

First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada Annual Report 2009



*Making a Difference for First
Nations Children and Families*
www.fn caringsociety.com

FIRST NATIONS CHILD AND FAMILY CARING
SOCIETY OF CANADA

302 251 Bank Street, Ottawa, ON K2P 1X3

November 1, 2009

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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 have made outstanding contributions to the wellbeing of Aboriginal children, youth and families in 2009. Special thanks to:

Amir Attaran, Professor of Law, U. of Ottawa
Amnesty International Canada
Assembly of First Nations
Anderson Family, Norway House
Cree Nation
Atkinson Charitable Foundation
Brookfield Properties
Canadian Paediatric Society
Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare
Cheryl Milne, David Asper Centre for Constitutional Rights
Child Welfare League of America
Christian Horizons
Defence for Children International
Editorial Board of First Peoples Review
Factor Inwentash Faculty of Social Work
Jean Crowder, Member of Parliament
J.W. McConnell Family Foundation
Kairos Canada
Leah Gryfe Designs
Liam Sharp, Liam Sharp Photography
Manitoba First Nations CFS Gala Committee
Many Hands One Dream Coalition
McGill University, School of Social Work

Melanie Vincent
Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services
Natasha Scott
National Association of Friendship Centres
National Collaborating Centre on Aboriginal Health
National Indian Child Welfare Association (USA)
National Union
Northern BC Touchstones Advisory Committee
Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, Ontario
Office of the Ombudsman, NB
Ousley, Hanvey and Deep, LLP
Paul Champ Law
The Printing House, 50 O'Connor, Ottawa
Sandy Tunwell Accounting
SNAICC (Australia)
Stikeman Elliott, LLP
UNICEF Canada
University of Queensland, Australia
University of Victoria School of Social Work, Indigenous Specialization
Yellowhead Tribal Services and Caring for First Nations Children Society fundraising committee

THE CARING SOCIETY MADE A DIFFERENCE FOR CHILDREN IN 2009:

This has been a historic year at the Caring society as we began the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal to ensure the federal government provides First Nations children equitable funding for these essential services and launched the implementation of the Touchstones of Hope philosophy of child welfare in Northern British Columbia. With your unwavering support we accomplished the following:

- The Canadian Human Rights Case on First Nations Child Welfare which began on September 14, 2009. More information at fnwitness.ca
- The Caring across Boundaries photography exhibit is presented by Cindy Blackstock with photography by Liam Sharp. The exhibit highlights why reconciliation is so vital in addressing the inequalities experienced by First Nations children. The exhibit will premiere at First Canadian Place in Toronto from November 23-27, 2009. It is expected that over 80,000 people a day will see the exhibit.
- Continued our advocacy work on the implementation of Jordan's Principle which was formally adopted by the Province of Ontario this past year.
- Continued our support of the Attawapiskat School Campaign
- Worked with 9 First Nations and the Province of British Columbia on the implementation of the Touchstones of Hope in Northern BC. More information at www.northernbctouchstones.ca
- Hosted the Touchstones of Hope Learning Symposium in Toronto.
- Trained Aboriginal youth on the Touchstones of Hope.
- Published the First Peoples Child and Family Review and updated our research database.
- Completed over 60 presentations in Canada, Taiwan and Australia to over 12,000 people.
- Received over 1.8 million hits on our website making it one of the most utilized child welfare resources in Canada.

Please support the Caring Society by becoming a member or making a donation on line at www.fncaringsociety.com

Did you know?

- The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society is the only national organization serving Aboriginal children and families.
- The Caring society has four staff and many volunteers
- Honours to the Board and staff this past year include:
 - An Order of Canada
 - Aboriginal Achievement Award
 - Honorary Doctorate
 - Atkinson Charitable Foundation Social and Economic Justice Fellowship
 - Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Scholarship
 - Defence for Children International Champion for Children Award
- The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada is an independent organization that currently receives no federal government funding
- Membership has increased 400% over the past two years.
- That the registered individual and organizational supporters of our various campaigns represent the support of millions of people in Canada who want to see a better future for First Nations children.
- Jordan's Principle is one of the most widely supported child policies in Canadian history.

About us

The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada (the Caring Society) was First Nation in 1998 at Nations child and (FNCFS). Meeting national non profit provide research, development and Nations child and Canada. An interim they developed for the Nations Child and



developed at the Squamish a national meeting of First family service agencies delegates agreed that a organization was required to policy, professional networking support to the First family service agencies in board was elected and the plan development of the First Family Caring Society of

Canada was approved at a second national meeting of First Nations child and family service agencies hosted by Kingsclear First Nation in May of 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 Caring Society with the support of the Voluntary Sector Initiative, established a head office in Ottawa in 2002 tasked with organizational administration, policy and public education services. As a result of a diversified funding plan and the generous support of members and donors, THE CARING SOCIETY continues to operate its Ottawa office in tandem with the First Nations Research Site in Winnipeg.

The Caring Society Mission and Mandate

The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society believes Aboriginal communities are in the best position to design and implement their own child safety solutions and that as a national organization our best role is to provide quality resources for them to draw upon. In light of this primary objective, the Board of Directors of the Caring Society developed the following mission statement for the Society:

“Building Helping Communities”

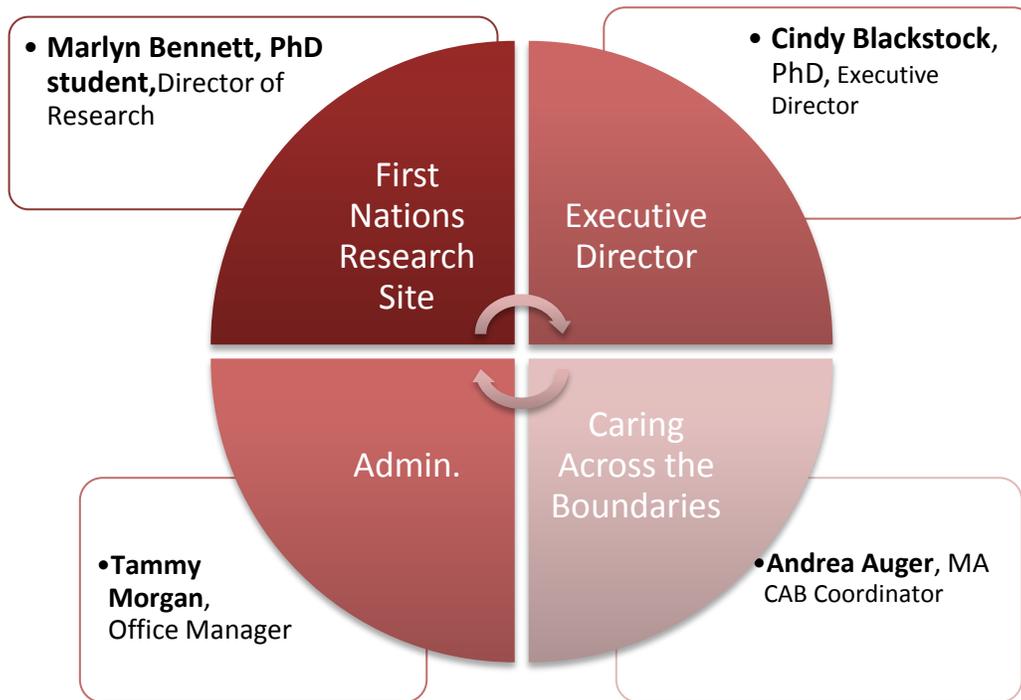
This mission is achieved through the following mandate which was developed in partnership with First Nations Child and Family Service Agency Directors at a meeting hosted by Kingsclear First Nation in Fredericton New Brunswick in 1999.

THE CARING SOCIETY Board of Directors

Name	Affiliation	Board Position
Elsie Flette	Southern FN Authority, Manitoba	President
Joan Glode	Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services	Vice President
Bill Gillespie	Southern FN Authority, Manitoba	Treasurer
Lise Haddock	Lalum'utul'smun'een	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 Shakotiiia'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
Judy Levi	Coordinator, New Brunswick First Nations Child and Family Services	Board Member

THE CARING SOCIETY Staff



Mandate and Project Summary for 2009

Research	Policy	Education	Training
<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Caring Across Boundaries Conference•2 editions of the First Peoples Child and Family Review•Collaboration with the Prairie Child Welfare Consortium to produce a conference and book	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Jordan's Principle campaign•Attawapiskat School Campaign supporter•Human Rights Case on First Nations Child Welfare Funding•7 ways to make a difference campaign	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Quarterly newsletter•Resource rich website with 1.8 million hits per year•Over 60 presentations reaching 12,000 people in 3 countries•Caring Across Boundaries photography exhibit	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Touchstones of Hope learning symposium•5 Train the Trainers sessions for Caring Across the Boundaries•Reconciliation in child welfare community sessions in Northern BC begin in November 2009

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 third cycle of the Canadian Incidence Study on Reported Child Abuse and Neglect.

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

- The First Nations Research Site has actively participated in the third cycle of the Canadian Incident Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (CIS). This collaboration has resulted in a record number of First Nations child and family service agencies participating in the study.
- Presentations on First Nations research to students at: University of Victoria, University of Alberta, University of Manitoba, Ryerson University, Carleton University, University of Toronto, Dalhousie University and the University of Western Australia.
- The Caring Society also contributed to a book jointly published by the Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare and the Prairie Child Welfare Consortium.
- The Research Director also assisted in the development of a number of information sheets on Aboriginal child welfare.
- The annotated literature review searchable database has been expanded to include new resources published in 2009. The database is available at no charge on our website www.fncaringsociety.com.
- The Research Director assisted with the coordination of three conferences to disseminate research on Aboriginal child welfare.

Over the coming year, the Director of the FNRS will plan for the dissemination of results from the 2009 cycle of the CIS and will also continue with publication of the First Peoples Review.

First Peoples Child and Family Review

The 2009 year has been very productive for the First Peoples Child and Family Review online journal. The First Peoples journal continues to be available for free from the Caring Society's website, as well as through Lund University's *Directory of Open Access Journals* (DOAJ, www.doaj.org) in Sweden. The journal also appears in *EBSCO Publishing's* database of journals, an information resource for millions of researchers in thousands of institutions worldwide (www.ebsco.com). The journal is also housed at the Library of Canada and is distributed throughout the United States by the National Indian Child Welfare Association.

The journal continues to be a successful resource used by many students and instructors as well as people working as children's program administrators, in frontline practice and by many individuals working at policy levels. Numerous copies of the journal are available at university libraries across Canada.

- This past year, hits to the Caring Society's website have increased considerably and now number over 1.8 million 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 Caring Society website accumulating about 2600 hits per month and is accessed by users throughout North America and the world. 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 and credible resource for many scholars, researchers, academic institutions and frontline providers.



Reconciliation in Child Welfare: Touchstones of Hope

We expanded our Reconciliation: Touchstones of Hope program which promotes grass roots involvement in the process of reconciliation to benefit children. The program now includes the Touchstones for Leadership program to engage community leaders in reconciliation, Touchstones for Youth to promote youth leadership in reconciliation and the Bachelor of Social Work curriculum geared toward integrating reconciliation into university curricula. Our next initiative will be to update the original 5 module Touchstones for Leadership to incorporate suggestions from all the participants who have generously provided feedback.

Since January 2008, we have hosted five train-the-trainer sessions for the Touchstones program throughout Canada. We now have a total of 98 trainers, 87 trained in the Touchstones for Leadership curriculum and 11 trained in the Touchstones for Youth curriculum:

- Kazabazua, Quebec (Ontario session); March, 2008; 7 participants
- Truro, Nova Scotia; July, 2008; 11 participants
- Sault Ste Marie, Ontario ; November 22-24, 2008; 11 participants
- Vancouver, British Columbia; December 2-4, 2008; 12 participants
- Montreal, Quebec; February 25-27, 2009; 14 participants
- Ottawa, Ontario; (youth session); May 6-8, 2009; 11 participants
- Prince George, British Columbia; July, 13-16 2009; 32 participants

There were a total of 4 workshops delivered to approximately 300 Indigenous and non Indigenous child welfare representatives, First Nations members, voluntary sector organizations, educational institutions and individuals from other organizations.

- Touchstones For Leadership: Reconciliation in Child Welfare in Northern British Columbia, October 15-17, 2008: Prince Rupert, British Columbia
- Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centre's Annual Youth Forum, October 25, 2008: Barrie, Ontario
- Touchstones for Leadership: Learning Symposium; February 3-5, 2009; Toronto, Ontario
- CAB Youth Community Workshop, March 20-21, 2009: Winnipeg, Manitoba

Overall, the Caring Society staff reached approximately 10,000 people by participating in over 40 local, provincial, national and international events on the Touchstones of Hope reconciliation movement.

Although our federal government funding for the project has concluded, we are pleased to be continuing the Touchstones work in Northern British Columbia. We have been pleased to work with the Northern BC Touchstones of Hope Committee to provide two train-the-trainer sessions on the Touchstones of Hope program for Elders, youth and adults as well as a policy advocacy workshop and a training symposium for government staff. In addition, a quarterly electronic newsletter and website based on the Touchstones have been launched. The next step will be for the trained Touchstones facilitators (with the guidance of the Caring Society staff) to work with their communities and community members to actively interpret the Touchstones of Hope principles to develop, and implement, child and family safety plans. This effort is historic in nature as it involves provincial governments and First Nations working together to restructure child welfare through community engagement using the Touchstones principles. For more information, please see www.northernbctouchstones.ca

Policy Change: A better world for First Nations children and families



Child from Tobique First Nation
Photograph by Liam Sharp (2009)

Ontario fully supports Jordan's Principle and pledges to work with First Nations and the federal government to ensure Jordan's Principle is honoured and applied in the province of Ontario. Honourable Brad Duguid, Ontario Minister of Aboriginal Affairs, April 22, 2009

Jordan's Principle

The Caring Society 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 resolving governmental jurisdictional disputes regarding funding for children’s services has been endorsed by over 2600 individuals and organizations. In May of 2007 when MP Jean Crowder (NDP) tabled a private members motion in the House of Commons in support of Jordan’s Principle. On December 12, 2007, Private Members motion 296 in support of Jordan’s Principle was passed unanimously by the House of Commons. Jordan’s father, Ernest Andersen and his older sister, Jerlene, were joined by other children and families from Norway House in the gallery of the House of Commons to witness this historic moment. As Ernest Anderson so rightly pointed out the good done in Jordan’s name that day would be nothing but a moral victory unless the provincial and federal governments implemented it. A month later, BC Premier Gordon Campbell became the first Premier to announce full support for Jordan’s Principle and table an implementation plan. This was followed by an announcement by the Western Premiers that they all strongly supported Jordan’s Principle. We are pleased to note that the Province of Ontario officially announced support for Jordan’s Principle on April 22, 2009. Unfortunately, federal government officials have tried to narrow the definition of Jordan’s Principle to apply only to children with complex medical needs. This was done by the federal government without any meaningful consultation with the Anderson family or Norway House Cree Nation. In keeping with Motion 296, we reject this narrowing of Jordan’s legacy and will continue to press the federal government to implement Jordan’s Principle across all federal government services. Jordan’s legacy was equality not partial equality. We are also committed to working with the provinces and territories to ensure all adopt and fully implement this important principle.

Canadian Human Rights Tribunal

In 2007, the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada was proud to join with the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) in filing a complaint with the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) 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 Canadian Human Rights Commission has now formally accepted the complaint and has referred the matter to full tribunal. We launched a campaign called “I am a witness” to compliment the tribunal.

The “I am a witness” campaign invites caring Canadians to sign up to be a witness meaning that they agree to follow the tribunal and make up their own minds about whether or not the Canadian government is treating First Nations children fairly.



Families march in support of the tribunal, University of Victoria, Indigenous Specialization, November 2009



To date, over 2700 caring organizations and individuals have signed on from at least 9 countries in the world. The “I am a witness” campaign has promotional items such as buttons, posters, and bookmarks in both official languages. Go to fnwitness.ca for more information and to sign on as a witness. It takes two minutes, is open to

people of all ages and organizations and is completely free!

The tribunal began on September 14, 2009 and was to resume with testimony on November 16, 2009. In a surprise ruling, a newly appointed tribunal chair cancelled the November dates even though none of the parties had requested an adjournment. The Caring Society is working hard to try to better understand the reasoning for the tribunal chair’s decision and to make sure the hearings get underway as soon as possible.

In the meantime, the support from community members for the tribunal has been overwhelming. This year alone, First Nations have organized fund raisers and awareness campaigns including a march at the University of Victoria on November 16, 2009 to express concern about the adjournment of the tribunal and to encourage Canada to do the right thing and treat First Nations children equitably. Other highlights include a gala dinner hosted by First Nations in Manitoba to raise awareness about the tribunal and raise funds to support the cause, a conference luncheon co-sponsored by the Caring for First Nations Children Society in BC and Yellowhead Tribal Services in Alberta as well as a fundraiser hosted by the National Association of Friendship Centres in Ottawa.

We are absolutely committed to continuing this work to ensure First Nations children on and off reserves receive equitable access and benefit from federal/provincial and territorial governments. Although the tribunal focuses on child welfare funding we are keen to ensure that the case, and the public relations activities accompanying the campaign address the inequalities experienced by First Nations children in other areas such as education, early childhood services, recreation and culture.

International Relationships

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. This past year Cindy Blackstock was honoured to travel throughout Queensland, Australia to learn from peoples and organizations working with Indigenous children and families in that country

as well as to share the experiences of First Nations in Canada. She also travelled to Taiwan to meet with Indigenous and non –Indigenous leaders in child welfare who are actively considering the Touchstones of Hope for implementation in that community. Later this year, a trip to Jordan is planned to present the Touchstones of Hope at a major international conference on reconciliation.

We value our relationships with the international community and look forward to travelling back to Australia in July of 2010 to attend the Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander and Child Care (SNIACC) conference in Alice Springs.

Caring Across Boundaries Photography Exhibit



Children from Tobique First Nation. Photography by Liam Sharp (2009)

International award winning photographer, Liam Sharp, generously volunteered his expertise to create a high quality photography exhibit showing the strength, dignity and inequities experienced by First Nations children living in three First Nations communities in Canada (Attawapiskat First Nation, Ontario; Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, BC; and Tobique First Nation, NB). With the generous support of the Atkinson Charitable Foundation and Brookfield Properties, the Caring Across Boundaries photography exhibit

will premiere at First Canadian Place in Toronto from November 23-29, 2009. The exhibit will be seen by over 80,000 people a day and will provide an excellent opportunity to raise awareness and engage caring Canadians in making a positive difference for First Nations children by providing them 7 cost free ways to make a difference in less than 15 minutes.

Future Directions

Our vision of Canada is one where all First Nations children are treated with equity, respect and justice. We know just what to do to make that vision a reality and it will require the active engagement of caring Canadians and organizations to make it happen. The inequities experienced by First Nations children are so entrenched that nothing less than a social movement is needed that provides meaningful opportunities for all Canadians of all income levels to get involved in the creation of a better Canada. The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society blends high quality research, public education and skilful policy change in ways that fuel the social movement of equity for First Nations children. Over the next year we look forward to making the following visions a reality:

Research	Policy	Education	Training
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publishing the results of the only comparative study on First Nations and non-Aboriginal children in care • Publishing 2 more editions of the First Peoples Child and Family Review • Expanding our free searchable databases • Analyze the data from the community visioning sessions at the Touchstones of Hope in Northern BC to identify promising practice and policy trends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a unified social movement plan to promote equity in all government services to First Nations children • Working to ensure two more prov./terr sign on to Jordan's Principle • Human Rights Case on First Nations Child Welfare Funding to be heard and to have a ruling pending • Expand the reach of our 7 ways to make a difference campaign • Engaging at least 3000 other individuals and organizations in our campaigns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly newsletter • Continue to promote the website and expand use of Twitter and social networking sites • Conduct presentations that reach at least 15,000 Canadians • Ensure the Caring Across Boundaries photography exhibit is seen by people in three regions of the country • Develop an education guide for the Caring Across Boundaries exhibit • Mentor Aboriginal youth in presentation skills and provide opportunities for them to present on human rights 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete the community engagement sessions in Northern BC and analyze results to produce a new vision of child welfare and begin implementing the action plan. • Create a policy advocacy mentoring program targeted to individuals who have no money and little experience. • Engage young people as leaders in the I am a witness campaign, Attawapiskat School Campaign and Jordan's Principle

As a small organization with four 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?



This youth from Attawapiskat First Nation dreams of a better world for younger children in her community. She wants them to go to school in a place that does not sit on ground contaminated by over 30,000 gallons of diesel fuel and she wants them to have all the supports that other children have to make their dreams come true. You can help by supporting the Attawapiskat School Campaign at www.attawapiskat_school.com

Children from Attawapiskat First Nation
Photography by Liam Sharp (2009)

Go on line to www.fncaringsociety.com and join the movement of equality for First Nations children. You will find seven ways you can make a difference for Aboriginal children and youth in under 15 minutes and think about supporting the Caring Society by becoming a member or making an on line donation.

Audited Financial Statement (2008/2009)

FIRST NATIONS CHILD AND FAMILY CARING SOCIETY OF CANADA

STATEMENT OF REVENUE AND EXPENSE FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31, 2009

	2009	2008
REVENUE		
Membership fees	\$ 9,625	\$ 8,200
Contract services	42,114	53,264
Donations and other	23,666	3,812
Human Rights Issue	28,325	-
Publication sales	1,490	2,870
Projects		
- First Nations Research Site	-	96,000
- Caring Across the Boundaries - McConnell (Phase II)	6,561	146,226
- Communities for Families	3,205	2,224
- Ka Ni Kanichihk Agency	2,565	18,342
- Canada Heritage	2,000	-
- UN General Comment	-	42,744
- Northern BC Touchstones	2,971	-
- Association of Native Children	-	1,443
- Status of Women (CAB)	108,357	51,029
- HRSDC RWI	138,100	4,114
- Jordan's Grant (TCIG)	-	2,000
- NCCAH	2,166	6,397
- Social Well Being	175,340	81,556
- University of Manitoba	58,889	11,438
- Centres for Excellence	128,850	-
	<u>735,224</u>	<u>531,659</u>
EXPENSE		
Administration	77,131	100,451
Projects (schedules)		
- First Nations Research Site	-	96,000
- Caring Across the Boundaries - McConnell (Phase II)	6,561	146,226
- Communities for Families	3,205	2,224
- Ka Ni Kanichihk Agency	2,565	18,342
- Canada Heritage	2,000	-
- UN General Comment	-	42,744
- Northern BC Touchstones	2,971	-
- Association of Native Children	-	1,443
- Status of Women (CAB)	108,357	51,029
- HRSDC RWI	138,100	4,114
- Jordan's Grant (TCIG)	-	2,000
- NCCAH	2,166	6,397
- Social Well Being	175,340	81,556
- University of Manitoba	68,879	11,438
- Centres for Excellence	128,850	-
	<u>716,125</u>	<u>563,964</u>
NET REVENUE (EXPENSE) FOR THE YEAR	\$ 19,099	\$ (32,305)

