SUMMARY REPORT: MCFD CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES

**Introduction**

This report provides an overview of the activities of the Child Protection Service (CPS) line provided by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) for the 2022/2023 fiscal year. The analysis summary mainly based on information on the service reporting website [1]

**Background**

The MCFD, through its child protection line provides services to support families in the safe care of their children [2]. The MCFD attends to reports received from members of the public who are legally obligated to report their concerns about a child or youth under the age of 19 years who is being abused, neglected, or not receiving necessary care.

**Child Protection Reports for 2022/2023 Fiscal Year**

Reports concerning about 55,500 (6% of the population between age 0 and 18) children are received annually, with only about half of such reports requiring some form of intervention from the MCFD [1]. Given the preference of the MCFD in providing services that keep families together, only about 6.9% of those requiring intervention end up being admitted into care, while the rest are able to live with their families, including extended family members.

**Child Protection Report Calls**: In the 2022/2023 fiscal year, about 48,354 reports were received from the public, with the police and schools accounting for most of the calls at about 34% and 14.7%, respectively. Of these calls, about 22,212 (about 46%) were assessed with safety concerns, requiring MCFD intervention with the highest percentage (about 77.7%) and lowest percentages (about 12%) recorded at Kootenays and Vancouver/Richmond SDAs, respectively.

Records show that the absolute number of Protection reports requiring intervention have slowly declined in both indigenous and non-indigenous populations from a peak in 2017.

**Services to Children in Need of Protection**: Guided by available evidence, the MCFD facilitates services that keep families together where possible. Of the 22,212 assessed with need, about 91% are able to live safely with family at home (about 82%), or with extended family (about 8%), while 2046 (about 9%) are taken into care as child and youth in care (CYIC).

**Permanency for Children & Youth in Care**: As of March 31, 2023, the overall caseload of CYIC is 4,875, occuring either via parental agreement (88%) or a court order (12%), predominantly (72.4%) due to parental neglect. Those in care for at least 6 months have an individually tailored care plan, with 84.5% of such plans meeting the required MCFD standard across the province ranging from highs of 100% and lows of 37.7% in the South Vancouver Island and Northeast SDA, respectively. CYICs are almost all placed in contracted resources or foster homes, with very rare cases of hotel placement as data from 2021/2022 fiscal year shows [5]. For Youth in care from age 19 and onwards, the ministry supports a transition to adulthood (including employment, education, or training) for 380 children in the 2022/2-23 fiscal year.

**Outlook**

Continuing efforts to facilitate family preservation have led to a gradual reduction in the number of CYIC admissions over the years from a peak of over 10000 in 2001, to less than 5000 as at March 2023 [5]. The overall decline is mostly accounted for by the non-indigenous CYIC.

**References**

1. <https://mcfd.gov.bc.ca/reporting/services/child-protection> (accessed: 2023-11-19)
2. <https://mcfd.gov.bc.ca/reporting/services> (accessed: 2023-11-19)
3. <https://mcfd.gov.bc.ca/reporting/about-us> (accessed: 2023-11-19)
4. <https://mcfd.gov.bc.ca/reporting/services/child-protection/services-to-children-in-need-of-protection/case-data-and-trends> (accessed: 2023-11-19)
5. <https://mcfd.gov.bc.ca/reporting/services/child-protection/permanency-for-children-and-youth/case-data-and-trends> (accessed: 2023-11-19)