

Government action plan to address external panel recommendations

External Expert Panel Recommendation	Government Response and Action	Timelines
<p>1. CFSA, AHS and CPS work together to develop protocols, effective relationships and communication pathways, to enhance interdisciplinary and inter-system cooperation and collaboration, and develop a shared mandate for the well-being and safety of vulnerable children.</p>	<p>ACCEPT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-locate a team of law enforcement, health and child and family services professionals in Calgary as part of an enhanced service delivery model. This model will inform action in other regions of the province. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate (Fall 2011)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage psychologists to work within the Calgary and Area Child and Family Services Authority (CFSA) to provide expert consultation to CFSA staff on complex cases. This strategy will inform action in other regions of the province. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate (Summer 2011)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish case-practice forums and training for child intervention supervisors and managers within the Calgary and Area CFSA to provide opportunities for education, reviews of actual cases and mentorship; reinforce the need for critical thinking and challenge decision-making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term (within next 12 months)
<p>2. The Alberta Government provide a framework for enhanced inter-ministry and inter-department collaboration among groups including, but not limited to, Alberta Children and Youth Services (ACYS), Alberta Health Services, and Solicitor General and Public Security to share in a vision and mandate to keep Alberta's vulnerable children and families safe.</p>	<p>ACCEPT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand the Alberta Vulnerable Infant Response Team (AVIRT), currently operating in Calgary, to Edmonton and share leading practices with other regions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate (Fall 2011)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further develop cross-Ministry training partnerships to increase staff and caregiver knowledge regarding child development and available resources for vulnerable children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate (Fall 2011)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share the External Expert Panel's recommendations with partners on cross-ministry initiatives to inform future policy decisions that support vulnerable children and families, including the Prevention of Family Violence and Bullying Initiative, the Alberta Addiction and Mental Health Strategy, Safe Communities, Children and Youth with Complex Needs initiative, and AVIRT. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate (Fall 2011)
<p>3. ACYS adopt a critical incident review process conducted by an independent panel of experts.</p>	<p>ACCEPT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an immediate interim process for conducting external reviews of extraordinary deaths of children in government care; identify and compile a standing list of available experts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate (Fall 2011)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint an arm's-length Child and Family Services Council for Quality Assurance (CFSCQA) responsible for quality assurance oversight, reviewing all serious injuries and deaths involving children in government care and determining which incidents require an in-depth review by an external panel. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate (Fall 2011)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the legislation establishing the CFSCQA, provide the Council with authority to convene external expert panels to review extraordinary deaths of children in government care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term (Fall 2012)

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4. The Alberta Government enact legislation similar to section 9 of the Alberta Evidence Act that protects information provided in quality improvement reviews conducted for Alberta Health Services.	ACCEPT IN PRINCIPLE subject to a cross-ministry review and concurrence, and the usual legislative processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term (Fall 2012)
5. ACYS institute a formal protocol and process when a case is considered 'complex and challenging'.	ACCEPT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further enhance the critical incident reporting process established in August 2010 to further assist workers in their assessment of complex and challenging cases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate (Fall 2011)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective immediately, a provincial practice guideline will assist child intervention caseworkers and supervisors with managing complex and challenging cases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate (Fall 2011)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building on existing protocols and initiatives, such as Children and Youth with Complex Needs, create a formal process to support consistent case management of complex and challenging cases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term (within next 12 months)
6. As a further check and balance, ACYS take steps to identify leading edge, effective, well-researched and accepted child at-risk and family violence risk assessment tools and consider embedding these within the current casework practice model.	ACCEPT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement mandatory use of the Screening Aid for Family Violence tool in situations where family violence is a current or past concern. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate (Fall 2011)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build on current family violence training provided to front-line responders to implement advanced-level family violence training for staff that will support risk assessment and safety planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term (Fall 2012)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a provincial co-ordinator to inform and support the review and analysis of incidents within the child intervention system where family violence is present. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate (Fall 2011)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with family violence experts to enhance current risk assessment tools and safety planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate (Fall 2011)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pilot a family violence client-centred response model to improve access to services and supports for individuals affected by family violence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short-term (Spring 2012)
7. The Child Abuse Case Conference becomes a pivotal meeting that results in clarity of language around the mechanism of injury and agreed-upon next steps with a written summary that is shared with all participants.	ACCEPT <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective immediately, a supervisor/team lead will join child intervention caseworkers at all child abuse case conferences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate (Fall 2011)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective immediately, a supervisor and manager will join child intervention caseworkers at all complex case conferences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate (Fall 2011)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective immediately, the specific actions to be taken by each party following the child abuse case conferences will be clearly documented and shared with all participants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate (Fall 2011)

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share with all regions the process and practices that will be formalized out of the partnership between the Calgary and Area CFSA's work with law enforcement and health professionals to improve child abuse case conferencing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immediate (Fall 2011)
8. ACYS develop and implement a functional electronic file system instead of a combination of handwriting and typing, including forms that are easy to read.	<p>ACCEPT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin implementing the Intervention Services Information System to assist staff with managing cases by documenting activities related to placements, service providers, assessments and other day-to-day case-specific information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immediate (September 2011)
9. ACYS incorporate learning from adverse events and critical incidents through subsequent process and practice reviews, program evaluations and redesign as needed.	<p>ACCEPT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effective immediately, learnings from actual cases will be incorporated into training and educational opportunities for staff to inform practice and support continuous improvement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immediate (Fall 2011)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Finalize the electronic critical incident management system to assist with identifying trends related to critical incidents within the child intervention system, and use this information to inform training and learning opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immediate (Fall 2011) Ongoing
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Refer all incidents involving serious injuries or deaths of children and youth in care to the Child and Family Services Council for Quality Assurance. The Council will identify themes to help inform practice. Implement an online tool for staff, caregivers and agencies to share leading practices, information and feedback. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Short-term (Winter 2012) Short-term (within next 12 months)
10. ACYS implement a critical response protocol for staff when a tragic event occurs.	<p>ACCEPT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement human resource-related processes that will be followed for staff involved in a critical incident. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Immediate (Fall 2011)
11. Action on the recommendations of the 2010 Review of the Child Intervention System continue to progress.	<p>ACCEPT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue the work underway to implement 10 recommendations from the Child Intervention System Review. Current actions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of a Memorandum of Understanding with First Nations children and families. Pilot project planning for Aboriginal service delivery agencies. Creation of an Aboriginal Policy and Initiatives Division and hiring of an Assistant Deputy Minister. Establishment of a Child and Family Services Council for Quality Assurance. Improved critical incident tracking. Continued implementation of outcomes-based service delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing