

GUIDANCE FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS:

Enabling Significant Connections for Youth in Care

The Bottom Line

Canadian service providers with a connection to child welfare must be creative and determined in their efforts to protect, maintain and increase young people's connection to family, community, culture and language now, and after the pandemic.

Guidance for Service Providers

Protect, promote, and create space for significant family and cultural connection for all children and youth. Particular attention should be paid to those overrepresented in child welfare (First Nations, Métis, Inuit, African Canadian, LGBTQ2S+ children).

Create environments where youth and their families can connect while adhering to any necessary guidelines.

Provide opportunities for frequent and significant connections (e.g., via phone, text, online chat or video conference, through the sending and receiving of care packages/letters, and other activities). Accommodations should be made to ensure youth have appropriate technology to communicate with family, support networks, and access cultural programming online to ease feelings of isolation.

Provide children and youth approaching family reunification with the opportunity for an extended in-home family visit. This is especially important for young children, mothers and fathers, who are at increased risk of trauma from prolonged separation.

Reach out to youth who have aged out of care and provide them with support needed to stay connected to loved ones, culture, and community. Sustain and provide support, such as housing and income support, relevant to individual needs.

Reach out to youth in care networks for advice on how best to create and sustain safe and healthy practices for children and youth in care to stay connected to their peers.

Guidance for Service Providers (Continued)

Ensure accountability measures are in place so no child gets left behind and is provided frequent and significant methods for connection.

Maintain encouragement and advocacy for forms of care permanency for youth to assist with transitions of any kind.

Keep record of services accessed within your agency to assess the differences before, during, and after accessing the service. This will better inform future research, policy, funding, and guidance.



For original sources and documents, please visit: www.childtraumaresearch.ca