



Events/Conferences/
Workshops/
Symposiums

FNCFCFS membership information

If you would like to join the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society as a Member under one of the following categories:

Individual Membership (\$75)

Student Membership with ID (\$5)

Small FNCFS Agency Membership:
1 - 50 employees (\$350)

Large FNCFS Agency Membership:
50+ employees (\$600)

Small Associate Membership:
Organizations with 1 - 50 employees (\$350)

Large Associate Membership:
Organizations with 50+ employees (\$600)

Please contact us:

**FIRST NATIONS
CHILD & FAMILY
CARING SOCIETY
OF CANADA**
1001 - 75 Albert Street,
Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5E7
ph. 613.230.5885
fax. 613.230.3080
email. info@fncfcs.com

www.fncfcs.com

Good news in the Federal Budget For First Nations Children and Families

There was good news in latest federal budget for First Nations children, young people and families who are receiving services from First Nations Child and Family Services. In it's Budget 2005 document, the federal government acknowledges the importance of providing First Nations child and family service agencies with the type of support parents and children need to prevent, and respond to, child maltreatment by allocating an additional 25 million dollars per year for five years to address immediate cost pressures. The budget acknowledges this initial investment is only the first step in what needs to be a comprehensive strategy to better support First Nations children and families.

Exciting changes such as the announcement of this new funding do not happen unless many people are working for it. So please join us in expressing our sincere appreciation to the First Nations, government and voluntary sector organizations and individuals who have actively worked toward making these additional resources available to First Nations children and families.

To find out more about the federal government's 2005 budget, please visit <http://www.fin.gc.ca/budtoce/2005/budliste.htm>

FNCFCFS kudos

The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada acknowledges the important contributions of Janet Mirwaldt, Children's Advocate in Manitoba and Deborah Parker-Loewen, Saskatchewan Children's Advocate. Janet and Deborah have both strongly advocated for the rights of Aboriginal children both in their respective provinces and nationally. Their active belief in working respectfully with Aboriginal communities to provide them with the supports necessary to implement community based responses to child maltreatment has been much appreciated. In completing their respective terms of Child Advocates, both women leave behind a substantial legacy.

Reconciliation: Looking Back; Reaching Forward Indigenous Peoples and Child Welfare Conference

FNCFCFS is proud to join hands with the National Indian Child Welfare Association (NICWA), the Child Welfare League of America (CWLA), the Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare and the Child Welfare League of Canada to co-host this invitational leadership forum that is intended to promote a discussion that reconfigures child welfare philosophy, values and approaches to better support Indigenous children, families and communities.

We believe that developing culturally based services requires a culturally based value and belief foundation for child welfare itself. This event will bring together 200 Aboriginal and non Aboriginal leaders in child welfare who are committed to being an active part of an ongoing movement to re-conceptualize child welfare in favour of Indigenous children and families. The event will be highly interactive – engaging participants in honest conversations about what underpins child welfare practice currently, and how it can be changed moving forward. In order to ensure this event resulted in the type of comprehensive conversation needed to support a broader movement we have had to limit the numbers of participants. We do however, want to stress that this gathering is beginning step, and not the end, of a larger process and thus we are currently developing means of supporting the meaningful engagement of communities at a local, provincial and national level.

The event will be held in Niagara Falls in October of 2005 and FNCFCFS will be working with our partners to develop a report that will be available in the spring of 2006.





FIRST NATIONS CHILD & FAMILY CARING SOCIETY OF CANADA

Spring 2005

Welcome to Kathryn Minichiello

Kathryn has joined FNCFCFS for her Master of Social Work placement and will be working with us on a wide variety of projects until April of 2005. Thank you Kathryn for all your contributions thus far and good luck with your studies!

Our Website gets a New Look!

The FNCFCFS website receives about 40,000 hits per month from a wide variety of people from all over the world. Website visitors are able to use our databases, read the on line journal "The First Peoples Child and Family Review", and get up to date information on First Nations child and family services.

We are currently redesigning the look of our website so that it coordinates with the look of other FNCFCFS materials featuring the logo designed by Wade Baker and the graphic design of Michelle Nahanee.

We encourage you to check out the website's new look at www.fncfcs.com beginning March 2005. Not only will you get to see some of the great resources available for free on the website but you will also understand why we at FNCFCFS are so very honored that Wade and Michelle chose to share their great artistic gifts with FNCFCFS.

Joint National Policy Review on First Nations Child and Family Services (NPR) Funding Research Project

Building on the recommendations of the Joint National Policy Review of First Nations Child and Family Services (NPR), completed in June of 2000, FNCFCFS is proud to work with the National Policy Review Advisory Committee (NAC), and NPR funding design team to conduct the research needed

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Caring Across the Boundaries – First Nations Communities taking the Lead



Jacqueline Ramdatt, Kelowa Edel and Norma Commadore at the Sto:lo Nation session.

The Caring Across the Boundaries professional development program is intended to promote greater access to culturally based voluntary sector resources for First Nations children, young people and their families. The program accomplishes this by providing baseline information to Aboriginal child and family service providers, voluntary sector organizations, philanthropists, governments on how they can work respectfully together to support First Nations in providing quality of life as well as services to children, young people and families at risk.

After completing the curriculum writing last year, we are proud to announce that we have co-hosted four pilot sessions of Caring Across the Boundaries with the following First Nations/organizations:

- 1) Mi'kmaw family and children's services (Pictou Landing First Nation)
- 2) N8TV Youth (Vancouver, BC)
- 3) Kunuwanimano Child and Family Services (Timmins, Ontario)
- 4) Xyolhmeylh Child and Family Services (Sto: lo First Nation)

And have two more sessions planned for Akwesasne First Nation and Kahnawake First Nation in March of 2005. All six pilots of Caring Across the Boundaries have been made possible, free of charge to participants, by the generous support of the J.W.McConnell Family Foundation. These two day sessions have already resulted in very encouraging "first steps" by participants to establish relationships to benefit children such as: - continued on page 2

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FNCFCFS kudos

Caring Across the Boundaries – continued

1) A non profit in BC has engaged Aboriginal young people in discussions on how to make their services more accessible and relevant.

2) A First Nation Child and Family Service agency has established an inter-agency committee for children and families and invited all voluntary sector participants and philanthropic organizations at one session to join.

3) An Elders group and Seniors organization have made arrangements to meet.

4) A large national non profit organization has identified working with First Nations in a respectful manner as a key strategic objective and has begun taking steps to

operationalize this plan across Canada.

5) A First Nations family resource program has submitted a description of one of its programs for inclusion in a national non profit newsletter.

6) A First Nations women's group invited participants at one CAB session to join them in a cultural ceremony to help build understanding and relationships.

And what do participants say about the Caring Across the Boundaries Sessions themselves?

This is a wonderful opportunity to build bridges and, as the woman beside me said, "taking the other's hand."

It is in my dreams to see this happen in my (First Nations) community.

I loved this workshop for different reasons:

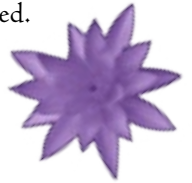
a) *It opened the lines of communication*

between the VS and FN community
b) *The presenters were very motivational and inspiring*
c) *resources shared like the funding proposals will help us work on our inter-agency work.*

The workshop provided me with information and gave me an opportunity to meet with other organizations and people from the First Nation.

Thank you- great workshop. Really good grounded energy. The colonization part especially necessary and very useful and powerful – it really brought the group to an important place to move from.

We are hoping to develop a train the trainers session soon so that this promising program can delivered by First Nations communities when it is needed.



Announcing the Official Launch of the Youth Caring Across the Boundaries Curriculum!

In addition to young people playing a key role in delivering the Caring Across the Boundaries sessions being delivered across Canada, Ginger Gosnell, Melanie Ferris and Maggie Kovach have just completed developing a Caring Across the Boundaries program designed to benefit Aboriginal young people. This two day module includes a 1/2 day primer for Aboriginal young people on the voluntary sector and a 1/2 primer for the voluntary sector on the lived experiences of Aboriginal young people. These primer sessions prepare both voluntary sector and Aboriginal young people to work together to explore the benefits of collaboration between the voluntary sector and Aboriginal young people during a day long networking session.

This curriculum was designed to be delivered by Aboriginal young people at a community level and thus we are hoping to develop a train the trainers module

for Aboriginal facilitators throughout Canada. Although we have yet to secure funding to develop and deliver the train the trainers program, we are moving forward with a focus group to identify the key components of an effective train the trainers program. Additionally we are proud to launch the Youth Caring Across the Boundaries program at the National Children's Alliance Annual Meeting in Kingston, Ontario on March 7 and 8, 2005.

Many thanks to Melanie, Ginger and Maggie for their outstanding work! Also please join us in acknowledging the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development for supporting the development of this important training program.





Joint National Policy Review on First Nations Child and Family Services (NPR) Funding Research Project - *continued*

to inform the following funding options for First Nations child and family services:

- 1) Integrating recommendations of the NPR into the current funding formula
- 2) Linking First Nations child and family service agency funding with provincial child welfare funding levels
- 3) A new First Nations based funding formula.

The interdisciplinary research team includes experts in economics, First Nations child and family services, sociology, substance misuse, community development, management, psychology and law. We are also using a variety of research methodologies but one of our main approaches is to conduct case studies of 12 First Nations child and family service agencies and the provinces. Selected First Nations child and family service agencies will also be contacted by experts in management information systems, jurisdictional disputes and child maltreatment prevention services in order to inform the funding formula research.

The research culminates in a final report to be delivered to the National Advisory Committee on May 31, 2005 and will lead to the development of a funding questionnaire for all First Nations child and family service agencies. Many thanks to the First Nations child and family service agencies and provincial governments who will, or have, participated in this important research project – and to our very gifted team of researchers.

Watch for updates on this project on our website and in future newsletters and visit the publications tab on our website www.fncfcs.com to download copies of the Communities in Crisis and Staying At Home research projects which were previously completed by FNCFCS to inform the implementation of the Joint National Policy Review.

www.fncfcs.com



FNCFCS celebrates the Aboriginal Foster Doll Awareness Project and welcomes Robert Jay Mathews!

The Federation of Aboriginal Foster Parents Association, the BC Youth In Care Network and the BC Foster Parents Association are collaborating on the Aboriginal Foster Doll Awareness Project. This innovative program matches foster dolls with honorary foster parents. The project is intended to raise public awareness of the diverse lived experiences of Aboriginal children and young people in care and the important role that foster parents play in supporting them and their families.

Cindy Blackstock, Executive Director of FNCFCS was honored to be entrusted with the care of Robert Jay Mathews, age 10, in February of 2005. Since his “placement” with Cindy, Robert has visited with Cowichan Tribes, the National Policy Review Funding Formula Design Team in Vancouver, the Canadian Coalition on the Rights of the Child, the management team of the ACCEL project and is now off to meet with the Child Welfare League of America and the National Indian Child Welfare Association.

The above picture features Robert enjoying breakfast with Janet Douglas and Cindy Blackstock during a meeting of researchers and First Nations child and family service representatives on the Canadian Incident Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect. To find out more about this important project and the work of the sponsoring organizations please visit http://www.fafp.ca/fosterdoll/fd_main.html.

