Please note that this annual report reflects activities from September 2017 to August 2018.

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Honouring

The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada (the Caring Society) expresses our 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 Indigenous children, youth and families in 2017/2018. Special thanks to children and youth throughout Canada who are standing with First Nations children and families and to:

Alberta Child and Youth Advocate
Amnesty International Canada
Anderson Family, Norway House Cree Nation
APTN
Assembly of First Nations
Maurina Beadle and Philippa Pictou
Beechwood Cemetery
Bentall Corporation
Books with no Bounds
British Columbia Representative for Children and Youth
Andrew Bryce
The Bryce Family
Canada Council for the Arts
Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions
Canadian Labour Congress
Canadian National Railway Company
Canadian Paediatric Society
Canadian Teachers’ Federation
Cheekbone Beauty
City of Ottawa
Clarke Child and Family Law
Community Foundations of Canada
Conway Baxter Wilson LLP
CUPE
The Edith and Bernard Ennis Foundation
Factor Inwentash, Faculty of Social Work
Gabrielle Fayant-Lewis
Feathers of Hope
Sébastien Grammond
Robert Grant, Gall, Legge, Grant and Munroe, LLP
Indigenous Bar Association
Indigenous Physicians Association
KAIROS Canada
Andrew Koostachin, Jenny Nakogee and Family
Law Society of Upper Canada
Lawson Foundation
Leah Gryfe Designs
Lemay Media and Consulting
Anne Levesque, University of Ottawa
Manitoba First Nations CFS Gala Committee
Manitoba Nurses Union
Many Hands One Dream Coalition
J.W. McConnell Family Foundation
McGill University
McIntyre Media
Lillian Meighen
Michelle Nahane
National Centre for Truth & Reconciliation
National Collaborating Centre on Aboriginal Health
National Film Board
National Indian Child Welfare Association
Alanis Obomsawin
Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, Ontario
Ontario Public Services Employees Union
Osgoode Hall Law School
Ottawa Muslim Women’s Organization
Ousley, Hanvey and Deep, LLP
Power Law
The Printing House
Project of Heart
Public Service Alliance of Canada
Rotary Clubs of Canada
SSHRC
Sandy Tunwell Accounting
Saskatchewan Advocate for Children and Youth
Liam Sharp, Liam Sharp Photography
Stacey Shiner
Sisters of Service
SNAICC (Australia)
The Stevens Family
Symposium Cafe
Harold Tarbell
Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UFCW
UNICEF
UNIFOR
University of Alberta
University of Ottawa
Melanie Vincent
Web Kitchen
Winnipeg Foundation
Don Wright Foundation
**Key Accomplishments**

**Spirit Bear and Friends**

- Spirit Bear published *Spirit Bear and Children Make History*, his first illustrated children’s book. In less than a year, we sold or donated more than 13,000 copies to communities, schools, and hospitals!

- We sold over 1,000 copies of *Spirit Bear’s 2018 calendar* and guide to reconciliation. All proceeds supported child and youth lead reconciliation initiatives!

- Spirit Bear received an honorary Bearister degree from Osgoode Hall Law School and was entered into the Bear by the Indigenous Bar Association!

- We launched the Reconciliation Ambearssadors program, communities around the world can host a teddy bear ambassador to learn about reconciliation and support the legacy of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission!

- We published a free learning guide for *Spirit Bear and Children Make History* to teach about equity, reconciliation, and how kids can make a difference!

**In the Spotlight**

- We published four newsletters featuring 43 articles (including three guest contributions)!

- We released a documentary entitled *It Takes All of Us to Enforce the Law*. This film explores the history and significance of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal case through interviews with the Caring Society’s pro bono legal team!

- We appeared in the news over 330 times, including in at least 130 Canadian and 16 international publications!

- We published two issues of the First Peoples Child & Family Review. Including a beary special child and youth edition, featuring submissions by young leaders in love and kindness!

- We published four newsletters featuring 43 articles (including three guest contributions)!

**The Spirit Bear Plan to End Inequalities in Public Services for First Nations Children, Youth, and Families** was unanimously endorsed by the Assembly of First Nations, the Chiefs of Ontario, and supported by Indigenous and non-Indigenous people around the world!
**Key Accomplishments (continued)**

**Reconciliation in Action**
- At least 1,000 children, youth, and adults came to Parliament Hill on February 15 to celebrate Have a Heart Day!
- We introduced the Touchstones of Hope to more than 300 enthusiastic students, including comprehensive training for at least 50 participants!
- We announced Reconciling History, an upcoming self-guided walking tour through downtown Ottawa, telling the true story of Dr. P.H. Bryce and Duncan Campbell Scott!
- To support community participation in Honouring Memories, Planting Dreams, we distributed hundreds of wildflower seed packs across the country!

**Big Win for the Kids**
- The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal issued a Fifth legal order on First Nations child welfare. The Tribunal ordered Canada to provide equitable funding for the actual cost of providing services to First Nations children and families!
- Since May 2017, over 60,000 Jordan’s Principle cases were approved. Our infographic relaying how to access services through Jordan’s Principle was viewed by over 75,000 people and counting!

**Making New Friends**
- We visited 9 different provinces and territories in Canada and 5 other countries including: Columbia, Ireland, Mexico, Switzerland, and the United States of America!
- The inaugural Jordan’s Principle scholarship was awarded to three outstanding First Nations students for their commitment to Indigenous children’s health and community service!
- We completed 120 public education events attended by thousands of people of all ages and backgrounds!
- We gained over 1,800 new followers on the @CaringSociety Twitter account and 1,500 new page likes on Facebook. Our online audience includes more than 27,345 followers!
- We gained over 450 new campaign supporters with a total of more than 71,000 declarations of support for I am a Witness, Jordan’s Principle, Shannen’s Dream, and more!
- We announced Reconciling History, an upcoming self-guided walking tour through downtown Ottawa, telling the true story of Dr. P.H. Bryce and Duncan Campbell Scott!
About Us

Building on the interest of First Nations child and family services leaders to create a national networking organization, the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada (the Caring Society) was developed at the Squamish First Nation in 1998 at a national meeting of First Nations child and family service agencies. Meeting delegates agreed that a national non-profit organization was required to provide research, policy, professional development and networking to support First Nations child and family service agencies in caring for First Nations children, youth and families. An interim board was elected and the plan was approved at a second national meeting at Kingsclear First Nation in 1999.

The Caring Society Board of Directors

Raymond Shingoose, President, Yorkton Tribal Council Child and Family Services Inc., Saskatchewan
Kenn Richard, Vice-President, Native Child and Family Services Toronto, Ontario
Judy Levi, Treasurer of the Board, New Brunswick
Elise Flette, Board Member, Manitoba
Marilyn LeFrank, Board Member, Mi’kmaq Confederacy of Prince Edward Island, PEI
Koren Lightning-Earle, Board Member, Kasokhawen Child Wellness Society, Alberta

The Caring Society Staff

Cindy Blackstock, Executive Director
Andrea Auger, Reconciliation and Research Manager
Jennifer King, Reconciliation and Policy Coordinator
Brittany Mathew, Reconciliation and Research Coordinator
Robin McLeod, Youth and Reconciliation Coordinator

The Caring Society works to ensure the safety and well-being of First Nations youth and their families through education initiatives, public policy campaigns and providing quality resources to support communities. Using a reconciliation framework that addresses contemporary hardships for Indigenous families in ways that uplift all Canadians, the Caring Society champions culturally based equity for First Nations children and their families so that they can grow up safely at home, be healthy, achieve their dreams, celebrate their languages and culture and be proud of who they are. The Caring Society proudly works with our partners in Canada and around the world to promote the rights of Indigenous children.

Landon Pearson, Board Member, Carleton University, Ontario
Teresa Steinhauer, Mamowe Opikihawasowin Tribal Chief Child and Family Services West Society, Alberta
Theresa Stevens, Board Member, Anishinaabe Abinoojii Family Services, Ontario
Mary Teegee, Board Member, Carrier Sekani Family Services, British Columbia
Kyra Wilson, Board Member, Long Plain First Nation, Manitoba

Daxton Rhead, Child and Youth Engagement Assistant
Marc St. Dennis, Editor, First Peoples Child & Family Review

The Caring Society also acknowledges the contributions of Tammy Morgan and Brandi-Lee Fisher for their dedication and service to the Caring Society and First Nations children, youth and families.
Spirit Bear and Friends!

fn Auringsociety.com/SpiritBear

Spirit Bear (Bear-rister)

This has been a bear-y exciting year for Spirit Bear as he continues to build his growing collection of resources for reconciliation. Like bears his own age, Spirit Bear opened his own Twitter, Instagram and Facebook accounts. It turns out he is a popular am-bear-ssador as he gained over 1,500 followers in less than a year!

Carrier Sekani Family Services gifted Spirit Bear to the Caring Society in 2007, and he has been a very busy bear ever since! He has been an honourary witness for the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal case. He represents the 165,000 children and their families affected by the case, and the thousands of other children who stood with them for justice. Spirit Bear has attended all of the hearings at the Tribunal, in Federal Court and the Federal Court of Appeal, and is a huge hit with all the children and adults who come to the hearings.

This year, after receiving an Honourary Bear-rister degree from Osgoode Law School, Spirit Bear became an Honourary Mem-bear of the Indigenous Bar Association. He also was thrilled to become a mem-bear of the Common Law and Civil Law Honour Societies at the University of Ottawa.
Bears

Spirit Bear and Children Make History

Spirit Bear is now a published author! After months of hard work and a little help from his friends Cindy Blackstock, Eddy Robinson and Amanda Strong, Spirit Bear’s first book was released in December 2017. *Spirit Bear and Children Make History* tells the story of the case for First Nations children at the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (<fnwitness.ca>). Aimed broadly at children in Grades 2 to 6, *Spirit Bear and Children Make History* engages
a younger audience in learning about the case, and affirms the important role of children in the reconciliation movement. Inspired by the voices of children, the story highlights the power of people of all ages and backgrounds to make a difference for First Nations children and families. A French translation, Spirit Bear et les enfants passent à l’histoire was published in May 2018, just in time for Bear Witness Day on May 10 (fncaringsociety.com/BearWitness).

Responses to Spirit Bear and Children Make History has been paw-nomenal! Senator Murray Sinclair, UNICEF Canada and the Canadian Pediatric Society are just a few of the individuals and groups who have expressed support. The book has also received significant media interest, with coverage by CBC, CTV and APTN News. In April 2018, Spirit Bear and Children Make History was endorsed by Indspire, a national Indigenous-led charity that invests in the education of Indigenous people, as a Successful Practice in K–12 education!

More than 13,000 copies of Spirit Bear and Children Make History have been sold since its release in December 2017. In addition to books sold, the Caring Society has donated over 400 books to low income schools, teachers, universities, and children’s hospitals and rehabilitation centers. Spirit Bear’s book is available for purchase online, in English and French, through book distributor Fitzhenry & Whiteside Limited at fitzhenry.ca. Given that Spirit Bear is a member of the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, a Carrier translation of the book is also underway, to be released in Fall 2018. We look forward to partnering with students, schools and communities to translate Spirit Bear’s book into other Indigenous languages in the coming year.

Spirit Bear celebrated the release of his first book with (what else?) a Teddy Bear Tea Party! Ninety children from four schools gathered at the University of Ottawa last December for a bear-themed book reading, complete with bear hats, bear cupcakes, and sheep popcorn bags. A second Teddy Bear Tea Party and book launch was held in Edmonton, Alberta, in February 2018, with over 150 elementary students and special guest Don Iveson (Mayor of Edmonton and TRC honourary witness).

The Caring Society is proud to offer a free learning guide to support families, educators, and communities in using Spirit Bear’s book to teach about equity, reconciliation, and how kids can make a difference. Spirit Bear and Children Make History addresses a significant gap in reconciliation education resources. While there are some excellent early learning books available on cultural teachings, Spirit Bear and Children Make History is the only book we know of that links reconciliation to social justice and demonstrates how children, including young children, have taken action to implement the TRC Calls to Action. Spirit Bear’s learning guide was released in May 2018 and is available in French and English on the Caring Society website.
Spirit Bear on the Big Screen

Get your popcorn ready...Spirit Bear is about to make his movie debut! The Caring Society is thrilled to be working with award-winning Michif filmmaker and artist Amanda Strong, of Spotted Fawn Productions, to produce a 20-minute stop-motion animation based on Spirit Bear and Children Make History. The film will be available in English and French, with an expected release date of Fall 2019. The Caring Society extends warm thanks to the Unifor Canadian Community Fund and the Canadian National Railway Company for their generous support of this and other Spirit Bear reconciliation initiatives.

Coming Soon...

We are excited to announce that Spirit Bear is working on a second book! The new story will follow Spirit Bear as he learns from his Elders about residential schools, Shannen’s Dream for safe and comfy schools and equitable education (shannensdream.ca), and children’s engagement with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action. As with Spirit Bear’s first book, the Caring Society will work with educators to develop a free Learning Guide, in English and French, to accompany the story. Spirit Bear plans to release his new book, via the Caring Society’s PAWS Publishing Den, in Winter 2018.

Spirit Bear Plan

fncaringsociety.com/spirit-bear-plan

The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (the Tribunal) February 2018 non-compliance order (2018 CHRT 4) calls on Canada to cost out the extent of the underfunding of public services for First Nations children and families, and identify actual needs. This finding by the Tribunal is consistent with the Spirit Bear Plan to End Inequities in Federally funded Public Services for First Nations Children, Youth and Families (the Spirit Bear Plan). Proposed by the Caring Society, the Spirit Bear Plan calls on Parliament to ask the Parliamentary Budget Officer to cost out the shortfalls in all federally funded public services provided to First Nations children and propose solutions to fix it.

Reconciliation Ambearssadors Program

fncaringsociety.com/Reconciliation-Ambearssadors

The Reconciliation Ambearssadors Program invites groups to host one of the Caring Society’s Reconciliation Ambearssadors (ambassadors) who will guide the group through a year of free ways to make a difference for First Nations children and promote the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action. Hosting groups are urged to “teach” the bear Indigenous languages and stories, and make sure the bear joins in cultural activities so it becomes a well-known Reconciliation Ambearssador in the community!

The Caring Society asks that groups and their bears work alongside Elders and update the Caring Society on what they have been learning. After their time with their bear, groups write a letter or prepare a video explaining all they have learned and their Ambearssador’s story. Reconciliation Ambearssadors are working with groups across Canada and even as far away as Australia!
Child and Youth Led Campaigns

The Caring Society believes all children, including First Nations children, have a right to grow up safely with their families, go to good schools and be healthy and proud of who they are. These rights are enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP). The Canadian Government has ratified the UNCRC and has expressed support for UNDRIP and thus we work actively to ensure the realization of these rights for First Nations children, youth and their families.

The Caring Society believes that meaningful reconciliation engages young people in learning about our collective past and thinking creatively about the future. Children and young people have a clear sense between right and wrong, and engaging them in reconciliation and social justice nurtures compassion, moral courage and bolsters self-confidence.

We believe that each of us can take peaceful and respectful actions to help make a better Canada for Indigenous children and their families. The Caring Society provides opportunities for educators and young people to take part in activities and events where they can feel empowered to make a difference.

Jordan’s Principle

jordansprinciple.ca

Jordan’s Principle is a child-first principle named in memory of Jordan River Anderson, a First Nations child from Norway House Cree Nation in Manitoba. Born with complex medical needs, Jordan spent more than two years unnecessarily in hospital while the Province of Manitoba and the Canadian federal government argued over who should pay for his in-home care. Jordan died in the hospital at the age of five years old, never having spent a day in his family home. Jordan’s Principle ensures that First Nations children can access all public services when they need them.

Services need to be reflective of First Nations distinct cultural needs, take full account of the historical disadvantage linked to decolonization, and without any service denials, delays or disruptions related to First Nations status.

In January 2016, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (the Tribunal) ordered the government to properly implement Jordan’s Principle. The Tribunal issued a series of legally binding orders that the Canadian federal government has an obligation to fulfill that include:

• applying Jordan’s Principle to all First Nations children living on and off reserve;
• applying Jordan’s Principle based on the needs of the child (not just limited to the normative standard of care);
• ensuring that administrative procedures do not delay service provision; and
• responding to most cases within 48 hours.

Shannen’s Dream

shannensdream.ca

Shannen Koostachin, a youth education advocate from the Attawapiskat First Nation in Ontario, had a dream: safe and comfy schools and culturally based education for First Nations children and youth. Many First Nations schools receive less funding per student than provincial and territorial schools, many also do not provide a safe and appropriate learning environment. Shannen worked tirelessly to try to convince the federal government to give First Nations children a proper education. Unfortunately, she passed away in a car accident at the age of 15 before her dream could come true. Shannen remains an important role model for Indigenous and non-Indigenous children and young people who continue to carry her dream for safe and comfy schools for all First Nations children in Canada.

In celebration of Shannen’s Dream, an annual walk and letter writing event has been held since 2011. Our Dreams Matter Too invites supporters
to write letters to elected officials in support of culturally based equity for First Nations children and youth. Since 2011, Our Dreams Matter Too has been supported by over 14,000 walkers throughout Canada.

I Am a Witness: Canadian Human Rights Tribunal

fnwitness.ca

In January 2016, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (the Tribunal) ruled in a landmark human rights case that the Canadian federal government is responsible for racially discriminating against 165,000 First Nations children by providing inequitable child welfare services to First Nations children and their families, and failing to implement Jordan’s Principle.

Since that time, the Tribunal has issued four non-compliance orders against the Government of Canada (2016 CHRT 10; 2016 CHRT 16; 2017 CHRT 14; 2018 CHRT 4). The Tribunal issued the latest non-compliance order on February 1, 2018, admonishing the Canadian federal government for its continued reliance on the incremental approach to equality that fostered the discrimination and spurred the initial complaint. The order finds that the Canadian government’s focus has been on internal financial considerations and not the best interests of children. The Tribunal notes that the Canadian government admits to lacking the data to address some of the immediate relief orders and has unilaterally decided to address the immediate relief orders in the mid-term or long-term without seeking leave from the Tribunal. The non-compliance order calls on the Canadian federal government to cost out the extent of the underfunding and to identify actual needs. This finding by the Tribunal is consistent with the Spirit Bear Plan to End Inequities in Federally Funded Public Services for First Nations Children, Youth and Families (the Spirit Bear Plan).

The Caring Society expresses our deep appreciation to our legal team, comprised of Sarah Clarke, Anne Levesque and David Taylor.
The Caring Society at Work: Services, Events, Projects

Caring Society Services

First Peoples Child & Family Review
fncaringsociety.com/first-peoples-child-family-review

The First Peoples Child & Family Review is an interdisciplinary journal that honours the voices, perspectives, and knowledges of First Peoples through research, critical analyses, community stories, and artistic expression. Submissions are accepted in written and audiovisual formats, and in English, French or Indigenous languages. The Caring Society welcomes submissions by Elders, academics, community knowledge holders, and children and youth.

The First Peoples Child & Family Review is available free of charge online so persons of all ages and incomes can access the journal.

The First Peoples Child & Family Review has been in publication for nearly 15 years and is well known for creating new opportunities within the world of peer reviewed journals. Our legacy of innovation continued in early 2018 with the publication of issue 12(2). This edition contained written and audiovisual submissions authored entirely by children and youth, and reviewed by a panel of their peers. Young people are experts in love and fairness, and it is important that every possible opportunity is provided to hear and learn from these young leaders.

Issue 12(2) was published in the summer of 2018 and featured an inspiring mix of academic articles, poetry, drawings, speeches, and community narratives. Thank you to all of the peer reviewers who provided thoughtful feedback and to the authors for sharing their knowledge, experience and stories.

Once again pushing the envelope of what entails an academic and peer reviewed journal, the Caring Society is excited to announce that issue 13(2), which is scheduled for publication in late 2018, will be our first audiovisual edition. This includes, but is certainly not limited to: films, audio recordings, music, podcasts, interviews, drawings and any other format that is not written. By publishing an audiovisual edition of the First Peoples Child & Family Review the Caring Society is providing a platform to recognize the importance of visual and audio expressions of Indigenous knowledge.

Online Research Database
fncaringsociety.com/publications/search

The Caring Society hosts one of the largest free resource databases on Indigenous children, youth and families in Canada. The database is a great resource for students, teachers, researchers and the general public. Resources in the database are accompanied by annotated descriptions and can be searched by topic, title or author. The database resources consist of literature reviews, reports, guides, films, studies, journal articles and much more. The Caring Society is excited to announce that the database will see some improvements made in the coming months along with the website improvements.
The Caring Society uses the Touchstones of Hope as our reconciliation framework. The principles (culture and language, holistic approach, structural interventions, self-determination and non-discrimination) and process (truth-telling, acknowledging, restoring and relating) can be usefully applied in a variety of contexts and organizations.

For a number of years, the Caring Society has worked with and guided the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Canada to include the Touchstones of Hope for their work with and for Indigenous peoples. In June 2018, representatives from the UFCW participated in a one-day Touchstones of Hope: Reconciliation in Canada workshop as part of their second annual Indigenous Day of Celebration.

Following three successful Touchstones of Hope engagement sessions in 2010, Kids Help Phone reached out to the Caring Society again in 2017. After developing more content for Indigenous young people, the organization wanted to continue with their Touchstones of Hope journey. In June 2018, the Caring Society facilitated a two-day Touchstones of Hope train-the-trainer session.

Organizations like the UFCW Canada and Kids Help Phone show us that the Touchstones principles, while interpreted in unique contexts, can serve as a foundation for respectful relationship building with First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities.

Just as the Touchstones can be interpreted differently by organizations, they can also be interpreted in various ways by young people. For example, this past year a youth volunteer at the Caring Society developed a bilingual Touchstones of Hope youth poster based on the process of reconciliation. It describes what reconciliation is and how young people can participate.

The Touchstones of Hope website has undergone some changes! We have been working hard to include updated information and to ensure access is user-friendly.

The First Nations Children’s Action Research and Education Service (FNCARES) is a partnership between the Caring Society and the University of Alberta’s Faculty of Education. FNCARES focuses on translating research on structural disadvantage for First Nations children into practical, community-based solutions, creating resources and holding numerous educational events throughout the year.

In 2017-2018, FNCARES applied for and received a three-year research grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Council of Canada (SSHRC) for Just because we’re small doesn’t mean we can’t stand tall: Reconciliation education in the elementary classroom. Led by Dr. Cindy Blackstock (McGill University) and co-investigators Dr. Nicholas Ng-A-Fook (University of Ottawa) and Dr. Susan Bennett (Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario), a team of dedicated reconciliation educators from across the country will study the impacts of the Caring Society’s social justice–based reconciliation campaigns on students and teachers at the elementary level. This research will inform the creation of professional development workshops, sample lesson plans, and age-appropriate resources to enable educators to effectively address the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action in regards to transforming the educational system in Canada.

In September 2017, FNCARES hosted a public lecture by Dr. Alika Lafontaine and Dr. Cindy Blackstock entitled Incremental Equality = Discrimination: First Nations and Public Services. Attendees included faculty and students from Medicine & Dentistry and Public Health, as well as health care practitioners and other members of the community. All joined in a lively
and informative discussion after the talk. A special thank you to the sponsors for this event, including the University of Alberta’s Division of Community Engagement, Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry, and the Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights.

In October 2017, FNCARES screened the film *Dis)placed: Indigenous Youth and the Child Welfare System* at the Centre for Global Citizenship Education & Research 2017 Conference at the University of Alberta. The conference attracts scholars from around the world, and attendees were fully engaged. Donovan Waskahat, one of the youths featured in the film, performed a spoken word piece after the film and, as panelists, Donovan

Top: Charlene Bearhead introduces Mayor Iveson at the Teddy Bear Tea Party and Book Launch; Middle: Cindy Blackstock doing a reading at the Book Launch with the help of Spirit Bear and Edbearton; Bottom: Students and Charlene Bearhead at the Book Launch.
Waskahat and Jesse Downing reflected on their experiences as youth within the system. Derek Chewka, Indigenous educator and former social worker, spoke about trying to make changes for Indigenous children and youth from within the system. Thanks to emcee Angela Wolfe, Associate Director of the Aboriginal Teacher Education Program at the University of Alberta, and to collaborators at CGCER for inviting FNCARES and for co-sponsoring this event.

On February 5, 2018, Spirit Bear landed in Edmonton to attend FNCARES' Teddy Bear Tea Party and Book Launch for the Western Canadian debut of his book, *Spirit Bear and Children Make History*. One hundred and fifty students from Grades 2 to 5 held their own stuffed bears as they listened attentively to Cindy Blackstock, Edmonton Mayor Don Iveson, and six other special guests reading about Spirit Bear standing up for First Nations kids at the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal. Thanks to the wonderful hosts Charlene and Wilson Bearhead; to the co-sponsors at the Faculty of Law, University of Alberta; to Dr. Hadley Friedland and her Indigenous Peoples and the Law class; and to all of the wonderful volunteers for this event.

In June 2018, FNCARES partnered with Charlene Bearhead for a film screening of *Finding Peter Bryce: Story of a National Crime* (Dir. Peter Campbell, 2018) and panel discussion on advocacy and resistance from within colonial systems. In the early 19th century, Dr. Peter Henderson Bryce spoke truth to power from within the Department of Indian Affairs, the colonial government department that created and oversaw Indian Residential Schools. Following the short film, panellists Walter Brettton, Dr. Jill Konkin, and Charlene Bearhead discussed if and how it is possible to resist colonialism from within contemporary institutions and systems, and audience members shared their own experiences and insights.

### Caring Society Events

#### Have a Heart Day

[fncairingsociety.com/have-a-heart]

Have a Heart Day, celebrated annually since 2012, is one of the Caring Society’s main events. It is a child- and youth-led reconciliation event that brings together caring Canadians to help ensure First Nations children have the services they need to grow up safely at home, get a good education, be healthy, and be proud of who they are. Thousands of supporters across Canada celebrate Have a Heart day by hosting their own events in their communities or attending the Parliament Hill event in Ottawa. Have a Heart Day also invites Canadians of all ages to send Valentine letters to the Prime Minister or their Member of Parliament asking for love, fairness and equity for First Nations children.

Have a Heart Day has grown bigger with every passing year. Supporters registered their Have a Heart Day event on the Caring Society website and details were displayed on a Canada-wide map. In 2018, there were more than 1,000

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*Finding Peter Bryce Film Screening poster.*

Celebrating Have a Heart Day 2018 on Parliament Hill.
students and participants from 21 different schools and community groups gathered on Parliament Hill to celebrate Have a Heart Day. There were over 50 events across Canada and approximately 10,900 letters were sent to elected officials in support of Have a Heart Day. Have a Heart Day can be celebrated many different ways, including:

• sending a Valentine’s Day card or letter supporting Have a Heart Day to the Prime Minister or Member of Parliament;
• hosting a Valentine’s Day party to raise awareness in your school or community;
• spreading the world through social media and use the hashtag #HaveaHeartDay.

Bear Witness Day

fncaringsociety.com/BearWitness

Celebrated on May 10, supporters of all ages bring their teddy bears to work, school or even daycare to “bear witness” and support the full and proper implementation of Jordan’s Principle in honour of Jordan River Anderson.

In its landmark 2016 ruling, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (the Tribunal) ordered the Canadian federal government to fully implement Jordan’s Principle by May 10, 2016. However, First Nations children and their families continue to face discrimination in accessing government services due to the federal government’s failure to comply with the Tribunal’s orders. In May 2017, the Tribunal issued a third non-compliance order finding Canada’s approach to Jordan’s Principle to be unlawful and discriminatory (2017 CHRT 14). In total, the Tribunal has released four non-compliance orders with the latest order being released in February 2018 (2016 CHRT 10; 2016 CHRT 16; 2017 CHRT 14; 2018 CHRT 4).

This year, Bear Witness Day was celebrated by hundreds of young people and adults across Canada. There was a Bear Witness Day party and a bear-thday party for Spirit Bear hosted by the Senate of Canada on May 10, 2018. Students, Senators, Members of Parliament and their teddy bears were in attendance as Spirit Bear and his friends celebrated by having lots of cake and goodies!

Caring Canadians can also celebrate Bear Witness Day by posting photos of their teddy bears on social media using the hashtags #JordansPrinciple and #BearWitnessDay. Bear Witness Day has seen tremendous support online since 2017 with the number of participants increasing every year. In both 2017 and 2018, #JordansPrinciple was trending on Twitter for the duration of May 10, making it one of the day’s most popular hashtags.
Honouring Memories, Planting Dreams
fnccaringsociety.com/honouring-memories-planting-dreams

Celebrated in the Spring of each year, Honouring Memories, Planting Dreams is an annual garden event that invites caring Canadians of all ages to plant Heart Gardens in honour of the residential school survivors and their families, as well as the legacy of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. Each heart planted represents the memory of a child lost to the residential school system, and the act of planting represents that individual’s commitment to Reconciliation.

In 2018, Heart Garden events were hosted in seven different provinces across the Canada and over 400 of the Caring Society’s new Honouring Memories, Planting Dreams Wildflower seed packets were distributed. Heart Gardens were registered on our website and displayed on a Canada-wide map.

Other Caring Society Projects

Website

In 2012, the Caring Society completed its last major website overhaul so we decided that it was time for some “spring cleaning.” In May 2018, we began work with WebKitchen and Leah Gryfe Designs to overhaul our website content and re-develop some of the layout and design to be more user-friendly.

We underwent reviews in order to make our website better. Our co-operative education student made a list of our most popular pages so that we could better highlight these pages (school resources and events are among the most visited). Our web team at WebKitchen did a complete site audit which guided us in archiving and deleting outdated content, re-organizing the site to be more user-friendly, identifying sections or pages needing French translation, and providing layouts that would be mobile compatible. Leah Gryfe Designs provided a cleaner look for the site, while also making sure our friend Spirit Bear became a more central part of our site.

With the launch of the site in September of 2018, website users can expect to find:

- centralized reconciliation and educator/school resources – they will be available on the home page and educator resources will be available in one location as opposed to several;
- less written text on individual pages;
- updated content throughout;
- a fully responsive layout that will be compatible with both desktop and mobile devices;
- a wider variety of French resources; and
- a video in ASL!

As we progress with our updated website, we are looking forward to continuing to provide French resources, creating Indigenous language resources (like Spirit Bear’s book), and providing more updated reconciliation/school and educator resources, including information sheets.

Jordan’s Principle Scholarship

In partnership with Norway House Cree Nation, the Caring Society announced the inaugural Jordan’s Principle Scholarship for First Nations students in January 2018. Christopher Severight, Kelsey Kerr and Kennan Andrew were presented with the scholarship in honour of their commitment to Indigenous children’s health and community service. May they always hold Jordan River Anderson in their hearts and minds, and remain champions for Jordan’s Principle as well as equity for all Indigenous children.
Future Directions

Our vision of Canada is one where all First Nations children are loved, respected and honoured. We know just what to do to make that vision a reality and it will require the education and active engagement of caring Canadians and organizations to make it happen. Over the next year we look forward to making the following visions a reality:

• Continue to work with the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal and the Canadian federal government on First Nations child welfare and implementation of Jordan’s Principle.
• Write, illustrate and publish Spirit Bear’s second book with accompanying education resources.
• Expand the Reconciliation Ambearssadors program and promote reconciliation initiatives for the Caring Society’s ever-growing bear pack.
• Expand the Reconciling History project to truthfully portray Canada’s collective past in order to honour reconciliation.

• Support First Nations child and family service agencies, governments and stakeholders’ engagement in the Touchstones of Hope Movement.
• Update the Touchstones of Hope toolkit.
• Publish two editions of the First Peoples Child & Family Review and continue updating the online database.
• Develop more educational resources for Shannen’s Dream, Jordan’s Principle and the promotion of children’s engagement in research and positive social change.
• Host School Is a Time for Dreams, Have a Heart Day, Honouring Memories, Planting Dreams and Bear Witness Day for another year!

A warm thank you to our members, volunteers and the many thousands of caring citizens of all ages who have joined the effort to ensure culturally based equity for First Nations children, youth and their families.
Want to Make a Difference for Indigenous Children?

Go on line to fncairingsociety.com to learn more and join the movement for culturally based equity for First Nations children, young people and families. You will find seven ways you can make a difference for Indigenous children and youth in under 15 minutes and think about supporting the Caring Society by becoming a member or making an on-line donation at fncairingsociety.com/donate.