

CITY OF BURNABY

FAMILY COURT AND YOUTH JUSTICE COMMITTEE

*HIS WORSHIP, THE MAYOR
AND COUNCILLORS*

RE: ANNUAL REPORT - 1998

RECOMMENDATION:

1. *THAT* a copy of this report be sent to the Office of the Attorney General, Room 232, Parliament Buildings, Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4.

REPORT

The Revised Statutes of British Columbia 1979, Chapter 341, "*Provincial Court Act*" - Section 4(4)(c) provides as follows:

4. (4) The Family Court Committee shall
(c) report annually to the municipalities and to the Attorney General respecting their activities during the past year.

In compliance with this statutory requirement, contained hereunder is a summary of activities of the Family Court and Youth Justice Committee during 1998.

GUEST SPEAKERS

Mr. Fraser Simmons, Regional Director, National Parole Board, appeared before members of the Family Court and Youth Justice Committee to provide an overview of the National Parole Board's role in the criminal justice system. Mr. Simmons advised that the National Parole Board is responsible for dealing with offenders serving from two years to life in prison. Mr. Simmons noted various types of conditional release including temporary absences, day parole, full parole and statutory release.

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Mr. Simmons outlined the policies that guide National Parole Board members in making decisions about parole. First, the Board members review all available and relevant information regarding the offender and make an initial assessment of risk. Mr. Simmons advised that, upon completion of the initial assessment, the Board examines and reviews specific factors such as institutional behaviour, information from offender, benefit derived from programs offender may have taken, appropriate treatment for any disorder diagnosed by a professional and the offenders release plan. After considering all of the above information, a final decision is made regarding whether or not to grant parole.

Mr. Bob Taylor, Victim Assistance Co-ordinator, Burnaby Detachment, R.C.M.P., appeared before members of the Family Court and Youth Justice Committee to outline the Victim Assistance Program. Mr. Taylor advised that the program is designed to ease the trauma experienced by victims of crime. Mr. Taylor noted that victims are kept informed regarding the status of the police investigation into their individual cases. In addition, general information regarding the criminal justice system, police procedures and criminal injury compensation is provided to the victim. Mr. Taylor further noted that the program provides referrals to appropriate community agencies for victims requiring assistance from a specialized professional service.

Ms. Lola Chapman, Ridge-Meadows Youth and Justice Advocacy Association, appeared before members of the Family Court and Youth Justice Committee to outline the youth diversion program in Maple Ridge and Pitt Meadows. Ms. Chapman advised that youth conference committees, consisting of volunteers, attempt to provide the motivation and personal help necessary to keep first time offenders from becoming repeat offenders. Ms. Chapman further advised that the goal of the youth conference committees is to hold young offenders accountable for their behaviour while reconnecting them to the community.

Ms. Chapman noted that the youth conference committee meets in private with the young offender and parents. The Committee decides the consequences for the offence. A diversion agreement is then signed by the youth. This voluntary contract may include any of the following items: restitution, apology, writing an essay, volunteer service work, attending counselling, visiting a secure facility, etc. Ms. Chapman concluded by advising that successful completion of the contract means a fresh start and no criminal record for the youth.

Community Accountability Program

The Family Court and Youth Justice Committee reviewed an information package from the Attorney-General outlining the benefits and advantages associated with establishing community accountability programs. These diversion programs give communities direct involvement in ensuring that low risk offenders face immediate and meaningful consequences outside the traditional court process. Moreover, the programs are designed to ensure offenders accept responsibility for their actions and make decisions and choices that can prevent repeat offences. In addition, the Committee noted that victims have an important role to play in these programs. In conclusion, the Committee agreed to continue monitoring the community accountability programs as described by the Attorney General.

CHILD AND YOUTH PROSTITUTION

The Family Court and Youth Justice Committee is represented on a City of Burnaby task force addressing the sexual exploitation of children and youth. The task force has completed reviewing a number of critical areas including education and prevention, crisis intervention, law enforcement and follow-up and support for children and youth leaving the sex trade. The task force has recommended that the City:

- 1) establish three separate locally-based multi agency committees - the Implementation Committee, the Protocol Committee and the Services Committee to work on various aspects of service delivery and public education around the issue of child and youth sexual exploitation.
- 2) pass a bylaw to regulate escort agencies and similar types of business.
- 3) forward requests to senior levels of government for a review of several sections of the Criminal Code of Canada as well as provincial policies pertaining to the court process and the identification of at - risk children and youth.
- 4) ask the province to provide resources on several fronts to address the sexual exploitation of children and youth in the sex trade.

Burnaby City Council has given the task force a mandate to continue working for another year. The task force's major task will be to develop a plan for a community education campaign. The task force will also oversee the work of the protocol and services committees, and monitor progress on all of its recommendations.

1998 CONFERENCE OF B.C. FAMILY COURT & YOUTH JUSTICE COMMITTEES

The Family Court and Youth Justice Committee was represented at the 1998 Conference of B.C. Family Court and Youth Justice Committees held in Prince George from October 02 - 04. The keynote speakers at the Conference were Honourable Lois Boone, Minister for Children and Families, and Honourable Judge Dollis, Prince George Law Court. Ms. Boone discussed factors which contribute to criminal behaviour such as abuse, neglect and poor parenting. Ms. Dollis discussed the role of Provincial Court judges.

The main topics discussed by Conference delegates included court watch programs, diversion programs and the need for safe houses. In addition, the Conference included a panel discussion regarding the causes of and solutions to youth crime as well as workshops on topics such as youth violence, aboriginal diversion programs and the role of Family Court and Youth Justice Committees.

Respectfully submitted,

Allen Hutton
Chair

Alison Joe
Vice Chair

Councillor C. Redman
Member

