



City of
Peterborough

To: Members of the Joint Services Steering Committee

From: Ken Doherty, Director of Community Services

Meeting Date: February 8, 2018

Subject: Report CSSSJSSC18-001
Changes to the Child and Family Services Act

Purpose

A report to provide information to the Joint Services Steering Committee on changes to the **Child and Family Services Act** effective January 1, 2018.

Recommendations

That the Joint Services Steering Committee endorse the recommendations outlined in Report CSSSJSSC18-001 dated February 8, 2018 of the Director of Community Services, as follows:

- a) That Report CSSSJSSC18-001, an overview of the changes to the **Child and Family Services Act** be received for information.
- b) That the presentation by a staff member of the Kawartha Haliburton Children's Aid Society be received for information.

Budget and Financial Implications

There is no direct budget or financial implications resulting from the endorsement of the recommendations of this report. Extending the age of protection may provide some reduction of demand on the services of the Youth Emergency Shelter. This may also positively affect the Social Services budget for a service that has recently been over capacity.

Background

On June 1, 2017, Bill 89, the **Supporting Children, Youth and Families Act, 2017** was passed by the Ontario Legislature and received Royal Assent. The Act includes repealing the **Child and Family Services Act (CFSA)** and enacting the **Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017 (CYFSA)** in its place, once proclaimed. It also includes amendments to the CFSA while it is still in force to provide a full range of child protection services to youth to their 18th birthday, including a new Voluntary Youth Services Agreement (VYSA) for those youth who require out of home placement. The amendments to the CFSA will come into force on January 1, 2018. It is anticipated that the **Child, Youth and Family Services Act** will be proclaimed in April 2018.

The objective of this change is to support the delivery of child protection services for 16- and 17-year-old youth in need of protection. By increasing the age of protection to include all children under the age of 18 years, 16 and 17-year-olds who are in need of protection will be eligible for the full range of child protection services, which will give them a better opportunity to get the support they need, reach their full potential, and have better outcomes as they transition to adulthood.

Key changes include:

- The full range of child protection services will be provided to 16 and 17 year olds up to their 18th birthday;
- A new voluntary agreement will be available for 16 and 17 year old youth who require out of home placement and supports;
- Continued Care and Support for Youth will be provided to youth where a voluntary service agreement expires at their 18th birthday.

The change in legislation means 16 and 17 year old youth may voluntarily engage with the Kawartha Haliburton Children's Aid Society (KHCAS) system of care for services and supports. The youth must be in need of protection, as defined within the Act. This requires an assessment by CAS. They will be offered the same services as other youth in care through their signing of a voluntary agreement. If the youth will not sign the voluntary agreement, KHCAS will assess the situation to determine next steps and if need be the youth may be apprehended under a court order.

The outcome of these changes will mean:

- Social Services will work closely with KHCAS in establishing clear communications and protocols related to youth involved with Social Services that may be in need of protection;

- Change in the age of protection may result in fewer youth requiring assistance from Ontario Works. If youth do not voluntarily agree to engage with KHCAS system of supports and are not in need of protection, they can apply for Ontario Works to determine eligibility for assistance;
- Some youth that require temporary emergency shelter services currently access this service through the YES Shelter for Youth and Families. Social Services, YES and KHCAS will work collaboratively in the development of a coordinated response that includes preventing youth from entering homelessness (YES Shelter for Youth and Families), coordinated case plans and collaboration;
- KHCAS will continue to communicate information about changes to the Act and possible implications to community partners including the Social Services Division. A follow up meeting is scheduled for May 2018.

Next Steps:

Between January and June 2018, the KHCAS will gather and analyze data from various sources and will engage with and establish key partnerships. The goal will be to have a more coordinated and clearer service system established for the end of June. KHCAS is reaching out to community partners to continue the conversation about these changes, impact to various organizations and developing common language and processes. KHCAS in conjunction with community partners will determine training needs in the community and include this as part of the transition plan. KHCAS will continue the work started with the Youth Advisory Panel and the development of youth mentorship opportunities. KHCAS may return in the fall with an update on the status of the legislative changes and the community transition.

Submitted by,

Ken Doherty
Director of Community Services

Linda Mitchelson
Social Services Division Manager

Contact Name:
Dorothy Olver, Social Services Program Manager
Phone: 705-748-8830 Ext. 3635
Toll Free: 1-855-738-3755
Fax: 705-742-7358
E-Mail: dolver@peterborough.ca