



*First Nations Child & Family Caring Society statement: January 4, 2022.*

*In response to the Agreement-in-Principle on long-term reform of The First Nations Child and Family Services Program and Jordan's Principle.*

*"First and foremost, we pay tribute to the children lost in residential schools; we pay tribute to the Residential School and Sixties Scoop survivors and youth, and to the young people and families who have been harmed due to Canada's ongoing discriminatory conduct. We must acknowledge that their truth-telling set the path for this progress to ensure that they are receiving the justice that is owed.*

*There is an unquestionable need for actionable change. This Agreement-in-Principle, while an important first step, is a non-binding agreement. A pre-agreement that simply lays out a pathway to a binding agreement to address Canada's longstanding discrimination in First Nations child welfare and inequitable public services via Jordan's Principle. It is only when that binding agreement has been written and signed by the Government of Canada and acted upon with great haste that First Nations children, youth and families will have a measure of assurance that actionable change is coming.*

*There are still victims, many of whom are children, who endured Canada's discrimination and inequalities in basic public services such that basic compensation is owed to them – an acknowledgement of the harm they have suffered. Another Agreement-in-Principle is in place for compensating these victims, but the Caring Society is not a party to that agreement. However, we remain an active party to legal proceedings regarding the CHRT compensation and we will ensure it upholds the children's rights under the CHRT orders as a minimum standard. We will also ensure that it provides safeguards against traumatization and provides proper support to the victims.*

*With some pre-agreements in place and binding agreements yet to come to fruition, we hope for good things for First Nations children and families in the New Year. In January of 2022, there will be a consent order going to the Tribunal that is related to providing post majority support to First Nations youth leaving care, and young adults (up to the age of 25) who have left care. The consent order also outlines additional prevention funding for families. The services being funded by the Government of Canada will take effect on April 1, 2022. It is through this*

*promise of change that Canada's true commitment to First Nations children and families will be put to the test.*

*Later in 2022, we hope that a binding agreement can finally be reached to safeguard First Nations children and families from Canada's longstanding injustice, discrimination and inequality, and that positive change can finally be made."*

- *Cindy Blackstock, Executive Director of the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada*