



Statement

August 2, 2011

The Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) has announced that it will be expanding the screening of families participating in the Child in the Home of a Relative (CIHR) program to include those families accepted prior to December 2007.

I am pleased and deeply encouraged that the Ministry is taking this step to help ensure the safety and well-being of all children and youth in the CIHR program.

In June 2010, I released a report titled *No Shortcuts to Safety* that expressed concerns about the large group of B.C. children being at risk of potential harm while living in homes of relatives, and expressed an urgent need for government to re-screen the adults caring for them under CIHR.

My Office subsequently had active and positive discussions with MCFD about the significant challenge where caregivers either were not screened at all or were screened inadequately because of a faulty screening method. I am therefore very supportive of this decision to have previously unscreened caregivers undergo screening checks.

I am also certain that grandparents and relatives will be pleased to participate in this initiative to further ensure children's safety. I know that relatives caring for their loved ones do so out of a genuine desire to make sure these children are raised with love, security and stability.

The RCY team of advocates is available to assist children, youth and caregivers to resolve issues arising from these new procedures.

We can be reached from anywhere in the province at 1-800-476-3933 or email us at rcy@rcybc.ca

Sincerely,

Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond
Representative for Children and Youth, British Columbia