

Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Wednesday, May 5, 2010 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: I will now call the House to order. We will proceed at this time with prayers.

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will proceed at this time with the Order Paper.

Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of National Mental Health Week

Hon. Mr. Hart: Mr. Speaker, I rise in the House today to acknowledge National Mental Health Week, May 3 to 9, 2010. Mental health is connected to an individual's overall health. Just as we have to nurture and look after our physical health, we also have to do the same with our mental health. More than ever, we have a number of responsibilities that can tax our mental health. We may have the responsibility to care for our children and elderly parents at the same time. We may be asked to help out for a number of events or causes or take on more and more responsibilities in our place of employment.

While having a purpose and sense of accomplishment can be positive, we have to work to ensure we keep a balance in our lives. It's not surprising that in our current world of e-mail, BlackBerry's, cellphones and being connected 24/7, a recent poll by the Canadian Mental Health Association found that 58 percent of Canadians reported feeling overloaded with many of their responsibilities and roles.

[French spoken]

Research shows that creating more balance in our lives and taking the time for exercise and for eating well can greatly improve our mental health.

Even a half an hour walk after lunch or after dinner can give us the needed mental break. We also can't be afraid to say no to unrealistic expectations. I encourage all Yukoners and all members of this House to take a few minutes during National Mental Health Week to see how we can add more balance to our lives.

[French spoken]

The state of our mental health can't be ignored and we must take the time to care for it, just as our physical health.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Merci beaucoup.

Mr. Cardiff: I rise on behalf of the New Democrat and Liberal caucus to pay tribute to National Mental Health Week and to all the professionals and volunteers that work delivering mental health services. Mental illnesses are caused by a complex of social, psychological, genetic and biological disturbances. One-third of Canadians will experience a mental illness sometime during their lives. Many mental health conditions can now be treated effectively with drugs, but treatment by drugs must be combined with psychotherapy to be effective.

Eighty-nine percent of Canadians say that their working environment is increasingly stressful. This results in almost the same percentage of people reporting in sick an average of six times in the past year. We are learning that we are simply working too hard to try and keep up with the economic demands. More than 2 million employees in Canada suffer mental illnesses at any given time, and the implications for the economy and the impact on our society are overwhelming.

We are beginning to realize the connections between mental and physical health. Regular physical activity improves psychological well-being and reduces depression and anxiety. As well as physical exercise, the Canadian Mental Health Association recommends that individuals use their mental capacities to encourage their own mental health.

We should treat ourselves well and carefully. We should exercise our minds to enjoy hobbies, to daydream, to set realistic goals and to share humour. As well, the people around us are important to our health. Much can be done with our families and friends toward a mentally healthy lifestyle.

Health is not only the absence of disease or negative conditions, it is the positive state of physical, mental and social well-being. That is especially true with mental health. We in this House can contribute a great deal to mental health. Everyone needs a proper place to live, an opportunity for employment, and opportunities to be part of a community that cares. All of these things are conditions that are needed for good mental health and they are in our power to achieve.

Speaker: Are there any further tributes?
 Introduction of visitors.

Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Mr. Speaker, I have for tabling the Department of Education's status report, a response to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts by the Auditor General of Canada. Mr. Speaker, further updates on this will be addressed in the department's annual report.

Speaker: Are there any further documents for tabling?
 Are there any reports of committees?
 Any petitions?
 Any bills to be introduced?
 Any notices of motion?
 Is there a statement by a minister?
 This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Committees of the Legislative Assembly

Mr. McRobb: This government is long on promises but short on action.

When a hot-potato issue arises, the Yukon Party typically tosses it into a processor and then ignores it. This government is in its eighth year, yet it has stalled progress to improve the workings of our Assembly — no SCREP meetings as promised. It wasn't until last fall that a select committee was finally struck to deal with legislative renewal. Then this government

delayed the committee's delivery date until after the next election. Five months have passed since the committee was struck, yet it hasn't done anything.

When will the Yukon Party member who chairs this committee finally call a meeting?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: It is normal process that this committee, the Standing Committee on Rules, Elections and Privileges for this House, does meet from time to time, but that requires a cooperative environment for the members who sit on the committee to be able to work collectively in the spirit and the intent of the committee's mandate.

If the Member for Kluane and the Liberals' members of the committee want to meet, I'm sure they are very capable of providing that signal and request to the chair of SCREP committee, and of course, the government, in the spirit of cooperation, would respond and reciprocate accordingly.

Mr. McRobb: Mr. Speaker, that's not leadership. Now, legislative reform isn't the only select committee stalled by this government. Last fall this government struck a select committee on off-road vehicle use, yet that committee hasn't met either. This inactivity has caused citizens to stand up and fill the void. Many Yukoners who have expressed concerns about off-road vehicles want to find a balance between this activity and other values. They've been looking to the government for leadership and haven't found it. They've had to start their own organization to find solutions to this problem.

Mr. Speaker, these ministers should be standing up to orders from the corner office. When will the Yukon Party member who chairs the ATV committee finally call a meeting?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Mr. Speaker, let us make the point and be very clear that these types of instruments and processes are given sanction by this Assembly and all its members, so we all have a duty in respect to addressing those obligations that this House has directed that the members must undertake.

Let us now reflect on this issue of cooperation and collaboration that is required to effectively deliver on these processes that the Assembly has directed that we do. One of the first committees struck was the committee on the *Landlord and Tenant Act* and, try as we might, the government side has been diligently trying to get this committee to do its job but we even have difficulty arranging a time and a date for the meeting of this committee that has been struck, Mr. Speaker.

The government members are ready and willing to meet immediately but it is difficult to get the members from the opposition benches — the Liberals, of course, included — to actually give us a date and time that they're willing to meet. We will continue to do our work on the government side and deliver on our obligations as the House has directed.

Mr. McRobb: This government is high on promises and processes yet low on progress. The Yukon Party chair for each of the select committees on legislative reform and ATV regulations hasn't yet called a single meeting. This inaction has caused concerned citizens to stand up and fill the vacuum.

Let's turn to yet another example. Our Assembly voted to form a select committee to consult Yukoners on revisions to the *Landlord and Tenant Act*, yet there has been very little progress other than to postpone the delivery date. There was supposed to

be a meeting called during this sitting. Time is running out to prepare for the public consultations that are supposed to begin next month. The Premier has been asked two questions and has avoided both answers. The mighty Casey is at bat and here comes strike three. When will the Yukon Party member who chairs this committee finally call this meeting?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: The bases are loaded and Casey is up to bat and it is a big fat slow pitch from the Member for Kluane and it is now out of the park. I would encourage the Liberals of this House to honour their obligation that has been directed by this Assembly and get busy on these committees.

Question re: Pesticide regulation

Mr. Fairclough: Mr. Speaker, the Environment minister once had many strongly held views on environmental protection in Yukon. One of his ideas was to restrict pesticide use. More than once, the member urged the government to, and I quote: "Immediately ban any pesticide suspected or known to be a risk to humans and to animals." He helpfully added that this could be done through *Environment Act* regulations.

Now that he's Environment minister and we're sure he has been hard at work drafting these regulations, will the minister update the House on his plans for new pesticide regulations?

Hon. Mr. Edzerza: This is always a very complicated endeavour and it's still a work-in-progress.

Mr. Fairclough: In other words, the minister is doing nothing, once again. The minister hasn't honoured any of the commitments he made before his most recent floor-crossing. He broke his commitment to preserve McIntyre Creek; he once said, and I quote: "I'm in full support of permanent protection of the McIntyre Creek corridor running right through the heart of the city." — unquote. He forgot that promise as soon as he upgraded his office.

Now we're asking about his belief that we need more pesticide regulations in the Yukon. Has the minister drafted new regulations or is this just another commitment he left behind?

Hon. Mr. Edzerza: I hope over the next year and a half that the Member for Mayo-Tatchun will get over the fact that I'm on this side of the House and deal with it. It seems to be more of a personal issue with the Liberals than anything else.

With regard to other comments made, yes, this is an issue that the government will be working on, and there is no legislation drafted as of today on this issue.

Mr. Fairclough: How interesting, Mr. Speaker, because that member, when in opposition, called for immediate action. Now that he's a minister, he's not doing anything. The minister once believed that the government must take immediate action on pesticides in the Yukon. He also once believed that McIntyre Creek deserved protection. Where is that? He's silent on that, Mr. Speaker. He also believed that the Environment minister should follow the law and that environmental reports should be, and I quote: "completed and put forward as soon as possible."

Where is that, Mr. Speaker? Now that the member has got the job, he's not in much of a hurry. Did the member bring any of his priorities when he re-entered the Yukon Party's hornet's nest?

Hon. Mr. Edzerza: Once again, I'd like to put on the record that the Member for Mayo-Tatchun still hasn't filed his report from 1998 when he was the Environment minister. I want to state for the record also that the members opposite know full well that it's easy to ask questions, which I did.

I also know that on the government side there's a lot of consultation that has to take place and that is one thing this government is good at doing: consulting with Yukoners.

Question re: Social worker caseloads

Mr. Cardiff: I have a question for the Minister of Health and Social Services. It's about the heavy caseload many of our social workers are asked to handle due to the severe shortage of these professionals and the great demand on their services. The Yukon depends on social workers to provide a broad range of programs and supports to some of our most vulnerable citizens, and with the *Child and Family Services Act* now in effect, the demands made on them are going to be even greater.

What concrete steps is the minister taking to attract and retain social workers?

Hon. Mr. Hart: For the member opposite, as indicated yesterday, we are continually out on recruitment for social workers because we do need social workers on an interim basis to fill our facilities and provide services that are required, both here in Whitehorse and in our rural areas. We are looking for social workers throughout Canada and North America.

We provide bonuses. We are utilizing whatever tools are available to us in an effort to try to attract individuals to the Yukon. We are also looking at utilizing the Yukon itself as an attraction — basically our outdoors — and ensuring that we can provide that service to assist in the recruitment of social workers.

Mr. Cardiff: Mr. Speaker, I think we need to do it on more than an interim basis. We need them on a full-time basis. Compared with other jurisdictions, social workers here — especially in the Adult Services branch — have many more clients. In fact they are expected to deal with almost three times as many clients as social workers in other jurisdictions.

I think we can all agree this situation, which has existed for awhile now, is not acceptable. It creates a lot of frustration and anxiety among the social workers and their clients, and it contributes to low morale, both in the public and in the workplace. People who train to become social workers want to help. They want to make a difference, but that is very difficult when their caseloads are too heavy.

What is the minister doing to reduce the caseload of social workers in the Adult Services branch from the current 78 clients per worker to the recommended, best practice number of around 35?

Hon. Mr. Hart: I thank the member opposite for the question. As I indicated yesterday with regard to this subject, we have gone a substantial way in assisting our social workers. We've looked at reorganizing the department to assist in helping with the workload. We understand that these individuals are in a high-pressure situation on a daily basis, as they are right across Canada, as they are right across North America.

We also understand that the longevity of individuals in this particular profession is very short and, thus, it makes it even more difficult to recruit and retain these individuals.

We are looking at manners and ways in which we can ease the situation for our social workers to ensure that we do provide excellent service to our citizens and also that we are providing our social workers with assistance for their workload.

Mr. Cardiff: Part of the short longevity of the careers of social workers is due to the workload. One young social worker in training was quoted recently in the media as saying that social workers in the Adult Services branch are little more than clerks these days. What she said was that they barely have enough time to issue social assistance cheques, let alone provide the necessary counselling and support.

While I applaud the government for taking steps to develop a social inclusion policy or strategy, social workers are going to be key players in the plan to address poverty and the social condition of some of the most vulnerable of people here in the Yukon.

When will this government allocate more resources to hiring more social workers so that they can play an important role in the government's social inclusion strategy?

Hon. Mr. Hart: As I indicated yesterday, also to the member, we have increased our social workers substantially since 2008. We also have increased our workload with the *Child and Family Services Act* and its implementation to assist in providing services in that area and also to assist in looking after the children of the Yukon. We also anticipate that, depending upon the results of the social inclusion policy, along with other aspects that this government is working with in conjunction with all Yukoners, we may have to look at other issues in relationship to social workers. As I stated, we are looking at reorganizing the situation within SA to assist the social workers to ensure that we can give them more time for consultation versus administrative work.

Question re: Veterinary positions

Mr. Cathers: Last Saturday the Yukon Agricultural Association held its annual general meeting and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources made a speech that left farmers with a lot of questions. I would like to follow up with him on some of those today. The minister told farmers half the cost of the new chief veterinary officer and field veterinary positions in the Department of Environment is being funded from the Growing Forward program. In fact, sharing the cost of those positions was considered, but 100 percent of those two positions is funded by Environment. At a recent budget briefing, Environment officials confirmed no money from Growing Forward is being used to fund these positions. So I will give the minister the opportunity to end the confusion his remarks caused and correct his statement. Will he assure farmers no money will be taken from Growing Forward to fund these positions?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Mr. Speaker, the Growing Forward initiative is a very important tool that this government will use in cooperation with the federal government. Mr. Speaker, a number of different initiatives have been brought forward to address some of the funding for this and other programs. The

Government of Yukon certainly supports the agriculture industry here in the territory, and we're working with the Yukon Agricultural Association and the Growers of Organic Food Yukon and others on addressing many of their needs, including access to large infrastructure, large tools and a multi-use facility. We're also looking at ways to increase the inspection of foods to ensure that Yukon's locally grown produce or locally raised animals can find their way to markets here in the territory.

Mr. Cathers: I asked a very simple question and got a very lengthy and complex answer that said many things but did not answer the question.

Last year, as then Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, I signed the Growing Forward agreement. In radio ads, in newspapers and in the budget highlights, the Yukon government proudly announced the increased commitment to agriculture — \$987,000 per year with 60 percent paid by the federal government.

We also announced we were moving away from using existing programs and staff positions to make up most of our 40-percent commitment, as had been done under the previous federal funding agreement, which thus leveraged federal dollars without really increasing the Yukon government's investment in agriculture. The bottom line: under Growing Forward, we increased Yukon's yearly cash investment to \$220,000 more than what it had been under the old APF agreement.

On Saturday, the minister seemed to be telling farmers that Yukon had now eliminated its cash support for Growing Forward programs and returned to the old way of leveraging federal money. Did the minister misspeak, or has the government reduced \$220,000 —

Speaker: Minister responsible, please.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: It's always interesting when the Independent member uses the term "we". "We" is a collective noun, and I believe he's now an Independent. Yes, he made some pretty good moves, I will admit, when he was minister responsible, but he does have to recognize the other move that he made and he isn't part of the collective any longer. I appreciate the comments that he has raised; I appreciate the work that he has done.

We will continue to build upon the work in the agriculture industry. We will continue to work with farmers, ranchers to provide them with access to meat- and food-inspection services and provide them with abattoir services. We're looking at additional ways to ensure safe and appropriate disposal of carcasses. We have a multitude of different programs, different services and different objectives. We'll continue to do all of that good work with Yukon's agriculture industry to see it growing forward in the territory.

Mr. Cathers: The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources' speech at the Yukon Agricultural Association's AGM was notable both for what it said and what it didn't say. Development of a multi-use processing facility has been a top priority of the Yukon Agricultural Association for years. During my time as Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, I supported that project. So did the Member for Porter Creek Centre when he held that post. He publicly reiterated his support for it last

fall. Today I'm pleased to hear the minister actually using the words "multi-use facility" because he has left some farmers with the impression that he is backpedalling on the work that has been done and that he may not be committed to following through on seven years of work done by farmers, the Member for Porter Creek Centre, me and my staff.

Will the minister assure us that he's committed to developing a multi-use facility?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate the work that the member opposite started and there are certainly a number of files that I wish he had finished. The member is aware of the YESA application that has gone through for this process. He is aware of some of the challenges that have arisen out of this — namely, the disposal of some of the materials from the abattoir process. Those are some of the hurdles that we are continuing to work through in order to address the needs of YESA so that we continue on with this project.

As I have said a number of times, we are committed to continuing to work with the Yukon's farmers, ranchers, food producers to ensure that they grow their industry and that we as Yukoners can benefit from locally grown produce and materials.

Question re: Whitehorse waterfront development

Mr. Inverarity: Mr. Speaker, I have some questions for the Minister of Tourism. On October 7, 2005, the minister proudly announced the government was moving forward with an arts and heritage village development plan for the Whitehorse waterfront. She described it as a critical component in the development of the waterfront.

In December 2008, the minister said that we are moving forward on a riverfront wharf project with designing underway and construction to take place in the next year or so. Now in 2010, this so-called "critical component" doesn't exist yet. Can the Minister of Tourism explain why this project is not completed as she said it would be?

Hon. Mr. Lang: We certainly are investing in the waterfront. Some of the plans have been delayed because of infrastructure that we had to put in place. We are working to get all the permits together, not only from YESAB — which has been done — but from Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Department of Transport. There is more work to be done, but we have committed to the wharf and we will see that through, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Inverarity: My question is for the Minister of Tourism. This is one of her flagship projects. I would like to hear from her. Mr. Speaker, in 2005, the Tourism minister described this project as critical component of waterfront development. Five years later, the minister has not been able to get this critical project finished. One of the main components of this development is the development of the wharf, as mentioned, on the riverfront and a floating dock that was supposed to be in front of it.

In December of 2008, the minister said we are moving forward on a riverfront wharf project with designing underway and the construction to take place in the next year.

A couple of weeks ago, this House was told that the wharf project has been delayed again and will not be constructed this

year, as promised. Can the Minister of Tourism confirm this part of the project has been delayed yet again, and can she confirm that the floating dock portion has been cancelled altogether?

Hon. Mr. Lang: We in Community Services are overseeing the project for Tourism, so I'll be answering the questions.

We have been working with the issue of the wharf. The wharf has been resourced to \$5.2 million; the cost has been recognized. We are trying to fast-track the wharf. We do have some permitting issues that have to be addressed, and also some work on the actual shoreline to make sure that the wharf will be stable and will be a safe investment in the territory.

We're working on the wharf as quickly as we possibly can. There is a \$5.2-million investment going into the wharf and, as far as the floating dock is concerned, that is the second part of this.

We have to get the secure wharf in place so we have something to attach the floating dock to. It hasn't been cancelled, and we're working as quickly as we can to get the wharf in place to highlight the work that we've already done on the waterfront. As we all know, Mr. Speaker, you only have to go to the waterfront today and see where it is today and where it was seven years ago.

Mr. Inverarity: I guess when you cancel projects there are no photo ops around those, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister of Tourism announced that this project was going to be done in 2005. She said it was a critical component of the development of the waterfront. She can't get it done. Five years have gone by and this project has not yet been completed. The government has announced and reannounced this project several times over the last five years. The problem is they haven't actually built anything yet.

The original plans for the project were drawn up in 2006. In 2007 an architect prepared several new concepts for the public to look at. Those plans have been revised again in 2009 and again in 2010. Will the Minister of Tourism table the latest plans for this project and can she explain why she has not followed up on this project and why it has been delayed year after year?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I want to put on the record for the member opposite a few items for his information. When the member opposite makes reference to "nothing has been done on the Whitehorse waterfront," I urge him to go take a stroll on the Whitehorse waterfront and go take a look at all the significant improvements. I'm going to take the opportunity to list this for the member opposite because I know the member opposite rarely gets out of his office to actually view all of the improvements that we see on the Whitehorse waterfront.

One only has to take a look at significant improvements, including The Old Fire Hall, used as a cultural venue, thanks to a partnership between the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce, the Yukon Arts Centre and the Department of Tourism and Culture. One only has to take a look at the extension of the Whitehorse waterfront trolley; the removal of the roundhouse to the Whitehorse waterfront, which also includes the restoration and refurbishment of the roundhouse, which also houses

the trolley itself; the MacBride Museum expansion — over a million-dollar expansion, which has also served as an icon anchor along the Whitehorse waterfront.

It doesn't even mention, or take into consideration, the \$10 million plus for the Kwanlin Dun First Nation cultural centre or the \$19 million worth of waterfront improvements along the Whitehorse waterfront.

It's unfortunate that the members opposite continue to vote against all of these items that I have just listed. If the members opposite are very committed to seeing the Whitehorse waterfront improvements, I urge them to support this budget.

Question re: Whitehorse waterfront development

Mr. Inverarity: Now, Mr. Speaker, I have some more questions for the Minister of Tourism on the long delayed waterfront project that she's in charge of. Way back in 2005, the minister announced this project with great fanfare. Five years later, she has yet to live up to the commitments that she made to complete this project by 2009 — over a year ago. It is our understanding that the entire project has been scaled back significantly because the government doesn't have enough money to build it as originally planned.

Perhaps if the Premier hadn't tied up \$36 million in asset-backed commercial paper, the Deputy Premier would have the money to fund this project.

Will the minister confirm that the floating dock portion and several other components, I believe, including the activity and animation components, have been cancelled from this project altogether?

Hon. Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, we have discussed this. We have resourced it, and this government has done an expanded waterfront improvement since the day we were elected in 2002. The opposition has voted against every dollar that this government has put on the floor for any expansion on the waterfront. So when the member opposite talks about investments, he should vote for those investments.

We're putting the resources on the ground; the floating dock component will come after the secure wharf is in place. We have the resources for it; we're proceeding in that vein now. There will be work done on the waterfront; there will be a wharf put in place over the next period of time. The floating dock will be attached to that wharf. Also, we're investing in a new library, which the members opposite will vote against.

Mr. Inverarity: The budget has been passed and this government can't deliver.

When this project was first announced in 2005, it included several new buildings along the waterfront, \$2.3 million for wharf development, \$3 million for landscaping and the development of public space, with a total price tag of \$22 million. Five years later, this project — described as critical by the Deputy Premier — has barely been started. Developing the waterfront is supposed to be a high priority for the minister but she has failed to move this project forward.

This year's budget says the total cost of this project has not yet been approved by Management Board. Can the minister tell the House if the final budget has been approved, how much has been spent to date and if the project resembles anything that was announced in 2005?

Hon. Mr. Lang: I will remind the member that you only have to look at the waterfront to see the investment this government has put on the ground there. The new Alexander Street seniors complex will be on the waterfront. As an investment partnership with the Kwanlin Dun, a brand new library for this city will be built on the waterfront. The wharf will be in place on the waterfront. The landscaping will be done. There is an expansion component to the fire hall that will be done on the waterfront, Mr. Speaker. We have seen massive improvements to the waterfront over the last seven years. Every one of those investments has been voted against by the members opposite.

Mr. Inverarity: Mr. Speaker, the activity and animation centre nixed. The historical interpretation centre nixed. The bank protections nixed. Mr. Speaker, waterfront development joins a long list of projects this Yukon Party can't manage properly. It is now years behind schedule and this has been scaled back significantly because the government has run out of money to build and do the original planning. The \$36 million tied up in asset-backed commercial paper would come in handy now, Mr. Speaker. The Minister of Tourism has lost a battle with Cabinet again and other projects are moving ahead at the expense of this one. So much for the promise that this was a critical component to the waterfront.

Can the minister tell this House if the final budget has been set by Management Board, and can she provide a list of what components will actually be in the project and what will be left out?

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Having listened to the questions coming from the Member for Porter Creek South, I find it quite striking and interesting that the member would stand up and criticize the Yukon Party government's Minister of Tourism, who has been very successful in investing in tourism, in the arts and cultural communities in this territory — literally millions of dollars that, by the way, the Liberals voted against.

Now that the member is criticizing, then the member must be accountable for Liberal initiatives for tourism. I recall those heady days when tourism by the Liberals meant stay another day, have a bean supper in Mayo. As the Liberals putzed through their mandate with government renewal and reducing the Yukon's economy and, indeed, its tourism industry, the public saw that there was a need for change, and the need for change was the direct result of electing a Yukon Party government that has actually invested in tourism in a real, meaningful way.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed. We'll proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Motion No. 1061

Clerk: Motion No. 1061, standing in the name of Mr. Nordick.

Speaker: It is moved by the Member for Klondike

THAT this House urges the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada to visit Whitehorse as part of its 2011 cross-country tour.

Mr. Nordick: Mr. Speaker, this motion urges the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada to visit Whitehorse as part of its 2011 cross-country tour.

This motion is very explicit and, in my opinion, needs no explanation. It should be obvious to all that it is unacceptable that this commission is not visiting the Yukon. Former residential school students from the Yukon deserve an opportunity in the Yukon to have their voice heard. They have valuable personal stories and personal experiences that need to be heard by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

I am requesting unanimous support for this motion. We need to stand united in support of our citizens. Thank you.

Mr. Fairclough: I thought perhaps the mover of the motion had a bit more to say on this important motion that he is brought forward today. We in the Official Opposition fully support this motion coming forward. It's calling for the commission to come to Whitehorse and hear what survivors from mission school have to say and what Yukoners have to say in regard to the impacts of residential school here in the territory. In this session, as well as in past sessions, we've asked questions on funding for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation and the Committee on Abuse in Residential School, or CAIRS. In this session alone, we've been asking questions on the Aboriginal Healing Foundation and the direct effects of federal cuts on our Yukon First Nation population. As we all know, those cuts have forced CAIRS to close its doors and really end the much-needed programming being utilized by Yukon First Nation people.

We ask a question on CAIRS funding this session in this House and we've pressed on the Government of Yukon to go to their friends in Ottawa and ask them to reinstate the federal funding for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation. We've done that. We've asked what representation the Yukon government has made to the Government of Canada to continue this much-needed funding for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation so that the programs administered through CAIRS could continue. Now the unfortunate part is that the government has refused to answer how they are dealing with this situation and the Premier chose not to address the issue.

Now it is great to see this motion actually being brought forward from the government for debate. Maybe now they will bring forward more funding for CAIRS and for preparation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's visit to Whitehorse as part of their 2011 cross-country tour. Maybe we will find out from government how they are going to prepare for this.

I just want to go briefly into the mandate of the commission. I'll read a little bit here for the members opposite, just to refresh their memory on this.

"There is an emerging and compelling desire to put the events of the past behind us so we can work toward a stronger and healthier future. The truth telling and reconciliation process

as part of an overall holistic and comprehensive response to the Indian Residential School legacy is a sincere indication and acknowledgement of the injustice and harms experienced by aboriginal people and the need for continued healing. This is a profound commitment to establishing new relationships embedded in mutual recognition and respect that will forge a brighter future. The truth of our common experience will help set our spirits free and pave the way to reconciliation.”

Let's not forget about the principles behind the establishment. Let me read a little more for the members opposite. Again, I want to express to members opposite that we do agree with the Member for Klondike bringing this motion forward to have the commission brought to Whitehorse to take in testimonies here of the people who have been affected by mission school and residential school.

The Canadian government formed the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada as part of an approved *Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement* that was negotiated between the legal counsel for former students, legal counsel for the churches, the Government of Canada, Assembly of First Nations and other aboriginal organizations. The commission is an official, independent body that will provide former students and anyone who has been affected by the Indian residential school legacy with an opportunity to share their individual experience in a safe and culturally appropriate manner. It will be an opportunity for people to tell their stories about a significant part of Canadian history that is still unknown to most Canadians.

For the commission to come here and listen to what Yukoners have to say, I think, is important. I thank the member opposite for bringing forward this motion.

I could go on more about the commission. I think the Member for Klondike said it was pretty well straightforward, but what we have heard is a cry for additional programming. We brought these questions to the government regarding the doors to CAIRS closing and the fact that Yukoners have accessed much of the programming that was provided through CAIRS. We ask the government to go forward to Ottawa and fight for Yukon and fight for the programming that is done through CAIRS and the Aboriginal Healing Foundation. So far nothing has happened on the Yukon government side.

So there are a couple of things here on the table. In the motion we're asking for the commission to come here to the Yukon Territory. We on this side of the House and the general public have been asking the Yukon Party government to go and fight for this funding to continue and talk to their friends in Ottawa to ensure continued funding to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation. With that, Mr. Speaker, I thank you.

Mr. Cardiff: I'd like to say a few things about the motion. We support in principle what appears in this motion and that is that Yukoners have the opportunity to participate in the truth and reconciliation process. We're a bit curious about what the mover is attempting to achieve because we believe there are actually problems and errors with the motion. As it stands, we believe that the motion actually creates some confusion.

Number one, if you were to call and talk to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, you would find out that they are not necessarily doing a cross-country tour this year. You would also find out that they will visit any locally organized Indian residential school events. My staff called the commission today to get some answers and hopefully clear some of these things up for the Member for Klondike.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was created as part of the *Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement*. It's a court-mandated body, and part of their mandate is to host seven national events in different regions across Canada. The seven regions are British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, the Maritimes and the north. It just so happens that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission announced just the other day that the national event they are going to host in the north is going to be in Inuvik. Inuvik just happens to be in the north. That's where they are hosting one of the seven mandated national events. It's not part of a cross-country tour; it's part of their mandate.

I can understand people in Nunavut who live in the Hudson Bay region or who live in Iqaluit or Pangnirtung — it's going to be difficult to travel to Inuvik. It's going to be much easier for Yukoners to travel to Inuvik. I'm not saying that we shouldn't have the Truth and Reconciliation Commission come to the Yukon. I think that we should have them come to the Yukon; furthermore, when my staff asked them, they said they would be more than willing to come to the Yukon if requested. The Yukon's not off the radar with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It's a court mandate that says that they're going to have seven national regional events. We support them coming to the Yukon. The concept of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission — as we've seen in other parts of the world where there have been massive and collective traumas like South Africa dealing with apartheid — is to uncover all the facts without punishment and thereby allow opportunities for individuals to heal, to forgive, to apologize and for our society to become stronger knowing where we've been, what we did wrong and to recognize that it will never happen again.

Now the commission's job is to prepare a complete historical record of the policies and operations of residential schools. It's a five-year mandate. They're supposed to complete a public report, including recommendations to the parties of the *Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement*. They're supposed to establish a national research centre that will be a lasting resource about the Indian residential school legacy.

Residential schools are a sorrowful part of the Yukon's past, of Canada's history, and the wounds suffered are with us to this day and they're going to be with us into the future.

One of the other pieces of the mandate — and you can look this up on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's website, and there's background on this on a number of websites. I'm going to read; there are six bullets, some of which I've already read, I suppose.

As I said, it's supposed to host seven national events in different regions across Canada to promote awareness and pub-

lic education about the Indian residential school system and its impacts.

The next one is to support events designed by individual communities to meet their unique needs and to support a commemoration initiative that will provide funding for activities that honour and pay tribute in a permanent and lasting manner to former Indian residential school students.

The part of the mandate that says “to support events designed by individual communities and to meet their unique needs” ties in with what the Member for Mayo-Tatchun was talking about. It’s talking about support for community groups, support for communities and for this government to lead the way. We know that there are organizations such as CAIRS, such as the Liard Aboriginal Women’s Society. There are other groups around this territory. There are First Nation governments and there are friendship centres that are all dealing with the legacy of Indian residential schools, and they are the ones that know what the unique needs of their communities are.

While I can support the motion, as confusing as it is in that there is no 2011 cross-country tour, I would definitely support the government supporting individual groups such as CAIRS and the Liard Aboriginal Women’s Society to come in contact with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, to support their members going to Inuvik to participate in the national event. For starters, I think that is an important thing that needs to happen. We should be supporting those Yukoners who want to attend that event. We should also support the organizations in our communities in asking the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to come here to listen to what their concerns are, to listen to what their experiences are, to share those experiences, to contribute to the body of work that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is supposed to complete.

I think it would be more appropriate for that to be the thrust of the motion. It wouldn’t be an easy motion to amend because you can’t amend a motion — I don’t think it would be in order to change it because we’re urging the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. The only thing I can see changing it to would be to urge the government to support our communities in participating in the national event and to ask the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to come to events and to support events. That’s a piece of their mandate, to support those events designed by individual communities.

I believe there is probably more than one community in the Yukon that would like to host an event that would meet the unique needs of their community.

While I think I understand where the member’s heart was in bringing this motion forward, I think there is much more that could be done. I think that all parties in the Legislative Assembly should work together with communities, with First Nations, with the Council of Yukon First Nations, with the survivor groups, to make sure that the commission will come to the Yukon. I would like to make a suggestion to my colleagues that the government draft a letter to be signed by all leaders in the Legislative Assembly — the Premier, the Leader of the Official Opposition — and that we encourage the commission to talk to Yukoners, to be in touch with organizations like CAIRS, to be

in touch with communities and to encourage them to visit the Yukon.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the time and thank you to members for listening today.

Hon. Mr. Edzerza: I believe this is one topic that probably holds the most interest for First Nation people who attended residential school. All other citizens in Canada can make all the comments they want about the mission schools, but the only ones who know the stories are the ones who were there. This is not about all the citizens in Canada; this is about those who went through the mission school system. The people who went through the mission school system don’t have to be educated about what took place there. They don’t need anybody to educate them about that. This whole truth and reconciliation is to document what went on in the mission schools so that all the citizens in Canada can have a better understanding and better knowledge of just really what took place through the mission school era.

I said it before on record, and I’ll say it again: you take an average citizen in the Yukon or anywhere in Canada who is non-native, have the police walk in and take their children out against the will of the parents and see what would happen. Try to visualize authorities like the RCMP or someone else commissioned by the government to walk into your house and take all the children and leave.

If somebody can visualize that, then you just got the beginning of really what took place through the mission school era. This whole process is about healing and it is quite fitting that this is Mental Health Week because the most damage that was done to First Nation people through the mission school era had all to do with mental health. The mental health — what was left behind for the people to contend with when the children were taken? People have to try to visualize a whole community with no laughter, no children. Try to visualize that. I think that the majority of people across Canada have no idea what went on in the mission schools. I believe that it is time that the governments in Canada started to acknowledge the fact that this was a massive abuse of a race of people and basically there was no intervention on how to deal with those mental health issues that were created. The breaking down of family structures to the point where brothers and sisters really don’t acknowledge each other any more — that’s common. It’s really common for two sisters or a brother and a sister, or two brothers in a family who attended residential school to have a falling out and never talk to each other for 10 years. The family bond is broken.

When we talk about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada it is critically important that they visit the Yukon Territory especially, because to the best of my knowledge, I think the most recently closed mission schools were in the Yukon. In fact, there were some open here in my younger days. When I went to high school at F.H. Collins, for example, I knew a large number of First Nation girls and boys who were in Coudert residence, for example. Some of them went to F.H. and some didn’t, but this is all about mental health and repairing the spirit. I know it has been told to me on several occa-

sions by elders that the only way that you can get the pain out is to be able to talk about it. That's why it's important to have all these stories documented — and everybody has a different story. Everybody's spirit is different, so everybody will perceive things differently; everybody's story is going to be different.

Some people will come out and say that it was the best thing that ever happened to them that they were in a mission school; yet there are others who died in their teenage years, in their early 20s, all due to the direct result of having to be in the mission school. I hear people today who are 55 years old plus, who say they still can't attend large functions where there are a lot of people. I heard a lady who is 55 years plus say this only about a month ago — that she still has problems attending general assemblies, for example, because it reminds her too much of being raised in a mission school where there were 300 children. They still have problems trying to function in crowded places.

So there's a lot to this whole history of the mission schools. Having people be able to tell their story and have it recorded and documented is probably one of the most important issues that the Government of Canada will be able to deal with in regard to mission schools.

I think that until this is all completed — until it's done — the apology really isn't completed yet. An apology — I've heard a lot of people in the territory say that they didn't accept it and there are a lot of people who said it's a good thing that it was done. But I think having this reconciliation commission to continue doing their work and to not put any restrictions on where they go across Canada — I understand the need for them to go to Inuvik, but I also think that they should have continued right on down to Whitehorse. I don't know the exact number of students from Yukon who went to mission school, but I would probably believe it was in the thousands, and we're talking many, many generations of First Nations who went to mission school.

Having said that, I do support this motion and certainly encourage other members not to get this confused with the Aboriginal Healing Foundation initiatives, because these are basically two separate issues and they are both equally important. They both should be really looked at and have some process to fill in — if one is not going to be carried on then there definitely should be another process to take over or to carry on what was started.

I think far too often with First Nation initiatives, when it comes to something like the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, there is an expectancy to undo what took 200 years to do. There is an expectancy that five or 10 years will clear everything up. Well, that is not the case. If the healing continued for 50 years, we would probably be able to see a bit of a dent made in how it affected a lot of people. But I do support this motion and I sincerely hope all the opposition does.

Hon. Ms. Horne: I agree with the Member for McIntyre-Takhini. I would urge the members opposite not to politicize this issue. These are two separate issues: the Truth and

Reconciliation Commission and the Aboriginal Healing Foundation.

As to the government's inactivity on the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, I recently introduced a motion to the Legislature to support a request to Canada to replace Aboriginal Healing Foundation funds, and we followed that up with a letter to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation to include Yukon in the funding.

But I would like to thank the Member for Klondike for bringing this motion forward, urging the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada to visit Whitehorse as part of its court-mandated tour.

This is paramount to me since I have said previously I was one of those individuals who attended residential school and, as I have said previously, I cannot truly express the harm that has been done to the spiritual well-being of First Nation people. Entire families have felt the effect. From the grandparents who lost their children to the government, the grandparents who lived in the dorms of the schools, right down to the grandchildren who still feel the effects of dysfunctional families — the legacy of residential school.

We are also left with deep, embedded memories of emotional, cultural, linguistic, spiritual, physical and sexual abuse that went along with residential school. We were entrusted to those schools by the government, not our parents. Just imagine, as the Member for McIntyre-Takhini said, the removal of all the children from the community, all the laughter, the playing. First Nation children are the heart of the community. It has always been said and always will be "Together Today for the Children Tomorrow."

No matter what culture you come from, the children are the leaders of tomorrow. In First Nation culture, the leaders were hereditary. The child was born as a leader and he was trained to be leader from birth. Those children are no longer trained in the cultural ways. Gradually we lost the leadership qualities that were inherent to our culture — I'm sorry, this is very difficult for me.

Imagine if you will, you go on a day trip and, when you come home your children are not there. You don't know where they are. You no longer had any input into their upbringing. You were not even allowed to speak to them in your own language. Your children are now told your hereditary way of life is no longer legitimate, no longer acceptable, that you were dirty heathens, your beliefs were heathen. You could no longer hold your children in your arms or be held when they hurt or when you hurt.

Just imagine with your children how that would feel. I still have nightmares that I am back in that dorm with every minute of the day accounted for, having to line up for meals. You couldn't speak in the lineup. You couldn't speak while you were eating dinner. Every day accounted for, cleaning the floors with toothbrushes.

I'll tell you a story about a young girl who was sick with measles. She and another young boy were put into an isolation room with no physical contact. She had measles. She had no loving arms to hold her, to tend to her or soothe her. Because it was contagious, no one was allowed to enter the room or come

out. The young boy died and no one knew or even bothered to check on them. The young girl was in there for days before they found she was in there with a corpse. How do you think she feels living with this memory?

We were not allowed to speak our language, to practice our traditional offerings or spirituality, the traditional knowledge of loving ourselves and others, the strength and endurance of the family unit.

The concept of loving ourselves and our self-pride is still missing. As I have said in this House before, the impact on our people is real. It is very deep. We must ensure it never happens again.

It's important that we have our stories recorded. You know, this reminds me of the Holocaust. We don't have our stories recorded. Our side isn't heard. I also spoke in this House about the healing power of forgiveness and our inability to magically erase the atrocities that were forced upon us, but now it is time to move forward, and part of moving forward is to release the pain, is having the ability to tell our story, to know it will be recorded so it won't happen again.

There are many who are no longer here to tell their story. Their life was cut short by substance abuse. Many of those I lived with in the dorms are deceased and I wonder if they had waited and heard the apology and been able to tell their story, if they would be able to move forward. You remember things and those flashbacks can be devastating. I think being able to tell your story and get it off your chest is part of healing.

Are Yukoners' stories of their time in residential school not as important as those in the other parts of Canada? Do we have to travel to Inuvik to have our story told? No. We weren't given that chance when we were taken away. We were not affected as deeply as those in other parts of Canada? We sure were.

Yukoners who attended residential schools have the right to be heard. I absolutely support this motion calling for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to visit Whitehorse as part of its 2011 cross-country tour. This is not for apologies; it's for us to tell our story.

Speaker: If the Member for Klondike now speaks, he will close debate. Does any other member wish to be heard?

Mr. Nordick: I would just like to take this opportunity to thank the members who spoke on this motion today. I'm going to leave my comments to what has already been said. Because of its important nature, I don't want to water it down with more words. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Hart: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Lang: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Horne: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Edzerza: Agree.

Mr. Nordick: Agree.

Mr. Mitchell: Agree.

Mr. McRobb: Agree.

Mr. Elias: Agree.

Mr. Fairclough: Agree.

Mr. Inverarity: Agree.

Mr. Cardiff: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 15 yea, nil nay.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.

Motion 1061 agreed to

Motion No. 1058

Clerk: Motion No. 1058, standing in the name of Mr. Nordick.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Member for Klondike

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to explore using the Northern Institute of Social Justice to expand its curricula for training people who work with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder clients.

Mr. Nordick: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to speak to and support this motion. Our 2002 Yukon Party election platform set out a five-step fetal alcohol spectrum disorder action plan. The five-step FASD action plan was: (1) promotion of prevention programs to eliminate alcohol consumption of high-risk parents in order to foster the birth of healthy babies; (2) early diagnosis of FASD before the age of 6; (3) supporting people and families with FASD through a wide range of services such as professional counselling and foster homes in order to provide a stable, nurturing home environment; (4) enhancing supported living arrangements for adults with FASD; (5) supporting a diagnostic team of professionals trained in personal counselling and social work/health to provide services to Yukon schools in order to provide support for FASD students and their families.

Since 2002, this Yukon Party government has made significant progress toward achieving the plan and has fully achieved some of the tasks set out in the action plan. We now have a diagnostic Yukon clinic for diagnoses of preschool and school-aged children delivered by professional staff at the Child Development Centre and the Department of Education, coupled with medical practitioners; diagnosis for adults through a contract with FASSY; we have enhanced supported housing for adults with FASD, including supported housing provided by the options for independence program. We have more support for children, families and adults affected by FASD. We have prevention programs including the recent public awareness social marketing campaign. Health and Social Services, Justice and Education are all working to address

FASD. There are numerous initiatives underway to further our work in this area.

Mr. Speaker, in regard to prevention, the Alcohol and Drug Services prevention unit delivers primary FASD prevention activities that aim to educate young people and the general public. These activities include an FASD presentation in communities and schools and the development of a pan-territorial FASD prevention media campaign.

The prevention unit also delivers secondary FASD prevention activities by continuing to offer training targeted to allied professionals who work with addicted persons and who come in contact with at-risk populations, including substance-abusing women. The Alcohol and Drug Services detox and treatment services unit provides a tertiary level of prevention of FASD, including activities like detox. Detox reserves two beds for women only and provides priority admission to pregnant women. Outpatient and in-patient treatment programs provide priority access to the respective programs for pregnant women. In-patient treatment is specific.

FASSY had two contribution agreements with Social Services totaling \$454,000 in place for the 2009-10 budget year, and the department has committed to continuing this funding in 2010-11 with \$200,000 for the Get By with a Little Help from My Friends program, which focuses on high-risk women with FASD, and \$254,000 for prevention services and diagnostics.

FASSY provides services primarily to adults, and particularly adults with FASD who are very marginalized. FASSY is not generally involved in service delivery to children with FASD and their families.

Other services from Health and Social Services include funds for housing individuals with FASD through the NGO Options for Independence. Mr. Speaker, there is \$226,000 in the 2010-11 budget for this.

Adult services for persons with disabilities — Health and Social Services provides a range of financial, residential, employment and personal support for adults with disabilities, including FASD. Services are provided based on functional assessment.

Health and Social Services funds Challenge Community Vocational Alternatives to provide employment support for people with disabilities, including adults with FASD.

Health and Social Services funds the Child Development Centre at \$90,000 per year to coordinate diagnostic teams for preschool and school-aged children. A diagnostic team for preschool children draws on therapists from CDC. A diagnostic team for school-aged children draws on therapists from Education. The two teams have a capacity to diagnose about 10 children per year.

Health and Social Services funds CDC to provide support and intervention services for preschool children and family support. Family Supports for Children with Disabilities provides funding for supports and intervention for children with disabilities, including FASD, and their families.

The supported childcare program provides funding to childcare programs to hire extra help for children with disabilities, including FASD. Education provides support within the school for children with disabilities. Education and Health and

Social Services participate in staff training on FASD that may be provided by FASSY and others on a regular basis. Health and Social Services and Education now have guidelines for coordinating supports to children with complex needs.

Mr. Speaker, the Yukon chaired the Canada Northwest FASD Partnership in 2008-09. The partnership is made up of three territories and four western provinces. The partnership organizes conferences and symposia, two of which have been held in the Yukon. Yukon will host another symposium in the very near future. The partnership launched a research network in 2002, which is now leading the development of research on FASD in Canada. The Yukon benefits from participation in the research network. Program staff have direct access to research and direct contact with researchers and Yukon can also provide direction on the priority research questions.

The partnership has also resulted in close collaboration with other jurisdictions. An example is that Yukon links up with video conferencing learning sessions on FASD organized by Alberta. FASSY and other community agencies are invited to attend as well as government workers.

Contact with researchers involved with the research network led to a Yukon-specific research project improving the treatment and support for Yukon girls and women with substance abuse problems and addictions. This was released by the Yukon government in early 2009.

Justice and Education are also leading a number of FASD initiatives, and departments are collaborating on the development of training programs through Yukon College on FASD for justice workers. Our government committed \$1.146 million over three years to the Northern Institute of Social Justice at Yukon College to deliver training programs to enhance the capacity of Yukoners in a wide variety of social justice fields and undertake related research.

The Northern Institute of Social Justice is overseen by a governing council that includes the Yukon government, Yukon College and Yukon First Nations. Their mandate is to develop the vision, mission and core principles for the Northern Institute of Social Justice; provide leadership and direction for strategic NISJ development and implementation; advocate and champion the institute through representing the interest of stakeholders, organizations and committees; and ensure management accountability.

The institute was created to help Yukon employers and employees address some of the challenges they face in delivering social justice-related programs and services. These challenges include the need for entry-level training, generic training, position-specific training and the need to attract, retain and develop a well-qualified workforce. In a joint announcement on December 11, 2009, the Yukon government and Yukon College officially announced the establishment of this institute. The institute is located within Yukon College and will work within the college in order to meet client training needs.

This spring, the following programs were delivered at the college: report writing for professional investigators; understanding compassion, fatigue and vicarious trauma; workplace violence prevention; and FASD and justice training.

Mr. Speaker, \$68,000 in 2008-09 and 2009-10 has been committed to the cost associated with developing and delivering curriculum on FASD for justice professionals through the Northern Institute of Social Justice. The Northern Institute of Social Justice FASD curriculum pilot course training focuses on justice issues and FASD. It is specifically designed for professionals who work in the front-line service delivery capacity with youth and adults with FASD. The program consists of a series of three-hour training modules that build a framework to understand, coordinate and implement appropriate and meaningful supports to people with FASD who are involved in the justice system.

Twenty-five seats are available for the pilot offering. One seat was offered to each of the First Nations, five seats available to the Department of Justice, four seats available to the Department of Health and Social Services, two seats for the Department of Education and the final participant makeup will be dependent upon availability.

An evaluation will be completed at the end of the pilot offering to look at the course content, the format of delivery and other areas identified by participants.

At the January 2009 meeting of the federal, provincial and territorial deputy ministers, deputies acknowledged the multifaceted nature of the problem with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and the need to develop a coordinated response in the justice system. The deputy ministers agreed that the issue be referred to a steering committee to develop a workplan with scope and options of moving forward.

The workplan action items are scheduled to be completed in June of this year. The workplan consists of six action items that were developed using the main themes recommended that came from the 2008 FASD and Access to Justice conference in Whitehorse. The three main areas of focus in the workplan include: information sharing, which means establishing knowledge and transfer sharing processes across jurisdictions on FASD and the justice system; on education: training and education for all justice professionals on FASD, what it means for the clients of the justice system and how best to serve individuals with FASD; and the third main focus area is identification. This includes exploring the current best practices for identifying FASD, ordering FASD assessments and determining how the justice system is responding to clients who are suspected of having FASD.

Mr. Speaker, the institute is being funded through the northern strategy trust fund and through the federally funded community development trust fund administered by the Department of Education. The total amount in 2009-10 from the northern strategy was \$333,000. The Department of Education has significant programs in place to assist with FASD like the Learning How to Help Kids with FASD in Schools program. This program supports children with special needs that may be caused by fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. Information is available on the Education website.

Another program is Trying Differently. This *Guide for Daily Living and Working with FASD and other Brain Differences*, produced by Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon, is supplied to classroom teachers throughout the Yukon. The in-

formation booklet is supplied by FASSY. Teachers regularly integrate different types of teaching strategies for working with students with FASD. Education staff in the Special Programs unit provide ongoing guidance and learning opportunities for teachers and parents in working with FASD.

Another program is Making a Difference, which includes an instructional manual for teachers that focuses on 12 essential elements for working with students with FASD. This manual is being used by most schools in the Yukon. Instruction on working with students with FASD is provided by Education staff in the Special Programs unit, which provides ongoing guidance and learning opportunities for teachers and parents in working with students with FASD.

Another program is Steps to Success for Teaching Students with FASD. This program is designed to assist educators in the development and use of effective strategies for students who are having difficulty coping in the school, both educationally and behaviourally. Some of these students may have been prenatally exposed to alcohol. The FASD project has focused on the Tantalus School in Carmacks with the plan to use this model in other communities. The focus is on building networks and links between the school, community and other agencies in order to develop a teacher training module and support manual, mentor and training school-based support and develop a culturally relevant grades 1 to 12 curriculum on FASD. The designers of this program work closely with the Special Programs unit of the Department of Education.

Mr. Speaker, the Special Programs unit of the Department of Education released the manual Making a Difference, *Working with Students who have Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders* to help school-based staff and others understand the challenges facing students with FASD. Other current initiatives that are specifically directed at students with FASD include: developing and delivering a teacher training module to introduce and support the manual; enhancing mentors and training school-based support persons; developing a culturally relevant grades 1 to 12 curriculum on FASD for Yukon students; and establishing an FASD diagnostic support team in Health and Social Services for school-aged children.

Mr. Speaker, the departments of Justice and Education are also leading a number of FASD initiatives and departments are collaborating. One example of this is the development of training programs through Yukon College on FASD for justice workers.

In closing, this Yukon Party government has come a long way in dealing with FASD. One more initiative in this regard is to explore using the Northern Institute of Social Justice to expand its curricula for training people who work with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder clients. I welcome the comments from the opposition parties, because we do listen to what they have to say and, if we all get together on this kind of initiative, it only brings better facilities and information to Yukoners. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Mitchell: I will just start, since this motion is very brief, by reading it into the record again. "THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to explore using the

Northern Institute of Social Justice to expand its curricula for training people who work with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder clients.”

We in the Liberal caucus can support the spirit of this motion, but frankly we don't really understand why the Member for Klondike put it on the Order Paper and called it for debate today. Certainly, providing training for people who work with FASD clients is an appropriate task for the new Northern Institute of Social Justice to address, but when I first read this motion I wondered, does the Member for Klondike not read his own government's announcements and those from the Yukon College? Well, apparently he does, since he has read quite a bit of information into the record today.

I'm not going to go over all of it and all the programming that exists, but basically the Yukon College, together with the president of Yukon College, announced last December that they would be doing exactly that. On Friday, December 11, as the Member for Klondike related, the president of the college along with the Yukon government announced the establishment of the new Northern Institute of Social Justice. In an interview with the *Whitehorse Star* published on December 14, the president of the college stated that one of the first classes that would be offered would address fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and the justice system.

I will just read a couple of clips from that article. First of all it says, “The institute will begin offering programming, including classes and research initiatives, in 2010.” The article went on to say, “One of the first classes offered will tackle one of the North's most prevalent social justice issues: Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and the justice system.”

It said, “The need for this specialized training has been around for decades, but at a conference on the subject held in Whitehorse last year, it was made a priority for the Yukon's Justice department. The courses currently being developed are in direct response to that need. There are no hard numbers on how many people in the territory's court and jail system suffer from FASD, although Justice officials have said such a survey is in the works, but everyone from victim services workers to judges recognize the disorder is a huge factor in the territory's crime statistics.”

Mr. Speaker, the action item in this motion is, in effect, already being done and so we're being asked to urge the Yukon government to do what it is already doing, which is to urge the Northern Institute of Social Justice to expand its curricula for training people who work with fetal alcohol spectrum clients. I guess in a narrow sense, we could be urging them to do even more than what they've announced they are doing, which is all well and good.

I have a file here on FASD/FAE and FASSY — the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society of the Yukon. It is three inches thick and goes back 10 years. It's full of studies and it's full of articles and it's full of information on symposiums.

There are publications. There is one here from January 1, 2006. During the term of this government this was published: *Final Consultation Report for the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society of Yukon: Working Together to Keep Families Together, Phase One*. There's one here that's from Canada: *It Takes a*

Community. I've got one here actually that goes back beyond 10 years in the file: *Fetal Alcohol Syndrome: A Hopeful Challenge for Children, Families and Communities*.

My wife is a teacher who specializes in being a learning assistance and reading recovery teacher. She teaches children with special learning difficulties. She has been teaching since 1972. She has been coming home since 1972 and talking about FASD before it even existed as a diagnosis. People were still debating whether or not there was such a disease, because if you're teaching kids with learning disabilities, it becomes fairly obvious that it is a real problem for us in the north.

In reviewing some information for today's debate, I looked back and some of the information that was available was fairly shocking. For example, there is a study entitled *Fetal Alcohol Syndrome in the Canadian Corrections System*. This was published in September of 2003, copyrighted by the Hospital for Sick Children. In that article, under “results” in the abstract at the beginning, it says, “In the Yukon Territory the correction system estimated that 2.6 percent of offenders had FAS.”

I know the Justice minister will agree with me that that is a hopelessly underestimated percentage that was being looked at in 2003, and I expect that the Education minister would also agree that that's an under-reported statistic.

We have come a ways since then, because, as a result, when you take the statistics out and look at them in a chart form under “province and territory” — they looked at a sampling in Yukon of 498 people in a given year in the justice system and they came out using the statistics, with perhaps five combined who were there as a result of FAS or FAE. We know that's not accurate.

Mr. Speaker, we've had a lot of discussion in recent days and weeks in this Assembly about issues that relate to substance abuse. There has been much discussion about the tragedy that occurred in December 2008 with the death of Mr. Silverfox and the ensuing coroner's inquest. We tried to bring forward a motion, in fact, to have a public inquiry into that, although debate was adjourned by the government side. There was the tragedy last weekend of another individual at detox. So we know that there are problems. What we seem to be doing in Yukon is dividing this all up into silos.

The Education minister, well-meaning, works hard at dealing with the needs of children with learning disabilities and knows that some of these disabilities are the result of FASD. It puts great challenges in human resources and money on the system. The Justice minister talks about rehabilitation. We talk about drug and alcohol strategies. We spent a lot of money and effort to try to address a lot of issues, many of which have resulted from alcohol abuse.

Many of the clients who are incarcerated at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre — we know far more than 2.6 percent from recent estimates — have come through life dealing with something that they will never outgrow. It is not a disease that gets cured by treatment, as we sometimes can, even with diseases as serious as cancer. It is not something that we prevent with an inoculation. As we've discussed, we could prevent all polio simply by vaccinating all children. So it becomes an on-going issue.

We deal with it in the Health department, and we've heard much from the Health minister in recent days. We've had three days of debate that came back to this issue a number of times in the Department of Health. We know this is greatly taxing our system and our resources. I would suggest that we have to stop putting all these things into silos and take coordinated action.

So far, the Health minister's plate is very full. There is going to be no dieting for the Health minister. He has a wellness strategy on his plate. He has a social inclusion strategy on his plate. He tabled a motion earlier this week — Motion No. 1065 — urging the Government of Yukon to review policy and program options dealing with chronic inebriates, which is going to be a multidisciplinary task force, and we're dealing with FASD.

At the same time, we see the government annually publishing statistics of the Yukon Liquor Corporation.

We see the dollar amount goes up every year and, from year to year, from time to time, we also see that the volume goes up, although I believe in the last report of 2009 — from 2007-08 to 2008-09 — I think that the volume was actually fairly flat, but the overall trend is that, in Yukon, we hold our own when it comes to drinking.

We know that we've heard from FASSY that the issues of dealing with FASD children become the issues of dealing with FASD adults — they are lifelong issues. They need supported living arrangements. They need supervision. People with FASD, as adults and before they are adults, as children and as teenagers, are very susceptible to suggestion from others. They have major difficulties with judgemental issues. They don't prioritize from one event to another. A year ago, I attended one of the annual general meetings of FASSY. The then executive director told a story of one of their clients who was hungry and hadn't eaten in days. They went to the place where the client was living and they found a cupboard full of canned tuna, but the client wasn't able to make use of a can opener to open the cans. There was food, but the person was going hungry.

These are cognitive issues that the rest of us would never have thought of. I would never have thought that a person who could walk around town, go from place to place, would not be able to translate the information from "I have food" to "I can eat food" for want of using the can opener, so we have some serious issues.

I've heard several members of the executive over several different boards of FASSY relate that they would like to see the Yukon government — and they've said it publicly many times, including the current president — look at diverting funds and take a percentage of all alcohol sales to address this problem. Funding should be going directly toward treatment and training of people dealing with alcohol-related disease issues.

Now I've heard the alternative argument from the government side that we don't want to restrict funding to only some set amount that, by putting the proceeds and the profits of the Yukon Liquor Corporation into general revenue, we may well spend far more in a given year on treating people with FASD and other alcohol-related diseases than would be generated by a fixed amount.

Perhaps we should still consider — for the symbolism if nothing else — that, for every drink poured, some funding would go toward helping people who have diseases, whether they have suffered from alcoholism themselves or they have diseases that have resulted from, in the case of FASD, a drinking parent during gestation, during pregnancy. It may also be that a set amount could go toward assisting those parents with coping with the issues of being a parent of an FASD child or to resist becoming a parent of yet another FASD child.

I guess what I'm saying is that we can support the spirit of the motion that the Northern Institute of Social Justice address and expand curricula for training people, but we think fairly clearly that the government has already encouraged the Yukon College, and the Yukon College has taken up the challenge and is in fact addressing this. We think it would be good if we don't have another file 10 years from now with more studies but that we actually continue on with some of the programs that the Member for Klondike did lay out and we do the work that needs to be done on all fronts to deal with these issues. We don't want to come in here one day and discuss what to do about FASD, the next day discuss what to do about inebriates, the next day discuss what to do about alcohol-related crime on our streets, and the next day talk about the need for social inclusion, and much of that wraps up around substance abuse as well. Let's just get on with it; let's do it. We don't think the government needs to use motion days to encourage themselves and their partners, such as the college, to do what is being done.

We will support the motion and we look forward to moving on, as the Premier also says, with the important issue of debating the budget. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: It is my honour and pleasure to rise today in support of the motion from the Member for Klondike, calling on the Government of Yukon to explore using the Northern Institute of Social Justice — to expand its curricula for training people who work with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder clients.

I must admit, Mr. Speaker, I think this is the dawn of a new day in this Assembly, where the Leader of the Liberal Party would stand up and say, "Why are we debating this? We recognize the government is taking action on this file." I applaud the Leader of the Official Opposition for recognizing that action has been taken on this front — that this is not a go-for-broke approach; it is not a reckless-spending initiative, but is a responsible initiative in order to address a real issue in our community.

Mr. Speaker, I do think, though, that we need to have a bit more discussion on this because there is obviously a lack of information or lack of understanding on the part of some people regarding this. It was just discussed by the Leader of the Liberal Party that there was a "silo approach" — that people were working independently, or one area was working on something and not keeping others informed.

I do need to clarify for the members opposite that that is certainly not the approach being taken in this area. In fact, if we just look at the makeup of the governing council of the North-

ern Institute of Social Justice you'll see that the different approach — the approach of being very inclusive — is certainly being put into practice here.

The Northern Institute of Social Justice executive committee or governing council is made up of the president of the college, the Deputy Minister of Justice, the Deputy Minister of Education, the Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services, the Public Service Commissioner, Mr. Eric Morris and Khà Shàde Héni, the Chief of the Carcross-Tagish First Nation.

This is certainly a broad cross-section of governments that have a significant representation of employees and people in this area. We are certainly working to tear down the silos and build working relationships and working programs between these areas that all share a common "client", if I can use that term — or, common responsibility to work with people.

We certainly are aware of the situation in our societies, in our communities and territory in responding to the issue of fetal alcohol spectrum disorder — its effect on people and its effect on our community.

One of the ways that we can be responsive to this is to build the capacity of the people who work with these people — people affected by FASD — in order to build their skills so that they can make an even bigger difference in the lives of the people who they work with.

One of the first steps in order to take action is knowing what action to take. Knowing what action to take comes from education, training and from gaining experience in these areas. So one of the best ways that we can work in our community to address many of these issues is to build the educational capacity and training of Yukoners to address the very needs that we have. That's the very nature of building a responsive education system.

It has been said that there are two roles or purposes to education, those relating to the individual and to the community. Our education system has a responsibility to help every individual to become everything he or she can be. We also have a responsibility to our society to ensure our community is made up of people who have the appropriate skills, attributes and education so they can be involved economically, socially, culturally and democratically, and meet the many varied needs in our society. We have to educate people in our community so they can have the skills and attributes we need for a society to work. That means educating — doctors, lawyers, plumbers — for a wide variety of positions. It's often referred to as the whole yellow pages or blue pages of opportunities. We need people in our communities with all of those skills and backgrounds of all the businesses we see listed and all the government positions we have through our various orders of government in the territory.

Mr. Speaker, it is an important issue to address the needs in our community and society of people with FASD. We have had a number of discussions on that in recent weeks. People have discussed many of the different areas that are addressed or affected by these situations.

Mr. Speaker, there are literally thousands of employees between the Government of Yukon — and First Nation governments who work in the field of social services, justice and

health. What we need to do is ensure that they build their skills and capacities in order to best meet the needs in our community. That was really the impetus or part of the driving force behind the creation of the Northern Institute of Social Justice, which was formally opened on December 11, 2009 at Yukon College. It reflects the collaborative efforts among governments and works to meet the identified training needs of justice, social services and other professions. The Northern Institute of Social Justice represents a realization of a collective vision and collaboration among Government of Yukon departments and First Nation governments.

By serving all orders of government — federal, territorial, First Nation and municipal — the Northern Institute of Justice will help to ensure our training efforts are streamlined and meet the needs of our community.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Education will contribute \$1,146,000, between the fiscal years of 2010-11 and 2012-13, from the federally funded community development trust to support the Northern Institute of Social Justice.

I trust, Mr. Speaker, that the Liberal opposition does not characterize this as "reckless spending", as "needless" or "wasteful", or characterize it as some kind of "go-for-broke" approach. Instead, Mr. Speaker, this is another example of the Department of Education's collaborative efforts to work with Justice, Health, Yukon First Nations and Yukon College to support the training needs of Yukon. Mr. Speaker, this is another example of preparing Yukoners for Yukon opportunities.

This is in addition to a number of other initiatives that the Government of Yukon is working on with Yukon College, such as our support for the Yukon Research Centre of Excellence. This will see northerners working together to facilitate and coordinate national and international expertise while they work on issues that have a local, northern and global impact. Also, Mr. Speaker, last May we demonstrated our commitment — the Yukon Party's commitment to Yukon College by bringing forward legislation to amend the *Yukon College Act*. The legislation that was endorsed unanimously will empower Yukon College to grant degrees. This is a big step for this institution. Many are calling upon the Yukon to build a university. I think we're already beyond that. We're now working with Yukon College to provide them with the legislative support and the capacity in order to provide degree-granting programs.

Now, Mr. Speaker, whether it's formal or accredited programs, apprentice programs or targeting training opportunities, the Department of Education is working hard to support life-long learning.

The Northern Institute of Social Justice fills an important part of Yukon Department of Education's mandate. By working in partnership, we are working together to strengthen Yukon's capacity and improve the lives of Yukoners.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to provide a few more details about the Northern Institute of Social Justice. It is an organization that provides training and education for jobs with a social justice-related component, for public and First Nation governments, for non-government organizations and businesses. It conducts research related to training and education and it also has the potential to become a pan-northern training,

education and research institute over time. We are continuing to work with our sister territories — Northwest Territories and Nunavut — on this issue. They have expressed an interest in having students attend the Northern Institute of Social Justice so we are working to build that capacity to provide collaborative education in a pan-northern forum.

The institute's vision is that northerners working together have solutions to the social justice challenges facing themselves and their communities.

Its mission: drawing on the north's leadership, unique values and diverse cultures, the Northern Institute of Social Justice delivers integrated training and education programs and conducts related research in order to help employers attract and retain a well-qualified workforce, help individuals develop careers, and provide tools to help support community leadership capacity development and transformation of service delivery.

It's called the Northern Institute of Social Justice because it grew out of a discussion involving Yukon, Nunavut and Northwest Territories. For that reason, we decided to title it "northern." As I mentioned previously, we will be working with our sister territories to provide them with opportunities for education here in Yukon.

The words "institute of social justice" mean that we will provide integrated training, education and research and that we're working through the challenges facing northerners and finding solutions that can move individuals, families and communities to equality of opportunity and outcome.

It means training people and preparing people for a way of responding that values working together to find solutions, is grounded in reality, respect and resiliency and that moves to equality of opportunity and outcome. A social justice approach to social policy in education and training promotes equity, fairness and inclusivity. This approach directs attention to root causes of inequity and works toward a systemic and institutional change by first strengthening and then empowering disadvantaged and vulnerable populations to address the social problems with which they are confronted.

One of the biggest steps that we can take in order to make the social changes that we have been discussing is to prepare people to develop the skills and education necessary to help other people make those changes. This is an important step in creating a responsive education system that helps to address the many needs that we have here in our society and in our community.

Mr. Speaker, I know I only have a couple of minutes left and I would just like to take this opportunity to highlight some of the other programs that Yukon College has. I must applaud Yukon College's board of governors, their leadership, their teachers and staff, for their work in becoming a very responsive educational institution here in Yukon.

Some of the programs that they currently have under development include the inukshuk heritage program, a heritage and culture certificate program, employment and training officer development program, and a municipal administration and community management program.

Some of the new programming that's currently available at Ayamdigut Campus includes a health care assistant certificate program, human services certificates, multi-media communication certificates, bachelor of science degree in conservation and environmental science — that's done in conjunction with the University of Alberta — and a masters of education degree in multi-disciplinary leadership with a literacy and inclusion emphasis in partnership with the University of Northern British Columbia.

This is in addition to some of the other programs that I mentioned before, such as the bachelor of social work program, the bachelor of education program, some of the trades-related programs — in which we're seeing increased enrolment and expansion — and many of the other community-based programs.

I would applaud the Member for Klondike for bringing this motion forward. It brings a fresh approach and strong action to addressing the needs that we have in our community. It recognizes that we have an issue that needs to be addressed, that being fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and its effects and influences on people in our society. It identifies a strategy and an approach to helping to address that — that being training and educating people and practitioners with the skills necessary to make those substantive changes.

It does so in a very collaborative, inclusive and, if I can say, Yukon way. It is being delivered through Yukon College under the leadership of the Northern Institute of Social Justice advisory committee, which includes representation from a wide variety of government departments and First Nation governments.

Also, Mr. Speaker, I want to make other members aware of the other ways of influencing Yukon College through the president's committees or through the other venues that they have for collaboration with community members. This is not the only way to address the situation that we've discussed. The Member for Klondike also put on the record some of the other initiatives underway to address some of these issues. I expect the Minister of Health and Social Services and the Minister of Justice will also bring forward some other issues.

This is a very strong step, and I would strongly encourage all members of the Assembly to demonstrate their commitment to this issue, to demonstrate their belief in education in the Yukon and in preparing Yukoners for Yukon opportunities, and show their support by supporting this motion. Let's send a loud message to all Yukoners that we are behind addressing this situation and that we are behind doing so in such a responsible manner. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Ms. Horne: I'd like to speak to this motion for a few minutes today. While the Northern Institute of Social Justice may provide training in many areas, I want to discuss the particular area of addressing training for people who work with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder clients.

When we campaigned for office in 2002, one of the areas that we highlighted in our platform was the need to address substance abuse in Yukon. Part of that included the need to address FASD.

The five-step FASD action plan was set out in the 2002 Yukon Party election platform. The five steps are as follows: (1) the promotion of prevention programs to eliminate alcohol consumption of high-risk parents in order to foster the birth of healthy babies; (2) early diagnosis of FASD before the age of 6; (3) supporting people and families with FASD through a wide range of services such as professional counselling and foster homes in order to provide a stable, nurturing home environment; (4) enhancing supported living arrangements for adults with FASD; (5) supporting a diagnostic team of professionals trained in personal counselling and social work/health to provide services to Yukon schools in order to provide support for FASD students and their families.

As I said, we have identified in our platform the need to address FASD. We committed to address the need to deal with Yukoners' serious alcohol and drug problems as a matter of top priority. We are addressing the drug and alcohol rehabilitation package, including counselling, offered to offenders.

We developed the *Yukon Substance Abuse Action Plan* as a way of addressing Yukon's substance abuse issues. We committed to continuing to implement the *Yukon Substance Abuse Action Plan* in 2006.

One of the areas that we identified was the need for a more skilled workforce in the area of substance abuse, especially with respect to FASD. I would like to share with you some of the ways that Yukon is responding to FASD. As you listen to the list of activities, I am sure you will understand how a Northern Institute of Social Justice would assist us by providing more skills development and training opportunities for Yukoners.

Yukon is working to address FASD at the national level. We have raised this issue as a matter of great concern. Yukon hosted The Path to Justice: Access to Justice for Individuals with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, a conference of 130 government and non-government stakeholders. This investment of \$139,000 was to help us find ways to address the reality that people with FASD who are engaged in the justice system as victims, offenders and witnesses have special and unique needs.

In my meetings with Minister Nicholson I have raised the issue of FASD as a major issue in the north. We worked to get this on to the FPT agenda as a discussion item and are moving it to the national level. A deputy ministers working group is exploring the issue further. Ministers approved the workplan in October 2009 with six action items that are drawn from the areas that we identified to be addressed at the 2008 Whitehorse conference.

I know my colleague, the Minister of Health and Social Services, has more detail and I have already outlined them in full, but let me summarize the five-step FASD action plan. We want to promote prevention, make diagnosis early in the child's life, provide support for families of FASD children, provide supported housing for adults with FASD and support schools with FASD students. These areas all require Yukoners with skills and training. Think about how the Northern Institute of Social Justice could support these activities.

My colleague advises me that we now have Yukon diagnostic clinics for preschool and school-aged children delivered by professional staff at Child Development Centre and Department of Education, coupled with medical practitioners; diagnosis for adults through a contract with FASSY; enhanced supported housing for adults with FASD, including supported housing provided by Options for Independence; more supports for children, families and adults affected by FASD; prevention programs, including the recent public awareness social marketing campaign — again, the Northern Institute of Social Justice is a resource that we can tap into to better serve Yukoners.

I would like to see more educational opportunities offered through the Northern Institute of Social Justice for Yukoners. Unlike schools in the south, which often have a southern focus, the Northern Institute of Social Justice is geared to addressing northern and Yukon concerns. Because it is overseen by a governing council that includes Yukon government, Yukon College and Yukon First Nations, its priorities will reflect northern concerns and opportunities. The institute's role is to provide training and education for jobs with a social justice-related component in public and First Nation governments, non-government organizations and businesses, and to undertake related research.

The institute was created to help Yukon employers and employees address some of the challenges they face in delivering social justice-related programs and services. These challenges include the need for entry-level training, generic training, position-specific training and the need to attract, retain and develop a well-qualified workforce. The institute is located within Yukon College so that it can maximize existing support structures and will work with the college in order to meet client training needs.

I understand that this spring the Northern Institute of Social Justice has, or will be, offering courses covering the following subject matter: report writing for professional investigators; understanding compassion, fatigue and vicarious trauma; workplace violence prevention; FASD and justice training.

In addition to the conference I noted earlier, Justice officials are also working on a number of projects. These projects include: (1) reviewing and updating the inmate handbook provided to offenders when they enter the Whitehorse Correctional Centre, including the creation of an accompanying video; (2) in partnership with Yukon College and the Northern Institute of Social Justice, a curriculum package on FASD for justice professionals has been prepared and will be delivered as a pilot this spring to a variety of justice system professionals; and (3) working with Justice Canada and the Canadian Centre of Substance Abuse to determine the feasibility of undertaking a prevalence study of FASD in the corrections population in Yukon.

Mr. Speaker, this is work that we are doing and it will better inform us as to what skills and training Yukon service providers will need in order to respond to those with FASD in our communities. Yukon brought forward the issue of FASD at the federal provincial, territorial minister and deputy minister level and has led the way on the development of a workplan to help

better inform the justice system as a whole about this very important issue.

I would like to acknowledge the work that my colleague, the Minister of Health and Social Services, and his department officials are doing to address this matter at their FPT table as well. Given we are doing this work in both Health and Social Services and Justice, it is reasonable to conclude that we are going to need staff with training in this area.

Let me give you another example of where expanding the FASD programming at the Northern Institute of Social Justice would make sense. We are investing \$574,591 per year for the Community Wellness Court. The court targets individuals with addictions, mental health problems and/or fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.

The Yukon Community Wellness Court is an innovative, therapeutic court designed to contribute to the building of safer Yukon communities through crime reduction. It does this by working with offenders in the criminal justice system on the root causes of their criminal behaviour. The court officially opened in April 2007, and it accepted its first referral in June 2007. The court targets individuals with addictions, mental health problems and/or fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.

Participants work with a coordinated team of professionals and community supports to develop and follow a holistic wellness plan. The Community Wellness Court is a response to the high percentage of cases before Yukon criminal courts with offenders who have significant wellness-related issues and problems. The court recognizes that these problems, including addictions, historical trauma, and poverty are deeply embedded in the fabric of many Yukon families and communities.

Holistic and culturally relevant approaches to working with offenders on the underlying issues that lead to their criminal behaviour are required in order for positive change to occur in Yukon recidivism rates. The CWC is a collaborative project that involves a partnership among the following: Yukon Territorial Court, Public Prosecution Service of Canada, Yukon Legal Services Society, Council of Yukon First Nations, RCMP, Health and Social Services, and the Department of Justice. We have some \$60,000 over the 2009-10 and 2010-11 fiscal years to undertake the first phase of a prevalence study on FASD in the corrections population.

This funding is leverage from our partners at Justice Canada. The results of that prevalence study may identify other areas where additional training is required. \$68,000 from fiscal 2008-09 and 2009-10 has been committed to the costs associated with developing and delivering curriculum on FASD for Justice professionals through the Northern Institute of Social Justice.

The other area I wanted to mention is the role that the Northern Institute of Social Justice can play in providing training for those working with women. What better way to address FASD than to prevent it. We know how to prevent it: we have to help expectant mothers avoid drinking. The report, *Improving Treatment and Support for Yukon Girls and Women with Substance Use Problems and Addictions* was released in February 2009.

One of the recommendations in the report was to provide training for front-line workers with women who may have substance abuse problems. Training sessions were held in the spring and fall of 2009, as well as a train-the-trainers session in November 2009. This is one area where I see real opportunities for the Northern Institute of Social Justice to expand its curricula. I think this is a good motion and I am pleased that the private member brought it forward. Günilschish.

Mr. Cardiff: Mr. Speaker, we on this side of the House support the intent of the motion. There is no doubt in our mind that more needs to be done to address and provide services to those persons who suffer from fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. We have some questions with regard to the wording of the motion, which I will get into at some point here.

The recognition that this is a problem, a concern, for us here in this Legislative Assembly and that there are many people in our community who suffer from this affliction can't be minimized, because it has a very huge impact on families and our community. We need to find ways to provide services. We need to provide supported living arrangements for those who are affected by fetal alcohol spectrum disorder or effects. We need to provide training for the members in our community and the professionals who deal with this client base, and that is what this motion is about.

Much has been said about what services are provided, what services should be provided, how many studies have been done and I'm not going to go into repeating all that has been said because it is all valid. It is all important and I don't think there is anyone in this Assembly who would disagree that progress hasn't been made, but I think we all need to agree in this Legislature that more needs to be done.

To deal specifically with the motion and not get sidetracked by which services should be provided and who said what and how much money is going where — to deal specifically with the issue of using the Northern Institute of Social Justice to expand the curricula for training people who work with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder clients.

We'd like to know from the mover of the motion or from one of the members on that side what is meant specifically by "explore" and what is meant by "expand the curricula". Maybe it would be good if we knew — seeing as how what we're discussing is the curriculum or curricula — what is presently available and what is it that the government sees as the need for expansion.

I'd like to just address the issue of the Northern Institute of Social Justice. This is a recently created institution. There was a press release December 11 of last year. I'm going to read a little bit from the background. It says that the institute was created to address two broad challenges: first, recruitment, development and retention of a qualified workforce to deliver programs and services with a social justice-related component from entry level to senior level.

That's where it fits in with this motion — these are social justice-related jobs. The purpose of the institute is to deliver the programs and services and to address things like recruitment, development and retention. The second thing is relevant and

accessible training to enter the workforce or further develop careers. There again is where the Northern Institute of Social Justice plays a role.

It says that the institute will meet these challenges by providing training and education and undertaking related research. It also says that, in carrying out its purpose, the institute will focus on training that is relevant, recognized, accredited and transferable. Regarding the curricula, I'm not sure what the government's role is in this actually, but since we are discussing this, we're hoping that whatever work is done at the Northern Institute of Social Justice is relevant, recognized, accredited and transferable.

It will broker, consolidate, adapt or develop training as required to reflect a Yukon context to meet Yukon-specific needs: that is very important, I think, because in a lot ways the Yukon is unique but there is a lot we can learn from other jurisdictions. So we can broker, consolidate, adapt or develop training from other jurisdictions, but we need to also think about that Yukon context and meet those Yukon-specific needs.

This is an interesting point in the backgrounder. It says, "The institute's governing council provides vision, leadership and sets direction. The council has overseen the institute's evolution. The council's founding members are: Terry Weninger, Yukon College President (council chair); Yukon government deputy ministers: Dennis Cooley; Pamela Hine, Stuart Whitley and Patricia Daws; Chief Mark Wedge, Carcross-Tagish First Nation; Eric Morris, community member; and Grand Chief Andy Carvill, Council of Yukon First Nations."

I will just go back to the first sentence: "The institute's governing council provides vision, leadership and sets direction."

I'm at odds with the motion, because here we are as legislators urging the Government of Yukon to basically tell the institute — the institute's governing council that is supposed to provide the vision, the leadership and the direction — what they should be doing. I think we should be working with the governing council, but I think we need to be respectful of their role in providing that vision and that leadership and setting a direction. I think that it's appropriate that we ask them to look at the issue of training for professional people who work with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder clients and to ensure that the curricula is relevant, up-to-date and in a Yukon context. I don't have a problem with doing that.

But the way that the motion reads, it is basically directing the Government of Yukon to explore using the institute. I think we should not be using the institute. I think we should be working with the institute; I think we should be asking the institute; I think we should be consulting with the institute's governing council that is providing the vision and the leadership and is setting the direction of the institute. It calls into question the arm's-length relationship that should exist between the institute and the government. The government shouldn't be directing the institute. It shouldn't be directing the college. It needs to be a collaborative thing.

I'd be interested to know which specific department of the government is being directed to do this, whether it's the De-

partment of Justice or the Department of Health and Social Services. It seems like a pretty simple thing for the government to do and to bring here to the floor of the Legislative Assembly today when we could be debating the budget.

I note that the Premier, last Friday, suggested that we should be spending more time debating the budget. I think that this is an important issue, but I don't know that it warrants the amount of time, because this is something that we could all agree to fairly quickly. The appropriate minister could make a phone call to the institute and could request a meeting with the governing body — the governing council — and ask them on behalf of the Legislative Assembly to look into doing this. I think the use of the word "using" the Northern Institute of Social Justice is a little bit over the top. I'd like to know whether or not the government is going to make a financial commitment to fund this initiative to look at the curricula, to expand it and to ensure that the institute has all of the resources.

What involvement and consultation would be done with regard to this initiative? Would the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon, FASSY — have they been consulted? Will they be consulted in what is appropriate and what developments in curricula need to take place? I think those are all important questions that need to be answered with regard to this motion.

However, I think that we also need to be cognizant of our time here in the Legislative Assembly. It seems to me that this isn't a hard motion to support. It's not a hard initiative. As the Leader of the Official Opposition said, "Much is being done in this area and we encourage the government to do more." So it's another example of the government wanting to say that they worked with us and passed another unanimous motion.

It's not a hard motion to support. We support the initiative; we just have questions around how it's being done and about the arm's length of the institute and what the relationship is. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Hart: I thank my colleagues, the Minister of Justice and the Minister of Education, for their comments with regard to this subject.

I would like to maybe just quickly provide some response to the member opposite with regard to some of his questions. Many of his questions were answered by both the Minister of Justice and Education in their addresses on this very important subject and with regard to many of the questions the member opposite raised in his review.

I would like to speak today to this motion. I would like to address the issues as they relate to this motion from Health and the Minister of Social Services. I believe that the Minister of Education and the Minister of Justice have done their good work in providing that information as it relates to their department.

I will try to be reasonably precise and move forward. Anything we can do to increase the awareness of FASD among the general population and build better supports among those individuals who will work with those affected in the population is a positive step toward an inclusive society.

For the past 11 years, the government has been a member of the Canada Northwest FASD Partnership. Together with Nunavut, Northwest Territories and the four western provinces, we have spent a good deal of time and effort looking at areas of prevention, intervention, prevalence and support.

In 2005, the partnership created and began funding the Canada Northwest FASD Research Network with one of the foremost North American experts in FASD, Dr. Sterling Clarren, as the scientific director. Dr. Clarren has been in the Yukon and is expected to return here in September for the 2010 FASD symposium being hosted by my department.

The research network, Mr. Speaker, was established by seven ministers responsible for fetal alcohol spectrum disorder to create northwestern research expertise.

The network nurtures and sustains a collaborative environment that is producing research that will lead to the prevention of FASD and to a significant improvement in the lives of those affected. The network reports to a board of directors, which has a Yukon representative. The board, in turn, reports to the ministers.

The research network is both formally and informally connected, a widely dispersed group of professionals from a range of disciplines who are located across northern and western Canada. They are involved in the use of scientific methods in the pursuit of advancing knowledge. These individuals work together in five network action team models that answer questions requiring research and evaluation posed by governments, organizations and communities.

These teams are currently conducting research in a number of program areas. The goal is to build research capacity across western Canada and the territories to address high-priority research questions to devise more effective prevention and supportive strategies for women, for individuals with FASD and their families, and to better inform policy.

Ultimately, I think everyone's goal would be a world where fetal alcohol spectrum disorder did not exist, but that day is in the future and, in the meantime, we must make every effort to support families and individuals in their lives.

The Yukon benefits from participation in the research network through program staff who have direct access to research and contact with researchers, and Yukon can provide direction on the priority research questions.

The partnership has also resulted in close collaboration with other jurisdictions. For example, Yukon links up with video conference learning sessions on FASD, organized by Alberta. FASSY and other community agencies are invited to attend, as well as government workers.

Contact with researchers involved with the research network led to a Yukon-specific research project. *Improving Treatment and Support for Yukon Girls and Women with Substance Use Problems and Addictions* was released by the Yukon government in early 2009. Early this year I asked my department to prepare a 10-year FASD plan. This will build on the five steps of the FASD action plan, which was originally set out in 2002.

Over the past eight years since that first plan was set out, the Yukon government has made significant progress toward

achieving the plan and has fully achieved some of the tasks set out in that action plan. We now have a diagnostic Yukon clinic for diagnosis of preschool and school-aged children, delivered by professional staff at the Child Development Centre and the Department of Education, coupled with medical practitioners; diagnosis for adults through a contact with FASSY; enhanced supported housing for adults with FASD, including supported housing provided by Options for Independence Society; more supports for children, families and adults affected by FASD; prevention programs, including the recent public awareness social marketing campaign that was done at the pan-territorial level.

I mentioned earlier that Dr. Clarren would be coming back to the Yukon. In September 28 and 29 of this year, the Yukon will host a symposium on FASD in Whitehorse called, *Walking Together: Connecting Practice and Research to Create Change*. Those involved in providing services, researchers and people with FASD will be involved in this conference.

FASD is a priority of this government and that of my department and we spend a lot of time trying to address many of their needs. In the area of prevention, Alcohol and Drug Services prevention unit delivers primary FASD prevention aimed at educating young people and the general public, staff in schools and in communities; they deliver secondary prevention by continuing to offer training to allied professionals who work with addicted persons and who come into contact with at-risk populations, including substance-abusing women.

Alcohol and Drug Services provides tertiary prevention by reserving two beds for women at the detox and providing priority admission for pregnant women. Similarly, our outpatient and in-patient treatment programs also provide the same priority admission to pregnant women.

Over the years, we have increased our funding for the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon. FASSY primarily provides services to adults, primarily adults with FASD who are very marginalized. In the last fiscal year, we provided FASSY with almost half a million dollars, and we have committed to continuing this funding again in this fiscal year. FASSY is using this money to fund prevention services and diagnosis, which pays for the diagnosis team to travel from Alberta to Whitehorse, and additionally to fund their support program for high-risk women with FASD.

The government continues to support housing for individuals with FASD through Options for Independence. Through adult services to persons with disabilities, we provide a range of financial, residential, employment and personal supports for adults with disabilities, including individuals with FASD; and funding is provided to Challenge Community Vocational Alternatives to provide employment supports for people with disabilities, including adults with FASD.

For children and families, Health and Social Services provides \$90,000 to the Child Development Centre for coordination of diagnostic teams for preschool and school-aged children.

The diagnostic team for preschool children draws on therapists from the Child Development Centre. The diagnostic team from the school-aged children draws a therapist from

Education. The two teams have the capacity to diagnose about 10 children each year. We continue to fund the Child Development Centre to provide assessment and intervention services for preschool children and family support, and through Family Supports for Children with Disabilities. We provide funding for supports and intervention for children with disabilities, including FASD. Family support is also provided.

We are here today, Mr. Speaker, to talk about the importance of responding to the needs created by those in our society affected by FASD. Training is a very strong component of that response. I have touched briefly on the training that we do for communities and allied professionals. I spoke about the opportunities of our staff through the video conferencing with Alberta child services, and next week, Family and Children's Services is sponsoring a two-day training session on the role of professionals in the lives of individuals with FASD, presented by Donna Debolt. For those who work and live in the FASD world, Ms. Debolt is another national FASD specialist we are very fortunate to have available to us.

She will present this advanced workshop for participants who have had previous training in fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. Participants will have learned at previous training how to both recognize and understand the complicated issues that surround FASD.

Even here we are working to improve our linkages with other departments to create a seamless system for both the workers and the individuals they serve. We see this as progression. The responsibility for FASD does not solely rest with Health and Social Services, Justice and Education. We are also leading a number of FASD initiatives and the departments are collaborating. For example, there is the development of a training program through Yukon College and FASD for Justice workers. Justice will also be providing funding to the Northern Institute of Social Justice to develop and deliver a curriculum on FASD. The institute could be an important umbrella that serves the needs of all of us. As I said at the beginning, Mr. Speaker, anything we can do to improve the status of individuals with FASD, their families and those who work with them is an effort well worth the process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Fairclough: I'll be brief in speaking to the motion that has been presented by the Member for Klondike. I heard the comments the government members have made with regard to their support behind this motion. We on this side of the House have said that we will support it. Like the Third Party, I do have some concerns about it, but I don't believe it's enough to really say that this motion should be off the table or not voted for. I think the Yukon Party has had this issue come up to them many times. It was brought to their attention by the Official Opposition many times and have been asked to provide training at least to the government employees who deal with FASD clients and, in particular, children. As a matter of fact, I really believe that government has not been taking a lead on this, rather that communities have stepped forward and started working on this long before the Yukon Party has taken this matter seriously. I brought up the fact that communities have put together information sessions on what FASD is all about.

They've brought experts into the territory from Alaska. I'm thinking about the one conference that took place in the community of Carmacks. The invitation was to all teachers and government employees — anyone who wanted a further understanding of what FAS and FASD is all about. Although there were some teachers and other government employees who have taken the training, most were interested in the kind of information that was shared at that time.

I believe there was follow-through another time with one of these conferences a year later. All who have taken in this conference acknowledged to the organizers that this was indeed very helpful to them. It is simply the understanding of what FAS and FASD really means, particularly in children.

The previous speaker talked about how anything we do to prevent FASD is a good thing. I just want to point out that the general public will let the government know if it's a good thing or not. I believe that it was the Yukon Party that, at one time, thought that the best way to deal with and prevent FASD was to put pregnant women in jail. That was the Yukon Party's route to go at that time. That was amazing because, at one time, children were diagnosed with FAS in schools and the children could have been named because of the high numbers. In my view, it was a diagnosis that was not accurate and communities have complained about that. The direction the Yukon Party was taking at the time was a direct threat to many people. What we really needed at the time was a lot of education and fast action on the part of government. Now we're dealing with a population of which a growing percentage is FASD. Our teachers face it every day while teaching children in school.

It is they who have a lot of difficulty in being able to do their job sometimes and call upon experts within the department to help them out and, in turn, they have teachers who deal with special needs. So I want to remind the members opposite that not everything that government does is positive in that way. It was the general public that shut down this direction the Yukon Party was going in, as they have done in many instances with governments in the past. So the general public does have a lot of good insight and they do their homework. I just want to remind the members opposite of what has taken place.

It is troubling to know that we still face this issue. As a matter of fact, a lot of people just don't want to have to face clients with FASD, but it's a reality these days and it needs to be dealt with. I believe that the communities have reacted. They've put on workshops.

They've got their local campuses to deal with putting on courses for community members, for social workers, for teachers and other government employees. I'm talking about the different levels of government, whether it's municipal, First Nations, or even Yukon and federal governments. Those have been available. All kinds of workshops have taken place over the years to try to bring everyone up to speed on what this really means to the Yukon, and really to the rest of Canada and the rest of the world.

It's disturbing to know that a lot of the FASD clients have been First Nations and they are labelled, have been labelled that way in the past and do not want to be labelled in this manner and have expressed concerns to the public or to the gov-

ernment, particularly when misdiagnoses have taken place with children with FASD — or labelling them with FASD, when in fact they did not have this at all.

I have talked to parents of children who have been labelled this way, but they definitely had not had any alcohol at all when pregnant with their children. This has come straight from the people, and I think we need to take their stories seriously on this matter and try to understand what this really means. This motion talks about providing training at the Northern Institute of Social Justice for people who work with FASD clients. I believe that, in the past, both the territorial government and the First Nations have worked hard to ensure that this training was provided, particularly to teachers. Many of them have taken that training and have been thankful that the different levels of government responded in that manner. This has helped them a lot with their jobs.

I have to say that perhaps the government has thought this through in detail. They have put a lot of effort and thinking — that this is the way that it is going to work and that this is the answer. I think there are other ways to do it, myself. I think when communities come forward and design training programs they tend to be better than those provided by governments. We look at all the ones that have been set up in the past. If you look at mine training, for example, a lot of those have been set up through local campuses and in turn the Government of Yukon has taken forward a lot of what has been set up by the communities. I am hoping that the Yukon government has looked at what the communities have done.

The motion before us says that the Northern Institute of Social Justice will be the place for training people who work with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder.

Rather than go on and on about this, we on this side of the House think that there could be better ways. I'm going to leave it in the hands of the government. If they feel they have done a lot of the homework on this matter, saying this is the best way to deal with it, then that's the way we'll agree to for now. We'll see how this thing pans out in the future. So, I thank the members opposite.

Hon. Mr. Edzerza: I'd like to just put a few things on record with regard to this issue, but first I'd like to correct the record from the statement the Member for Mayo-Tatchun made with regard to an individual who said that putting pregnant women in jail is a solution to FASD. Well, that individual so happens to be the new leader of the United Citizens Party. He is actively seeking to establish a new political party in the Yukon. Maybe that will be something that's on that party's platform in the upcoming election.

Anyhow, I would like to talk about some of the characteristics of those who suffer from FASD.

I want to state that it takes one with very high skills and training in the medical field to be able to address this issue. Therefore, the things I'm going to put on record are materials relating to FASD that were written by scholarly individuals who probably have the credentials to write on such a delicate topic.

I'd like to start by saying that the cognitive and behavioural impairments that may be exhibited by individuals prenatally exposed to alcohol are quite broad and are often apparent before a child reaches school age and may result in limitations in the ability to learn basic academic skills, such as mathematics and reading — Conry and Fast, 2000.

According to Conry and Fast in 2000, the specific cognitive and behavioural deficits that may be experienced by individuals with FASD can fall into five general areas, which are: adaptive behaviour, language, attention, reasoning and memory.

Let's talk about adaptive behaviour. Adaptive behaviour refers to the ability to modify one's future behaviour according to the consequences of their past actions. It also includes the extent to which individuals are able to meet the expectations of personal independence and social responsibility appropriate for their age and cultural groups. Individuals with impaired adaptive behaviour may have difficulties meeting their most basic self-care needs, forming long-term relationships and social relationships, learning appropriate communication skills, and exercising appropriate judgement in various settings, such as school and work environments.

In practical terms, individuals with impairments in adaptive behaviour may have difficulty managing their finances, finding and maintaining employment, and engaging in healthy leisure time activities. Further, their interactions with others may be inappropriate and, although they want to create and maintain friendships, they are frequently rejected because of their immature and awkward interpersonal style.

Because they have limited abilities to learn from their past interactions with others, they may be prone to manipulation and abuse from others. Further, they are at higher risk of alcohol and drug abuse than individuals who do not exhibit impairments in this area. Now I'll talk about language.

Individuals prenatally exposed to alcohol frequently have impairments in language acquisitions and have difficulty in acquiring reading, writing and speaking skills. However, they may be quite verbal in an attempt to mask their basic language deficiencies. Because of this, they may appear to possess good verbal skills when in fact their comprehension levels are quite low. They may be unable to understand the subtle nuance of language and may respond differently depending upon how a question is asked. This may lead to the conclusion that they are lying when in fact they are simply responding quite literally to what they are asked.

For example, an individual with FASD may deny going to a house because they had gone to an apartment. Then we go on to the attention part of people with FASD. It has been estimated that 60 percent of individuals with FASD have some level of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. This translates into a pattern marked by distractibility, inability to remain focused on tasks, and restlessness. They are also characterized by impulsive behaviour, and may rush into action without appreciating the consequences. Thus, they may unwittingly place themselves into dangerous situations. For example, individuals with FASD may be easily influenced by anti-social peers, which could lead to impulsive delinquency, such as shoplifting

and breaking and entering. Reasoning: individuals with FASD typically have difficulty linking their behaviour with consequences, and thus have an impaired ability to learn from experience. This is especially a problem when the consequences of a particular behaviour are separated by a lengthy time period from the behaviour itself, as is often the case in legal proceedings.

Individuals with FASD may not remember why they are in court, or may not be able to connect the sentence with the offence. These individuals also have difficulty understanding the effects that their actions have on others, and moving beyond their own immediate needs or perception is problematic. For example, an individual with FASD may link that it is okay to rob someone with a weapon because they don't intend to use it — not understanding the trauma they cause the victim.

Finally, memory — fetal alcohol exposure can affect memory function in a variety of ways. The most problematic memory deficit is related to short-term recall, where an individual may not remember information or even what they were recently exposed to. However, long-term memory may also be affected, meaning that their memory for events occurring further in the past is impaired or distorted. Due to the gaps in memory these individuals may experience, they are prone to confabulation, in which they may fill in missing memories with inaccurate details — Conry and Fast, 2000.

Because they believe that these confabulated memories are accurate, they are not lying. Simply, these individuals are vulnerable to suggestions of what might have happened in a particular situation, for which their own memory is impaired and may incorporate these suggestions into their memory as fact.

So, Mr. Speaker, having read out these five general areas that I mentioned with regard to those who suffer from FASD, they support the reasoning for training those who work with clients who are suffering from FASD and that is what this motion speaks to.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I am very pleased to also lend my voice and support to this particular motion. I'd like to thank the Member for Klondike for bringing it forward.

It is an opportunity for us to not only speak to the gist of the motion, but really, it is an opportunity to raise awareness about the importance of training, particularly when it comes to this affliction.

I wanted to just touch upon a couple of things. I guess — starting back to days when I went to school, elementary school and so forth, having grown up in rural Yukon, I was born and raised in the Town of Watson Lake and had the opportunity to go to school in Watson Lake for many, many years. I was just reflecting upon my experience of attending school in the elementary phases and while I try to think that I'm not that old, but actually, reflecting upon the past, many years have transpired since I was in elementary school.

When looking upon and reflecting upon those previous years, it's important to note that I believe that there has been significant progress made in addressing fetal alcohol spectrum disorder. There has been a lot of debate, a lot of research, a lot

of thought by educators, by those in the research field, by health providers, by childcare providers, and there has been a lot of discussion over the years.

I think we heard earlier today about the discussions that have taken place in this country and about the pan-northern approach among the three territories. All these discussions, research and training continues to evolve. The one thing that is very clear and certain about FASD is that there isn't any certainty. The fact that FASD is not often understood and is under-diagnosed makes it very challenging to look at behaviours, interpret those behaviours and be able to respond effectively to those behaviours.

I think today's motion is all about coming up with a framework for better understanding, coordinating and implementing those appropriate and meaningful supports to individuals who are suffering from FASD. What better way to do that than through training initiatives?

When I was going to school, there was often a division of students. The division was between children who had learning disabilities and those who did not. I think that education has very much evolved over the years. It's much more inclusive and it's much more integrated. I have to say that there's a lot more education and more training opportunities made available, but I think that in this particular field more needs to be done, always. There's always more to be done.

I think it's really appropriate that we discuss this very issue today. We know that there is an increasing level of FASD. It is sad to report that we are doing more work, but that's not to say that the number of individuals coming forward with FASD has gone down. By starting with education and its promotion at early ages, we are able to prevent. We are able to inform individuals, support moms and support families who are around those mothers at an early age about the importance of healthy relationships and having a healthy lifestyle — the importance of good nutrition, the importance of having healthy families.

There's a program, Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies, that is delivered in many of our communities. That is one example of a multitude of programs being delivered by communities, in communities, that help support the moms who carry children until birth and continue to be a primary caregiver until the end of life.

I think that whether you're looking at prevention or you're looking to train care providers, it is very important that a necessary level of training be provided, because identifying and understanding this spectrum disorder is new.

There continue to be developments in research and practice every day. I'm very heartened to see the developments over the years in providing supports for education and diagnosis — whether that's early or later in life — and being able to respond effectively through training and education opportunities. Housing support is critical in providing that safe nurturing environment as well to those with the affliction.

It reminds me that there has been a lot of discussion on the national front about sovereignty — Arctic sovereignty. I often recall there was one conference that I had the privilege of attending, and that was the Arctic Council held in Norway. There have been a number of forums talking about Arctic sovereignty

and how best to secure and protect our own sovereign right to our land, people, culture, history, heritage, economy and social well-being.

Of course, it's all well and good to have defence mechanisms and a military presence but, at the end of the day, what really truly makes a very big difference in being able to assert our sovereign right is our ability to strengthen our communities. That is by way of self-reliance and promoting education and training opportunities.

When we talk about opportunities and training, that is geared toward northern priorities and realities of today. This is just one more very important example of the need to emphasize the importance of education in our communities. Through the whole process of correctional reform, from the replacement of the Whitehorse Correctional Centre to more emphasis on community-driven programming, there has been a shift in how we deliver corrections in the territory. That is taking a holistic approach to addressing crime in our communities, addressing substance abuse and, of course, part of that is also addressing FASD through prevention, diagnosis, supports and training opportunities.

There is a whole host of organizations and governments working on this very issue and I applaud every ounce of prevention, every ounce of programming that has been committed to and continues to be provided by our communities. Yukon College has been able to expand its mandate over the years as well. We've seen an expanding range of education programs being delivered through that institution. There has been renewed emphasis on research in the knowledge sector, whether that is through climate change or coming up with northern technologies that are pertinent to some of the challenges we have today.

We talked about the heritage certificate program, which is a relatively new program being developed as we speak, and the licensed practical nurse program, which was in part being delivered through Education and Health. In the college, we've looked at bachelor of science degrees, masters of education, even a new School of Visual Arts with accreditation with other institutions throughout Canada.

This motion speaks to the very importance of curricula, expanding what we do have today, but expanding the curricula for training people who work with individuals with FASD. This is a tremendous investment. I think a lot has been done, but a lot more has to be done as well.

So I just wanted to say thank you again to the Member for Klondike for bringing it forward and just to reiterate our government's support and our commitment to continuing to expand this very worthy initiative.

Speaker: If the Member for Klondike speaks, he will close debate. Does any other member wish to be heard?

Mr. Nordick: I'd like to thank all members for their comments and concerns that they put on the record with regard to this motion. One thing that we have to keep in mind as leaders and legislators is that sometimes discussing issues and debating issues brings more attention to issues. The more we as a

group can work together, united against things like FASD, the more that brings positive change to the Yukon.

I know the Liberal Party said, "Why talk about this? Why would you put this on the Order Paper?" Well, shoving things underneath the rug and not doing anything about them is not the way to go. What we need to do is continue to talk, continue to improve our actions with regard to FASD and people with disabilities — I'll just leave it at that.

I hope the Liberal opposition actually realizes that, by discussing and debating issues, positive results happen. That is why we're here — to bring positive results for Yukoners, not to ignore the issue and sweep it underneath the rug. Thanks to all members for supporting this motion.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Hart: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Lang: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Horne: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Edzerza: Agree.

Mr. Nordick: Agree.

Mr. Mitchell: Agree.

Mr. McRobb: Agree.

Mr. Elias: Agree.

Mr. Fairclough: Agree.

Mr. Cardiff: Agree.

Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 14 yea, nil nay.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.

Motion No. 1058 agreed to

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, I move that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Mr. Nordick): Order please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 20, *First Appropriation Act, 2010-11*, Vote 3, Department of Education. Do members wish a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 15 minutes.

Recess

Bill No. 20 — First Appropriation Act, 2010-11 — continued

Chair: Order please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before Committee is Bill No. 20, *First Appropriation Act, 2010-11*. We will now proceed with general debate in Vote 3, the Department of Education.

Department of Education

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I rise in the House today to present the 2010-11 budget for the Department of Education. I'm pleased to say that with this budget, the third budget in our second mandate, we are continuing our good work in creating a better quality of life for Yukoners — educating today for jobs tomorrow.

Mr. Chair, it has been said numerous times that one of the key roles and responsibilities for the Department of Education is to help prepare Yukoners for Yukon opportunities. To that end, we aim to create a more responsive education system that enables all learners to succeed, to enhance transitions between different levels of education, training and the world of work and to further develop and maintain meaningful relationships with all partners in education and training.

I think we have a consensus among members in this Assembly that these are appropriate goals for the Department of Education and that we are all on the same page with the vision of education in the territory.

The total budget for the Department of Education this year is \$141,413,000. Before I speak to the numbers behind the 2010-11 budget, I would like to thank all Yukoners for their continuing commitment to education. The Department of Education's main objective is to deliver accessible and quality education so learners of all ages can become productive, responsible and self-reliant members of society. Our vision is for all Yukon people to possess a desire for and appreciation of life-long learning, a strong commitment to their communities and the knowledge and skills needed to live meaningful, productive and rewarding lives.

You will see this vision reflected in the Department of Education's programs and in the budget allocation. I'm sure we'll all agree that education is an important component of building Yukon's workforce and economy by developing and enhancing programs and resources to meet changing education, community and labour market needs.

Our total support for Yukon College this year is approximately \$25 million. This is a reflection of how much we value this northern post-secondary institution. Members will recall that it was only a short time ago that we passed legislation in this Assembly that provides Yukon College with the authority to grant university degrees. While others talk about creating a Yukon university, we are working with Yukon College to provide university education here in the territory. Some of this is done in partnership with other jurisdictions and some is done

through the courses at Yukon College, which are transferable to jurisdictions in the south.

In the area of capital expenditures, I would now like to speak directly to what the departmental plan means in terms of the 2010-2011 capital and O&M budget for the Department of Education.

First, I'd like to begin by addressing the capital portion of this year's budget. The capital budget for 2010-11 is \$11,910,000. This capital budget reflects an increase of approximately 80 percent over the 2009-10 capital main estimates. In pursuit of the department's vision, we are committed to ensuring the educational facilities meet the needs of Yukoners, and that commitment is very much reflected in this budget.

This is an issue that we've heard little about in the debate so far this session, but the single largest component of this budget is \$2.7 million for the design of the new F.H. Collins Secondary School. I am quite certain that members opposite would not characterize this as "irresponsible", "reckless", or "going for broke." This expenditure certainly recognizes the facility that we currently have, recognizes the need to put in appropriate programming, recognizes the need to look at secondary school programming and infrastructure needs and certainly recognizes the important value that we put on working with our partners in Education and working with the building advisory committee.

To ensure that the school best meets the needs of our students, a building advisory committee, or BAC, consisting of representatives from all the school stakeholder groups and partners was established in 2009 to guide the planning and design process for the new school. The building advisory committee has had a number of meetings over the past several months to discuss the specific needs of our new school. The process has culminated in the production of a requirements specification document, which describes the building advisory committee's expectations to the design architect. This document will translate these requirements into a functional and visually pleasing school design.

The second largest component included in this year's budget is for the improvement of both the Dawson City and Pelly Crossing Yukon College campuses. This reflects our work to ensure Yukon College has adequate facilities in the communities. Both Dawson City and Pelly Crossing campuses will be seeing major improvements to their facilities this year. These campuses were approved under the knowledge infrastructure program and are cost-shared with Canada.

Mr. Chair, \$2.285 million has been budgeted to build the Dawson City campus. This campus will be approximately 568 square metres and will be constructed as an addition to the facility that houses the School of Visual Arts.

Mr. Chair, over \$1,200,000 has been budgeted to build the Pelly Crossing campus. This campus will be approximately 250 square metres and will be constructed as an addition to the existing school. The construction of both of these campuses must be completed by March 31, 2011. In my recent discussions with the chair and president of Yukon College, I understand that they are very confident that this will be met on time and on budget.

Mr. Chair, the Department of Education is also seeking funding for other capital projects to help maintain other public school facilities — \$277,000 is being requested to repair the roof at St. Elias Community School in Haines Junction. The roof replacement over the large gym is the last of several phases to replace the older roof system. For general site improvement, recreational development and soccer field repairs throughout Yukon schools, the department is requesting \$335,000. For ongoing routine projects such as school-initiated renovations, various school facility renovations, indoor air quality improvements, energy management projects, capital maintenance repairs and painting of the schools, the Department is requesting \$1,424,000.

Also, under our capital budget, the Department of Education is requesting funds to support our instructional programs. There is \$1,349,000 requested to support the school-based information technology program. Included in this figure is \$377,000 to complete the implementation of the Yukon student information system, or YSIS. This new information system will assist the department in supporting and tracking student achievement and attendance. Implementation of this new system confirms the Department of Education's commitment to implement recommendations from the report of the Auditor General of Canada that was released at the end of January 2009.

I should note at this time that earlier today the update on where the Department of Education is in responding to the Auditor General comments was tabled in this Assembly. That was in response to a request from the Public Accounts Committee. I should add that future annual reports from the Department of Education have already been fleshed out, are providing much more information than they used to and will also contain updates in this area.

Mr. Chair, \$120,000 is also being requested to replace the school library management system. The remainder of the funding will be used to purchase computer hardware, software, network infrastructure upgrades and associated curriculum software upgrades for various schools; \$315,000 is requested for the final years of a replacement of our school vans; \$435,000 is requested to purchase school-based equipment; and \$20,000 is requested to continue support for distance education.

Where our school populations are small, distance education and technology-assisted learning can help to ensure that students are able to enroll in the courses they need to make their desired transition to post-secondary education. Video conferencing access is now available in schools in all communities. The importance of information in communication technologies in education is increasing and this project ensures equality of access for all of our communities.

It is interesting to note that there are students in many rural communities who are taking courses, such as drafting or law or some science courses, and doing those by distance education. We are working to ensure that the opportunities are engaging and to provide students with the opportunity for success.

This government is also committed to continuing its support for labour market development in the territory and that support is expressed in capital expenditures for an information

system required to administer the Canada-Yukon labour market agreement, or LMA.

Under the Canada-Yukon labour market development agreement, which is referred to as the LMDA, the Government of Yukon is now overseeing assistance programs that help prepare employment insurance clients for new jobs. By assuming responsibility for these programs, Government of Yukon is now better positioned to work with our stakeholders and match our skills development programs with our economic agenda and prepare Yukoners for Yukon opportunities. As part of that agreement, Canada has agreed to fund the development and implementation of information systems required for the delivery of its benefits and measures. The department is requesting \$400,000 for the Advanced Education branch to continue the development of this information system.

Mr. Chair, the most significant benefit of the information system is that it will allow Yukon to comply with the information exchange as outlined in the agreement. It will also allow Yukon to analyze the effectiveness of the employment benefits and support measures being implemented under this agreement. I am sure, Mr. Speaker, that the members opposite will recognize the benefit of putting in place tools to measure and monitor the efficiency, effectiveness and efficaciousness of our program delivery.

At this point, I would like to touch on a couple of issues regarding Yukon College. In the territory, Yukon College is a leader in trades education and it offers a full complement of academic courses as well as certificate and diploma programs. It also delivers degree programs through matriculation agreements with other post-secondary institutions in Canada and Alaska.

Of course, you will recall that last spring the Government of Yukon amended the *Yukon College Act* as a key step toward empowering the college to grant degrees. \$750,000 is requested to support Yukon College capital expenditures. That sum represents our annual base capital support for Yukon College.

I have just had an opportunity to go over some of the objectives of the Department of Education, its vision and its goals and to provide a bit of background on some of our capital issues. Before I continue on with O&M, I'd just like to give the member opposite an opportunity to respond if there's any issues that he'd like me to clear up regarding some of the positions I've already put forward.

Mr. Fairclough: I do have some questions for the minister. He has laid out some of the capital plans for the Department of Education and the one that I've brought up to the member quite often is the Carmacks school. I was there with the minister, ribbon cutting, and students are in the new school. There are a number of issues that the community has with this school. One of them is that there are no dressing rooms off the gym — there are just the bathrooms. I was quite amazed that this would even take place, especially in a smaller community. One of the biggest issues right now that they have with it — and I keep asking the minister when this is going to take place, and he says: in the budget, in the budget; next year, next year — is about the completion of the school grounds.

There is still rebar sticking out of the ground; it's still muddy and it still hasn't been fixed up to the standards it should be. I'm wondering where in the capital budget this is laid out and when it will finally be finished.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I am pleased to rise to provide some specific responses to the Member for Mayo-Tatchun about the school that's in his constituency. He will remember that in last year's budget there were funds identified for playground structures and this type of work. The Department of Education is working very closely with Property Management, which is housed in Highways and Public Works. It's this area that will be undertaking much of the work. It will be funded, as the member is aware, through the Department of Education. He recognizes the allocation of resources re provided in a previous budget. We're working very closely with Property Management, which will be putting the finishing touches on the site survey work. I expect that Property Management may be able to provide additional information to the member opposite about the process as it continues. The Department of Education recognizes this important issue, has identified resources for it in a previous budgeting process, and we expect to complete the work in the near future.

Mr. Fairclough: Can the minister tell us what the work entails? What is being done on these grounds — what exactly?

The member named a few things last year, but obviously the minister responsible is not answering the question, so I am asking this of the Minister of Education.

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Mr. Chair, the work will include some of the landscaping issues and cleaning up some of the field areas. I anticipate that it will involve the seeding of lawns and the installation of playgrounds. We discussed last time in the last budget that there would be age-appropriate play structures put in place — so a variety of different structures — some for the little kids, some for the big kids and that type of thing. I don't have the specifics or any of the catalogues or that type of very specific information for the member opposite. I would have to go through the previous year's budget to once again identify the amount that was previously identified for this work. As I said, we're working very closely with Property Management to complete the work in an expeditious manner.

Mr. Fairclough: The minister said there is a very close working relationship with Property Management. I was hoping that perhaps Property Management would have shared this information with the Minister of Education, as it is related to the Tantalus School in Carmacks. Then, I would like to know why there is a delay in finishing off this project? It was identified last year. Why is there a delay?

Hon. Mr. Rouble: I appreciate that the member has some concerns about the issues in his riding. I wasn't quite expecting this to be the first question in today's debate. I thought we'd start off with some of the broader issues in education, or some of the educational priorities across the territory.

There is certainly a strong working relationship between Property Management and the Department of Education. Members will remember that it was a little over a year ago when there was a transfer of responsibility for many of the building

maintenance types of functions, or building operations functions, to PMD from the Department of Education. Our officials work on a daily basis, and I can assure the member opposite that there is a strong working relationship between the minister responsible for Highways and Public Works and me. I am quite certain that he is prepared to provide additional information about what Highways and Public Works and Property Management will be doing in the very near future to address the situation.

We will continue to work very closely, though, with the teachers in the area to put on some great events. I know last year I had the opportunity to attend the Ridge Run and it was great to see the community out there, organizing that annual function and making use of all the fields and terrain at their disposal.

The amount that was previously identified for playground equipment was \$150,000, and this is for the playground equipment and the grounds cleanup. I trust that answers the member opposite's question.

Mr. Fairclough: Well, Mr. Chair, it doesn't. I am hoping that this good working relationship between the Department of Education, Property Management and the minister present here today will improve — or that we can get answers to questions in regard to capital projects that should have been done already. I never got the answer to why there is a delay in this project. I take the minister's word. I am hoping that the question could be directed to the minister responsible for Property Management.

In the meantime, maybe we can take a day here to think about this question and ask another one that perhaps is more in the Minister of Education's realm.

In talking with the community members in Carmacks, the Carmacks Tantalus School has a name on the front of it, on the highway side, which is not a very big name at all. Many have asked, "Why doesn't our school have a big name — Tantalus School — on the school itself?" The question came up and well, why doesn't the school have a big name sign on the school — a plaque? Then the question was: does it have to be "Tantalus School"?

I bring this up because community members have said perhaps we could look at another name for the school or rename the school. Quite often communities name significant buildings after prominent community members or history. Now the Tantalus Butte is something significant in the community and has always been recognized as a landmark for First Nation people travelling up and down the Yukon River. Yes, they've gone through this competition in the past and perhaps would like to see this open up again for a discussion with community people.

I'm hoping that perhaps the minister would have answers for us today here and be open-minded about asking the community whether or not they would like to rename the school — even thinking about this and talking with the principal and school council about this, even before we all go down for the graduation that will take place very soon.

I'm hoping the minister does think about that before we head down to the community — also for him to work closely

with Property Management and perhaps bring forward some answers when he comes down to the community of Carmacks about the property, the school grounds. I know the minister has said in the past what the dollars in last year's budget were going toward — perhaps even talking with the community to see what could be developed on the school grounds, because it's a lot bigger than what it was before removing the old Tantalus School.

Now we've opened up this yard, and if anybody drives by there, they'll see that this is a gravel pile and it's dirty around there. From what I understand, sometimes it could be unsafe, having things like rebar sticking out of the ground and so on. I think those safety issues should have been addressed. It was brought to my attention a very short while ago, only a few days ago. I didn't realize this was taking place; otherwise, I would have brought it to the minister's attention too. I want to see this school completed. For the term that the Yukon Party has been in — for the two mandates — we have been questioning government on the Tantalus School, its building of the Tantalus School, the design and so on. I would like to have this completed and I would like to have the minister's attention to this, to ensure it gets done and for the Minister of Education to maybe get on the minister responsible for this project and get it done. We've talked about this last year and the work is still not done.

This question is on people's minds. Why isn't the community getting the attention that it should be getting in regard to finishing up this project? The minister said that there was a delay and the minister responsible for Property Management is on this case and he has close working relations with them. I just want to leave that with the minister.

Mr. Chair, seeing the time being so close to 5:30, I move that you report progress.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Fairclough that Committee of the Whole report progress.

Motion agreed to

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Mr. Chair, I move that Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Chair: It has been moved by Ms. Taylor that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I'll now call the House to order. May the House have a report from the Chair of Committee of the Whole?

Chair's report

Mr. Nordick: Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 20, *First Appropriation Act, 2010-11*, and directed me to report progress.

Speaker: You've heard the report from the Chair of Committee of the Whole. Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

The time being 5:30 p.m., this House now stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

The following Sessional Paper was tabled May 5, 2010:

10-1-161

Education Status Report (May 5, 2010), Department of: Response to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts Report by the Auditor General of Canada (Rouble)