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LAW INSTITUTE

MODERNIZING THE CHILD, FAMILY AND COMMUNITY SERVICE ACT

Media Release

New BCLI publications call for reforms to the child protection framework and review of legislation on youth aging into the community

for immediate release

Vancouver, 25 May 2021—Today the British Columbia Law Institute published the *Report on Modernizing the Child, Family and Community Service Act* and the *Study Paper on Youth Aging into the Community*. Following public consultation and consideration of the input derived therefrom, with these two publications the work of BCLI's Child Protection Project Committee has drawn to a close.

The *Report on Modernizing the Child, Family and Community Service Act* contains a focused review of British Columbia's child protection statute. It makes 39 recommendations for reform that would harmonize the language in the Act with British Columbia's *Family Law Act*, expand its disclosure provisions and provide a means for incorporating a child's views into a child protection proceeding. "These recommendations will improve the Act," said committee co-chair Corinne Feenie, "This, in turn, will mean that the law can better protect vulnerable children and provide increased support to their families and communities."

The *Study Paper on Youth Aging into the Community* sets out comparative legal research. Its subject is how jurisdictions support young people who were once in the care of the child protection system but who have reached the age of majority. Of acute concern is the overrepresentation of Indigenous children and youth in the system, and special attention is paid to issues related to Indigenous young people leaving the care system. The study paper contrasts British Columbia with Ontario and four international jurisdictions. "We found that Australia, England, New Zealand, and the United States have each enacted comprehensive legal frameworks to support transitions and provide necessary supports for youth and specifically Indigenous youth in the system," said committee co-chair Katrina Harry. "Studying their legislation provides options and solutions that could benefit British Columbia."

Copies of the report, the study paper, and backgrounders summarizing their contents are all available at <https://www.bcli.org>. BCLI thanks the Law Foundation of BC for supporting this project.

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The British Columbia Law Institute has been undertaking independent law reform projects in British Columbia to develop just and innovative solutions and increase access to justice since 1997. We work to promote the clarification and simplification of the law and its adaptation to modern social needs, promote improvement of the administration of justice and respect for the rule of law, and promote and carry out scholarly legal research.

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