



STATEMENT

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Ministry of Children and Family Development

MINISTER RESPONDS TO B.C. CHILD AND YOUTH REVIEW

VICTORIA – Children and Family Development Minister Stan Hagen issued the following statement today:

“I am very pleased with this balanced, fair and thoughtful review presented by Hon. Ted Hughes.

“Together with my colleagues, I will spend the coming days looking in detail at Mr. Hughes’ recommendations and his plan. We will move expeditiously, but carefully. He has set out a reasonable timeframe to act on his recommendations. Where we can act faster, we will.

“Commenting on the review itself, we are pleased that it is forward looking, constructive and focused on continual improvement in our protection of children. It is not looking to turn back the clock to an old system of overlapping mandates and duplication that was not meeting the best interests of children.

“On balance, the report provides a blueprint that builds on the fundamental vision, direction and changes government implemented since 2001 to improve child protection and reporting. He supports the mandate we gave the Coroner’s Office to review child deaths, and the role of the ministry in reviewing deaths and injuries of children under its watch.

“Mr. Hughes acknowledges that the ministry has accomplished a great deal and endorses the resources provided in Budget 2006, as well as our initiatives such as bringing supports and services closer to communities and keeping families together.

“His support of initiatives such as the Kelowna Accord and Aboriginal governance echoes this government’s firm commitment to improving quality of life for Aboriginal people and fostering a new relationship with their communities.

“We acknowledge Mr. Hughes’ comments about areas where the ministry has struggled, and agree that the ministry can do better. We will do better and we have the resources and dedicated people to follow through. We will work collaboratively with our partners: this means our Aboriginal partners, our community partners and our federal partners. This will not happen overnight, but it will happen.

“We endorse Mr. Hughes’ call for the spirit of co-operation among legislators to do what’s best for children and youth. Only by working together will we be able to move forward in their best interests.

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“I thank Hon. Ted Hughes and his team as well as the organizations and individuals who made submissions. I also thank staff within my ministry who also provided much time and effort in responding to the needs of the review.”

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1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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