

Two parallel diagonal lines, one gold and one dark blue, extend from the top left towards the center of the page.

## **Assembly of First Nations Annual General Assembly**

### **Long-Term Reform of the First Nations Child and Family Services Program and Jordan's Principle: The Path Forward**

Dialogue Session

July 10, 2023

## What is IFSD?

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- The Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy (IFSD) is an independent self-funded research-based consulting practice hosted at the University of Ottawa.
- IFSD was established by Kevin Page, Canada's first Parliamentary Budget Officer.
- IFSD specializes in solving complex problems and providing decision-support in Canada and other countries, with a public finance tool set.

## Why is IFSD working on FNCFS Reform?

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- Since 2018, IFSD has been working at the request of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and Caring Society on First Nations Child and Family Services reform (FNCFS).
  - Listening to and honouring the voices of First Nations and FNCFS agencies is key to proposing funding approaches that will work on the ground.
  - In the last two years alone, we have visited over 25 FNCFS agencies and First Nations, across all regions, including in remote communities, hosted 9 regional gatherings with over 70 First Nations and 125 participants, and shared updates and briefings at several gatherings.
- This work is intended to support First Nations, First Nations leadership, FNCFS agencies, and the parties as recognized under 2022 CHRT 8. There are three projects:
  - Phase 3
  - First Nations not affiliated to a FNCFS agency
  - Jordan’s Principle
- As a research-based consulting practice, IFSD does not have decision-making authority.
- IFSD provides monthly updates on the progress of its work in FNCFS. To receive the updates via email contact [info@ifsd.ca](mailto:info@ifsd.ca) or access them on the project website [www.ifsd.ca/fncfs](http://www.ifsd.ca/fncfs)

## Clarifications regarding the \$2,500 in prevention

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- It is important to keep in mind that the allocation of \$2,500 for prevention activities is part of a larger approach described in IFSD's report, [Funding First Nations child and family services \(FNCFS\): A performance budget approach to well-being](#).
  - Pulling out the \$2,500 per person from the overall funding approach is an artificial representation of the full resource profile that is being proposed as part of the broader reformed approach.
- The prevention services allocation of \$2,500 per person, comes from an operating FNCFS agency providing only prevention services and represents a specific set of activities, including its program operating structure.
  - The program activities include: “community-based activities and family support, legal support, victim services, social work, and social assistance. The active learning style initiatives range from education on fetal alcohol syndrome and brain development to emergency homes for respite.” ([Enabling First Nations Children to Thrive](#), p. 92)
- First Nations and FNCFS agencies have different starting points. Splitting \$2,500 per person between the two entities may insufficient, as it may not reflect the costs for either one to deliver on their mandates or their desired prevention supports and services.

## IFSD's projects on FNCFS

Component	Phase 3 (Contract holder: AFN)	First Nations not affiliated to a FNCFS agency (Contract holder: Caring Society)
Goal/purpose	Test and model the approach from Phase 2, (with refinements), into First Nation and agency specific delivery models, to build tools and setup First Nations and FNCFS agencies for success in transition.	Define the current state and needs in child and family services of First Nations not affiliated to a First Nations child and family services (FNCFS) agency.
IFSD's mandate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Close data gaps, e.g., capital needs, baselines</li> <li>– Model and test the proposed funding approach</li> <li>– Refine and test the Measuring to Thrive framework</li> <li>– Enhance fiscal certainty and planning tools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Assess needs for the delivery of prevention and other child and family related services</li> <li>– Quantify a structure and a range of costed approaches for the delivery of child and family services focused activities on-reserve</li> <li>– Consider capital, programming, and operational requirements (e.g., staff, IT, etc.) in the analysis</li> </ul>
Approach	Bottom-up; questionnaire (FNCFS agencies); in-depth collaboration (1.5 years) from 20 collaborators (First Nations and FNCFS agencies); research and analysis; expert support	Bottom-up; questionnaire; case study collaborators; research and analysis
Project end	March 2024 (project end); final report to follow *Monthly updates	December 2023 *Monthly updates

## Where can I find more information on Phase 3?

- IFSD shares its interim research findings and project progress in its monthly updates. To receive the updates via email contact [info@ifsd.ca](mailto:info@ifsd.ca) or access them on the [project website](#).

Component	Phase 3 (Contract holder: AFN)	Where can I find additional information on Phase 3 interim findings?
IFSD's mandate	– Close data gaps, e.g., capital needs, baselines	<a href="#">Capital needs initial summary</a> <a href="#">FNCFS questionnaire 2022 analysis</a>
	– Model and test the proposed funding approach	<a href="#">Funding approach considerations</a> <a href="#">Funding components overview</a>
	– Refine and test the Measuring to Thrive framework	<a href="#">November 2022 Measuring to Thrive workshop summary</a>
	– Enhance fiscal certainty and planning tools	IFSD is preparing a <a href="#">transition framework</a> and tools  Note: national estimates of the FNCFS program are anticipated in Fall 2023 using IFSD's proposed funding approach

## Where can I find more information on the work with First Nations not affiliated to a FNCFS agency?

- IFSD shares its interim research findings and project progress in its monthly updates. To receive the updates via email contact [info@ifsd.ca](mailto:info@ifsd.ca) or access them on the [project website](#).

Component	First Nations not affiliated to a FNCFS agency (Contract holder: Caring Society)	First Nations not affiliated to a FNCFS agency (Contract holder: Caring Society)
IFSD's mandate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess needs for the delivery of prevention and other child and family related services</li> <li>Quantify a structure and a range of costed approaches for the delivery of child and family services focused activities on-reserve</li> <li>Consider capital, programming, and operational requirements (e.g., staff, IT, etc.) in the analysis</li> </ul>	<p><a href="#">Questionnaire 2022 summary of analysis</a></p> <p>Monthly update texts for <a href="#">April and May 2023</a></p> <p>Note: regionally-specific portraits of questionnaire findings and workshop summaries were shared on a regional-basis</p>

## Jordan's Principle Part 1

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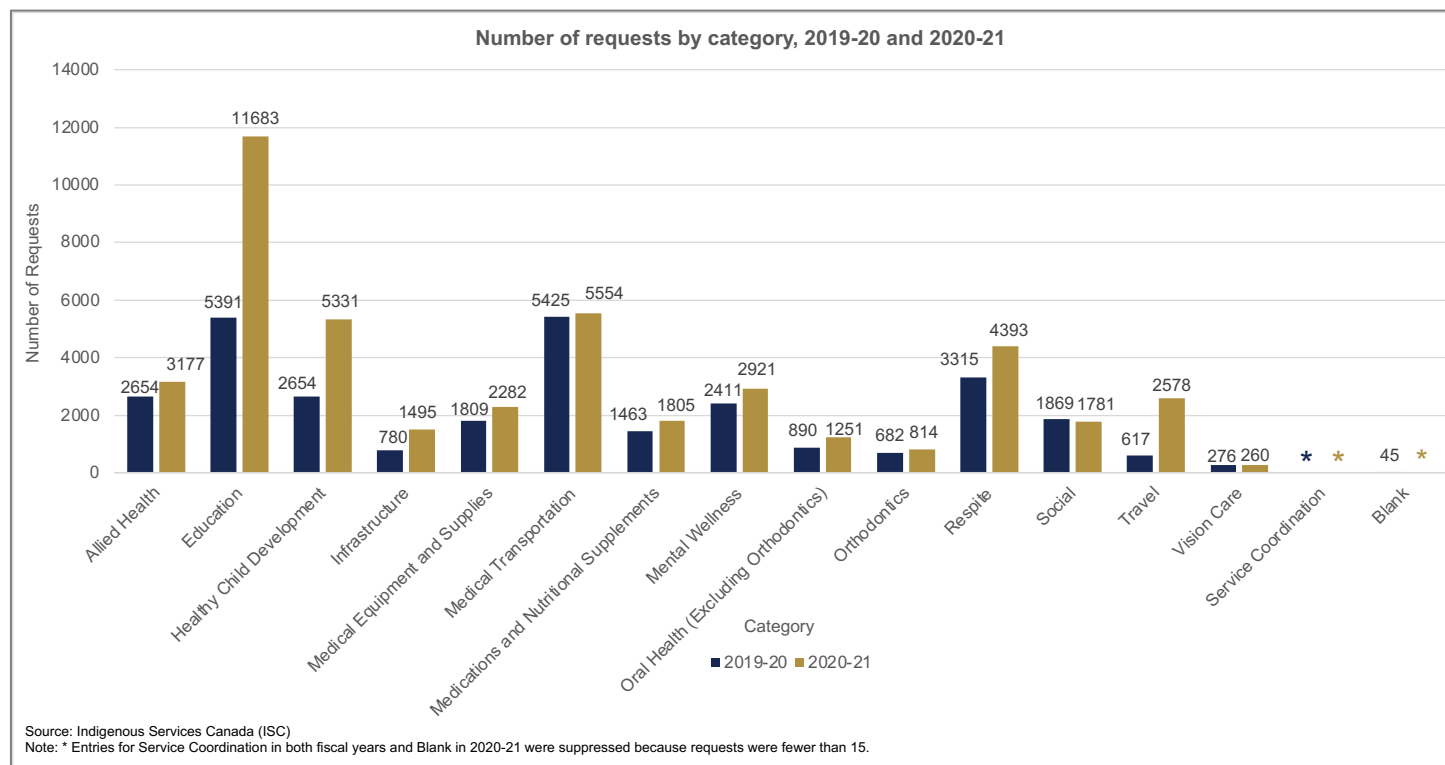
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- Part 1: IFSD's 2021 report, [\*Data assessment and framing of an analysis of substantive equality through the application of Jordan's Principle\*](#) found that while Jordan's Principle is addressing unmet needs on the ground, data suggest it is addressing gaps in other services such as education and health. It is also unclear if Jordan's Principle is achieving formal equality (what everyone else gets) or substantive equality (takes into account different needs and realities).
- **What we know:** Jordan's Principle is addressing needs.
- **What we don't know:** the root causes of requests to Jordan's Principle...why are children in need? We know inequalities exist, but what are they? How are they affecting children?
- **Why does this matter?** Jordan's Principle is concealing gaps in existing program areas. Understanding the root causes of need is critical to developing informed policy and funding decisions to support well-being over the long-term.



## Jordan's Principle Part 1: Requests by category, 2019-20 and 2020-21

- Most requests in fiscal year 2019-20 came from education and medical transportation. In 2020-21, the request categories remained consistent, with healthy child development following closely behind medical transportation.



## Jordan's Principle Part 2

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- Part 2 is designed to respond (in part) to the recommendations made in part 1, and to propose options for the long-term sustainability of Jordan's Principle. The approach will be bottom-up with a focus on engagement with those working in capacities related to Jordan's Principle.
  - The project will make recommendations to develop and implement structural solutions to achieving substantive equality for First Nations children, youth, and families.
  - There are four parts to the project reviewed in the next table.
- Part 2 of Jordan's Principle is expected to be completed by December 2024.

This work has four parts:	Guiding questions/considerations
1) Development of a policy framework	<p>What is the problem Jordan's Principle is intended to address?</p> <p>How should Jordan's Principle be evaluated?</p> <p>What indicators can be used to monitor changes in outcomes of children? How can formal equality and substantive equality be measured for children?</p>
2) Review of existing programs and services	<p>What do we know about the current state for First Nations children and families?</p> <p>Cost analysis of program activity areas including, but not limited to, education, health, water, child and family services, housing (on-reserve) and community infrastructure, and other social services</p>
3) Options and considerations for reforming the operationalization of Jordan's Principle	<p>How is Jordan's Principle operationalized?</p> <p>Lessons from: those working in related fields, e.g., maternal health, early childhood, etc.</p> <p>Alignment of structure and the goal of substantive equality</p> <p>Approaches for the delivery of Jordan's Principle</p> <p>Lessons from First Nations-based Jordan's Principle administrators on recipient needs and operating considerations</p> <p>Changes to provincial services and impacts on Jordan's Principle</p> <p>Lessons on the provision of Jordan's Principle on- and off-reserve</p>
4) Financial analysis and costing of the baseline and any proposed reforms	<p>Current and estimated short-, medium-, and long-term costs of delivery</p> <p>Estimated costs to close gaps in formal and substantive equality, with consideration of estimated costs over the short-, medium-, and long-term (with consideration of standard program growth drivers, population + inflation)</p>

## Get in touch

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