



**VIA E-MAIL**  
Ref: 244474

August 21, 2019

Dylan Cohen  
Susan Russell  
Campaign Organizers  
Fostering Change  
E-mail: [Dylan@FirstCallBC.org](mailto:Dylan@FirstCallBC.org)

Dear Dylan and Susan:

Thank you for your letter of July 25, 2019, regarding the Agreements with Young Adults Program (AYA).

Youth transitions is a priority for our government and has been identified in my Mandate Letter as well as in the Mandate Letter for my colleague, the Honourable Melanie Mark, Minister of Advanced Education, Skills and Training. As you note in your letter, we are currently undergoing a process of reimagining the AYA program, with the goal of improving the program so that it can meet the needs of more young adults transitioning into adulthood.

Over the last year, staff have undertaken an extensive engagement process and spoken to over 1,300 British Columbians across the province, including service providers, community agencies, Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) staff, Delegated Aboriginal Agencies, caregivers, youth and young adults to understand the current state of youth transitions and to identify areas for improvement. We reported out publicly on these engagements in the [What We Heard About Youth Transitions and the Family Based Caregiver Payment Model in British Columbia](#) Report.

I acknowledge the challenges you have pointed out, such as differential access to the AYA program and the types of services provided. Our ministry is committed to supporting front line staff in administering AYA consistently and broadly. To this end, we have established a monthly provincial Community of Practice call for staff who administer AYA to share information and ideas, and to discuss identified concerns or areas for improvement.

As you note, the program is not flexible. For instance, enrollment in a life skills program – or other eligible program such as university or rehabilitation – is a legislative requirement to receive AYA. However, as we work towards systemic change, including regulatory and legislative changes to make it more flexible, staff are encouraged to find innovative ways to support young adults within the existing program.

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Ministry of  
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Minister

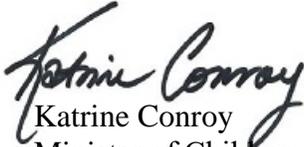
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We are striving to ensure that all young people transitioning from care receive the support they need during this transition, not just a few. I have directed my executive team to report back to me on how MCFD will continue to address inequities in current practice.

Thank you again for writing and continuing to raise this important issue. I look forward to meeting with you on October 23, 2019, and discussing this further then.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Katrine Conroy". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "K".

Katrine Conroy  
Minister of Children and Family Development

pc: Honourable Melanie Mark