



Newsletter



In preparation for the year ahead

As we look toward the year ahead, Mnaasged Child and Family Services is entering a season of transformative growth. We are thrilled to share that we are taking the next vital steps in the Stage C designation process, bringing us closer to our long-term goals for our children and families.

To support this evolution, we are actively expanding our team in the areas of Management, HR, and support roles. We are also excited to announce that the Director of Corporate Services will be joining our team in mid February.

Upcoming Dates - January

Feb 14	Have a Heart Day
Feb 14	Women's Memorial March
Feb 16	Family Day (Office Closed)
Feb 21	Mother Language Day

**The Bear Moon (Mkwa-giizis)
Half-Days (Tew^hnislyaks)**

Member Nations

Mnaasged is proud to have partnership with our communities
"Working together, we can move forward"



Annual General Assembly

We are excited to announce that Mnaasged Child & Family Services will be hosting its Annual General Assembly (AGA) on February 9th.

This year's gathering will take place in the community of **Eelūnaapèewii Lakhèewiit** (Delaware Nation). The AGA is a vital opportunity for us to come together, share updates on our programs, and discuss our collective vision for supporting the well-being of our children and families.

A message from Executive Director

Mnaasged is moving into the year ahead with a focus on expansion and progress. As we continue the Stage C designation process, we are actively growing our team and look forward to sharing new opportunities to join us in the coming months.

We are honored to continue this journey and remain committed to working alongside our Member Nations as we build on this momentum.

Thank you,

Melissa Patruquin



Jordan's Principle Update

1. The "Substantive Equality" Standard

Since the February 2025 Operational Bulletin, ISC has shifted its approval criteria. Requests are no longer "virtually guaranteed" as they once were. To be approved in 2026, a request must now clearly demonstrate:

A specific gap or delay in accessing a government service.



How the product or service is required to achieve substantive equality (meaning it provides the First Nations child the same level of care/opportunity as a non-Indigenous child).

A direct link between the request and the child's specific health, social, or educational needs.

2. Heightened Professional Documentation

General requests or "self-referrals" are being met with much higher denial rates. Applications now strictly require:

Professional Letters of Support: These must come from a regulated health professional, educational professional, Elder, or Knowledge Keeper within the child's circle of care.

Clinical Basis: The supporting letter must provide a professional recommendation based on a specific diagnosis or identified developmental/health need.

Case-by-Case Reviews: Previous approval for a service (like a multi-year tutoring grant) does not guarantee renewal; each new request is treated as a fresh application.

Indigenous Services Canada - Jordan's Principle Operational Bulletin
www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1739222520301/1739222546551



3. Exclusions and Limitations

ISC has identified specific items that are generally no longer funded unless a unique clinical need for "substantive equality" is proven:

Home Renovations: Purchase or construction costs.

Elite Sports: Competitive sports training or international travel.

General Household Items: Furniture, clothing, and general childcare (non-medical).

Education Gaps: Many educational assistants and specialized school items are now being redirected to provincial school boards first.

4. Regional Solutions and Backlogs

Ontario is currently facing some of the highest backlogs in the country. In response, the Chiefs of Ontario (COO) and other leadership bodies are actively seeking a "Regional Solution" to take back administrative control from the federal government to ensure children in the region receive care more efficiently.

5. Settlement Claims Open

Separately from new funding requests, the First Nations Child and Family Services and Jordan's Principle Settlement claims process is now open. Families who were denied services or faced delays between 2007 and 2017 may be eligible for compensation.

First Nations Child and Family Services and Jordan's Principle Settlement
www.fnchildclaims.ca



Update on Long-Term Child Welfare Reform

In late December 2025, two separate plans were submitted to the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) to settle the long-term reform of the First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) program:

The Federal Proposal: The Carney government has proposed a \$35.5 billion plan through 2034, which includes a permanent annual commitment of \$4.4 billion thereafter. This plan focuses on regional agreements to allow First Nations to tailor services to their own communities

The First Nations-Led Plan: A competing plan was submitted by the National Children's Chiefs Commission (NCCC) and the Caring Society. This plan demands more direct First Nations control, stricter accountability to end discrimination permanently, and national minimum standards to ensure no child "falls through the cracks" regardless of where they live.

The Tribunal is currently reviewing both to determine which path best fulfills the legal requirement to end systemic discrimination.

Ottawa and First Nations present competing child welfare reform plans
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eiCXBOoLHu4>



Focus on Prevention (Tertiary Care)

A major pillar of the 2026 reform is the shift from "protection" to "prevention." Funding is now being structured to support:

Least Disruptive Measures: Providing families with the resources they need (housing support, mental health, food security) to keep children at home safely.
Post-Majority Support: Extended support for youth aging out of care up to age 26 is now a standardized part of the reform funding model.

Additional Questions?

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