

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Ontario's Advocate for Children and Youth launches first public inquest database  
*Access to inquest information will encourage greater public scrutiny and improve accountability***

**TORONTO, ON (Thursday, January 10, 2013)** – Recommendations and commitments from more than 26 inquests in the last fifteen years into the deaths of children and youth connected to the children's services system including, child welfare, youth justice and children's mental health, are now publicly available on the first provincial inquest database in Canada. Created and maintained by the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, the database enables the Advocate's office and the public to access and track the recommendations and commitments of the recipients and identify trends and issues across inquests.

"We are at every inquest involving the death of a youth or child connected to our mandate. These were children and youth to whom the state had already expressed a public obligation to intervene in their lives," said Irwin Elman, Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth. "We are determined to do what we can to elevate the voice of these children. Our hope is that increased emphasis on inquest recommendations will raise awareness of the issues facing children and young people and ensure these children are not forgotten."

The database includes all recommendations made at each inquest which can then be categorized by the user in a variety of ways.

"With this data base we hope to provide Ontario with a useful tool that will increase transparency and provide a resource for those seeking improvement to the way in which we serve children and their families," said Elman. "We also hope that the database will further honour those children who have lost their lives."

The provincial inquest database can be accessed at: <http://provincialadvocate.on.ca/inquest/en/home/>

**About the Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth**

The Office of the Provincial Advocate reports directly to the Legislature and provides an independent voice for children and youth, including children with special needs and First Nations children. The Provincial Advocate receives and responds to concerns from children, youth and families who are seeking or receiving services under the Child and Family Services Act and the Education Act (Provincial and Demonstration Schools). The Provincial Advocate identifies systemic problems involving children, conducts reviews and provides education and advice on the issue of advocacy and the rights of children. The Office is guided by the principles of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and has a strong commitment to youth involvement.

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