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Child Intervention Panel

Ministerial panel explored ways to improve Alberta's child intervention system.

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An all-party Ministerial Panel on Child Intervention was appointed to recommend ways to improve Alberta's child death review system and strengthen the intervention system. More than 10,000 children and youth currently receive child intervention services across Alberta.

Panel activity: By the numbers

- 5 communities visited, in 3 Treaty areas
- 12 months of panel activity
- 35 panel meetings held across Alberta
- 65+ total presentations heard
- 339 public submissions received
- 300+ past recommendations reviewed
- 448 total submissions received from the public, stakeholders and others

3,000+ pages of submissions reviewed by the panel

- 8,000+ visits to the panel website

What the panel did

Over twelve months, the Ministerial Panel on Child Intervention engaged in an unprecedented, open and transparent review of Alberta's child intervention system. The panel explored ways to improve Alberta's child death review process and strengthen the intervention system as a whole.

As part of this work, the panel met with families, communities, stakeholders, child intervention experts, frontline staff and Indigenous leaders across Alberta to develop consensus-based recommendations to improve the health and well-being of children and families.

All Albertans had a chance to share their ideas online, in writing and in-person at community conversations.

- [Read Panel Activity: By The Numbers](#) (PDF, 1.28 MB)
- [Read the Terms of Reference](#) (PDF, 255 KB)
- [Read the background materials](#) (PDF, 20.5 MB)

Following every meeting, the panel provided a summary outlining what was discussed and an audio recording, if available:

- [meeting summary documents](#)
- [meeting audio recordings](#)

Phase 1 Recommendations

During Phase 1, the panel reviewed expert presentations from stakeholders across Alberta, and engaged in an open and collaborative conversation about how to strengthen Alberta's child death review process. It then provided detailed recommendations to streamline and strengthen the child death review process.

Based on these recommendations, the government passed Bill 18: The *Child Protection and Accountability Act* to improve the death review process.

- [Fact Sheet on Bill 18: The Child Protection and Accountability Act](#) (PDF, 96 KB)
- [How Bill 18 addresses the panel's Phase 1 recommendations](#) (PDF, 272 KB)

Phase 2 Recommendations

In Phase 2, the panel focused on examining the system more broadly to address the systemic issues that lead children into government care, and strengthen Alberta's child intervention system as a whole.

As part of this work, the panel reviewed legislation, policies, current practices, literature, relevant data, and past recommendations, including those from the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate and the Auditor

General of Alberta. It is also solicited feedback from subject matter experts, Albertans with lived experience, and frontline staff.

The panel also met with Indigenous leaders, communities and families across Alberta to hear how the child intervention system could be improved. This included meeting with band designates, Delegated First Nation Agencies, First Nations Chiefs and Metis stakeholders, as well as visits to Indigenous communities in Treaty 6, Treaty 7 and Treaty 8.

Based on these engagements and deliberations, the panel delivered [26 recommendations](#) (PDF, 157 KB) aimed at strengthening the intervention system and addressing issues that help lead to children into receiving services.

Next steps

The Government of Alberta worked with Indigenous families and communities, as well as stakeholders and community partners, to co-create a public action plan that puts all of the panel's recommendations into practice. [A Stronger, Safer Tomorrow](#) outlines 39 actions that the government will take to improve services for Indigenous families, increase supports for children, youth and all caregivers, and address the funding gap on-reserve. [Learn more about the Child Intervention action plan](#).

Panel members

The 14-member Ministerial Panel on Child Intervention included representatives from all parties:

- [Debbie Jabbour](#): Panel Chair, Deputy Speaker, MLA for Peace River
- [Maria Fitzpatrick](#): MLA for Lethbridge-East
- [Nicole Goehring](#): MLA for Edmonton-Castle Downs
- [Graham Sucha](#): MLA for Calgary-Shaw
- [Heather Sweet](#): Deputy Chair of Committees, MLA for Edmonton-Manning
- [Cameron Westhead](#): MLA for Banff-Cochrane
- [Jason Nixon](#): Opposition House Leader, United Conservative Party caucus, MLA for Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House-Sundre
- [Ric McIver](#): United Conservative Party caucus, MLA for Calgary-Hays
- [Dr. David Swann](#): Leader, Alberta Liberal caucus, MLA for Calgary Mountain View
- [Greg Clark](#): Leader, Alberta Party caucus, MLA for Calgary-Elbow
- [Danielle Larivee](#): Minister of Children's Services and MLA for Lesser Slave Lake, will sit as an ex-officio member.

Four leading Alberta experts on child intervention and Indigenous issues also sat on the panel:

Dr. Peter Choate, MSW, PhD

Assistant Professor, Faculty of Health, Community and Education, Mount Royal University

Dr. Peter Choate is a Registered Social Worker and Member of the Clinical Registry, Approved Clinical Supervisor for the Alberta College of Registered Social Workers. He holds a PhD in Addictions and a Master of Social Work. He is an Assistant Professor of Social Work at Mount Royal University in Calgary, Alberta.

Dr. Choate has been engaged in clinical private counseling and an assessment practice with an emphasis on addictions, domestic violence and child protection matters. He has been qualified as an expert witness on many occasions in the Provincial Court of Alberta (Family and Youth Division) in Calgary, Red Deer and Edmonton as well as the Court of Queen's Bench (Calgary and Medicine Hat).

Dr. Choate provides services to Alberta Child Welfare, Youth Probation Services (Calgary) and as a qualified Substance Abuse Professional for the U.S. National Transportation and Highway Safety Act. He is a Continuing Education Instructor at the University of Calgary. His particular emphasis is on child and adolescent mental health including maltreatment, neglect and abuse (physical, sexual, emotional) and these issues within family systems. He has presented nationally and internationally at various conferences and as a trainer for organizations in these areas.

Bruce MacLaurin, MSW

Professor, University of Calgary Faculty of Social Work

Bruce MacLaurin's research interests include child maltreatment, child welfare policy and service delivery, foster care outcomes, street youth and youth at risk. He is currently the primary investigator on *Service Outcomes for Children and Youth Referred to Out-Of-Home Care*, a three-year study for the Alberta Centre for Child, Family and Community Research.

He is a co-investigator on three other major studies, including *Telling: Examining Cross-Cultural Patterns of Maltreatment Disclosures of Adolescents* and *Evidence-Based Management in Child Welfare*, both funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council; and Interdisciplinary Capacity Enhancement Grant in Homelessness, Housing and Health, funded by Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

Professor MacLaurin teaches classes on child maltreatment, social work evaluation, research, social work policy related to child and family issues, and at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. In 2007, he was nominated by the Graduate Students' Association for a teaching excellence award. Before coming to the University of Calgary's Faculty of Social Work in 2002, he was a research associate at the University of Toronto's Bell Canada Child Welfare Research Unit.

Dr. Patti LaBoucane-Benson, PhD

Director of Research and Evaluation, Native Counseling Services of Alberta

Patti LaBoucane-Benson has a PhD in Human Ecology, focusing on Aboriginal Family and Community Resilience. She was the recipient of the two top Canadian social sciences doctoral awards: The Pierre Elliot Trudeau Scholarship and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Doctoral Fellowship.

Patti has worked for Native Counselling Services of Alberta (NCSA) for 21 years and is currently the Director of

Research, Training and Communication, providing leadership for research teams undertaking community-based, applied research. Patti also is executive producer and principle investigator for BearPaw Communications, BearPaw Media video productions and BearPaw Legal Education publications and oversees the development and implementation of the historic trauma healing programs for NCSA.

Dr. LaBoucane-Benson is also a mentor and lecturer for the Peter Lougheed Leadership College, a lecturer for the University of Alberta Executive Education, and provides Historic Trauma-Informed Service delivery training for Legal Aid Alberta, The Edmonton Police Service and REACH Edmonton.

In 2015, Patti's first novel was published by House of Anansi Press. Based on her PhD research, *The Outside Circle* is a work of creative non-fiction about healing and reconciliation for an inner-city Aboriginal family struggling with poverty, gang affiliation and hopelessness. *The Outside Circle* was on the *Globe and Mail's* Top Ten Canadian books and was named a CBC "Best Books of 2015", an Outstanding International Books 2016 by the United States Board on Books for Young People, winner of the Red Deer Reads competition and long-listed for the Canada Reads competition.

Patti has been awarded the Alberta Aboriginal Role Model Award for Education; the Legal Aid Access to Justice Award and the Rotary Paul Harris Fellow.

Tyler White

CEO, Siksika Health Services and President, First Nations Health Consortium

Tyler White is the CEO of Siksika Health Services for Treaty 7. He is also President of the First Nations Health Consortium, which is working to enhance the coordination of health care service delivery to First Nations children in the province. With more than 19 years of experience in First Nations Health Care, Tyler has worked extensively with the federal government, Government of Alberta and Alberta Health Services to improve services and support.

Tyler most recently supported government initiatives as a member of the Mental Health Review Panel. He is also co-chair of the Joint Action Health Plan for Alberta Region (Tri-lateral table). Tyler has also served as an analyst, negotiator and manager for the Siksika Indian Self-Government Process, executive director for the Calgary Indian Friendship Centre, and with the Siksika Health and Wellness Centre.

A past winner of the First Nations Health Manager's Award of Excellence, he is highly respected for his ability to collaborate, innovate, and build relationships across organizations and governments. Above all, Tyler is committed to strengthening and advocating the health and wellbeing of Indigenous people and communities in Alberta.

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