



HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY  
Newfoundland and Labrador

**Sheilagh O'Leary, M.H.A.**  
**District of St. John's East-Quidi Vidi**

**Hon. Tony Wakeham, Premier**

June 26, 2026

[Premier@gov.nl.ca](mailto:Premier@gov.nl.ca)

Government of Newfoundland and Labrador

P.O. Box 8700

Confederation Building

St. John's, NL

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Dear Premier,

**Re: Funding for Relationships First Restorative Justice in NL**

I am writing to you today to express my serious concern regarding the cancellation of funding for **Relationships First NL (RFNL)**. RFNL is an organization that your Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has worked with to coordinate relational and restorative justice work, to provide sustained professional learning and mentoring, develop resources, support research, and bring people and organizations together over the past number of years.

RFNL has built relationships and supported learning across organizations - early learning, education, justice, community services, Indigenous communities, arts and culture - to build relationships, respond to harm and create more just and caring communities.

Integration of the principles of restorative justice through the Safe Schools initiative has been instrumental in developing and sustaining restorative justice initiatives and these actions make our schools and communities safer. However, the work is not complete.

Participants call RFNL's work transformational. I have been contacted by a number of organizations and constituents who have experienced the who work at, volunteer with, and rely on the programs offered or aided by them.

I am particularly concerned that without timely intervention RFNL will be forced to close at the end of this month and will have to stop supporting programs entirely. The end of this restorative justice-based program will have a direct and lasting impact on communities and will place additional pressure on already over-extended social systems.

RFNL is foundational to help build strong and healthy communities. They are building capacity and bridges with our Indigenous communities.

I strongly urge you to restore funding to RFNL to ensure they have the stability needed to do this vital work across the province. Restorative justice learning is imperative at early school level for children to understand conflict resolution and to set the stage for the rest of their lives.

I look forward to your response and to hearing how your government intends to support RFNL in a meaningful and long-term way. I am available at your convenience for a meeting or a phone call about this situation.

Sincerely,



Sheilagh O'Leary, M.H.A.  
St. John's East-Quidi Vidi

cc.

Paul Dinn, Minister, Education and Early Childhood Development

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