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Vancouver, BC V6J 4S5

BC ASSOCIATION *of*
SOCIAL WORKERS

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BC CHILD WELFARE SOCIAL WORKERS OVERWHELMED

(Kamloops) The BC Association of Social Workers responded to an investigation by theDiscourse published today, that notes the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) is failing to meet its own standards of care for the more than 6,000 children and youth in care.

“The Ministry sets standards to ensure that children, youth, and their families receive quality services” said BCASW President Michael Crawford. “The analysis of audit data by theDiscourse is alarming and shows the Ministry is falling far short of meeting their goals.”

theDiscourse investigation shows that between 2014 and 2018, the Ministry gave itself a failing grade on nearly 40 per cent of its critical performance measures in 37 different audits.

“Child welfare social workers across BC work hard every day to protect children and youth, and help families to succeed” said Crawford. “Unfortunately, heavy caseloads and understaffing means that overwhelmed social workers are unable to do the job as well or as completely as they would want.”

The BC Association of Social Workers is part of a province-wide coalition currently in discussion with the Ministry to strengthen professional social work in BC. The Association seeks to:

- reverse the recent decision by MCFD to expand educational qualifications for child welfare workers to include bachelor degrees in sociology, theology, and other areas,
- reserve the title “social worker” within MCFD for persons holding social work degrees - perhaps less than 50% of child welfare workers hold social work degrees, and
- to ensure that Ministry social workers are required to be registered with the BC College of Social Workers.

“A strong professional identity and regulated social work practice will improve the delivery of child welfare services in BC” said Crawford. “We are optimistic that our discussions with MCFD will benefit children, youth, and their families.”

- 30 -

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theDiscourse - <https://www.thediscourse.ca/child-welfare/bc-gov-failing>