

# Strategic Plan 2010 - 2014



Department of Child, Youth and Family Services

## Message from the Minister



As Minister responsible for the newly created Department of Child, Youth and Family Services (CYFS), I am very pleased to provide our first strategic plan which outlines our directions and priorities for the next four years.

Prior to the creation of the new department, the Department of Health and Community Services (HCS) had the mandate to provide policy direction to the Regional Health Authorities (RHAs) which, in turn, were responsible for the delivery of all programs

and services regarding Child, Youth and Family Services.

The creation of a new provincial department means there will be more targeted attention on children, youth and their families. It will help us ensure our resources and investments are aligned and utilized to their greatest potential. We will take this opportunity to review all our existing programs and services with a view to addressing gaps and driving improvements.

A key priority of the new department is to build a revitalized child protection system. We have introduced and will be implementing more child-focused, progressive legislation. We will be researching and implementing innovative solutions to address the shortage of foster homes. The long-term goal is to create a full continuum of appropriate placement options for at-risk children and youth.

Over the next four years, we will be concentrating on the effective transition of staff to the direct management of the new department and the successful implementation of a new organizational structure. We must ensure that our frontline staff and managers - who are dedicated to caring for children, and

youth and supporting families in challenging circumstances - have the necessary tools and supports in order to provide the best possible service to our children, youth and families. As Minister, I am focused on transforming this service by creating a culture of accountability, excellence and consistency across all CYFS programs and regions. This is about getting back to the basics of solid case management and service delivery. The protection and healthy development of our children is paramount.

This plan was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Transparency and Accountability Act*, and the strategic directions of government were carefully considered during the preparation of this document. These directions represent the desired physical, social, or economic outcomes government is seeking to achieve for the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. My plan clearly reflects government's commitment to the children and youth of Newfoundland and Labrador and I am accountable for achieving its important goals and objectives.

The focus of this document is the strategic plan for the years 2010-2014. This allows me to convey my plans for the transition of programs and services from the Regional Health Authorities as well as provide the public with a long term view of the transformation we are working towards. It also ensures this department maintains the same planning schedule as other government departments.

I very much look forward to implementing the strategic plan and building a department dedicated solely to key issues for children and youth.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Bull'.

Minister of Child, Youth and Family Services

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## Plan at a Glance

### Vision

Safety and well-being for all children and youth within supportive families and communities.

### Mission

By March 31, 2017, the department will have transformed the program and service delivery system to better protect children and youth and support their development.

### Goal 1:

By March 31, 2014, the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services will have strengthened the service delivery framework.

### Goal 2:

By 2014, Child, Youth and Family Services will have completed the transition from the Department of Health and Community Services and four regional health authorities to a fully operational department with a shared culture of excellence and a common identity.

*The department works in partnership with other government departments, community groups and agencies to develop, provide and promote services for children, youth and families.*



## Departmental Overview

Announced under Budget 2009, the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services (CYFS) is a new provincial department dedicated to the protection of children and youth from maltreatment by their parents, and to the promotion of the healthy development of children and youth in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Previously, this mandate was overseen by two divisions within the Department of Health and Community Services and was delivered through the four Regional Health Authorities. Government's decision to move these programs under the direct mandate of a single department reflects its overall commitment to the children of this province and will help ensure targeted attention and consistent application of services in the following areas:

- providing protective intervention to children and youth at risk or in need of protection from a parent;
- administering the adoption program which finds permanent homes for children who are available for adoption and approves applications to adopt a child from other Canadian provinces and territories as well as foreign countries; and
- providing youth who are a victim, or at risk, of maltreatment by a parent with residential, financial, educational, or rehabilitative services;

- supervising youth who are subject to community corrections supervision orders or are referred to a diversion program;
- contributing to the development of young children by establishing quality program standards for licensed child care centers, monitoring compliance and facilitating the development of child care spaces; and
- supporting Family Resource Centres which are located in communities throughout Newfoundland and Labrador.

*Protection Intervention Services*

*Adoption Services*

*Youth Services*

*Community Youth Corrections*

*Child Care Services*

*Family Resource Centres*

### Staff and Budget

The transition of employees from four Regional Health Authorities and the Department of Health and Community Services to the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services will occur in stages during 2010-11. There will be approximately 700 employees (72 male and 628 female) in 52 locations across the province throughout the four regions (see map on next page showing regional boundaries). This includes 79 staff at the provincial office. A new organizational structure and a more detailed analysis of workload will define specific resource allocations to each program area and office. The operating budget for fiscal year 2010-11 is \$163.7 million.

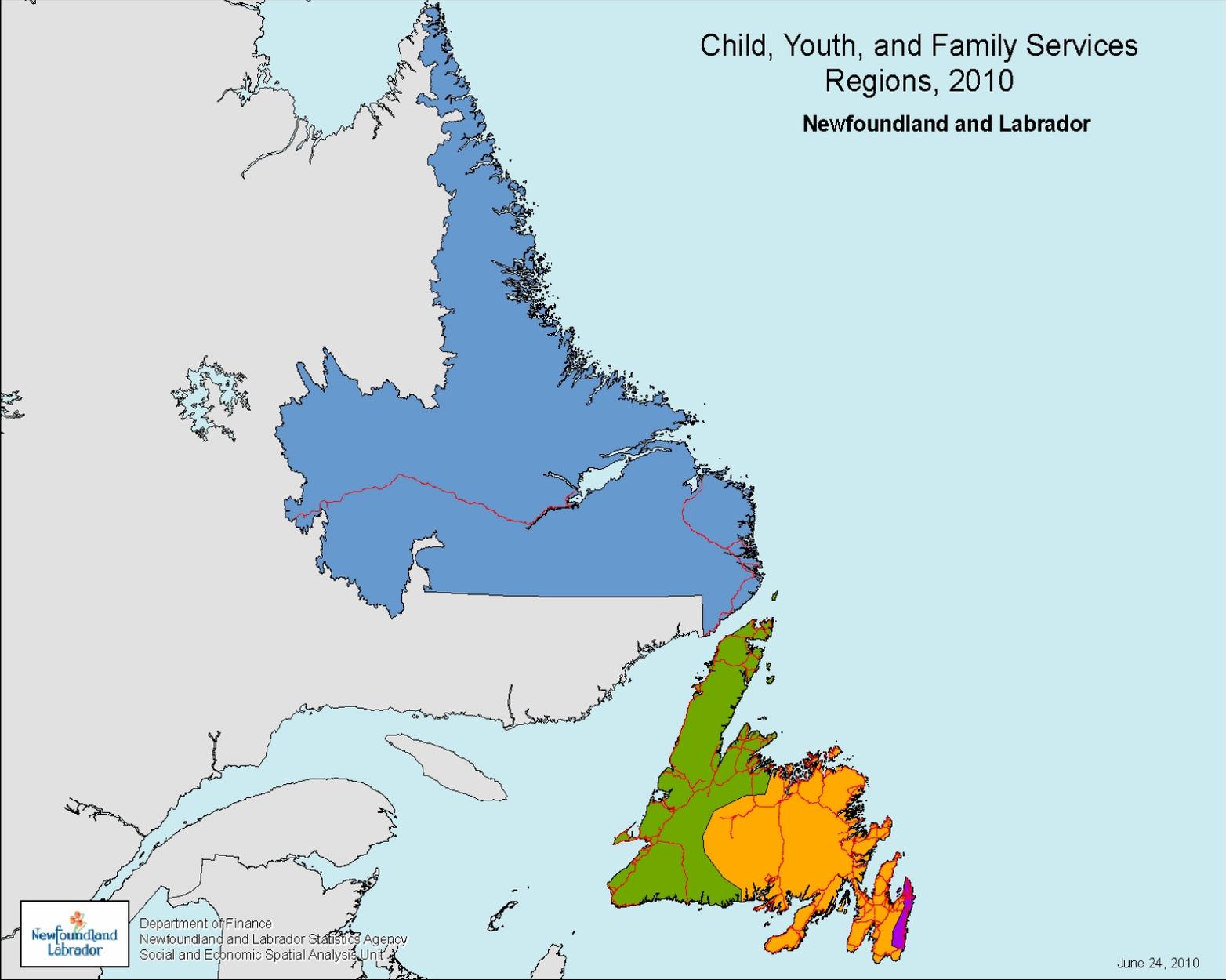
### Structure

The department is organized into three branches:

- Policies and Programs
- Service Delivery and Regional Operations
- Corporate Services



*Our ability to fulfill the challenges of the Department's legislated responsibilities is directly linked to the quality and commitment of our staff.*



## Mandate and Lines of Business

### Mandate

The Department of Child, Youth and Family Services is responsible for protecting children and youth from maltreatment by parents, and supporting their well-being and healthy development in families and the community through the provision of services and programs.

### Legislation

Legislative authority for the department's programs and services is provided by:

- *Child and Youth Family Services Act* (to be replaced by the Children and Youth Care and Protection Act when proclaimed)
- *Adoption Act*;
- *Child Care Services Act*;
- *Youth Criminal Justice Act*; and,
- *Young Person's Offences Act*.

### Lines of Business

The Department of Child, Youth and Family Services is responsible for six lines of business:

#### Protective Intervention

All programs and services within the Protective Intervention Program are designed to help ensure the safety and well-being of children. When there is concern of child maltreatment by a parent, social workers assess the risk to the child. All decisions

to intervene with the family are made based on the best interest of child. Where a child is determined to be in need of protection, the social worker, together with the family, develops a plan to reduce the identified risk including services to assist the family to care for the child or youth in the home. This could involve providing supervision in the home and ensuring the parent avails of supports and intervention services that they require to adequately care for the child or youth. These services may be provided by departmental staff, other departments or agencies of government, or through service providers within the community.

#### *As of April 1, 2010:*

- *7,758 children in Newfoundland and Labrador were receiving child, youth and family services.*
- *644 of these children were in the care of the Director through voluntary agreements or were in the custody of the Director through a court order.*

When a child or youth needs to be removed from the home for a period of time to ensure their health and safety, the department can provide the following options:

- allowing parents to enter into voluntary care agreements in situations where they are unable to care for their child and need time to seek help or resolve issues in the family home that could place the child's safety, health or well-being at risk. In these situations, the parents maintain custody of their child.
- transferring the care and custody of a child to the department through an order of the court which decides a child is in need of protective intervention and places a child in the care of the department on a temporary or permanent basis. This alternative is only pursued where it is in the best interest of the child and other options have been exhausted.
- providing child welfare allowances to relatives or significant others who are willing and capable of providing care to a child who is in need of protective intervention and, if relatives or significant others are not available, the child is considered for foster care.
- placing children with an approved foster family or in another approved residential setting that best meets that child's needs if there is no other viable option with family or significant others. There is recognition of the importance of placing siblings together and keeping children connected to their family and other individuals who are significant in their lives.



***Fostering means providing care for children who cannot live with their own families. Foster families are the backbone of the child protection system in Newfoundland and Labrador and they play a critical role in supporting the provincial government's overall mandate to keep children safe. There is an ongoing need for more foster care families across the province.***

***Foster parents are dedicated to helping children through difficult situations by offering a supportive, nurturing and safe environment. They are entrusted with the responsibility of nurturing and protecting a child, addressing and meeting the child's developmental needs, helping a child stay connected to their birth family and working with social workers to support the child.***

### Youth Services

The department assists 16 and 17 year olds who are victims, or at risk of maltreatment by a parent, or have no parent willing or able to provide care, make a successful transition to adulthood by:

- providing supportive services to young people living in their family home to address issues which could affect their safety and development in an effort to keep families together and avoid out-of-home placements;
- providing residential, financial, educational, and rehabilitative services to youth through a voluntary Youth Services Agreement; and
- supporting community groups that offer specialized services for youth at risk.

### Community Youth Corrections

The department provides rehabilitative services to youth who come into conflict with the law between their 12th and 18th birthdays. This involves working with the provincial

Department of Justice which is responsible for the operation of Secure Custody and Remand Services. CYFS services include:

- supervising young offenders in the community while serving sentences such as probation, community service orders, and the community release portion of custody sentences;
- supervising young offenders who are given open custody sentences by the court and are placed in group homes or approved community custody homes; and
- supporting 35 community Youth Justice Committees throughout the province to operate restorative justice and diversion programs as alternatives to court proceedings.

*As of April 2010, there were approximately 440 youth receiving services through Voluntary Youth Services Agreements.*

Adoption

Adoption is the legal process whereby a person or persons become a child's legal parent or parents. The department finds permanent homes for children available for adoption. Children available for adoption through a consent signed by a custodial parent or who are in the continuous custody of the Director of Child, Youth and Family Services are matched with approved

adoptive parents. The program also approves applications to adopt a child from other Canadian provinces and territories as well as foreign countries. In addition, the department provides post adoption services involving a registry to allow the sharing of information between consenting adoptees and a parent.



*Types of Adoptions*

Domestic:

Infant (age 0-3 years)

Applicants may apply to adopt a child under the age of three who is eligible for adoption in Newfoundland and Labrador. The provincial waiting period is approximately eight years depending on the number of infants available for adoption.

Older Child (age three years and older)

Applicants may apply to adopt a child over the age of three who is eligible for adoption in Newfoundland and Labrador. The provincial waiting period depends on the number of older children available for adoption. Older children available for adoption are usually in the continuous custody of a Director of Child, Youth and Family Services.

Step-parents and relatives

(parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle, or sibling of a child by birth or adoption) may apply to adopt a child using the Step-parent/Relative Self Help Kit.

Interprovincial Adoptions:

Applicants may apply to adopt a child who is identified as available for adoption by another province or territory of Canada.

The Department of Child, Youth and Family Services will work with adoption authorities in the child's province of birth to facilitate the adoption. Applicants must meet the requirements for adoption under the Adoption Act in Newfoundland and Labrador and any requirements of the province/territory where the child is born.

Intercountry:

Applicants may apply to adopt a child from a foreign country. Applicants must meet the requirements for adoption under the Adoption Act for Newfoundland and Labrador. They must also meet the requirement of the country from which they choose to adopt a child. Applicants typically use a private adoption agency licensed in Canada and the foreign country to help facilitate this complex process. Currently, there is one agency in Newfoundland and Labrador which is licensed to facilitate domestic adoptions. However, applicants can, and do avail of services of agencies located in other provinces.

### Child Care Services

The department monitors and licenses child care facilities across the province. In this province, child care must be regulated if more than four children of mixed ages or three infants are being cared for in a child care centre, or in a residential home by a person who is not their legal guardian. All regulated child care must comply with provisions set out by the *Child Care Services Act* and meet the minimum required standards to maintain their license. Regional Child Care Services staff visit regularly to ensure the standards are met and to support licensees/providers to go beyond the minimum standards.

The department provides a supplement to child care centres on behalf of eligible families to facilitate their access to quality and affordable child care. It also assists community groups in rural or under-serviced areas to start or maintain a child care service and provides financial support to licensees, as needed, to include children with special needs in a centre's regular program. As well, the department is committed to attracting and retaining Early Childhood Educators (ECE) professionals in this province through educational supplements; loan forgiveness or bursaries; and by facilitating professional development opportunities.

#### FAST FACTS

- *The first six years of life set the foundation for a child's future. During these years, children develop skills and confidence in communication, creativity and problem solving.*
- *When children benefit from a high quality early learning setting, they are more likely to do well in school.*

#### Did you know?

*The Child Care Services Subsidy Program helps eligible parents or guardians pay for child care in a licensed child care centre or a regulated family child care home. Some or all of the cost may be covered depending on family income. Transportation costs may also be covered. Families select the child care service they wish to access and the subsidy is paid directly to the licensee or provider on behalf of the family. As of April 2010, over 1,900 children in Newfoundland and Labrador are attending child care centres with support from the subsidy program.*

### Family Resource Centres

Government supports the operation and development of family resource centres in many locations across the province. These centres provide a variety of community-based activities and resources for children and families that emphasize early childhood development and parenting support. They provide a place for families to gather in a friendly and informal setting.

Programs offered reflect the needs of the families that are participating and the communities in which they are located. Types of programs include everything from drop-in playgroups, Baby and Me groups, parenting workshops, clothing exchanges to toy-lending libraries. Some include community kitchens and healthy lifestyle sessions.

Healthy Baby Clubs are also delivered which are nutrition support programs for eligible women who may need extra support during and after their pregnancy.

As of April 2010, the department is supporting 27 organizations that are delivering family resource programs in over 160 communities, with three new organizations being developed.

*Family Resource Centres support the relationship between children and parents. Qualified staff can answer questions about children's behaviour and development, as well as provide information about other parenting resources in the community.*



## The People We Serve

The Department of Child, Youth and Family Services has three primary client groups: children, youth and families. The programs and services delivered are aimed at :

### Children

- who are maltreated or at risk of maltreatment by their parents.
- who may need foster care or residential care services in the absence of a protective parent.
- who require adoptive homes for permanency and stability.
- who were adopted and have reached the age of majority and are seeking information about their birth families.
- who attend regulated child care and family resource programs.

### Youth

- who are maltreated or at risk of maltreatment by their parents.
- who require supportive services including alternative living arrangements in the absence of a protective parent.
- who are in the permanent custody of the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services.
- who are involved with community corrections.

### Families

- who require services and support to ensure the safety and well-being of their children and youth.
- who require child care services.
- who wish to adopt children, locally, nationally and internationally.
- who use the services provided by community family resource centres.

## Values

The Department of Child, Youth and Family Services will focus on creating an organizational culture based on the “best interests of the child”, accountability, and excellence. While the Department strives to demonstrate a number of organizational values, it has chosen the following six key values as a priority for this planning cycle:

### Child and Youth Centered

Each individual makes the safety and well-being of children and youth their highest priority.

### Collaborative

Each individual works with families, service providers and partners in reducing risk to children and youth and supporting their well-being.

### Responsive

Each individual works to match services to the identified risk and needs of children and youth.

### Responsible

Each individual fulfills his or her roles and commitments in the delivery of quality client services.

### Knowledgeable

Each individual makes decisions based on expertise and best practice while recognizing the importance of a healthy family experience and permanent relationships for children and youth.

### Respectful

Each individual acts in a manner that demonstrates value for diversity and culture.

*“There is no gift more precious than a child, and no duty more important than advancing the best interests of our children through the choices we make.”*

*- Speech from the Throne, March 22, 2010*

## Vision and Mission

### Vision

*Safety and well-being for all children and youth within supportive families and communities.*

### Mission

Over the next four years government will establish a strong foundation on which to advance the mandate of the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services by facilitating change and improvements to the system while delivering professional programs and services. At the same time, the department will also strive to educate the public about the department's primary mandate to protect children and to support healthy development.

As a first step, the department will be working hard to ensure the effective transition of staff and services from the Regional Health Authorities to a single department. The ability to monitor and address systemic issues will be greatly strengthened under the direct management of the department.

A new organizational model will be implemented to support frontline social workers better and allow them to focus strictly on their clinical practice. The proposed organization structure reflects what the department believes is necessary to improve the quality of service delivery and ensure the core business of CYFS is managed efficiently.

Recognizing that communities in the province face unique social and economic challenges, particularly our most isolated communities in Labrador, the department will also work with community partners to develop an innovative service delivery model for the Labrador region. The emphasis will be on recruitment strategies and on incorporating cultural and aboriginal perspectives.

A key goal under the new department is to revitalize the child protection system, guided by the implementation of improved and child-focused legislation passed in the House of Assembly Spring 2010. The department is also committed to researching innovative solutions to address the shortage of foster homes with the long-term goal of creating a full continuum of appropriate placement options for at-risk children and youth.

As well, a new computerized case management system will be implemented which will not only support the clinical practice of social workers but help ensure provincial standards can be monitored.

Separate divisions for the adoptions and community corrections programs will be established to ensure focused attention on these areas. The department will also review and update the current *Adoption Act* to ensure our adoption program is progressive and based on best practice. Government recognizes the importance of finding permanent and stable homes for children who cannot be safely reunited with their families.

The department will continue to facilitate, promote, and strengthen the development of programs and services that foster healthy child development. It will work closely with child care providers to further build capacity in the community and promote best practices in child care settings. As well, the department will focus on the development of an Early Learning and Child Care Strategy to chart directions for the future.

In addition, a series of important new initiatives will be implemented to boost the level of clinical practice and service delivery across the province, including: the establishment of an on-call system for child protection; a stand alone quality unit which will audit files and implement quality standards across all program areas; a targeted training program for staff to ensure a highly skilled workforce; and the development of a provincial adverse events policy to review significant events.

### *Other key areas for transformation recommended in the Clinical Services Review include:*

- *Stabilize the workforce through the development of a coordinated, province-wide recruitment and retention program.*
- *Implement a system for the management of complex cases.*
- *Update policies and procedures to ensure they are appropriate, consistent and clear.*
- *Develop a system for workload measurement.*



## Mission

*By 2017, the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services will have transformed the program and service delivery system to better protect children and youth and support their development.*

### Performance Measure

Transformed programs and services.

#### Indicators:

- implemented a new Children and Youth Care and Protection Act to replace the *Child, Youth and Family Services Act* and a new *Adoption Act*.
- defined core business and aligned programs and resources.
- introduced a new organizational structure and service delivery model.
- implemented a wide range of strategies to support a stable, skilled workforce.
- implemented a strategy to inform the public about the Child, Youth and Family Services mandate and their role in protecting children and supporting their development.
- developed and achieved progress on the implementation of a 10-year early learning and child care strategy.
- established a system of continuous quality improvement and outcome measurement to inform program decisions.



## Strategic Issues, Goals and Objectives

In consideration of Government's strategic directions and the mandate and financial resources of the department, the following areas have been identified as the key priorities of the Minister for the next four years. The goals identified for each issue reflect the results expected in the four-year timeframe while the objectives provide an annual focus. Measures and indicators are provided for both the goal and the first year's objectives to assist both the department and the public in monitoring and evaluating success. As the department progresses through this planning cycle, it will monitor and consider the impacts on children, youth and their families, as well as stakeholder groups.

The goals and objectives in this plan will address two strategic issues:

- Strengthening service delivery
- Creation of a new department

*Child protection is even more complex and challenging today than ever before. Those working with children, particularly those most at risk, have tough jobs and are working under difficult circumstances.*

*But when I visited social workers across the province, I noticed and appreciated their passion for their work. They assess risk and make professional clinical judgments calls in order to safeguard children. Every day, they champion the children of Newfoundland and Labrador's right to live in a safe environment.*

*It is this sort of passion that we, the department, hope to build on as we move forward; as we work towards a goal of ultimately creating the best child protection system in the country.*

*-Minister Joan Burke, speech to Corner Brook Rotary Club, April 8, 2010*

## Strategic Issue 1 Strengthening Service Delivery

The creation of a new department is the initial step in providing a mechanism to strengthen service delivery of programs and services to children, youth and their families. To support government's strategic direction to enhance child, youth and family services, it will be necessary to focus on a number of key areas. The design and implementation of a new organizational structure will be essential to ensure social workers providing frontline service delivery have the supports they need to work with children, youth and families. This includes manageable caseloads, access to good clinical supervision and administrative support. Improved information management systems and the availability of good data will also be key in strengthening service.

Additionally, strong legislation and associated policies and procedures will improve consistency and quality in the delivery of programs and services across regions. The degree of success in achieving the goals associated with this issue also include the engagement of community partners that provide a variety of services to the people we serve. Such collaborative relationships will be clearly defined through Memorandums of Understanding.

The transformation of service will take three to five years to reach fruition, however, this will be undertaken through a consultative and planned process. Progress will be tracked on a continuous basis to ensure results are achieved.



*Susan Abell, author of the Clinical Services Review, notes that the key changes required in the child protection system will require a concerted and sustained focus of strong leadership over several years. A patchwork of “quick fixes” will fail to make significant improvement.*

**Strategic Issue 1: Strengthening Service Delivery**

**Goal 1 :** By March 31, 2014, the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services will have strengthened the service delivery framework.

**Measure:** Legislation, policies and procedures have been implemented to strengthen services for children, youth and their families.

**Indicators**

- Redesigned organization model has been operationalized.
- Revised Child, Youth and Family Services and Adoption legislation in place.
- New electronic case management and data collection system implemented.
- Quality monitoring in key areas operational.
- Partnerships in place to support programs and services.
- Outcome measures in place in selected program areas.

<b>Objective 1</b>	By March 31, 2011, the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services will have implemented key initiatives towards strengthened services for children and youth.
	<p>Measure: Implemented key initiatives.</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New legislation for Child, Youth and Family Services in place.</li> <li>• Quality monitoring unit established.</li> <li>• Business review of the electronic case management system underway.</li> <li>• Provincial on-call system designed.</li> <li>• Plan for continuum of residential care developed.</li> <li>• Plan for an early learning and child care strategy for future development commenced.</li> <li>• Survey to profile foster parents and identify their training and support needs completed.</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 2</b>	By March 31, 2012, the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services will have further implemented key initiatives to strengthen service.
<b>Objective 3</b>	By March 31, 2013, the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services will identify select program areas for evaluation.
<b>Objective 4</b>	By March 31, 2014, the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services will have implemented the legislation changes and system redesign necessary to strengthened service delivery.

## Strategic Issue 2

### Creation of a new department

The establishment of one department focused solely on children, youth and families is the first step in creating the best child and youth protection system in the country. A focused approach to addressing systemic issues, consistency in the application of policies and accountability are viewed as essential to the overall success of the transformation process.

The logistics of creating a new department are challenging. The transfer of 700 employees from five different employers (the Department of Health and Community Services and four Regional Health Authorities) while ensuring quality client service is a complex undertaking that requires analysis, planning and time.

The provincial divisions for programs and corporate services were established in June 2010, with staff transferred into positions. The transition of employees from the Regional Health Authorities will happen in stages by region and is expected to be completed by the end of 2011. The transition is the initial step in our overall goal to ultimately transform CYFS services.



*By removing CYFS services from the broader health care system, the ability to monitor program activities and drive improvements will be greatly strengthened under the direct management of one department.*

*The creation of a new department clearly signals this government's commitment to making children a top priority.*

**Strategic Issue 2: Creation of a new Department**

**Goal 2 :** By 2014, Child, Youth and Family Services will have completed the transition from the Department of Health and Community Services and four regional health authorities to a fully operational department with a shared culture of excellence and a common identity.

**Measure:** Completed the transition to a new department with a shared culture and identity.

**Indicators**

- Employees transferred under the authority of a single department.
- Budget is clearly defined and allocated within the new department.
- All assets associated with the program areas under the mandate of the department have been identified and transferred.
- Required Memorandums of Understanding are in place for shared resources with RHAs and to address labour relations issues.
- Processes are established to create a shared culture and identity.

<b>Objective 1</b>	By March 31, 2011, the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services will have implemented key components towards the transition to the new department.
	<p>Measure: Implemented key components.</p> <p>Indicators:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provincial program/policy divisions as well as corporate divisions established.</li> <li>• Majority of employees transferred from the regional health authorities.</li> <li>• Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) are in place.</li> <li>• Identification of assets for transfer completed.</li> <li>• IT and records management plan for transfer developed.</li> </ul>
<b>Objective 2</b>	By March 31, 2012, the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services will have finalized transition of staff and assets to the new department.
<b>Objective 3</b>	By March 31, 2013, the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services will have implemented processes towards a shared culture and identity.
<b>Objective 4</b>	By March 31, 2014, the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services will have finalized development of the new department and commenced an evaluation of the performance of the new organizational structure.

## How to Reach Us

Further information about the services offered by the  
Department of Child, Youth and Family Services  
may be obtained from the department's website at: [www.gov.nl.ca/cyfs](http://www.gov.nl.ca/cyfs)

### **Provincial Office**

Department of Child, Youth and Family Services

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St. John's, NL A1B 4J6

Telephone: 1-709-729-0760

## Appendix

### Strategic Directions

**S**trategic directions are the articulation of desired physical, social or economic outcomes and normally require action by more than one government entity. These directions are generally communicated by Government through Throne and Budget speeches, policy documents and other communiqués. The *Transparency and Accountability Act* requires departments and public bodies to take into account these strategic directions in the preparation of their performance-based plans. This action will facilitate the integration of planning practices across Government and will ensure that all entities are moving forward on key commitments. The directions related to the Department of Child, Youth and Family Services are provided in the following pages. Each strategic direction is comprised of a number of components, or focus areas. These focus areas will be addressed through the various planning processes of the department. As indicated in the following tables, some have been addressed in this strategic plan while others are addressed in the operational or work planning processes of the department.

## 1. Enhanced child youth and family services

**Outcome: A strengthened foundation through a re-structured service delivery model that provides clients with the appropriate services at the appropriate time.**

Focus Areas — Systemic intervention in the areas of:

Components of Strategic Direction	Applicable to Other Entities Reporting to the Minister	This Direction is Addressed:		
		in the department's strategic plan	in the department's operational plan	in the branch/divisional work plans of the department
Creation of new department		√		
Information sharing, collaboration and partnership		√		
Recruitment and retention of a skilled workforce			√	
Policy and process enhancements		√		
Improved service delivery		√		
Enhancements to programs and services including measures to address complex cases and/or special needs		√		

## 2. Safety, health and well-being

### Outcome: Improved safety, health and well-being of children and youth

Focus Areas — Systemic intervention in the areas of:

Components of Strategic Direction	Applicable to Other Entities Reporting to the Minister	This Direction is Addressed:		
		in the department's strategic plan	in the department's operational plan	in the branch/divisional work plans of the department
Enhanced adoption outcomes		√		
Access to child care spaces		√		
Improved early childhood learning outcomes			√	
Increased protection of children at risk		√		
Increased number of foster families		√		
Strengthened family resource programs			√	

Department of Child, Youth and Family Services