



For Immediate Release

**Statement In Support of Aboriginal Children and Families
National Aboriginal Day 2013**

OTTAWA (June 21, 2013) – The Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW) and the Canadian Association for Social Work Education (CASWE) fully support equity of funding for child and family services in Aboriginal communities as compared to other Canadian communities. This is currently not the lived reality for Aboriginal communities as evidenced by the latest National Household Survey that found nearly half of children under 14 in foster care in Canada are Aboriginal.

CASW and CASWE applaud the efforts of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada (FNCFCSC) and Assembly of First Nations (AFN) who, for seven-years, have fought a legal battle with the Government of Canada to have the voices of Aboriginal children and their families heard by the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT).

On February 25, 2013, the CHRT began hearing evidence to determine if Canada's provision of Aboriginal child and family services are flawed, inequitable and therefore discriminatory toward Aboriginal children and families. CASW and CASWE unequivocally supports the position of the FNCFCSC that argues on-reserve children are left with less programming and less quality services, and placed into foster care more often than off-reserve children due to funding gaps on the reserves.

Recently, the United Nations Human Rights Council conducted a peer review consisting of 80 countries that made comments and recommendations on Canada's human rights record. Most of the countries involved in the review commented on human right abuses relating to the Aboriginal people of Canada. The United Nations urged Canada to ensure equity of funding and services between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities. All children merit the opportunity to fulfill their potential; CASW and CASWE urge the Government of Canada to stop blocking progress through the courts and move forward with a fiscal plan that addresses the well documented and established funding gaps.

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