



## ADVOCACY

### SUPPORTING B.C. CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Every child and youth in British Columbia has the right to be healthy, safe, educated and to be heard. The dedicated team of advocates who work with the Representative for Children and Youth are committed to providing information, advice and support to vulnerable young people from birth to 18 years, and the adults who call on their behalf, who need help dealing with services or programs provided or funded by government. Most importantly they are there to ensure the rights and interests of children and youth are protected and upheld, and their views heard and considered by decision makers.

#### Who do we help?

- Children and youth receiving designated services or programs provided or funded by government including: services under the *Child, Family and Community Service Act*, early childhood development or child care, addiction services for children, mental health services for children, services under the *Adoption Act*, services under the *Youth Justice Act*, services under the *Community Living Authority Act*, and additional services or programs prescribed by regulation under the *Representative for Children and Youth Act* including:
  - a) children and youth in care;
  - b) young people under a youth agreement;
  - c) young people in custody;
  - d) children and youth with special needs;
  - e) young people transitioning to adulthood.

#### What can we do?

- Help children and youth understand their rights and what to do if those rights have been ignored;
- Help connect children and youth with the government services and programs they need;
- Help children and youth advocate for themselves by coaching them to speak up in a way that might solve their problem;
- Help children and youth be a part of discussions about the care they receive and the decisions made about them;
- Support children and youth in expressing their opinions if they are afraid;
- Be their advocate if there is no one else that can help a young person be heard.

#### What can't we do?

- Override decisions made by Ministries and child and youth serving organizations about children and youth in care;
- Represent children in custody or access matters;
- Change custody or access arrangements;
- Provide child protection services;
- Speak for children and youth in a court of law or influence a legal decision that has been made about them.

#### How you can find us?

- Call the Repline toll-free at 1-800-476-3933
- Email us at [rcy@rcybc.ca](mailto:rcy@rcybc.ca)
- Visit our web site at [www.talktotherep.ca](http://www.talktotherep.ca)

For more information, visit our web site at [www.rcybc.ca](http://www.rcybc.ca).