

Caring Society Update Report to the CHRT

December 2025

Completion of Regional Engagements

1. First Nations and First Nations child and family service experts leveraged regional processes to participate in the engagement. Over 100 submissions in English and French were received from First Nations, regional and sub-regional First Nations organizations, First Nations child and family service agencies and experts, and a handful of individuals.
2. The NCCC and Caring Society encouraged the participation of youth, particularly those with lived experience in alternative care, as well as Elders, in the regional engagement process.
3. In keeping with data sovereignty, all regional engagement submissions were submitted to the National Children's Chiefs Commission.

Youth Submission by Assembly of Seven Generations (A7G)

4. The Assembly of Seven Generations submitted a synthesis of previous consultations with youth and young adults on child welfare reform. These recommendations will inform the national plan to end Canada's discriminatory conduct in First Nations Child and Family Services.
5. A7G also prepared a youth engagement guide to support the ongoing inclusion of young people.
6. This work was funded by the Caring Society but prepared independently by A7G.

Analysis of Regional Engagement Submissions and Evidence

7. **Regional Engagement Data Analysis:** In partnership with the National Children's Chiefs Commission, the Caring Society worked with an expert from the University of Toronto to design and implement a data analysis method that reflects best practices and serves the purposes of 2025 CHRT 80. All of the researcher's findings were member-checked with NCCC technical experts to ensure accuracy.

8. **Identification of Relevant Research and Other Information Sources:** The NCCC and Caring Society have collaborated to identify relevant evidence and supporting sources to ensure the plan to be submitted is consistent with the CHRT orders, jurisprudence, and the best available evidence.

Reporting to First Nations Rights Holders

9. **Honouring the Direction of First Nations-in-Assembly.** The NCCC and Caring Society warmly welcomed the appointment of Regional Chief Francis Verreault-Paul, assisted by Regional Chief LeBobe, in November 2025. We have been collaborating closely with the Regional Chiefs to ensure the direction of First Nations-in-Assembly is discharged.
10. **Updating Leadership at the Assembly of First Nations Annual General Assembly (AGA).** The Assembly of First Nations hosted two sessions during the AGA. The first was a dialogue session hosted by Mary Teegee (Hereditary Chief and NCCC technical expert for the BC Region) and included presentations by Regional Chief Verreault-Paul, Richard Gray (NCCC Technical Expert for the Quebec Region), and Cindy Blackstock. On December 5, 2025, there was a one-hour plenary session featuring Regional Chief Verreault-Paul, Regional Chief LaBobe, Chief Frost, and Cindy Blackstock. On both occasions, First Nations leadership and their technical experts were updated on the national engagement and progress towards satisfying 2025 CHRT 80.

Winter Solstice Prayer and Sweetgrass Offerings for Children

11. National Children's Chiefs Commission and Our Children; Our Way Knowledge Keeper Tsiqw Xwéwne (Red Hummingbird) Judy Wilson worked with Elders and other Knowledge Keepers to prepare the “Winter Solstice Prayer and Sweetgrass Offering” to honour the children—past, present, and yet unborn—and to invite the ancestors to guide our collective work on Jordan’s Principle and First Nations child and family services.
12. The Caring Society was honoured to join Ts iqw Xwéwne, Elders, and Knowledge Keepers at the Solstice Ceremony on December 21, 2025, on the territory of the Tk’emlúps te Secwépemc, where the “Winter Solstice Prayer and Sweetgrass Offering” was shared.
13. The “Winter Solstice Prayer and Sweetgrass Offering” was also shared on social media to encourage all peoples across the country to honour the children and their families.

14. The plan to be submitted by the AFN and Caring Society on December 22, 2025, and the process that follows, will be guided by ceremony to ensure the work happens in a good way.

Other

15. **Expert Advisory Committee.** In a welcome turn of events, Canada has agreed to reconvene and pay the Expert Advisory Committee so that it can discharge its mandate. The Caring Society participated along with AFN and Canada in the first EAC meeting since early 2024, and another is planned for January 2026.

16. **National Webinar on Analysis of National Engagements.** On December 19, 2025, the National Children's Chiefs Commission (Tracy Lavin and Sam Hull) and the Caring Society (Cindy Blackstock) hosted a national webinar to update First Nations leadership, experts, and the public on the analysis of the national engagement submissions. Over 200 attendees participated in this simultaneous translation webinar. Future webinars are planned.

17. **Canada's News Conference on First Nations Child and Family Services.** Canada has announced a news conference on December 22, 2025, at 2:00 PM Eastern Time, regarding First Nations Child and Family Services. We are not aware of what Canada will be announcing, although we note Prime Minister Carney's announcement of "significant, significant resources" at the Assembly of First Nations meeting in December 2025 and are aware of repeated reports that Canada is soliciting First Nations to adopt a regional approach. The Caring Society supports a national framework with regional variations that uphold the minimum standards of the CHRT rulings and the rights of First Nations and their children, to ensure Canada permanently ceases its discriminatory conduct.