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## Jones calls for investigation into province's foster care system **LATEST NEWS**

The Telegram

Opposition Leader Yvonne Jones has written the Child and Youth Advocate to officially request a complete review of the province's foster care system.

Jones was responding to reports of a 20 per cent increase in the number of children in foster care, a shortage of foster families, motels and efficiency units being used to house young people, and that 25 per cent of children from Natuashish are in foster care, many outside the province.

"I feel the Child and Youth Advocate has unique abilities to identify and help find solutions to this developing crisis situation," Jones said. "I feel very strongly about this issue and believe it is shameful that children are being subjected to these circumstances."

Jones said there are a number of questions raised: Are the majority of these children coming from voluntary or involuntary foster care? What are the needs of parents requiring foster care for their children? What can be done to increase the recruitment of foster families? Why are increased numbers of children coming into the system? Are existing government programs working? Are there more economic advantages available for the child in foster care than currently offered to parents on social assistance?

"It is obvious that numerous problems exist in our foster care system and we must identify and address these shortcomings," she said.