

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

### **RCY-CYSN Research report highlights key components for CYSN service delivery – Current FCC pilot model leaves more questions than answers**

*FSI calls CYSN to make funding available, equal and flexible for all children, youth and families*

**(February 24, 2023 – New Westminster, B.C.)** Family Support Institute (FSI) applauds and welcomes the most recent RCY paper, "RCY-CYSN Research review Feb 2023", where the document outlines the six key components for effective CYSN service delivery. The report is timely as the four pilot Family Connection Centre (FCC) sites have been launched around B.C. this past month, leaving people to wonder how services will be delivered and whether there will be funds to support the families in desperate need everywhere across our province, including those who do not access the FCC pilot sites.

While the FSI is awaiting the unfolding of the FCC services for children and families, we are also deeply concerned about the quality of government support programs and services operating in the regions where no FCC pilot has been launched or for those who choose not to join the pilots. Many questions still need to be answered, as the RCY report also succinctly identifies, such as funding, access, service delivery, collaboration across ministry programs, social workers' qualifications, cultural or trauma-informed care, eligibility, and crisis response, to name a few.

Due to these lingering questions, and those raised in the RCY report, FSI is asking for more attention to systems improvements in the current MCFD model and a family-centred approach that will reflect the real needs of the families in B.C. Unfortunately, the complex consequences of completely overhauling the B.C. system for kids with neurodevelopmental disabilities have yet to be adequately considered by the provincial government to date. The RCY report captured the intricacies needed to begin the engagement process with families and ensure we meet their needs starting from a place of engagement and deep listening, a process skipped entirely when the Ministry first announced changes in October 2021.

"We stand beside families and their need for flexible, malleable care options," says Executive Director Angela Clancy. "Individuals and families are the ones we need to be listening to. Families have a lot of great ideas, and there are things that they need to share that are working well and should continue. However, some things are deeply troubling for them. We need to stop and carefully listen to them, or else this system will continue to cause real harm to people."

Clancy also highlighted that respite services are critical in keeping families resilient and strong while keeping kids out of care, employed and away from burnout. "Providing respite as an essential service would be a good move," says Clancy. "Respite is a way that families can

have a small break, provide some self-care, or even manage their daily tasks without interruption. If families don't have respite, the chances of breakdown are much higher."

Inside the system, CYSN workers determining eligibility for respite has already been deemed a fractured and unsafe aspect of the government bureaucracy. In addition, these workers are closely linked to Child Protection, the system that removes children from their homes. As a result, many families do not consider the CYSN office a safe place to ask for help, and this may remain the case for many until child protection and CYSN are systemically separated.

"Additionally, we have concerns and questions about funding for Nursing Support Services and their role in the new framework. These families are also experiencing service delivery and direct funding cuts, staffing shortages, and exclusion from many programs due to underfunding. Yet, their needs are highly complex, and the risks to these families are significant", said Executive Director of FSI, Angela Clancy.

FSI stands firm that to meet the needs of the diversity of all children and families in B.C., the service offerings need to build on the principles of equity, choice, flexibility, and family-centeredness, have a trauma-informed foundation, be culturally responsive in practice, and be equally available in all geographic areas. A provision of family-centred care, cross-sector collaboration and services customized to meet individual needs, all outlined in the RCY- CYSN research report, matches the FSI belief system.

The time is now to engage deeply and listen to families firsthand about what they need, what is working, and what needs to change.

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**About Family Support Institute of BC:**

The Family Support Institute (FSI) supports families who have family members with disabilities and mental health challenges. FSI is unique in Canada and is the only grass-roots, family-to-family peer support organization. FSI believes families are the best resource to support one another and the most vital voice for their family members. FSI supports all families with children of all ages, disabilities, and concurrent conditions. FSI's supports are **free to any family**.

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