



News Release

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MORE WORK NEEDED ON HUGHES RECOMMENDATIONS

VICTORIA - Government must ignite new enthusiasm to address child protection measures called for in the Hughes Review 18 months ago, BC's Representative for Children and Youth said today.

"Many key Hughes Review recommendations, when acted on, will significantly and noticeably improve the lives of vulnerable children," said Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond. "But too many of these recommendations have yet to receive the attention they deserve. I urge government to commit itself to genuine support and action on the Hughes Review recommendations."

The Representative today released her '2007 Progress Report on Implementation of the Hughes Review Recommendations'. The report assesses how much activity has occurred to implement each recommendation.

Of the 62 recommendations, 18 are complete or substantially implemented, 19 are in early stages of implementation or planning, and 25 have little or no progress, or couldn't be assessed due to lack of information.

"This is concerning to me as an advocate for vulnerable children, and as an oversight body to MCFD," Turpel-Lafond said.

In releasing his report in April 2006, the Hon. Ted Hughes said that he believed "the recommendations will, with the help of the new Representative for Children and Youth, form a blueprint for the full repair of a system that protects and cares for BC's most vulnerable children and families."

The path ahead seemed very clear with the release of the Hughes Review, Turpel-Lafond said, and the widespread support it received was encouraging and inspiring.

"The Hughes Review is the best report of its kind that I have seen, and I have seen many. It was enthusiastically received throughout BC and Canada, and played a pivotal role in my decision to take on the position of BC's first Representative for Children and Youth.

"I sincerely believe what Mr. Hughes said in releasing his review - that adequate funding, continuity and commitment can lead this ministry, within a reasonable time frame, to new levels of sustained excellence.

"While some progress is being seen, over the last 18 months we have lost valuable time," she said. "There is an urgent need for government to demonstrate a sincere public commitment to the Hughes Review."

Turpel-Lafond is asking government to reiterate its continuing support for the recommendations of the Hughes Review, and for the Ministry of Children and Family Development to work with greater urgency to implement the Hughes recommendations deserving of priority attention.

The Representative for Children and Youth is an independent Officer of the Legislature, who champions the fundamental rights of vulnerable children and youth, and promotes improvements in the delivery of services to children, youth and their families. The Representative has offices in Vancouver, Victoria and Prince George.

Full report available at www.rcybc.ca

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