**Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts Hearings on the 2019-2020 Annual Report of the Representative for Children and Youth** Igaluit, Nunavut June 22, 2021

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## **Members Present:**

Tony Akoak Pat Angnakak Pauloosie Keyootak Adam Lightstone John Main, Chair Calvin Pedersen David Qamaniq Emiliano Qirngnuq Allan Rumbolt Craig Simailak

### **Staff Members:**

Stephen Innuksuk Siobhan Moss

# **Interpreters**:

Andrew Dialla Philip Paneak Jacopoosie Peter Blandina Tulugarjuk

# Witnesses:

Jane Bates, Representative for Children and Youth

Charlotte Borg, Director of Student Achievement

Rebecca Hainnu, Associate Deputy Minister of Education

Arijana Haramincic, Executive Director of Family Wellness

David Korgak, Manager of Individual **Advocacy Services** 

Victoria Madsen, Assistant Deputy Minister of Health

Stephen Mansell, Deputy Minister of Justice

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Yvonne Niego, Deputy Minister of Family Services

Colleen Stockley, Deputy Minister of Health

>>Committee commenced at 9:00

Chairman (Mr. Main)(interpretation): Good morning, my colleagues and witnesses. Good morning. We are having a hearing as the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Public Accounts on the Representative for Children and Youth's 2019-2020 Annual Report.

To our colleague, Mr. Qamaniq, good morning. I'm glad that you are able to join us this morning. I didn't recognize you yesterday, as you were not present. We are glad that you are present this morning.

Representative, good morning. We will start with your report on (interpretation ends) page 10. (interpretation) I'll say it in English. (interpretation ends) We're going to start off where we left off yesterday, which was in the section of the representative's report titled "About Our Office" and that's pages 10 to 12. I understand that all the departmental witnesses are the same as yesterday, so there is no need to go through that again and we will start the meeting. I'll open the floor to questions from Committee Members under "About Our Office."

I can start off the questioning if that's the Committee's preference. For the representative, maybe if you could describe for the Committee what role the elder advisors play in terms of guiding the work of your office. Ms. Bates.

**Ms. Bates**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good morning. We have a public nomination process and elder advisors serve a two-year

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term. We actually were in the process this past fiscal year of nominating new elders to advise us.

In terms of what they do for our work, elder advisors input work of our office. Individual advocacy specialists can consult with them and do consult with them about individual advocacy cases. They have reviewed some of our documents. They have reviewed quite a bit of our documentation. As I mentioned in the opening comments, the elder advisors consulted with us in regard to how Inuit societal values and child rights work together, and there is reference of that work inside the annual report.

In terms of our reading books, they have also reviewed those particular books, *Mosesie Speaks Up* and also *Annie and Uqi Play*. Also, we consult with them on a regular, I would say, should be more regular basis on Inuit societal values and how we incorporate them into our work. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the representative's report on page 11, there is reference to Inuit culture. Mr. Chairman, as fathers, we take care of children too but not like mothers and as fathers, we are not as knowledgeable about babies as mothers are. In terms of our Inuit culture, I would like to know how the representative feels about this statement. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Bates.

**Ms. Bates**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to and I just want to clarify the statement is that fathers are not as

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knowledgeable about babies and children as the mothers are. Am I correct? With respect to that, I can't speak to what knowledge men or fathers have with respect to children generally, but what I would say is that equally, fathers and mothers want the best interest of their children and want to raise their children in their traditions and culture. I think, again, equally, fathers play an important role in the raising of children.

In terms of whether the mothers are more knowledgeable about child rearing, I don't think I can make a statement with respect to whether or not they're more knowledgeable. I think there are many fathers that may be raising children on their own, independently of having a mother present, but I think, equally, they play an important role in raising a child. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the next one, the voice of the child, the one right below on the same page about the fact that the children need to have a voice and be able to say what other people are doing to them or what other children or adults are doing to them. I would like to get more information. I would like to ask the Department of Education to get more information about the voice of the child. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Bates.

**Ms. Bates**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the fundamental principles of our office is to ensure that the voice of the child is heard. Again, I believe it centres on decision-making through discussion and consensus.

When we talk about ensuring that the voice of

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the child is present, it is really kind of the foundation of our office in terms of when we're looking at cases, when we're looking at systems, we want to make sure that we can see that the voice of the child is present and that it has been considered. Just because a child has rendered an opinion or gives out "I would like this to happen" doesn't mean necessarily that's what's going to happen, but that opinion or that voice should be heard.

With respect to if they're having difficulties, again, it's ensuring that children are heard if they are being harmed, if there are concerns, or if they require services, that is really the fundamental basis, to ensure that when we're reviewing matters, when we are looking at systems, we can see that the voice of the child is present. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to ask this question to the Department of Education. What is being done within the schools towards this voice of the child? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Hainnu.

**Ms. Hainnu** (interpretation): Thank you. With respect to your question, we have some good responses to it. I would want Charlotte to add to this.

First of all, education in Nunavut is changing and improving. Quite recently some communities have only had education for 50 to 60 years. With Inuit culture in the schools, the culture is not the same at home as it is in the schools with education as it is going through a change. What we call student achievement is there now and in 2014 there was one PY and now in 2021 we have many

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We're always open for children; caretakers. We are always welcoming them to come to the school and tell stories and talk to the children and youth about what they do so that the youth and children can know who is available and what kind of help is available.

If you don't mind, I would like Charlotte Borg to respond further. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Borg.

Ms. Borg (interpretation): Thank you. Good morning. (interpretation ends) The best way to elicit the voice of the child, the voice of the youth lies within the relationship between the school staff and the families. The Department of Education continues, as it has done historically, to foster that critical relationship between school and community and to continue to be mindful to strengthen the relationship and to work together with community level partners, district education authorities, to empower the voice of the child and youth.

Specific actions the department has taken in recent years; in 2016 we started holding an annual conference called Nipivut, which means our voice, specifically for youth in grades 9 and up. We have delivered that conference annually in partnership with the Canadian Red Cross. In 2016 we held it in Igaluit, later in 2016 in Rankin Inlet, then in Cambridge Bay, and we're now repeating the circuit, so we just had it in Pangnirtung this year. We opened the conference in Pangnirtung and held it remotely via sessions for students in South Qikiqtani and Grise Fiord because that community missed the conference last year due to weather. We have had the office of the representative do some

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sessions, I can't recall this year, but I know that in 2016 and in the following years about child advocacy sessions. I don't know if you recall that.

Also, the *Education Act* mandates every school to have a school team which consists of specific members of staff and education representatives, as well as the parent and the student can attend school team meetings when it's specific to the needs of a student. We are currently working on a handbook for school teams to better define the roles and responsibilities, and there will be a section there for families and how to better engage students as self-advocates as well.

Our programming in schools since 2015, the Nunavut suicide inquest, again in partnership with the Canadian Red Cross, every year we have rolled out training for educators on a three-year cycle. Depending on the needs of the school and where they are in that three-year cycle, we facilitate peer leadership training specifically for youth. We deliver training on how staff can work with youth and children to build and foster healthier relationships and a fundamental of that is communication and the skills to express one's feelings.

In terms of other work we have done, we recently updated our education support services directive to align with the Government of Nunavut's information sharing protocol. Now students 16 and up can self-advocate for services without parental consent if they are considered a mature minor.

There are a number of things. I can answer and give more detail. I think progress has continued to be made in recent years and we're happy to share that we don't intend to lose momentum in this area. (interpretation) Thank you.

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ϤʹͰͺͻͺ Ͱϲ·ͺʹϯϤʹͽ, ͰͼͿͺʹϐʹʹͽʹ·ͺͰϲ·ͺʹϯϤʹ ΔͻϤ;ϧʹϥ·ͻϹϲ, ϳͼϷϧϲʹϹϧʹϹͼͼϧϧϲͿϲ ϹϪʹͼͿϤͺϤϽϲ΅ͶϹϷͰϲͺϤʹͰϹϲͺϤʹͰͺͻͺϤϽϤͿϲϲϲͼ΅ Ϲϥʹ·ϽͿ, ϥϧϲϒͺͺʹϒͼͺϷϹͺϹʹ·ͼͺʹ·ͻϤϹϷϯʹͽͺϹΔͰʹͼ ϷϷͼϧ΅Ͻʹ·ͿͺϤΛ΅ͼͿϹʹϧͼͺʹ;ͺʹͼͿϧ·ͼͺϳʹϧͺϪϧϯͼϷϹʹ΅ͺ

**Ĺ・イ♪** (⊃ݩ、ト೧Jˤ): ʿdゲᡆᡤ゙, Δ゚ᡟ/ᡧ▷ᡤ. ϤʹͰͻ ʿdゲaᡤ Ċ゚ᡆ ϤΛჼᠯdႶӷႱჼჾ. Ċ゚ᠯϤ ႶႶჼႦ<sup>c</sup>

⟨¬ჼ⊂▷σჼ៶, ϲݛ▷ϲჼ¬; Ϥϧ▷ჼ¬Δϟ

ℂ゚ᡧ▷ϲჼႶ·ͻͿ. ϤʹͰͻ ΔィͰՐႦィ▷ΠίჀჼӷϧϧ<sup>c</sup>

ΛͻϤʹͻʹΓ Ͱʹϧϐʹʹ ՈͿϧͻϧʹͺʹͰϹ Ϥʹϼʹϲϧϳʹϗϐʹϼ<sup>c</sup>

▷°«϶ʹ·ʹ ΛϲͺʹϐʹʹՈ·ϼʹ ϧͰʹϧϽϲʹ ϧͰʹϧϽϲʹ

ϤϧϤ;ϤϹͰϧͺϹͽϲͺϹϧϥϽϲͺ ϤϧϽϧϹϷϤϧϥϹͺϤϝϽͺϽϧϯϥϧϧϲͺϒͱϭϷϢϧϲ ϤͰ ͼϽͼϘϧϹϷϤϝϤͺϽϧͰͿϤ;ͺϒϲϤϧϢϲͺϒϧͼ ϒͱͼϷͿϧϧϲͺϧϲϧ ϒϧͼϷͿϧϧϲͿϥϲϧ ϒϧͼϷͿ Αγτιγρείσης Αγτονρικο Αγτονρ

**Δ°/<▷C**°: L′a. (⊃\\\\) Δαςα\\d, ለʔ/<sup>c</sup> ለተα▷በኄዮር Γ°\α, Γ\ αΔͿ.

**ዹΔJ** (ጋጎትበJ°): 'dታቴፈቮ', Δ<sup>6</sup>/ላይኦር<sup>4</sup>ን. <sub>ዹ</sub>Δቈ<sup>4</sup>ኌJ, ቮቈኦታዮ<sup>2</sup>ጏቴ<sup>6</sup>ር<sup>4</sup>ንJ<sup>6</sup>. Lলሀ<sup>4</sup> C-92, CΔda ለলቢ⊲ቢታኦላ<sup>6</sup> baCኦ<sup>7</sup> ሀዲሀ ቴ<sup>6</sup>ሰ<sup>6</sup>ሰ<sup>6</sup> ወ<sup>6</sup> ላ<sup>4</sup>Lኌ ሀዲሀቴ<sup>6</sup>ል<sup>8</sup> ወ<sup>6</sup>.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Moving on. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning, everyone.

On page 11 on the left side there at the very bottom, that paragraph there, when Canada committed to the United Nations more than 30 years ago and made that commitment, they included Nunavut. I'm wondering and this would be a question for all of you, I guess: has the federal government provided enough funds and resources to meet the commitment that they made and, if not, what is being done to meet the shortfall?

I don't know how if I need to read that paragraph or not that's on the page. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I'll turn it to Ms. Bates to begin. Ms. Bates.

Ms. Bates: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. In terms of funds, I think what the question is funds to implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. I'm not familiar with what, if any, funds were allocated or directly put forward to implement. What I can tell you is that how the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child can be realized is ensuring that its commitment and the principles set out and the rights set out are embedded in legislation.

One of the fundamental things that we look for at the Representative for Children and Youth's Office, especially when we're providing submissions and especially when we're looking at legislation that serves children, such as the *Education Act* and the *Mental Health Act*, we often advocate for an actual expression and a commitment to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of

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**Ĺ • ア >** (⊃¼ト೧ノ゚): ႯႸჼႭႠჼ. ◁ჲჼႺჼ┦ልჼჲჼ ⊃ႺჼႱႵႻჼ ჾჼႠჁჽႶቴჼቴჁႱႱ. LႠႱႠჀჽჁჼݐႠ, LႠႱჼჾ⊲ჼႶՐႸჁჼݐႠݐ ႶႶႺჼႶՐႸჁჼႽႠჼჂႮჼ the Child. We do that because, in a lot of ways, I'm not sure it's really about funding. I think it's more about ensuring that those rights are implemented.

We talk about the right to protection, the right to be with your family, and those types of things. I think they can be operationalized inside of jurisdictional legislation as opposed to a funding issue because they are principles to live by and they are principles that should be embedded in operations. When you're looking at policy and procedure, looking at that from a child rights perspective, does it uphold rights?

That would be my answer to that question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Mr. Simailak, do you want that question answered by the departments? Okay. We will start with Justice, I guess, and in terms of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and how that convention applies within the justice department's work. Mr. Mansell.

Mr. Mansell (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I thank the Member for the question. The document has become, I think, more prominent through the work of the advocate, and we do take it into account when we're particularly dealing with incarcerated youth with respect to our department. We do our best when dealing with youth particularly in a situation where their rights are being affected, their rights under the charter, when you're dealing with incarcerated youth, as well as their rights under the UN declaration. The department does all it can to respect human rights of children and all our clients. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you.

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(interpretation ends) We will go next to family services in terms of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. Ms. Niego.

**Ms. Niego** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) A short answer would probably be not quite enough funds.

I think I would have to mention Bill C-92 and the work happening there with the federal government and other jurisdictions. Prior to C-92, Nunavut's legislation was already ahead of the game. Where we fall short are the resources at the community level to support children best.

One example would be for children who have to be flown out of territory and be cared for in, for example, medical foster homes. That's one example. We could always use more mental health counselling and social work type of life skill support for youth aging out of care. We need more resources, as the Member from Clyde River, I think, alluded to yesterday. Those are a couple of examples. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Department of Health, Ms. Stockley.

Ms. Stockley: Good morning. The Department of Health doesn't receive any funds directly for the promotion of the United Nations perspective on the rights of the child, but we do receive funding from the federal government that does speak to that kind of work.

For example, we do receive funds that we use for mental health funding and that would be for mental health promotion projects, including sewing groups, radio programs and that sort of thing for youth, healing and community type of programs, on-the-land

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〈▷ጐ<sup>6</sup>(ነር ▷ጐ፫▷፫ና › ላ<sup>6</sup>/ነር › ህ ሊ/Լሀ › ላ<sup>6</sup>/ነር › ለርሲ<sup>6</sup>(ል▷ላና › ለርሲቴበ՝ ቴናኔ<sup>6</sup> › ህ ላና › ላርር ለዖነ<sup>6</sup> ፦ ህ ሊነ<sup>6</sup> › ለ▷ሶ ለ▷ሶ ለሶር ቴናኔ › ህ Լነፅነ › ህብና ነስር · ኔና.

programs, where youth can be brought out on the land and mentored by elders, and public health funding, which would also come, some of it from the federal government, and we would use that for community wellness type of initiatives that youth would be involved in.

Another one that comes to mind is the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program that provides some funding for moms and babies and young children. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Department of Education, Ms. Hainnu.

Ms. Hainnu: Thank you very much for that question. Without going through a historical background information session, in summary, the Education Act was assented for the second time only in the history of Nunavut. It will always be a contentious bill because it pertains to our children most vulnerable in our population. I have to say that although it is not the funding that speaks to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, it must be how we think, how we breathe, and how we live in the way that we treat our children. I think it's not so much that it translates to funding but in how we incorporate the rights of the child in all of our systems.

The Department of Education, as it is now, as you know, in the last 30 years since the passing of this, has undergone a great deal of change. Nunavut was created and from Nunavut, amalgamations of the three regional offices in Nunavut. There are political implications that took the forefront of the politics in Nunavut in the last 30 years, and so I am very pleased to say, with the only second Nunavut-made, IQ-based *Education Act* that was recently passed on November 10.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child has been affirmed and this is not

because of the Department of Education alone; it is in partnership with the RCYO, it is in partnership with the CNDEA, with the NTA, with the DEAs, and I look forward to more milestones such as these. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Thank you. Committee Members do recall the representative's submission on Bill 25 and it's included in this annual report. Department of Justice, I believe, wants to add something to their response. Mr. Mansell.

Mr. Mansell (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I spoke about our role on the corrections side of things, but the department also has a very important role as the legal advisor to the government and as the drafter of legislation. Any department can come to us to ensure that their programs or their legislation coincide with Canadian human rights norms.

Our director of the Legal Division sits on an FPT that is run by Foreign Affairs Canada, where all provinces and territories get together on a regular basis to discuss Canada's international human rights treaties and we have to report on what we do to ensure that the work that the Government of Nunavut does coincides with our international human rights obligations.

As well, Members will recall that we recently passed the new *Legislation Act* and that Act will require statements from the Legislative Division alerting MLAs if a piece of legislation is contrary to human rights in any way. That's an important development as well, so I thank you for coming back to me. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Simailak, you are done. Mr. Akoak.

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I like your paragraph where the voice of child, it says "The voice of the child is the young person's opinion. All young people have the right to express their opinion. Adults, especially government decision makers, should at least hear and consider the young person's opinion when making a decision on their behalf." That stands out to me.

I think my question is towards Family Services, social services area, where constituents have come up to me and said that when the people have problems in the family, the couple has problems, the only thing the department wants to do is take the children away and they're not listening to the children. We do have children who would like to stay with either the father or the mother when they're having problems. You don't take them away. I think that is what is happening today. They're not listening to the child.

At the bottom it says, "All humans have rights. The rights of one person do not supersede the rights of another person." That's another good point there. My question to the department: is the department aware of the roles and responsibilities of the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth? Do you go to them and seek their assistance or ask for their help? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. To the Department of Family Services, Ms. Niego.

**Ms. Niego** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) For this

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question, I think I'll invite Arijana Haramincic, who I believe is still on the line. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Through Zoom, Ms. Haramincic.

**Ms. Haramincic**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for your question. If I understand correctly, it is a question of if we work closely when there is a question about a child coming into care or not into care with the office of the representative.

The responsibility of the Department of Family Services is to ensure the protection and well-being of the children. It is guided by the *Child and Family Services Act* of Nunavut. The responsibility of the department is to ensure that safety is first and foremost ensured within the family and that as the last resort is the decision to bring the child into care.

There are a very small percentage of children that are being brought into care, considering the number of referrals or the number of investigations that our department conducts. If the children are being brought into care, those children are first considered to stay with a family, with their extended relatives or within the community.

The very last decision is for the child to be brought into care and be placed within a foster home, and then the second after that is if the child's needs are unable to be met within the community or within the foster home, then unfortunately we have to consider outside of the territory placement. If there are special or complex needs for the child or the behaviours that are unable to be maintained, we will extend the foster home.

I am aware that when communities hear about the Department of Family Services, the first thing is about the children being removed  $\Delta$ \*ba $\Delta$ 7c-L<sup>1</sup>/L<sup>1</sup>/c <sup>5</sup> <sup>5</sup>b>1c  $\dot{\varsigma}$ % <sup>c</sup>C  $\Delta$ 2 $\dot{\varsigma}$ 9  $\dot{\varsigma}$ 6  $\dot{\varsigma}$ 6  $\dot{\varsigma}$ 7  $\dot{\varsigma}$ 8  $\dot{\varsigma}$ 9  $\dot{\varsigma}$ 9

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When it comes to the work with the office of the representative, we follow up on every recommendation that the representative provides to us. We take seriously any of the concerns that the representative has had. We've had numerous conversations, and I'm sure Ms. Bates will confirm that, about the concerns and possible resolutions of the issues that are being brought forward. We do have our regular meetings which are broader meetings of the leadership teams twice a year, but on an ongoing basis, there is a communication about how do we service children better.

I trust this answers your question. *Ma'na*, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the answer. Just a comment, we don't want our children in this day and age going back to residential school situations where children are being taken away when they're very young. It's not good, even in today's day and age. I'm hoping the departments will work with the representative to make things so much better for our young people that.... What can I say? Maybe they

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are not the mistake; maybe the parents are the mistakes that are making all the problems for the little ones. It's just a comment not taken lightly. I hope everything will improve this coming future. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Maybe I'll turn that to Ms. Bates. In terms of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 3 says that all adults should do what is best for young people. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect young people. That's from your report on page 12.

When we think about a child protection situation and what's best for the young person at the centre of the matter, it doesn't appear to be a simple decision of whether the child stays with their family or whether they go somewhere else, particularly when you think about compounding factors such as sexual abuse or domestic violence. In your work particularly as it applies to doing what is best for the young person, how do you help the departments to try to strike the right balance in terms of child protection issues? Ms. Bates.

**Ms. Bates**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You're quite correct; these are complex matters and I'm going to speak from my experience and what I have seen at the office and our review of matters that we have dealt with as they relate to child protection and family services.

Typically what we see, and I'm going to speak directly around the voice of the child, is if the child is in the care of the director and living in out-of-home care, there have been ongoing concerns if that child has not been spoken to or their wishes, their understanding of the situation is not a consistent occurrence in terms of what does the child want, what are the child's views and wishes. We have raised that concern on several cases.

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Second to that, one of the other concerns that I would say and one of the issues that I have raised is, for children in care of the director, so that's family and children services, there are currently no policy and procedures directly related to children in care. Why that is concerning to me and to our office is policies and procedures for a department govern how you do your work. We have a policy that all children in care must be seen in the foster home once per month, they must have a privacy visit, they must speak with the child. In absence of those policies and procedures, I believe that the voice of the child, the rights of children particularly in the director's care are not protected and there is not a consistent, standard way of ensuring the services to those children.

Second to that and I think to your point is when children are living in out-of-home care or in foster homes, one of the concerns that have come to the office's attention is that children who are in foster homes there may be for a lengthy period of time and there's not what I would consider to be long-term or family services, so long-term work with the family to address the risk, address the concerns that potentially required the child to be in need of protection, requiring out-of-home care.

Again, I would echo that we see at our office probably a lot of the children are in the director's care and there's often a small percentage of the number of families that the department will come in contact with that children won't come into care, but one of the concerns I have had is that work isn't being done with the family to support the family to address the risk issues that brought that child into the director's care, whatever that may be.

Yes, we have made many recommendations to Family Services on individual cases. Again, it's mainly related to compliance with

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policies, procedure, and legislation because, again, when you're not compliant with policies, procedure, and legislation, there is always a concern for violation of rights, and I have seen that, not just for children but for parents. I would additionally say that and systemic-wise and again, I raised the issue around having specific policies and procedures related to children in the director's care.

I trust that answers the question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Thank you. Moving on. (interpretation) As you are joining us this morning, Ms. Angnakak, we are happy because we were missing some Members. We are glad that you and Mr. Qamaniq are in attendance. (interpretation ends) Ms. Angnakak, go ahead.

**Ms. Angnakak** (interpretation): I apologize. Let me get rid of these papers.

(interpretation ends) Good morning. I'm quite taken aback by Ms. Bates' statement and wonder if.... I mean, to me, that's very concerning and I'm wondering if the Department of Family Services, through you, Mr. Chairman, can make a response to those concerns raised by Ms. Bates. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I don't disagree with the representative. Yesterday I spoke a bit about resourcing. For example, today we have a bit of a crisis in the Kivalliq with two communities at least: Naujaat and Arviat. Some of our communities are single social worker communities. You're the lone social worker serving how many families. At

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⋖ѷ┼<sup>॓</sup>°^°⊃┙┷<sup></sup> ७०२८८७°С९¬४°С९ «۵۳۵°С९¬۵¬۵¬۵¬۵¬۵¬۵¬۵° some points in your day you may be with a child and not able to do any other duty.

There is a lot of work needed within the department. We are now six or seven years old. There is still building up of different parts of the department. There are many moving blocks. There is legislation. There are manuals. There are procedures. There are so many things required with very little resourcing, so I'm in full support of what the representative is saying. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your response. Since everybody knows that we are in a crisis and there are big problems, and at the same time we see very sad pictures in every one of our communities when it comes to children and youth. What are we waiting for? What needs to happen right away? I know people are working hard, but you say there is so much more that needs to be done. How do we get to that point? How do we get to actually doing something that needs to be done? What is it that's needed? I would like to ask the department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) That's the Department of Family Services? Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As I was saying, there are so many different facets, so many different pieces, moving blocks, right from housing. I can't seem to secure enough housing in communities to bring in a social worker. I have to contract with a private homeowner through housing. There is the HR process which is taking longer because of lack of housing. There are casuals that, in the

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meanwhile, can be hired, but then who is able to go out and go to all of these universities where the social work programs are and recruit in? I need a big recruiting campaign there.

There are so many other things; maybe I'll pass it on to Arijana Haramincic. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Through Zoom, Ms. Haramincic.

Ms. Haramincic: Ma'na, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for the question. I think it goes back to the capacity that we talked about throughout the hearing yesterday and the capacity, in my mind, is not only ability of the people to work but it's actually having enough financial resources to support all the activities. Financial resources is number one, which would then help us to secure the people and hiring the people recruiting the people, and having enough knowledgeable, skilled individuals who are then able to take on those activities.

One of the first activities is to actually have the social workers who are permanent, indeterminate social workers in each of the communities who then can start building the engagement and involvement with the community and working on that trust that we talked about yesterday, how important it is in the social work field to then be able to not only develop a trust with the communities and the families but other professionals and develop those good practices so that really good social work can occur.

We have been having barriers, such as HR processes, and barriers in terms of having to look at unfunded positions. As you have heard, a quality assurance team has been completely unfunded and we're also looking at developing a highly skilled team, which we

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called Nunavut Seals, to actually support when there's a crisis such as Ms. Niego mentioned in Arviat that we could send individuals who have good experience and who are aware of the Nunavut-specific issues and concerns and barriers and are able to immediately assist the community. However, without sufficient number of individuals, it is very difficult to move from the crisis-oriented approach to actually planned and really strategic.

I will just add too, in terms of the children in care policy that Ms. Bates has mentioned that we have implemented in spite of all the barriers, we have implemented the rights of the child in care annual review that is reviewed with every child 12 years and older that is in care on an annual basis that goes after their rights, their ability to speak and raise their voices. It is a requirement of each and every social worker to connect with a child and review their rights. It's also bringing the voice of the child.

We have hired this summer a youth with experience in being a child in care, who will be engaging with youth, not only youth in care but youth around the territory, to bring their voices and to advise us on how to better serve them. I think I mentioned yesterday also that we're reviewing our manual which will include the specific child in care policies and procedures. There is lots of work, even with the lack of resources and lack of capacity that we talked about, that is being done as much as possible.

The final comment in regard to specialized teams, we are piloting in Iqaluit, our largest office, the specific referral and intake team versus ongoing services team to try to address those issues and being able to follow up and work with families to build their strength and ability to care for their children safely so the children can actually remain in the homes or

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**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you. I guess my next question would be for the Representative for Children and Youth, Ms. Bates. In light of what we just heard with the response, it seems like your office has identified some really troubling areas and the department has responded why we are at where we are today. I know that you provided recommendations on legislation and policies, but seeing that without the proper housing, without the proper staff, it just seems like a Catch-22 going round and round and round. How would you see the department address these concerns that they have just voiced? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Bates.

**Ms. Bates**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. It is a complex issue. However, I would like to highlight a couple issues, if I may.

There absolutely needs to be a plan in place and it's difficult to execute plans when you're having HR barriers. I would submit to you that community social services workers are hired on contracts. I assume that they still need housing when they're here doing those particular contracts, so I don't know how we translate moving contract staff into indeterminate positions for that stability piece. I think there are many issues around the housing issues and those types of HR issues.

Having said that, again, I must come back to the issue around the collection of information and building a business case around why you need what you need. Yesterday there was a lot ₽ህ--- '- 

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of reference by the departments about "We're collecting information because the RCYO needs it and is requesting it." What I would like to say about that is, and I'm going to use it in this particular case, in relation to referrals, so how can you make a business case about what you need in terms of staffing and those types of things when you don't know how many sexual abuse cases that you're dealing with over the course of a year? If you say, "We've got 500 referrals for the year, which equates into a caseload of 20 per worker, we're going to need X number of staff to deal with that effectively and consistently," and on top of that what I would say is once you establish those baselines, you understand, then you can put it forward to people and say, "We need this amount of money to do this job."

Second to that, I'm very happy to hear that they're piloting what we call an intake in family service model of service because, as I said previously, what I see in cases is Family Services is very good at responding to an immediate crisis, reacting/responding. Where the issue lies is not providing the supports and services to those families, to those children on a long-term basis to say, "What's happening here? How do we support you and how do we mitigate these concerns so that your child can be back in your home or can remain in your home safely?" Again, it requires kind of that model of service delivery, but it requires that overarching kind of vision of what it means to look like and what you're looking to achieve.

The third issue that I would raise is that not following policy and procedure, you have policy and procedure in place and there's legislation in place. It clearly governs and clearly sets out how children can be brought into the director's care, how investigations need to be documented and those types of things. Again, not only recording and understanding the magnitude and scope of

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what you need and what you're dealing with, you also have to be following what your legislation sets out, what your policy and procedures set out, because again, that's accountability for the work and you can say, "We have done X number of investigations. Here's the documentation about the outcome of those investigations."

I think again and I think the Auditor General, in some of her recommendations when she came in to review, talked about having indeterminate staff and having that foundation. Huge challenges, I can certainly appreciate that for the department, but again, I really need to circle back around to I struggle with understanding or being able to.... If you don't know what you're dealing with, how can you make a plan? That's really the bottom line here. Again, collecting this information and understanding the information isn't about what the Representative for Children and Youth Office wants. I believe that it is beneficial to the departments, particularly Family Services, in being able to set forth a vision for service delivery and responding to children and youth and their families.

I trust that answers the question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you. I guess I would like to go back then to the Department of Family Services. In light of the concerns that you have brought up in representing your department, do you feel that the department is following its legislation and carrying out the duties under it? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Niego.

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Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I'm quite sure that the representative has brought out times when the department has not. As I said, in some communities we have lone social workers. At the managerial level, of the regional directors and regional manager positions I spoke of yesterday, almost all of those are vacant and filled by casuals. We have the overturn of staff. We are having difficulty in providing the proper mentoring, coaching, and supervising of frontline staff. I know that there are mishaps along the way.

We are doing everything we can to try to push this client information system forward, building the best possible database to collect information but also to provide that remote supervision. It will be a means to monitor what's happening at the frontline. Data and research is one of our priorities. We have to be improving enforcement of our legislation, our own internal, through relying on that data. I recognize that.

Business cases are also not a simple thing. As I stated, there are many positions required. If the government were to allow us all of these positions, it still would take a long time. We're still trying to sort out the successful business cases from the last couple of years and filling those positions. When you create a new role in Nunavut that has never existed in Inuit society, it takes time to build that local resource, the understanding about the language. For example, the family resource worker positions were created a few years ago and we're still struggling to try to capture the proper role and the training with it, with, again, none of the resources to even do that. Everything has become a challenge.

I don't know if that answers well. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you.

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(interpretation ends) Thank you. Committee Members are keenly aware that just because something exists in legislation doesn't necessarily mean that it exists in reality. I think we're all aware that we have to consider resource limitations when we're looking at things like legislation. Ms. Angnakak.

**Ms.** Angnakak: Thank you. Yes, the picture is not always rosy, I know. I know it's always easier to be the one asking the questions than the one having to answer with the realities. I recognize that as well.

I would like to know from the representative and also from the Department of Family Services: what kind of involvement have you had in looking at these concerns and in trying to find solutions and in discussing them with Inuit organizations? Are they involved? I mean, everybody is aware about the situation that we have, but not everybody, I don't believe, is really aware of why things aren't getting better the way we think they should be getting better. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Bates.

Ms. Bates: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that question. In terms of our involvement with Family Services in terms of creating solutions, I want to say that I recognize that our office receives the complaints, as I said in the opening comments, so everything that we generally see is a complaint gap and problem. Every time we look at an individual advocacy case or a systemic issue that is brought to our attention, I recognize that it's easy to be the armchair quarterback of the day and say "Do this or do that" because there are many realities of doing business.

Having said that, when we do make recommendations, again, it's always in mind

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**Δ°/<>C**<sup>®</sup>: L'α. (Ͻ<sup>'</sup>\ληͿ<sup>c</sup>) ϧημλςςς. Γ', Ϥʹαͺϧ<sup>®</sup>.

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with: is this a realistic recommendation? Is it possible? I think that a lot of the recommendations that we have made to Family Services again echo what the Office of the Auditor General had said and made recommendations. When we looked back at what the recommendations were made and the commitments that Family Services made in relation to those recommendations, we haven't seen.... What we were seeing in individual advocacy cases was, had those recommendations been implemented as set out and agreed upon, we wouldn't be seeing the same issues that we have continued to see year over year.

Having said that, I think there is absolute commitment by Family Services to address the situation. It's not an easy situation to address when you are delegated to carry out legislation, but what I would say is, specifically with child and family services legislation, it clearly sets out how you do and what you are required to document an investigation. If you decide not to investigate something, you must justify that as per legislation to the director, who is the ultimate authority under the Act. Those things in the day-to-day operations should be done because, if you have a person doing that work is what I'm talking about, there are provisions around the creation of plans of care. That is clearly set out of how you operationalize and how you create plans of care and assign plans of care. That's set out in legislation. It's more service and requirements on what you need to tell a parent when they enter into a plan of care.

I would also say, in terms of the Inuit organizations, certainly we haven't consulted with respect to family services as it relates to that, and we certainly talked about having much more involvement with Inuit organizations and having that contact and establishing that relationship. Anytime we

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have endeavoured when we were looking at a particular matter or a systemic matter and we did ask one of the Inuit organizations to review what we were proposing and in the future, again, I think that that is imperative as a way forward because I think this needs to be a collective, it needs to be a community response, and I think everyone needs to be on the same page and working towards the same end goal, which is the improvement of services, ensuring that legislation, policy, and procedure are being followed, children are being adequately protected, children are being heard as it relates to any matter.

I trust that answers your question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I believe Ms. Angnakak also wanted that question directed to Family Services. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Family Services actually has quite a good relationship with the Inuit orgs, particularly NTI and through not only the Poverty Reduction Roundtable, Food Security Coalition, but on several files; Child First Initiative. There is regular contact with NTI. What gets difficult is the breadth of family services work. Family wellness is just one program. We are quite, actually, demanding on NTI and spend a lot of time trying to connect on many things. We are working with them in collaboration with the Inuit orgs.

I think I want to touch on two areas, not just on this question but a couple of the other ones; one would be in regard to frontline staff and support for frontline staff. In our communities, as much as we try to encourage local hire, it can be a very difficult role. It's like enforcing your own or policing your own. We have a lot of instances where if there is a

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Another one is the Member from Gjoa Haven mentioned something along the lines of parents and to your previous question of what can we do different, focusing on the child, I have to then remember "focus on the caregiver." They are, for example, the reason why sexual incest and sexual abuse in homes aren't getting reported. It's kept hidden in the home, so we have to focus on parents.

There is so much trauma that we haven't dealt with when it comes to the parents and offering better parental support is, I think, one gap. We have the Inunnguiniq parenting program. The Qaujigiartiit research society has been at the forefront of that program. We don't invest enough into parental programs, and I think I'll stop there. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Moving on. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My first question is for the representative. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as setting the obligation.... Sorry. The conventions of the rights of the child, of course, they set out the rights that every child should have, including safe drinking water, going to school and receiving instruction in their own language, but it also outlines the obligations that governments have in meeting these rights.

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My question is specifically to the rights of children to have access to adequate, nutritious food, and given the rates of food insecurity in every community across the territory, MLAs in this House over the last several years have repeatedly requested the Government of Nunavut to do more to address this issue. However, it's a complex matter that no single Minister has been willing to accept responsibility for.

For example, Family Services has their poverty reduction roundtable and their food security initiative, and meanwhile the Department of Health has the Healthy Child Initiative funding which they distribute to schools and communities, and then there is the Department of Education which has some level of food programs currently being provided in every school.

My first question for the representative is: is there one department in the Government of Nunavut who would be in the best position to meet the obligation to ensure that all children in Nunavut have access to nutritious food? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Bates.

Ms. Bates: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. My response to that is I think caring for children is a community responsibility and a community response. I believe that all departments share equal responsibility to work together to provide services to address gaps and issues. As it relates to food insecurity, I can see a role for each department in addressing those concerns. I would hesitate to say it is one department's responsibility.

I think, again, what I come back to is that interdepartmental surrounding that holistic approach of looking at children and

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addressing community issues, systemic issues, and I believe that food insecurity is one of those and I think you see places where Education is providing food programs. I'm unclear in terms of family services. I believe they may provide grocery vouchers and those types of things, but I think it's more a coordinated interdepartmental response too and that's where I see, again, perhaps it's more of an overall interdepartmental strategy and vision regarding how you address these concerns as a whole. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Ms. Bates, for that response. I understand where you're coming from, where it is a communal effort and all departments must play their role in a holistic, coordinated fashion. My follow-up question to you is: do you believe that there has been sufficient collaboration on this front to meet the obligation to ensure that every child in Nunavut has access to adequate, nutritious food? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Bates.

Ms. Bates: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks for the follow-up question. My response would be I am not aware at this time what interdepartmental coordination is occurring with respect to this particular issue. What I can tell you is coordination between departments has been a concern that the Representative for Children and Youth Office has raised as it relates to the coordination of services for children and youth. I would identify this area as one of those potential topics or issues that would fall under that category.

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It was a recommendation from "Our Minds Matter." I believe it was no. 14 recommendation is the development of an interdepartmental protocol for the coordination of services for children and youth. To date that particular protocol has not been finalized or come to fruition. I think, again, those types of protocols and those types of formalized processes will hopefully have the departments get together and really, again, understanding what the problem is, but then getting together and say, "How can each of our departments...?" If kids who are going to school are food insecure, how does the Department of Education coordinate that service and fill that gap? Where does the Department of Health fit into that overall piece of where can we contribute or how do we address that issue and subsequently, Family Services and Justice? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you again, Ms. Bates. My next question is going to be for the Department of Education.

As I had previously indicated, the topic of providing government-funded food programs in schools has been brought up in this Assembly on a number of occasions and the Minister of Education himself has indicated that he feels that providing food programs in schools is not part of his mandate, not part of the mandate that is provided to the Department of Education, and therefore has not met the repeated cries or requests from Members. However, I believe that the Department of Education, as the department who has direct access to all children in Nunavut, would be best suited out of all the government departments and agencies to ensure that children are receiving adequate,

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My next question for the Department of Education: do you believe that you are obligated to ensure that children in Nunavut have access to nutritious foods that has been identified as their right? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Hainnu.

Ms. Hainnu: Thank you. Thank you very much for the question. I am a teacher; I have been teaching for many years. There have been many times where I sat in the month of March for it is Nutrition Month and we have to talk about nutrition, what is healthy, what is a healthy alternative to, let's say, pop. When pop is \$1.39 versus milk in the same container costs \$4, we have a real social problem when that is the situation. We have to go back to the grassroots, I believe. I think food and food security, having healthy choice in food for children is absolutely their right. It is absolutely everyone's responsibility to feed their children, but this is a band-aid approach, providing food in the community.

K to 12 students should not ever go hungry. After a long weekend, for some families, that is the reality. Hungry children come to school with tummies that are hurting and they don't know why their tummies are hurting. Absolutely and all of our educators in all of our 45 schools believe this and so what do they do is they volunteer. There is not another profession, a group of professionals, 800 and plus educators who come in early or who stay late, past their seven and a half hours a day, on volunteer, unpaid, thankless duties, they prepare breakfast, they provide packages, they prepare snacks.

Imagine a community approach solution to this issue where we're not just feeding the \"የነ<sup>1</sup>\L° L° u ለ«፦ርላው" ለእ°ረና▷∩<u>"</u> Δຼຼຼຼຼດ, አ<sup>1</sup> ነት « በΓ▷ ረራ» ሷ ሲ 7-፫°ጋ» ርፈ፦ ጋ ርጐልላ በΓ▷ ረ፫ ርፈን» <sup>°</sup> ር፫ ት የበጆ የ ኦ° ጋΓ, ር∟° u ጋየ ጋላ የነስር ነው የ« ረሮ, Γ° < Δ° ሲ የነር ነ

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children. When our children are coming in hungry, their parents are at home hungry. We need real solutions that take real dialogue within the communities so that the issue is addressed and not a band-aid approach is done.

I do absolutely, with 45 schools with access to K to 12 students on a daily basis, encourage all government departments, the RCY, and everyone in the communities to offer any funding there may be and to staff these positions because retention and recruitment for teachers alone is an issue in the north. To ask them to also do food programming, that's on top of what they already do, and I encourage any partnership to come in and be part of the solution.

I do thank you for that question. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Maybe if I can just follow up on Mr. Lightstone's question. Ms. Hainnu, you mentioned breakfast programs and the volunteer situation. The contribution that many teachers make is amazing and the Committee thanks them for their efforts.

In terms of expanding the food programs for lunch programs in every school in Nunavut, is that something that has been priced out or do you have any estimates as to how much that would cost? I'm asking about a properly funded program, not on the backs of overworked teachers, but a properly funded program in terms of the amounts of money that would be required to establish lunch programs in every school in Nunavut. Is that something that has been budgeted or looked at? Ms. Hainnu.

**Ms. Hainnu**: Thank you for that question. No, not to this date, but I will have my team do that right away and submit it to the Standing Committee for your records. Thank

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you.

Chairman: Thank you. It's something that Members have been asking about in various forms, so thank you for that commitment. (interpretation) Through Zoom, our colleague, Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning. On page 11 of the annual report it identifies (interpretation ends) Inuit societal values and apparently these Inuit elder advisors are nominated and they only have a term position as the *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* traditional knowledge and there are only a few Inuit who are listed on the report and there seem to be only three communities that have appointed *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* traditional knowledge workers.

Why are there only three communities that have been identified and is the department going to appoint or nominate other Inuit traditional knowledge holders in other communities other than the three communities that are listed as wisdom and perspective based on lived experiences? Is the department going to appoint more Inuit traditional knowledge workers in other communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Bates.

**Ms. Bates**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like Lynn Matte, the Director of Child and Youth Advocacy Services, to answer this question for you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Matte.

**Ms. Matte** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you to the Member for the question. In 2019-2020

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the office had five elder advisors from four communities. Unfortunately one of our elder advisors, Bessie Sitatak, passed away and she was from Kugluktuk. We also had advisors from Rankin Inlet and Pond Inlet.

The way that we obtained our elder advisors was through a public nomination process which was advertised in the newspapers across the territory. Our goal at the time was to make sure that we had representation from all three regions and it wasn't about a specific community people were from.

In 2019-2020 we did hold a second nomination process, as some of our elders did not wish to extend their term because of medical conditions or other personal concerns. As part of that renewal process, we have now an elder advisor from Gjoa Haven, Mariam Aglukkaq, and two from Iqaluit, Mosha Akayak and Pitsiulak Akayak.

Our office isn't specifically targeting communities. We ask the entire territory for their nominations and then we have to make a selection from those that are brought forward to us, and again, the selection is not done by specific community, but we do ensure that we always have representation from all three regions. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you too. Mr. Qamaniq.

Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are these elder advisors doing it on a voluntary basis or are they given a salary or are they paid and how long are their terms? I think that their appointment has expired for most of these positions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Again to Ms. Matte.

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Ms. Matte (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We do currently have five appointed elder advisors, so right now working with us, we have Helen Iguptak and Lucy Makkigak from Rankin Inlet, we have Meeka Arnakaq from Pangnirtung, and as I mentioned earlier, Mariam, Mosha, and Pitsiulak. All five of those elder advisors are currently working with our office. Those who previously had a two-year term and chose to extend, such as Helen, Lucy, and Meeka, continue to work with our office; their terms were extended.

The positions are not on an organization chart. They're not full-time positions. They are similar to the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Katimajiit, which people may be familiar with, that Culture and Heritage has. The elder advisors receive an honorarium when they provide supports to our office and we have raised concerns with the Department of Finance that the amount of money we are allowed to pay does not seem to be adequate for the service that we are asking for and we did provide feedback to that department on section 8(10) of the Financial Administration Manual a few years ago, recommending increases. I unfortunately don't know off the top of my head if those increases have occurred. I don't believe so, but I could be incorrect.

When we spoke with our elder advisors about that matter, their comments to us were "We aren't doing it for the money; we're doing it for the children," and so all of those who are working with us do it very much out of a passion for improving the lives of our young people. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Qamaniq, do you have any more questions?

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**ϲΔ°ґϽ·** (Ͻʹ៶ͰΛͿϲ): ʹϭͰ·ͼϹ<sup>ͱ</sup>, Δ<sup>ͱ</sup>Ͱ«ϷϹʹ<sup>ͱ</sup>. ʹϭͰ·ͼϹ<sup>;</sup>ͰϹ·ϽϹ· Ϲ<sup>ͱ</sup>ϭϤ ΡϷʹ៶ʹͰϹ Ϥ<sup>ͱ</sup>ͰϤϽ· Mr. Qamaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is my last question. I think that we have to elevate the elders' positions because I think it's very important. They make a great contribution when it comes to *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* or Inuit societal values. I would like your office to look into this further. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Qamaniq. We lost you for a second, so I didn't hear your question. Did you have a question in your statement?

**Mr. Qamaniq** (interpretation): Yes, it's just a comment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Okay. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Qamaniq. At this time it's 10:30, so we will take a 15-minute break. When we resume, we will proceed with the section titled, to say it in English, (interpretation ends) individual advocacy, pages 14 to 17. (interpretation) We will be dealing with that section. We will first take a short break, (interpretation ends) a 15-minute break. (interpretation) Thank you.

>> Committee recessed at 10:29 and resumed at 10:49

Chairman (interpretation): Our hearing will now resume on the 2019-2020 Annual Report of the Representative for Children and Youth. (interpretation ends) We're going to move on and the Committee is now reviewing the section titled "Individual Advocacy," which is on pages 14 to 17. I don't have any names, so I'll start off the questioning with a question for Ms. Bates.

Table 6 on page 16 shows that service providers were 54 percent of the numbers of individual advocacy cases. I wonder you can tell the Committee about what the relationship is or who these service providers who are

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referring cases to your office. Ms. Bates.

**Ms. Bates**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like David Korgak, the Manager of Individual Advocacy Services, to answer this question.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Korgak.

**Mr. Korgak**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When people contact our office, anybody is free to contact our office if they have a concern regarding any young person.

As it relates to service providers who contact our office, when they make referrals for individual advocacy cases, the reasons vary. Every individual advocacy case is different. However, generally we receive referrals from service providers when we come across circumstances where, perhaps, a teacher made a referral over to family services or to mental health, and there has been inconsistent or no follow-up that has been reported back to the teacher to mitigate the concern, or service providers are experiencing barriers within their departments with supervisors and management-level staff.

Each referral is different, but we are seeing service providers come to us when they're experiencing those types of situations. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Just to follow up on that, in the case where it's a service provider who is raising a case to do with their own department, in your experience, are there concerns that the service providers have in terms of facing disciplinary action from within their own department for reaching out to the representative's office or is this something that is allowed by service providers and openly discussed? I hope you

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Mr. Korgak: I can't speak to the relationship of frontline service providers with their supervisors. However, all referrals made to our office are confidential. We do not share that information with the public or with anybody else. Our legislation has a section of it dedicated to ensuring that those who are in fear of reprisal are protected through the *Representative for Children and Youth Act*. We have those two layers in place to ensure that those who make referrals to our office are protected. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Committee Members, Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you. On page 16 again in regard to total individual advocacy cases closed, on the last list here, it says "Declined advocacy services." I'm wondering if that could be better explained. What does that really mean? Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Korgak.

Mr. Korgak: A big theme that we have been discussing is the voice of the child, and one of the things that we do is if a young person does not want to pursue a matter that has been raised to our attention, we respect their wishes and can close a file if it's in their best interest. If they do not wish to pursue the advocacy matter and it is in their best interest, for example, if there was a child protection concern where they did not want to participate, we can continue to pursue the matter and review it.

However, in other circumstances where, perhaps, a young person is seeking additional assistance in school, additional support, or ᠘ᠵᢀᡩᡳ᠐ᠮ᠆ᡔᢥᡃᠾ᠘ᢗ.

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accessing a mental health service that they may not want to engage with our office on, we respect their views and will close the advocacy matter. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you. I'm wondering if you can tell us a little bit more about it. I'm wondering if you have come across a case where a child has first raised an issue with your office, and then it involves family members and as you start to work with the family, it becomes very hard on the child, perhaps, and then the child backs down and no longer wants to carry on with the process because of the pressures placed upon that child by the family, how does your office deal with something like that? If you have dealt with that or maybe you haven't, I'm not sure, but if you can explain that to us. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Korgak.

**Mr. Korgak**: Our services as they relate to Government of Nunavut services, we typically do not get involved in private family matters. Family is a big part of many of our individual advocacy cases and we work with parents fairly frequently.

If I have to fall back and discuss the best interests of that particular young person, if the circumstance warrants and it is in their best interest, we will continue to advocate on their behalf. However, each circumstance where a young person may disengage, such as the one you reference, we may respect their wishes or we may pursue it further. It depends on the situation at hand. If it is related to a child protection matter or the young person wishing to access mental health services, for example, and they are not yet a mature minor, we can continue to advocate for them. However, we

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typically do try to respect young persons' wishes that we contact.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you. I guess my other question around this when it comes to advocacy of the child, sometimes I think it's felt by everybody that Inuit societal values sometimes differ very much from how a child can be helped. I'm wondering: when it comes to advocacy with children and it differs from, perhaps, the traditional way of growing up or the values of the family where sometimes the child does not have a voice, how does your office deal with that kind of situation? Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Korgak.

Mr. Korgak: If you refer to our annual report, we do have a section where Inuit societal values and children's rights align, and we try to elevate the voice of young people using those values. If a family's values do not align with these rights that young people have, they do have parental rights. However, it is everybody's obligation to uphold children's rights and because one of their rights is to have their voice heard, we would encourage that young person to speak up and always as it pertains to Government of Nunavut services because we do not get involved in private matters. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you. I guess I would like to ask the same question to the departments here. When it comes to children's rights and when it comes to the child being heard, it can sometimes be very conflicting within the family. How does the

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department deal with that? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Ms. Angnakak, you maybe want to rephrase your question. I'm just trying to get to the specific.... It's an audio problem we're having. Maybe rephrase your question to make it a bit more specific in terms of the departments. Ms. Angnakak.

**Ms. Angnakak**: Okay. That other voice is very....

>>Laughter

**Chairman**: We will just take a pause here while the technicians deal with the audio issue we're having.

Okay? (interpretation) Thank you. (interpretation ends) Apologies, Ms. Angnakak. Continue.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you. I guess what I'm thinking about is I know of circumstances where, perhaps, a child is frowned upon for speaking up or maybe even asking questions or wanting something that maybe the parents don't realize or don't recognize or don't want that may be within that child's right. There are some conflicts that could happen within the family. As the Department of Family Services or the Department of Health or Education or Justice work on these issues, how do they go about addressing those conflicts? That's what I'm trying to get at when it comes to child advocacy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Department of Justice, Mr. Mansell.

**Mr. Mansell** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I thank the Member for the question. One area with

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ΛՐ⊲'σ⊲c T°L<sup>c</sup>. bՈL}ናሬ ህΔ°α°)<sup>c</sup> ሀ≪L°d<sup>c</sup>
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respect to justice and services provided to children that I can think of where the child's desires or wishes may not align perfectly with the parents is release planning. Just a bit about that, as soon as a child comes under our care at the youth facility, release planning begins. They're assigned to youth workers who begin monthly reports and begin to speak with the family but also with the child about what their wishes are when they get out of the facility.

The goal is for everyone to agree to a release plan to ensure that the best interests of the child are recognized when they get out of the facility and they go to a place, hopefully, their home in their community, but sometimes the family has concerns about the child coming back or the child has concerns about going back into that situation. In that case, Corrections calls what we call a section 19 conference under the Youth Criminal Justice Act and the conference brings together stakeholders, community resources, and officials from my colleagues' departments here and the youth's wishes and desires are one of the foremost concerns there. The intention is if they can't return to their home community or there are concerns about going back to the home, then working with our partners, we find a place for them and our community corrections workers monitor them and make sure that the placement is successful. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) We will go next to Family Services. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) For family services and social work in dealing with conflicting values, family values versus Inuit societal values versus governmental or operational type of values. Very much it would be a case-by-case-by-case basis. There are so many examples that we have come

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**Δ°/<>C**<sup>®</sup> (⊃\̈̀¿Դ∩Ј°): ◁౧˙ϳ<sup>®</sup> Γ<sup>¹</sup> L˙<sup>c</sup>.

**△¹/<▷⊂**<sup>®</sup> (⊃\́\\∩J<sup>c</sup>): 'd>-a, ⊢'. Γ'⊂ 'P-°J<sup>®</sup>.

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Basically it comes down to dealing with individuals first one on one between the social work office and one the parents, then it may involve both of the parents, then it could involve extended family. Getting to the root of what values align and what don't align and working with all of the individuals, sometimes the child, we can bring some mediation into the picture. Sometimes the family is just not willing to engage that way and it could also be the age of the child, if they are very non-verbal.

I'll be passing it on to the director of child welfare, Arijana, shortly, but probably one of the advantages of our office is we have access not just to a child focus but a family focus, very much involved with the families, the parents, extended family, and then foster homes as well. There are multiple options. It comes down to, though, child safety. When there is expected harm, that's when the authority of the social worker is there to enforce some separation.

If I may pass it on to Arijana to elaborate. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Joining us through Zoom, Ms. Haramincic.

Ms. Haramincic: Ma'na, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for your question. Just to add a little bit more to Ms. Niego's comments, there are sometimes conflicting values, but those times are much rarer than what we would consider or what we think because the social work values and Inuit societal values are very much aligned and so the approaches, we have actually looked at our policies and procedures and aligning those so that we have situations where when we do find that we're advocating for one member of the family versus the other member of the family, we're finding ways to

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negotiate or mediate or find some solutions to honour both values and both approaches.

Some of the really helpful approaches that we have implemented are family group conferencing or family group mediation that we would sit down with the family members, extended family, with an elder, who will then advise all of us and support the child's wishes as well as the family wishes within the community. Very much our approach is community-based that focuses on the child's wishes. When it comes that the child's wishes are contradictory to the parent's wishes and it's impossible or it's not leading to the resolution that is satisfactory to everyone in the family, then those decisions will go leaning towards the child's wishes to ensure that the safety and well-being of the child is being cared for.

I also want to add that we have in the recent years also implemented indigenous approaches to mediation practices and specifically based on the consensus and everybody's voice is being considered and valued. I hope that answers your question. *Ma'na*, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Department of Health, Ms. Stockley.

Ms. Stockley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks to the Member for that question. For Health, like my colleagues, it would be very much a case-by-case basis. Consent for medical treatment would very much depend on the age of the child and the judgment of the practitioner on whether the child could consent on his or her own or whether the consent of parents was required.

The other, I guess, points that we would consider would be mental health and addictions. As you probably will recall, the new *Mental Health Act* that just came into

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If it's okay with you, Mr. Chairman, I would like to reach out to Victoria Madsen to just provide a little bit more detail from the mental health perspective. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Madsen.

Ms. Madsen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As Ms. Stockley said, it's certainly a case-by-case basis and sometimes, I have to say, I wonder if it's a clash of values or a clash of preferences, and perhaps sometimes it's education and support that helps and I'll give you examples.

Sometimes we will have a youth come in and they have been assessed and one of the recommendations is for medications and sometimes their parents aren't comfortable with the medications and they don't want the youth to have these medications. That's a fairly common scenario with mental health and addictions and often we're able to reach a compromise either through care conferencing, giving more education, but mostly by taking our time and not pushing it and making sure that both the youth and the family are in agreement because, if we push it, the youth will sometimes not want to go against their parents and then they will decline the treatment. I think the main part is making sure people feel supported in their decision, we go slowly, we educate, and we try to meet people where they are.

Another example is when we want to send youth out of territory and that's obviously not something that we like to do. We will sometimes see a child and we will think, "You know what? They need a bit more treatment, some more assessment," and we

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talk to the family and say, "We would like to send this child out, and the family says no and they have a lot of good personal reasons that they say no. Same thing, we don't push it, that would be the last thing we would want to do, and we try to keep the youth in territory and do what we can until potentially the family comes around and everyone feels a little bit more comfortable with that decision.

As Ms. Stockley mentioned, in our new *Mental Health Act*, we have the tikkuaqtaujuq that is our substitute decision-maker when someone is found incompetent, but it's also a person who, if mandatory for the mental health clinician, give them updates and this tikkuaqtaujuq doesn't always have to be family; it can be a friend and I think that helps too because we get support for that youth in the circle that they feel the most comfortable with.

Those are a variety of responses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Department of Education, Ms. Hainnu.

**Ms. Hainnu**: Thank you for that question; I do appreciate it. I have to say that although the Department of Education has done family engagement strategic planning for the next ten years, it's only the beginning of it.

I think there are already in practices in schools everywhere the school teams. The school team's role is to advocate for the child and come up with an individualized student support plan, but also bring in the parents so that the parents are informed of what the child's rights are and what parental rights are. In working with the school team, they can also educate both the educators and the parents about what the child's rights are.

**Δ°/«>C°**: L′α. Γ<sup>、</sup>L˙<sup>c</sup>.

**L**<sup>c</sup> (ጋኒት∩J<sup>c</sup>): 'dታ<sub>2</sub>αΓ<sup>c</sup>, Δ<sup>c</sup>/«ΡΟ<sup>c</sup>. 'dታ<sub>2</sub>αΓ<sup>c</sup>CΡ<sup>c</sup> CΔL<sup>c</sup> ΔΛΛLΔ<sup>c</sup>. Ρ<sup>c</sup>b<sup>c</sup>bPUL PP-<sub>2</sub> L PΔ<sup>c</sup>NΔP, ጋ\<sup>c</sup>b<sup>c</sup>C<sub>C</sub>P<sup>c</sup>DJ<sup>c</sup> 475-σ<sup>c</sup> ΔαΡ<sup>c</sup>ΓΡC<sup>c</sup>σ<sup>c</sup>, 225 Δά/<sup>c</sup>D<sup>c</sup>D<sup>c</sup> Δα<sup>c</sup>σ Δα<sup>c</sup>C

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One of the most amazing things I have seen from the RCYO in the last few years and in 2019, I believe it was, is the chart of all the rights of a child on one poster. It's beautiful and colourful. If we could have that everywhere, it would go a long way. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you. I guess my last question is for the office of the children and youth. I'm wondering, when we talk about advocacy rights of children and youth there, the office has been busy doing that. How does your own office monitor your own progress when it comes to resolving these cases? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Korgak.

**Mr. Korgak**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Member, for the question. If you refer to Table 2 in our annual report where we provide reasons for closure, you will see that 77 of 93 closed individual advocacy cases

**Δ°/<>C°:** L'a. (Ͻ<sup>i</sup>λ<sup>2</sup>Λ)<sup>i</sup>σ<sup>\*</sup>) ϤϹϷ/\*bσ<sup>\*</sup>Γ ϤΛΩJLUL, LΓϤαϷU<sub>2</sub>Ϥ<sup>c</sup> bΛL<sup>2</sup>ς<sup>c</sup>. Ϥ/<sup>3</sup>λ<sup>\*</sup>C<sup>5</sup>C<sup>c</sup>σ<sup>\*</sup>Γ<sup>2</sup>σ<sup>\*</sup> Δ<sup>\*</sup>ba Δλ<sup>\*</sup>Π<sup>c</sup> Ϸ<sup>5</sup>Φ/<sup>4</sup>δ<sup>5</sup>C<sup>c</sup><sup>\*</sup>UC Ϥ<sup>\*</sup>σϤ<sup>\*</sup>CΔσσλ<sup>3</sup>d<sup>4</sup>σ. Λλ<sup>2</sup>Λς<sup>5</sup>C<sup>c</sup>σ<sup>\*</sup>Γ<sup>c</sup> /<sup>2</sup>/<sup>4</sup>σ<sup>c</sup> L<sup>3</sup>d<sup>c</sup>Dσ<sup>c</sup> Δ/Lσλ<sup>3</sup>d<sup>c</sup> Δ/Lσλ<sup>3</sup>d<sup>c</sup>.

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were resolved; nine, all avenues exhausted; five, unable to contact; and two, declined. I'm not aware of any overview of statistics that we may have done. I'm sure it has been done in the office over the last few fiscal years. However, to me, to see the number of issues that we're resolving for young people would be a clear indicator of our progress and our advocacy skills in this office for young people. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) For Ms. Bates, on page 17, in terms of the recommendations made and the number of times it applied to a new individual advocacy case, one of the most common issues is "Improve service coordination, within department(s) and between departments." This is something that, according to this Table 7, has been seen in all of the departments in front of us today or with us today. Is service coordination between departments improving in your view or is it something that is still largely on the to-do list within the departments? Ms. Bates.

Ms. Bates: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. I would say it's still on the to-do list. Again, I'm just going to reference back to the Recommendation No. 14 that we made in "Our Minds Matter," which was the interdepartmental service coordination protocol be developed and implemented, and it was for this sole reason is that this is an ongoing issue that we have seen.

I do know that at times the Representative for Children and Youth Office, the individual advocates, to resolve a situation, have helped convene meetings between the departments to facilitate service coordination, which is not really their role to be doing, but again, as part of their advocacy work that they are completing.

**Δ°1<<>C**\*: L'a. (⊃\1\1\1\5\5) \ Γ' \ C'\5\5.

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To answer your question, yes, I would say it's still on the to-do list, very much so. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) For the Department of Education, on page 17 of this report, it notes that the representative's recommendation to "Implement in-school supports" applied to individual cases 20 times. What challenges does the Department of Education face in providing the necessary supports in schools? Ms. Hainnu.

Ms. Hainnu: I'm trying to recall what the 20 cases are. I appreciate the question. Thank you. I just want to say that when we received this report, like many Nunavummiut, the tone of the report was that once again, Nunavut was a terrible place, that all of our children were hungry, angry, behind academically when in fact we have wonderful children that are achieving many wonderful things and come from good, healthy homes.

The misleading aspect of the report, for me, was this page in particular where there are individual advocacy cases and systematic cases that we have followed and we have implemented seven out of nine recommendations by the RCY, and absolutely we totally appreciate those recommendations because it means that seven out of the nine recommendations truly came from instances where we needed to pay attention to what services we were providing and that hopefully with those recommendations implemented into the system, it improves it because we are talking about the implications to that of a child, to that of the cohort that a child exists with in their school career, which is a 13-year commitment.

This table in 17, "Implement in-school supports," it feels like it implies that we disagreed with something or issues

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**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Borg.

Ms. Borg (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the question. In terms of in-school supports, I think they range from.... I don't know the specifics of the numbers, what actually went into the 20, because some of the cases come directly from the communities and I would not be privy to all of those, but going from my experience, working in the area of ensuring our children are well served in our schools, they could range from needs requiring more support from personnel, for example, more student support assistants, more services, more timely services, so there is a whole range.

Of course, as more services are provided and they're provided in a timelier manner and we identify the needs more, then it grows exponentially and the more the students are served, then the more monitoring and evaluation is placed, the more we understand the scope of the range of services needed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) In terms of the representative, in terms of this report, I am not of the opinion that this report is in any way misleading and in fact this Committee has in the past directed the representative to focus on where the problems are and the Committee, in previous hearings, had noted, perhaps, flowery or overly positive reporting formats and so the Committee does appreciate this most recent report in that it does hone in on where the issues are. We all know that there is a lot of good work happening and there are a lot of good news stories, but if

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we're here to troubleshoot, it kind of demands that we focus on where the trouble is.

I would like to turn it to the representative in terms of that, implementing in-school supports, on Table 7 and what that is referring to. Ms. Bates.

Ms. Bates: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just would like to make a general comment about the tone of the report. My comment, again, as I said in my opening comments, we took the feedback of the Management and Services Board and Standing Committee recommendations about what the annual report should look like, what should be contained in it, and I think this report reflects that feedback. The tone is not intended to be angry; the tone is intended to be factual and to reflect the work of our office in a factual way. We made a recommendation; we identified what the concern is and how we followed that up both individually and systemically.

To your question with respect to the "Implement in-school supports," I think what I'm going to do is I'm going to turn this to David, manager of individual services, because I think he can answer that question more specifically. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Korgak.

Mr. Korgak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. As it relates to the 20 recommendations made, generally many of the individual advocacy cases we saw in that fiscal year pertained to young people who may need one-on-one classroom support due to the level of need, and those that were raised to our attention, perhaps, needed to be a little more highly prioritized.

We're understanding of the fact that many schools may not have every position filled **Δ°Υ<>C**<sup>®</sup> (⊃\̈1\Λ)<sup>c</sup>): 'd'>°αΓ΄'. Γ' '1\C̄'°-.

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and may not have all of the resources they need. While working with schools and the Department of Education through those individual advocacy cases, we're able to ensure that the students that were identified as needing more support were provided more support. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) We will now move on to the next section of the report which is titled "Systemic Advocacy," and for Committee Members just to keep in mind that this is quite a long section; it stretches from pages 18 to 29, if you include the recommendations section pertaining to the "Our Minds Matter" report, and so I just remind Committee Members to be specific in referring to which page you're asking questions on. I'll open the floor. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My first question is for the representative and on page 22, Recommendation No. 1 in Table 10, "Our Minds Matter," the RCYO recommends that the Department of Health and Education "collaborate to ensure a full range of mental health services, including universal programming, targeted interventions, and intensive interventions are delivered in Nunavut schools." My first question is...well, first, I believe that this is an excellent recommendation. I'm glad to see it as number one, top on the list, but before going further on into this topic, I was wondering if you would be able to elaborate further on exactly how you envision these services being provided. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Bates.

**Ms. Bates**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to ask Lynn Matte to answer this particular question.

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**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Matte.

**Ms. Matte** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you to the Member for the question. The recommendation that we made, which thank you for your support for the recommendation, was based on the feedback that we received from 475 Nunavummiut. Through the course of that review, 225 of the people who participated were young people in the territory and we heard very clearly from them that they would like to see these types of supports available through the school system, in schools. The recommendation that we made is based on their input and we don't generally, in our recommendations, direct departments on how specifically to figure that out. That is generally envisioned as the role of the departments to work together to decide.

There has been some work, it was not in 2019-2020, but there has been some work done in order to start providing some supports in schools and that preliminary work that was done was very well received by young people. I think that the departments actually have some good information to share on how they're piloting this and seeing opportunities to bring services into schools. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Maybe I'll turn it over to the Department of Health and the Department of Education to respond. Which one of you would like to go first? Ms. Hainnu.

**Ms. Hainnu**: Thank you. I appreciate the question. It is very important. 10,900 children who go to our schools in the K to 12 system do deserve mental health supports if they need it and so mental health supports is something in the territory there are no mental health specialists that are trained specifically in treating children ages 5 to 18 and it's really

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hard to find that specific mental health worker.

Again, going back to what can the community offer? Is it *silagujarniq*, which are traditional on-the-land programs that specialize with schools? Schools are being very creative in how they address some of the mental health issues, educating about drug-induced schizophrenia, which is a trend in Nunavut schools or in schools in Canada, educating the public about how do they occur. These are just examples.

There are mental health supports also with the departments of Health, Family Services, and Justice, actually, through Inuusivut and Inuunivut committees. That has been a forefront of our dialogues in meetings and making a comprehensive mental health strategic plan that is co-chaired by two departments, the Department of Health and the Department of Education, and also mental health supports starting before the issues arise, with pre-screening on hearing, prescreening on literacy, implications of a trilingual writing system, family, homelessness. There are children in our system that are couch-surfing and when they are couch-surfing, they're surfing the couches of their relatives. They're not homeless, but they have four or five different homes, and so mental health is very different in Nunavut communities and we do need to have and hone in on skills that target issues in Nunavut.

I am very pleased to be here with Charlotte Borg, in student achievement, who has been a part of many initiatives that are implemented in our K to 12 schools that are real efforts in addressing some of the needs of our children and staff. If you will let me, I would like Charlotte Borg to add to the answer.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Ms. Borg, briefly.

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Ms. Borg (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) There have been successes since the report was issued. For example, working collaboratively with the Iqaluit youth mental wellness team, staff at Aqsarniit Middle School piloted Makimautiksat, which is a youth mental health and wellness program developed by the Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre. I apologize for my pronunciation. I want to highlight that success. It's a critical connection that bodes well for the future of mental health services in schools.

We are working with mental health to revitalize the school-based mental health framework that was drafted a few years ago and see what that means moving forward in the light of recent collaborative actions with mental health and also in light of the recent mental health pilot that the Department of Education rolled out in schools just prior to the pandemic. We did encounter some difficulty with that during the pandemic, but we are open to working with mental health to find a different approach to rolling out school-based mental health services for our children and youth. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I'm going to go to the Department of Health before I go back to you, Mr. Lightstone. Ms. Stockley.

**Ms. Stockley**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank my colleagues for such a complete answer.

Basically the only thing I would like to add is that at the request of Education, mental health and addictions staff in each community will approach the schools to introduce themselves and to start those relationships and advise of local services and how they can be accessed. Mental health and addictions is working with education in various communities to conduct

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after school psychosocial programming with children and youth that education and educators identify as requiring extra support. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank the responses received from everybody. That was a lot of information and I'm really glad to hear that there is being progress made on this avenue and I look forward to hearing more about it.

The first issue that piqued my interest is the fact that there are no mental health specialists in Nunavut who specialize in youth ages 5 to 18, but that's a matter I'll get to later.

Another issue that was brought up was the topic of drug-induced schizophrenia. This is something I was surprised to hear. I do understand that there is some sort of correlation between cannabis use and early onset schizophrenia, especially amongst teens and youth. That's an area that I would like to focus on next.

As Ms. Hainnu from Education had indicated, there is an issue of drug-induced schizophrenia. I would like to dig a little bit further on that specific topic and ask if there has been any collaboration with other departments, specifically the Department of Health, on this matter and identifying any sort of statistical information or plans to educate youth on the dangers of early cannabis use. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Hainnu.

**Ms. Hainnu**: Thank you. As Ms. Bates actually said earlier, how will we know what to do if it's not driven by data? We need to

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take intentional steps and collect that data. I do believe in that and that processes of collecting that data from different communities has begun and the collaboration with professionals, chief paediatricians, and meeting with the Department of Health and collaborating through our directors that are sitting here today on what is it that we need to look at. That absolutely is a part of our regular discussions and what do we do in terms of screening, in terms of treating, in terms of following through so that when those types....

That's just one type that I only used as an example, but other trends could be TB in communities. Other trends could be recovering from COVID-19. When those occur, how we know to prepare for that as a school system is that we talk with and engage in dialogue with the Department of Health. I hope that answers your questions; if not, I can clarify. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Mr. Lightstone, before I go back to you, I just want to get this clarified. On page 22 of the report under Response and Commitments Made, it says "The Department of Education and the Department of Health met in January 2020 to re-establish a working group..." Maybe I'll go to the Department of Health. What's the status of this working group between your two departments? Ms. Stockley.

Ms. Stockley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's actually one of the things that Ms. Borg mentioned that we are regularly meeting. COVID-19 has wreaked some havoc in some of our in-person meetings, but we have continued our collaboration as we committed to as joint departments for that recommendation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for those responses. I truly hope that the Department of Education and the Department of Health will tackle the specific issue of drug-induced schizophrenia in our schools and get a good grasp on the data and work to proactively address the situation by educating youth on the dangers that cannabis poses on the developing brain.

Returning back to page 22, the Department of Health partially agrees to the RCY's recommendation and it seems like it's a bit contrary to what we have been hearing. It sounds there has been a lot work and progress made in this area, but on page 22 it states that "The Department of Health (Health) agrees that collaboration with the Department of Education (Education) is important to ensure that a full range of mental health services are available to children and youth." And then it states that "Health recognizes that school settings may not be the appropriate location to provide some of the services that may be required." I just would like to ask if the Department of Health would be able to elaborate a bit further on that last sentence. what services would not be appropriate in a school setting, and specifically to the three items that were recommended: universal programming, targeted interventions, and intensive interventions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Stockley.

Ms. Stockley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With your permission, I would like to ask Ms. Madsen to address that question, please. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Madsen.

Ms. Madsen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that's exactly correct; it's the intense portion. It caused a concern and we can't sort of commit or promise that the full continuum of mental health services could be offered in a school setting. Sometimes we have some kids that are very fragile, there are some confidentiality issues, and sometimes there are some agitated behaviours that might be impulsive and we need to create a safe space and therefore we couldn't commit entirely to always being able to give all services in a school setting. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Ms. Madsen, for that response. My next question is directed at the Department of Justice as well as the Department of Education.

On page 16 of the "Our Minds Matter" systemic review, it indicates that youth involved in the criminal justice system are often connected with mental health resources and supports, and I have heard some very positive things that our youth have access to in the young offenders' facility. However, there seems to be some indication that these youth tend to fall off the rails after their release from the facility.

I would like to ask: how does your department, the Department of Justice, collaborate with Education and/or Health to ensure that young offenders can continue to have the same level to access to services after they are released? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is my final question for now.

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**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Mansell.

Mr. Mansell (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I thank the Member for the question. You are correct; we do have quite a bit of services that we provide in facility. The department has a mental health nurse and a clinician that are available to all client under our care as well as we do quite a bit of programming in facility.

I spoke a bit about the release planning and the section 19 conferences that we have and that are where we work with our partners to identify the needs that the young person is going to have when they are released from the facility and that process starts upon intake into the facility.

Our community correctional workers are available to provide support and check-ins to the young person as well. We can't provide our medical care outside of the facilities, but we work with the Department of Health and the Department of Education to create those release plans to ensure that the young person is provided the care that they need when they are released from the facility. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mansell. (interpretation ends) That sounds again like a situation where coordination between departments is required because this is the youth is going from Department of Justice to the Department of Health so maybe I will turn it to Ms. Bates in terms of commenting on the responses that are provided just now and how important it is to ensure that that coordination is actually happening. Ms. Bates.

**Ms. Bates**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the responses are encouraging in terms of what is currently occurring in terms of

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delivering mental health supports and ensuing the young people have access have access to those supports.

I can't stress enough, again, as you see in the individual advocacy cases that one of the reasons that we have is make the recommendation that coordination between departments really is central to ensuing that children, youth and their families are receiving that coordinated approach in a timely manner and that all of the departments are working together to provide the services that children, youth and their families are entitled to and should be receiving so that they can live their best lives. I think it is such an important aspect of public service and the delivery of service, departments working together to be able to communicate and to share information, certainly within the parameters of privacy so that they can deliver those services.

Again, I come back to on the to-do list and to really ensure that that ability to do that and that set out with a coordinated way and a set out way so that there is no concerns about can I share this, can I not share this, how do we work together?

I trust that answers the question, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Moving on. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to ask about this subject listed on page 22 within the report, where it states what mental health services are. Mental health is extremely important, especially amongst our youth. It identifies the youth who may require additional mental health counselling or services and that some youth require this service while they are resident in Nunavut.

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Mental health is extremely important as it is written within the report, and I want to see how the policy will be interpreted, and I would like to understand when this policy will be reviewed, and will it be available for review, Mr. Chairman? I wish to understand this issue, hence my question on it. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Qirngnuq, can you rephrase your question please? Thank you. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) On page 22 of your report, *Our Minds Matter: A Youth-Informed Review of Mental Health Services for Young Nunavummiut*, now, under the "Our Minds Matter" report was your office's first systemic review. Can you describe how your office determines when to conduct a formal systemic review? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Bates.

**Ms. Bates**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am going to ask the Director of Child and Youth Advocacy, Lynn Matte, to respond to that question.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Matte.

Ms. Matte (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you to the Member for the question. Members may recall from previous annual reports that the office had a very long list of systemic issues to consider making a choice which one that we wanted to review first. To help us figure out which topic to look into first, we asked a series of questions, things like how many young people are being affected by this matter, does it have the potential to have a

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negative impact on many young people if it is not addressed, the number of times this concern was raised to our attention, how often we are seeing the topic come up in our individual advocacy cases.

We looked at all of that information and the concerns about mental health services for young people scored the highest. It was also a topic that had been raised to our attention in every single community that we have travelled to. Young people, their family, service providers, everybody was telling us that mental health services for young people needed to be improved and so for all of those reasons, we chose this as the topic of our first review. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. If it is ok with you, Mr. Qirngnuq Department of Justice would add on to that, Mr. Mansell.

Mr. Mansell: Apologies, Mr. Chairman, actually it was related to the issue of interdepartmental cooperation post-release. To add to that, the youth facility has actually taken steps recently to offer programming infacility to young offenders who receive probation in Iqaluit.

Previously when you left the facility, you left the facility, but we are enabling them to come back and the centre is coordinating to bring youth into the centre that we feel can continue to benefit from the programming that is available in the centre, even though they are on probation and programming staff have been leaving the centre to provide assistance to youth that are on probation.

As well, for interdepartmental cooperation, our medical staff work for Justice, but we have a teacher that works for the Department of Education that is focused on the youth facility and so that teacher works with his

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$$\label{eq:controller} \begin{split} & \forall \Lambda^{\circ} \mathcal{H}^{\mathsf{L}} \Gamma \mathsf{L}^{\mathsf{C}} \subset \mathsf{C}^{\circ} \ \, \forall \mathcal{H}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{n}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{L} \mathsf{E}^{\mathsf{S}} \mathsf{N} \mathsf{N}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{L}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{C}^{\mathsf{C}} \\ & \mathsf{D} \mathsf{L}^{\mathsf{L}} \mathsf{L}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{L}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{L}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D}^{\mathsf{C}} \mathsf{D$$

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colleagues at the Department of Education to assist with transitioning back into the regular school system and ensuring that the schools know what the needs of the student are. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank the witnesses for responding adequately. This question was raised earlier by one of our colleagues or as part of their question. I would like to get further clarification on this issue, so I wish to query you on it.

When discussing our youth in Nunavut, I would like to know what type of direction or plan is provided. Since we are talking about our youth, I want to ask the Department of Family Services what programs are made available for youth. Some young people are provided services without the parents' involvement, especially for future services and often it seems the social workers are dictating to the youth their preferred approach, especially the types of services they may be directed to, and I believe if given the choice, they can make informed decisions, but I am worried about the consequences if the social worker makes the wrong decision.

I wish to clearly understand this situation, Mr. Chairman, which is why I am querying the witnesses, especially in cases where problems may crop up with the parents disagreeing with the suggested course of action. Why are the parents not included? Is it because the child or youth has a problem? How and in which area can parents become involved in the process, especially if the youth is impacted negatively?

Mr. Chairman, I hope you can understand me. Thank you.

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**Δ⁴/<>⊂**<sup>®</sup> (⊃ίλΛης): ٩σ-αΓ, Γ, Γ, ας αςγό-.

**ϲΔ<sup>°</sup>/Ͻ<sup>°</sup>** (ϽʹͱϒΛͿ<sup>°</sup>): ʹϭͿϧ·αΓ<sup>°</sup>, Δ<sup>°</sup>/«ΡΟ<sup>°</sup>, ʹϭͿϧ·αΓ<sup>°</sup><sup>°</sup> Ο<sup>°</sup> ΑΛ<sup>®</sup>ϭΠͿϲ Ρ<sup>°</sup><sup>†</sup> <sup>©</sup> ΔΑ<sup>°</sup> Ο Γ<sup>°</sup> Ο ΔΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο Γ<sup>°</sup> ΔΑ<sup>°</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup> Ο ΓΑ<sup>†</sup>

 $\Delta$ ካ**ィ<>**C\* (ጋኒት\)J<sup>c</sup>): የժታ• $\alpha$ ፫፥. Γ' < $\Delta$ <sup>c</sup>ነ.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Department of Family Services, Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I think the answer to the question is similar to one that had been asked before about family values. It's very much case by case by case. It might depend on the age of the child. If they are old enough to start making their own decisions, we have to respect that to some degree. As much as possible, families are consulted. If safety is a concern, of course it needs to be taken into consideration.

There are so many factors and of course our frontline staff make every effort to balance all perspectives. Not every time will a child make the right decision for themselves. We also have to think long term in the community, in an isolated community. Maybe today that's what the child thinks is best for them, the youth, but then in the long term, will the family go against that youth? Even though today that seems like the right decision; maybe long term there could be effects.

There is so much to consider and things can change also along the way. Of course we provide service, not just one time, one day; it can extend and the influencing factors will play into that. It's not an easy answer, but not an easy question. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. We have to recognize the clock at this time. We will take a break for lunch. The meeting will resume at 1:30 p.m. We will see you later. Have a good lunch.

>> Committee recessed at 11:58 and resumed at 13:28

Chairman (interpretation): We're now back

**<∆**<sup>c</sup>` (⊃፟\ት∩J<sup>c</sup>): 'dታ°ዺΓ፞°, ∆°/<\⊅Ċ፞፞°. 'bዾ∆`\<sup>∞</sup>Ր°d&<sup>c</sup> Γ` ŰJ° የ▷ታ▷'dታናጔ⊲ና ⊲∧"d∩. 'dታ°ዺΓ፞°.

**△¹/<>C**<sup>®</sup> (⊃\̈+∩J<sup>c</sup>): Γ' L̄<sup>c</sup>.

**Ĺ**ና (⊃\\^∩J<sup>c</sup>): 切ኑ°ዺΓ፞<sup>t</sup>, Δ°/≪▷Ċ<sup>t</sup>. ⊃የ/°∩⊲२°d ⊲∧°d∩°U ⊃የ/°b°σ?L'L° ७ዾ° ७▷>°σ°L°Ū°∩J Ċ°ዺ.

ΔL-σ<sup>\*</sup>C<sup>\*</sup>bt<sup>t</sup>Γ<sup>t</sup>L<sup>c</sup> dia C<sup>†</sup>b t<sup>\*</sup> <sup>†</sup>D<sup>\*</sup>tL-b d<sup>\*</sup>a Δ<sup>c</sup>

<sup>†</sup>PL<sup>†</sup>A<sup>t</sup>L+C<sup>\*</sup>DΓσP<sup>c</sup>-Jσ, 14-2) d<sup>\*</sup>tC<sup>c</sup> <sup>†</sup>D<sup>\*</sup>tt<sup>t</sup>t CΔ<sup>a</sup>a

<sup>†</sup>PL<sup>†</sup>A<sup>t</sup>Γ<sup>†</sup>A<sup>†</sup>B<sup>a</sup>b<sup>a</sup>c<sup>c</sup>CPΛΓ<sub>C</sub>P<sup>\*</sup>TL<sup>t</sup>L<sup>c</sup> 14-2) d<sup>\*</sup>tC<sup>c</sup> C<sup>†</sup>dd

<sup>†</sup>Δ<sub>C</sub> C<sup>c</sup> Δ<sup>t</sup>L C<sup>c</sup>A<sup>t</sup>C d<sup>b</sup>c-tt<sup>Δ</sup>C C<sup>c</sup> «σ<sup>b</sup> f<sup>a</sup> a σ d<sup>t</sup>L<sup>i</sup>t Γσ<sup>b</sup>

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Δየ**/<>C**\* (ጋኒትበJ<sup>c</sup>): የሀን ሚ ኮ. Γ'C CΔ<sup>c</sup>I $^{\circ}$ .

to resume our hearing as the Standing Committee on Government Operations and Public Accounts with the Representative for Children and Youth. This morning we left off with Mr. Qirngnuq asking questions, so he will continue. (interpretation ends) We are on the section titled "Systemic Advocacy" in the report and it's quite a long section. It stretches roughly from pages 18 to 40. I'll just remind Members to be clear when you're asking questions and reference the page number when possible. Mr. Qirngnuq.

**Mr. Qirngnuq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I say "good day" to everyone who is present at this meeting.

Mr. Chairman, here on pages 22 to 29, for clarity, I'll speak in English. (interpretation ends) On page 22 of your annual report you note that of the 15 recommendations from your systemic review, *Our Minds Matter*, you determined that there was an agreement of six recommendations, partial agreement with five, and disagreement with one, and the remainder unclear if there was agreement or disagreement. Can you describe how you will continue to monitor these recommendations? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Bates.

**Ms. Bates**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to ask Lynn Matte, the Director of Child and Youth Advocacy Services, to speak to this.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Matte.

**Ms. Matte** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the question. In front of you, you have our 2019-2020 annual report. We reported out what we knew in that fiscal

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year. These recommendations will appear again in subsequent annual reports to let you know what progress departments are making on them. We follow up with departments annually to ask what they are doing to implement the recommendations and we will continue to report out on it publicly.

We have in the last year established a process with departments such that for the majority of our recommendations that are systemic, we will allow them a year before we ask them what they have done, but we will ask them sooner than that whether or not they agree or disagree with the recommendation. After a year has passed, then we will start asking departments to let us know what they have done to implement the recommendation and we are committed to continuing to publish that in our annual reports going forward. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Still on table 10, page 29, the last paragraph, 15, (interpretation ends) "The Department of Community and Government Services, in partnership with the Department of Culture and Heritage, hamlets, and young Nunavummiut, develop and implement a territorial child and youth recreation strategy and action plan." There's a disagreement in response and the commitments made by "The Department of Community and Government Services does not agree with the recommendation to develop a strategy and action plan specific to children and youth at this time." (interpretation) Mr. Chairman, I'm asking for clarification on that. Thank you. Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Bates.

Ms. Bates: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to again ask Lynn Matte, the Director

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of Child and Youth Advocacy Services, to respond.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Matte.

Ms. Matte (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the question. The Department of Community and Government Services told us that they were working on a sport framework for the entire territory and that they hoped to encompass all age groups in one document and that was the reason why they disagreed with the recommendation. They are choosing not to develop a framework that is specific to sport connected to young people or recreational opportunities that would focus on those opportunities just for young people.

As a result of that disagreement, you see it in the 2019-2020 annual report, but because the department has disagreed, there is nothing for us to follow up with them on. They aren't doing it. They have told us no. Jane has the authority as the representative to issue recommendations, but she cannot force departments to take action. Decisions on whether or not to implement a recommendation lie with the departments. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Thank you. Next name on my list: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to quickly add onto or ask about your last response here. There has been a change of Ministers and some executive staff, I believe, at the department. Has there been a follow-up to see if there has been any change in mind about this response? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you.

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(interpretation ends) That's regarding Recommendation 15 in the "Our Minds Matter" report. Ms. Bates.

Ms. Bates: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. No, there has been no further follow-up. We expected the answer of the departments. Certainly that's something that we can consider in the future, but it's not something typically we would do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the response. Moving on, on page 23, I would like to direct my question to Education. Recommendation No. 2, "The Department of Education ensure that all school staff, including *Ilinniarvimmi Inuusilirijiit*, guidance counsellors, teachers, support staff, and principals, receive basic mental health training on how to connect children and youth with appropriate mental health services and how to support them while this connection is being made."

There are some casuals regularly working in our schools, I believe, in every community. They could be substitute teachers, substitute student support assistants, but because they are casuals, they do not take part in any of these courses or in-service sessions that happen throughout the school year. I would like to know why that is because these people do work regularly, every month some of them, and they're dealing with our children on a daily school basis. I'm wondering why these people are not included in these training sessions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Department of Education, Ms. Hainnu.

Ms. Hainnu: Thank you for that question.

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I do appreciate the question very much. As it pertains to professional development, the Department of Education's Professional Development Fund assists with the Nunavut Teachers Association. The millions that are devoted to professional development go and sit with the NTA, and so what I can do for you today is pass this question along because you bring a valid point that all of our students in our school system deserve a trained employee in the building, whether it is a custodian, a secretary, *ilinniarvimmi inuusilirijiit*, DEA elder hires, teachers, or administrators.

As for an NTA member is only an NTA member when they are a substitute teacher on the day they show up and that is a collective bargain item and so that is covered under the collective agreement between the NTA and the Department of Education and some of those logistical pieces tie up resources that we could have a say in.

I would like Charlotte Borg if she has anything to add to the II training in particular. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Borg.

Ms. Borg (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The Department of Education does its best to be inclusive of all school level staff, working in a school and across the territory at any given moment in time. For example, this past February we delivered training via teams to all our *ilinniarvimmi inuusilirijiit*, some of whom are employed in term positions or as casuals. That training was in mental health first aid and we ensured that all those serving in that role had access to that training. I do believe we had 95 percent uptake across the territory. (interpretation) Thank you.

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**△¹/<▷⊂**<sup>®</sup>: L′a. Γ¹⊂ ℉៕.

**'₽~J**\*: 'dケャႭ፫ჼ ᠘⁰ሃጳ▷ር፫ჼ 'dケャႭ፫ჼ ᠘
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**△५८०**: L'a. Г'⊂ L'y>-

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the responses. Next question, under responses to commitments made on the same page, on 23, "The Department of Education committed to providing ASIST training..." It lists a few different communities. I'm wondering: how often is this ASIST training done in our communities? Is it done in every community?

ASIST training, I believe, has to do with suicide prevention and we all know that this is a very serious issue in our territory. I had one in my high school this past January or February during our winter sitting, and it was very hard for me to be here in Iqaluit and not in Baker Lake at the time.

I'm wondering about this ASIST training. How often is it done and is it provided to new teachers? Are they coming from the south or NTEP graduates? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Hainnu.

Ms. Hainnu (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that good question. (interpretation ends) ASIST training, like professional development, is up to the teachers. In the collective agreement it stipulates that the professional development will be at the discretion of the teacher, but the department has offered to ensure that the right kind of professional development is available is make them available. Any teacher that comes in can take ASIST, they can sign up for it, they can sign up for it at any time, they can utilize their professional development during PD week in February, but at the same time they can retake it. I have taken ASIST and I have been to Red Cross, I think it's the same course, four times with different

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As for the logistics, like the number of ASISTs offered, I could not tell you that, but I will ask my associate to answer the question if she has the data. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Borg.

**Ms. Borg** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I extend my condolences to the Member from Baker Lake for the loss in your community this past year.

Together we continue to work so that we stem the tide of loss in our territory and in that regard, as my colleague Ms. Hainnu has stated, we do make ASIST training available and we work with the Embrace Life Council and the Canadian Red Cross to make training to all our staff accessible at the community level.

As the annual report here notes, we haven't in the past done so well in documenting the number of staff that take the training and we have measures in place to do a better job documenting the number of staff taking the training moving forward. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Simailak said that he was done. (interpretation ends) I'm going to throw in a few questions of my own here.

Recommendation 11 on page 28 references cultural competency training, so I would like to ask the representative first. When your office was putting together this report, what were you hearing from Nunavummiut about the importance of cultural competency training for mental health service providers? Ms. Bates.

## **Δ<sup>6</sup>/«>C**%: L'α. Γ' L̄<sup>c</sup>.

L° (⊃ίλρης): 'θϧ·αΓ΄ Δ΄ νανος". 'θϧ·αΓ΄ Δ ΔΛἣθηςς Σ. Οστρουρηνικό Ροτρουρηνος νας Ντάν 2019/2020-Γ αστίν Νσή Γ Λθνρησος άις Πος σ Νσή Ενρας Γίς, Ρρωης, νας Οπίκο Νθυρηνικό Νας Νας Παρας Λαισηνικό Ευθυσο Ναιθηθή Νας Ενστανίκος. 'θλη αΓ΄ Δ΄ νανος".

Ms. Bates: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wasn't directly involved in the formation of this particular report, so I think it is best that I ask Lynn Matte, who was the director of child and youth advocacy services, to speak to this. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Matte.

Ms. Matte (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the question. As I mentioned in an earlier response, we did hear from 475 Nunavummiut, 225 of which were young people. We heard directly from the young people as we administered surveys to them in communities across the territory. I believe it was 10 communities we went to.

What we were hearing was very much that in order to receive appropriate services, the people who are providing those services needed to be aware of the context around those young people, which includes the realities of Nunavut, its creation, the fact that it is a majority Inuit population, that Inuktitut is the first language for a large portion of our population and that they have a right to receive services in that language if they wish, that they wanted cultural practices to potentially be part of the solutions to helping them address their mental health concerns, if that was appropriate, and the only way to have those kinds of solutions even explored is to have service providers who have that cultural awareness. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) In the response on that same recommendation from the Department of Health, it states on page 28 that Indigenous Cultural Competence training has been made mandatory. However, it also mentions that "As staffing levels change on near daily basis,

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it is challenging for [the Department of]
Health to provide an accurate figure of the staff who have completed the training."
That's concerning from where I sit, so I would like to turn it to the Department of Health, Ms. Stockley, in terms of: do you now have an accurate picture or an accurate figure in terms of how many of your mental health service providers have completed the Indigenous Cultural Competence training?
Ms. Stockley.

**Ms. Stockley**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like, with your permission, to ask Ms. Madsen to respond. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Madsen.

Ms. Madsen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I think the near daily changes aren't a very good description. I think that how it should read is whenever we're asked what our mental health staff numbers are throughout the territory, it changes, let's say, with the turnover of our casual staff, and so I think "daily" makes it sound more chaotic or not as robust as it actually is.

As for the numbers, yes, we could say who has done ICC (Indigenous Cultural Competence). A couple of things, ICC isn't always able to be accessed because the department in which it is at present doesn't always have the resources to have someone travel throughout the territory and do this very needed course. We're looking at how we can make sure we can reach more people faster with ICC because of its content and it should be something everybody has.

What we do in between our opportunities to have ICC is we reach out, usually through Culture and Heritage, and we have secured sometimes it's an elder or sometimes another person who will give us our own cultural

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 awareness presentation, and we try to have it as in-depth as we can and it is mandatory because we can't have people coming from the south and going to communities without having this knowledge. We try to have people to come through Iqaluit first so we can ensure that they have the basic knowledge. I don't think it's very respectful to put someone into a community without this.

In answer to the question, yes, I'm sure we could come up with the numbers; it has been recorded what types of cultural competency training we give. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I'll beg the forgiveness of the Committee. I'm just going to throw in one more question here. You're referring to turnover and staffing levels, so for the Department of Health, as it pertains to mental health services for children and youth, how much of a barrier is the staff housing issue in terms of your workforce and your staffing levels at the community level? Ms. Stockley.

**Ms. Stockley**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can honestly say that it is the biggest barrier, not only for mental health and addictions but for critical care, long-term care, all kinds of care that the Department of Health is responsible for providing.

Simply put, without being able to put people in positions, we can't do our work, so we have people that are working more than one position at a time, we have a patchwork of CSAs, contractors, potentially people working from the south because we have no choice, they can do the work here, but they have nowhere to live.

I can honestly say it is the biggest barrier and having the ability to have staff in place is the biggest risk to the Department of Health. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is for the Department of Health and it's regarding Recommendation No. 6 on page 25 and the recommendation is that "The Government of Nunavut establish an interritory facility that offers residential mental health treatment for children and youth..." and the department neither agreed nor disagreed with the recommendation and responded that "Programming and target populations for the Nunavut Recovery Centre (NRC) have not been decided yet. However, it is very unlikely that the NRC will be providing the full spectrum of mental health services for children or youth."

I would like to ask if Ms. Stockley would be able to explain the rationale for neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the recommendation and, as the response was provided over a year ago, if you would be able to provide an update on the Nunavut Recovery Centre's programming and target population. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Stockley.

Ms. Stockley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Given the technical nature of that question, with your permission, I would like Ms. Madsen to respond. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Madsen.

Ms. Madsen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Nunavut Recovery Centre would not be able to give the full spectrum of mental health services for youth because we're going to be focusing on addiction. We will also be looking at some trauma counselling as well as

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#455°10 (그\2015): 'dh°ait', A°140it. <pre it pertains to addiction, but the Nunavut Recovery Centre won't be a full spectrum of services. You're right; after a year we are closer to imagining who our target audience is and we look forward to sharing that as we get the details together.

At this time, when we look at agreeing or disagreeing to a facility for the youth in Nunavut, I think what we have to ensure is being able to offer the full spectrum to the youth and that may or may not include an actual facility. We don't know. As you know, we look forward to having a new mental health and addictions strategy in the next couple of years and I'm sure that's where we will be able to determine the best way to do this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Ms. Madsen. My next question is also for the Department of Health. Over the last day and a half there has been much discussion over the topic of child abuse and it's clear that we all know that it's going on, but no one is quite certain of the extent.

However, there was a comment made earlier this morning which I found to be alarming and it was stated that currently there are no mental health workers in Nunavut who specialize in treating youth aged 5 to 18. I think it's quite obvious that physical and emotional abuse is traumatic and will leave lifelong scars, and those youth need assistance on the road to recovery, but when it comes to child sexual abuse, it's exceptionally traumatic at a completely different level.

My first question for the department is: how is the Department of Health assisting abused kids to recover? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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Ms. Stockley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I mentioned yesterday, Health has contributed to the Umingmak centre, which offers mental health clinical services to children and that's predominantly aimed towards children who have experienced abuse. Children and youth also have access to virtual mental health care. Just because the statement was made that care is not available in territory doesn't mean that it's not available. With your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would like Ms. Madsen to offer some details on that. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Madsen.

Ms. Madsen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish we had more mental health clinicians who specialized in child and youth. Unfortunately, with the staffing issues that have already been outlined, we don't always have the luxury of picking and choosing to that extent. Over the years there have been times that we've had excellent clinicians that specialize in child and youth. Unfortunately they moved to another position or moved out of territory. Right now we do have a counsellor, though virtual, who specializes in child and youth.

It's very similar to the fact that we don't have a person who specializes in geriatrics or people who specialize in couple's therapy. People come with their general knowledge and usually we find that that type of person can work in a health centre and they can meet a lot of needs, but we are always looking for more people who specialize in child and youth. Thankfully we do have psychiatrists that regularly visit Nunavut face to face and we also have psychiatrists virtually. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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 Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I would like to give the representative a chance to comment on Mr. Lightstone's question. In terms of the services that are available or facilities, such as the Umingmak centre, and given the status of child sex abuse in the territory, are you of the opinion that what is currently available is adequate to address the problem? Ms. Bates.

**Ms. Bates**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Do I feel what is currently available is adequate? Again, I just want to circle back and say that not knowing the magnitude and the scope of the issue and the magnitude and scope of the problem, it's difficult to say whether the services that are currently available are adequate to meet the need.

Having said that, I think the Umingmak centre is a very.... In such a small jurisdiction, to have a centre of that calibre, for a lack of a better word, I think is exceptional because you have access to.... Again, they specialize largely in abuse. They're doing what I would call multidisciplinary investigation and support and treatment of child abuse. Again, not knowing truly what the numbers are and how many children are in need and how many child abuse cases are actually occurring, again, it's difficult for me to say whether the services are adequate.

I would say that the Umingmak centre is absolutely having that resource here in the territory, although it's central to Iqaluit, I do know that Family Services has brought young people in to go to the Umingmak centre, but I think there is always room for more services. Again, I would never not advocate for having more services for children. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

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It has come to my attention that the first 12 months alone in the operation of the Umingmak facility, they've had over 80 children who have suffered abuse come through their doors and I believe that they are predominantly from Iqaluit.

My next question, I'm going to pose it to the Department of Health. I'm not sure who would be most appropriate to provide a response, but as I indicated, Umingmak has done exceptional job in filling the void that should be available to all children in every community. My next question is; I know that the GN and the feds played a role in creating Umingmak. Are there any intentions or plans on assisting Umingmak to expand into other communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Stockley.

Ms. Stockley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I referenced yesterday, Dr. Amber Miners actually provides a lot of training to communities outside of Iqaluit, but with your permission, Mr. Chairman, I would like for Ms. Madsen to expand on my answer, please.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Madsen.

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Ms. Madsen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, of course, we would want to have those services everywhere, but realistically speaking, looking at resources, we're going to have to start smaller than in a facility in all the regions. What we do now is when we're aware of a situation in another community, another region, we do work with Umingmak and there was a recent time that there was a tragedy in one of the communities that Umingmak sent their counsellors with our mental health counsellors and together they went to the community to help the children.

We often consult and you might remember that the counsellors that work at Umingmak actually were mental health counsellors with our programs, so that means our relationship is very close. That combined with the training that we're doing throughout Nunavut with Dr. Miners and Radius, which is an excellent training module for dealing with kids in these situations, we're hoping all our paraprofessionals are trained, we're hoping that we get to the nurses. We have big plans to move this along. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Mr. Lightstone, I'll give you one more question. Go ahead.

**Mr. Lightstone**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks again, Ms. Stockley and Ms. Madsen. I'm very glad to hear that there are some big plans and I hope that we will be hearing something shortly down the road.

Getting back to the topic of assistance to children who have experienced these traumatic events and the lifelong scars that it leaves on them, and in previous responses, there was indication that there have been specialists in the past and today there are currently counsellors who assist children virtually, I was wondering if the Department ᠙ᡃᠾᡥ᠋᠘᠘ᢣᢈᢅ᠆᠋ᠫᡃᠨᡩᠬ᠋᠊ᢎᡃ᠋ᢗ᠆ᡥᢉ᠇ᢐ᠆᠖᠘ᢣᡃᡪᢅᠮ,ᢂᢁᢡᡫ᠂ᠴ ᠙ᡣ᠘ᢣᡪᡄᠣᠲᡶᡥ᠋᠌ᠵᠦ᠈᠋ᠫᡃᡪᡩ᠌ᡓᡱᡃᠴ᠂ᢐ᠆ᠵ᠘ᠵ᠌ᢅᠵᠴ᠌᠌ᡶᠴ᠘᠊ ᢄᡃᠲᡄᡶ᠘ᢇᠫ᠋᠘ᠫ᠘ᠫᠰᡳᡲ᠊ᡃᢧᠲᡕ᠋ᢗᢚᡕᢕ.

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of Health would be able to expand a little bit further on what is currently being made available to children who have experienced traumatic events.

I just really want to express the importance of this. It's something that we never really hear about and I think it's a little known fact that most predators were victims once themselves, so the treatment is absolutely necessary in ending the cycle, which is why I'm really trying to push this here now.

With that being said, I would like to ask if you can provide a little bit more information on what exactly is being made available to those children. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My last question.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Madsen.

Ms. Madsen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Well, first of all, thank goodness for the report, "Our Minds Matter." I have noticed since that report we've actually had more community and stakeholder support in getting things like this done. It has really brought to the attention of the need and a mental health clinician in a community, one person, can't meet that need alone.

When we've had issues like this brought forward, depending on the community and the situation, we've had great support from Family Services and the RCMP in making sure that we deal with this as best we can. Now, it depends on the case. Sometimes a family will say, "We would all like to go south and we would all like to have some counselling together." Sometimes people will come to us and say, "I know someone in Yellowknife and I would feel comfortable if we went there." Sometimes it's the psychiatrist that comes to town and does follow-up virtually for a few weeks after that

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with the family.

We have to get together what we can right now because we do need more resources. That's absolutely true, but right now this is how we do it: on a case-by-case, what are the resources we have, how can we work together, what's the best for this child because it's obviously not always leaving their community, what can we bring in. The virtual services work much better than I ever dreamed they would work. I'm not going to say it's a good thing that we have had to rely on them in the last year, but it has really opened up people's minds on using them. Right now I think we're doing pretty well, but we can absolutely do better and we will keep working toward a better plan and more resources. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) The Department of Justice would also like to respond. Mr. Mansell.

**Mr. Mansell** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As was mentioned with respect to these issues and with the operations of the Umingmak centre, the RCMP is also an important stakeholder in this.

Just some updates from the RCMP, they have filled the divisional family violence coordinator position which works towards supporting educational initiatives but also investigating allegations of family violence, as well, they have staffed a special investigations team which is fully operational, located here in Iqaluit, but investigates matters across the territory, and the objective of the unit is to investigate crimes of a sexual nature, involving victims at risk, which includes children. These are highly specialized officers with training dealing with child victims and marginalized victims and

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Our victim services staff at the department also work with the Umingmak centre. They do a lot of referrals to mental health, to counsellors, and to the Umingmak centre. Since their establishment, Victim Services has supported 116 child victims and that's an important role as well for maybe when the RCMP isn't involved, our Victim Services do get involved in these matters as well. The RCMP is making some very good progress on getting specialized investigative units and officers with the proper training and proper mindset to deal with these victims. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Mr. Mansell, would you be able to provide a breakdown of that figure of 116? It could be at a later date or in writing in terms of the regional breakdown and a breakdown by community in terms of where the victims were from. Mr. Mansell.

**Mr. Mansell**: If I don't find it in my book in the next 20 minutes or so, I will follow up with the Committee for sure. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Some of the issues that I would like to ask about were touched upon and maybe I can direct my question to the Department of Education.

Let me start off with the recommendations in the report, and I have the Inuktitut copy. On page 27, Recommendation No. 10 indicates that your department is working with Nunavut Arctic College and the Department of Health collaboratively to assess whether this idea would work, as some comments were made ۵۲۲۲- ا

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▷<sup>5</sup>b'(~<sup>6</sup>N)<sup>6</sup><sup>5</sup>σ<<sup>1</sup>Δ).

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about the need for an instructor, however, it was said in the vein of counselling youth. Now, there is an existing institution as the report states that Arctic College is completely open to any collaborative approaches to combat this need, at least in the recommendations.

In Clyde River, the cultural school Piqqusilirivvik along with Ilisaqsivik Society provide counselling services, and all of their work is solely provided in Inuktitut, and they train people only by using the Inuktitut language, and they have professional trainers and teachers in that school. And further, the society also provides healing workshops and their counsellors travel to communities, and they also focus on teaching children and youth about the cultural practices and traditional counselling at Ilisaqsivik, and Piqqusilirivvik teaches youth how to conduct safe travels out on the land.

Has the department made any efforts to incorporate their successes and, if not, why not? Did you discuss this issue with those involved in these two facilities? Here I am talking about the cultural school and Ilisaqsivik Society. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Keyootak. Is your question for the Department of Education? Ms. Hainnu, if you can respond. We do know that Arctic College representatives are not here today. Ms. Hainnu.

Ms. Hainnu (interpretation): Thank you very much for your relevant question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As you may be aware, my Minister is responsible for two portfolios and I work for the Department of Education as well as for adult education services, as that is the other part of the portfolio. I also wish my Minister a very happy birthday today.

**≺∆<sup>c,</sup>** (⊃\À∩J<sup>c</sup>): 'd⊁°aĖ<sup>\*</sup>, ∆°l'«ÞĊ<sup>\*</sup> Ċ°a ◁Λ<sup>®</sup>d∩ՐᲡ<sup>®</sup>σ. Å. L⊂L⊂Þ'&<sup>®</sup>J<sup>c</sup> \<sup>®</sup>PCÞ∠Þ<sup>®</sup>Ր°σ<sup>®</sup>Lσ Ċ°d◁ 'PΓ'ʔαJ°a<sup>®</sup>l'∠Þ<sup>®</sup>l'LÞ¢<sup>c</sup>, Ч'L⊐ ΔL°a ◁<sup>®</sup>P°l'L'<C ∧Þσ<sup>®</sup>\Þσ◁⊃°<<sup>c</sup>~∟°&Ր¹°a∠Þ<sup>®</sup>C¢<sup>c</sup>.

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Now, under Nunavut Arctic College, there are components that are taught that include some IQ principles, however, it is only in social work training modules that are sent from southern institutions, as the courses are readily available. This will be the first course we offer this year, where we will have advanced social work courses, but with respect to Piqusilirivvik's mandate as well as Ilisaqsivik's mandate, we would like to see that available in all communities, as many Inuit would like to take training offered in Inuktitut using Inuit knowledge and cultural skills, and using their mother tongue.

Perhaps it can be incorporated into the nursing program which is called ICC, where they could become the trainers, however, when it comes to legal issues and the law, these tend to bind our options when it comes to offering that. We are bound by law on some issues, as it is not within our legal mandate, and therefore we cannot deal with that matter as it is another department's responsibility. I hope I answered your question properly, but yes, that is our preference. Thank you.

Chairman (Mr. Rumbolt): Thank you, Ms. Hainnu. As you noticed, I have traded seats with Mr. Main. He wants to ask some further questions, so to make it a little easier, I will chair the meeting for a little while, but continuing on, Mr. Keyootak, do you have another question?

▷°ᢀ᠘ᢩ᠂ᡠ<sup>c</sup> ለ፫ሲ◁ሲነ▷ᡃ᠍ᢐᡃᠣᡅ᠌ᢩᡆᠲᠺᡗ᠍ᠺ᠌ᠪᡃ? ᠪᡟᡃᡆᡤᡃ. ᠮ<sup>ᡕ</sup> <᠘<sup>c</sup>ᡟ.

**Δ°γ<Φ⊂°**: L'α (ϽΫληυς) ά, LΓας τους ανθούς. Γ'α ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς ανθούς

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᠑᠆ᡱ᠈᠘ᡩ᠈᠂ᡏᠫᡥᠬ᠆ᠴ᠒ᠮ᠂᠙ᡌ᠈ᢆᡰᡠ᠂ᡧᡗᡷᢐ᠆ᢐᡅ᠘ᡩᡕ ᡤ᠆ᡆ᠂ᡟᠫᠨᡥ᠕ᡧ᠊ᡆ᠌᠌ᠵ᠒ᢐ᠘᠊᠙᠘ᢣᡄᢆᡰ᠂ᠴ ᢦ᠋᠌᠘᠆᠘ᡨ᠘᠘ᢐᡒ᠘᠐᠘᠘᠘ Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you for the good response. Indeed, I know that Arctic College is responsible for that portion, nonetheless, I appreciated her candid response, and further, I prefer that the cultural school Piqqusilirivvik as well as Ilisagsivik Society be involved as that would be good optics as well. It would help placate Inuit who want to see real tangible programs in all communities in light of the successes of Clyde River, as it is operating very smoothly and they have good resources that they could provide, and the counsellors who do that work in Clyde River for Ilisagsivik and trainers from Piqqusilirivvik could help.

These are two separate bodies and both of them provide these services entirely in Inuktitut, and they provide much-needed support and assistance to our youth who take their courses, and they would be very good resources for the government. I encourage you to explore these ideas to include the two institutions in Clyde River that provided much-needed grounding for our youth, as they also under healing workshops, and are taken out on excursions to practise the skills they need. It would be good to see that happen and I would prefer that. I urge you to do so, and this is just a comment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you for comments. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) On page 36 and 37 of the representative's report, there is a large list of systemic issues. Well, actually it goes on to page 38. This question is for the representative. At the bottom of page 36, two of the issues listed there are child sexual abuse and inadequate protection. In your experience in your office's work, is there a link between these issues and mental health

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Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Ms. Bates.

Ms. Bates: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that question. Yes, to answer your question, there is absolutely a link between the exposure of child abuse, child sexual abuse.... Really, any form of abuse has generally a direct link to mental health. To further the point is that the intervention that comes after the abuse, after it has been investigated, after it has been dealt with is extremely important and can contribute to the long-term mental health of that young person.

I trust that answers the question. **Chairman**: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) There is a link there in the representative's opinion between sex abuse and mental health. I'm trying to connect these issues because we talk a lot about suicide prevention and the need to prevent suicide. It's a very difficult topic to talk about, as is sex abuse. It's very difficult to raise it in the community or in any room without affecting people emotionally.

For Family Services, in your 2019-2020 annual report on page 6, this is the department's annual report under the *Child and Family Services Act*, on page 6, titled "Strengthening Government's Response to Child Abuse," it mentions that "...the Department of Family Services is committed to leading efforts to strengthen the Government of Nunavut's response to child sexual abuse." I would like to pose a question to Ms. Niego, maybe if she can explain the link, if there is one, between child sex abuse and suicide or suicide attempts. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) For a link, I would say there are two reports that I would refer to; one would be what's known as the follow-back study. In there, I can't remember the years that it was involved, but it was, I believe, 60 cases and I can't remember if it was 60 actual and 60 similar or if it was 30-30, I can't remember the split, but they followed the lives of either 30 or 60 individuals and in the report it narrows down to mainly for Nunavut two areas, one was child sexual abuse and the other was drug use, I believe it was.

That's one report that seems to talk about mental health in the context of suicidal ideation and completed suicides. The other report is the Qanuippitali study done, I think, prior to that. There are all kinds of data in there where adults being interviewed speak to those same two areas in their earlier years, so definite linkages. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Niego. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I would like to turn it back to the representative again on this topic of child sex abuse, which is so hard to discuss and it's so uncomfortable for many of us, but it has to be discussed. In your office's experience or in your experience, is there a link between occurrences of child protection related to abuse linked to inadequate housing situations, such as overcrowding, couch-surfing, and what have you? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Ms. Bates.

Ms. Bates: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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Thank you for the question. I'm going to rely on my professional experience here. Being a long-term social worker who operated in child welfare, I can tell you that the link between child abuse and what I would call basic needs being met, so if you have a lack of housing, if you have a lack of financial security, you can't get an amount of food, it creates a stress situation and stress situations can, in certain circumstances, lead to abusive situations, keeping in mind that if someone is in an abusive situation or a family violence situation and they can't leave because they don't have adequate housing to go to. All of these things are interconnected and they lead potentially, not all the time, can lead to child protection issues.

I trust that answers the question.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I'll go back to the Department of Family Services, if there is a relationship between housing issues, such as overcrowding, multigenerational homes, too many people living under one roof, and child protection issues, is there a direct link there where the more overcrowding your housing is, the more likely you are as a child to be in need of protection? That's my question. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Niego.

**Ms. Niego** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I think I would have to go to my former profession as well in policing and my experiences there, as well as hearing from the social work side that I currently now am involved with.

Overcrowding alone cannot be alone the reason for sexual abuse. There are lots of good homes that are overcrowded and it

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Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I want to go back to the representative. In this report it discusses child sexual abuse; you mentioned it yesterday as being a crisis. Are you handcuffed...? Not handcuffed, that's a bad term to use. Are you limited in what you can look into in terms of that issue of child sexual abuse?

I'm thinking specifically of the offenders. If the offenders are not youth or are not children, if they are adults, does your mandate limit you to looking specifically at children and youth who are the victims or do you have the ability to look at the services needed to, I guess, help the offenders as well? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Ms. Bates.

Ms. Bates: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. In terms of the representative's role in reviewing matters, again, we can review any matter that is brought to our attention and we certainly try to review all matters from a holistic perspective so it's not just.... We want to look at what has happened for this young person who has accessed those types of things, keeping in mind we're not a service provider, a frontline service provider, so we're not completing an investigation that Family Services would do.

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When we examine cases, what we're looking at are where the policies and procedures currently in place, do they meet the needs of that young person. Let's say if we're talking about an investigation, was an investigation completed? Was it documented? What were the findings? Were adequate steps taken to protect that child and make sure they were in a safe place? Was there follow-up with respect to treatment? Again, where is the offender? Those types, we look at all of those aspects of the case.

This also speaks to critical injury and death. Sexual abuse is considered to be a critical injury. Currently, as I previously stated, section 4(b) that allows the representative to review critical injuries and deaths is not currently in force, but again, this would fall into that category. If a critical injury was reported to our office, we could review it and again, the focus of that review is to look at: did this young person receive all the services they were entitled to? Did those services meet that child's needs, i.e. did they protect them from that harm? Could different services have prevented something?

Again, I think it's a two.... We do, on individual advocacy cases, certainly we have identified that because it's a systemic issue, it means we have seen it more than once and it's a larger issue, it affects more than one child, but again, the addition of critical injury and death reviews would also permit the representative to critically look at those particular incidents because we consider them critical injuries.

**Chairman**: Thank you. Mr. Main.

**Mr. Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I just wanted to get the response clarified. That review of critical injury and death, section 4(1)(b) of the Act, the part that's not currently in force,

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would it be fair to say that if that is brought into force, the ability to review those critical injury and death occurrences, is it safe to say that that would be another tool in the tool kit to address child sexual abuse in Nunavut, in the representative's opinion, of course? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Ms. Bates.

Ms. Bates: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. Yes, it would be another tool in the tool kit. Again, referring back to the fact that the representative reviews and makes recommendations with respect to services or policies, procedures, and legislation, and that is the view from which we look at critical injury and death, and I think it's a helpful perspective because then we can make recommendations to the departments about changes in policy, procedure, and certainly changes in legislation that may prevent or treat child sexual abuse. Thank you.

**Chairman**: Thank you. Mr. Main, any other questions? Go ahead.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I want to change to a different topic now. On page 37 of the representative's report under the Department of Health, dental care services are listed as one of the systemic issues. I wonder if the representative can just briefly give us a summary of what the dental care service issue is pertaining to children and youth. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Bates.

**Ms. Bates**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With permission, I would like to ask Lynn Matte to respond to this question.

**Chairman**: Thank you. Ms. Matte, please go ahead.

Ms. Matte (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the question. The matter has been raised to our attention through a number of different ways and it is a matter that has been highlighted in some of our previous reports with individual advocacy case samples.

We have seen a number of cases where young people are waiting for very long periods of time in order to access dental services and often it's not a matter of a checkup and a cleaning; it's a matter of the need for medical intervention under general anaesthetic. The Department of Health has had programs in place, I believe, in partnership with the federal government to try to bring down those wait-lists, but despite the best efforts that have gone on to date, those wait-lists continue to grow and so the issue continues to come to our attention.

It has included situations like a young person seeing the dentist, a referral being made for surgery, that referral form goes to Non-Insured Health Benefits people at the federal government, and somebody reads the form and decides that the child does not need surgery, so no surgery is booked and the family is told, "You will need to see the dentist again the next time they're in town," except the child is desperately in need of dental surgery and the system should not be sending them back to do the same thing that they did the first time to try to get a different outcome.

When we get involved in those kinds of cases, we are working directly with the Department of Health to try to find ways to help families navigate those various systems because it is a combination of the Department of Health contractors who come up to provide the

services and permissions coming from the federal government, so there are multiple layers to that particular issue. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Matte. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I would like to turn it to the Department of Health in terms of the dental care service issue. How does the department track the amount of need at the community level as it pertains to youth and children? How does the department track how much need is there and how much service is required on a community-by-community basis? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Stockley.

Ms. Stockley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department tracks all referrals that come in for in particular the children who need dental services under general anaesthetic and we do as a department provide services on behalf of NIHB (Non-Insured Health Benefits). NIHB gives the authorization for us to go ahead to book the surgery for the child and there are, in some cases, a little bit of pushback. When we become aware of any pushback from the federal government, from NIHB, we will advocate and we will get our chief dental officer involved and look at those on a case-by-case basis.

There is a big need. The wait-list has grown. A lot of it is due to COVID-19 and the lack of being able to have children come in and have surgeries, particularly dental surgeries, and we imagine that most people have had interruptions in their dental care too because the kind of care it is, there are concerns when there are COVID outbreaks. The wait-list was 840 children in March and it has grown again, it's over a thousand now, and that's a huge

concern.

Right now we're looking at getting extra OR times; getting them in the south is not an option. As many of you know, for example, I have heard that Ontario is going to take years to catch up just on their own residents' surgical needs. We're looking to make the best use of our operating room at the QGH, at the hospital here in Igaluit, and as well, looking to have extra weeks provided in Churchill, Manitoba. Now, in Manitoba they can't operate on children less than three, but we can here at the QGH, so that's a work in progress. There are extra weeks that have been added and it's something I discussed with the representative only last week with regard to the work that is being done on this.

Again, and I don't mean to harp on this, in order to provide the surgeries, we need the technicians to clean the operating rooms, we need the nurses for post-op, we need all of the health staff that is required to be able to provide that service, and again, if we are unable to hire or unable to house those staff, it is a big impediment in us providing the service. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Stockley. Before I go back to Mr. Main, it's very easy for us to use acronyms here, but it makes it very difficult for the interpreters, so if we could try to not use acronyms, please. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I would like to turn this issue to the Department of Education. A big part of dental care, it's my understanding, is prevention and some schools currently have dental hygienists in them and it was something we had when I was a kid growing up in the NWT days, but unfortunately it seems to have fallen out of fashion or it's no longer as common as it was in those days.

Can the Department of Education give an update in terms of how many hygienists are working in schools? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Hainnu.

Ms. Hainnu: Thank you for that question. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I do not have the number of the hygienists. There are community initiatives, in working with the Department of Health, who are health employees come to the school and work with our K to 12 students, and I can't even recall what they are called, but they are similar to hygienists without having acquired the credentials, but they do informative classroom visits, information about oral hygiene, and they work with classroom teachers.

I would like Charlotte Borg to add to this; she may be more knowledgeable on the subject. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Borg.

Ms. Borg (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We have begun and have been for some time in our capital planning including space in our schools for dental hygienists to use when they come through and work with our students, but I think the practice, as the Member has said, has not continued in a systematic manner and that we would love for dental hygiene to be provided in our schools moving forward. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Before I go back to you, Mr. Main, I'm going to ask Ms. Stockley if she has anything she can add to this because the education department did mention that the Department of Health records some of this, so Ms. Stockley.

Ms. Stockley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What Ms. Borg was referring to are community oral health coordinators and they provide basic preventative services in oral health care. For example, they will go in and they will apply fluoride varnish as a preventative service. There are currently 13 community oral health coordinators in 11 communities; Iqaluit has two. In Resolute Bay and Grise Fiord, community health representatives take on a dual role as a community oral health coordinator. Unfortunately there are currently 11 vacant positions at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you. Are you done, Mr. Main? Okay, one more? Go ahead, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I wonder if the departments of Education and Health would be able to come back to the Committee with further information on this topic in terms of specifically what is the best way to provide dental care for children in schools. Is it by having a hygienist actually based in the school, ideally local, a trained individual? Just a comparison of approaches would be useful, maybe, for the Committee, so that's my request. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you. I don't know which one will answer. I'll try Ms. Stockley and see if she can give a response. Ms. Stockley.

**Ms. Stockley**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, of course, we can do that.

I would like to add that the community oral health coordinators are trained local people in the communities. I had the opportunity when I first came to Nunavut in 2014 to go over and see the first group that was being trained and let them practise on me as a matter of fact.

They do offer a great service and they are very welcomed by the Department of Education.

Again, unfortunately so many positions are unfilled. The positions actually exist, but there are 11 current positions vacant, as I mentioned, in Gjoa Haven, Kinngait, Clyde River, Sanikiluaq, Chesterfield Inlet, Kugluktuk, Coral Harbour, Sanirajak, Whale Cove, Taloyoak, and Kugaaruk. If we were able to house and hire, we would be able to offer those services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman**: Thank you. Any other questions, Mr. Main? Go ahead.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I guess the request was for further information to be provided to the Committee from between the two departments in terms of the approach to providing dental care, so I guess I'll make that request again, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. I think we're in agreement from the nodding of the heads that they do agree to get more information back to the Committee. With that, anybody else with questions? Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to tip my hat to the representative and Ms. Lynn Matte. Reading pages 36, 37, and 38, the number of systemic issues currently in progress or the number of systemic investigations under progress, there is a considerable amount of items listed on here under each department, and we could spend a whole week discussing each of these topics. You have highlighted a number of very key areas; crisis response protocols in schools; safe houses for young people. You have also identified child sexual abuse and inadequate protection in here.

The first issue that I would like to question the representative about is under the Department of Justice, you have the issue of notification to schools regarding sexual offenders. This is something I'm curious to find out more about your work on. I have been bringing this exact issue up for the last few years. I would like to ask the representative if they would be able to expand a little bit further on what exactly is being investigated here or considered. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (Mr. Main)(interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Matte.

Ms. Matte (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the question. Members may know that issues do come to our attention from a number of sources and sometimes this very House is the source of issues that come to our attention.

We have discussed this issue with the Department of Justice to find out whether or not it is possible, and it appears, in discussions with Justice, that the notification lies with the RCMP. It is outside of the Government of Nunavut's jurisdiction to have control over it, that it does lie with those folks that we contract to provide the service to us.

We did ask questions as well in connection to some jurisdictions such as Manitoba that appear to have a committee that looks at those types of situations to determine whether or not the public interest outweighs the confidentiality concerns of the sexual offender. Because our only police service is the RCMP, a committee isn't going to be able to make that decision.

The RCMP is bound by federal legislation on privacy on how it manages these things, but I believe it's also our understanding that there is ongoing conversation that there may be

more openness to these types of conversations amongst the RCMP. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My next question along the topic will be towards the Department of Justice. I have previously indicated in this House that I believe Nunavut is the only jurisdiction in Canada where the RCMP have yet to publicly announce the release of violent sexual offender into a specific community.

Looking at the other two territories, Yukon and the NWT, there have been a number of instances, in small jurisdictions such as the Maritimes there have also been instances, and when I raised this specific issue up with the Minister and to the department through written questions, the response was, as Ms. Matte had indicated, it is the RCMP's duty to release that type of information or determine when it's necessary to breach an individual's privacy rights in the best interest of the public.

I would like to ask: over the last year or two, would you be able to provide an update on progress made on discussions with the RCMP on one, releasing warnings to a community of the release of an offender, and two, notification to schools regarding sexual offenders? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Mansell.

Mr. Mansell (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I thank the Member for the question. As Members know, there was a specific presentation from Superintendent Jones and Constable Crockford, who is the member responsible for

the registry and notifications in Nunavut, and we talked about the current process, which is the RCMP internally conducts a balancing related to the risk to the public as well as privacy concerns. They take into account the safety of the community. One thing I can assure you is that victims are notified on a regular basis. Community-wide notifications are somewhat of the exception in Nunavut.

The committee model which is in Manitoba and Saskatchewan in which a committee of nominated representatives provide recommendations to the RCMP with respect to disclosure, the RCMP in Nunavut has committed to look at that model and they are looking at it now and we're in active discussions with them on that very topic. I can't make any sort of announcements at this time, but we're actively discussing that model and what it would look like for the territory. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that response. My next question for the representative will be an item under the Department of Family Services which has been identified as a systemic issue is safe houses for young people and their families. I think we have touched on that item over the course of these hearings and I was wondering if the representative would be able to expand on why that was included and what sort of findings or conclusions the representative has made on the matter. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Bates.

**Ms. Bates**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With your permission, I would like Lynn Matte to respond to the question. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Matte.

Ms. Matte (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) If I understood the question correctly, it wants more information on how this matter came to our attention. It has come to our attention in a variety of ways and the first I'll start with is in connection to our individual advocacy cases. We have seen situations where young people appear to be falling through the cracks because they don't quite fit into the mandate for the shelters that are operating in our territory.

For example, there was a situation where a mother and children were staying at the women's shelter and as soon as a male child turned 14, that male child was no longer eligible to reside in the shelter, so the family was left to make a decision of: do we stay in the shelter but tell the 14-year-old that they don't get to live with us anymore? Do we all leave the shelter and potentially return to an unsafe home to stay together as a family? The 14-year-old male is not old enough to live at any other shelter in the territory and so there was a gap in services.

I believe we are also all aware of the very tragic situation that occurred with Ambar Roy who, as an 18-year-old who was intoxicated, was not eligible to be received at the shelters in Iqaluit and ended up, unfortunately, out on the land and did not make it home. We have also seen situations where young people, as has been mentioned, are in essence couch-surfing. There have been instances raised to our attention of young people who were using the emergency room at the Qikiqtani General Hospital as an impromptu shelter, but it was not an appropriate use of the space. It has come to our attention in a number of ways.

We have also seen situations where families

are being told that the shelters are full, which is true because there is a need for those services, and so then having to make decisions about whether or not they try to press for services, as in having to leave the territory or leave their community in order to access safe places, and sometimes young people need to be able to leave a home without a parent, especially our youth. They might find themselves in a situation where it's not them and a number of other family members trying to find a safe place; it's just one young person.

We currently have the shelter that's operating in Cambridge Bay and the recent announcement that there's a funding pot now available to hopefully open another safe space for young people, but it is a definite gap in services that we have seen. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks again, Ms. Matte. My next question will be for the Department of Family Services. As Ms. Matte has indicated, there is a clear gap in services available to youth who are in need of safe spaces. My first question is: is this a concern of the Department of Family Services? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Niego.

**Ms. Niego** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) You sounded like Dr. Patterson there.

>>Laughter

Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Ms. Niego, for that response. Continuing along that line of questioning, the Minister had indicated that the Department of Family Services played no role in the creation of the youth shelter in Cambridge Bay, and the Minister had also indicated that there is a pot of federal funding that the GN has that applicants can apply for. Aside from that application process, is there any further assistance that the Department of Family Services is willing to provide to interested groups who may wish to open youth safe shelters? That's my final question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I will refer the response to my colleague, Arijana, shortly, but the department can work in different ways with youth in crisis. It's not just about youth safe shelters. There are foster homes that can be utilized as temporary overnight stays. There is a safe home policy in the works to create more spaces. There are the pots of funding that Arijana and her team are working on, so I will pass it on to her, if I may, *Iksivautaaq*.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Through Zoom, Ms. Haramincic.

Ms. Haramincic: Ma'na, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your question. There are a number of possibilities for the communities that are interested in opening a shelter or opening services for youth in Nunavut. We do have available funding and we will certainly work with any community, any groups, any not-for-profit or hamlets that are interested in providing or establishing and implementing

services for youth.

The Cambridge Bay shelter, we have worked with the hamlet to establish the youth shelter in Cambridge Bay and we will continue supporting them throughout the next fiscal year. There is a contribution agreement in place and we will be following closely with other supports that are required specifically for Cambridge Bay's shelter.

We're also presently in the process of discussing a possibility of similar services in Iqaluit and Pond Inlet. There are services for youth specifically to ensure safety, some education and awareness in Arviat that has been funded. There are a number of communities that came forward to work with us on providing services for youth.

I hope this answers your question. *Ma'na*, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Thank you. At this point in the afternoon I'm going to call a 15-minute break and we will resume around 3:18. Thank you, everybody.

>>Committee recessed at 15:01 and resumed at 15:21

Chairman (interpretation): We will resume our meeting. (interpretation ends) We're currently on the systemic advocacy section of the report, but to simplify things, we are simply going to open up the rest of the report to the Committee in terms of what you can ask questions on, so the entire report, from page 1 to 54, it is up to Committee Members. (interpretation) Mr. Lightstone, I believe you have a question. (interpretation ends) Go ahead.

**Mr. Lightstone**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have one question in relation to the

systemic issues in progress. The representative's annual report identifies that one of the reviews being undertaken is near the completion phase and the RCYO is developing the recommendations, and that's the custom adoption and medical consent review. I'm just curious: when do you expect the review will be complete and your backand-forth with the final report with the departments will be done and it will be released to the public? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Matte.

Ms. Matte (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the question. In the 2019-2020 year it was still under development, but the work has since been completed, a recommendation has been issued to the department and we have received a response. That recommendation, I believe, was issued in the 2020-21 fiscal year, so it will appear in the next annual report. There was only one recommendation issued and so it was in a letter to the department rather than a comprehensive, full report. It will be coming soon. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Moving on. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In your report on page 36, included are references to the Department of Education and the Department of Family Services. The focus of our discussion today and yesterday has been on crimes against youth.

I would like to get clarification from the representative regarding youth or young people who have experienced physical violence or bullying, and as I spoke about yesterday, some youths are timid and fearful. Whether it is to a social worker or to a health centre nurse, or even in a court setting and other places of work, youth generally feel scared and intimidated or that they are scared of authoritative figures.

Due to that reason, I would ask the child and youth representative: since these are not visible signs we can discern, how many times a year are sessions scheduled to provide assistance to youth? How many trips are scheduled into the smaller communities to provide these services or to hold meetings? I would like to understand, hence my question, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Bates.

Ms. Bates: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to turn this question to Lynn Matte, the Director of Child and Youth Services. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Matte.

Ms. Matte (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the question. Prior to the pandemic and the travel restrictions that were put in place, our office had a goal to travel to 12 communities every year as a minimum and in 2019-2020 we made it to 11 communities and had two more visits that we had planned in those last few weeks of March, but those were cancelled. Visiting 12 communities every year meant that we were in communities once every two years.

We have since, in collaboration with our elder advisors, discussed new ways to engage communities and so we still have plans once travel restrictions are eased and communities are ready to have visitors coming in again that we will still try to visit the same number of communities, but we will make those visits look a little bit different. We started out with a focus on making sure service providers were aware of our office and a bit of public engagement at the local Northern Store or the Co-opportunities, or going to wherever children were doing evening activities and now the focus will be more on making sure that opportunities are available to community members, families, and young people to see us and less focus on service providers.

That was some of the feedback we have received from our elder advisors in order to better engage Nunavummiut as a whole. You would see in our report that service providers have always been at the top of the list of people who make referrals to our office and we would like to see more referrals coming directly from young people and from their families. We intended to pilot that type of community visit in the 2020-21 fiscal year, but it has been delayed. It is still our plan to do that in the future. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Qirngnuq.

**Mr. Qirngnuq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much for your response. We will be looking forward to seeing you in our community once restrictions are lifted.

Moving on to another item that is also on page 38, under the reference to the Department of Justice, it mentions child-friendly court. Can the official from the Department of Justice provide a brief explanation of what child-friendly court is? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Mansell.

**Mr. Mansell** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I thank the Member for the question. It's a very good question because court can be an unfriendly place for children and an intimidating place for children.

I talked in my opening statement about some of the work that we're trying to do; developing child-friendly materials related to separation and divorce, but also when it comes to children that are appearing in court. one of the things that our Victim Services along with Court Services do is they bring the child into the court before the hearing, a week before when it's empty, there's nobody there, and familiarize them with where they will sit and who the parties are. I let them sit in the witness box and talk them through the process and answer any questions they might have about the court and how it works. For some children and some matters, it is enough to allow them to appear in court and feel comfortable.

In some matters, particularly those involving sexual assault or severe violent crimes when a young person is a witness, they may not be comfortable or our Victim Services staff will know that that young person should not be in court facing the accuser and our Court Services has two options in that case. There is a screen that the young person would sit behind that separates them from the rest of the court or in other cases we can even allow them to testify by closed-circuit television. That work is ongoing to develop more ways to help young people feel more comfortable in court.

We had an open house career fair at the court as well a few months ago where we invited anybody from the community to come in and visit the court and also learn about jobs in justice, but it was also an opportunity just for people to drop in and get some swag and learn about the court and what we do. As I say, the court can be an intimidating place for young people and for Nunavummiut and so we are doing our best.

With respect to one of the other related items in the report, access to community halls blocked by the court, so our court is a travelling court. Generally when there are no restrictions on travel, there are two courts flying around territory at any time and it's our mandate as a department to bring the justice system to Nunavummiut where they live.

Part of the problem is that we are limited in the facilities in the communities that can handle the amount of people and the technological requirements and the requirements to hold a court, and so we often have to use the community hall or the gym in the school and that does disrupt the community. When booking, our court staff do the best they can to ensure that we're not interfering with community events and that sort of thing, but in order to bring court to the communities, we often do have to sometimes disrupt those communities.

We are sending sheriffs along with the circuit court now and we are exploring the idea that the sheriffs, again, being a tool to show people opportunities in justice and to make the court a little friendlier to communities. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Qirngnuq.

**Mr. Qirngnuq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank the official from the Department of Justice for that clarification.

What about the court system and related processes, such as the legal aid or assistance? Are our youth provided any assistance when

they are facing charges for events they undertook? This is usually when legal aid or a worker begins to provide counselling or legal advice.

However, not enough effort is provided to ensure they completely understand the consequences of their actions, and due to their lack of knowledge, it leads to severe mental stress, resulting in suicidal actions, especially with our youth, as this occurred in our community, and this was not a very pleasant experience for local elders. Obviously this occurs in many other communities with that kind of resulting action.

In order to try to alleviate the mental stresses placed on them, what type of information is provided to the youth? I would appreciate it if the Department of Justice can provide an overview of the types of actions that are provided to the youth. I would like to understand more of the process, Mr. Chairman, which is why I am asking about this. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Mansell.

**Mr. Mansell**: I could follow up if there is any information I haven't shared.

Also, just to highlight that when a young person becomes involved in the justice system, often in Nunavut they are able to avoid the court system altogether through the community justice committees. Community justice committees have representatives of all ages and they have special regard for youth and elders in the community, and they provide an ability to review the offence, facilitate dialogue between the young person and the offender so they understand the impact of their crime, and to facilitate community-based consequences for their actions.

In addition, we have discussed the Therapeutic Justice Program which was launched in Cambridge Bay and recently expanded to Arviat. The Therapeutic Justice Program is somewhat similar to the community justice committees in that it provides a diversion from regular court. If you're charged, you can go to the Therapeutic Justice Program and they set up a plan of care and a number of treatments and sort of stepping stones that you have to do and, if you meet that, your charges may be dismissed.

The Therapeutic Justice Program is available to young people as well as adult offenders and during the pilot year, 16 clients successfully completed the program and had their charges dismissed upon completion of the Therapeutic Justice Program and five of those were youth under the age of 19. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Moving on. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm directing my question to the representative. On page 35, it is Recommendation No. 1 to Arctic College's 10-year strategic plan consultation. I'm wondering if you have any updates yet on that. Recommendation No. 1 is "Seek input from young people as part of a broader consultation process."

Let me quickly explain why I'm bringing this up. Coming from Baker Lake, it's not a civil servant town. There are not much jobs for our youth. I throw a rock in any direction here in Iqaluit and there is a civil servant position. I can't do that in Baker Lake. We're a mining town and a lot of our youth do want to work for the mining sector. It could be for the mine themselves or for one of the subcontractors, but they need the training for something like

that and I'm wondering if you have any updates on this Recommendation No. 1, if I can ask that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Bates.

Ms. Bates: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again with permission, I would like to ask Lynn Matte, the Director of Child and Youth Services, to respond to that question. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Matte.

Ms. Matte (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the question. We did receive a response from the college; it just wasn't in 2019-2020, so that's why it's not in the report in front of you and we will include that in full detail in our next report.

In answer to your question, the college did confirm with us that they took steps to engage with young people to find out from them what they would like to see in the college going forward. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Simailak, are you done? Okay. I have no more names on my list. Do members have any questions? (interpretation ends) On page 37 under systemic issues, one of the issues listed here is school attendance and it's listed under the Department of Education and the Department of Family Services. I'm wondering if the representative can give us an understanding of what that systemic issue listed there is. Ms. Matte.

**Ms. Matte** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the question. The matter of school attendance

had been raised to our office's attention numerous times and some of the ways that it was being raised to our attention was in connection to the question of whether or not young people who are not attending school is potentially a flag that they may be a young person in need of protection. It is a topic that has been discussed with departments at Standing Committee at the last appearance.

In 2019-2020 we were still considering it a joint issue, but I will give you a little bit of information on our next year's report. We have pulled that issue apart. Departments told us that while a young person not attending school may be of concern in and of itself as a single reason, it would not constitute a child in need of protection, but it in combination with other factors could be red flags that there are some concerns for that young person's well-being.

In the future years' reports you will see that issue pulled apart a little bit more so that we are keeping school attendance as an issue connected with the Department of Education on its surface and then we are delving into whether or not there is adequate protection for young people and whether or not reports of concern are being investigated and sits as a separate issue with the Department of Family Services because, as a stand-alone item, school attendance on its own, we have been told, does not constitute a child in need of protection, although it may be a concern in conjunction with other factors. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Thank you for clarifying that. For the Department of Family Services, on page 36, two of the systemic issues listed in this annual report involve guardianship orders. Can you describe the challenges faced when guardianship orders are put in place for Nunavut children and youth and what the

Department of Family Services is doing to improve this service? Ms. Niego.

**Ms. Niego** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I'm not sure on the detail of those; I may have to refer that part of it to my director of child welfare, Arijana Haramincic.

However, what the department has been doing is the creation of the Office of the Public Guardian was within the department. Having social workers we assigned to become the public guardian, there is an obvious conflict there, and then eventually the public guardian was pulled away a little bit from the frontline social work to be more like an oversight, a guardianship, and then eventually we received approval to separate it totally and bring it within the Department of Justice. Those two items actually, for the current year, would fit within the Department of Justice.

Maybe if I can get Arijana Haramincic to speak on the detail of that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Through Zoom, Ms. Haramincic.

Ms. Haramincic: Ma'na, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for your question. I think inappropriateness of use of guardianship, the detail that I can provide in this situation is that there are certain circumstances where the child once in care and then transitioning into becoming a youth, so this is between the ages of 16 and 18 or 18 and 26, there could be, in support of a transition to adulthood, the use of a guardianship order. In those circumstances, we work closely with the office of the guardian to ensure which is the best department to provide services to the young person.

We have initiated and are still working on the

working group to develop the better communication and better plans where we do have the young people that are between the departments. Since the guardianship orders and the guardianship responsibility moved to the Department of Justice and very often we also have the Department of Health being involved in servicing the young people, and the Department of Family Services, we're jointly working on establishing a family services conferencing or discussions for permanency planning, conferences where we will be discussing situations, which department is in the best position to continue servicing the young Nunavummiut.

The second issue that has been brought forward is the parents who are under a guardianship order who are caring for young Nunavummiut. Normally it is assessed the parent's ability to care safely and provide for the well-being of young people. It is a concern and in some circumstances it can lead to protection concerns, but we have been successful in supporting the parents with the Department of Justice so that we do not remove the children just because they're under guardianship or just because there is some part of their functioning that is not enabling them to 100 percent adequately and appropriately care for the children.

I can bring that as a really positive and good outcome for the Department of Family Services in being able to support parents who traditionally in the past were not able to continue caring for their children. Thank you for your question. *Ma'na*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I would like to turn to the representative for comment on the new information and the changes that have been put in place regarding the guardianship function and whether these systemic issues have been resolved or whether they continue

to be of concern to the office. Ms. Matte.

Ms. Matte (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Neither of the issues is considered resolved at this point in time. While we have been having conversations with departments to learn more about the issues, we have not received information that has led us to a point that we would consider the issues to be resolved.

I would like to provide a little bit more information on both of those issues for the Committee's information. For the inappropriate use of guardianship order, the concerns that were raised to our attention were in connection to young people who would be transitioning from youth services, in particular under the care of the director, and seeing young people ending up with guardianship orders rather than, for example, the use of an extended services agreement that would see that young person move on to independence. A guardianship order means that that young person is not going to achieve independence because they require additional supports in at least one realm of their life; they have been deemed to be incapable of making decisions for themselves.

We also had a situation brought to our attention of a young person who had a physical disability and required supports in order to learn how to live independently, but the workers in the community were struggling to find a way to be able to provide that person supports. If they didn't fall under the Child and Family Services Act, then they were too old, but they also didn't have a guardianship order in place, then it appeared that there was no way to provide supports to this young person, and so there was exploration of getting a guardianship order in place in order to be able to provide this young person with access to independent living supports and training, which we had grave concerns with.

The other item, young people under the care of parents under a guardianship order, our concern is not connected to the fact that the young people continue to reside with their parent. Obviously if that's possible, it's the best place for a young person to be. Our concern is in connection to a court deciding that that adult or parent is not competent to make decisions in a particular area of their own life. That has been decided by a court, yet the parent remains responsible for making decisions in that area of their children's lives because they remain the legal guardian of those children.

If the parent is not capable of, for example, making their own health care decisions, they require guardianship and somebody else to help them make appropriate decisions, how can we expect that adult to be responsible for making the health care decisions for their children? Our concern is again not about where the child is residing if appropriate supports are in place; it's around who has decision-making authority if a court has deemed the adult incapable of making those decisions. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Thanks for bringing us up to date on those issues. Back to you, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to get further clarification from Ms. Arijana Haramincic. She mentioned earlier about, when she was talking about youth shelters, she was answering one of my colleague's questions that there is funding available for youth shelters and whatnot, I believe, is what she said. I'm wondering what else can be done if the funding being offered is not enough to upgrade or renovate an existing building that would like to be used

for a shelter, if I'm making sense here. What other avenues are there?

Ms. Niego did visit Baker Lake not too long ago and she met with the mayor and council, I believe, and she advised them that there are monies available for shelters and speaking with the mayor, they were under the assumption that the funding would not be enough to upgrade or renovate an existing building. That being said, Baker Lake is still without a shelter and we're stuck. I'm wondering if I can get some more clarification about some of this funding that's available or what other avenues there are, if I can ask that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) While I was in Baker Lake discussing the matter, it seemed to surround not specifically youth sheltering; it was more specific to homeless men and secondarily, family violence for women and children. At the time there was an announcement from NTI. The NTI AGM was occurring in Baker Lake. There were funds there that were to be used for the capital required for four shelters, Baker Lake being one of those four.

Along with that, our department has secured funding to go alongside with that, O&M money for family violence shelter. A youth shelter was not one of the items that the community brought forward. However, there is another set of money that Arijana has been talking about, the youth initiatives money which is now up to \$900,000, I believe, for this current fiscal and it was \$300,000 for last. All of last year's money was spent. Current year, there is some money left over, which Arijana can expand upon. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Through Zoom, Ms. Haramincic.

Ms. Haramincic: Ma'na, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your question. There are probably more than 40 percent of the allocated funds still available for the youth initiatives. Some communities are using this to establish youth shelters and some communities are establishing different programs that will ensure safety and well-being of youth. It is up to the community, depending on their needs and depending on the voices of the youth in that specific community, what they would consider would be the best approach or the funding being used in the best way.

The process for it is to contact our youth initiatives coordinator and discussing your idea and, if possible, she can also work through with you what would be the best way to apply for that funding. It is an ongoing application process and at any time, any interested community or community group, not-for-profit organizations and hamlets can approach the department and work through to what their needs are and apply for the monies that are available. I hope this answers your question. *Ma'na*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I believe it does; Mr. Simailak has no further questions. For the representative, again on page 37 under systemic issues under the Department of Health, one of the systemic issues listed here is "New pediatric guidelines and impact on smaller communities." I wonder if we could get a bit more information in terms of what that specific issue is. Ms. Matte.

**Ms. Matte** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The matter that was raised to our attention was that under new guidelines that were being proposed for

paediatric visits, rather than a set schedule for paediatricians to visit every community on an annual basis with a set number of service days, there would have to be a certain threshold met of demand in the community before a paediatrician would visit. We had concerns that this would mean delays in service for young people, especially in smaller communities.

We have since learned that the way around that, for example, if a young person was the only person in the community requiring paediatrician services for an extended period of time, then there would be efforts put in place for that young person to travel to a location where they could access the service, but it puts the burden on the child and their family to travel rather than bringing the service to them. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I would like to turn this issue to the Department of Health. It sounds like this issue has been clarified, but if you can maybe elaborate a bit on whether that threshold is still in place or what assurances the Committee can have that children and their families are not being left out, particularly those in smaller communities. Ms. Stockley.

Ms. Stockley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We actually had a conversation with the representative just last week with regard to this and yes, under the previous system, paediatricians were often unavailable between their two annual community visits, which could lead to wait times for children, but we do have a new system in place, partly assisted by the increased use of telehealth that has come to be as part of the COVID response.

At this point, enquiries and questions from community health nurses and general

practitioners are now answered in a timeefficient manner, typically within 24 hours. When a patient is assessed and needs to be seen urgently by a paediatrician, arrangements can be made by the paediatrician for the patient to fly to be seen within a couple of days.

As I mentioned, we're using telehealth as well with phone support and in-person visits and, when it's urgent and appropriate for telehealth utilization, a telehealth visit can be arranged within a few days. We have shifted from a schedule to more of an on-demand type of system and I know that the representative and staff have raised some concerns to make sure that it doesn't put a lot of burden on family, so we will continue to monitor that and try to continue to find the model that works best for the territory. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Thank you. There is a long list of systemic issues on pages 36 to 38 and then there are systemic issues awaiting action on page 39. Looking through this list, some of these are pretty major issues: lack of daycare, quality of the education system, inadequate and overcrowded housing. These issues are very familiar to MLAs in the room and no doubt the departmental officials as well.

How does the representative's office choose which issues to tackle next? If we look at the list on page 39 as your to-do list, how does the office decide which ones are going to be addressed and in which order? Ms. Matte.

**Ms. Matte** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As you have said, there are a lot of issues that could use some attention, and certainly the resources of our office are ten people, two people who report to me that work on systemic issues.

What you have seen in the report is that not every single issue needs a systemic review for it to be addressed or a discussion to start or to see some movement and some change, and that's why you saw three pages of "in progress" issues because we have been having conversations with departments to see if they are doing things that might be addressing the issues that are being raised to our attention. A lot of the issues that you pointed to on page 39 are some of our biggest, most difficult issues in the territory, such as housing, food security, daycare spaces. They are large issues. They do absolutely, though, deserve our attention and our efforts.

How we make decisions on what issue to look at next, we take information from our systemic database that lets us know how many times have Nunavummiut brought this concern to our attention. We take referrals that come from our individual advocacy cases. Even though we might have worked on a situation to fix a problem for one person, if we keep seeing that same problem come again and again, it gets sent over to the systemic team to say "Something bigger needs to change than just fixing it for people when they come to us one by one."

We listen to what people are saying when we go to communities. We listen to the topics that the Members are raising here in the Legislative Assembly. We listen to what young people are putting forward in all the different channels that they communicate. We see them being active on social media. We see them engaging with the traditional media, raising issues. We look at what our national Inuit youth council is raising as topics. We take all of that information and we look at what we will run a systemic review on next.

I can share with the Committee that we are currently conducting a systemic review regarding child protection services at the Department of Family Services. The department was notified in, I believe, July 2020 that we were conducting the review and we are hoping to complete that review and have it to the Assembly before the end of the current fiscal year. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Matte. (interpretation ends) Maybe I'll turn it to Ms. Bates. That's the first that we have heard of this next in-depth systemic review. In terms of what Committee Members can expect to see in terms of presentation or I guess we can look to the "Our Minds Matter" report; it would be a similar type of in-depth report. If you can maybe elaborate a bit on what we can expect there, Ms. Bates.

Ms. Bates: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, it would be a similar report to the ones of "Our Minds Matter." It's not quite as in-depth, I would say, simply because when we initially decided to take on this particular review, it's a smaller type of review because we were and, again, it kind of stemmed out of the ongoing concerns that we were seeing through the individual advocacy.

What we're looking at is, I think I had previously spoken about this, that the Auditor General of Canada had come in and had done two reports with respect to family services and child welfare services. What we were looking at and what we are currently looking at is several recommendations were made and when we were looking at individual advocacy cases, seeing the concerns that we were seeing, we were thinking, "If those recommendations had been implemented, would we still be seeing those concerns?"

That is the general focus of this particular report. There have been some challenges regarding obtaining information, but it will be similar to the format and what you see in

"Our Minds Matter." Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I don't have any further names on my list from the Committee, so I'm just going to keep going until I run out of questions, if that's okay. For Family Services, your 2019-2020 annual report, on page 8, lists new positions within the department and so there are funded positions and then unfunded positions. I wonder if we could just get an explanation first of all on what you mean by "unfunded positions." Does that mean that these are not permanent, that these are temporary type assignments that have been made? Ms. Niego.

**Ms.** Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes, *imaa*. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Why are these positions unfunded? I mean, quality assurance coordinator, that sounds like a pretty important job based on what we're hearing from the representative, based on the issues that were raised by the Auditor General in 2011 and 2014. It sounds to me like it's an important role. When we see a position like that and it's unfunded, what are Committee Members to interpret when we look at the fact that it's unfunded?

Does that mean that the Department of Family Services has been unable to convince decision-makers within the government, I guess the Financial Management Board or whoever has authority over budgeting processes, does that mean that the department has been unable to convince them that these positions are important enough to justify funding or does it indicate something else that, perhaps, I haven't mentioned? Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Part of the reason would be that and that's not to those other decision-makers, it's not to their criticism; it's to our department in that we don't have the data to substantiate a good business case and reason for it other than it could be one recommendation from a report internally to the department.

There are so many needs and we have to substantiate with data that this particular position will be the priority. I can't remember exactly, but of all departments, this current government has approved of any other department a lot for Family Services. It takes time to build and build. We can't just have an influx of so many positions all at once. We just can't manage that, so it has to be built in blocks.

Part of the reason for quality assurance, or quality improvement is more along the lines of what we called it, is simply to respond to the numerous and numerous RCYO or representative requests and requests from this Committee. There are constant papers and documents being requested of us, taking us away from frontline work when we only have so many social workers.

When the department was created, it didn't come with the full corporate services staff and policy staff, key parts to corporate services, the management of the department, and so we rely on these unfunded little pockets to help us get the work done. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I mean, I guess I'll turn that to the representative because, on the one hand, your office wants to see things improve in terms of the services for children and youth, one of the departments that you deal with shares that, but they're facing budgetary

limitations. How do we get to a point where that's no longer an issue? If we don't have the data in front of us to say "This would be the right number of staff for the Department of Family Services," what can we go on as elected officials?

I'm really trying to wrap my head around this and I apologize if the question is unclear. In your introduction, you mentioned fundamental change to the ways that things are done; on the other hand, we don't have data, in Family Services' case, to support what to do. How can those decisions be made best? With the incomplete information that we have with regard to family services, how can we go forward, in your opinion? Ms. Bates.

Ms. Bates: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. It's certainly a complex question, but I think, again, the starting point, child welfare is a very difficult service to provide. It requires a great deal of infrastructure. It requires a great deal of very clear policy, procedure, and legislation. It requires that the staff that are carrying out those duties are adequately trained and adequately supervised so that they have the supports to carry out those functions.

I think that the collection of information and the collection of data, even if you don't have a state-of-the-art client information system, I worked in a system for more than 17 years that did not have an electronic, state-of-the-art case management system or a client information system, yet we still collected data. Yes, it was labour intensive. Yes, on a piece of paper, the intake supervisor collected every single day that we received a referral and the reason for that referral, and that informed our business plan going forward to get staff, to justify "We need X number of staff to build our system so that we can respond to these concerns, these needs, and

provide the services that children and families require." I know it's difficult to provide that information, but even a year's worth of that information, I believe, would provide a good foundation for making those business cases.

In addition, I want to make it clear that when the Representative for Children and Youth Office requests information, especially as it relates to individual advocacy cases, and in fact as it relates to systemic issues, the information that we are requesting should have already been completed and in the possession of the department. For example, we often request "May we see a copy of the investigation report that was completed on this particular matter." Although I appreciate that we do make several requests, that information should be readily available.

With respect to systemic issues, a lot of the information that we have requested, certainly recently as it relates to the special report, is to say the departments said they would create a workload policy. "Can you please provide us with a copy of the workload policy as per the recommendation of the Auditor General?" Commitment made and said that it was going to be completed. Again, I recognize it is time-consuming to go and find the policy, but again, it's a matter of sending it to our office.

I certainly recognize that Family Services does get a huge amount of requests from us because they have the most contact with our office and we require information in order to carry out our duties. On a go-forward basis, I think that it would absolutely support any staffing with respect to family services, but again, what I caution here and what I would say is that my worry is you add more staff, but if the staff currently are not following policy, procedure, and legislation, you're adding to a situation that's not going to improve, which is concerning to me.

I would also say from a quality assurance perspective that I absolutely support quality assurance, especially inside of child welfare. It's an essential function. The department has had a child welfare specialist position which is, I believe, a full-time, indeterminate position for some time and I read the job description and one of its sole functions is exactly what we're talking about, which is quality assurance in doing file audits on a yearly basis, providing clinical child welfare supervision. You also have supervisors and managers in place. Their function is also to provide quality assurance, which means they're providing that clinical training, support, and supervision as it relates to how you respond, how you provide good services to children and their families.

I completely recognize that it is a daunting task and I also can say that the infrastructure that's required and the training that's required to carry out this type of work is intensive, but I cannot stress enough how important it is and again, if I can say nothing else during this whole Standing Committee, is the importance of documenting your work. That is your accountability and not just to an office like ours; it is to the children and families that you serve.

If a child has experienced something, a harm, if they had to be taken away from their family, documenting how that happened, the decisions that were made and why they were made, that is important because that is the experience of that child, that youth, and they may come back to you, that department several years later, and say "Why did this happen to me? How did you make these decisions?" Without that documentation, the department is not accountable for that. Again, I cannot stress enough, as a social worker who worked in child welfare, documentation was one of these things we all dreaded, but it's an accountability piece and to me, it's the life of

the child, it's the life of a family who is receiving services.

I trust that answers your question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I would like to ask you on another topic and it's also regarding Family Services and it is on page 37. At the bottom of page 37 you have listed under systemic issues custom adoption and medical consent, and then another issue right underneath that are sexual abuse investigations. It has been raised in the House before, but I don't believe it was during the representative's last hearing. Is the representative's office aware of the situation or the concerns that have been raised with custom adoptions and the potential for sex offenders to adopt a child through that avenue? Ms. Bates.

**Ms. Bates**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the question. With your permission, I would like Lynn Matte to respond to that question. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Matte.

Ms. Matte (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The matter that was raised to our attention concerning custom adoption was specifically connected to who has the authority to provide medical consent on behalf of the custom adopted child, in particular concerning out-of-territory medical services.

As part of our review, we did come across information concerning how custom adoption takes place and what that process looks like, previous judgments that have been made. There was a judgment by Justice Bev Browne concerning this topic that provided a lot of background information for us. No specific

concern has been raised to our office to date regarding the lack of safety checks that occur if a custom adoption takes place. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) That's a concern I have heard directly from constituents, so if you want to consider it raised with your office. I'm not the only MLA in the current government who has raised that.

In terms of family services, I know that we have raised this before during, I believe, budget considerations, and so regarding custom adoptions and the potential for protection issues or safety issues with a child, is that something that your department is open to working with the representative's office to look into? Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Can you repeat the question? Sorry. Working with the representative, was it on the custom adoption piece? Yes, but I think the most important for custom adoption is the whole legislative process as well as, because it is custom, we depend on the Inuit custom which implicates the Inuit orgs.

With that, in the *Criminal Code* book, I don't know if you have seen it, but there are hundreds, if not thousands, of pages and that book has never been translated into Inuktitut. There are many different types of charges, even when it comes to sexual offences. There is suspicion, even, of sexual offences is that we don't know because we need the custom part of this to kick in. We need to know from an Inuit entity what is acceptable and what is not acceptable.

There are so many different levels within the *Criminal Code* and I'm sure my colleague can speak more to that, but if we start to draw

lines on what is allowable and what is not, that is up to the custom, the culture, the custom, not a public entity such as Family Services. I would have to rely on the Inuit orgs to tell me where the line should be drawn and so that's where the majority of that work would be.

It would take in-depth consultation in each and every community because it could differ from community to community or region to region what is acceptable. Is the intent to touch acceptable or not in the custom? I don't know from community to community, so it's a complicated drawing of lines which we would have to rely on Inuit. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Inuit organizations again come in, as they were raised earlier, come into the conversation or the situation. Does the Department of Family Services have any plans to consult with Inuit organizations on this issue? Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes, we would have to proceed with the legislative proposal, secure funds for the consultation, and follow through all of that. It's in the planning stages. I expect it would not happen within the term of this government. The preplanning would start. It has been in the preplanning. The department has been busy with other legislation and now that that's complete, we can move on to the adoption and custom adoption. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) For the representative, we have this child abuse and neglect response agreement as part of the Committee's package for this meeting, and roles and responsibilities are listed in here and so there are a number of

different parties to the agreement. Has your office reviewed this agreement and provided any feedback to the departments on it? Ms. Bates.

Ms. Bates: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the question. Yes, prior to it being finalized and tabled, the department requested that we look at it and provide feedback and we did so. We in fact provided a copy or made suggestions that the departments may want to look at other jurisdictions that had similar reporting protocols, and I believe we provided one that we had looked at ourselves. We did consult and we did see the document and did provide feedback on it when it was in kind of that early phase prior to it being finalized. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I would like to turn to the Department of Justice regarding this response agreement. On the front page it's dated September 2020, so it hasn't been that long since this was tabled in the House, but in terms of its application to date, what has the experience been from your department's perspective? Is this agreement proving to be useful in terms of coordinating the different pieces of responding to child abuse and neglect? Mr. Mansell.

Mr. Mansell (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I would have to get back to you on that specific question. The frontline staff that would work with the document and investigate the matters, I would have to consult with them to determine whether or not they think the document has been beneficial in the last several months, and I can commit to get back to the Committee on that.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Thank you. I'll turn back to the representative. This is one part of the

puzzle, the child abuse and neglect response agreement. It's a response. It's something that's happening after the fact. When we consider the issue of sexual abuse, there is a prevention side of things. When we look at the prevention side of things or side of the issue, in your opinion, is enough being done to prevent abuse from happening in the first place, safeguards, criminal records checks, what have you? Is that an area that needs more investment in your opinion? Ms. Bates.

**Ms. Bates**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. I just want to go back a little bit just to add to your question to Justice about the implementation of the protocol that you're referencing.

Although it's in this fiscal year, we did have a case referred to us in which we had to raise with the community social services worker that there was a protocol in place relating to the investigation of child abuse. In fact I sent it over to the worker and the supervisor because they seemed to be aware of its existence. I would say that training or making sure that everyone knows that it's in existence and what it means because it is a very.... In my opinion, when you look at the document, it very clearly outlines roles, responsibilities, and when police should be involved in interviews and those types of things.

In terms of prevention of child abuse and child sexual abuse, I think you have raised here discussing particularly child sexual abuse is uncomfortable and it's a difficult subject and I believe that that's the starting point. Preventing child sexual abuse is really talking about it, acknowledging that it's happening, and putting a plan in place. In some ways that's part of the prevention strategy. The fact that we're starting to have these conversations, it's starting to be publicly spoken about, I believe is the first step and I would say that no, there is not enough being

done in terms of prevention because I think we're at that early stage of really just starting to talk about it.

I would say, again, it's a good step in the right direction, but there's a lot that needs to fall into place in terms of doing more about prevention and, again, defining what abuse is so that everyone has a common understanding, people feeling comfortable to talk about it, providing opportunities for children to make disclosures, having those safe conversations and having people who are safe for them to have those conversations with. Again, the whole area of prevention is and I think this is not just unique to this jurisdiction; I think, again, when we talk about the prevention of child sexual abuse or even child abuse in general, there is so much that needs to be done in that area.

I trust that answers your question. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) It does. I do feel guilty for hogging the mic, and nobody else has questions on this currently? Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate all the great questions that you have been asking and I really appreciate the representative's responses. You pointed out a great fact that not too long ago there weren't high-end electronic case management systems, yet governments were still able to collect information that was necessary to ensure adequate resources were being appropriated.

I don't have any further questions; I just wanted to add a comment. Throughout the hearings we have discussed many different issues that are faced by children and youth in Nunavut, as well as the many challenges and barriers the Government of Nunavut must

overcome to provide adequate services and protection to children.

I believe that some highlights over the last two days: I believe that the Government of Nunavut must do more to meet its obligation under the UN Rights of the Child; to ensure that all children have adequate access to nutritious food and I believe that will require a holistic approach from all the team members here, but in the end, it will be a universal, government-funded food program, breakfast, lunch, snacks, and equally as important are food banks in our schools.

I know there are some schools that do provide food banks and of course that is voluntarily run by the school staff and that is excellent, but I believe that the government must step in and provide assistance to support those teachers and provide funding and resources to ensure that there are food banks in every school that will never have empty shelves.

In addition, I believe that the Government of Nunavut must do more to fulfill its obligation to ensure safety of all children from all forms of violence, whether it's physical, emotional, or sexual, through prevention, intervention, and post-vention. We all know that all forms of abuse are going to have a traumatic effect on those children which will have lifelong repercussions. The worst form and the deepest scars are those related to child sexual abuse. which has been a hot topic over the last few days, if not the last few years that we've had since the life of this Assembly. Again, the Government of Nunavut must do more in association with our Inuit organizations, with our communities. It will not just fall alone on the Government of Nunavut's shoulders to address child sexual abuse; it will require a holistic approach of all of Nunavut.

I do want to note that we're in the last few months of this government, but I truly hope that the next government will do more, designating the matter a crisis, creating public awareness initiatives, ending the shame so that victims will feel more comfortable in coming forward and parents will feel more comfortable talking about this with their children and give kids the knowledge they need to protect themselves, further correcting the errors or issues in data tracking, and long-term counselling services for victims as well as the perpetrators. I recall an individual mentioning the habitual predators. That's an item of extreme concern.

Like I said, in order to address the rampant rate of child sexual abuse in the territory, it will be an all-of-Nunavut approach, not just the Government of Nunavut, but the Government of Nunavut must step up and take the initiative. I have brought this up in the past, Greenland's sexual abuse strategy, the six-point strategy, from prevention, intervention, and post-vention and long-term services and community awareness, creating champions that go around to the communities and raise awareness about it.

I really hope that the next government will produce a similar strategy and in ten years' time we will have a better understanding and hopefully a better hold on the rampant rates of abuse. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. (interpretation ends) Thank you. I just have one last question for the representative before we wrap up the meeting and it's regarding page 45, which is the reviews of critical injuries and deaths update. It states here in the report, "Despite departmental policies to collect, document, and track this information," this this regarding the Department of Family Services, "it was not being done thoroughly, which means that the reported numbers are not accurate."

To the representative, has this situation with the reported numbers being inaccurate been rectified between your office and the Department of Family Services currently? Ms. Bates.

Ms. Bates: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the question. I would say that we're working on it. It's still an ongoing issue. It has definitely improved. We are receiving notifications regarding critical injury and death more consistently. There have been occasions when we have become aware of critical injuries through individual advocacy cases and then recognize that they weren't reported as critical injuries, but we're working very diligently with the Department of Family Services to ensure that reporting is consistent, accurate, but again, it's an ongoing issue and again, it's related to the collection and documentation issue.

I trust that answers your question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) We don't have any further questions, so I'm going to give the departments a chance to provide brief closing comments. I'll begin with Mr. Mansell, Department of Justice.

**Mr. Mansell** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I thank the Members for all the good questions over the last two days. I thank the representative's office for the report.

As I stated in my opening comments, we have been working hard as a department to be more responsive to the information requests and to build a positive dialogue between our department and the representative's office, and I think we're making real progress on that.

We have discussed some very difficult issues over the last couple of days. I am optimistic about some of the work that is being done at the RCMP with respect to special victims and sexual assault, as well as my team at Victims Services and the hard work that is done by our team at the youth centre. We will continue to identify ways to do better. We know that we have a role in the protection of young people in Nunavut and that they're our future.

I appreciate the dialogue over the last couple of days and I thank you very much.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In closing, I guess two kinds of areas of not concern or caution but somewhere along those lines, one which the department definitely feels is in the area of support for our frontline staff. The impact of a venue such as this, either the whole of government at the highest level, the Legislative Assembly, or whether it's the representative's office, I think the term that the Chair used was "flowery language" in past reports and then the move to kind of the complete opposite, I would really hope that there is more of a balance.

When our frontline staff feel like they are put down, it really is counterproductive to all recruitment efforts for those good quality people that we need at the frontlines, so that's one of the areas. There is so much good work that is done by our frontline staff. My colleague spoke to all the volunteerism outside of regular working hours. I think some of the Members here spoke to how our frontline social workers handle difficult conflict situations. There is so much work that is done that some of the things I listed in my opening comments, I won't mention them, but with that, I think there is a need for

recognition and support of frontline staff.

The other area would be sort of a caution around government becoming the parent too much. I think the Member from Gjoa Haven hit on a really good point when it comes to supporting parents in their roles and that intergenerational piece and the trauma that our parents, our caregivers, our grandparents continue to suffer and not providing enough support for them to take care of the children. They're the gatekeepers of the children, truly, first and foremost before we are. We are there to support those homes.

That would be my closing comment in the spirit of our children. Thank you, everyone, for focusing on children and bringing the voice of children out. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Department of Health, Ms. Stockley.

Ms. Stockley: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to say "thank you" to the Standing Committee and the representative and my colleagues here today, and particularly to the very hard-working staff of the Department of Health. I just want them to know that their efforts don't go unnoticed, even when there are difficult questions asked, and we commit to working together to continue to work together to improve services for children and youth. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Department of Education, Ms. Hainnu.

**Ms. Hainnu** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the opportunity to give a closing statement. I do appreciate very much what the Representative for Children and Youth is doing.

I do, like Ms. Niego, would like to emphasize that the report can encompass more in terms of...I'll give you an example. Attendance is flagged, but attendance is work effort, a commitment made by district education authorities with the Department of Education, but the report doesn't allude us to that. Page 2 implies that there is complacency in normalizing of abuse in Inuit society. Some of the things, I think, could change in tone to better protect, to better provide a service to the children that need them, and to identify what are areas that really do need help and stipulating by identifying if attendance is an issue, then what in attendance is an issue and what truly are the recommendations to correcting the problem.

I look forward to working with the other departments, as I have been recently, with Inuusivut and Inuunivut initiatives, very promising initiatives that have a holistic approach to greeting a child into our government system, but also doing preventative measures for the parents that are taking care of the children.

I very much appreciate the role of the RCYO. I understand it is new and I think, like any new entity, the adult population also needs to be educated in the same way that our children get to be educated about what their rights are when school visits occur. Community consultations to better inform community members can be occurring too to enhance the relationship of the Representative for Children and Youth and communities. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Ms. Bates, you get the last words; you're the centre of this meeting. First of all, thank you very much to you and your staff for all the time and effort in preparing for this meeting, and any closing comments, Ms. Bates.

**Ms. Bates**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the opportunity to provide some closing comments.

First off, I wish to thank everyone here today. I always welcome the opportunity for our office to be held accountable for the work, to be held accountable for what we are legislated to do, what our office is supposed to be doing, and I take the feedback from the departments very seriously and I appreciate it.

What I want to say is the foundation of our office is: why does it matter? Why do we need to prioritize young people? They're 48 percent of the population is under the age of 24 here. The children and youth are the leaders and decision-makers and parents and caregivers of tomorrow and we want them to grow up to be helping, contributing members of society. They're going to be making decisions for us, for their own children.

Conditions and experiences in childhood have a major impact on your life trajectory. Our number one goal is to ensure that the services that are being offered and provided by the Government of Nunavut, as I said in my opening comments, are equitable, ethical, and consistent. It is not easy to be held accountable, absolutely, and I recognize that.

I do want to say that I do appreciate again all the feedback that we have received today, and I do want to say that I want to thank all the staff at the Representative for Children and Youth Office who work tirelessly, who comb through information, who all have the best interests of young people in this territory at heart. I also want to recognize all the frontline service providers who also work tirelessly to deliver services. It is not an easy job.

I think I will just close again by saying "thank you." I look forward to the coming years and the ongoing collaboration and the ongoing

discussions that we're about to have, and I recognize that there have been some very difficult subjects that we've had to talk about today, but I'm encouraged that we're talking about them because it only means a future that is brighter and only means that we can then address some of these concerns and make the services and the programs being offered to young people better.

Thank you for the time and I thank you for the opportunity. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Thank you. To all the departments, thank you for taking the time to attend our hearing. Ms. Bates, to you and your staff, I already mentioned, thank you very much and I look forward to working with your office in the future.

(interpretation) Our interpreters, we thank you for allowing us to understand, whether we speak English or Inuktitut. I thank you for your good work and there were some people on their phones and some people talk really fast occasionally. You are quite able.

(interpretation ends) Thanks to our staff for helping us to prepare for this meeting. (interpretation) Our meeting is adjourned. Enjoy your evening.

(interpretation ends) In terms of next steps, the Committee will be preparing recommendations which will be presented in the Assembly at the fall sitting. (interpretation) Thank you. Have a good evening.

>>Committee adjourned at 16:52