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Representative for Children and Youth  
**2018-2019 ANNUAL REPORT**

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L'ENFANCE ET DE LA JEUNESSE

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CHILDREN AND YOUTH

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Cam Kayuryuk, Shameka Uquqtuq, Ryan Uquqtuq, and Andrew Kayuryuk  
in Baker Lake.

Arviat, NU

We dedicate this report  
to the late Bessie Sitatak of Kugluktuk,  
who was an Elder advisor for the  
Representative for Children and Youth's Office.



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September 27, 2019

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

Mr. Speaker:

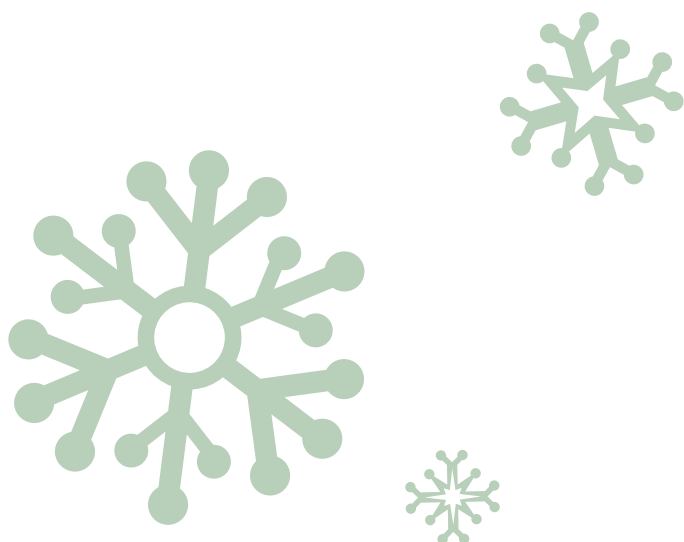
It is my pleasure to present the 2018-2019 Annual Report of the Representative for Children and Youth to the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut. This document reports on the period of April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019. This report has been prepared in accordance with section 35 (1) of the *Representative for Children and Youth Act*.

Respectfully,

Jane Bates  
Representative for Children and Youth

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# WHAT ARE CHILD RIGHTS?

All humans have rights.

Child rights are things you should have, like a safe place to live, or things you should be able to do, like go to school, so you and your family have what you need to make good choices for your life.

In support of your rights, government must make sure you and your family have access to all of these things.



# MESSAGE FROM THE REPRESENTATIVE

I am pleased to present the Representative for Children and Youth's 2018-2019 Annual Report and share highlights of the many activities undertaken by our office over the last year. First, however, I would like to



acknowledge the passing of one of our office's beloved Elder advisors, Bessie Sitatak. In the time we worked with Bessie, she proved to be a passionate advocate for young people and their families and generously shared valuable knowledge and advice with our office. In honor of Bessie, we have dedicated this annual report in her memory. She is missed dearly by our entire team.

In 2018-2019, we continued to see sustained activity in our key program areas, as well as some growth. The number of people contacting our office for information and assistance with Government of Nunavut (GN) system navigation increased significantly, as did the number of requests for presentations and information related to the work of our office. While our systemic team was largely consumed with conducting our review of mental health services for children and youth, the number of systemic issues being brought to our attention also continued to rise. Similar to previous years, the office continued to execute its community visit travel plan; successfully visiting all 12 communities scheduled for the year. While in communities, our staff continued to build and strengthen connections with key stakeholder groups, including our most important stakeholder group, children and youth. In 2018-2019, our team visited 14 schools and delivered the *Raise Your Voice: Self-Advocacy* workshop to 610 students. To date, the workshop has been delivered to 1,113 young Nunavummiut across the territory!

Our self-advocacy workshop, as well as all of our other work, is grounded in the rights that children and youth have under the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Throughout the course of our work, it is not uncommon for us to hear misconceptions about child and youth rights. At the RCYO, we always welcome opportunities to discuss rights with young people, as well as adults. It is through open discussion that we can work together to alleviate misconceptions that exist and provide families and communities with information about rights that can empower them and help them support the young people in their lives.

All humans have rights. However, given a child or youth's vulnerability and dependence on adults, a specific set of rights were developed just for young people. These rights are established by the United Nations and are detailed in the *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. In addition to explaining the rights every young person in the world has, the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* also outlines the obligations that governments have to fulfill these rights in order to protect young people and provide for their basic needs. The ultimate goal is to ensure that every young person is able to grow, thrive, and live a full life. The United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* is the most widely ratified human rights treaty in history and it plays a substantial role in transforming the lives of young people.

One of the most common misconceptions we hear from adults is that child and youth rights encourage young people to be too individualistic and defy the adults in their lives. However, the opposite is actually true. Similar to the Inuit societal value of *inuuqatigiitsiarniq*, the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* encourages respectful relationships and emphasizes the important role that family plays in a young person's life. It also outlines rights that protect the integrity of the family and states, "that the family, as the fundamental group of society and the natural environment for the growth and well-being of all its members and particularly children, should be afforded the necessary



protection and assistance so that it can fully assume its responsibilities within the community”.<sup>1</sup> Through our office’s self-advocacy workshop and other rights-based conversations we have with young Nunavummiut, we talk about the respect that everyone should have for the rights of others, including their peers, community, and family members.

Another common misconception adults have about children’s rights centers on a young person’s right to be heard. Article 12 of the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, explains that young people have a right to be heard and have their views taken seriously in matters that affect their lives, according to their age and maturity. In our experience, adhering to this right tends to be challenging for adults, not only in Nunavut, but throughout the country and even the world.

While beliefs and attitudes regarding young people may vary across cultures, the reasons for excluding the thoughts and opinions of young people are surprisingly consistent: young people lack competence; young people don’t have sound knowledge or proper information; parents always know what’s best; involving young people places a burden on them and increases their risk of harm; and giving young people a voice will make them demanding, promote bad behaviour, and make them disrespectful.<sup>2</sup>

The right for young people to have their views heard and considered is a fundamental right. As explained by UNICEF, “it is a measure of our human dignity that we are able to be involved in decisions that affect us, consistent with our levels of competence. It is also a means through which other rights are realised. It is not possible to claim rights without a voice. Children

who are silenced cannot challenge violence and abuse perpetrated against them. The capacity to learn is restricted without the chance to question, challenge, and debate. Policy-makers cannot identify the barriers to fulfilling children’s rights if they do not hear from children about the existence and nature of those barriers. And, the right to be heard applies to every aspect of a child’s life – at home, in school, in healthcare, in play and leisure, in the media, in the courts, in local communities, and in local and national policy-making, as well as at the international level.”<sup>3</sup>

When Canada signed the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* in 1991, the federal, provincial, and territorial governments committed to supporting the rights of all young people in Canada. It is therefore the responsibility of government to fulfill these basic rights. While we acknowledge there is much work to do in Nunavut and in Canada to ensure every young person’s rights are being supported, our office is fully committed to continue this important conversation and address misconceptions that exist about child rights.

As always, we remain unwavering in our quest to change the child rights landscape in Nunavut, thereby ensuring the rights and interests of young Nunavummiut are supported. This is one of the main reasons our office exists.

Sincerely,



Sherry McNeil-Mulak  
Representative for Children and Youth

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<sup>1</sup> Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2017). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Retrieved from <https://www.unicef-irc.org/portfolios/crc.html>. para. 6

<sup>2-3</sup> Unicef. (2011). *Every Child's Right to be Heard*. Retrieved from [https://www.unicef.org/adolescence/files/Every\\_Childs\\_Right\\_to\\_be\\_Heard.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/adolescence/files/Every_Childs_Right_to_be_Heard.pdf)





# ABOUT OUR OFFICE

The Representative for Children and Youth's Office (RCYO) is an independent office that is devoted to ensuring the rights of young Nunavummiut are supported. We have a legal mandate to advocate for young people's interests and rights and to assist the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut (Legislative Assembly) in ensuring their needs are met. Our work is guided by the *Representative for Children and Youth Act* (RCYA), the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, Inuit societal values (ISV), the voice of the child, and national advocacy standards established by the Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates (CCCYA). Typically, we work on behalf of children and youth who are 18 years old and younger. However, the RCYA allows us to work with young people up to 25 years of age in specific situations.

## OUR MANDATE

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

- ✳ Ensure children and youth's rights and interests (individually and collectively) are protected and advanced, and that departments of the Government of Nunavut (GN) and its designated authorities<sup>4</sup> hear and consider the views of children and youth on matters that affect them;
- ✳ Ensure children and youth can access GN services and that the GN considers their concerns about those services;
- ✳ Help children, youth, and their families communicate with GN 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 office;
- ✳ Provide advice and recommendations to the GN on how to make its programs, services, laws, and policies better for children and youth in Nunavut.

<sup>4</sup> Designated authorities are listed under Schedule A of the RCYA.



## OUR MISSION

**We are an independent child and youth advocacy office that ensures the Government of Nunavut supports and protects the rights and interests of young Nunavummiut.**

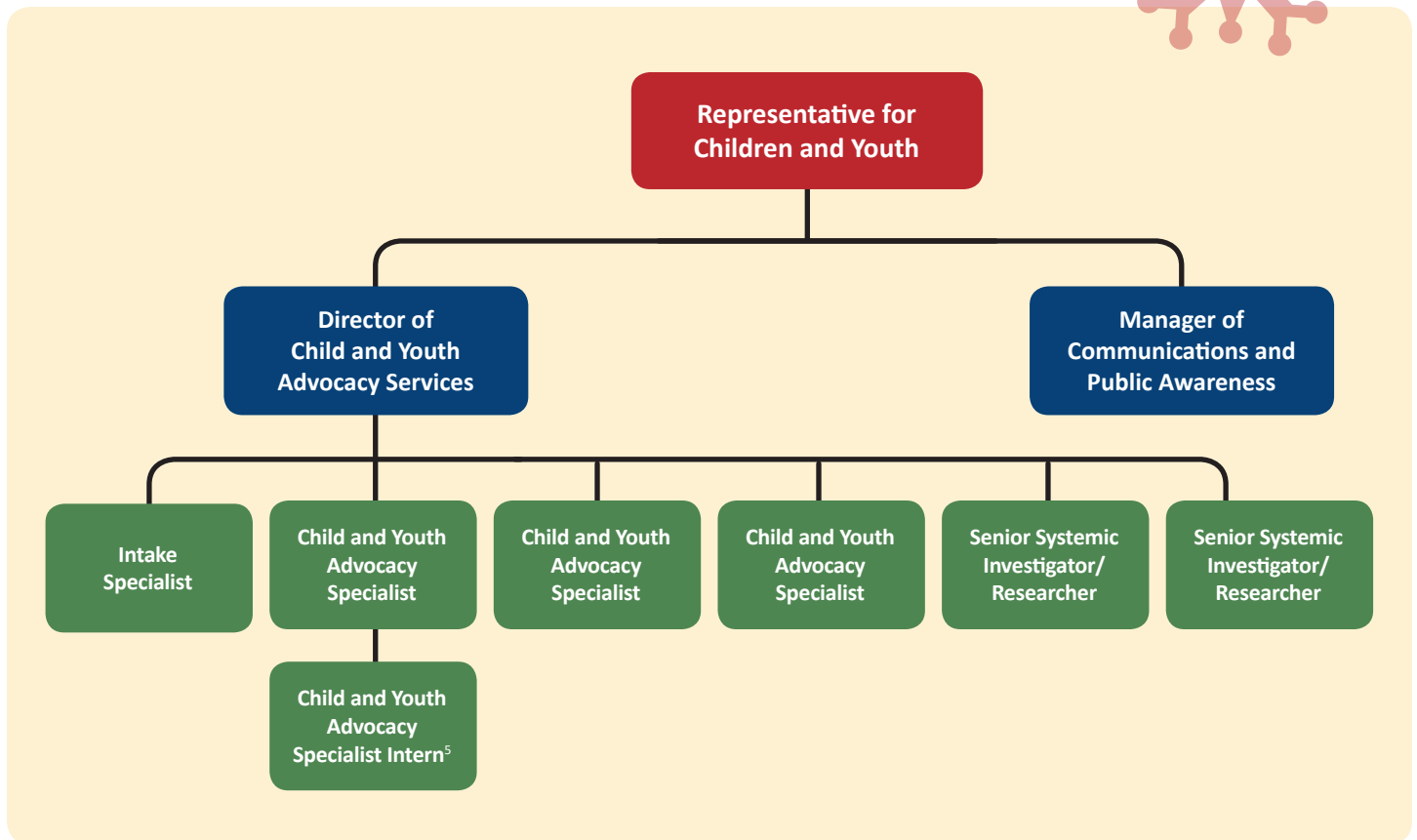
## OUR VISION

**All children and youth in Nunavut know their potential, value their identity, and feel supported and empowered to express their views in matters that affect them.**

## OUR TEAM

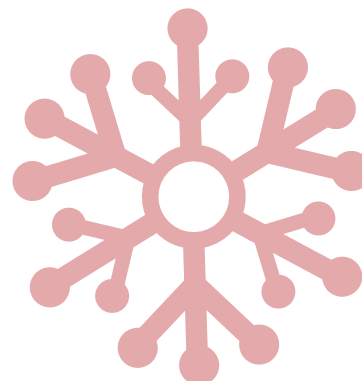
The Representative for Children and Youth (Representative) leads the RCYO, guiding the work of a team of eight staff, as well as one intern from the Sivuliqtiksat Internship Program. In 2018-2019, the RCYO was fully staffed and a summer student was welcomed to the team through the Summer Student Employment Equity Program (SSEEP). Each member of our team brings a unique personal and professional background to the RCYO, while sharing a passion for child rights and advocacy. Figure 1 illustrates the organizational structure at the RCYO.

FIGURE 1: ORGANIZATIONAL CHART



Since opening, the office has not seen any growth in terms of the team's composition, however there has been a noticeable increase in the demand for our services. With the office now open for three and a half years, we are well-positioned to evaluate demand against the existing resources assigned to the office. This has allowed us to initiate changes and submit resource requests to better serve young Nunavummiut. In 2018-2019, the office permanently converted the position dedicated to our reviews of critical injuries and deaths program to a second full-time senior systemic

investigator/researcher to better assist with the increased demands on our systemic advocacy program. In doing so, the office alerted the Management and Services Board (MSB) that additional resources would be required to successfully launch the reviews of critical injuries and deaths program in 2020-2021 and to help better manage other program areas. Since opening, the office has put forward two requests for additional resources (August 2017 and August 2018). The office did not receive any additional resources as a result of those requests.



<sup>5</sup> Two-year position under the Sivuliqtiksat Internship Program ended November 2018.





## SIVULIQTIKSAT INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

In November 2018, David Korgak successfully completed the Sivuliqtiksatsat Internship Program. In the spring of 2018, with support through the internship, David also graduated from the Nunavut Teacher Education Program at Nunavut Arctic College (NAC) as valedictorian of his class.

David is now a permanent member of the RCYO, supporting young people and their families as one of our child and youth advocacy specialists (advocacy specialist). Congratulations, David!



## CONTINUING EDUCATION

In the fall of 2018, Christa Kunuk, one of the RCYO's advocacy specialists, was accepted into the University of Victoria to work towards her Bachelor's degree in Child and Youth Care, specializing in Child Protection. The program emphasizes the importance of cultural competence and a commitment to social justice in order to build supportive relationships with children, youth, and their families.

Christa anticipates the knowledge gained from this program will help her be even more effective when supporting children, youth, and families in Nunavut. Pursuing her degree also aligns with Christa's career goals of assuming greater leadership responsibilities. Christa anticipates completing her degree in the fall of 2020.



## YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

One of the ways our office engages the participation of young people in our work is by promoting youth employment through the Summer Student Employment Equity Program (SSEEP). During the summer of 2018, the RCYO hired a communications coordinator with their main task being to assist the office in highlighting youth voice in our first systemic review. Rhea Monteiro's artwork will be featured in the report, available in the spring of 2019. While employed with our office, Rhea also contributed to our social media strategy, coordinating community outreach throughout Iqaluit, and took part in the National Youth Policy Session. The RCYO greatly appreciates the value our summer students bring to our work.

## IN RHEA'S WORDS

I moved to Iqaluit from Mumbai, India, in May of 2017. Moving to the Arctic was a huge change for me having lived my whole life in a warm tropical city with many people. Since I love to sing, joining the Inuksuk Drum Dancers has been really great for me because it has helped me learn some Inuktitut and a bit about Inuit culture.

Working at the RCYO over the summer was my first job ever and it has been such a wonderful experience.

As the communications coordinator I was responsible for daily media monitoring and coordinating public outreach opportunities in Iqaluit at local grocery stores and summer camps.

I learned about the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* and helped choose the right that would be the focus of the 2018 Your Story Your Voice contest. I also had the opportunity to use my creative abilities to make illustrations that would highlight youth voice in the office's review of mental health services.

Working at the RCYO has not only given me a better understanding of how important children's rights are, it has also helped me to be more responsible and get out of my comfort zone, mainly by sharing my thoughts and information with the team. I am so glad that I had the chance to work with such incredible people who believe that children and youth voices matter.

## INVESTING IN OUR TEAM

The RCYO is the only organization in Nunavut with the legal mandate to advocate for children and youth's rights and interests to the GN. Given this responsibility, we continuously strive to strengthen our internal capacity and expertise by providing staff with relevant professional development opportunities.

The following table summarizes the initiatives that RCYO staff participated in during the 2018-2019 fiscal year. Staff also received individual training tailored to their distinct needs and roles.

**TABLE 1: PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

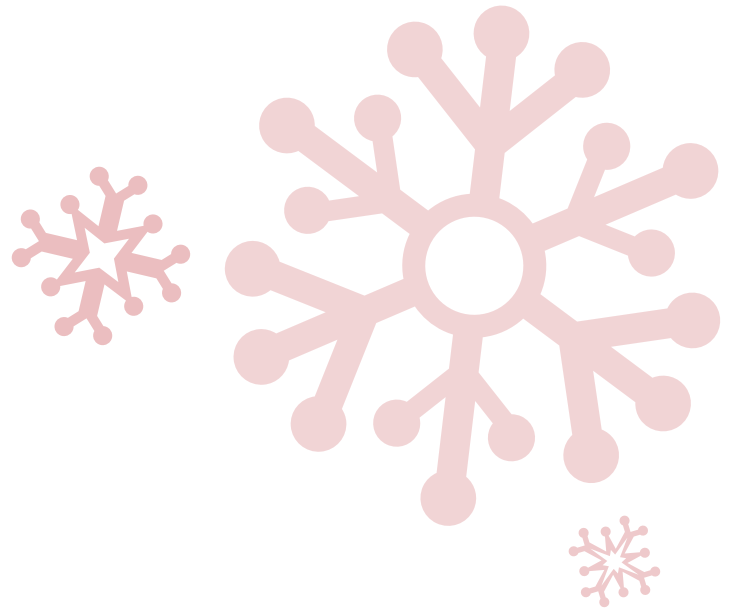
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT	DATE COMPLETED
Case Note Training	December 2018
CCCYA Advocacy Education Sessions	
Our provincial/territorial counterparts, CCCYA, provide professional support to each other on an ongoing basis. As a way of staying up to date on issues, resources, and best practices across the country, CCCYA hosts regular information sharing sessions via webex.	
Q & A on critical injury and death investigations	May 2018
Saskatchewan: Youth Voice Special Report	September 2018
Nunavut: <i>Raise Your Voice: Self-Advocacy Workshop</i>	February 2019
Indigenous Cultural Competence	April, September, December 2018, and January 2019
Indigenous Cultural Responsiveness Theory Webinar	June 2018



Article 39: United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*

All young people have the right to help if they have been hurt, neglected, or badly treated.





## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## DATE COMPLETED

### International Summer Course on the Rights of the Child

June 2018

This annual course offers international perspectives on various rights, with each year focusing on a particular group of rights. In 2018, the theme was early childhood and the right to education — Articles 28 and 29 of the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*.



RCYO staff at the Bay of Fundy during low tide.

### Inuit History and Culture

December 2018

### Inuktitut Language Training

July and November 2018, February and March 2019

### Media Training

August 2018

### Positive Space Training

October 2018

The RCYO is dedicated to providing a safe, supportive, and welcoming environment where all individuals are respected and should feel free to express themselves without fear of judgment or criticism. To convey this message to our stakeholders, last year the RCYO added a rainbow flag icon to our website and positive space stickers to our office doors. This year we supported NAC in providing LGBTQ2 positive space training. All RCYO staff attended.



### Staff Retreat

May 2018

### Trauma Informed Practice

June and October 2018

# INUIT SOCIETAL VALUES IN OUR WORK

At the RCYO, we strive to make ISV the foundation of all that we do and we are committed to ensuring these values guide the conduct of our work, as noted in Figure 2. The RCYA itself includes repeated references to recognizing and applying both Inuit culture and ISV in our work. These references hold the office accountable for embedding ISV in our work in a meaningful way. We are committed to continuous learning and ongoing discussions with Inuit partners to better understand how to ensure these values continue to guide our work now and into the future.

The RCYO provides ongoing training related to ISV and Inuit culture for all staff. Over the last year, various staff had the opportunity to participate in the following training opportunities:

- ❄ Indigenous Cultural Competence
- ❄ Inuit History and Culture
- ❄ Inuktitut language training (Pigiarvik, Allurvik, and Atangiivik)

**FIGURE 2: INUIT SOCIETAL VALUES AS THE FOUNDATION OF OUR WORK**

We are dedicated to creating an environment where children, youth, and their families feel comfortable seeking support. The **Intake Process** provides the opportunity, as the first point of contact with our office, to practice *tunnganarniq* — fostering positive relationships by being open, welcoming, and inclusive.

The goal of **Systemic Advocacy** is to address the root cause of issues. The process of gathering information and collaborating with stakeholders to understand the issue, offers an opportunity to practice *piliriqatigiinniq/ikajuqtigiinniq* — working together for a common cause. When developing recommendations, we are mindful of *qanuqtuurniq* — being innovative and resourceful.

Our **Individual Advocacy** work is guided by *aajiiqatigiinniq* — decision making through discussion and consensus. When providing individual advocacy support, we encourage young people to participate meaningfully in decisions being made about their lives and well-being. We also encourage them to share their ideas about how to best move forward or resolve issues with government. When working with government departments we strive to do so through respectful discussions and consensus, as well as collaboration.

Our **Communications and Public Awareness** efforts focus on increasing understanding of children's rights, awareness of and support for our work, and opportunities to hear about the public's concerns regarding matters affecting children and youth. We communicate regularly and respectfully with our stakeholders to nurture strong relationships — *inuuqatigiitsiarniq*.



Article 27: United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*

All young people have the right to food, clothing, and a safe place to live.

In February, the RCYO again participated in Uqausirmut Quviasuutiqarniq, meaning the “celebration of our language.” This annual celebration provides our team an opportunity to promote the use of Inuktitut and increase cultural awareness in our workplace. The theme for 2019 was traditional songs and chants. RCYO staff worked together to learn three Inuktitut children’s songs, improving their vocabulary and pronunciation, and having a bit of fun along the way!

ISV remains the first agenda item at monthly RCYO staff meetings. A sample of topics discussed over the past year includes: the value of and more ways to involve Elder advisors in our work; sharing examples of how ISV are reflected in our work, such as making decisions based on open and honest discussion; reconciliation and cultural reclamation; and future ISV training opportunities.

These regular discussions challenge RCYO staff to individually and collectively make ISV the foundation of our work, as laid out in Figure 2.



RCYO advocacy specialist Sharon Reashore with Elder advisor Regilee Ootook in Pond Inlet.



## YOUTH CHANGE MAKERS



### INADEQUATE HOUSING IN NUNAVUT

Meagan Tassiuk, a high school student from Arviat, wrote an essay titled *Overcrowding and the housing shortage in Nunavut*.

Throughout her essay she explains how safe and secure housing is connected to one’s physical and mental health, saying “adequate housing is a human right that needs to have full attention.”

She discusses the poor living conditions, such as mold and smoke damage; high unemployment rates; and population growth, which are all putting pressure on the housing supply in Nunavut. “We must work together and find a way to make the living experience of Nunavut residents safer and healthier”, says Meagan.

Her essay, which was recognized in the Legislative Assembly on March 12, 2019, calls for everyone to educate themselves on Nunavut Housing Corporation (NHC) processes, stating that “the more we know, the more we can advocate for the basic needs of the people in Nunavut.”

Article 12 of the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* states that all young people have the right to give their opinion and for adults to listen and take it seriously. The RCYO commends Meagan for speaking up about this very important issue and for encouraging others to educate themselves and speak up as well.

Meagan’s essay can be found on the NHC website at [www.nunavuthousing.ca](http://www.nunavuthousing.ca).

# ADVOCATE'S APPLAUSE



## UMINGMAK CENTRE

With child abuse and maltreatment rates 10 times the national average<sup>6</sup> and a demonstrated need for improved service coordination in Nunavut, the Umingmak Centre will provide much-needed supports using a child-centered response to child abuse and neglect.

The Arctic Children and Youth Foundation (ACYF) has led the development of the centre, which is a space where young Nunavummiut, who have experienced abuse or neglect, can access the supports of numerous service providers in one location. The centre allows the service providers to physically work together to provide coordinated care and decrease secondary trauma by minimizing the number of interviews and examinations a young person experiences during an investigation.

In collaboration with the Department of Justice, the Department of Health, the Department of Education, and the Department of Family Services, as well as the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. (NTI), the ACYF has worked to create a centre where children and their families will feel safe and comfortable during a difficult time. With child-centered services that are trauma informed, culturally relevant, and well-coordinated, the centre promises to address gaps in service delivery and contribute to the long-term well-being of children and youth in Nunavut.

The Umingmak Centre is an excellent example of what can be achieved through collaboration. We look forward to the centre's opening in 2019.

<sup>6</sup> Arctic Children and Youth Foundation.  
Retrieved from <http://www.acyf.ca/ucysc/>

## WORKING WITH OUR ELDER ADVISORS

In 2018-2019, our office continued to work with our Elder advisors; Meeka Arnakaq in Pangnirtung, Helen Iguptak in Rankin Inlet, Lucy Makkigak in Rankin Inlet, Regilee Ootook in Pond Inlet, and the late Bessie Sitatak in Kugluktuk. Under the RCYA, our office can seek the expertise of Elders on matters related to dispute resolution, Inuit culture, and ISV. Our Elder advisors offer valuable wisdom and perspectives based on lived experience and cultural knowledge. They are well-respected in their home communities and considered experts in Inuit culture and ISV. As their knowledge is influential in guiding young people, their voices are integral to our work.

In May 2018, two of our Elder advisors came to Iqaluit to join the RCYO's three-day staff retreat. Together we participated in team building exercises, a review of the RCYO's business plan priorities, and group discussions about:

- ❄ What a culturally competent workplace looks like;
- ❄ How we can contribute to reconciliation;
- ❄ How we can better incorporate our Elder advisors into our individual advocacy work;
- ❄ Examining historical and modern contexts and their impact on children, youth, and families.



RCYO staff with Elder advisors Meeka Arnakaq and Regilee Ootook.



Article 34: United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*

**All young people have the right to be free from sexual abuse.**



Our Elders also led their own session, sharing personal reflections from their childhood and together we discussed how life has changed over the years.

During the retreat, RCYO staff and Elders also re-visited the office's interpretation of how ISVs apply to our work. Each value was examined and discussed extensively to better understand the meaning of the value and to generate ideas regarding how the value could best guide the various aspects of our work. The RCYO also used information generated from this exercise to help inform the review and revision of its internal policy and procedure manual. Going forward, the RCYO is committed to re-visiting these values regularly with our own team, as well as key Inuit stakeholders. In 2019-2020, the RCYO plans to undertake a similar ISV exercise with Tuttarviit, for their input on our interpretation and application of ISV in our work.

In addition to the retreat, the RCYO team conducted a teleconference with our Elder advisors in January 2019. During this teleconference we learned what it was like when the Elders were children; discussed how times have changed, including how young people used to share their thoughts or concerns with the adults in their life; an update on the preliminary findings of our systemic review was provided to our Elders and they were asked for their thoughts on the next steps in the review process; and finally, our Elder advisors provided us with feedback related to our self-advocacy workshop.



*CCCYA members and the RCYO staff learn about throat singing.*

## SHARING INUIT CULTURE WITH THE CANADIAN COUNCIL OF CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCATES

In June 2018, the RCYO hosted the spring CCCYA meeting in Iqaluit. In addition to two days of CCCYA business, the RCYO planned a third day dedicated to Inuit cultural education for the CCCYA and RCYO staff.

The group started the day by meeting with staff from the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs who presented *An Overview of Nunavut: Inuit, History and Governance*. Following the presentation, the group visited Sylvia Grinnell Territorial Park and learned about throat singing and traditional Inuit games. A seal fleshing demonstration took place and knowledge was shared about the significant role the seal plays in Inuit culture and survival. CCCYA and RCYO staff also learned about bannock making and had an opportunity to sample local country food with community members.

It was important for the RCYO to promote awareness of Inuit history and culture with its Canadian counterparts, some of whom provide advocacy support to young Inuit in their respective jurisdictions.



# REPORTING ON OUR ACTIVITIES

In the spirit of continuous quality improvement, the RCYO undertook a comprehensive review of its policy and procedure manual. The manual was originally created using information from other child advocacy offices with consideration of Nunavut's cultural, geographic, and service contexts. Since the manual was written in preparation of the office opening, it was important for the office to review its contents after gaining several years of experience providing advocacy supports in Nunavut. In addition to receiving input from staff and Elder advisors, we also considered feedback from young people, their families, and service providers that we obtained through our client satisfaction surveys.

The manual includes direct references to relevant sections of the RCYA, descriptions of how particular processes align with and support ISV and national advocacy standards, as well as quality assurance measures.

## INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY

The GN provides many programs and services to support children and youth. Despite best intentions, problems can occur. A child, youth, or family member may not know who to contact about a program or they may feel uncomfortable raising questions with service providers. Maybe a service provider hasn't returned a parent's repeated calls or followed-up, as promised. Perhaps a youth-in-care doesn't understand why they can't visit a family member. In these types of situations, our office can assist by providing information, coaching in self-advocacy, or providing advocacy support to an individual or a group.

Every case that is brought to the RCYO's attention is unique and we tailor our response to each circumstance. In general, the individual advocacy process involves three phases: intake and assignment, investigation and problem solving, and resolution and follow-up, as laid out in Figure 3.

### PROVIDING INFORMATION

Nunavummiut can always contact our office for information on child rights and/or government services and programs that support children and youth. Even if we receive a request that falls outside of our mandate, we always try to help connect the client to the person or resource that can provide the necessary information or supports.

### SELF-ADVOCACY COACHING

It is not always easy for a young person or a concerned parent or guardian to express their views to government service providers. At any point in the advocacy process, our staff can help an individual learn the skills required to self-advocate, so they feel more empowered to express their views.

### ADVOCACY SUPPORT

Most of the cases that come to our office require advocacy support. This is when one of our advocacy specialists works directly with a young person, or on behalf of a group of young people, and with a government service provider(s) to resolve an issue. A government service provider is any individual who works for the GN and provides a government service or program to children and youth, such as a teacher, nurse, mental health worker, community social services worker (CSSW) or probation officer. Advocacy support can be basic or comprehensive, depending on the complexity of the issue and the level of RCYO involvement required to resolve the matter. Typically, advocacy support includes working directly with service providers, meetings with the child or youth and their parent(s) or caregiver(s), and case conferences. Whenever possible, the voice of the young person leads the advocacy work.



Article 24: United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*

**All young people have the right to the best health care possible.**

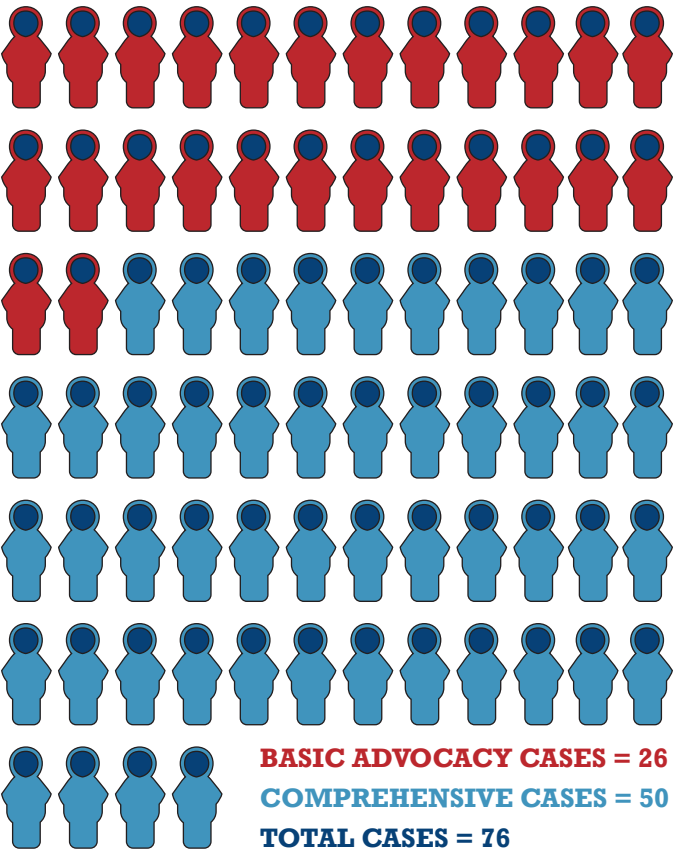
FIGURE 3: THE INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY PROCESS



INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY  
ACTIVITIES FOR 2018-2019

Our office opened 76 individual advocacy cases between April 1, 2018, and March 31, 2019. Our team also continued to work on 49 cases that carried forward from previous fiscal years. By the end of 2018-2019, 78 individual advocacy cases had been closed. Additionally, between April 1, 2018, and March 31, 2019, we opened 61 information files, which is when our office is contacted solely for information.

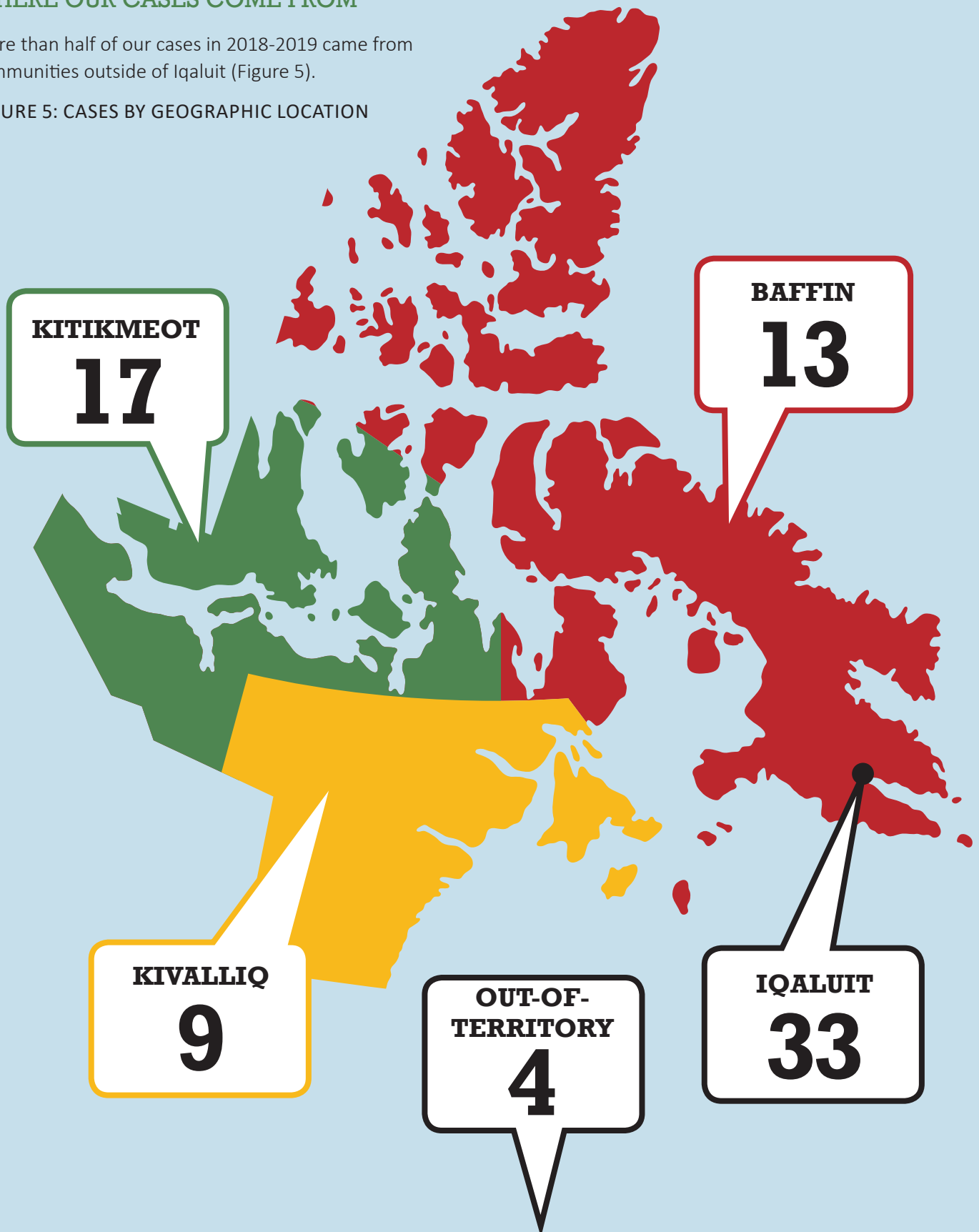
FIGURE 4: INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY CASES AND TYPE OF ADVOCACY SERVICE REQUIRED



## WHERE OUR CASES COME FROM

More than half of our cases in 2018-2019 came from communities outside of Iqaluit (Figure 5).

FIGURE 5: CASES BY GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION



Article 15: United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*

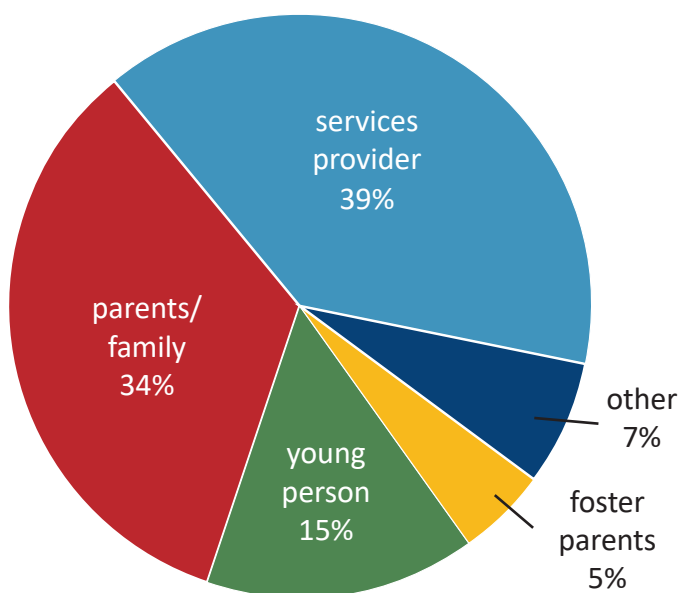
All young people have the right to choose their own friends.



## SOURCE OF OFFICE CONTACTS

While GN service providers continued to be the main contact raising individual advocacy cases to our attention in 2018-2019, parents and families are increasingly raising concerns to our office (Figure 6). Young people combined with parents and families raised approximately half (49%) of all the individual advocacy concerns brought to our attention. With our office's ongoing public awareness efforts, and as more Nunavummiut learn about our office, we anticipate that young people and their families will continue to be a major source of contacts to our office.

FIGURE 6: SOURCE OF OFFICE CONTACTS



## CASES BY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT

Our individual advocacy cases typically involve GN departments that most often offer services and/or programs to children and youth.

As in previous years, the departments the RCYO worked with most frequently followed the same order: 1) the Department of Family Services, 2) the Department of Health, 3) the Department of Education, and 4) the Department of Justice. The RCYO also worked on a small number of cases pertaining to the Nunavut Housing Corporation (NHC), District Education Authorities (DEA), NAC, and licensed daycares. Many of our cases involved multiple departments and/or multiple service areas from a single department. If we look at cases by the

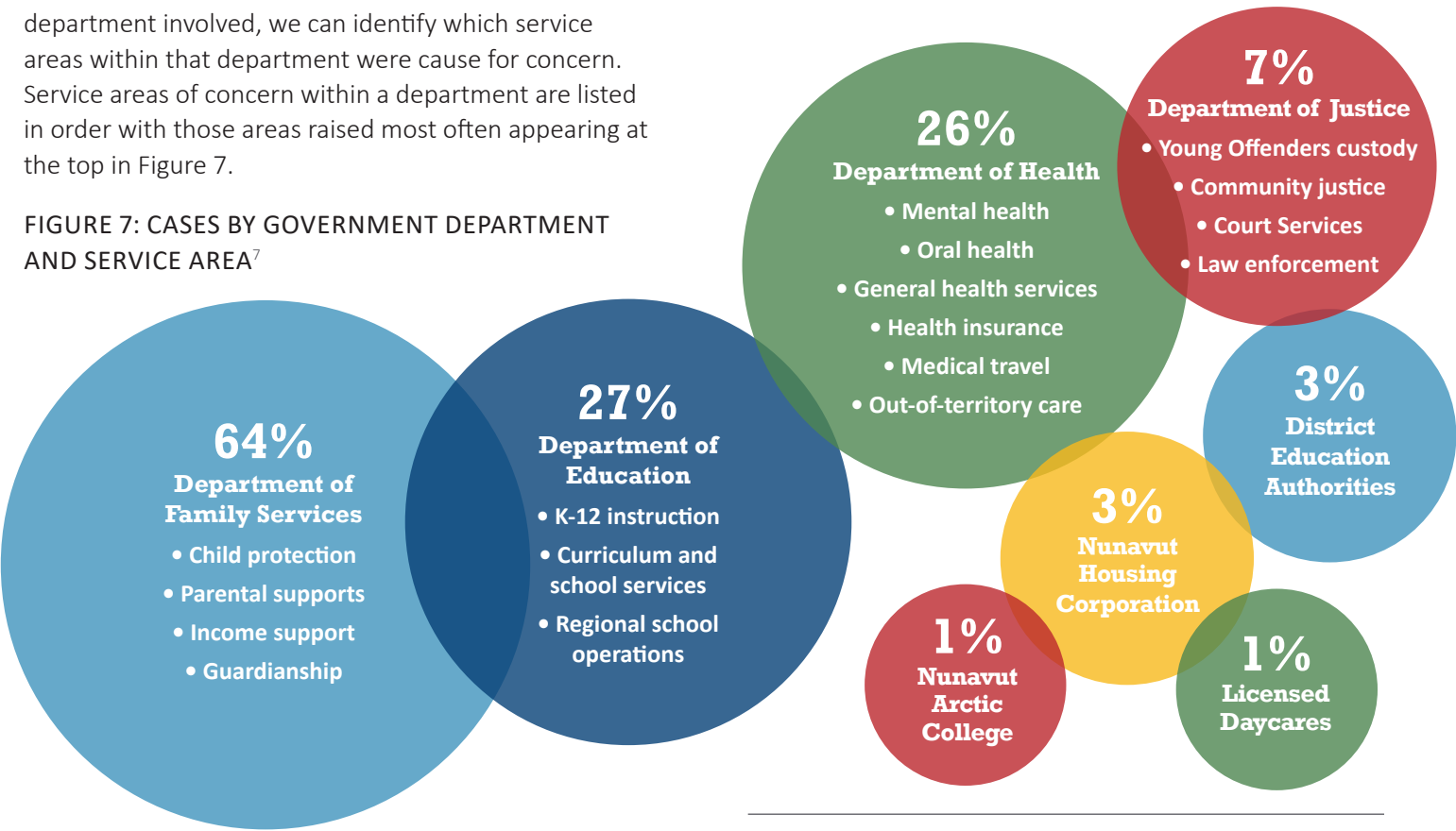
### CASE SAMPLE:

#### Inadequate Service Coordination and Planning

A number of individuals and service providers contacted the RCYO to obtain advocacy support for a young person who was struggling at school and within their community. The young person was perceived to be difficult to deal with and unsafe to be around other children. With the support of the advocacy specialist, various community services providers, who had been working independently, and the young person's guardian came together to determine how they could jointly support the young person. Working collaboratively, the service providers were able to create a plan to better support the young person within the community. Their discussions also identified the need for additional supports once the young person completed high school, which lead to the creation of a longer-term plan that would assist the young person to gain necessary life skills through a program that was not available in the community and required placement out of the territory. The advocacy specialist continued to work with the family and service providers for an extended period of time ensuring that the changes to supports within the community were realized, and that the long-term plan for additional supports was carried out in a timely manner, after the young person finished high school.

department involved, we can identify which service areas within that department were cause for concern. Service areas of concern within a department are listed in order with those areas raised most often appearing at the top in Figure 7.

FIGURE 7: CASES BY GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENT AND SERVICE AREA<sup>7</sup>



<sup>7</sup> Total percentages exceed 100% due to cases involving more than one department.

### CASE SAMPLE:

#### Keeping Family Connections

A youth who was in the care of the Director of Child and Family Services was in an out-of-territory placement. When children and youth are placed away from their community by the Department of Family Services, they are to receive a visit with family every six months. The Department of Family Services had attempted to facilitate a visit between the youth and a grandparent within the allotted six-month timeframe, but because of unforeseen circumstances the visit did not happen as planned. The department was not

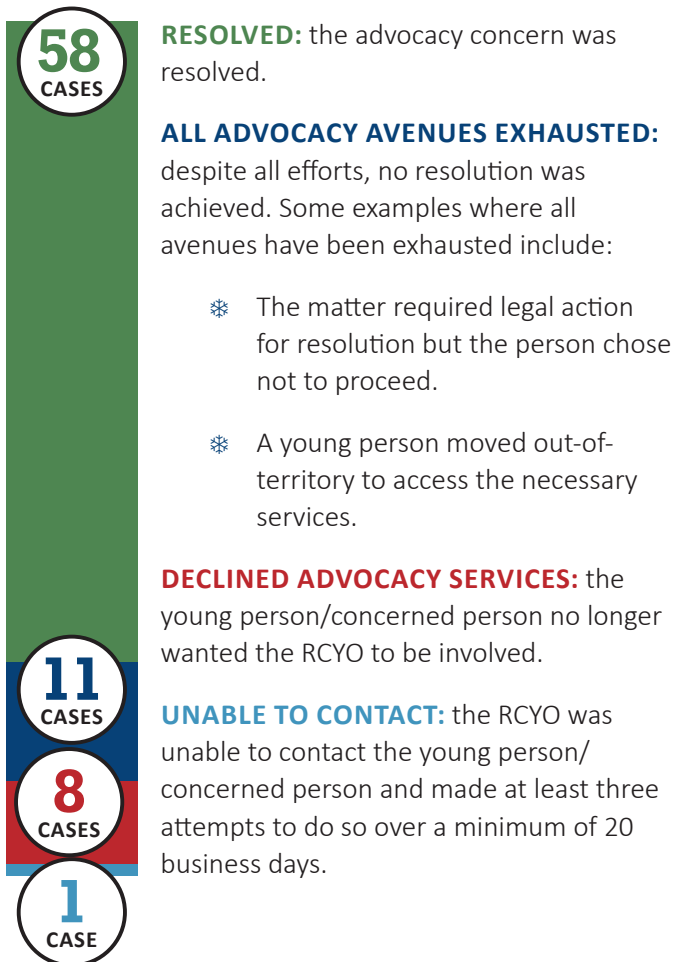
making any efforts to reschedule the cancelled visit. Both the youth and their grandparent grew concerned about the amount of time that had passed since the youth last had a family visit. After nearly a year without a visit, and failed attempts to work with the department, the grandparent contacted the RCYO and requested help. The RCYO advocacy specialist contacted the youth who confirmed that they wished to see their family. The advocacy specialist worked with the family and the department to obtain the long-overdue visit.



## CASE CLOSURES

There are four possible reasons for the RCYO to close a case. Figure 8 illustrates why 78 advocacy cases were closed this fiscal year.

FIGURE 8: 2018-2019 RCYO CASE CLOSURES



### CASE SAMPLE:

#### Family Reunification Through Service Coordination

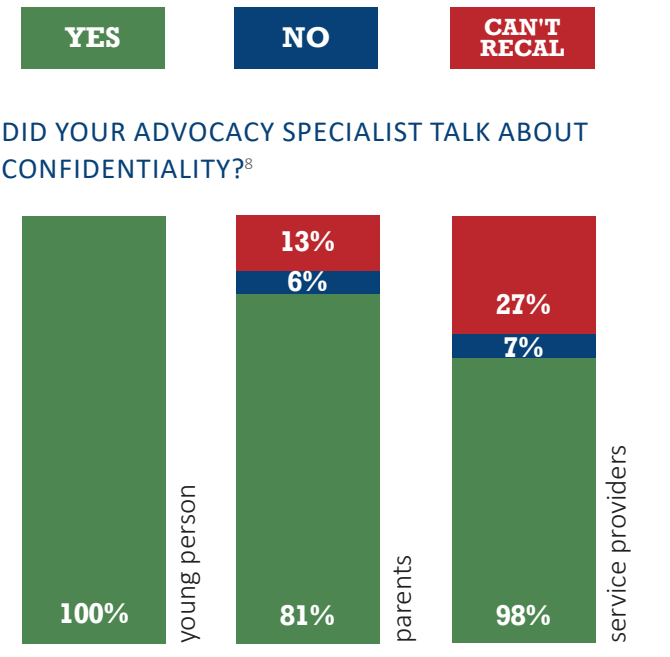
A young child in out-of-territory medical foster care through the Department of Family Services had been away from their home community for an extended period of time and was deemed to be medically ready to return back home to family. The child's high medical needs meant that they needed to live in a home that would ensure their health would continue to be stable. There was a delay in reunification for the family because the home they lived in was overcrowded and not safe for the child. In addition to inadequate housing, there wasn't a CSSW in the community to complete the necessary home study to assess alternative accommodations. An RCYO advocacy specialist encouraged the Department of Family Services to have the position staffed as promptly as possible and wrote a letter of support to the local housing authority. The letter emphasized the importance of family reunification and urged consideration of the special circumstances of this child and their family. Confirmation that the family was added to the housing waiting list was received by the RCYO. Once a CSSW arrived in the community and conducted a home study that concluded that the accommodations were safe, the child was reunited with their family. The family was able to live with relatives while continuing to wait for their own home.

CLIENT SATISFACTION SURVEY

In alignment with CCCYA national advocacy standard five – *accountability*, the RCYO developed a series of surveys to assess the effectiveness of our individual advocacy program. In 2018-2019, we continued administering the survey to young Nunavummiut, parents, and service providers who had worked with our office.

Surveys are administered after an advocacy case is closed. In 2018-2019, feedback was received from nine young Nunavummiut, 15 parents, and 31 service providers. The RCYO is committed to continually striving towards service improvements and uses feedback received through these surveys to identify areas for improvement, as well as areas of strength.

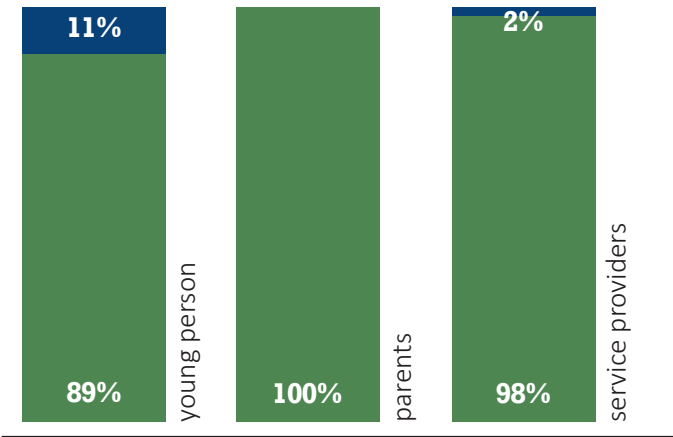
FIGURE 9: INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY CLIENT SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS



“ The service we received was done with great professionalism. ”  
– parent

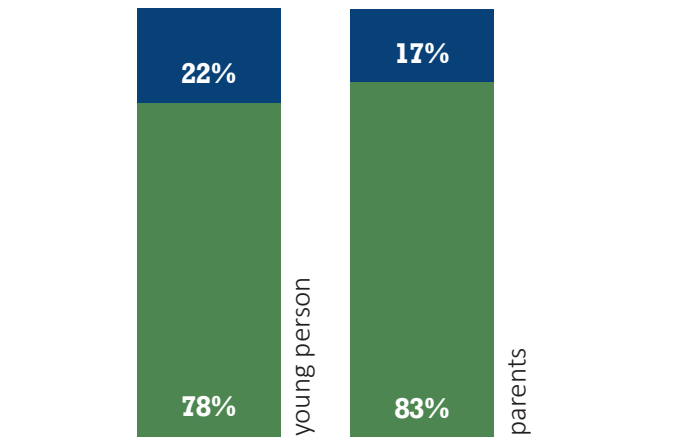
“ I appreciate the help being provided. ”  
– parent

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND OUR OFFICE TO OTHERS?



“ The office was very collaborative – prime example of collaboration. ”  
– service provider

WERE YOU HAPPY WITH WHAT HAPPENED?<sup>9</sup>





## SYSTEMIC ADVOCACY

Typically, systemic issues affect many children or youth; happen when government policies or services aren't working as intended; have a good chance of reoccurring if not addressed; and may require government to change its policies, practices, or laws.

Systemic issues can come to our office's attention in many ways. Our staff might see the same issue repeatedly in different individual cases and then flag it for further investigation. Members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs) or youth parliamentarians might raise an issue in the Legislative Assembly. A media outlet could bring an issue to the public's attention. Young people and adults can also contact our office directly with a systemic issue they would like to raise to our attention.

When our office becomes aware of a systemic issue, we can then choose to investigate it. We can do this informally or formally. Informal systemic advocacy mainly uses discussion and collaboration to bring about change. We believe this type of systemic advocacy aligns well with ISV, particularly the values of *piliriqatigiinniq* — working together for a common cause and *aajiqatigiinniq* — decision making through consensus and discussion. Issues that qualify for informal reviews tend to be less complex. They also tend to resolve quickly. Informal systemic advocacy work may or may not result in a public report outlining recommendations.

Formal systemic reviews generally focus on more complex issues. Considerations that may elevate a matter from informal to formal review status include: severity of the issue, the potential for harm if the issue is not addressed, the urgency of the issue, and the potential benefit to the public resulting from the review.

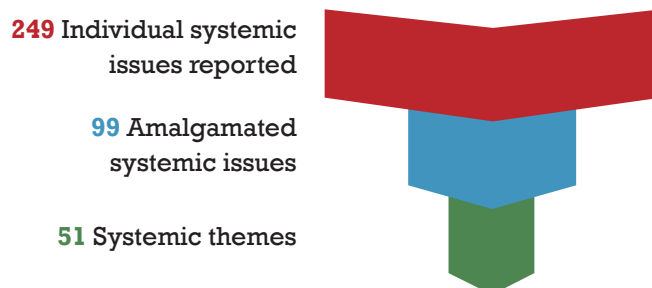
Systemic issues that require formal review tend to be comprised of many layers. For this reason, formal reviews require interviews, requests for and the review of documentation, and significant research and analysis to formulate well-informed conclusions and recommendations. Formal systemic advocacy typically results in recommendations issued to government departments targeting system improvements. Often these recommendations are shared through a public report.

The systemic advocacy team maintains a database of all systemic issues brought to the office's attention, while also tracking how often the issues are raised. For this reason, we record the number of individual systemic issues reported, as well as the number of amalgamated<sup>10</sup> systemic issues. We also look for broader themes amongst the amalgamated systemic issues. Systemic information is cumulative, and encompasses all information collected year after year.

## SYSTEMIC ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES FOR 2018-2019

Systemic data collected in 2018-2019 and added to the RCYO cumulative database can be found in Figure 10.

FIGURE 10: BREAKDOWN OF SYSTEMIC DATA



<sup>8</sup> Total percentages exceed 100% due to some respondents choosing more than one answer to the question as they had been involved in more than one case.

<sup>9</sup> This question was not asked to service providers.

<sup>10</sup> The same or similar systemic issue

# ADVOCATE'S APPLAUSE



## BUILDING ESTEEM

A pilot program called ESTEEM, Empowering Students Through Elders, Education, and Mentorship, is helping increase attendance rates and cut down on conflict at

John Arnalukjuak School, in Arviat.

"Instead of assuming that our students should show up to school, we wanted to change the [focus] to why they should show up to school and moreover what is it we're offering them while they're here,"<sup>11</sup> said the school's principal, Romeo Fournier.

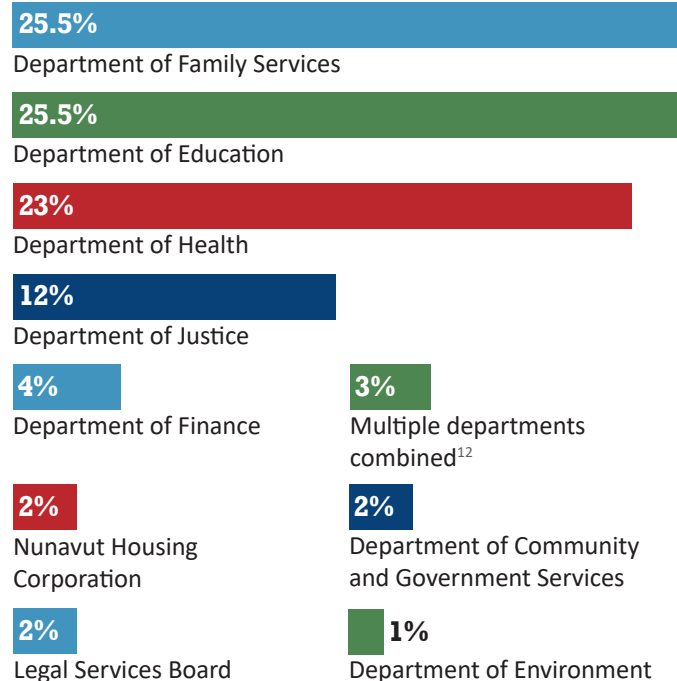
Changes already implemented by the school through the ESTEEM program include; a multi-grade, two-teacher homeroom system, which aims to create consistency and stability for the students through their high school experience; a week of on the land activities know as P.A.C.K, which stands for Promotion and Acquisition of Culture and Knowledge; as well as the introduction of the Pilimmaksarniq Centre, which is a living room-type space within the school, created from donated items. In addition to having this space available during the day to catch up on homework or take a little time out, students are welcome to invite a friend or siblings to hang out Tuesday and Thursday evenings from seven to nine.

The RCYO would like to commend the staff and students at John Arnalukjuak School for their innovative and resourceful approach to this issue which aligns with the ISV *qanuqtuurniq*. We encourage all educators to find creative ways to motivate their students.

<sup>11</sup> Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. (2018, May 2) *Pilot program at Arviat high school boosts student attendance, emotional stability*. Retrieved from <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/north/arviat-esteem-program-1.4643945>

This year, the four departments with the highest percentages of systemic issues are the Department of Family Services, Department of Education, Department of Health, and the Department of Justice. Figure 11 presents information related to systemic issues by lead department.

FIGURE 11: SYSTEMIC ISSUES BY LEAD DEPARTMENT



## YOUTH PARLIAMENT

Every two years, the Legislative Assembly holds youth parliament, where young Nunavummiut from across the territory play the role of a MLA. This event offers an opportunity for youth to learn more about politics and legislative procedures, while taking part in a full-day sitting in the Legislative Assembly.

On November 22, 2018, the Representative and RCYO staff attended the event. We heard about the issues affecting young people directly from 22 youth representing the entire territory. Youth parliamentarians spoke with passion about topics of concern, asking questions and voicing their opinions on a range of issues. The top issues identified by participants were:

<sup>12</sup> A lead department or designated authority was assigned for all but three systemic issues. These three systemic issues are categorized under "multiple", as more than one department is equally involved.

<sup>13</sup> As of December 31, 2018



1. **Inadequate housing;**
2. **Support for recreation and sport;**
3. **Mental health and wellness, including suicide prevention;**
4. **Preservation of the Inuit language; and**
5. **Wildlife management.**

At this year's event, the Honourable David Joanase, the Minister of Education, Minister of Culture and Heritage, and Minister of Languages, appeared to answer questions related to his ministerial roles and responsibilities. Youth used this opportunity to ask Minister Joanase questions related to his three portfolios, focusing on the following themes:

1. **Preservation of the Inuit language;**
2. **Education curriculum; and**
3. **Support for cultural activities.**

As in previous years, this event provided our office with insight into the issues that youth consider important. This event also encourages and supports Article 12 of the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* — the right to give their opinion and for adults to listen and take it seriously. We applaud the 2018 youth parliamentarians for their participation in this important event, and for taking the opportunity to amplify the voices of youth across the territory.

## FORMAL REVIEW OF MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

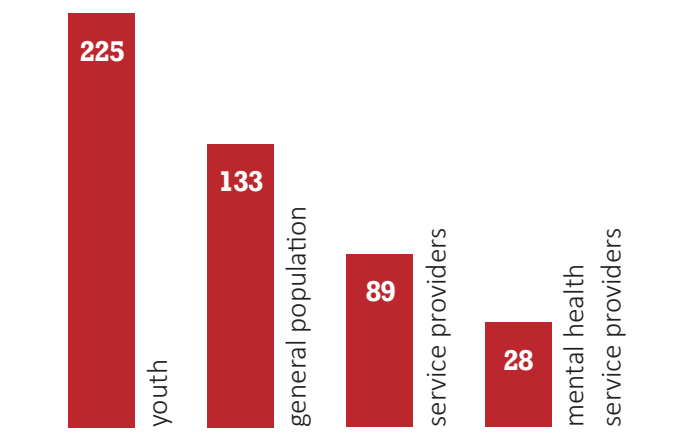
In October 2017, our office announced our first formal systemic review, with a focus on mental health services for young Nunavummiut.

We chose mental health services for children and youth in Nunavut as the topic of the review for a number of reasons including, it was one of the earliest systemic issues tracked by our office; it was a prominent issue raised repeatedly and by multiple sources, including young Nunavummiut, their families, and service providers; it was an issue that received a high score

when entered into the RCYO's Issue Categorization and Prioritization (ICP) tool; and it was a prominent systemic issue often seen in our office's individual advocacy cases. In fact, a review of the first 258 individual advocacy cases<sup>13</sup> opened by our office revealed that more than half of our health-related cases (60%) pertained to difficulties young Nunavummiut encountered with mental health services.

This work was guided by what young Nunavummiut told us. As we worked to gain a greater understanding of what mental health services for young people in Nunavut entails, we relied upon the information that youth shared in the surveys we administered to inform our review. Youth survey respondents were open and forthcoming with their opinions, their experiences, and their thoughts as to what would make mental health services in the territory better— and we listened. We also relied upon information provided to us by the RCYO's Elder advisors, three additional stakeholder groups who participated in surveys relating to mental health services for young Nunavummiut (Figure 12), individual advocacy cases that involved mental health services, literature and media on mental health for young people, as well as extensive documentation from the Department of Health and the Department of Education. In addition, we interviewed 13 key informants, comprised of employees from various GN departments as well as Inuit organizations, including NTI.

FIGURE 12: SURVEY PARTICIPANTS BY STAKEHOLDER GROUP



The Representative has the ability to monitor the steps that government takes to give effect to recommendations made by our office. We look forward to the release of our report and sharing information on the response and progress of the GN with respect to the implementation of the recommendations.

## INFORMAL SYSTEMIC ADVOCACY

In addition to formal reviews, our office conducts informal systemic advocacy work. This is when our office identifies a smaller scale issue and believes there is an opportunity for resolution through discussion and collaboration with GN stakeholders.

## OBTAINING BIRTH CERTIFICATES

Some permanent wards of the Department of Family Services do not have birth certificates on file with the department. This can result in negative consequences for the child or youth including: experiencing difficulty travelling, even for medical services, due to a lack of adequate documentation; or difficulty obtaining a social insurance number, subsequently affecting a young person's ability to obtain employment. For this reason, our office encouraged the department to ensure that staff are aware of, and are implementing, Standard 401 of the *Government of Nunavut Children and Family Services Manual*, which speaks to obtaining a birth certificate for young Nunavummiut in care. The department confirmed that staff are aware of the standards and are following them, while acknowledging that complications do arise in certain circumstances. We will continue to monitor the number of individual advocacy cases pertaining to this issue.

## RE-INSTATEMENT OF THE CHILD TAX BENEFIT AFTER A CHILD RETURNS TO THEIR FAMILY

When a child is placed in the care of the Director of Child and Family Services, the department notifies the federal government so that the child tax benefit is diverted to the GN's consolidated revenue fund. It has been reported to our office that when a child is reunited with their family, some parents have encountered challenges in having the child tax benefit reinstated, with no assistance provided by the department. We raised this

to the department's attention, and they confirmed that staff are aware of the need to provide additional support to parents regarding the reinstatement of the child tax benefit when children are reunited with their families. We have recommended the department revise their policy manual to ensure assistance is provided to families in making applications to re-instate the child tax benefit at all times. At the conclusion of this year, this had not yet been done, and we anticipate following-up with the department on this issue again in the upcoming year.

## WAITING PERIOD FOR INCOME ASSISTANCE

It had been reported to our office that under certain circumstances, the Department of Family Services would suspend income assistance clients' food allowance for a period of two months. These circumstances included a client quitting their job without cause or being fired for just cause.

Our office became aware of a child who was experiencing food insecurity as a result of this policy. This created a great deal of stress and interfered with the child's ability to participate in medical appointments and concentrate at school. Further, there were inadequate community supports or emergency relief funding sources to support this child. In raising this issue with the Department of Family Services, we were informed that changes to the Social Assistance Suspension Policy were made, in July 2018, shortly after the child's situation was resolved. Under the new policy, clients receive 50% of their basic allowance<sup>14</sup> for two calendar months, with full benefits in the third month.

In a territory where the household food insecurity rate is more than eight times higher than the Canadian average,<sup>15</sup> and in a country where children have a right to an adequate standard of living that meets their physical and mental needs, it is essential that there is adequate financial support offered to families to ensure their children and youth are food secure. Although the changes to the Social Assistance Suspension Policy allow for income assistance clients to receive 50% of their basic allowance, children and youth may still encounter food insecurity.

We strongly encourage the Department of Family Services, and all other GN departments, to give due



consideration to the impact their policies have on young Nunavummiut. While the changes to the Social Assistance Suspension Policy are encouraging, as cases arise, we will continue to advocate for those children and youth whose standard of living is impacted by the policy in its current form.

## TRANSFER OF SCHOOL RECORDS

Our office was advised that students were experiencing delays in attending school as a result of issues with the transfer of school records. These issues included that school records were being transferred by mail, and that only the principal of a school was able to make a request for this information. Our concern regarding the educational and social impact that these delays were having on young Nunavummiut was brought to the attention of the Department of Education. The department acknowledged issues with the process and advised that they were working to update the current *Student Records Regulations* and the *Student Records Management Directive*, which includes the establishment of an electronic records (e-record) transfer process. Our work on this informal systemic issue will continue into 2019-2020.

## MEDICAL TRAVEL POLICY

A number of individual advocacy cases, and subsequently systemic issues, were brought to the attention of the office regarding medical travel. The issues raised included challenges regarding escorts for pregnant mothers, parents experiencing challenges in bringing infant children with them when acting as a medical escort for older children, challenges related to family travel when a child is receiving medical care out-of-territory, a reliance upon the Department of Health's medical travel division for Department of Family Services' travel, and no compassionate travel accounted for within the policy when adult family members are out-

## CHILD RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A Child Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) is a tool that enables government to consider, in a systematic manner, how legislation, policies, programs, practices or decisions may impact children, youth, and their rights. This is of particular importance when considering that decisions may impact young people differently than adults, and that these effects may be unexpected, unintended, or indirect. In a territory where almost half of the population is under 25 years of age,<sup>16</sup> it is imperative that government consider the potential consequences that decisions may have on children and youth.

One of our office's priorities this year was to initiate an inter-jurisdictional scan of CRIA tools used in Canada and around the world. The information compiled will be used to help shape the development of a Nunavut-specific version of the tool to introduce to the GN. Developing and adopting a CRIA tool in the territory, as has been done in New Brunswick, can serve to elevate children's rights in government, while also ensuring that their well-being is taken into consideration as government makes decisions that affect their lives.

of-territory for medical treatment for extended periods of time.

Upon learning that the Department of Health was conducting a review of its medical travel policy, we shared information related to the individual advocacy cases and systemic issues that had been reported to our office. Departmental staff advised that the policy had been revised and was awaiting submission to Cabinet, with the revisions encompassing the areas of concern we had brought forward. We were further advised that work was underway to create a handbook for medical travel staff, that training would follow, and that there would be an improved focus on good client service.

In February 2019, the Minister of Health announced that while the medical travel review was not yet complete, new medical travel benefits for elective infant travel

<sup>14</sup> Basic allowance includes food and clothing allowance.

<sup>15</sup> Nunavut Food Security Coalition. (2016). Retrieved from <https://www.nunavutfoodsecurity.ca/Rates>

<sup>16</sup> According to population data retrieved from the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, as of July 1, 2017, an estimated 47.5% of Nunavut's population is between 0-24 years of age.



and pregnant women would be available through the government's enhanced medical travel policy. The expanded benefits included that all women leaving their community to give birth are provided an escort and that guardians are able to bring infants when escorting other children on medical travel. At the end of the year, the medical travel policy and guidelines available on the Department of Health website continue to be the documents from June 2013 and the remainder of the results of the medical travel review have not yet been made public.

In March 2019, the Minister of Family Services announced that effective October 1, 2018, Corporate Management had taken over the function of family services' client travel. While the announcements by the Ministers of Health and Family Services directly pertain to some of the issues raised by our office, and should enhance the services for children, youth, and their families, additional areas for improvement, such as family and compassionate travel, remain. We look forward to seeing the revised Medical Travel Policy, with the hope that the remaining areas of concern are also addressed.

## AGE OF CONSENT FOR SEXUAL ACTIVITY

Our office was made aware that there is uncertainty amongst GN service providers regarding the age at which a young person can consent to sexual activity. We informed the Department of Justice of this issue and encouraged them to ensure that accurate and easy to understand information regarding the provisions in the *Criminal Code of Canada* pertaining to consent be distributed to GN departments and service providers regularly. This would better help support employees in identifying and reporting criminal offences related to inappropriate sexual relationships that they identify through the course of their work, thereby better supporting young people. Following our recommendation, the department developed and circulated a memo to a number of GN departments regarding the age of consent for sexual activity. Following our review of this memo, we suggested a number of amendments including indicating what actions an employee should take if they become aware of an offence and a user-friendly chart that captures the

ages at which an individual can and cannot consent to sexual activity. These suggestions were adopted and incorporated into a second memo which the department circulated. While our office acknowledges the Department of Justice's response to our recommendation, we will continue to monitor this issue to ensure this information is circulated regularly amongst GN departments.

## COORDINATION OF SERVICES

While providing individual advocacy support, time and time again, RCYO staff call upon service providers to improve services coordination within and between departments. Improving service coordination would require service providers and departments to increase their communication and consistently work together to create holistic long-term plans for the young people they serve.

Addressing these shortcomings will not only improve GN services, but it will increase trust in the service systems and reduce the frustration of young people, families, and service providers alike when trying to access or provide appropriate and necessary services and supports.

As a result of the prevalence of inadequate service coordination, this issue has been noted as a systemic issue.

Despite the RCYO's call for improved service coordination with front-line service providers and the RCYO's nine meetings in 2018-2019 with departmental senior management and deputy minister-level committees to discuss progress to date, the GN has not made any notable progress towards improving service coordination amongst its child and youth serving departments.

Improved service coordination can begin through the development of an information sharing protocol that clearly indicates when it is appropriate to share information and what types of information can be shared. This protocol should align with the various ethical and practice requirements of relevant professional licensing bodies. The protocol must also be included in employee orientation information with adequate training provided; be re-visited and updated regularly; and understood and supported by all levels



within the GN, from deputy ministers to front-line staff members.

## MONITORING OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

### EDUCATION ACT SUBMISSION

As outlined in *Turaaqtavut*, one of the GN's priorities is to amend the *Education Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act* to ensure quality schooling and to improve student outcomes.

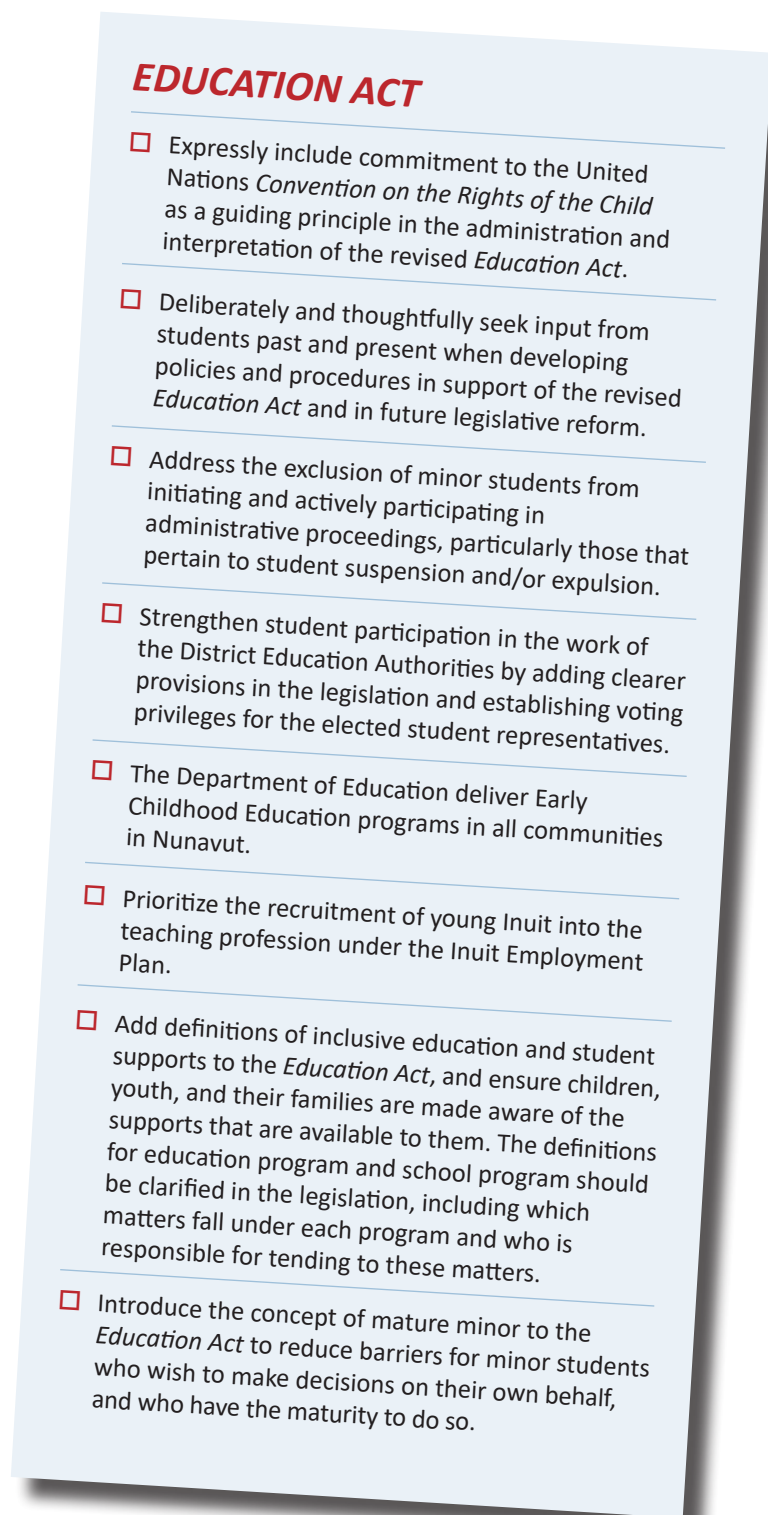
In August 2018, prior to the Department of Education beginning community consultations regarding amendments to the *Education Act*, we encouraged the Minister of Education to connect with young Nunavummiut to hear what they had to say about their education in order to reflect their thoughts and concerns in the proposed amendments. Creating opportunities to engage with youth throughout the legislative process supports Article 12 of the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* — the right to give their opinion and for adults to listen and take it seriously. We repeated this message to the Department of Education and again in our office's formal submission on the proposed amendments to the *Education Act*, which contains eight recommendations and can be found in Figure 13.

Monitoring the legislative revision process will remain a priority for our office in the coming fiscal year, as it is anticipated that the Department of Education will be tabling the proposed revisions to the *Education Act* in the Legislative Assembly in 2019-2020.

### LET'S BE AWARE/UJJIQSUQTA

As part of their responsible use of alcohol campaign, *Let's Be Aware/Ujjiqsuqta*, the Department of Finance announced that a youth strategy would launch in 2018-2019 and that youth consultations had taken place to inform it. Upon review of the campaign's website, the site describes how young people in grades six to eight in the Kivalliq region submitted artwork for consideration in a 2019 calendar. Despite youth participation, it is unclear how youth input has meaningfully informed the *Let's Be Aware/Ujjiqsuqta* campaigns.

FIGURE 13: EDUCATION ACT RECOMMENDATIONS



# ADVOCATE'S APPLAUSE



## PIRURVIK PRESCHOOL

Creating a high-quality, culturally-relevant early childhood education program was the dream of Tessa Lochhead and Karen Nutarak and that dream is coming true in several communities across the territory.

The Pirurvik Preschool method, which originated in Pond Inlet, blends Montessori teaching methods with Inuit traditional knowledge, based on the ISV of *pilimmaksarniq*.

Together they work to create a learning environment that is child-led, allowing children to learn about the topics they choose, in a manner and at a pace of their choosing.

Seven community daycares including Arctic Bay, Cambridge Bay, Igloolik, Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, Taloyoak, and the Naurainnuk daycare in Pond Inlet will be welcoming the Pirurvik Preschool method into their programming for 3 months to 5 years old.

The RCYO hopes this innovative approach to early childhood education continues to expand in Nunavut.



Photo credit: Leah Kippomee  
Ryan Kadloo, from Pond Inlet, enjoying a seal skinning activity.

The increased social media presence of *Let's Be Aware/Ujjiqsuqta* in 2018-2019 contains information for parents or caregivers, providing tips on “how to tell if youth are drinking”; “tips for talking to youth” about alcohol; and “tips to delay youth drinking”.<sup>17</sup> While our office supports providing this information, we would equally like to see information for young people that addresses their concerns about alcohol. Information sessions, like those that took place in multiple communities this year, should be ongoing, in support of Article 17 of the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* — a child’s right to access information that is important to their health and well-being.

## LEGALIZATION OF CANNABIS

Keeping apprised of the GN’s next steps with respect to the regulation of cannabis in the territory was a key area of interest for the RCYO this year. Of particular interest to our office was the GN’s objective to “protect the health and safety of Nunavummiut, especially youth”.<sup>18</sup>

Nunavut’s territorial cannabis legislation, the *Cannabis Act* and the *Cannabis Statutes Amendments Act*, were passed in June 2018, with the majority of provisions coming into force upon the federal legalization of cannabis in October 2018.

The RCYO made two recommendations that are federal responsibilities:

- ✱ We recommended that retailers be subject to restrictions on selling cannabis in forms that are attractive to children, such as lollipops or other candies.
- ✱ We recommended that packaging should contain information on potency and the potential harms of cannabis.

Our office will continue to monitor any future campaigns that directly target children and youth, particularly as the federal legislation moves toward permitting the legal sale of cannabis in edible, extract, and topical form in 2019-2020. The RCYO's recommendations to the GN regarding the legalization of cannabis can be found in Figure 14.



Article 33: United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*

All young people have the right to be protected from harmful drugs.

FIGURE 14: LEGALIZATION OF CANNABIS RECOMMENDATIONS

### Was the RCYO's recommendation regarding the legalization of cannabis satisfied?



<sup>17</sup> Let's Be Aware. (2018). Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/ResponsibleNunavut/>

<sup>18</sup> Government of Nunavut, Department of Finance. (2018). *Regulating Cannabis in Nunavut – A Proposal for Consideration and Discussion*. Retrieved from [https://www.gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/rpt\\_-\\_regulating\\_cannabis\\_in\\_nunavut-eng.pdf](https://www.gov.nu.ca/sites/default/files/rpt_-_regulating_cannabis_in_nunavut-eng.pdf)

<sup>19</sup> The *Age of Majority Act* states that a person ceases to be a minor once they turn 19 years of age.

## MONITORING OF THE OFFICE OF THE AUDITOR GENERAL'S RECOMMENDATIONS

Prior to the opening of our office, the Office of the Auditor General (OAG) of Canada conducted audits and released three reports related to services provided to children and youth in the territory:

- ❖ *Children, Youth and Family Programs and Services in Nunavut* (March 2011)
- ❖ *Safety of Schools and Childcare Facilities in Nunavut* (November 2013)
- ❖ *Follow-up Report on Child and Family Services in Nunavut* (March 2014)

Our office monitored the departments' progress in meeting the recommendations of the OAG, as we believe that achieving these recommendations would enhance the delivery of government services to children and youth in the territory. While our office did not conduct a formal assessment, review of information collected from the three departments, in addition to other relevant information, allowed us to identify areas that still require improvement with respect to fulfilling the recommendations made by the OAG and to issue letters to the respective departments.

We informed the Department of Family Services that significant shortcomings remain with respect to the department's progress in meeting the OAG's recommendations from 2011 and 2014. In our letter to the department, we advised that since our opening in 2015, 70% of all individual advocacy cases involved the Department of Family Services and that 94% of these cases pertained to child protection issues. Disappointingly, many of these issues are also identified in the OAG's reports, such as compliance with key standards, recording of basic information on children in care, and workforce management. This clearly illustrates that more must be done by the department to ensure children and youth are receiving adequate services, and that the recommendations of the OAG are properly addressed.

Correspondence to the Department of Education highlighted three areas requiring improvement, which were inspections of childcare facilities, fire evacuations for schools, and how the department manages issues of

non-compliance identified in childcare facility inspection reports. Our monitoring of the department's progress in meeting the OAG's recommendations revealed that not all childcare inspections between 2013 and 2017 were carried out annually, as required by the *Child Day Care Act* and as recommended by the OAG. Further, when we requested the dates of fire evacuations for eight randomly chosen schools for the 2016-2017 school year, we found that one of the eight schools met the requirement of six evacuation drills per year (three per season), two may have met the requirement, and five did not. We also encouraged the department to revisit how issues of non-compliance identified in childcare facility inspections reports are managed to ensure the safety of young Nunavummiut. This area of improvement was based upon the OAG's recommendation that the department should ensure that corrective action is taken on all non-compliance issues identified in childcare inspection reports before it issues licences. The Department of Education responded to our correspondence, noting that the department will continue to strive to complete all childcare inspections within a 12-month period, will continue to improve upon better documenting follow-ups and outcomes related to issues of non-compliance, and will dedicate additional resources to ensure that all schools conduct the required number of fire evacuation drills.

Similarly, the Department of Community and Government Services was encouraged to ensure that fire inspections of childcare facilities are carried out in accordance with internal procedures and that fire inspections of schools are completed with documentation to substantiate that these inspections have occurred. These areas of improvement were identified when seven randomly chosen childcare facilities did not meet the OAG's recommendations on fire inspections dates. The information we received did not support that fire inspections were carried out once per year, as a minimum, as fire inspection reports were not produced for three of the seven childcare facilities in 2016, and for two of the childcare facilities in 2017. Further, while information received from the department stated that fire inspections for schools twice per year had been achieved, subsequent documentation did not support this statement. Our request for fire inspection dates for seven randomly chosen schools revealed that for one school, there were no fire inspection reports produced in either 2015 or 2016.





While our office's monitoring of the progress these three departments have made with respect to meeting the OAG's recommendations has concluded, each department was advised that the RCYO looks forward to continuing to work together to ensure departments, and their staff, are supporting and advancing the rights of children and youth, and that the services young Nunavummiut receive are improved.

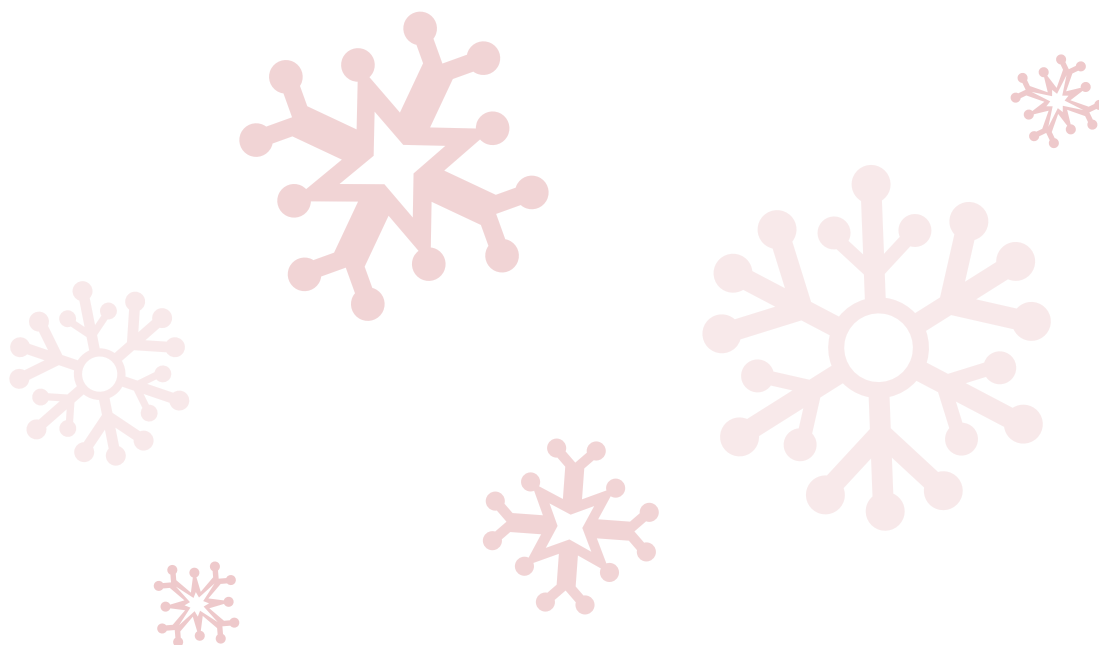
## REVIEWS OF CRITICAL INJURIES AND DEATHS

This area of our work involves conducting a review when a child or youth receiving government services experiences a serious injury or dies. These reviews provide meaningful opportunities to learn from mistakes. They are not about placing blame. Rather, they are opportunities to understand what went wrong and to initiate changes to prevent similar occurrences in the future.

We recognize these reviews are highly sensitive. They require the proper knowledge and capacity to conduct thoroughly. As a result, we continue to develop this program with particular attention and care. The section of the RCYA related to reviews of critical injuries and deaths is not yet in force.

## REVIEWS OF CRITICAL INJURIES AND DEATHS ACTIVITIES FOR 2018-2019

While development of the reviews of critical injuries and deaths program slowed in 2018-2019 due to the focus on our office's systemic review into mental health services, work in this area did continue. In April 2018, RCYO staff attended a coroner's inquest into the death of a child who died while in the care of the Department of Family Services. Attending this inquest provided an opportunity to note similarities and differences between the role of coroner's inquests and our future program. While both the Chief Coroner and the Representative may make recommendations to prevent future deaths in similar circumstances, only the Representative will have the authority to review critical injuries of children and youth. Research on critical injuries was completed in this year, specifically the duty to report critical injuries and how critical injuries are defined. Program development is anticipated to accelerate in 2019-2020, with both systemic researchers focusing on developing the reviews of critical injuries and deaths component of our work.



## COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC AWARENESS

The RCYO has a legal duty to raise Nunavummiut's awareness of child rights and to share information about how our team can work with young people to support their rights. Equally important are the opportunities this area of our work creates to listen to Nunavummiut and learn directly from them about issues affecting young people.

Our public awareness work takes many forms: presentations, information sessions, community outreach, contests, developing promotional material, attending public events, and maintaining our office's website ([www.rcynu.ca](http://www.rcynu.ca)). All of these activities share one goal which is to build and strengthen relationships with our many stakeholders including; children, youth, families, the GN and other designated authorities, and the public.

FIGURE 15: RCYO COMMUNITY VISITS



CHESTERFIELD INLET • APRIL 23-27, 2018



CAMBRIDGE BAY • MAY 13-18, 2018



TALOYOAK • AUGUST 19-24, 2018

## COMMUNICATIONS AND PUBLIC AWARENESS ACTIVITIES FOR 2018-2019

In 2018-2019, we continued to execute key initiatives outlined in our communication and public awareness plan. As resources allowed, we strategically implemented new initiatives.



POND INLET • AUGUST 27-31, 2018



RANKIN INLET • SEPTEMBER 23-28, 2018



KIMMIRUT • OCTOBER 9-12, 2018



RESOLUTE BAY • OCTOBER 14-16, 2018



Article 8: United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*

All young people have the right to an identity, an official record of who they are.



## COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Again, this year the RCYO has successfully met its goal of visiting 12 communities. This rotating schedule ensures that our staff have a presence in each community at least once every two years. Being based in Iqaluit, with a mandate to serve the entire territory, it is essential that we continue to reach all communities to raise awareness of child rights and our work.

Results from our client satisfaction surveys, as well as the communities our cases come from, demonstrate that our public outreach efforts are having an impact. In 2018-19 more than half (51%) of our individual advocacy cases came from Nunavut communities other than Iqaluit, and only 23% of service providers that were surveyed reported not being knowledgeable about the RCYO prior to working with us. It is clear that awareness of our office has grown over the last three years, however, we recognize that much work remains.

Two groups our office will be targeting to increase awareness of our work are parents and young people. Surveys for those two groups indicated that 56% of parents and 67% of young people were not at all knowledgeable about the office prior to working with us on an advocacy matter. As we continue to deliver the self-advocacy workshop to young people in grades 7-12 in every community, begin to deliver a rights game for children in grades 3-6, and develop and deliver a family advocacy workshop, we anticipate a shift in these statistics over time.

RCYO staff will continue to meet with young people, Elders, families, the public, and child and youth service providers as a regular part of each community visit. Hearing directly from Nunavummiut about issues affecting young people in their communities informs all aspects of our advocacy work. Figure 15 provides a summary of our community visits this year.



**ARCTIC BAY • OCTOBER 17-19, 2018**



**QIKIQTARJUAQ • MARCH 11-14, 2019**



**SANIKILUAQ • NOVEMBER 4-8, 2018**



**ARVIAT • FEBRUARY 24-MARCH 1, 2019**



**PANGNIRTUNG • FEBRUARY 4-8, 2019**



**IQALUIT • HEADQUARTERS**

## CHILD RIGHTS RESOURCES

### MOSESIE SPEAKS UP

This year, the RCYO completed its first made-in-Nunavut child rights book, *Mosesie Speaks Up*. The office partnered with the Department of Education and Inhabit Education to develop this book as part of the Balanced Literacy Program. Extension activities were also created to assist educators with the subject matter and provide classroom activity ideas. Copies of the book and extension activities which are geared toward a Grade 3 reading level were distributed to all Nunavut schools.

*Mosesie Speaks Up* is a story about a young boy who is having trouble seeing the board in class. He raises this to the attention of his sister and mom, who help him advocate to his teacher for a seat closer to the front of the class, and eventually an appointment with the eye doctor, when they come to town. Mosesie learns about his right to education and his right to healthcare. He also learns what advocacy means and his right to speak up, as well as adult's responsibility to help him.

### RAISE YOUR VOICE: SELF-ADVOCACY WORKSHOP

This year, RCYO staff continued to deliver the made-in-Nunavut, *Raise Your Voice: Self-Advocacy Workshop* to students in grades seven to 12 throughout the territory. The fun, interactive workshop is used to educate young Nunavummiut about their rights and to encourage self-advocacy skill development. By the end of the 2018-2019 fiscal year, 610 students in 13 Nunavut communities had participated in the workshop.

### SILA IS COLD: THE IGLOO GAME

Having received positive feedback from workshop participants and educators, the RCYO developed a child rights activity for elementary students. *Sila is Cold: The Igloo Game*, is an activity best suited for students in grades three to six. The activity starts with a very cold, shivering Sila. As participants learn about Sila's rights and

### SANTA CLAUS PARADE

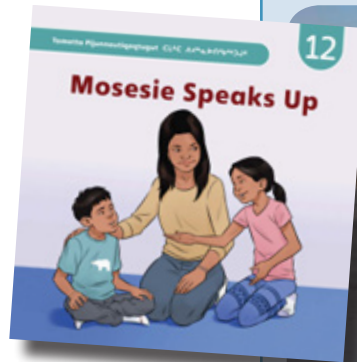


Photo credit: Sandra Omik

This year RCYO staff participated in the City of Iqaluit Santa Claus Parade, handing out copies of *Mosesie Speaks Up* and candy canes.

responsibilities through photos, blocks are placed around Sila in an igloo shape. Once all the photos are in place, Sila is warm because her igloo is complete. We will continue to use this resource on future community visits.

### WEBSITE

The RCYO uses its website to share information with our many stakeholders. While the website, ([www.rcynu.ca](http://www.rcynu.ca)) provides information about the different areas of our work, it also provides examples of how RCYO staff can help young people and their families. On our website is where you will find information on recent community visits and all of the office's publications, news releases, and reports.

Website data compiled from April 1, 2018, to March 31, 2019, showed that website sessions by Nunavut users increased from 48% in 2017-2018 to 53% this fiscal year.

### TEXT MESSAGING

Recognizing that many young people prefer to communicate via text message, and inspired by the successful launch of Kids Help Phone's texting service in the territory, the RCYO began work to make our advocacy services available through text messaging. The office conducted a jurisdictional scan across Canadian child rights advocacy offices and consulted with Kids Help



Article 21: United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*

All young people have the right to care and protection if they have been adopted or are in foster care.

Phone and the LGBT Youth Line to learn about their texting programs. At the end of 2018-2019 the RCYO had selected a company to support its texting services and was in the process of text-enabling its toll-free telephone number. The office looks forward to offering Nunavummiut a new way to connect with us in 2019-2020.

## BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

In the spring of 2018, the RCYO signed protocols with the Department of Education, the Department of Family Services, the Department of Health, and the Department of Justice. These protocols guide the working relationship between the RCYO and each respective department. They include information on:

- ❄ the RCYA,
- ❄ the RCYO's right to information and how it will be requested and provided,
- ❄ how the RCYO will conduct advocacy work, including each parties' responsibilities, and
- ❄ the purpose and frequency of proactive meetings between the RCYO and the relevant department.

The protocols ensure a clear understanding of how we will work together to achieve the best possible results for young Nunavummiut.

The RCYO held proactive meetings with each of the four main child and youth serving departments (Education, Family Services, Health, and Justice) in the spring and fall of 2018-2019, for a total of eight meetings. In addition to sharing department-specific case statistics, the RCYO used the meetings to discuss draft recommendations from the systemic review into mental health services for children and youth in Nunavut, and a variety of informal systemic issues. (See pages 23-27 of this report for further details). At every proactive meeting, the RCYO requested an update regarding each department's work to improve service coordination. Again, the meetings with individual departments revealed that the GN was not making any notable progress to address the inadequate coordination of services.

# YOUTH CHANGE MAKERS



## EMPTY SODA CANS INTO COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

What started as a recycling program has evolved into an inspiring youth-helping-youth initiative.

In 2017, Denise Nowyuk started a recycling program in Pangnirtung. Receiving \$1,500 for each full sea can of empty soda cans from a southern source, she is now looking for effective ways to put the money earned from this project back into her community.

Over the past year, Denise, has used the funds to support community feasts, youth dances, and skating for youth. In the summer, Denise plans to host outdoor activities, such as baseball, soccer, volleyball, and basketball, because, "there's not a lot of things to do over the summer for kids and teenagers".

Seeing the momentum of Denise's hard work, many young people wanted to get involved. Today, the Amaruit Group is 20 youth strong, working on filling their fourth sea can, and still coming up with innovative ways to reinvest their recycling money back into the community.

Keep up the great work Denise and the Amaruit Group. We can't wait to see what you'll do next!



Photo provided by: Denise Nowyuk  
The Amaruit Group.





## NATIONAL CHILD DAY

National Child Day, November 20, is celebrated every year to recognize Canada's ratification of the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. This year, the RCYO celebrated National Child Day in the following ways:



## YOUR STORY, YOUR VOICE CONTEST

This year the RCYO held its fourth annual Your Story, Your Voice contest focused on a child's right to education — Article 28-29 of the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

More than 150 young Nunavummiut from eleven classes participated in the 2018-2019 contest. An evaluation panel of RCYO staff reviewed each submission for creativity, originality, and accuracy. Thank you to all classes who participate and congratulations to this year's contest winners!



- ▲ 1a class at Rachel Arngnamaktiq Elementary School in Baker Lake
- ◀ Grade 11 class at Paatsaali High School in Sanikiluaq
- ▼ Grade 7-9 class at Qiqirtaq Ilihakvik High School in Gjoa Haven



## DAY CARE PARADE

This year, the Iqaluit daycares organized a school bus parade where children, daycare workers, and RCYO staff rode in three buses, decorated with coloured streamers and an RCYO National Child Day banner, showing their support of child and youth rights.



## LUNCH AT INUKSUK HIGH SCHOOL

RCYO staff sponsored and prepared a special National Child Day lunch at Inuksuk High School. With the help of Lael Kronick, the Food Studies teacher, and students, we fed more than 100 students and staff. An information table was also set up in the school's cafeteria encouraging students to learn more about their rights and the work of our office.



Article 30: United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*

All young people have the right to practice their own culture, language, and religion.

## PRESENTATIONS, KEY MEETINGS, AND COMMUNITY VISITS

Arctic Bay: schools, GN service providers, and community

Arviat: schools, GN service providers, and community

Baffin Trade Show

Cambridge Bay: schools, GN service providers, and community

Canada Revenue Agency Northern Service Centre  
RCYO staff took part in the opening and roundtable discussion on outreach services for individuals.

Canadian Red Cross

Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates

- \* Fall meeting: Moncton
- \* Spring meeting: Iqaluit

The CCCYA meets face-to-face several times per year. In June, the RCYO hosted the CCCYA in Iqaluit, Nunavut, for their spring meeting. Throughout the two-day meeting, attendees were given a city tour, took part in a qulliq lighting ceremony, enjoyed country food, and were treated to music from the Inuksuk Drum Dancers. Read more about the third day added to the agenda to focus on Inuit culture on page 13.



CCCYA enjoying the sounds of the Inuksuk Drum Dancers.

- \* Winter Meeting: Toronto
- \* Webinar on *Raise Your Voice: Self-Advocacy Workshop*

Chesterfield Inlet: schools, GN service providers, and community

Child First Initiative

- \* Northern Region
- \* Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.

RCYO staff took part in a meeting with the federal government, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), and other stakeholders regarding the Inuit-specific child care initiative.

City of Iqaluit

- \* Development Appeal Board Hearing for the Umingmak Centre
- \* Mass Registration
- \* Santa Claus Parade
- \* Summer Day Camp

Department of Education

- \* Early Learning and Child Care Training Session
- \* *Education Act* consultation
- \* Nunavut Principals' Conference
- \* Nunavut Teachers' Conference



The Representative presents at the Nunavut Teacher's Conference plenary session, hosted in Iqaluit in February 2019.

- \* Senior management team (2 proactive meetings)

Embrace Life Day Walk

Department of Family Services

- \* Community social services workers core training
- \* Ilagiittugut Centre for Youth
- \* Ilagiittugut Centre for Youth evaluation
- \* Iqaluit camp shelter
- \* Ottawa Client Liaison Officer
- \* Senior management team (2 proactive meetings)

Department of Health

- \* Makimautiksat Wellness and Empowerment Camp for Nunavut Youth
- \* Medical Travel Policy Review
- \* Mental health staff orientation training
- \* Quality of Life Secretariat
- \* Senior management team (2 proactive meetings)

Youth Wellness Team

- \* Information session
- \* Video game tournament

Iqaluit: schools, GN service providers, and community



# ADVOCATE'S APPLAUSE



## MEN AND BOYS PROGRAMMING

In 2018-2019, the Department of Family Services funded community-based initiatives that recognize the importance of supporting men and boys by engaging them in discussions around how they can prevent violence in their relationships, families, and communities.

The programs held in Kugluktuk, Pond Inlet, and Sanikiluaq gave participants opportunities to engage in activities such as, traditional tool-making; developing networks of support within their respective communities; and sharing stories and discussing daily challenges and struggles, all within a safe space. Although each program offered slightly different projects, all of them focused on men's health, healing, and recovery from experiences of violence and trauma.

One program participant said "I do feel good about myself being here at men's group", while another said it provides "a sense of fulfillment [sic]".

We would like to acknowledge the hard work of community volunteers who made these programs possible, and encourage the Department of Family Services to continue funding these and other similar initiatives through the Men and Boys Initiatives Grants.



Photo credit: Danny Maktar  
*Jigging for arctic char in Pond Inlet  
before setting up the nets.*

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse in  
Inuit Nunangat Forum



*Lynn Matte with Bonnie Poole  
from the Child and Youth Advocate's Office of  
Newfoundland and Labrador.*

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### Department of Justice

- ❄ Coroner's Inquest
- ❄ Isumaqsunnigittukkuvik Young Offenders Facility
- ❄ Senior management team (2 proactive meetings)

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### Kids Help Phone

Kimmirut: schools, GN service providers, and community

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### LGBT Youth Line

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### National Child Day

- ❄ Daycare city bus tour
- ❄ Lunch and information booth at Inuksuk High School

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### National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG)

- ❄ Inuit perspectives and best practices
- ❄ Iqaluit participants pre-meeting



*Inuvik, NT*

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Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. youth programs coordinator

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Article 17: United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*

All young people have the right to information that will help them stay well.

## Nunavut Arctic College

- ❖ Administration students
- ❖ Community Information Fair

## Pangnirtung: schools, GN service providers, and community

### Pauktuutit Child Welfare Engagement Session

Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada (Pauktuutit) hosted an engagement session in September 2018 called 'Exploring Federal Legislation on Inuit Child and Family Services'. The goal was to ensure Inuit women and children's rights, needs, and priorities were incorporated into the proposed legislation to address the over representation of Indigenous children and youth in care. Our office, along with representatives from across Inuit Nunangat and urban centres participated, resulting in Pauktuutit issuing 12 key recommendations for the federal government's consideration, including the need to have the United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child* included as a guiding principle in the proposed legislation.

In February 2019, *Bill C-92, An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families* was introduced in Parliament. Although this bill has not yet become law, it may have a significant impact on child and family services in the territory, and in turn, young Nunavummiut.

## Piruatigitiit Resource Centre

### Plan International Canada, Youth for Gender Equality dialogue

The RCYO teamed up with Plan International Canada and Inuksuk High School to facilitate a Youth for Gender Equality Dialogue in Iqaluit. The topic of the dialogue was the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal on gender equality. Thirteen youth, including a youth facilitator and note-taker, participated in the dialogue. One participant was selected to attend the Writer's Conference in Ottawa, where information from each dialogue held across the country was reviewed collectively in order to form a youth-led action plan for presentation to the federal government.

## Pond Inlet: schools, GN service providers, and community

### Quality of Life Deputy Ministers

### Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre

## Qikiqtarjuaq: schools, GN service providers, and community

## Rankin Inlet: schools, GN service providers, and community

### Royal Canadian Mounted Police

- ❖ Commanding Officer
- ❖ Iqaluit Watches

## Resolute Bay: schools, GN service providers, and community

## Sanikiluaq: schools, GN service providers, and community

## Students Commission of Canada, Youth Policy Workshop

## Taloyoak: schools, GN service providers, and community

## Tammaativvik Boarding Home

## Tungasuvvingat Inuit

## Umingmak Centre staff

## Youth Parliament 2018

## YWCA Agvvik Nunavut



# LOOKING AHEAD 2019-2020

Our office is always looking for new ways to connect with young Nunavummiut from across the territory. In the upcoming year, we will continue to connect with youth by visiting them in their home communities. In fact, in 2019-2020, we will begin our third round of community visits! From these visits, we have learned that nothing quite compares to connecting with young people face to face in a place that is familiar to them. This is where we learn the most about young people and the issues they face.

We are also planning some new initiatives to connect with youth in the upcoming year. These include working towards establishing a presence on social media and launching our office's texting service. We are hopeful these initiatives will help connect us with more youth and increase young people's understanding of our office and the supports we offer. In launching these initiatives, we recognize they are technology dependent and therefore not accessible to all youth in Nunavut. For this reason, we will continue to explore other ways to increase our reach to all youth across the territory.

In the upcoming year, we will also explore ways we can work with families more. Families offer an environment where young people grow and develop and family members often play the important role of natural advocate in their children's lives. It is important that families understand the rights their children have and understand how these rights can support the family as a whole. With this in mind, the office is in the preliminary stages of developing a rights-based advocacy workshop for parents and caregivers, which will be delivered in communities by RCYO staff.

Some of the other key priorities for the upcoming year include: evaluating the public's awareness of the office and assessing the effectiveness of the office's promotional material, conducting quality assurance audits on the individual advocacy program, developing a second child rights book as part of the Department of Education's Balanced Literacy program and initiating the development of a Nunavut-specific Child Rights Impact Assessment tool.

As an organization that is committed to continuous quality improvement, there will always be new avenues to explore as we evolve and strive to keep pace with the changes that surround us. As the office prepares to welcome a new Representative for Children and Youth in 2019-2020, the foundation established over the past five years will serve the office well during this period of transition. New leadership offers an opportunity for new ideas and represents an important next chapter in the office's history.

The well-being of children and youth is an important responsibility that does not belong to just one group; rather, it is a responsibility we all share — as parents, community, and government. Nelson Mandela once said, "There can be no keener revelation of a society's soul than the way in which it treats its children". Going forward, we should carefully consider how each one of us can better contribute to a society that places the highest of value on young people and their well-being. It is imperative that we rise to this challenge because the future of young Nunavummiut depends on us and before we know it, our future, and the future of this territory, will depend on them.





# STAFF TRAVEL SUMMARY

TABLE 2: STAFF TRAVEL SUMMARY

PURPOSE OF TRAVEL	DATES	# OF STAFF
Arctic Bay & Resolute Bay Community Visits	Oct 14-19, 2018	1
Arviat Community Visit	Feb 24-Mar 1, 2019	2
CCCYA Fall Meeting: Moncton, NB	Sept. 21-22, 2017	1
CCCYA Winter Meeting: Toronto, ON	Jan 21-25, 2019	1
Cambridge Bay Community Visit	May 13-18, 2018	2
Chesterfield Inlet Community Visit	April 22-27, 2018	1
International Summer Course on Child Rights: Moncton, NB	June 24-29, 2018	3
ITK Prevention of Child Sexual Abuse in Inuit Nunangat Forum: Ottawa, ON	Nov. 19-22, 2018	1
Kimmirut Community Visit	Oct. 9-12, 2018	2
National Inquiry into MMIWG: Guided Dialogue on Inuit Perspectives and Best Practices: Inuvik, NT	Oct. 29-Nov. 4, 2018	1
Pangnirtung Community Visit	Feb. 4-8, 2019	1
Pauktuutit Child Welfare Engagement Session: Ottawa, ON	Sept. 17-20, 2018	2
Pond Inlet Community Visit	Aug. 27-31, 2018	1
Qikiqtarjuaq Community Visit	Mar. 11-14, 2019	1
Rankin Inlet Community Visit	Sept. 23-28, 2018	1
Sanikiluaq Community Visit	Nov. 4-8, 2018	1
Taloyoak Community Visit	Aug. 19-24, 2018	1

# BUDGET REPORT

TABLE 3: SUMMARY STATEMENT OF BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES FOR FISCAL YEAR ENDED  
MARCH 31, 2019

	BUDGET	EXPENDITURES	% OF BUDGET SPENT
Permanent Salaries	1,426,000	1,329,134	
Casual Wages		107,061	
<b>TOTAL COMPENSATION &amp; BENEFITS</b>	<b>1,426,000</b>	<b>1,436,195</b>	
Travel & Transportation	195,000	66,245	
Materials & Supplies	145,000	125,269	
Purchased Services	65,000	76,910	
Contract Services	250,000	180,818	
Fees & Payments	20,000	10,506	
Other Expenses	-	9,881	
Tangible Assets	19,000	8,467	
Computer Hardware & Software	10,000	12,709	
<b>TOTAL OTHER EXPENSES</b>	<b>704,000</b>	<b>490,805</b>	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2,130,000</b>	<b>1,927,000</b>	<b>89.5%</b>
<b>SURPLUS</b>		<b>203,000</b>	<b>9.5%</b>



Article 16: United Nations *Convention on the Rights of the Child*

All young people have the right to privacy.