



"Every child deserves an enriching experience in care that leads to success."

-- Jane Kovarikova, PhD Candidate and former youth in care

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REPORT FINDS DRAMATIC OUTCOMES FOR YOUTH WHO AGE-OUT OF CARE

Toronto, Ontario – Today, a special report ([Click here for full report](#)) detailing consistently bleak outcomes for youth who have aged-out of care across multiple jurisdictions was released by Jane Kovarikova, PhD candidate at Western University and a former youth-in-care.

The research, presented at the Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, was undertaken to better understand the child protection system's lasting impact on the lives of young people leaving care. Irwin Elman, the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, commended Kovarikova's work as a crucial step toward improving outcomes for youth aging-out of care.

"My Office is committed to harnessing the wisdom that comes from the lived experience of the children and youth it serves," said Elman and, "Jane is an example of the many young people who put heart and mind into their efforts to ensure all children and youth are well served in our child welfare system."

Typical outcomes for youth who age-out of care include:

- low academic achievement
- unemployment, underemployment, and poverty
- homelessness and housing insecurity
- criminal justice system involvement
- early parenthood
- poor physical and mental health
- loneliness

Kovarikova suggests that evidence-based policy and system reform could prevent these life outcomes and empower youth after leaving care.

"Ontario does not systematically track what happens to young people after they leave care, nor study the long-term impact of growing up in the system," said Kovarikova. "If you do not study youth outcomes after care then you cannot know if your policies or reforms are working!"

"All Ontario children, including the most vulnerable, deserve a fair shot at a bright future unhampered by the tragic circumstances of their past," concluded Kovarikova.

The report recommends that a longitudinal study of youth outcomes after aging-out of Ontario's child protection system should be undertaken to provide better care to Ontario's most vulnerable children and youth.

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