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Nunavut Maligaliurvia

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Assemblée législative du Nunavut

Return to Written Question

Asked by: Pat Angnakak, MLA for Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu

Asked of: Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik, MLA
Minister of Family Services

Number: 037 – 5(2)

Date: July 22, 2019

Subject: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder

The Department of Family Services is not responsible for diagnostic services, for children and youth with presumed FASD. If the Department of Family Services believes a child or youth has FASD, staff will refer to and collaborate with the Department of Health to ensure children and youth receive the care they require.

Question:

1. Broken down by fiscal year, how many children who were taken into care by the Department of Family Services have fetal alcohol spectrum disorder:

- a) 2018-19
- b) 2017-18
- c) 2016-17
- d) 2015-16

Response:

The Department of Family Services does not track the number of children taken into care who have suspected FASD. The information requested for the above timeframes is not available. The Department does not have the capacity to use FASD as a distinguishing factor in tracking information related to children and youth in care, nor do Departmental staff have the capacity to diagnose a child with FASD. However, if a child were suspected by staff as having FASD, or diagnosed by the Department of Health as having FASD,

Departmental staff would include this in the child's case documentation and advocate accordingly for them to receive the necessary services.

Question:

2. Broken down by fiscal year, how many children who were sent by the Department of Family Services to receive care out of the territory have fetal alcohol spectrum disorder:

- a) 2018-19
- b) 2017-18
- c) 2016-17
- d) 2015-16

Response:

As the Department does not track children with FASD, the exact number of children with FASD sent out-of-territory is unknown. As such, the information requested for the above timeframes is not available. The Department does track the broader reasons why children are sent out-of-territory including medical, behavioral, or mental health-related reasons. A child with presumed FASD may exhibit both medical and behavioural challenges.

As noted above, if a child's care needs exceed what the family and community can offer, due to FASD or otherwise, the Department will collaborate with necessary stakeholders to find alternative placements for the child such as residential care or group homes.

Question:

3. What percentage of the children and youth currently receiving services from the Child and Family Services Branch of the Department of Family Services are presumed to suffer from fetal alcohol spectrum disorder?

Response:

The Department of Family Services does not track the number of children with FASD. As such, it is unknown the specific percentage of children and youth receiving services, who have FASD.

Question:

4. Broken down by fiscal year, what specific counselling or training sessions were provided to families and caregivers of children and young adults with FASD?

- a) 2018-19
- b) 2017-18
- c) 2016-17
- d) 2015-16

Response:

The Department of Family Services does not provide counselling or training for families and caregivers of children and youth with FASD. The Department has provided training to foster parents on FASD in the past. If a family were struggling to care for a child or youth with

presumed FASD, the Department would work with the family to find appropriate supports and resources.

Piruatigiit, a non-profit organization that recently opened in Iqaluit, provides education, resources and programming for children, youth and adults with FASD. They also provide programming, resources and support for caregivers, including parenting skills, peer support programs, and drop-in sessions. The Government of Nunavut, through various Departments, has provided funding to support Piruatigiit's programming and training materials.

Piruatigiit Resource Centre's very first Katimajut Peer Support Program for parents and caregivers of children with FASD took place on May 30, 2019, and will continue the last Thursday of each month. Katimajut is not an FASD training or education program; rather, it is a support group for parents and caregivers parenting a child with FASD.

Question:

5. Broken down by fiscal year, what specific counselling or training sessions were provided to foster parents of children and young adults with FASD?

- a) 2018-19
- b) 2017-18
- c) 2016-17
- d) 2015-16

Response:

In FY 2015-16, the Department coordinated FASD training for foster parents. Materials on FASD are also available for foster parents. The Department recognizes the need to strengthen the foster parent program to increase supports for foster parents in Nunavut, including increasing awareness on FASD. The Department was successful in securing funding for three (3) Foster Program Coordinators who will support future work to strengthen supports and training for foster families.

Question:

6. Broken down by fiscal year, how many courses, workshops, or training programs addressing fetal alcohol spectrum disorder were delivered to staff of the Department of Family Services?

- a) 2018-19
- b) 2017-18
- c) 2016-17
- d) 2015-16

Response:

Training on FASD is included in the Department of Family Services' annual CORE training for frontline staff. Additionally, FASD resources are made available to frontline staff as recommended readings.