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# Backgrounder

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## **First Nations Child and Family Services (Quebec)**

### **First Nations Child and Family Services**

The core objective of INAC's First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) program is to ensure the safety and well-being of First Nations children on-reserve by supporting culturally appropriate prevention and protection services for First Nations children and families. This is done in accordance with legislation and standards of the province or territory to create a more secure and stable family environment for children on-reserve.

Historically, there has been no federal child welfare legislation as Child and Family Services are regulated by provincial legislation. The Government of Canada, through Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), formed agreements with many provincial governments to support the delivery of child and family services on-reserve. Under the agreements, INAC reimbursed the provinces for services which were provided. In more recent years, First Nation Child and Family Services agencies have emerged in many communities operating under provincial legislation but funded by INAC.

In 2007, INAC renovated its approach to Child and Family Services by introducing an Enhanced Prevention-Focused Approach that will ensure that more First Nations children and parents get the help they need to prevent the types of crises that lead to intervention and family breakdown.

First Nation Child and Family Services agencies in Alberta entered into a partnership with INAC and the provincial government in 2007. In July 2008, partnerships were also reached with Child and Family Services agencies in the provinces of Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia.

### **First Nations Child and Family Services - Enhanced Prevention-Focused Approach in Quebec**

Under Canada's Economic Action Plan, First Nations Child and Family Services agencies in Quebec will receive approximately \$59.8 million over five years in new funding, in addition to already existing CFS program funding. First Nations, in collaboration with INAC and the province, will develop individual business plans to access the new funding.

Quebec has 15 First Nations Child and Family Services agencies which provide child welfare services to 19 First Nations communities. There are also 3 provincially-run youth centres that deliver services to 8 reserves. The Akewasne Agency is also included because it provides services to First Nations children in both Ontario and Quebec.

The Enhanced Prevention-Focused Approach will support:

- Families getting the support and services they need before they reach a crisis;
- Community-based services and the child and family system working together so families receive more appropriate services in a timely manner;
- First Nations children in care benefiting from permanent homes (placements) sooner by, for example, involving families in planning alternative care options; and
- Services and supports coordinated in the way that best helps the family