

YOUTH INDEPENDENT LIVING SERVICES

Programs

1. Youth Services – Guardianship
2. Youth Services – Protection

Description of Services

CAFCA supports youth ages 13 to 19 who meet one or more of the following criteria

- the youth is in permanent care of the Ministry of Children and Family Development (the Ministry);
- the youth is on a Ministry Youth Agreement; and/or
- the youth has been charged under the Young Offenders Act and is involved in the Ministry's Youth Justice Program.

Youth services are delivered by both ministry staff and contracted services providers (like CAFCA). The services are generally designed to provide youth with the tools to meet basic health, housing, income, educational and vocational needs; to make positive changes to assist them to realize their potential; and to develop improved, more functional relationships within their families and communities.

In partnership with community and families, youth will be supported to be safe, healthy and contributing members of their community by:

- Promoting/developing the capacity of youth to stay with family;
- Supporting communities in their responsibility to care for and protect vulnerable youth;
- Building the capacity of youth and their families to support the return of youth to their home;
- Increasing protective factors and resiliency by reducing risk factors;
- Supporting youth to exit sexual exploitation;
- Supporting youth to address their mental health, addiction and justice issues;
- Supporting homeless youth to obtain stable, safe accommodation;
- Providing and assisting youth to access services that promote their successful transition to independence;
- Supporting youth to make connections with school and/or work; and,
- Monitoring trends in adolescent behaviour that includes a way of informing parents, peers, schools of the issues and approaches that emerge.

In the case of youth in care or youth on Youth Agreements, CAFCA counsellors pay special attention to assisting the youth to prepare for leaving the care of the Ministry when they turn 19 years of age. A Youth Agreement is a legal agreement between a youth and the Ministry that may provide financial, residential, educational, and other types of support to assist youth to make healthy connections to family and community while transitioning to independence.

Services to youth may be quite brief, focusing on a specific task that can be achieved in short period of time, or they may be quite extended (lasting more than one year), so the counsellor can support the youth until they transition out of the care of the Ministry.