



Assembly of First Nations Issue Update



Jordan's Principle

History

Jordan's Principle is named in honour of Jordan River Anderson, a First Nations child from Norway House Cree Nation in Manitoba. Born with complex medical needs, Jordan could have received home-based care, but because the governments of Canada and Manitoba could not agree on who would pay for his care, Jordan spent his entire life in hospital. Jordan passed at age five in 2005. Jordan's Principle ensures First Nations children have access to the supports they need to thrive, regardless of where they live, without denial, delay, or disruption. Between July 2016 to February 2024, Jordan's Principle approved over 4.58 million products, services, and supports for First Nations children.

In 2007, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society filed a complaint at the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT), alleging discrimination against First Nations children and families in the delivery and underfunding of the First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) Program and Jordan's Principle. In January 2016, the CHRT found that the Government of Canada was discriminating against First Nations children on-reserve and in the Yukon, and ordered the government to immediately reform the FNCFS Program and properly implement Jordan's Principle to meet the needs of First Nations children and ensure their best interests are protected.

AFN's Recent Advocacy

The AFN advocates for First Nations children to receive the products, services, and supports they need to thrive, without delay, denial, or disruption, and for First Nations to determine and advance their priorities for implementing Jordan's Principle. In December 2023, the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society filed a motion at the CHRT outlining Canada's continued non-compliance with the orders of the CHRT regarding Jordan's Principle. In particular, they pointed to issues of non-compliance with the CHRT-ordered timeframes for determining requests, delays in issuing payments to individuals and service providers, and mishandling of urgent requests that risk harm to First Nations children. The AFN has intervened in the non-compliance proceedings and will continue to advocate for Jordan's Principle to be properly implemented in accordance with the CHRT's orders.



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Pursuant to AFN Resolution 84/2023, Continuation of Funding at Actuals for Post-Majority Support Services and Support for High Needs Jordan's Principle Recipients, the AFN advocated for an investment of \$2.469 billion over five years to extend the age of majority for Jordan's Principle to age 26 in Budget 2025. This follows previous budget advocacy ahead of Budget 2024 for Jordan's Principle post-majority supports; however, Budget 2024 did not make the necessary investments to meet the needs of youth aging out of Jordan's Principle eligibility.

In March 2024, the AFN hosted a Jordan's Principle Service Coordinator Gathering in Montreal, Quebec, bringing together over 230 Jordan's Principle Service Coordinators and other community-level employees who support First Nations children to access the services and supports they need. Participants learned about the AFN's advocacy on Jordan's Principle, discussed needs such as infrastructure and post-majority supports, and shared practices for service coordination and administration.

Next Steps

The AFN will continue to advocate for First Nations children and families in proceedings at the CHRT related to Jordan's Principle, guided by First Nations-led research, engagement and relevant CHRT orders, as well as in the work towards a long-term approach for Jordan's Principle. The AFN will continue to advocate for investments and policy changes to enable post-majority supports for youth aging out of Jordan's Principle eligibility including through long-term reform negotiations.