



Alternative Care Evaluation Report 2009/2010

Sandy Bay
Child & Family Services Inc.
Box 105 Marius, MB
R0H 0T0

Sandy Bay 843-2687
Winnipeg 336-3440
Portage 856-2030
Brandon 725-5760
Dakota Plains 252-2580

SANDY BAY CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES INC.

**Evaluation Report
2009 / 2010**

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Executive Summary

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) provides a contribution of \$30,600 to each new First Nation Child and Family agency in its third and sixth year of operation to complete an internal review of its operation in order to identify weaknesses and strengths and to plan any desired improvements to the quality of its services. On August 20, 2007 Sandy Bay Child and Family Services (SBCFS) satisfied all legal and program requirements needed for Mandate within the Province of Manitoba. On September 1, 2007, that mandate came into effect. Currently, SBCFS is into its third year of operation as a separately mandated agency.

Sandy Bay Child and Family Services' on-reserve alternative care system has experienced several challenges both pre and post mandate. The number of children coming into care has steadily increased over the last couple of years and it has had a definite impact on the quality of service the alternative care program can provide. While the process of licensing quality foster homes in Sandy Bay Ojibway First Nation is a challenge, it should be noted that this is a challenge in all child welfare jurisdictions across Canada.

For its first internal review, SBCFS has centered its focus on its Alternative Care Program through a ***processed-based*** evaluation. The processed-based evaluation will allow Sandy Bay Child and Family Services to have a better understanding of how the alternative program achieves its intended outcomes outlined in the program description by revealing how program activities and results are impacted by ***staff qualifications, program processes and program standards***.

Overall the evaluation of the foster home licensing process did reveal common themes between the procedures of the Main Office (Sandy Bay) and the Winnipeg Office. Within the two offices, the findings of the file reviews did demonstrate positive outcomes in terms of compliance with the key service standards. The evaluation also identified gaps related to specific service standards required for foster home licensing. Similar findings emerged from the evaluation of the places of safety files.

The agency has formulated a set of recommendations to respond to the findings of the evaluation. These recommendations are twofold; those related to systemic influences and those related to internal protocols and procedures.

Organizational History

- 1981** - DOCFS acquired mandate to provide child and family services, Sandy Bay was included under this mandate
- 1996** - Sub-agreement signed with DOCFS for provision of services to community of Sandy Bay
- 1999** - Letter of Intent for mandate to Manitoba Family Services & Housing – declined
- 2001** – Letter of intent for mandate to Manitoba Family Services & Housing – accepted
- 2001**- Incorporation of SBCFS inc. Board of Directors
- 2004** – Request for Pre-Assessment to Southern Authority for mandate.
- 2005** – Pre-assessment review completed; interim working board established;
- 2006** – Work plan developed and review areas addressed (Governance, Service Delivery, Practice Standards, Agency Administration, Human Resources, Communication, and Infrastructure).
- 2007**- Final mandate review completed,
- 2007** – *Agency Mandates Regulation* signed by minister of family services and housing, Gord Mackintosh on Aug.20/07.
- 2007** - Mandate celebration Aug 21/07
- 2007** - Mandate effective Sept.1/07. Provincial mandate. New offices opened in Winnipeg and Portage la Prairie.
- 2009** –acquisition of service agreement to provide services to Dakota Plains Wahpeton Nation. New offices opened in Dakota Plains and Brandon effective Aug.1/09.
- 2010**- Grand opening celebration in Dakota Plains Wahpeton Nation to recognize the return of Child and Family Services to the community.

Program Description

ALTERNATIVE CARE (FOSTER CARE) SERVICES

Sandy Bay Child & Family Services has a responsibility to ensure that all children placed in foster care are provided with a safe and loving environment, which meets the child's emotional, mental, physical, educational, social, cultural and spiritual needs.

The Agency encourages placement with extended family but where that is not possible will make every effort to place within their home community or with a First Nation family.

Sandy Child & Family Services has the mandate for the development, utilization, maintenance and overall coordination of the foster care/alternative care program within its administrative structure. The *Child and Family Services Act* defines a foster home as:

“a home other than the home of a parent or guardian of a child, where not more than four children who are not siblings are placed by an agency for care and supervision but not for the purposes of adoption.”

Foster homes are licenses under the *Foster Homes Licensing Regulation (Regulation 18/99)*.

The purpose of the foster care program is to protect children and strengthen the family. A foster family provides the child with the stability of an alternative family that is seen as complementary to the child's biological parents, rather than as a substitute family. This view of the foster family is an extension to the biological family, rather than a replacement, will reduce conflict between the foster parents and biological parents. Their role is to assist the child and his/her family with reunification, if that is the plan. The length of time each child remains in care is determined by the needs of the child and his/her family situation.

The Agency has also developed a network of contacts with alternative care facilities in the area, the City of Winnipeg and within the Province of Manitoba. The licensed facilities are accessed through the Child Protection and Support Branch and provide a range of placements for children in need of a higher level of care. Their facilities include group homes and child care institutions (Knowles Center, Marymound Inc., Macdonald Youth Services and New Directions).

PLACE OF SAFETY

The *Act* defines a place of safety as any place used for the emergency temporary care and protection of a child as may be required under the *Act*.

Under clause 4(2) of the *Act*, the Director may designate in writing a place or type of places as a place of safety. The *Act* does not list specific types of places of safety except in subsection 22(2) which states where a child who is apprehended is a patient in a hospital, the hospital is a place of safety.

Section 2 of the *Foster Home Licensing Regulations* (Regulation 18/99) applies if a home is used for four or more days a month on a regular monthly basis, or for 15 or more consecutive days in any year.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

Foster family care is appropriate for a child who is:

- In need of a family based program;
- Not at risk of acting out that could put the foster family at risk;
- In care for the first time, or who has had extensive group treatment;
- In a large family of children whose individual needs would be best served by remaining together;
- Preschool children;
- Emotionally disturbed or physically disable but is ready for discharge from residential care, can live with a family in the community with special help, and has experiences geared to his/her readiness;
- In need of specialized medical or physical care.

PROCEDURES

Foster family services provide a substitute family for a planned period of time for a child who has to be separated from his/her natural or legal parents. This service also includes social work and other intervention services needed by the child, his/her parents, and the foster parents.

Foster family services provide a combination of care for the child and family who need placement, plus services and resources to the child, family, and foster family. These services offer opportunities for the health development of the child in accordance with the *Act*.

It is important this resource is used for the child who can benefit most from a family environment. Other forms of placement may be preferable for the child who has extreme needs which a foster family could not meet.

Placing a child in a foster family affects not only the child but the entire foster family. Each person in that family is considered for each placement and discharge.

RECRUITMENT

The Agency responds to enquiries from prospective foster parents **within five working days** provides information on the orientation and application processes.

FOSTER PARENT EDUCATION

A foster parent applicant receives an orientation or pre-service program as part of the approval process and any ongoing and specialized training to meet the needs of an individual child. An agency provides an opportunity for an applicant to receive an orientation **within three months** of contacting the agency unless the agency has advised the applicant it will not approve the application.

LICENSING REQUIREMENTS

The Agency has certain requirements they must meet in order to ensure the child is in a safe and secure environment.

1. Complete an Application Form
 - a. Criminal Record Check on adults living in the home
 - b. Child Abuse Registry Check on all adults living in the home
 - c. Prior Contact Check with all Child and Family Services Agencies for all adults residing in the home
 - d. Medical checks for all applicants
 - e. Physical Requirements Checklist
 - f. Four written references or approval from the Local CFS Committee
2. Completed and approved Foster Home Study

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Foster parents receive a daily allowance to assist in caring for the child. SBCFS follows the Provincial Chart of Accounts which details what is covered in the daily rate.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Table 1: Sandy Bay Child and Family Services Total # of Cases as of March 31/2010

| Field Office | Children In Care | | | Family Service | | | All Cases |
|--------------------|------------------|------------|------------|----------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | Federal | Provincial | Total | Federal | Provincial | Total | Total |
| Sandy Bay | 142 | 17 | 159 | 120 | 7 | 127 | 286 |
| Winnipeg | 1 | 69 | 70 | 0 | 59 | 59 | 129 |
| Portage La Prairie | 0 | 9 | 9 | 0 | 16 | 16 | 25 |
| Brandon | 0 | 18 | 18 | 0 | 6 | 6 | 24 |
| Dakota Plains | 0 | 8 | 8 | 5 | 0 | 5 | 13 |
| Total | 143 | 121 | 264 | 125 | 88 | 213 | 477 |

Table 2: Sandy Bay Child and Family Services Legal Status as of March 31/2010

| Ward | Permanent Ward | Temporary Ward | Voluntary Surrender of Guardianship | Total |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------------------------|------------|
| | 68 | 54 | 4 | 126 |
| Voluntary Placement Agreement | | | 59 | 59 |
| Other | Apprehension | Petition Filed | Transitional | |
| | 78 | 0 | 1 | 79 |
| TOTAL | | | | 264 |

Table 3: Sandy Bay Child and Family Services Placement as of March 31/2010

| Placements | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|-----|------------|
| Foster Home | Foster Home | 107 | |
| | Foster Home- Specialized | 0 | |
| | Foster Home-Staff | 0 | 107 |
| Residential Care | Residential Care | 7 | 7 |
| Other Paid Resources | Place of Safety | 66 | |
| | Not Known | 0 | |
| | Out of Province | 1 | |
| | Independent Living | 1 | 68 |
| Select Adoption Placement | Select Adoption Placement | 0 | 0 |
| Other Non-Pay Care | Corrections | 2 | |
| | Health/Mental | 0 | |
| | Own Home/Relative | 80 | 82 |
| Total | | | 264 |

Evaluation Statement

Sandy Bay Child and Family Services' on-reserve alternative care system has experienced several challenges both pre and post mandate. The number of children coming into care has steadily increased over the last couple of years and it has had a definite impact on the quality of service the alternative care program can provide. While the process of licensing quality foster homes in Sandy Bay Ojibway First Nation is a challenge, it should be noted that this is a challenge in all child welfare jurisdictions across Canada.

- *The focus of this evaluation will be to identify primary barriers and opportunities to the licensing of quality foster homes via the Head Office located in Sandy Bay Ojibway First Nation and the Winnipeg Sub-Office located at 1721 Main Street in Winnipeg, Manitoba.*

Methodology

The goals and objectives of child and family service legislation varies across Canada but they all generally reflect the notion that the family is the basic unit of society and that they need to be preserved and supported. Within this notion of preservation and support also comes the recognition of certain basic rights for children, which includes the right to protection from neglect and abuse. Child and family service authorities across Canada are delegated the responsibility of protecting children and preserving families. In some instances, situations occur where children need to be separated from their biological parents for various reasons for various periods of time. Children may be removed voluntarily when a biological parent or legal guardian is unable or unwilling to care for a child or involuntarily due to risk or actual occurrence of neglect or abuse.

Foster or alternative care is the term generally used to describe the program that facilitates the placement of a minor into a private home that is licensed or certified by a child and family service agency. The roles and responsibilities of foster homes in respect to the care and supervision of a child is governed by three primary pieces of written matter;

1. Legislation,
2. Standards, and
3. Agency Policy

The legislation, standards and the agency policies pertaining to SBCFS will be incorporated into this review by utilizing three (3) data collection methodologies;

1. File Review
2. Questionnaire
3. Focus Group

Data Collection

| Method | Source |
|---------------|---|
| File Review | -Current files containing complete/incomplete applications for licence/POS |
| Questionnaire | -Questionnaire with former Foster Parents of Sandy Bay CFS |
| Focus Group | -operations supervisor -Alternative Care Staff from Head Office/Winnipeg Sub-Office. |

Data Analysis

FILE REVIEWS

A random selection of files from the Sandy Bay Office and the Winnipeg Sub-Office were reviewed via the following schedule;

- **Sandy Bay Office – March 24/25, 2010**

- Foster Home Files (n=8)
- Place of Safety Files (n=12)

- **Winnipeg Sub-Office – March 26/29/30**

- Foster Home Files (n=8)
- Place of Safety Files (n=6)

The reviewers established a rating scale based on the number of items required to license a home or complete a Place of Safety. For Foster Homes, the number of required items was 14 and for Places of Safety, the number of items required was 9. The following criteria was established to determine **High, Medium, Low** compliance;

Foster Home Licences;

- High Compliance: 12-14 required items on file.
- Medium Compliance: 9-11 required items on file.
- Low Compliance: 0-8 required items on file.

Place of Safety;

- High Compliance: 7-9 required items on file.
- Medium Compliance: 5-6 required items on file.
- Low Compliance: 0-4 required items on file.

QUESTIONNAIRE with FOSTER PARENTS

The purpose of the survey was to gather information and feedback regarding the experience of former foster parents for Sandy Bay Child and Family Services Inc. The survey consisted of a preamble, which provided background information relating to the evaluation project and the purpose of the survey. The survey consisted of 5 questions which attempted to elicit responses regarding length of fostering experience, overall fostering experience, relationship with the agency, circumstances relating to discontinuation of fostering services with Sandy Bay CFS, and assess the willingness of the respondents to re-apply to the Alternative Care Program.

FOCUS GROUP

A focus group was held with five (5) alternative care staff from the Sandy Bay Office and Winnipeg sub-office staff in the Sandy Bay head office located in Sandy Bay Ojibway First Nation. The purpose of the focus group was to have program staff identify barriers and opportunities relating to the alternative care program. The group began with a summary of the results from the file review. Focus group participants were then asked to discuss two (2) questions;

1. What do you feel are the barriers/opportunities present in the current standards/legislation/application process?
2. What changes or adjustments would you recommend to the standards/legislation/application process?

SUMMARY of FINDINGS

FILE REVIEW

FOSTER CARE LICENSES

Overall the evaluation of the foster home licensing process did reveal common themes between the procedures of the Main Office (Sandy Bay) and the Winnipeg Office. Within the two offices, the findings of the file reviews did demonstrate positive outcomes in terms of compliance with the key service standards such as completed applications, criminal records checks, child abuse registry checks, medical reports, copies of the current foster care license and the physical structure checklists. There were gaps found in the required number of letters of reference, home studies and contact sheet/information on the children placed/discharged from the home.

PLACES OF SAFETY

The evaluation of the Places of Safety files located in the Sandy Bay Office indicated a high compliance with the standards related to agreements to provide places of safety, criminal records checks. There were gaps noted in the data related to letters of reference, physical requirements checklists, summaries of contact and applications of the Place of Safety service provider to become a foster parent.

In the Winnipeg Office the files contained the key information related to criminal records checks, child abuse registry checks, prior contact checks and physical requirement check lists.

Service gaps were found in the areas of information on the children currently in the home, letters of reference, applications to become a foster parent and summaries of contact.

A. FOSTER CARE - SANDY BAY OJIBWAY FIRST NATION - (N=8)

High Compliance

- Completed applications
- Criminal records checks, Child Abuse & Prior Contact Checks
- Medical reports
- Information on Applicant's personal history
- Copy of Physical Check list
- Copy of license
- Orientation

Medium Compliance

- Home Studies
- Orientation Module Certificates
- Letters of Reference
- Release of Confidential Information document

Low Compliance

- Placement Information on children placed/discharged
- Placement/Transfer Summaries
- Contact with care givers

B. PLACES OF SAFETY – SANDY BAY OJIBWAY FIRST NATION - (N=12)

High Compliance

- Agreements to Provide Place of Safety
- Criminal Record Check

Medium Compliance

- Child Abuse Registry Check
- List of children in Place of Safety

Low Compliance

- Letters of Reference
- Prior Contact Check
- Physical requirements checklist
- Application of Place of Safety service provider to become a Foster Parent
- Summaries of contact

C. FOSTER CARE - WINNIPEG - (N=8)

High Compliance

- Completed applications
- Release of confidential information document
- Criminal records check, Child Abuse & Prior Contact Check
- Information on Applicant's personal history
- Copy of physical check list
- Copy of Foster Home License

Medium Compliance

- Reference Checks
- Medical reports
- Home Studies
- Orientation
- Placement information on children placed/discharged

Low Compliance

- Placement information
- Placement/Transfer Summaries
- Contact with care givers

D. PLACES OF SAFETY – WINNIPG - (N= 6)**High Compliance**

- Agreements to provide Place of Safety
- Criminal Record Check
- Child Abuse Registry check
- Prior Contact Check
- Physical check lists

Medium Compliance

- List of children in Place of Safety

Low Compliance

- Letters of reference
- Application of Place of Safety service provider to provide to become a FP
- Summaries of Contact

E. Incidental Services (N=3)

- Did not rate according to compliance as these POS homes were not used.

TOTAL – 37 Files

QUESTIONNAIRE with FORMER FOSTER PARENTS

A total of **nineteen (19)** surveys were completed in the Sandy Bay Ojibway First Nation and were submitted to the Agency. The results are summarized as follows:

1. Foster Care /Places of Safety Fostering Experiences

- 11 of the respondents (58%) had provided care for children for less than one year;
- 4 of the respondents were care givers for a period of 2-5 years and 4 had a time frame of 6 or more years;
- 16 of the former providers (84%) rated their fostering experience as “good” to “excellent”; and
- 16 of the survey participants rated their overall fostering time and relationship with the Agency as ‘good” to excellent while 3 (16%) described their work with the Agency as “not so good”;

2. Reasons for Discontinuing Their Involvement with the Program and the Agency

- 5 of the respondents indicated that they had accepted short term emergency placements and had not been contacted by the Agency to provide further services;
- 4 of the participants advised that the time commitments were excessive and their personal time was limited to meet these demands;

“we are very busy right now, we tried fostering 2 children and it was fun, and nice to have little ones in the home. We just need time to give them proper care. We just didn’t have the time.” – former foster parent

- 2 respondents advised that they had been harassed by the biological family/extended family of the child(ren) placed in their care;
- 2 of the participants responded with the comment that they were requested to accept high needs child and they did not receive the required follow up and supports from the Agency staff.

3. Willingness to Reconsider Providing Their Home as an Alternative Care Resource

- 14 respondents (74%) expressed an interest in resuming their role as a foster care/place of safety provider; and
- 4 participants responded with a “maybe”.

4. Changes/Recommendations to Enhance the Quality and Quantity of the Program

- 5 responses to the survey (26%) suggested that more regular and consistent contact is needed between the Agency and the foster parents;

“Both foster parents and case workers should be in contact with each other more often” -former foster parent

- 2 respondents commented on the need for some protection from the Agency when they are encountering episodes of harassment from family members of the child(ren) placed in their care;

“If I were to become a foster parent again, I don’t want any other family member harassing us again” - former foster parent

- Additional comments focused on the need for the Agency to:

- Share relevant medical/social information with the care givers;

“Foster parents to be notified of child’s needs, behaviours etc; everything to be explained to foster parents ahead of time and not to find out later of child’s problems”-former foster parent

- Assist in developing workshops on child management issues;

- Place a greater emphasis on prevention/support services so as to enable children to remain with their parents;

- Set up and operate evening programs for children;

- Ensure that workers are held accountable for the placement decisions that they are called upon to make on a regular basis; and

-Include foster parents in the ongoing planning meetings for the children in their care.

“The agency can provide the dos and don’ts of foster parents, for example when and where could the child go and play or visit. What is in place for purchasing beds or other necessities for the child’s well being?” -former foster parent

FOCUS GROUP

The following comments and themes were identified by the participants in the focus group;

1. The various documents for personal histories and home studies used by the staff to track this information is confusing, difficult to respond to due to language barriers.

“Potential foster parents complain that the Home Assessment package and the Personal History Forms are long and often ask the same questions. There are 40 items in the home assessment package and 44 questions in the Personal History Forms” -Alternative care worker

2. The lack of writing skills by the applicants may delay the completion of the required documents and hinder the licensing process.
3. The costs of medical assessments may impact on the applicant’s ability to complete the medical requirement.

“The doctor’s charges for medical reports vary from doctor to doctor. They range from being free on reserve, \$65 in the Portage Clinic, to \$75-\$200 in Winnipeg” -Alternative care worker

4. The tight time line to complete the requirements to license a Place of Safety needs to be revisited and recommend modifications to the current regulations/standards.

“Timelines for making medical appointments to see the doctor vary from 1 month in Portage La Prairie, to 6months in Winnipeg – Alternative Care Worker

“New applicants are supposed to pay for their first criminal record check and often the criminal record check does not reveal the charges. It takes 6 months to do finger print checks and criminal records checks take at least a month on reserve whereas they are instant off reserve”-Alternative Care Worker

5. Mention was made to the fact that in some instances, the extended family places of safety were not interested in becoming foster parents but only interested in providing short term care till children were returned home.
6. The number of letters of reference required by a foster home applicant is difficult to satisfy as a result of the reality that many of the families on reserve are related.
7. There is a lack of clarity around the contact responsibilities attached to the children placed in the alternative care resources by the staff. This has created some confusion for the service providers(foster parents, places of safety providers) are they are often called upon to relate to various staff - the role of the worker responsible for the child in the home and the role of the foster care coordinator). This has lead to the service providers receiving conflicting messages and in some cases a lack of relevant data on the functioning of the child (ren) in the placement.
8. There was also some comment on the ability of the Agency to issue a Provisional License or a Place of Safety while the Agency is awaiting the receipt of licensing information.
9. Physical Requirement Checklist is not appropriate for On-Reserve living conditions and social norms.

“Physical requirements checklists for homes on reserve are unrealistic”
-Alternative care worker

CONCLUSIONS

In developing a series of conclusions to address the findings of this evaluation, it is important to acknowledge the fact that many First Nation Communities struggle with sub-standard housing conditions. Sandy Bay Ojibway First Nation is no exception to this reality. Therefore in some instances, foster homes, and places of safety are placed in situations of non-compliance with regulations and standards. Bedrooms may often exceed the maximum recommended number of children per room, windows may be too small, and often fire exits are nonexistent.

The following conclusions have been identified based on their origin of influence. Systemic issues are those that are beyond the scope of the agency and require action by change agents such as the Southern Authority and/or the Province of Manitoba. Internally influenced issues are those that can be addressed immediately by the agency, through revised policies and procedures.

Systemic Issues

The evaluation revealed a need to revisit the regulation related to the 15 day timeline for the licensing of Places of Safety. Through the focus groups with alternative care staff, it suggested that the timeline be extended to 90 days. The current standard stipulates that the license must be completed within 15 days and the application to provide foster care services must be provided within an additional 15 days. This would enable program staff to complete the required documentation in a more realistic timeframe.

In addition, the focus groups and surveys made it clear that there is an urgent need to review the requirements of the Home Study and Personal History forms to identify redundancies and to consider the possibility of consolidating the two documents. A single document would create a more user-friendly process and aid in the completion of the required forms in a more efficient and timely manner.

Based on the file review, which revealed a number of unlicensed homes and expired places of safety, and the focus group discussions, it was suggested that consideration be given to the development of a provisional license which would address those families caught between expired Places of Safety and Licensed Foster Home. In many instances, extended family placement providers expressed that they were **not** interested in fostering for a long term basis but only interested in providing placement support for a short term to extended family members. A provisional license would sanction this increasingly common situation and address the issue of unrealistic standards and regulations creating instances of non-compliance.

Lastly, in terms of systemic issues, it was stated in the focus group by alternative care staff that possibly revisiting the regulation related to the yearly relicensing of foster homes and consider extending the timeline to every 2 years. This would again alleviate some of the critical timeline constraints currently being experienced.

Internal Issues

The data analysis highlighted inconsistencies regarding waiting periods to see the doctor and costs associated with medical assessments from office to office. In some instances medical costs were covered for some applicants and in other scenarios, there was no charge for the assessment to be completed. The agency will develop a strategy to cover the cost of medical assessments to ensure the application process is fair and equitable for all applicants.

The file review affirmed the need to develop a filing process to ensure Places of Safety/Foster Home files are consistent across offices. This process should allow the following information to be readily available;

- number of children in the home
- dates of placements and discharges
- confirmation of the assigned worker
- current status of the license (licensed/pending)

In addition, the evaluation showed that there was some confusion regarding the roles and responsibilities of assigned child protection worker and the alternative care worker internally and with foster/place of safety providers. A directive was issued to staff and foster/place of safety providers indicating that matters relating to the care and well being of the child in care were to be directed to the assigned protection worker and that matters pertaining to the licensing process and training were to be directed to the alternative care worker. The agency will ensure a process is in place to confirm compliance with the current agency directive related to roles and responsibilities.

The evaluation process also revealed a communication gap between the child protection and alternative care departments in terms of documentation regarding the placement and removal of children from homes. In some instances only the Child Care Instruction Sheets (commonly referred to as green sheets) were being completed by the assigned protection worker to ensure payment to service providers, but Child Placement and Foster Placement follow up Sheets were not being forwarded in a timely manner. This resulted in the alternative care workers not being aware of placements or removal of children from available resources.

As a result, the agency implemented a new document that merged the two forms together into a single document. This has resulted in improved communication between the respective departments regarding the utilization of foster/place of safety resources and the placement of children in care.

In closing, it can be emphatically stated that the agency is committed to evaluating the practices of staff to ensure compliance with the existing regulation and standards currently governing the administration and licensing of alternative care resources to the best of its ability. The agency will also strive to ensure the needed changes identified in this report be examined in some depth by the Southern First Nations Network of Care Authority (Southern Authority) and/or by the Department of Family Services and Consumer Affairs. The Staff and Management of Sandy Bay Child and Family Services are committed to taking an active role in the development and implementation of the changes identified in this report.