



First Nations Child & Family
Caring Society of Canada

Annual Report

2016 | 2017



Please note that this annual report reflects activities from September 2016 to August 2017.

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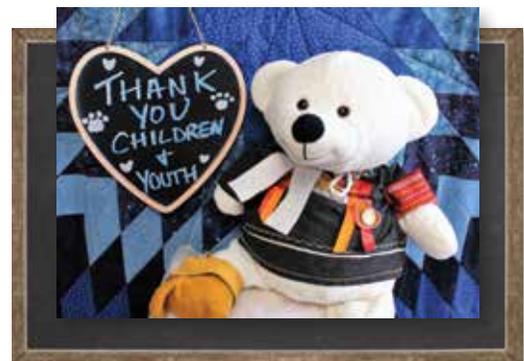
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Honouring

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 2016/2017. Special thanks to children and youth throughout Canada who are standing with First Nations children and families and to:

Alanis Obomsawin	Law Foundation of Ontario	Public Service Alliance of Canada
Alberta Child and Youth Advocate	Law Society of Upper Canada	The Printing House
Amnesty International Canada	Lawson Foundation	Robert Grant, Gall, Legge, Grant and Munroe, LLP
Andrew Bryce	Leah Gryfe Designs	Rotary Clubs of Canada
Anne Levesque, University of Ottawa	Lemay Media and Consulting	SSHRC
APTN	Liam Sharp, Liam Sharp Photography	Sandy Tunwell Accounting
Assembly of First Nations	Lillian Meighen	Saskatchewan Advocate for Children and Youth
Anderson Family, Norway House Cree Nation	Manitoba First Nations CFS Gala Committee	Sébastien Grammond, University of Ottawa
Beechwood Cemetery	Manitoba Nurses Union	Sisters of Service
Bentall Corporation	Many Hands One Dream Coalition	SNAICC (Australia)
British Columbia Representative for Children and Youth	Maurina Beadle and Philippa Pictou	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
Canada Council for the Arts	McGill University	The Bryce Family
Canadian Federation of Nurses Unions	Melanie Vincent	The Circle on Philanthropy and Aboriginal Peoples in Canada
Community Foundations of Canada	National Centre for Truth & Reconciliation	The Stevens Family
Canadian Labour Congress	National Collaborating Centre on Aboriginal Health	United Church of Canada
Canadian Paediatric Society	National Film Board	UFCW
Canadian Teachers' Federation	National Indian Child Welfare Association	UNICEF
Clarke Child and Family Law	Office of the Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth, Ontario	UNIFOR
CUPE	Ontario Public Services Employees Union	University of Alberta
Don Wright Foundation	Osgoode Hall Law School	University of Ottawa
Factor Inwentash, Faculty of Social Work	Ousley, Hanvey and Deep, LLP	Winnipeg Foundation
Feathers of Hope	Power Law	Web Kitchen
Harold Tarbell	Presbyterian Church in Canada	
Indigenous Bar Association	Productions Cazabon	
Indigenous Physicians Association	Project of Heart	
Jith Paul		
J.W. McConnell Family Foundation		
KAIROS Canada		
Andrew Koostachin, Jenny Nakogee and Family		



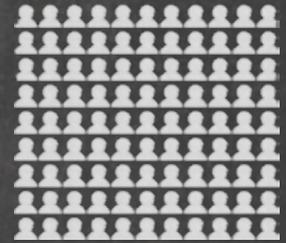
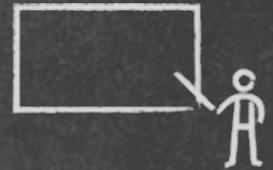
Key Accomplishments for 2016/2017



2 ISSUES of the First Peoples Child and Family Review were published in 2016/2017. Between the two issues, we went forward with fourteen manuscripts, ranging from creative submissions to academic publications to personal stories.



We completed **87 PUBLIC EDUCATION EVENTS** attended by **OVER 14,000 PEOPLE!**



We trained over **50 TRAINEES** on the Touchstones of Hope Reconciliation Movement!

We visited **9 DIFFERENT PROVINCES AND TERRITORIES** in Canada and **5 OTHER COUNTRIES** including: **AUSTRALIA, COLUMBIA, ENGLAND, SWITZERLAND** and the **UNITED STATES!**



On **MAY 10, 2017**, in an extraordinary show of support for Jordan's Principle, people from all over brought their teddy bears to daycare, school and work to participate in Bear Witness Day. By mid-morning, **#JORDANSPRINCIPLE WAS TRENDING ON SOCIAL MEDIA!**

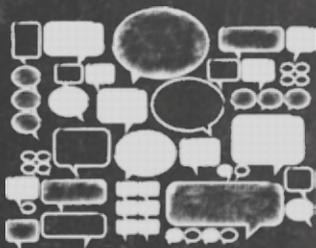


In **MARCH, 2017**, after three days of hearings at the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, **CANADA IS FOUND TO BE NON-COMPLIANT WITH THE TRIBUNAL'S 2016 DECISION ON JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE** and a third set of orders is released by the Tribunal in regards to the full, proper and immediate implementation of Jordan's Principle.



OVER 70 HAVE A HEART DAY EVENTS were held across Canada in 2017, and at least **6,500 VALENTINE LETTERS** were sent to elected officials. In Ottawa,

700 STUDENTS from **20 DIFFERENT SCHOOLS** gathered on Parliament Hill to share letters, poems and songs asking Canada to "have a heart" and treat First Nations children fairly!



We expanded our reach with **OVER 50 MEDIA INTERVIEWS**

In 2017, **OVER 7,000 HONOURING MEMORIES, PLANTING DREAMS WILDFLOWER SEED BOOKMARKS** were distributed to support the planting of Heart Gardens and celebration of reconciliation!



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

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 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, get a good education and be healthy and 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.

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

Elsie Flette Board Member, Manitoba

Marilyn LeFrank Board Member, Mi'kmaq Confederacy of Prince Edward Island, PEI

Koren Lightning-Earle Board Member, Kasohkewew Child Wellness Society, Alberta

Derek Montour Board Member, Kahnawake Shakotia'takehnhas Community Services, Quebec

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

The Caring Society Staff

Cindy Blackstock Executive Director

Andrea Auger Reconciliation and Research Manager

Jennifer King Reconciliation and Policy Coordinator

Robin McLeod Child and Youth Engagement

Marc St. Dennis Reconciliation and Research Coordinator

Brittany Mathews Executive Assistant

The Caring Society also acknowledges the contributions of **Danielle Bigras**, **Lynne Hogan**, **Tammy Morgan** and **Jocelyn Wattam** for their dedication and service to the Caring Society and First Nations children, youth and families.

The Caring Society Bears

Spirit Bear (age 10) Witnessed all hearings related to the Canadian Human Rights Case on First Nations children. Regalia made by Red Cedar Gifts. Original Hudson Bay trading beads gifted by Alanis Obomsawin and Truth and Reconciliation Commission pin from former TRC chairperson Murray Sinclair. Spirit Bear enjoys meeting children and likes cookies. He received an Honorary Barrister degree from Osgoode Law School this year and is excited about his book coming out later this year teaching children about reconciliation!

Era Bear (age 4): Era Bear joined the Caring Society in 2013, seven years after the Canadian Human Rights Case on First Nations children was launched. In many First Nations traditions, seven years marks a new generation, and so, Era Bear joined Spirit Bear to witness the proceedings.

Cedar Bear (age 1) Spirit Bear's sister. Named by Andrea Auger. Hat made by the Nuu-chah-nulth Nation. Regularly goes with Spirit Bear to the hearings and to visit children and youth across Canada.

Memengwe (age 1): Spirit Bear's sister. Named by children at Pierre Elliott Trudeau School with the guidance of an Algonquin Elder. Regalia made by Caitlin Tolley. Attended the graduation of students at Pierre Elliott Trudeau School this year.

Barney Bear (age 1) Gifted by Nishnabe Aski Nation Elder Barney Battiste. Loves children and going to schools.

Cindy the Sheep (age 1½) The real Cindy the Sheep (named after Cindy Blackstock) lives on a farm in British Columbia. Cindy the Sheep has won agricultural awards and the stuffy version of Cindy the sheep will be featured in Spirit Bear's upcoming book to promote diversity!



The Caring Society at Work: Services, Events, Projects

Caring Society Services

First Peoples Child and Family Review

The *First Peoples Child and 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. We accept submissions in different formats (video, voice recording, written) and in various languages: English, French or Indigenous languages (with English translation provided).



We welcome submissions by academics, Elders and community members and encourage children and youth to contribute to our First Peoples Child and Family Review community.

Issue 11(2) was published in December, 2016. It is a special Edition on the 60s Scoop and Indigenous child welfare, in partnership with the Thunderbird Circle (Indigenous Social Work Educator's Network) of the Canadian Association for Social Work education. Issue 12(1) was published in August, 2016. We were honoured to include youth perspectives for this general call. Between the two issues, we went forward with fourteen manuscripts, ranging from creative submissions to academic publications to personal stories. Thank you to all of the peer reviewers who provided thoughtful feedback and to the authors for sharing their knowledge, experience and stories.

Issue 12(2) will be published in December, 2017. We are thrilled to announce that this issue will be our second child and youth edition! Canada is celebrating its 150th birthday. However, the events of the past century and a half have not always been cause for celebration. From the residential school system and the 60s Scoop, to today's overrepresentation of Indigenous children in child welfare, it is important to acknowledge the discrimination that Indigenous children continue to face. This special edition is a chance for children and youth across Canada to share their thoughts on the past 150 years, along with their hopes for the future.

Online Research Database

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. Database users can search by topic, title or author and locate annotated descriptions of relevant resources. Although the database does not include full copies of the resources, the annotations do provide the information needed to access a copy via libraries, by visiting the URL or contacting the publisher.

Search the free database at fncaringsociety.com/publications/search.

Touchstones of Hope

The Touchstones of Hope is a set of principles to guide a reconciliation process within all aspects of society and is the basis for a respectful and meaningful relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. The success of the movement rests on the fact that it is a community driven process that fosters relationships and provides opportunities to have respectful conversations about reconciliation. This



includes concrete steps for moving forward together so that all Indigenous children, youth and their families are healthy and living with dignity.

When the Touchstones of Hope were first conceived the focus was on reconciliation in child welfare. This remains a priority for the Caring Society and many others, though it is with gratitude and joy that the Touchstones of Hope have been successfully implemented across a wide variety of contexts. This includes reconciliation in workplace environments, education, health care and much more.

Since October, 2016, the Caring Society has supported a Touchstones of Hope movement for the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs. Most recently, in January, 2017, we held a Train the Trainer session in Winnipeg, Manitoba. These sessions train facilitators on the Touchstones of Hope principles and process so that they can strengthen a movement in their community!

In 2015, United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) Canada and the Caring Society adapted the Touchstones of Hope principles for reconciliation in a workplace environment. In June, 2017, we visited UFCW Local 401 in Calgary, Alberta, to support the development of a reconciliation action plan for the national union.



First Nations Children's Action Research and Education Service

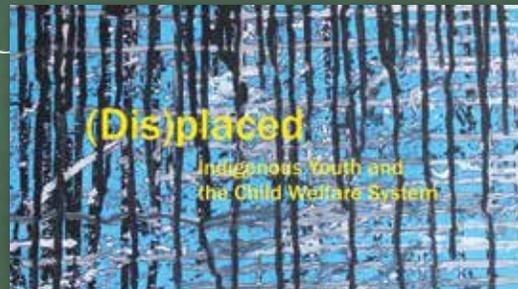
The First Nations Children's Action Research and Education Service (FNCARES) is a partnership between the University of Alberta and the Caring Society. FNCARES focuses on translating research on structural disadvantage for First Nations children into practical, community-based solutions, and hold numerous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

This year, in collaboration with our academic and community partners, we co-hosted 5 public events, produced 2 videos, and published information sheets on the relationship between First Nations child poverty and lifelong wellbeing. We also collaborated with the Caring Society team on two editions of the *First Peoples Child and Family Review*.

FNCARES Highlights from 2016-2017

March 2016: Co-hosted public talk by Cindy Blackstock entitled "The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal on First Nations Child Welfare."

November 2016: Launched *(Dis)placed: Indigenous Youth and the Child Welfare System* (Dir. Melisa Brittain, 2017, Vtape.org) in Calgary and Edmonton, featuring panel discussions with youth from the film, Elders and advocates.



(Dis)placed features the voices of Indigenous youth as they reflect on their prior involvement with child welfare and share their multiple strategies of resistance to assimilation and state control.

February 2017: Partnered with the National Film Board and Metro Cinema on a sold-out screening of Alanis Obomsawin's *We can't make the same mistake twice* (NFB, 2016). Video of Q&A session with Director Obomsawin and Cindy Blackstock available at [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com).

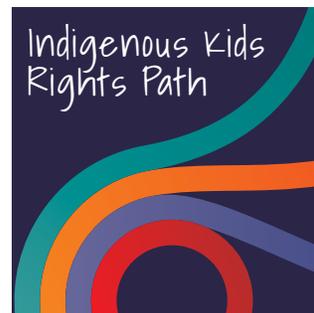
March 2017: Co-hosted a screening and panel discussion of *(Dis)placed* at MacEwan University in Edmonton.

May 2017: Moved to the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta after 5 successful years in the Faculty of Extension.

Alanis Obomsawin, director of *We Can't Make the Same Mistake Twice*, a film about the human rights case and the children who stood up for equity.

Indigenous Kids Rights Path

On November 20, 2015, the Caring Society launched the website Indigenous Kids Rights Path (IKRP). This online tool provides resources and links for Indigenous young people if they feel their rights are not being respected and others who want to learn more about Indigenous rights and child rights. IKRP also includes resources on individual rights matters and contact information for emergency services such as child welfare complaints. Through this initiative, our goal was also to provide information about First Nations children's rights in Canada by identifying international and domestic laws, treaties and norms affecting First Nations children's rights and to provide resources for Ontario, Canada and abroad. Visit IKRP at indigenoukidsrightspath.ca.



Student Placements and Volunteers

The Caring Society consistently welcomes placement students to assist in Caring Society projects while also focusing on the strengths and passions of the students. During the 2016/2017 year, we welcomed a social work student from Carleton University and two youth volunteers. **Thank you** to these students, placement supervisors and the universities for helping us make a difference for First Nations children and their families.

In addition, we would like to offer a warm **thank you** to all of the dedicated volunteers who devoted their time and energy to helping out with Have a Heart Day, including the singers and performers, speakers and those on Parliament Hill who accommodated our visit.

Caring Society Events

Have a Heart Day

Now in its fifth year, Have a Heart Day is a key event in the Caring Society's reconciliation and child and youth engagement work. Created in 2013 by a group of children, youth and educators in Ottawa (Ontario) who wanted to show their commitment to love and fairness for First Nations children, Have a Heart Day has since grown into an annual event celebrated by thousands of people across the country. Have a Heart Day invites people of all ages and backgrounds to send Valentine letters to their Member of Parliament or the Prime Minister in support of culturally-based equity for First Nations children. Supporters can take part by sending a letter, or by organizing an event in their school, workplace or community to educate others about the First Nations child welfare case, Shannen's Dream and Jordan's Principle.

Over 70 Have a Heart Day events were held across Canada in 2017, and at least 6,500 Valentine letters were sent to elected officials (a sizeable increase from 2016, in which 40 events were held and 5,500 Valentine's messages supporting culturally based equity for First Nations children were sent). In Ottawa, 700 students from 20 different schools gathered on Parliament Hill to share letters, poems and songs asking Canada to "have a heart" and treat First Nations children fairly.

The Caring Society supports Have a Heart Day by maintaining a web page about the event, which includes a registration form, interactive map and event materials. We promote the event nationally via social media and email campaigns and are also proud to support the work of a dedicated Child & Youth Circle in coordinating the event on Parliament Hill.



Honouring Memories, Planting Dreams

Celebrated annually in the spring, Honouring Memories, Planting Dreams invites individuals of all ages from across Canada to plant Heart Gardens in memory of the children lost to the residential school system, to honour the residential school survivors and their families and to support the legacy of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Each heart represents the life of a child lost, and the act of planting represents our commitment to reconciliation. Heart Gardens can be made by anyone and can include decorated paper hearts affixed to planting sticks, real flowers or indigenous plants and medicines, where appropriate.

In 2017, over 7,000 wild flower seed bookmarks were distributed across Canada to support planting Heart Gardens and celebrate reconciliation.



Bear Witness Day

Bear Witness Day is an annual event calling for full and proper implementation of Jordan's Principle. In its landmark ruling of January, 2016, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (the Tribunal) ordered the federal government to fully implement Jordan's Principle by May 10, 2016. The Caring Society asked people across the country to celebrate May 10th by bringing their teddy bears to daycare, work and school to honour Jordan River Anderson and Jordan's Principle. Teddy bears were Jordan's favourite toy.

Unfortunately, the federal government failed to comply with the Tribunal's order. First Nations

children continue to face discrimination in accessing government services. It has now been 10 years since Jordan's Principle was unanimously supported in the House of Commons and one year since the Tribunal ordered the federal government to fully implement Jordan's Principle. "Bearing Witness" to Jordan's Principle is more important than ever.

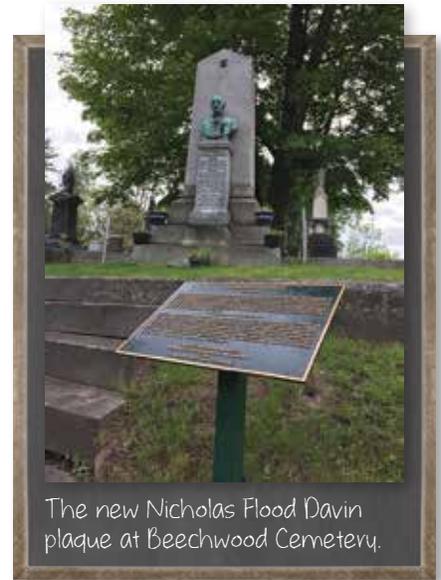
Now an annual event, Bear Witness Day invites supporters to bring their teddies to work or school, take photos and post them on social media using the hashtags #JordansPrinciple and #Waiting4UCanada. By mid-morning on May 10, 2017, #JordansPrinciple was trending on Twitter! The Caring Society would like to thank everyone who stood up for First Nations children and youth by honouring Jordan's Principle and participating in Bear Witness Day!

Nicholas Flood Davin Plaque at Beechwood Cemetery

In early June, Beechwood Cemetery unveiled the new Nicolas Flood Davin plaque alongside partners, KAIROS and the Caring Society. This plaque portrays Nicolas Flood Davin's life and his crucial role in the establishment of residential schools and their legacy.

The unveiling took place at the Nicolas Flood Davin monument, and was followed by visits to the burial places of Duncan Campbell Scott, another instrumental architect of the Residential School System and Dr. Peter Henderson Bryce, a hero and advocate for First Nations children. The reception afterward included words from historian John Milloy, President Natan Obed of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, and Henry Morris, a passionate young person and long-time advocate for Indigenous youth.

This event and many others to come are part of *Reconciling History*, an ongoing initiative that revolves around truthfully portraying Canada's collective past in order to honour reconciliation and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.



The new Nicholas Flood Davin plaque at Beechwood Cemetery.

Caring Society Projects

P.H. Bryce Award

The P.H. Bryce Award is named in honour of Dr. Peter Henderson Bryce, a pioneer in public health and courageous advocate for First Nations children. In 1908 Dr. Bryce raised the alarm about the preventable deaths of Indigenous children in residential schools. Canada ignored his recommendations for life-saving reforms and Dr. Bryce faced personal and professional retaliation for standing up for the safety and wellbeing of Indigenous children. This did not dissuade him; Dr. Bryce knew these children could be saved and he did everything he could to make that happen.

The P.H. Bryce Award is awarded every two years on a rotating basis in both child/youth and adult categories. The award recognizes outstanding leadership in promoting the safety, health and well-being of First Nations, Métis and Inuit children and youth. This year, the P.H. Bryce Award Committee is thrilled to announce the winners of the 2017 P.H. Bryce Award for Children and Youth.

Guadelupe (Individual) for outstanding community leadership and an indomitable spirit in overcoming challenges. Since the first grade, Guadelupe, with the help of her parents has been raising funds to purchase school supplies for children in need. She has since raised over \$12,000 and is an active volunteer and speaks particularly on the special education circumstances of Indigenous youth in care.

Guadelupe, 2017 P.H. Bryce Award recipient.



Save Smarts and Arctic Safety Teams (Group)

for their ground-breaking campaign to educate young people about the importance of wearing helmets when riding off-highway vehicles. The teams developed video and poster campaigns to educate community members as well as fundraising to finance the purchase of helmets until funding was secure. As a result, every school aged child in Great Whale River now has a helmet.



Save Smarts and Arctic Safety Teams, 2017 P.H. Bryce Award recipient.

In addition, the Committee is pleased to award Honourable Mentions to four remarkable young people: Annika, Jasmine, Kaylem and Sparrow.

Website and Social Media

The Caring Society website is our primary tool for keeping the public up to date on the latest in Caring Society news and First Nations child rights. The I am a Witness and Jordan's Principle sections feature current news stories and information sheets, and legal updates regarding the First Nations child welfare human rights case and the implementation of Jordan's Principle. We have also added new resources to Child & Youth Engagement to support young people in getting involved in reconciliation, and are updating Touchstones of Hope to widen its applicability to other spheres (e.g., research, education, and health care).

Stay up to date with Caring Society at **fncaresociety.com**. For real-time updates, join our 7,398 followers on Twitter (**Twitter.com/CaringSociety**) and 14,488 followers on Facebook (**Facebook.com/CaringSociety**).

Child and Youth Led Campaigns

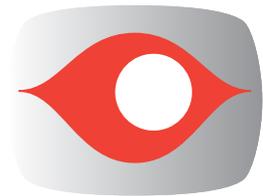
The Caring Society believes all children, including First Nations children, have a right to grow up safely with their families, go to good schools and be healthy and proud of who they are. These rights are enshrined in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the United Nations 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.

I am a Witness

In 2016, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal found that the Government of Canada is racially discriminating against 165,000 First Nations children and their families by providing flawed and inequitable child welfare services and failing to implement Jordan's Principle. The I am a witness campaign invites organizations and people of all ages to follow and learn about the case in person or online and to decide for themselves if First Nations children are being treated fairly. Learn more at fnwitness.ca.



Jordan's Principle



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 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 aims to make sure First Nations children can access all public services in a way that is reflective of their distinct cultural needs, takes full account of the historical disadvantage linked to colonization, and without experiencing any service denials, delays or disruptions related to their First Nations status. Learn more at jordansprinciple.ca.

Shannen's Dream

Shannen Koostachin, a youth education advocate from of 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. Learn more at shannensdream.ca.



Canadian Human Rights Tribunal

In January, 2016, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (the Tribunal) substantiated a landmark human rights case finding the Canadian federal government responsible for racially discriminating against First Nations children by providing inequitable child welfare services to First Nations children and their families and failing to implement Jordan's Principle (2016 CHRT 2). The Minister of Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada and the Minister of Justice Canada welcomed the ruling and then failed to implement it.

Since that time, the Tribunal has issued three non-compliance orders against the Government of Canada (2016 CHRT 10; 2016 CHRT 16; 2017 CHRT 14). The latest non-compliance order focused on Canada's failure to comply with the Tribunal's previous orders on Jordan's Principle. Highlights of the order are:

- a) Apply Jordan's Principle to all First Nations children living on and off reserve;
- b) Apply Jordan's Principle based on the needs of the child (not just limited to the normative standard of care);
- c) Ensure that case conferencing and other administrative procedures do not delay service provision;
- d) Respond to cases within 48 hours;
- e) Provide public advertisements on APTN regarding the legally compliant definition of Jordan's Principle.

Canada has chosen to appeal the Tribunal's order on Jordan's Principle (2017 CHRT 14) to the federal court to quash the sections of the order related to timeliness of response and case conferencing. The Caring Society is very disappointed that Canada has chosen to pursue an appeal of the Tribunal's decision based on another technical argument that appears geared to delay equity for First Nations children and thus we will be opposing Canada's appeal. Hearings are expected in late 2017 or early 2018.

Canada is required, by law, to implement the order in full pending the appeal to Federal Court so members of the public who have a Jordan's Principle case should report it to: 1-800-567-9604.



Caring Society Counsel Sarah Clarke and David Taylor present the Caring Society's case at the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal non-compliance hearings. Spirit Bear is there watching everything in his role as honorary witness.



Left to right: Sarah Clarke, Sébastien Grammond, Anne Levesque, David Sterns (OBA President), David Taylor and Spirit Bear at the 2017 OBA Annual Award Gala.

The Tribunal is expected to issue another order shortly regarding Canada’s compliance with orders relating to the discriminatory provision of First Nations Child and Family services. Once the order is released it will be posted on line and the Caring Society will prepare an information sheet on the ruling.

All of the key legal documents and orders are available to view on fnwitness.ca, just click on the Timeline and Documents tab.

The Caring Society expresses our deep appreciation to our pro-bono legal team (Sarah Clarke, Sébastien Grammond, Anne Levesque and David Taylor) and we were thrilled when they received the prestigious Ontario Bar Association President’s Award for their work on this case.

Spirit Bear (Barrister) and Friends!

This has been an exciting year for Spirit Bear! He received an honorary *Barrister* degree from Osgoode Law School “for courageous support and bearing witness throughout a long and difficult process of truth-telling and healing,” and he has had a few more family members join the bear pack at the Caring Society!

Spirit Bear was gifted to the Caring Society by Carrier Sekani Family Services back in 2007 and has been an honorary witness for the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal case. He represents the 165,000 children and their families affected by the case and is there to remind us all about the importance of putting children’s interests first. 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.

Viewers of Alanis Obomsawin’s landmark documentary film on the human rights case “We Can’t Make the Same Mistake Twice” produced by the National Film Board of Canada will note that Spirit Bear appears frequently throughout the story. He listened to all the witnesses and legal arguments and to the stories of children and adults who attended the hearings or watched them on line or on television. Over the years he has become quite a legal expert. This year, he traveled across Canada to visit students in schools and to key events like Assembly of First Nations meetings and the Norway House Cree Nation teddy bear parade in honour of Jordan’s Principle!



Above: Spirit Bear receives his honorary Barrister degree from Osgoode Law School. Below: Spirit Bear with his Barrister degree.



His regalia has been gifted to him by children, youth and adults from across Canada and he has an ever growing wardrobe! In addition to his regalia made by Red Cedar Gifts in Manitoba, Alanis Obomsawin gifted Spirit Bear with original Hudson Bay trading beads and Senator Murray Sinclair presented him with a Truth and Reconciliation Commission Pin that he wears proudly.

Among the favourite things Spirit Bear has are drawings and sculptures of him made by children!

Watch for Spirit Bear's new book this winter honouring the First Nations and non-Indigenous children who came together to stand up for justice and reconciliation and keep an eye out for Spirit Bear at the Assembly of First Nations meeting in December, where he regularly makes an appearance!

Future Directions

Our vision of Canada is one where all First Nations children are loved, respected and honored. 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 government on First Nations child welfare and implementation of Jordan's Principle.
- Write, illustrate and publish a book featuring Spirit Bear and friends with accompanying educational resources!
- Create an "adopt a bear" and commitment to reconciliation initiative 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 tool kit and develop child friendly Touchstones of Hope material.
- Publish two editions of the *First Peoples Child and Family Review* and continue updating the on line database.
- Continue adding resources to the Indigenous Kids Rights Path.
- Updates to the Caring Society website.
- 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 Have a Heart Day, Our Dreams Matter Too, 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 fncaringsociety.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 fncaringsociety.com/donate.

7 free ways
to make a
difference

fncaringsociety.com



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