

BC Association of Aboriginal
Friendship Centres
BCAAFC

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 4, 2026

BCAAFC's Response to *Don't Look Away - Two Years Later*

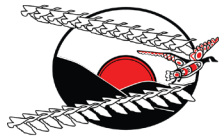
VICTORIA, B.C. – The BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (BCAAFC) welcomes the release of the Representative for Children and Youth's *Don't Look Away – Two Years Later* report and supports its call for continued, coordinated action to transform child and family services in British Columbia.

The original *Don't Look Away* report, released in 2024, examined the tragic death of an 11-year-old First Nations boy in foster care and made clear that his death was not an isolated incident. While the Province has since taken important steps, including developing a government-wide Child and Youth Well-Being Action Plan and an outcomes measurement framework, *Don't Look Away – Two Years Later* finds that too many children, youth, and families—particularly Indigenous children and families—continue to experience the impacts of longstanding systemic challenges in British Columbia's child and family service system.

"Friendship Centres have long advocated for a child and family service system that recognizes the strengths of Indigenous families and communities and invests in culturally grounded, preventative services," said Nox Stikine, Annette Morgan, President of the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres. "RCY's report reinforces what Friendship Centres see every day: when Indigenous children and families have access to culture, community, and early supports, they are better positioned to thrive. We must continue moving away from crisis-driven responses and toward a system centred on child and family well-being."

Across British Columbia, the province's 24 Friendship Centres provide culturally safe, community-based programs and services that support Indigenous children, youth, and families living in urban communities. As trusted community organizations, Friendship Centres play a critical role in connecting families with prevention-focused supports that strengthen well-being and help keep families together.

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"BCA AFC remains committed to supporting Indigenous children, youth, and families and advocating for a child welfare system that responds to the needs Friendship Centres see every day," said Celeste Hayward, Executive Director of the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres. "We look forward to continuing to work with the Representative for Children and Youth, government, and our partners to advance meaningful, lasting change that strengthens families and ensures children receive the essential community services they need before they reach crisis."

The BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres encourages all partners to review *Don't Look Away – Two Years Later* and continue the collaborative work needed to achieve lasting systemic change for Indigenous children and families across British Columbia.

Learn More

To read the *Don't Look Away – Two Years Later* report visit <https://rcybc.ca/reports/dont-look-away-two-years-later/>

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