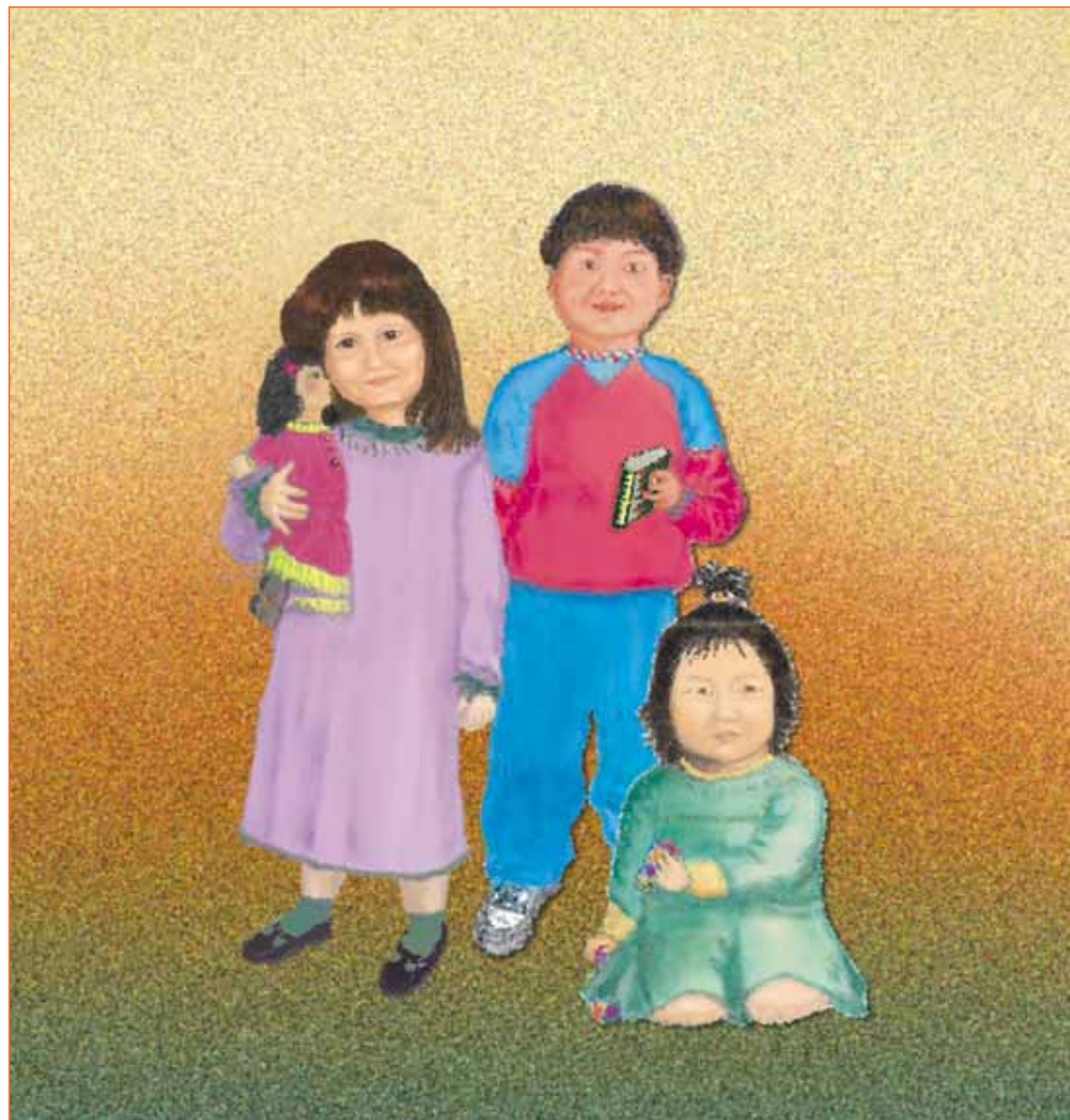


First Nations National Child Benefit

Progress Report 2000



Indian and Northern
Affairs Canada

Affaires indiennes
et du Nord Canada

Canada 



Published under the authority of the
Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development
Ottawa, 2001
www.inac.gc.ca

QS-7021-000-EE-A1
Catalogue No. R2-111/2000E
ISBN 0-662-29314-2

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Cette publication peut aussi être obtenue en français sous le titre :
La Prestation nationale pour enfants chez les Premières nations - Rapport d'étape 2000

INTRODUCTION

It is our pleasure, on behalf of the Social Policy and Programs Branch, to have collaborated with First Nations across the country to publish this 1st Annual Progress Report on the National Child Benefit for First Nations and to re-affirm the federal government's commitment to support First Nations' continued involvement in the National Child Benefit (NCB) initiative.

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he National Child Benefit initiative was implemented in July 1998 after First Ministers of Social Services agreed that the federal, provincial and territorial governments, and First Nations that deliver social assistance should work together to address the issue of child poverty in Canada. This joint initiative provides families with the supports and services, outside of social assistance, they need to provide a better life for themselves and their children.

To make it easier for families to break the cycle of poverty, the National Child Benefit aims to ensure that no family has to choose between a job and benefits for their children. The National Child Benefit initiative helps prevent and reduce the depth of child poverty, reinforcing that families will always be better off as a result of parents working, and reduces program overlap and duplication of programs and services.

First Nations play an important role in the design and delivery of the programs and services funded under the National Child Benefit. Similar to most provinces and territories, First Nations that deliver social assistance have the flexibility to reinvest savings in programs and services that fit the needs and priorities of their individual communities.

First Nations determine their own reinvestment initiatives in ways that meet local needs and priorities whether it is introducing new programs and services for families with children, or enhancing the current range of community-based employment support programs.

As we head into the third year of the National Child Benefit, it is important to reflect on how the National Child Benefit makes a difference in the lives and communities of First Nations. This is the goal of the Progress Report, written specifically with First Nations in mind and to highlight the impact the National Child Benefit has had and continues to have in First Nations communities.

The Children's Program Directorate



SEEING THE POSSIBILITIES, MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Thank you to all those who participated and assisted in the National Child Benefit self- evaluation process of 1999-2000.

- The Children's Programs Directorate,
Social Policy and Programs, Indian and
Northern Affairs Canada.

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The National Child Benefit (NCB)

- The National Child Benefit is a joint federal/provincial/territorial initiative that supports children and families¹.
- The three objectives of the National Child Benefit are to help prevent and reduce the depth of child poverty, to promote an attachment to the workforce, and to reduce program overlap and duplication.
- The National Child Benefit initiative consists of a series of programs and services across Canada designed to improve benefits and services for low-income families with children and represents a significant investment in Canada's children.

National Child Benefit Reinvestment Guidelines

- National Child Benefit reinvestments are an opportunity for First Nations to develop innovative programs that meet the objectives of the National Child Benefit and the unique circumstances of First Nations communities.
- In 1998-1999, First Nations had approximately \$30.8 million available for reinvestment in National Child Benefit programs. This amount increased by approximately \$20 million in 1999-2000, for a total of \$48.76 million.
- The types of programs and services for parents and their children fall into five broad areas: child/day care, child nutrition, early child development, employment and training opportunities, and other, e.g., cultural and traditional teachings, recreation, youth development.

Monitoring Progress

- Ongoing monitoring and periodic evaluation by federal/provincial/territorial governments and First Nations of the National Child Benefit and its impact on child poverty levels is essential to ensure the goals of the program are being met.
- An evaluation of the National Child Benefit and its effectiveness on First Nations and First Nations communities will consider the impact the broad range of reinvestment programs are having on these communities.
- First Nations participation in the evaluation process includes a working relationship with the Assembly of First Nations, First Nations members participating on the First Nations National Child Benefit Evaluation Working Group, feedback from First Nations communities to produce the short- and medium-term program outcomes, First Nations self-evaluations of the reinvestment projects, and First Nations interviews and dialogue circles to feed into the interim and final evaluations.

1 The Government of Quebec, although agreeing with the basic principles of the National Child Benefit which aims to increase the resources available for poor children and promote employment retention and the return to work, has not taken part in its development because it wishes to assume control of income support for the children of Quebec. Consequently, any reference to joint federal/provincial/territorial positions in this report does not include Quebec. The family policy implemented by Quebec is consistent with the National Child Benefit.