



Changing the way we respond to children and youth who have experienced abuse in British Columbia

BC Network of Child and Youth Advocacy Centres
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News Release
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Child Abuse Reporting on the Decline

British Columbia Network of Child and Youth Advocacy Centres urging community action

VANCOUVER, BC – As the COVID-19 health pandemic has swept across the world, every community in our province has been faced with making radical changes to ensure health and safety for all. This has resulted in many children and youth being isolated at home with their families. Sadly, for too many children and youth in our province, we know that home is not a safe place to be. Across the country, service providers are noting the number of reported child abuse cases have dropped significantly. **Today, the British Columbia (BC) Network of Child and Youth Advocacy Centres is releasing a public service announcement aimed at educating citizens in our province on the moral and legal obligation to report suspicions of child abuse.** We are particularly concerned during this time where the typical safeguards for children and youth who experience abuse are impacted.

British Columbia is home to eight child and youth advocacy centres (CYACs) across the province providing support to children and youth who have experienced abuse, with one more in development. The BC Network of Child and Youth Advocacy Centres urges everyone in the province to take action as we all have a responsibility to keep children and youth in our community safe. Each of us needs to equip ourselves with the tools to recognize child abuse and speak up for our children. We can work together to ensure every child is heard and believed and do our part in being their voice when they need us most. To learn more about how to recognize child abuse or how you can help those in your community visit www.safechildbc.ca.

Our PSA can be found at: <https://youtu.be/qFj85KUQI18>

CYACs provide a safe place where children and youth who have experienced abuse can go to tell their story and be supported throughout the entire disclosure, investigation, judicial and healing journey. By supporting children, youth, and their non-offending caregivers, we provide them with customized supports that best suit their needs and will allow them to heal at their own pace.

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The BC Network of Child and Youth Advocacy Centres represents over 100 professionals responding to child abuse across BC who work as part of a CYAC team in these communities: Kamloops, Kelowna, Kootenay/Boundary Region, Maple Ridge/Pitt Meadows, Prince George, Surrey, Vancouver, Vernon, and Victoria.

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Representing child and youth advocacy centres across British Columbia