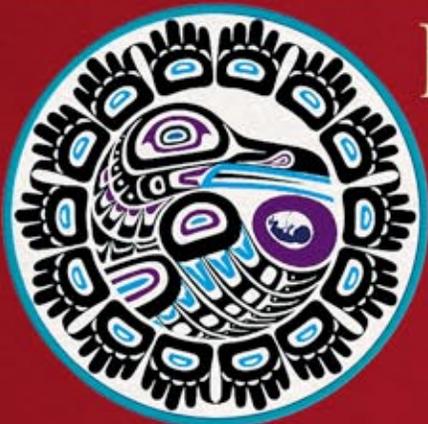


# FNCFCFS

## *Annual Report*

### **2006**



FIRST NATIONS  
CHILD & FAMILY  
CARING SOCIETY  
OF CANADA





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## Honouring

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The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada would like to express our sincere appreciation to all of those who supported our works to benefit Aboriginal children, young people and families this past year. Special thanks to the following organizations and individuals who made special contributions to our works this past year:



ACCEL Management Committee  
Assembly of First Nations  
Bruce McLaurin  
Canadian Child Care Federation  
Canadian Paediatric Society  
Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare  
Child Welfare League of America  
Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development  
Dr. Barbara Fallon  
Dr. Fred Wien  
Dr. Gerry Cradock  
Dr. John Loxley  
Dr. Nico Trocme  
First Nations and Inuit Health Branch  
First Nations Child and Family Service Agencies in Canada  
J. W. McConnell Family Foundation  
Kathryn Irvine  
Melanie Vincent  
Michelle Nahanee Design  
Natasha Scott  
National Children's Alliance  
National Indian Child Welfare Association  
Public Health Agency of Canada  
NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child  
Pauktuutit Inuit Women's Association  
Shelley Thomas Prokop  
Social Development Directorate  
Sub Group for Indigenous Children and Youth (NGO Group)  
The Many Hands One Dream coalition  
Wade Baker and Mary Tasi Baker

## FNCFCS Board of Directors and Staff

### **FNCFCS Board of Directors**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Affiliation</b>	<b>Board Position</b>
Joan Glode	Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services	President
Elsie Flette	Southern FN Authority, Manitoba	President
Bill Gillespie	Nog Da Win Da Min Family and Community Services	Treasurer
Nancy Sandy	First Nations Directors Forum	Board Member
Carolyn Peacock	Yellowhead Tribal Services	Alberta Contact Person
Raymond Shingoose	Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services	Board Member
Linda Deer	Kahnawake Shakotii'a'takehnhas Community Services	Board Member
Robin De Conte	Kitigan Zibi CFS	Board Member
Harry Sock	Big Cove Child and Family Services	Board Member
Kenn Richard	Native Child and Family Services	Board Member
Deborah Parker- Loewen		Board Member

### **FNCFCS Staff**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Office Location</b>
Cindy Blackstock	Executive Director	Ottawa
Marlyn Bennett	Director of Research	Winnipeg
April Whitehead	Office Manager	Ottawa
Jacqueline Ramdatt	Policy Analyst	Ottawa
Jordan Alderman	CAB Coordinator	Ottawa
Rachel Levasseur	Summer Student	Ottawa

## Executive Summary

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A great strength of Aboriginal cultures is the value for interdependence and a positioning of communal rights as being critical to ensuring the rights and wellbeing of children and youth. This year, the FNCFCS has embedded in these values by working with First Nations child and family service agencies and contributing to the development and implementation of national and international policies and networks to support Aboriginal child welfare in Canada. Our activities range from working with communities to celebrate their best practices in child welfare, promoting indigenous knowledge through our on line journal *The First Peoples Child and Family Review* and perhaps most ambitiously engaging in two processes which are intended to redefine child welfare, child health in ways that better support Aboriginal children: Reconciliation in Child Welfare: Touchstones of Hope for Indigenous Children, Youth and Families ([www.reconciliationmovement.org](http://www.reconciliationmovement.org)) and Many Hands One Dream ([www.manyhandsonedream.ca](http://www.manyhandsonedream.ca))

FNCFCS is interested in change because far too many Aboriginal children are unnecessarily placed in the child welfare system. We want to support Aboriginal communities in caring safely for many more of their children at home by advocating for equitable funding in child welfare, expanding access to voluntary sector services and developing progressive policy solutions such as Jordan's Principle ([www.fncaringsociety.com](http://www.fncaringsociety.com)). FNCFCS has also had the honour to share our ideas with over 8000 people representing diverse perspectives and disciplines this past year alone at over 50 community, regional, national and international events. We have also presented at the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights as well as the Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights and the House of Commons Committee on Aboriginal Affairs. We believe strongly that communities have the best solutions to caring safely for children and thus the best role for our organization is to work to make available the resources and knowledge needed by communities to move forward with their plans.

FNCFCS also engages in activities meant to promote the wellbeing of all children and youth in Canada such as our active role in supporting the development of the Beyond the Rhetoric: Ethical Guidelines for Respectful Youth Engagement guidelines which are intended to help national organizations form mutually respectful and meaningful relationships with young people to promote the mission of the organizations and the overall wellbeing of Canadian society.

Taken together our efforts to renovate the child welfare and aboriginal child health systems whilst working to ensure that Aboriginal communities have the resources necessary to implement their own best solutions for child safety provides a holistic and, we believe, sustainable way to increase the number of Aboriginal children who can grow up safely in their homes and communities.

All of this success was fuelled by the active involvement of Aboriginal child and family service agencies, FNCFCS members, our partner organizations and the many individuals who gave so generously of their skills, knowledge to help realize this past years accomplishments and we are very much looking forward to working with all of you in the year ahead to support Aboriginal communities in making the best difference for their children.

## **Organizational History**

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The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada grew out of a grass roots movement to create a national organization to share knowledge and to stimulate action in Aboriginal child welfare at a national level. FNCFCS fundamentally believes that communities are their own best experts and as a national organization our best service lies in providing the widest range of information and resources possible for communities to draw from to implement their own best solutions.

Community feedback coupled with data from our website indicating that over 500,000 hits this past year alone seem to indicate that we are doing well in responding to community information needs. Although we are proud of our collective achievements we are also aware there is much more to be done to support First Nations children and families and the FNCFCS is committed to learning from the communities, young people and our own experience so that we can do our best all the time.

The community as expert philosophy is integrated into all aspects of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society from the board of directors who all work at a community level in Aboriginal child welfare right through to our policy positions, projects and publications. This philosophy is supported by research that affirms that the most sustained outcomes for children and families come in environments where the right of Indigenous communities to make their own decisions is affirmed and respected.

## **FNCFCS Mission and Mandate**

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The prime objective of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society is to support First Nations Child and Family Service Agencies by providing culturally relevant knowledge, skills and resources. In light of this primary objective, the Board of Directors of the FNCFCS developed the following mission statement for the Society:

***“Building Helping Communities”***

This mission is achieved through the following mandate which was developed in partnership with First Nations Child and Family Service Agency Directors at a meeting hosted by Kingsclear First Nation in Fredericton New Brunswick in 1999.

## Mandate and Project Summary

Research	Public Education	Policy	Professional Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ First Nations Research Site</li> <li>♦ National Policy Review Research Project</li> <li>♦ Canadian Incidence Study on Reported Child Abuse and Neglect</li> <li>♦ First Peoples Child and Family Review on line journal</li> <li>♦ Searchable databases on Aboriginal child welfare (over 2000 resources on line)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Presentations on First Nations child welfare</li> <li>♦ FNCFCFS quarterly newsletters</li> <li>♦ Publications such as Joining Hands Across the World and the FASD Training Inventory</li> <li>♦ Co-hosting Reconciliation in Child Welfare Conference and Joining Hands Across the World Event</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Submissions to the UN, Senate committees and House of Commons Committees on First Nations child welfare</li> <li>♦ Ethical guidelines for youth engagement</li> <li>♦ Indigenous sub group for the NGO Group on the UNCRC</li> <li>♦ Member of the Many Hands One Dream Coalition for Aboriginal Child Health</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Caring Across the Boundaries training programs</li> <li>♦ Research workshops for First Nations child and family service agencies and Aboriginal young people</li> <li>♦ Workshops and keynote addresses at conferences and community events</li> <li>♦ Reconciliation in Child Welfare: Touchstones of Hope for Indigenous children, youth and families</li> </ul>

## Organizational Chart

**Cindy Blackstock,**  
Executive Director  
Ottawa

**Marlyn Bennett**  
Director of Research  
Winnipeg

**April Whitehead,**  
Office Manager  
Ottawa

**Jacqueline Randatt,**  
Policy Analyst  
Ottawa

**Jordan Alderman,**  
Youth Services  
Coordinator  
Ottawa

**Rachel Levasseur**  
Summer Student  
Ottawa

## Projects and Services: Living our Mission Statement

### *National Policy Review Research Project*

Building on the results of Wen:de: We are Coming to the Light of Day, the FNCFCFS in partnership with a skilled team of researchers completed the third and final stage of the National Policy Research Project in October of 2006. The final stage focused on conducting a national survey of First Nations Child and Family Service agencies and a series of special studies to inform the recommended changes to the federal government's funding formula (known as Directive 20-1) for First Nations child and family services. The information from the phase three research documented in the Wen:de the Journey Continues report informed numerous recommended changes to both the

structure of the funding formula and the levels of funding provided by the formula. Overall, a detailed economic analysis found that the current federal funding formula needs to be enhanced by an additional 109 million is needed per year to provide a basic equitable level of child welfare services to First Nations children. Consistent with findings of the Wen:de: We are Coming to the Light of Day report, the area where there is the most significant funding shortfall is with regard to child maltreatment prevention services. The current formula provides unlimited funds to remove children from their homes but provides negligible funding to keep them safely in their homes – the result is an exponential increase in the numbers of First Nations children going into child welfare care.

To date, the federal government has not implemented the recommendations from the Wen:de reports but FNCFCS continues to actively work with other NGOs and government to ensure the recommendations are adopted and First Nations children receive the full benefit of those recommendations.



### *First Nations Research Site*

The Research Site was established in partnership with Public Health Agency of Canada's Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare (CECW) based in Toronto. The CECW is a research coalition of five leading organizations including the University of Toronto, Faculty of Social Work; The University of Montreal, Faculty of Social Work; McGill University, Faculty of Social Work,; the Child Welfare League of Canada and the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada. This partnership, along with the gift in kind contributions of the University of Manitoba, has significantly assisted building the Research Site's capacity.

The following significant achievements highlight the value of this important FNCFCS project:

- Updating of the on line database on First Nations child welfare with the addition of over 50 new articles
- The First Nations Research Site has actively participated in the dissemination of results from the 2003 cycle of the Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (CIS). This has resulted in the inclusion of eight First Nations Child and Family Service Agencies across Canada in this important national study.
- The First Peoples Child and Family Review, FNCFCS on line journal, will launch its third edition this year.
- Participated in the development of three fact sheets on Aboriginal child welfare.

Over the coming year, the research site will publish two additional editions of the First Peoples Child and Family Review and is supporting a number of community based research projects.

## The Caring Across the Boundaries Project



First Nations child and family service agencies face significant challenges in meeting the needs of children and families who have been substantially impacted by colonial policies of residential school, social exclusion and inconsistent recognition of existing rights and title. The agencies respond to these multi-generational impacts with limited targeted prevention and community development resources contained in the federal funding formula. This situation not only calls for supporting the recommendations of the *Wen: de reports* to be adopted but also for the mobilization of the significant skills, knowledge and resources of the voluntary sector in Canada. The voluntary sector accounts for 115 billion dollars in revenue each year which is deployed to support a myriad of causes including social services and child youth and family programs.

The FNCFCS is committed to working with First Nations child and family service agencies, the voluntary sector, the philanthropic community and government to ensure that First Nations children and families are able to access and benefit from voluntary sector resources. In line with this goal and with the support of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada, the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society received funding from the Voluntary Sector Initiative (Sectoral Involvement in Departmental Policy Development Initiative) to determine the current nature and extent of collaboration between First Nations child and family service and the child, youth and family serving voluntary sector.

The project consisted of four phases: 1) literature review 2) surveys of FNCFSA, the voluntary sector, and governments to determine engagement patterns and develop suggestions to promote collaboration 3) key informant interviews and 4) completing the final research report and developing professional development tools and programs based on research findings.

The following is a summary of the results of this research project:

- The literature review and annotated bibliography segment has been posted in data base format on our website [www.fncfcs.com](http://www.fncfcs.com). The literature review confirmed that there is very little information published on collaboration between First Nations and the voluntary sector either in Canada or abroad. There was only one unpublished resource that specifically dealt with the issue of engagement between First Nations child and family service agencies and the voluntary sector in providing services to First Nations children, youth and families living on-reserve.
- Survey results and key informant interviews revealed that there was negligible evidence that First Nations children, youth and families benefit from voluntary sector resources nor is there any substantial investment in on reserve forms of volunteerism that support children and families. The full results of the research project are available on line in a report entitled "Caring Across the Boundaries: Promoting Access to Voluntary Sector Resources for First Nations Children and Families."

This report informed the development of a comprehensive professional development program called Caring Across the Boundaries. This program

consists of half day primer and full day collaboration courses designed for First Nations, the voluntary sector, youth, philanthropic and government audiences. The courses provide participants from these various groups with the education needed to engage in meaningful dialogue and prepares them to begin the process of relationship building in a forum which facilitates exploring ways of promoting respectful collaboration and expanding on reserve voluntary sector resources to benefit First Nations children and their families.

With the generous ongoing support of the J.W. McConnell Family Foundation, the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society has, in partnership with First Nations child and family services agencies, delivered the Caring Across the Boundaries program to eight communities across Canada with another eleven slated for delivery.

The curriculum for the program has been revised to incorporate participant contributions and lessons learned from the first year of implementation and a new program area, Caring Across the Boundaries Youth Focus, the need for which was identified by First Nations young people to promote engagement between First Nations youth and the voluntary sector, is now ready for delivery. We look forward to seeing the outcomes of this effort to build capacity and increase opportunities for First Nations young people. Steps have also been taken in preparation to launch the Caring Across the Boundaries training developed to promote collaboration between First Nations and the philanthropic community. As well, several community members have already offered to assist with the development of the Caring Across the Boundaries training specifically for off-reserve.

Thus far, the results of the Caring Across the Boundaries program have ranged from major national non profits integrating strategic objectives into national plans to support First Nations and Aboriginal children to emerging collaborations between Aboriginal and non Aboriginal organizations to provide services to families. Initial evaluations demonstrate that CAB is highly effective in creating relationships and collaborations between First Nations and the voluntary sector.

Given some of the unique attributes of the program, care was taken in identifying a means by which to undertake the formal program evaluation. In this regard, the Caring Society has been fortunate to enlist the expertise of Terry Cross of the National Indian Child Welfare Association to develop an evaluation framework and undertake the evaluation of the Caring Across the Boundaries program.

As the future sustainability of the program is an important point of consideration, the Caring Society has been exploring the development of a train the trainers program which would ensure accessibility and continuity of the program through certified trainers available to conduct the training at the community level. As a means of informing this strategy, First Nations community members who participated in the delivery of Caring Across the Boundaries in their home communities, attended a focus group meeting where they provided insight on the progress of the program to date and discussed a number of sustainability measures.

The Caring Across the Boundaries program continues to thrive and expand and we are excited by the program's ability to inspire and facilitate the development of new relationship which will ultimately promote equality and greater access to resources for First Nation children, youth and families on and off reserve.

### *Aboriginal Children's Circle for Early Learning (ACCEL)*

The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada ([www.fnCARINGSOCIETY.COM](http://www.fnCARINGSOCIETY.COM)) in partnership with the Canadian Child Care Federation ([www.cccf-fcsge.ca](http://www.cccf-fcsge.ca)) were pleased to work with Aboriginal ECD providers across Canada to design and implement the two year ACCEL project which came to a close in March of 2006. This project which began in May of 2004 is funded by the First Nations and Inuit Health Branch of Health Canada. The following text is a synopsis of the project and key accomplishments

#### **Project Goals Include:**

1. Development of a comprehensive and accessible clearinghouse of Aboriginal ECD resources
2. Development of an interactive website and database on Aboriginal ECD
3. Development of a sustainable network of Aboriginal ECD providers
4. Professional development resources such as journals, teleconferences and e-bulletins

#### **Accomplishments:**

1. Established a bilingual website featuring resources for Aboriginal ECD providers
2. A searchable database of over 600 annotated resources on Aboriginal ECD as well as a resource catalogue which provides the database contents in hard copy for those who may have limited internet access.
3. A series of trilingual resource sheets on topics of interest to Aboriginal ECD providers (ie: cultural identity, crystal methamphetamine, Aboriginal languages.)
4. Interactive tele-seminars were hosted on topics of interest to Aboriginal ECD providers
5. Provided the ACCEL advisory committee with resources to assist them with the development of an ACCEL organization
6. Promotional materials were developed for the use of the evolving ACCEL organization which assumed responsibility for the development and implementation of the ACCEL project as of April 1, 2006

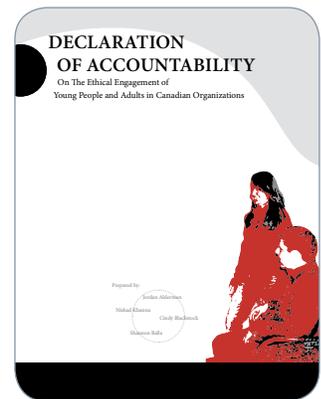
Please visit the ACCEL website [www.accel-capea.ca](http://www.accel-capea.ca) for more information on this important resource.

### *Ethical Guidelines for Youth Engagement*

We are pleased to announce the release of the *Declaration of Accountability to the Ethical Engagement of Young People and Adults in Canadian Organizations*. This document is the product of a voluntary working group of youth-run, youth-serving, adult-focused organizations and individuals. The final report may be

downloaded free of charge by visiting [www.fncaringsociety.com](http://www.fncaringsociety.com).

The document examines the need for standards and guiding principles on the Ethical Engagement of Young People and Adults in Canadian organizations. This document highlights key principles that organizations and individuals can strive for and adhere to as a strategy to create an environment that respects the contributions of all members.



Throughout the consultation, research and writing phase of this document it was clear that while there is a plethora of information on youth engagement there exists a gap on how to engage young people and adults ethically, responsibly and meaningfully. *The Declaration of Accountability on the Ethical Engagement of Young People and Adults in Canadian Organizations* has been designed to influence the process and practice of the engagement of youth and adults in Canada and abroad by building on the success of Canadian and international organizations who are continually contributing to the youth engagement movement. This is a topic that will continue to evolve as individuals and organizations embrace engagement as a philosophy and way of being rather than an organizational program.

The Declaration sets forth a mechanism for organizations and individuals to make a public commitment to evaluate, examine, change and monitor engagement within their organizations. The seven Principles have been designed to provide a standard that organizations can endeavour to achieve through reflection and conversation with young people and adults who contribute to the organizations.

### Summary of the Principles:

**Youth Engagement is Not a Program**-Youth engagement should be viewed as a natural way of working in the organization rather than as a special program.

**Contributions Match the Organization** -Young people and adults who are working with an organization should be recruited for their knowledge, skills, interests and commitment to the organizational mission.

**One Person Cannot Represent the Many** -A young person should not be considered "the youth voice" at the table – it should be acknowledged that everyone at the table brings different perspectives to the issue.

**Debate as a Learning Tool**-Debate is a key element of personal and organizational growth.

**Dignity and Safety** -Under no circumstances should young people or adults in the workplace feel that placing themselves in an emotionally, spiritually, physically or cognitively unsafe space is expected or required by the organization.

**Avoiding False Expectations**-It is important to be honest about the changing role of youth within an organization including recognizing that there are limitations that correspond to age, experience, education and training.

**Balance and Accessibility**-As part of the development of the working

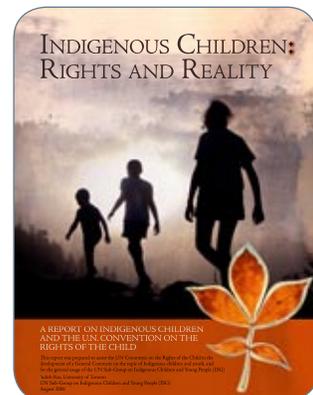
relationship comes the understanding that most people require workplace accommodations to support them in making the optimal contribution to the organization – including young people

The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society values the experience of working with groups and individuals who are dedicated to the philosophy of youth engagement. This fruitful partnership has yielded a desire to further develop the Principles into presentations and a series of training workshops for organizations and their board members, staff, and the community. The FNCFCS Society will explore this potential and continue to collaborate with the working group on the next steps and implementation of the *Declaration of Accountability on the Ethical Engagement of Young People and Adults in Canadian Organizations*.

### *Joining Hands Across the World: Working with International Partners for the benefit of First Nations children in Canada*

A key priority for the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society is to ensure First Nations families have the same opportunity to safely care for their children at home as other Canadians. To this end, we submitted a report to the United Nations Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and is currently working on a submission to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child Day of Discussion on the engagement of children and young people.

One of the most exciting developments this past year was that FNCFCS worked in partnership with Indigenous peoples organizations to develop the Sub Group on Indigenous child and youth rights (ISG) of the NGO Group on the CRC. The Sub Group was officially formed at a meeting hosted by Native Child and Family Services in Toronto on October 24, 2006 which corresponded with the United Nations 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The ISG is the only international focal point that specifically looks at Indigenous child and youth rights so its creation signals an important step in promoting the dialogue of Indigenous child rights on an international level. The ISG has worked in partnership with Judith Rae of the University of Toronto to produce the first international literature review on Indigenous child rights pursuant to the human rights treaty body instruments and customary law. In addition, the sub group has been actively working with the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child to support the development of a general comment on Indigenous child rights. Please visit the ISG webpage at <http://www.fncfcs.com/projects/indigenousChildRights.html> for further information.



### *FNCFCS and Reconciliation in Child Welfare and Aboriginal Child Health*

FNCFCS was proud to co host the *Reconciliation: Looking back; reaching forward: Indigenous Peoples and Child Welfare Conference* In October of 2005 in the territory of Six Nations of the Grand River. This highly interactive invitational leadership conference looked beyond services to Indigenous children to explore how the

values and philosophy of child welfare itself supported or addressed the well being of Indigenous children, youth and families. Delegates came together to identify a process for reconciliation in child welfare and process to guide the redevelopment of a child welfare system that would be more responsive to the needs of Indigenous children and their families. These discussions are captured in the document: *Reconciliation in child welfare: Touchstones of hope for Indigenous children, youth and families*. The Child Welfare League of America, The Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare, the National Indian Child Welfare Association and FNCFCS are now working to develop implementation tool kits to assist child welfare researchers, policy makers, practitioners and community members to engage actively in the reconciliation discussion and implementation of the touchstones. For more information visit [www.reconciliationmovement.org](http://www.reconciliationmovement.org)

FNCFCS is also very proud to be a member of the Many Hands One Dream coalition on Aboriginal child health. This coalition seeks to reconceptualise health care in a way that better supports Aboriginal children and young people. Similar to the process used for the Reconciliation in child welfare movement, the 11 organizations involved in Many Hands One Dream brought together over 160 delegates in December of 2005 to inform a new vision of Aboriginal child health and set in place the principles of reinvigorated health care approach. The Many Hands One Dream team is currently in the process of finalizing a document to capture the wisdom of the delegates and to develop implementation strategies. For more information visit [www.manyhandsonedream.ca](http://www.manyhandsonedream.ca)

## **FNCFCS Publications in 2005**

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In 2005, FNCFCS published over 1000 pages of research and policy documents which are available free of charge on line – here is a sample of our works this past year:

- *Joining hands across the world for Indigenous children: An international indigenous knowledge symposium*. (34 pages)
- *Touchstones of hope for Indigenous children, youth and families* (15 pages) Available in French and English
- *FASD Training Study: Final Report* (90 pages)
- *Wen:de: We are coming to the light of day* (228 pages). Available in French and English
- *Wen:de: The journey continues* (195 pages). Available in French and English
- *A literature review and annotated bibliography on aspects of Aboriginal child welfare* (254 pages)
- *Supporting Aboriginal children and youth with learning or behavioural disabilities* (87 pages)
- *First Peoples child and family review journal* (130 pages)
- Four newsletters

See all of these publications on line at [www.fncaringsociety.com](http://www.fncaringsociety.com)

## **4 Ways to Make A Difference for Aboriginal Children in Under 15 Minutes**

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FNCFCFS believes in the goodness of Canadians and thus we spend a great deal of our time developing meaningful policy solutions which would address some of the inequities and risks facing Aboriginal children and youth. We are also sensitive to the fact that many people live busy lives and the degree to which they can make a contribution varies but we believe each contribution is valuable so we have 4 ways where Canadians can make a difference for Aboriginal children in under 15 minutes by:

- 1) Registering their individual or organizational support for Jordan's Principle which is a child first principle to resolving inter governmental jurisdictional disputes at [www.fncaringsociety.com](http://www.fncaringsociety.com).
- 2) Endorsing the Reconciliation in Child Welfare: Touchstones of Hope for Indigenous children and youth on [www.reconciliationmovement.org](http://www.reconciliationmovement.org).
- 3) Joining Amnesty International's Write for Rights campaign to ask MP's to end the inequity in Aboriginal child welfare funding by adopting in full the recommendations of the Wen:de reports
- 4) Endorsing the Many Hands One Dream declaration on Aboriginal Child Health at [www.manyhandsonedream.ca](http://www.manyhandsonedream.ca)

All contributions are valuable – the most important is to ensure that no one stands on the sidelines when they could make a difference for this generation of Aboriginal children – especially now that they can.

## **Organizational Memberships and Affiliations**

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- 1) Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare: Co-Director
- 2) Many Hands One Dream Coalition: Member
- 3) Reconciliation in Child Welfare: Touchstones of Hope: Member
- 4) Sub Group on Indigenous children and youth of the NGO Group on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child: Co-convenor.
- 5) Sub Group on separated children: NGO Group UNCRC: Member
- 6) World Indigenous Nations Higher Education Consortium: Member
- 7) International Society for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect: Member
- 8) National Children's Alliance: Member
- 9) Winnipeg Social Planning Council: Member

## **Summary and Future Directions**

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Thanks to the guidance of our board of directors and the support of our members, the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society has made a significant contribution of knowledge, tools and resources to support First Nations communities in caring for their children. These contributions have bridged the local community level with international works bringing together the best of the world's resources for the benefit of all Indigenous children and young people.

This past year, the Board of Directors mapped out the strategic directions for the next five years for FNCFCFS. The strategic direction document is posted on line at [www.fncaringsociety.com](http://www.fncaringsociety.com). We are committed to maintaining our focus of affirming and promoting Indigenous ways of knowing and being in child welfare whilst advocating to ensure that First Nations child and family service agencies have the resources needed in order to deliver the highest quality culturally based child, family and community services. This will include the launch of a train the trainers program to ensure Caring Across the Boundaries is available to communities when needed and at a minimal cost. We will also continue with our work to support First Nations child and family service agencies to receive adequate and equitable financial and knowledge supports to enable them to meet the needs of children and families in their communities. The Reconciliation: looking back, reaching forward: Indigenous Peoples and Child Welfare event will also contribute significantly to reshaping child welfare in a way that better supports First Nations children.

Although we have made significant progress, there is much more work to be done by FNCFCFS in the following year:

- 1) Supporting the development of a new and equitable funding formula for First Nations child and family service agencies
- 2) Engaging mainstream child welfare in meaningful and sustained efforts to redefine child welfare in a way that better supports Aboriginal children.
- 3) Continuing research to better understand the reasons for the drastic over-representation of Aboriginal children in care and their experiences throughout the in care continuum.
- 4) Continue to promote the universal collection of disaggregated child welfare data by Aboriginal cultural group.
- 5) Working with our partners to further develop the ethical guidelines for youth engagement
- 6) Engaging the Canadian public and non profit groups in respectfully working with First Nations communities to improve the well being of First Nations children and young people

*As a small organization with six staff members we are proud of our progress to date and thankful for the support of our members, the First Nations and Aboriginal communities, as well as our government, academic and voluntary sector partners as we work toward a better future for First Nations children.*





[www.fncaringsociety.com](http://www.fncaringsociety.com)