



# Gender Affirming Care



Land Acknowledgement:

- *“Everyone who works with British Columbia’s children and youth – from those in child welfare, to those in education, health care and justice – has a responsibility to ensure the proper care and safety of young people, just as those who oversee the systems that serve children and youth must ensure they are designed to provide attachments and connections that meet the needs and respect the rights of every child.”*

## The Right to Thrive:

An Urgent Call to Recognize, Respect and Nurture Two Spirit, Trans, Non-Binary and other Gender Diverse Children and Youth

JUNE 2023



# Recommendations for MCFD:

**5) That MCFD establish an action plan and timelines** for the incorporation of the principles developed under the leadership of the Ministry of Health into its procurement, policies, education/training protocols and materials, practice guidelines and parental/familial/peer support services, across all service lines, ensuring staff feel knowledgeable and capable in providing gender-affirming care to 2STNBGD children and their families

- By Jun 30<sup>th</sup> 2024

**6) That MCFD create a minimum of two provincial positions to provide specialized practice consultation and support to MCFD staff, caregivers and out-of-care care providers involved in the care of 2STNBGD children and youth.**

- MCFD to create positions by April 30, 2024, and
- MCFD to fill these positions by Sept. 30, 2024.

**7) That MCFD provide foster parents with the supports and specific training they need to provide gender-affirming care for the 2STNBGD children and youth in their care.** These supports and training opportunities to be made available to out-of-care providers and adoptive parents. MCFD to develop supports and training by

- Dec. 31, 2024, and
- Implement supports and training by June 30, 2025

**8) That MCFD ensures all residential resource contracts for staffed resources include requirements for policies that are specific to gender-affirming care.**

Contracts to include terms that require mandatory training to ensure that staff provide appropriate care that protects 2STNBGD children and youth from discrimination in the resource and ensures their safety.

- MCFD to complete contract updates and improvements by March 31, 2024

# RCY Report Data

The RCY collected data from:

- Stories from children and youth
- Policy, practice and jurisdictional scans
- Aggregate RCY data including critical injury and death reports from 2018-2022.


The RCY data showed:

- Nine per cent of all reported injuries were experienced by 2STNBGD children and youth (718)
- Suicide attempts and suicidal ideation were the most reported critical injury classification for 2STNBGD youth (44%)
- Physical harm was also commonly reported (19%)
- Care status was a factor – 42% were in voluntary care and 27% were in continuing care (CCO)
- Nearly two-thirds of injuries (63%) reported for 2STNBGD children and youth were those placed in staffed resources
- The next most common living arrangements were Family home (18%) and foster home (10%)

# What is Gender Affirming Care?



- “The processes of health care and other systems that cares for and supports an individual, while recognizing and acknowledging their gender identity and expression. Also describes one's gender transition“ (*RCY Right to Thrive*)
- A broad definition of “respecting who people are when they tell us who they are.”
- It is a term that describes “a wide range of psychosocial and often medical interventions to help young people and adults feel safe in their identity,”




# Modalities of gender affirmation:

- **Social**
- **Emotional/Psychological**
- **Cultural**
- **Legal**
- **Health (medical and surgical)**



Social:

**Can Include Changing:**

- **Pronouns**
  - **Names**
  - **Clothing/Style**
  - **Gender expression**
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# Emotional/ Psychological


## Can Include:

- Supporting and providing access to trauma informed and culturally attuned counselling/mental health services
  - Group support/therapy with other kids/youth/young adults
  - Transition (medical/surgical) counselling
  - Family therapy
  - Counselling for parents to better understand and support their child/youth
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Legal:


Can include changing:

- Birth certificate
  - SIN Card
  - Medical Records
  - Driver's license
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# Cultural:

## Can Include:

- **Supporting the child/youth's connection to and knowledge about their culturally specific gender roles and mentors**
  - **2 Spirit in Indigenous culture**
  - **Understanding the additional layer that cultural and/or religious beliefs may have on a transgender child/youth and how this may impact the child/youth's safety**
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Medical:


## Commonly Used:

- **GnRH Antagonists**
  - **Estradiol**
  - **Testosterone**
  - **Finasteride**
  - **Spirolactone**
  - **Birth Control**
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# Surgical:

## Can Include:

- Chest/breast reconstruction, augmentation, or removal
  - Hysterectomy, orchiectomy (removal of one or both testicles)
  - Vaginoplasty, phalloplasty
  - Facial feminization
  - Chondrolaryngoplasty
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# Proposed Changes and Discussion

- RCY Recommendation: That MCFD ensures all residential resource contracts for staffed resources include requirements for policies that are specific to gender-affirming care.
- Need to include terms that require mandatory training to ensure that staff provide appropriate care that protects 2STNBGD children and youth from discrimination in the resource and ensures their safety.
- Although recommendations refer to contracts, we are revising the *Standards for Staffed Children's Residential Services* and the *Screening and Assessment Policy for Caregivers and Care Providers in Contracted Care Settings*.

## **Proposed updates for discussion:**

- Agencies to have policies related to caring for 2STNBGD children and youth
- Agencies to provide training to ensure staff can support 2STNBGD children and youth

## **Outcomes:**

- 2STNBGD children and youth will be protected from discrimination in their resource, feel safe, and have their gender identity respected and supported.

# Resources:

[www.TheSafeZoneProject.com](http://www.TheSafeZoneProject.com)

[The Right to Thrive - rcybc.ca](http://rcybc.ca)

**CBC Youth video:** <http://www.cbc.ca/player/play/2264515139903>

**USA Today video:** <https://youtu.be/lmiaDNq79Uc>

[Trans Action Kit | GLSEN](#)

[Pew Research Center](#)

[#23: Gender Affirming Care - The Curbsiders](#)



Thank you