



newsletter

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Updates on the Caring Society's Non-compliance Motion on Jordan's Principle



Proceedings in the non-compliance motion on Jordan's Principle that the Caring Society filed against Canada in December 2023 continue before the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal. Since the initial filing of the non-compliance motion and the Caring Society's January 12, 2024 affidavits, Canada filed its affidavits and notice of cross-motion on March 15, 2024. Cross examinations of two senior Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) officials were held the first week of April.

On April 19, 2024, the Caring Society filed its first factum seeking further orders related to urgency, timeliness, backlogged requests, resolving reimbursement and payment delays, and the establishment of a complaints mechanism and other accountability measures.

Canada opposes the Caring Society's non-compliance motion, and its notice of cross-motion seeks several orders from the Tribunal that differ from the orders sought by the Caring Society. The Assembly of First Nations (AFN), the co-complainant in the human rights case alongside the Caring Society, filed their factum on May 17. The AFN has reversed its prior position of partial support of the Caring Society's non-compliance motion and asked for a complete dismissal of the Caring Society's orders sought. The Canadian Human Rights Commission supports the Caring Society's non-compliance motion and filed their supporting factum on May 10, 2024. The Chiefs of Ontario and Nishnawbe Aski Nation will not be taking a position.

Following the AFN's April 5, 2024 adjournment request, the Tribunal has revised the schedule on the non-compliance motion. The Parties will continue to file written submissions throughout June and July, with hearings taking place August 8, 2024 and August 20-21, 2024.

To read the Parties' submissions, information sheets on the non-compliance motion, and background information, please visit fnwitness.ca.

Bear Witness Day 2024

Celebrated annually on May 10, Bear Witness Day is an important date in the timeline of Jordan's Principle at the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal. Bear Witness Day honours Jordan River Anderson and his family and is an opportunity to come together to "bear witness" to ensure Jordan's Principle is fully implemented. May 10 is also Spirit Bear's *bearthday*!

Every year, hundreds of children, families, schools, organizations, and communities from across the country gather to show their support for Jordan's Principle. Once again, groups used the hashtags **#BearWitnessDay** and **#JordansPrinciple** to share all the different ways they were "bearing witness." Celebrations included teddy bear tea parties, crafts, letter writing, picnics, ceremonies, and community barbecues.

This year, Senator Francis made a statement at the Senate to honour the day and announce his plan to introduce a motion to officially recognize May 10 as Bear Witness Day. We are hopeful the motion will be unanimously passed by the Chamber!

(below, top row) Teddy bear tea party (@AnishNation via X); (below, bottom) Bear Witness Day at The Hospital for Sick Children, (@SickKidsNews via X).

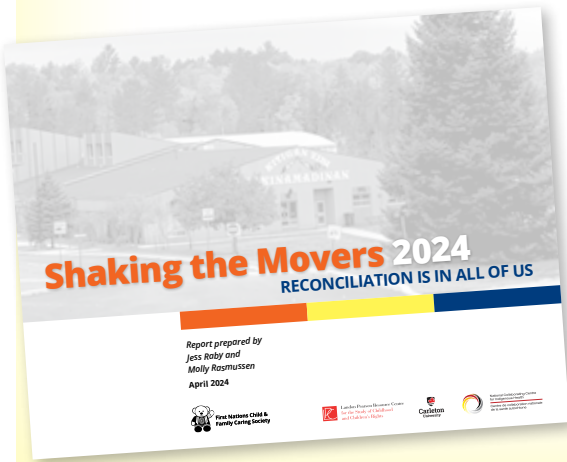


Shaking the Movers 2024

The Caring Society was so fortunate to be able to participate once again in Shaking the Movers, an annual youth-driven and youth-led

workshop supported by the Landon Pearson Resource Centre for the Study of Childhood and Children's Rights at Carleton University. Each year, children and youth are invited to consider aspects of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in relation to their lived experiences as young people, and in alignment with a particular theme. This year, we owe a special thanks to the Sections 4 and 5 students from Kitigan Zibi Kikinamadinan for their time, efforts, and insightful contributions to this year's theme, "Reconciliation and places where we belong."

Students identified topics including water contamination, the housing crisis, social media, and forest fires and environmental degradation as some of the more pressing issues they want to see fixed as First Nations youth living and attending school on reserve. The students emphasized the need for individual and collective actions to address these issues in order to ensure that subsequent generations will be able to live with safety and dignity. To read the full report of the students' findings, visit fncaringsociety.com/publications/shaking-movers-2024-report-reconciliation-and-places-where-we-belong.



Research Project: That's a Wrap!

Just because we're small doesn't mean we can't stand tall: Reconciliation education in the elementary classroom,

a six-year project that studied the impacts of the Caring Society's social justice-based reconciliation campaigns on elementary students, wrapped up at the end of March. Researchers at the University of Ottawa, Dr. Nicholas Ng-A-Fook and Dr. Lisa Howell, interviewed teachers about their students' experiences of participating in Caring Society's campaigns and created resources based on their findings.

Along with publishing an academic paper on research findings, Dr. Ng-A-Fook and Dr. Howell held workshops and webinars, and presented at multiple conferences for educators. You can read the academic paper at bit.ly/4buJ79e. In addition, Dr. Lisa Howell and the Caring Society authored *Spirit Bear's Beary Caring Curriculum* and learning guides for the Spirit Bear Virtual School, an online resource developed for educators who indicated that they wanted more streamlined resources to help them teach specific Caring Society campaigns in their classrooms.

You can find more information about the project and many more resources at the Spirit Bear Virtual School: fncaringsociety.com/spirit-bear/spirit-bear-virtual-school. We are always adding new resources, so be sure to visit us there soon!

FNCARES and the Caring Society would like to thank our co-researchers and all of the educators who participated in the study, as well as the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, which funded the research.

And of course, thanks to all of the students who participated, and continue to participate, in working towards justice for First Nations kids!



SAVE THE DATE Orange Shirt Day 2024

Summer is here, which means that not too long from now, Orange Shirt Day will be here, too! Each year on September 30th, people around the country take the day as an opportunity to raise awareness about the Canadian residential school system and honour the Survivors and children who did not make it home. People of all ages in Canada are invited to wear an orange shirt as a way of raising awareness and honouring Phyllis Webstad's story, as the founder of the Orange Shirt Day movement: orangeshirtday.org/phyllis-story.

The Caring Society will be working alongside Assembly of Seven Generations and Beechwood Cemetery again this year to host another day of learning on September 30.

Keep an eye on our website and social media for updates as the day approaches: fncaringsociety.com/orange-shirt-day.



Spirit Bear Exhibit

Spirit Bear is on his biggest adventure yet! The Caring Society is partnering with Lheidli T'enneh First Nation, Carrier Sekani Family Services, and The Exploration Place to bring the Spirit Bear and Children Make History Exhibit to Prince George. Visitors will learn how Spirit Bear and children stand up for equity for First Nations children, how to learn from the past, and how we can all work together to fulfill the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

Opening June 1, children, youth, and families can view the hand-crafted puppets and sets from Spirit Bear's four stop-motion animation films made by Spotted Fawn Productions. The exhibit will also feature archival material from the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal case, Jordan's Principle, Shannen's Dream, and Reconciling History.

Stay tuned to our social media channels and the Spirit Bear page on our website for the latest information!



Announcing the 2024 Shannen's Dream Scholarship Recipients!

More than 110 First Nations students applied for the award this year, which made it challenging for the Scholarship Committee to narrow it down to just four recipients. However, the Caring Society is pleased to award this year's Shannen's Dream Scholarship to Aleria McKay, Jaimey Jacobs, Rainingbird Daniels, and Taylor Nicholls!

The Shannen's Dream Scholarship, named in loving memory of Shannen Koostachin, is an award to assist First Nations youth with post-secondary costs, and involves a pay-it-forward component in which recipients make a fair and measurable contribution



to the Shannen's Dream campaign or a related initiative. The Shannen's Dream Scholarship is generously funded by the Collure family of Richmond Hill, ON, and Top Hat, a Toronto-based education tech company.

We can't wait to see how Aleria, Jaimey, Rainingbird, and Taylor pay it forward over this next year. In the coming weeks, we will be sharing more on our social media about this year's recipients and how last year's recipients have paid it forward.

To learn more about the scholarship, visit: fncaringsociety.com/shannens-dream-scholarship.

SAVE THE DATE

14th Annual
Caring Society

Gala

Mark your calendars! The 14th Annual Caring Society Gala will take place on October 18, 2024, in Winnipeg. An evening of music, good food, and fun for the whole family, the Gala is an annual fundraiser hosted by the First Nations child welfare agencies in Manitoba in support of the Caring Society, and we are so grateful for the continued support and generosity. Keep up to date at fncaringsociety.com/events/annual-caring-society-gala.

Spirit Bear Releases a New Film

On June 1, Spirit Bear will release his fourth stop-motion animation film, *Spirit Bear: Echoes of the Past*, and we think it's his best yet!

In *Echoes of the Past*, Spirit Bear travels with his family and friends to Songhees and Esquimalt territories (Victoria, BC), where he witnesses a statue of John A. Macdonald, Canada's first Prime Minister, being removed from the steps of Victoria City Hall. Spirit Bear notices that some people want to save the statue, but others are happy to see it go, and this prompts Spirit Bear to ask: What does it mean to reconcile history?

By creating a special plaque at Beechwood Cemetery in Ottawa to teach people about Peter Henderson Bryce, a courageous doctor who spoke out about the terrible health conditions and children getting sick in residential

schools, Spirit Bear realizes the importance of learning history to make better decisions now and for future generations of children and cubs.

Based on a on a true story, this film features new characters like Cubby Springs, a spunky reporter, and Echo the Fox, who lives at Beechwood Cemetery and helps Spirit Bear and others learn from the past. This film also features its first 3D animated character, Robin, who tags along for the fun.

As with all the Spirit Bear films, this is a collaboration between the Caring Society and Spotted Fawn Productions and is an adaptation of the book with the same title written by Cindy Blackstock.

Find all Spirit Bear's film on Spirit Bear TV: vimeo.com/spiritbearTV and



visit Spirit Bear's film page for more information: fncaringsociety.com/spirit-bear/films.

Reformed Approach to Child and Family Services

May 2024



Caring Society's Updated Reformed Approach to First Nations Child and Family Services

The Caring Society released a document outlining its positions on the long-term reform of the First Nations Child and Family Services Program to stop the discrimination

against First Nations children, youth, and families, and prevent it from happening again. The document sets out the Caring Society's key positions on the necessary building blocks to achieve the best outcomes for First Nations children, youth, and families based on the current community-informed and

evidence-based research on child and family services. This includes ensuring that Canada provides funding pursuant to the reformed funding structure as a minimum standard, on an ongoing basis, free of any adverse or discriminatory effects, and that there are enforcement mechanisms in place, including an accessible dispute resolution process to hold Canada accountable and ensure First Nations children, youth, and families can enjoy these rights in perpetuity.

Initially released in March 2024, the Caring Society updated the document in May 2024 to reflect its current positions. The document is available at fncaringsociety.com/publications/updated-reformed-approach-child-and-family-services-may-2024.

First Nations Child & Family Caring Society

Membership Information

Join the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society as a Member under one of the following categories:

- Individual Membership: \$75
- Student Membership with ID or Elder: \$5
- Small FNCFCFS Agency Membership (1-50 employees): \$500
- Large FNCFCFS Agency Membership (50+ employees): \$1,000
- Small Associate Membership (Organizations with 1-50 employees): \$500
- Large Associate Membership (Organizations with 50+ employees): \$1,000

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