



A Aboriginal L Life I In V Vancouver E Enhancement

Aboriginal Life In Vancouver Enhancement Society

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The Children of Forgotten Promises

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In response to the BC Representative for Children & Youth Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond's report, "On Their Own", April 2014, Aboriginal Life In Vancouver Enhancement Society's president, Ernie Crey, has praised the report as practical and says the report's recommendations, if adopted, would help restore dignity and choice is supporting B.C.'s most vulnerable youth. "Making a healthy transition into adulthood, from government care, especially for urban Aboriginal youth here in this province's largest city is something we should all get behind".

"The creation of a Youth Secretariat is long overdue and would help to align youth funding for better outcomes. And being accountable back to youth by using reliable research and measurements for success will benefit all British Columbians, as we support youth in government care". And Crey believes we all have a responsibility to assist youth with housing, and encourage healthy relationships, educational plans, life skills, enhanced identity, and emotional well-being. He says that actively engaging youth in developing their own plans to independence is essential.

ALIVE is convinced that developing a province-wide strategy for youth in government care must begin by bringing together First Nations, federal and provincial, municipal and foundation funding to address the issues as identified in BC Representative for Children & Youth report. Current government policies only serve to encourage a model of top down services and competition for clients which must be replaced with a strategy that fosters cooperation and coordination, and empowers Aboriginal people to take their rightful place in Vancouver's 24 communities. Crey says that, "While our youth are resilient, we still owe it to them to help them, and to honour our community-wide responsibility to ensure they enjoy equality of opportunity. The days of adopting government funding regimes and policies which pipeline our kids to the Downtown Eastside must end".

ALIVE strongly recommends that the Ministry act immediately to implement the full recommendations of the "On Our Own" report along with taking immediate action on the recommendations from the Representative's earlier "When Talk Trumped Service" and "Lost in the Shadows" reports.

ALIVE is adamant that each community has strengths to build on, and the Ministry For Children & Family Development has the potential, through a Youth Secretariat, to create a climate of collaboration firmly rooted in tried and true measures for success. The ultimate goal is to help youth move from government wardship to full adult independence.

For more information, please contact ALIVE President, Ernie Crey, at: 1-604-819-7981 or ALIVE's Executive Director, Scott Clark, at: 1-604-499-9738