



# MISSION

We commit to upholding the rights and amplifying the voices of children and youth throughout the Yukon.



# VISION

The vision of YCAO is for a safe and healthy society that hears, includes, values, and protects the rights and voices of children and youth.

# VALUES

YCAO operates from a foundation of Indigenous values, and believes that traditional knowledge and culture can guide the work of our office in a way that supports all Yukon children and youth. Currently, these values are Empowerment, Integrity, Excellence, Professionalism, Accountability, Self-Determination, and Respect.

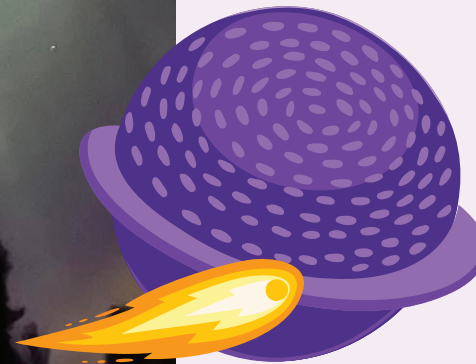
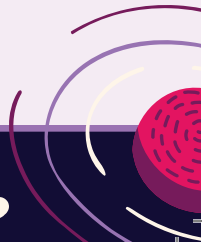
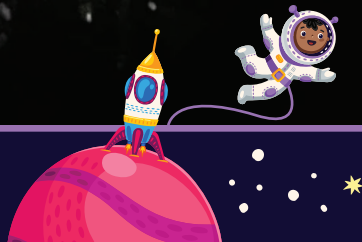


Photo: Lindsay Raftis





**OFFICE OF THE CHILD & YOUTH ADVOCATE**  
2070 - 2nd Avenue, Unit 19, Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 1B1  
PH: 456-5575, FAX: 456-5574, ycao.ca

September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024

The Honourable Jeremy Harper  
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly  
Box 2703 Whitehorse, YT  
Y1A 2C6

**Re: Child and Youth Advocate Office 2023-2024 Annual Report**

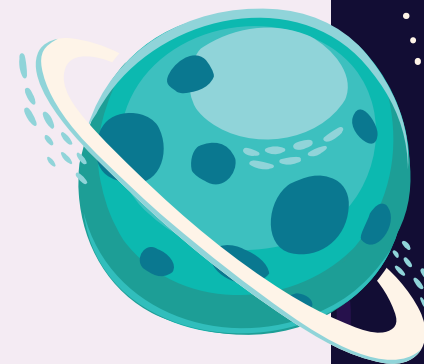
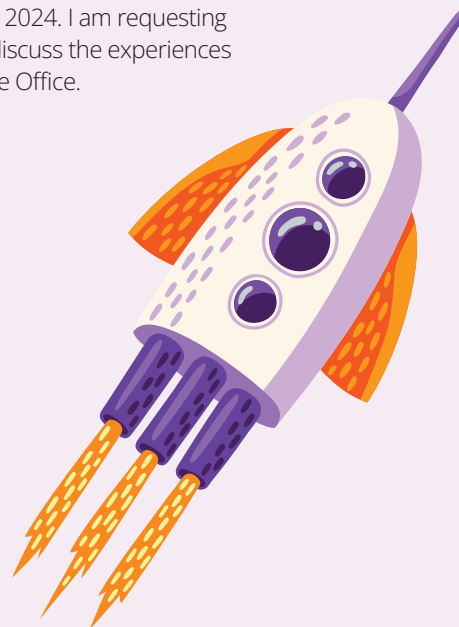
Dear Speaker,

Under my authority as set out in Section 24 of the *Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Act*, I am pleased to present you with *Making Space for Children's Rights: 2023-2024 Annual Report*. The document reports on the activities of the Child and Youth Advocate Office during the period April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 – March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024. I am requesting a meeting with Members' Services Board to discuss the experiences and priorities of the Child and Youth Advocate Office.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Annette King". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Annette King,  
Yukon Child and Youth Advocate



# ADVOCATE MESSAGE

At the Child and Youth Advocate Office, we like to shoot for the stars. We work tirelessly for children's rights and we aim high. It's written into our vision statement - we won't rest, back down, or stop our advocacy until we've achieved a world "that hears, includes, values, and protects the rights and voices of children and youth." Want to hear the exciting part? It's starting to work...and we're over the moon about it!

Consider this annual report a telescope of sorts - looking back over the past year to see how far we've come. We've started to see progress in many areas, especially when it comes to making space for youth. At times in the past it has seemed like the government is on a different planet when we've talked about children's rights, but we are excited to see adults recognizing the value in asking young people what they think, and considering the impacts of decisions on future generations. Young people continue to lead the way.

We have been impressed with the growing awareness of policy analysts and managers in all levels of the civil service who understand the importance of meaningfully considering the impacts on children in all that we do. Their passion to do better is inspiring and helps

create a child rights-centered culture within Yukon government; accountability to the Territorial Youth Strategy and a commitment to implementation of Child Rights Impacts Assessments are just two examples of prioritizing youth interests. Yukon government departments have been responsive to requests for regular meetings with us to share about ongoing advocacy concerns. However, there is still a lot of work to do.

Lack of communication between teams, high turnover in Yukon government positions (of all levels), and muddled clarity on which issues are whose jurisdiction continue to be a frustrating reality in our individual advocacy work. This leads to a need to respond systemically.

We're heartened to see others in our community upholding and making space for children's rights and views. We received an invitation from the

First Nations Education Commission to collaborate with the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate on investigating systemic racism in Yukon education (p.14); a request from the Minister of Education to review the Department of Education's Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity policies (p.15); a Territorial Youth Collective (formerly Communities Building Youth Futures) presented a Territorial Youth Strategy to the government listing key priorities for Yukon youth (p.21). All these, plus more, make us feel affirmed and inspired to continue our work - there is intelligent life in all parts of this galaxy, and we're excited to keep working together for the betterment of our youth!

Our team has worked tirelessly to address the high volume of individual advocacy issues, the comprehensive systemic reviews, and we have integrated a new database, ensuring that data in our

advocacy work is stored securely and efficiently. At the same time, we have had numerous engagements as part of reviewing and making recommendations for changes to the Child and Youth Advocate Act. We thank all those who have participated in our discussions on this important project; your insights help shape legislation that will further enable our efforts to champion young people.

So let's turn that telescope towards the future now, where we'll continue to persist, advocate, and fight for young people across this galaxy (but focusing on the Yukon) to have their rights respected, their voices heard, and their stories honoured. What kind of universe can young people lead us to when given the chance? I'll answer that with the encouraging words of an otherworldly, decidedly kid-friendly wiseman named Buzz Lightyear: "To infinity... and beyond!"



Annette King,  
Yukon Child and Youth Advocate



## Reach for the stars

Our goals for the next year are:

### Individual Advocacy and Youth Engagement

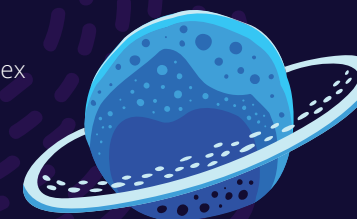
- ★ Continue to work with Yukon government departments to ensure children's views and rights are prioritized in decisions.
- ★ Promote access to our advocacy services for children and youth who don't have others advocating for them.
- ★ Demonstrate our commitment to the Territorial Youth Strategy by signing on and promoting the priorities established by youth.

### Systemic Advocacy

- ★ Complete the review on Systemic Racism in Education.
- ★ Begin the review of the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity policy in Education.
- ★ Track progress on Yukon government's implementation of our systemic recommendations (children in care, safety in school, mental wellness).
- ★ Address long-standing and emerging systemic issues: high conflict custody, supports for children with complex needs, and youth homelessness.

### Legislative Review

- ★ Continue engagement with First Nations governments, service providers, and youth and families to collect input for the review of the *Child and Youth Advocate Act*.
- ★ Work with Members' Services Board to finalize detailed recommendations for legislative amendments.
- ★ Develop an operational plan and public education plan to implement legislative amendments.



# WHAT DOES YCAO DO?

YCAO Staff: Annette King, Julia Milnes, McKenzie Amundson, Shauna Kewin, Anya Braeuner, Ben Monkman, Ian Cooper, Christopher Tse, Rachel Veinott.

## DID YOU KNOW?

YCAO's primary role is to promote the views of young people. Throughout this report, youth voice is showcased in purple quotes.

### Our work is guided by:

- ★ Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Act (2009)
- ★ United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
- ★ Truth and Reconciliation Commission 94 Calls to Action
- ★ United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- ★ Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls & 2s+ Calls to Justice
- ★ Territorial Youth Strategy

The *Child and Youth Advocate Act* (2009) is YCAO's guiding piece of legislation. In 2023-24 YCAO continued engagement on the review of the Act.



### INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY

YCAO helps young people effectively access government services and have their views heard and rights meaningfully considered in the decision-making of government service providers.

### SYSTEMIC ADVOCACY

YCAO may review and provide advice regarding systemic or policy issues that arise in the course of individual advocacy and raise a substantial question of public interest. The Legislative Assembly or a Minister may refer relevant matters to YCAO for review.

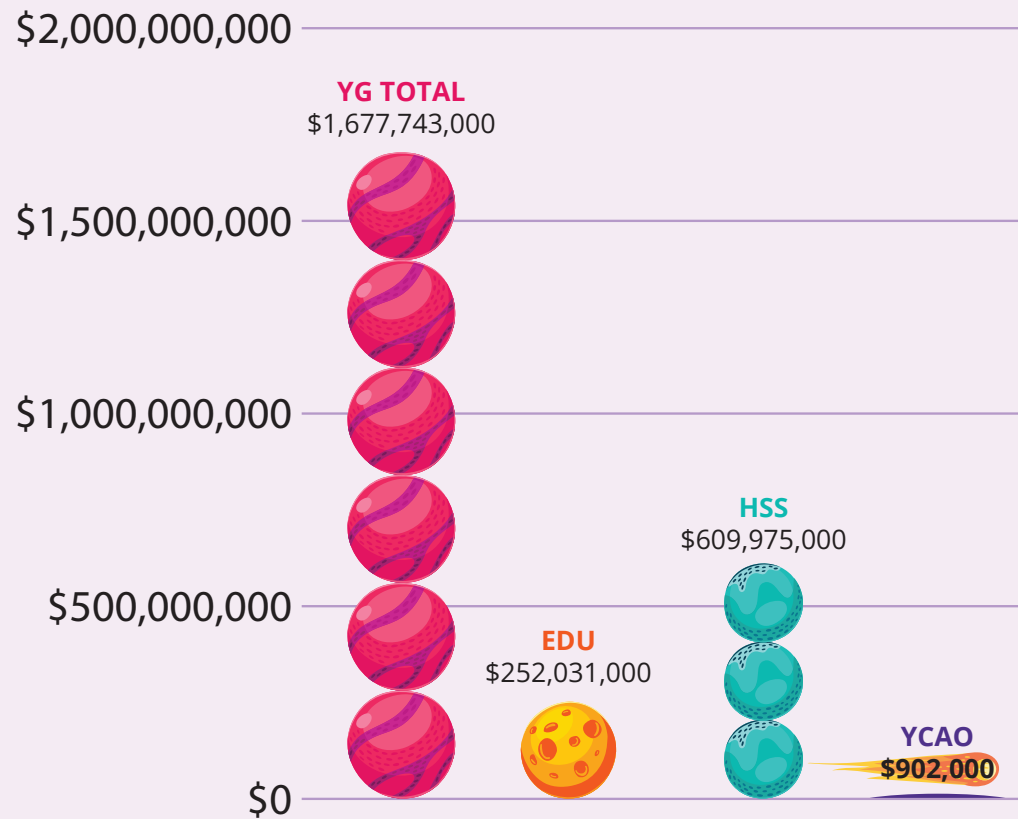
### PUBLIC EDUCATION

YCAO provides information about the role of the Advocate and children's rights. YCAO hosts or participates in activities and events that engage youth and the community.

# FINANCIAL STATS

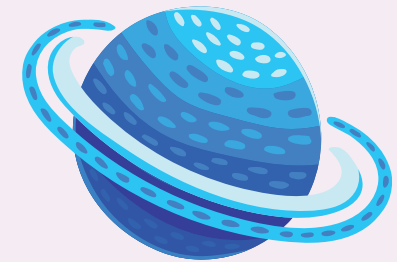
YCAO is an independent office of the Legislative Assembly and submits an annual budget and quarterly updates to the Member Services Board, an all-party committee of the Legislative Assembly.

## BUDGET

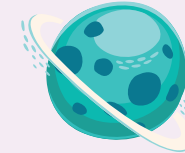


## YCAO EXPENDITURES

**PERSONNEL**  
\$719,369



**OPERATIONAL**  
\$180,396



**CAPITAL**  
\$2,000



## DID YOU KNOW?

YCAO received **\$83,000** from the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate to support work on the Review of Systemic Racism in Education.

YCAO received **\$41,000** from the Youth Directorate to support work on the priorities identified in the Territorial Youth Strategy.



# WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU CALL YCAO?

## INTAKE

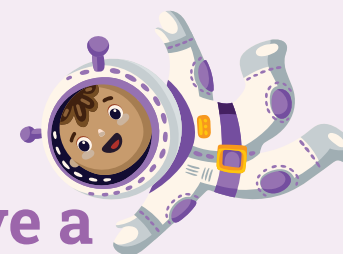
- ★ When you first contact YCAO you will be greeted by our **Client Services Administrator (CSA)**. The **CSA** will ask you for the child or youth's basic personal information and an overview of your concerns.
- ★ The **CSA** will provide you with an overview of the services YCAO can provide and our advocacy processes.
- ★ YCAO is not an emergency service, but in urgent situations we will recommend the appropriate supports and services for you to contact.
- ★ YCAO does not share our referral source with anyone, however referrers can still choose to remain anonymous.

## REVIEW

- ★ The **CSA** will take the information you provide back to our team:
  - ★ to determine whether the issue meets YCAO's mandate;
  - ★ to identify the advocacy issue and the government service (s) involved; and,
  - ★ to assign an **Advocacy Representative (AR)** for the child or youth.
- ★ After the information is reviewed by the YCAO team the **CSA** will follow up with you to:
  - ★ confirm that an **AR** has been assigned and is moving forward with our individual advocacy process; or,
  - ★ if the issue is not within our mandate, the **CSA** will recommend other resources or supports that YCAO has identified.
- ★ The **CSA** will provide you with information about the role of our office and an overview of our advocacy process.

## ADVOCACY

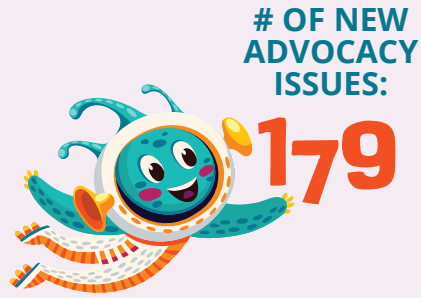
- ★ At YCAO, the child or youth is our client. Our **ARs** strive to meet with every client to get their view, and will meet the child or youth wherever they feel most comfortable.
- ★ If it is not possible to meet the child or youth, YCAO will defer to children's rights under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- ★ From there, the **AR** will connect with the government to make sure that children's rights are being upheld.
- ★ Our office strives to work with families, but occasionally we will need to advocate without parental involvement.



“ Adults have a tendency to overlook why things are happening and focus on the what instead. ”



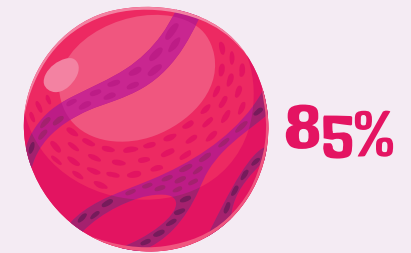
# INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY 2023-24



Informal Advocacy Issues are concerns brought to YCAO that do not directly fit the YCAO mandate for advocacy. YCAO provides information and makes referrals to community resources that may be able to offer support. YCAO often lets YG know about informal issues reported to the YCAO.

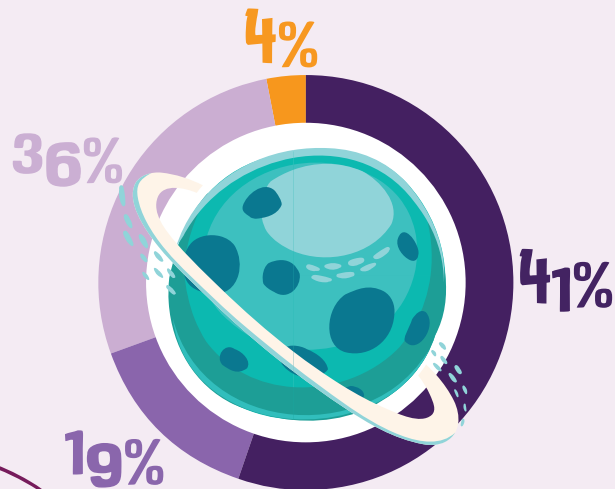
## WHERE ARE THE ISSUES?

**Whitehorse:** 85% (152)  
**Community:** 15% (27)



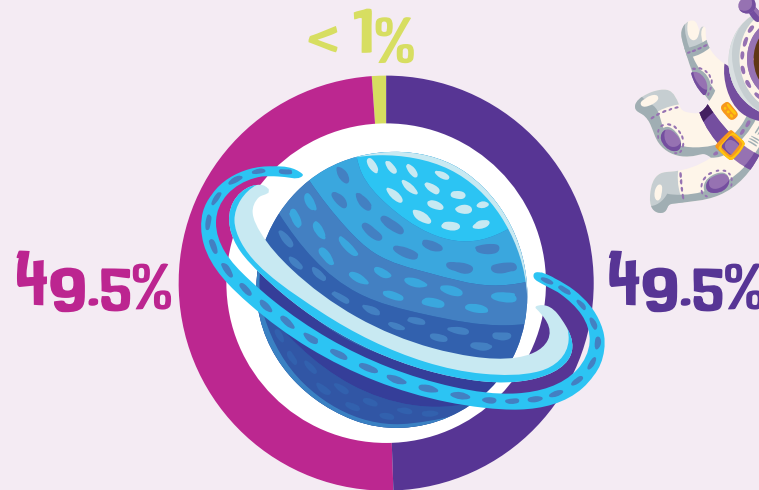
## HOW MANY NEW ADVOCACY ISSUES ARE FOR INDIGENOUS CHILDREN AND YOUTH?

**Yukon First Nations:** 41% (73)  
**Indigenous from outside of the Yukon:** 19% (34)  
**Non-Indigenous:** 36% (64)  
**Unknown:** 4% (8)



## HOW OLD ARE YCAO CLIENTS?

**Child (0-11 years):** 49.5% (90)  
**Youth (12-17 years):** 49.5% (88)  
**Youth (18+ years):** less than 1% (1)



“ I want [them] to know I am more than just an angry kid. ”



“

No one talks to each other. I've had to tell my story over and over.

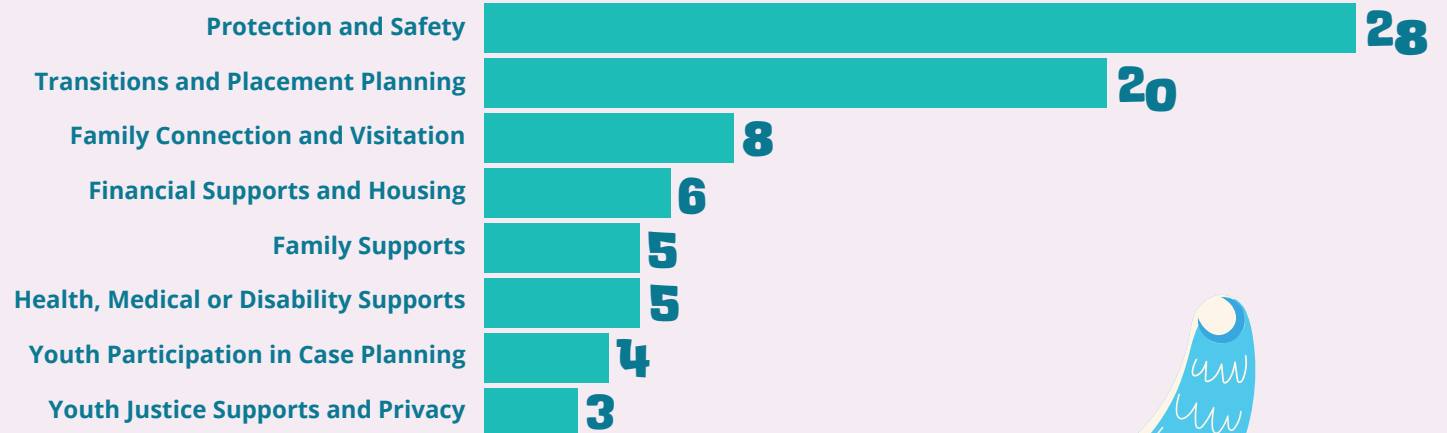


**DID YOU KNOW?**

YCAO is not observing progress in addressing school attendance issues. We are asking government to work collectively to address the ongoing barriers to attendance.

**WHAT TYPES OF ISSUES DID YCAO ADDRESS?**

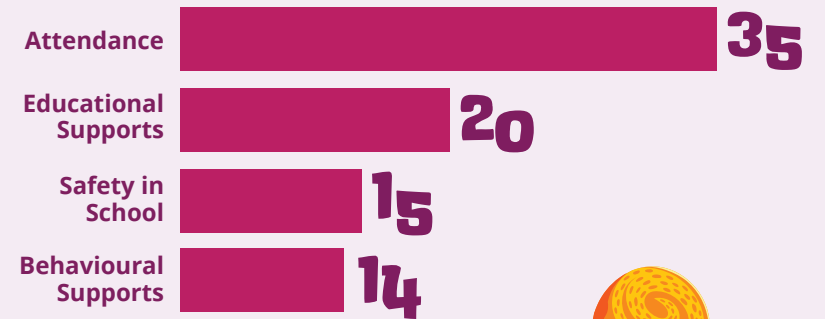
**ACCESS TO SUPPORTS AND SERVICES**



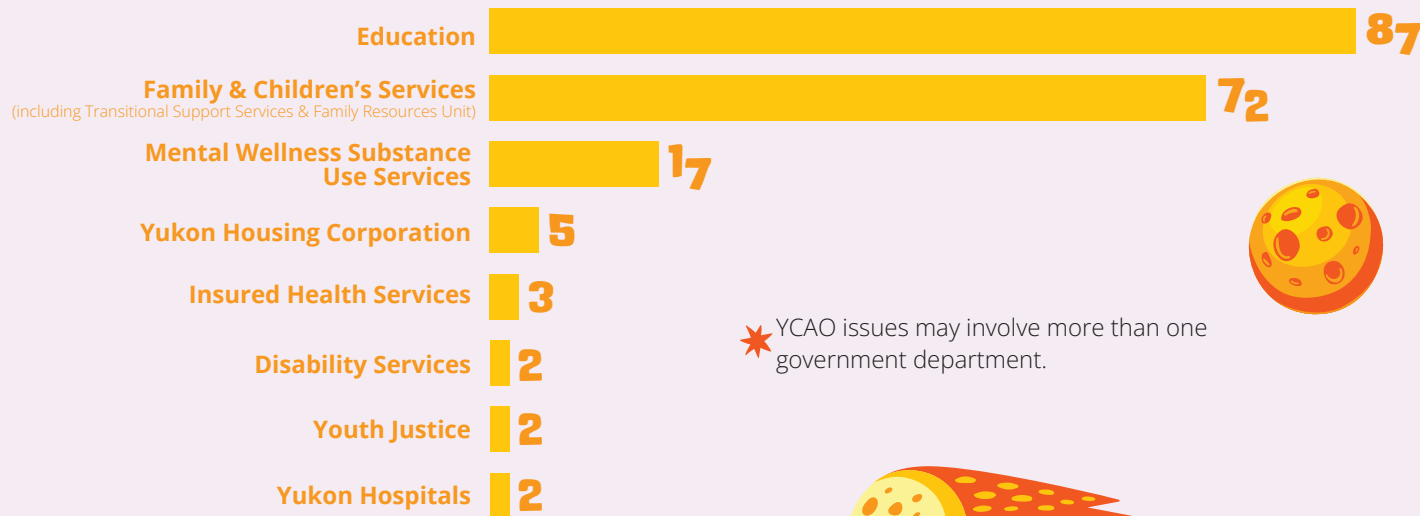
**ACCESS TO MENTAL HEALTH**



**ACCESS TO EDUCATION**



## WHICH GOVERNMENT DEPARTMENTS HAD ADVOCACY ISSUES?



\* YCAO issues may involve more than one government department.

### DID YOU KNOW?

YCAO has migrated to a new case management database that is enhancing efficiency in client service and security of client data.

“  
**Anything is possible if you put the time on it.**  
 ”

# SYSTEMIC UPDATES

## NEW SYSTEMIC ISSUES

- Systemic Racism in Education
- The Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity policy in Yukon schools
- Close to Home: A Yukon Approach to Supporting Children With Complex Needs
- Community Safety

## TRACKING PROGRESS on YCAO RECOMMENDATIONS

- Responding to Sexualized Abuse in a Yukon School
- School Attendance: What is, What Could Be
- Empty Spaces Caring Connections: The Experiences of Children and Youth in Yukon Group Care
- Child Rights Impact Assessment of amendments to the *Child and Family Services Act*

## THEMES WE ARE CONTINUING to ADDRESS

- High Conflict Custody
- Youth on their Own (Homelessness)
- Restraints and Confinements at Jack Hulland Elementary School


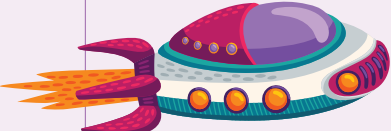


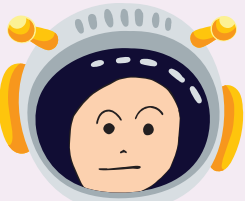

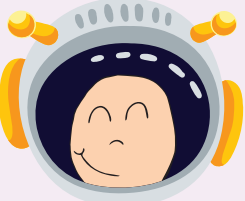

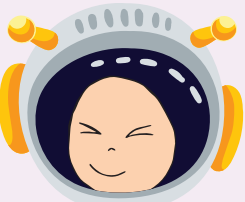
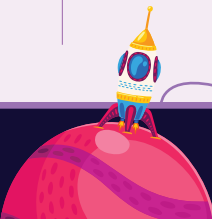







# PROGRESS TRACKING ON SYSTEMIC ADVOCACY ISSUES

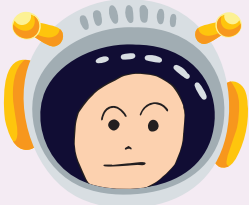
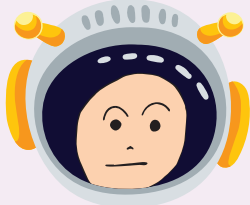
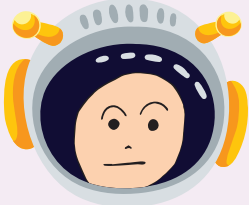
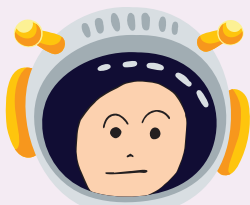
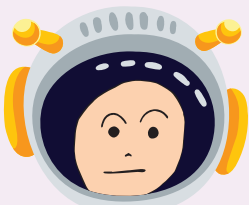

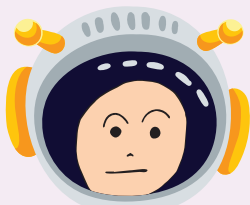
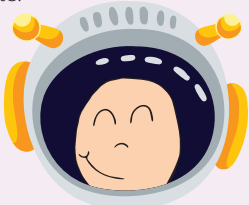
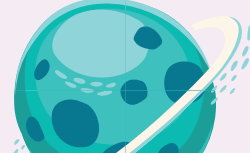

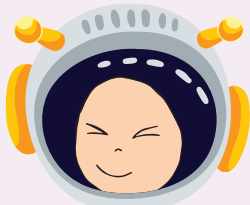


In the 2022/23 Annual Report YCAO identified tracking government responses to systemic recommendations as a priority for the year and committed to creating a simple and consistent tracking tool to hold government departments accountable.

Scale	Ratings indicates the degree to which the Department is implementing YCAO recommendations, which are likely to lead to more positive outcomes for children & youth.	Progress on Recommendation
	<p>Not being implemented at this time. No children and youth are benefiting from this practice or activity.</p>   	<p><b>Not started (0)</b> Recommendation rejected/no progress.</p>
	<p>Beginning and/or intermittent and inconsistent. Recommendation has been accepted. Discussions about or initial implementation of the practice, policy, strategy, or activity have taken place. There is a definite interest and organizational activities have begun. Few children and youth are involved or benefitting. The practice, policy, strategy, or activity is in the earliest implementation stages; progress is being made and plans are moving forward. The practice, policy, strategy, or activity may be implemented in some areas or in some cases, but not frequently or with consistency.</p>	<p><b>Some progress (1)</b> Started but is not yet complete.</p> 
	<p>Emerging. Concerted efforts are being made to fully implement the recommendation including practices, policies, strategies, or activities. Many children and youth are involved or benefitting.</p> 	<p><b>Significant progress (2)</b> Extensive progress, but not yet complete.</p>
	<p>This recommendation is used to make decisions about needed services, changes in programs, plans and strategies, and is utilized in the Department's emerging, short-term and long-range planning efforts, changes to policy, procedures, practices or professional development. YCAO is seeing a reduction in individual advocacy issues in the area(s) affected by the recommendation and there is a reduction in the amount of time to resolve these issues.</p>  	<p><b>Fully implemented (3)</b> Recommendation fully implemented. The full benefit may or may not have been realized yet.</p>  

# PROGRESS TRACKING: SAFETY IN SCHOOLS

YCAO delivered on their 2022/23 commitment and provided the first application of the progress tracker, evaluating Yukon government's response to the recommendations provided in Responding to Sexualized Abuse in Yukon Schools: Review of Policies and Governmental Response.

YCAO Recommendation	YCAO Rating	YCAO Recommendation	YCAO Rating
<p><b>1 Coordinated Response</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Confirm best practices for responding to any incident in education where a child is, or is likely to have been, physically, sexually or emotionally harmed.</li> <li>Design and implement an interagency response process, which includes competent investigations, child and family-centered approaches to information sharing, protection of privacy, communication with families and coordination of services.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Some progress.</b></p> <p>Started but is not yet complete.</p> 	<p><b>5 Therapeutic Supports</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Immediately determine therapeutic needs of students and families impacted by alleged abuse and ensure low-barrier access to appropriate supports identified by students, families and professionals.</li> <li>Provide accessible therapeutic supports for impacted educators. Develop a plan to create and fill clinical counsellor positions in all Yukon schools.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Some progress.</b></p> <p>Started but is not yet complete.</p> 
<p><b>2 Duty to Report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide clear information to educators and families about their mandatory duty to report any incident where a child is, or is likely to have been, physically, sexually or emotionally harmed.</li> <li>Provide clear steps on how and who to report incidents to and how to follow up.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Some progress.</b></p> <p>Started but is not yet complete.</p> 	<p><b>6 Educational Supports</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide specialized educational supports for all children with special needs. Programs should include input and oversight by Learning Assistance Teachers (LATs), Student Support Services and, if needed, external specialists.</li> <li>Guidance and oversight by specialists should be thorough and long-lasting with the goal of creating educational programs that have clear and measurable goals and help students reach their full potential.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Some progress.</b></p> <p>Started but is not yet complete.</p> 
<p><b>3 Developmentally Appropriate Responses</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement best practices to ensure developmentally and culturally appropriate interviews and victim support services for students who have been physically, sexually or emotionally harmed.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Some progress.</b></p> <p>Started but is not yet complete.</p> 	<p><b>7 Accountability &amp; Oversight for Educators</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop structures for training, monitoring and supervising educators, particularly 1:1 EAs working with vulnerable students.</li> <li>Ensure learning environments are inclusive and promote safety and belonging.</li> </ul> 	<p><b>Some progress.</b></p> <p>Started but is not yet complete.</p> 
<p><b>4 Sexual Health Information</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide developmentally appropriate sexual health information throughout the school year to all Yukon students. Sexual health programming should be mandatory and accessible to all students, including those with individualized plans (Individual Education Plans (IEPs), Student Support Plans (SSPs), etc.).</li> <li>Provide additional guidance to families about how to talk to children about sexual health.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Significant progress.</b></p> <p>Extensive progress, but not yet complete.</p> 	<p><b>8 YG Response</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a public report outlining YG's response to the Advocate's review by November 22, 2022, and a subsequent progress report within twelve months.</li> </ul>  	<p><b>Fully implemented.</b></p> <p>Recommendation fully implemented. The full benefit may or may not have been realized yet.</p> 



# REQUESTS FOR SYSTEMIC REVIEW

## REVIEW OF SYSTEMIC RACISM IN YUKON SCHOOLS

With the support of Yukon First Nation Education Directorate (YFNED), YCAO has launched a review of systemic racism and discrimination in Yukon education.

The issue was first raised by the Chiefs Committee on Education (CCOE) who then directed YFNED to complete the review and made a formal request to the YCAO to provide individual and systemic advocacy for children and youth experiencing discrimination and racism. YCAO notified the Department of Education about the review in December 2023 and it was publicly announced at the YFNED conference in February 2024.

The goals of the review are to:

- ★ Look at how racism impacts Indigenous students and other students of colour.
- ★ Understand how students, parents, and communities experience racism.
- ★ See if students in Whitehorse and the communities experience the same type of racism.

### Direct or Interpersonal Racism:

Actions between individuals that cause harm. This can look like racist name-calling, threats, jokes and stereotypes, and physical violence.

**Systemic racism:** Thoughts and actions that support an unequal system. This system benefits some and harms others, and is based on race, ethnicity, and culture. This can look like laws, policies, and institutions such as education, healthcare, or law enforcement.

### Systemic Racism in Education:

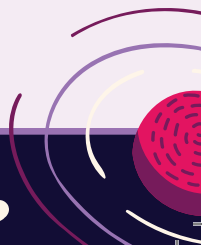
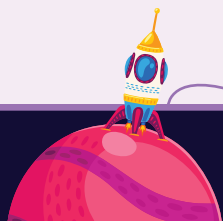
An education system that prioritizes the needs and values of a colonial and Eurocentric society over other racial groups and cultures. This leads to poor outcomes in areas like:

- ★ Academic Success
- ★ Attendance
- ★ Discipline
- ★ Representation

“  
I don't get to learn much about my culture. But I'd like to.”



“  
I see myself as an independent Indigenous youth... I'm extremely passionate about my culture and others, as it was my saving grace for success and well-being.”





## REVIEW OF THE SEXUAL ORIENTATION AND GENDER IDENTITY (SOGI) POLICY IN YUKON EDUCATION

On March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2024, the Minister of Education, the Honourable Jeanie McLean requested that YCAO conduct a comprehensive review of the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) policy for Yukon public schools.

SOGI policies play a crucial role in fostering environments where children and youth of all sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions

can thrive. The review by the YCAO aims to assess the effectiveness of the Department of Education's current SOGI policy in promoting and sustaining a supportive and accepting atmosphere within schools.

Through a child rights lens, the review will examine various aspects of SOGI policy, including their implementation and their impact on students' experiences. It seeks to identify strengths and areas for improvement to better support the diverse needs of children and youth across the education system.



“  
I want them  
to know I'm  
transgender.”

“  
Things are  
better now  
that I have  
switched  
schools.”





**I feel rejected,  
like I'm a  
bad kid.**



## CLOSE TO HOME

Through our individual and systemic advocacy work, YCAO has connected with a growing number of children in the territory with exceptional needs. Although the issue is widespread from K-12, YCAO is focusing on the immediate needs of children who are elementary school aged.

YCAO is deeply concerned about the lack of local comprehensive resources to adequately support children with complex needs. In many cases, these children are connected to a wide range of Yukon government departments and community organizations, and continue to face challenges accessing safety and stability, mental and physical wellness, and a meaningful education program. YCAO has observed a growing trend of elementary school children being denied access to full time learning environments, often due to neurodiversity and dysregulation resulting in difficult behaviours and complex learning challenges.

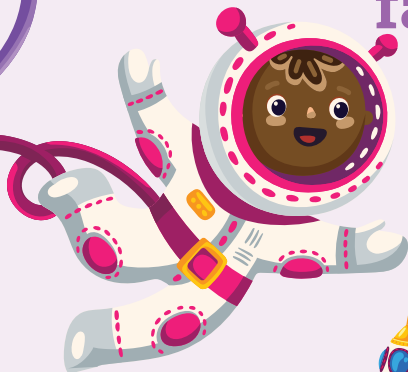
YCAO has identified four themes:

- ★ Assessment and treatment
- ★ Safety at school, at home and in the community
- ★ Educational programs
- ★ Supports for families

**I can't control  
my body. I  
can't control  
my brain.**



**It's really important that kids want to go [to treatment] because it can be traumatizing for the kids to be away from their loved ones and family because it can be emotional for them.**



## COMMUNITY SAFETY

Children and youth have the right to survive and develop in the best possible way. This includes growing up in a safe and nurturing community without fear of violence, harmful drugs, or exploitation. Over the past few years our office has seen an increase in calls related to community safety. These include issues involving substance use and overdoses, gang violence, sexualized violence, and violent public assaults (including incidents at schools).

YCAO notified the departments of Justice, Health and Social Services and Education on December 5<sup>th</sup>, 2023 about the concerns regarding community safety that we have heard from young people.

Presenting Issues for Children and Youth:

- ★ Violence in the communities
- ★ Violence at schools
- ★ Risk assessment and planning
- ★ Insufficient behavioural intervention and restorative response
- ★ Complex relationships between youth
- ★ Lack of collaboration between Yukon government departments

In January 2024, YCAO welcomed a Bachelor of Social Work practicum student from Yukon University to complete a project reviewing and comparing community safety models and how they might be integrated in a rural, remote and northern context.

“  
I haven't heard from the school after the restorative conference. I don't know if it is safe there or if I am allowed back [at school].  
”



“  
I've learned how to take care of myself not by choice but by circumstance.  
”



“  
Every youth has knives, bear spray and weapons to protect themselves. If I don't carry them, I'm going to get killed.  
”



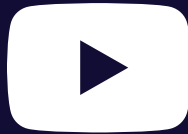
# SCHOOL ATTENDANCE PODCAST

“  
Alternatives  
should be  
offered when  
kids can't go  
to school

In March 2023 YCAO launched a 5 episode podcast revisiting the 2021 *Review on School Attendance in the Yukon: What Is, What Could Be*. The episodes looked at the themes from the report: Personal Factors, Safety in School, Belonging and Culture, Mental Health and Trauma, and Educational and Behavioural Supports.

School attendance continues to be a pervasive problem in the Yukon. In fact, attendance is once again the education issue where YCAO is seeing our highest number of individual advocacy cases. It is going to take a holistic and collaborative approach to address the underlying issues that lead to chronic absenteeism.

**THE PODCAST IS AVAILABLE  
THROUGH SPOTIFY AND YOUTUBE.**



**LISTEN NOW!**



# TERRITORIAL YOUTH COLLECTIVE & STRATEGY

**VISION OF THE TERRITORIAL YOUTH COLLECTIVE: ALL YUKON YOUTH HAVE A SENSE OF BELONGING THROUGHOUT THE TERRITORY.**

This means that youth feel empowered, have a positive sense of self and their futures, have mutually caring and fulfilling relationships, and feel connected to and supported by their family, community, and land.

The Territorial Youth Strategy (TYS) serves as a guiding document for decision-makers at all levels and in all sectors. It is a living document that is revised based on conversations at Annual Accountability Forums which take place as part of the annual Yukon Youth Summit. In 2024, YCAO is a signatory to the TYS.

#### TYS Priorities:

1. Basic Needs
2. Community Safety and Harm Reduction
3. Mental Wellness and Connections
4. Access to Learning and Education
5. Employment and Career Opportunities
6. Land and Stewardship



**I don't know how to get the information I need to make decisions.**





# CHILD RIGHTS IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (CRIA)

A Child Rights Impact Assessment (CRIA) is a tool for translating the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the child's best interests into policy and practice to:

- ★ Improve public policy and contribute to better outcomes for children
- ★ Ensure potential impacts to children are predicted, monitored and mitigated
- ★ Consider short-term and long-term effects of policy on children
- ★ Apply research and evidence to analysis of decisions
- ★ Emphasize children's participation in decision-making
- ★ Provide an efficient process to verify that governments are meeting obligations to uphold children's rights

On September 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup>, 2023, YCAO hosted our annual CRIA training. Participants from various levels of government and youth organizations joined students from the Porter Creek Secondary School Rainbow Room to discuss the impact of government policies on children's rights and to go through practical exercises that can be implemented to enhance their work.

In 2020, YCAO convened a CRIA Working Group for the Yukon. The CRIA working group has developed a primer, flowchart screening tool, and an analytical tool in partnership with UNICEF to use in policy and program development.

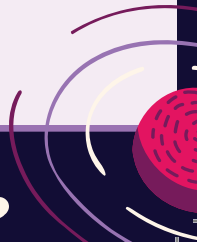
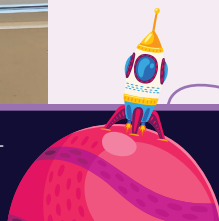
Learn more at [ycao.ca/cria](http://ycao.ca/cria)

“

**We are talking about our future. We are talking about leaving something for our children. [Government] needs to keep the next generation in mind when they do policy. We are putting our trust in our government to protect [our children] and their well-being**

”

~ Elder Margaret MacKay

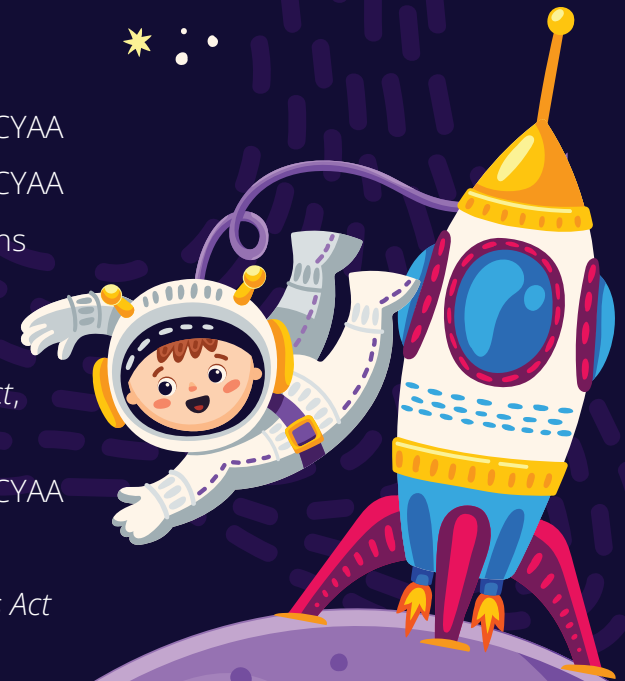


# TIMELINE OF THE ACT REVIEW

- 2009** *Child and Youth Advocate Act (CYAA)* passed
- 2010** Child and Youth Advocate Office opens
- 2014/15** Five-year anniversary of YCAO and the CYAA. CYAA is due for review
- 2017** YCAO made a submission to Members' Services Board for the amendment of the CYAA
- 2018** YCAO made a submission to Members' Services Board for the amendment of the CYAA
- 2018** YCAO achieved some of the changes sought to the CYAA through recommendations to the review of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*
- 2018** YCAO recommended actions on the review of the *Coroner's Act*
- 2019** YCAO provided recommendations on the review of the *Child and Family Services Act*, and requested the Minister undertake a review of the CYAA at the same time
- 2020** YCAO made a submission to Members' Services Board for the amendment of the CYAA
- 2021** Youth advisors developed a youth-friendly version of the CYAA
- 2022** YCAO completed a Child Rights Impact Assessment of the *Child and Family Services Act*
- 2023** YCAO requested feedback from First Nations Chiefs and launched a public survey
- 2024** YCAO presented review themes and proposed amendments to Members' Services Board



Photo: YCAO attends Child Death Review Community of Practice meetings in Edmonton, AB.



# LEGISLATIVE REVIEW OF THE CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCATE ACT (CYAA)

## Why is the CYAA being reviewed?

- ★ The Act came into force in 2009 and is currently ten years overdue for review.
- ★ Many pieces of the legislation are outdated and require updating.

YCAO has continued to engage with youth, First Nations governments, service providers and families to develop an updated submission to the Members' Services Board, an all party committee of the Legislative Assembly responsible for reviewing the Act.



A promise means nothing if you can't keep it.

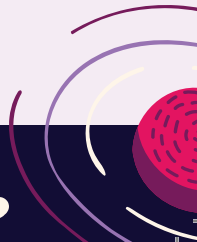
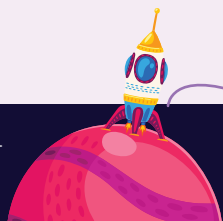


REVIEW OF THE CHILD AND YOUTH ADVOCATE ACT

Yukon Child & Youth Advocate Office

CHANCE TO WIN A \$25 GIFT CARD!

PROVIDE YOUR FEEDBACK TO HELP US ENSURE CHILDREN'S RIGHTS ARE UPHELD



YCAO IDENTIFIED SIX THEMES FOR THE REVIEW:

Definitions and  
Guiding Principles

Public  
Reporting

Information  
Sharing

Child Death  
Reviews

Legal Representation

Communicating  
Children's Rights

“

Our children need this safety net even if we find positive ways to amend the burdens that hinder our children's needs.

”

~ First Nation Representative

“

It is really frustrating not knowing what I can share and what I can't.

”

~ Service Provider

