



Residential Placement Advisory Committee (Toronto RPAC)

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TORONTO RPAC

RPAC “Residential Placement Advisory Committee” was created to develop a placement procedure that focuses on the individual needs of children (birth to 18) in residential programs and to involve parents/guardians and youth in a regular review process. RPAC is part of the children’s safeguard system and as such can play an important role in ‘speaking’ about the issues that children and youth in residential programs sometimes can face.

RPAC operates across the Province as mandated by the CYFSA, Sections 62 to 66. There are individual RPAC committees in each region. Skylark operates RPAC for Toronto region on behalf of the Ministry. In other words regardless of where the residential placement is located, if the child/youth is from Toronto, then Toronto RPAC conducts the review. We actually travel across the province.

There are two different types of reviews, Mandatory and Discretionary:

Mandatory Reviews

Mandatory reviews occur for all settings licensed for 10 or more for admissions expected to last 90 days or more. Following the CYFSA guidelines, providers advise RPAC of each admission using the RPAC Notice of Admission Form faxed on or before the admission date. As legislated RPAC schedules the initial review within the first 45 days of the admission date and every 9 months thereafter until discharge. When a placement, originally determined to be less than 90 days extends, the provider advises RPAC to initiate the review process. Please note reviews continue for individuals aged 18 – 21 when they remain in the children’s licensed placement.

Discretionary Reviews

“Discretionary” reviews occur ‘upon request’ when a youth aged 12+ or anyone acting on their behalf has a dispute about the appropriateness of the placement for their needs. Most Discretionary requests involve youth placed by one of child welfare agencies. Most often discretionary referrals were initiated after a youth or parent first contacted the former Provincial Advocate’s Office regarding a residential placement concern or decision that they felt was not appropriate.

Primarily RPAC reviews consider whether the residential placement is appropriate for the child or youth in the circumstances. Placement Reviews are the youth's right; the youth should be at the centre of the process. Youth aged 12 and over are invited to take part in the review. RPAC listens to the youth's views and wishes, given due weight in accordance with age and maturity.

RPAC considers the following and produces a report with recommendations based on the information gathered during the course of each review:

- Did the youth's presenting needs exceed what community based services and supports could provide before residential placement was considered an option
- Placement location, environment, privacy
- Cultural, Religious, and identity needs are met
- First Nations, Inuit or Métis cultures, heritages & traditions
- Staffing supports; supervision
- Relationships with staff and peers
- Access to specialized supports and resources
- Special needs; medical needs; medication
- Access to on-site or community school program
- Family involvement
- After School and weekend recreation including access and connection to community
- Privacy
- Individual and family goals
- Length of time in placement and anticipated discharge plans
- RPAC can advise youth, parents and service providers as to the availability and appropriateness of alternative services and programs if requested

****Upon admission regardless of number of beds and type of placement it is the responsibility of **every service provider** to notify every youth and parent/guardian of the RPAC process and their right to participate. The service provider obtains the appropriate consents. There will be circumstances when it is not appropriate to involve parents. Please provide the RPAC postcard upon admission to each youth and parent/guardian.

Once RPAC receives the admission notice, we will contact the service provider for general background information; request a copy of the admission report or most recent Plan of Care. We will schedule to come out to your location to meet directly with the youth and tour the placement. It is our hope to talk directly with the youth however understand when they choose not too. Some youth are more comfortable with a staff person present. When visits are not possible we will request if the youth is comfortable with a short telephone conversation regarding how their placement is going and if they have any concerns. The review also includes the perspective of involved service providers and guardians. A youth friendly report will be prepared and sent to the youth with copies to the parent/guardian, service provider and to the

ministry. When a youth or parent disagrees with RPAC recommendations, they can contact the Child and Family Services Review Board (CFSRB) if they wish.

Trish Bar, long-term Toronto RPAC volunteer, continues as our Citizen Committee Representative and Brenda Scott is the Toronto RPAC Coordinator. Please see the attached updated Toronto RPAC admission and discharge notice forms.

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