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## **Standing Committee on the Status of Women**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Tuesday, February 15, 2011**

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**Chair**

**The Honourable Hedy Fry**



## Standing Committee on the Status of Women

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• (1100)

[English]

**The Chair (Hon. Hedy Fry (Vancouver Centre, Lib.)):** I call the meeting to order.

Pursuant to Standing Order 108(2), the committee is undertaking a study on violence against aboriginal women. We are looking at the root causes of that violence. We're looking at the extent of the violence. We're looking at the forms of violence and the nature of the violence, and we are looking for solutions from the people we are talking to, especially in aboriginal communities, to see what we can do, because this has been going on for a long time, and despite efforts from every level of government, very little seems to have changed.

It is my pleasure to present to you the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations, which will present for 10 minutes; then they must leave. Many of you have the chief's name there, but instead of the chief we will be having Patricia Schuster, who is the executive director of the Saskatchewan First Nations' Women's Commission.

Patricia, welcome. Would you like to begin your presentation? You have 10 minutes.

**Ms. Patricia Schuster (Executive Director, Saskatchewan First Nations' Women's Commission, Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations):** Thank you very much.

I would like to extend my apologies on behalf of our chair, Chief Day Walker-Pelletier, who is unable to attend in person this morning to present her own statement. Our legislative assembly for our chiefs is meeting for the next few days, and this morning is an important part of this process.

I will be reading her statement verbatim, and therefore may refer to "I", meaning Chief Day Walker-Pelletier and not myself. It is her statement and should be reflected as such in the notes.

I will begin. The statement reads as follows:

I would first like to thank the chair, the Honourable Hedy Fry, for the opportunity to contribute to the Standing Committee on the Status of Women. I am Chief Day Walker-Pelletier of the Okanese First Nation, Treaty 4 territory in Saskatchewan. I have been chief of my first nation for 30 consecutive years. I also sit as chair of the Saskatchewan First Nations' Women's Commission within the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations structure.

It gives me great pride that I am able to assist in the successes of my community and champion the causes and rights of first nations women and children.

In Saskatchewan, we currently have 10 first nations women chiefs and more than 140 other women in leadership capacities. It is our mandate at the women's commission and as first nation leaders to ensure that our communities flourish and that our membership is given every opportunity possible to succeed. It is a difficult path, considering that in our past various legislation and policies have

been used to keep first nations people from succeeding. Residential schools have had such a negative impact on our people that two or three generations later the effects are still clearly evident. Violence against first nations women and children is rampant in our communities, born from the cycle of abuse created from residential schools.

Within the last three years, the Saskatchewan First Nations' Women's Commission has gathered research from women within our communities in Saskatchewan regarding violence. We went out to several communities and talked to more than 300 women, and our findings were astounding: 10 out of 10 women had experienced violence within their lives, either as children or as adults. Further to that, when we asked whether the women had ever had a crime committed against them, very few women answered yes, yet many had answered that they had been assaulted by their partners or someone in their lives. What this showed us was that women do not even comprehend what violence is and how it is not right for them to be experiencing it. Our response was to go back out into the communities and identify ways that women can keep safe. We identified that violence against any person is not right, and then we went back to the very basics and discussed what violence really is.

Today I'm here to ask you to respect our abilities as first nations leaders. I know what my community needs. I understand the complexities that exist on my reserve pertaining to violence.

When a woman experiences violence, it affects her ability to be a supportive mother, maintain a job, contribute to the household income, and take part in our many community activities. Our communities are based on family threads, and when a woman is in a volatile relationship, she will often cut off these threads, which contributes to her and her children being confined to living with violence.

According to the World Health Organization, violence against women is an issue of public policy and is a human rights concern. As a community leader, I believe that this is true and I am trying to ensure that the human rights of all my members are met. This includes our collective rights as a nation. Our communities are family oriented and work together as a community, as we have always done in the past. This is a main staple of our nationhood.

I'm willing to work towards developing a course of action to prevent violence against women. We must identify the women in our communities who are experiencing abuse. We must create talking circles, support groups, and educational awareness seminars to assist in this effort. More access to safe houses should be available on our first nations or within our tribal council areas. They must be developed based on our holistic beliefs and be based on our traditions where women have always held power in our communities. Women must feel safe, be treated with respect, and have access to professional support, yet there is very little funding available for development of action-oriented solutions.

I know you are looking for information that you can identify recommendations on, to influence future legislation. Today I have already identified recommendations to you, including access to funding to create our own solutions. First nations people are unique to anyone else in Canada. We have a treaty-based relationship with the government signed by our respective forefathers, and we would like to ensure this process is respected.

November 25 has been designed as International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women by the United Nations General Assembly. Within the next nine months, let us work together to begin the process of change for our women experiencing violence. I ask you today to recommend a commitment to give funding to first nations to develop safe shelters for our women and children who need help at a local level.

Thank you.

•(1105)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms. Schuster. That was very short, but you have to leave now. Is that right?

**Ms. Patricia Schuster:** Yes.

**The Chair:** I want to thank you very much for presenting. We would have liked to ask you questions, but since you must leave, we will thank you again.

We're very interested to know that you have done some work yourself in your own communities and that you have some very interesting findings that are consistent with findings we've heard elsewhere.

Thank you again, Ms. Schuster.

**Ms. Patricia Schuster:** Thank you very much.

**The Chair:** The next witnesses are going to be on the issue of child welfare. As we did our travels across the country, we found one consistent pattern, and it is that there is a huge problem with child welfare and with the taking of children away from their parents and putting them into care in a non-aboriginal setting. This in itself has become almost an epidemic.

We wanted to discuss this because we didn't feel that we had enough information, so we've held these meetings to discuss the issue of child welfare and to dig deeper into what is going on. As a result, we have with us Cindy Blackstock, executive director of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada.

Welcome, Cindy.

**Dr. Cindy Blackstock (Executive Director, First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada):** Thank you.

**The Chair:** We will hear from you for 10 minutes and then we will have questions and answers. It's just you, so you're on the hot seat.

**Dr. Cindy Blackstock:** Thank you, honourable members.

I'm so glad that the issue of children has joined the issue of women and motherhood. It is fundamental that children be seen within the context of their families, within the context of what it is to be a woman, and within the context of the perpetuity of a society.

There are more first nations children in child welfare care today than at the height of residential schools, by a factor of three. We believe that this is fundamentally preventable in the vast majority of cases.

The factors that drive first nations children into child welfare care are poverty, poor housing, substance misuse linked back to residential schools, and inequitable services for child and family service agencies and other services funded by the federal government on reserve.

Fundamental and central to what I'm about to say is a question of the Canadian conscience. Is it Canadian in any shape, way, or form for a government to say "no" to a child or to say a child deserves less than other children simply because of that child's race? If you think that's okay, you will see nothing but barriers to solving what I'm about to say is a solvable problem. If you don't think there's any room within Canadian society for denying children the same benefits other Canadian children enjoy simply because of their race, something that they cannot change and should not be asked to change, then you will see nothing but opportunity in solving what is a solvable problem for this generation of children.

Some people may not be aware that when it comes to child welfare, provincial and territorial laws apply on and off reserve, as a requirement by the Department of Indian Affairs. The funding is provided by the Department of Indian Affairs through a host of funding arrangements if the funding is not tied to the provincial statutes or to the needs of the children. The Auditor General has reviewed all of the various funding arrangements provided by the Department of Indian Affairs, including the much touted enhanced model, and has found them all to be inequitable and flawed. That was as of 2008.

I just came from the aboriginal affairs committee, and there were first nations child welfare agencies there that have received the enhanced funding. They are now three years into that; they are experiencing deficits running their agencies and are unable to meet the needs of their children in a comparable way.

I'm going to quickly go through some of these funding models so that you're briefed on them. I'm going to talk a little bit about Jordan's principle, and I will spend most of my time on the solutions.

There are three funding formulas currently used by the Department of Indian Affairs. One is called directive 20-1. What you need to know about that formula is that there's almost no money in that model to keep children safely in their family homes. In fact, the Department of Indian Affairs' own fact sheet on child and family services says that the funding is so badly structured and is such an inequitable amount that it drives first nations children into foster care because they aren't provided the same services as other Canadians.

There's something called the enhanced model, which is really just the Indian Affairs take on the directive. It's just an adaptation of the directive. The department has said that now that we have rolled this out, this is the solution. As I just shared with you, Sheila Fraser found it to be inequitable and flawed three years ago, yet that's all the department is prepared to offer first nations children. You either take dire and inequitable under the directive, or you take flawed and inequitable under this new approach.

The third model is just about as old as I am. I am 46 years old. The third model is 45 years old. Can you imagine being funded for a child welfare practice on the basis of a model that's 45 years old? Well, that's what happens to first nations child and family service agencies in Ontario. These agencies are struggling every day to meet the unique needs of their children within their culture and context. That model too was reviewed by the Auditor General of Canada was found to be flawed and inequitable.

Now, if the best our country can do for first nations children is dire and inequitable or flawed and inequitable, I think you would all agree with me that it is insufficient for the Canadian conscience.

There's another problem, which is that our first nations children get caught in disputes between the federal government and the provincial governments about who should pay.

Jordan River Anderson was born in Norway House Cree Nation in 1999. He was medically required to stay in a hospital for two years, but after two years, he should have been medically discharged to a family home. Everything was ready for his at-home care.

• (1110)

If he had been non-aboriginal, he would have gone home, but Canada and the province decided to argue over each individual item related to his care, and this baby stayed in hospital unnecessarily for over two and a half years.

Doctors, social workers, and family members pleaded with the provincial and federal governments to allow this child to go home as any other child would have, but their voices were not heard; Jordan died in a hospital, never having spent a day in the family home.

The family pleaded for this not to happen to any other children, but we knew it was. We conducted a study in only 12 of the 108 first nations agencies and found that because of these disputes, 400 other children were being denied government services available to all other children.

Jordan's principle is a very simple concept. It says that when a government service is available to all other children—so these aren't services that aren't available; basically, if you were a non-aboriginal child, you'd receive them—and one of these disputes crops up, either the federal or the provincial government—whoever gets contacted by the child first—pays for the service, and they can argue about reimbursement as a secondary concern.

That was adopted by many of you, as parliamentarians, in December 2007. Some of you may remember Ernest Anderson in the gallery that day, and the standing ovation that you all gave him in recognition of his family's contribution.

I'm sad to say that the bureaucrats have reinterpreted the direction of the parliamentarians. They've narrowed Jordan's principle to now only apply to children with complex medical needs and multiple service providers, suggesting that denying children services in education and other areas is somehow okay. I would encourage you as parliamentarians to direct the bureaucrats to re-embrace the true tradition of the House.

We have Canada before the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal at the moment. I say to people that a day back in February of 2007 was

probably one of the saddest days of my life as a Canadian citizen, because I found myself having to file a human rights complaint against the Government of Canada because they had failed to address the inequalities in child welfare, despite there being two evidence-based solutions and despite there being billions of dollars of surplus budget or billions to be spent on stimulus projects.

The kids somehow were still at the bottom of the deck, so along with the Assembly of First Nations, we filed a human rights complaint against the Government of Canada alleging that they're racially discriminating against first nations children by underfunding child welfare and driving these kids away from their families and into non-aboriginal homes in many cases.

That case is now four years on. Why has it taken so long without a judgment? Because the Canadian government is not fighting it on the merits. They don't see fit, in this case, to put all the facts before the Canadian public and before the courts in order to have that issue resolved. They want to fight it on a legal loophole. What they're saying is they, as a federal government, only fund child welfare. Others deliver it, so it's the people who deliver it who should be held accountable for the discrimination, if there's any occurring.

That truly is splitting hairs. Can you imagine? The federal government provides very few direct services to Canadians. If that was your measure, it's the doctors who deliver the health care. If they decide to give 20% less health care to people wearing blue sweaters today, well, it's not the federal government discriminating, but the physician. That would be unacceptable and un-Canadian, and yet that is the position of the Canadian government at the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal.

The Federal Court has refused to derail the tribunal, despite two appeals by the federal government to stop the tribunal on this "funding is not a service" issue. As well, they brought a similar motion—not to the Federal Court of Appeal, as one would expect, but back down to the tribunal to try to get it derailed on the same technicality just this last June, and we are waiting.

The other thing that the Canadian government doesn't want is for this to become part of the public consciousness. We have a campaign called "I am a witness"—you can see my button here—and we've posted all the court documents related to this case up on a website. We invite Canadians, not to support our position—because they don't know all the facts—but to listen carefully to the Government of Canada and carefully to ourselves, to read the Auditor General's report, and to make up their own minds about whether they think their country is doing the right thing for first nations children three years after the apology.

There are over 7,000 Canadians and organizations representing about 10 million Canadians following this case at the moment. It the most watched legal case in Canadian history.

• (1115)

Among those who came was a 14-year-old non-aboriginal girl by the name of Summer Bisson, and I bring her quote to your attention on page 8 of my brief. She came to watch Canada's last attempt to try to derail the tribunal by using the legal loophole that funding is not a service. This is what she says:

Canada's lawyer has to come up with a good reason as to why the Tribunal should be dismissed and really there is no reason except for the fact that the government is scared, and does not want justice to be done. It's no wonder the government doesn't want this to be public. It is quite embarrassing and sad to think that our government is trying to get out of its responsibility to provide the same quality of services to First Nations children in the child welfare system as they do to non-Native children. I am a student and I am aware and I am going to make sure other youth are aware. Cindy is speaking for others who cannot speak and that is amazing. So I am going to speak for others who cannot be here today and make sure they're aware.

This is not a partisan issue. Equality is not a partisan concept. I think all of you swore oaths to stand on guard for the values that define this country the most. A testament of the nation and of your leadership is that when you know something is wrong, you can surface above your party lines and do the right thing for children. Can you say there comes a time in the history of all great nations when we have to turn the page on Canada's relationship toward first nations children from one of oppression and discrimination to one of hope and inspiration?

There are multiple solutions, which I've identified in my series of recommendations on the report, but be clear about this: Canada knows it's discriminating. It knows the harm to children. You heard from many of the mothers of those children in your briefs.

There are solutions that were jointly developed by the government, and quite frankly, if we can afford billions for fighter jets, we can afford to invest in our greatest natural resource. The World Health Organization says for each dollar you as parliamentarians spend on children, you save \$7 down the line. Imagine what you could do with the \$6 of savings if you were to do the right thing by first nations children today. There'd be more jobs in your regions, more accessibility to health care for an aging generation, more services for seniors, more services for women; fail to do that, and you will be using those dollars to build mental health facilities, substance misuse treatment facilities, and prisons.

It's not a question of whether you want to spend the money; it's a question of how much you want to spend and where you want to

spend it. At the end of the day, it's a question of whether or not you think it's the right thing for a federal government to do to say "no" or "not quite as much" to children on the basis of race.

Thank you very much, parliamentarians.

• (1120)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms. Blackstock. That was very compelling testimony.

Now I'm going to start the questions and answers. It is a seven-minute round, and that seven minutes includes the question and the answer.

I'll begin with Ms. Neville for the Liberals.

**Hon. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Ms. Blackstock, for being here. You and I were both just at the aboriginal affairs committee listening to the discrepancies in the delivery of child protection and child services across the country.

We have just travelled the country. I haven't been everywhere with the committee, but I certainly did all of western Canada on the issue of violence against aboriginal women, as you're undoubtedly aware. The issues you raise here are critical to families. What we also heard in our travels is the conundrum, the dilemma, that women have in reporting violence, abuse, or dysfunction in their homes because of the very real fear of having their children taken away.

All of what you said this morning feeds into that. I wonder if you could speak to your experience with the mothers who have to come forward or who don't come forward because of their fears of what will happen to their children.

**Dr. Cindy Blackstock:** Thank you for the question.

There are two areas of inequality that aboriginal women experiencing domestic violence experience. One area is the shortfall in actual, direct government spending for services that we just talked about, as in the case of child welfare. The other big gap is in federally funded voluntary sector services, those volunteer services that federal government dollars go to for delivery of services.

In my study in 2003 I found that the average amount each Canadian receives in publicly funded voluntary sector support is about \$2,400 off-reserve. The amount going to first nations for children and family services was 35¢. Think about it for a moment. How many voluntary sector services funded by the federal government did you see on your tours across the country?

That means there's a whole vacuum of services. Imagine here in Ottawa today if I cut every shelter, every food bank, every domestic violence program, and then on top of that, I underfunded child welfare services. How well do you think the citizens of this city would be doing if they're parenting in a few years? Not that well.

The other problem is in the statutes on child welfare. Over the last 15 years in particular, there's been an increasing recognition of the very real harms that domestic violence does to children. Those are legitimate concerns, and I am not underestimating that aspect. However, there is also increasing evidence, particularly out of states like New York, that when you put domestic violence into child welfare statutes as a reason for child welfare to intervene in families, they were actually not getting the reports of the most severe abuse because of women being afraid of their kids being taken away. In fact, they back-stepped on that.

One of the realities is that child welfare is not that good at responding to domestic abuse. We don't have the resources to do that. We could, within first nations agencies, retool some of those services and reprofile them, but not on the basis of the inequitable funding we currently have.

I would encourage parliamentarians to pay attention to those two factors. Where is the federally funded money for the voluntary sector for services for violence against women going, and to what extent is that benefiting aboriginal women on reserves? The second question is this: be aware of that inclusion of domestic violence in child welfare. Are you confident, as members, that child welfare has the proper responses and supports to women and to men experiencing domestic violence in order to keep children safe? I'm not that confident about that.

• (1125)

**Hon. Anita Neville:** Do I have more time?

**The Chair:** Yes, you have about two and a half minutes.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** Ms. Blackstock, could you elaborate a little bit more on the 35¢ versus the \$2,400? I don't think we've heard very much on that and I think it would be helpful.

**Dr. Cindy Blackstock:** The Canadian Council on Social Development did a study. What they found is that about \$115 billion in funds are deployed by the federal, provincial, and territorial governments each year in voluntary sector services for Canadians; if you divide that by population, you get roughly that figure of \$2,400.

As you know, I grew up in remote communities and I spent a lot of time on reserves. I also did social work on and off reserve. What I found is that in these areas where there should be food banks because there's the greatest food insecurity, there are no food banks, and those groups are not servicing on-reserve. I didn't see any emergency shelters. I didn't see any of these things that people in the cities and off-reserve take for granted.

So I did a study as part of my master's thesis when I was at McGill. I polled 70 national organizations that had child, youth, and family in their mandate. I also polled first nations child and family service agencies. I asked a simple question: have you provided services to a child on a reserve in the past year? Among the 70 voluntary sector organizations, none of them had. Of more concern, about 73% could see no relationship between their mandate and what

was happening on-reserve. Among the first nations, there were about six individual children who had received any benefit from those publicly funded voluntary sector services in the year prior.

Since then I've been calling on governments to say they must mandate these groups to make sure that a proportionate amount of that voluntary sector funding is going to those of greatest need, who are often children and women and men on-reserve.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

I'll go to Monsieur Desnoyers for the Bloc Québécois.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers (Rivière-des-Mille-Îles, BQ):** Thank you very much, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Ms. Blackstock. Your report is very interesting. It's also very interesting where it addresses the entire aspect of discrimination against aboriginal persons which has been around for many years.

A number of witnesses have come and told us that and described it to us from various standpoints, both for women and children and for aboriginal persons in general. We've talked about the Indian Act, which is obsolete and should be substantially amended.

When we say things have to be changed, I believe that has to be done by going way back in history and bringing it all back to the actual situation of aboriginal people today.

A number of people have come and told us that everything has to be done in the culture of the aboriginal peoples. I'm going to refer to your recommendation 5, which I would like to analyze with you. I'd like to hear you say a little more about that recommendation, which states:

"INAC must develop in partnership with first nations in the Northwest Territories and Yukon Territories strategic measures to support the full and proper operation of first nations child and family service agencies in the territories including, but not limited to [...]."

I'd like to hear what you have to say on those strategic measures. We've had a number of groups talk to us about education, health, funding and grouping funding together. Instead of having 16 departments, they proposed they we have fewer and that the money arrive faster so that cuts can ultimately be avoided as well. From department to department, mutual cuts are being made so that there are ultimately fewer services for the aboriginal community.

In the second part, you say:

"... but not limited to, supporting culturally-based and community-based child welfare and the provision of adequate and flexible financial resources."

What does that mean?

• (1130)

[English]

**Dr. Cindy Blackstock:** Well, it's interesting. You can do two things as a government. One is that you can decide that you have all the solutions and only fund people according to a fixed amount. That has not served children very well in a diverse context across the country. The other is that you can do something different—that is, you can look at the particular needs of the children within the context of their family to find out what their concept of a healthy child is and then determine how you achieve that within the context of that community and that culture. Then you fund not by program, but by principle.

We are working with the British Columbia government on something called the Touchstones of Hope project. It's a project that involves working with first nations communities for their own visions of what healthy children and families are. We actually get all the community members into a hall, including the children themselves, as well as elders, youth, and parents, and we vision out what a healthy child is and what a healthy family is, because remember: one of the things that was taken from us during colonization was our ability to dream for our own children. Governments dreamt for us, and we've all seen the consequences of that, but here we are calling on communities to vision again what a healthy child is and what a healthy family is in their community, to identify the indicators of that and to look at the now, and then to look at what resources are needed to go forward.

The Province of British Columbia, I have to say, is a regular bureaucracy, much like your governments are, but they were convinced that having 80% of the children in care who are first nations in that region was no longer acceptable. It was a reason to break the rules as we had done. Now they're looking at funding those plans not according to what the Government of British Columbia thinks is a good idea for everybody; they're looking at funding those particular community plans on the basis of principle, which allows consistency across government funding but also allows for innovation at a community level that makes sense.

The Touchstone principles are these: a respect for self-determination, culture, and language; holistic response, which means working with the child not only at his or her age level, but across ages and within a context of their family, community, and nation; structural interventions, which means dealing with the factors that are beyond the ability of parents to control on their own; and non-discrimination, which we've been talking a lot about today.

That is going very well, actually. They are two years into this project. So far, the British Columbia government has noticed that we haven't quite got the number of children going into care tailing off, so we still have more work to do there, but what's happening is that the children are going home much sooner.

Why is that? Well, before, you would have four child protection workers squirreled away in an office trying to manage the situation. Now you have 100 or 200 people who came out to the session and who can now see a role for themselves as community members and as citizens to be actively engaged in the well-being of those children, and they are definitely stepping up to the plate.

We are not seeing, in any way, first nations communities sweeping under the carpet some of the real concerns in communities. In fact, we are seeing an unbelievably vital determination to conquer those, to embrace our own accountability, and to move forward. However, the underfunding by government is a definite barrier, and it needs to be addressed.

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers:** With regard to funding, a number of witnesses have told us that, instead of establishing prisons, we should—as you have just emphasized—go back to the community and use the money that was allocated to those prisons for aboriginal women and the community in general. We could probably serve the community better that way. What do you think of that?

[English]

**Dr. Cindy Blackstock:** Absolutely. We're having an independent evaluation done of this Touchstones of Hope project. I and many of my colleagues believe that being first nations is not enough. We have a fundamental responsibility to get it right and do it really well for our kids, even to a higher standard than non-indigenous communities.

What we're finding in these early days is that the visions of community we're seeing are much more aligned with the best evidence in child welfare than with the way child welfare is currently funded by the department or the way provincial child welfare statutes are done. We need to get back to a fundamental Canadian value that is shared, I think, among the political parties, which is that people at a grassroots level really know their families best. If we look to them as the experts and guides in the process, we're going to make the smartest investments as a country, and we're going to see bigger and more immediate payoffs at the level of the child—and that, member, is my measure. It's not how many announcements the government makes, how many handshakes I see, how many dollars are in the budget. It's what's happening with that child in that family. Are we making a difference as a country? That's the measure.

• (1135)

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers:** I'd like to address one final point.

[English]

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers:** You noted the fact that you had an independent assessment of the Touchstones of Hope project. Is that document available?

[English]

**The Chair:** We're over time here.

[Translation]

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers:** If it's available, we would like to have it.

[English]

**Dr. Cindy Blackstock:** It's under way, and once it's available, we will post it on our website, as we do with all our documents. We want to be entirely publicly accountable to all Canadians.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Now I go to Mr. Boughen for the Conservatives.

**Mr. Ray Boughen (Palliser, CPC):** Thank you, Madam Chair, and my thanks to the witnesses. We appreciate your testimony.

Could you expand a little bit on Jordan's principle? What has happened with that whole concept since it was introduced, and where does it sit today?

Secondly, where do we go from here? You've outlined what has happened previously, so here we are today. How do we move forward?

**Dr. Cindy Blackstock:** Thank you for those two very important questions.

As you know, Jordan's principle applies to all government services. The Prime Minister or the government and all of parliamentarians today could say that we re-embrace the original intent of Jordan's principle that we voted for in the House of Commons; that we as a federal government will take leadership and insist that it be fully implemented; that we will pick up the tab on services, whether we think they're the provinces' or not, and we're going to keep records, because we want to be accountable to taxpayers; but that those conversations are going to be secondary to the concerns of children.

I can tell you that I know of 33 children right now who are at risk of going into foster care simply because there's a dispute between Manitoba and Canada about who should fund their in-home supports. You could stop those 33 kids from going unnecessarily into child welfare care by fully embracing and implementing Jordan's principle.

It's not an irresponsible use of taxpayers' dollars to step up to the plate on equality. In fact, when I share Jordan's story, I haven't run into one Canadian yet who thinks you should have sorted out an agreement with the province before they implemented it for Jordan. All Canadians agree: children must come first.

That is one thing that I think needs to happen. What's happening in practice is that there's a narrowing of the definition to children with multiple service providers and multiple disabilities, and it's only being implemented by the Government of Canada in what they call willing provinces. They're effectively putting agreements with the province ahead of meeting the needs of children, which is not Jordan's principle; Jordan's principle is asking for leadership from parliamentarians to meet the needs of the child and then figure out the jurisdictional stuff as a secondary concern.

The other thing is about where we go from here. It's an important question.

I'm not all about problems. It's not helpful to just say that this is where we are and that we're stuck here. We know enough about the enhanced funding formula to be able to correct those problems that were well identified by the Auditor General of Canada, and you and

your committee could call the department's attention back to the 2008 report and call on the department to remedy those problems that you've heard about here, which are in the Auditor General's report and were just spoken about at the aboriginal affairs committee. That would be a fundamental positive step.

The other thing that could be done is to look at the missing elements in the enhanced formula. What we've found gives a lot of trouble is that there are not adjustments for children with special needs or with high populations. Members, I need not tell you that some of the children in child welfare have extraordinary needs. It can cost up to \$60,000 a month to house some of these very special needs children. If you are an aid agency and you have one of those and there's no adjustment for that situation, that's important.

The third thing about where you go from here is—you've probably heard of the McIvor decision and those deliberations—that there has been no thought whatsoever given to the department, at least publicly, about how they're going to adjust the funding for child and family services up, so that we're not losing investments in children as we're making more use of an already very desperately limited pool.

With those things in mind, we could make a substantial gain for children and could think about whether we would like to do processes such as the Touchstones of Hope, which we have going on in northern B.C., and whether it is something we would want to make more publicly available. It's a very low-cost model. In fact, the British Columbia government, prior to our implementing this model, spent \$43 million trying to renovate its approach on aboriginal child welfare, and it failed.

This approach has spent 0.0007% of that, and it is completely now run not by the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society, but by community members. That's because we have designed it to be sustainable at a grassroots level and to cost hardly anything to run these sessions, because we don't want the money going into the pockets of consultants; we want the investments to go to children themselves. That's another opportunity.

● (1140)

**Mr. Ray Boughen:** Am I out of time, Madam Chair?

**The Chair:** You have two and a half minutes.

**Mr. Ray Boughen:** Thank you.

Have you had a chance to present to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and have you put together an implementation plan that incorporates many of the things you've spoken about this morning on how you get started in dealing with youngsters and their needs and what agencies you would want to pull into the operation? Is there an overall design that is like a business plan, only it's a personal plan about people? Does such a thing exist, or is it in the formation stage?

**Dr. Cindy Blackstock:** Thank you for the question.

We do have that, in two ways. One is the Wen:de reports, which were completed in 2005. They were done by over 25 leading researchers, including five economists.

I personally believe in using the few tax dollars we have for maximum benefit. Our economists costed out every dime that we would use to enhance and provide equality for first nations children. Then we backed each of those pennies with the best evidence we could that was joined together by independent academics, researchers, and first nation communities, as well as departmental staff. That document is on the books as a guide about where to move forward.

The second thing is that I would welcome an opportunity to meet with the minister. As you can imagine, I've had many letters back saying that it has been brought to the attention of the minister, but I have not had the opportunity to meet with him personally and I would welcome that opportunity.

Again, to me this is not a partisan issue. This is an opportunity for the country and the conscience of the nation to do the right thing for first nations kids.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We'll hear Ms. Mathyssen, for the NDP.

**Ms. Irene Mathyssen (London—Fanshawe, NDP):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Thank you, Ms. Blackstock. I heard you speak last week at an event sponsored by FAFIA. You are a most skilled, forceful, and passionate spokesperson. I very much appreciate the information you bring to this committee.

You talked about Jordan's principle that day and you also talked about Shannen Koostachin and what happened to the children at Attawapiskat. As a former teacher, I know that in the province of Ontario there is a funding formula, and about \$6,500—probably more now—is devoted to each child.

Do you know how much money is devoted to each child in a first nations school on a reserve? Could you describe the impact on the quality of that education, based on that lesser funding formula?

**Dr. Cindy Blackstock:** Thank you for the question.

I think a lot of Canadians don't understand that there are multiplier effects from these inequalities that come from government services and the lack of voluntary sector services. The children served by the underfunded child welfare system are the same children caught up in Jordan's principle and the same children trying to go to school and learn.

The Auditor General, as early as a decade ago, was raising concerns about the inequality in funding for elementary and secondary education on reserves and also calling attention to the condition of the schools themselves and the many communities where there are no schools.

You mentioned Shannen Koostachin. In many ways, she is a symbol of so many first nations children across the country. She is at once a Canadian hero—someone who we all, as Canadians, should be looking up to—and also a reminder about what the consequences are if we fail to act fully and properly.

Shannen Koostachin was from Attawapiskat First Nation. She was the daughter of Andrew Koostachin and Jenny Nakogee, a very loving family.

The only school in that community was contaminated by 30,000 gallons of diesel fuel. In 2000, when Shannen was in kindergarten, the Government of Canada brought up portable trailers and put them on the playground of the contaminated school. Members, I kid you not: I can throw a pebble from here to the translation booth, and that is the distance between the kindergarten portable and the contaminated waste site.

The children were told that this portable trailer system was temporary, that the Government of Canada would do everything it needed to do to make sure they had a proper school not sitting on contaminated ground. Three ministers of Indian Affairs promised them a school and did not deliver. Shannen would later say that was one of the hardest things.

Maybe as Canadians we get used to politicians making statements and not keeping their promises, but I for one think that the minimum standard is that you keep your promises to kids. These kids could not understand it. They wanted to learn. They knew they needed an education, so Shannen Koostachin organized the younger children in the school to write letters to the government. Maybe, she thought, if you heard in their own words what it's like to try to learn in a portable trailer that is now so rundown that the heat goes off and it's 20 degrees below zero in the classroom, you would want to act, and you would find the motivation to cut across whatever you needed to do to make sure they had a chance to learn.

But those letters did not move those in authority to change that position, so she reached out to non-aboriginal children in her grade eight year, and thousands of them wrote letters. However, not even that was enough to move the Government of Canada.

She was the chairperson of her grade eight graduation committee. She received a letter from the Minister of Indian Affairs saying, "We cannot afford a new school for you, and we don't know when it will come." She cancelled her grade eight graduation trip, and she came down here to meet with the minister herself to ask for a new school. The minister said, "We can't afford it." She said, "I don't believe you." She said, "School is a time for dreams." She said, "Every kid deserves that."

She wanted to be a lawyer so she could grow up and make a contribution to Canadians and fight for the education rights of other Canadian children. She promised the Canadian government and the children in the schools all over the country that she would never give up until every first nations child had a safe and comfy school and equitable education. She knew that when the children in Manitoba turned on the taps in their school, out came little garter snakes. She knew of other children going to school in tents, not in Africa but in Canada. She knew something could be done so that they could grow up to be lawyers and grass dancers and cooks and your pharmacist and your physician.

She had to move 500 kilometres away from her community to go to high school because the high school in her own community was so underfunded she would have no option of going to law school.

While she was there, she was with Member of Parliament Charlie Angus, whom some of you know. She went to one of the most rundown high schools. It was one of the first times Shannen Koostachin had ever stood in a hallway. He realized after a while that he was walking alone and that Shannen was lost somewhere in the school. He went back and found her in a classroom. She was touching all of the books and looking at all the wonderful things that other children have to learn. She said to Charlie, "I wish I had my life to live over again so I could go to a school as nice as this."

• (1145)

Shannen Koostachin died in a car accident in the spring of 2010. She never knew what it is to be treated equitably by the Government of Canada.

We have, with her family's support, pledged to carry her dream forward with the thousands of children who support her. I would just ask—and I know that you see many important problems in your work and that there are lots of competing interests—for the conscience and the good of the country, can't we just give these kids a proper school?

What is stopping us from doing that? What possible reason would we have for Shannen today on why that type of inequality is continuing? What would we say to Jordan? What would we say to the children who are going into foster care simply because they don't get a shot at life?

Whatever your recommendations are from this committee, I ask that you keep their images in your mind. Those are the audiences. If you can convince those children that what you're doing is the right thing, then you're providing the right example for Canadians and for Canada's future.

• (1150)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms. Blackstock.

We have 10 minutes. We have time for a two-minute round, if anybody wants.

Go ahead, Ms. Simson, for two minutes.

**Mrs. Michelle Simson (Scarborough Southwest, Lib.):** Thank you, Ms. Blackstock.

I don't even know where to begin. We've been hearing stories like this as we go across the country. I am curious, though; successive governments—and again, it's not partisan—were all looking at inputs and outcomes. Clearly there isn't enough input, although there is some, but the outcomes are dismal.

To my way of thinking, we're not making any kind of headway, or if we are, it's not even close to being good enough.

I'm curious about the third funding formula that you described. Could you just elaborate on it? You said it's 45 years old. Do you have any sense of why we are clinging to it like it's some kind of life preserver?

**The Chair:** You have one minute to answer, if you wish.

**Dr. Cindy Blackstock:** It's what's called the Indian Welfare Agreement and it applies in Ontario. Over a decade ago, in 2000, there was a call for a joint review of that particular formula. Of course there were calls at the community level much before that. In a

formal way, the department agreed to that over a decade ago, but there has been no movement on it. Again in 2008 the Auditor General called for it. There is still no movement on it.

However, there is an opportunity for all of you to insist, in a respectful way, that the department do that on the basis of expert opinion. It's important to have economists, etc. It's not enough to entrust taxpayers' money to a bunch of people who are public servants in finance. I mean no disrespect, but the development of funding formulas is a specialized field of economics called econometrics. It involves that, and it should be surrounded by first nations community members and driven from the ground up on the basis of the needs of the kids.

**The Chair:** We will go to Madame Boucher, for the Conservatives.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher (Parliamentary Secretary for Status of Women):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

[Translation]

Good morning, Ms. Blackstock.

We've met a lot of people who have made the same criticisms. What I'm trying to understand is that often, regardless of the government in power, we get the impression that we don't have enough education. I'm white, so we have little knowledge of the situation of aboriginal women and children. There's a lot of talk about violence, and a lot of talk about education. We often have levels of government that work together with the communities. I would like to know how the best discussion can be conducted. Have you had a discussion with the federal and provincial governments? Are you working in cooperation with other groups than your own? Are you able to have frank and healthy communication with everyone all together, or are there...?

[English]

**The Chair:** Madame Boucher, we only have 30 seconds for Ms. Blackstock to answer.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** All right.

Can you answer that, please?

[English]

**Dr. Cindy Blackstock:** What I'd say on child welfare is that we already have on the books two expert solutions developed within the last decade that involve first nations, academics, the federal government, and often the provinces. It's not a lack of solutions. It's a failure to implement properly and to monitor those implementations so that we can make proper adjustments. No matter how well researched the solution is, there are going to be unexpected consequences, and as responsible Canadians, we need to adjust to those consequences. That's what I would say in response to your question.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

We'll go to Madame Demers, for the Bloc.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers (Laval, BQ):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Ms. Blackstock, thank you very much for being here. You probably have the strongest, most assertive and most objective voice that I've heard today. Thank you for using it so well.

Do you believe that the program that was introduced in British Columbia could be put in place in the other provinces with the amounts necessary for that program? Do you believe that we could convince the government to invest in that kind of program rather than invest in lawyers who appear before the Human Rights Commission, which is very costly? I imagine that Canadian men and women are paying for that out of their taxes. How much has that cost to date?

• (1155)

[English]

**Dr. Cindy Blackstock:** We don't know; one of the things that is important to know, though—I know that you were particularly interested in the ties with residential schools—is that the Attorney General has assigned lawyers from the residential schools division to fight this case of equality against first nations children.

I actually send my documents to the residential schools division of Justice Canada, and it's those lawyers who are arguing this case against equity of first nations children today. In fact, when I was under cross-examination by the Government of Canada last year, it was by a lawyer who argued against residential school survivors in my own community. Among the first questions I was asked was not about the discrimination or the impacts or what was happening. It was “Dr. Blackstock, do you believe in God?” and “Were you in child welfare care?”

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Could you repeat that, please?

[English]

**Dr. Cindy Blackstock:** The transcript is posted on the I Am a Witness website so that you can see the proper transcript.

Among the first questions I was asked by the Government of Canada's lawyer was “Dr. Blackstock, do you believe in God?” and “Were you in child welfare care as a child?”

**The Chair:** Thank you, Madame Demers.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Thank you very much, Ms. Blackstock.

[English]

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Ms. Mathysen.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** Thank you for that, Dr. Blackstock. I'm speechless.

I wanted to ask you a question about the recommendations. These are marvellous, and I hope we can incorporate a number of them into our final report.

But number seven caught my eye. It says, “INAC must immediately provide training to INAC staff, particularly at the senior levels, so they are fully briefed on all reports, including the reports by the Auditor General of Canada, on INAC's First Nations child and family services program so they are in a better position to implement outstanding recommendations”.

I find it hard to believe they wouldn't do that as a matter of course. Is there a lack of training? Is it a lack of concern? Is it a matter of simply thinking they know better? Why isn't this training there?

**Dr. Cindy Blackstock:** It was interesting. I wasn't the only one under oath on the stand last spring. The senior official at Indian Affairs, Ms. Johnston, was called to testify under oath about the funding arrangement for child welfare. I've recreated a portion of her testimony on page 9. It's publicly available.

Ms. Johnston was in charge of the division of INAC that was responsible for preparing the responses to the Auditor General's recommendations in the 2008 report. She was asked whether or not she was aware if the Auditor General of Canada had any concerns about their funding arrangements. She said she wasn't sure.

This is the senior departmental official who heads the division responsible for implementing the Auditor General's concerns. Under oath in testimony, she admits she is unaware of whether or not the Auditor General has concerns, let alone what the recommendations are.

In other testimony, she said she was not aware of the national policy review done in 2000, other than that it existed. She was not sure what the recommendations were. When asked similarly about the expert review funded by the department in 2005, she could not speak to the recommendations. She just knew it flowed from the 2000 report.

In my view it's hard for bureaucrats to implement the recommendations if, under oath, senior officials in the department—those who are supposed to be experts advising the minister—are not aware of the contents of those reports and the recommendations.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

We have now ended this. I just want to thank Dr. Blackstock very much for coming and for giving us, as Madame Demers said, probably the single most interesting and definitive set of presentations of the problems and the solutions that we've had to date. Thank you again.

I'm going to end this session so that we can wait for the other session to begin. That gives us about a minute.

Thank you.

- \_\_\_\_\_ (Pause) \_\_\_\_\_
- 
- (1200)

**The Chair:** I'd like to welcome Ms. Baggley and Ms. Murphy, who are from the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. They are specifically from the social policy and programs branch and deal with child welfare only. That's their specific expertise and that's what I hope we're going to discuss.

Welcome.

You have 10 minutes between you, within which you can make a submission to us. Then there will be questions and answers.

As you know, we are looking at the issue specifically of child welfare. Something we heard over and over as we travelled across the country is that children being taken into care in large numbers is a real problem. As you heard, it is a larger number than the total number of children who were ever sent to residential schools, so we're going to be asking questions on that particular issue and on how your department is dealing with child welfare for aboriginal people.

Who is going to begin?

Ms. Murphy, will you share your time, or will you do the whole 10 minutes?

• (1205)

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy (Director General, Social Policy and Programs Branch, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** I'm going to do the opening remarks. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. Please begin.

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** I want to thank you for inviting Corinne and me to appear before the committee. It is a privilege for my colleague and me to be here before all of you as you continue your important work with respect to violence against aboriginal women.

Our department continues to be deeply concerned about this issue, and I appreciate this opportunity to assist the committee. However, there are many other federal and provincial programs that assist in addressing violence against aboriginal women, with first nations child and family services being one piece of a broader overall response.

**The recent provincial report of the Saskatchewan child welfare review panel states that:** Commentators and researchers are increasingly clear on the fact that the conditions which contribute most to a child's risk are conditions that the child welfare system itself often does not have the mandate or capacity to directly address. As noted earlier, we use a child welfare solution when the primary drivers are outside the child welfare mandate.

We agree with this assessment, and I think it's an important lesson to keep in mind, while we work on this issue, that there are limitations to what each piece of the overall solution can achieve on its own.

I am joined today by my colleague, Corinne Bagley, senior policy manager with Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. Together, Corinne and I will do our best to answer any questions the committee may have, but first I would like to begin with a few remarks.

My predecessor, Mary Quinn, appeared before this committee in April 2010 and provided you then with an overview of some of the program areas within Indian and Northern Affairs Canada that support healthier and safer aboriginal families, including INAC initiatives that specifically target violence against women. Mary also explained how INAC works in partnership with other federal departments, provinces, and aboriginal peoples to contribute to the overall response to this serious issue, particularly on-reserve, but also in aboriginal communities and urban centres.

Although I won't get into the specifics about all these programs today, I would first like to acknowledge the multiple underlying causes that may increase the risk of violence against aboriginal

women, such as lack of education, unemployment, and poverty, many of which disproportionately impact aboriginal communities and women. INAC works closely with aboriginal, federal, and provincial partners to address these underlying causes and build healthier and safer aboriginal families.

As an example, the reform of INAC's first nations child and family services program on-reserve involves a shift toward enhanced prevention services and will help to support parents and keep families together, which ultimately will enhance a sense of security among women who reside on-reserve and can decrease the risk of violence.

Child welfare is one of the most complex areas of public policy, given that decisions around the care and protection of children have lasting effects on children, their families, and communities. It is important to clarify that decisions with respect to the protection of children made by child welfare authorities, including delegated first nations child and family services agencies, are made in accordance with provincial legislation and standards.

All children are protected by provincial child welfare legislation, as child and family services are matters of provincial jurisdiction. Provincial governments delegate to service providers both on- and off-reserve and are responsible for ensuring they comply with provincial legislation and standards.

In the past 20 years, the number of first nations child and family services agencies has grown considerably. Today, 106 of these agencies deliver programs under agreements with provincial child welfare authorities. The amount of funding provided by INAC through its first nations child and family services program has also increased dramatically, up from \$193 million 15 years ago to \$550 million last year, in 2009-10.

As provinces began to shift their approaches to focus more on the prevention end of the spectrum of services provided under child welfare, INAC followed their lead through tripartite partnerships with willing first nations and provinces. In 2007, the federal government took action to help first nations child and family services providers to improve outcomes. This included working with provinces to ensure best practices in prevention-based services were brought to reserves, as well as broadening the tool kit of culturally appropriate services, such as kinship care. Over time, INAC's new approach to funding first nations child and family services, which we call the enhanced prevention focused approach, will enable first nations child and family services agencies to help keep families together.

• (1210)

Under this new approach, the agencies will have the flexibility and funding they require to ensure enhanced prevention services are available to at-risk children and families before a situation escalates into one that requires protection.

[Translation]

Three years ago, INAC developed a tripartite framework with the province and the first nations of Alberta to implement an enhanced prevention focused approach known as the Alberta Response Model. It focuses on proactive intervention, namely providing appropriate services before the problems escalate and become a child protection matter.

[English]

The preliminary results of this approach have been positive and encouraging. In the past three years, for instance, the number of Alberta first nations children in care on-reserve has dropped, permanent placements are on the rise, and placements in institutional facilities are decreasing. These significant results are attributed to a delivery system that is also facilitating greater use of more appropriate types of placements for children, including kinship care and post-adoption subsidies. Kinship care is an option that is used when children are removed from their home and placed in the care of a family member.

Since establishing the first tripartite framework in Alberta, partners in Manitoba, Quebec, P.E.I., Saskatchewan, and Nova Scotia have also collaborated to conclude tripartite frameworks on first nations child and family services. This means that the new prevention funding model is now being implemented in first nations communities in six provinces and is reaching 69% of first nations children who live on-reserve. Each framework now provides for specific prevention-based funding for first nations agencies to deliver or purchase on-reserve prevention-based services.

In the last four federal budgets, the Government of Canada has committed additional funding to implement these enhanced prevention-focused approaches. When fully implemented, this funding will provide over \$100 million annually in additional funding for the new approach under the six framework agreements.

I also want to say that INAC is strongly committed to and continues to work with all remaining jurisdictions toward securing tripartite frameworks by 2013.

[Translation]

This government recognizes that effective and culturally appropriate child and family services play an important role in creating strong and healthy first nations families. Moreover, we will continue to collaborate with willing partners to fund these services in first nations communities across Canada. This is why we remain committed to implementing a prevention focused approach by means of tripartite partnerships with first nations and the provinces.

Issues that impact the quality of life of first nations are not the responsibility of only one group. This is a shared responsibility.

[English]

It is clear that there are no simple solutions to the unfortunate ongoing situation of violence against aboriginal women, because it is a complex and multi-faceted issue. It is, however, my hope that moving forward with responsive and positive changes with such programs as on-reserve child and family services will go some way in helping first nations families to access the services they need

before a situation escalates, and will help keep first nations families together.

Thank you. My colleague and I will do our best to answer your questions.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Ms. Murphy.

I will begin with the question-and-answer period. It's a seven-minute round, and that means the seven minutes include the questions and answers.

I'll begin with Ms. Neville for the Liberals.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** Thank you for being here this morning.

This is one of those unusual mornings on which some of us have just come from the aboriginal affairs committee, where in fact we were talking about child protection and some of the disparities in funding between aboriginal and non-aboriginal children. We had the opportunity to hear from representatives of Manitoba, Nova Scotia, and Saskatchewan, so there's a certain coming together between the two meetings this morning.

I want to talk about the enhanced funding approach. Dr. Blackstock referred to it. My understanding is that it was an approach developed by INAC and implemented by INAC.

I'm interested in knowing what kind of consultation took place with first nations communities and first nations authorities in the development of this approach. I want to know on what research it was based. Was there research done? What was that research? Also, what kind of evaluation has been carried out to date on this?

•(1215)

**The Chair:** Ms. Murphy, would you answer it?

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** Yes, I'll start to answer, and then if Corinne can enhance that answer, she will.

**The Chair:** Yes.

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** In terms of our approach to enhanced prevention, INAC was following suit of provinces. The first province that we worked with was Alberta. They were getting good results with a protection approach, and we felt that it was appropriate for INAC to look at them in terms of its responsibilities for the on-reserve context of child and family services.

When the department looks at this kind of approach, it's a tripartite approach. We work with the province and the jurisdiction we're dealing with, as well as first nations. In terms of your question on consultations, in every jurisdiction where we've rolled out the enhanced prevention framework approach, we've consulted with first nations communities and leadership, as well as with the province, to arrive at an enhanced prevention model that works for that jurisdiction.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** Can I just interrupt? I am interrupting.

What Dr. Blackstock indicated in her brief and what we heard earlier this morning is that it was imposed—that it was developed as a tripartite funding arrangement, and then imposed on first nations as an exclusive option to directive 20-1.

I'm curious to know if there was significant input from first nations that was incorporated into the design of this, or did you simply take the Alberta model and put it across the country where agreeable?

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** When we introduce the enhanced prevention model, we work with the provincial jurisdiction and in close partnership with first nations as well, through both the developmental and implementation stages of the transition.

When we work in each jurisdiction, we don't take what was done necessarily in another jurisdiction and say that this is what you will follow. We expect that the agencies delivering the service will develop five-year work plans. They get an opportunity in developing those plans to look at the needs of the communities they're servicing. They look at the prevention and protection aspects of their services. They have to align with provincial jurisdiction and legislation and they work with the province and us to put those plans in place. They're reviewed and then they're put in place, so what a first nation agency might do in Alberta may not be the same thing as what one might choose to do in Manitoba.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** What adjustments have you made to the plan since the Auditor General found it inequitable in 2008?

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** In terms of the OAG findings, we've done a number of things to make adjustments to the program.

We developed a management response action plan to the report. The activities to date include completing the update of the program authorities in 2007 to include a broader and more culturally appropriate range of placement options with the addition of kinship care. Post-adoption subsidies and supports were authorized under provincial legislation and standards.

We have worked closely with provinces to ensure that agencies meet provincial legislation. We've updated the first nations national reporting guide to require business plans for those agencies entering into the new prevention model. We've articulated a guiding principle concerning culturally appropriate services. We've revised program reporting requirements and drafted performance indicators for discussion with partners and held a preliminary meeting with first nations partners—

• (1220)

**Hon. Anita Neville:** I don't know what my time is like here, so can I just ask you one more thing?

Of the increased funding you mentioned in the CFS funding, what percentage is driven by children going into care? I have an access to information document saying that it's the vast majority—

**The Chair:** You have one minute.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** —saying that it's the vast majority of children.

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** The vast majority is from children in care?

**Hon. Anita Neville:** Yes.

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** In terms of our costs, a lot of what has driven them up to where we are now is maintenance costs. It depends on provincial rates, and those rates have gone up in terms of per diems, so that is a cost driver.

I don't know if Corinne has additional information. I think she does in terms of the numbers, and she can provide that to finish the answer.

**Mrs. Corinne Baggley (Senior Policy Analyst, Social Programs Reform Directorate, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Are you looking at it in terms of the numbers of children in care?

**Hon. Anita Neville:** Yes.

**Mrs. Corinne Baggley:** For INAC—

**The Chair:** Ms. Baggley, you have 20 seconds.

**Mrs. Corinne Baggley:** Okay.

In terms of the number of children in care, as of March 2010 we have around 8,000 in care. Early results are showing that the number is decreasing as a result of implementing the enhanced prevention focused approach.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** That's 8,000 children in care on-reserve?

**Mrs. Corinne Baggley:** Yes, in INAC-funded care.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Now I go to Madame Demers, for the Bloc Québécois.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Thank you, Madam Chair. Mesdames, thank you for being here this morning.

Eight thousand children are in foster families. They are not in foster families in the aboriginal communities, but outside the aboriginal communities, and those families are funded by the Department of Indian Affairs. Is that correct?

[English]

**Mrs. Corinne Baggley:** When we say “children in care”, there are a variety of care options that are available to the agency, ranging from institutional care to foster care to kinship care.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** What we perceived during our tour—and I've toured across Canada from eastern Canada to the Northwest Territories—is that most of the time children are not placed in kinship care with community children or parents, but rather outside the community. At that point, people receive a lot of money from the provincial government to take care of the children. They receive up to \$2,500 a month to take care of the children, or of one child, because the mother is poor. It's not that she's a bad mother or that she doesn't love her child, but she's poor and that's why she can't take care of her child. Consequently, because the mother is poor, the child is taken and removed from the family environment and sent to a foster family. Up to \$2,500 a month is given to that person, who is a white person, who does not teach the child aboriginal traditions or values, to take care of a child who would be better off with his or her mother and to whom we would give \$2,500.

Do you mean to tell me that this is the new way of doing things and that's it's better this way? In 20 years, we're going to wind up with the same problem as the residential schools problem. Are you telling me that it's better to do it this way?

[English]

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** I'm not sure of all the figures of where children are placed. Placement options are the jurisdiction of the child and family services agencies and the provinces. I would have to get back to you in terms of what numbers we might have in terms of the rates are that are paid. It's the provinces that run this with the agencies. We don't necessarily have the information at our disposal on which cases are being managed and what the costs of those cases are.

•(1225)

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** What kind of follow-up are you doing to ensure that the families that take in children from the aboriginal communities have some notion of aboriginal culture? How do you ensure the children receive the upbringing they need in order to be sure that they don't lose their aboriginal values, culture and identity? What follow-up are you doing?

[English]

**Mrs. Corinne Baggeley:** We do track the placements of children in the variety of care settings. We are seeing, in those jurisdictions under prevention, an enhanced use of the kinship care option, which means that those children are being placed with family members.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** What follow-up do you do for those who aren't placed with family members? If you do any, can you send us the reports on that follow-up?

[English]

**Mrs. Corinne Baggeley:** As Sheilagh mentioned, the decisions around placing children in care are made in accordance with provincial legislation and standards, and provinces are responsible for ensuring that there is compliance with those standards. We do not collect that information.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** You don't know whether the children are treated well. You don't know whether the money that the federal government gives to the provinces is well used or whether the children retain their culture. And it is the money of all Canadian men and women that is being used. Is it being given any old way to just anyone?

[English]

**Mrs. Corinne Baggeley:** No, I'm not saying that. We do have accountability in place. We have tripartite accountability and frameworks in place for prevention. We do track results. We do track outcomes. We are working on building an information management system to do that more consistently and to also track the same information that provinces are tracking. Cultural placements are one of those indicators.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** So I would like to have those reports, please.

Can you send them to the committee?

[English]

**The Chair:** Please send them to the clerk as soon as possible.

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** We can forward to the committee whatever results we have in that area.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Can you explain to us why there is systemic discrimination and racism in places like Prince Albert or Williams Lake, where the population is mostly aboriginal? Children are removed from aboriginal families in a truly arbitrary and terrible way and are placed with, once again, white families, even though the population in urban areas is mostly aboriginal?

[English]

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** Again, we leave the placement of children to the authorities who are managing the files. Either a first nations child and family service agency or the province itself will make those decisions in accordance with their legislation and their standards.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** So the Department of Indian Affairs is making no decision. You don't have any programs or measures developed with the provinces to ensure that those children are receiving the competent care they need to develop their abilities and potential?

[English]

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** We're working on an information management system that will have those criteria built into it. It's not completed. It's not something that we would necessarily have measured consistently in the past. It's something that we are working towards with our partners.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** When will you have finished developing that procedure?

[English]

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** We have started the work. We expect to have that system up and running in 2012, with full implementation by 2013.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** That's a long time.

[English]

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** Yes, but it's a complicated system that's being built from the ground up. It has to take in a number of parameters and a number of jurisdictions, so to build that, we have to take a number of steps to complete the process.

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Don't you think that, with the apology we made in 2007-2008, we could already have started laying the ground work to ensure we don't have to apologize again in 10, 15 or 20 years?

Hasn't the aboriginal community been suffering, and haven't these children been forgotten, for long enough? Hasn't the aboriginal community as a whole lost its identity, values and traditions for long enough, and haven't we been making decisions for it for long enough? Hasn't it been long enough?

[English]

**The Chair:** Madame Demers, your time is up.

Ms. Murphy, did you want to give a quick answer to Madame Demers' question?

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** I would just respond by saying that it's unfortunate if that is happening while children are in care. It's something we're concerned about, and we would like to work with our partners to make sure there are processes and procedures in place to have their culture respected and maintained while they're in care.

• (1230)

[Translation]

**Ms. Nicole Demers:** Why don't you consult them?

[English]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Mr. Clarke, go ahead, please, for the Conservatives. You have seven minutes. You may wish to share your seven minutes with Madame Boucher.

**Mr. Rob Clarke (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, CPC):** I'll share my time.

**The Chair:** Remember that when we're sharing time, I will be reminding you of the time you're using.

Please go ahead, Mr. Clarke.

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** Go ahead.

**The Chair:** Mr. Clarke, your name is on the list here. Will you please begin?

**Mr. Rob Clarke:** I never put my name on the list.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** All right. I'm going to start.

[English]

**Mr. Rob Clarke:** Thank you, Madam Chair. I didn't put my name on the list.

**The Chair:** Your name was on the list.

**Mr. Rob Clarke:** It's from the previous witnesses.

**The Chair:** We're wasting time. Can you begin, please, Mr. Clarke? The time is going.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** I have some questions.

[English]

**Mr. Rob Clarke:** Thank you.

I'd like to thank the witnesses for coming in here today.

Just to go back and to clarify, I'm sitting on the aboriginal affairs committee, and we are talking about family services. I'm very interested in hearing this, but first of all, I want to go back to the previous testimony in regard to the school at Attawapiskat in northern Ontario.

I know we've discussed this within the committee, and I just wanted to clarify couple of things. Am I correct that INAC has scheduled a new school?

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** It's in the long-term capital plan.

**Mr. Rob Clarke:** It's in the long-term capital plan. Back on February 25, 2010, regional officials met with the working group from the community and \$200,000 was allocated for the 2010-11 fiscal year. Is that correct?

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** I don't know the exact amount. That's not my area of expertise. I know that the regional office and officials have been working with the community to complete the necessary pre-work before they head into design. They are working with the community to arrive at a process for doing the design work and then would move forward on the construction of the school. I'm not aware of the total dollar amounts afforded to that activity this year.

**Mr. Rob Clarke:** From what I was told, if my memory serves me correctly, the funding is currently being planned for the design and the construction phases.

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** Yes. It usually takes a number of years to get through the process of design and then construction. It doesn't happen in one year. It takes a year or two for design, and then construction starts, and that can take up to one or two years to complete.

**Mr. Rob Clarke:** Thank you.

In regard to similar testimony I heard today, I'd like to get some clarification on family services in the first nations.

I believe that there was \$104.8 million in additional funding in 2008 allocated for Saskatchewan. By chance, do you know the funding arrangement or the funding status or the funding amount prior to that year?

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** Do you mean for Saskatchewan itself?

**Mr. Rob Clarke:** I mean for Saskatchewan. As well, what's the total funding now, to date?

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** Do we have that?

**Mrs. Corinne Baggley:** Yes. For Saskatchewan, the enhanced prevention was announced in July 2008. They received \$104.8 million over five years, with ongoing annual funding of \$22.8 million.

**Mr. Rob Clarke:** Thank you.

Is that additional money?

**Mrs. Corinne Baggley:** Yes.

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** If you need to know what the base was, we'd have to get back to you with that figure.

**Mr. Rob Clarke:** If you can, please do that.

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** Absolutely.

**The Chair:** We'll go to Madame Boucher.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** I'd like to ask a question that goes back somewhat to what Ms. Demers was saying.

We've been hearing things since we've been considering the issue of aboriginal women. We also don't have access to some provincial jurisdictions. When we give money to certain provinces, we give it for certain things, such as aboriginal affairs or education, but the province doesn't have to tell us how it spends the money. Is that correct?

[English]

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** Do you mean in terms of the child and family services funding we provide to provinces?

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** Yes.

[English]

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** Is your question about whether they are accountable for the funds?

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** When we give money to a province with which we have an agreement on education or child health care, do you have an agreement that makes it possible to determine where that money goes? Is the money being spent in the right places?

• (1235)

[English]

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** They have to report back to us under the terms and conditions of the agreements we enter. As part of those terms and conditions, we expect them to tell us where they have spent the money in areas such as maintenance and operations. There are criteria within those costing models they need to meet. We do that with them on a regular basis.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** Thank you.

Do I have any time left?

[English]

**The Chair:** You have about two minutes.

[Translation]

**Mrs. Sylvie Boucher:** We talked a lot about transitioning to the prevention model. I'd like you to tell me about the progress being achieved in this kind of program.

[English]

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** In terms of the EPFA, there are numerous ways in which you can look at progress. One would be in the fact that we have rolled out to six jurisdictions, starting with Alberta, so that we now are covering about 69% of first nations children under that model. It's our expectation that we'll continue to work with the additional jurisdictions and have all jurisdictions under the enhanced prevention framework approach by 2013. That's one area of, I would say, results.

We have been looking most recently at Alberta. We've done an evaluation. It's not complete, but the results there are showing that we have had success in reducing children in care. We have invested \$91.8 million over five years in Alberta. Overall, there are now more culturally appropriate placements, more permanency supports for children, and increased use by families of prevention programming, as well as increased use of less costly placements.

In 2007-08, for instance, in Alberta there were 329 in institutional care; in 2009-10 there were 68. There has been a substantial reduction demonstrated by an increased use of more cultural and fewer institutional placements of children unable to be in care by their families.

In terms of kinship care, we had no one in that kind of arrangement in 2007-08; in 2009-10 we had 375. There has been a dramatic increase, demonstrating that there's a support for that type of culturally appropriate placement within the Alberta context. In terms of post-adoptive subsidies, we've gone from none in 2007-08 to 130 in 2009-10.

We're seeing results in Saskatchewan as well, where we have invested since 2008. We have kinship care results of 407 in 2007-08 and 492 in 2009-10.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Murphy.

Now I go to Ms. Mathysen, for the NDP.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** Thank you, Madam Chair, and thank you to the witnesses for being here.

I have a number of things. I want to start with the school at Attawapiskat.

The contamination under the school happened in 1989. That's 22 years ago. Subsequently, there were portables put basically on the same site, which meant that the kids were still sick and were being exposed to the diesel contamination.

This is 2011. I first heard about the situation in Attawapiskat in 2005. I understand that it takes a year to plan and that there have to be community consultations and a couple of years for construction, but this happened in 1989. Why does it take so long? It's glacial as a response to the needs of little kids and the educational needs of a community that needed a school in 1989. That was a long time ago. Why are we still waiting for a school in 2011?

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** I'm not going to answer that question, as that's not my responsibility. In order to answer it correctly for you, I would prefer that we provide you with a written response on why it has taken so long and what the department has been doing in that intervening period with the community, rather than give you information that may not be correct. I am not responsible for capital infrastructure projects on-reserve, but we can provide that information, if you would like.

● (1240)

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** Yes, I would like. I have to be candid; I'm feeling very frustrated by the recurring theme of "I am not responsible". It feels as though we're in a jurisdictional black hole, and I share Madame Demers' frustration.

I have a question about Jordan's principle. The committee for Indian and Northern Affairs heard last week from the B.C. Attorney General, who stated unequivocally that the scope in regard to Jordan's principle should not be narrowed. We've heard today from Dr. Blackstock that Canada, through INAC, has taken a decision to narrow the scope of Jordan's principle. As Dr. Blackstock pointed out, motion 296 was passed unanimously in December 2007, yet we see this narrowing, this case-by-case basis, and this requirement that there be complex medical needs and multiple service providers.

It feels very much again like a backing away from responsibility. Instead of saying, "These are children; they need services, and we're going to make sure they have what they need so that they have the best and happiest prospects", we are wrangling.

Why is that narrowing happening? What's going on? What have we forgotten as human beings?

**Mrs. Corinne Baggeley:** When the motion was passed in 2007, INAC and Health Canada worked together to present a federal response to cabinet. That federal response outlines our focus for first nations children under Jordan's principle. The focus is on those who were like Jordan—those who are the most vulnerable, those who have multiple disabilities and require multiple services from across jurisdictions. We thought children in that situation are most vulnerable and are more likely to be the subject of jurisdictional disputes.

That doesn't mean that the response excludes all other first nations children. We focused on the most vulnerable, but in the work we are doing with provinces and first nations, which we continue to do, we are responding to all cases that are presented to us—not just those children with multiple disabilities, but children with a variety of needs. We have been able to connect those cases to the services those children require.

In the event of a federal-provincial jurisdictional dispute—and we haven't been presented with one yet—we are prepared to make sure that the service continues for that child while the federal and provincial governments attempt to resolve the funding or responsibility issues.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** Thank you.

Do I have time left, Madam Chair?

**The Chair:** Yes, you have two minutes.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** In your brief you say that "...the child welfare system itself often does not have the mandate or capacity to directly address...[and]...we use a child welfare solution when the primary drivers are outside the child welfare mandate". I understand that to mean that we're using apprehension and the child welfare system when the real problems are lack of decent housing, poverty, and substance abuse. As we heard in communities such as Iqaluit, there's a desperate lack of support and counselling services. In Iqaluit, in fact, the solution very often was to incarcerate.

The resources are clearly not adequate. There needs to be better coordination and more investment in communities, and an engaging of communities in regard to finding real solutions. The problems have been going on for generations, and the solutions are going to be difficult.

To what degree is INAC determined or prepared to provide that community with the resources it needs in order to deal with some of these problems?

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** That's difficult, as there is lots in that question.

I can say that through a variety of programs, which touch child and family services, community development, and education on-reserve, we are trying to work closely with aboriginal, federal, and provincial partners to help address underlying risks and build healthier and safer aboriginal communities. We have done reform work in social programs on-reserve, which is critical to tackling root causes that may contribute to violence against women on- and off-reserve. For example, the prevention approach that we've been talking about today will ultimately enhance a sense of security among women who reside on-reserve, and will thus decrease the risk of violence.

We're also moving forward in terms of income assistance on-reserve to go solely from meeting basic needs towards implementing an active measures approach that will help individuals participate in job readiness and training so that they can find employment. As we make progress in this area, we are hoping to enable on-reserve individuals to become more self-sufficient and self-reliant and so reduce the impact of poverty.

● (1245)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Murphy.

Now we're going to a second round.

We have 15 minutes, so I'm going to have a two-minute round. I'm going to really hold you to this, because we have work that we must get done on some decisions that have to be made for the committee.

We will go to Mrs. Simson, for the Liberals. You have two minutes.

**Mrs. Michelle Simson:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

My first comment is an observation.

I've heard the expression that INAC is working on programs that will become more culturally appropriate, which indicates to me that we didn't get it right the first time and that there was very little consultation. If there had been, we probably would have been culturally appropriate from the outset.

Of the 8,000 children who have currently been apprehended, how many are in institutional care as opposed to a home setting?

**Mrs. Corinne Baggley:** We would have to provide you with that information; I don't have that breakdown in front of me.

**Mrs. Michelle Simson:** I'd really like that. In your testimony you indicated this is being tracked, that you have a sense of it, so if you could break it down as to how many—

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** Yes.

**Mrs. Michelle Simson:** What's the incentive to return a child to the family when organizations are specifically receiving funding based on placing them outside the home? Do you have sense of what incentive there would be?

In other words, how long, on average, does a child remain outside the home? How temporary is it? Do you have a sense of that average?

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** I think we'd have to get back to you with that information as well. There's a whole range of timeframes, depending on the situation in which the child is removed from the home.

**Mrs. Michelle Simson:** Would you agree that there is no incentive for the child to be returned if organizations are receiving funding based on that child remaining outside the home? It's a convoluted system.

**The Chair:** You have 15 seconds.

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** I think it depends on why they were removed from the home. It's difficult to say that's the sole reason.

**Mrs. Michelle Simson:** Madam Chair, I don't have a question; I would like you to ask them to submit those statistics on the children.

Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Ms. Grewal is next, for the Conservatives.

**Mrs. Nina Grewal (Fleetwood—Port Kells, CPC):** Thank you, Madam Chair.

Apart from the child and family services program, what is Indian and Northern Affairs Canada doing to support aboriginal women?

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** I partly responded that we were working on income assistance reform, a movement to active measures that will help provide opportunities and training supports to transition women who may not be employable, as well as men, to employable status. That's one area where we're starting to make inroads on a province-by-province basis.

Another place we've made improvements is with the national child benefit reinvestment project, which is under the national child benefit program. That is focused primarily on reducing child poverty and strengthening on-reserve families in areas of providing child

care, home-to-work transition activities, parental and nutritional support, and culturally relevant programming.

We also address programs that target violence against women. The family violence prevention program aims to ensure that first nations on-reserve women and children have a safe place to turn to during situations of family violence. It supports first nations communities to address the root causes of family violence through a range of prevention activities.

In 2007, the department announced an investment of approximately \$55 million, over five years, to support the existing network of shelters, including \$2.2 million to support the construction of five new shelters. The department currently supports 41 shelters in its network and 350 community-based prevention projects to first nations people residing on-reserve. Under CMHC, a shelter enhancement program covers the capital cost for construction and maintenance of the shelters.

In terms of urban programs, we work with the Office of the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians to improve socio-economic conditions of Métis and non-status Indians and urban aboriginal people who reside off-reserve. As well, through the urban aboriginal strategy, we're partnering with the aboriginal community, local organizations, municipal and provincial governments, and the private sector to support projects in three areas of priority.

● (1250)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Murphy.

Now I'm going to go to Monsieur Desnoyers, for the Bloc. You have two minutes.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers:** Thank you, Madam Chair.

I realize that the witness is reading a document or a number of documents related to our questions. Would it be possible to have a copy of those documents? She's giving us answers that appear in her document.

My questions are as follows. In your introductory speech, you mentioned that what might increase the risk of violence against aboriginal women is, among other things, low education levels, unemployment and poverty. Would it be possible to have a written answer on what the department has done on those three issues to improve the plight of the various aboriginal communities?

Then, on page 4, you say that “106 agencies deliver programs under agreements with provincial child welfare authorities.” Would it be possible to have a list of those groups and the extent to which they are subsidized?

I'd like to have one or more copies of the agreements that have been signed between the provincial and federal levels with regard to enhanced prevention, as you call it—which is a new term we've just learned—in the aboriginal communities.

On page 4 of your report, you state that, in 2007, “the federal government took action to help first nations child and family services providers to improve outcomes.” Have there been any substantial improvements as a result of this approach since 2007?

On page 5, you state: “In the past three years, for instance, the number of Alberta first nations children in care on reserve has dropped; permanent placements are on the rise.”

This is somewhat the same question as my colleague, what is—  
[*English*]

**The Chair:** Mr. Desnoyers, you are over time now.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Luc Desnoyers:** All right. I'd like to have that list. In the end, I'll stop here.

[*English*]

**The Chair:** Thank you.

There is no response except that we would be expecting that the clerk would have copies of all those requests for information.

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** Yes, we can provide the requests for information.

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Now I go to Ms. Mathysen for two minutes.

**Ms. Irene Mathysen:** I have two quick questions.

First, Hollow Water First Nation in Manitoba has an extensive healing program that looks at sexual abuse as a root of many of the problems in that community, including addictions, anger management, and violence. What is needed in order for other communities to have access to that same kind of healing program? Have you considered the Hollow Water template for others?

Finally, I was at an event this morning with the National Aboriginal Circle Against Family Violence. They've created a workbook for use in shelters, and it's a step-by-step process that helps a woman, a victim of violence, acquire financial skills and literacy skills in order to get the support that she needs in order to escape the violence that she faces. Has this come across your desk at INAC, and what are the chances of getting this funded? They're looking for support for this program.

**Mrs. Corinne Baggley:** With respect to the National Aboriginal Circle Against Family Violence, INAC, through the family violence prevention program, provides the circle with core funding and also with funding to support their annual training forum. We do support the circle and their efforts to provide those resources for shelters.

**Ms. Sheilagh Murphy:** You also asked about the Hollow Water addiction centre in Manitoba. I'm not personally familiar with that centre. This is my second month in this position; however, I think we would look at that, see what that is, and see what's appropriate in terms of its providing services. We could get back to you with a response to that question.

• (1255)

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

Now I'm going to suspend for one minute while we go in camera. There are some things that have just come up that I need to get your answers to with regard to decisions that the committee has to make.

Thank you.

Will everyone who is not authorized to be in the room please leave?

[*Proceedings continue in camera*]

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