SUMMARY REPORT: MCFD CHILD PROTECTION SERVICES

Introduction

This report provides an overview of the current service state of the Child Protection Service (CPS) line provided by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD). 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.

Reports concerning about 5500 (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. 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.

The Four Key Stages (Reports for Fiscal year 2022/2023)

Child Protection Reports: In the 2022/2023 fiscal year, about 48354 reports were received from the public annually, with the police and schools accounting for most of the calls at about 34% and 14.7%, respectively. ~~Most of the reports are being handled by the Vancouver/Richmond, South Fraser, and East Fraser service delivery area (SDA).~~ 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 22212 assessed with need, about 91% are able to live safely with family at home (about 82%), or with extended family (about 8%), while 2046 (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, taken in 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].

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.

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.

Fatality?

In the2021/2022 fiscal year, CYICs were almost all placed in contracted resources or foster homes, with rare cases of hotel placement which account for only about 0.03%, occuring mostly in the North Central and Northwest SDA [5].

References

1. https://mcfd.gov.bc.ca/reporting/services/child-protection
2. <https://mcfd.gov.bc.ca/reporting/services>
3. D
4. <https://mcfd.gov.bc.ca/reporting/services/child-protection/services-to-children-in-need-of-protection/case-data-and-trends>
5. https://mcfd.gov.bc.ca/reporting/services/child-protection/permanency-for-children-and-youth/case-data-and-trends