



FIRST NATION REPRESENTATIVE

Background: In 2018 the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada et al. v Canada, 2018 CHRT 4) ordered Canada to fund the actual cost of Band Representative Services for First Nations in Ontario.

On April 1, 2022, Indigenous Services Canada began providing funding for First Nation Representative Services to First Nations in all provinces and in the Yukon to support children, youth and families that are ordinarily resident on reserve or in Yukon.

About: First Nation Representative Services support First Nations when children, youth, young adults, and families from their Nation are involved or at risk of involvement with the child and family services system. First Nation Representative Services is critically important to First Nations and in ensuring that the rights of First Nations children and youth are respected within the child and family services system.

First Nations Representative's Role: First Nation Representative Services has been defined by our Nation and will include engaging with child and family services providers and participating in child and family service matters as set out in provincial, territorial and federal child and family services laws.

First Nation Representative Services activities include, but are not limited to:

- Serving as the main contact between a First Nation and child and family services providers.
- Exercising the rights and responsibilities of the First Nation under provincial, territorial and federal child and family services laws.
- Ensuring that child and family services providers address the real needs of First Nations children, youth, and families, including needs tied to culture, land and geography, and the effects of historical and contemporary disadvantage.
- Building and maintaining meaningful cultural, family, and community connections for First Nations children, youth, and families involved with the child and family services system.
- Facilitating the repatriation and/or reunification of children and youth in care with their family and First Nation(s).

- Supporting First Nations children, youth and families involved or at risk of involvement with the child and family services system outside of their home communities, including working across different Regions and jurisdictions.
- Participating in child and family services administrative and court proceedings.
- Helping families access prevention supports
- Supporting customary care, kinship care and alternative care arrangements.

Principles:

- The holistic well-being of First Nations children, youth and families creates the foundation for healthy First Nations communities and future generations.
- First Nations should be involved in the planning and provision of services to and decisions respecting their children, youth and families, including by receiving notice in advance of a child and family services provider taking any significant measure in relation to a First Nations child or youth.
- First Nation Representatives work to:
- Uphold and strengthen the rights of the First Nation in provincial, territorial and federal child and family services laws.
- Help ensure First Nations children, youth, and families can meaningfully exercise their rights under provincial, territorial and federal child and family services laws.
- Prioritize preventive care, including prenatal and postnatal preventive care.
- Promote substantive equality for First Nations children and youth.
- Promote and support family unity.
- Connect First Nations children, youth, and families with the lands, languages, cultures, practices, customs, traditions, ceremonies and knowledge of their Nation.

For more information regarding these services please contact:

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