National Inquiry into
Missing and Murdered
Indigenous Women and Girls

Enquête nationale
sur les femmes et les filles
autochtones disparues et assassinées

# National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
# Truth-gathering process – Part I Public Hearings
# Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel
# Britannia Ballroom

## Metro Vancouver, British Columbia

***Public***

## Friday April 6, 2018

## Public Volume 96:
## Youth Panel: Cheylene Moon, Shae-Lynn Noskye, Fialka Jack & Erin Pavan

## Heard by Commissioner Qajaq Robinson
## Commission Counsel: Shelby Thomas

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**APPEARANCES**

| | |
|---|---|
| Assembly of First Nations | No Appearance |
| Government of British Columbia | Leah Greathead (Legal counsel) |
| Government of Canada | Donna Keats (Legal counsel) |
| Heiltsuk First Nation | No Appearance |
| Northwest Indigenous Council Society | No Appearance |
| Our Place - Ray Cam Co-operative Centre | No Appearance |
| Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada | Beth Symes |
| Vancouver Sex Workers' Rights Collective | No Appearance |
| Les Femmes Michif Otipemisiwak/Women of the Métis Nation | No Appearance |

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Commission Counsel: Shelby Thomas

Clerk and Registrar: Bryan Zandberg

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Metro Vancouver, British Columbia

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**MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** Good afternoon, Commissioner Robinson. This afternoon we'll be hearing from Cheylene Moon, Shae-Lynn Noskye, Fialka Jack and Erin Pavan, who will be talking about youth experiences of transitioning out of care in B.C.

Mr. Registrar, the four of them would like to affirm on an eagle feather.

**MR. BRYAN ZANDBERG:** Good afternoon, everybody. Where did the eagle feather go? There's the eagle feather. So, we'll do a promise, and we'll start with Fialka.

Good afternoon, Fialka. Do you solemnly affirm that the evidence you will give will be the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth? Thank you. And we'll pass the feather to the next.

**MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** Let's start. If the four of you could just introduce yourselves and tell the Commissioner a little bit about your connection with youth transitioning from foster care.

**MS. ERIN PAVAN:** I can start. My name is Erin Pavan, and I'm the manager of the STRIVE Youth in Care Transition Program. It's operated by the YWCA Metro Vancouver; we're funded by the B.C. Ministry of Children

and Family Development and the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training. I've been working with STRIVE for about four years, and it's a life skills program for youth ages 17 to 24, in, or from/out of home care. I'll pass it on to you.

**MS. SHAE-LYNN NOSKYE:** My name is Shae-Lynn Noskye. I'm 22 and I aged out of foster care in 2014.

**MS. CHEYLENE MOON:** My name is Cheylene. I'm also 22 and I was in foster care for seven years.

**MS. FIALKA JACK:** I'm Fialka. I'm 24 and I aged out of care in 2012.

**MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** Can you guys just share a little bit about where you're from?

**MS. ERIN PAVAN:** I was born and raised in Vancouver. And actually how I came to this work is my stepfather, who raised me from a young age as Anishinabe and he's a survivor or residential school and the Sixties Scoop. And I have two stepbrothers, who are also Anishinabe and both spent time in care. And one of them, who spent the most time in care, died very young, at age 21. And that is why I ended up working with Indigenous youth in care.

**MS. SHAE-LYNN NOSKYE:** My family is originally from Grand Prairie, Alberta, and my mother moved to Vancouver when she was pregnant with me. Yeah.

**MS. CHEYLENE MOON:** I was born and raised in Vancouver, but I'm Scottish from my mom's side and Quilchena from Upper Nicola on my dad's side.

**MS. FIALKA JACK:** I was born in Nanaimo. I'm from the Mowachaht tribe from Qu-Yuquot.

**MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** If you guys could take a little time to share, with whatever details you feel comfortable, your experience in the foster care system.

**MS. FIALKA JACK:** I grew up going in and out of care from only a couple of weeks old till I aged out at 19. I grew up thinking that a lot of Aboriginal children were in care and that it was normal to hop from home to home. You settle down once or twice and you get excited to have a home, but yet, it never lasts and you learn fast, that you're just another child or another income in their care.

I wish I could say I had a great experience, but I had so much ripped from me, it is hard to see it like that. How many more of my brothers and sisters have to be ripped away from their culture? How many more will grow up in a colonized world that they will never get the chance to actually learn from the land or their language, and our ancestors? How many more will cry themselves to sleep at night, thinking that there is no Creator out there for them?

**MS. CHEYLENE MOON:** I was in care briefly a couple times as a kid, and then I went in and stayed in, like a month or two before I turned 12. And I've been in two foster homes, one group home and on independent living twice within the seven years that I was in care.

**MS. SHAE-LYNN NOSKYE:** Turning 19 when you're parented by the government is no cake walk. It's more like jogging in front of your coach's car, knowing full well that they'd run you over if you stopped moving. And even 25 is hard, because the resources that you had to cling to after losing your old ones for the first time, are now unavailable to you. It's important to acknowledge that everyone faces hardship, no matter their age, especially if one has this experience in Ministry care. Trauma ages the soul and stunts any potential growth during recovery.

**MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** Can you share your experience of aging-out of the foster care system?

**MS. FIALKA JACK:** I can't say that my social workers didn't try to help me, but to be honest, I was super stubborn. To this day, I feel like they didn't want me to live on my own and that they had me out of my group home on my 19th birthday before noon. They told me that they were going to call the cops and they threw me a whole garbage bagful, like a whole box full of garbage bags and so I filled all my stuff in the six bags of garbage and

into a laundry hamper and they drove me out to New Westminster to PLEA.

And PLEA is a program that is supposed to help, I guess, people with addictions, I'm not quite certain. At the time, I had been only a year sober, so I was kind of confused at why I was put into this type of housing. And so, I had never, ever been into New Westminster in my life. So, to be put into a city that you had never been into, you're completely isolated from all your friends and all your family. And so I was isolated from my world and it was rough not knowing where you were.

A month after aging-out of care, my social worker moved me to the Downtown core of Vancouver into an SRO. And until that day, I didn't know what the word SRO stands for. And it was horrifying to see, so fresh into my adulthood, to see that this is where people were living. Like, I couldn't imagine how people could live happily in those types of places, and it was horrifying and it, to be honest -- I did some things that I promised I would never do, and I regret it.

But like, from there, I've grown and to be honest, I don't think social workers should be putting their children into SROs. I think, like, looking for housing and teaching us how to look for housing, should be an important piece. Because you shouldn't have to worry

about homelessness every second of your life after aging-out of care. And that is something that at almost 25, I still fear, every day.

And I live in a house, I live in South Van, I live with a lot of people, people that love me. But I have been homeless twice since aging-out of care. I was homeless for a year; I lived in downtown Vancouver, I lived in Stanley Park. Like, I slept in Stanley Park. That's how bad it was, aging-out of care.

And like it was a Gong Show trying to get supports and to be able to create trust with people, because you don't know if they're ever going to leave you. And because, you know, at 19, you lose everybody; you lose every single person that was in your life growing up. And it's because they are paid by the government to take care of you and to be your friend.

So, it was something that took me a long time to learn, that I am my only friend. The person that stares back at me in the mirror is the only person that will ever have my back. And that's hard to come to that conclusion. And it's not a feeling, I think, that any foster children should ever, ever, ever ever ever have to feel. Because it is a gut-wrenching feeling and it kills me. And it hurts me to know that there are lots of other youth that I see that are just aging-out and they're living

on the streets.

I used to hang out at Directions Youth Centre and they'd have a lot of street youth that come from across Canada, from as far as New Brunswick and as small towns like, small little towns in Ontario. And they come all the way here, just for hope. Hope that they can find housing, hope that they can find work; but yet, they don't find it. They end up homeless on Granville for months and months and it becomes a shit show, it really does.

Like, it's scary to know that a lot of us will end up homeless at any given time after aging-out of care. And it's -- I don't think any child should ever have to deal with that. I don't know any parent that would ever kick their child out at 19, on their birthday, saying "You'd better leave or else I'm calling the cops on you," that's not a good feeling. And it leaves you with no hope for your life and for your future. And it's -- yeah.

**MS. CHEYLENE MOON:** Well for me, as a teenager, I couldn't wait to age-out and like, be on my own. Because like, I mean I used to run away from my foster homes all the time. And so I thought that I could make it on my own. But when I aged-out, then I realized there is like so many things I needed help with and that I should have like, taken advantage of the services that I could have gotten while I was still in care.

But luckily, when I aged-out, my old foster dad offered me to rent out a suite at the back of his house. And like, while I was on independent living before I aged-out, my brother and sister moved back to Vancouver from Merritt. And they moved into his foster home, so it was my first time living in the same house as my younger siblings in like four years. But after a year, when my younger brother aged-out, I lived with him. Because like, he's been through way worse trauma than I have, so he can't really like talk to people and navigate through, like, being an adult.

So I had to do all the work search myself and stuff. We moved five times in the first year of him aging-out, and the last time was into a storage locker and we were homeless for four months. And I'm just glad that I had a bunch of friends and family that would let me stay at their houses, so I was going back and forth between six different people's houses while I was in school full time and working part time, and doing volunteer work in my free time. And it's pretty hard to look for housing while you're that busy, too. And then, luckily I moved into BYRC but, like, I have one more year there and I'm like worried about finding housing once that lease is up.

**MS. SHAE-LYNN NOSKYE:** At 19, you don't just age-out of care and lose financial support. You also age-

out of every service you've previously been receiving support from. Certain safe-houses or shelters are off limits, and if you had a counsellor or mental health clinician, you're no longer able to work with them.

If you had a psychiatrist, you have to get yourself onto a waiting list, because the adult resources, the adult services, lack resources. When I tried to get into DBT, which is a type of group therapy, I was told it was at least a year wait. But the number of people put on the waiting list grew so large that the agency began a wait-list group that I was invited into. Unless you're seeking immediate intervention, there is a really high barrier to accessing the services needed by youth who have been previously in care, but have aged-out. It leads to self-medication with substances that become addictive and further escalating the downward spiral.

From September 2005 to November 2012, data was collected from the At-Risk Youth Study in Vancouver, which was for 14 to 26-year-olds who had used drugs other than cannabis within the past 30 days and had street involvement. Out of the 937 participants, 49 percent had been in care at some point in their life.

The experience of being in care was especially common on youth who are of Indigenous heritage, victims of abuse, had not completed high school, had

parents who had abused substances themselves and had first experimented with drugs at an early age.

**MS. ERIN PAVAN:** Can I make some general comments here about aging-out of care? Great. So, I'm gonna talk a little bit about the adverse outcomes that affect youth aging-out of care, compared to the general population. And I just want to acknowledge that sometimes when I'm asked to talk about this, I feel like I'm almost pathologizing being in care. And I just want to say that, yes, there are really adverse outcomes, and also that there's a lot of resilience. And that like these three young women here, are really amazing, resilient and strong women. So I just want to put that out there before I list some adverse outcomes.

So, aging-out of care is really like a euphemism for the abrupt termination of all MCFD services. Like, this "aging-out," I don't even like this term, I think it's too gentle for what the experience is; it's like being pushed off a cliff, right?

So when you turn 19, it means that your social worker can't have contact with you anymore, technically, and they have these huge caseloads. I also know a lot of social workers who are still in touch with tons of kids on their caseload after they turn 19, even though they're already overworked. And this is mostly

women, right, it's like pink collar -- it's not like you're making good money, or there's no glory in it or anything, it's really hard work. They don't get a lot of respect or support.

And some of these women are working all hours, trying to keep track of all the kids after they turn 19, because they're worried about them and they've made that connection with them. But then they're just supposed to say "Bye!" You know, "I can't speak to you anymore, I've got to work with the younger kids on my caseload now," and we shouldn't be putting those social workers in that position, we shouldn't be putting those young people in that position either. Because it's so artificial, right?

You don't kick people out of your life on their birthday; it's a really bizarre system that we've got going. And the outcomes are not surprisingly, for youth who age-out of care, really terrible. Like, shameful, compared to the general population. They're not graduating high school; I think that by age 19, like 32 percent of youth aging-out of care will have a high school diploma, compared to 84 percent for the general population. And, so they're not finishing school.

They're also less likely to have a job. They're going to make less money. A lot of them are relying on income assistance right off the bat, 40 percent

will go right onto income assistance.

The income assistance rate just finally got raised in B.C., but for Vancouver it is not even near enough money to live off of. You can't even pay rent with it, never mind buy food. So they're going into extreme poverty right off the bat, with no high school diploma, not enough supportive people in their lives. Obviously, by definition, anyone who's been through care, is going to have trauma. So they've got trauma; they're more likely to have issues with their mental health, with substance use, more likely to be involved with the criminal justice system, become young parents. They're more likely to die young. Of the 1,000 youth who age-out of care in B.C. every year, three to four will be dead before they turn 25.

So I think you can really see the connection, right, between the missing and murdered young women and the care system. We also know that the majority of youth in care in B.C. are Indigenous, and that that's true across the country, right? And we know the reason for that, too. We know that it's about the intergenerational effects of residential school, from the Sixties Scoop and the continued marginalization and oppression of Indigenous peoples in Canada.

So at the same time, in B.C. -- and this is true across the country -- most 20- to 24-year-olds are

actually living at home. So we're seeing demographically that people don't move out at 19. Because you can't get a job right out of high school that you can support yourself on anymore, right? That's not how the economy works, and we know that. So kids who have stable, loving, supportive homes, they're still at home at 24, getting support from their parents, financially and emotionally. Kids who have trauma, not enough support; we're expecting them to be able to move out and be independent at 19, when their peers who have all the support that they need aren't doing that at 19? You know, it just doesn't make any sense. It doesn't make sense, right?

All right, I think that's it for me for now.

**MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** Fialka, can you talk a little bit about the symbolism behind garbage bags?

**MS. FIALKA JACK:** When you're aging-out of care, they don't really give you the preparation to actually move. You're not even told what's going to even happen on your 19th birthday, to be honest. Half the time, your social worker will just show up and be like, "This is the plan." I remember waking up on my 19th birthday, I got abruptly woken up at like 7:00 o'clock in the morning. And I was told to literally pack everything that was in my room. And I had six garbage bags; there was only six garbage bags, and I had a laundry hamper. And I was told

if none of it fit, then the rest was all gonna get thrown out. And if I wasn't out by noon, that the police were going to get called, because there was already somebody on their way to my group home to take over my room.

So it's, in a way, I feel like it was like throwing away garbage. It wasn't like, when you're going on a trip, you don't put your clothes into a garbage bag when you're going to Mexico, right? You don't throw your clothes into a garbage bag when you're moving; you box them up. You put them into a suitcase, you know? You take good care of your things and like, I took good care of my things throughout my foster care time, and to have it all put into a garbage bag -- it literally felt like it was garbage day.

Like, that is literally the best way I can describe it, it literally felt like it was Friday and it was a garbage day. So, I felt like I was just getting thrown out and like I was just garbage to the Ministry. So, I don't know.

**MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** Thank you. Cheylene, you mentioned that you couldn't wait, kind of, to get out of the foster system. But then going through that, you realized the lack of supports you had. Can you explain that a little more?

**MS. CHEYLENE MOON:** Well, the first foster home I went into, right before I turned 12, was like

probably the worst foster home I've ever been in. And because of that experience, like, I just got used to running away from my foster homes for like, a few days to like a week at a time. But then I'd usually get brought back by the police. And like, not having anyone ask me why I didn't want to be there.

And so, I just got used to being on my own and going off and doing whatever I wanted, without really listening to my foster parents or social workers that much. And so, like I thought I could handle being on my own. But right around the time I aged-out, my depression and anxiety made me lose my full time job. And then I went on income assistance, and was like living off of $215 a month, plus the 375 for rent, for the first two years of aging-out. And like, the only way I could survive off that money was to go to different programs and stuff, where they'd give me food and sometimes gift cards for attending.

It was also weird, because when you move out, you don't realize some of the things you need to live a normal life, until you get to the house, and you're like, oh, there's no shower curtain. I have to go figure out where to buy shower curtains, and like the hangers and stuff. And when you're cooking, you don't realize the kind of things you need until you're trying to cook something, and you're like, oh, I don't have this, so I have to go buy

it.

And just, you learn the things you need as you go on, but it's like the first two years were pretty hard. But I mean, luckily I had support from the community and like different programs I could go to and stuff to like help me get by; barely getting by.

**MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** Shae-Lynn, you mentioned how the over-representation of Indigenous youth in care. Can you explain a bit about how being in care impacts Indigenous youth differently?

**MS. SHAE-LYNN NOSKYE:** For sure. I guess it just really all goes back to the intergenerational trauma, and the Sixties Scoop and residential schooling. I guess that trauma just sort of follows your family. The other pain follows you until someone's ready to feel it.

There's a lot of things at work when it comes to over-representation. A lot of it starts with poverty, not being able to afford to even buy your kids school supplies sometimes. Sometimes kids are apprehended because their parents can't afford to raise them; other times it's because of substance abuse problems; self-medication, it kind of all really goes back to that.

**MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** Shae-Lynn would like to submit to the Commission something she wrote. And it has different reports attached to it.

Now, it's been mentioned that there are different programs available for youth transitioning. Can you guys talk a little bit about the different programs that you've been a part of, or any of the programs that you might have not been a part of, but that you know about?

**MS. SHAE-LYNN NOSKYE:** I can definitely say that I wouldn't be where I am today without Aunt Leah's Place. They work at both ends of the foster care system. They help youth get ready to transition out of care; and their support program, they help you after you age-out, with no age cap, so you can go back any time you need support. And they also help mothers that are at risk of losing their children to the foster care system by putting them in supportive living, where they learn the life skills and parenting skills that they need for success.

Through Aunt Leah's I've also done their Bootstraps Work Training Program, and they connected me to different programs and jobs. Like, the McCreary Centre Society, they have a Youth Research Academy, and that's how I got a hold of STRIVE, actually.

**COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** I just wanted to ask a quick question, what's the name of the program again?

**MS. SHAE-LYNN NOSKYE:** Auntie Leah's Place.

**MS. FIALKA JACK:** My social worker had

connected me to ICY, which is the acronym for Inner City Youth. They are on Granville Street in the downtown of Vancouver. They do mental health counselling and they have psychiatrists; I personally didn't have a good experience with them. I've heard a lot of other youth who have had also not so good experiences, but with me personally, it was like, just where I was at, it wasn't what I needed, I guess.

And I've also accessed Directions, since just before I aged-out of care, and to be honest, like I aged-out on income assistance. I'm on disability now and that barely makes me be able to get by, with my food and my rent. But when I first aged-out, I was on income assistance and I couldn't even have a cent to myself to be able to feed myself. And if it wasn't for Directions, I'd probably, honestly wouldn't be here right now. They fed me and they gave me that hope that there was a community out there. And that even though we all have our screw-ups or we're all having a really bad day, that like, we can all come together and be able to sit down and have a good meal together. And just watch TV and enjoy ourselves.

And it gave me that hope, that even though we're all hurting, that there are people out there that care. And that they could care less about their paycheque and that, like, they'll sit there and talk to you for hours

and hours. So, yeah.

**MS. CHEYLENE MOON:** Well I've been in a bunch of different programs. I was part of the STRIVE program, which Erin's now the manager of, which she can talk more about. And all of us are actually part of Collective Impact Trust, and the three of us are on the collective young leaders for that initiative. As well as we've all been part of the Youth Research Academy at McCreary. And for the last three years I've been part of the Aboriginal Youth Mentorship Program with LUMA, where it's for youth aging-out of care, to give us the skills we need to live on our own.

For the last seven years, I've also been on the Youth Advisory Committee with VACFSS to help improve their services for their youth in care. And we do a lot of public speaking and travelling to different cities and countries, sometimes, to talk about issues regarding youth in care. I've also been part of the Mentor-Me Program with Pacific Association of First Nations Women, helping out their Urban Butterflies Program for youth and for Indigenous girls in care.

And I'm on the Youth Advisory Committee with the Network of Inner City Children Services Society, I think it's called, to help with their social capital lending system that they've just implemented and just

started like a month ago. And also with UNYA, I was part of their Connections, mentorship program, which is where I first met Erin when I was like 16 and had just graduated high school. And Erin has actually been the biggest support for me in my life, like she's always been the one to be persistent and consistent. And not everyone tries to push me to talk to them, and check up on me, but Erin has always been there.

**MS. ERIN PAVAN:** STRIVE is a life skills program, it is a pre-employment program. So we take youth who are still in care or who have already aged-out, and we're lucky that with our funding, we're able to pay them to come and do workshops. And it's, we try to be as holistic as possible. So it's not just like how to write a resume, but how are you going to make a good life for yourself and take care of yourself. So we can cover mental health and substance use, and nutrition, and we can cook together, and you know, dance and go to the gym. We do all kinds of wacky stuff, laughter-yoga and break dancing. I like to joke about how break dancing is a life skill at our program.

We also try to make it fun, and we try to not really recreate the experience of high school, which was negative for most of the youth that we're working with. It's very participatory and it's late in the day; you know,

it's not at 9:00 in the morning anymore. And then we also can set up youth with paid job placements, where we go out and find them an employer and we pay the full wage and get them to that interview and find a job that they want to do.

Mainly we just try to help them with whatever it is they need help with, really. It's just about being a supportive adult in their life and trying to figure out what it is that they want from their life, and just do everything you can to make that happen. And, just like with Aunt Leah's, like Shae-Lynn mentioned, we don't have an end-date. So for us, we're just always there, as long as we're funded. They know that we're open, that you can come by; and that we have food and a friendly face, and that whatever you're going through, we're going to try and help you. That's pretty much it with STRIVE.

And then, I would like to plug the UNYA connections program as well. Because I was going to speak about this later, but maybe I can talk about it now. That I was a volunteer for the Urban Native Youth Association, they have a mentorship program for young people who are aging-out of care. And it's called Kinnections, with a 'K-I-N', the idea being that you're creating, like, a family relationship.

And so Cheylene, I was very lucky to have Cheylene as my mentee, because we really got along well.

And I think that this is something that everyone can and should be doing. And that communities, you know, just ordinary citizens, anybody, can step up and do something about this issue of young, Indigenous women in care, any youth in care, not having enough caring connections.

And when you ask the youth, they really want people who are not being paid. That's very important, that other people don't have to have paid supports in their lives, right? They have people doing it for free. So, doing it as a volunteer is really meaningful, because it shows that you're doing it because you actually want to be there. Although it's not like my job at STRIVE is something I'm doing just for a paycheque. I don't think a lot of people in social services see it that way, but probably some of them do.

But even if you are not there for the paycheque, it still makes the relationship feel different for the young people. So, just becoming, like an Auntie, like a big sister, or like a grandma for a young person is something that I think everyone can do. And you really can create a family relationship from nothing. Like I think it feels real to us and it was not like a 'civic duty' for me, it wasn't like a chore being with Cheylene. Because Cheylene is an amazing young woman and I know I've gotten just as much out of the relationship as she has. Just like

with any relationship, I've learned a lot from her and we've had a lot of fun together. And it's been really an honour to be a supportive adult in her life. And I think that's something that anyone can benefit from. So I always like to tell people about that UNYA Program, and that we should fund more programs like this as well.

**MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** Can you guys share a little bit about how the programs helped, or your experience with the programs?

**MS. CHEYLENE MOON:** Well, like I said earlier, without these programs, I don't think I could have survived aging-out of care. Because at every one of these programs, we always eat food first. And like, for the Youth Advisory Committees, I get paid for my time, like, usually with cash. And then some of the other programs, I get like, like the Aboriginal Youth Mentorship Program, I get gift cards every week, for like Super-Store or No Frills if I've been to both days out of the week. And it just really helped me eat and get by.

**MS. SHAE-LYNN NOSKYE:** So I started out in the Support Link Program at Aunt Leah's Place. Basically, it's supported, independent living. You have a self-contained suite, but instead of a landlord you have an overseer. So, they act completely like a landlord and they confer with your youth worker just to make sure that you

don't have people in your suite past the time you're allowed, and you're not throwing any parties.

Along with the suite, you get, I think it's five or six hours a week with your worker. And so it's usually split up into two days, and then one of them's usually, like you're learning life skills. And then the other time, they'll take you grocery shopping and stuff. They also have their essential skills workshops on Wednesday afternoons, and those are for not only the youth that are in the Support Link, but Link as well, if they so choose.

And so, after I aged-out, I took some time away from Aunt Leah's and when I went back, they had started a Youth Advisory Committee. So, I've gotten involved with that. I started as the Administrator and then I worked my way up to the Presidency; I prefer Co-Chair, though, actually, because it's definitely not a one-person show. It's a lot of people coming together in order to try and influence change.

So from Support Link you go into Link, which doesn't have an age-cap. They help you with things like finding housing or employment; connecting you with various services, taking you to appointments. They have a SEFY Program, so Supported Education for Fostered Youth, and they can help you out with various pieces, like paying for

transcripts and helping you to apply for college as well.

Yeah, there's just so many incredible programs that go through those doors, and it's just really incredible to see the growth with the social enterprises as well. They run a tree lot every Christmas; they have youth from the programs volunteer, you get volunteer hours through that, and sell people Christmas trees in a couple different lots in metro Vancouver.

And they also have Urban Thrift, which is on Main and Broadway; it's a thrift store, that all of the proceeds go directly into funding the programs. And so, when I was in the Bootstraps Training Program that they ran, they had us working in the warehouse as well as Urban Thrift, just learning basic work etiquette and such.

**MS. FIALKA JACK:** I'd like to reiterate that if I hadn't been able to access Directions, I wouldn't be here and to be honest, I'd probably be heavier into my addiction than I was when I showed up. I probably would, -- who knows where I would be, like they literally gave me the chance to be able to have a second chance at my life. Even though my dad and everybody around me growing up told me that I was going to end up a drug addict. And that I was going to end up dead before I was 30.

So, I wanted to prove every single one of them wrong, and Directions helped me with that and they

gave me hope for the fact that, even though I was in addiction, that I could work one day and be able to hold a full time job. And that there were people around me that cared, and it just -- it took me a long time to be able to get past that.

And to be able to look in the mirror and actually realize that the addict in the mirror was really just crying out for help. And it was, it was a matter of time of, when could I connect to people and, like, being a foster child? Connecting isn't easy. Connecting is something that isn't second nature to me. As much as I love to connect to people and I love people, connecting is hard. Learning to trust people is the hardest thing.

And Directions gave me the ability to trust people again and that people that are working with you are there just because they're a paycheque and that you're just someone they have to help that day. They really like you and they want to be there. And it created those caring connections that I actually did meet; even though they were paid, I didn't care. It was that they were there day in, day out, and they just gave me hope and I -- yeah, I've been sober for like three years. And they've promised me a job there. So, that really, actually was a huge part of why it helped me to be able to get sober, was knowing that I was going to be able to help my street brothers and

sisters be able to get to where my peers had helped me to get to where I am today. So, that's what I hope to do.

**MS. CHEYLENE MOON:** And I just remembered about a couple other programs that I've been part of. Like the Agreement With Young Adults Program, for like youth that go to post-secondary. And they've also expanded it, you do life skills programs, so you can still get funding over the summer when you're not in school.

And the YEAF Program, which is -- Youth Education Action Fund -- yeah, which is supposed to pay for your tuition and books. Because I would not have become financially stable if I didn't go into post-secondary school. Like, because it's so hard to live off of income assistance, and then it was hard for me to find a job because of my anxiety and depression. But like, I loved school growing up, because it was like my safe place away from my foster homes. And like math and science are my best subjects, so like I just enjoyed school.

And going into college, it was like my first time being financially stable, because they pay for your rent and they give you like a portion for food and living expenses. And then, so while I was homeless during my second semester of school, I just saved up that money that I was supposed to be paying for rent so that I would have money for when I got out of school. And I had enough money

to sustain myself for one month after school, in case I couldn't get a job or anything. So, that has really helped me get out of poverty. Yeah, not as many youth in care know about it, and like more people need to know that you can get paid to go to school. It's actually really helpful.

**MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** Erin, can you share your observations of the youth who use the STRIVE Program? Like, just demographically or just their experiences, or how the STRIVE Program helps the youth who use it.

**MS. ERIN PAVAN:** Yeah, I can say that more than half of them have been Indigenous, which basically exactly reflects the proportion that are in care. And more than half of them identify as having a disability, which is also reflective of the population. And most have not completed high school when they come to us.

I can also say that in -- so Agreements With Young Adults that Cheylene was just talking about, is a Ministry of Children and Family Development program, and all the provinces have something similar. And it's basically that, after you age-out, if you're going to school they'll pay for your living expenses and help you to go to school. And prior to October of 2016, you could get this support if you were in school or doing a vocational program or in rehab, some kind of rehabilitative, addiction

treatment. And in 2016 they expanded it so you could also get the support while attending a life skills program.

So we do see since then a lot more youth coming to STRIVE so that they can get that support. Which is great, because when we have youth come into the Program who are homeless, it's really hard when you don't have -- you know, there is a hierarchy of needs, and when someone's not housed, there's not -- you can kind of help them survive, but there's not that much you can do. And the housing market in Vancouver is just ridiculous, like it's so unaffordable.

And the youth are facing also discrimination, too, right? If you're on income assistance you've got to bring this paper from the Ministry showing that you're on welfare, and people just slam the door in your face. And same with, no one wants to rent to young people either, right? And also people of colour experience discrimination when they're renting. So, they've got a lot stacked against them trying to rent here, and having that money coming in for their rent from Agreements With Young Adults while they're attending STRIVE helps us to actually be able to say, "Okay, now you've got your housing. What do you actually want to do?" You know, like, "What are you passionate about, or what do you want to do with your life? Or, what other help do you need,

like maybe you need mental health supports or whatever it is. Do you want to go back to school?" And that's been really helpful.

And this might be veering off topic a little bit, but the thing about Agreements With Young Adults is, it was just expanded again, so that you an access it in B.C. up to age 27, for a max of four years. It used to be, you could only do it for two years, so you couldn't do a full Bachelor's degree, so people would get -- I know people who would go two years into their BA, and then leave, because they only have funding for two years, so how am I supposed to do this four-year degree, exactly?

So now you can do a four-year degree, and it's up to age 27. So there's more support, but if you drop out, that money stops coming in. So you can imagine, for example, let's say you're going to college. You've somehow made it through high school and gotten to school, even though, statistically, not a lot of youth from care graduate from high school and are able to access this.

So it's like, they don't know about it and they're not able to get there. And you start having anxiety and you stop going to class; and then, the more you don't go, the more anxious you are. And you don't have a parent to talk to about it. And you're afraid to tell your social worker that you're not going to school, because you

know that if you tell them you're not going, they're going to cut your money off because they have to, that's the policy.

And then the next thing you know, you're dropped out of school and you don't have rent for next month, because you're agreement has been cut off, because you're not attending a program like you're supposed to be.

So, the thing is, if we're trying to catch the most vulnerable youth, the youth who are like 'slipping through the cracks' or whatever term you want to use, the young women who are ending up missing or murdered -- these are often the youth who are not actually able to attend school, or get themselves to a program; like, the really vulnerable youth. They might not be able to stay on that Agreement With Young Adults.

I don't think that that is actually the solution, and I think that's why this program's been around for a long time, and it hasn't stopped these adverse outcomes that we see. And I think that's the reason, is that the youth who are able to access it are already kind of doing okay. And then there's nothing for the youth who are really struggling.

And we still, at STRIVE, we'll have youth who are in the Program and they're on that agreement while they're in it, and they miss one day, and call, like having

a panic attack. "Oh my God, I'm not there, is my IA going to get cut off, are you going to tell my social worker?" And they're living with this constant panic of homelessness, just not having this safety net.

And I think people who have that safety net -- like, just the knowledge that if something goes really wrong in your life, you can go crash with your parents? Just gives you this sort of feeling of, like confidence, that you can go out there and mess up and it's gonna be okay. And the youth who were raised in care often don't have that. So they're just living in fear all the time, of like, I'm just two steps away from being homeless.

And I don't think people realize what it's like to live with that fear, and that AYA is just a continuation of that. It's like, "Well, if I mess up, if I don't go to STRIVE or I don't go to school, I'm homeless again."

So, I think it would make more sense if we just had that be guaranteed, and we just said, "Okay, we're gonna support you till you're 25 and we're gonna encourage you to be working towards something, but we're not going to cut you off if you stumble." Right? So that they feel safe enough to make mistakes or follow their passions and thrive, just like children who come from families that are able to support them at any age, right?

**MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** Can you guys share your experiences of reconnecting with your family or your community?

**MS. FIALKA JACK:** So, me and my mom, I hadn't seen her since I was like four or five years old. And when I moved here, it was a difficult situation, because I had just moved from my father. But like, reconnecting with her, to be honest, has been super awkward, and it's only been since May of last year. So it's awkward, and as much as I know she's my mother, she, in a way, feels kind of like a stranger to me.

And it's not because I don't love her, and it's not because I don't appreciate what she's given to me. It's that I have been my parent for the last 25 years. I have been the one that has been there for me. She hasn't been the one that has held my hand while I've cried over a boy breaking my heart; she wasn't the one that was there for me when anything happened to me. So it's difficult. And I feel like there's something missing, and I can't put my finger on what it is; and I feel like she feels the same way, she's -- I don't know, it's really difficult.

And like, when I was homeless a couple of years ago, my dad got back in contact with me and he kept just shilling me money to keep my mouth shut over the abuse that he had given me, and it was his only way to make me

shut up. And I was like, "okay." And when I finally got back in contact with my stepmom that he was contacting me, he immediately blocked me out of his life, and it was difficult, but I realized that it was probably the healthiest thing that I could have had. Because he isn't a healthy relationship to have with, is I guess the best way to put it.

And I don't think that I would want to have him in my life and to be able to share the things that I'm doing with him, because he has destroyed almost everything that is beautiful to me. And it's not easy to forgive and forget, I guess. And I want to, but I don't think that I'll ever want to reconnect with him.

**MS. CHEYLENE MOON:** I have a large family, so. I guess I could start with my mom, because after a year or two of us being in care, she stopped showing up to our visits, because she got further into her addiction. So I'd only see her, like, two or three times a year for a few years. And like slowly her addiction got worse, until it was to the point of drug-induced psychosis, so I just don't talk to her or see her anymore.

But like, my dad has always been there for us, and he's always been very loving and supportive. But he has a brain injury and a walking disability, so he wasn't able to look after us when our mom couldn't. But

he's always been very supportive, although he is always asking me for help with things. So, along with supporting myself and my younger brother, I also have to support my dad. So, yeah, at a young age I kind of took on the mother role in my family, because I'm like the oldest daughter that I grew up with.

And just like a month or two ago, I met my older sister for the first time, which was really nice, because she's really friendly. And I've always wondered what it would be like if I knew my older sisters. To have a good, healthy female -- like, growing up with my parents, my mom was like really hard working, did anything she could to support us. And it's just once we got taken away that she became homeless, and then all that grief, like, it just took her down a bad path, I guess.

And, like, when I was 15, my younger brother and sister moved to Merritt with our aunt, which we had only met like a few months before they moved up there. And she was really strict and kind of abusive, and like, my siblings have not been the same since they lived there with her. Because her and my dad were part of the Sixties Scoop, and the home that they lived in was very abusive. And so, I think that just kind of got passed along to us.

Because my aunt also didn't like my dad, and she was willing to be open about it with us, because he was

continuing the cycle since we ended up in care. And so, like, it's me and my siblings have all blocked her out of our life.

And then I think a couple of years ago, we reconnected with my mom's side of the family. And that was really nice for us, because I only have a couple of memories of them from when I was three years old. And then, another memory from when I was 11, meeting, like having my grandma come stay over. And so, like my mom's side of the family is always trying to, like, check in, make sure me and my siblings are doing okay and stuff. And they're trying to become part of our lives again. Which is really nice.

But yeah, I also lost connection with my older brothers when we went into care, because they have different dads. So I didn't really see them much after going into care. So, yeah, it's just a lot of different ways to feel about the different parts of my family, I guess.

**MS. SHAE-LYNN NOSKYE:** So, my mom comes from a large sibling group. She has five sisters and a half-brother, and they all ended up in care as children. And this was in Alberta, and obviously, after hearing the things we've gone through, you can just imagine what someone in care back in the '80s would have had to go

through. It was a lot worse.

And so I can't blame her for the troubles that she faces. But there's definitely a disconnect there. I have to respect the choices she makes, and when she's ready, yeah.

**MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** Commissioner Robinson, can we have a 15-minute break?

**COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Yes, let's do that, we'll have a 15-minute break, and we'll be back at 2:55.

--- Upon adjourning at 14:40

--- Upon resuming at 15:05

**MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** What differences are -- can you guys explain what differences are experienced by kids in the foster system, and what is experienced with children who have parental support?

**MS. SHAE-LYNN NOSKYE:** I think it's really important to note that, for parented youth, you're not cut off at 19. There's still a place to go if you're scared, if you're hungry, if you need to do your laundry. It's not really something that youth in care get to experience.

I read in a report once, I believe approximately 7 out of 10 families still provide free rent and groceries and emotional support to their children between the ages of 19 and 28. So, yeah.

**MS. ERIN PAVAN:** I think part of it, too, while you're in care, it's just about consistency and stability. As we know, some people get moved around to a lot of foster homes. Actually Indigenous youth are more likely to get moved around, there's more risk of the placement breaking down. You also get switched between social workers, so sometimes you don't really get a chance to build a relationship with anyone. And like the young women have spoken about, it's hard to trust people and build relationships when you were raised that way.

So a lot of the times you just don't get a chance to really connect to anyone, and then the next thing you know, you're aged-out. And it's inconsistent, too; like, you might get put in a group home, or you might get put in a foster care placement; you might get put with your siblings, you might be split up. And some foster homes are better than others.

And if you don't like where you are, it's not really easy to get moved. And I think Cheylene touched on that, that running away from your foster home doesn't mean that your social worker is going to say, "Oh, are you not happy there? Like maybe we should move you somewhere else."

Yeah, that's it.

**MS. CHEYLENE MOON:** I don't know very many

people that are living with their parents. I know a lot of youth in care, from all the programs that I've gone to. Yeah, I don't really know much of the difference.

**MS. FIALKA JACK:** I think the difference between youth in care and youth that may not be in care and have support, is that the supports that youth have during care are the supports that you can only have until you're 19. And then they're cut off. And you learn as you grow up in care that everything is temporary and nothing is ever really set in stone.

And tomorrow, you could be in a new place, you could have a new social worker, and -- or, you might not even have any of your belongings. Like, it is so up in the air, and it's like -- I feel like there isn't enough stability for foster children.

And I think that is a huge issue and McCreary Centre Society did a report, I don't remember exactly which one, but I know that there's a report, that they talked about how moving around a certain amount of times actually will cause instability and will cause issues later in life. So, foster children move at any given time, five to six times, if not more, during a year. So, that's once a month to every other month, you know, some children move on a weekly basis.

And there's not a lot of foster homes that

are available. So to jump from home to home, you're really going to start jumping from group home to group home once your social worker's not really interested in filling out the paperwork to get you into a foster home. So, like, when -- I'd assume that when you grow up in your home, you know, you go to your parents and tell them what's going on in school or what the issues are that, you know, might arise in your personal life. But, like, as a foster child, who do you go to? Who do you think of, that these foster children turn to? They -- they're probably less likely to turn to their foster parents, because why would they want to open up to someone that they know they might not even see in two weeks?

You know? They don't -- like, it's difficult, and I think it definitely, like -- yeah.

**MS. CHEYLENE MOON:** I only know like a few people that live with their parents who are also Native, and like, they still struggle a lot, too, the ones that I know. And some of them have to work to help support them and their family at a young age, just like I do. And -- I don't see a big difference between me and my friends that do live with their parents. So, I don't know, just -- it's hard for all Native youth, I think, growing up in this city; and also in urban areas as well.

**MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** You're all lovely and

inspiring ladies. And I'm just wondering if you could tell us a little bit about how you've moved forward from your experiences and what your plans are for the future.

**MS. CHEYLENE MOON:** Well, for me, it used to be hard for me to even order food at restaurants. I used to have to get like, my boyfriend at the time, to order food for me. And when I'm upset, I don't like to talk. But my boyfriend at the time liked to talk about problems when they arose, so it made conflict between us hard. And eventually I had to like force myself to speak when I physically felt like I couldn't, in order to try to save that relationship.

So that kind of like helped me a little bit to come out of my shell, and going to all those different programs to survive also helped with my social anxiety a little bit. Like, having to be around people a lot. And with the Pacific Association of First Nations Women, it was like Jolene Mitton who helped to organize Indigenous Fashion Week last year; she got me into modelling when I was 19. And like, I was already like public speaking for three years before that, and like I couldn't look at the crowd when I was public speaking, but, since modelling, I just had to stand there and not say anything. It was a bit easier for me to look at the crowd.

And because of that, it gave me more

confidence. And now when I do public speaking, I can look at the crowd and count how many people are in the audience while I'm waiting for my turn to speak. And like, I love math, so the numbers actually help calm me down when I'm counting people. Also, my favourite singer, Ronnie Radke, who's also the lead singer of "Falling in Reverse," his music has really helped me through hard times and it's been very inspirational and he helped me to keep going when I felt like I had no one there to support me.

And so I usually talk about him a lot. And I got my first tattoo after him. Yeah, music and poetry has really helped me to express myself. Also, yes, dying and cutting my hair; because when I'm upset, I just go and I change my hair. And then I feel a bit better, because I'm kind of like a new person with this new look.

**MS. SHAE-LYNN NOSKYE:** I just want to take a moment and recognize the fact that I was really lucky to graduate on time, in 2013. And then shortly after, in 2014, I aged-out. So it's taken me nearly five years now to sort of get to a place where I feel like I have stability and a sense of permanency. And, you know, caring connections. And while some of them are still paid connections, I feel like I've been able to broaden my horizons and sort of just meet genuine people who actually care for me.

And it's definitely motivated me to continue my work with advocacy, as well as going back to school. So in May, I start my prerequisites; I'm looking to go to Langara and do the Social Service Worker program, and eventually I want to work towards my Bachelor's of Social Work. And I just want to continue with my youth advocacy, because it's really important for people with lived experience to be able to be there and support you, and go, you know, "I was exactly where you are now, and it does get better. It takes a while. But the only thing holding you back is your own, I guess -- your own limitations."

**MS. CHEYLENE MOON:** I remembered some other stuff. Like, also from my youth advocacy work, it's helped me realize that my voice matters. And that I can make a positive change in society. But also, I forgot to talk about my goals and aspirations in life.

Right now I'm trying to get enough credits to transfer to the Forestry Campus at UBC, because like, I love nature, and I just want to work in nature. And I'd like to do something for the economy. But I also want to learn natural medicines and become like a medicine-person.

**MS. FIALKA JACK:** I honestly don't think I would have been able to make it this far if it wasn't for my uncle, who has honestly stood by me for the last 11 years, through everything, even my addiction. And he was

probably the only person that fully accepted me within my addiction and didn't judge me. And was always there to tell me that what I was going through was going to get better; and that even though it might not seem like it, it was just a matter of time; and that it was a matter of me having to take those steps, and to be able to find my own self-worth.

And even to this day, I still have to remind myself of my own self-worth, and that I am gonna get somewhere, and that I am going somewhere. And my writing has really helped a lot, I think. I write a lot of poetry and it really does help take out everything on my chest, and to, I guess, put to words feelings that I wouldn't be able to if I was to tell someone in a conversation.

And, I'll be honest, I was never -- I wasn't overly proud of my Native heritage and it wasn't because I didn't love that part, it was that I was ripped away from it at such a young age. And I was shoved into a white home and only with white people, and it was really hard to reconnect to my culture. And even to this day, it is hard. And it takes so much umpffh to be able to text someone, and be like, "Hey, I really need to go to the sweat lodge this week," you know, and to be able to reach out to people.

And to be honest, I think that reconnecting to my culture has honestly been one thing that has helped

me in the last few years. And I think that more youth should reconnect to their culture because it is like -- it is the most amazing feeling to know that there are people out there that care, and that the Creator is there listening to every single tear that drops, and that He is there catching you, no matter what.

And it's -- finding your purpose is important as a foster child. And I think that growing up, we aren't told that we have purpose, and we aren't told to learn to find our purpose. And we aren't taught that we have something, we are here for a reason. And I really do think that is something we should all work on as, like, before aging-out of care, is showing that these youth have self-worth and that they have purpose in life. And that they aren't just a foster child that's going to age-out at 19 and have a 50-50 percent chance of being homeless or addicted to drugs.

I think that these kids need to find that gem within themselves to feel good about themselves, and they have every right. And like I've said multiple times, Directions Youth Services has been the one that has really helped me figure out what my purpose was.

And growing up, I always, even at like three, four years old, I always wanted to help people and I always loved people. Most parents would be like, "Don't

talk to that person, they're on drugs!" I was that person that would go up to them, and I'd be like, "I love you, you're amazing!" And like, it was just something that I couldn't help but do. And if I don't do that during the day at some point, helping someone, I can't go to bed at night. I can't go to bed at night feeling easy and feeling okay, knowing that there are people out there that are just as lonely as me and just as scared and just as unloved, or unnoticed. And I don't want anybody else to ever feel the way that I have felt. And so, yeah.

**MS. CHEYLENE MOON:** I'm similar, where like, if I'm down, helping someone else makes me feel better. And I just remembered about this poem that I wrote when I was 18. I wrote it to like share with people and I feel like now is a good time to share it, because it's also a good reminder for myself when I share it with other people.

"Chaos, it can happen to anyone, in all different ways.
It is no fun when you're stuck in this haze,
Separation, abuse, heartache and shame,
In the end, it all feels the same.
But do not worry, there is still hope,
No need to hurry to learn how to cope.
Healing takes times, something we all need to learn.

You will be fine, maybe there's just bridges to burn.

Find what makes you happy and hold on tight
Make sure it's worth the fight to be part of your life.

Happiness isn't hard to find, it's all in your mind.

So work your way out of the darkness and into the light."

**MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** What do you guys believe would help children transitioning from foster care?

**MS. FIALKA JACK:** So on average, when foster children in Vancouver -- not every foster child will end up with a housing worker or a transition worker -- but when you do, sometimes it's usually within the last four weeks before you age-out. I was lucky enough to have two social workers that were really on my ass about trying to work on things, and they had me have a transition worker from the moment I turned 16 and it was probably one of the most helpful things to have.

Because they taught me how to budget with the money that I had, even though obviously that's not how much you get when you age-out of care. But at least, you know, I was able to learn what were essentials and like what I personally needed in my diet. And I think,

definitely, having peers that have had lived experience would be super helpful. Because when you're 19 and you've just aged-out of care, in that moment, you could feel so alone and you feel like your pain is your pain, and only you have ever felt that. But, you don't realize that there are a thousand other kids in B.C. that are aging-out at the same time as you. And that you're not the only one that is feeling bad.

So, I think that having peer support that has lived through and could have a positive impact on you aging-out, would probably be really helpful. And I know that the three of us do that type of work, and we help foster children that are aging-out right now. And we give them peer work and we don't get paid, we go, and we go bowling with them; we've done a few different things. And it's -- to be honest, I wish that was something that was around when I was aging-out, or getting ready to age-out. Because, then it would have been able to connect me to other foster children and know that I wasn't the only one that was going through that at that time.

And to be able to make friends, and to be able to make peer mentors, so -- yeah.

**MS. CHEYLENE MOON:** Yeah, I think a solid support network for youth aging-out of care is very important. Just like having healthy people to look up to

and maybe someone who's been through similar experiences, but has gotten out of those dark times. It's like -- really important.

And also, like Collective Impact, where with our Connect to Thrive event, we're having all these different organizations and programs. And you get little stamps or stickers with their information for the youth that attend that gathering. And I think that's really important to have that little black book of all the services that youth can utilize after they've aged-out of care.

Because, like if you're lucky enough to have a social worker that knows about the stuff and passes that information on to you, like I did, then you can find ways to survive. But for those youth that don't know about all these services, they're the ones that are more likely to end up on the street, or addicted to drugs and stuff.

I just think all the youth from care need that little black book of services that are available to them and a good support network.

**MS. ERIN PAVAN:** So, like Cheylene mentioned, I don't think that we said that we're all part of a Collective Impact Initiative. So I don't know if anyone's familiar with this. It's a model for systemic social change, it's grass roots, so it's basically just

people coming together around an issue that's affecting the community. And for us, it's youth aging out of care in Vancouver. We have over 100 members who've been around for four years now.

These three young women are all part of the Collective Young Leaders, so that's like the Youth Advisory portion of the Collective. We have people from different government ministries, all the different agencies across Vancouver who are supporting youth aging-out, and we've been working on this for a few years of how to make better outcomes for the youth who are aging-out in Vancouver every year.

And one thing that we do is, every year, all the youth who are aging-out in Vancouver that year are invited to a big marketplace, where all the resources are there. We have a table, and there's food, and you find out all the things you're gonna need to know when you age-out.

And you get a transition kit. So it's like -- a toilet brush and a frying pan, and stuff you don't know, like a shower curtain; expensive stuff that you don't know you're going to need when you turn 19 and are going to be on your own. So this is a difficult, it's a complex issue. We've been working on it for years.

In a nutshell, I would say for the youth who are in care, we need to provide better services while

they're in care. And one thing is, I think the Guardianship Social Workers have unmanageable caseloads. I think they're at around three times what is reasonable for them to actually provide good quality service and have time to check in with all the youth that they're responsible for.

We need more foster parents. Like really badly. We do not have enough foster parents and enough good foster parents, we need people to step up.

And we need to make sure we have good transition planning that starts early, so that we teach those life skills early. So that by the time they turn 19, they're ready. And I also would like to see that 19 pushed up. Like I said, I think 19 is not reasonable, your brain is still developing; you're not really ready for the long-term thinking. And we also see that demographically with the rest of the population, people aren't moving out at 19. So it just doesn't, it's a policy that got put in place a long time ago that is no longer appropriate. So I would say, raise the age and then do better planning for the transition.

**MS. SHAE-LYNN NOSKYE:** So there's a B.C. report called "Fostering Success: Improving Educational Outcomes for Youth in/from Care". And they have 12 action items that they believe will improve the outcomes for

youth.

The first one, is to set an expectation of success within MCFD and the Ministry of Education for children and youth in care. This includes closing the graduation gap, encouraging youth to succeed and use their full potential, as well as valuing the effort that they're able to give.

The second one, is validate the value of caring relationships. So, relation-based practice is pivotal to positive outcomes. Trust is built based on interactions between individuals, not between children and government officials. There needs to be more importance placed on relationship-building between youth and their social worker. That way the youth feels comfortable in sharing their struggles and successes. It should not be common practice to only see your social worker every three to five months unless you're in crisis.

Just for a reference, in 2013, when I asked my social worker how many cases they had on their load? I was told 38. That's 38 young women and men that require support and are expected to put their trust and faith into the same individual. And that's a recipe for disaster if I ever saw one.

The third one, is to promote the work and support of peer community mentors. As you can tell, just

by the panel, many youth in care agree that it's important for there to be people with lived experiences similar to their own, that they're able to talk to about their struggles. Peer support workers are pivotal to academic achievement and transitional success. They foster a sense of belonging in someone who might have originally felt as if they were meant to live on the island of misfit toys.

The fourth one, is to expand the implementation of how the wrap-around approaches. There needs to be focus placed on the coordination of tracking the educational outcomes of youth in care in order to better support them and celebrate their successes.

Number five, is strengthen knowledge and practices in relation to cultural competency. So, ensure youth have access to, and are supported in, engaging in various learning opportunities and professional development in a culturally relevant way. This might include exploring linkages with Indigenous organizations and opportunities to strengthen the cultural identity of students.

It wasn't until I was in high school that I learned how to smudge. And it was my Aboriginal Mental Health clinician that took me to my first few sweats. As I learned about the culture I'd been denied as a child, I felt as if I was unlocking a whole piece of my identity that I was never aware I had. What I was being taught felt

inherently right within me, it positively affected my mental health, and every youth deserves to feel that exact same way.

Number six, is support the development of turning separate practices into pieces of a forward community. So that means strengthening the ties between agencies involved with a specific individual for best practice to support a youth. It's an interconnected approach that looks at the bigger picture instead of the current problem or just a specific jurisdiction.

Train and support caregivers to focus on educational outcomes. Encourage their involvement. When I was 14, my foster parent didn't care whether or not I made it to class. They actually -- they actually told me that it didn't matter to them whether I attended or not, because at the end of the day it didn't affect them in the long run.

And number eight, is convene education partners who will praise the success of young people in care. Social worker support alone is often not enough, but having a youth in care flagged within a school data base can help educators know when to bring together social workers, care givers and other supports to strategize how to make school a meaningful experience.

In 12th grade, my champion was my Aboriginal

support worker at school. I was starting to deal with a lot of social anxiety and they allowed me to do my course work in their office when my anxiety got so intrusive that I was not longer able to sit among my 30 peers in a given class. Because at the time there was definitely overflow of students in the classroom.

Number nine, is explore funding models to promote school success for youth in care, trying to change the educational outcomes of such a large group of people requires teamwork from the community level all the way up to provincial strategies.

The 10th point is, strengthen the cross-Ministry joint protocols on educational outcomes for youth in care. And specifically what is meant by this, is that there needs to be an address of how to properly share information, while also protecting the privacy of the youth. And collaboration to determine the joint areas of responsibilities.

The 11th point, is ensure information systems identify and track youth in care's pathways through school. And I'm not quite sure if this is a reality yet, to my knowledge there is very few studies that track the outcomes of youth who have aged out of care. Except for at their transition meeting with MCFD when they're getting ready to age-out and have not actually done so yet.

The few statistics that we do have from the 677 youths that aged-out in B.C. between April 1st, 2012 and March 31st, 2013, 48 percent ended up on income assistance within six months of their 19th birthday. According to Opportunities in Transition, 45 percent of the youth in the sample had been involved in the justice system in 2003. And out of the 37 youth that were interviewed for the report, when youth had aged-out of care, 13 were parents and 4 were expecting their second child by final report.

So there's a foster care alumnae study that examined the outcomes for 659 youth who had aged-out between 2000 and 2002: 25 percent had PTSD, which is higher than the rate found in US war veterans; and 54 percent had been diagnosed with at least one mental illness; from that, 40 percent of those youth had three or more diagnoses.

And so the last one, is to give special attention to the educational pathways of youth in care on independent living and youth agreements. Youth living on their own need extra support to have their education treated like the priority that it is.

**MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** At this time, do any of you have anything else to share?

**MS. ERIN PAVAN:** There is something that I would like to say, that we also need to be focusing on

keeping kids out of care in the first place. So, we want to do something to end the over-representation of Indigenous youth in care, it just keeps climbing, right? And so, I think there's a few things that should be done about this.

One is that when First Nations communities want to take jurisdiction over their child and family services, they need to be supported to do that, and have the funding that they need to deliver quality services. And in a way that makes sense for their community.

And we also, like I said, I think MCFD is just underfunded and understaffed, and we need more family-strengthening programming, right? It's just - when you don't have a lot of funding and a lot of staff, you're always just going to be doing damage control. So anytime there's cutbacks at MCFD, Child Protection is, like that's the core. Anything other than that is going to be seen as cut-able, right?

So, we need to really prioritize the programming that's going to help parents keep their children at home. And we need to think about why Indigenous kids are being put into care, and it's mostly what's called "neglect". And that's really poverty, right? It's about not having, not being able to house your kids and having to maybe even put them in voluntary care, just

because you don't have somewhere for them to live that's safe. Or not having, working so much that you're not also able to clean the house and make sure that they get to school because you're working two jobs to make ends meet. And you don't have enough money to make sure that they have the clothes and the school supplies and the food that they need. So, no one should be forced by poverty to have their kids be put in care.

And then the other piece is about the intergenerational trauma and mental health and addictions. So, we need people to be supported to be well enough to be good parents to their kids. And we need programming to help people access counselling or treatment, whatever it is. And then the issue of aging-out, would be lessened once we have less kids in care. So I just wanted to speak about that as well.

**MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** Are there any other things you want to say?

**MS. CHEYLENE MOON:** Well, Fialka said, "all my relations," and that reminded me of this prayer my dad taught me as a teenager. It's:

"*Kooks-chum* (phon) Great Mystery, for all our relations and their ships which keep us all united and bonded within reality's healthy and happy grass.

*Kooks-chum* Great Mystery for the preparation

and presentation of a healthier, happier society. Give care."

Oh, yeah -- and also, because most people have incorporated the Western view of "taking care". And my dad says care is not something that can be taken, it's something that's supposed to be given. So, if you can replace "take care" with "give care" when you say goodbye to people; it's like, it's going to be much healthier, because the words you say are actually really important. And they have an impact on society. So even just like saying "give care" every once in a while can help create positive changes.

**MS. SHELBY THOMAS:** Commissioner Robinson, do you have any comments or questions?

**COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** So many! I thank all of you so much for being here with us, for sharing with us. Sharing with the rest of the country.

I have some questions and many of them you've actually answered as we went along. I have this habit, in the margins, I have questions and things I'm thinking about. And Erin, you talked about how important it is -- I know care is needed in some cases, right? But the importance of the support and resources before it becomes the option. And I was wondering if there were things, specifically, that you three would like to have

seen. Like what are the things you needed that weren't there that you would want to share with me.

**MS. FIALKA JACK:** So a year-and-a-half ago, I went and I wrote the Ministry for my foster care records. Because I wanted to see the actual reason behind why I was taken away. And a couple of weeks ago I got it back, after a year-and-a-half of waiting. And it was probably like, it was a late Christmas gift, to be honest. Really sad Christmas gift.

But as I was reading through it, I was noticing that my mother needed a lot of support. My mom, at the time when she found out she was pregnant with me, she diagnosed with leukemia. And she refused to go through with treatment, because she knew that that meant she would have to abort me. And she continued on with her pregnancy and she still had me. And she was still sick, and it was written in my records that it seemed like she was wishy-washy, but I know that she was really, really sick with cancer at the time. And to be honest, I think that probably would have helped a lot, if they had given her more supports around that. And if they had been a little bit more lenient in the timing of what she was dealing with.

Because there were days that she might not have made appointments that she was supposed to meet me

for, or social worker appointments, and it was because she was sick. And she was at the hospital.

So, for the fact that we were taken away, because she wasn't able to make appointments because she was sick and trying to take care of herself to make sure that she was there for her children. It just kind of seems -- I don't even think redundant is the right word; it's -- ridiculous. Because I could have grown up in my mother's care if they had given her supports around her sickness and her illness. So.

**MS. CHEYLENE MOON:** Yeah, when I was in care, my mom told me that her work-search person that was helping her, she wanted to become a bus driver. But since she already had a degree in, I don't remember what it was called, but she was like a care giver, she looked after this person that was paralyzed on half her body. So she worked like 12- and 24-hour shifts, looking after someone who couldn't get out of bed.

And so her boss at the time was like the lady's daughter and she wouldn't always pay her on time, or pay her the full amount. So that's part of why we got put into foster care, even though my mom had bus passes for all four of us kids, plus herself. And she'd spend $100 on groceries every week, and she was the main support for us, because our dad has a disability; like, he's had trouble

walking since he was 21. I think if my mom was actually able to have her employment person actually listen to her when she wanted to become a bus driver and work for TransLink, that she would have had a more stable job with better payment, instead of having this person who's not always going to pay her properly.

And not overwork her, because part of the reason why we went to care is because she accidentally fell asleep after one of her shifts, when she was only planning to take a nap. So we were left at school until 8:00 p.m., and then we got put into foster care.

So I think if the workers could actually listen to what the parents want help with, then we probably could have still stayed with my parents, and then I wouldn't have had to walk from 57th and 9th all the way to Britannia and back every day, just to hang out with friends, because my foster parents wouldn't give me bus fare. And like living with my parents, I always had a bus pass.

So I wouldn't have so much trouble gaining weight now, because I can lose up to five pounds just by sleeping, because I starved as a teenager, because I'd run away all the time. And like, I was only given $5 a week, so I'd spend that on food pretty quickly. And so I wasn't really eating, I wasn't really sleeping, but I was walking

a lot. So it's taken a lot of years for my stomach to grow back to a normal size and for me to regain my appetite. And I've been working hard at trying to gain weight, but it's still pretty hard for me.

Yeah, just supporting the parents more to find out what they want and what they need to look better after their kids would have been really helpful in my case.

**MS. SHAE-LYNN NOSKYE:** I definitely have to agree that there needs to be more support for parents. I've spoken about it a couple of times, but the adult mental health supports that are out there are not nearly as much as is needed, I guess. You really have to start with the parent and do a bit of fact-finding and figure out what exactly that person needs to thrive themselves, before they can even think about starting to support their children.

Definitely, it's always difficult being a single parent as well. There needs to be more programming out there that connects mothers with other mothers, and fathers with other fathers. Just to, I guess, continue to build that sense of community that I really feel like we've lost. Yeah.

Do you have another question, or do you want me to talk about that one?

**COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** I do have more questions, but I do want you to talk about that one, too.

If you have some additional thoughts that you wanted to provide, recommendations.

**MS. ERIN PAVAN:** Yeah, I think I've probably already said all my recommendations so this might be repeating myself. But, I think part of it is about the community taking more responsibility as well. I think that this is something that governments can definitely do something about and put more funding into. But I also think the community can step up. And that could mean, like volunteering to be a mentor; it could mean becoming a foster parent. It could just mean getting more involved with your neighbours and finding out what's going on and offering support.

When you think about, before there was care, what would have happened if parents were going through a hard time and their kids needed help? Then, the extended family and the community would have come in and helped the family and taken care of the kids. So, I think there's still room for that now, of people coming together and helping each other.

And maybe like a cultural shift around mental health and addiction. But I think we're starting to see it not being something shameful; same with poverty, something you can actually talk about, that when you're going through a hard time, that you can -- people reach

out. And going to therapy or counselling is nothing to be ashamed of, or needing extra support for food or childcare is nothing to be ashamed of either. And providing those supports and having that be more normalized, so that parents aren't, I think, afraid to reach out. And may be sometimes afraid to reach out because they don't want people to know, because then their kids will get taken away.

So it's like, yeah, a shift around openness and acceptance, that it's normal to struggle with your mental health and addiction, and it happens to so many people. And to struggle to pay your bills and feed your kids, and an attitude of reaching out and people helping each other, rather than being afraid.

**COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Absolutely. One of the things that you mentioned earlier, and the programs that all of you spoke about -- I'd like to know how these programs are funded. And the stability of that funding; I understand the bulk of them are non-profits, is that correct?

**MS. ERIN PAVAN:** Yeah, that's my understanding. So it's a lot of not-for-profit agencies, like the one I work for, writing proposals and bidding on these government contracts. And having year-to-year funding; like, my program doesn't have stable funding, it

runs out in October. And every year, we don't know if we're going to continue.

At a not-for-profit, you spend a lot of your time writing those proposals, right, instead of delivering services. I'm lucky I work for a big organization, where we have people, their whole job is just the fund development and the proposal-writing side. But smaller organizations don't have that capacity. So you end up doing that at home at night or on the weekends, writing your proposals, while you're trying to deliver the services. And never knowing if you're going to have to tell your clients that your program is done, because you don't have funding. Or if you're going to have a job.

And then you also have the different organizations competing with each other for scarce resources, which is really not a good culture to be working in. Because we're actually working together, supporting the same clients a lot of the time. But then we also know that there is not enough funding for all of us, and that we're putting in proposals for the same contracts. So it can be kind of toxic.

**COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** It's that interconnected web that you spoke about, if those different service providers are then competing for the funds. Do you have any recommendations on how funding can be delivered in

a more effective way?

**MS. ERIN PAVAN:** I think longer-term contracts would be good, for starters. These short-term contracts are really difficult. We've even gotten grants that were for less than a year, and it's just too tight of a turnaround and you don't have the time to really build and learn and grow. So, more stability.

And then, the scarcity issues, and so, a problem, right?

**COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** Final question -- I'd like to know, and you don't have to answer if this is something you're not comfortable with. But how many of your communities, the First Nations you're either a member of -- are involved in your care, have been notified of your care or participated in any way? Because I know -- actually, I have two questions.

I know that in some provinces and territories, there's an obligation for the Ministry to notify a child's Indigenous community or First Nation when they're in care. Is that the case here?

**MS. ERIN PAVAN:** I mean, I actually can speak to that a little bit, because I was employed as a Roots Worker for Aboriginal Child and Family Services in the Lower Mainland. And that's a position, it's actually like a corrective position, to address the systemic racism

in the Ministry of Children and Families. And your role was to help the Indigenous youth connect to their home community and their culture, and to write cultural plans as well. Like if there was an adoption, or if they were being adopted by a non-Indigenous family, you'd have a cultural plan in place and cultural connections. So we would always contact the First Nation whenever a child or youth came into care.

And my experience with that, is that it's difficult with the amount of movement that you get, that sometimes it's -- sometimes the community is very far away. And that they don't have the capacity a lot of the time to respond. You're trying to call a Band office where they're understaffed and they don't get back to you for a while. And in the meanwhile, there's pressure to place the child right away. And it's hard to wait until they can actually get back to you and put the word out in the community and find out if there's any families that can take the child. And I would be in a position of sort of, trying to get a social worker to wait while I was trying to get in touch with a Band, a couple of provinces away. And you know, a couple of months would go by and it was quite difficult.

**MS. FIALKA JACK:** So I actually wasn't aware that other provinces notified Bands when kids ended up in foster care. I know that in the case of my Band, that when

I was 16, I had already been in care for quite some time and I asked my social worker if I could move to my reserve. And he was totally gung-ho to let me go, but when he contacted my reserve, he came back to me and he told me that the only foster home on my reserve was my little brother's foster dad, and he only took boys.

And that was the only shot that I had to be able to connect to my culture, because my Band refuses to let you learn the language, learn anything about the culture, unless you live on the reserve for a certain amount of time. And I come from hereditary-chief blood, and for me to not be able to have that connection, it hurts. And to know that I got refused at 16, to be able to learn about my culture, is horrifying.

And to know that there are other youth that are probably dealing with that exact same issue. And so, to know that there's other provinces that will help contact reserves, it kind of broke my heart hearing that. And I really hope that other youth can be able to connect to their culture, instead of waiting years and years and where there's such a disconnect between themselves and their culture. So.

**COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** The final question I have is, I understand that in B.C., children in care have legislated rights, specific rights. And you also

have all sorts of other rights; human rights, Indigenous rights. Were you ever informed or educated about your rights by either social workers or people within the programs about your rights as a child in care, or your rights as a citizen, or your rights as an Indigenous woman?

**MS. CHEYLENE MOON:** Well I had my social worker come to my foster home and go over a little book of rights a couple times when I first went into foster care. Like when I first became a CCIYA; anyways, I was 12 to 14 at the time; and so it didn't really click in when our aunt, who lived in Merritt, that my younger brother and sister were living with -- that like she was not respecting our rights. And like, using -- removing family visits as a punishment for like stupid things that we'd done, like me dying my younger brother's hair because he asked me to. She wouldn't let us have our visit the next month because of that; actually I think it was for two or three months I couldn't see my siblings, because I did something my brother asked me to do. Which we were already doing before they moved to Merritt, but once they moved to Merritt and lived with her, we couldn't do anything that we wanted to do and that our parents were okay with us doing.

That really messed up my younger siblings. Like I was too young to understand that those rights were being violated at the time.

**MS. FIALKA JACK:** I didn't know I had rights as a foster child until two years ago when I got hired by McCreary. And we were handed pens, and it was showing all our rights as foster children. And I remember just sitting there and reading it, and I was like, "Wait, I had rights as a foster child when I was in care?" So, yeah, I think that's something, as a foster child, you should really, really know. And especially as an Aboriginal woman, I think you should really know what your rights are.

**MS. SHAE-LYNN NOSKYE:** So like Cheylene, I was given that booklet of your rights. I was told to read it on my own, and if I had any questions, to ask. And once I realized I had these rights, I started to try and advocate for myself. And it just became really apparent, that even though there's this booklet that tells me I have these rights, as a youth in care, being under the age of majority -- you don't have any sort of, I guess, say, in what happens to you.

I've been in some pretty horrific placements, where I would try and talk to my social worker about why I was feeling unsafe. And my rights were not respected to the point where my foster parent would be standing at the stairs, listening in. So I wouldn't feel comfortable talking to my social worker about what was really happening. And so on the phone, I'd talk to her

about all this other stuff. But once she came in to investigate, I no longer was able to say anything. And so I was just really shut down. Your rights are just a piece of paper if people aren't going to respect them. Yeah.

**COMMISSIONER QAJAQ ROBINSON:** I want to thank you all so much for joining us today. I'm speechless in so many ways. I've been wanting to hear from you, youth, since I started this mission that we're all on, this journey. And I've heard from so many women who've talked about the impact the child welfare system has had on them as mothers and as kids. And to hear from you, bringing this full circle in very many ways.

But I also -- you're just awesome, and I just want to raise my hands to you all for your fortitude, your -- there's no words. I want to give you some gifts of appreciation -- acknowledgement. It's more important than appreciation, I think.

So I asked my friends here. I said, these young ladies need a bundle. We give seeds and a feather, and you will get that. But you talked about finding your purpose, you talked about being free to find out who you are; your culture, your being. And I just texted these ladies, and I said, they need -- what did I say -- I said, "We need something for their toolbox, a bundle."

So the feathers I'm presenting to you women,

you young women, are white feathers. The white feather is from the Bald Eagle. And these feathers, what I've been taught, is that they go to the warriors.

I'm also gifting you with a rattle. So when you're with other Indigenous women in your circles, in your rallies, in your gatherings, Pow Wows, wherever it may be; and a song starts -- I don't know if you have drums yet, but you'll have a rattle, to join in.

I'm going to put the mic down.

**MS. AUDREY SIEGL:** I would like also to raise my hands and say, *hai-thetka* (phon) for standing up and answering the call. I'm sorry you've had to be so strong. There were prayers put into this work. Our friend from Musqueam, Sean Hall, who makes these rattles, she's a powerful woman. And like you, she's a warrior woman. I'm a former kid in care; everything you say was true in 1989 when I went into care. And three years later when I came out of care, and I would like to -- I don't share that to make it about me, I share it so you know.

The light that you're looking for, the light that you need, it's in you. You carry it. You carry it for all the women before you who weren't able to shine, who weren't able to make their way. And we share these warrior feathers with you, because you are warriors. You're warriors of truth, of light and justice. We honour you, in

the highest way we know how. To share the feathers of the protectors and the truth-speakers.

We do that because you need medicine now. You came, you opened yourselves up, you were vulnerable, and now we're going to close you up. We're going to close you with love and with songs and prayers and with medicines. If you need anything after this at any point, you are welcome to contact us. Not just today. The work that you're doing, you are changing the world. You are making it a better and safer place. You are finding ways to shine light and truth when most likely you didn't have anyone to show you how. So you are bringing the light, and you are the light, and we see that, and we honour that and we love you for it. I say that from my heart and from my mind, and I say that for the mothers that you miss and love. *Tsep-ka* (phon).

**MS. TERRELLYN FEARN** I just want to add, these rattles that we're gifting you, can be added to your bundle. And we want to honour you. And in my teachings, what I was taught is, our understanding, our songs, our language, our ways, are not lost; they're in our blood, our blood-memory. And it's our role to journey back, to learn. And let these rattles be one step in your bundle, to get you connected to those songs. And I have a lot of wonderful women here that will, once we gift you these

rattles, we'll all sing the Strong Women Song, and we would like for you to shake your rattles with us.

So, thank you.

So this is what was shared with me about the song that we will all sing together. And we ask that you let the love from this song enter with you, the "Strong Woman Song," here's what was shared with me. It's a little bit likely that I want to share what's in here, because it's important.

"In 1962, this song came to a young Anishinabe woman serving time in solitary confinement at the Kingston Penitentiary, Kingston Prison for Women, in Kingston, Ontario. There were many atrocities committed against First Nations women in the prison and many suicides. The guards brutalized and belittled the women in solitary, seemingly to no end. They were allowed out of their cell once per day to stand alone in an open space, worrying if she would survive to see her children.

The woman stood in the yard and prayed for strength. The song that came was healing, and the words, although in her own language, soon helped to lift up the other women. Before long, it became an anthem for the women in Kingston. And soon, they called themselves the Native Sisterhood. They carried on the Sisterhood with women in prison and out of prison, as the Native Sisterhood

spread beyond Kingston, throughout Cree, Saultaux, and Saskatchewan prisons, later to Alberta and B.C. And now anywhere women need to call out for strength. The women say the song not only brings strength, but also courage. And it is a reminder that even in the darkest, coldest dungeons, that they were there to care about one another. And to hold each other up.

The Native Sisterhood also asks for prayers for our brothers in prisons, many of whom, the Sisterhood says, have forgotten how to pray."

So, there are links all over online to versions of the song, and there are many versions. And the way I sing it, is how it was shared with me. And I will be happy to learn and sing it different ways, too. But so you know, in case you didn't hear any of the times we've said it before, we love you.

So, we're just going to jump in. Jump in when you want, and we'll finish with all of us together. Yeah?

**--- Exhibits (code: P01P15P0302)**

**Exhibit 1**: Text by Shae-Lynn Noskye dated 2018-04-06 (eight double-sided pages).

--- Upon adjourning at 16:26

LEGAL DICTA-TYPIST'S CERTIFICATE

I, Shirley Chang, Court Transcriber, hereby certify that I have transcribed the foregoing and it is a true and accurate transcript of the digital audio provided in this matter.

Shirley Chang

April 17, 2018