



FNCFS REFORM

Long-Term Reform of the First Nations
Child and Family Services (FNCFS) Program

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Chiefs of Ontario and Nishnawbe Aski Nation Commit to a Better Future for Children

February 26, 2025 - In a display of unity, Chiefs of Ontario (COO) and Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN) leadership voted by nearly-unanimous resolution to ratify the \$8.5 billion Ontario Final Agreement on the Long-Term Reform of the First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) Program. During today's [COO Special Chiefs Assembly](#) (SCA), 76 chiefs and proxies voted in favour of the agreement, 4 were opposed and 3 abstained.

Ontario Regional Chief Abram Benedict and Nishnawbe Aski Nation Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler have issued the following statement:

“We are so proud of our leadership for their unwavering dedication to reforming the broken child welfare system for our children today. This is a significant step forward in a process that has been ongoing for nearly 20 years. It has been nine years since COO and NAN applied for intervenor status at the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) to both represent the unique interests of remote First Nations and to ensure that First Nations retain decision-making over their own child and family services. NAN’s participation at the table was vital in ensuring that the realities of our remote communities were recognized and accounted for in this process. We have achieved groundbreaking results, including an evidence-based process for adjusting funding to account for the increased costs associated with delivering services in remote areas.

When the National Final Agreement that was approved by our leadership in October was rejected at the Assembly of First Nations, we didn't give up. Our leadership was determined to protect the significant advancements made, and so we carried on, pushing to do what is best for our children. The Ontario Final Agreement that was ratified today is not a new agreement, but builds upon the hard work that has been done to reform the FNCFS and will bring long overdue change. We know that this is not the end of the road, and we will continue to advocate for meaningful change. We are now at the beginning of a new day: the start of true, community-driven reform.

Chiefs have exercised their inherent right to make decisions regarding their children and they expect that these decisions be respected as this process unfolds before the CHRT and beyond. Any attempts to delay the implementation of these decisions will be considered an unacceptable interference in this inherent jurisdiction. We therefore call upon all other Parties to refrain from any interference that could impact the agreement’s approval and implementation. We will similarly act in support of Chiefs in other regions who wish to make similar decisions that impact their children.”

For more information please visit: www.fncfsreform.ca

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Nishnawbe
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