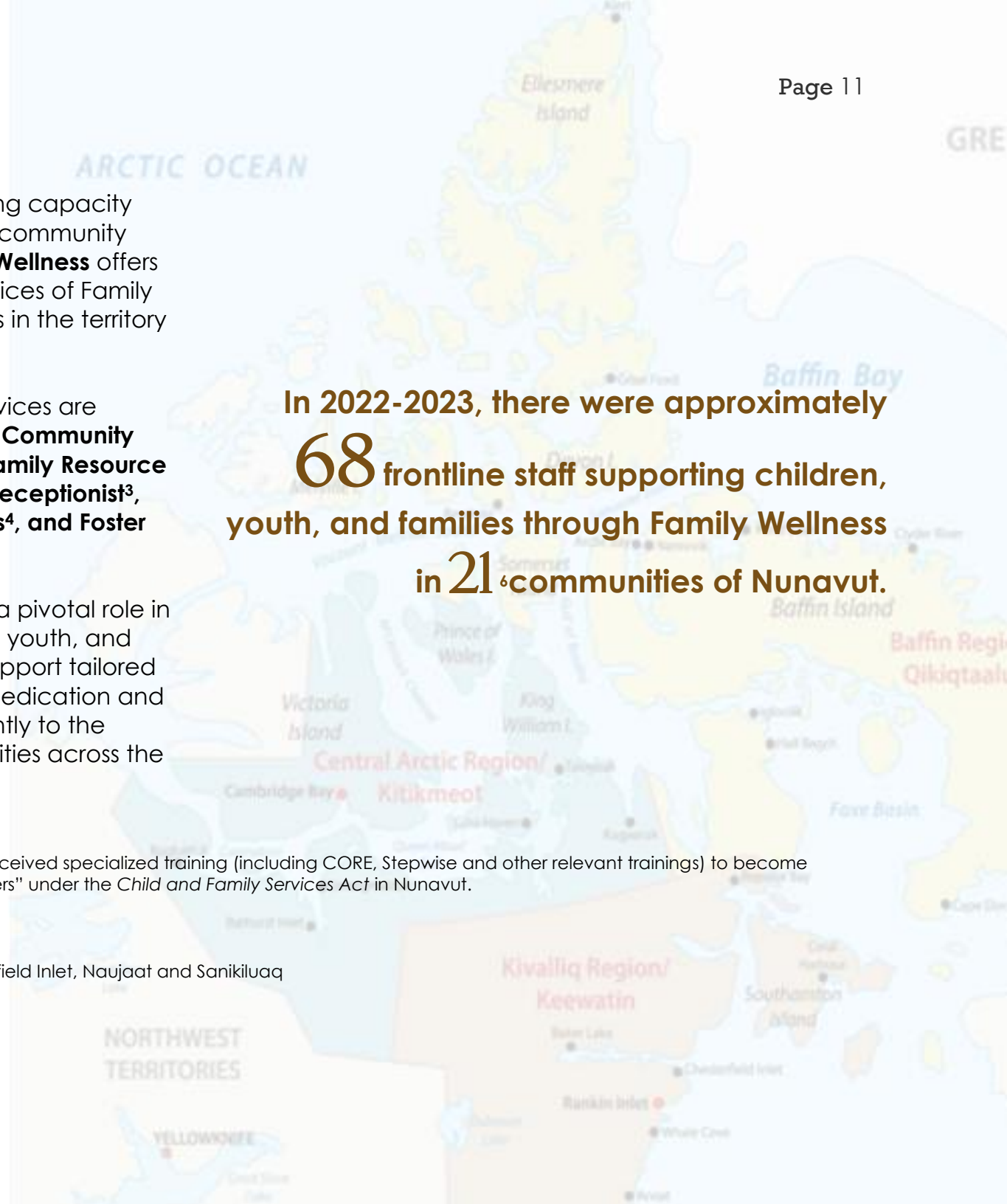
<sup>4</sup> Term specific for Kivalliq Region

<sup>5</sup> Term specific for Kivalliq Region

<sup>6</sup> Vacant frontline positions in Sanirajak, Chesterfield Inlet, Naujaat and Sanikiluaq



ᑭᕐᑎᕐᑎᕐᑎᕐ  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble



Through specialized training and statutory appointments, these staff members are equipped with the necessary knowledge and expertise to effectively fulfill their roles and responsibilities.

For example, **CORE training** introduces **Community Social Services Workers** to the role of supporting children, youth, and families in Nunavut as they become familiar with the legislation, policies, and procedures relevant to child welfare and community work. **Incorporating Inuit Societal Values and using trauma-informed practices while working with families is also a focus of this training.**

**StepWise**, a court-recognized approach to interviewing, is a basic training that provides participants with the knowledge and skills necessary **to conduct effective forensic interviews of children and youth.**

Within our organizational framework, personnel occupying leadership roles receive specialized training sessions tailored for **Supervisors/Managers.** This training equips them with advanced skills in team management and strategic decision-making, **fostering a culture of effective and trauma-informed leadership** within the Division.



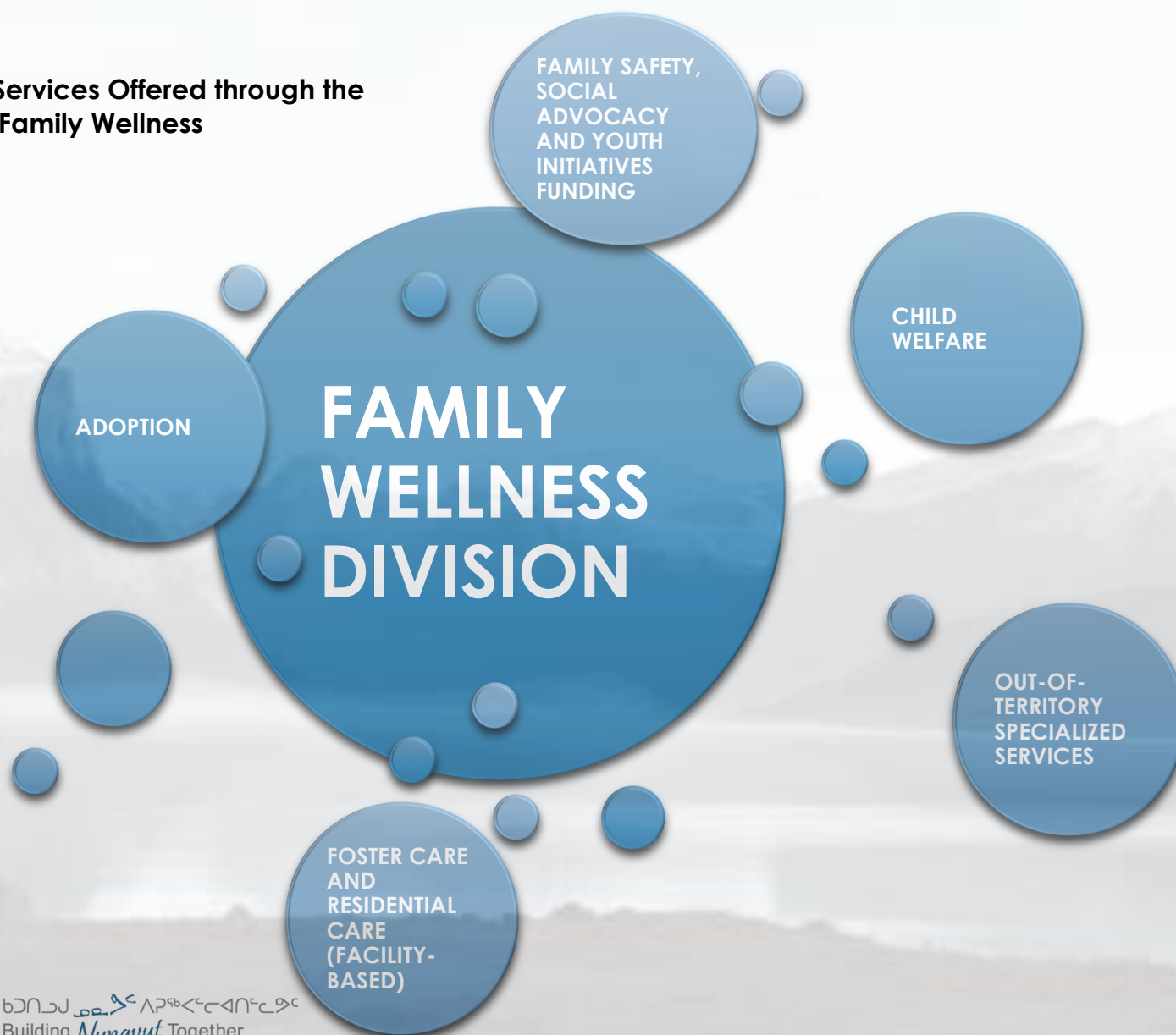
ᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ ᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ ᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ ᑭᑦᑭᑦᑭᑦ  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

In 2022-2023, we delivered a total of **12** specialized trainings, remote & in person in the communities of **Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, Pond Inlet & Ikaluktutiak.**

Staff also received regular training for their professional development during virtual **“LUNCH & LEARN”** sessions throughout this reporting period.

**Topics included mental health and wellness, trauma and attachment, child behavior and development, supporting foster parents, Child Abuse Network and Response Agreement (CANRA), Office of the Public Guardian, Inclusion and Diversity.**

**Figure 1.1 Services Offered through the Division of Family Wellness**



**ᑭᐁᑎᐁᑦ ᐱᓱᐁᐁᐁᑦ ᐱᓱᐁᐁᐁᑦ ᐱᓱᐁᐁᐁᑦ**  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

## CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES

The Department of Family Services delivers child welfare services through Family Wellness Division, which acts under the authority of **the Child and Family Services Act (CFSA)**. This aid encompasses a spectrum of services, ranging from preventive measures to protective interventions.

### PREVENTION SERVICES

Collaborating closely with youth, families, or expectant parents, Community Social Services Workers (CSSWs) and Family Resource Workers (FRWs) endeavor to identify and implement support systems tailored to their specific needs. The primary aim of prevention services is to bolster the strengths of youth and families, thereby preserving familial bonds.

These services may encompass linkages to external service providers, participation in wellness programs, or engagement in activities conducive to overall family well-being. Throughout the engagement process, CSSWs adopt a holistic approach, striving to identify interventions that bolster the resilience and strengths of individuals and families.

Examples of requests include but not limited to housing advocacy, support letter writing for Inuit Child First Initiative applications and food insecurity.

### PROTECTION SERVICES

Guided by the fundamental principle of ensuring children's right to a safe and nurturing environment, protection services are pivotal in safeguarding children and youth from abuse, harm, and neglect. In instances where concerns arise regarding potential maltreatment, individuals are required to report to a Community Social Services Worker (CSSW) or their local RCMP.

Upon receipt of such reports, CSSWs assess the situation to determine if further actions are warranted to ensure the safety of the children and youth involved. Subsequent interactions may involve discussions with relevant parties, including children, youth, parents, and other stakeholders, to gain insights into the family's circumstances. Families may then be offered preventive supports or may necessitate protective measures to mitigate risks and enhance their well-being.



ᑲᑭᑎᓴᓴ ᓄᓇ ᓇᑦᑭᑦ ᓴᑲᓂᑦ  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

## CONTINUUM OF SUPPORTS AND SERVICES FOR CHILDREN, YOUTH, AND FAMILIES

### PREVENTION SERVICES<sup>7</sup>

#### **Voluntary Services Agreements (VSA):**

Agreement with parents and children **from 0 to the age of 15** who are not in need of protection but require some form of support.

#### **Support Services Agreements (SSA):**

Agreement with a youth **between the ages of 16 and 18** who cannot remain safely in their parents' home and are making efforts to live independently.

#### **Extended Support Agreements (ESA):<sup>9</sup>**

Agreement that allows the department to support young adults **between the ages of 19 and 26**.

### PROTECTION SERVICES<sup>8</sup>

#### **Plan of Care (POC) Agreements:**

Agreement between the parent(s) and the Department that outlines a case plan for the child and family to ensure the child's protection and wellbeing.

### CHILD PROTECTION COURT ORDERS

#### **Supervision Orders (SO):**

Court order that directs a CSSW to supervise the home of a child according to the terms and conditions of the order. The order cannot exceed one year.

#### **Temporary Custody Orders (TCO):<sup>10</sup>**

Court order which directs that the child be placed in the custody of the Director for a specified period.

#### **Permanent Custody Orders (PCO):**

Court order that places a child in the permanent custody of the Director to age 16, extendable to 19 if the youth consents or if ordered by the court.

<sup>7</sup> Children and youth are not in the care of the Director of CFS while receiving prevention services.

<sup>8</sup> Regarding protection services, only children and youth under TCO, PCO and Interim Order are in the care of the Director.

<sup>9</sup> ESA is listed in this section to provide a comprehensive overview of services provided by Family Wellness Division; however, as ESA pertains to young adults aged 19-26, this will be further explored in Section 4 of this annual report.

<sup>10</sup> Part I of the Child and Family Services Act (CFSA)



ᑭᑭᑕᑭᑭ ᑭᑭᑭᑭ ᑭᑭᑭᑭ ᑭᑭᑭᑭ ᑭᑭᑭᑭ  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

## SECTION 2: PROTECTION OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Photo Credit: Isaac Demeester | Unsplash



## REPORT AND INVESTIGATING ALLEGATIONS OF CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

On December 14, 2022, the Child Abuse and Neglect Response Agreement (CANRA) underwent revisions through Surusinut Ikajuatigiit, a working group supported by the Family Wellness Division and other departments both within and outside of the Government of Nunavut (GN). The revisions aimed to enhance the effectiveness and cultural appropriateness of the agreement, ensuring it remains responsive to the needs of Nunavut's children and families.

The working group was formally established in 2023, focusing on integrating feedback from stakeholders and territorial partners to improve the processes for reporting and preventing child abuse and neglect. The goal was to strengthen the collaborative approach among professionals involved in child protection, ensuring that efforts are aligned and coordinated. Although the formal approval process continued beyond the 2022-2023 reporting period, the groundwork laid in 2022 and 2023 facilitated the creation of an upcoming renewed agreement used by GN employees across the territory. This continuous improvement ensures that the collective efforts to safeguard children are well-coordinated and responsive to any challenges or gaps in service delivery.

As outlined in CANRA and stated in **Section 8 of the CFSA: Duty to report child needing protection**, reporting incidents of child abuse and neglect is a collective responsibility, with individuals urged to contact their local Family Wellness Office and speak with a Community Social Services Worker (CSSW)<sup>11</sup> when concerned about a child's safety and well-being. Additionally, children experiencing abuse are encouraged to reach out to a CSSW or a trusted adult for assistance. Regulatory oversight of children and family services is provided under the CFSA. Maltreatment, which encompasses abuse and neglect, is a significant concern in Nunavut, often identified through reports from service providers or community members.

<sup>11</sup> Community Social Services Workers receive specialized training to become statutorily appointed as "Child Protection Workers" under the CFSA.



**As outlined in the CFSA, harm to a child or youth falls into seven main categories:**

- 1. Child physical harm<sup>12</sup>**
- 2. Child sexual harm<sup>13</sup>**
- 3. Child emotional harm<sup>14</sup>**
- 4. Inadequate care & supervision<sup>15</sup>**
- 5. Failure to obtain health services<sup>16</sup>**
- 6. Caregiver with a problem<sup>17</sup>**
- 7. Child exposure to family violence<sup>18</sup>**

Upon receiving an initial report of child abuse or neglect, a Community Social Services Worker (CSSW) gathers referral information, consults with their supervisor or manager, and utilizes the Structured Decision Making® (SDM®) Screening and Response Priority Assessment tool to determine the appropriate course of action, whether it involves an investigation, non-investigatory intervention, or no further involvement. This tool has been developed to follow Inuit Societal Values as a guide and prioritizes children’s safety from a physical and cultural lens. In cases requiring investigation to assess the immediate safety of the child or youth, the CSSW conducts a thorough inquiry and employs the SDM® Risk Assessment tool to evaluate potential risks in consultation with the family. This process helps determine the necessary support, if any, required to ensure the child or youth's safety and well-being. The referral and investigation procedure will be illustrated through a child protection flowchart in the next page.

---

<sup>12</sup> CFSA Section 7 (3)(a) and (b)

<sup>13</sup> CFSA Section 7 (3)(c), (d), (q) and (r)

<sup>14</sup> CFSA Section 7 (3)(e) and (f)

<sup>15</sup> CFSA Section 7 (3)(k), (l), (m) and (n)

<sup>16</sup> CFSA Section 7 (3)(g), (h), (i), (j) and (o)

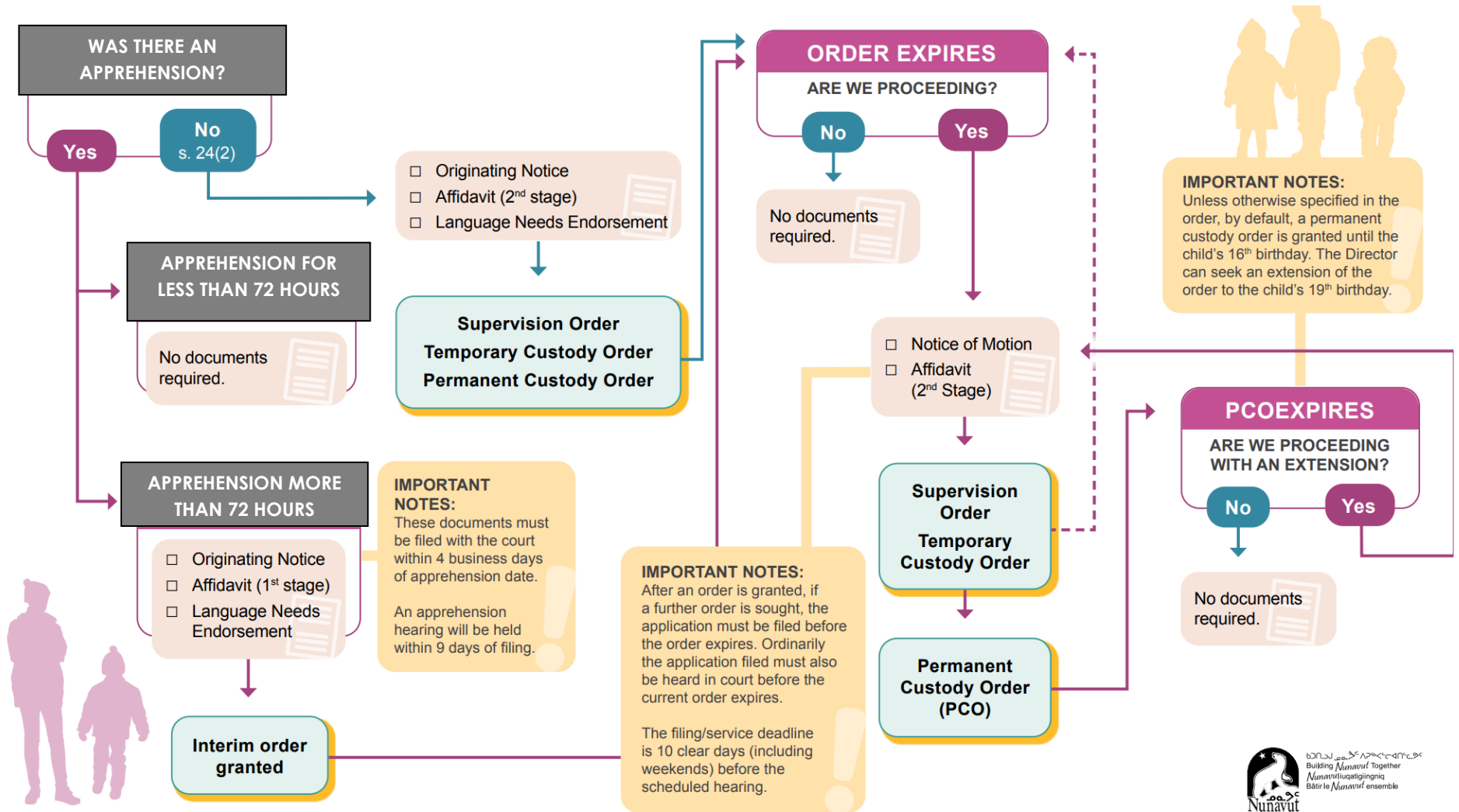
<sup>17</sup> CFSA Section 7 (3)(n)

<sup>18</sup> CFSA Section 7 (3)(a), (b), (e), (f) and (p)



ᑭᓄᓂᓄᓂᓄ ᓂᓄᑦ ᓃᓄᓂᓄᑦ ᓂᓄᑦ ᓂᓄᓂᓄᑦ  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

Figure 2.1 Child Protection Flowchart



ᑲᑎᑎᑭᑦ ᑭᑦᑎᑦ ᑭᑦᑎᑦ ᑭᑦᑎᑦ  
 Building Nunavut Together  
 Nunavut liuqatigiingniq  
 Bâtir le Nunavut ensemble



# CRITICAL GAPS IN COLLECTING DATA ON REFERRALS

It is essential to acknowledge the significant challenges we have encountered in obtaining precise figures regarding referrals for child abuse and neglect during this period. While the Client Information System (CIS) had served its purpose, it is evident that it might not exhibit optimal data integrity as its structure and organization had presented challenges in capturing and analyzing this critical data.

Additionally, the decentralized nature of data management within the regional offices, where reliance on the Y: Drive<sup>19</sup> and physical documentation was prevalent, further compounded the issue. Moreover, the high turnover rate and staffing vacancies within our division hindered our ability to maintain consistent data collection practices. These factors, combined with the absence of standardized protocols for tracking referrals, created substantial gaps in our data. The launch of the Family Wellness new data and electronic case management system, Matrix, in November 2023 will allow for more accurate data collection.

**For this reporting period of 2022-2023, we received approximately 2504 referrals.<sup>20</sup>**

**Our current approach deviates from the previous methodology in that it does not rely on estimations or averages. While in previous years, such methods were employed to provide numerical representations, this year's strategy prioritizes precision and accuracy. As a result, we are not able to provide an analysis of**

<sup>19</sup> The Y: Drive, often referred to as the network drive or shared network folder, is a common method used in organization for storing and accessing files and documents. It typically represents a networked storage location accessible to multiple users within an organization. In our context, the Y: Drive was utilized as a centralized repository for documenting and storing critical information, providing a shared platform for collaborative work and data management within the Department of Family Services.

<sup>20</sup> This excludes Kivalliq and South Qikiqtaaluk.



trends over the last few years due to different data collection metrics and methods, rendering any analysis potentially inaccurate.

This shift reflects our commitment to enhancing our data management systems to ensure greater precision and accuracy in future reporting, thereby fulfilling our mandate to protect and support the well-being of children and youth in Nunavut. We will delve deeper into our ongoing efforts to address these persistent issues in *Section 7 of this report: Strategies for a Way Forward*.

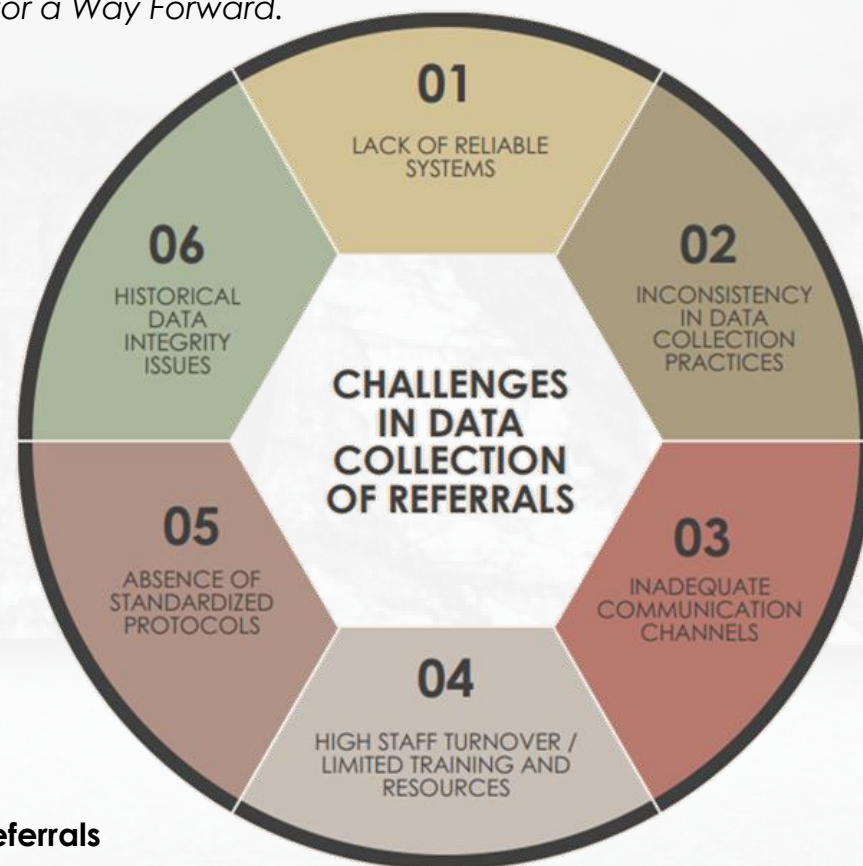


Figure 2.2 Challenges in Data Collection of Referrals



ᐅᑎᑎᑭᑦ ᐅᑎᑎᑭᑦ ᐅᑎᑎᑭᑦ  
Building Nunavut Together  
Nunavut liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le Nunavut ensemble

## APPREHENSION AND RETURN OF CHILD APPREHENDED

**In Nunavut, the apprehension and return of a child are governed by the Child and Family Services Act (CFSA). This legislation outlines the procedures and criteria for apprehending a child under paragraph 10(1)(a) or 2(a) or subsection 11(1) of the Act when their safety and well-being are at risk.**

According to the CFSA, a child may be apprehended if there are reasonable grounds to believe that they are in need of protection due to abuse, neglect, or other circumstances that jeopardize their safety (*Section 7(3)(a) to (r) of the Act details situations in which a child needs protection*). This decision is typically made by child protection authorities, such as child protection workers or law enforcement officers, in consultation with legal guidelines and regulations.

Once a child has been apprehended, efforts are made to ensure their prompt and safe return to their family or caregivers, whenever possible and in the best interests of the child, in accordance with *Section 12 of the CFSA*. This process may involve conducting assessments, providing support services, advocating for support services from community partners, and implementing intervention plans to address the underlying issues that lead to the apprehension.

The CFSA emphasizes the importance of family preservation, culturally appropriate interventions, incorporating Inuit Societal Values and family reunification whenever it is deemed safe and appropriate, recognizing the significance of maintaining familial connections and stability for the child's overall well-being.

## PLAN OF CARE COMMITTEE AND AGREEMENT

**The Plan of Care Committee and Agreement in Nunavut** are embedded into **the Child and Family Services Act**.

This legislation provides the legal framework for the establishment and operation of these crucial mechanisms aimed at ensuring the safety and well-being of children and youth in the territory.

**Under Section 14 of the Act**, specific procedures are outlined for the establishment of a Plan of Care Committee. This includes the requirement for the Child Protection Worker to provide notice to individuals with lawful custody of the child, as well as the child themselves if they are aged 12 or older. Additionally, information about the procedures for developing a Plan of Care Agreement and seeking court intervention must be provided.

**Section 15 of the Act** defines the composition of the Plan of Care Committee, which includes representatives from various sectors such as **Child and Family Services Committee members and Child Protection Workers**. The committee's responsibilities, **outlined in Section 19**, include developing comprehensive care plans and entering into a plan of care agreement that addresses the child's needs in areas such as living arrangements, education, social and recreational activities, and other relevant support services.

Furthermore, the Act provides provisions **for the review and extension of Plan of Care Agreements**, as well as procedures for termination in cases where the child's safety is at risk, as stipulated in **Sections 20, 21, and 22**. These sections ensure that the Plan of Care Committee operates within a clear legal framework, with mechanisms in place to safeguard the rights and well-being of children and youth in Nunavut.

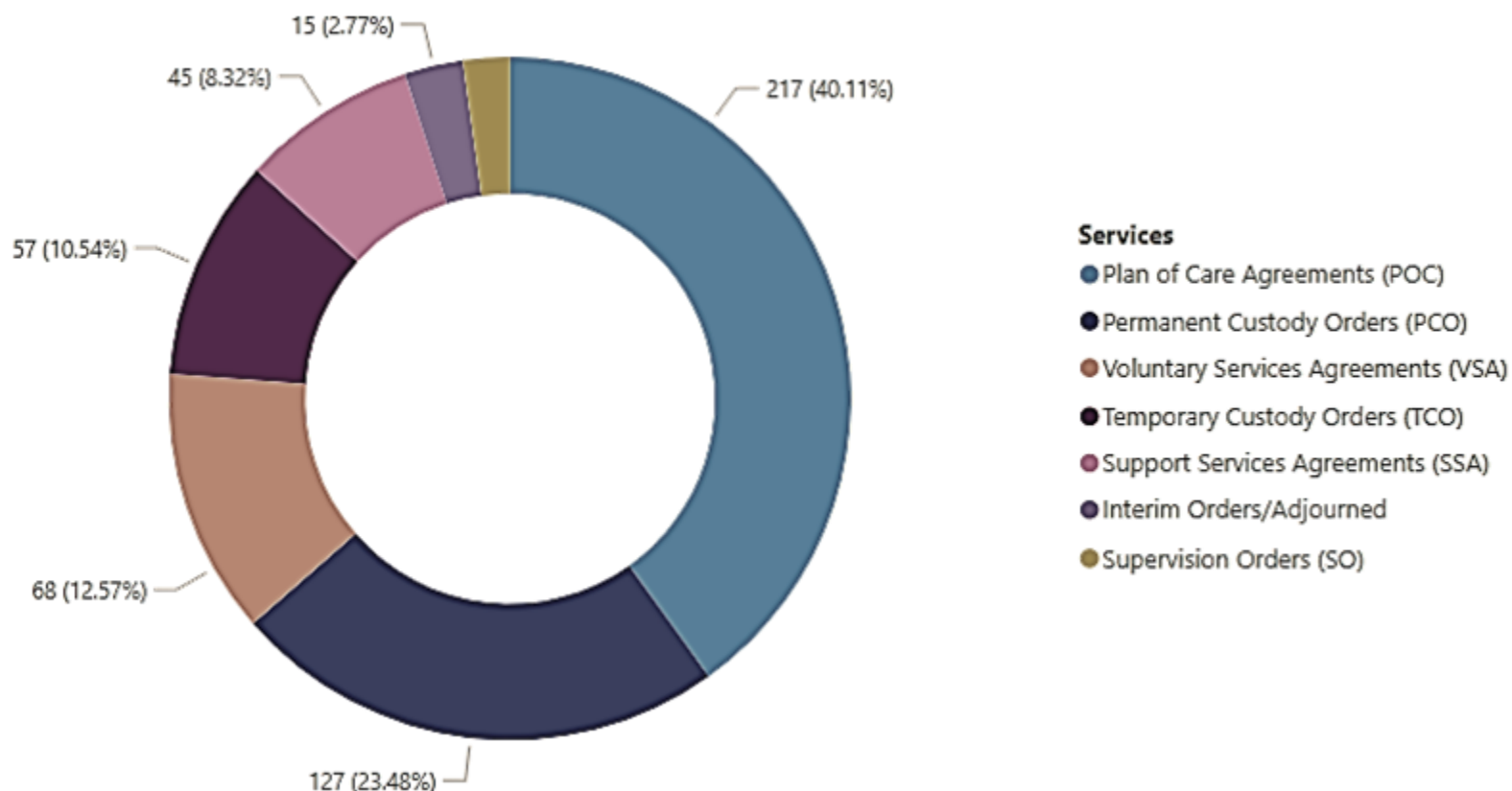


ᑭᑕᑎᑎᑎᑎ ᑭᑎᑎᑎᑎ ᑎᑎᑎᑎᑎᑎ  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

## STATISTICAL DATA ON CHILDREN AND YOUTH RECEIVING SERVICES IN 2022-2023

Between April 1, 2022,  
and March 31, 2023,

There were **545**  
children and youth who  
received prevention and  
protection services  
through the Offices of  
Family Wellness in the four  
regions of Nunavut,  
**Kitikmeot, Kivalliq,  
North and South  
Qikiqtaaluk.**



**Figure 2.3 Percentage of  
Children and Youth Receiving  
Services during FY 2022-2023<sup>21</sup>**

<sup>21</sup> There were 12 (2,21%) children and youth receiving services through Supervision Orders (SO) for this reporting period. Please note that the figures for Voluntary Services Agreements (VSAs) and Support Services Agreements (SSAs) differ from the those previously reported to the Representative for Children and Youth Office (RCYO) with regards to their 2022-2023 request. The discrepancy arises from the inclusion of 8 youth aged 16-18 in the VSAs count, which was inaccurate as VSAs are exclusively for children aged 0 to 15 years.

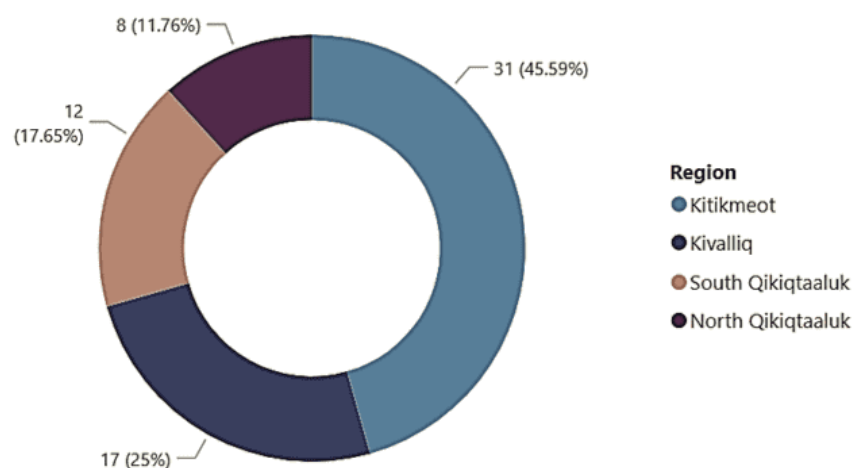


ᐅᑎᑎᑎᑎᑎ ᐅᑎᑎᑎᑎᑎ ᐅᑎᑎᑎᑎᑎ  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

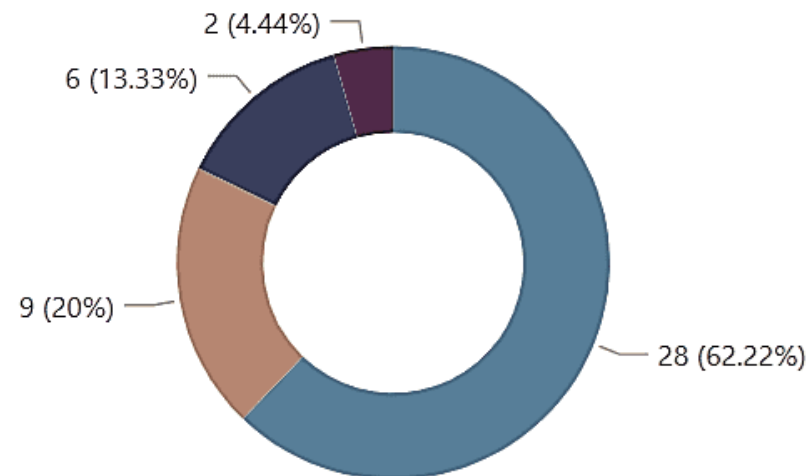


## PREVENTION SERVICES

**Figure 2.4 Percentage of Children<sup>22</sup> Receiving Services through Voluntary Services Agreements (VSA) Per Region**



**Figure 2.5 Percentage of Youth<sup>23</sup> Receiving Services through Support Services Agreements (SSA) Per Region**



**FY 2022-2023 experienced a 17% and 87,5% increase of children and youth respectively, receiving services through VSAs and SSAs, from 58 children and 21 youth in FY 2021-2022.**

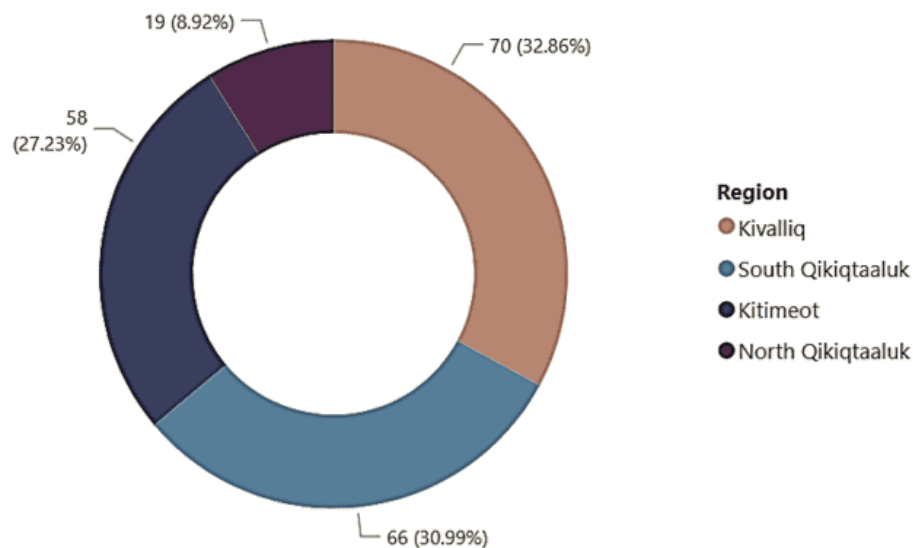
**In 2022-2023, the region of KITIKMEOT accounted for 62% of CHILDREN/YOUTH receiving services through Voluntary Services Agreements and Support Services Agreements.**

<sup>22</sup> From the age of 0 to 15, as defined by the CFSA.  
<sup>23</sup> From the age of 16 to 18, as defined by the CFSA.



### PROTECTION SERVICES

Figure 2.6 Percentage of Children<sup>24</sup> Receiving Services through Plan of Care Agreements (POC) Per Region



**213 CHILDREN** and **4 YOUTH** received services through Plan of Care Agreements, with the region of **KIVALLIQ** experiencing the highest percentage, at **34%**.

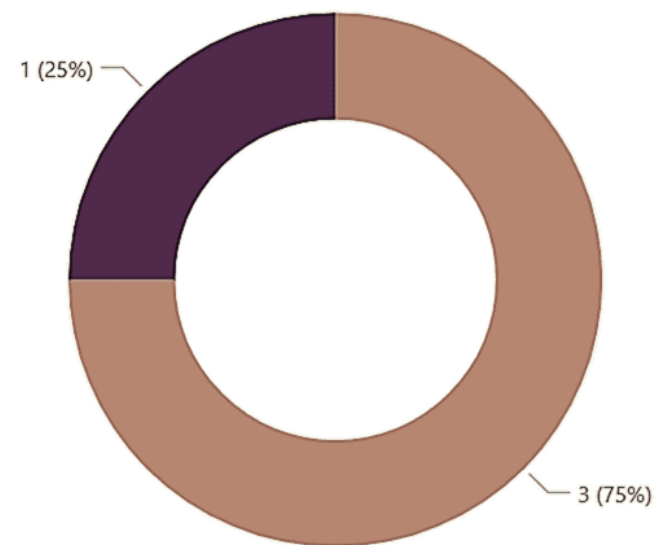
<sup>24</sup> From the age of 0 to 15, as defined by the CFSA.  
<sup>25</sup> From the age of 16 to 18, as defined by the CFSA.



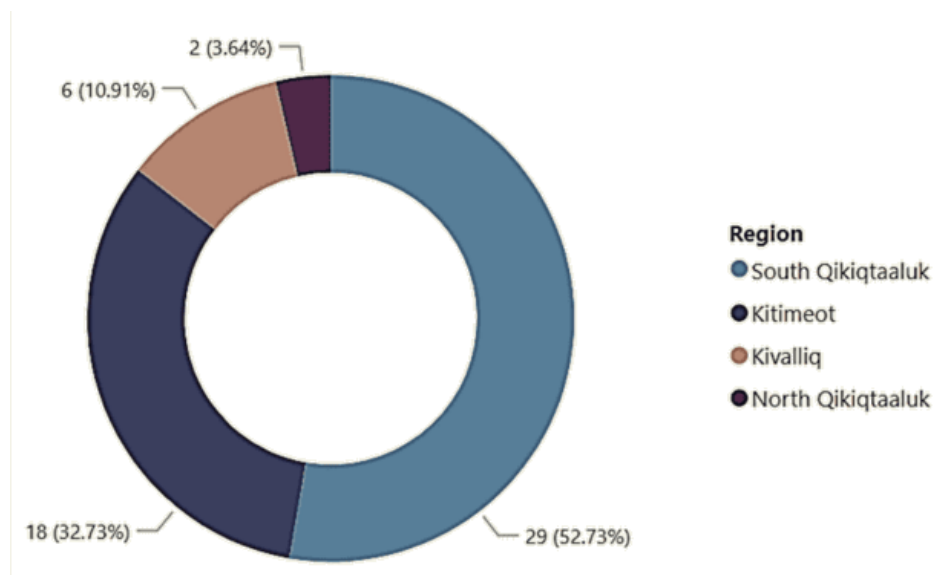
ᑭᓄᓂᑦ ᑭᓄᓂᑦ ᑭᓄᓂᑦ ᑭᓄᓂᑦ  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

**A 37% increase** of children/youth received services through Plan of Care Agreements from **134 children/youth** in FY 2021-2022

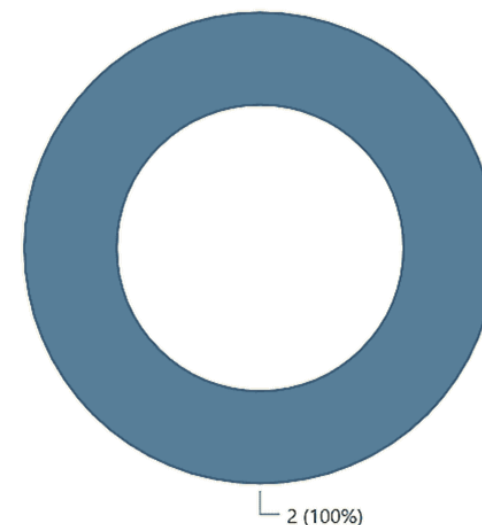
Figure 2.7 Percentage of Youth<sup>25</sup> Receiving Services through Plan of Care Agreements (POC) Per Region



**Figure 2.8 Percentage of Children<sup>26</sup> Under the Care of the Director through Temporary Custody Orders (TCO) Per Region**



**Figure 2.9 Percentage of Youth<sup>27</sup> Under the Care of the Director through Temporary Custody Orders (TCO) Per Region**

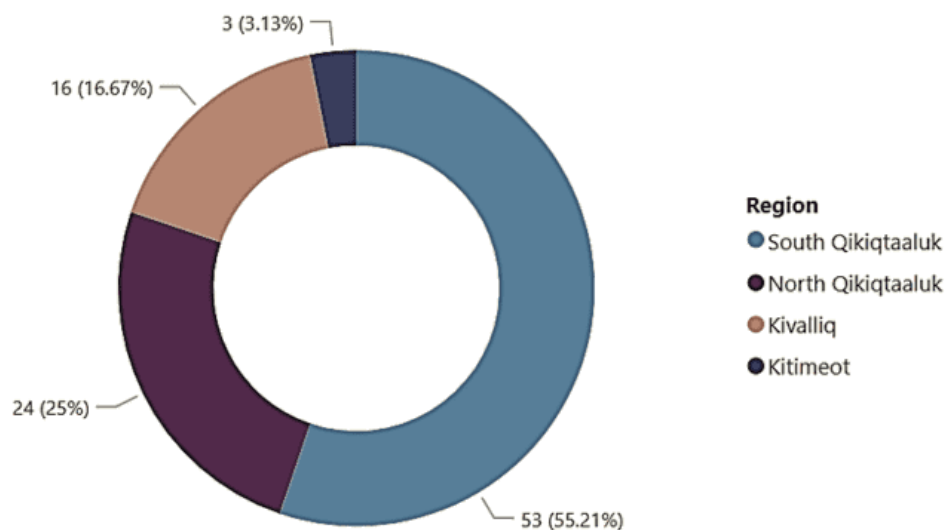


A **21%** increase of CHILDREN/YOUTH under the care of the Director through Temporary Custody Orders (TCO) from FY 2021-2022, with **SOUTH QIKIQTAAALUK** accounting for more than **50%**.

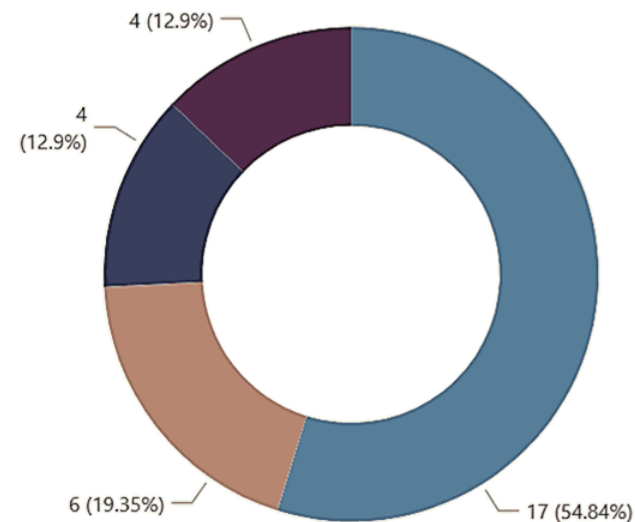
<sup>26</sup> From the age of 0 to 15, as defined by the CFSA.  
<sup>27</sup> From the age of 16 to 18, as defined by the CFSA.



**Figure 2.10 Percentage of Children<sup>28</sup> Under the Care of the Director through Permanent Custody Orders (PCO) Per Region**



**Figure 2.11 Percentage of Youth<sup>29</sup> Under the Care of the Director through Permanent Custody Orders (PCO) Per Region**



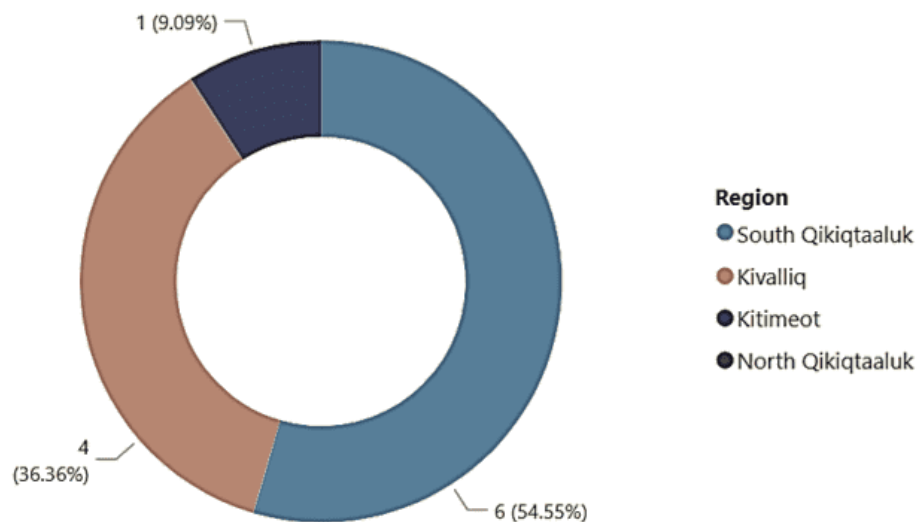
<sup>28</sup> From the age of 0 to 15, as defined by the CFSA.  
<sup>29</sup> From the age of 16 to 18, as defined by the CFSA.



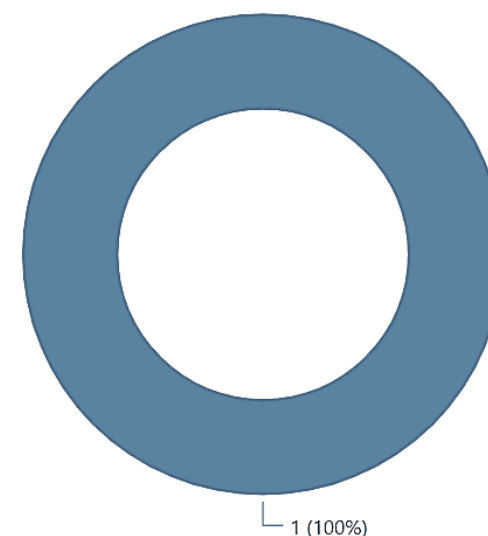
ᐅᑦᑎᑦᑎᑦ ᐅᑦᑎᑦᑎᑦ ᐅᑦᑎᑦᑎᑦ  
 Building Nunavut Together  
 Nunavut liuqatigiingniq  
 Bâtir le Nunavut ensemble

IN 2022-2023, **127** CHILDREN/YOUTH were under the care of the Director through Permanent Custody Orders (PCO), a **38%** increase from FY 2021-2022, with **SOUTH QIKIQTAALUK** at **55%**.

**Figure 2.12 Percentage of Children<sup>30</sup> Receiving Services through Supervision Orders (SO) Per Region**



**Figure 2.13 Percentage of Youth<sup>31</sup> Receiving Services through Supervision Orders (SO) Per Region**



<sup>30</sup> From the age of 0 to 15, as defined by the CFSA.  
<sup>31</sup> From the age of 16 to 18, as defined by the CFSA.



ᐅᑕᑎᑕᑕᑕ ᐅᑕᑎᑕᑕᑕ ᐅᑕᑎᑕᑕᑕ ᐅᑕᑎᑕᑕᑕ  
 Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
 Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

IN 2022-2023, **12** CHILDREN/YOUTH received services through Supervision Orders (SO), while FY 2021-2022 and 2020-2021 had **9** and **6** CHILDREN/YOUTH respectively. **SOUTH QIKIQTAAALUK** accounted for **58%** of children/youth under SOs.

## SECTION 3: FAMILY WELLNESS RESOURCES



Photo Credit: Isaac Demeester | Unsplash

## IN-TERRITORY FOSTER CARE

Preserving the bond between a child or youth and their family, community, and cultural roots remains a fundamental priority, especially in situations necessitating out-of-home care interventions. While extended family care may not always be feasible, foster care serves as a viable alternative. **Foster parents undergo a rigorous application procedure to assess their suitability prior to the child/youth being placed with them, that includes a criminal record and vulnerable sector check.** Upon approval, they receive comprehensive assistance and financial aid from the Family Wellness Office in their communities.

**Support provided by Family Wellness Office encompasses various essential services and allowances tailored to the unique requirements of foster families.** These encompass bi-weekly financial assistance, clothing allowances, respite and childcare provisions, homemaker services as well as virtual training workshops for foster parents. By offering these resources and support systems, FCS aims to ensure that foster caregivers can effectively meet the needs of children and youth under their guardianship, promoting their well-being and development in a nurturing environment.

**It is noteworthy that extended family members are often prioritized as foster caregivers, given their inherent connection to the child and their community, and are financially supported under the foster care rates.** This approach ensures that children in foster care maintain their cultural ties within their home communities, fostering a supportive environment for their overall well-being.

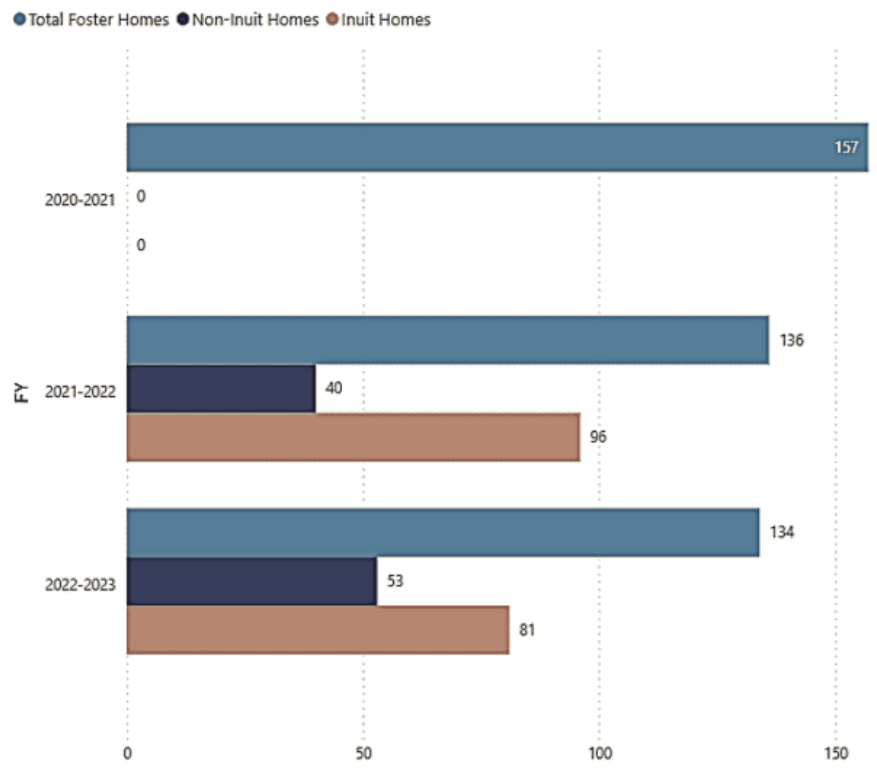


ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑭ ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑭ ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑭ ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑭ  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

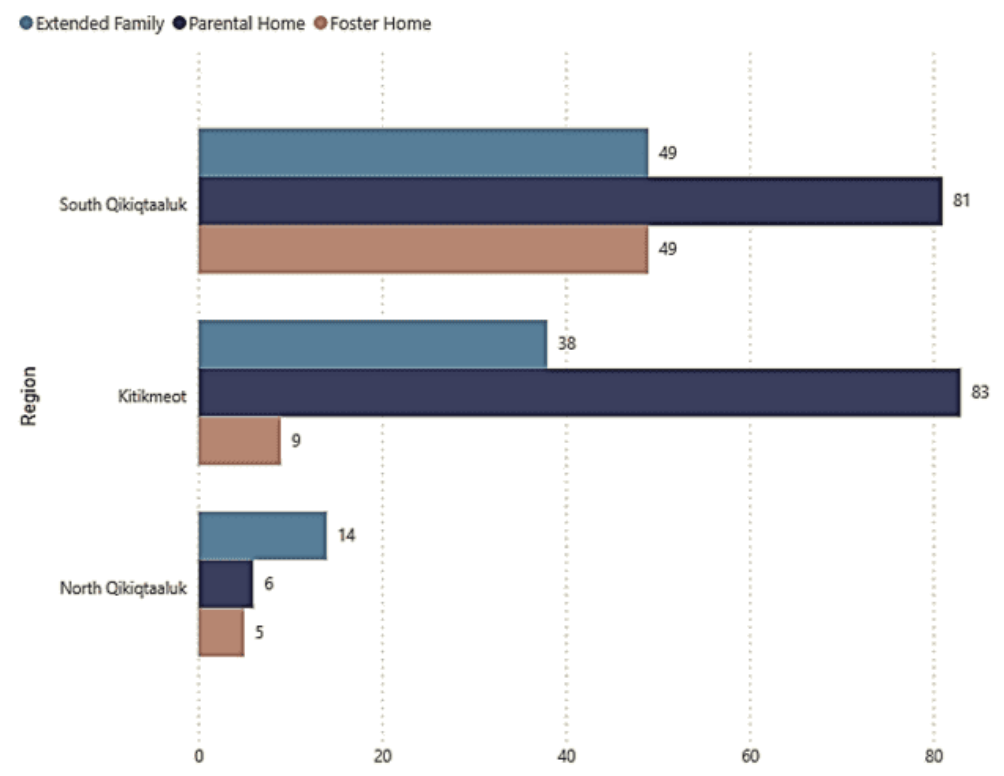
In 2022-2023, we had  
**134** FOSTER HOMES  
in the territory of Nunavut, with  
**81** Inuit homes and **53**  
non-Inuit homes.

**IN 2022-2023, SOUTH QIKIQTAALUK** had the highest percentage of CHILDREN/YOUTH receiving services while residing with their parents and extended family members, at **48%**.

**Figure 3.1 Comparison of Inuit and Non-Inuit Foster Homes in 3 Fiscal Years, 2020-2021, 2021-2022, and 2022-2023.<sup>32</sup>**



**Figure 3.2 Comparison of Children/Youth Receiving Services in Placement Types<sup>33</sup> Per Region, March 31, 2023.<sup>34</sup>**



<sup>32</sup> No data on Inuit and Non-Inuit Homes for FY 2020/21  
<sup>33</sup> Includes Extended Family, Parental Home, and Foster Home  
<sup>34</sup> No data for Kivalliq Region during this reporting period



**17% decrease of FOSTER HOMES**  
 from FY 2020-2021 to FY 2022-2023



## IN-TERRITORY GROUP HOMES

Residential care facilities, including group homes, play a vital role in providing round-the-clock care and support for children and youth whose needs extend beyond what can be provided within a family or foster family setting. These facilities serve as safe places for children and youth facing complex challenges or those requiring specialized care and attention. **In-territory group homes offer a structured environment where children can receive support tailored to their individual needs, encompassing emotional, physical, and developmental aspects of their well-being.**

Within these group homes, a team of trained professionals works collaboratively to address the diverse needs of each child or youth under their care through various programs guided by IQ Principles and ISV. This holistic and multidisciplinary approach ensures that comprehensive support is provided, including access to therapeutic interventions, educational assistance, life skills development, and recreational activities. By fostering a supportive and stable environment, group homes aim to empower children and youth to overcome obstacles, build resilience, and achieve positive outcomes in their lives.

While there were 3 group homes<sup>35</sup> in Nunavut for FY 2022-2023, it is important to note that in February 2023, the Department of Family Services closed its **Ilagiittugut Girls' Group Home in Iqaluit** and terminated its contract with the Nova Scotia-based company Shift.

<sup>35</sup> Includes Boys' and Girls' Group Homes in Iqaluit and Naja Isabelle in Chesterfield Inlet.



ᑭᑕᑎᑭᑭ ᑭᑕᑎᑭᑭ ᑭᑕᑎᑭᑭ  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

In 2022-2023, we had

**3** GROUP HOMES

providing support and services to

children and youth in **2**  
communities of Nunavut,

**Iqaluit & Chesterfield  
Inlet.**

## OUT-OF-TERRITORY (OOT) SPECIALIZED PLACEMENTS

The Family Wellness Office in each community delivers a variety of specialized services tailored to address the unique needs of children, youth, and families in Nunavut. The primary approach involves community-based interventions, prioritizing local resources and partnerships to provide treatment services for children and youth. When local options are insufficient to meet the needs of a child or youth, Family Wellness team works collaboratively with community stakeholders to explore alternative solutions, including out-of-territory specialized services, in consultation with the child/youth, and family as appropriate.

The Out-of-Territory Specialized Services Placements cater to children, youth, and families whose requirements exceed the capacity of local programs and services. These specialized services extend to locations in provinces such as **Ontario, Alberta, and Saskatchewan**. Each child or youth undergoes a comprehensive assessment to determine their specific care and service needs, following which they are matched with appropriate services tailored to their individual requirements.

### CRITICAL GAPS

It is imperative to recognize that the division faces significant barriers, including staffing vacancies and resource constraints, which have contributed to gaps in our standards and procedures for out-of-territory specialized placements. However, we are committed to addressing these issues head-on and implementing comprehensive reforms to ensure the safety and well-being of children and youth in our care remain our top priority.



ᑭᐅᑎᑭᑭᑦ ᑭᐅᑎᑭᑭᑦ ᑭᐅᑎᑭᑭᑦ  
 Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
 Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

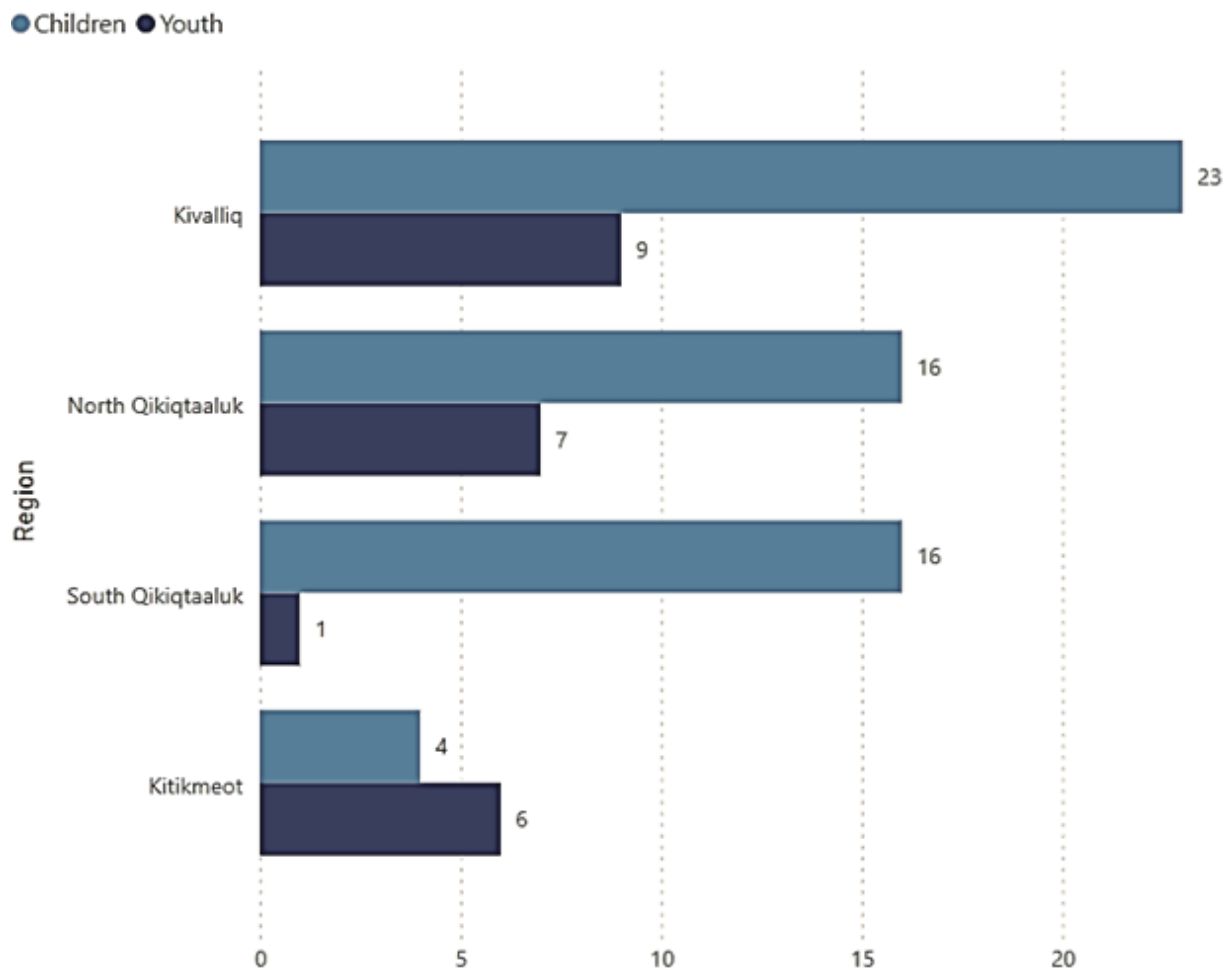
As of March 31, 2023,

**82**

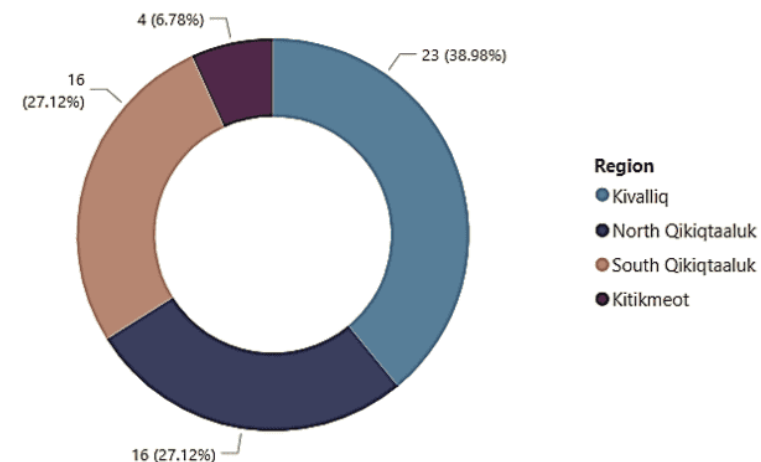
**CHILDREN/YOUTH**  
 received support in  
**out-of-territory specialized**  
**placements,**

representing **15%** of  
 children/youth receiving  
 services, a **5%** increase from  
**FY 21/22. KIVALLIQ** had the  
**highest percentage of**  
**children/youth in OOT**  
**placements in 22-23, at 39%.**

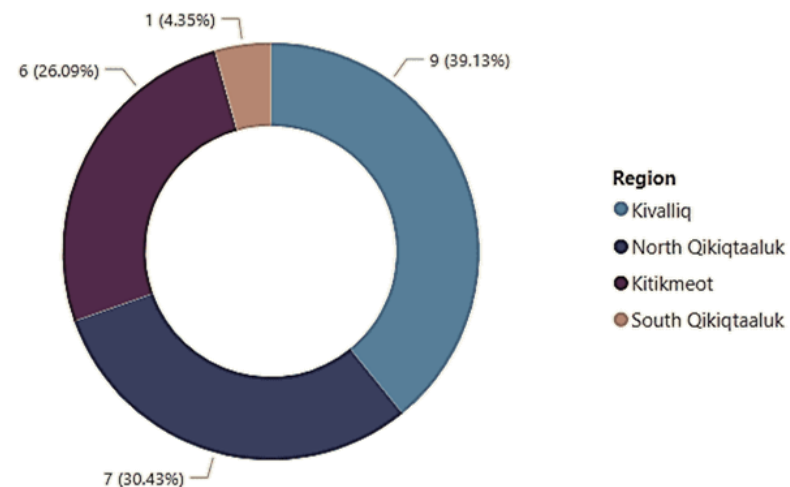
**Figure 3.3 Statistical Data on Children and Youth Receiving Services in Out-of-Territory Specialized Placements Per Region During FY 2022-2023**



**Figure 3.4 Percentage of Children in Out-of-Territory Placements Per Region, March 31, 2023**

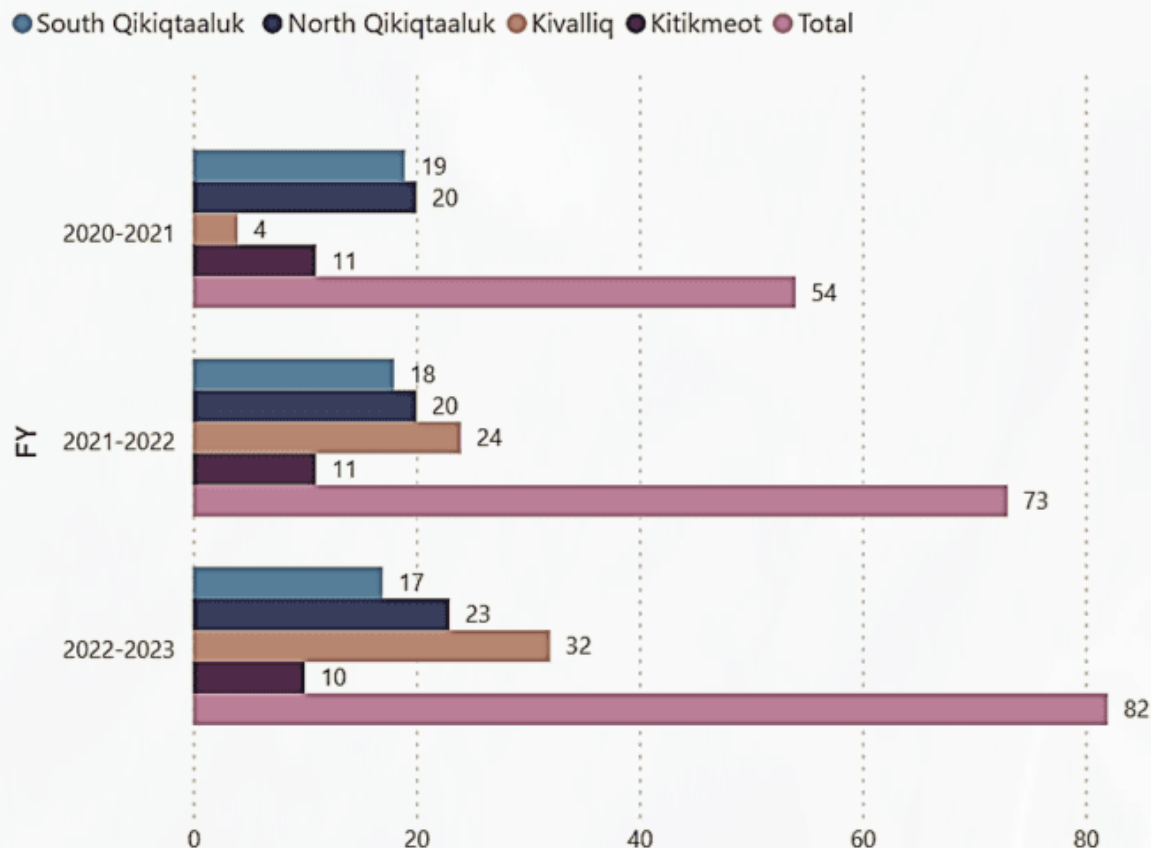


**Figure 3.5 Percentage of Youth in Out-of-Territory Placements Per Region, March 31, 2023**



ᑲᑕᑎᑕᑭ ᑭᑭᑭ ᑭᑭᑭ ᑭᑭᑭ ᑭᑭᑭ ᑭᑭᑭ  
 Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
 Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

**Figure 3.6 Comparison of Children/Youth Receiving Services in Out-of-Territory Placements Per Region in 3 Fiscal Years, 2020-2021, 2021-2022 and 2022-2023.**



The NUMBER of CHILDREN/YOUTH in OUT-OF-TERRITORY PLACEMENTS has changed significantly over the 3 reporting periods, with a notable **51%** increase from FY 2020-2022, with KIVALLIQ experiencing a surge from only **4** children/youth in FY 20-21 to **32** in FY 22-23, likely due to a lack of resources in the communities.



## FAMILY SAFETY & SOCIAL ADVOCACY INITIATIVES

### FAMILY SAFETY

Since February 2022, the Coordinator for Family Safety Initiatives (CFSI), position in Iqaluit has been staffed indeterminately. During this period, the coordinator has actively engaged with other government agencies and Inuit organizations within the territory of Nunavut, to establish new working relationships while reinforcing existing ones. **Roundtable discussions on Family Safety Initiatives have been conducted in Iqaluit, Cambridge Bay, and Kugaaruk.** These discussions centered on enhancing collaboration among departments and organizations to deliver effective services and resources to Nunavummiut.

Moreover, the CFSI, alongside the Coordinator of Preventing Violence Against Children and Youth Initiatives, traveled to Cambridge Bay in the winter of 2022 to facilitate a 10-day youth outreach program. This program was designed for a group of youth identified as facing challenges in coping and healing.

<sup>36</sup> YWCA Agvikk Nunavut – Qimaavik Women's Shelter

<sup>37</sup> Arnat Qimavik Women's Shelter

<sup>38</sup> Tammaaqvik Women's Shelter

<sup>39</sup> Kataujaq Society Safe Shelter

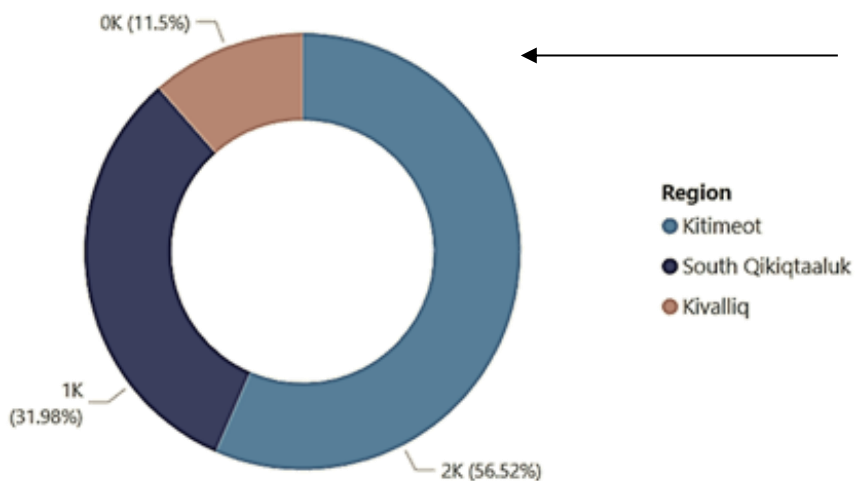
<sup>40</sup> Crisis Intervention Centre



ᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ ᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ ᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭᑭ  
 Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
 Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

The Department of Family Services provides funding for **5** emergency family safety shelters in Nunavut, located in Iqaluit,<sup>36</sup> Cambridge Bay,<sup>37</sup> Kugaaruk,<sup>38</sup> Rankin Inlet<sup>39</sup> and Kugluktuk.<sup>40</sup> Annual shelter reviews ensure that operations are culturally relevant, safe, and responsive to residents' needs.

Figure 3.7 Comparison of Nights Children Spent at Family Safety Shelters Per Region



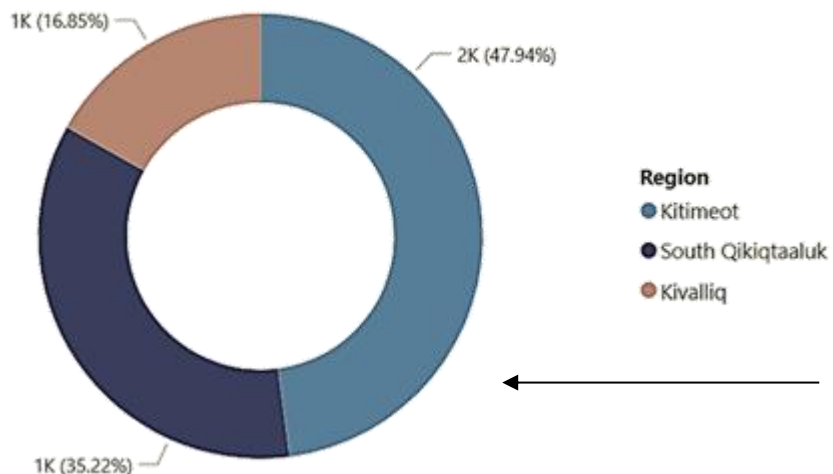
In 2022-2023,  
YOUNG PEOPLE (age 0 to 18) spent

a total of **7,959**

**NIGHTS** at

**Family Safety Shelters in Nunavut.**

Figure 3.8 Comparison of Nights Youth Spent at Family Safety Shelters Per Region



ᐅᐱᑎᑭᑦ ᐱᑭᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦᑲᑦ  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

## SOCIAL ADVOCACY →

### Preventing Violence Against Children and Youth Initiatives (PVACYI)

The Preventing Violence Against Children and Youth initiatives (PVACYI) have prioritized collaborative efforts with numerous agencies and organizations, both within and outside the territory, to proactively address violence prevention across Nunavut for youth and children. This involves program implementation through Social Advocacy Initiative Funding.

#### Overview of PVACYI in 2022-2023

The funded initiatives by the Department of Family Services in 2022-2023 yielded positive outcomes across Nunavut communities. **In Iqaluit, Pinnguaq Association's digital storytelling and content creation workshops** empowered youth with digital literacy skills while preserving Inuit storytelling traditions. **33 participants from Arviat, Pangnirtung and**

**EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES** by providing tools, resources, and fostering self-reliance.

**In 2022-2023, the Department of Family Services funded approximately**

**\$900,000<sup>41</sup>**

**for diverse social advocacy initiatives in Nunavut.**

<sup>41</sup> In Canadian dollars



ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑦ ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑦ ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑦ ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑦ  
 Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
 Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

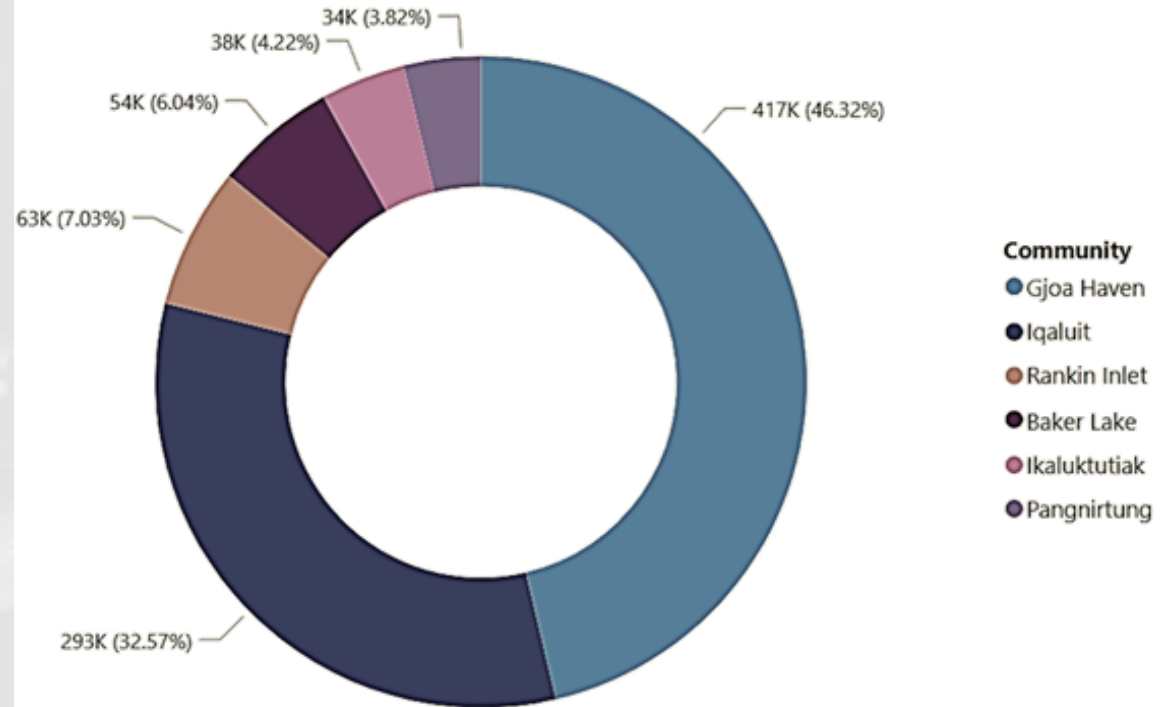
**Qikiqtarjuaq** not only honed their abilities in video editing, web-based media and coding but also shared Inuit-specific narratives, fostering cultural pride, and enhancing employability.

**In Pangnirtung, the On-the-Land Program** provided invaluable experiences for youth, connecting them with traditional activities like fishing and hunting. These activities not only instilled a sense of cultural identity but also provided a reprieve from daily challenges, fostering trust and a sense of belonging among participants. Overall, these initiatives exemplify the Department's commitment to youth empowerment, cultural preservation, and community well-being in Nunavut. **During the on-the-land program facilitated by Peter Kilabuk from Peter's Expediting and Outfitting (PEO), a 17-year-old participant said, "I wish I could stay out here longer to enjoy the land and environment."**



ᑭᐳᓂᑭᐳᓂᑭᐳᓂ ᑭᐳᓂᑭᐳᓂᑭᐳᓂ  
 Building Nunavut Together  
 Nunavut liuqatigiingniq  
 Bâtir le Nunavut ensemble

**Figure 3.9 Percentage of PVACYI Allocated Fundings for Approved Programs in 6 Communities of Nunavut**





The **Isaksimagit Inuusirmi Katujjiqatigiit Embrace Life Council (Iikelc)** successfully implemented the **March Sobriety program** in 2023, to provide a safe and creative space for the residents of **Rankin Inlet, NU**. The program aimed to promote sobriety, suicide prevention, and healthy relationships through various activities such as crafting, beading, wall hanging, and lino printing. **With over 200 participants, more than 80% Inuit and 55% between the ages of 16 and 35**, the program achieved positive outcomes, including the creation of a welcoming safe space, the development of self-confidence and positive self-esteem, and the establishment of new friendships and positive relationships within the community. The program also received overwhelming support from local businesses and organizations, fostering positive connections between community members and promoting the Iikelc as a valuable community resource. Through the March Sobriety program, Iikelc successfully provided a platform for residents to express their emotions in a positive and healthy way.

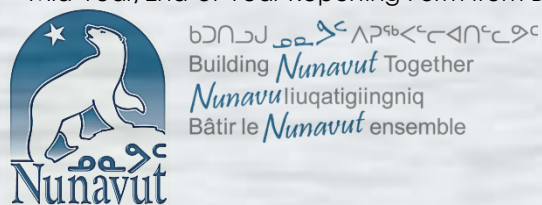
Also facilitated by Iikelc is the **Youth Videography Workshop in Iqaluit**, centered on storytelling, script development, camera operation, lighting techniques, post-production, and film presentation. The program aimed to empower **15 young individuals, both Inuit and non-Inuit**, with the skills and knowledge to create compelling short films. The films created by the students addressed important issues within the Inuit community, such as mental health, substance abuse, and climate change. The program also emphasized practical skills, community engagement, networking opportunities, and access to online resources related to filmmaking.

In Baker Lake, the **Youth Outside Looking in Dance** initiative saw participants grow in confidence and become admired role models within their community. The program's success extended beyond dance routines, as participants embraced leadership roles and continued to innovate creatively. “[The Youth] made **new friends and feel like part of a team that spans the entire country. They not only learnt new skills and developed confidence but made new lifelong friends they will keep in touch with through social media.**”<sup>42</sup>

Similarly, the **Nutagat Music Program in Gjoa Haven** provided a platform for youth to express themselves through music, fostering community engagement and offering a positive outlet for self-expression.

In **Ikaluktutiak**, funding was allocated to the hamlet to assist in maintaining the operation of the existing **Youth Shelter**.

<sup>42</sup> Mid-Year/End-of-Year Reporting Form from Baker Lake Youth Outside Looking in Dance, Date of Report, September 12, 2023



## **SECTION 4: EXTENDED SERVICES FOR YOUNG ADULTS**



Photo Credit: Isaac Demeester | Unsplash

## EXTENDED SUPPORT AGREEMENTS (ESA)

Youth in care have the entitlement to receive positive assistance, access to resources, and secure accommodation as they navigate the transition to adulthood, fostering their ability to flourish in their adult lives. **Extended Support Agreements (ESAs) are available to young individuals who were under the permanent care and custody of the Statutory Director of Child and Family Services upon reaching their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday until they turn 26.**

These agreements are voluntary arrangements offering supplementary support, both financial and non-financial, assistance with service navigation, and connections to additional support and services aimed at aiding the youth's transition to adulthood. Young people have the autonomy to opt in or out of ESAs as they see fit.

Consequently, an ESA empowers the young person to determine when and how they require support. Youth aged between 15 and 18 must be provided with the necessary assistance to formulate a transition plan that encompasses both short-term and long-term objectives, along with the resources required to establish a robust support network as they approach their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday.

**The ESA provides consistent, dependable support during this crucial stage of a young person's life, promoting their autonomy and encouraging self-determination while offering guidance.**

**In 2022-2023,**

**35** YOUNG ADULTS

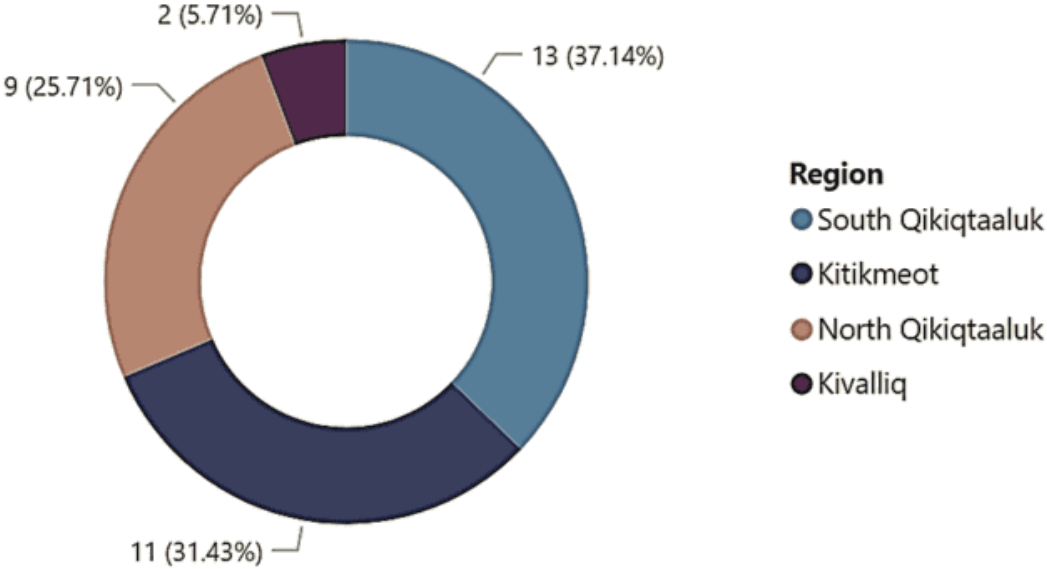
**received services through Extended Support Agreements (ESA), with 4 having aged out of care.**



ᐅᑦᑎᐱᑦᑕ ᐅᑦᑎᐱᑦᑕ ᐅᑦᑎᐱᑦᑕ  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

Photo by courtesy of Ashlea Biles

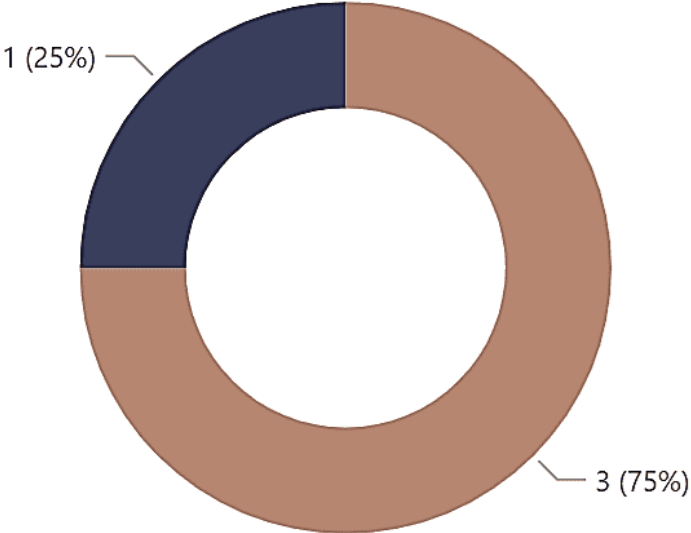
**Figure 4.1 Percentage of Young Adults Receiving Services through ESAs Per Region, March 30, 2023**



**21%** increase of **YOUNG ADULTS** receiving services through **Extended Support Agreements (ESA)** from **FY 21/22 to 22/23.**



**Figure 4.2 Percentage of Youth Who Have Aged Out of Care, March 30, 2023**



**COURTESY SERVICES** in this context could encompass a range of support measures, such as assisting with the coordination of care, facilitating communication between the adult and service providers, arranging transportation, ensuring continuity of medical and therapeutic treatments, and advocating for the individual's rights and well-being. Essentially, it involves providing necessary assistance and care to individuals under guardianship, ensuring their needs are met even when they are placed outside of their home territory. However, it is important to note that while we assist with various aspects of care, the OPGT remains the primary case managers for their clients, overseeing their overall well-being and decision-making processes.

Additionally, we may refer young adults, receiving Extended Support Agreements (ESAs) to the OPGT by completing a comprehensive adult guardianship referral package. This referral often occurs when youth age out of care and transition into adulthood, who demonstrate diminished capacity for decision-making in areas such as personal care, treatment decisions and legal decisions.

“Guardianship refers to the legal process whereby the Court appoints a person (either a family member of the Public Guardian) to support an adult who has been assessed as having diminished capacity for decision-making. Services provided by the Office of Public Guardian are governed by Nunavut’s Consolidated Guardianship & Trusteeship Act (GTA).”<sup>43</sup>

<sup>43</sup> Office of the Public Guardian, *Adult Guardianship in Nunavut*, 2015, Nunavut.

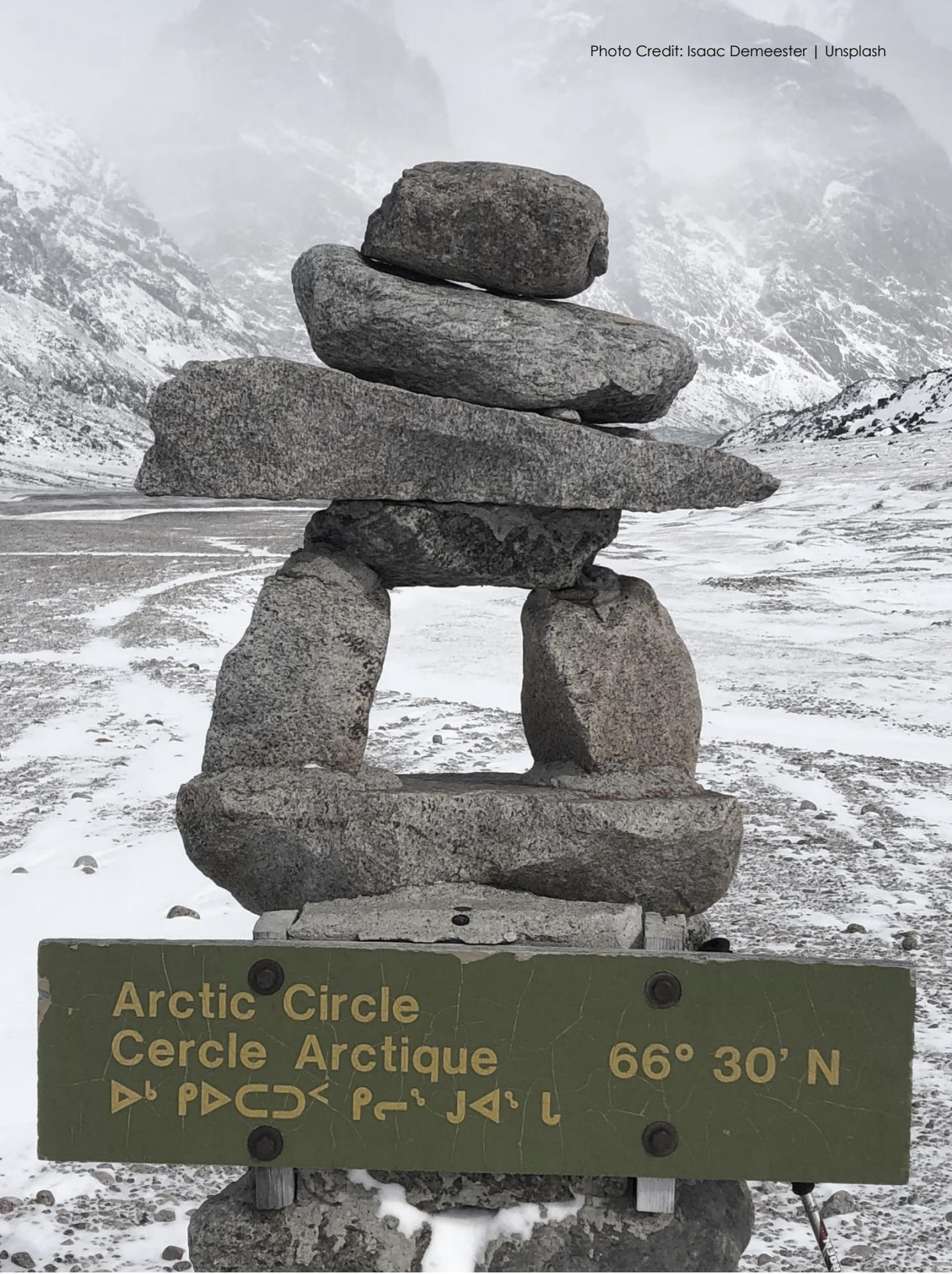


ᑭᓄᓂᓄᓄ ᓄᓄᓄᓄ ᓄᓄᓄᓄ ᓄᓄᓄᓄ ᓄᓄᓄᓄ ᓄᓄᓄᓄ ᓄᓄᓄᓄ  
 Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
 Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

## INTERSECTION WITH THE OFFICE OF PUBLIC GUARDIAN AND TRUSTEE

In addition to our legislative responsibilities, we also support the Office of Public Guardian and Trustee (OPGT) in locating and acquiring specialized adult services in and out of territory.

In 2022-2023, we provided courtesy services to a total of 90 adults under guardianship, with 88 individuals in out-of-territory placements and 2 adults receiving support in Nunavut.



## SECTION 5: ADOPTION PROCEDURES & PRACTICES

## OVERVIEW OF THE NUNAVUT ADOPTION ACT AND THE ABORIGINAL CUSTOM ADOPTION RECOGNITION ACT

The **Nunavut Adoption Act**, enacted in 1998, outlines the legal procedures and requirements for adoption within the territory. This legislation governs the process of adopting a child or youth, ensuring that it is conducted in a manner that prioritizes the best interests of the child while also protecting the rights of all parties involved. The Act provides guidelines for eligibility to adopt, the consent process, the role of adoption agencies, and the legal implications of adoption, among other aspects. It aims to facilitate the creation of permanent, loving families for children in need of adoption while upholding the principles of transparency, fairness, and accountability.

In addition to the Nunavut Adoption Act, the territory also recognizes the **Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act (ACARA)**, enacted in 1995. This legislation acknowledges the cultural traditions and practices of Indigenous communities in Nunavut regarding adoption. Aboriginal custom adoption, rooted in cultural values and kinship ties, is recognized as a valid form of adoption under this Act. It allows Indigenous families to formalize adoptions according to their customs and traditions, ensuring that children are raised within their cultural community. The Act provides a legal framework for recognizing and validating aboriginal custom adoptions, thereby preserving, and respecting Indigenous cultural heritage and family structures.

Both the Nunavut Adoption Act and the Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act play crucial roles in regulating adoption processes within Nunavut. Together, they provide a comprehensive legal framework that balances the need for child welfare and protection with respect for cultural diversity and Indigenous rights. These Acts reflect the territory's commitment to supporting safe, loving, and culturally appropriate adoption practices that benefit children, birth families, and adoptive families alike.



ᐅᑲᑲᑲᑲᑲᑲᑲᑲ ᐅᑲᑲᑲᑲᑲᑲᑲᑲ  
 Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
 Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

## ADOPTION PATHWAYS

### DEPARTMENTAL ADOPTIONS

Departmental adoptions pertain to situations where a child under the permanent care of the Director of Child and Family Services is legally adopted through a court order. Within the Department of Family Services in Nunavut, the decision to grant Permanent Custody Order, which leads to adoption, can stem from two main circumstances:

When a parent voluntarily relinquishes their child to a Child Protection Worker with the intention of adoption, all necessary consents required by the Director are provided (as per Section 37(1) of the Child and Family Services Act). When a child is apprehended (as outlined in Section 33 of the Child and Family Services Act) and subsequently placed under the permanent care and custody of the Director of Child and Family Services.

### INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

When child is adopted from a country other than Canada. Intercountry adoptions are regulated by the Nunavut Adoption Act, **the Nunavut Inter-country Adoption Act (Hague Convention), federal immigration laws, and the laws of the child's country of origin.**

### PRIVATE ADOPTIONS

Private adoptions occur outside the purview of the Director of Child and Family Services when the child or youth intended for adoption is not under their care. These adoptions are facilitated independently between the birth parent(s) and adoptive parent(s) and must adhere to the stipulations outlined in the Adoption Act. While children and youth may be placed with adoptive families residing outside of Nunavut, it is imperative that the adoption process complies with the regulatory standards set forth by both Nunavut and the receiving province or territory.

### REGISTERED CUSTOM ADOPTIONS

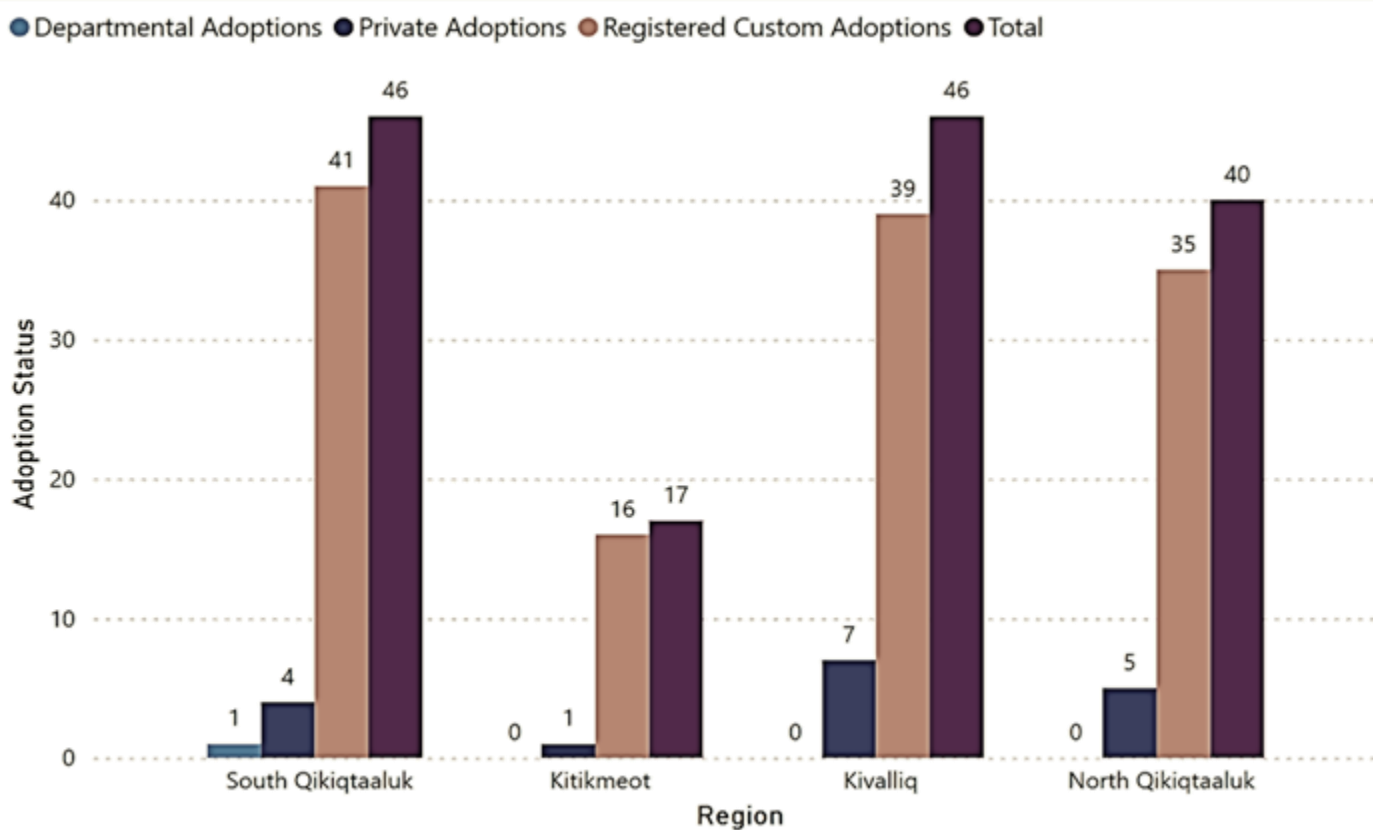
Custom adoptions within Nunavut are overseen by Adoption Commissioners situated in communities. The department extends assistance to these commissioners in accordance with the **Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act (ACARA)**. While the department itself does not engage directly in the custom adoption process, it assumes responsibility for ACARA, which encompasses tasks such as appointing, training, and compensating Adoption Commissioners. Governed by this legislation, custom adoptions are formally registered without judicial involvement and legal proceedings, facilitated by designated Custom Adoption Commissioners.



ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑭ ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑭ ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑭ  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble



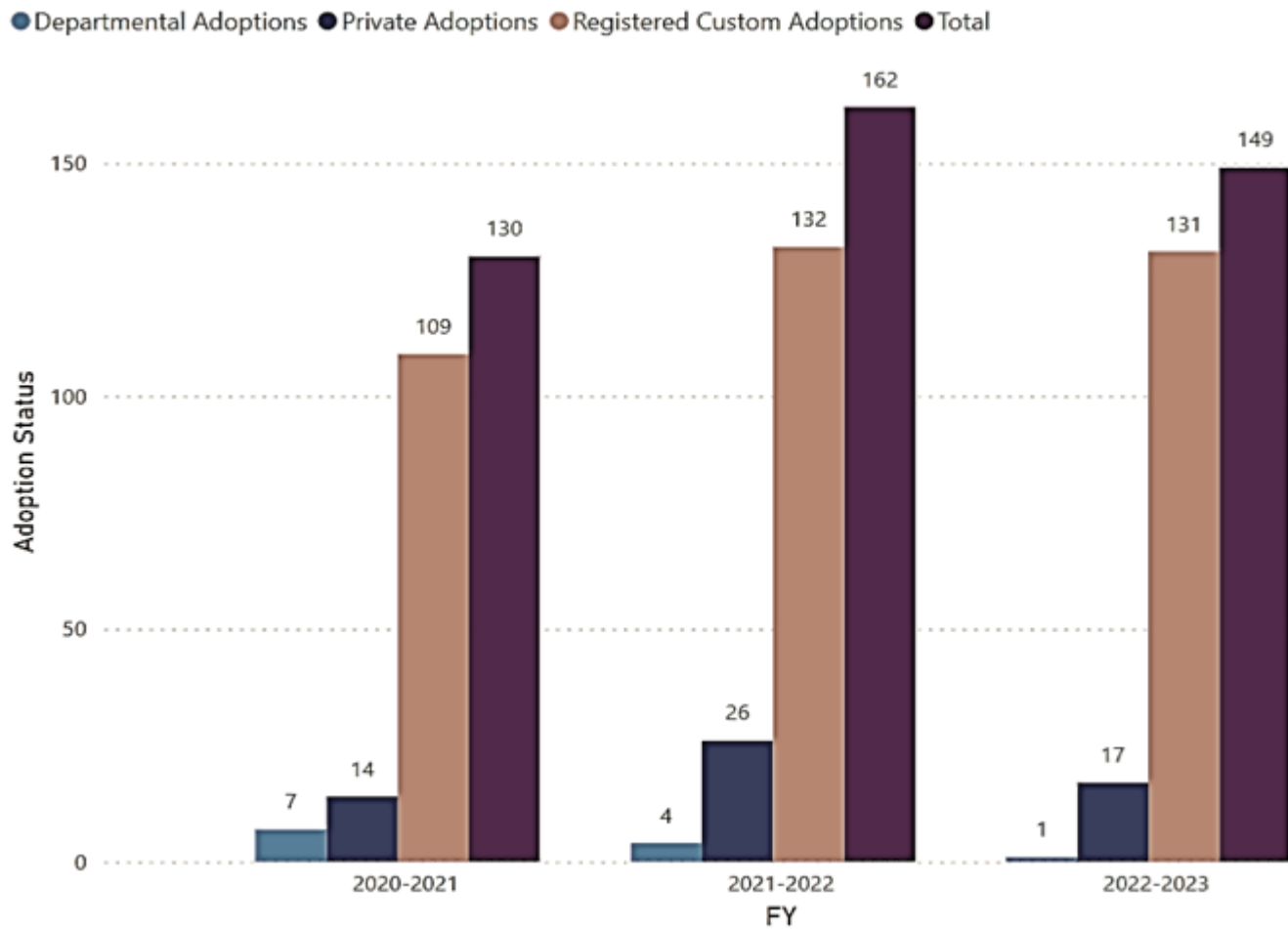
Figure 5.1 Statistical Data on Adoption Status Per Region between April 1, 2022, and March 30, 2023



ᐅᑕᑎᑕᑭ ᐅᑭᑦ ᐱᑭᑭᑦᑕᑦᑕᑦᑕᑎᑦᑕᑭᑦ  
 Building *Nunavut* Together  
 Nunavut liuqatigiingniq  
 Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

In 2022-2023, there were **149** ADOPTIONS in the territory of Nunavut, with more than **60%** from *Kivalliq and South Qikiqtaaluk*.

Figure 5.2 Comparison of Adoptions in 3 Fiscal Years 2020-2021, 2021-2022, and 2022-2023



**FY 2021-2022 had the highest number of ADOPTIONS in Nunavut.**

**DEPARTMENTAL ADOPTION** has experienced a marginal 5% decline over these 3 reporting periods, while **PRIVATE ADOPTIONS** and **REGISTERED CUSTOM ADOPTIONS** reached their peaks in 21-22, respectively accounting for 16% and 81% of successful adoptions.



ᑕᑕᑎᑕᑎᑕ ᑕᑕᑎᑕᑎᑕ ᑕᑕᑎᑕᑎᑕ  
 Building Nunavut Together  
 Nunavut liuqatigiingniq  
 Bâtir le Nunavut ensemble

## SECTION 6: KEY ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2022-2023

### FAMILY SAFETY AND SOCIAL ADVOCACY INITIATIVES

In the span of 2022-2023, significant strides were made in strengthening family safety and community support initiatives in Nunavut. One notable achievement was the continuing operation of 5 family safety shelters spread across 5 communities in Nunavut. **Another shelter is currently under development in Pond Inlet and expected to be operated in late Fall of 2023.** These shelters serve as vital places for families who are fleeing abuse and family violence.

Moreover, **10 social advocacy initiatives across Nunavut** were funded by the Department of Family Services to promote resiliency, increase capacity building, and strengthen support systems for children, youth, and families within communities. These efforts aimed to create nurturing environments conducive to growth and development, fostering resilience and solidarity among communities. →

### ACCESSIBILITY TO CHILDCARE SERVICES

**Recognizing the pressing need for accessible childcare services, efforts were made to establish daycare services by renovating vacant space in the office and transforming it into a licensed childcare facility for families receiving support within the Iqaluit office of Family Wellness.** This initiative addressed the glaring gap in community daycare availability, providing vulnerable families with access to essential support so they can balance work and family responsibilities.



### QIKIQTAAALUK

#### Iqaluit

**Pinnguaq Association** - Computer Refurbishment Program / Digital Storytelling and Content Creation Workshop

**Ikaksimagit Inuusirmi Katujjiqatigiit Embrace Life Council** - Youth Mentorship Film Program

#### Pangnirtung

**PEO Services** - On-the-Land Program (Peter Kilabuk, CEO)

### KIVALLIQ

#### Baker Lake

**Hamlet of Baker Lake** - Outside Looking In (OLI)

#### Rankin Inlet

**Ikaksimagit Inuusirmi Katujjiqatigiit Embrace Life Council** - Youth Programming

### KITIKMEOT

#### Gjoa Haven

**Hamlet of Gjoa Haven** - Youth Film Mentorship Program / Nutagat Music Program / Cabin Building Program

#### Cambridge Bay

**Hamlet of Cambridge Bay** - Youth Shelter

## CHILD WELFARE FROM A CULTURALLY AWARE AND DECOLONIAL APPROACH

Furthermore, a significant shift was implemented in the approach to child welfare case management. Departing from traditional institutional settings, a more culturally appropriate environment was embraced for family access visits, centered on Inuit Qaujimaqatugangit (IQ) Principles. Activities such as visits to sewing centers or engaging in outdoor activities on the land were introduced, like the purchase of canvas tents, camping equipment and other supplies to support family visits on the land, enriching the familial and cultural experience while promoting holistic well-being.

## NEW INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Additionally, an important milestone was achieved with the initiation of a working group tasked with developing a new informational management system, named Matrix. **This system, set to streamline processes, holds the promise of enhancing efficiency in managing information related to child welfare, marking a crucial step towards strengthened data accuracy and integrity, hence improved program service delivery and informed decision making.**

These accomplishments underscore a dedicated commitment to prioritizing family wellness, advocating for community support, providing accessible care services, and embracing culturally sensitive practices in service delivery, ultimately fostering stronger, more resilient communities in Nunavut.



ᑲᑕᑎᑕᑕ ᓂᓂᓂ ᓂᓂᓂ ᓂᓂᓂ  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

**Departing from traditional institutional settings, a MORE CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE ENVIRONMENT was initiated for FAMILY ACCESS VISITS, centered on INUIT QAUJIMAJATUQANGIT (IQ) PRINCIPLES. Activities such as visits to sewing centers or engaging in outdoor activities on the land were introduced, enriching the FAMILIAL AND CULTURAL EXPERIENCE while promoting HOLISTIC WELLNESS.**

## REPRESENTATIVE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH OFFICE IN NUNAVUT (RCYO)

The protocol between the Representative for Children and Youth Office (RCYO) and the Government of Nunavut (GN), specifically the Department of Family Services (DFS), outlines a structured approach for communication and information sharing.

It is designed to ensure that the rights and interests of children and youth in Nunavut are well-protected and that the RCYO can effectively fulfill its statutory duties as outlined in the **Representative for Children and Youth Act (RCYA)**.

When RCYO staff initiates contact for case-specific information about a child or youth, it serves as a notice of review. The DFS is required to respond **within two business days** to confirm receipt and designate a staff member to provide the requested information. This information must be furnished **within five business days**, with the possibility of an extension, if necessary, communicated to the RCYO prior to the deadline. The RCYO may request expedited information in urgent cases, and the Department of Family Services is expected to accommodate such requests to the best of their ability.

**Our collaboration with the Representative of Children and Youth Office (RCYO) has been instrumental in shaping our approach to safeguarding the well-being of children and youth in Nunavut.**

**The RCYO's 2022-2023 Annual Report has been a cornerstone document, offering systemic recommendations to the Department of Family Services. These recommendations serve as valuable insights into areas where improvements can be made to enhance the support and services provided to children, youth, and families across the territory.**



ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑭ ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑭ ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑭ ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑭ  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

Additionally, the RCYO's report sheds light on individual advocacy issues that have been brought to our attention through our collaborative efforts. These issues represent real-life challenges faced by children and youth, highlighting the importance of our ongoing partnership with the RCYO in advocating for their rights and best interests.

In 2022-2023, the RCYO received **55** new individual advocacy cases, involving the Department of Family Services.

**KEY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT FROM THE RCYO RECOMMENDATIONS 2022-2023** →

1. Develop policies for children under the Director's care.
2. Establish transition plans for non-urgent placement changes.
3. Update the *Children and Family Services (CFS) Standards and Procedures Manual* to include Umingmak Centre referral procedures and *Child Abuse and Neglect Response Agreement (CANRA)*.
4. Address safety concerns promptly within 60 days.
5. Provide comprehensive training for all staff on *legislative responsibilities*.
6. Take corrective action for policy non-adherence.
7. Include ongoing family support policies in manual.
8. Implement documentation standards for referrals in the Client Index System (CIS).
9. Ensure headquarters receives copies of all referrals for reporting purposes.



ᑲᑲᑎᑲᑲ ᑲᑲᑲᑲᑲ ᑲᑲᑲᑲᑲᑲᑲᑲᑲᑲ  
 Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
 Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble

## SECTION 7: STRATEGIES FOR A WAY FORWARD

**Addressing Staff Vacancies:** To mitigate staff vacancies, we will engage a third-party company to facilitate the recruitment of indeterminate positions. This initiative aims to reduce staff vacancies across the territory and increase positions to provide support in high-needs communities, ensuring consistent and adequate staffing levels to meet the demands of our programs.

**Enhancing Information Management:** We are in the final stages of planning for the implementation of the new information management system, Matrix, scheduled for rollout in the Fall of 2023. This system will streamline data collection, storage, and retrieval processes, centralizing our data management system, and improving efficiency and accuracy in our operations.

**Revising Out-of-Territory Protocols:** Additionally, we are revising protocols for out-of-territory placements in collaboration with relevant stakeholders and Inuit organizations, ensuring that placement decisions align with best practices and the well-being of children and youth.

**Reviewing Standards and Procedures:** A comprehensive review of the Family Wellness Standards and Procedures Manual is in the early stage of strategic development. This review will ensure that our policies and procedures are up to date, aligned with legislative requirements, and reflective of best practices in child welfare. By enhancing our regulatory framework, we aim to strengthen child protection measures and improve the well-being of our children, youth, and families.

**Continued Support for Family Safety and Social Advocacy Initiatives:** We remain committed to providing funding for family safety and social advocacy initiatives in Nunavut communities, prioritizing prevention services and interventions that support healthy family dynamics and positive youth development. By investing in these initiatives, we aim to create safer environments for children and youth, empower families to thrive, and reduce the need for more intensive interventions in the future.



ᑭᓄᑦᑭᓄᑦ ᑭᓄᑦᑭᓄᑦ  
Building Nunavut Together  
Nunavut liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le Nunavut ensemble

## APPENDIX: GLOSSARY

### **Apprehension**

The legal act of taking a child into custody by child protection authorities due to concerns for their safety or well-being.

### **Apprehension less than 72 hours**

A temporary custody situation lasting less than 72 hours, typically used in urgent situations where immediate protection is necessary.

### **Child**

A person who has not reached the age of majority, typically defined as under 16 years old.

### **Child Emotional Harm**

The infliction of emotional harm or psychological trauma on a child by a caregiver or other person in a position of trust.

### **Child Exposure to Family Violence**

A situation where a child witnesses or is exposed to domestic violence or other forms of family violence.

### **Director of Child and Family Services**

An official responsible for overseeing child welfare and family support services within a jurisdiction or organization.

### **Extended Support Agreement**

An agreement providing additional support and services beyond the age of majority for youth transitioning out of the child welfare system.

### **Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit**

Traditional Inuit knowledge, values, and cultural practices that guide decision-making and behavior within Inuit communities.

### **Inuit Societal Values**

Core principles and beliefs held by Inuit communities, shaping social norms, relationships, and governance structures.

### **Plan of Care Agreement**

A formal agreement outlining the care, support, and services to be provided to a child or youth under the supervision of child welfare authorities.

### **Plan of Care Committee**

A committee responsible for developing and overseeing the implementation of a plan of care for a child or youth involved with child welfare services.

### **Supervision Order**

A legal order requiring supervision of a child by child welfare authorities or other designated individuals.

### **Support Services Agreement**

An agreement outlining the support services to be provided to a child, youth, or family by child welfare authorities or other service providers.



ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑭ ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑭ ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑭ  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble



**Child Physical Harm**

The intentional infliction of physical harm or injury upon a child by a caregiver or other person in a position of trust.

**Child Protection Order**

A legal order issued by a court to protect a child from abuse, harm, or neglect, typically involving restrictions on contact with certain individuals or removal from a harmful environment.

**Child Sexual Harm**

The sexual exploitation or molestation of a child by a caregiver or other person in a position of trust.

**Community Social Services Worker**

A professional who provides social services and support to individuals and families within a specific community.

**Neglect**

The failure to provide adequate care, supervision, or support for a child's basic needs, including food, shelter, education, and medical care.

**Out-of-territory Specialized Placements**

Placements of children or youth in specialized care facilities or services located outside the territory of Nunavut.

**Permanent Custody Order**

A legal order granting permanent custody of a child to the Director of Child and Family Services, typically issued by a court.

**Temporary Custody Order**

A legal order granting temporary custody of a child to the Director of Child and Family Services, typically issued by a court.

**Voluntary Services Agreement**

An agreement entered voluntarily by a family to receive support services.

**Youth**

A person who has reached adolescence but has not yet reached the age of majority, typically defined as between the ages of 13 and 18.



ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑭ ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑭ ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑭ ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑭ ᑭᑎᑎᑭᑭ  
Building *Nunavut* Together  
*Nunavut* liuqatigiingniq  
Bâtir le *Nunavut* ensemble