



Kids These Days: Well done, graduates.

By Dr. David Rideout

Over 27 years as an educator, I have had the privilege of watching thousands of students walk across the stage to receive their high school diploma. I have also breathed a bit of a sigh of relief when my own two sons successfully reached this important milestone in their lives. No matter how well I have known the graduates, each occasion has always been cause for celebration and admiration – for them and the dedicated teachers who have worked with them.

We should all be proud of the graduating youth in our communities, as it is a major accomplishment for them. Within our world of Child and Family Services, we are especially proud of the youth we serve who walk across that stage. Many of them have faced more challenges than some people experience in a lifetime, but they have still become successful. So it is with great delight that I want to congratulate them on their journey to graduation and let them know we're very proud of them.

Children who come under the care of Child and Family Services are often in a very vulnerable position. Life circumstances, whatever those may be, have put them in a situation where they are unable to live with parents. Their needs can be high. They may struggle in a classroom or with their peers. Statistically, fewer children and youth in care complete high school.

When those youth celebrate at the end of this school year, they will be joined by important people in their lives - including extended family, caregivers and caseworkers who will be celebrating too. Everyone will be proud of their hard work and expressing best wishes for their continued success in the future.

High school graduation remains one of the biggest factors contributing to lifelong success. The diploma our youth receive will open many doors of opportunity by providing them with the knowledge and skills for the future.

On behalf of everyone delighted with the celebrations, we say "Well done, Graduates!"

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Feedback or comments are welcome and can be sent via email to david.rideout@gov.ab.ca