

Aboriginal Justice Inquiry - Child Welfare Initiative



Options for Foster Care Providers

Norman Region

October 2004





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THE AJI-CWI: A New Approach to Child and Family Services in Manitoba

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The child and family services system works to protect children at risk of abuse or neglect. It supports and strengthens the well-being of families, especially those experiencing difficulties in caring for their children.

Child and family services in Manitoba is currently undergoing a major restructuring through an initiative called the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry – Child Welfare Initiative (AJI-CWI).

The AJI-CWI is a joint initiative of four parties:

- ◆ Manitoba Metis Federation
- ◆ Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs
- ◆ Manitoba Keewatinowi Ininew Okimowin
- ◆ Province of Manitoba

The parties have worked together to develop a new system that:

- ◆ recognizes and respects the cultural diversity of Manitoba
- ◆ returns to First Nations and Metis peoples the right to develop and control the delivery of their own child and family services

In the new system, the delivery of child and family services is a shared responsibility between the Province of Manitoba and Aboriginal peoples. The most fundamental change is the delegation of responsibility for the delivery of child and family services from the Province to four new child and family services Authorities, three of which are Aboriginal Authorities.



The four new Authorities are:

- ◆ Metis Child and Family Services Authority
- ◆ First Nations of Southern Manitoba Child and Family Services Authority
- ◆ First Nations of Northern Manitoba Child and Family Services Authority
- ◆ General Child and Family Services Authority

This change is legislated through *The Child and Family Services Authorities Act* of the Province of Manitoba, proclaimed November 24, 2003.

Upon completion of the restructuring (being implemented on a region-by-region basis), all four Authorities and their agencies will provide services throughout the province. Aboriginal children and families will have access to culturally appropriate child and family services through Aboriginal agencies, no matter where they live in Manitoba.

Vision Statement

A child and family services system that recognizes and supports the rights of children to develop within safe and healthy families and communities, and recognizes that First Nations and Metis peoples have unique authority, rights and responsibilities to honour and care for their children.

Mission Statement

To have a jointly coordinated child and family services system that recognizes the distinct rights and authorities of First Nations and Metis peoples and the general population to control and deliver their own child and family services province-wide; that is community-based; and reflects and incorporates the cultures of First Nations, Metis and the general population respectively.



New Arrangements for Foster Care Providers

Foster families are an essential resource in the restructured child and family services system. There are, however, new arrangements for foster care being introduced as part of the restructuring of the system.

General Licensing Arrangements

Licensing of foster homes will continue to be the responsibility of agencies, subject to province-wide regulations and standards. A major change being introduced is that agencies will now be able to license foster homes anywhere they choose throughout the province. As licensing arrangements will no longer need to be based on geography, foster families will be able to choose the agency from which they would like to request a licence. However, each foster home can hold a licence from only one agency and a family can have only one foster home application active at any given time.

A registry will be developed to track applications and licences. All foster family licence renewals are to be done by the current licensing agency, unless otherwise agreed to by the agencies and foster home involved.

Management and Support

The agency that licenses a foster home will be responsible for supporting and managing that home. The exceptions to this are foster homes that are currently managed by non-mandated child and family service agencies. Arrangements for these particular foster homes are not changing at this time but will be reviewed later in the AJI-CWI process.



Sharing Arrangements

Sharing arrangements will be developed by each Authority to allow other agencies access to foster care spaces in homes licensed by their agencies. As such, foster families licensed by one agency will not be prevented from providing care for another agency. Subject to these protocols, however, the licensing agency (in consultation with the foster home) will be responsible for approving all placement decisions.

Implementation

The new foster care arrangements are being introduced in the province on a region-by-region basis. This began in the Interlake in November 2003 with introduction in other regions scheduled throughout 2004. Detailed information and supports are being made available to foster families in each region as implementation takes place.

The introduction of these changes begins in the Norman region in October 2004. A coordinated approach is being used to support existing foster families in making licensing decisions throughout implementation.

Starting the first day when cases are transferred in the Norman region, foster families will have up to three months to decide which agency to apply to for licensing when their current licence expires. Once this three month period is over, a process will be in place to facilitate licensing by either the existing or an alternate agency.

The existing licensing agency will be responsible for renewals for foster families whose current licence expires before the end of this three month period. A change in licensing agencies would be processed the next time their licence expires, unless otherwise agreed to by the agencies and the foster family involved.



Implementation and Places of Safety

At the time of case transfers, some children will be in the care of a Place of Safety home. If the family providing the Place of Safety decides to become a foster family, they will need to decide which agency they wish to apply to for licensing.

Foster Care Rates

Special rates currently being paid to foster families will be maintained for six months from the date of the case transfer of any particular child. During this time, there will be no decrease to the special rates paid to the existing foster home. Any increase will be based on sound case planning. If a placement change is made during this time, this provision does not apply.



Child and Family Services Authorities and Agencies Serving the Norman Region

Three agencies from the four Authorities will be the primary service providers in the region:

Metis Authority

- ◆ Metis Child, Family and Community Services

Southern First Nations Authority

- ◆ A service agreement will be signed to provide services to children and families from southern First Nations communities.

Northern First Nations Authority

- ◆ Cree Nation Child and Family Caring Agency

General Authority

- ◆ Rural and Northern Services - Northern

The following pages provide summaries of the foster care arrangements for each Authority and a brief profile on each of the three agencies listed above.

Please note that child and family services may be provided by other agencies in the province, but the three profiled in this booklet have primary responsibility in the Norman region.

A map depicting the geographic region of Norman is provided on the inside front cover of this booklet.



Metis Child and Family Services Authority



On behalf of the Metis Child and Family Services (MCFS) Authority I wish to extend greetings to individuals in Manitoba's Norman Region. As many are aware, the past year has been extremely busy for the Board and staff of the MCFS Authority as we prepared for the opening of the first Metis-specific child and family services agency in the history of Manitoba, which took place on June 3, 2004.

The establishment of Metis Child, Family and Community Services (MCFCS) has been a longstanding dream within the Metis community and it was with great excitement and enthusiasm that we received the formal mandate from the Province of Manitoba to deliver child and family services province-wide on September 13, 2003 and subsequently, Proclamation of *The Child and Family Services Authorities Act* on November 24, 2003. While these events, combined with our Agency Launch in June of this year, were major milestones for the Metis Authority and agency, we continue to focus our attention and efforts on detailed planning and development to ensure we are adequately prepared to begin delivering mandated services to families.

MCFCS has a single-agency structure with a head office located in Winnipeg. Although the majority of administrative tasks will be managed centrally through the head office, services will be developed and provided on a regional basis.



We are currently planning to develop services in five stages. In each stage, services will be developed in an area or region of Manitoba. MCFCS will deliver services directly to children and families throughout the Norman region of Manitoba.

We are excited about the months ahead and we look forward to working with individuals, families, and organizations as we implement our mandate and work to roll out services throughout the province.

Nelson Mayer
CEO, Metis Child and Family Services Authority
127-150 Henry Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3B 0J7
Ph: (204) 949-0220 Fax: (204) 984-9487
E-mail: info@metiscfs.mb.ca



Metis Child, Family and Community Services



Metis Child, Family and Community Services (MCFCS) is the first child and family services agency established in the history of Manitoba to support and strengthen Metis, Non-Status and Inuit children, families and communities throughout the province.

We operate under the following mission statement:

Metis families and communities have the right and responsibility to care for children. Our mission is to ensure children and families are served with dignity, respect, and understanding throughout the delivery of Metis community-based family services and support programs, so that we may serve to strengthen the Metis child, family and community.

We believe in a holistic approach in working with children and families. We recognize that children require a permanent, stable, safe and nurturing environment where they receive adequate nutrition, shelter and clothing. As well, a child's unique strengths and needs must be assessed and attended to in order to maximize the child's emotional, social, academic, spiritual and cultural growth.

Overriding all these needs is the firm belief that maintaining family and community connections and decision-making power within the community is essential to healthy child development. Children must be provided with the skills necessary to access resources and maintain and build relationships to make a healthy transition into adulthood.

Our efforts are intended to serve the best interests of children, families and communities. MCFCS strives to support and strengthen Metis, Non-status and Inuit families. Our focus is to promote the health and well-being of our Metis children and families by building on the capacity of our Metis communities through the provision of culturally sensitive and appropriate programs and services.

We will accomplish this by ensuring our programs are responsive and accountable to the communities we serve. We will offer an alternative method of intervention and prevention that is holistic and family centred. We believe that involvement of family and community is



essential when working with children who are at risk of entering the child welfare system.

MCFCS plans to provide the following types of "Alternative Care" arrangements:

- ◆ Extended Family Placements by way of a licensing process
- ◆ Licensed Foster Homes (no relationship with a particular child) within a specific community to maintain the child's connections with the birth family
- ◆ Treatment or Specialized Foster Care arrangements for children with special needs

MCFCS has developed a number of programs and services designed specifically for care providers, including:

- ◆ Cultural Orientation Training to encourage cultural sensitivity with our children
- ◆ Training to address specific behavioral difficulties (ie. FAS, ADD, ADHD, Oppositional Defiance, Caring for medical needs children etc.)
- ◆ Connecting and bridging relationships with birth family members

MCFCS will provide ongoing support and supervision to all placement resources.

We look forward to the future where we will all work together to build stronger families and communities.

We can make the sun rise tomorrow for children and families of the Metis Nation.

Contact Information:

DIRECTOR: Dorothy McLoughlin

Main Office:

Metis Child, Family and Community Services Agency

1261 Main Street

Winnipeg, MB R2W 5G9

Ph: (204) 697-1118

Fax: (204) 697-0606

E-mail: info@metiscfs.mb.ca



First Nations of Southern Manitoba Child and Family Services Authority

In the year 2000, the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs signed an historic agreement with the Province of Manitoba that would begin the process of restoring responsibility to First Nations for child and family services to their own people living off-reserve.

In Manitoba, First Nations have been providing child and family services to their own people living on-reserve for over twenty years. With the proclamation of *The Child and Family Services Authorities Act*, First Nations are now able to begin providing these same services to their First Nations citizens, wherever they live in Manitoba.

The First Nations of Southern Manitoba Child and Family Services Authority is an incorporated body that has been assuming the duties and responsibilities that *The Act* assigns to it. This has included developing the management, financial, operational, information technology, human resources, and program capabilities, while at the same time continuing to participate in the transitioning of the child and family services system in Manitoba.

The Southern First Nations Authority works with seven First Nation child and family services agencies in southern Manitoba, which in turn provide a full range of culturally appropriate child and family services to 36 First Nations communities.



These agencies are:

- ◆ Anishinaabe Child and Family Services
- ◆ Dakota Ojibway Child and Family Services
- ◆ Intertribal Child and Family Services
- ◆ Peguis Child and Family Services
- ◆ Sagkeeng Child and Family Services
- ◆ Southeast Child and Family Services
- ◆ West Region Child and Family Services

The Southern Authority's area of responsibility is to those First Nations communities encompassed within southern Manitoba and therefore does not have many requests for service in the Norman region. For these reasons, services to our residents living in the northern part of Manitoba will occur through a service agreement.

The Southern First Nations Child and Family Services Authority presently has a staff of thirteen and a Board of Directors that govern their work. As of July 1, 2004, all southern First Nations child and family services agencies had their mandates extended to include being able to provide services to their off-reserve residents.

For information contact:

**First Nations of Southern Manitoba
Child and Family Services Authority**

100-696 Portage Avenue

Winnipeg, Manitoba R3G 0M6

Telephone: (204) 783-9190

Toll-free: 1-800-665-5762



First Nations of Northern Manitoba Child and Family Services Authority

The opportunity has been created for First Nations of northern Manitoba child and family service agencies to move closer to attaining full jurisdiction over child and family matters. While the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry - Child Welfare Initiative is not a self-government initiative, it is a process that has extended our mandate to help our families living off-reserve.

One area of service is foster care. In our northern communities, the existing First Nation child and family service agencies have developed models such as custom care, community care and alternative programs. These models have been designed to meet the goals and objectives of northern First Nations and the needs of northern First Nation children, with an emphasis on program elements which recognize and support First Nations identity, traditional customs and culture.

With the development of the Northern First Nations Authority and the establishment of service delivery sites off-reserve, the Northern First Nations Authority will support the above principles, but will also be mindful of its relationship to the provincial system and its program and service delivery standards.



There will be differences among the agencies affiliated with the Northern First Nations Authority and its service delivery system, in terms of roles and responsibilities, there will be commonalities in the areas of philosophy, recruitment, support systems, financial systems, placement protocols, reviews, data and record keeping, registration requirements, and appeal processes. Examples of common elements reflected in the philosophy of most affiliated agencies service delivery systems include: “our children are our most precious resource”; “children are our future”; “children are entitled to a safe and healthy environment that is nurturing and protective”; and “keeping families together”.

The Northern First Nations Authority is committed to creating a better system for helping our people.

For more information, please call: (204) 942-1842



Cree Nation Child & Family Caring Agency

Cree Nation Child & Family Caring Agency (CNCFCA) provides direct services to First Nations members from the following communities:



- ◆ Grand Rapids First Nation
- ◆ Sapotaweyak Cree Nation
- ◆ Mosakahiken Cree Nation
- ◆ Chemawawin Cree Nation
- ◆ Wuskwi Sipiik First Nation
- ◆ Opaskwayak Cree Nation
- ◆ Mathias Colomb Cree Nation
- ◆ Marcel Colomb First Nation

We operate under the following mission statement:

Cree Nation Child & Family Caring Agency provides community based child and family services and programs to members of the Swampy Cree Tribal Council First Nations. By incorporating both protection services and prevention programs, the agency will place paramount importance on family unity in our communities.

Our agency's Board of Directors is comprised of representatives from each of the Swampy Cree Tribal Council (SCTC) communities through delegated authority from the Chiefs of the Swampy Cree Tribal Council. Board representation includes Local Child and Family Services Committee Members, Community Members, Councillors and a CFS Portfolio Chief.

In the Norman region, Cree Nation Child & Family Caring Agency has already identified two workers that are under the direct supervision of the Northern Regional Office, Family Services and Housing. These Social Workers have worked in partnership with CNCFCA in joint planning for children and families in this region.



Programs and Services:

Cree Nation Child and Family Caring Agency provides the following services:

- ◆ Child and Family Services (case management, family court proceedings, apprehensions, placements of children, prevention programming/awareness)
- ◆ Child Protection Investigations (all child abuse allegations/disclosures, collateral partnership with RCMP detachments)
- ◆ Foster Care Services (Resource Placement and Development) (recruitment of foster homes, licensing, orientation and training to foster parents, and a partnership with MYS – Northern Alternative Parent Home Program and their clinical case managers)
- ◆ Adoption/Repatriation Services (De facto, Parent's Own, Select Adoptions, limited repatriation services)
- ◆ Winnipeg Sub-Office Child and Family Services (Agency workers maintain a caseload of SCTC children placed in long-term Winnipeg resources, in collaboration with local level workers)
- ◆ Counselling & Referral Services
- ◆ Minor/Expectant Parent Services (assessments/support and referral services)
- ◆ Service Delivery Agreements with Northern Region Child and Family Services
- ◆ Local Child and Family Services Committees

Contact Information:

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Diane Deschambeault, C.I.S.W., B.I.S.W.

Main Office: Box 10130
Opaskwayak, MB R0B 2J0
Ph: (204) 623-7456
Toll Free: 1-877-252-7535
Fax: (204) 623-3847



Other Offices:

Winnipeg Sub-Office

3rd Floor – 338 Broadway

Winnipeg, MB R3C 0B9

Ph: (204) 927-1230

Fax: (204) 927-1234

Grand Rapids Local Office

Box 334

Grand Rapids, MB

R0V 0V0

Ph: (204) 639-2518

Fax: (204) 639-2443

Sapotaweyak Local Office

General Delivery

Shoal River, MB

R0L 1L0

Ph: (204) 587-2216

Toll Free: 1-888-515-2553

Fax: (204) 587-2030

Mosakahiken Local Office

General Delivery

Moose Lake, MB

R0B 0Y0

Ph: (204) 678-2211

Fax: (204) 678-2337

Chemawawin Local Office

General Delivery

Easterville, MB

R0C 0V0

Ph: (204) 329-2532

Fax: (204) 329-2709

Wuskwi Sipiik Local Office

General Delivery

Birch River, MB

R0L 0E0

Ph: (204) 236-4831

Fax: (204) 236-4429



Other Offices:

Opaskwayak Cree Nation Local Office

Box 10130

Opaskwayak

MB R0B 2J0

Ph: (204) 627-7240

Toll Free: 1-877-627-7240

Fax: (204) 627-7259

Mathias Colomb Local Office

General Delivery

Pukatawagan, MB

R0B 1G0

Ph: (204) 553-2139

Fax: (204) 553-2135



General Child and Family Services Authority

The General Child and Family Services Authority (General Authority) has been created as a part of the restructuring of the child welfare system to oversee the delivery of child and family services to non-Aboriginal people throughout Manitoba.

The responsibility for the delivery of services for non-Aboriginal persons and all others who choose the General Authority will rest with one of the following General Authority agencies:

- ◆ Child and Family Services of Western Manitoba
- ◆ Child and Family Services of Central Manitoba
- ◆ Jewish Child and Family Service
- ◆ Churchill Child and Family Services (a program of the Churchill Regional Health Authority)
- ◆ Winnipeg Child and Family Services
- ◆ Rural and Northern Services - Interlake
- ◆ Rural and Northern Services - Eastman
- ◆ Rural and Northern Services - Parkland
- ◆ Rural and Northern Services - Northern

All of these agencies have been in operation for many years and will continue to deliver child welfare services in their particular geographical regions. They continue to be responsible for receiving referrals from their communities, investigating child abuse allegations, and providing all services under *The Child and Family Services Act* and *The Adoption Act*, including licensing foster homes.



The role of the General Authority is as articulated in *The Child and Family Services Authorities Act* but generally is as follows:

- ◆ To ensure that child and family services are delivered through a network of agencies to all children and families falling under the jurisdiction of the General Authority who require these services
- ◆ To advocate for the delivery of high quality services throughout the General Authority agencies
- ◆ To fund the agencies under its jurisdiction for regional and community based programs and services
- ◆ To ensure compliance with legislation, regulations and standards

The General Authority is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by the Minister of Family Services and Housing for the Province of Manitoba. The Board is a governance Board which takes the lead role with the General Authority in promoting and supporting innovative programs within the agencies. The AJI-CWI has created a unique opportunity for all Authorities and service providers to critically examine all of the assumptions behind the traditional delivery of child welfare in this province.

The General Authority too takes this opportunity. With the leadership of the General Authority and the continued work of the agencies, the future of services to children and families will be reformed and enhanced. The well being of all children living in the province continues to be the prime directive for all child welfare practitioners. Innovative and creative alternatives to the more traditional delivery of services is what is driving the whole system under this initiative....we need to preserve what is good for children and change what doesn't work anymore.

For more information contact:
Dennis H. Schellenberg
Chief Executive Officer
(204) 984-9360 or
Toll Free: 1-866-803-2814



Rural and Northern Services - Northern Region



Manitoba

Northern Region, Child and Family Services is part of an integrated social services delivery system operated by Rural and Northern Services Branch of the Department of Family Services and Housing.

Our Vision

"Quality Services--- Strengthening Individuals, Families and Communities"

Our Mission

"Family Services and Housing, Northern Region, provides integrated and co-ordinated social services to individuals and families. Services respond to the diverse needs of northern residents and assist communities in providing safe and supportive environments. Our services are accessible, culturally sensitive and respectful of the need for self-reliance."

Our Services

We deliver a comprehensive range of social services to residents of the Northern region of Manitoba, guided by Manitoba legislation and public policy.

We share with residents in our region, the responsibility for the protection of vulnerable children and adults. We provide financial security and supports to individuals, families and communities in creating safe and supportive environments.

In particular, we provide services in the following areas:

- ◆ Child Protection
- ◆ Voluntary Family Services
- ◆ Services to Children in Care



- ◆ Foster Care Support
- ◆ Adoption and Post Legal Services
- ◆ Day Care
- ◆ Family Conciliation and Mediation
- ◆ Services to Handicapped Adults and Children

Foster Care Providers are the backbone of the child and family service system and integral members of the service team. Through the loving support provided to all the children in their care and with the support of the agency around planning for general and special needs, children receive the support and protection required for them to achieve a healthy and independent adulthood.

Contact Information:

The Pas Gerri Cross, Area Manager

3rd St. and Ross Avenue
Provincial Bldg
The Pas, MB R9A 1M4
Phone: (204) 627-8311
Fax: (204) 627-8265

Flin Flon Anne Danis, Area Manager

143 Main St.
Provincial Bldg
Flin Flon, MB R8A 1K5
Phone: (204) 687-1706
Fax: (204) 687-1708



DO YOU

Want more information?

Have any concerns?

If you want more information before you make a decision regarding the new foster care arrangements, please speak to your worker. If you prefer, you can also call any of the Child and Family Services Authorities during regular office hours:

Metis Child and Family Services Authority
(204) 949-0220

First Nations of Southern Manitoba
Child and Family Services Authority
(204) 783-9190
Toll Free: 1-800-665-5762

First Nations of Northern Manitoba
Child and Family Services Authority
(204) 942-1842

General Child and Family Services Authority
(204) 984-9360
Toll Free 1-866-803-2814

OR:

Visit the web site:
www.aji-cwi.mb.ca

Call the Central Information Line:
In Winnipeg: **(204) 945-1183**
Toll Free: **1-866-300-7503**

E-mail us at:
ajicwi@gov.mb.ca