

Child Intervention: Legislation

What gives my caseworker the ability to do what they do?

In Alberta, Child Intervention caseworkers work with children, youth and families under three sets of acts:

- The *Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act*,
- The *Protection of Sexually Exploited Children Act*, and
- The *Drug-Endangered Children Act*.

These allow Child Intervention workers to become involved with a child and family in order to help keep children safe.

At times, caseworkers can also support families through the use of another act:

- The *Protection Against Family Violence Act*.

Child Intervention caseworkers work for the Government of Alberta through a regional office or with a Delegated First Nations Agency (DFNA) to provide intervention services.

Child Intervention services are provided through seven service delivery regions and through 17 DFNAs, which provide services on 39 of 48 First Nation Reserves in Alberta.

The Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act (CYFEA)

This Act defines what is abuse and neglect. CYFEA also outlines what caseworkers must do when they find that children or youth are at risk of being, or have been, abused or neglected.

There are many children, youth and families who get help from Child Intervention. Sometimes that help is given inside the family home and sometimes it's given when the children or youth cannot live at home.

CYFEA outlines what caseworkers need to consider when making their decisions. This Act ensures the focus is on working with families to try to keep them together and healthy. It also outlines what needs to be done if children or youth cannot remain with or return to their family.

This Act also explains adoption and private guardianship for when children or youth cannot return to their family home.

The Protection of Sexually Exploited Children Act (PSECA)

This Act recognizes that a child or youth involved in prostitution is sexually exploited and a victim of sexual abuse, and requires services and protection.

PSECA addresses how this protection and services will occur. Its services and programs also address child sexual exploitation and the forms that this exploitation can take, including prostitution.

Under this Act, police or a Child Intervention caseworker may apprehend and confine children or youth who are at risk of sexual exploitation for their protection and safety.

It's important to know that you may have a PSECA caseworker and your Child Intervention caseworker at the same time. When this happens, the caseworkers will work together and with the family to help resolve concerns about the child.

The Drug-Endangered Children Act (DECA)

When parents or guardians are involved in selling or making illegal street drugs, DECA allows Child Intervention caseworkers or police officers to apprehend the children or youth that might be living in the home.

When this happens, a decision must be made in the next two days to either return the children or youth to their home, or to carry on with an apprehension under CYFEA.

The Protection Against Family Violence Act (PAFVA)

When there is violence in the family home, this Act provides legal ways for the victims of family violence to go to court to apply for a protection order.

Want to learn more?

You can read each of these Acts online. Simply visit the Alberta's Queen's Printer website: www.qp.alberta.ca.