

**FIRST NATIONS CHILD AND FAMILY CARING
SOCIETY OF CANADA**

ANNUAL REPORT

Making a Difference for First Nations Children



2006/07

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HONORING

The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada (the Caring Society) expresses its sincere appreciation to First Nations child and family service agencies, our members, funding organizations and partners who are all working together to ensure 2007 is a year to make a difference for First Nations children, youth and families.

Special appreciation to:

Assembly of First Nations

Canadian Paediatric Society

Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare

Editorial board of the First Peoples Child and Family Review

Human Resources and Social Development Directorate

J.W. McConnell Family Foundation

Many Hands One Dream Coalition

McGill University Faculty of Social Work

MP Jean Crowder (NDP)

Nahanee Designs

Natasha Scott

National Association of Friendship Centres

National Collaborating Centre on Aboriginal Health

NICWA

Norway House Cree Nation

Ousley, Hanvey and Deep, LLP

Sandy Tunwell

SNAICC

Sub Group on the Rights of Indigenous Children and Families

UNCRC Indigenous General Comment Expert Writer, Margo Greenwood

United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child

University of Toronto, Faculty of Social Work

FNCFCS: Making a Difference

DID YOU KNOW THAT FNCFCS MADE A DIFFERENCE FOR FIRST NATIONS CHILDREN IN 2007 BY:

- Working with Norway House Cree Nation, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and the Assembly of First Nations to advocate for the implementation of Jordan's Principle
- Joining with the Assembly of First Nations to file a Human Rights Complaint to ensure First Nations children get equal access to child welfare resources on reserves
- Having over a million hits per year on its website
- Presenting to over 10,000 people each year
- Publishing an average of 700 pages of new material on Aboriginal Child Welfare each year
- Contributing to over 90 news stories on Aboriginal child welfare this year throughout Canada and the United States
- Producing three editions of the First Peoples Child and Family Review
- Partnering with the National Association of Friendship Centres to train nine Aboriginal young people to deliver Caring Across the Boundaries
- Caring Across the Boundaries sessions resulting in First Nations children and youth receiving voluntary sector services such as:
 - Addictions services
 - Recreational equipment
 - Child maltreatment prevention programs
 - Youth mentorship
 - Cultural programs
- Working with the Many Hands One Dream coalition to develop principles to improve Aboriginal child and youth health

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or making a donation on line at
www.fncaringsociety.com**

FNCFCS Board of Directors and Staff

FNCFCS Board of Directors

Name	Affiliation	Board Position
Joan Glode	Mik'maw Family and Children's Services	President
Elsie Flette	Southern FN Authority, Manitoba	Vice President
Bill Gillespie	Nog Da Win Da Min Family and Community Services	Treasurer
Nancy Sandy	BC Member	Board Member
Carolyn Peacock	Yellowhead Tribal Services	Alberta Contact Person
Raymond Shingoose	Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services	Board Member
Linda Deer and Robin Deconte	Kahnawake Shakotii'a'takehnhas Community Services and Kitigan Zibi CFS	Board Members
Kenn Richard	Native CFS of Toronto	Board Member
Landon Pearson	Carleton University	Board Member
Deborah Parker Loewen	Sask Member at Large	Board Member
Harry Sock	Big Cove Child and Family Services	Board Member

FNCFCS Staff

Name	Position	Office Location
Cindy Blackstock	Executive Director	Ottawa
Marlyn Bennett	Director of Research	Winnipeg
Tammy Morgan	Office Manager	Ottawa

We would also like to acknowledge Jordan Alderman, Jacqueline Ramdatt, Linda Lamerande, Punit Khare, Jocelyn Formsma, and Rachel Levasseur for their contributions during the 2006/2007 fiscal year.

Organizational History

The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada (FNCFCS) was developed in 1998 at a national meeting of First Nations child and family service agencies (FNCFSA) at the Squamish Nation. Meeting delegates agreed that a national non profit organization was required to provide research, professional development and networking support to the First Nations child and family service agencies in Canada. An interim board was elected and the organization became incorporated in 1999.

In 2001, the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada, in partnership with the Center of Excellence for Child Welfare, established the first research site devoted to the affirmation and support of First Nations child welfare research. The research site disseminates research information to First Nations child and family service agencies, provides professional development programs on research, and oversees national First Nations child and family service related research projects.

Building on the existing infrastructure, the FNCFCS, with the support of the Voluntary Sector Initiative, established a partnership and networking office in Ottawa in 2002. In addition to being the head office of the society, this office is conducting a national research project on the nature and extent of collaboration between First Nations child and family service agencies and the voluntary sector. The goal of the project is to provide First Nation child and family service agencies (FNCFSA) with meaningful supports to ensure that First Nations children, youth and families have access to the significant social supports of the voluntary sector. This would include promoting the development and support of culturally based voluntary sector organizations on reserve to meet family needs and promote a higher quality of life.

As a result of a diversified funding plan, FNCFCS has continued to operate its Ottawa Office in tandem with the First Nations Research Site in Winnipeg during fiscal 2006/2007.

FNCFCS Mission and Mandate

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:

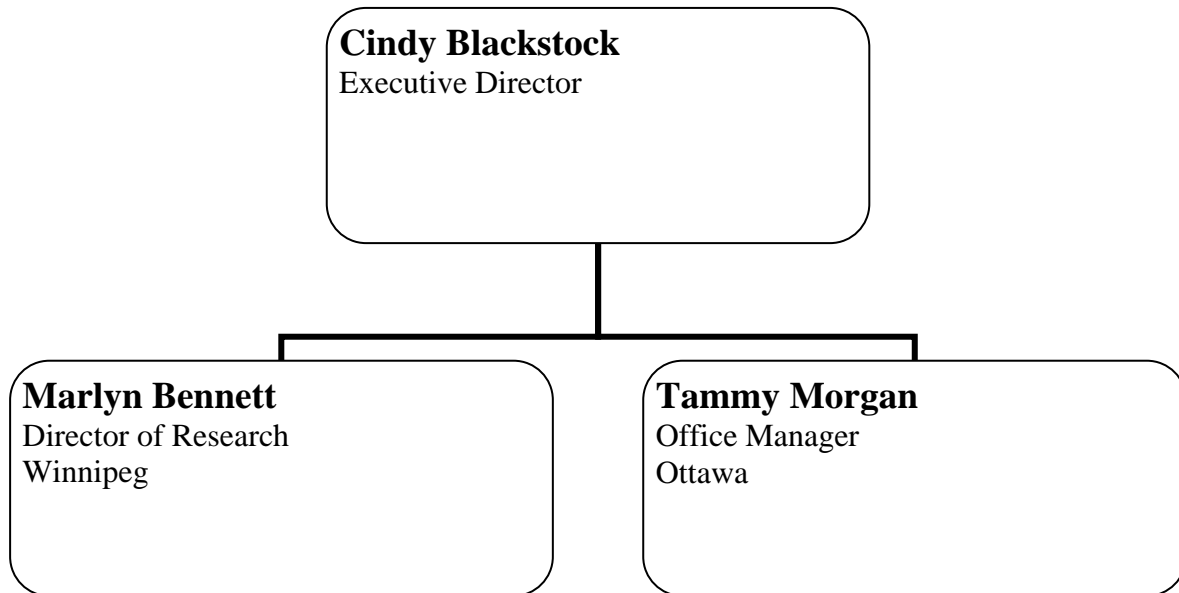
“Building Helping Communities”

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 for 2007

Research	Public Education	Policy	Professional Development
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Nations Research Site • Canadian Incident Study on Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (3rd cycle) • First Peoples Child and Family Review on line journal • Searchable databases on Aboriginal child welfare • Communities and Families Research project • Fact Sheets on Aboriginal Child Welfare • Research articles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentations on First Nations child welfare • FNCFCS quarterly newsletters • Reconciliation in Child Welfare Movement • Many Hands One Dream Movement • 5 ways to make a difference for Aboriginal children initiative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First Nations Child Welfare Funding • Jordan's Principle to manage inter-governmental jurisdictional disputes • Submissions to the UN, Senate committees etc. on First Nations child welfare • Assisting the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child with the development of a General Comment on Indigenous Child Rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caring Across the Boundaries training programs • Research workshops for First Nations child and family service agencies and Aboriginal young people • Workshops and keynote addresses at conferences and community events • Presentations to university and college students

Organizational Chart



Projects and Services: Living our Mission Statement

First Nations Research Site

The First Nations Research Site is a national research forum for First Nations child welfare agencies, organizations, researchers, policy makers, front line workers, caregivers and volunteers who are interested in culturally based child welfare research that is generated by, and for, Aboriginal peoples. The Research Site was established in partnership with the Public Health Agency of Canada's Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare (CECW). 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. As the site has evolved it has been pleased to expand the list of University partners and to actively support the Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare in running the Canadian Incidence Study on Reported Child Abuse and Neglect.

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

- The annotated literature review searchable database has been expanded to include new resources published in 2006 and 2007. The database is available at no charge on our website www.fncaringsociety.com
- The First Nations Research Site has actively participated in the planning for the third cycle of the Canadian Incident Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (CIS). We anticipate that eleven First Nations Child and Family Service Agencies across Canada will be included in the third cycle of this important national study.
- As part of the First Nations Research Site's commitment to ensuring a strong community connection, Marlyn Bennett and Cindy Blackstock have presented at over 40 conferences and events this past year.
- Presentations to students from four universities.
- FNCFCFS also contributed to the Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare book entitled *Putting a Human Face on Child Welfare: voices from the prairies*.

Over the coming year, the research site will plan for the 2008 cycle of the CIS and will also be publishing a 6th edition of the First Peoples Child Welfare Review.

First Peoples Child and Family Review

The 2006-2007 year has been very productive for the First Peoples Child and Family Review online journal. Not only has the Caring Society produced 3 journals in a record 8 months, but this year the journal has also become a member of the Canadian Association of Learned Journals (<http://www.calj-acrs.ca>). The Canadian Association of Learned Journals (CALJ) was organized in 1990 to ensure the well-being of learned journals in Canada as important disseminators of scholarly work. Representing over 100 Canadian journals, CALJ concentrates its efforts on three main areas: education, promotion and lobbying.

In addition to being available for free from the Caring Society's website, the First Peoples journal can also be accessed through Lund University's *Directory of Open Access Journals* (DOAJ, www.doaj.org) in Sweden and through *EBSCO Publishing*, an information source for millions of researchers in thousands of institutions worldwide (www.ebsco.com). As a result of this exposure, we are able to influence research. The journal continues to be quite successful resource used by many students and instructors at the university level, including those working within administration, within frontline practice and by many individuals working at policy levels. Numerous copies of the journal are available through various libraries at the University of Manitoba and at other libraries across Canada.

Hits to the Caring Society's website have increased considerably over the years and now number over 1million per year. On average, there are over 550 hits to the journal website monthly. The journal is consistently among the top 5 visited pages on the FNCFCFS website. To date, there have been over 6,668 hits to the journal website since the

beginning of 2007. In addition, interest in the journal and increased responses to our Call for Papers means that we are publishing on average of 10 articles per issue (amounting to approximately 20 articles published a year). This indicates that our journal has become an important resource to many scholars, researcher's, academic institutions and frontline providers as a credible and unique Aboriginal based research resource in that it:

1. Supports Aboriginal academics by providing a credible peer review mechanisms for publication of cultural knowledge and thus Aboriginal writers are submitting papers that they might have held back from other publishers;
2. Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal social work students use it in their academic training;
3. It is being used by service providers and policy makers in both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal child welfare jurisdictions across Canada; and
4. Our pool of contributors and reviewers (from both the scholarly and non-academic communities) continually grows with every issue published.

As a result of this success, the Caring Society has been contracted by the National Collaborating Centre on Aboriginal Health (NCCAHA) to write a paper on the approach the Caring Society took in developing the online journal and about our peer review process. The NCCAHA is planning on developing their own Aboriginal articulated peer review process for products and materials on Aboriginal Health and therefore has looked to the Caring Society for advice and recommendations on how to do this. An outline of this paper has already been prepared with a final paper to be completed by September 30th, 2007.

The name of the journal *The First Peoples Child and Family Review* is now copyrighted although we are proud to continue our policy of respecting Indigenous intellectual property by ensuring the authors retain copyright of the individual articles. We look forward to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council's decision regarding our application for one of the open-access journal grants of \$25,000 so that we might be able to hire additional staff to learn about the publishing process and to help ensure that the knowledge generated through the journal is shared with the wider community according to the advice of our Elders.

The Caring Across the Boundaries

Caring Across the Boundaries (CAB) was created by the FNCFCSS in response to a call from First Nations child and family service agencies for greater access to quality of life and prevention services from all sectors of society. Caring Across the Boundaries was created to address the lack of culturally based voluntary sector quality of life and prevention services available to children, youth and their families' resident on reserve. By promoting knowledge sharing and collaboration between First Nations child and family service agencies and voluntary sector organizations, Caring Across the Boundaries aims

to ensure that First Nations children, youth and families have equal access to the wide range of services and resources offered by the voluntary sector.

It is a program developed and implemented in the spirit of:

- Facilitating collaboration between Voluntary Sector and First Nations peoples
- Providing awareness and education for First Nations & the Voluntary Sector
- Providing space and opportunity to interact, connect and network
- Facilitating the development of action plans focused on building relationships with each other
- Supporting the further development of culturally based on-reserve voluntary sector organizations

The design of this program reflects the commitment of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada to respect that First Nations communities are in the best position to provide information and guide the process to engage in respectful cross cultural collaborations. Caring Across the Boundaries simply provides a framework to facilitate this process.

The mutual benefits for Voluntary Sector organizations and First Nations communities to be derived from participating in the Caring Across the Boundaries training are numerous, some of which have been articulated below. Given the current success of the program, the possible outcomes for First Nations children, youth and families through the potential joint efforts of Voluntary Sector organizations and First Nation communities are exciting to imagine.

Amongst the benefits of the program, participants:

1. Gain Greater Understanding of:

- The diversity and richness of First Nations cultures, languages, knowledge and traditions
- Historical context that shapes the present experience of First Nations communities
- Issues facing First Nations children, youth, families and communities;
- Mutual benefits gained through understanding, respect and support of First Nations communities
- What respectful relationship building and communication look like from a cultural perspective
- Cultural protocols and the process of working with First Nations communities to make a positive difference for First Nations children, youth and families

2. Identify

- Key components of respectful relationship building with First Nations people and how these play out in a corporate relationship

- Ways in which Voluntary Sector organizations can work with local communities to support sustained social, economic and environmental objectives that are mutually beneficial;
- Ways to contribute to the enhanced social capital and inclusion of First Nations

3. Opportunity to:

- Become familiar with the richness of First Nations cultures, knowledge and communities
- Strengthen the foundation for informed decision making and mutual respect
- Enhance and build on current relationships
- Bridge the gap between First Nations and non First Nations peoples throughout the organization
- Exchange knowledge and expertise
- Network and discuss possible collaboration and learning opportunities
- Establish a framework for future collaboration and start the process of building the trust and respect critical for sustainable partnerships.

Results

To date, the program has been delivered in 13 Aboriginal communities, reaching over 80 First Nations and 150 voluntary sector organizations. Outcomes include, but by no means are limited to:

- A First Nations community established an inter-agency committee that brings VS and FNCFS providers together on a regular basis to plan joint initiatives.
- Child maltreatment program provided by the voluntary sector has been delivered to children in over 23 First Nations
- Recreational equipment has been made available to First Nations children and youth in one community
- A seniors group and Elders organization have arranged joint meetings to build relationships and explore how they could jointly support young people and children.
- A First Nations community has included VS organizations in their cultural ceremonies to promote cross cultural understanding and relationship building.
- A partnership between the FNCFCS and the National Association of Friendship Centres culminated in a train the trainers' session with 9 Aboriginal youth.



Victoria, BC CAB Session April 25-26, 2007

Philanthropic Module

The first training of the CAB Philanthropic curriculum was co-hosted by Community Foundations Whistler and took place in November 2006. The objective of the philanthropic module is to engage foundation representatives in a discussion about the funding structure and needs of Aboriginal communities and to encourage philanthropic organizations to target- in partnership with Aboriginal communities-these specific needs.

CAB: Youth Focus

The pilot program, Caring Across the Boundaries: Youth Focus brought together First Nations youth with representatives from the voluntary sector to network, dialogue and focus on possible areas of collaboration. This program provided an opportunity for voluntary sector representatives to discuss with First Nations youth what the strengths and challenges are in their communities, and how they can better support youth engagement, on and off reserve. The four pilot sites were:

Thompson, MB

Curve Lake First Nations, ON

Standoff, AB

Whitehorse, YK

Information from the pilot sites coupled with interviews of community co-facilitators guided the a revisions to the CAB curriculum. A train the trainer's manual was also developed and subsequently used for the Train the Trainers program in February 2007.

Train the Trainers Program

In partnership with the National Association of Friendship Centres, a train the trainers' session with nine Aboriginal youth was held on February 25-27, 2007 in Calabogie,

Ontario. Darren Thomas, a respected facilitator from Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, was recruited mentor the youth on facilitation skills.

The purpose of the training event was to provide an opportunity for the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society to develop a national speakers' bureau from which to draw CAB facilitators and for the National Association of Friendship Centres to provide a skill building and training opportunity for youth connected to the Friendship Centre movement.

Furthermore, the objectives for the training were to provide an opportunity for:

- Aboriginal youth to become trained in delivering CAB workshops
- Aboriginal youth to experience the session as it would normally be delivered
- Development of facilitation skills
- Developments of youth lead collaborative initiatives
- Engaging youth in cross-cultural conflict resolution



Front Row: Ursula Johnson (NS), Jordan Alderman (ON), Jocelyn Formsma (ON)

Middle Row: Darren Thomas (ON), Elder Irene Lindsay (ON), Lori Ledrew (NL), Nancy Paul (NS), Chelsea Legge (NS), Disa Amyotte (SK)

Back Row: Loretta Ross (ON), Carey Calder (ON), Chelsea Shatilla (SK), Kelly Funk (AB), Sean Vanderklis (ON)

This was an incredibly successful training event and CAB inspired workshops have been delivered by participants from the training. We are excited about future CAB related activities and partnership opportunities.

Relationship Development Grants

A pilot project was also launched in conjunction with the second year of implementation that provided funds to Caring Across the Boundaries participants to follow-up on initiatives generated by participants in the CAB session. The purpose was to provide a seed fund in order to capitalize on the momentum of the ideas generated at the CAB

session. The fund was split into multiple cycles to account for flow of workshops over the fiscal year.

Completed Projects:

Sportlink: Working Together

The project for the Relationship Development grant revolved around cultural sensitivity. A workshop that SportLink Sport Council developed in partnership with White Fish First Nation was delivered in February 2007. The objective was to provide awareness on Aboriginal history, tradition and culture to non-Aboriginal individuals and associations who are involved in sports. Various topics presented included: cultural sensitivity, song and storytelling, the history of Aboriginal people, a discussion on tradition and culture and how sport affects Aboriginal youth.

Tearmann: Rainbow Colours

The “Rainbow Colours” was a project between the Pictou Landing First Nation community, Tearmann Society for Abused Women in New Glasgow and cooperating agencies. The program was designed to build effective, respectful relationships to ensure that First Nations girls in Pictou Landing, and their families, benefit from resources in the wider community. A central goal was to share experiences, stories and strategies to enhance the self-esteem, safety and support of girls in the community.

Current Projects:

Curve Lake Voluntary Sector Information Fair

Youth are an important and vital part of the community both on the First Nation and off. This project will reinforce the commitment that the voluntary sector and Curve Lake First Nation has of developing strong and educated youth leaders. Voluntary sector representatives and youth will have the opportunity share ideas and learn about each respective culture and needs through various methods of teaching, presentations and sharing. A late afternoon dinner and symposium will feature booths and information sessions that will assist in building relationships. This will be followed by a weekend camp based on “life skills on the land” teachings from an Aboriginal perspective. Activities will include: outdoor education, native awareness, survival in the woods, living in the best of both worlds and story sharing for youth and voluntary sector representatives.

Canadian Red Cross-Peterborough Branch

Working in partnership with Curve Lake First Nation, the Red Cross will offer education and training activities such as the Beyond Hurt Peer Facilitation training to strengthen the capacity for youth to engage in volunteer opportunities. A group will be formed for and by youth, 15-25, in Curve Lake, meeting on a regular basis to address issues of social vulnerability.

New Leaf

In partnership with the Pictou Landing Interagency Committee on Family Violence and First Nations peoples from Pictou Landing, two forums will be facilitated to provide education and awareness opportunities through building personal relationships. The activities may include drum making, the making of wooden flowers, bead and quill works, basketry, cooking of traditional foods and/or traditional dancing and drumming. This process will assist in developing, enhancing respect and understanding between participants.

Policy Networking: National and International Activities

The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada was proud to join with the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) in filing a Human Rights Complaint against the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada alleging that the inequitable funding for First Nations children and families on reserve resulted in unequal benefit under child welfare laws. The case is currently under review by the Canadian Human Rights Commission which, if the complaint runs the full course, is expected to make a decision in May of 2008.

FNCFCS has worked with the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and Norway House Cree Nation to promote Jordan's Principle. This child first principle to resolve inter governmental jurisdictional disputes regarding funding for children's services has been endorsed by over 360 individuals and organizations. A very positive development this occurred in May of 2007 when MP Jean Crowder (NDP) tabled a private members motion in the House of Commons in May in support of Jordan's Principle. All four political parties indicated that they would support the motion when it comes back for a vote in September of 2007. In the summer of 2007, the Canadian Paediatric Society released its annual report card on government compliance with children's health policy and best practice. Every province and territory received a poor rating on the implementation of Jordan's Principle except Nova Scotia. Given the growing support for Jordan's Principle by groups such as the Canadian Medical Association Journal we are hoping that CPS will be able to report that all provinces and territories have adopted Jordan's Principle next year.

Along with the many other activities of the Society, a key goal is to ensure that First Nations child and family service agencies are aware of and included in international discussions relevant to First Nations children youth and families. A key objective of the FNCFCS was the establishment of a relationship with the National Indian Child Welfare Association of the United States, the Centre of Excellence on Child Welfare and the Child Welfare League of America to reposition child welfare to improve the outcomes for Aboriginal children. The Reconciliation in child welfare movement is continuing with the following projects and results:

- Several US States and Canadian provinces are using the Touchstones of Hope for Indigenous children youth and families document (available at www.reconciliationmovement.org) to redesign services for Aboriginal children and families.
- Participation in the National Indian Child Welfare Conference in May of 2007 which featured the Touchstones of Reconciliation as a conference theme.
- Leadership curriculum and Bachelor of Social Work curriculums has been developed and are currently being distributed.
- Funding proposals to offer the Touchstones of Hope Leadership curriculum have been developed and are under review.

Along with our work with the Reconciliation movement, we are proud to work with the Many Hands One Dream (MHOD) Coalition to re-center Aboriginal child health services in a way that better support Aboriginal children and youth (www.manyhandsonedream.ca). The MHOD coalition is beginning to develop curriculum for health care providers on how to actualize the principles.

FNCFCS has also formed a very positive relationship with the National Collaborating Centre on Aboriginal Health to develop fact sheets on Aboriginal child and youth health matters for dissemination to the health care community.

FNCFCS is proud to be Co Convenor of the Indigenous Sub Group on child rights (ISG) which is working with the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child and expert writer Margo Greenwood to develop a General Comment on the Rights of Indigenous Children. Judith Rae assisted the ISG in developing an international literature review entitled “Indigenous Children: Rights and Reality” which provided a framework for the development of the General Comment. The draft general comment has been through its initial review by the UNCRC and is now subject to an international consultation. The final draft of the General Comment is expected to be presented to the UNCRC in May of 2008. For more information on the General Comment please visit (www.isg-ngogroup.org)

Summary and Future Directions

Thanks to the guidance of our board of directors and the support of our member organizations, the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society has a strong foundation on which to ensure our continued commitment to provide First Nations and Aboriginal communities with the highest standard of resources so that they can implement their own community based solutions.

We will continue our focus of affirming and promoting Indigenous ways of knowing and being in child welfare whilst working to ensure that First Nations child and family service

agencies have the resources needed in order to deliver equitable culturally based child, family and community services.

As a small organization with three staff members we are proud of our progress to date and are thankful for the support of Aboriginal child and family service agencies, our members, First Nations communities, as well as our government, academic and voluntary sector partners. Without your support and encouragement the progress we are proud to report to you this year would not have been possible.

Want to Make A Difference for Aboriginal Children?

Go on line to www.fncaringsociety.com to find five ways you can make a difference for Aboriginal children and youth in under 15 minutes and think about supporting FNCFCS by becoming a member or making an on line donation