

## First Nations Child & Family Services (FNCFS) Program

General Information	
Lead Department	Indian & Northern Affairs Canada (INAC)
Partners	INAC, First Nations governments & agencies, provincial governments. INAC's policies are currently being joint reviewed by INAC, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and First Nation Child and Family Services agencies.
Effective Date	As per INAC Policy Directive 20 -1 (1989, amended 1995), FNCFS agencies are mandated by the province in accordance with provincial / territorial legislation to provide prevention, protection and adoption services to First Nation children and families on-reserve.
Expiry Date	Ongoing
Web Site(s)	<a href="http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ps/fnc_e.html">http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ps/fnc_e.html</a>
Purpose	<p>To enable First Nations children and families living on-reserve to have access to culturally sensitive child welfare services in their communities and to ensure that these services are comparable to those available to other provincial residents in similar circumstances.</p> <p>FNCFS agencies are mandated by the province in accordance with provincial legislation, to deliver: (1) prevention services to families, in order to keep children in the home ; (2) protection services to children at risk; (3) adoption services where required by provincial legislation.</p>
Roles and Contributions	<p>Provinces provide the legislative framework for the FNCFS and mandate individual agencies operate within provincial legislation and guidelines.</p> <p>First Nations either directly operate provincially-mandated agencies or appoint a Board of Directors to operate the agencies.</p> <p>Provinces are responsible for providing services in areas where FNCFS agencies do not exist.</p> <p>INAC provides the policy framework for the operation of the Federal/First Nation/Provincial partnership.</p> <p>INAC provides the funding for services provided by First Nation agencies and the provinces.</p> <p>INAC website and publications include information on the roles and responsibilities of the department.</p> <p>FNCFS agencies, through their Boards of Directors, report back to First Nation communities on the interrelationship of governments.</p> <p>Provincial governments report on FNCFS agencies through their normal reporting mechanisms for the appropriate departments, according to their own procedures.</p>
Resources	

Funding	<p>\$309 million (01-02) Part III, Plans &amp; Priorities. FNCFS is included in Social Support Services.</p> <p>INAC provides funding to First Nation agencies for Operations, determined by an established formula, and for Maintenance (actual costs of children in care) based on the reimbursement of allowable actual expenses.</p> <p>INAC also reimburses provinces for the actual costs of providing Child &amp; Family Services to children and families on reserve.</p> <p>Some agencies are being funded through block funding pilot projects to determine if increased flexibility provided to agencies will have a positive effect on the welfare of First Nation children on-reserve and the longer-term costs of care.</p>
Tracking and Reporting	<p>INAC requires FNCFS agencies to report on the number of children in care, the levels of care required, and the costs of both children in care and operational expenditures. Information is gathered from monthly reports and invoices submitted by the FNCFS agencies.</p> <p>FNCFS agencies are required to provide an annual audit to INAC and the provinces.</p> <p>Funding agreements include requirements for program reporting as outlined in the "First Nation National Reporting Guide". This information is not publicly reported but is available on request to the First Nation council or the INAC Regional office.</p>
<b>Measurement and Reporting</b>	
Outcomes / Outputs	<p>Culturally sensitive child welfare services by First Nations children and their families.</p> <p>Provision of prevention services for First Nations families on-reserve, in order to reduce the need for removal of children.</p> <p>Protection of on-reserve First Nation children from neglect and abuse, in accordance with provincially-approved standards.</p> <p>Placement and adoption of eligible on-reserve First Nation children in accordance with legislation and standards.</p>
Indicators	<p>Provincial authorities are responsible for ensuring that standards and terms of legislation are met for both direct care and for care through mandated agencies. The reporting models differ from province to province.</p> <p>INAC monitors the number of children in care and levels of care as identified by FNCFS agencies. Levels of funding by agency, by region, and in total are also monitored.</p> <p>First Nations have noted the need to develop social indicators that are significant and appropriate to their communities and also provide an overall context interpret the performance of their governments. To facilitate this exploration, INAC is supporting the Governance Statistical Initiative to identify the statistical requirements of First Nation governments and to consider</p>

	sustainable means of developing this data.
Comparable Indicators	Periodic studies are undertaken to compare the volume of service on- and off-reserve, in order to determine whether trends are altering. Trends are tracked through INAC records and agency reports.
Evaluation/Third Party Assessments	The FNCFS National Policy Review (INAC, AFN and FNCFS agencies) is currently reviewing policies and funding arrangements. Operations are reviewed through periodic third party evaluations of agencies, and reports from regional contact persons.
Shared Information and Best Practices	The FNCFS National Policy Review is expected to make recommendations on sharing information and best practices.
Public Reporting	FNCFS annual meetings report to First Nation communities and leadership. In accordance with funding agreements, First Nation financial and activity reports, program evaluations, management assessments, and other standards, policies and procedures are to be made available to community members. Publication of annual reports by FNCFS agencies in accordance with provincial government guidelines. FNCFS agencies report to provincial governments on the quantity and quality of service being provided. Data provided by FNCFS agencies is contained in the annual reports of the relevant provincial departments which are availability to the public. Basic Departmental Data reports, available on the departmental website provides summary information on the number of children in care, related costs and total funding provided. Estimates, Part III : Plans & Priorities. Departmental Performance Report (FNCFS is included with Adult Care, Family Violence and Day Care, and reported as such under Social Support Services). FNCFS National Policy Review Report to be presented to Minister of INAC, National Chief of the AFN, appropriate ministers in provinces and territories, other interested federal departments (such as Health Canada), and FNCFS agencies.
<b>Involving Canadians</b>	
Provisions for Citizens to Participate in Developing Social Priorities and Reviewing Outcomes	Residents of First Nations communities participate in community-based processes to identify priorities and review outcomes. The FNCFS National Policy Review has involved the participation of the FNCFS agencies and will be reviewed by the AFN and First Nation representatives. INAC works in partnership with provinces, First Nation governments and FNCFS agencies to deliver First Nations child and family services. All partners review and report on outcomes to their own constituents.

Feedback Mechanisms to the Public	<p>FNCFS annual meetings report to First Nation communities and leadership.</p> <p>Publication of annual reports by FNCFS agencies.</p> <p>Estimates, Part III: Plans &amp; Priorities and Departmental Performance Reports.</p> <p>Departmental website.</p>
<b>Service Commitments</b>	
Public Availability of Eligibility Criteria	<p>FNCFS agencies are responsible or ensuring public knowledge of their services within the communities they serve.</p> <p>Provincial agencies are responsible for ensuring public knowledge of their services to communities they serve.</p> <p>Elegibility criteria for the programs are also found in INAC's website <a href="http://www.inac.gc.ca">http://www.inac.gc.ca</a>.</p>
Existence and Availability of Service Commitments	<p>Provincial authorities are responsible for ensuring that standards and service commitments are established for both direct care and for care through mandated agencies. In most cases, eligibility criteria are agreed upon by the three partners.</p> <p>Provincial agencies are responsible for ensuring public knowledge of their service commitments to communities they serve. Protocols dealing with child sexual abuse are well advertised by provinces, as are mechanisms for reporting neglect and physical abuse of children.</p> <p>FNCFS agencies are responsible or ensuring public knowledge of their service commitments within the communities they serve.</p>
Measurement and Public Reporting	<p>Most FNCFS agencies release annual reports which provide relevant data, point out achievements of the past year, and set out goals and objectives for the coming year.</p> <p>FNCFS agency annual reports are available to their Boards of Directors, the communities which they serve, and to Canada and the provinces / territories.</p> <p>FNCFS agencies provide annual audits to their communities, to the province / territory, and to Canada, <a href="http://www.inac.gc.ca">http://www.inac.gc.ca</a>.</p>
<b>Appeals and Complaints</b>	
Existence, Availability and Communication of Mechanisms	<p>Appeals and complaints are most appropriately received by the provincial / territorial governments, which are obliged to follow-up and seek resolution. In the case of child sexual abuse, formal protocols exist in every province requiring the reporting of such incidents.</p> <p>Complaints and appeals may also be received by First Nation governments, INAC, Members of Parliament, Senators, and other federal departments. These complaints must then be forwarded to the appropriate provincial government.</p>
Tracking and Public Reporting	<p>Provincial standards and legislation are clear on the role of the provinces in dealing with complaints related to child and family services. In the case of</p>

	<p>child sexual abuse, the roles of the agencies and all public officials are clear and required by law.</p> <p>First Nation governments establish their own procedures for tracking of appeals and complaints, which are handled internally.</p> <p>There is limited feedback to the public on these matters as they tend to be highly confidential in nature.</p>
<b>Mobility</b>	
Existence of Measures	<p>This is a targeted program through which INAC provides funds to First Nation organizations to deliver culturally sensitive child welfare services in their communities comparable to those available to other P/Ts in similar circumstances. INAC provides the funding to First Nation agencies which receive their mandate and authorities from provincial/territorial governments. Where FNCFS agencies do not exist, services are provided by P/T agencies at INAC cost.</p> <p>There are no residency-based barriers in this program.</p> <p>Protocols between P/T and First Nations are required to ensure service to non-Status individuals or families on reserve. Protocols are in place between most First Nations and P/T authorities.</p> <p>Continuing measures include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Monitoring of the program implementation through the regular review of funding agreements and program reporting requirements.</li> <li>2. Over the next two years, facilitate the development of protocols where required for existing agencies and also ensure that protocols are instituted as new agencies are developed. It is not anticipated that such protocols will be either burdensome or complex to implement.</li> </ol> <p>A review of the national policy on FNCFS was completed on June 30,2000. A series of 17 recommendations were made which address such issues as the need for more flexibility and more focus on prevention services. An implementation process is set to begin in 2001.</p>