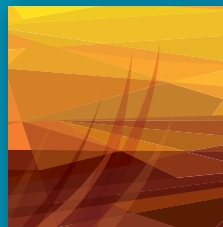
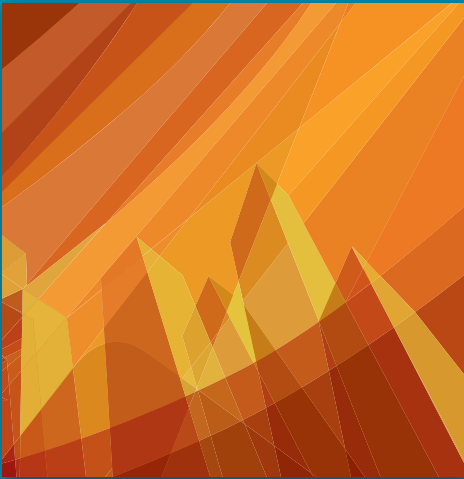


Gathering Today For Our Aboriginal Children's Future



HONOURABLE YVONNE FRITZ
MINISTER, CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES

Chairs, Delegated First Nation Agencies
Co-Chairs, Child and Family Services Authorities
First Nation Representatives

Government House
Edmonton, Alberta
Tuesday 30th, November 2010

**Government
of Alberta** ■

Message From The Honourable Yvonne Fritz Minister, Children And Youth Services



Our second gathering of Chairs of Delegated First Nation Agencies (DFNA), Co-Chairs of Child and Family Services Authorities (CFSA), and Representatives of First Nation organizations served by Child and Family Services Authorities on November 30th 2010, provided us with another opportunity to further explore ways to work together to keep our children safe and help families to remain together.

The energy and commitment of everyone to improve the lives of our children, youth and families was evident at our meeting. I believe that the shared sense of purpose and hope will encourage us to work together to do the right thing for our Aboriginal children, youth and families. As we continue our efforts to build stronger relationships, I know we will be better able to achieve outcomes while addressing concerns in a manner that is sensitive to the culture and traditions of the Aboriginal communities.

Throughout the day, people reflected on their experiences with the child intervention system. They voiced their optimism that the initiatives we have undertaken, such as developing a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding, hiring an Assistant Deputy Minister of Aboriginal Initiatives, and ensuring there is effective cross-cultural training, will assist all of us in improving outcomes for Aboriginal children, youth and families. I am encouraged by the progress we have made, and by the closer working relationships that have been forged between First Nations, DFNAs and CFSAs. These relationships will serve as the foundation upon which we will be able to do our work.

Within these pages, you will read many of the thoughts, ideas, concerns, and hopes that were voiced during the day. My commitment to you is also reflected on these pages. This record of the day will serve as a reminder of what we said we *need* to do, what we *said* we will do, and what is possible if we work *together*.

Thank you for making this meeting a success.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Yvonne Fritz". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Honourable Yvonne Fritz, Minister
Children and Youth Services

Table Of Contents

Message From The Honourable Yvonne Fritz, Minister, Children and Youth Services.....	1
Executive Summary.....	5
Morning Session.....	8
Steve MacDonald, Deputy Minister, Children and Youth Services.....	8
Opening Remarks – Honourable Yvonne Fritz.....	8
Memorandum of Understanding – Steve MacDonald	11
Memorandum of Understanding – Catherine Pennington.....	12
Response to MOU Presentation – Steve MacDonald.....	14
Response to MOU Presentation – Honourable Yvonne Fritz.....	15
Steve MacDonald	15
Charlene Houle-White, Chairperson Saddle Lake Wah-Koh-To-Win Child Care Society	15
Response to Charlene Houle-White – Steve MacDonald.....	15
Response to Charlene Houle-White – Honourable Yvonne Fritz.....	15
Steve MacDonald	15
Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Training – Steve MacDonald	16
Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Training – Joey Hamelin, Aboriginal Initiatives.....	16
Grand Chief Ernest Gadwa, Kehewin Cree Nation	19
Chief Allan Paul, First Nations Delegate, Alexander First Nation	20
Response to Chief Allan Paul – Honourable Yvonne Fritz	21
Response to Chief Allan Paul – Steve MacDonald	21
Honourable Yvonne Fritz	21
Valerie Kaufman, Board Member, Edmonton and Area.....	22
Chief Rose Laboucan, Chief of Driftpile First Nation.....	22
Audrey Franklin, Aboriginal Co-Chair, North Central Alberta	23
Chief Gordon Auger, Chairperson, Bigstone Cree Social Services Society	23
Response to Chief Auger – Honourable Yvonne Fritz.....	24
Charlene Houle-White	25
Response to Charlene Houle-White – Minister Yvonne Fritz.....	27

Chief Cecil Janvier, First Nations Delegate, Cold Lake First Nations.....	27
Response to Chief Cecil Janvier – Honourable Yvonne Fritz	29
Kevin Provost, Board Member, Piikani Child and Family Services.....	29
Response to Kevin Provost – Gord Johnston, ADM, Ministry Support Services	31
Lorne Morin, Chairperson, Yellowhead Tribal Services Agency.....	31
Response to Lorne Morin – Honourable Yvonne Fritz	31
Lorne Morin.....	32
Response to Lorne Morin – Honourable Yvonne Fritz	33
Chief Carolyn Buffalo, Montana First Nation	33
Response to Chief Carolyn Buffalo – Honourable Yvonne Fritz	35
Lunch Address.....	36
Introduction of Honourable Len Webber – Honourable Yvonne Fritz	36
Honourable Len Webber, Minister of Aboriginal Relations	36
Honourable Yvonne Fritz	38
Elder Gordon Lee, Ermineskin Cree Nation.....	40
Roundtable.....	41
Steve MacDonald	41
John Phillips, Aboriginal Co-Chair, Calgary and Area.....	41
Elder Eva Cardinal, Saddle Lake Cree Nation	42
Barb Louis, Board Member, Kasohkewew Child Wellness Society	43
Gerrad Oishi, Co-Chair, Calgary and Area	44
Brian Hjlesvold, Co-Chair, Edmonton and Area.....	44
Audrey Breaker, Chair, Siksika Family Services Corporation	44
Response to Audrey Breaker – Steve MacDonald.....	45
Audrey Breaker	46
Response to Audrey Breaker – Steve MacDonald.....	46
Sharon Anderson, Aboriginal Co-Chair, Métis Settlements.....	46
Audrey Franklin, Aboriginal Co-Chair, North Central Alberta	46

Charlene Houle-White 47

Closing Remarks – Steve MacDonald 48

Elder Gordon Lee 49

Summary of Group Discussions 50

 Urban Aboriginal Services 50

 Moving Forward to Build Stronger Relationships 51

 Working Together to Bring the Children Home 52

Next Steps..... 54

Appendix 1 – Evaluation Summary..... 55

Appendix 2 – Memorandum of Understanding Presentation 56

Appendix 3 – Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Training Presentation 69

Appendix 4 – List of Participants 79

Executive Summary

The second Gathering Today For Our Aboriginal Children's Future, held on November 30th 2010, provided another opportunity for Chairs of Delegated First Nation Agencies (DFNA), Representatives of First Nations served by Child and Family Services Authorities (CFSAs), and Co-Chairs of CFSAs to come together as a governance group to discuss issues concerning Aboriginal children and youth in care, and their families.

The Honourable Yvonne Fritz, Minister of Children and Youth Services, hosted the November 30th 2010 governance meeting. The purpose of this meeting was to report on progress made on each of the Next Steps indicated in the Report of the inaugural meeting, and to provide another opportunity for the governors to strengthen the relationship between DFNAs and CFSAs.



Chief Arthur Noskey, Judy Ostrowski, Chief James Ahnassay

One of the items committed to at the inaugural gathering was the development of a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Provincial Government, Alberta First Nations and the Federal Government. The Deputy Minister, Steve MacDonald, reported that there have been several meetings with DFNA and CFSAs technicians, and Representatives from Treaty 6, 7 and 8 Treaty

Organizations to identify the steps to be taken, the best way to proceed, and the issues to be addressed. The Deputy Minister hoped that a business case and an invitation to Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) to be at the table would be ready for review and approval before Christmas. He also pointed out that there is a strong interest in having the MOU drafted before the end of this fiscal year, that is, by March 31st 2011. The goal is to have a signed agreement by Fall 2011.

Catherine Pennington and David Luff of Talking Stick Consulting Group have been engaged to assist Children and Youth Services to meet this timeline. They outlined the process that is being used to develop the MOU and noted that several meetings have already taken place with the three Treaty organizations (see Appendix 2).

The Children and Youth Services MOU was also a topic of the luncheon address by the Honourable Len Webber, Minister of Aboriginal Relations. He confirmed his support for the MOU and said he would urge his Federal counterpart, the Federal Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, to keep children and youth issues and work on the MOU on the table. He also made reference to the Education MOU that specifically recognizes the needs of First Nation children in care and commits to developing strategies to improve First Nation children's educational outcomes. He noted that an Education MOU working group is drafting an implementation plan that will engage Treaty Organizations in developing implementation strategies. Minister Webber referenced the Protocol Meeting to be held that very afternoon. He indicated that one of the key agenda items for the meeting was the topic of children and youth and said that there would also be discussion on the Children and Youth Services MOU.

Another initiative undertaken as a result of the June 17th meeting was a review of cross-cultural sensitivity training. Steve MacDonald reported that

Executive Summary

the Aboriginal Initiatives Branch within the Ministry and Broadview Applied Research Group will be conducting the review. He pointed out the need to have cross-cultural sensitivity integrated into the “system thinking” and noted that “policy development, the practice, the way we organize, [need] to be infused with cultural sensitivity.” He also said that the review will not be done in isolation of the DFNAs, CSFAs and other Aboriginal-led-organizations. He stressed the importance of having everyone’s perspective in order to understand what is truly needed before solutions are recommended.

Joey Hamelin from the Aboriginal Initiatives Branch explained the process being undertaken for this review. She reaffirmed that the approach will be participatory and collaborative and will include a wide range of people involved in child intervention. She also noted that the review would cover what others are doing around diversity and cultural training. She stressed that critical to the review is acknowledging the uniqueness of each First Nation and understanding the importance of community to First Nation and Métis culture.

One of the points Joey Hamelin raised with respect to the review was the need to consider how cross-cultural sensitivity training would allow a caseworker, working directly with a child or with a family, to respect and understand the impact of history on First Nation and Métis people and therefore, the challenges they face today. She noted the review would take into account people’s suggestions regarding cultural training, and what that might look like. She indicated that the key successes and challenges of delivering effective cultural sensitivity training programs would also be identified through the review (see Appendix 3).

The response to the review of cross-cultural sensitivity training and the MOU was very positive. People were encouraged by progress made on the MOU and the review of cross-cultural sensitivity training. There were several suggestions regarding the review

of cross-cultural sensitivity training. They included the following:

- Talking to youth to obtain their views;
- Seeking guidance from Elders;
- Consulting with people who have experienced the residential school system;
- Making sure the training is applicable to workers and foster parents;
- Including in the training the colonization process and its impact;
- Using more powerful language; and
- Getting the training right the first time.

During the afternoon, participants were divided into three groups to discuss three topics: Urban Aboriginal Services, Moving Forward to Build Stronger Relationships and Working Together to Bring the Children Home. During the conversations on the above noted topics, participants identified several issues. They pointed out the need to clarify the role of Band Designates. They said it is critical to clearly define their legislated roles and responsibilities, and to identify the resources and funding required to support those positions. They also identified the need to collect and provide data that would allow service providers to plan and implement effective and appropriate programs and services. They wanted to have a better sense of the outcomes for children who are in foster homes and also for those who have left the system.

Other suggestions included exploring the possibility of an integrated, centralized service delivery model that would incorporate cross-ministry government programs (i.e. housing, education, etc.); celebrating successes and publishing stories of successful child intervention placements; and developing an Urban Aboriginal Strategy that addresses the needs of Aboriginal children, youth and families living in the urban centres.

Executive Summary

In response to the suggestions voiced by participants throughout the day, the Ministry of Children and Youth Services will undertake the following Next Steps:

1. Continue work on the MOU with the goal of having agreement by all parties on the contents of the MOU before the next governance meeting.
2. Continue working on cross-cultural sensitivity training for all who work in the child intervention system, including foster parents, and incorporate ideas suggested by the Governance Group.
3. Hold a follow-up meeting with the Directors of the DFNAs and the CEOs of the CFSAs.
 - This meeting will be held within six months of the November Governance meeting.
4. Conduct an assessment of the current state of the Band Designates; clearly define the legislated role and expectations; and identify required funding and resourcing.
 - This topic will be discussed at the meeting with the Directors of the DFNAs and the CEOs of the CFSAs.
5. Collect and provide information and data that assists stakeholders in understanding the context and circumstances of Aboriginal children, youth, families and communities. The information may be used for collaborative discussions to inform decisions and actions. The goal is to use information and data to help improve outcomes for Aboriginal children, youth and families. Information and data would come from various places and sources such as:
 - Qualitative information and stories of the experiences of Aboriginal children, youth families, and communities, and service providers.
 - Quantitative information and statistics from the Government's data systems.
 - Research and leading practice information from academic institutions and service providers.
6. Explore the possibility of an integrated, centralized service delivery model that would incorporate cross-ministry government programs (i.e. housing, education, etc.).
 - The Deputy Minister will bring this topic forward for discussion at Alberta Supports, the cross-ministry table.
7. Celebrate successes and publish stories of successful child intervention placements.
8. Develop an Urban Aboriginal Strategy that addresses the needs of Aboriginal children, youth and families living in the urban centres. Ministry staff, DFNA and Regional CFSAs staff, urban Aboriginal participants, and elders would collaborate to develop the strategy.

Morning Session¹

Steve MacDonald, Deputy Minister, Children and Youth Services

Thank you again, Elder Cardinal, for your beautiful and inspirational words to begin our day. Good morning everybody, and welcome, truly welcome. It is an honour to have the opportunity to chair this important meeting today. During my time with Alberta Children and Youth Services, I have gained a great respect and admiration for the level of commitment from everybody in this room to the children, youth, and families in our communities. Today is another opportunity to strengthen our partnership and discuss the challenges we face. Thank you for taking the time to share your wisdom and for your commitment to move forward together on this important issue.

We have a very full agenda today and we will cover a wide range of issues. But first, it gives me great pleasure to introduce our host, and my Minister, the Honourable Yvonne Fritz. It has been an absolute privilege to work with Minister Fritz and witness firsthand, her dedication to children, youth and families, and her profound respect for Aboriginal culture and communities. It was her vision and leadership that brought us together in June for that historic inaugural meeting, and it is her energy and determination that has been a driving force behind the progress we continue to make in the weeks and months that have followed. I can assure you, she has been a driving force behind me.

Minister Fritz has a long and distinguished public service career representing her constituency of Calgary-Cross. She has been elected there since 1993, and before that, she served five years as an Alderman. Before becoming Minister of Children and Youth Services, the Minister served in three other Ministries: Seniors and Community Supports, Housing and Urban Development and Housing and Urban Affairs. Minister Fritz is a tireless and compassionate advocate for families and communities, and it gives me great pleasure to introduce her and to welcome her today.

Opening Remarks – Honourable Yvonne Fritz

Thank you, Steve. Good morning everyone. Welcome to our second Gathering for Our Aboriginal Children's Future.



Elder Eva Cardinal, Hon. Yvonne Fritz

I would like to begin by introducing the Grand Chiefs and Chiefs who are here with us this morning. I'm absolutely delighted to have Grand Chief Arthur Noskey and Grand Chief Ernest Gadwa. Thank you both for being at this meeting. I appreciate that you are here. My thanks also to Chief James Ahnassay, Chief Gordon Auger, Chief Allan Paul, Chief Cecil Janvier, and Chief James Badger for being here with us today. Chief Rose Laboucan and Chief Carolyn Buffalo are not here yet but I know they will also be joining us. Thank you all. You are the leaders of your Nations and your attendance today shows a real desire to working together in the best interests of our Aboriginal children, youth and families.

¹ Speakers are quoted verbatim except for edits that were made to enhance coherence. Sometimes it was not possible to hear what was being said due to ambient noises. Those parts, therefore, could not be transcribed.

Morning Session

This important meeting is about you, as leaders and decision makers in your community, bringing to the table your vision and solutions for enhancing our approach to the services that we offer.

Welcome also to the Delegated First Nation Agencies (DFNA) Board Chairs, Representatives of First Nations served by Child and Family Services Authorities (CFSA), CFSA Co-Chairs as well as other guests, including staff.

Elder Gordon Lee, I understand, has arrived. Elder Lee, thank you for being here. We are delighted that you are with us today. We are all looking forward to your wisdom and advice.

Let me explain why we are meeting in this room today. People discussed changing the venue with me, but I felt that we needed to be back here for this second meeting because this is where governance meetings take place in our Government. We meet here as a Caucus on Thursday mornings for four hours when we are in Session, and we have an upcoming full day Caucus meeting here this Friday to review and discuss education. This important meeting is about you, as leaders and decision makers in your community, bringing to the table your vision and solutions for enhancing our approach to the services that we offer.

It is good to be gathered together once again to continue our work to improve the outcomes for Aboriginal children, youth and families. The passion of the people in this room is really extraordinary and that passion was reflected in the Report of the June 17th 2010 meeting.

When we were here last, we talked about improving the quality and the appropriateness of services to support the lives and well-being of our Aboriginal children, youth and their families. I want you to know that I

heard what you said. As you saw in the Report that you received, we did commit to some very specific tasks which we have begun working on or have completed; and we have moved a long way since that meeting, as my Deputy Minister, Steve MacDonald, said to you earlier this morning.

Since our last conversation, you received the Child Intervention Review Report at the end of August. For those of you who are new, the previous Minister commissioned that report. It was a report that was written by people, two of whom are from Alberta. The rest of the panel members are from across the country. The report had fourteen recommendations. Our Ministry reviewed the report and those recommendations. As many of you know, we accepted ten of the recommendations. The first four relate to the Aboriginal community. I accepted three of the four that related to Aboriginal people. They referred specifically to bettering our partnership with the Aboriginal community.

The very first recommendation was that we, in Government, establish an executive position at the Assistant Deputy Minister (ADM) level to sit at the table that Steve chairs. My understanding is that that recommendation is moving ahead and the position is being advertised now. The ad will be in the paper this Friday. We are moving very quickly, and please contact Steve if there is absolutely anything that you read in the ad that you are concerned about. Steve, thank you for making this happen so quickly.

We have never had an Aboriginal Assistant Deputy Minister position before. Getting the position

Morning Session

approved required a tremendous amount of work. We needed to go through a number of committees such as the Executive Agenda and Priorities Committee, and the Cabinet Policy Committee. As well, we had to send the recommendation to Caucus for discussion. In these economic times, positions are not being approved at all unless they are frontline. New positions like this can be very, very costly. I was pleased that all along the way, we had unanimous approval at every table. There wasn't a single person that disagreed with this recommendation.

The next recommendation included what I committed to after our June 17th meeting, and that is to establish a tripartite agreement between our Province, Alberta First Nations, and the Federal Government. Steve has very quickly taken action on getting the work started on a Memorandum of Understanding, which I appreciate very much. Steve and I spoke with Minister Duncan, and Steve has been speaking with Minister Duncan's Deputy Minister, regarding the tripartite agreement.

Today, as I was saying to many of the Chiefs that are here this morning, we just lucked out. We didn't know this day was going to be the same day that the Protocol Meeting was set for the Chiefs and which is being co-chaired by Minister Webber. I will be at that Protocol Meeting with the Chiefs and we will be talking about the MOU.

The third recommendation is enhancing the capacity of Aboriginal-led-agencies to provide services for our Aboriginal children and youth off-reserve. That, too, is important, and I know that today you will be discussing urban Aboriginal-led-agencies and the services they need to provide for the community.

I did not approve the fourth recommendation because your input into this recommendation is important. I telephoned Chief Rose, and I want to thank you, Chief; you were there for me. That phone call was so important. I needed you to let me know that we should

not approve this recommendation without bringing it to this table, and I thank you for that. I also thank others who have been there for me as well concerning this Panel Report.

As mentioned earlier, we are moving ahead with the Memorandum of Understanding. We are consulting with the Minister of Education about the Memorandum of Understanding that they developed. At the Protocol Meeting today, we will be speaking with the Ministry of Education to learn from their experience when they developed their MOU.

We have also been discussing Jordan's Principle. We had a meeting at the McDougall Centre in Calgary, which is the Government House for Calgary, with Minister Evans and Minister Hancock, Minister Webber, and Minister Zwozdesky. These Ministers are involved with Jordan's Principle. We are looking at how best to address Jordan's Principle. We are also working with Representatives from Treaty 6, 7 and 8, and with staff from Children and Youth Services and Aboriginal Relations to establish a framework that will help ensure that everyone's needs are met. We hope to discuss our proposed approach to Jordan's Principle with you at our next meeting.

Before I end, I want to ask that you consider just one more thought. I have been in the Ministry for ten months now, and I have had some wonderful experiences with how we recognize Aboriginal children, many of whom are foster children. There was a special recognition celebration for our foster children who graduated and are going on to higher education with assistance from our Grants and Bursaries Program. There are many wonderful ways in which young people are improving their lives after high school.

I was at a recognition event on Monday night to celebrate eleven outstanding youth. Ten of those youth are Aboriginal. I really appreciated the good will and spirit that was in that room. I am asking you to think about and suggest to us other ways we can recognize

Morning Session

our Aboriginal children and youth. It doesn't have to be public recognition. It could be recognition in any way that you think is appropriate.

Thank you, everyone. I wish you a great day. I know you will come together and bring forward your ideas as you discuss the many important issues affecting Aboriginal children, youth, and families. I am looking forward to today.

Memorandum of Understanding – Steve MacDonald

Thank you very much, Minister Fritz, for those very powerful opening words, and again demonstrating your commitment to this process and making a difference.



Deputy Minister Steve MacDonald

The Minister mentioned that one of the action items coming out of the June 17th meeting was a commitment to work on a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The Child Intervention Review Panel report also reinforced the need for an MOU.

The tripartite agreement, as the Minister said, is between the Provincial Government, Alberta First Nations and the Federal Government. It will be a high

level agreement. The Minister mentioned that we are modeling our process on the experience we had with the Education MOU to determine our principles and vision. We've had a number of meetings with the technicians, and the Representatives from Treaty 6, 7 and 8 Treaty Organizations to talk about what it is we have to do, the best way to get it done and some of the issues that we need to address. We've made a lot of progress. First, we needed some trust building around the table. I think we've established that, and now we're really trying to understand how we need to move forward. We will probably hear some more about that around the table today.

As part of the process and learning from the Education experience, we recognize that we needed some support around this, so we've brought in two consultants to help us, Catherine Pennington and David Luff from Talking Stick Consulting, to keep the work going when we leave the room. We have lots of great conversations but we need some capacity to make things happen.

Our immediate first steps are to develop a business case and an invitation for Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) to join us. Again, building on the successful experience of the Education MOU, we thought it was important for Alberta and the First Nations to be clear on what we expected from this MOU before we invited the Federal Government to the table. That way, we would have a common position before introducing a third party to the conversation.

In terms of the next steps ... and Catherine's going to walk us through an update around this ... we've recognized very much the need to have the Delegated First Nations giving advice on the technical aspects and how we move forward. A strong partnership will be necessary, and we recognize that in terms of our next steps.

Morning Session

In terms of timelines, there is a sense of urgency around this. There is an opportunity. There's a momentum created by the Minister that we want to take advantage of ...

The other thing that was put on the table that we totally understand is the need for local consultation on this. The MOU will set the stage for a lot of very important work so we have to make sure the communities are engaged and understand where we are going on this one.

In terms of timelines, there is a sense of urgency around this. There is an opportunity. There's a momentum created by the Minister that we want to take advantage of and we're hoping that the business case can be ready for review and approval before Christmas. If that happens, we can have a letter ready to get to the Federal Government to invite them to the table to start the challenging negotiations as quickly as possible. Ideally and ambitiously, we would hope to have a draft MOU before the end of this fiscal year - by March 31st. Then the lawyers will get involved in details and discussions and hopefully, we will have a signed agreement by Fall 2011. So, very ambitious given the complexities and the many partnerships but I think we need to push this forward and take advantage of the momentum we have on this very important item.

I'm going to turn it over to Catherine who will give you a quick overview of where we are at, and reinforce these next steps so that we are all clear on what we need to be doing.

Memorandum of Understanding – Catherine Pennington

Thank you very much, Steve, for the introduction. I'd like to start off by acknowledging that we are, indeed, in Treaty 6 traditional territory today, and I'd also like to acknowledge the Elders in the room, the Chiefs, and of course, the Minister, as well as all of you who are here today.

Thank you for the introduction. My name is Catherine Pennington, and I'm a managing partner of Talking Stick Consulting Group. I'm here today with my business partner, David Luff, and together we will be the facilitators for the Children and Youth Services MOU discussion.

Dave and I are very, very honoured to be a part of this very vital undertaking which is to develop a high level agreement that will positively impact the lives of First Nation children, youth and families. Clearly, there is nothing more important and more sacred than children. That much is evident from the passion in the room today and certainly, the commitment and the level of attention that is here. Through the process of collaboration, the parties involved in this particular tripartite agreement will have the opportunity to improve the well-being of Alberta's First Nation children, and, as explained by Steve, the MOU will set the framework for continued topics of mutual concern which will be addressed upon the implementation of this high level agreement.

As the facilitators for this agreement, I believe we bring quite a diverse skill-set to the table. Prior to a career shift into facilitation and private consulting with my good friend and partner, Dave, I spent about twelve years as a frontline social worker and some of that was spent in the Aboriginal community. So I feel quite a personal connection to this line of work, and actually my standing joke is, I'm a recovering social worker; but I'm not recovering because here I am fully engaged and it's just so near and dear to me indeed.

Morning Session

My partner, Dave, began his career in Aboriginal consultation and facilitation while he was working with the Alberta Government negotiating the First Nations Shortfall Land Claim. And most recently, Dave has participated in a review of the Government of British Columbia and Treaty First Nations Consultation Protocol Agreement. Together, we're very, very honoured, and cannot stress that enough, to be here and be part of this process.

So with that, I'm going to start the presentation. Our purpose here today is to present a background, a present situation and a path forward. I understand that you have a one-page take away document in the material that we've provided, and we're very open to questions and comments. If we don't have time today, we'll be here through lunch and then also by email.



Chief Allan Paul, Patti Beebe, Talking Sticks Consultants

We go back to 2008 ... there was a Protocol Agreement which was signed by the Premier, the Minister, the Grand Chiefs and the Vice-Chiefs to discuss the establishment of further consultation processes at sub-tables and sub-agreements. The Grand Chiefs wrote a letter to the Premier urging him to address funding equities in First Nation Child and Family Services and in the Province, and requested that the Government of Alberta call on the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs in Canada to ensure equitable funding for all First Nation Children and

Family Services in Alberta. In March 2010, the Grand Chiefs put forward a resolution at the Assembly of Treaty Chiefs, again stressing the importance of this Protocol Agreement, and then also put forward two Portfolio Chiefs, one of whom is here with us today, Chief Paul, and also Chief Weasel Head. In June 2010, many of you, most of you, sat in this room together, and discussed your regional struggles and from there, clearly indicated intent to follow through with an agreement.

The Child Intervention Review Panel put forward a report, and also stressed an ongoing formal tripartite process to collectively and collaboratively address equity for First Nation people in the Child Intervention System. The Government of Alberta response, as we saw in October, as our Minister discussed this morning, was to increase input from the Aboriginal community and the development and the delivery of services, capacity building of service providers and clarification of roles and responsibilities among Provincial, Federal and First Nation partners, again stressing collaboration across the board.

We get to the present situation ... so here we are to talk about the tripartite agreement. I should start with the success of the Education MOU, which was recently completed. It's a high level document which addresses vision, principles, commitment and establishes the Alberta First Nations Circle. I understand you'll be looking at that, discussing that possibly today as well. The tripartite MOU for First Nation Child and Family Services ... there have been initial discussion that have taken place with Treaty Area representatives, dating from June 2010, with recent meetings in October and November, and, as recent as yesterday. We met with the working group yesterday. I must say there is a great commitment and energy with that group of people who are incredibly committed to this process at all levels of Government, and I say that with respect to the three Provincial Treaty Organizations as well. I want to thank them for that real dedication.

Morning Session

There are partners, indeed, at this table for these discussions and they include representatives from Treaty 6, 7 and 8. Our understanding is that the Treaty Chiefs support and endorse the MOU discussions and there is going to be, as the Minister made reference, a Protocol Meeting this evening at which the Government of Alberta will provide an update on the MOU discussions to the Grand Chiefs. As well, the Grand Chiefs are aware of the meeting that we had yesterday. I understand, based on the briefing notes that they supplied, there is indication that initial discussion on the development of the tripartite MOU Child and Family Services has begun, and the Government of Alberta will continue to work together with First Nation partners to provide better outcomes for vulnerable children, youth and families. Further meetings are scheduled with the Treaty Area representatives in December. We are currently working to develop a business case and invitation to Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to be part of this tripartite process.

Success will be founded on communication, collaboration and cooperation.

The Treaty Area community engagement strategies and plans will be developed early in the new year. The DFNA and CFSA Treaty Area technicians and other First Nation community based organizations will be actively engaged. Success will be founded on communication, collaboration and cooperation. Initial sessions have taken place regarding a process framework for the MOU, for this very high level document. This document will be a vehicle in which further conversations about service delivery, provision, and other case management experiences will occur.

I just want to stress that this document is very much a high level overview. This is a process framework as it stands right now, and you will see community engagement at the very base of this triangle. When we say community engagement, what this working group at the table means and senior officials mean, is the inclusion of First Nation communities, the DFNAs, the service providers, the community area experts, the technicians, this absolute foundation of this agreement.

In order for an agreement on paper to actually change the lives of children, families, and youth and First Nation communities, it needs to be applicable. It needs to have action. We're going to have to get that action piece at the community level to have that impact. The senior official steering committee and working group, that is one group that has two arms: the senior officials which include senior officials from Children and Youth Services, Aboriginal Relations, Assistant Deputy Ministers, and Directors; and the technical working team which includes the inter-governmental initiatives coordinators, a number of experts within that group, the Portfolio Chiefs, two of whom I've mentioned, Chief Paul and Chief Weasel Head, and of course the Deputy Ministers. From there, the next level is the Grand Chiefs and Ministers.

So that concludes my quick overview of the high level document, and certainly we may have a few moments for questions or comments before we turn it over to the Chair for the next part of your important meeting here today.

Response to MOU Presentation – Steve MacDonald

Thank you very much, Catherine. Again, the real purpose was to give an update of where we are at, to touch base and to make sure that we are on the right track. I have been very pleased that at those meetings people are speaking up. We don't have a lot of paper; we don't have an outline for you at this point, but again, by the end of December we'll have something to

Morning Session

tell the Federal Government ... here is basically where we want to head, the direction ... so that we will be able to get down to the real work in the new year, and map out the content of what that MOU would look like. It's a complex business, so that's why we're checking in now. We want to make sure we're on the right path, that we've got a process that makes sense for the hard work that will be required to meet these timelines. If there are any questions, I welcome them.

Response to MOU Presentation – Honourable Yvonne Fritz

The good news is that when we talked with Minister Duncan about this MOU, he supported the idea. With that support, we will continue to move forward.

Steve MacDonald

Are there any other questions on the MOU? The Minister makes a very good point. When we talk about it at our senior officials level, we're not doing something that's secret, behind the backs of the Federal Government. We're engaging them at the officials' level. I've talked to the ADM; the Deputy Minister knows. They're waiting for us to present them with where we think we need to go. The Minister's point exactly ... she's got the commitment from the Federal Minister that this is the right path. The devil will be in the details; so they're waiting for us to present our business case around this. The Federal Minister talked about the need for our business case to go to his Treasury officials at some point too.

Charlene Houle-White, Chairperson Saddle Lake Wah-Koh-To-Win Child Care Society

I just want to say, there also was a change in our Nation in our Board Chairs. I have a really simple question. Because there's been so much happening in Child Welfare ... there's been development all along. I understand it's an MOU, but the MOU we

are discussing, is that a separate agreement with each Province, or is that an MOU that's standard with the Federal Government, specifically with INAC, for our kids, or does this MOU represent all Aboriginal communities, meaning the Métis community as well? Is that the type of agreement we're working on?

Response to Charlene Houle-White Steve MacDonald

The Minister actually had this conversation with the Federal Minister, and what's clear is that Alberta was the first one to get the enhancement money. The Federal Government recognizes that we're an innovative Province, that we have the wisdom and the partnerships to move things forward, so they're prepared to look at an Alberta specific MOU. As the Federal Government, they recognize that whatever they do in Alberta the other Provinces will be watching closely. The Deputy Minister also said this to me that they recognize they have to start some place and Alberta has demonstrated in the past that we're ready to make this happen; so they're prepared to start those conversations with us.

Response to Charlene Houle-White Honourable Yvonne Fritz

That's why you see it's such a big step. That's a very good question because it does have to be tailor-made to Alberta, and we will lead the way with this.

Steve MacDonald

Good questions, and another one of the complexities of the discussions that are taking place nationally while we try to develop something more appropriate. There is another meeting coming up shortly. We'll be updating the Grand Chiefs this afternoon, so these conversations will continue. Thank you for listening, and hopefully you are optimistic about the progress to date, and our ability to deliver on the timelines we've set.

Morning Session

Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Training – Steve MacDonald

The next update is a conversation, one we had on cross-cultural training. Again, this was one of the items that was discussed at the June 17th meeting. There were strong voices around the table saying that this Province probably needed to do some more work to ensure that there is sensitivity built into the way we develop policy, the way we do practice. To get this work started, we're working with our Aboriginal Initiatives Branch within our Ministry and brought in some consulting help to keep the momentum and activity around this. Broadview Applied Research Group is going to help us. The first step is that they're assessing the state of what is. One of the things I found when I asked questions is that there is not a clear understanding of what cross-cultural training currently exist. In fact, there is not necessarily a clear understanding of what is cross-cultural training. Therefore, the purpose of this review is to see how the training can be improved in terms of our delivery model.

Joey Hamelin from our Ministry, and Ray Downie, the consultant ... I saw Ray here, way back in the corner there ... they're going to provide us an update on where that process is and where we're going, and that will help lead the discussions. Again, this is really

to clarify that we're asking the right questions and heading in the right direction so the work can proceed at a rapid pace. The other reality around this one is that this isn't going to be done in isolation. We'll continue the conversations with DFNAs and CSFAs and other Aboriginal-led-organizations to get that broad perspective in order to understand before we leap to solutions. I'll turn it over to Joey and Ray to walk us through an update on where we're at and where we're headed.

Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Training – Joey Hamelin, Aboriginal Initiatives

Thank you. I'd just like to acknowledge being in Treaty 6. I'd like to thank the Elders, Eva Cardinal and Gordon Lee, for being here today. As well, I'd like to just go, "Yahoo!"

I want to thank our Minister for leading us, and particularly when we talk about culture and the work that we are doing. We heard your concerns at our last meeting here. Today we are going to have a very brief presentation on where we're at. We're looking at being involved with you, with the community, with the DFNAs, with the CFSAs, with Elders, before moving forward.



Joey Hamelin, Judy Ostrowski, Elder Eva Cardinal



Brian Hjesvold, Joey Hamelin

Morning Session

When we talk about culture, we think about family; we think about connections; ...
we think about self-esteem, pride; we think about our children; we think about
our ancestry; we think about spirituality. . .

When we talk about culture, we think about family; we think about connections; we think about adversity; we think about self-esteem, pride; we think about our children; we think about our ancestry; we think about spirituality ... because spirituality is a big piece of our culture ... and our traditions and our knowledge; our values, our beliefs and the grandfathers and the grandmothers who guide us when we ask for their advice. And today I ask you, grandfathers and grandmothers, to be with us. As well, it's about our language. So with that, before we begin I want to read a little poem:

In dreams we have spirit
In spirit we have connections
In connections we are family²

I just wanted to begin with that.

From our last meeting on June 17th, when we broke up into the discussion groups, you identified the importance of culture, and the importance of culture with our First Nation and Métis children in our communities as well as a number of the First Nation and Métis children that are in care. We're aware that there are a high number of children that are in care, that are being served off-reserve or off Métis settlements. All the more important for us to ensure that our children have a connection to their families,

have a connection to their community, and that we're part of that. So why the review? It is to look at what we have currently within Children and Youth Services ... the kinds of training programs we have, what we are doing, what are some of our practices and what are some of the gaps.

As I indicated earlier, this came from some of our important discussions from the June 17th meeting, and from the Delegated First Nation Agencies and each of the CEOs of CFSAs when we met on September 15th. Again, the same thing was echoed ... the importance of culture to the children that we are involved with. We are looking at our programs, our processes, and services we provide and asking, "Are we being culturally appropriate? Are they culturally appropriate and are they meeting the children's needs?" We are aware that there is limited knowledge, often time with caseworkers and us, even our Deputy maybe, with some of the protocols, and that we do need greater cultural awareness.

Our approach will be participatory and collaborative and we will be considering everyone that is involved in the area ... yourselves, your communities ... throughout this process. We will be looking at literature, at what's going on out there around diversity and different cultural training. Michelin Tire has a unique program, a model that they do. I believe it's with the Mi'kmaq. There are all kinds of different things that we will be looking to see what others are doing. That's not to say that that's what we're going to take; but we will look at some of the things that work.

² Author: Me-co-us Skey is Squay

Morning Session

We also need to acknowledge that there is a uniqueness to each of the First Nations, the uniqueness of Cree, the uniqueness of the Dene Thá, with the Slavey language, the uniqueness in Alexander Reserve or uniqueness in Saddle Lake. We need to acknowledge the uniqueness of each other, the respective uniqueness of each of the communities and where the children come from, their community of origin, and the importance of children knowing where they come from. In this global, economic world that we live in today ... and it is so diverse ... we need to have our children be strong, have that pride, know where they come from, know where they belong, so when they go out to compete in society, in the world at large, they know that they always have a home, that they belong somewhere. That's going to be their strength for them to succeed and to be healthy and happy in their life in the years to come.

Some of the things that we've been looking at is what is being offered, what's been offered in the past, as well as looking at what programs were developed and implemented and where we need to go from here. So those are some of these things that we'll be looking at.

I'm not going to go through these questions, but these are some of the things ... they're in your handouts ... but one thing I would like to point out though is when we're talking about cultural programming or cultural



Fred Anderson, Barb Louis, Chief Arthur Noskey

We need to acknowledge the uniqueness of each other, the respective uniqueness of each of the communities and where the children come from, their community of origin, and the importance of children knowing where they come from.

training, what might that look like, and how do we, at the end of the day, when we have a case worker working directly with a child, with a family, how do we respect and how do we show that we understand some of the history and appreciate some of the challenges that families go through today.

We need to identify some of the key successes and challenges where there are cultural sensitivity training programs. This is where we're going to need your voice, your ideas, and to connect with you as we move further along.

We met yesterday with Treaty 6 Delegated First Nation Agencies in Saddle Lake and there were about four or five CEOs in attendance. So this is as a result of the meeting on the June 17th. One of the recommendations was bringing our DFNA Directors and CEOs together. Well, we are doing that, and this was our second meeting and we booked January 17th to meet with Treaty 6 at the DFNA table and we are going to be talking about cultural training. We will be asking what does that mean, and sharing with each other the different programs because there are some really unique programs and initiatives that are happening out there in the communities with some CFSAs as well as Delegated First Nation Agencies. So you will notice we have the Treaty Areas at the table. We need to acknowledge and recognize the importance of having Elders, Métis and First Nations

Morning Session

involved with us in this work, and as well as the Métis Nation and Region 10 and CFSAs and Ministry staff.

So your voice ... we want your meaningful participation through this review process. We're seeking your wisdom, your ideas and your advice, and we'd like you to tell us what else we should be looking at. What else do we need to think about? Who else should we be speaking with? What do you want us to know? What are some of your concerns? And other suggestions.

That concludes our presentation. I just want to see if we are on the right track, and as well, to get your support on this. I was wondering whether we have consensus. So by a show of hands, who supports that we continue to do our work with culture? Thank you.

Another thing that's really important in our culture is that we have a sense of humour and we also acknowledge people who are important to us. I'd just like to acknowledge that my boss ... beside the Minister and the Deputy ... Fred Anderson, who's not expecting it ... today is his birthday and I would be pleased to just sing a Happy Birthday to Fred.

Steve MacDonald

Thank you very much, Joey and Ray, for that presentation. So, we now know the path we're on. We should leave those questions up just to start the conversation. This is really to make sure we are on the right path.

Grand Chief Ernest Gadwa, Kehewin Cree Nation

I want to say I'm really excited about the presentation that was just brought forward. First of all, I want to thank our Elder for opening with prayer because that's very key in our lives. I want to just acknowledge and thank all the Chiefs. And, welcome to Treaty 6.

I know, as the Grand Chief of Treaty 6 Confederacy, the kind of compassion that we have for our children. There are so many things that we are looking at: MOU

for Education that revolves around our children to try to take the rights steps; the agreement that we are trying to put forward with Children Services.

There is this one guy I want to acknowledge, Bruce Anderson. I go back, we go way back, Bruce and I. Before, I used to sit as a Board Chair on Children's Services, and at some point in our lives we take things ... we can only go as far as we can, and then once we get to that part, we've got to know in our own selves that we can't take it any further. That's why I always like somebody else to take over, and they would just move those things further ... always have that goal in mind. Fred is obviously there, and a lot of his wisdom is what helped us out in our area.

I just want to ask the lady there that did a presentation. You talked about the DFNAs. They had a meeting out at Saddle Lake. How was the response with the DFNAs? How were they? Are they committed?

Joey Hamelin

Yes.

Grand Chief Ernest Gadwa

When we talked about a show of hands, this is something that Treaty 6 and the eighteen Nations ... and I know it's safe to say ... that we are all in agreement. We want this stuff to move forward. Like the Deputy Minister, the Minister here, we need to make this thing happen. We need to make it move, but also, we need to make it right the first time so we're not going back correcting the stuff. I just wanted to make those comments, and, I thank you.

...we need to make it right the first time so we're not going back correcting the stuff.

Morning Session

**Sending them for treatment where there are adults sometimes is not the best place. . . .
I think we have to look at addressing in our First Nation communities an alternative.**

Chief Allan Paul, First Nations Delegate, Alexander First Nation

Good morning, and Elder, thanks for the prayer. Good to see you again, Chiefs, and I want to acknowledge the Métis settlements, the spokesperson for it.

I don't know what to say, Minister, but it's coming on really very fast. Give me a leaked document or something. I don't know how you're coming up with all this new stuff and it's all good so far.

I just want to remind us that we are the non-delegated First Nation, so there has to be some emphasis there ... the First Nations that have not taken on a delegation, and we have a model that works for us. That has to be considered in this process that we are looking at.

At the other end is that when we are dealing with cultural sensitivity, that we have to look at ... is it for just the workers or how about the clients? We have to ensure that there is protection, that the kids are going to continue being in an environment where they have and will learn, continue to learn, their culture. If that's what we are talking about, I fully support that. I didn't raise my hand, and it's not because I didn't like your presentation, but I have to feel that there is some protection there so that the kids can continue to learn their language and the culture. There has to be, that has to be a must.

The other thing is, I fully support the progress that's gone on today, and I think we have come a long way. But the other questions that I have to look at is ... because of the incidence of apprehension that is happening now ... there seems to be a void when these kids get to be about sixteen to seventeen years old, when they

start having kids. We have to look at that process of how we can look at dealing with those kids that are having kids and they are in a system now. We haven't fit anywhere that I can see where they are afforded the same protection, especially the kids who have to deal with their addiction. Sending them for treatment where there are adults sometimes is not the best place. So I think we have to look at addressing in our First Nation communities an alternative. And I think we can probably look at strengthening the family through these alternative counselling or other areas we can consider. But I think we have to spend some time dealing with that.

The other one we have to look at is the whole liability when at some point ... it might happen down the road ... when the kids might just come and sue the pants off the First Nations and the Provincial Government when they become of age, when they start to deal with the residential school syndrome. I think we have to look at the whole liability stuff. That maybe could be addressed at some discussion in the future, but I just wanted to point those things out.

Again, I want to congratulate you for doing such a good job, Minister.



Ron Gaida, Peter Miller

Morning Session

Response to Chief Allan Paul – Honourable Yvonne Fritz

Thank you. I think your words are well said, Chief. Bill C-3 is going to be coming forward, and when that happens there could be another 50,000 children across Canada that are affiliated with our First Nations. I don't know how First Nations will be affected, but Bill C-3 is going to be a whole new factor in the mix. Some of your points relate directly to this. There's going to be a lot of growth, and especially, as you said, with the sixteen to seventeen-year-old children having children. I also think that what you said about liability is important.



Hon. Yvonne Fritz, Chief Allan Paul

Response to Chief Allan Paul – Steve MacDonald

Minister, one other point the Chief made that is very important. The Chief is absolutely right ... this isn't just about cultural sensitivity training for the worker,

It's really about the systemic change in having cultural sensitivity infused in our whole system thinking.

so in that one interaction there is an awareness and a cultural sensitivity to it. It has to be about the system as a whole: the policy development, the practice, the way we organize, all those things must be infused with cultural sensitivity. The Chief makes a very good point ... this isn't just about the workers. It's really about the systemic change in having cultural sensitivity infused in our whole system thinking. So thank you, Chief, for making that point.

Honourable Yvonne Fritz

And that also goes back to what Chief Gadwa said, and this is why your involvement is so critical. Everyone around this table has experience and knowledge. We have to get it right the first time. We have to. I appreciate what you brought to the table as well.

Valerie Kaufman, Board Member, Edmonton and Area

Thank you. I just wanted to be mindful of the people that we serve ... the youth and kids in care. When this question asks, "Who else should we speak to?" I believe pretty strongly that we should be asking our youth what they would like to see. Sometimes we think we do for, rather than do with them, and I hear that often from the young people that we work with. Chief Gadwa mentioned the kids, especially those who are sixteen, seventeen or eighteen. Minister, you saw a couple of those kids the other night at our event ... their idea of what they would like to have an understanding of or people to have an understanding about their culture ... it might be a little bit different than what we think it is. So if we could engage the youth somehow and kids in care, I think that would be appropriate. They seem to be missed.

Morning Session

Response to Valerie Kaufman – Honourable Yvonne Fritz

Thank you, Valerie. I don't think that was intentional. I don't know where Joey is or Ray Downie, if he's still here. When Joey said "multiple stakeholders", I think they were included. But thank you, Valerie.

Chief Rose Laboucan, Chief of Driftpile First Nation

Minister Fritz, I don't know how much power you have, but as a woman I know you have a lot.

Honourable Yvonne Fritz

I thought Chief was going to say, "But..."

Chief Rose Laboucan

Not after I make that kind of a comment. In regard to the cultural sensitivity training program, it hasn't been created yet, right? One of the things I want to see happen is that it becomes part of the Social Work Program at the university level or at another level or whatever that's there. I think that's very key.

But the other point I want to make is, my understanding is that sixty-five percent of the children that are in care are Aboriginal. Now that's a real, real crisis. What can we do at our First Nations level to try to change that, to help this process along? I think what that raises is we need to really look at addressing the equity with the foster parents that are there and available for our children. The other point I want to make is to address parenting because that is a big issue and it has to be dealt with somehow.

If I really had that power and control I would like to see something to address the colonization process in your sensitivity training program because that is a key. That is a key. If I could get rid of all the social ills in our First Nations, that would be one of my solutions ... is to decolonize my people. I say that because I've

been through that process and I'm still in that process, so ... to give me back my spirit by understanding colonization and that process. I have a long way to go to even gain knowledge about my cultural background, my history, my ... all of the things that have been missing. But to go through a decolonizing process for me was that it returned my spirit. I became a human being again. And being recognized as a human being ... like when I came into this room, you acknowledged me. I appreciate that totally, but, that's whatever ... was the trail that I blazed, like working hard, whatever it is, and I acknowledge that. My people have a long way to go when it comes to decolonization, and I think it's a really key component in making that difference. To eliminate those social ills, I think we have to go deeper.

I want to say though, with any cultural training, there has to be more to it than just my tobacco offering. It's more than that, and I think we need to look at it from that perspective, and definitely in the training.

If I really had that power and control I would like to see something to address the colonization process in your sensitivity training program. ... If I could get rid of all the social ills in our First Nations, that would be one of my solutions

But what does the Child and Family Service do with the education, with all the things we're trying to do here. We all know that life is about choices. If I had a positive self-worth, if I had a good education, I could make better choices. Wow! What choices would I have? I mean ... I envision that cry for our youth. If they have a better choice ... and when I look back at the process that I went through, like I said before, I'm no longer blaming. I'm no longer taking the easy way out. I'm no longer making excuses. It's only by

Morning Session

understanding the process of colonization ... and that journey is a big journey ... and when you accept that journey, then you could partake in this meeting. You could say, "You know this is a wonderful idea", and we really become partners on an equal basis. I already see some two-pronged approaches here and I'm not sure that's necessarily a good idea. Working side by side with the department might be better. But I'll say that in my group, or I will leave it with that. So thank you.

Audrey Franklin, Aboriginal Co-Chair, North Central Alberta

I would just like to add to Rose's comments about ... we mentioned it in the Provincial Aboriginal Advisory Committee (PAAC) meeting the other day ... about cultural sensitivity and I mentioned that we have to go back to our humanism first of all, because we are all

...we have to go back to our humanism first of all, because we are all human

human. There is a value system that the First Nations claim, that you know we value, that our God is God and sometimes it competes when Capitalists who figure that money is their God, and it goes on and on. So let's recognize those values and come back to who



Brian Hjelevsold, Chief Rose Laboucan, Chief James Badger

we really are, that we are all human. We have to teach our children that, especially our youth, so that we have some identity and then our cultural diversity comes in and we recognize who we are as human. Thank you, Rose, and I appreciate your comments. Thank you very much.

Chief Gordon Auger, Chairperson, Bigstone Cree Social Services Society

Thank you, Chair. First I would like to acknowledge the Elder that said a powerful prayer this morning.

There is at Bigstone seven thousand membership, and we are an agency. We have big plans as here everybody has. When I look at this ... where everybody is talking about the improvement, I look at three tiers of people here: the highs, the lows and medium. A lot of times we thought at a high level scale, but never looked at the bottom scale. In order to succeed, we have to look at the bottom line too. Speaking for myself, I consider myself the bottom line. Being at residential school, a ward of the Federal Government for ten years in residential school, I'm a survivor. I did a lot of surviving but also lost my culture along the way ... no parenting skills and living in poverty. So I consider myself low profile, low scale, while here, there are probably high profiles, who learn from university.

I think as far as I'm concerned, we need an ad hoc committee that consist of somebody down the street,



Henry Moosepayo, Audrey Franklin

Morning Session

that lives in poverty ... how he managed to live on that, how he managed to survive ... those are the people. If we start at the three tier system here, highs and lows have got to get together and that's who's on the ad hoc committee. Right now, we are talking about consulting here. There are a lot of people out there on the street that are good consultants. They learned how to survive. How they managed is what has to be considered. I just wanted to throw that in because to me, being fourteen years a social worker ... and this right away ... I don't know everything, but I know a lot about what I lost in the process. And also I think a lot of times we need to come out of this as a whole.

I was a commodity when I was a ward of the system of the Federal Government. Who was a commodity too? The residential schools that got money for my being in the system, being there ten years, twelve years. The same it is today. Children are commodities. We need to change that. You know, children are commodities. Everybody wants to take our children into their houses for one dollar, for a dollar only, for a dollar figure. Is it so much about love? I don't know. It is why I always despised myself. But, I just want to share that. Change that idea of commodity. These are our children that are in need. It's no different in the system right now. I was a ward, permanent ward in the sixties, of the Federal



Chief James Ahnassay, Chief Gordon Auger

Government. Now the Federal Government changes it to the Provincial Government ... same thing. Still it's a commodity issue. So we need to shift that to a different level of care and a different level of how we look ... it's not a commodity. It's got to be better practice.

**Children are commodities.
We need to change that. ... Everybody
wants to take our children into their
houses for ... a dollar figure.**

You talk about the youth. As well, Elders ... where are the Elders of ours? We still hurt about the residential schools. A lot of us are still lost from residential school days. Like I said, I'm a parent. I'm a leader. I still don't have parenting skills because that was taken away from me at the residential school. How do you expect me to be able to parent? All I know is how to fight for a good cause from what I learned. That's why I like to be a part of Child Welfare. I'm an advocate but I don't have all the solutions and answers either.

I just want to say take a firm line because I think a lot of these have the highs and lows. We have to combine them both. Highs right now ... we call them highs ... how about the lows? That's a combination of the ad hoc committee to be established ... could be a homeless man for that matter, so I think we have just a very important piece. Thank you.

Response to Chief Auger – Honourable Yvonne Fritz

Thank you, Chief Auger. Wise words and I think they fit with what Chief Laboucan said about the social ills that are with First Nations and our approach. But also what I heard the consultant say this morning is that they invite all stakeholder groups to the table. You've

Morning Session

brought forward the need to ensure we involve people who have had residential school experience and who are living in poverty. There will be others on your Nation who weren't from residential schools but are experiencing poverty.

Poverty is one of the underlying social factors that affect all of us, including First Nations. DFNAs and our non-delegated Nations, our CFSAs and our Métis people very much have to be at the table. They are going to bring to the table not only their experience but also the solutions and what success means.

You have raised a much deeper issue today though. You're the first person I've heard raise it in such an eloquent way as you did, and that is about children being a commodity, and paying people to look after children. You've pointed out the kind of circle we can get into when it becomes economic. I don't know how you'll address that today, or if you will. I appreciate what you said. Thank you.

Charlene Houle-White

Sorry, I just have one more question. It's regarding the cultural sensitivity. I, presently, am not aware of any component that a social worker has to have when they're working, or doing key interventions for our kids from back home. I have to use our Nation as an example. We have an insurmountable amount, not only of poverty, but we also deal with stereotypes and racism where we come from, and that really hinders the success of our parents, our young parents. We advocate ... I know I have in the past ... and I've found myself advocating for great-grandparents, for young

... we also deal with stereotypes and racism where we come from, and that really hinders the success of our parents, our young parents.

mothers and for young people. What we try to do is ... we try to house them off the reserve because we have no houses in our community. We try to get them into these units in our home town, and what happens right off in the district that we deal with, because we can't combine the two, our people have to go off the Nation to get the help they need with their kids. And there is often no work, of course. So we go and we get a place for them. We help them find a place. We do all the referencing. Although we go through all of this, we have the problem of racism and the stereotypes of the people who work with our kids. What they do is they intervene and they say, "Well, we can't return your kids for at least another six months." So a lot of different issues come from this.

The whole idea that a lot of the workers that we deal with ... you've got the Social Services side, and you've got the Child and Family side ... the two don't work together to help our people. What often happens is I find myself getting really upset because people call me. They think that I'll speak for them, which I do. I know what our Chief is saying. A lot of people, they don't have that confidence, especially people who believe that they are not good parents, that they're not good. What we try to do is encourage them. I know I've done that with a lot of young mothers, and it's just such a challenge. And then, once the children are in the home, right now Social Services is telling them, "We're going to cut you off. You have to go to school. You have to get a job." Perhaps they need to do parenting. Perhaps they need to be given some time to restore their dignity, and their trauma to be healed from the trauma they experienced when their family was torn apart.

And what I've seen! I'm a teacher. I teach. So what I'm seeing in this day and age ... we're dealing with children who have experienced generational trauma, and even though their parents are really good providers, we still see the trauma in the children. I don't know if it's contagious or what happens, but a lot of our kids, even if they do well up here, it's the peer pressure from the

Morning Session

So you've got these ducks and you put them in this clean water and you're doing good things with them and they're working well, but somehow they're always looking at the ducks that are suffering. They see that and somehow it affects them.

community or from the brokenness, from the lateral violence. We see a lot of pain that still exists in our communities. So you've got these ducks and you put them in this clean water and you're doing good things with them and they're working well, but somehow they're always looking at the ducks that are suffering. They see that and somehow it affects them. That's why when you bring them home and we try to restore our little families, we need the support, not only of the Child Welfare Department, but also of the Social Services Department.

We need these workers to understand that our people are good people. Our moms love their children. Our Director back home put it best when she told us, "Of course, when a worker goes to a door and says, 'I'm here to pick up your children.' What's the first thing a young mom and a young dad are going to do? They're going to jump up and they're going to be ready to fight. They're not going to allow anybody to take their babies. They're going to fight to the end. So what's the worker going to do? The worker is going to say, 'Oh, these people are violent. I can't deal with these people. Perhaps I should call the police.' So the police get involved. Next thing you know, they're really angry. They're at level nine. They go from being kind of angry to level nine. Next thing you know, the police are involved. Dad gets thrown in jail. The children are taken. That affects the child, no matter what anybody says, forever. That doesn't go away." So this is where, when the workers are going out, they need to be trained like warriors to work with our people, because they're broken.

When we talk about cultural sensitivity, that's one of the areas we need to really focus on. I'm glad to hear

what the Chief said, because it's true. It's not only cultural sensitivity for the worker, although Lord knows they need it, some of them; but it's cultural sensitivity for the parents too, for the parents keeping our kids. The goal has to be to restore our families, not to take our babies and keep them.

We have the experience where we've got adult children coming home now, and there are broken families. Their families don't know them. And we have these young people. Already they're eighteen to twenty. I've worked with some that are twenty-three, coming home now to nothing ... no family. How do we restore that? When we talk about cultural sensitivity, how do you restore someone back to their blood relatives when they were taken when they were six months? How do you restore that kind of damage? And then they start to be parents. Next thing you see is that it's their kids that are in care. That's the situation also. Thank you for listening.

It's not only cultural sensitivity for the worker, although Lord knows they need it, some of them; but it's cultural sensitivity for the parents too, for the parents keeping our kids. The goal has to be to restore our families, not to take our babies and keep them.

Morning Session

Response to Charlene Houle-White – Minister Yvonne Fritz

Thank you for saying those words. It is important that we consider what you brought forward about the generational trauma and how we consider it in the review process that Joey showed here today. As you explained so eloquently, children are trying to survive. They are coming home even when they are twenty-three. They are youth, but really in their hearts, they are children and need to know who they were. I am hearing that pain. I know that your point will be considered during this process. So thank you for your comments.

Chief Cecil Janvier, First Nations Delegate, Cold Lake First Nations

Good morning everybody. Elder, thank you for the prayer. I appreciate that. I'd like to say to begin with, I'd like to say thank you to all the mothers who are here today. Without you, we ... I certainly wouldn't be sitting here.

One of the things ... the stigma factor in this whole situation about Child Welfare, the stigma that's placed on us, not only as being a native person, but all the stigma that goes with the native person ... one of the things that really upsets me, really bothers me, is the fact that some of our mothers are labelled. Then when they have a child, whether they have mental problems, whether they have drinking problems or a drug problem or something, what really bugs me is when those kids come, when they give birth to a child, because the mother is stigmatized or the father is stigmatized as an alcoholic or a drug addict or mentally unstable or violent or whatever ... one thing that really bugs me is the fact that they take our children right out of the hospital and we never see our kids again. What really gets to me is because I've got to go through JDRs. I've got to go to JDRs and to sit with these mothers and cry with these mothers and cry with these fathers. They just basically ripped the baby out of their hands

and they're never given a chance simply because they're stigmatized, stuck with some stereotype that they are not good people. Then what is ever done to them to help those people? Nothing really, because they're stuck with that stigma; they're stuck with that stereotype. We never help them. They go to court and they go to court, and they go to court, and they fight and they fight and they fight. And how that hurts ... how that hurts us.

Why I go down that street is probably because I walked that road with my mother. My mother had to walk that road when my brother, my youngest brother was born, and then to see her suffer for all those years. To know what she suffered, and to know how long she suffered! And as the lady said here, those mothers love their children, and for my Mom, to watch her deteriorate in spirit, in soul and in heart, and then it gets to a point where you just give up. You beg ... no one's helping. No one's listening, so they turn to alcohol. They turn to drugs. They turn to the streets. They turn to whatever they do.

Then because that woman is unhappy, then the husband is unhappy. Then, just because she's always unhappy because her child isn't with her, then there's no happiness in that home. Then the husband thinks, "Oh geez, maybe it's me." He goes out and parties; does his thing; comes back violent. That vicious circle that carries on, and we always talk about that ... the issues of alcoholism, drugs, prostitution, whatever it may be.

I really like this thing about cross-cultural awareness. It's not the fact that we drink the alcohol or we take the

I really like this thing about cross-cultural awareness. It's not the fact that we drink the alcohol or we take the drugs or we stand on the streets. It's why we do it.

Morning Session

**Without spirit, without heart, without all those things, then you've got no respect for yourself.
If you've got no respect for yourself, you're not out there showing respect for each other...**

drugs or we stand on the streets. It's why we do it. Why are those mothers leaving their children? Why are there fathers beating their wives? Why are the children quitting school? Why is there no comfortable home to go to? We say we want to tackle these things. Well, we also have to give some of our honour back to our Elders because without their wisdom and knowledge, I certainly wouldn't be here.

For myself, I came from that bad situation; left home when I was fourteen years old. With what my grandfather left in my head and what with my mother's will that I have in my heart, I finished high school, and I finished Electric Trades and I took my Business Admin, whatever I had to do, I had to get to be here with what they left me, with the heart that they left me, and my grandfather's certain words that he said.

I walked that walk for I've seen ... I've been that father, that violent father. In watching these things ... I've seen my brother, his kids ripped, taken away from him, and he can't do a darn thing now. He can't fight the system. The system won't help him. When will I ever see my niece and my nephews again? I don't know because I'm not even allowed to talk to them. My own, I don't know, even as their Chief, I can't get information on adopted children. It's sad when I, as a Chief, I can't even help comfort a mother or a father whose child has been gone for ten, twelve, eight years, six months, whatever. It's sad when we can't even do that, speak, and get any information on our children. Like I say, it's not the addictions that's the problem. We all know we've got to fight these addictions. We've got to fight these problems. We've got to fight these social ills, but it's why we do this as native people. The discrimination has been shown against us in everything.

If our people had decent homes, a man would have a decent home to go to after his job, after a good job, employment. How could he get employed without getting a proper education? How can a child properly study, come home from school, if he doesn't even have a room to study in when there are three families living in homes? One vehicle, one income ... sure it may seem all right, two families living together. In my home, I have my brother's family living with me. I love my brother, I love my sister-in-law. My brother has passed on now. He's a victim of suicide. He committed suicide, and he was a victim of this situation, child welfare situation. I have his children living with me and my sister-in-law. Although we're all family, there's different personalities living in homes. So if we say we're going to tackle child welfare issues, it's more than just tackling child welfare issues. It's housing; it's employment; it's education; it's giving us back our soul, our spirit ... the Elders, even.

Without spirit, without heart, without all those things, then you've got no respect for yourself. If you've got no respect for yourself, you're not out there showing respect for each other, and that's happening right now. It's happening between sexes. It's happening between couples. It's happening between children and Elders ... that lack of respect. You know, it's also the law system that hurts our youth ... because those ... some of those kids, just because of social ills at home, or social issues.

I know some of my own Nation members here in Edmonton who phone me. They say, "It's warmer in jail. I'll go to jail because I've got no home to go to. I got no job. I've burnt my bridges with a certain family member because of too many people living at home." Those kinds of things ... if we say we will tackle child family issues ... there are so many things that we have to look at ... we have to look at.

Morning Session

That's why I say when we do get to a time where this Memorandum of Understanding is signed, sealed and delivered, I'd like to be able one day to say to the members of my Nation who lost their children, or I'd like to go visit graves of people and say, "Hey! We finally got us back, our identity, our culture, our history, our traditions." Without that, then we have nothing to pass on to our children. We have no values, and morals and all that stuff that our children need to grow a beautiful mind and adapt it to the rest of the world.

One thing that I want somewhere along the line to address is the justice system and how they deal with our children coming straight out of the hospitals and how they deal with those mothers and fathers. Things like that have got to be looked at.

Response to Chief Cecil Janvier – Honourable Yvonne Fritz

I hear you and thank you very much, Chief. What I hear is the despair when you're speaking. You've shared personal experiences with us. I appreciate that, and I also agree with you about the vicious circle. When you spoke about the vicious circle, you asked the "why" question. That's a huge question. I know that the consultants reviewing the cross-cultural cultural sensitivity training understand how important it is to consider how culture affects people. In Canada, one in ten people have been on a reserve, one in ten. So what



Chief Cecil Janvier, Chief Ernest Gadwa, Hon. Yvonne Fritz, Henry Moosepayo

you're saying is we need to create an understanding for people and that is a huge task. I appreciate you bringing that to the table because people do need to learn about how culture applies to the work we do. We must have cultural training for parents as well as for others.

Kevin Provost, Board Member, Piikani Child and Family Services

So, good morning. I'm Kevin Provost with Piikani Child and Family Services. I'm also the representative from Chief and Council to sit on our Tribal Counselling Services Board.

Thank you, Elder, for the prayers this morning. It's very important to start the day. I'm very impressed with hearing of this MOU and the speed that we're talking about. I'm a firm believer in that if we are going to do it, let's do it right. I think these dates here that you've set are realistic. We, at the end of the day, we should all have an action plan that we're going to go home and we're going to implement and we're going to work with our communities so that when we come back together and have meaningful discussions, we have input from our community.

There was an excellent comment by Chief Rose on the decolonization of people. I'm lucky enough that Chief Reg Crowshoe is my Chief and he's actually received an honorary doctorate from the U of C. One of his teachings is the difference between western education and the traditional native education, and paralleling those two educations. So even though I sit here with my degree in the western education system, on the Aboriginal, on the native side, I'm still maybe at a senior high, junior high level of education.

I was also a child of the system and my parents passed away at a young age due to their addiction actually. I grew up and I made some different choices, but I had that education that pushed me through. However, the bigger thing is why it was so delayed ... I got my degree later, mid-twenties, when I was out of there, in fact late

Morning Session

twenties when I received that. But one of the big things that I noticed was just the sense of pride, the sense of belonging. That never, never really happened for me until I understood and had that identity as a Blackfoot member or as a young Piikani man. This cross-cultural sensitivity is very pleasing to my ears and especially for the people I represent of Piikani.

I was also a child of the system ... I grew up and I made some different choices, but I had that education that pushed me through.

Just a quick story. When I was in college, I was elected as President of our Native Club. We have about four hundred members at Lethbridge College, and my big fight with the College at that time, was to actually have our Blackfoot offered as an approved elective for different courses such as Business Admin, Nursing, Criminal Justice and those things. At that time, I did win the fight for it to be an elective so those classes were offered to the rest of the students in those programs. So that was really good.

I guess how we move forward and one of the things for me is, we need to utilize and have access to these CA³ dollars that will allow us to put this into practice



Valerie Kaufman, Kevin Provost

because right now, some of the rules on that CA are very, how you say, rigid and don't allow for much play in that area.

In Piikani, we had a really good program called the Niipomakii Program which is in the summer and for the rest of the year. It's a Blackfoot word but it just means chickadees. It's an actual society that our children, a traditional protocol or whatever ... a society. They have their own things. Since that program has been instituted for about twelve years now, we're now seeing the benefits of that program. From that original class, I think there were twenty-four kids in that original class and now I think we have about twenty who are in post-secondary education. Some were children ... roughly about half were children involved in the system, but it was just a month long program in summer where the kids come and have a cultural component to their summer and they learn traditional values and teachings. But I guess that mirrors the native education system that we've incorporated in Piikani. I mean it's out there and it works.

Another thing that we've done is implemented a Piikani's document that really ... in our corporate bylaws in many of our corporations, which is basically almost like a dispute resolution that allows us to bring the problem back to us and let us work it out amongst each other with the parties involved before getting involved in, I guess, the courts or whatever. Sitting here and listening to the child welfare problems that we face ... to me, I'm looking deeper at the problem and this is kind of a symptom and it's not necessarily the problem. I think the problem's been talked about, and we all know the problems out there are about the housing and the education, the poverty of our communities. I think a lot of communities and their leadership are working to alleviate those problems and they are doing a good job. But I guess it's up to us, in this room, to go back and work with those people and come to a common solution that will benefit our children.

3 Contribution Agreement

Morning Session

Unfortunately, I have to leave this afternoon, probably about one, one-thirty. Our Chief has called a meeting in Calgary, so I have to take off, and while I have this opportunity I just wanted to ask ... I got a call this morning from our new Executive Director in Piikani. She just wanted access to the Government Web through Blackberries and with the CFSA's workers and whatever ... that was the one message they sent back to me. At the DFNA level, we would have access to the Government ... what do they call them ... their Government account, the e-mail account.

Response to Kevin Provost – Gord Johnston, ADM, Ministry Support Services

That's something that we will look into going forward for sure, as we continue to upgrade our hardware or software. I remember people working with First Nation agencies across the Province to give you the supports that you're going to need going forward but especially on ISIS implementation. Thanks for that comment.

Lorne Morin, Chairperson, Yellowhead Tribal Services Agency

Thank you, Chairman. Good morning everybody. First of all I'd like to thank Elder Eva for the blessing and the opening prayer. Also, good morning Chiefs, Elder members who are here, delegated workers. For those of you that don't know me, I'll introduce myself. I'm the former Chief of Enoch, also former Grand Chief of Treaty 6, and current Council member of Enoch, and Chairman of the Yellowhead Tribal Services Agency. The reason why I do that ... I hear the passion when you speak to those issues that we're dealing with here in the Child Family Services, and the overall community problems that we have. We all have the same problems as Nations. It's difficult at most times, as an elected leader, to try to address them all.

I just wanted to speak to that for a little bit. But before I go on, Minister, I'd also like to, I guess maybe for

those of you that don't remember ... I don't know if I got the name right ... but after this June 17th meeting, you lost your Director of Communications, I believe, in an accident. He passed away, and I'd like to express sincere condolences to part of your family.

Trevor Coulombe I think was his name? I had lunch with him and sat with him, and he was quite a bright individual, a young family man, and I just thought that I'd acknowledge that I lost a good person that worked here, and was a real advocate for helping out the First Nations also.



Cheryl Whitney, Brian Broughton, Lorne Morin, Audrey Breaker

Response to Lorne Morin – Honourable Yvonne Fritz

Thank you for your comments. He has left this ... as you say ... a hole in our hearts. We still talk about him a lot, and for those that don't know, when Trevor did pass, it was due to a motorcycle accident. He loved riding his bike. He was young, too young to go.

I should mention as well ... I know a couple of you asked me earlier if the Child Advocate was going to be here. Our Child Advocate, as you know, is retiring in January. He, too, is very seriously ill. He has been in hospital for about three weeks. He is just beginning to take visitors now. I will pass along that you were enquiring about him when we do go to visit. Thank you.

Morning Session

Lorne Morin

Getting back to what I was saying ... I won't say much more, but again, the problems that we face ... and I know when Joey gave me the Minutes of the last meeting, it was verbatim when you speak at these Roundtables. I told her, "Geez I talk like that? I talk like this."

Anyway, but again, my same message ... I'll probably sound like a broken record. Again, when Barack Obama and Harper announced stimulus packages for both countries of North America, not one dime was given to First Nations, I don't believe, and we probably could go search that. You know the financial difficulties that we face and the families that are piled up, with children having children, and relatives. We've got six people or six different families staying in one small crowded house. It creates problems in all our Nations. And I know money isn't the answer to everything. The first meeting we had in June, we talked about a level playing field, on-reserve, off-reserve. On-reserve you give less money to those people that are taking care of these kids that are in care. And why is there a different range or level? We still haven't got that levelled out yet. I know money isn't the answer to everything, but it is necessary.

It is necessary for the Governments to acknowledge that we, in all our First Nations, do need to develop our Nations, the infrastructures, so that our people can be happy. I believe one of the Chiefs said all any one family wants is just a home, a place they can call home, and raise their kids, raise their families. A lot of our Nations don't have it. We, our Nation, we are very fortunate that we have a very successful business with a casino, but believe it or not, we are still struggling financially, and we have five hundred people on a

...all any one family wants is just a home,
a place they can call home...

waiting list for homes and we have a high case load of child welfare. Child welfare has been my portfolio since I've been in office twenty-two years now and it's difficult.

I've got to commend again, the Province, this Minister, for pulling us together. It's the first of its kind. Going back to June 17th, we had the very same passion ... passionate meeting. I guess that took place on June 17th ... the first gathering and again I welcome the new players, the new Chiefs to the second meeting. That same passion is always going to be there, for all of us, until we ratify something that is going to help us all. And communication is key.

**We keep our kids home with our people.
For those that go out of the system and
not stay in the Nations, those, our white
brothers and sisters that take on our
kids, they must take ... our custom care
program, learn the cultural component of
our people and our unique Nations.**

I know at Yellowhead Tribal Services Agency we have custom care models and I think all of you may know the systems that we have in place about teaching our caregivers the cultural component in everything, and that is open to everybody. We want to share that. It's been successful for us, and it's for our people from within the community. We try to keep our families. That's why we have delegation of authority. We keep our kids home with our people. For those that go out of the system and not stay in the Nations, those, our white brothers and sisters that take on our kids, they must take our program, our custom care program, learn the cultural component of our people and our unique nations.

Morning Session

Again Minister, with the Premier announcing a four to five billion dollar deficit, and I don't know if anybody else has heard that, does that affect this area? If we are not going to be able to get any extra dollars going into an MOU, which I think is key, any type of MOU has got to have a dollar figure to it. And maybe I'll stop right there, and, again thank you for allowing me to speak.

Response to Lorne Morin – Honourable Yvonne Fritz

Thank you. Speaking to the budget ... when we started a year ago in this Ministry, the budget had already been set. We did have a reduction of thirty-six million dollars overall to the Ministry's budget. Child intervention is over half our budget. Twenty-six million dollars was lifted out of Child Intervention, and that's right out of the base. That is significant when it is taken off of the base.

Throughout the first few months, with the good help of our Deputy and staff, my colleagues, and especially our Premier, the commitment was made not only to reinstate that money but also to add more funding. In the first quarter, we received an increase from Treasury Board which is very, very rare. Treasury Board added seventy-two million dollars to our Ministry's base. We had twenty-six million dollars returned to Child Intervention and further funding was also added. So our budget right now is stable. Could we use more funding? Yes. We are just now beginning budget discussions once again. You are right ... with the deficit, I don't know what that picture will look like at the end of the day for us, but I appreciate you recognizing it too. As you know, funding is critical. It is one of the golden keys to what we can accomplish.

**I've got to commend again, the Province,
this Minister, for pulling us together.**

Chief Carolyn Buffalo, Montana First Nation

Good morning everyone. I want to start out by acknowledging the Creator for giving us another day of life and another day of opportunity to be of service. I, too, want to thank the Elder for the prayer. And Minister, I want to thank you for doing this, for gathering us all for this. We are all very, very busy, but it's important to take time to discuss these things because it's our children that we want to help.

I'm not going to repeat a lot of the things that have already been said and expressed so well, but I did want to say that I really ... it's very heartfelt for me ... I'm really glad that we're on the path and we're talking about an MOU. We have the one in Education and is it going as fast as we would like? Is it perfect? No! But I'm still happy that we're all at the table still talking, and glad that we're going to be doing that for Children and Youth Services because really, when it comes down to it, we're talking about the same kids. The Education MOU does mention children in care, but I've always felt that the issues around childcare are so huge. As a Chief I know where the other Chiefs are coming from when they say, "I have problems when we're talking about child welfare." Really, what are the root causes? It's poverty. It's racism; it's marginalization; it's colonization. It's roads; it's infrastructure; it's water; it's housing. It's all of those things. And so to me, what we really are talking about if we are going to be changing the system is getting to the root causes of the problems, because if your families aren't healthy, then you can't raise your children in a good environment, and that's really what we're talking about. But it's all these other things too. Justice is very important to me because I work with the Justice System and with the police a lot, and that's a huge piece of the puzzle too, as has been pointed out by some of the Chiefs already. Those kinds of things really ... they need further discussion. I'm really happy that we're talking about an MOU and bringing that up.

Morning Session

I like to think of it as more than just raising awareness. What we're doing is raising people in the system, and what we're really doing is empowering them and giving them tools, better tools to work with, so that they are able to do their job better.

I wanted to make a few comments about Joey's presentation. I think it's excellent that we're having that discussion today. I think that it's long overdue, but I'm glad that we're doing it. My comments are with respect to, first of all, the title "cross-cultural sensitivity". Those are nice words, but I like using strong, powerful language because I think if your words are strong, then your actions will be strong. I like to think of it as more than just raising awareness. What we're doing is raising people in the system, and what we're really doing is empowering them and giving them tools, better tools to work with, so that they are able to do their job better. That goes for the parents as well because parents need all the support they can get.

I get calls from mothers who have had their children taken away from them, and a lot of the times it's so



Elder Eva Cardinal, Chief Carolyn Buffalo, Chief Cecil Janvier

sad, it's so heartbreaking ... because a lot of the times what it really is they're just one cheque away between being homeless and staying in their apartment. It really comes down to those kinds of things. For us Chiefs, that's what we deal with on a daily basis. A lot of times I reach into my own pocketbook and help them. I'm always doing that. I'll always, always do that. We're always doing that ... giving money out of our own funds to help people. We're buying groceries and somebody's got a relative in the hospital and they have no way to get there. It's those kinds of things that we deal with every single day. Those are really the kinds of things that need to be talked about and with all of the workers out there. Our reserve workers know these issues inside and out, but the ones in the urban settings need to understand these things.

The other thing ... because I actually developed my own awareness training, and I used to give it out for free. I even offered the Caucus ... this Conservatives caucus ... I went up to some of the Ministers and said, "Here, I'll teach you this for free, because you guys need to know this information." I've yet to have anybody take me up on that. But I've developed my own training and I've given it out to the School Board and police. What I've always thought was really important, in addition to the history and the residential school aspect, along with that was the political framework needs to be set out, because a lot of our problems stem from the fact that people are afraid to step out of their jurisdiction. The jurisdictional issues need to be very well understood, so that's something that I would proffer as a recommendation to be included in this.

The other big issue, and many of you currently know that I'm a huge, huge advocate for handicapped and disabled children on the reserve. I mean there's lots of groups that claim the title of being the most marginalized group but I really defy anybody to tell me who's more marginalized and handicapped on reserves, because they're handicapped and disabled, indigenous and they are children. Many of them like

Morning Session

my son, literally can't speak, so we have to be their voice. I'm always reminding the Chiefs ... and they've heard me say this over and over again ... we have to speak for them because they can't speak for themselves. That's another piece that I really feel strongly needs to be framed into the discussion, because again it's really heartbreaking. All the workers ... because lots of frontend workers ... need to know that there's a lot of parents on reserves who have children with special needs and they can't provide for them on a daily basis. And that's heartbreaking too. So that's another thing that we need to have a serious discussion about because of the jurisdictional issues that the parents run into. They, like I, have a handicapped child. I know what it's like when you try to access Provincial services and they say, "No, you're Federal responsibility. Go away. You grew up on reserve; we can't." So, those kinds of things need to be stopped because we're just adding more and more children into the system.

... once kids get into the system, so often, all too often, they never get out. They just graduate from the Child Welfare System into the Criminal Justice system. I want to increase graduates from school and university. I want to change ... put them in a different system, one that's going to empower them and decolonize them ...

What I feel really strongly about ... taking the preventative approach because once kids get into the system, so often, all too often, they never get out. They just graduate from the Child Welfare System into the Criminal Justice system. I want to increase graduates from school and university. I want to change ... put them in a different system, one that's going to empower

them and decolonize them and all those things that Chief Rose said.

Those are the things that I really feel very passionate about because at the community level and the home, they're facing these issues every day, and it's very frustrating and it's very hard.

But you know, even though all those Chiefs are all making more money than the Premier there, according to the Canadian Taxpayers Federation ... I'm going to debate with them about that ... but anyway, those are the situations that we're facing. I just wanted to offer those comments.

Response to Chief Carolyn Buffalo – Honourable Yvonne Fritz

Thank you. I appreciate your comments very, very much. They are good closing comments because we will be taking the preventive approach. This is really about children and especially those that are most vulnerable ... the children who are disabled and, as you said, indigenous.

Your comment that the title, Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Training, should be changed in some way to be more empowering is important to consider. I am hoping that you will suggest how that could be worded. I also encourage you to share your ideas with our consultants because you said you have already developed some very good information on cultural awareness. Thank you, Chief Buffalo.

NOTE: Speakers are quoted verbatim excepts for edits that were made to enhance coherence. Sometimes it was not possible to hear what was being said due to ambient noises. Those parts, therefore, could not be transcribed.

Lunch Address

Introduction of Honourable Len Webber – Honourable Yvonne Fritz

My colleague, Len, and I knew each other even before we were elected to the Legislature. We all have connections with people in different ways, and with Len, it was way back in high school. My husband was a School Resource Officer. My husband was on the job as a policeman for twenty-nine years before taking over as head of Security and Risk Management at the University of Calgary. Now where does the connection occur? Len's brother-in-law works with my husband in Risk Management; and one of Len's daughters, Lauren, was elected as the Student's Union President for the University of Calgary in March of this year. She is following in her dad's footsteps, politically. She's an amazing young woman. One other personal thing I'm going to say about Len is that he loves to ride motorcycles. He's got a Harley!

Len looked around the room here at lunch and said he recognized many of you. I shared with him some of the comments that had been made this morning in our meetings and I know he's going to take them to heart. Many of the Chiefs who are here today are going to be at the Protocol meeting this afternoon that Len

is Co-Chairing with Chief Weasel Head. Len, I very much appreciate that you put us on the agenda. I will be speaking to the Memorandum of Understanding this afternoon. I will also be discussing Jordan's Principle, and the good work that our Ministries are doing together. We are really looking forward to hearing the words you have to say to us today, Len. Let's give my friend and colleague a great, big hand.

Honourable Len Webber, Minister of Aboriginal Relations

Thank you, Yvonne. I appreciate all your kind words. Hello, everyone. I've got speaking notes. I don't speak as eloquently as my dear friend does, so I will have to pull this out here.

Anyway, thank you all and good afternoon. Elder Lee, thank you for the prayer. Minister Fritz, Elders, Chiefs and also special guests, ladies and gentlemen, I am honoured to join you today for this second meeting of DFNA and CFSA governors and First Nation representatives. I commend my dear colleague, Yvonne, for hosting this event here today. I can certainly tell you that she has been a very strong advocate for children as long as I have known her. You can just see her aura. I



Hon. Len Webber and Hon. Yvonne Fritz



Hon. Yvonne Fritz, Murray Smith and Hon. Len Webber

Lunch Address

...I fully support working towards a tripartite MOU between Minister Fritz and my Department, between Children's Services and Aboriginal Relations and, of course, the First Nations and our Federal counterparts, INAC. I think that this is a tool that could go a long way in addressing the issues that you have identified.

can see her aura over here and it is just a warm beautiful aura. I love you, Yvonne, and you are a mentor to me. I aspire to be like you some day. So thank you, Yvonne.

I would like to thank all of you very much for being here. It is gatherings like this that give us a chance to strengthen our ties and talk about important issues. I would also like to thank you for your commitment as well to helping children and developing families in this Province who need extra help. The services and supports that you do provide are absolutely invaluable and very necessary and I know that the challenges you face are difficult at times and very complex. You are, and you know you are, making a positive difference in the lives of children and families in this Province.

I understand that this morning you have been talking a little bit about the socio-economic gap between Aboriginal children and youth, and children and youth in general. I can tell you that I'm very aware of these issues as well, and we also know that access to services isn't equitable. We know relationships among organizations and agencies need to be stronger and we need better data, of course, and there are also concerns around planning, I understand. There are concerns about funding as well, which always seem to be a problem. But the issues that you have discussed in this forum, they are complex and they are long-standing and they involve different jurisdictions in different partners. Like all of you, I know that we must work together and address the needs of at-risk Aboriginal children and youth here in Alberta, and that's why we need a formalized, a collaborative approach to finding

potential solutions. That is why I fully support working towards a tripartite MOU between Minister Fritz and my Department, between Children's Services and Aboriginal Relations and, of course, the First Nations and our Federal counterparts, INAC. I think that this is a tool that could go a long way in addressing the issues that you have identified. As Aboriginal Relations Minister I will do all that I can to help this process move forward. This includes advocating our Federal counterpart, the Minister, the Federal Minister, advocating him as necessary and helping to ensure children and youth issues, including work on the MOU around the table or under the Protocol Agreement that Yvonne mentioned on Government-to-Government Relations.

Now, as you may know, the Protocol Agreement signed in 2008 formalizes the relationship between the Alberta Government and the Alberta First Nations. This Protocol Agreement provides the structure for partners to work together on important issues. The original focus of this Agreement was addressing land and resource issues, but that has now evolved and has expanded to other issues and other areas such as Education and Children and Youth. Now this Agreement commits the Premier to meet face-to-face with the Grand Chiefs and the Vice-Chiefs at least once a year, and it commits Ministers to meet the Grand Chiefs and Vice-Chiefs at least twice a year. In fact, and Yvonne had mentioned this earlier, we are meeting this afternoon and I will be joining the Grand Chiefs and the Vice-Chiefs and several Ministers to our fifth ... this is our fifth meeting under the

Lunch Address

Protocol Agreement. One of our key agenda items this afternoon is children and youth, and I will certainly be mentioning the fact that we had this gathering here today and we will be talking about the MOU. I'm very pleased that Minister Fritz will be there and we look forward to seeing you there and talking about the Children and Youth Services in general. So thank you, Yvonne.

As you may know, my Ministry is a signatory to the MOU on First Nations Education. The three parties to that MOU are the Alberta Government and the three Treaty areas, and INAC, and they have all agreed to work towards this shared goal that First Nation students achieve or exceed the same level of education as other students in Alberta. I know that there are at least two people here who were instrumental in developing that MOU, and they are Chief Rose Laboucan and also Chief Carolyn Buffalo. I thank you both sincerely for all your hard work, and there may be other here as well that were involved and I apologize that I didn't pick you out. However, these two individuals have been working day and night to bring a brighter future to the young people in the Aboriginal Community. I'm sure that Chief Laboucan and Chief Buffalo would agree that our work under the Education MOU is very much over the long-term.

...we will continue to make important progress and build strong relationships among our partners, and this MOU specifically recognizes the needs of First Nation children in care and includes a commitment to develop strategies to address their educational outcomes.

That said, we will continue to make important progress and build strong relationships among our partners, and this MOU specifically recognizes the needs of First Nation children in care and includes a commitment to develop strategies to address their educational outcomes. In fact, an MOU working group is drafting an implementation plan that looks to engage your organizations in developing strategies.

I know that Mr. Hancock talked to you about the Education MOU in your meeting in June. I couldn't agree more with one key point that Minister Hancock had said. He said that children and youth must continue to be the focus of our efforts and that children and youth deserve a bright and positive future. And, as I said, we know that the issues are complex, so they need to be addressed through a collaborative approach among all the partners. It is these relationships that are important and it is through these relationships that we will find solutions. We can strengthen these relationships through our work under the Protocol Agreement, through your day-to-day efforts in the community, and of course, forums like we have here today.

Thank you again sincerely for inviting me here today; and I thank you also for all your work that you are doing with Aboriginal children and families. I look forward to hearing the outcomes of your meetings and your talks today. I want to thank you all very much for having me. All the best to you.

Honourable Yvonne Fritz

Len, thank you very much. Your support for the tripartite agreement is truly appreciated. Thank you very, very much. People heard first-hand today exactly where you are at with the Education MOU as well. You are right ... Mr. Hancock had discussed the Education MOU at our previous luncheon. Now they are at the implementation phase of that MOU. I appreciate you mentioning our very dynamic women Chiefs that are a part of that work, Chief Laboucan and also Chief

Lunch Address

Buffalo. Thank you both for participating with the Minister. Len, we have a gift for you. This is from all of us, Len. Thank you very much for being here.

And now I'm just going to make some brief closing comments. I have been both inspired and energized by the commitment to our children, youth and families by everyone in this room. As we continue our efforts to build stronger relationships, I think we are all filled with a sense of purpose and with a sense of hope, and I really believe that together, we will make a difference. These words are truly heartfelt and sincerely meant because I do know we will make a difference.

I am grateful to the people who helped organize this meeting for us with our Deputy Minister and others. I want to offer my thanks to several people. Thank you again, Elder Eva Cardinal, for your opening prayer. Elder Gordon Lee, thank you for the blessing of this lunch, and later on, Elder Lee, for offering the closing prayer. To our Grand Chiefs, Arthur Noskey and Ernest Gadwa, thank you. Arthur, I am pleased that you are still here. I'm not certain if Ernest could stay or if he went over to the Legislature, but I appreciate that he was here today. Also, the other Chiefs that are here ... I am glad that you will be here for this afternoon's discussions. I thank the Delegated First Nation Agencies Board Chairs, our Child and Family Services Authorities Co-Chairs and Representatives of First Nations served by CSFAs, for lending your experience and your wisdom to the conversations this morning. I value all that you shared this morning and very much appreciate you being here with us today.

Deputy Minister, Steve McDonald, thank you for your leadership. Steve, you are outstanding. The reason everything has moved so quickly is because of you. It's hard to believe that you have been in this Ministry for only eighteen weeks. During your short time here, we have made this really, big quantum leap forward in what we're doing in the Ministry and I am thankful to you for helping us make progress on so many issues.

A special thanks to the Planning Committee for all the hard work that's needed to make gatherings like this possible. I'll ask the Planning Committee members to stand and be recognized when I call their names. We have Gerrad Oishi ... please stay standing. Sarah Potts, Sarah where are you? I told Sarah, "That's a beautiful jacket that you have on." Sarah said to me, "Would you like one?" and I thought, "Yes, that one." And Sharon Anderson ... Sharon where are you? Thank you, Sharon. Joanna Gladue, and Audrey Breaker ... Audrey, where are you? And Teresa Bull. Please give them all a big hand.



Elder Gordon Lee, Hon. Yvonne Fritz



Charlene Houle-White, Bruce Anderson, Elder Eva Cardinal

Lunch Address

I'd also like to thank the very strong people that we have in our Ministry and who have made a huge commitment to making today work so smoothly, and our last meeting as well on June 17th ... our Assistant Deputy Minister, Gord Johnson. Gord, where are you seated? Please stay standing, Gord. Michael Norris ... Mike was Executive Assistant for some time to the Minister of Agriculture and has a lot of experience in the Legislature. We're just so pleased that you are now working directly with our Deputy Minister. Last week as we went over a lot of regulations it was good to have your support. And of course, we have our beloved Fred Anderson. Fred, I'll get you to stand as well. Thank you, Fred. Mary Jane Graham, thank you to you and all of your staff. My thanks as well to Jennifer Yip Choy for her valuable assistance and planning of today's program. You're just so excellent at what you do. Your enthusiasm is amazing. Jennifer, I ask you to stand because we want to recognize you in the same way. Let's give them a big hand.

Now, Len and I do need to go back to the Legislature. Last Monday when we came to the Legislature, Len and I learned that we were going to be sitting all night to put forward Legislative Bills to ensure that there was good debate. Last week was a very long week with many late night hours in the Legislature. We go back again today, and I apologize for having to leave you. However, this is what happens when we are in Session. We do have long, long hours right now. We have to return for question period, and immediately following is our Protocol Meeting. After the Protocol Meeting, we have a Cabinet Policy Committee meeting on Health and then we are back in for a night of debate. But my Deputy will let me know about your afternoon discussion, and what should be our next steps.

I wish you all the blessings ... many blessings ... for this holiday season. God bless you, everyone. Thank you.

NOTE: Speakers are quoted verbatim excepts for edits that were made to enhance coherence. Sometimes it was not possible to hear what was being said due to ambient noises. Those parts, therefore, could not be transcribed.

Elder Gordon Lee, Ermineskin Cree Nation

I've been asked to make this presentation to our Honourable Minister. It is my first meeting with this group, and I must say that I'm very impressed. I am here because I have a lot of concern for our foster children. Of course, as I said earlier, this is our future generation that we are dealing with and it's very encouraging to hear the words that have been spoken, and especially by the Minister and Deputy Minister, and the Minister for Aboriginal Affairs. It's encouraging now that we are beginning to work together, and I believe that we will progress. I am confident of that. I am confident because we have people in the Government like yourself and thank you very much. I offer this gift along with our prayers.

It's encouraging now that we are beginning to work together, and I believe that we will progress. I am confident of that.



Hon. Yvonne Fritz, Elder Gordon Lee

Roundtable⁴

Steve MacDonald

The conversations were very strong and provided a lot of insights. We will be true to the words and tie everything back together as we report back to you.

We have built in a bit of time to do a Roundtable, not for a report back of what came out of your group discussions, but feedback in terms of the day. This is a chance for people to talk a bit about what they heard today and anything they want to share before we close the meeting and move forward with the action items. So really, it truly is a Roundtable and I would encourage anybody who has some comments or some final words they want to share with the group, please do it now.



Standing: Avis Gagne and Mary Berube, Seated: Betty Forster and Bert Auger



Joanna Gladue, Karen Egge

John Phillips, Aboriginal Co-Chair, Calgary and Area

I am John Phillips, the Aboriginal Co-Chair for the Calgary and Area Region. I just wanted to say I think it's very important ... communication is always very important. I want to commend the Deputy Minister and Minister for this get-together.

I think cultural awareness is very fundamental to building an understanding of the Aboriginal issue, not just for the urban Aboriginal people, which is a very main concern of mine, but I think also with the First Nation peoples.

One of the things we talked about ... cultural awareness. I think cultural awareness is very fundamental to building an understanding of the Aboriginal issue, not just for the urban Aboriginal people, which is a very main concern of mine, but I think also with the First Nation peoples. I'm strongly in support of cultural awareness, but not just with the Government and Government staff, but also with all the Aboriginal youth and the kids themselves. A lot of governments in the past put huge efforts into destroying the Aboriginal peoples by destroying their culture and family structures. I think acknowledgements by governments are good, but it needs action to turn the situation around to help clear up the problems that were created through some of the government actions in the past. But this is going to be more like turning a super tanker and it's not going to happen easily or quickly or overnight. It's going to need some real long-term commitments by all, in particular, the Government.

⁴ Speakers are quoted verbatim excepts for edits that were made to enhance coherence. Sometimes it was not possible to hear what was being said due to ambient noises. Those parts, therefore, could not be transcribed.

Roundtable

The thing I'd like to see is young people, young Aboriginal people, standing proud as young Aboriginal men and women, and for that, we do need the cultural awareness. But they also need to know and understand where they come from and who they are. I think it's sad when we see so many of the current young people aping some of this gangster-rapper culture, the gang culture that developed in East Los Angeles or some place like that. I think it can't be surprising that that would be due to a cultural vacuum that existed or resulted from current actions and activities by governments and some of their organizations. But it's that adopting, that sort of mentality of this gangster-rapper approach that's a road to continued heartbreak.

The thing I'd like to see is young people, young Aboriginal people, standing proud as young Aboriginal men and women, and for that, we do need the cultural awareness.

I think it's very important for the young people to know who they are, where they came from, and that's particularly in urban centres where the Aboriginal community is very, very, very fragmented, scattered around the urban centres. You don't really have the central focus of one particular Nation that they are able to rally around. I think we also need to be able to present them with opportunities and hopes for the future that they're able to see today, so that they'll be able to understand that this is the way to go. I think it's important, as has been addressed, that the Government has to be aware that to be able to address all these issues you have to look at the entire circle of life and it just can't be done in piecemeal. Everything is inter-connected and it all has to be addressed. Thank you.

Elder Eva Cardinal, Saddle Lake Cree Nation

I want to say to each and every one of you, it truly has been a choice experience being with you. I have learned a lot. I have also observed the willingness, the willingness to hear us, to hear a people, my people. There are so many of us who've come a long way; so many of us who are so curious. And I guess, in my lifetime, I have to say that is the one observation I have made ... to see my people ... more and more we see well educated people, my people. I say my people because I am their people.

It is my hope that the work effort that has gone into this day does not get lost in your paperwork, and in some quiet way I hope it goes on too. I keep saying ... this is the second time I've used these words to say ... it is my hope that our effort here will echo loud over there, for a people that's sitting over there on the outside, to know that there have been measures taken to do a work that is so needed, especially towards those children and kids in care. Hai Hai! Kinanāskomitin. I thank you.

It is my hope that the work effort that has gone into this day does not get lost in your paperwork, and in some quiet way I hope it goes on too.

Roundtable

Barb Louis, Board Member, Kasohkowew Child Wellness Society

I would like to say that cultural awareness is a really, really good thing. However, embracing the culture is much more. In that case ... more work and more internal connection. We need action to help our children in care to be connected to their biological community. When I say that, I'm thinking about a spiritual connection. When a child returns after he's been in the care of this Province, after our child comes home, he's lost; he's not connected. I would hope ... our hope is that our children, when they return home, if they choose to, that they would be connected spiritually, physically, emotionally. For them to be productive and healthy, spiritually oriented, industrious, they have to be rooted in their identity of who they are.

**That's what we want for our children ...
that no matter where they are, that they
are spiritually rooted in their community.**

The best example I think that I can give to help us understand what that means to us ... we all heard, and we all know of minority groups that come to our country. They come for their own reasons. I know people personally, and I'm sure you all know people personally, who come here. They work hard. They work long hours. They save their money and they send it back

home to support their families, their people at home, in that home country. They have a spiritual, physical and emotional connection to their community even though they live here in Edmonton or Calgary. That's what we want for our children ... that no matter where they are, that they are spiritually rooted in their community. We do not want our children to be lost in a melting-pot society. We are a special people. We made Treaties. That gives us the right to speak the way we do, and we can't disconnect our children from what is rightfully theirs.

I hope that all that we have said in the gatherings, in the sessions ... I truly enjoyed today ... I hope that it's not in vain. I hope that you writers are going to town, not just putting things on paper, but really deeply putting what we've said in your heart, in your spirit and truly heard us; truly heard that our children, us as a people, will continue to be and continue to exist so long as our children are spiritually rooted biologically. And it's much more than cultural awareness. Yes, we want that too; but it's a little bit more, not a little bit ... it is more than that. That's my hope. I come from the Kasohkowew Child Wellness Society out in Samson Cree Nation and that's my hope that that kind of work will continue, but we won't just be aware of it. We will actually embrace it. And that's really what I wanted to say here.

**And it's much more than cultural awareness. Yes, we want that too; but it's a little bit more,
not a little bit ... it is more than that. That's my hope ... that that kind of work will continue,
but we won't just be aware of it. We will actually embrace it.**

Roundtable

Gerrad Oishi, Co-Chair, Calgary and Area

I wanted to express thanks for the conversations that we've had today, the conversations we've had in June, and the relationships that are beginning to grow from the conversations. Within our Board, this has been something that we've cared about for a long time. But in some ways, it felt like you weren't sure what the tools were. In a way, you didn't even know what tools you were missing in order to begin to move forward.

We've seen the terrific work that is happening on a Provincial front ... big systemic pieces. I know that John and I both feel that the conversation around our Board table in Calgary is better, is more focused. It feels like we're better informed in a way, in terms of the questions we need to begin to ask our organization to make sure that we are doing the right things. So I really look forward to our next opportunity as we continue to advance this whole issue, Provincially and locally.

Brian Hjesvold, Co-Chair, Edmonton and Area

I'll just follow-up on Gerrad's statement. I challenge each and every one of us to continue to reach out and continue that dialogue, even on a Regional basis and talking to the DFNAs, reaching out to us on a Government level, and continue that discussion. Engagement in building those relationships, I think, is going to be very, very, very important for us as Authorities. I think the Ministry really, really needs to grab hold of that message that you've relayed to us today. It's unfortunate that most of the Aboriginal leadership is away now but I think it's so important that we continue that dialogue. Thank you.

Audrey Breaker, Chair, Siksika Family Services Corporation

I just want to thank the Elder for saying our prayer today. One of the questions I had ... and I like what John had to say. John is my neighbour. He's in Calgary. Our children are not only in Calgary. Our children are everywhere. So when we start talking about Aboriginal relationships and building that relationship, it has to be across the board. I don't just think Siksika can say, "Okay, we're only going to build a relationship with Calgary. We're not going to worry about anybody else." Our children are all over the place, including Vancouver and you name it. We have to reach out to a lot of different people and agencies whenever we are dealing with child apprehension or whatever it may be. We have to make strong relationships, and those people in Vancouver have to know what's Siksika all about ... who are they; where are they from and what kind of culture they have.

So when we start talking about Aboriginal relationships and building that relationship, it has to be across the board.



Audrey Breaker, Floyd Thompson

Roundtable

I don't think if we are going to build this relationship that we need to build, I don't think we can just stop here. I would also like to see it expanded in other areas, and one is with the CEOs and the Chairs, the Chairs, like myself. I think we should be having these meetings and these discussions with John and all the other CEOs across Alberta once in a while.

When we talk about cultural relationships and building that, it's good to know that I'm from Northern Alberta. When I moved to Calgary in Southern Alberta, and I've been there ever since, I wasn't aware of the Stoney people. I wasn't aware because I was in the North. Did any Stoney people ever come to the North? No. Did any Blackfoot people ever come to the North? No. I might have seen a couple of black people in the High Level area maybe before that. We are very isolated in the North. I wasn't aware of all these different Aboriginal groups in the South. It's not written in the history books I read in grade seven, eight and nine. So when we're talking about cultural relations, there's a lot to learn. There is a lot to learn about the different cultures we have across just Alberta, not even extending beyond those borders. I'm really glad this conversation is happening today.

There's a lot of good, good discussion that we had in our little group that we've had there, but there was just so much to cover. Of course, we didn't get to cover all the areas that we need to, and our days just never seem long enough. We had three topics to cover today, and I think we got one pretty well beat to death, but we just barely touched on anything else. It's just not enough time.

One of the questions I raised when we were talking about planning this session is... where do we go from here? How do we move forward from here? I don't think we can just say, "Well this might be our last meeting." I don't think if we are going to build this relationship that we need to build, I don't think we can just stop here. I would also like to see it expanded in

other areas, and one is with the CEOs and the Chairs, the Chairs, like myself. I think we should be having these meetings and these discussions with John and all the other CEOs across Alberta once in a while. I know this is sitting at this table here, but it'd be nice to have a gathering every six months or something or every three months, whatever it may be, and just say, "Well what's happening in your area right now?" and be giving each other some really good feedback about any new initiatives that are happening in those areas.

That's what we talked about today too. Well, what could Urban Aboriginal Services look like? Well they can look similar to what some of the services are there already. Then there was also talk about not wanting duplication. Well, no, we don't want duplication, and I don't think those Aboriginal services would be duplication anyway. There are so many possibilities and there is so much potential and I don't think we can just say, "Okay, well this is it." It has to go on. Amen.

Response to Audrey Breaker – Steve MacDonald

Amen, Audrey. You are absolutely right. That's an excellent point that this is one table. If we try to get everything done at this table, it's not going to happen. At the last meeting, the June 17th meeting, there was a commitment that I'd called a meeting with the CEOs and the Directors and the DFNAs ... that's got to happen again too, another follow up to keep the momentum. Out of that meeting, there was a commitment for the Treaty Areas to get together with

Roundtable

the regional operations, and that's the way this has got to happen. We can't have one conversation every six months and expect it to get done. These relationships have got to multiply and we've got to find lots of tables to make this work happen because it's incredibly complex and there's a lot to do. The more relationships we build and the stronger those relationships are, that's going to carry us through all the tough work ahead of us. So thanks for raising that again.

The more relationships we build and the stronger those relationships are, that's going to carry us through all the tough work ahead of us.

Audrey Breaker

And just for your information too, we had an election in our community last week. We have a new Chief this week and some new Council members. So that's changing too, and we don't know what that means for the Boards and Committees in our community. We don't know what that's going to look like. In six months I might not be the person that's sitting here. We don't know because things are changing. I just wanted you to know that.

Response to Audrey Breaker – Steve MacDonald

I feel your pain about that too. That happens on our side of the world too. You're absolutely right. That's the importance of keeping these relationships because the world changes ... elected officials, senior officials ... they change. We need to have lots of strength out there, and understanding and trust.

Sharon Anderson, Aboriginal Co-Chair, Métis Settlements

I just wanted to say thank you to Eva Cardinal. One of the things that strikes me about today, and just based on conversations that we have heard from her, is that when it comes to our children, we need to look at this Ministry with our hearts and from our hearts. I mean, we talk about timelines and budgets and business plans and strategies, but when it comes right down to it, it's really about the heart. She shared with us her experience. For those of us who were in the group, there is a part of her conversation where she spoke in Cree, and although we may not have ... some of you may not have understood the words that she spoke, but you knew the heart that she was sharing from. For me today, that's what I want to come out, come away from this day, is to look at this Ministry. It's like when you were talking about your experience, they were ripping your heart out when they took your chapan (grandchild) ... they were ripping your heart out. That's what happens for so many of our people. So many of our kids are taken and you're affecting the hearts of the people. You are affecting the hearts of the community, and when you are looking at addressing the sixty-five percent of Aboriginal children who are in care, I think we need to look at it with some heart. I wanted to say thank you to Eva for sharing today.

Audrey Franklin, Aboriginal Co-Chair, North Central Alberta

I, too, would like to thank the Elder for her story. She shared her pain and the pain that family members of sixty-five percent of the kids in care feel. They feel that pain. A lot of people are walking around in pain and I think that that has to be acknowledged before we move on and really heal. I'm still a promoter of addressing the trauma and grief and that if we want to be parents, Government parents, of all of these kids we need to address that pain, and that's through ... it's

Roundtable

called trauma therapy and grief, and if we can look at that somehow and implement that, take action, even though the kids may have been traumatized at home. We say, "Well, we are keeping them and we'll keep them safe." When we take them from that home we still cause them more trauma, more pain for them. I'm still a great promoter of that, and will continue to do so while I am at this table. Again, thank you, Elder, for sharing your pain, and it definitely does come from the heart.

A lot of people are walking around in pain and I think that that has to be acknowledged before we move on and really heal.

I would just like to acknowledge that when we bring these kids into the system, we have good intentions, you know. So it's not that we're taking them away just to be bad people. If you can understand the intention behind it ... so it is our job and it is legislated that we keep our children safe. If there was a different way, it would be great. Hai Hai!

Charlene Houle-White

I also want to thank our Elder. She's kind of our babysitter. She takes care of us in a lot of ways. But I also want to thank the Minister and the Deputy Minister and thank the Premier for allowing this process to happen, for promoting and acknowledging the Aboriginal content and the input.

I also need to say that one of the biggest struggles that we ... coming from my Cree Nation ... right now are in the midst of the storm because we have always been guarded by our Treaties. And a long time ago, when our people were here and the change came for

our people, we had to stay in one place. So our life changed. When you change a whole Nation of people, there is devastation when the values, of course, when the values are much different. Chief Carolyn talked about the philosophy and this is where those of us that come from ... that were reared in our upbringing and our knowledge from when we were children to respect the Treaty process. For a long time I listened to our people back home especially the really strong, strong advocates. They talked about we can't negotiate with the Province because we didn't make these Treaties with the Province. Well, for me today, that whole message, it has changed. But I want to invite the Premier and his Ministers to sit in our circles as we talk about our Treaties.

It is exciting to know that Canada is going to make this commitment at the United Nations level to recognize Aboriginal people and our rights. It is at a fitting moment but it's also at a very stormy time when it comes to our Treaties and it's just the thought that I want to place on the table.

If you can imagine what it might be like to come from a Nation that was once a very strong and self-sufficient Nation who connected itself wholeheartedly with Mother Earth, and thanked every thing around for life, and based on that, allowed others to come and share in that goodness and in that grace that abound in God's creations. When you picture yourself in a situation where your grandfathers have been part of that process and sat down and had a ceremony to protect that and to keep it sacred for as long as the sun shines, and the rivers flow and the grass grows ... that's very important to our people. I know as a young mother and a young grandma, those are the changes that my grandchildren won't see. It's very hard to let go of those very powerful things. But as we sit here today, you know these things have to happen and if it means bringing our children home and beating our drum to the understanding, then that's what I bring forth for my Nation. I know that our leadership will agree. I just thought I'd say

Roundtable

thank you again to the Minister for allowing us to come and bring our concerns.

Closing Remarks – Steve MacDonald

Thank you, Charlene, for those words. There have been so many powerful words spoken. I don't want to keep you any longer than I need to so I think this is a time to close. On behalf of the Minister, I thank you so much, everyone, for attending today. I know how much she wanted to be here this afternoon, but as a Minister, her world is not always hers to manage. I know she is in the House thinking about us and how much she would have enjoyed hearing the conversations that happened this afternoon. She would have been very inspired by your words.

Today has been another great and very memorable day. I have to admit that I am amazed at how much we can accomplish when we come together to have such an open and frank conversation. Personally, I am both inspired and energized by the commitment of everyone in this room to improve the world for our children, youth and families. The conversation has been very heartfelt, and at times, very painful. I learned so much from your sharing. I personally appreciate it very, very much, and thank you. I also believe as we continue to work together, we will be filled with a sense of purpose and hope. The reality of your stories ... this isn't some theoretical exercise. This is about real people and real pain, and the need to make a difference. As a Deputy Minister, what an opportunity to make a difference in lives and to try to make things better! I honestly believe that together we will make a difference.

Thank you to Elder Eva Cardinal and Elder Gordon Lee for providing today's prayers and thank you to all the Chiefs who had to leave us today to attend the Protocol Meeting and for their participation today, but again reinforces the importance of this event.

Now, listening to Elder Cardinal's story about cultural diversities ... and her words have stuck with me when

she told her story ... we need to remind our children that they come from beautiful people. I thought that's a nice way to describe what cultural diversity is really about. And Elder Lee talked about it's not just the physical; it's the spiritual, and that's a word you hear often around this table. It's about the heart and the spirit and we can never forget that. That's the power of these conversations.

Again, thank you to the Delegated First Nation Agencies Board Chairs for joining us today, and CFSA Co-Chairs ... very much appreciate you coming again ... and the Representatives of our First Nations served by our CFSA's for lending both your experience and wisdom to these discussions.

I hope you all appreciated the words of the Honourable Len Webber. I thought he reinforced his awareness of what we are doing and his commitment to stand shoulder to shoulder with our Minister to make a difference. That coalition of Ministers is so important for the challenges we have before us.

A special thank you to the Planning Committee for all the hard work that is needed to make these important events possible. To my staff, thank you. As the guy sitting in the big chair, I see all the activity around me and when I see it come together like this I am so proud of all the work they do, and the long, long hours they put into making these things happen, and taking in all the advice that they receive from the Planning Committee. I have to again thank Jennifer. She is our navigator through all this. Her wisdom and strong relationships and trust she builds with my staff and with the Minister make all this possible. She gets things done that no one else can. We owe a huge gratitude to you for making this happen.

Now, once again, we have talked about some very complex and important issues. It's a wide, wide conversation. There are gems in there we can distil and turn into clear action. I think the relationships are really the big part of this whole work because it's going

Roundtable

to take that strength, that trust and that commitment to push through and start this journey together.

I really appreciate your thoughts about the progress we are making on the MOU and the Review of Cross-Cultural Training. I'm a very impatient man so I always worry that we haven't come far enough, fast enough. It's very, very reassuring to hear the positive feedback that you, as leaders, are seeing us moving in the right direction and that the pace is reasonable at least.

The conversations over the lunch hour and into the afternoon were very, very powerful and we'll be true to your words and capture them well and report them in a meaningful way too. A theme that I heard in all the rooms and I heard throughout the day is this idea of communication. That's something we can build on and keep reinforcing through these kinds of conversations and staying true to the words here.

The other powerful message I hear repeatedly, and one I firmly believe, is that our efforts can't get lost. We have to turn these powerful words into powerful actions; and that's going to be hard. When I meet with the officials' levels I say, "We can't change the world overnight." People talk about seeing a difference for our grandchildren. It's a long journey, so we can't wait to get it all right and agree on every single step. We've got to start taking action now. I think the MOU, the Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Training Review, the creation of the ADM position, those are real actions that we can build on. We can build on those strong foundations. We can't just keep talking.

So again, your encouragement and the support from you as governors, allow us to really move this forward and to make that difference. Thank you all very much for that. And the commitment to being realistic ... we both have to move together. We have to come together. We both agree we need to change. I know the Minister recognizes that very much.

I think the most important thing is that ... talking about the heart again ... that we all have a common

vision of children growing up in safe and loving homes, with the opportunity to develop strong connections to their families, their community and their culture. Nothing stronger can motivate us to make a difference and so I'm very optimistic. Our work here will help make this vision a reality. I honestly believe that, and I know everyone believes that. Again, I know we have a long road ahead of us. I heard today that you believe we're taking some legitimate steps on that journey, and we are going to be successful; and that since our last meeting you've have seen great progress. The next time we get together I hope to be able to demonstrate even more progress based on the work we do.

So again, my heartfelt thanks for joining us today. I know the Minister appreciates so much the time and commitment you make to this effort. When you go back to your communities and your Boards and your Agencies, we know you will continue to motivate and make your staff available, open their minds to new approaches and allow us to move forward. So with that, please all have a very safe trip home.

I would like to call Elder Lee to close with a prayer.

Elder Gordon Lee

I didn't have a father. I can't imagine, I can't imagine what it would be like to grow up without both parents and that's what we're dealing with. I believe that with God's help we can do it. I believe that. So I ask the Creator to bless us with a good mind and a good heart and that we leave this place in hope.

NOTE: Speakers are quoted verbatim excepts for edits that were made to enhance coherence. Sometimes it was not possible to hear what was being said due to ambient noises. Those parts, therefore, could not be transcribed.

Summary of Group Discussions

During the afternoon, participants were divided into three groups to discuss three topics: Urban Aboriginal Services, Moving Forward to Build Stronger Relationships and Working Together to Bring the Children Home. A summary of what was said on each of the topics is provided below.

Urban Aboriginal Services

The discussion on Urban Aboriginal Services covered a wide range of issues which included cross-cultural sensitivity training, transition services for on-reserve people moving into the urban centres, parenting and planned parenting programs, housing support programs and the need for relevant data. Underscoring those conversations was the importance of relationship building, collaboration, cooperation, and communication between service providers on-reserve and service providers off-reserve.

Some people noted that “great things are happening” and there is greater collaboration as a result of the June 17th meeting. However, even though there is progress being made in how Delegated First Nation Agencies (DFNAs) and Child and Family Service Authorities (CFSAs) are working together, participants said there is still more work to be done to ensure that urban Aboriginal service delivery agencies establish and maintain strong connections with on-reserve service delivery agencies. People viewed these connections as essential in order to ensure the following:



Tracy Czuy McKinnon, Rose Lameman

1. Both on-reserve and off-reserve agencies will work jointly with parents and with on-reserve family members if necessary when there is a critical incident involving Aboriginal children off-reserve in order to resolve the issues to the benefit of all parties.
2. Aboriginal children will be able to re-connect or remain connected with their First Nation or Métis community of origin as well as with their family, including their extended family.
3. Parents who live off-reserve will be offered the support of their Band Designate even when the parents do not wish the Band to be involved. The Band Designate will then have the opportunity to advise the parents regarding registering their children if they are not already registered with their Band.
4. When children are moved to different jurisdictions the Band will be able to follow what happens to the children from their Nation.
5. There will be First Nation representation and voice in urban areas.

The groups noted that relationship building is the foundation of collaboration, cooperation and better communication between DFNAs and CFSAs. That foundation, they felt, would be strengthened through an understanding of and appreciation for each other's worldview, values and lifestyle. They said that cross-cultural sensitivity training is important in developing that understanding and appreciation. The participants also noted that service agencies need to understand and value what “kinship” and “connections” mean to Aboriginal people. Participants pointed out that culture was more than bringing children to the reserve.

In the group discussions, people also identified the need for transition services to help those moving off their reserve to understand how to navigate their way to success in the urban centres. They noted:

Summary of Group Discussions

1. Many of those who move to the urban centres, particularly young couples, may not have extended family in the city or urban setting to help them with their children, to find affordable housing, and so on. One of the suggestions made was to develop an orientation program for new arrivals to the city.
2. Young people leaving the reserve for educational purposes may also require support to help them be successful and complete their schooling.

The groups also pointed out the need for services that would provide support to young parents, and suggested that urban Aboriginal services should include parenting and planned parenting programs in order

- to address the growing number of young parents;
- to help new parents learn how to parent; and
- to mentor young couples who did not have grandparents or mentors in the urban centres.

Another service deemed important was that of assisting Aboriginal people living in the urban areas to find employment. One of the groups pointed out that recruitment processes do not promote the hiring of Aboriginal people, especially those who are from on-reserve. In particular, it was noted that education systems do not hire newly graduated Aboriginal teachers.

Also identified was the need for housing supports. People said that affordable homes that are available in the city are situated in neighbourhoods that resemble ghettos (no parks, high crime rates, etc.). They said that to qualify for housing supplements, people needed a certain salary/income. They commented that some agencies offer affordable housing for those looking for employment.

In one of the discussion groups, people noted the absence of data and identified the need to know the following for the purposes of program planning and services:

1. The number of Aboriginal children in care that are from on-reserve and off-reserve.
2. The factors that draw Aboriginal people into urban settings; that is, the reasons for them moving to urban centres.
3. The causes of family breakdown; that is, what causes the intervention.
4. The percentage of Aboriginal people living in urban settings who are linked to their Nation communities (especially those involved with Children and Youth Services and the Justice system).
5. The outcomes for children who are in foster homes and for those who have left the system.

The groups identified the need for both sides to create opportunities for partnerships, and to build and maintain relationships that would ensure communication between DFNAs and CFSAs. Some of the suggestions put forward to address the needs and gaps identified above included establishing an integrated and centralized service delivery model that would incorporate cross-ministry government programs (i.e. housing, education, etc.). Participants believed programs should focus on prevention such as developing skills in parents, promoting healthy development of self, spiritual connection to the community, and kinship supports.

Moving Forward to Build Stronger Relationships

The need for better communication, collaboration, and information sharing was again voiced in the discussions on Moving Forward to Build Stronger Relationships. One of the suggestions to strengthen communication between DFNAs and CFSAs was to develop working arrangements or protocols focused on improving outcomes for children. The group suggested these arrangements should be proactive not reactive and ensure authorities respect people's homes and families.

Summary of Group Discussions

They also felt that workers should be required to take the time to listen and offer support to the family, as a first step, and consider the possibility of including extended family, the “community family” and foster parents in case-planning. It was also suggested that better understanding of the role of the Band Designates by both First Nation and CFSA caseworkers might ensure that children and their families receive the best possible services. As well, participants thought that recruiting more Aboriginal caseworkers would help Government staff develop a better understanding of, and respect for, Aboriginal people and their values.

Participants believed that it is prudent to determine beforehand, the philosophy and principles that should guide policy and regulations. They suggested, for example, that honoring, respecting and maintaining family structures, extended family ties and kinship relationships should be the underlying guiding principles for any child intervention policy being proposed. Some participants noted that the principles underlying current legislation and policy reflect non-Aboriginal values and do not incorporate other cultural values. One of the examples given was the concept of adoption as defined and applied in current legislation, which they pointed out, is not congruent with the Aboriginal culture.

Participants said that Government must stop creating policy for the lowest common denominator or “the tragic case” and believed that fear of litigation often holds people back from good case management. They believe that much of what caseworkers do is in response to risk aversion, fear of liability and litigation. One of points raised was that authorities need to make a greater effort to share stories about the good things that are happening.

Working Together to Bring the Children Home

There was a clear and consistent message conveyed by participants that children must be given the opportunity to know who they are and where they come from. Participants noted that CFSAs need to support First Nation families to remain together and said that placing children with grandparents or extended family must be the first option for children taken into care. They pointed out that providing services and supports for the parents would enable parents to care for their children. Some participants believe the current system is causing great harm to children, parents and families.

The general perception among some is that the system is broken because it is focused on the wrong



Tom Wickersham, Hon. Yvonne Fritz, Sharon Holtman



Judy Ostrowski, Elder Eva Cardinal, Loretta Bellerose

Summary of Group Discussions

things, such as removing children from their families instead of making sure families remain together. An example used to illustrate the point was Permanent Guardianship Orders, which people believe are permanent and cannot be rescinded. Participants noted that every effort should be made to reunite children with their families. Some people think the Child Youth and Family Enhancement Act does not focus on maintaining connection to community. They pointed out as an example that foster parents are not required to maintain a connection between the children and their home communities.

Suggestions to support efforts to bring the children home included making sure that DFNAs are given an opportunity to meet with the caseworker when off-reserve children/youth are brought into the system. People said that it is important to meet face to face to discuss the best way to address the situation, and that it is preferable to avoid relying on letters or phone calls as a primary means of interaction or communication.

They also suggested that establishing an Aboriginal child advocacy office would foster the connections between the children and their communities and would go a long way to helping connect children to their biological roots.

Another suggestion was to have specialized workers who would work with Bands to build better relations, and get to know the communities. In this regard, the role of the Band Designates was considered to be important. However, people pointed out that the roles and responsibilities of the Band Designates need to be clearly defined and the positions adequately resourced.

Participants identified the need to continue the discussions on developing an Urban Aboriginal Strategy to meet the needs of Aboriginal children youth and families living in the urban centres. They suggested that a proposed strategy should be developed with input from Ministry staff, Regional CFSA staff, urban Aboriginal participants, including elders.

Suggestions arising from group discussions:

The suggestions arising from group discussions may be summarized as follows:

1. Conduct an assessment of the current state of the Band Designates; clearly define the legislated roles and responsibilities; and identify required funding and resourcing.
2. Collect and provide data that would allow service providers to know the following:
 - a. The number of the children apprehended from on-reserve and from urban settings.
 - b. The factors that draw Aboriginal people into urban settings; that is, the reasons for them moving to urban centres.
 - c. The causes of family breakdown; that is, what causes the intervention.
 - d. The percentage of Aboriginal people living in urban settings (especially those involved with Children and Youth Services and the Justice system) who are linked to their Nation communities.
 - e. The outcomes for children who are in foster homes and for those who have left the system.
3. Explore the possibility of an integrated, centralized service delivery model that would incorporate cross-ministry government programs (i.e. housing, education, etc.).
4. Celebrate successes and publish stories of successful child intervention placements.
5. Develop an Urban Aboriginal Strategy that addresses the needs of Aboriginal children, youth and families living in the urban centres. Ministry staff, DFNA and Regional CFSA staff, urban Aboriginal participants, and elders should collaborate to develop the strategy.

Next Steps

1. Continue work on the MOU with the goal of having agreement by all parties on the contents of the MOU before the next governance meeting.
2. Continue working on cross-cultural sensitivity training for all who work in the child intervention system, including foster parents, and incorporate ideas suggested by the Governance Group.
3. Hold a follow-up meeting with the Directors of the DFNAs and the CEOs of the CFSAs.
 - This meeting will be held within six months of the November Governance meeting.
4. Conduct an assessment of the current state of the Band Designates; clearly define the legislated role and expectations; and identify required funding and resourcing.
 - This topic will be discussed at the meeting with the Directors of the DFNAs and the CEOs of the CFSAs.
5. Collect and provide information and data that assists stakeholders in understanding the context and circumstances of Aboriginal children, youth, families and communities. The information may be used for collaborative discussions to inform decisions and actions. The goal is to use information and data to help improve outcomes for Aboriginal children, youth and families. Information and data would come from various places and sources such as:
 - Qualitative information and stories of the experiences of Aboriginal children, youth families, and communities, and service providers.
 - Quantitative information and statistics from the Government's data systems.
 - Research and leading practice information from academic institutions and service providers.
6. Explore the possibility of an integrated, centralized service delivery model that would incorporate cross-ministry government programs (i.e. housing, education, etc.).
 - The Deputy Minister will bring this topic forward for discussion at Alberta Supports, the cross-ministry table.
7. Celebrate successes and publish stories of successful child intervention placements.
8. Develop an Urban Aboriginal Strategy that addresses the needs of Aboriginal children, youth and families living in the urban centres. Ministry staff, DFNA and Regional CFSA staff, urban Aboriginal participants, and elders would collaborate to develop the strategy.

Appendix 1 – Evaluation Summary

Twenty-four people completed the evaluation survey. Ninety-eight percent of the respondents rated the meeting above average to excellent. The two presentations in the morning were well received: 81% of the respondents rated the presentation on the Memorandum of Understanding as very good to excellent; and 87% thought the presentation on Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Training was very good to excellent.

The afternoon group discussions received mixed reviews. Many people said that there was insufficient time to have a thorough deliberation on each topic. Several people did not evaluate the group discussions but provided comments indicating a need for more time. One group was able to address only the first topic, Urban Aboriginal Services.

Participants expressed a wish to have meetings on a regular basis. They felt gatherings like this one would help build trust and encourage people to be more open with each other, to listen to each other, and learn from each other.

Several comments were made that indicated a sense of hope and optimism for the future. Many expressed a heartfelt gratitude to Minister Fritz for her leadership in bringing the DFNAs and CFSAs together at the same table.

Appendix 2 – Memorandum of Understanding

Catherine Pennington
Talking Stick Consulting Group

Memorandum of Understanding

November 30, 2010

Meeting Participants:
Minister Yvonne Fritz
Deputy Minister Steve MacDonald
Chairs, Delegated First Nations Agencies
Co-Chairs, Child and Family Services Authorities
Child and Family Services Representatives
First Nations Representatives

Appendix 2 – Memorandum of Understanding

Our Purpose Today

- ❖ Background
- ❖ Present Situation
- ❖ Path Forward

Appendix 2 – Memorandum of Understanding

Background

- ❖ **Protocol Agreement – May 2008**
 - ❖ signed by the Premier, Minister, Grand Chiefs and Vice-Chiefs
 - ❖ contemplates the establishment of further specific consultation processes, sub-tables and sub-agreements

- ❖ **Grand Chiefs Letter – January 2010**
 - ❖ urged the Premier to address funding inequities in First Nations child and family services in the province
 - ❖ requested that the Government of Alberta call on the Minister of INAC to ensure equitable funding for all First Nations child and family services in Alberta

Appendix 2 – Memorandum of Understanding

Background

- ❖ **Treaty Chiefs Resolution – March 2010**
 - ❖ establish sub-agreement on Child and Family Services pursuant to the Protocol Agreement
 - ❖ Chief Allan Paul and Chief Charles Weaselhead to act as Portfolio Chiefs

- ❖ *Gathering Today For Our Aboriginal Children's Future – June 2010*
 - ❖ proposed follow up action included a proposal to develop a MOU to “eliminate jurisdictional struggles”

Appendix 2 – Memorandum of Understanding

Background

- ❖ **Child Intervention Review Panel and Government of Alberta Response**
 - ❖ The **Panel's Report** of June 2010 - *Closing the Gap Between Vision and Reality* - called for “an ongoing, formal, tripartite process to collaboratively address inequity for First Nations people in the child intervention system”
 - ❖ The **Government of Alberta's Response** of October 2010 calls for increasing input from the Aboriginal community in the development and delivery of services, capacity-building of service-providers and clarification of roles and responsibilities among provincial, federal and First Nation partners

Appendix 2 – Memorandum of Understanding

Present Situation

- ❖ **Tripartite MOU for First Nations Education**
 - ❖ recently completed high-level document that addresses Vision and Principles, Commitments and establishes the 'Alberta First Nations Circle'

- ❖ **Tripartite MOU for First Nations Child and Family Services**
 - ❖ initial discussions have taken place with Treaty Area representatives - dating from June 2010 with recent meetings on October 25th, November 16th and November 29th
 - ❖ partners at the Table for these discussions have included representatives from Treaty Areas 6, 7 and 8

Appendix 2 – Memorandum of Understanding

Present Situation

- ❖ Our understanding is that the Treaty Chiefs support and endorse the MOU discussions
- ❖ Protocol Agreement Meeting – this evening
 - ❖ Government of Alberta will be provide an update on the MOU discussions for the Grand Chiefs
 - ❖ indicate that initial discussions on the development of a tripartite MOU on child and family services have begun
 - ❖ Government of Alberta will continue to work together with our First Nations partners to provide better outcomes for vulnerable children, youth and families

Appendix 2 – Memorandum of Understanding

Path Forward

- ❖ Further meetings are scheduled with the Treaty Area representatives
- ❖ Working to develop a business case and invitation to INAC to be part of the tripartite process
- ❖ Treaty Area community engagement strategies and plans will be developed early in the New Year

Appendix 2 – Memorandum of Understanding

Path Forward

- ❖ DFNA's, CFSA's, Treaty Area Technicians and other First Nations community-based organizations will be actively engaged
- ❖ Success will be founded on communication, collaboration and cooperation
- ❖ Initial discussions have taken place regarding a process framework for the MOU development

Appendix 2 – Memorandum of Understanding



Appendix 2 – Memorandum of Understanding

Memorandum of Understanding

November 30, 2010

Meeting Participants:
Minister Yvonne Fritz
Chairs, Designated First Nations Agencies
Co-Chairs, Child and Family Services Authorities
First Nations Representatives

Appendix 2 – Memorandum of Understanding

Update Regarding Development of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Background

- ❑ the Protocol Agreement on Government to Government Relations contemplates the establishment of specific processes, sub-tables and sub-agreements
- ❑ pursuant to the Protocol Agreement, the Grand Chiefs and the Treaty Chiefs have called upon the Government of Alberta to address the challenges in the delivery of First Nations child and family services and to include the Government of Canada
- ❑ the Government of Alberta has committed to increasing input from First Nations communities and clarifying roles and responsibilities for service delivery between provincial, federal and First Nations partners

Present Situation

- ❑ the First Nations Child and Family Services tripartite MOU can draw from the lessons learned in the development of the high-level tripartite MOU for First Nations Education
- ❑ initial discussions have taken place with Treaty Area representatives and it is understood that the Treaty Chiefs support and endorse these discussions
- ❑ as a result of these discussions we have already begun to see some progress in areas like the development of the actual structure of the MOU as well principles upon which the MOU will be based
- ❑ at the November 30, 2010 Protocol Agreement Meeting the Government of Alberta confirmed its support for developing a tripartite MOU on First Nations Child and Family Services

Path Forward

- ❑ As a significant first step, the Minister of Children and Youth Services will invite the Grand Chiefs to sign a Conceptual Document that will recognize the commitment of the Province, Alberta First Nations and the Federal Government to develop a Tri-partite Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for First Nations children and youth
- ❑ DFNA's, CFSA's, Treaty Area Technicians and other First Nations community-based organizations will be actively engaged in the development of the First Nations Child and Family Services MOU
- ❑ Work has commenced in the development of a business case and invitation to Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to be part of a tripartite process
- ❑ Treaty Area community engagement strategies and plans will be developed early in the New Year

Appendix 3 – Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Training Presentation

Joey Hamelin
Aboriginal Initiatives, Children and Youth Services

Alberta Children and Youth Services

**Review
of
Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Training**

Why the Review

- To determine how cross-cultural sensitivity training programs have resulted and can result in the improvement of service delivery and outcomes for children, youth and families

Appendix 3 – Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Training Presentation

Why the Review

At the June 17th gathering and at the DFNA Directors and CFSA CEO meeting on September 15th people stated the following:

- Programs, services and standards are not “culturally appropriate”
- Caseworkers off-reserve have limited knowledge and understanding of First Nation and Métis culture
- There is a need for greater cultural awareness

Appendix 3 – Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Training Presentation

Our Approach

- Will be participatory and collaborative and consider stakeholders as partners
- Will incorporate multiple methods to conduct the review appropriate for the range of stakeholders (document review, program review and interviews)
- Will be sensitive to the needs of a wide range of populations

Appendix 3 – Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Training Presentation

Framework for review

What we will be asking ourselves and others:

1. What cross-cultural sensitivity training/education programs are currently offered or have been offered in the recent past?
2. Why and how were these programs initially developed and/or implemented?
3. How were these programs delivered— for whom, by whom, and how often?

Appendix 3 – Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Training Presentation

Framework for review

4. What effect have these training programs had?
 - *Has cross-cultural sensitivity training improved service delivery and created meaningful differences to children, youth and families?*
 - *Has it resulted in improvements that support staff to remain focused on achieving safety and well-being for children and youth?*
 - *Has it resulted in allocation of resources to directly impact children and youth outcomes?*
 - *Has it resulted in strengthening community and stakeholder system confidence?*
5. What are the key successes and challenges associated with cross-cultural sensitivity training programs?

Appendix 3 – Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Training Presentation

Key Stakeholders

- Treaty 6 DFNA Table
- Treaty 7 DFNA Table
- Treaty 8 DFNA Table
- Elders: First Nation and Métis
- Agencies
- Métis: Métis Elders, Métis Nation of Alberta Association, CFSA Region 10 Métis Settlements
- CFSAs
- Ministry staff

Appendix 3 – Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Training Presentation

Your Voice

- We want your meaningful participation in the review process
- We are seeking your wisdom, your ideas and your advice

Appendix 3 – Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Training Presentation

We would like you tell us...

- What else should we be looking at?
- What else do we need to think about?
- Who else should we speak to?
- What do you want us to know?
- What are your cautions?
- Other suggestions?

Appendix 3 – Cross-Cultural Sensitivity Training Presentation

How to Contact Us

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Appendix 4 – Attendees

Honourable Yvonne Fritz, Minister of Children and Youth Services

Steve MacDonald, Deputy Minister, Children and Youth Services

Delegated First Nation Agency Representatives

Chief James Ahnassay, Chair, North Peace Tribal Council Child and Family Services

Chief Rupert Meneen, North Peace Tribal Council

Germaine Anderson, Chair, Tribal Chief Child and Family Services (West)

Laura Auger, Chair, Little Red River Cree Nation Child and Family Services Society

Chief Gordon Auger, Chair, Bigstone Cree Social Services Society

Chief James Badger, Chair, Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council Child and Family Services

Audrey Breaker, Chair, Siksika Family Services Corporation

Charlene Houle-White, Chairperson, Saddle Lake Wah-Koh-To-Win Child Care Society

Joanna Gladue, Chair, Western Cree Tribal Council Child Youth and Family Enhancement

Henry Moosepayo, Chair, Tribal Chief Child and Family Services (East)

Chief Vern Janvier, Chair, Athabasca Tribal Council Child and Family Services

Lorne Morin, Chairperson, Yellowhead Tribal Services Agency

Kevin Provost, Board Member, Piikani Child and Family Services

Grand Chief Arthur Noskey, Chair, Kee Tas Kee Now Child and Family Services

Barb Louis, Board Member, Kasohkewew Child Wellness Society

Marcel Weasel Head, Chair, Blood Tribe Child Protection Services

Cheryl Whitney, Chairperson, Tsuu T'ina Child and Family Services

Daniel Mackinaw, Ermineskin Cree Nation

Appendix 4 - Attendees

First Nation Representatives

Chief Rose Laboucan, Chief of Driftpile First Nation

Grand Chief Ernest Gadwa, Treaty 6

Chief Allan Paul, First Nations Delegate, Alexander First Nation

Chief Cecil Janvier, First Nations Delegate, Cold Lake First Nations

Myrna Rabbit, Councillor, Paul First Nation

Chief Gerald Ermineskin, Ermineskin Cree Nation

Chief Carolyn Buffalo, Montana First Nation

Daniel Makinaw, Ermineskin Tribe

Pattie Beebe, Treaty 6

Elders

Elder Eva Cardinal, Saddle Lake Cree Nation

Elder Gordon Lee, Ermineskin Cree Nation

Appendix 4 - Attendees

Child and Family Services Authorities Representatives

Sharon Anderson, Aboriginal Co-Chair, Métis Settlements

Brian Broughton, Co-Chair, North Central Alberta

Tracy Czuy McKinnon, Co-Chair, Northeast Alberta

Karen Egge, Co-Chair, Northwest Alberta

Audrey Franklin, Aboriginal Co-Chair, North Central Alberta

Ron Gaida, Co-Chair, Central Alberta

Brian Hjlesvold, Co-Chair, Edmonton and Area

Sharon Holtman, Aboriginal Co-Chair, Southwest Alberta

Valerie Kaufman, Board Member, Edmonton and Area

Rose Lameman, Co-Chair, East Central Alberta

Peter Miller, Co-Chair, East Central Alberta

Gerrad Oishi, Co-Chair, Calgary and Area

Judy Ostrowski, Aboriginal Co-Chair, Northeast Alberta

John Phillips, Aboriginal Co-Chair, Calgary and Area

Sara Potts, Aboriginal Co-Chair, Central Alberta

Ken Serr, Board Member, Southeast Alberta

Floyd Thompson, Aboriginal Co-Chair, Métis Settlements

Tom Wickersham, Co-Chair, Southwest Alberta

Facilitators

Bruce Anderson, Aboriginal Initiatives

Bert Auger, Aboriginal Initiatives

Avis Gagnon, Aboriginal Initiatives

Mary Jane Graham, Governance Services

Joey Hamelin, Aboriginal Initiatives

Appendix 4 - Attendees

Staff

Fred Anderson, Aboriginal Initiatives

Laurie Anderson, Governance Services

Nancy Brenneman, Governance Services

Mary Berube, Intergovernmental Affairs

Loretta Bellerose, Aboriginal Initiatives

Betty Forester, Community Support Services

Mark Hattori, Program Quality and Standards

Susan Johnson, Communications

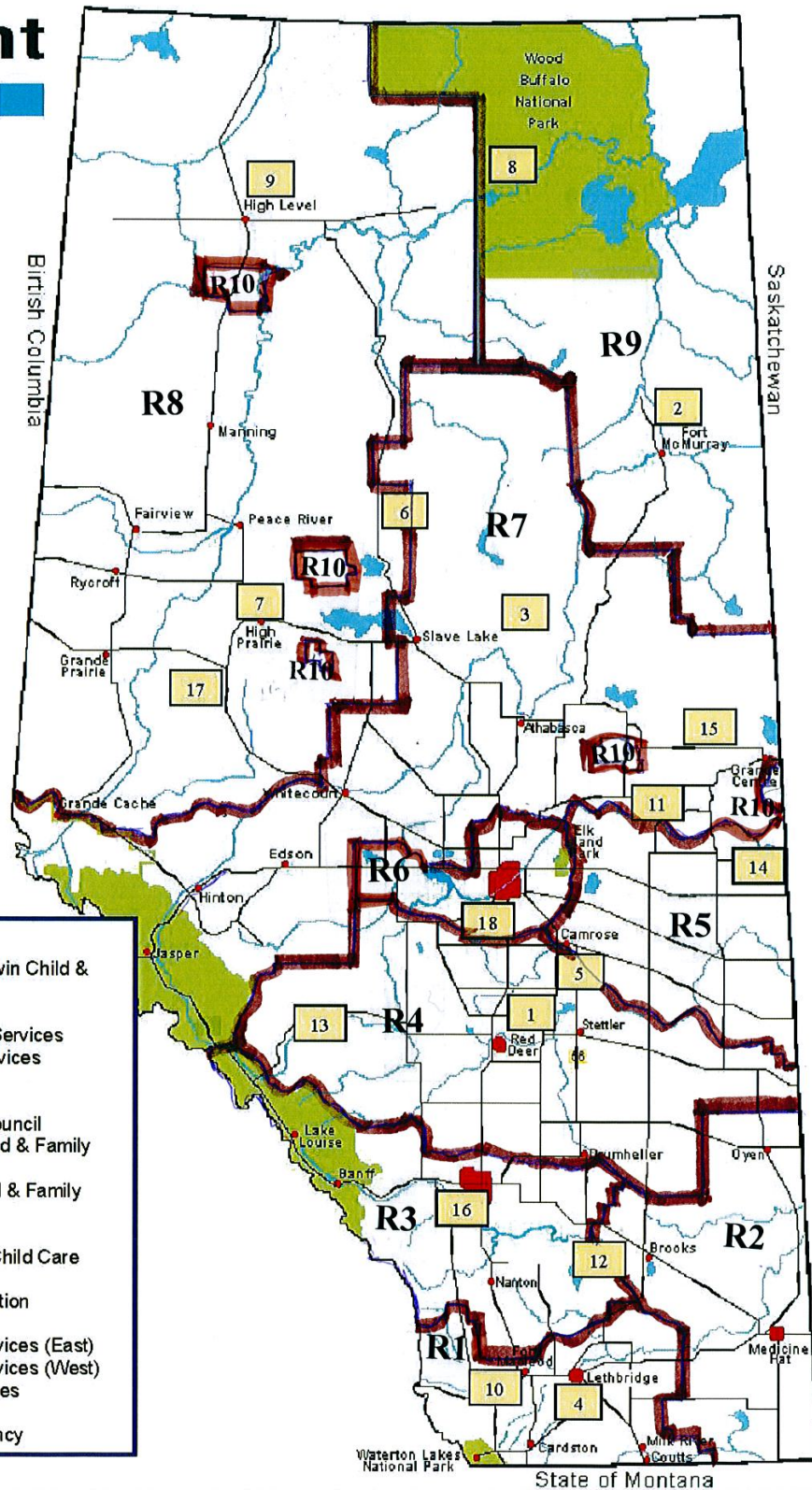
Gord Johnston, Ministry Support Services

Michael Norris, Deputy Minister's Office

John Tuckwell, Communications

DELEGATED FIRST NATION AGENCIES AND CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AUTHORITIES

Government of Alberta ■



- Child and Family Services Authorities (CFSAs)**
- R1 – Southwest
 - R2 – Southeast
 - R3 – Calgary and Area
 - R4 – Central
 - R5 – East Central
 - R6 – Edmonton and Area
 - R7 – North Central
 - R8 – Northwest
 - R9 – Northeast
 - R10 – Metis Settlements

- | Agency Name |
|---|
| 1. Akamkispatinaw Ohpikihawasowin Child & Family Services |
| 2. Athabasca Tribal Council |
| 3. Bigstone Indian Child & Family Services |
| 4. Blood Tribe Child Protection Services |
| 5. Kasohkewew Child Wellness |
| 6. Kee Tas Kee Now |
| 7. Lesser Slave Indian Regional Council |
| 8. Little Red River Cree Nation Child & Family Services |
| 9. North Peace Tribal Council Child & Family Services |
| 10. Piikani Child & Family Services |
| 11. Saddle Lake Wah-Koh-To-Win Child Care Society |
| 12. Siksika Family Services Corporation |
| 13. Stoney Child & Family Services |
| 14. Tribal Chiefs Child & Family Services (East) |
| 15. Tribal Chiefs Child & Family Services (West) |
| 16. Tsuu T'ina Child & Family Services |
| 17. Western Cree Tribal Council |
| 18. Yellowhead Tribal Services Agency |

Alberta