

# **Jordan's Principle: A roadmap for long-term sustainability**

**DRAFT – For discussion only**

**Jordan's Principle Service Coordinator Gathering  
Assembly of First Nations (AFN)**

March 4, 2024

## What is IFSD?

---

---

- 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.
- 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).
  - As a research-based consulting practice, IFSD does not have decision-making authority on long-term reform.

## IFSD's findings from Jordan's Principle Part 1

---

---

- IFSD's 2022 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 service areas.
- Neither ISC's public reporting nor its internal data enable IFSD to observe if substantive equality is being achieved by Jordan's Principle.

# IFSD's findings from Jordan's Principle Part 1

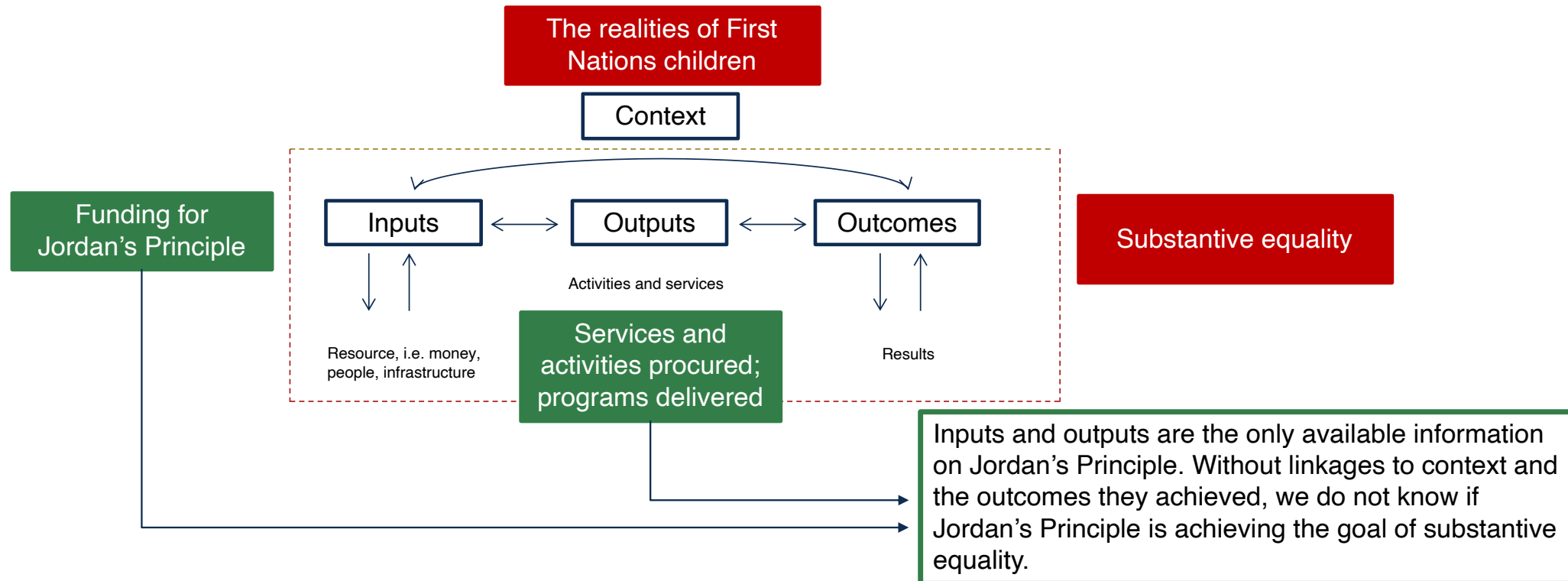
---

---

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 this matters	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.

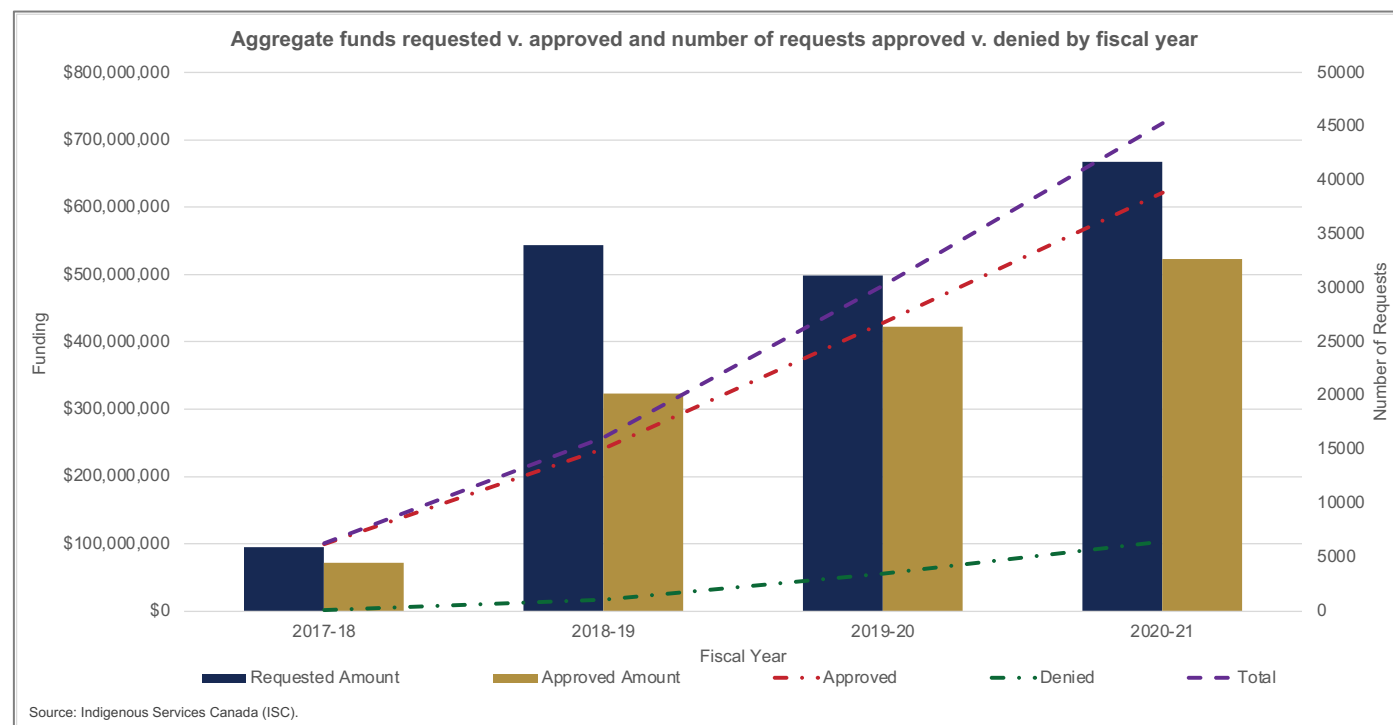
## Current reporting practices and gaps

- There is no way of knowing if the funding from Jordan's Principle is addressing gaps in substantive equality. This would require linking *why* the claim was being made, i.e., the shortfall being addressed, and *what* happened to the child's/group's wellness after the claim.



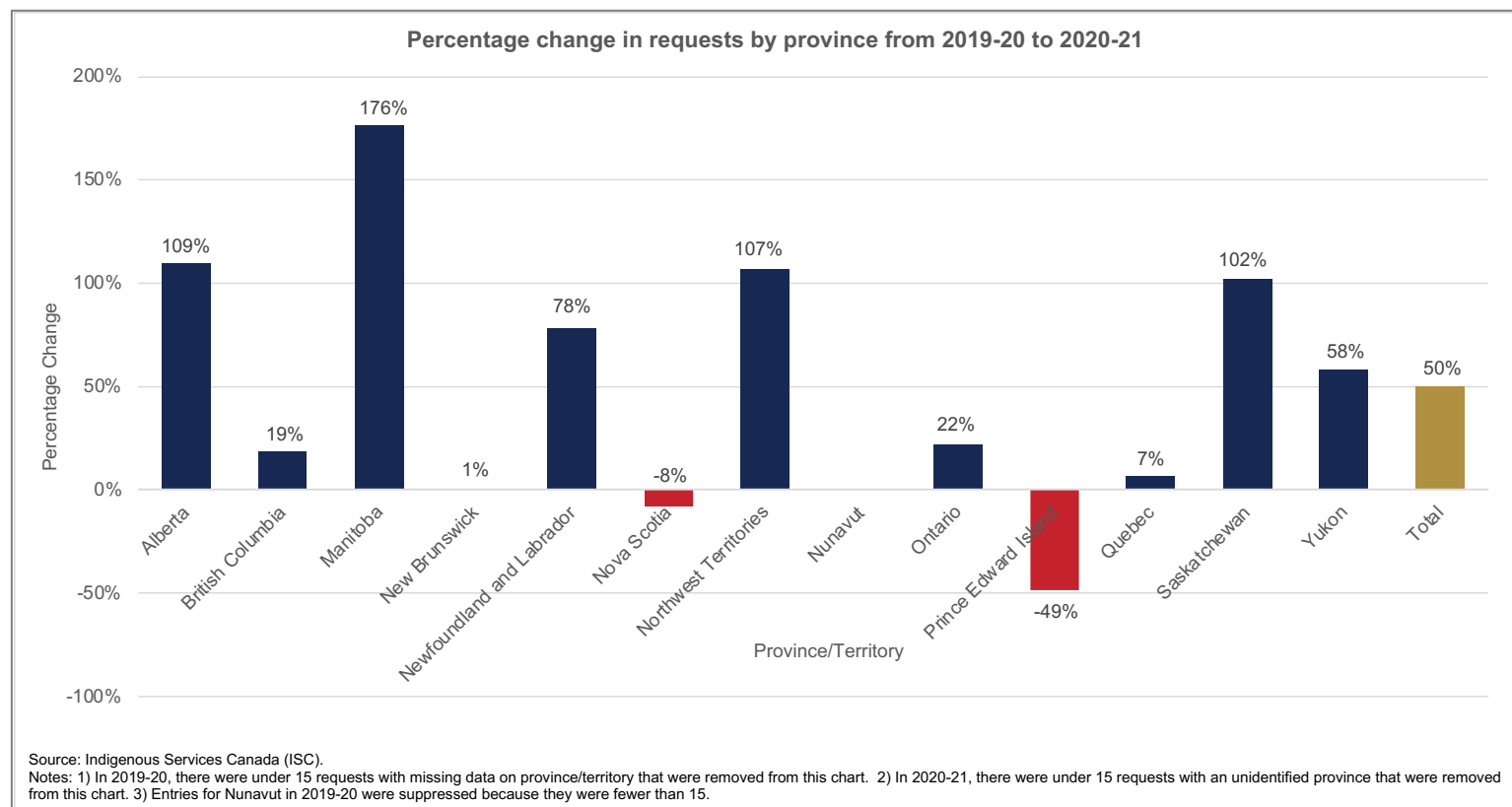
## Analysis of ISC's GC Case data (2017-18 to 2020-21)

- The number of requests, approvals, and expenditures has increased through Jordan's Principle. Between 2019-20 and 2020-21, there was approximately a 50% change in the number of requests.



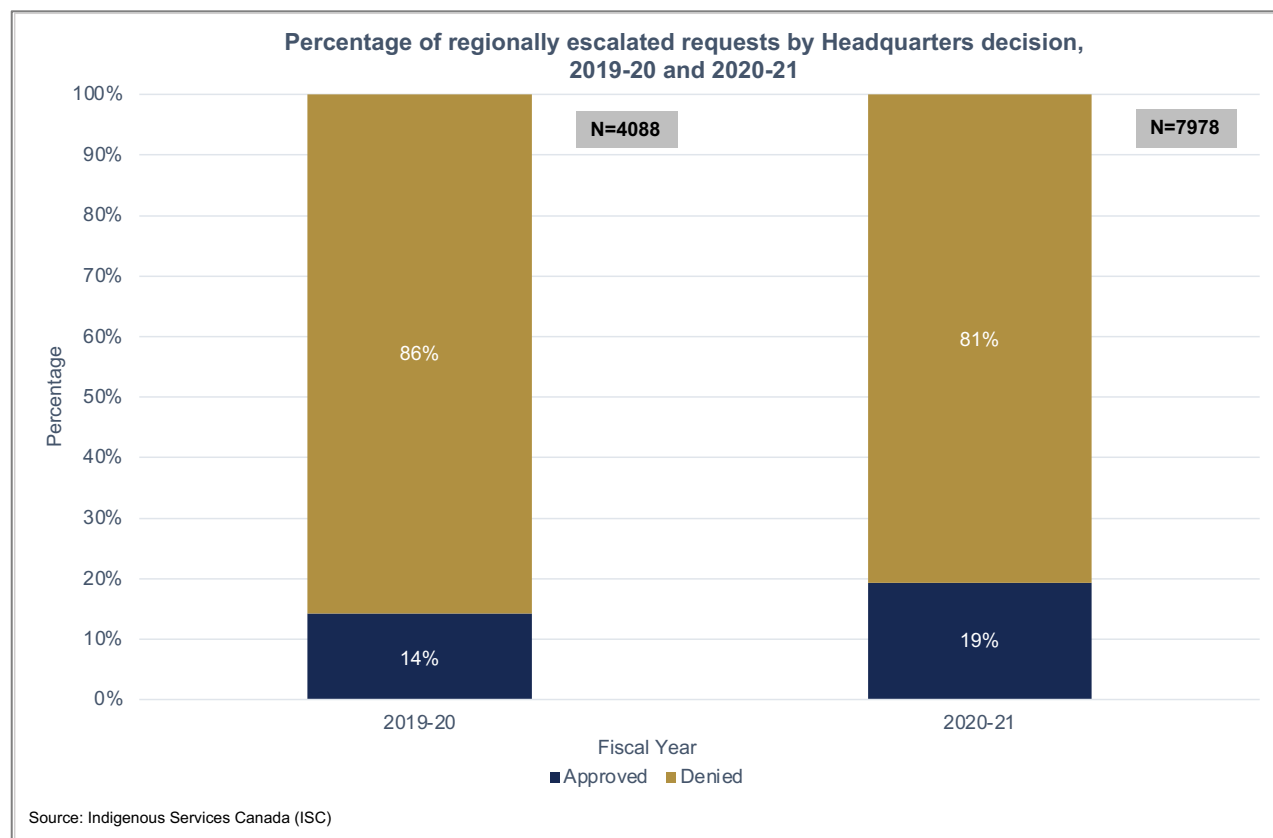
## Percentage change 2019-20 to 2020-21 by province/territory

- The most significant increases in requests were in Manitoba, followed by Alberta, Northwest Territories, and Saskatchewan. Requests from Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island decreased.



## Escalated requests with Headquarters decision

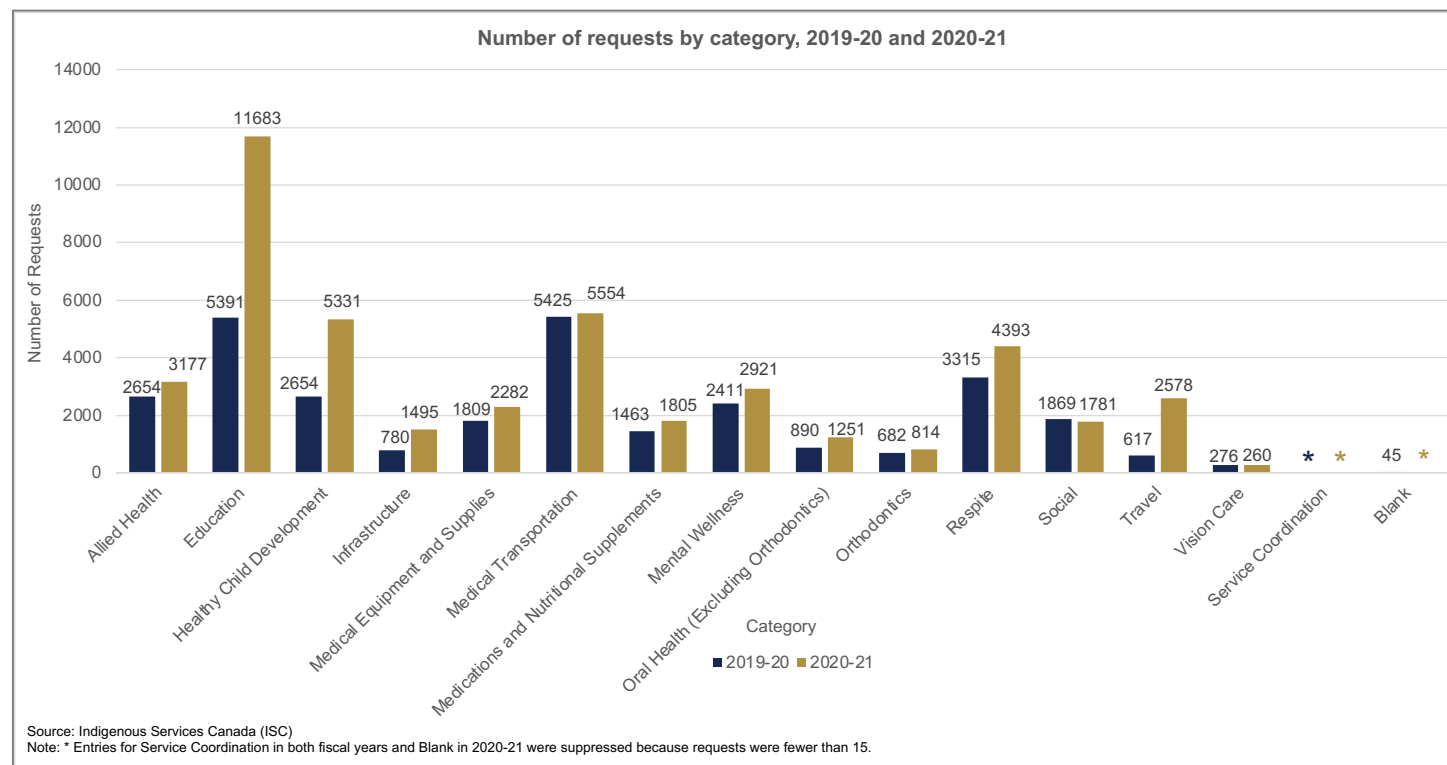
- Requests escalated by the region to headquarters for a decision are mostly denied with less than 20% approved for fiscal years 2019-20 and 2020-21.





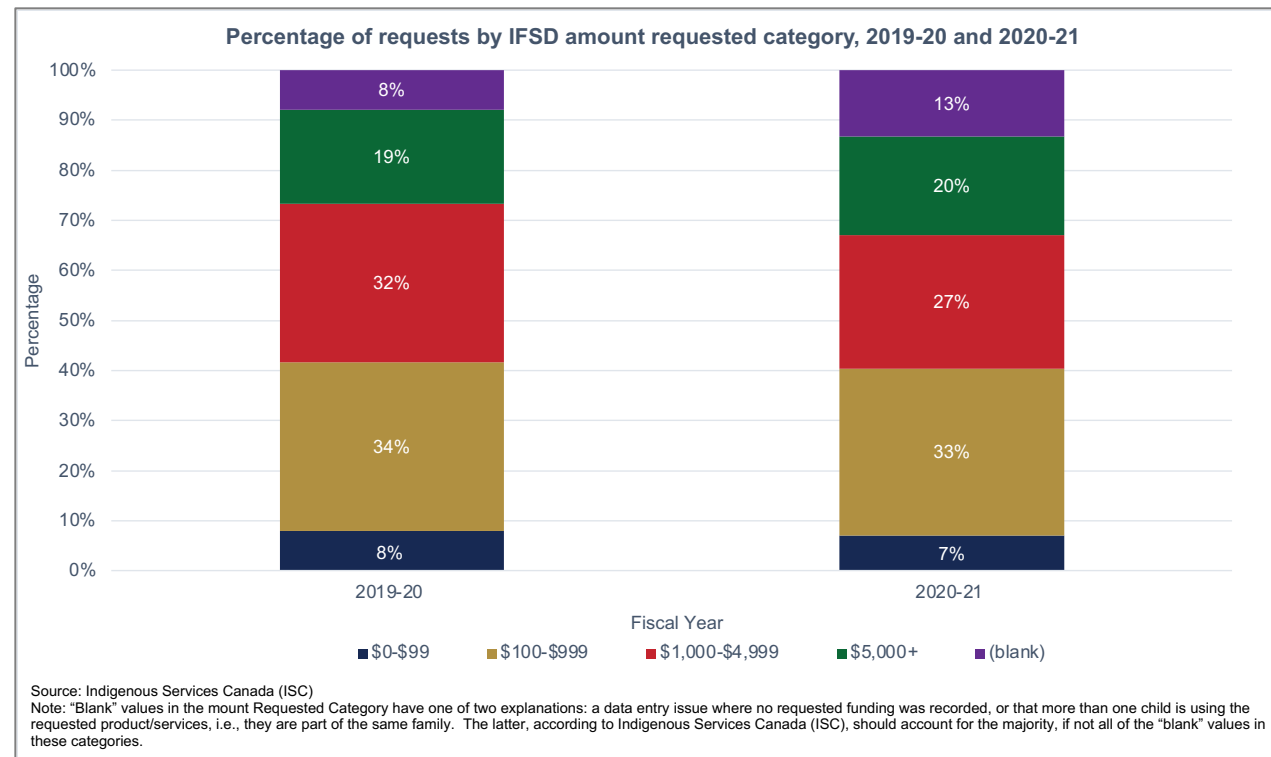
## Requests by category, 2019-20 and 2020-21

- 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.



# Amounts requested

- Most requests were for products and services < \$5,000 (the trend is consistent for approved requests).
- No matter how big or small the request, they go through the same review and adjudication process.



## IFSD's mandate for Jordan's Principle Part 2

---

---

- Respond (in part) to the recommendations made in Part 1, and propose options for the long-term sustainability of Jordan's Principle through the:
  - 1) Development of a policy framework (e.g., approach to measuring/monitoring outcomes for children, evaluating Jordan's Principle, etc.);
  - 2) Review of existing programs and services including community-based coordination services;
  - 3) Definition of options and considerations for reforming the operationalization of Jordan's Principle;
  - 4) Financial analysis and costing of the baseline and any proposed reforms.

## IFSD's approach

---

- The approach will be bottom-up with a focus on engagement with those working in capacities related to Jordan's Principle. Other primary data sources and secondary data sources will also be used.
- A regionally-representative working group has been assembled to provide practitioner input on operating realities, successes/challenges, and considerations for refining/improving matters associated to Jordan's Principle.
- Part 2 of Jordan's Principle is expected to be completed by December 2024.

This work has four parts:	Guiding questions/considerations	Progress update
1) Development of a policy framework	<p>What is the problem (needs) 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>	<p>Policy framework using available documentation is complete</p> <p>Evaluation and indicators to monitor Jordan's Principle underway</p> <p>Considerations for measuring formal and substantive equality defined</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>Do we know why needs addressed through Jordan's Principles are not met through other services?</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>	<p>Data on Jordan's Principle received from ISC</p> <p>Challenges accessing public servants for interviews on Jordan's Principle</p> <p>Census, IRS, ISC, RHS, reviewed as sources for current state of children and families (on- and off-reserve)</p>

<p>3) Options and considerations for reforming the operationalization of Jordan's Principle</p>	<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>	<p>Two meetings with working group; regional portraits of claims processes defined</p> <p>National processes mapped</p> <p>Three meetings with First Nations/Tribal Councils scheduled to explore different approaches to Jordan's Principle, e.g., training coordinators, coordinating services</p> <p>Limited engagement from professionals outside of working group on experience with Jordan's Principle.</p>
<p>4) Financial analysis and costing of the baseline and any proposed reforms</p>	<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>	<p>Dependent on findings from #1-3</p>

## We need your help

---

---

- IFSD welcomes introductions to practitioners and other experts that may wish to share their professional experiences/work experiences with Jordan's Principle.
- There are different ways to contribute these experiences:
  - Share reports/publications, research etc.
  - One-on-one discussions with IFSD
  - Group discussions with IFSD
  - Written Q&A
- We hope you will refer or introduce colleagues from government, health, education, and other services related to Jordan's Principle.

## Get in touch

---

---

Helaina Gaspard, Ph.D.

Email: [helaina.gaspard@ifsd.ca](mailto:helaina.gaspard@ifsd.ca)

Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy (IFSD)

University of Ottawa

[www.ifsd.ca](http://www.ifsd.ca)