



REPRESENTATIVE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH 2025-2026 ANNUAL REPORT

Ensuring the Government of Nunavut provides ethical, equitable, and consistent services that meet the needs and support the rights of young Nunavummiut, and the families, who rely on them.



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NUTAQQANUT INULRAMIRNULLL
UQAQTIKHAANIK

REPRÉSENTANT DE
L'ENFANCE ET DE LA JEUNESSE

REPRESENTATIVE FOR
CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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Cover photo: The RCYO is proud to advocate for the children and youth of Nunavut, including Joe Spracklin, who smiles for the camera on his favourite thinking rock during a beautiful summer day in Iqaluit.

Cover photo credit: Abigail Atienza



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REPRÉSENTANT DE
L'ENFANCE ET DE LA JEUNESSE

REPRESENTATIVE FOR
CHILDREN AND YOUTH

September 11, 2026

The Honourable David Joanasie
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut
P.O. Box 1200
Iqaluit, NU X0A 0H0

Dear Speaker:

It is my pleasure to present the Representative for Children and Youth 2025-2026 Annual Report to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut.

This report covers the period of April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026, and has been prepared in accordance with section 35(1) of the *Representative for Children and Youth Act*.

Yours sincerely,

Jane Bates
Representative for Children and Youth

This report is dedicated to the
children, youth, and families of Nunavut.

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MESSAGE FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE

It is my privilege to present the Representative for Children and Youth's 2025–2026 Annual Report. This report comes as I complete the second year of my second term as Nunavut's Representative for Children and Youth (Representative).

This year, change continued across Nunavut. A new government and the Seventh Legislative Assembly brought forward a vision that recognizes young people not just as the future, but as sources of advocacy, creativity, and inspiration today. That vision is of a territory where children and youth feel valued, build strong relationships with family and community, participate in formal and informal learning, take pride in their cultural identity, and have positive and fulfilling life experiences. It also commits the Government to engaging young people as partners in identifying youth priorities and shaping the decisions that affect their lives. The Representative for Children and Youth Office (RCYO) welcome this vision and will watch closely to see how this new government operationalizes it.

Change also continued within the RCYO as we welcomed new members to our team, bringing new knowledge, perspectives, and experience to our work. Over the past year, however, I became increasingly aware of the cumulative impact this work has on RCYO staff. Their role requires independence, objectivity, and careful analysis, while also exposing them, in concentrated form, to circumstances involving profound loss, serious harm, unmet needs, and failures to protect young people.

We often recognize the impact difficult work can have on those serving in frontline positions, but we may overlook the dedicated individuals working in independent offices who experience resistance from Departments, review cases, identify failures, and advocate for change. We must also recognize their humanity, support their well-being, and ensure that the pursuit of accountability does not come at the expense of the people entrusted with carrying it forward. I remain deeply grateful for the commitment of RCYO staff, and for the care, integrity, and professionalism they bring to this difficult work each day.

This year marks an important change in how—and what—the RCYO reports publicly about issues identified across all program areas that affect young Nunavummiut and their families. Wherever possible, we have moved



beyond general descriptions to provide more specific and measurable evidence. This approach connects concerns across cases and over time to assess whether the actions taken in response are producing meaningful change.

In Individual Advocacy, we previously reported systemic issues as general themes. In 2025–2026, we identified the specific systemic issues present across the 99 cases worked on during the fiscal year and quantified how frequently they occurred. As reported on page 50, children and youth living in out-of-home care accounted for more than half of the RCYO's individual advocacy cases. More broadly, nearly 90 percent of the new Individual Advocacy cases for the 2025–2026 year, which largely stem from external complaints and referrals made to our office, involve the Department of Family Services—a trend we have consistently seen since 2015.

In the Systemic Advocacy section, we set out the systemic issues identified through individual advocacy cases and referrals during the 2025–2026 fiscal year. We continued to identify serious concerns involving child-protection investigations, case management, children in care, out-of-territory placements, foster care,

data reliability, and the absence of comprehensive standards and procedures—particularly for children in care and the services provided to their families—all of which fall within the responsibility of the Department of Family Services. For each concern, the section traces its history and the recommendations previously made to address it. This approach shows why these issues remain urgent, identifies where previous recommendations have not led to meaningful action or improvement, and illustrates the impact that resolving the issues could have on children, youth, and their families.

In the Reviews of Critical Injuries and Deaths program, reports of sexualized violence increased significantly, from eight in 2024–2025 to 22 in 2025–2026, while the number of young people who died by suicide tragically increased to 13. The Department of Family Services’ reporting of critical injuries also remains problematic, and the figures provided cannot be considered accurate or reliable. The reasons for these concerns are described in the Reviews of Critical Injuries and Deaths section on page 70. The persistence of this reporting problem demonstrates that creating a new standard in March 2025 or establishing a Quality Assurance Team does not, by itself, equate to improvement.

I encourage readers to examine the information contained throughout this Annual Report, connect the dots across programs and over time, and judge for themselves whether the actions reported by departments have resulted in meaningful, measurable improvements in the lives of children, youth, and their families.

From the RCYO’s perspective, measurable improvement would mean fewer children coming into care because families were engaged early and received meaningful support. It would mean fewer children remaining in care for extended periods without sustained work toward reunification, stability, or permanency. It would mean fewer young people being placed outside the territory because appropriate services and placements were available in Nunavut. It would also mean fewer young people dying by suicide and less violence against children and youth. If the systemic issues identified by the RCYO were being effectively addressed, our Office should eventually see fewer cases involving the same failures.

I remain grateful for the privilege of serving as Nunavut’s Representative for Children and Youth. I also remain hopeful—not because the challenges are small, but because the responsibility is shared, the evidence is clear, and meaningful change remains possible.

We cannot allow another generation of young Nunavummiut to grow up, become parents, and watch their own children encounter the same failures, face the same barriers, and suffer the same preventable harms. The standard by which our collective efforts must be judged is clear: whether the lives of young Nunavummiut are safer, healthier, more stable, and more hopeful because of what we choose to do now.

Yours sincerely,



Jane Bates
Representative for Children and Youth

STATUS OF YOUNG NUNAVUMMIUT

Pursuant to the Representative for Children and Youth Act (RCYA), the Representative must submit an annual report to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut (Legislative Assembly) which includes "a report on the status of children and youth in Nunavut."

In our 2023-2024 annual report, the RCYO analyzed five years of various datasets to identify trends and growing concerns, including side-by-side data presentations and a written analysis that provided simple commentary on some metrics. To address these concerns, recommendations were made to the responsible departments. A list of those recommendations is in the back of this section. The departments agreed with those recommendations, and this year each department has provided an update on the progress they've made toward them.

This year, similar to last year, the RCYO elected not to perform a detailed analysis on the changes in data over the previous year as we did in 2023-2024. Instead, we continued to focus on removing data that provided little insight into the status of young Nunavummiut, while adding those, like the number of medevac flights or boil water advisories, that help paint a better picture of what is impacting the territory's children and youth. We also elected to continue presenting data from the previous five years, as we found the side-by-side comparison effective in highlighting trends and providing the context needed to help understand the current status of young Nunavummiut.

General Nunavut Statistics

LEGEND

- Data not yet available

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
TOTAL POPULATION¹	40,086	40,603	40,916	41,410	41,830
0-4 years of age	4,624	4,528	4,411	4,225	4,015
5-9 years of age	4,242	4,396	4,430	4,462	4,494
10-14 years of age	3,882	3,933	3,985	4,091	4,132
15-19 years of age	3,329	3,431	3,478	3,523	3,609
20-24 years of age	3,207	3,221	3,2436	3,292	3,305
25-44 years of age	11,582	11,654	11,778	11,997	12,201
45-64 years of age	7,475	7,624	7,689	7,803	7,894
65+ years of age	1,745	1,816	1,899	2,017	2,180
Percentage 0-19 years of age	40.10%	40.11%	39.84%	39.36%	38.84%
TOTAL BIRTHS²	949	866	804	753	-
To mothers under 15 years of age	5	4	5	5	-
To mothers 15-19 years of age	160	150	131	126	-
TOTAL DEATHS³	212	221	256	232	-
0-19 years of age	34	29	35	30	-
Infant mortality, 0-1 year of age ⁴	14	14	15	16	-
Fetal deaths ⁵	24	11	9	4	-
Total Suicides ⁶	36	27	37	32	-
0-19 years of age ⁷	13	2	6	12	13
Percentage 0-19 years of age	35%	7%	18%	34%	-

¹ Statistics Canada. (2025). *Population estimates on July 1, by age and gender*. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.25318/1710000501-eng>.

² Statistics Canada. (2025). *Live births, by age of mother*. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.25318/1310041601-eng>.

³ Statistics Canada. (2026). *Deaths, by age group and sex*. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.25318/1310070901-eng>.

⁴ Statistics Canada. (2026). *Infant deaths and mortality rates, by age group*. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.25318/1310071301-eng>.

⁵ Fetal death refers to the spontaneous intrauterine death of a fetus at any time during pregnancy. It can also be referred to as a stillbirth when it occurs later in pregnancy, at 20 weeks of gestation or more). Statistics Canada. (2025). *Live births and fetal deaths (stillbirths), by type of birth (single or multiple)*. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.25318/1310042801-eng>. Statistics Canada has not yet released the data for calendar year 2025.

⁶ Nunavummit Kiglisiniartiit (2025). *Nunavut Suicides by Region, Sex, Age Group and Ethnicity, 2002 to 2024*. Iqaluit, NU: Nunavummit Kiglisiniartiit. Retrieved from https://www.gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/documents/2025-09/Nunavut_Suicides_by_Region_Sex_Age_Group_and_Ethnicity__2002_to_2024.xlsx

⁷ Data provided by Nunavut's Office of the Chief Coroner.

General Nunavut Statistics

LEGEND

- No data available
- Data not yet available

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
MARKET BASKET MEASURE⁸ per family of two adults and three children					
Iqaluit	\$107,421	\$111,614	\$114,437	\$116,211	\$117,179
Qikiqtaaluk (excluding Iqaluit)	\$101,498	\$105,460	\$108,127	\$109,804	\$110,718
Kivalliq	\$91,028	\$94,582	\$96,974	\$98,477	\$99,297
Kitikmeot	\$97,571	\$101,380	\$103,944	\$105,556	\$106,435
INCOME					
Median total income (individual) ⁹	-	\$69,800 ¹²	\$85,100	\$117,100 ¹²	-
Median total income (family) ⁹	\$160,600	\$140,100	\$135,100	\$150,400	-
Income Assistance recipients ¹⁰	10,342	10,912	11,162	11,201	11,657
Income Assistance expenditure (Millions) ¹⁰	\$38.3	\$44.0	\$62.6	\$64.5	\$66.9
Unemployment rate ¹¹	10.4%	14.1%	13.2%	8.3%	10.3%

⁸ The Market Basket Measure is based on the cost of a specific basket of goods and services representing a modest, basic standard of living for a reference family. These costs are compared to the disposable income of families to determine whether or not they fall below the poverty line. For Nunavut, the Market Basket Measure reference family consists of two adults with three children. Statistics Canada. (2026). *Market Basket Measure (MBM) thresholds for the reference family by Market Basket Measure region, component and base year*. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.25318/1110006601-eng>.

⁹ Median total income is the income amount that divides a population into two equally-sized groups, half having an income above that amount, and half having an income below that amount. An economic family refers to a group of two or more persons who live in the same dwelling and are related to each other by blood, marriage, common-law, adoption or a foster relationship. A person not in an economic family is a person living either alone or with others to whom he or she is unrelated, such as roommates or a lodger. Statistics Canada. (2026). *Market income, government transfers, total income, income tax and after-tax income by economic family type*. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.25318/1110019001-eng>.

¹⁰ Data provided by the Department of Family Services, Income Assistance Division. In April 2023, the Income Assistance benefit was increased.

¹¹ Statistics Canada. (2026). *Labour force characteristics by province, territory and economic region, annual*. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.25318/1410046401-eng>.

¹² Data to be used with caution.

Status of Young Nunavummiut

Department of Education

LEGEND

- No data available
- Data not yet available
- # Data reported but confirmed by the department to be inaccurate

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
TOTAL LICENSED CHILDCARE CENTRES¹³	60	60	61	61	62
Daycares	33	33	34	36	38
Preschools	8	7	6	4	4
Head Starts	7	7	7	7	7
Afterschool	7	7	7	6	6
Home daycares	5	6	7	8	7
Childcare spaces	1,239	1,243	1,315	1,364	1,453
Infant (0-2 years of age)	218	223	237	240	254
Full-time Preschool (3-5 years of age)	598	616	662	730	786
Part-time Preschool (3-5 years of age)	258	240	240	216	230
School-age (6-12 years of age)	165	164	176	178	183
Waiting list¹⁴	912¹⁵	-	1,420¹⁶	1,615	-
Infant	242	-	512	401	517
Preschool	440	-	727	753	904
School-age (6-12 years)	230	-	181	194	199

¹³ The Department of Education licenses daycares. It does not operate them.

¹⁴ Surveys to establish waiting list lengths were not conducted in 2020-2021 and 2022-2023. Each centre may have their own waiting list so parents may put their names on more than one waiting list.

¹⁵ Data from 2020 voluntary childcare facility survey. Not all facilities fully responded.

¹⁶ Seventy-two percent of daycares responded. Each centre may have their own waiting list so parents may put their names on more than one waiting list.

Status of Young Nunavummiut

Department of Education

LEGEND

- Data not available
- Data not yet available

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
SCHOOLS					
Enrollment	10,388.5¹⁷	10,629	10,852	11,327	11,170
Elementary (Kindergarten to Grade 9)	7,638.5	7,781	7,858	8,321	8,269
Secondary (Grade 10 to Grade 12)	2,750	2,848	2,994	3,006	2,901
Homeschooled	-	-	14	15	13
Attendance rates	52.9%	71.07%	68.51%	66.24%	66.11%
Final graduation numbers	262	261	310	282	-
Graduation rate ¹⁸	38.4%	37.3%	45.5%	38.4	-
Student Educator Ratio (SER)	11.9	11.6	11.8	12.2	12.2
YOUNG PARENTS STAY LEARNING					
Recipients	20	35	14	15	9
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR NUNAVUT STUDENTS (FANS)					
Applicants	722	835	786	798	891
Recipients	452	516	530	731	591

¹⁷ Kindergarten students are counted as 0.5 as they only attend school for half of the day.

¹⁸ Numbers listed are gross graduation rates. The gross graduation rate is calculated by dividing the number of graduates by the average of estimate 17 and 18 year-old populations (as the typical age of graduation). The population count of 17 and 18 year-olds is based on population data provided by the Nunavut Bureau of Statistics.

Status of Young Nunavummiut

Department of Education

LEGEND

- Data not available
- Data not yet available

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025 ¹⁹	2025-2026 ²⁰
VIOLENT INCIDENTS, by type					
Total Violent Incidents	993	362	180	96	161
Abuse/Assault	409	251	162	88	129
Discrimination	-	11	6	3	11
Threats	-	100	27	18	34
Sexual incidents	19	0 ²¹	4	-	-
Incidents reported to police/RCMP	56	29	24 ²²	-	-
STUDENT DISCIPLINE					
Suspensions	372	993	362	180	-
Suspensions	142	213	-	-	-
Expulsions	4	3	-	-	-

¹⁹ July 2024 to April 2025

²⁰ As of May 31, 2026

²¹ October 2022 to June 2023

²² July 2023 to June 2024

Status of Young Nunavummiut

Department of Family Services

LEGEND

- Data not available

Data reported but confirmed by the department to be inaccurate

/ Inconsistent numbers reported by the department

	2024-2025	2025-2026
REFERRALS²³	1,573^{24, 25}	-
Physical Harm	266	350
Non-accidental physical injury.	46	-
Unexplained physical injury.	19	-
Parent/caregiver has acted or threatened to act in a way that is likely to cause physical injury.	201	-
Emotional Harm	561	704
Parental action has or is likely to emotionally harm the child.	264	-
Exposure to family violence between parents/caregivers and/or other adult household members.	297	-
Sexual Harm	110	119
Parent/caregiver has engaged in or attempted to engage in a sexual act with child.	26	-
Sexual exploitation of child by a parent/caregiver.	6	-
Exposure to sexually explicit conduct or sexually explicit materials.	12	-
Physical, behavioural, or suspicious indicators consistent with sexual harm.	40	-
Threat of sexual harm.	26	-
Neglect	709	-
Parent/caregiver permanent absence or abandonment.	27	-
Failure to protect child against neglect, physical harm, emotional harm, and/or sexual harm.	79	-
Inadequate supervision.	382	509
Non-organic failure to thrive.	4	-
Inadequate medical, dental, and/or mental health care.	31	-
Inadequate clothing or hygiene.	16	-
Malnutrition.	11	-
Exposure to unsafe home and immediate environment.	106	454
Child younger than 12 years old committed a criminal act and parent/caregiver is unable or unwilling to provide for needs.	2	-
Exposure to illegal drug commerce.	10	-
Involving child in criminal activity	3	-
Parent/caregiver provides drugs or alcohol to child or allows access.	18	-
Newborn exposure to drugs or alcohol.	17	-
Other high-risk birth.	3	-
Death of a child	1	-
Suspicious death of a child.	1	-

Status of Young Nunavummiut

Department of Family Services

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
IN THE CARE OF THE DIRECTOR²⁶	144/145	183/184	159	246	261
Permanent Custody Orders	92	126/127	101	139	172
In-territory	114	94	72	95	129
Out-of-territory	31	33	29	44	43
Temporary Custody Orders	47	57	58	73	84
In-territory	-	55	50	67	67
Out-of-territory	-	2	8	6	17
Adjourned	3	-	-	14	2
Apprehension	2	-	15	20	3
AGED OUT OF CARE²⁷	9	4	3²⁸	34	12
16 years old	-	-	-	25	8
19 years old	-	-	-	9	4
TOTAL ADOPTIONS	162	149	169	143	86
Registered Custom	132	131	148	129	72
Private	26	17	18	12	8
Departmental	4	1	3	2	6
TOTAL FOSTER HOMES²⁹	136³⁰	134	150³¹	218	158
Inuit	96	81	69	55	74
Non-Inuit	40	53	45	163	84

²³ The number of referrals is not equal to the number of young Nunavummiut being subject referrals. A child who is the subject of referral may have multiple (sub)categories of referral.

²⁴ These maltreatment codes used in Nunavut's child welfare system are drawn from the Structured Decision-Making (SDM) tools developed by Evident Change in 2019.

²⁵ The sum of the individual maltreatment categories appears higher (1,646) is that each referral can contain multiple maltreatment types. This is standard practice in child protection reporting and aligns with national data reporting conventions, such as those used in the Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (CIS).

²⁶ The Director of Child and Family Services has legal guardianship of these young people as a result of a court order.

²⁷ Young people between 16 and 19 who were in the care of the Director under a Permanent Custody Order that expired.

²⁸ Does not include data from the Kivalliq and Qikiqtaaluk

²⁹ The RCYO recognizes that caregiver ethnicity oversimplifies a complex reality and we look forward to collaborating with the Department of Family Services on including foster home data in future annual reports that better reflects a child's broader relational and cultural environment

³⁰ Does not include data from multiple communities

³¹ Does not include data from the Kivalliq

Status of Young Nunavummiut

Department of Family Services

LEGEND

- Data not available
- # Data reported but confirmed by the department to be inaccurate
- / Inconsistent numbers reported by the department

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
RECEIVING SERVICES, but not in the care of the Director, under court order					
Total receiving services	12	27	41	20	32
Supervision Order	9	12	26	20	22
RECEIVING SERVICES, but not in the care of the Director, by service agreement type					
Total receiving services	216	334	232	317	296
Plan of Care	134	214-219	114	176	173
Voluntary Services Agreement	58	75-81	68	80	62
Support Services Agreement	21	33/36	18	30	24
Extended Services Agreement	3	35	32	31	37
FAMILY VIOLENCE SHELTERS					
Young people who stayed in a shelter	-	-	390	296	-
Total nights spent in shelters	4,103	7,959³²	9,915³³	9,672³⁴	-
0-5 years of age	1,515	3,887	580 ³⁵	341	-
6-18 years of age	2,498	4,072	256 ³⁶	43	-
CRITICAL INJURIES	-	-	556³⁷	395³⁸	75
DEATHS	5	3/1³⁹	3	4	5

³² Does not include data from South Baffin

³³ Including Adults, Children and Youth

³⁴ Including Adults, Children and Youth

³⁵ 0-10 years of age

³⁶ 11-18 years of age

³⁷ Total number of critical injury incidents documented internally by DFS across regions during the fiscal year. However, this number does not represent a finalized or reconciled count.

³⁸ Total number of critical injury incidents documented internally by DFS, across all regions during the reporting period. This includes all incidents DFS was made aware of, compiled through a manually maintained spreadsheet monitored by the DFS Quality Assurance team.

Status of Young Nunavummiut

Department of Family Services

LEGEND

- Data not yet available

Data reported but confirmed by the department to be inaccurate

/ Inconsistent numbers reported by the department

	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
TOTAL PLACEMENT SERVICES⁴⁰	325	394	421
Extended Family	103⁴¹	150	180
In-territory	99	149	180
By agreement	45	61	64
By custody order ⁴²	54 ⁴³	88	116
Out-of-territory	4	1	0
By agreement	3	0	0
By custody order ⁴²	1	1	0
Foster Family (non-biological)	141	146	145
In-territory	112	112	107
By agreement	40	27	20
By custody order ⁴²	72	85	87
Out-of-territory	29	34	38
By agreement	8	9	6
By custody order ⁴²	21	25	32
Group Homes (Non-Medical)	39	30	48
In-territory	17	10	20
By agreement	8	5	8
By custody order ⁴²	9	5	12
Out-of-territory	22	20	28
By agreement	9	12	16
By custody order ⁴²	13	8	12
Other Out-of-territory Care Arrangements (Non-Medical)	0⁴⁴	14	0
By agreement	0	1	0
By custody order ⁴²	0	13	0
Out-of-territory Medical Needs Placements	42	54	48
Permanent Custody	11	17	14
Temporary Custody	2	1	1
Interim Order	0	0	1
Plan of care Agreement	5	5	3
Voluntary Services Agreement	24	24	22
Support Services Agreement	0	3	4
Extended Services Agreement	0	4	3

³⁹ Although the Department of Family Services reported three deaths, only one was reported to the RCYO as per section 19 of the RCYA. See page 54 for more information.

⁴⁰ Data provided by the Department of Family Services for 2019-2022 is too incomplete to include.

⁴¹ This number is different from the total number of foster homes listed above as depending on each circumstance, placement services with extended family members can be family arrangements, not necessarily categorized as approved foster homes.

⁴² Custody orders include Temporary Custody Orders, Plans of Care, Interim and Adjourned Orders.

⁴³ This number also includes statuses of Supervision Orders and Interprovincial Courtesy Supervision.

⁴⁴ This number is already counted in the above sub-section of out-of-territory Foster Family (non-biological).

Status of Young Nunavummiut

Department of Health

LEGEND

- Data not yet available

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
TOTAL PATIENTS	24,818	29,765	30,470	32,688	32,130
19 years of age and younger	9,541	12,421	12,308	13,240	12,748
0-4 years of age	3,434	3,935	3,387	3,879	3,196
5-9 years of age	2,119	3,092	3,165	3,183	3,316
10-14 years of age	2,093	2,837	3,073	3,271	3,247
15-19 years of age	1,895	2,557	2,683	2,907	2,989
Percent of patients 19 years of age and younger	38%	41%	40%	40%	39%

TOTAL VISITS	75,723	133,296	151,424	161,979	190,698
19 years of age and younger	25,340	49,585	52,378	52,272	60,192
0-4 years of age	11,241	21,601	20,579	19,121	20,065
5-9 years of age	4,429	10,196	11,426	10,756	13,274
10-14 years of age	4,410	8,169	9,688	10,317	12,126
15-19 years of age	5,260	9,619	10,685	12,078	14,727
Percent of visits by those 19 years of age and younger	33%	37%	34%	32%	31%

Status of Young Nunavummiut

Department of Health

LEGEND

- Data not reported because it is not one of the top 5 reasons for that fiscal year, locations, or age group.

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
MEDICAL TRAVEL (Number of people sent out of home community for a medical procedure/treatment)					
Total medical travel patients	9,693	10,952	12,094	12,136	11,893
19 years of age and younger	2,875	3,509	3,715	3,797	3,470
Percent of medical travel patients 19 years of age and younger	29%	32%	30%	31%	29%

TOP 5 MEDICAL TRAVEL REASONS, All ages (patients)					
Radiological examination not elsewhere classified	1,395	1,484	1,965	3,124	2,910
Medical services in home not available	347	1,407	3,293	5,189	3,854
Normal delivery	745	629	682	1,110	973
Dental caries/Diseases of hard tissues of teeth ⁴⁵	716	811	1,009	1,389	1,132
Abdominal pain	473	410	390	592	557

TOP 5 MEDICAL TRAVEL REASONS, 0-4 years of age (patients)					
Dental caries/Diseases of hard tissues of teeth	336	345	386	587	464
Medical services in home not available	-	178	185	156	147
Acute Bronchiolitis	-	94	74	-	-
Examination of ears and hearing	28	47	-	66	55
Other respiratory abnormalities	-	69	-	-	-
Fever	33	-	-	-	-
Pneumonia organism unspecified	-	-	48	60	60
Radiological examination not elsewhere classified	34	-	-	47	50
Convulsions	32	-	-	-	-
Unspecified follow-up examination	-	-	44	-	-

⁴⁵ As per the Department of Health, "Dental Caries, Unspecified (K02.9): This code is used for instances of tooth decay or cavities where the specific part of the tooth is not specified. It's a common code for pediatric health reports, reflecting the general issue of dental caries among the child or adolescent without delving into specific parts of the tooth affected." In 2025-2026, Diseases of Hard Tissues of Teeth (K03.9), which includes general wear, structural defects, or non-decay issues like abrasion, erosion, or attrition where the precise condition is unspecified, replaced Dental Caries as one of the top issues for medical travel. For the purpose of this report, the two categories have been grouped together.

Status of Young Nunavummiut

Department of Health

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
TOP 5 MEDICAL TRAVEL REASONS, 5-9 years of age (patients)					
Dental caries/Diseases of hard tissues of teeth	198	226	334	354	293
Medical services in home not available	-	61	158	224	187
Examination of ears and hearing	37	74	53	86	74
Unspecified follow-up examination	19	-	56	-	61
Radiological examination not elsewhere classified	19	34	39	94	61
Follow-up examination	-	-	-	45	-
Unspecified hearing loss	-	29	-	-	-
Abdominal pain	18	-	-	-	-
TOP 5 MEDICAL TRAVEL REASONS, 10-14 years of age (patients)					
Orthodontics aftercare	28	92	46	82	90
Medical services in home not available	21	71	174	237	205
Examination of ears and hearing	37	62	59	78	-
Dental caries/Diseases of hard tissues of teeth	48	52	71	142	123
Radiological examination not elsewhere classified	39	46	46	79	65
Unspecified follow-up examination	-	-	-	-	59
TOP 5 MEDICAL TRAVEL REASONS, 15-19 years of age (patients)					
Normal delivery	138	129	123	228	205
Orthodontics aftercare	-	103	65	149	120
Medical services in home not available	-	103	278	401	376
Radiological examination not elsewhere classified	87	96	118	211	175
Pregnant state incidental	58	-	46	-	-
Poisoning by unspecified drug or medicinal substance	53	47	-	88	-
Dental caries/Diseases of hard tissues of teeth	44	-	-	-	65

Status of Young Nunavummiut

Department of Health

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Medevac Flights⁴⁶, by departure community, region					
Qikiqtaaluk	1381	1342	1288	1367	1251
Iqaluit	345	353	355	330	307
Grise Fiord	12	15	10	18	7
Qikiqtarjuaq	55	63	46	56	44
Arctic Bay	62	70	88	73	78
Pond Inlet	217	206	175	197	168
Pangnirtung	161	143	139	129	126
Clyde River	142	104	101	122	98
Kimmirut	27	47	40	53	64
Kinngait	144	159	137	143	113
Igloolik	193	181	176	154	164
Resolute Bay	17	14	8	12	16
Sanirajak	60	83	53	73	56
Sanikiluaq ⁴⁷	143	116	128	N/A	N/A
Kivalliq	840	869	848	896	743
Baker Lake	189	222	203	217	176
Rankin Inlet	149	196	186	178	129
Arviat	128	150	165	190	201
Nauyasat	122	91	68	41	44
Chesterfield Inlet	41	52	47	41	30
Coral Harbour	68	85	68	87	65
Whale Cove	46	26	28	37	16
Sanikiluaq ⁴⁷	N/A	N/A	N/A	117	74
Kitikmeot	438	607	510	507	398
Cambridge Bay	104	101	124	124	90
Gjoa Haven	62	125	105	108	87
Kugaaruk	83	90	81	66	54
Kugluktuk	74	106	78	58	45
Taloyoak	64	152	105	98	98

⁴⁶ Individual medevac flight record.

⁴⁷ Sanikiluaq data reported under the Kivalliq Region starting in fiscal year 2024-2025.

Status of Young Nunavummiut

Department of Health

LEGEND

- Data not available

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
PEDIATRICIAN VISITS⁴⁸, by community					
Qikiqtaaluk	861	833.5	864	973	932
Iqaluit	801	734.5	764	870	849.5
Grise Fiord	2	4.5	5	4.5	4
Qikiqtarjuaq	9	4	13	11.5-	10-
Arctic Bay	4	10	11	16	7.5
Pond Inlet	4	10	13	14	11.5
Pangnirtung	3	6	11	8.5	7.5
Clyde River	12	11.5	8	13	9
Kimmirut	0	0	0	0	0
Kinngait	6	10	15	12	9
Igloolik	13	23	15	15	14
Resolute Bay	3	4.5	5	4.5	6
Sanikiluaq ⁴⁷	0	10	0	N/A	N/A
Sanirajak	4	5.5	4	4	4
Kivalliq	32	76.5	-	134	178
Baker Lake	10	18.5	-	32	33
Rankin Inlet	14	15	-	9	58
Arviat	3	15	-	35	26
Nauyasat	0	9	-	14	15
Chesterfield Inlet	2	7	-	6	7
Coral Harbour	0	6	-	22	6
Whale Cove	3	6	-	5	12
Sanikiluaq	N/A	N/A	N/A	11	21
Kitikmeot	52	55.5	62.5	56.5	69.9
Cambridge Bay	20	4.5	15	12	14.4
Gjoa Haven	12	13	8	13.3	16.8
Kugaaruk	5	11.5	11	10.8	12
Kugluktuk	10	11	12	13.2	13.5
Taloyoak	5	15.5	16.5	7.2	13.2

⁴⁸ Pediatrician days are in-person community visits, but Iqaluit includes in-person and telehealth services in pediatrician clinics. Data provided by the Office of Medical Affairs.

⁴⁹ Where an advisory spans multiple fiscal years, the days are allocated to each fiscal year in which the advisory was active (For example, a Drinking Water Advisory that begins on March 1, 2022 and ends on April 7, 2023 would be broken down as follows: FY2021–2022: 31 advisory days; FY2022–2023: 7 advisory days).

⁵⁰ The following Drinking Water Advisories remain active and unresolved at the time of reporting and were not included in the counts: Sanikiluaq (June 24, 2016), Arctic Bay (August 26, 2024), Pond Inlet (July 17, 2025), Gjoa Haven (January 16, 2026).

^{50a} Iqaluit experiences frequent Drinking Water Advisories related to infrastructure repairs and construction activities. These advisories are established by the City of Iqaluit rather than the Department of Health. For this reason, Iqaluit was excluded from this report.

Status of Young Nunavummiut

Department of Health

LEGEND

- Data not yet available

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
Boil Water Advisories^{49, 50}, by community, region (Advisories/Days Under Advisory)					
Qikiqtaaluk	9/355	4/126	8/278	5/182	5/452
Iqaluit ^{50a}	0/0	0/0	1/8	0/0	0/0
Grise Fiord	1/120	1/59	1/126	0/0	1/144
Qikiqtarjuaq	0/0	1/40	1/19	1/31	0/0
Arctic Bay	0/0	0/0	1/10	0/0	0/0
Pond Inlet	4/132	1/17	1/14	0/0	0/0
Pangnirtung	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	1/46
Clyde River	1/32	0/0	0/0	0/0	1/144
Kimmirut	0/0	0/0	1/35	0/0	1/82
Kinngait	2/39	0/0	1/56	2/51	0/0
Igloolik	0/0	1/10	0/0	2/100	0/0
Resolute Bay	0/0	0/0	1/10	0/0	0/0
Sanirajak	1/32	0/0	0/0	0/0	1/144
Kivalliq	6/95	11/150	6/431	8/838	3/187
Baker Lake	2/58	2/32	1/8	3/354	0/0
Rankin Inlet	2/19	5/52	1/41	2/113	2/152
Arviat	0/0	0/0	3/46	1/10	0/0
Nauyasat	-	-	-	-	-
Chesterfield Inlet	0/0	0/0	0/0	0/0	1/35
Coral Harbour	0/0	0/0	0/0	2/361	0/0
Whale Cove	2/18	3/61	1/336	0/0	0/0
Sanikiluaq	0/0	1/5	0/0	0/0	0/0
Kitikmeot	1/38	1/78	3/156	1/23	2/129
Cambridge Bay	0/0	0/0	1/68	0/0	0/0
Gjoa Haven	0/0	1/78	0/0	0/0	0/0
Kugaaruk	0/0	0/0	1/52	0/0	2/129
Kugluktuk	1/38	0/0	1/36	0/0	0/0
Taloyoak	0/0	0/0	0/0	1/23	0/0

Status of Young Nunavummiut

Department of Justice

LEGEND

- Data not yet available

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
YOUTH IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM					
Incarcerated	2	5	5	6	11
Incarcerated more than once	2	1	0	1	2
Total in community supervision orders⁵¹	0	0	2	0	3
Youth charged	62	59	83	234	138
13 years of age	8	1	3	10	6
14 years of age	10	4	10	23	26
15 years of age	11	21	7	32	19
16 years of age	15	16	21	69	15
17 years of age	18	17	42	100	72
Cases in youth court	101	166	120	-	70
12-15 years of age	46	31	13	-	20
Guilty	12	4	2	-	3
Acquitted	0	0	0	-	0
Stayed or withdrawn	34	21	10	-	16
Other decisions	0	6	1	-	1
16-17 years of age	45	38	47	-	27
Guilty	11	7	17	-	4
Acquitted	2	0	0	-	0
Stayed or withdrawn	32	28	30	-	23
Other decisions	0	3	0	-	0
18 years of age ⁵²	10	97	60	-	23
Guilty	3	30	12	-	5
Acquitted	0	0	0	-	0
Stay or withdrawn	7	19	18	-	16
Other decisions	0	48	30	-	2

⁵¹ Average number of youth throughout the reporting year.

⁵² Prior to this annual report, this was categorized other ages and could have included 19 year olds.

⁵³ The "18 years of age" category was new for the 2024-2025 RCYO annual report.

⁵⁴ Under the Criminal Code certain sex offences: [sexual interference; invitation to sexual touching; sexual exploitation; incest; bestiality (compelling the commission of, and in presence of or by a child); child pornography (making, possession, distribution); parent or guardian procuring sexual activity; exposure, sexual assault, sexual assault with a weapon, threats to a third party or causing bodily harm; aggravated sexual assault; attempt or conspiracy to commit any of the above] require mandatory registration on Canada's National Sex Offender Registry, which was created by the *Sex Offender Information Registration Act* (SOIRA) of 2004. As of 2011, judges no longer have discretion when it comes to requiring a convicted offender to register as a sex offender for these offences. If the individual is convicted of an offence covered by SOIRA, they must register as a sex offender. For other sexual offences, a Crown Prosecutor may apply to the Court for an order for registration. The Prosecutor will make this application when they believe an offender, who has not committed a SOIRA mandatory offence, poses an adequate risk to the public. It would then be up to the judge to decide if registration is warranted. "The RCMP "V" Division does not release regional figures for sexual offenders in Nunavut for privacy and public safety reasons." This category and its subcategories fluctuate on a daily basis. The data provided is accurate to the point in time at which it was collected.

Status of Young Nunavummiut

Department of Justice

LEGEND

- Data not available

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
ARRESTS					
Young people arrested	118	126	246	316	217
Alcohol/Drug related arrests	52	115	175	222	118
12 years of age	11	0	4	9	8
Alcohol/Drug related	3	0	2	4	0
13 years of age	14	9	9	10	7
Alcohol/Drug related	5	9	6	1	2
14 years of age	12	14	31	23	17
Alcohol/Drug related	4	12	13	10	5
15 years of age	20	21	50	32	26
Alcohol/Drug related	9	18	34	29	13
16 years of age	26	32	50	69	43
Alcohol/Drug related	13	26	42	56	28
17 years of age	35	50	102	100	41
Alcohol/Drug related	18	50	78	73	29
18 years of age⁵³	-	-	-	73	75
Alcohol/Drug related	-	-	-	49	41
Percentage of alcohol/drug related arrests	44%	91%	71%	70%	54%
CRIMES AGAINST YOUNG PEOPLE					
Charges laid with an offense against a young person	310	223	627	76	45
Convictions in relation to crimes against a young person	31	5	5	5	0
Sexual Interference	-	-	5	4	0
Sexual Exploitation	-	-	0	0	0
Luring of a Child	-	-	0	1	0
In-territory registered sexual offenders^{54, 55}	471	467	434	427	397
With offence(s) against a young person ⁵⁶	259	260	243	241	235
High-risk child sex offenders ⁵⁷	16	22	24	21	18

⁵⁵ As of March 31, 2026.

⁵⁶ These statistics represents the number of in-territory registered sexual offenders who committed an offense against a young person. The offence did not necessarily occur in the fiscal year noted.

⁵⁷ Determined to be "above average risk" of re-offending against children based on a computer algorithm.

Status of Young Nunavummiut

Department of Justice

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE					
Charges⁵⁸	626	1,034	627	1,138	484
Convictions	189	240	72	484	106
VICTIM SERVICES⁵⁹					
Number of young people accessing Victim Services	312	192	236	123	216
Witness to assault, domestic violence	189	97	142	46	57
Sexual assault	52	56	45	20	28
Historical sexual assault	3	12	12	7	0
Homicide	8	8	0	13	0
Sexual interference	0	2	38	9	2
Common assault	8	6	14	0	13
Victim of domestic violence	6	1	5	20	0
Family Information Liaison Unit client	5	4	13	0	0
Bullying	4	0	0	0	0
Witness to assault causing bodily harm	7	0	0	0	0
Aggravated assault	0	0	1	2	1
Sudden death	5	0	4	0	0
Witness to suicide	1	0	0	0	0
Witness to attempted suicide	0	0	0	0	115
Motor vehicle accident	4	0	3	0	0
Assault causing bodily harm	6	0	2	0	0
Assault with a weapon	0	0	4	0	0
Forcible confinement	0	0	1	0	0
Uttering threats	0	0	4	1	0
Sexual material ⁶⁰	0	0	0	1	0
Dangerous driving	0	0	0	2	0
Maltreatment ⁶¹	0	0	0	2	0
CHILD PROTECTION					
Matters before the court	44	51	52	66	56

⁵⁸ Charges may not have been laid and resolved within the same reporting period.

⁵⁹ Up until 2023-2024, Victim Services tracked the reason a young person accessed Victim Services based on all related Criminal Code offence(s). As many clients are victims of multiple offences, the total for "Number of young people accessing Victim Services" may have been lower than the aggregate numbers assigned to the reasons for accessing services. As of the 2024-2025 reporting year, to avoid variances in the total figures, Victim Services tracks the reason a young person accesses Victim Services based only on the most serious offence.

⁶⁰ "Sexual material" refers to any form of sharing sexual images on social media

⁶¹ "Maltreatment" includes any form of non-sexual abuse or neglect.

Status of Young Nunavummiut

Department of Justice

	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
PUBLIC GUARDIANSHIP			
Children in the care of their parent where the parent is under Public Guardianship	6	6	0
Under the Office of the Public Guardian	0	0	0
Under Private Guardianship	0	0	0
Applications in Process, by age			
18 or younger	1	0	1
19	3	1	0
20	5	5	1
21 and older	62	77	78

Status of Young Nunavummiut

Nunavut Arctic College

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
ENROLLMENT	676	788	621	486	539
Students 19 years of age and younger ⁶²	61	45	43	2	34
Final graduation numbers⁶³	102	59	84	144	-
Students 19 years of age and younger	15	19	3	6	-

Status of Young Nunavummiut

Nunavut Housing Corporation

LEGEND

- Data not available

	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
HOUSING UNITS, by type					
Public housing units	5,847	5,916	5,950	5,920	5,956
Qikiqtaaluk	2,808	2,827	2,838	2,851	2,864
Kivalliq	1,793	1,819	1,827	1,788	1,807
Kitikmeot	1,246	1,270	1,285	1,281	1,285
Staff housing units	1,735	1,728	1,731	1,718	1,715
Qikiqtaaluk	1,105	1,080	1,083	1,081	1,083
Kivalliq	365	372	388	376	374
Kitikmeot	265	276	260	261	258
Vacant staff housing units⁶⁴	221	337	174	137	154
Qikiqtaaluk	109	192	88	51	96
Kivalliq	62	87	55	48	35
Kitikmeot	50	58	31	38	23

	2023-2024	2024-2025	2025-2026
OVERCROWDED HOUSING UNITS, by type⁶⁵			
Public housing units	2,515	2,191	2,542
Qikiqtaaluk	1,173	949	1,074
Kivalliq	807	772	917
Kitikmeot	535	470	551
Staff housing units	-	65	-
Qikiqtaaluk	-	51	-
Kivalliq	-	11	-
Kitikmeot	-	3	-

⁶² Age data is based on information that students input about themselves. Not all students provide correct date of birth information.

⁶³ Graduation statistics can be delayed and, as a result, may change from year to year as more data becomes available.

⁶⁴ NHC considers housing vacant when no one is living in the unit or no one holds a lease for the unit.

⁶⁵ According to the National Occupancy Standards, overcrowding in a public housing unit or staff housing unit occurs when the following standards are not met: a maximum of two persons per bedroom; parents are eligible for a separate bedroom from their children; household members 18 years of age and older are eligible for a separate bedroom, unless married or cohabiting as spouses; a maximum of two males or two females 0 to 17 years of age per bedroom; children five years of age and older of the opposite sex do not share a bedroom; a maximum of two children younger than five years of age per bedroom.

STATUS OF YOUNG NUNAVUMMIUT 2023- 2024 ANNUAL REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS UPDATE:

DEPARTMENT OF EXECUTIVE AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS

Recommendation #1: Agree

The Representative for Children and Youth recommends that the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, as the lead, works to ensure current, complete, and accurate statistics are available through the Nunavut Bureau of Statistics.

2025 Update: "Through recent realignment efforts within the department, capacity is increasing, and work is being undertaken to update the website with current, accurate and complete data. In addition, there is a newly appointed Director of Nunavummit Kiglisiniartiit, who is available to assist with data-related queries.

It is important to recognize that while Nunavummit Kiglisiniartiit is the central statistical agency for the GN, it is not always the primary source for all Nunavut-related data. This means that we are subject to the release timelines of other bodies for tabulation and availability of data.

Nunavummit Kiglisiniartiit partners with Statistics Canada to access the data that is collected about the territory through a vast network of resources. Most of the territorial data that is received is as a result of our data-sharing agreement with Statistics Canada. Some of the data is publicly accessible, while some is available upon special request.

Nunavummit Kiglisiniartiit has conducted independent surveys (for example, the Food Price Survey) when resources and capacity allow. We make every effort to ensure that data is current and available; however, standard collection and tabulation processes mean that some data is lagged by a few months up to a year."

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Recommendation #2: Agree

The Representative for Children and Youth recommends that the Department of Education continue work to increase the number of early learning and childcare spots.

2025 Update: "The department continues to strive to increase the number of early learning and child care spots across the territory.

Since the signing of the Canada-Wide Early Learning

and Child Care Agreement in January 2022, a total of 272 new licenced child care spaces have been created, with a net overall gain of 189 spaces due to the closure of spaces for various reasons.

Working with our provincial and territorial colleagues, we successfully advocated for the increased federal funding needed to sustain critical programs already in place that support early learning and child care, especially \$10/day child care, and the wage scale for child care workers. The additional funding was announced June 19, 2026.

In March 2026, the department announced increases to the wage scale effective April 1, 2026, to align with inflation and match the Nunavut Employees Union wage and northern allowance increases. Some child care centres still do not operate at full capacity due to lack of staffing. Keeping child care worker wages competitive is the primary way to recruit and retain enough staff to operate centres.

The 2026-2027 combined action plan for federal ELCC funding was signed in April, ensuring funding continues to flow to departmental programs and child care centres.

The department will continue to promote and provide support for additional child care space growth across the territory."

Recommendation #3: Agree

The Representative for Children and Youth recommends that the Department of Education focus efforts and report on initiatives to increase attendance rates.

2025 Update: "The department continues to work with schools and District Education Authorities to increase attendance rates in all of our schools.

All District Education Authorities have their own Registration and Attendance Policies which include encouraging and promoting regular attendance.

The department rolled out a revised and standardized monthly principal reporting mechanism last year. As more information comes through via these reports, the department will identify and share promising practices from communities with high attendance rates.

Highlighted below are some initiatives taken by schools to increase attendance rates:

- Monthly awards ceremonies: some schools include prizes with the awards, while others may invite parents and guardians to help celebrate the student's successes, such as good attendance and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit values.
- Increasing family engagement through various

initiatives such as open house events, parent-teacher interviews, welcoming families to join in special events and special family fun nights hosted in the evenings.

- Extracurricular activities: most schools provide activities in the afternoons but some schools host some at lunch and in the morning to encourage students to attend and stay for the day.
- Various school food programs: some schools provide breakfast and lunch while others have special events offering hot breakfasts and/or feasts with Elders.
- Land trips and activities to offer learning outside of the classroom."

Recommendation #4: Agree

The Representative for Children and Youth recommends that the Department of Education focus efforts and report on initiatives to increase graduation rates.

2025 Update: "The Department continues to work directly with schools to support initiatives to increase graduation rates.

The department is committed to improving graduation rates and applies this goal in all actions taken, such as:

- Development and implementation of the new Nunavut curriculum with more relevant and relatable curricula and resources.
- Offering a variety of Career Technology Studies (CTS) courses to encourage opportunities in trades.
- Open house nights with parents and students to discuss attendance, course options, explaining the credit system and what is needed to graduate as well as ongoing parent-teacher interviews.
- Continued school-based mental health services to support the overall well-being of students.

The department has also launched a new student platform, the Future Pathways Navigator, designed to support students as they explore post-secondary opportunities and plan for life after high school.

The platform is intended to assist guidance counsellors and teachers by helping students identify post-secondary programs and institutions that align with their interests and goals. It outlines the courses required for entry into various programs and highlights Inuit role models who have completed specific programs or are working in careers that students may wish to pursue.

As part of this initiative, a Pathways Advisor provides

individualized and classroom-based support, helping students understand their interests, strengths, and aspirations, assisting them in setting goals, exploring opportunities, and developing personalized learning and transition plans. By supporting students to stay interested and motivated, we hope this tool will contribute to increased graduation rates."

Recommendation #5: Agree

The Representative for Children and Youth recommends that the Department of Education assess the effectiveness and use of their Young Parents Stay Learning program and use their findings to inform program improvements.

2025 Update: "While licensed child care in Nunavut has been \$10-a-day since December 2022, the YSPL program remains available to ensure that the cost of child care is not a barrier to student parents under the age of 18 by further reducing their fees.

The department continues to promote the availability of the YPSL program to all high schools to support school leaders in encouraging students who need child care to be able to return to school.

The number of students who access the funding varies each year based on student need. The department will continue to ensure funding is available and will continue to promote the program to schools and students."

Recommendation #6: Agree

The Representative for Children and Youth recommends that the Department of Education standardize the reporting of violent incidents in school to ensure accuracy across the territory.

2025 Update: "The department continues to implement its online violent incident reporting tool, which was developed in collaboration with the NTA under the Safe Schools Anti-Violence Committee.

The reporting through this online tool is voluntary and anonymous, which protects the privacy of those involved. This means the data reported may not accurately reflect all incidents or may not be reported uniformly across each region. The department sends monthly reminders encouraging staff to use the reporting system.

It should be noted that, regardless of an online mechanism, schools record school-related incidents through a school-level incident report. These reports, however, are not compiled or consolidated, so the online reporting tool was created to allow for territory-wide tracking.

Collecting this data allows the department to

identify areas for targeted programming. For example, during the 2024-25 school year, all staff completed a mandatory training session on Verbal De-escalation Intervention Training to better equip them to deal with violent incidents and students or parents in crisis.

For the 2025-26 school year, all schools were expected to complete the Teaching for Positive Behaviour workshop. It encourages school-wide strategies that build positive relationships and consistent responses to student behaviour, fostering Inuuqatigiitsiarniq, or respect for others and care for the well-being of all.

Additionally, in 2026-27, an online training course titled Calming the Storm: Verbal De-escalation Skills for School-Based Educators will be introduced. All staff will be required to complete the training as a group on a designated professional development day."

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES

Recommendation #7: Agree

The Representative for Children and Youth recommends that the Department of Family Services make the collection of accurate and complete statistics a priority.

2025 Update: "We have made the collection of accurate data a priority and remain committed to ensuring we make progress in our reporting capacity. The Department's statistical information provided demonstrates our commitment to collecting accurate data. Ongoing improvements are being made to improve outcomes."

Recommendation #8: Agree

The Representative for Children and Youth recommends that the Department of Family Services evaluate their current model of adoption services and use their findings to inform program improvements.

2025 Update: "The department has increased capacity within the adoption team, and a review of the program manual has begun. The next phase of our case management system implementation will focus on adoption processes."

Recommendation #9: Agree

The Representative for Children and Youth recommends that the Department of Family Services develop and implement a tracking system for critical injuries and death.

2025 Update: "A new module has been added to Matrix, which will improve management of critical injuries. In addition, standards of practice have been updated, another step towards improving reporting and oversight. Additional resources have been allocated to the quality assurance team, and tasks include monitoring and review of critical incident

reporting."

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

Recommendation #10: Agree

The Representative for Children and Youth recommends that the Department of Health continue efforts to improve data collection to ensure specificity and consistency across the territory.

2025 Update: "The Department of Health (Health) continues its efforts to improve the collection, quality, completeness, timeliness, integration, and appropriate use of health data. This includes modernizing health-information systems, improving reporting processes, and strengthening analytical capacity territory-wide. For example, Health is initiating work associated with a centralized health data platform that connects information from clinical public health and virtual care systems, providing a central place where information is stored, organized and kept safe. Different teams will be able to access the same reliable information, which reduces duplication and supports decision-making by having key data in one place."

Recommendation #11: Agree

The Representative for Children and Youth recommends that the Department of Health continue efforts to provide preventative dental care aimed at children, youth, and their families.

2025 Update: "Health is focused on oral health promotion and prevention efforts to reduce the number of children having to travel for dental care. The Children's Oral Health Project has been in existence for almost a decade and provides in-community educational and clinical preventative services to children from birth to 12 years of age. Local community oral health coordinators are hired to support the Oral Health Project who are responsible for the distribution of resources and educational information to parents, and for offering toothbrushes, toothpaste, and dental floss free of charge in all communities.

During FY 2025-26, roughly 2500 children were screened under the Oral Health Project.

A toothbrushing pilot project was implemented in Arctic Bay at the beginning of the school year in September 2025. The project supported children and youth in kindergarten through Grade 7 to practice daily, supervised toothbrushing routines, with the intention to enhance overall oral health habits.

Health is looking to expand the program in the coming months to 3 communities and throughout daycares in Iqaluit."

Recommendation #12: Agree

The Representative for Children and Youth recommends that the Department of Health continue efforts to prioritize in-territory access to dental care.

2025 Update: "Health currently provides approximately 2,450 general practitioner and specialist service days in-territory, in addition to the access provided by 3 private dental clinics in Rankin Inlet and Iqaluit. Oral surgery occurs at QGH in Iqaluit, and oral surgery services in Rankin Inlet and Cambridge Bay will recommence once facilities meet the standard for safe administration of oral sedation. This is anticipated by the end of 2026.

While Health continues to advocate for increased oral surgery services at QGH, and additional general practitioner and specialty service days in communities, there are challenges including availability of clinicians and accommodations, and clinical space."

Recommendation #13: Agree

The Representative for Children and Youth recommends that the Department of Health continue efforts to increase pediatrician access across the territory.

2025 Update: "Pediatric coverage across the territory has grown over the last several years.

QGH has 6 pediatricians on long-term contracts (part-time and full-time) that provide services to the Qikiqtaaluk communities. Based on the overall success of the coverage model initially set up in the Qikiqtaaluk region, a similar coverage model was developed for the Kivalliq and Kitikmeot regions, with pediatricians from Ongomiizwin Health Services out of Winnipeg supporting the Kivalliq and pediatricians from the Stanton Hospital in Yellowknife supporting the Kitikmeot.

All communities have been assigned a consistent pediatrician, which means pediatricians support communities with in-person visits and virtual assessments, and general availability for health centre staff to answer questions.

Pediatric coverage has also grown through:

- Virtual Care: A dedicated virtual care link has been established between the QGH ER and The Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO) to allow on-demand support for the care of children in the ER.
- Vision Clinics: Health works with health centres and optometrists to set up clinics specific to children up to 18 years of age. From September 2025 to June 2026,
- 1,756 exams were completed at schools for students. During this period, school clinics were held

in all communities except Chesterfield Inlet, Coral Harbour, and Rankin Inlet. These communities did receive clinics; however, they were not hosted in the schools. They will be prioritized for school-based clinics in the 2026-27 school year."

DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Recommendation #14: Agree

The Representative for Children and Youth recommends that the Department of Justice work with the Department of Finance and the Department of Health to create an awareness campaign about the impacts of alcohol/drug use and abuse aimed at children and youth.

2025 Update: "The Department of Justice can provide support to these awareness initiatives through information sharing about data and available programming. The department's focus in addressing alcohol/drug use and abuse remains enforcement through support to the Nunavut RCMP and providing rehabilitative and therapeutic programming in corrections and diversions run by community justice, which are available to youth who come into contact with the justice system."

Recommendation #15: Agree

The Representative for Children and Youth recommends that with the Department of Family Services as the lead, the Government of Nunavut immediately develop and implement a government-wide child abuse (including physical, sexual, and emotional abuse) strategy and action plan.

2025 Update: "In addition to continuing to review departmental-specific initiatives, the Department of Justice is awaiting confirmation from the Department of Family Services on the planned direction for the proposed government-wide child abuse strategy and action plan."

NUNAVUT HOUSING CORPORATION

Recommendation #16: Agree

The Representative for Children and Youth recommends that Nunavut Housing Corporation continue initiatives to achieve housing security for young Nunavummiut, as a priority, and Nunavummiut as a whole.

2025 Update: "The Nunavut Housing Corporation (NHC) continues to advance initiatives to improve

housing security for young Nunavummiut and Nunavummiut as a whole, primarily through Igluliuqatigiingniq – Building Houses Together (Nunavut 3000) and efforts to expand the housing continuum.

In 2025, NHC conducted the Nunavut Territorial Housing Needs Assessment (THNA), which can be found on our website. The THNA provides a

territory-wide analysis of housing conditions, needs, and challenges, identifying priority actions to improve housing adequacy, suitability, and affordability for all Nunavummiut. The needs assessment identified many issues, including data gaps and delayed formation of households. The THNA also identifies that certain groups face especially acute housing barriers, including Inuit children, Elders, survivors of gender-based violence, and persons with disabilities.

Recognizing that increasing housing supply alone will not address the full range of needs, NHC is continuing to strengthen planning across the housing continuum and improve the evidence available to guide future investments. Through the Housing Policy Working Group of the Nunavut Partnership Committee, NHC is working collaboratively with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, including on opportunities to strengthen housing data collection and develop a more complete understanding of housing need across Nunavut. This work will support the development of strategies and programs that better respond to the needs of different demographic groups and stages of life, including children and youth, young adults establishing their first households, families, persons requiring supported or transitional housing, and Elders.

Looking ahead, the THNA projects substantial additional housing demand over the next decade as Nunavut's young and growing population forms new households. NHC will therefore continue to use the THNA, strengthen community-level data, and collaboration with Inuit organizations and other partners to inform the allocation and type of new housing delivered under Nunavut 3000 and to expand affordable, transitional, supported and homeownership options. Together, these initiatives are intended to address immediate housing pressures while building a more diverse and responsive housing system that supports young Nunavummiut as they transition into adulthood and provides greater housing security for Nunavummiut throughout their lives."

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ABOUT OUR OFFICE

The Representative for Children and Youth (Representative) is an independent officer who reports to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut (Legislative Assembly) and the public. Independent offices are part of the Public Service but not part of the Government of Nunavut (GN).

It is the mandate of the Representative for Children and Youth's Office (RCYO) to review legislation, policies, procedures, programs, and services established by GN departments and designated authorities (departments).

Designated authorities under the *Representative for Children and Youth Act* (RCYA) include:

- ❄ Apprenticeship, Trade, and Occupations Certification Board;
- ❄ District Education Authorities and governing bodies of schools;
- ❄ Labour Standards Board;
- ❄ Legal Services Board;
- ❄ Nunavut Arctic College;
- ❄ Nunavut Housing Corporation (housing authorities and housing associations);
- ❄ Operators of licensed child daycare facilities; and
- ❄ Victims Assistance Committee.

The RCYO makes recommendations to departments to ensure their services provide ethical, equitable, and consistent outcomes that meet the needs and support the rights of young Nunavummiut, and the families, who rely on them.

These recommendations are informed by the complaints we receive about services or services that should be provided by departments, which are brought to our attention for advocacy support.

All information reported to our office is confidential and can be reported anonymously. RCYO staff take an oath of confidentiality and must not disclose information received in the performance of their duties unless a specific exception in the RCYA applies.

If anyone has a complaint about a department's services or is unable to receive a service for a young person or their family, they can bring it to the attention of our office for review.

The RCYO does not replace service providers. We review complaints about government services or services that should be provided by GN departments and advocate for improved services to benefit children and youth.

RCYO staff provide advocacy services in Inuktitut and English. Services in Inuinnaqtun and French are available with interpretation support.

OUR MISSION

Establish our office as the conscience of child- and youth-serving Government of Nunavut departments.

OUR VISION

A territory in which children and youth are healthy and safe, their interests and opinions are heard, acted upon, and supported through the delivery of ethical, equitable, and consistent government services.

OUR MANDATE

REPRESENTATIVE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH ACT

Our mandate includes the following specific duties as outlined in the RCYA:

- ❄ Ensure the rights and interests of children and youth, individually and collectively, are protected and advanced;
- ❄ Ensure departments hear and consider the opinions of children and youth on matters that affect them;

- ❄ Ensure children and youth can access departments' services and that the departments consider their concerns and opinions about those services;
- ❄ Help children, youth, and their families communicate with department service providers to improve understanding between them;
- ❄ Inform the public about the rights and interests of children and youth, and the roles and responsibilities of the RCYO; and
- ❄ Provide advice and recommendations to departments on how to make laws, policies, programs, and services better for children and youth in Nunavut.

Our mandate allows us to work on behalf of children and youth when all of the following apply.

- ❄ The young person involved is a child or youth as defined by the RCYA⁶⁶:
 - A child is less than 16 years of age;
 - A youth is 16 to 18 years of age;
 - 19-25 years of age and is part of an agreement with the Director of Child and Family Services appointed under the *Child and Family Services Act*;
 - 19-21 years of age and has requested or is receiving services under the *Education Act*;
 - 19-21 years of age and has been charged under the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* or the *Young Offenders Act* and there has been no final disposition of their charge, or they have not completed their sentence or disposition; or
 - 19-21 years of age and has a long-term physical, mental, intellectual, or sensory impairment that, in interaction with environmental and attitudinal barriers, hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.
- ❄ A department(s) is involved; and
- ❄ A department is not upholding the rights of the child, as described in the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* or other relevant legislation, policies, or procedures.

Our mandate does not allow us to:

- ❄ Work on problems with personal relationships, such as when a young person is not listening to their parents;
- ❄ Conduct investigations of child abuse or neglect; or
- ❄ Work on complaints involving businesses or private organizations. For example, if a young person does not receive proper payment from their employer.

⁶⁶ Additional categories may be added through Regulations made under the RCYA.

WHAT GUIDES OUR WORK

In addition to the RCYA, our work is also guided by the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, including the best interests of the child and the voice of the child; National Advocacy Standards established by the Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates (CCCYA); Inuit societal values, as well as the Inuit Child First Initiative (ICFI).

UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD⁶⁷

The United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* is an international human rights agreement, which describes all the rights young people have and the obligations governments have in connection to these rights. When Canada signed the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* in 1991, Canada promised to uphold the rights of children, youth, and their families.

All young people have these rights. No single right is more important than another and often when one right is not met several others are not met as well.

The rights of one person do not take priority over the rights of another person. Most adults can advocate for their own rights. Children and youth are a vulnerable group and rely on adults to help them. It can be difficult for some adults to respect the rights of children when they feel their own rights have not been respected.⁶⁸ Supporting the rights of children, empowers today's young people to protect and respect the rights of others as they enter adulthood.

BEST INTEREST OF THE CHILD

As per the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, Article 3, states:

All adults should do what is best for you. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children.

This article highlights that the actions of decision-making bodies, such as government, must be in the best interest of the child.

According to the Supreme Court of Canada⁶⁹, decision-makers should consider a broad range of criteria specific to each young person's situation when determining the

best interest of the child. Specific criteria, while not an exhaustive list, are noted in Canada's *Divorce Act* and the *Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis Children, Youth and Families* and in Nunavut's *Child and Family Services Act*.

VOICE OF THE CHILD

Article 12 of the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* states:

You have the right to give your opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously.

The voice of the child is the young person's opinion. All young people have the right to express their opinion when decisions are being made about them. Adults, especially government decision-makers, should seek, hear, and consider the young person's opinion when making a decision on their behalf.

Incorporating the voice of the child does not mean that the young person gets to make the decision. It also does not exclude the opinion and involvement of the young person's parents or caregivers. Including the young person and their opinion in the decision being made about them means that the decision is considerate of the young person's opinion and aims to support the Inuit societal value of *Pilimmaksarniq/Pijariuqsarniq*, development of skills through observation, mentoring, practice, and effort, by teaching responsible decision-making and holding the young person accountable for their actions and responsibilities as rights holders.

The RCYO prioritizes incorporating the voice of the child into our work. Sometimes we are unable to obtain the voice of the child because:

- ❄ the young person is too young to speak;
- ❄ the problem being solved is too complicated for the young person to understand;
- ❄ the problem may be triggering (e.g. an assault or abuse); and/or
- ❄ the young person does not want to provide their opinion.

In these situations, we try to collect the opinion of the child through their parents/guardians/caregivers.

⁶⁷ Throughout this document and in all work of the RCYO, when referencing articles in the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, the child-friendly language, as per Figure 1, is used. The official *Convention on the Rights of the Child* can be downloaded in English and French from UNICEF.org.

⁶⁸ UNICEF and Save the Children. (2011). *Every Child's Right to be Heard*. London, UK: Save the Children UK, Save the Children, and UNICEF. Retrieved from <https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/node/5259/pdf/5259.pdf>

⁶⁹ *Barendregt v. Grebliunas*, 2022 SCC 22 (CanLII), <<https://canlii.ca/t/jpbbg>>, retrieved on 2024-08-26

FIGURE 1: United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*

Article 1
Everyone under 18 has these rights.



Article 2
All children have these rights, no matter who they are, where they live, what their parents do, what language they speak, what their religion is, whether they are a boy or girl, what their culture is, whether they have a disability, or whether they are rich or poor. No child should be treated unfairly on any basis.



Article 3
All adults should do what is best for you. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children.

Article 4
The government has a responsibility to make sure your rights are protected. They must help your family protect your rights and create an environment where you can grow and reach your potential.



Article 5
Your family has the responsibility to help you learn to exercise your rights, and to ensure that your rights are protected.

Article 6
You have the right to be alive.

Article 7
You have the right to a name, and this should be officially recognized by the government. You have the right to a nationality (to belong to a country).

Article 8
You have the right to an identity – an official record of who you are. No one should take this away from you.



Article 9
You have the right to live with your parent(s), unless it is bad for you. You have the right to live with a family who cares for you.

Article 10
If you live in a different country than your parents, you have the right to be together in the same place.

Article 11
You have the right to be protected from kidnapping.

Article 12
You have the right to give your opinion, and for adults to listen and take it seriously.



Article 13
You have the right to find out things and share what you think with others, by talking, drawing, writing or in any other way unless it harms or offends other people.

Article 14
You have the right to choose your own religion and beliefs. Your parents should help you decide what is right and wrong, and what is best for you.

Article 15
You have the right to choose your own friends and join or set up groups, as long as it isn't harmful to others.



Article 16
You have the right to privacy.



Article 17
You have the right to get information that is important to your well-being, from radio, newspaper, books, computers and other sources. Adults should make sure that the information you are getting is not harmful, and help you find and understand the information you need.

Article 18
You have the right to be raised by your parent(s) if possible.

Article 19
You have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, in body or mind.

Article 20
You have the right to special care and help if you cannot live with your parents.



Article 21
You have the right to care and protection if you are adopted or in foster care.

Article 22
You have the right to special protection and help if you are a refugee (if you have been forced to leave your home and live in another country), as well as all the rights in this Convention.

Article 23
You have the right to special education and care if you have a disability, as well as all the rights in this Convention, so that you can live a full life.



Article 24
You have the right to the best healthcare possible, safe water to drink, nutritious food, a clean and safe environment, and information to help you stay well.

Article 25
If you live in care or in other situations away from home, you have the right to have these living arrangements looked at regularly to see if they are the most appropriate.

Article 26
You have the right to help from the government if you are poor or in need.

Article 27
You have the right to food, clothing, a safe place to live and to have your basic needs met. You should not be disadvantaged so that you can't do many of the things other kids can do.

Article 28
You have the right to a good quality education. You should be encouraged to go to school to the highest level you can.



Article 29
Your education should help you use and develop your talents and abilities. It should also help you learn to live peacefully, protect the environment and respect other people.

Article 30
You have the right to practice your own culture, language and religion. Minority and indigenous groups need special protection of this right.

Article 31
You have the right to play and rest.

Article 32
You have the right to protection from work that harms you, and is bad for your health and education. If you work, you have the right to be safe and paid fairly.



Article 33
You have the right to protection from harmful drugs and from the drug trade.

Article 34
You have the right to be free from sexual abuse.

Article 35
No one is allowed to kidnap or sell you.

Article 36
You have the right to protection from any kind of exploitation (being taken advantage of).

Article 37
No one is allowed to punish you in a cruel or harmful way.

Article 38
You have the right to protection and freedom from war. Children under 15 cannot be forced to go into the army or take part in war.

Article 39
You have the right to help if you've been hurt, neglected or badly treated.

Article 40
You have the right to legal help and fair treatment in the justice system that respects your rights.



Article 41
If the laws of your country provide better protection of your rights than the articles in this Convention, those laws should apply.

Article 42
You have the right to know your rights! Adults should know about these rights and help you learn about them, too.



Article 43-54
These articles explain how governments and international organizations like UNICEF will work to ensure children are protected with their rights.

THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD
in child friendly language

Every child in Canada and around the world from birth to 18 has rights. Rights are what you should have or be able to do to survive, thrive and meet your full potential. All rights are equally important and are connected to each other. You are born with these rights, and no one can take them away.

UNICEF Canada wants to support you and your school as you explore rights, respect and responsibility for yourself and others here and around the world. UNICEF Canada's Rights Respecting Schools (RRS) initiative uses the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (the Convention) to make sure everyone feels included and respected. This includes giving you meaningful opportunities to voice opinions about your school, and to make it the best school it can be!



unicef.ca/schools

This text is not an official version of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Access the official text at unicef.org/crc.

About Our Office

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NATIONAL ADVOCACY STANDARDS ESTABLISHED BY THE CANADIAN COUNCIL OF CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCATES

The CCCYA is an alliance of child advocates from across Canada that identify areas of mutual concern and work to develop ways to address issues at the national level.

National Advocacy Standards, established by the CCCYA, provide a framework which ensures consistency in child advocacy services across the country. They also provide a basis for accountability, a direction for staff training, and a means to evaluate our services.

The National Advocacy Standards are:

Clarity of Purpose

The member shall have clearly articulated objectives and purposes that are outlined in the governing framework. The member shall ensure that accurate information related to the member's scope, limitations, and jurisdiction is readily available to the public.

Putting Children First

The member shall ensure that advocacy staff in the Member's Office consider the views of the children they are advocating for to the maximum extent possible for guidance. Advocacy staff shall be non-judgmental and respectful of the child's experiences and viewpoints. In all matters, including those where it is not possible for children to communicate their needs and opinions, the member will advocate with the best interests of the child as the paramount consideration.

Empowerment

The member shall endeavor to increase the capacity of individual children and/or groups of children to make choices and transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes. Advocacy staff shall strive to enhance children's knowledge and understanding of their rights, skills, and strengths for the purpose of increasing self-sufficiency and enabling them to gain power over their lives. Advocacy staff shall act as supports and partners who have knowledge and skills which can be used in finding solutions and driving positive change.

Equal Opportunity

The member shall treat every individual in a positive and non-discriminatory manner, considering all aspects of the individual, including but not limited to their sex, sexual orientation, gender-identity, nationality, ethnic origin, race, religion, marital or family status, physical or cognitive disability, culture, and social disadvantage.

Accountability

The member shall be accountable to the children they serve and answerable for the full range of responsibilities assigned to it given the public resources, private information, and legislative authority with which it has been entrusted.

Accessibility

The member shall ensure that its premises, publications, service delivery and outreach initiatives are publicly available throughout their geographic jurisdiction and are accessible to all children within their mandate to the maximum extent possible.

Support for Advocates

The member shall ensure that children they serve receive services from staff who are supported in their roles through the provision of ongoing supervision and organizational support, with access to professional development, especially as related to children's rights.

Confidentiality

The member shall keep confidential all information obtained in the course and performance of its work, except when required to disclose the information by law or in the furtherance of its mandate.

Complaints

The member shall have a publicly available written policy regarding its process for providing feedback or the making of a complaint concerning its provision of services.

INUIT SOCIETAL VALUES

The RCYO respects *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* which is why it is a legislative requirement within the RCYA. The work of the Office is also guided by the same eight Inuit societal values as departments. These principles have commonalities with the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, highlighted in Table 2 which was developed based on input from our Elder Advisors.

TABLE 1: Complementary Principles in Inuit Societal Values and the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*

Inuit Societal Values	United Nations <i>Convention on the Rights of the Child</i>
<i>Aajiiqatigiinniq</i> encourages decision making through discussion and consensus.	Article 12: Young people have the right to give their opinion and for adults to listen and take it seriously.
<i>Pijitsirniq</i> is about serving and providing for family and community. It is about leading through doing for other people. It is about serving others for the greater good.	Article 3: All adults should do what is best for young people. When adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect young people. Article 4: The government has a responsibility to make sure the rights of young people are protected. They must help families protect the rights of young people and create an environment where young people can grow and reach their potential. Article 26: Young people have the right to help from the government if they are poor or in need.
<i>Pilimmaksarniq/Pijariuqsarniq</i> is about learning and mastering new skills through observation, mentoring, practice, and effort.	Article 12: Young people have the right to give their opinion and for adults to listen and take it seriously. Article 29: A young person’s education should help them use and develop their talents and abilities. It should also help them learn to live peacefully, protect the environment, and respect other people. Article 30: Young people have the right to practice their own culture, language, and religion. Minority and Indigenous groups need special protection of this right.
<i>Tunnganarniq</i> emphasizes the role that being open, welcoming, and inclusive plays in fostering positive relationships.	Article 2: All young people have these rights, no matter who they are, where they live, what their parents do, what language they speak, what their religion is, what their gender or gender identity is, what their culture is, whether they have a disability, or whether they are rich or poor. No young person should be treated unfairly on any basis.

ELDER ADVISORS

The Representative for Children and Youth Office (RCYO) recognizes the value of Elders' traditional knowledge, lived experience, and guidance in understanding and responding to concerns affecting young Nunavummiut. Historically, the RCYO had Elder Advisors; however, there were no established expectations governing when or how they were to be consulted, and Elders were not meaningfully integrated into all areas of the Office's work. Since the COVID-19 pandemic, those connections have been lost.

In 2024–2025, the RCYO began exploring a process for identifying Elder Advisors from across Nunavut and developing standards of practice that could formalize an appropriate and meaningful role for Elders within the Office's programs.

During 2025–2026, acting on the advice of a Member of the Fifth Legislative Assembly, the RCYO contacted nine hamlets across Nunavut to determine whether they had an Elders advisory group and whether any criteria were used to identify or recognize someone as an Elder. Most of the communities contacted expressed interest in establishing an Elders Advisory Committee or advised that they had previously had such a committee but had been unable to sustain it. Through this outreach, the RCYO was unable to identify an existing Nunavut model that could be adapted for the Office's purposes. We also contacted our counterparts across Canada and received similar feedback about the challenges associated with establishing and sustaining a meaningful Elder Advisor model.

At the same time, the effects of second-hand trauma on RCYO staff who review cases involving serious harm, profound loss, unmet needs, and failures to protect young people became increasingly apparent. The RCYO concluded that routinely asking Elders to review the same distressing records and circumstances could expose them to similar harm. Any future role must therefore be carefully designed to respect and protect the well-being of participating Elders and must not place an expectation on them to absorb the trauma encountered through the Office's work.

Much of the RCYO's oversight work also requires the review and application of legislation, court orders, departmental standards and policies, and other records that establish legal duties and government accountability. Determining whether those legal and administrative obligations have been met remains the responsibility of the RCYO and cannot be transferred to Elder Advisors. This does not diminish the importance of Elders' knowledge. Rather, it requires the Office to distinguish between its statutory and legal responsibilities and the areas in which Elders' cultural knowledge, community experience, and guidance can meaningfully inform its work.

The RCYO will continue exploring ways for Elders to assist the RCYO when we visit communities or on a case-by-case basis without exposing them unnecessarily to traumatic information. In the future, the RCYO intends to seek guidance from communities about identifying and engaging local Elders. The appropriate and culturally respectful process for doing so has not yet been determined and will require further dialogue with communities and Elders themselves.

OUR STAFF

The RCYO has twelve positions, not including the Representative. As of March 31, 2026, seven positions were staffed. Four positions were filled indeterminately; three positions were filled through casual employment.

The Manager of Individual Advocacy Services was vacant as of March 31, 2026.

The Manager of Communications and Public Awareness resigned.

Two of our Senior Systemic Investigators/Researchers positions are filled indeterminately.

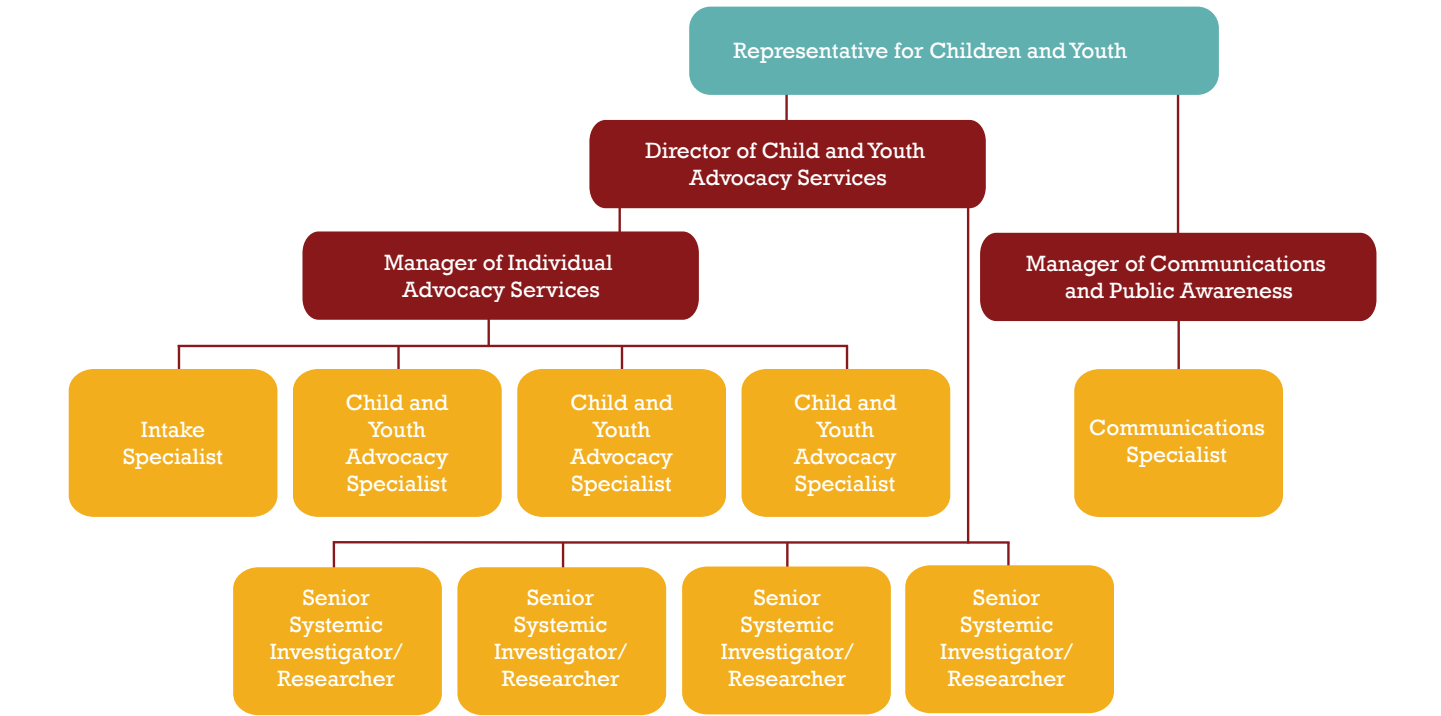
Two of the four Senior Systemic Investigators/Researchers positions were vacant; a competition was underway as of March 31, 2026.

One of the Child and Youth Advocacy Specialist (Child Advocate) positions was filled indeterminately. Two of the Child and Youth Advocacy Specialist positions were filled through casual employment.

Our Intake Specialist position was filled through casual employment; this position has been waiting for more than 2 years for housing to be assigned.

The allocation of housing to RCYO positions is the single greatest barrier to staffing positions on an indeterminate basis.

FIGURE 2: Organizational Chart



REPORTING ON OUR ACTIVITIES

The RCYO works in four different program areas including Individual Advocacy, Systemic Advocacy, Communications and Public Awareness, and Reviews of Critical Injuries and Deaths.

INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY

When government services for young Nunavummiut are not ethical, equitable, or consistent, or when a child, youth, or their family are unable to access a service, the complaint can be brought to our attention for review. These complaints are our individual advocacy cases.

Our office can get involved to figure out what happened or, more often, what did not happen. Our Child Advocates work with those involved, such as the young person, their family, and the service providers, to find a solution. We may also seek advice from our Elder Advisors.

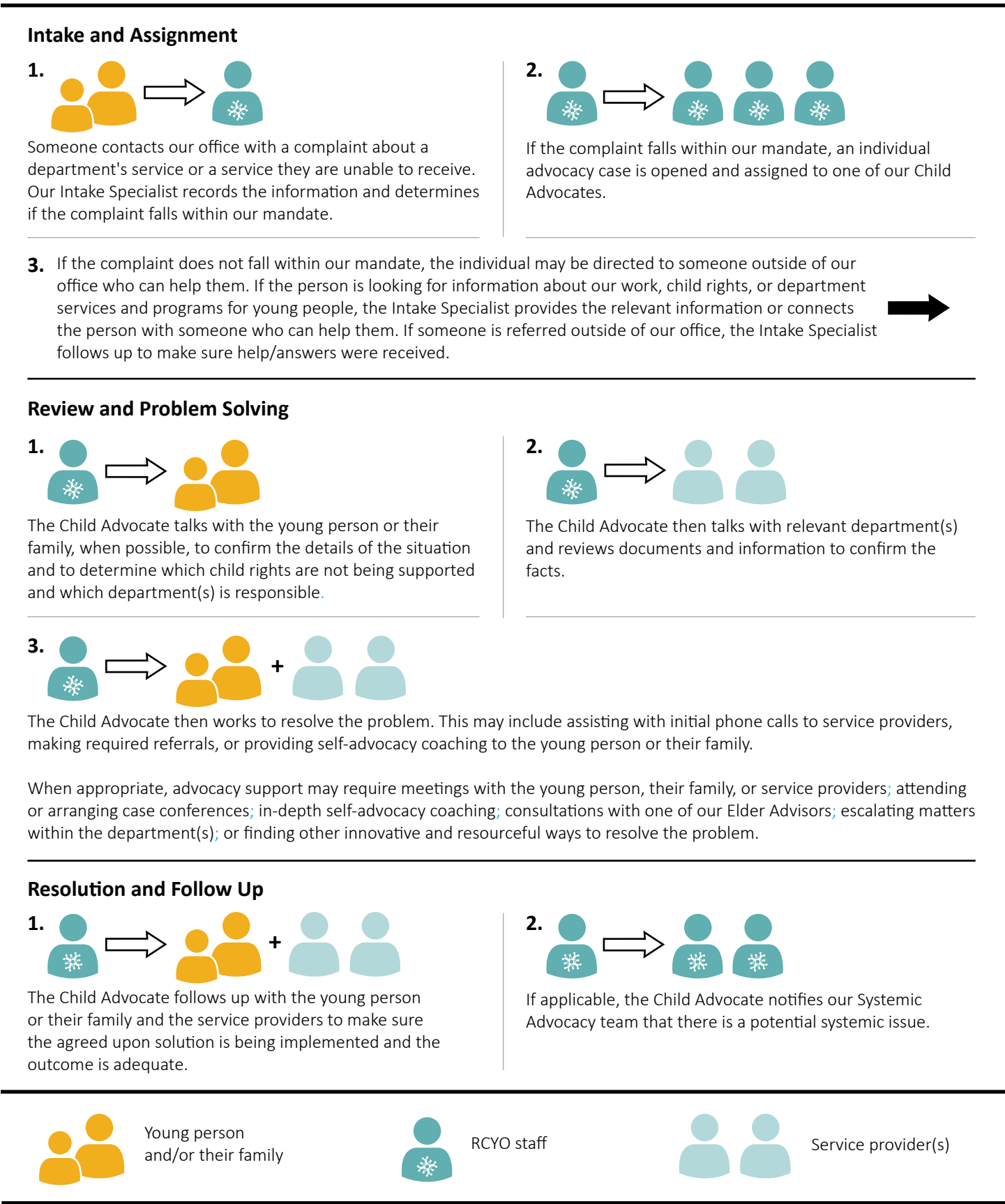
After reviewing the situation and hearing and considering the voice and best interests of the young person involved, our Child Advocates suggest actions to the service providers involved to resolve the problem. Every individual advocacy case is unique, and our Child Advocates customize their response to fit each situation.

Our individual advocacy work is conducted with the following Inuit Societal Values in mind:

- ❄ ***Inuuqatigiitsiarniq***: Respecting others, relationships, and caring for people.
- ❄ ***Tunnganarniq***: Fostering good spirits by being open, welcoming, and inclusive.
- ❄ ***Pijitsirniq***: Serving and providing for family and/or community.
- ❄ ***Aajiiqatigiinni***: Decision-making through discussion and consensus.
- ❄ ***Pilimmaksarniq/Pijariuqsarniq***: Development of skills through observation, mentoring, practice, and effort.
- ❄ ***Piliriqatigiinni/Ikajuqtigiinni***: Working together for a common cause.
- ❄ ***Qanuqtuurniq***: Being innovative and resourceful.

The individual advocacy process involves three phases: intake and assignment, investigation and problem solving, resolution and follow-up, as detailed in Figure 3.

FIGURE 3: The Individual Advocacy Process



INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES FOR 2025-2026

The Individual Advocacy program opened slightly less cases this year than in 2024-2025 (62). The number of cases that we started the year with were significantly higher than the previous year (28).

TABLE 2: Breakdown of Individual Advocacy Cases Worked On and Closed this Fiscal Year

Total Individual Advocacy Cases Worked On	99
New individual advocacy cases	57
Ongoing cases from previous years	42
Total Individual Advocacy Cases Closed	16
Reason for Closure	
Resolved with GN services	9
Out of scope	8

In addition to providing advocacy services to our clients, this year, we responded to 2 information files, which are questions or requests for information about our work, child rights, or services and programs for young Nunavummiut.

TABLE 3: New Individual Advocacy Cases Opened, by Region*

Total New Individual Advocacy Cases	57
Qikiqtaaluk (excluding Iqaluit)	22
Kivalliq	16
Kitikmeot	12
Iqaluit	11

* The sum of these numbers is higher than the total number of cases because all out-of-territory cases are also counted in the young person's home region and some youth also moved between regions.

Case Sample 1

Nick* is 11 years old and is currently in foster care. Nick’s foster parents wanted to take him on an international family vacation and needed support to obtain a passport for him. Nick’s foster parents had previously tried to obtain a passport for him through the Department of Family Services about a year earlier, but experienced difficulties with communication, coordination, and delays with the process.

With plans to try again and recognizing the complexity of the passport application process, Nick’s foster parents reached out to our office for guidance and support.

Our office advocated for Nick by working with the Department of Family Services to address the barriers that delayed the processing of the passport application. As a result of this advocacy, Nick was able to obtain his passport and join his foster family on their international trip.

Nick’s story is an example of the work we do to support young people and foster parents when:

- ❄ Departments do not communicate or collaborate clearly with foster parents to provide timely and comprehensive services;
- ❄ A young person’s right to identification needs to be upheld; and
- ❄ A young person’s right to participate fully in family and placement activities needs to be supported.

As of March 31, 2026, this case remained open with the RCYO.

* Some details have been changed to protect the young person’s identity.

TABLE 4: New Individual Advocacy Cases, by Language of Service*

	Number of Cases
English	57
Inuktitut	0
Innuinaqtun	0
French	0

TABLE 5: New Individual Advocacy Cases, by Department*

	Number of Cases
Department of Family Services	51
Department of Education	8
Department of Justice	3
Department of Health	2

*Total cases exceed 57 due to some cases involving more than one department.

TABLE 6: How New Individual Advocacy Cases Were Brought To Our Attention*

	Number of Cases
Service Provider	67
Caregiver (Parent, Foster parent, Extended family)	17
Other (RCYO initiative, Legislative Assembly, Community Member)	13
Young Person	2

*Total cases exceed 57 as, in some circumstances, the party who raised a new individual advocacy concern belonged to more than one of the above categories.

Case Sample 2

A young person, now 17 years old, experienced sexual violence earlier in their life that resulted in a diagnosis of PTSD, they had an ongoing series of mental health crises that included violence toward others and suicide attempts. During one such crisis, the young person was admitted to a local health centre but was eventually discharged on the basis that their actions were “behavioural.” The young person continued to escalate and eventually became involved in the justice system.

The parent was encouraged to pursue charges in order to “get help”; Family Services entered into an agreement that did not include the parent/guardian. Due to a lack of placements, the young person was moved to a larger community and placed in group care by the Department. While placed in an in-territory facility, mental health interventions were not provided until the young person suffered another crisis that resulted in a mental health referral.

The parent/legal guardian was not consulted or kept informed of what was occurring; no case planning was completed with the parent; the Department made decisions about the young person's care and treatment, including escorting the young person on medical travel.

The RCYO advocated for the young person to receive comprehensive supports once removed from their home community, for mental health supports to be delivered proactively rather than only in response to crises and/or incidents, and for the young person's rights and those of their legal guardian to be respected.

Ultimately, this advocacy resulted in the legal guardian being included in case planning and Family Services understanding that custodial rights were not suspended when the department entered into a service agreement.

This story is an example of the work we do to support young people and their families when:

- ❄ Decision-making not in the best interests of the child and their family;
- ❄ Entering agreements with young people who may lack capacity;
- ❄ Legal Authority;
- ❄ Case planning; and
- ❄ Barriers to accessing services, including instances of departments being dismissive of mental health concerns.

As of March 31, 2026, this case remained open with the RCYO.

* Some details have been changed and removed to protect the young person's identity.

In previous annual reports, recurring concerns arising through individual advocacy were reported as general themes. This year, the RCYO took a more specific and measurable approach by identifying the systemic issues present in its casework and recording how many times each issue occurred across the 99 Individual Advocacy cases addressed during the fiscal year.

This moves the RCYO’s reporting from general observations to measurable evidence about the frequency with which systemic issues affect young people. Identifying and quantifying the prevalence of systemic issues that are actively affecting young Nunavummiut also creates greater opportunities for the RCYO’s programs to work together, share evidence, identify recurring patterns, and pursue timely changes that may improve outcomes for more young people.

TABLE 7: Systemic Issues Observed in Individual Advocacy Files*

Systemic Issue Category	Number of Case Files
Investigations Not Completed as Per Standard	36
Case Planning	34
No Collaboration / Communication on Mutual Clients (Interdepartmental Communication)	27
Documentation / Standards Concerns	22
Placements, Adoption, and Children in Care	21
Legal Authority	18
Out-of-Territory Placements	17
Family Placements Prioritized Above Safety Concerns	15
Plan of Care Not Completed as Per CFSA/ Standards	13
Best Interests of the Child / Rights Concerns	13
Mental Health Not Addressed	6
Birth Registration and Certificates	3
Agreements Signed by Young People Who May Lack Capacity	3

*Some files contained more than one unresolved systemic issue.

Individual Advocacy Cases Involving Children in Out-Of-Home Care

Out-of-home care refers to situations in which a young person is not residing with their parent, caregiver, family, or legal guardian and has been placed by Family Wellness in an alternate living arrangement. This may include a foster home, an extended-family placement, an in-territory group home, or an out-of-territory group home/foster home.

A young person may be placed in out-of-home care through an agreement, including a Voluntary Support Agreement, Support Services Agreement, Extended Support Agreement, or Plan of Care. In these circumstances, the parent or legal guardian agrees to the young person’s placement in an approved placement but retains their legal rights and responsibilities. There is no legal transfer of custody to the Director.

A young person may also be placed in out-of-home care under a temporary or permanent court order. In those circumstances, legal custody is transferred to the Director, who becomes the young person’s legal guardian for the duration of the order. Of the 99 total Individual Advocacy cases for 2025-2026:

- ❄ **55 involved out-of-home care; and**
- ❄ **21 involved permanent care and custody, which also account for 38% of all out-of-home care cases.**

INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY RECOMMENDATIONS

When collaboration with service providers is not enough to resolve an individual advocacy problem, the Representative may make recommendations to a department.

This year, the Representative did not make any individual advocacy recommendations.

COMPLEX FILE REVIEWS

When our Child Advocates are concerned that legislation, policies, procedures, or gaps in service contributes to a problem, they may refer the file to the Systemic Advocacy program for consideration of a complex file review. Complex file reviews help to address the individual problem and identify potential systemic issues. Conducting these extensive file reviews requires the expertise of both our individual advocacy and systemic advocacy teams.

This work supports *Piliriqatigiinniq/Ikajuqtigiinniq*, working together for a common cause; *Pijitsirniq*, serving and providing for family and community, and *Qanuqtuurniq*, being innovative and resourceful to support solutions that uphold child rights and the best interests of the child.

As per section 26 of the RCYA, departments must provide the Representative with all relevant information when it is requested. Once documentation is received, our team uses the following process to review it:

1. To organize the file, all documentation is sorted by date.
2. Each document is then reviewed by the review team.
3. An assigned team member creates a timeline.
4. The Child Advocate, who initially worked on the individual advocacy case, provides essential information for the timeline about the young person's story and how decisions made by the department(s) have impacted them. They also provide context around interactions with the department(s) in their advocacy work.
5. If/When gaps in documentation are identified, we inform the responsible department(s) and request the missing information. Gaps are often identified by cross-referencing existing documents and incidents mentioned in the documentation. If the department(s) provides the missing information, it is added to the timeline. If the department(s) does not

provide the missing documentation, we report this in our findings and will likely make a recommendation about adequate and consistent file management.

6. The timeline is reviewed together, with one team member assigned to make note of individual advocacy problems and another assigned to record systemic concerns as they are identified.
7. The findings of the review are compiled and presented to the Representative.
8. The team works with the Representative to formulate possible recommendations. This collaboration ensures the recommendations made support the delivery of ethical, equitable, and consistent services that support the rights and best interests of the child involved. All recommendations, if implemented, aim to prevent the problem from recurring.
9. The Representative invites the responsible department(s) to meet. The review's findings and proposed recommendations are presented to the department(s) for discussion and feedback, which will be considered before the recommendations are finalized.
10. Once the recommendations are finalized, they are submitted by the Representative to the responsible department(s) with a deadline for the department(s) to respond.
11. If the department(s) accepts the recommendations:
 - a. The individual advocacy team monitors the department's progress on recommendations specific to the young person.
 - b. The systemic advocacy team monitors the progress made on recommendations related to systemic issues.

COMPLEX FILE REVIEWS IN PROGRESS

In May 2025, the RCYO started a complex file review involving several young people under the age of 10 whose caregiver was defined by the Department of Family Services, Standard 203 as a "sensitive client/organization". Family Services' lack of documentation has significantly hindered completion of this review. As of March 31, 2026, the review was ongoing.

SYSTEMIC ADVOCACY

When a concern is identified that could impact multiple young people and the delivery of ethical, equitable and consistent services, the RCYO reviews the concern to determine if it is a systemic issue.

Systemic issues, if not identified and addressed, have the potential to have a negative impact on multiple young people. Systemic issues are related to a department's practices, policies or standards, procedures, legislation, or their absence.

Systemic issues are primarily brought to our attention through our individual advocacy casework. We may also learn about systemic issues from young people, families, community members, Members of the Legislative Assembly, Youth Parliamentarians, departments, and the media.

For each systemic issue, responsible department(s) are identified. Addressing some issues may require multiple departments to work collaboratively to change practices, policies or standards, procedures, or legislation.

Systemic issues are addressed with recommendations made by the Representative. The RCYO can make systemic recommendations:

- ❄ as the result of a brief or comprehensive review;
- ❄ through a submission when departments invite us to do so or there is a public call for submissions;
- ❄ or through a practice letter when adequate evidence is discovered through individual advocacy casework that a problem has the potential to occur again.

Recommendations are evidence-based and suggest improvements to existing legislation, policies, procedures, programs, and services or the creation of policies, procedures and practices. As systemic issues are usually complex and multifaceted, RCYO generally makes multiple recommendations to address one systemic issue.

Our team works collaboratively with departments to develop recommendations in accordance with Inuit societal values of:

- ❄ **Aajiiqatigiinniq**: Decision-making through discussion and consensus;
- ❄ **Qanuqtuurniq**: Being innovative and resourceful;
- ❄ **Piliriqatigiinniq/Ikajuqatigiinniq**: Working together for a common cause; and
- ❄ **Pijitsirniq**: Serving and providing for family and/or community.

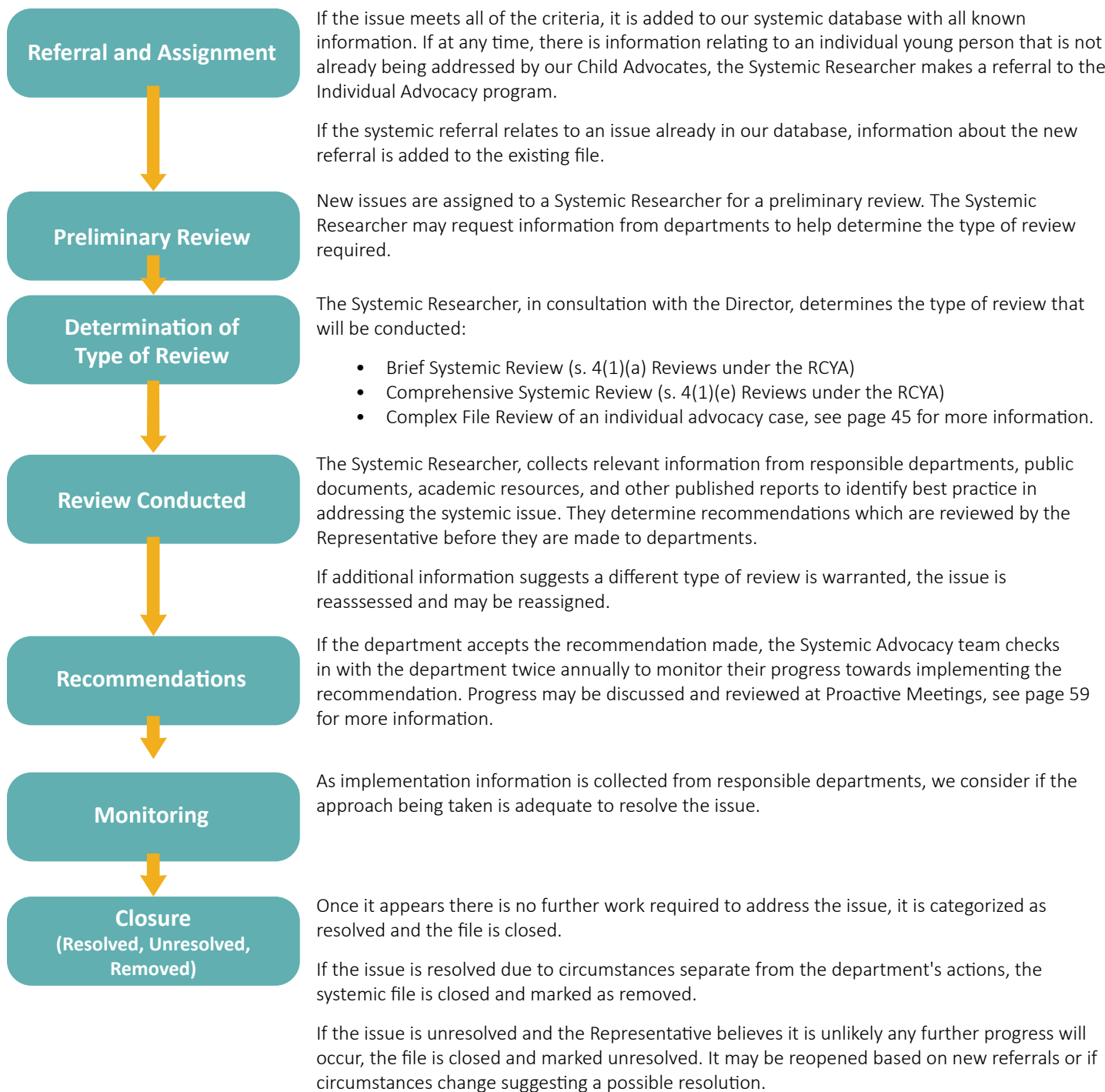
Departments may agree or disagree with our recommendations. If they agree, we monitor their implementation progress by requesting updates and holding them accountable for resolving the issue. All updates, including recommendations disagreed with, are reported publicly in this section of our annual report.

Our systemic database is a year-over-year accumulation of all systemic issues identified by or brought to RCYO's attention. The database also tracks our systemic recommendations and progress made by responsible departments to fulfill them. The RCYO maintains consistent contact to support departmental progress.

FIGURE 4: Process for Resolving a Systemic Issue

When a systemic concern is brought to our attention, it is reviewed by the Systemic Advocacy team to determine if it is a systemic issue which must meet the following criteria:

- Does the issue relate to a department's policy, procedure, or legislation or the absence of a policy, procedure, or legislation?
- Is the issue likely to occur for other young Nunavummiut if it is not addressed?
- Will addressing the issue support advancing young people's rights?



At any time throughout the process of resolving a systemic issue, the Representative may choose to report publicly on the issue, a department's progress in implementing recommendations, or the resolution itself.

SYSTEMIC ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES FOR 2025-2026

In 2025–2026, the RCYO identified a number of systemic issues affecting young Nunavummiut and their families. These concerns became apparent across the full range of the RCYO’s work, including individual advocacy, systemic reviews, reviews of critical injuries and deaths, community engagement, monitoring activities, information received from the public, and matters raised in the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut.

In previous annual reports, the RCYO reported the number of new systemic referrals received during the fiscal year. This provided a count of concerns referred to the Systemic Advocacy program but did not explain what the systemic issues were, how frequently they arose, whether they were new or recurring, or what action had been taken to address them. Historically, new concerns were recorded in the RCYO’s systemic database and awaited assignment for preliminary review. As a result, the annual report did not fully reflect the systemic issues actively affecting young people or the work being undertaken across the RCYO in response.

Beginning in 2025–2026, the RCYO is changing this approach. Systemic referrals will continue to be recorded in the database, but this section of the annual report will focus on the systemic issues identified through the RCYO’s active work and affecting young Nunavummiut during the fiscal year. The RCYO will endeavour to connect current systemic issues with concerns identified in previous years, the recommendations made to address them, and the actions taken in response. In this way, the section will maintain a clear history of each issue and support accountability for whether meaningful action has been taken and whether the underlying concern has been resolved. The RCYO believes that identifying, following up on, and reporting on current systemic issues may lead to more immediate changes in practice and improved outcomes for young Nunavummiut.

This change is intended to more fully integrate the information and evidence gathered across the RCYO’s programs. Rather than focusing primarily on the number of referrals received or whether each concern has been assigned as a separate systemic file, the RCYO will report on the broader systemic issues emerging from its casework, reviews, and oversight activities, the work undertaken in response, and whether the underlying issues remain ongoing.

This change relates to how the RCYO identifies, integrates, and reports on systemic issues; it does not alter the formal processes available for conducting systemic reviews and making recommendations.

This approach is also reflected in the Individual Advocacy section of this report. Rather than describing recurring concerns only as “themes,” the RCYO identifies the systemic issues revealed through individual advocacy casework and reports how many times each issue was encountered during the fiscal year. This moves the RCYO’s reporting from general observations to measurable evidence about the frequency with which systemic issues affect young people.

While Child Advocates address the immediate circumstances, rights, needs, and best interests of an individual young person, Senior Systemic Investigators and Researchers step back from those circumstances to consider whether changes to legislation, standards, procedures, oversight, or departmental practices could have prevented the concern or resulted in a better outcome. Focusing on systemic issues that are actively affecting young people also creates greater opportunities for the RCYO’s programs to work together, share evidence, identify recurring patterns, and pursue changes that may improve outcomes for more young Nunavummiut.

The RCYO is increasingly seeing a direct connection between longstanding systemic issues that have not been addressed and concerns that continue to arise in individual advocacy and reviews of critical injuries and deaths. When a previously identified systemic issue continues to affect individual young people, it indicates that the underlying issue has not been effectively resolved and that children and youth remain affected by the same gaps in legislation, policy, procedure, oversight, or service delivery.

Since the RCYO began receiving and addressing cases in 2015, it has developed a substantial body of evidence about the experiences of young Nunavummiut and the government services they receive. This accumulated casework has allowed the RCYO to identify recurring patterns, recognize where similar concerns arise across different programs and departments, and distinguish isolated incidents from broader systemic issues.

We believe this integrated approach will allow the RCYO to identify and address systemic issues more quickly, contribute to more timely improvements in government services, and achieve better outcomes for a greater number of young Nunavummiut.

During 2025–2026, 28 systemic issues were identified through our casework, reviews, community engagement, monitoring, and other oversight activities.

Table 8 describes how each issue came to the RCYO’s attention, any relevant history or previous recommendations, actions taken by the responsible department, and the work undertaken by the RCYO during 2025–2026.

TABLE 8: Systemic Issues, by department

Issue	Source	Details	2025-2026 Update
Department of Education			
District Education Authorities	Individual Advocacy Program	The systemic issue is the absence of clear standards and procedures governing the transfer of students between schools. In addition, issues regarding the governance, monitoring, and accountability framework for District Education Authorities within Nunavut’s education system.	During 2025–2026, the RCYO resolved the individual advocacy matter while the broader systemic review continues. A referral was made to the Office of the Languages Commissioner.
Daycares	Individual Advocacy Program	The systemic issue is that the Department of Education provides limited oversight of daycares. The Office of the Auditor General is currently conducting a performance audit of the Government of Nunavut’s Early Learning and Child Care system.	As of March 31, 2026, the RCYO continued to address the individual advocacy matter and had initiated a broader systemic review.
Department of Family Services			
Client Relations Office	Legislative Assembly	The systemic issue identified the Family Wellness Division’s complaint process its effectiveness and how outcomes are measured.	The RCYO did not undertake further follow-up on this issue during 2025–2026.
After-hours child-welfare services	Community Member	The systemic issue identified was that individuals were sometimes unable to reach after-hours child-welfare services when they needed assistance or wanted to report a child-protection concern. The Department’s after-hours contact information was also not easily accessible.	On May 8, 2025, the Deputy Minister of Family Services was notified of the issue. The RCYO did not undertake further follow-up on this issue during 2025–2026.
Interdepartmental Communication	Individual/ Systemic Advocacy Programs; including reviews of critical injuries and deaths.	This systemic issue includes the lack of consistent collaboration, communication, and coordinated planning between departments serving the same young person or family. Several interdepartmental protocols have been developed to support collaboration and coordinated service delivery. Despite these formal mechanisms, the RCYO has consistently observed that effective communication, collaboration, and coordinated responses remain dependent on the individuals involved rather than being embedded consistently across the system.	During 2025–2026, the RCYO addressed this issue through individual advocacy casework and its review and oversight functions.

Residential placements, in and out of territory	Individual/Systemic Advocacy Programs	In 2022–2023, the RCYO initiated a systemic review of group homes and residential care. A summons was issued to obtain information from the Department. In its 2023 report, the Office of the Auditor General found: In the files we reviewed, children, youth, and young adults were placed in Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario. As a result of the gaps and weaknesses in information management that are discussed in paragraphs 56 to 59, we could not confirm the accuracy of these numbers. March 3, 2025, Standard 609: Out-of-Territory Specialized Placements was implemented.	In 2025–2026, additional issues were included in the review, including: the availability of in-territory residential placements, the standards governing their operation, the contracting processes and approvals utilized, and the monitoring of these placements.
Case Planning	Individual/Systemic Advocacy Programs	The systemic issues identified included: inadequate or limited case planning with young people and their families. In 2022–2023, the RCYO made a recommendation: the Child and Family Services Standards and Procedures Manual be updated to include policies and procedures ensuring ongoing supports and services to families. As of March 31, 2026, this recommendation had not been implemented.	During 2025–2026, the RCYO addressed this issue through individual advocacy casework and its review and oversight functions.
Legal Authority	Individual Advocacy Program	The systemic issue identified was that children and youth remained in out-of-home placements without a current court order or valid agreement. Cases were identified in which the Department continued to maintain the placement and make decisions without the legal authority to do so. In addition, cases were identified where young people subject to a Permanent Care and Custody Order had no approved placement and whose departmental case had been closed. In some instances, the young person had been returned to, or placed with, the caregiver from whom they had previously been permanently removed, without the Department seeking a variation or revocation of the existing custody order to reflect the young person's actual circumstances and restore legal custodial authority to the caregiver.	During 2025–2026, the RCYO addressed this issue through individual advocacy casework and its review and oversight functions.
Custom Adoption	Individual Advocacy Program	The systemic issue is the Department's involvement in the registration of custom adoptions.	During 2025–2026, the RCYO resolved the individual advocacy matter. This issue was incorporated into an existing systemic review, which remains ongoing.
Agreements with young people who may lack capacity	Individual Advocacy Program	The systemic issue is that Family Wellness entered into agreements with youth over the age of 16 who had documented mental-health or cognitive impairments. The issue was whether these youth could provide informed consent and whether the parent or guardian was improperly excluded from the agreement, case planning and decision-making. November 12, 2025, Standard 402: Support Services and Agreements for Youth – Support Services Agreements (SSA) was implemented and does reference informed consent.	During 2025–2026, the RCYO addressed this issue through individual advocacy casework and its review and oversight functions.

Child Abuse and Neglect Response Agreement (CANRA)	Individual Advocacy Program/ Reviews of critical injuries and deaths.	The systemic issues are the effectiveness of the implementation of the agreement. The agreement is vague on process and leaves significant discretion to service providers on when and how it should be implemented.	In 2025-2026, further follow-up on this issue was not completed.
Children in Care without Birth certificates	Individual Advocacy Program	The systemic issue concerns children and youth in the care of the Director who do not have birth certificates or other essential identity documentation. In 2022–2023, the RCYO made a recommendation develop and implement policies and procedures for children in the care of the Director.	During 2025–2026, the RCYO addressed this issue through individual advocacy casework and its review and oversight functions.
Birth registration and delayed adoptions	Individual Advocacy Program	The systemic issue occurs when a child is born outside Nunavut and the birth must be registered in the province or territory where the birth occurred. When that registration is not completed, the child may remain without essential identity documentation. A birth certificate is a core identity document. An adoption cannot be finalized without the birth registration. January 2024, the RCYO notified the Department of Family Services that it had initiated a systemic review of adoption processes, with an initial focus on a specific case. The review could not be completed because the departmental file did not contain sufficient information to establish what had occurred or how decisions had been made. The review remained open.	During 2025–2026, the RCYO addressed this issue through individual advocacy casework and its review and oversight functions.
Best interests of the young person	Individual Advocacy Program	The systemic issue is that decisions about young people are being made by the Director and their delegates, without considering the factors set out in section 3 of the <i>Child and Family Services Act</i>. Family Wellness was unable to articulate how these factors were considered, assessed, or how competing considerations were weighed. - The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child also requires that the best interests of the child be a primary consideration in decisions affecting children. - Section 3 of the <i>Child and Family Services Act</i> states: Best interests of the child: Where there is a reference in this Act to the best interests of a child, all relevant factors must be taken into consideration in determining the best interests of a child, including the following factors, with a recognition that differing cultural values and practices must be respected in making that determination: (a-j)	During 2025–2026, the RCYO addressed this issue through individual advocacy casework and its review and oversight functions.
Unreliable Data/ Lack of Information	Individual/ Systemic Advocacy Programs; including reviews of critical injuries and deaths.	The systemic issue is the quality and lack of data available. This issue dates back to the Office of the Auditor General's 2011 Report and continues in their reports of 2014, 2023 and 2025. The 2025 report outlined that, <i>"The department concluded that because of inconsistent approaches to tracking referrals, the historical information it had on the number and type of referrals it received on suspected cases of child abuse and neglect was unreliable."</i> (p 4 of 21)	During 2025–2026, the RCYO addressed these concerns on a case-by-case basis through its review and oversight functions.

Documentation	Individual/ Systemic Advocacy Programs	The systemic issue is that documentation is not completed according to standards and procedures. - In 2011, the Office of the Auditor General's report, recommended: The Department of Health and Social Services should ensure that community social service workers and supervisors keep accurate records of visits to children under care and maintain complete documentation, as required by the <i>Child and Family Services Act</i>. - March 3, 2025, Standard 202: Investigations, was implemented. - March 19, 2025, Standard 501: Case Documentation was implemented. - November 27, 2025, Standard 203: Investigations of Foster Homes and Group Care Settings was implemented.	During 2025–2026, the RCYO addressed this issue through individual advocacy casework and its review and oversight functions.
Family placements and known safety concerns	Individual/ Systemic Advocacy Programs	This systemic issue is the placement of children and youth despite identified or documented safety concerns. - In 2023, the Office of the Auditor General's report found: - The department did not direct community social services workers and supervisors on what to do when the results of criminal or vulnerable sector checks had positive or possible matches. - October 2, 2025, Standard 603: Approval of Regular Foster Homes, and, Standard 604: Approval of Tuqłuraqtuq/ Kinship Placements were implemented; and, - October 20, 2025, Standard 602: Urgent Interim Care was implemented.	During 2025–2026, the RCYO addressed this issue through individual advocacy casework and its review and oversight functions.
Interdepartmental Coordination on ensuring Birth Registrations	Individual Advocacy Program	This systemic issue concerns how the Department of Family Services and the Department of Health are working together to address the issue of Nunavut birth parents who deliver outside the territory returning to Nunavut without registering the child's birth. On March 26, 2026, the Representative wrote to the Director of Statutory and Strategic Initiatives requesting information about what actions Family Wellness had taken to address this systemic issue and whether the matter had been reported to the Department of Health. A response was requested by April 1, 2026.	In 2025-2026, further follow-up on this issue was not completed.
Child Tax Benefit	Individual Advocacy Program	This systemic issue is when the Department applies for the child tax benefit for a child in care and the funds are not redirected back to the Department of Family Services to support the child/caregiver. Instead, they go to the Government of Nunavut General Funds.	In 2025-2026, further follow-up on this issue was not completed.

Investigations	Individual/ Systemic Advocacy Programs	The identified systemic issue is the failure to complete investigations as per the <i>Child and Family Services Act</i>, standards, and the Child Abuse and Neglect Response Agreement (CANRA). - In 2011, the Office of the Auditor General found: <i>The Department of Health and Social Services is not adequately meeting its key responsibilities for the protection and well-being of children, youth, and their families. Although it reacts quickly when it is made aware of children in need of protection, the Department is not meeting many other requirements of the Child and Family Services Act and its own standards and procedures.</i> - The 2013 Office of the Auditor General's report continued to identify this as an issue. - In 2023, the Office of the Auditor General's report found that there was a failure to complete required screening and investigation steps. The Auditor General found little evidence that supervisors were verifying completion of required steps and noted that, when investigations are not concluded, protective services may not be provided to children who could be at risk of maltreatment. - In 2024–2025, the RCYO identified 9 such files through its Individual Advocacy work. On June 21, 2024, A letter was sent to the Deputy Minister of Family Services regarding this finding. - In their 2025 report, the Office of the Auditor General found that the Department of Family Services took actions to strengthen how it responds to referrals and how investigations are conducted, substantial work remained to be done. - March 3, 2025, Standard 201: Receiving and Screening Reports of Suspected Harm and Neglect and 202: Investigations were implemented. - November 27, 2025, Standard 203: Investigations of Foster Homes and Group Care Settings was implemented. In 2025-26, cases were identified in which required investigations of foster homes or group-care settings were not initiated, completed, or documented in accordance with departmental standards.	During 2025–2026, the RCYO addressed this issue through individual advocacy casework and its review and oversight functions.
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Organizational Structure	Individual Advocacy Program	The systemic issue is that the reporting structure of the Department of Family Services does not align with the <i>Child and Family Services Act</i>. - On June 25, 2025, the Representative for Children and Youth filed a privacy-breach complaint alleging that the organizational structure of the Department of Family Services created a systemic risk of unauthorized access to personal information in child-protection files. - The Information and Privacy Commissioner found that recent reorganizations within the Department could result in personal information being accessed by staff who were not authorized to view it. The Commissioner recommended that the Department align its organizational structure with the <i>Child and Family Services Act</i>, either by amending the legislation or changing the structure. - On September 23, 2025, the Department accepted the recommendation and advised that it had initiated a legislative review.	In 2025-2026, further follow-up on this issue was not completed. As of March 31, 2026, this systemic issue remained unaddressed. The Department continues to operate under the organizational structure that gave rise to the concern, including Directors reporting to the Assistant Deputy Minister.
Plans of Care	Individual/Systemic Advocacy Programs	The systemic issue identified was that Plans of Care were not created, implemented, documented, reviewed, or renewed in accordance with the <i>Child and Family Services Act</i>, departmental standards, and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit. Cases were identified where the Department did not recognize or respect the continuing custodial rights of a parent or guardian and made decisions about a young person's care, placement, or services without meaningfully involving them. In a February 2010 Knowledge Sharing Forum: A Review of Child Welfare Practices in Nunavut—Final Report recommended the establishment of community-based Plan of Care committees, broad community representation, training and ongoing support for committee members, greater community ownership of child-welfare processes, the integration of Inuit values and customs, and Government of Nunavut support for Child and Family Services Committees. In their 2023 report, the Office of the Auditor General found: A plan of care is frequently used as a means to keep a child safe within the family home or in foster care, and it is an alternative to the department seeking a child protection order from the court. The plans, which may be extended, are signed by a number of stakeholders, including the department and the person with custody of the child. These plans may include, for example, terms for support services, counselling, or visitation by a parent who may not be living with the child. In 51 case files that we looked at, there were 41 plans of care in place during our audit period. We found in 36 of the 41 plans of care (involving 27 children and 13 families) that the department did not have evidence that the terms of the plans were carried out. Without follow-up on these care plans, there is no way to know if the issues that gave rise to child protection concerns are still present. March 18, 2026, Standard 404: Plan of Care Agreement and Plan of Care Committees was implemented.	During 2025–2026, the RCYO addressed this issue through individual advocacy casework and its review and oversight functions.

Children in care	Individual/ Systemic Advocacy Programs; including reviews of critical injuries and deaths.	The systemic issue is there are limited standards and procedures that ensure that services to children in care are ethical, equitable and consistent. In 2011, the Office of the Auditor General’s report found that <i>"headquarters cannot accurately track the current status of the children in its care,"</i> and that <i>"the Department does not perform any analysis of the children that come into the care of Child and Family Services. For example, there is no analysis of the rate at which children come into care compared with the population of their community. Nor does the Department compile the reasons why children require care."</i> As a result, they made the following recommendations: • The Department of Health and Social Services should ensure that community social service workers and supervisors keep accurate records of visits to children under care and maintain complete documentation, as required by the <i>Child and Family Services Act</i>. • When placing a child outside of the parental home for his or her safety and best interests, the Department of Health and Social Services should comply with its own directives and standards. • The Department of Health and Social Services should ensure that the regions collect basic information about the children in care and send it to headquarters on a timely basis. • The Department of Health and Social Services should determine what additional information needs to be collected, tracked, and analyzed in order to provide management with trends about children in care, including but not limited to repeat users of child and family services; analysis by issue and analysis by community. • The Department of Health and Social Services should use its analyses of children in care to: • develop, as needed, community-based, territory-wide, or issue-specific strategies aimed at preventing and identifying abuse and ensuring that children and their families are receiving the protection to which they are entitled; and • include information on these analyses in annual reports to the Minister of Health and Social Services. In 2022–2023 the RCYO made recommendations to develop and implement: • policies and procedures for children in the care of the Director; • a standard and procedure establishing when Individualized Care Plans must be completed; and • implement child-in-care recordings, assessments, and plans, including standards establishing when those records must be completed. March 18, 2026, Standard 119: Rights of Children and Youth in Care, came into effect.	During 2025–2026, the RCYO addressed this issue through individual advocacy casework and its review and oversight functions. As of March 31, 2026, these recommendations had not been implemented.
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Children and Family Services Manual	Individual Advocacy Program	The systemic issue is that the Department does not have a comprehensive standards and procedures manual that addresses all aspects of service delivery in child welfare. - In 2014, the Office of the Auditor General finding 48 was: <i>We also noted problems with file documentation. Children's case files and foster family files often included little information. In addition, the completeness of children's files varied, depending on the practices of individual community social service workers. Children's safety may be placed at risk whenever standards are not respected, and documentation is insufficient.</i> - In 2022–2023, the RCYO made a recommendation: the Child and Family Services Standards and Procedures Manual be updated to include policies and procedures ensuring ongoing supports and services to families. - In 2022–2023, the RCYO made a recommendation: develop and implement policies and procedures for children in the care of the Director; During 2025–2026, the Department continued updating the Child and Family Services Standards and Procedures Manual. The RCYO identified and documented deficiencies and gaps in the standards as they became apparent through its casework and reviews. Once the Department has completed the Manual, the RCYO will conduct a comprehensive review to assess whether it adequately addresses children in care, out-of-territory case management, supports for families, children in care, and other outstanding areas.	During 2025–2026, the RCYO addressed the gaps as they arose through individual advocacy casework and its review and oversight functions.
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Department of Health			
Medical Travel	Individual Advocacy Program	The issue identified a lack of clarity regarding young people who must leave Nunavut to receive medical treatment or supports on a long-term basis. This includes whether they continue to be considered medical-travel patients, what ongoing supports and services the Department of Health is responsible for providing while they remain outside the territory (including financial, housing and per diems), and whether there is a point at which they are no longer considered residents of Nunavut. The systemic concern includes the absence of clear criteria governing when medical-travel status begins and ends, what supports remain available to young people and their families during a prolonged out-of-territory stay, and how residency status is determined for young people who remain outside Nunavut because required medical services are unavailable in the territory.	As of March 31, 2026, the RCYO continued to address the individual advocacy matter and had initiated a broader systemic review.

Medical Evacuations (Medivac)	Individual Advocacy Program	The systemic issue is the administration of medical evacuations for children and youth. This includes the timeliness of medivacs, who is responsible for the young person if there is a delay, as well as who attends as an escort. In some situations, the escort was not the legal guardian and had no ability to provide medical direction or consent to procedures. It also includes the follow-up travel for caregivers who need to follow the medevac'd young person and could not be on the airplane with the young person, and supports available under the Medical Travel policy.	As of March 31, 2026, RCYO was still attempting to resolve the individual advocacy matter while initiating a broader systemic review.
Sexual-assault examination kits	Individual Advocacy Program	The systemic issue is that in more than one community health centre, the sexual-assault kits were expired or there weren't any at the health centre.	During 2025–2026, the RCYO addressed this issue through individual advocacy casework and its review and oversight functions.
Community health nursing policies and procedures	Individual Advocacy Program	The systemic issue is that the Community Health Nursing Policies and program documentation may not be consistent with the <i>Child and Family Services Act</i> , Child Abuse and Neglect Response Agreement (CANRA).	During 2025–2026, the Department of Health was notified on July 3, 2025, that a review would be conducted.

2025-2026 ANALYSIS

The systemic issues identified during 2025–2026 are not new. Previous reviews, including those undertaken by the RCYO and other oversight bodies, have already resulted in recommendations intended to address these concerns. In several areas, those recommendations remain outstanding or the actions taken have not resolved the underlying issue.

MONITORING OF SYSTEMIC ADVOCACY RECOMMENDATIONS

In 2025-2026, the RCYO monitored 19 systemic recommendations, 13 continue to be monitored (TABLE 9) and six recommendations were implemented (TABLE 10).

TABLE 9: Recommendations agreed to but yet to be implemented, by year made

Department	Recommendation
2023-2024	
Department of Family Services	That the Department of Family Services develop and implement a standard and procedure that sets out when Individualized Care Plans are to be completed.
Department of Family Services	That the Department of Family Services develop and implement a standard and procedure on Change of Information forms, revise the current form to be more useful.
Department of Family Services	That the Department of Family Services develop and implement standards and procedures for contact with foster homes, role of foster parents and update the Foster Parent Manual.
Department of Family Services	That the Department of Family Services develop and implement child in care recordings, assessments and plans and set standards when recordings must be completed.
2022-2023	
Department of Family Services	The Children and Family Services Standards and Procedures Manual should be updated to include policies and procedures that ensure supports and services to families on an ongoing basis.
Department of Family Services	The Department of Family Services should assess the effectiveness of the current service model and consider alternatives to ensure that families requiring ongoing assessments, services and supports post investigation, or when a child has been returned to parental care, are receiving them.
	The Department felt that this was implemented based on the response below. A framework has been created and reviewed by the RCYO. Work is underway to incorporate RCYO feedback on the framework as well as developing a comprehensive service model that is reflective of Inuit Culture and enhances service delivery. The RCYO disagrees with this assessment. On February 2, 2025, a framework was provided to the RCYO but it was a high-level document on the type of model DFS wants to implement and what it would achieve. The RCYO provided no feedback as it was not an actual service delivery model.
Department of Family Services	The Department of Family Services develop and implement policies and procedures for children in the care of the Director.

Department of Family Services	The Department of Family Services develop and implement a policy and procedure that requires a transition plan be developed and implemented prior to any non-urgent placement changes of a child in the care of the Director.
Department of Family Services	The Department of Family Services develop and implement a policy and procedure that outlines the requirement to consult and obtain consent from parents or legal guardians when a child is placed outside of the parental home under a Voluntary Service Agreement and there is a need to change their placement, prior to the move. Standard 401: Voluntary Support Services and Agreements (VSA) - Effective June 18, 2025 According to the Standard, families can access Out of Territory services under a VSA. However, the Standard is silent on the use of VSA for in territory placements. Standard 605: New Placements/Changes in placement - Effective October 14, 2025 The Standard is silent on obtaining consent prior to the move from parents or legal guardians when a child is placed outside of the parental home via an agreement.
2021-2022	
Department of Family Services	The Department of Family Services amend its Child and Family Services Standards and Procedures Manual to include clear timelines for the LCA purchase approval process.
Department of Family Services	The Department of Family Services create and implement a policy that clearly states who is eligible to receive support via an LCA so that all children and families, as per the <i>Child and Family Services Act</i> , are receiving equitable and consistent services, including those not in the care of the Director.
Department of Family Services	The Department of Family Services train and ensure all Family Wellness employees are aware of and implement these policies consistently. There have been several occurrences where the updated/revised standards have not been followed, particularly concerning: Standard 202: Investigations - Effective March 3, 2025 Standard 203: Investigations of Foster Homes and Group Care Settings - Effective November 27, 2025 Standard 605: New Placements/Changes in Placement - Effective October 14, 2025 Standard 506: Critical Incident/Serious Occurrence Reporting - Effective March 3, 2025
Department of Family Services	All staff should be trained on the Nunavut Child Abuse and Neglect Response Agreement in conjunction with the RCMP in the respective communities to ensure it is used consistently when conducting child abuse investigations. This should be completed when a new CSSW, Supervisor or Manager is hired as part of their orientation/training and prior to receiving any form of delegation.

RECOMMENDATIONS IMPLEMENTED THIS FISCAL YEAR

TABLE 10: Recommendations implemented, by year made

Department	Recommendation	Implementation Date/Method
2024-2025		
Department of Family Services	The Department of Family Services develop and implement clear expectations and standards for providing services when a community office does not have a Community Social Services Worker or staff are absent from the community for an extended period. This Standard should include requirements for: a. case summaries b. coverage c. out-of-office notifications d. requirements for notifying collaterals of who to contact e. any other documentation or preparation required	August 12, 2025 Standard 112: Service Interruptions-Office Closures
2023-2024		
Department of Family Services	That the Department of Family Services develop and implement a Placement Resource Form that documents vital information about the child, legal status, placements and reasons for moves. This Form should be provided to the foster home or residential home when the child is moved and is updated prior to any moves or on an annual basis.	October 14, 2025 Standard 605,605.1 Tool
Department of Family Services	That the Department of Family Services develop and implement a standard and procedure on Permanency Planning for children and families.	November 11, 2025 Standard 608: Permanency Planning Standard 606: Concurrent Planning & Reunification
Department of Family Services	That the Department of Family Services update standard #702 related to the Representative for Children and Youth Office to ensure that it clearly sets out that involvement with the RCYO should be on the case file.	March 30, 2026 Standard 702 now Standard 117: The Representative for Children and Youth Office Now in Section 1: Administration
2022-2023		
Department of Family Services	The Department of Family Services develop and implement a policy and procedure that requires a transition plan be developed and implemented prior to any non-urgent placement changes of a child in the care of the Director.	October 14, 2025 Standard 605: New Placements/Changes in Placement
Department of Family Services	The Department of Family Services develop and implement a policy and procedure that outlines what constitutes an urgent placement change for a child in the care of the Director and the appropriate steps to take when this occurs.	October 14, 2025 Standard 605: New Placements/Changes in Placement, Tool 605.b Urgent Placement Change – Transition Checklist

SYSTEMIC REVIEWS

During the 2025–2026 fiscal year, the RCYO continued seven systemic reviews initiated in previous years and initiated four new reviews.

As the RCYO’s systemic work progressed, related matters were consolidated to support more comprehensive reviews. The review initiated in January 2024, concerning eight young Nunavummiut placed in an unlicensed out-of-territory group home in Alberta, was incorporated into the broader Group Home review. In addition, an individual advocacy case concerning a custom adoption was incorporated into the Adoption review initiated during the 2024–2025 fiscal year.

TABLE 11: Systemic reviews, by department, 2025-2026

Department	Ongoing/ Carried Over	New	Total
Department of Family Services	4	1*	5
Department of Health	3	1	4
Department of Education	-	2	2
Total	7	4	11

** The Custom Adoption Individual Advocacy file was added to the broader Adoption systemic review. It is included among the four new matters but did not become a separate stand-alone systemic review.*

REVIEWS OF CRITICAL INJURIES AND DEATHS PROGRAM

TRIGGER WARNING: The following section contains information regarding the injuries and deaths of young people, including suicides, that may be triggering to some. If you or someone you know is struggling, here's where to get help:

- 9-8-8 Suicide Crisis Helpline: Call or text 9-8-8 at any time for support.
- Nunavut Kamatsiaqtut Help Line: Available 24/7 at 1-800-265-3333 (available in Inuktitut upon request).
- Hope For Wellness Helpline: 1-855-242-3310 (available in Inuktitut upon request).
- Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868 (phone), text TALK to 686868.

The Reviews of Critical Injuries and Deaths program examines the circumstances leading up to and the response of departments to a critical injury or death of a young person in Nunavut. When a young person dies in Nunavut, the Office of the Chief Coroner (Coroner) reviews the circumstances to determine their identity and when, where, and by what means they died.⁷⁰ The purpose of our review is to determine if the young person received the services they were entitled to and if these services, or the lack thereof, contributed in any way to the injury or death. Our reviews are not about placing blame, assigning responsibility, or determining criminal or civil liability. The purpose is to identify deficiencies and gaps in services, standards, procedures, practice, or legislation.

After completing a review of a critical injury or death, the Representative may issue a public report with recommendations that suggest improvements to services, standards, procedures, practice, and legislation to prevent similar critical injuries or deaths from occurring in the future.

In Nunavut, deaths and critical injuries of young people are only independently reviewed by RCYO. We do not conduct reviews of every critical injury or death but carefully select incidents for review where there is evidence that government services or the lack of services may have contributed to the critical injury or death.

Section 4(1)(b) of the RCYA gives the Representative the power to review any matter related to the death or critical injury of any child or youth. There is no requirement for the child or youth to be receiving services from a department at the time of the death or critical injury.

Under section 19, 20, and 21 of the RCYA, the Director of Child and Family Services and the Coroner are required to report critical injuries and deaths to the RCYO as soon as is reasonably possible after learning of a young person's injury or death. We may also learn about critical injuries and deaths from service providers, community members, and through the media.

The RCYO classifies critical injuries into six categories:

- ❄ **Emotional harm:** An injury that may cause an emotional injury to a child/youth. For emotional harm to be considered mandate in the RCYO classification scheme, it must reasonably be seen as having the potential to cause serious or long-term emotional or psychological harm to the child/youth.
- ❄ **Physical harm:** An injury that caused physical injury to a child/youth which was self-inflicted or accidental. For physical harm to fall within the mandate of the RCYO classification scheme, it must cause more than minor soft tissue damage.
- ❄ **Physical Assault:** An injury that caused physical injury to a child/youth which was inflicted by another person.
- ❄ **Sexualized Violence:** A sexualized act committed on a child/youth. This may be a physical act, but it may include non-contact unwanted sexual experiences (such as invitation to touch, luring, or threats). Sexualized violence is non-consensual in that the

⁷⁰ According to s9(1)(b) of the *Coroner's Act*, the Chief Coroner investigates deaths of young people "to determine cause of death and the circumstances surrounding death." The investigations are required when the death is reportable under s8 of the Act: (a) occurs as a result of apparent violence, accident, suicide or other apparent cause other than disease, sickness or old age; (b) occurs as a result of apparent negligence, misconduct or malpractice; (c) occurs suddenly and unexpectedly when the deceased was in apparent good health; (d) occurs within 10 days after a medical procedure or while the deceased is under or recovering from anesthesia; (e) occurs during the course of employment; (f) is a stillbirth that occurs without the presence of a medical practitioner; (g) occurs while the deceased is detained or in custody involuntarily pursuant to law in a jail, lock-up, correctional facility, medical facility or other institution; or (h) occurs while the deceased is detained by or in the custody of a police officer.

child/youth did not or could not consent, and it is also non-consensual when the child/youth is not able to consent due to age, mental capacity, or other factors.

- ❄ **Substance-Related Harm:** The use of drugs, alcohol, or other substances in a way that causes or could have caused a critical injury.

- ❄ **Suicide Attempt, Suicidal Ideation:** A suicide attempt is defined as a non-fatal attempt to take one's life. Suicidal ideation refers to thinking about, considering, or planning suicide.

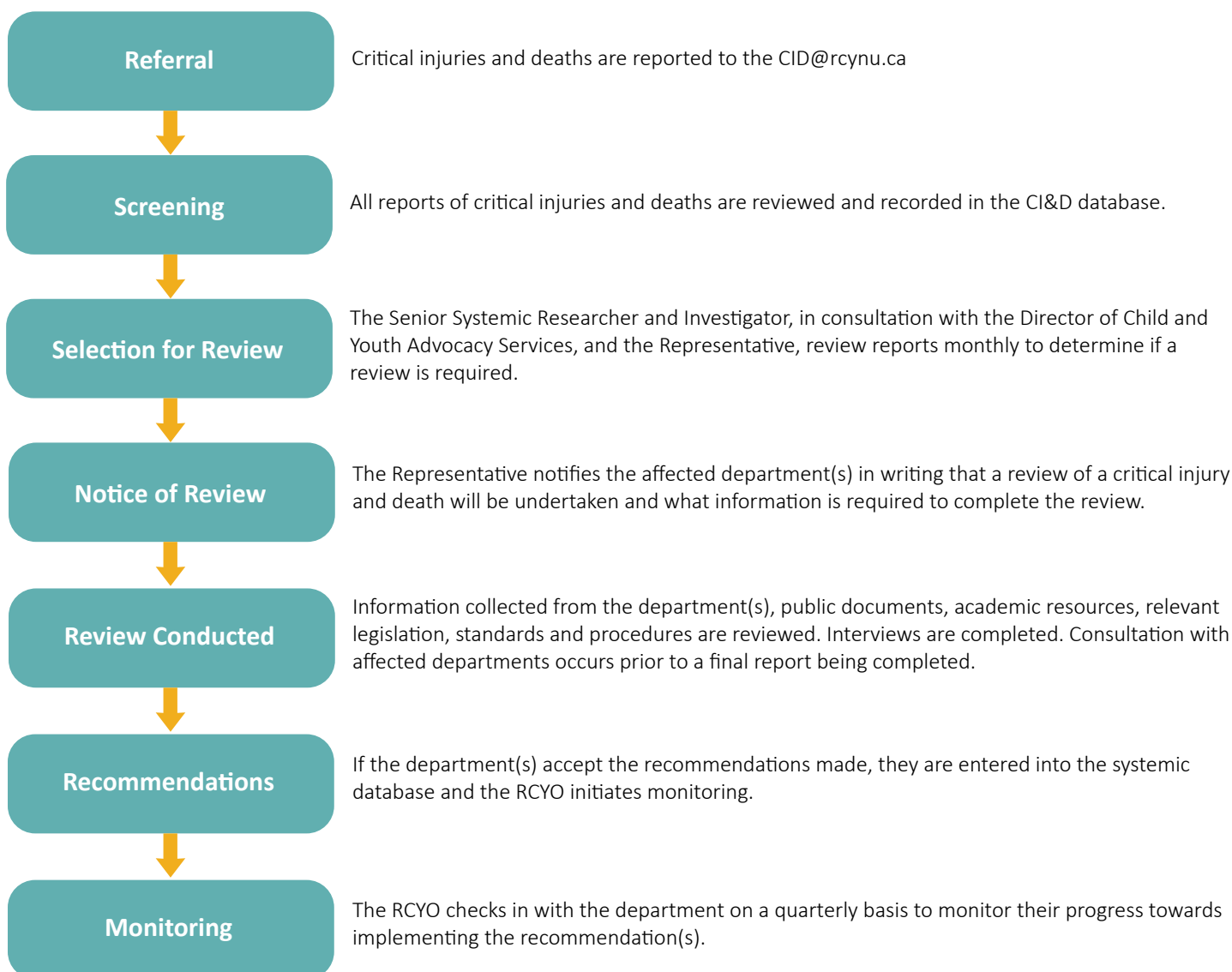
FIGURE 5: Process for Critical Injury and death reviews

When a critical injury or death is brought to our attention, it is reviewed by the Systemic Advocacy team to determine;

1. If the injury or death is within our mandate.
 - The injured or deceased is a child or youth as defined by the *Representative for Children and Youth Act*.
2. The critical injury meets the classification criteria (see page 54).

There is no requirement for the child or youth to be receiving services from a department at the time of the death or critical injury.

Currently the Director of Child and Family Services and the Coroner are required under sections 19 & 20 of the *Representative for Children and Youth Act* (RCYA) to report critical injuries and deaths to the Representative for Children and Youth Office.



The Representative reports publicly on recommendations made and department's progress on implementation in the annual report.

REVIEWS OF CRITICAL INJURIES AND DEATHS UPDATE FOR 2025-2026

CRITICAL INJURIES

The RCYO continued to track critical injuries reported by the Director of Child and Family Services, as required under sections 19, 20, and 21 of the *Representative for Children and Youth Act*.

During the 2025–2026 fiscal year, 72 critical injuries were recorded in the RCYO’s database. Of these, 63 were reported by the Director of Child and Family Services, four were reported by a contracted group home, and five critical injuries dating back to 2022 were identified during an RCYO review.

As described in the Systemic Advocacy section on page 54, the RCYO identified a number of current systemic issues affecting young Nunavummiut and their families. Reviews of critical injuries and deaths contributed to the identification of several of these issues, including:

- unreliable data and incomplete information;
- deficiencies and gaps in the Child and Family Services Standards and Procedures Manual;
- failures to initiate, complete, or document investigations in accordance with applicable requirements;
- concerns regarding the implementation and effectiveness of the Child Abuse and Neglect Response Agreement;
- failures to create, implement, document, review, or renew Plans of Care; and
- failures to document how the best interests of the young person were assessed and considered.

The RCYO does not believe that the figures in Table 12 provide a complete or fully accurate representation of the number of critical injuries that occurred during 2025–2026. However, based on the incidents reported to or otherwise identified by the RCYO, the data show substantial year-over-year changes.

TABLE 12: Critical Injuries, by Type

Total	72
Emotional Harm	25
Sexualized Violence	22
Suicide Attempt, Suicidal Ideation	13
Physical Assault	8
Physical Harm	4
Substance-related Harm	0

Reports involving suicide attempts or suicidal ideation decreased from 80 in 2024–2025 to 13 in 2025–2026. Reports of physical harm also decreased, from 12 in 2024–2025 to four in 2025–2026. In contrast, reports of sexualized violence increased significantly, from eight in 2024–2025 to 22 in 2025–2026. This increase is concerning and requires further examination to determine whether it reflects an actual increase in incidents, changes in identification or classification, improved reporting, or a combination of these factors.

During the 2024–2025 fiscal year, *Standard 506: Critical Incident/Serious Occurrence Reporting*, and *Tool 506.a: Classification and Reporting Table* came into effect. The Department classifies critical incidents into four levels but reports only Level 4 incidents to the RCYO.

In October 2025, the Representative notified the Department of concerns regarding the Standard and classification tool. The RCYO identified several types of incidents classified by the Department as Level 2 or Level 3 that may meet the definition of a critical injury under the *Representative for Children and Youth Act*. These include:

Level 2 Incidents

- use of physical or chemical restraint that does not cause injury;
- assault of a person in an approved foster-care resource or specialized service;
- suicidal ideation where the young person has not yet articulated a plan; and
- self-harming behaviour that does not result in medical treatment.

Level 3 Incidents

- suicidal ideation where the young person has articulated a plan;
- use of physical or chemical restraint that causes injury;
- self-harming behaviour that results in medical treatment; and
- abuse or misuse of medication.

The RCYO also continued to identify concerns regarding the timeliness, accuracy, and completeness of critical-incident documentation and reporting. Under Standard 506, critical-incident reports are to be entered into Matrix and submitted to Headquarters for review. The Quality Assurance Team is responsible for identifying errors in the assigned incident level and returning reports to the region for correction. Despite this review process, the RCYO frequently received reports that contained inaccurate classifications, incomplete information, or missing details.

As only Level 4 incidents are routinely reported to the RCYO, incidents that may meet the statutory definition of a critical injury may not be reported. This calls into question the validity and completeness of the numbers reported to the RCYO.

Given the deficiencies in the Department’s classification table, including the routine reporting of only Level 4 incidents, incidents that may meet the statutory definition of a critical injury may not be reported to the RCYO. Continuing concerns about delayed, inaccurate, and incomplete reports further call into question the validity and completeness of the figures presented in Table 12. The reported numbers should therefore not be considered a complete or reliable representation of the critical injuries experienced by young Nunavummiut during 2025–2026.

DEATHS

The Coroner determines the manner of each death, classifying them into five categories: Natural, Accidental, Suicide, Homicide, or Undetermined. In 2025-2026, the Coroner reported 25 deaths of young Nunavummiut.

The number of young people who died by suicide increased. In 2024–2025, 11 young people died by suicide. Five deaths involved a firearm, five involved hanging, and the method in one case was not reported.

In 2025–2026, 13 young people died by suicide. Six deaths involved a firearm and seven involved hanging. This

TABLE 13: Deaths Reported by the Office of the Chief Coroner 2025-2026, by Manner

Total Deaths	25
Suicide	13
Unclassified - pending final autopsy	7
Natural	3
Undetermined	1
Accidental	1
Homicide	0

represents an increase of two deaths, or approximately 18 percent, from the previous fiscal year.

The number of accidental deaths declined from five in 2024–2025 to one in 2025–2026. Seven deaths remained unclassified at the end of the fiscal year pending final autopsy results. The classification totals may therefore change when those results are received.

CRITICAL INJURY AND DEATH REVIEWS

During the 2025–2026 fiscal year, the RCYO continued four reviews of critical injuries and deaths initiated in previous years and initiated five new reviews. The review of the 11 deaths by suicide reported in 2024–2025 is not included in the table. That review was placed on hold to protect the health and safety of RCYO staff.

TABLE 14: Critical injury and death reviews, by department, 2025–2026

Department	Ongoing/ Carried Over	New	Completed
Department of Family Services	3	4	1
Department of Health	1	-	-
Department of Education	-	1	-
Total	4	5	1

COMPLETED CRITICAL INJURY REVIEW

On October 7, 2024, the RCYO notified the Department of Family Services that it was initiating a review of multiple critical injuries involving a young person under the age of five. The review examined the Department's response to the reported incidents, including its compliance with child-protection investigation requirements, the use of Plans of Care, the protection of the young person and family, and respect for their statutory and human rights.

On April 8, 2025, the Representative wrote to the Department of Family Services to communicate the findings of the review.

Findings

1. The Department of Family Services, Family Wellness Division, failed to complete a child-protection investigation in accordance with the *Child and Family Services Act*, the *Child and Family Services Standards and Procedures Manual*, and the *Surusitut Ikajuqtigiit: Child Abuse and Neglect Response Agreement (2020)*.
2. The Department failed to enter into a Plan of Care Agreement with the family in accordance with the *Child and Family Services Act* and the *Child and Family Services Standards and Procedures Manual*.
3. The Department violated the rights of the parents and children by entering into a Plan of Care without a child-protection basis.
4. The Department failed to recognize the mother, who was herself a youth, as a young person in need of protection and failed to take action to protect her or provide appropriate services and supports.

5. The Department violated the rights of the young person under the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child*, including:
 - Article 3: best interests of the child;
 - Article 17: access to information; and
 - Article 19: protection from violence.
6. The Department failed to administer the *Child and Family Services Act* in accordance with Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and Inuit Societal Values, including:
 - Pijitsirniq: serving and providing for family and community;
 - Aajiiqatigiinni: decision-making through discussion and consensus; and
 - Piliriqatigiinni/Ikajuqtigiinni: working together for a common cause.

The Representative did not make additional specific recommendations. Instead, the Representative strongly urged the Department to act on recommendations previously made by the Office of the Auditor General of Canada and the RCYO to improve the lives of children, youth, and families and the quality of services they have a right to receive in Nunavut.

The Representative concluded that the paramount concern was the Department's ongoing failure to conduct and document child-protection investigations. In this case, there were multiple violations of the *Child and Family Services Act*, departmental standards and procedures, and the rights of the parents and children. The Department's actions in 2024 to address failures that occurred in 2022 were found to be unacceptable and to have resulted in further violations of the rights of the parents and children.

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COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

Our Communications and Public Awareness initiatives build and strengthen relationships with our many stakeholders, including children, youth, families, community members, departments, the Legislative Assembly, and the media.

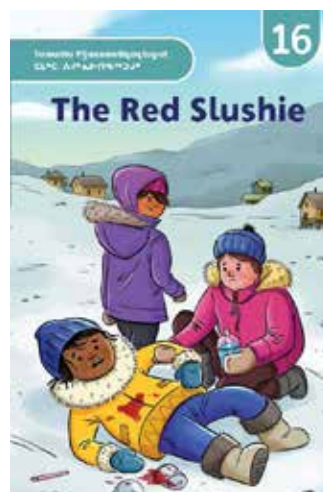
The RCYO works to increase awareness of child rights and the responsibilities that adults and governments have to support the rights of children and youth. We carry out this responsibility through presentations; development of child-rights resources and information materials; hosting contests; and sharing information about our work through the media, social media, and the Office's website.

Although our office is located in Iqaluit, we work on behalf of all Nunavummiut. Our most comprehensive public awareness initiative is our community engagement visits. It is important that we visit communities to hear directly from Nunavummiut and see firsthand the current challenges affecting children, youth, and their families in each community.

Every year we strategically plan public awareness initiatives while continually looking for new opportunities to engage with our stakeholders as they arise and our human resources allow.

Our public awareness initiatives are a collaborative effort among all RCYO staff, supporting the following Inuit societal values:

- ❖ **Inuuqatigiitsiarniq:** Respecting others, relationships, and caring for people.
- ❖ **Tunnganarniq:** Fostering good spirits by being open, welcoming, and inclusive.
- ❖ **Pijitsirniq:** Serving and providing for family and/or community.
- ❖ **Piliriqatigiinniq/Ikajuqtiigiinniq:** Working together for a common cause.



COMMUNICATION AND PUBLIC AWARENESS ACTIVITIES FOR 2025-2026

CHILD RIGHTS RESOURCES

Guided Reading Resource

The Red Slushie is the RCYO's third child rights book, created in partnership with Inhabit Education for the Department of Education's Inuktitut Titiqqiriniq balance literacy program. As of the end of the 2024-2025 fiscal year, this resource, and two others in all four languages, is now in our office and waiting to be distributed.

Language: *The Red Slushie* and its corresponding extension activities are available in Inuktitut, English, French, and Inuinnaqtun.

Child Rights Teaching Guide

During the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the RCYO began creating a comprehensive child rights teaching guide for kindergarten to grade four, in collaboration with Inhabit Education. In 2025-2026, our office continued to work with the Department of Education to finalize a distribution plan for these materials.

This teaching guide incorporates all of the RCYO's child rights resources created to date, including:

- ❖ three *Tamatta Pijunnautiqaqtuqut* Series books created by the RCYO and Inhabit Education, *Mosesie Speaks Up*, *Annie and Uqi Play Out*, and *The Red Slushie*;
- ❖ six child rights video segments created by the RCYO and Taqqut Productions Inc. which highlight a child's right to culture, the right to family, the right to safety, the right to education, the right to play, and the right to healthcare; and
- ❖ some of the child rights-based activities created by staff of the RCYO including *Sila is Cold* and a child rights dice game.

Language: The teaching guide is available in Inuktitut, English, French, and Inuinnaqtun.

Raise Your Voice: Self-Advocacy Workshop 3.0

Teaching young Nunavummiut to self-advocate supports their right to be heard and have their opinion considered when decisions are being made about their lives. As such, the Raise Your Voice: Self-Advocacy Workshop was created by RCYO staff. Over the years, the workshop has evolved, but its goals have remained the same: to educate young people about their rights and responsibilities and to build confidence in self-advocacy skills.

Throughout the workshop, young people will discover their strengths, the difference between needs and wants, and effective communication skills, such as active listening and clear communication. Another focus is how to access government services.

During the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the RCYO did not facilitate the *Raise Your Voice: Self-Advocacy Workshop* to any students. However, all staff were trained on the workshop this year.

Language: The workshop could be delivered to your class by RCYO staff in English and in Inuktitut, Inuinnaqtun, and French with interpretation support.

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Community Engagement Visits

The best way to share information about our work is to meet with people face to face and see first-hand the current challenges affecting children, youth, and their families in each community. To build and strengthen relationships with our many stakeholders and increase awareness of child rights and our office's work across the territory, RCYO staff travel to all of Nunavut's communities.

Proactive Meetings

Proactive meetings occur twice annually with the four main child- and youth- serving departments, the Department of Education, the Department of Family Services, the Department of Health, and the Department of Justice, in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding between the RCYO and the GN. Proactive meetings provide an opportunity to acknowledge and discuss systemic issues.

TABLE 15: Community Engagement Visits

Total Community and Date Visited	Type of Visit
Baker Lake May 13-15	Individual Advocacy Review
Pond Inlet June 16-20	Systemic Issue Investigation/General Outreach

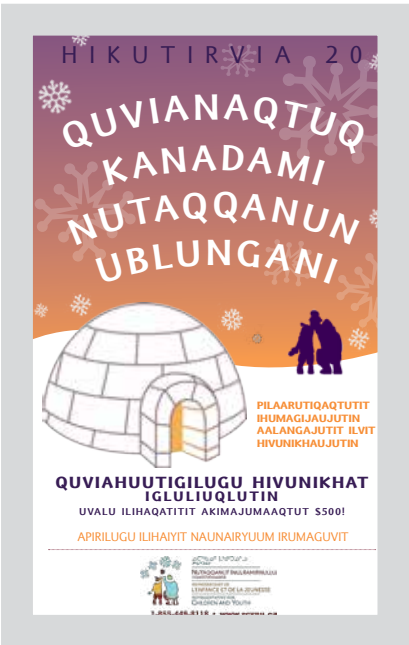
Departments are responsible for scheduling the spring proactive meetings. The Department of Family Services and Education scheduled spring meetings this fiscal year. The fall proactive meetings are the RCYO's responsibility to schedule; they took place in November and December 2025 with Justice, Health and Education. Family Services was initially scheduled for December and then rescheduled to February 2026, but did not occur within the fiscal year.

National Child Day

National Child Day is celebrated every year on November 20, in recognition of Canada's agreement to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. In 2025-2026, our National Child Day contest continued in classrooms across the territory. To celebrate the future that children and youth want, we asked classrooms across the territory to "build an igloo" with each block containing messages written by the children with sentences like: "In the future..." or "I imagine that..." We put all entries into a random draw to win their classroom a \$500 gift card, with three winners selected across the territory.

This year, in addition to the contest, we partnered with Connected North to offer classrooms across the territory an online child rights workshop.

Language: Contest materials were provided in Inuktitut, English, French and Inuinnaqtun. Connected North workshop was offered in English.



Notices of Adverse Report

The RCYO issued a notice of adverse report to the Chief Coroner, the Department of Education, the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, the Department of Family Services, the Department of Health, the Department of Justice, Nunavut Arctic College and Nunavut Housing Corporation regarding the RCYO’s 2024-2025 annual report. All departments had the opportunity to comment on related content before publication. The Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, the Department of Family Services, and the Department of Education provided feedback. This feedback was reviewed, considered, and incorporated where appropriate, prior to publication. The RCYO’s 2024-2025 annual report was tabled on September 16, 2025.

Language: These correspondences were provided in English.

Advocate’s Applause

Until last year, our previous annual reports highlighted departmental initiatives that were particularly successful in promoting and protecting the rights of children and youth that fiscal year. We called these best practices “Advocate’s Applause”.

Last year, we kept the "Advocate's Applause" name but decided to expand the scope to non-governmental organizations. This year we're happy to feature the Kids Help Phone, a non-profit mental health service offering free, multilingual and confidential support to help all young people. More information is available on page 79.

Facebook

The RCYO Facebook page allows us to share information about the Office's work, child rights, community engagement activities, and important information available on our website. The RCYO’s Facebook channel is @NunavutRepresentativeforChildrenandYouth.

Over the previous two years, from 2023-2025, nearly all of the RCYO's Facebook analytics showed a downward trend. With a more concerted effort and increased capacity, we are pleased that our Facebook statistics rebounded across the board this year. At the same time, we acknowledge there is still much room for improvement.

TABLE 16: RCYO Facebook Statistics

Total number of original posts	11
Followers, by the end of the fiscal year	359
Post Views, the number of times our content was played or displayed.	65,425
Post Engagement, the number of times people engaged with the post through reactions, comments, shares, views, and clicks	1,629

Website

This year, we had a 18% increase in visitors to our website, www.rcynu.ca. The RCYO continues to use Matomo analytics software to monitor website traffic.

Language: The RCYO's website is available in English, Inuktitut, French, and Inuinnaqtun.

TABLE 17: Website Visits, by Language Accessed

Total website visits	8,863
English	78.4%
French.	11.9%
Inuktitut	4.9%
Inuinnaqtun	4.8%

LEGISLATED APPEARANCES

Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts

The RCYO appeared before the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts in April 2025 to speak to the 2023-2024 annual report. During that session of the Standing Committee, our office, alongside several departments present, made the following commitments*:

- Act as the “conscience” or watchdog/accountability body for child- and youth-serving GN departments, ensuring departments act in young people’s best interests.
- Consider improving tracking of why referrals come to the office, including whether children/youth/families are not receiving services.
- Consider whether the Act should be amended to allow the office to address private business complaints, while noting that this would require review of logistics and consistency with the Act.
- Continue advocating for better cross-departmental documentation, follow-up, information sharing, coordinated case management, and quality assurance.
- Continue advocating for youth emergency shelters with attached services, and for separate safe residences for at-risk youth rather than relying on existing group homes.
- Continue collaboration with Education on the Child Rights Teaching Guide, finalized for K–Grade 4 and translated into four languages, with expansion to higher grades underway.
- Continue critical injury and death reviews under the Representative for Children and Youth Act; first public critical injury review report expected in May 2025.
- Continue fulfilling the office’s independent mandate to ensure GN services for children, youth, and families are ethical, equitable, and consistent.
- Continue holding departments accountable for action on child sexual abuse, including data-driven action, better reporting, and breaking the silence around the crisis.
- Continue investigating critical injuries and deaths under the Representative for Children and Youth Act, using/adapting classification categories developed with reference to British Columbia and Family Services input.
- Continue listening to the public, children, youth, families, and departments; monitor government progress; remain available for feedback.
- Continue pressing for government action on the child sexual abuse crisis, including an immediate government-wide action plan, public awareness, prevention, investigation, post-treatment, and holistic supports.
- Continue prioritizing systemic issues affecting vulnerable children/youth, especially child protection, critical injuries/deaths, Department of Family Services crisis issues, and younger cohorts.
- Continue receiving referrals from departments, parents, and the public, and review whether services meet needs and whether departments are acting in the child/youth/family’s best interests.
- Continue requesting detailed data and explanations from departments to support trend analysis and meaningful reporting.
- Continue reviewing bullying, student-on-student issues, staff-student issues, and Education’s actions when cases are brought to the office.
- Continue seeking and using data on teen pregnancy, youth justice involvement, victim services, sexual abuse, injuries, medical travel, and other child/youth outcomes to inform advocacy and departmental accountability.
- Continue systemic advocacy, individual advocacy, monitoring of recommendations, and identifying systemic issues from advocacy files.
- Continue using the Status of Young Nunavummiut section to gather and analyze cross-departmental data on services, outcomes, social determinants, and systemic issues.
- Meet with elder advisors at least every three months and consult them additionally on individual advocacy and systemic reviews as needed.
- Monitor departmental action plans, request evidence of progress, and hold departments accountable for implementing commitments on child sexual abuse.
- Re-establish the elder advisor committee; terms of reference created, nomination process planned, with letters to hamlets and requests to MLAs for nominations.
- Requested legislative amendments, including changes to the Representative’s term of office and broader mandatory reporting of critical injuries/deaths by all departments.

PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENTS

Protocols between the Representative for Children and Youth's Office and the Government of Nunavut

Since 2018, partnership agreements, also known as protocols, have been in place between the RCYO and the Department of Education, the Department of Family Services, the Department of Health, and the Department of Justice. These protocols aim to guide the working relationships.

In February 2021, the RCYO reviewed each protocol and proposed revisions for the departments to consider. In April 2021, the departments proposed one protocol between the RCYO and the GN, specifically the departments mentioned above (GN-RCYO Protocol). With the Department of Justice leading this initiative, much work was completed to update and amalgamate the pre-existing protocols into one, while ensuring it is clear what departmental staff are obligated to do under the RCYA.

The protocol was then submitted to the Executive Council of Nunavut (Cabinet). On January 3, 2023, the RCYO was notified that Cabinet approved the GN-RCYO Protocol for signatures.

On August 8, 2023, the finalized GN-RCYO Protocol was signed.

Memorandum of Understanding with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Nunavut

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Nunavut (OIPC) permit the sharing of relevant information between offices and aims to ensure our work and the work of departments are in alignment with the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (ATIPPA). This MOU was signed on October 11, 2023.

Memorandum of Understanding with the Office of the Languages Commissioner

Since 2021-2022, the RCYO has had an MOU with the Office of the Languages Commissioner (OLC), which permits the sharing of relevant information when a child rights complaint brought to the RCYO's attention is also potentially in violation of language rights and vice versa.

Memorandum of Understanding with the Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates

The Office also has an MOU with the CCCYA. This MOU details the working relationship between all Canadian offices, particularly in connection with providing advocacy supports to mutual clients who may cross from one province or territory to another, to ensure seamless and timely access to services, and permits the sharing of relevant information. This MOU has been in place since 2015.

ADVOCATE'S APPLAUSE

KIDS HELP PHONE

For 35 years, Kids Help Phone (KHP) has provided free, confidential mental health support to young people across Canada. Through its Indigenous Initiatives Team, KHP has worked to ensure that First Nations, Inuit, and Métis youth can access services that are not only available when needed but also culturally relevant and reflective of their lived experiences.

In 2025–26, KHP significantly expanded its outreach to Inuit youth by developing Inuit-specific resources, imagery, and programming. Working closely with Inuit advisors, organizations, Elders, youth, and community partners, KHP introduced Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun content for its Brighter Days Indigenous wellness program, making these resources more accessible to youth across Inuit Nunangat. The organization also developed Inuit-specific videos and outreach materials featuring Inuit voices, experiences, and perspectives, helping young people see themselves reflected in the supports available to them.

KHP's Brighter Days program provides virtual wellness sessions and interactive learning modules that help young people understand mental health, recognize abuse, build healthy coping strategies, and develop help-seeking behaviours. The program is available to youth aged 6–29 and has been delivered in communities across Nunavut. KHP also offers a range of free supports through its website and mobile app, including culturally relevant wellness resources, safety-planning tools, peer-to-peer support, journaling activities, and connections to local services.

What makes KHP's work particularly noteworthy is its commitment to community engagement and youth voice. Inuit youth, volunteers, community organizations, and regional partners have helped guide resource development, ensuring supports are grounded in community needs and priorities. As Billie Barnes, KHP's Inuit Engagement Coordinator, noted, making services available in Inuit languages and reflecting Inuit experiences helps ensure young people feel seen, valued, and more comfortable reaching out for support.

By expanding access to culturally relevant mental health resources, strengthening partnerships across Nunavut, and creating opportunities for Inuit youth to connect with support in their own language, Kids Help Phone is helping ensure that no young person has to face challenges alone.

COMPLIANCE WITH SERVICE STANDARDS

The RCYO is committed to providing ethical, equitable, and consistent services. We aim to provide a measurable level of service that our clients can expect under normal circumstances.

Our service standards are integrity, inclusivity, accountability, and empowerment. Each service standard has quality assurance measures, detailed below, that help us evaluate our performance.

INTEGRITY

The RCYO sets and meets high standards of professional and organizational conduct through:

- **Application and compliance with legislation (RCYA) established policies and procedures in all programs.**
- **Application and compliance with GN-RCYO protocol.**

Quality assurance measures applicable to our integrity service standard and how we met them:

► **Individual advocacy complaints are assigned for review within five business days.**

- For 57/57 (100%) of our individual advocacy cases

► **A courtesy notification is sent to the involved department(s) advising them that an Individual Advocacy file has been opened.**

- For 57/57 (100%) of our individual advocacy cases, notice is sent within two business days of a file being assigned

Note: Individual Advocacy files often present with multiple departments involved. When this occurs, all departments receive a separate Courtesy Notification email. When an Individual Advocacy file is opened with one department, and the review indicates the involvement of a second department, the second department receives a Courtesy Notification within two business days of the Child and Youth Advocacy Specialist recognizing the need to reach out to the second department.

► **A courtesy notification is sent to the affected department within 5 working days when a decision is made to review a systemic issue, critical injury or death.**

- In 2025-2026, the decision was made to review four systemic issues that had presented themselves to the RCYO during the fiscal year. In each of these four cases, the lead Department was notified the same day that the systemic issue was assigned to a Senior Systemic Investigator/Researcher for a review.

INCLUSIVITY

Young people, families and service providers feel valued, respected and have equal opportunities to provide their perspective on matters involving the RCYO.

Tunnganarniq: the importance of being open, welcoming, and inclusive and the role this plays in fostering positive relationships and considering everyone's perspective.

Quality assurance measures applicable to our inclusion service standard and how we met them:

► **Contacting the young person(s) to seek their perspective on case matters that affect or involve them.**

- Of the 57 files opened in 2025-2026, 27 young people were directly contacted by an RCYO staff member.
- Contact was made with parents, caregivers, or legal guardians for children who were not contacted directly. This included children too young to understand the existence and role of the Representative, or who were otherwise not capable of understanding.

► **Collaborating with departments throughout reviews.**

- During reviews, departments are contacted on regularly to provide disclosure and clarification. This occurred in each Individual and Systemic Advocacy file.
- The RCYO has started a “verification of facts” process:

During an Individual Advocacy review, a list of facts will be sent to the Department to verify if what we have read is correct, prior to any findings or recommendations being made

- As no individual reviews were published, no adverse reports were sent this year.

► **Collaborating with departments to develop recommendations.**

- No new Individual Advocacy or Systemic Advocacy recommendations were published in 2025-2026

► **Requesting updates (if applicable) from departments about the implementation of recommendations at least twice a year.**

- The Departments of Family Services, Education, Health and Justice met face-to-face twice with the Representative for Children and Youth and staff for proactive meetings.
- Email requests for updates went out a minimum of twice a year for each open issue.

► **Facilitate engagement opportunities with departments, communities and other stakeholders to provide and receive information about the work of the RCYO**

TABLE 18: Stakeholder Engagement Sessions, by Group and Language

Stakeholder Group / Type of Engagement	Language(s)
CCCYA	English
Connected North	English
Department of Education:	
• Assistant Deputy Minister • Early Learning and Child Care • Proactive Meeting • Principals Conferences • Superintendent of Nasivvik	English
Department of Family Services:	
• Assistant Deputy Minister • Assistant Director • Deputy Minister • Director • Minister • Ministerial Political Advisor • Proactive Meeting	English

Department of Finance	English
Department of Health	English
Department of Human Resources	English
Department of Justice:	
- Assistant Deputy Minister - Deputy Minister - Proactive Meeting - Young Offenders Facility	English
Inhabit Education	English
Legislative Assembly	
- MLA - Craig Simailak - Standing Committee	English Inuktitut/English
Nunavut Arctic College	English
Social Work Program	
Office of the Auditor General of Canada	English
Office of the Child and Youth Advocate - Prince Edward Island	English
Office of the Elections Commissioner of Nunavut	English
Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Nunavut	English
Office of the Languages Commissioner of Nunavut	English
Pond Inlet Elder's Tea	Inuktitut/English
Public Safety Canada	English
Chief Advisor to Combat Human Trafficking	
Qikiqtani Inuit Association	English
RCMP	English
Supreme Court of Canada	English
Justice	
UNICEF Canada	English
University of Calgary	English

► **All information is publicly available in all official languages of Nunavut**

- Inuktitut and English upon release
- Inuinnaqtun and French translations as completed

TABLE 19: Documents Published on the RCYO Website, by Language and Date

Document	Inuktitut	English	Inuinnaqtun	French
2024-2025 Annual Report	October 3, 2025	October 3, 2025	March 3, 2026	March 3, 2026

ACCOUNTABILITY

Demonstrating operational transparency with respect to processes, decisions and actions taken by the RCYO. Ensuring that decisions and actions are timely, relevant, and child-and-youth-centered.

Quality assurance measures applicable to our accountability service standard and how we met them:

► Reporting on the RCYO’s activities, performance, including review findings and recommendations.

April 28--29, 2025, the Representative, Director of Child & Youth Advocacy Services and the Manager of Individual Advocacy Services appeared before the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts to account for the 2023-2024 Representative for Children and Youth Annual Report.

September 8, the Representative for Children and Youth Office Response to the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts Report on the Review of the RCYO Annual Reports for 2023-24 was tabled in the Legislature.

September 16, the 2024-2025 RCYO Annual Report in Inuktitut and English was tabled in the Legislative Assembly

February 25, the 2025-2028 Business Plan was tabled in the Legislative Assembly

► Yearly review of the systemic database.

- RCYO reviewed and compiled a list of all issues reported in 2025-26 for the Annual Report.

► Information about the work of our office is shared with the media to keep stakeholders informed.

TABLE 20: Media Engagement, by Date

Date	Outlet	Subject	Outcome
May 2025	Nunatsiaq News	Department of Family Services' office in Kinngait.	Missed Deadline
May 2025	CBC North	Department of Family Services' office in Kinngait.	Inuktitut/English Television Broadcasts, Inuktitut/English Radio Broadcasts, English Web Story
June 2025	Nunatsiaq News	Department of Family Services created a new line for confidential complaints about the department's work	English Web Story
June 2025	CBC North	Department of Family Services created a systemic breach of privacy on child-protection files	Inuktitut/English Television Broadcasts, Inuktitut/English Radio Broadcasts, English Web Story
July 2025	CBC North	Department of Family Services Hotline	English Web Story
September 2025	CBC North	Building 439 in Iqaluit	Inuktitut/English Television Broadcasts, Inuktitut/English Radio Broadcasts, English Web Story
September 2025	Nunavut News	National Day for Truth and Reconciliation	Declined - Out of Scope
October 2025	CBC	Issues with Family Services that candidates should be thinking about.	Declined - Wait Until After Election

October 2025	APTN	2024-2025 Representative for Children and Youth Office Annual Report	English Web Story
November 2025	Nunavut News	National Child Day	English Web Story
November 2025	CBC Manitoba	Child and Family Services across Canada	Declined - Out of Scope
January 2026	CBC North	Nunik Group Home closed last year	Declined - No Knowledge
February 2026	CBC North	Foster parents outline woeful treatment	For background information
February 2026	CBC North	Naja Isabelle Home	Declined - Under Investigation
March 2026	APTN	Reaction to Department of Family Services strategic plan	English Web Story
March 2026	CBC North	The importance of Representative for Children and Youth Advocacy Offices	For background information

EMPOWERMENT

Creating opportunities for young Nunavummiut to develop skills through observation, mentoring, practice, and effort; supporting our staff to further develop their skills in order to best meet the evolving needs of our young people.

► Prioritize engagement opportunities with young Nunavummiut.

This year, RCYO staff participated in one engagement event with young Nunavummiut.

TABLE 21: Engagement with Young Nunavummiut, by Location

Event	Approximate Number of Participants	Language
Young Offenders Facility Tour with Staff and Youth, Iqaluit	2	English

► Empower staff through relevant training and professional development.

Our staff are encouraged and supported to take part in opportunities that further strengthen our internal capacity and expertise to best meet the evolving needs of young Nunavummiut.

TABLE 22: Staff Training and Professional Development Completed

Training/Professional Development	Date Completed	Number of Staff
P&P Manual	June 2025	1
P&P Manual	November 2025	1
RCYA	November 2025	2
UNICEF- Child Rights Impact Assessment	November 2025	1

YCJA	November 2025	1
Trauma Informed Practice and Gender Based Violence (Embrace Life Council)	November 2025	1
RCYO Media Training PArt 1	December 2025	8
Self Advocacy Workshop & Sila is Cold Training	December/January	8
Cultural Safety and Trauma-Informed Care	January 2026	1
Inuit Culture and Language	January 2026	2
Assertiveness Skills	January 2026	1
CFSA	January 2026	9
Writing in Plain Language	February 2026	1
CPR	February 2026	1
Microsoft 365 Copilot Chat	March 2026	3
Nunavut Decolonization	March 2026	1

BUDGET REPORT

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

Fiscal year ended March 31, 2026

TABLE 23: Budget Report

	Budget \$	Expenditures \$	% of Budget Spent
Permanent Salaries	2,229,000	1,251,299	56%
Casual Wages	-	332,782	-
Employee Benefits	-	25,485	-
Total Compensation and Benefits	2,229,000	1,609,566	72%
Travel and Transportation	155,000	48,010	31%
Materials and Supplies	60,000	48,436	81%
Purchased Services	50,000	42,101	84%
Contract Services	434,000	350,647	81%
Fees and Payments	10,000	4,502	45%
Tangible Assets	10,000	538	5%
Computer Hardware and Software	15,000	8,751	58%
Total Other Expenses	734,000	502,985	69%
Total	2,963,000	2,112,551	69%
Surplus		850,449	71%