



It was a privilege for BCACDI to attend the Office of the Representative for Children and Youth (RCY) ceremony on July 16th where the report, [Don't Look Away](#), was released. This report outlines the tragic story of a system of services failing to come together to effectively support a young Indigenous boy with medical challenges. Sadly, he suffered horrific abuse while in the care of extended family caregivers, under the authority of the Nations Child and Family Services Department and the Ministry of Children and Family Development. While the report focused on this one child, the stories of 14 other children in eight families were investigated and helped to shed light on how the systems work, and how they don't.

This boy's death was determined to be entirely preventable, and he was not an outlier. The Representative's report calls for the creation of a provincial Child Well-being Strategy and Action Plan, and identifies four themes for action:

- The prevention of intimate partner and family violence
- Enhanced family support services
- Better inter-agency and cross-government collaboration
- Better assessment, support and monitoring of those providing kinship care

The Minister of MCFD, Grace Lore, spoke at the event and committed to a fundamental shift in the government's approach to supporting vulnerable children and families, guided by the RCY report recommendations. Sadly, the RCY has released several reports over the years with many recommendations, yet these tragic stories continue. There is the promise of cross-Ministry committees and government-wide plans, yet the front line service delivery challenges and issues persist. Vulnerable children and families in our province can't wait for committees and action plans, they need effective and culturally safe services and supports now. All of the partners in the system, which includes BCACDI member agencies, need to rise up to this challenge and improve how we support vulnerable children, youth, and families in BC. It takes a Village, a strong and connected community, with each partner committing themselves to building relationships and interconnectedness, providing a culturally safe environment, and holding each other accountable that we are all doing our part in our best way.

BCACDI will continue to support and provide training opportunities for our member agency staff, share models of best practice in the supporting of vulnerable families, and continue to build and foster relationships with Indigenous communities and Indigenous service providers. We acknowledge we are a partner, we are committed to doing better, and we will not look away.