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# **Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development**

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**EVIDENCE**

**Tuesday, February 15, 2011**

**Chair**

**Mr. Bruce Stanton**



# Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development

Tuesday, February 15, 2011

● (0845)

[Translation]

**The Chair (Mr. Bruce Stanton (Simcoe North, CPC)):** Good morning, members, guests and witnesses. The Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development is holding its 48th meeting today. On the agenda we have First Nations Child and Family Services.

[English]

Again this morning we welcome four organizations and their respective leaders, who we'll properly introduce at the correct time.

We'll just say at the moment, members, that we're going to try to get through at least two rounds here. We'll give each of our four organizations present today an opening ten minutes. I know some of you have more than just one person with you. If you want to split it between the two, that's fine, but you have up to ten minutes. We'll go through that in succession, in the same order that you see on your agenda, and then after each of the opening presentations we'll proceed to questions and statements from members.

Let's begin and introduce *le sous-ministre adjointe Services à l'enfant et à la famille*, Carolyn Loeppky. Carolyn is from the Government of Manitoba. We'll begin with Ms. Loeppky.

I hope I am pronouncing that correctly.

**Ms. Carolyn Loeppky (Assistant Deputy Minister, Child and Family Services, Government of Manitoba):** You are.

**The Chair:** Okay. Thank you very much. Please go ahead with your opening presentation.

**Ms. Carolyn Loeppky:** Many thanks for inviting me to appear before this committee today.

As indicated, I am Carolyn Loeppky, with the Department of Family Services and Consumer Affairs in Manitoba. I have served the people of Manitoba in that capacity for the last four years and I have over 35 years of experience in the public sector.

I have witnessed much change in the various sectors of government in Manitoba, and none more so than in the area of child welfare in our province. Historically, Manitoba child and family services were provided either by non-profit private agencies, or in some of the rural and northern areas by regional offices of the department.

Prior to the mandating of individual first nations agencies under the Child and Family Services Act, on-reserve services were provided by regional office staff and the province was reimbursed for these services and costs by the federal government.

In the 1980s first nations agencies began to receive provincial mandates to provide on-reserve services. As these agencies received their mandates under our province's Child and Family Services Act, they began to receive some provincial funding for services to children in care under provincial jurisdiction.

With Manitoba's proclamation of the Child and Family Services Authority Act in November 2003, a unique model of governance was formed within Canada as four child and family service authorities were established. These are the First Nations of Northern Manitoba Child and Family Services Authority, the First Nations of Southern Manitoba Child and Family Services Authority, the Métis Child and Family Services Authority, and the General Child and Family Services Authority. These authorities are mandated the responsibility of overseeing the operations of their agencies.

This process of devolving child welfare responsibilities to first nations and Métis peoples came as a result of the aboriginal justice inquiry child welfare initiative. As a result of this, in Manitoba the province funds the authorities, who in turn fund their agencies.

Cooperation and communication between the Province of Manitoba and the federal Department of Indian Affairs has led to a new funding model for Manitoba. It's a funding model that recognizes Manitoba's unique and historical approach to child welfare and engages and acknowledges the unique authority, rights, and responsibilities of first nations and Métis peoples to honour and care for children.

The model differs from other provinces because Manitoba is the only province where first nations agencies provide mandated services both on and off reserve. We refer to this as "concurrent jurisdiction", which means that first nations agencies serve those populations who are members of their communities and of their bands both on and off reserve.

The province, the Department of Indian Affairs, the authorities, and the agencies in our province have worked in partnership to develop the Manitoba model. Although not all requests that were identified for inclusion in the model could be accommodated at this time, the model provides significant increases to first nations child and family service agencies.

The highlights of our model include the following:

The province and INAC share funding for core positions within first nations agencies at a ratio of 60% for the provincial share and 40% for the federal contribution. The Manitoba model uses for the federal component an assumption that 7% of children are in care, rather than the 6% used in other provinces. For the provincial component we use actual numbers.

Prevention services in our model will be staged over three years, beginning in 2010-11, to accommodate for the capacity-building necessary to deliver prevention services. It will be a three-year phased-in approach.

The extensive resource development will be required on reserve to provide some comparable services for accessibility for prevention services. Over probably two and a half years, the agencies, authorities, province, and INAC have been working together to develop the terms of the funding model.

● (0850)

We are currently just at the stage of starting to implement. The federal government has made a commitment, over five years, to begin this first stage of implementation.

The funding model will have to be looked at closely, reviewed, and monitored to determine how this new approach for Manitoba first nations will be implemented and to determine whether adjustments and/or changes will have to be made over time.

Thank you very much.

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

I see our second witness has yet to arrive, so we'll jump down the list and invite Ms. Arlene Johnson, who is the director, Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services of Nova Scotia.

Welcome, Ms. Johnson. If in the course of your comments you'd like to introduce your colleague, that would be great as well. Go ahead.

**Ms. Arlene Johnson (Director, Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services of Nova Scotia):** Thank you very much for the invitation to be here to do a presentation. Also with me is Brenda Cope, our chief financial officer. She will be helping me answer some questions, if you have any.

I'll start my presentation.

The Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services agency has provided child and family services to Mi'kmaq peoples throughout Nova Scotia for more than 25 years. We follow provincial legislation but are heavily regulated and funded by the Department of Indian Affairs.

We are proud of our families and children and are also honoured by the excellent reputation that Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services has throughout Canada and the U.S.A., particularly for our innovations in family group conferencing and culturally based care.

● (0855)

[Translation]

**Mr. Marc Lemay (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ):** Ms. Johnson, pardon me for interrupting you.

[English]

For translation, please go a little slower.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.

**Ms. Arlene Johnson:** In Nova Scotia, the Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services agency has recently been audited by the Department of Community Services to ensure that we are meeting the mandated responsibilities of a child welfare agency. The department identified several areas in which we have not met standards. We are working with the department to identify the resources needed to correct the issues.

We are funded under the enhanced funding approach. INAC advances the position that the enhanced approach is the solution, but this is not our experience. We are expected to provide the same services as the province with approximately 75% of the funding. This approach continues to place our vulnerable children at risk of harm.

Until 2006, Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services of Nova Scotia was funded under Directive 20-1. Directive 20-1 has been reviewed by the Auditor General of Canada and the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, and both found that Directive 20-1 was inequitable and not based on the needs of first nations children and families.

INAC's fact sheet dated 2007 links the directive to growing numbers of first nations children in care and the inability of first nations child and family service agencies to meet mandated responsibilities.

INAC's Directive 20-1 also has an impact on our agency operations. Even though our agency and staff had won numerous national awards, we were working out of an office that was condemned by INAC's own building inspectors. Wiring was a hazard, sewage pipes regularly leaked into the building, mould was a constant problem, and staff were overcrowded. These are not the conditions that any federal government employee would be asked to endure.

In 2005 we were approved for a flexible funding approach, but still within the structure of Directive 20-1, which allowed our agency a set amount of maintenance expenses, which we were allowed to divert to a more proactive approach to child protection that was more consistent with the direction of the Department of Community Services in Nova Scotia.

This allowed us to provide services intended to keep children at home with their families. The average increased cost per year under Directive 20-1 and their reimbursement for actual expenses for children outside the family home from 1996 to 2004 was 25.3%. When we were able to divert funds to the more proactive model, the average rate of increase per annum from 2005 to 2010 was 4.3%. From 1996 to 2004, our cases increased from 81 to 279, an increase of 244%. From 2005 to 2010, our cases increased from 279 to 323, an increase of 12%. This is at least an indication that a more proactive approach is also more cost-effective.

The new flexible funding model addressed part of the need to work more proactively but did nothing to correct the lack of funding for operations. Directive 20-1 provides no funding for capital expenditures on premises, computer equipment, or any other fiscal plant needs. Funds for administration and staff were still inadequate. No agency can operate effectively without space, proper administrative support, or sufficient staff. How can INAC expect agencies to function efficiently without the resources to do so?

INAC seems to prioritize actions related to reducing federal cost and thus the well-being of children, even when multiple expert reports and its departmental records indicate that more investment is needed to ensure child safety and well-being in these regions.

As can be seen from the experience in Nova Scotia, actions to prioritize the safety and well-being of children actually appear to also have the effect of reducing cost.

We were funded under Directive 20-1 until 2009, and our previous executive director, Joan Glode, was very involved in the three INAC-sponsored reviews of the directive in the 1990's through to 2007. Mi'kmaw was pleased to work with our first nations colleagues across Canada and with INAC to document the inequities and to develop solutions to the problems that would ensure culturally based and comparable services to our families.

• (0900)

We experienced first-hand how the lack of family services was undermining the success of families and driving Mi'kmaw children into foster care.

We also experienced some success when we were able to take a more proactive preventive approach. We were in a very difficult situation of delivering services to our peoples knowing we could not do so at the same level as our provincial counterparts because of INAC's restrictive policy regimes. As noted in this INAC document obtained under access to information, INAC agrees that its programs are causing harm to children and undermining INAC's own requirement that agents meet provincially mandated responsibilities. Instead of relying on the evidence-based approach of Wen:de, INAC staff developed the enhanced model unilaterally and presented the enhanced funding model to us as the exclusive option to Directive 20-1, even though the Auditor General had found it to be inequitable in 2008.

INAC's own records indicate they have an inflexible national template to guide implementation in the regions, and their documents emphasize that INAC is only mandated to discuss the enhanced approach with provinces and first nations, not negotiate. Although the Auditor General of Canada found enhanced funding to

be an improvement over Directive 20-1, it continues to be inequitable and incorporates some of the flaws of Directive 20-1, such as not basing funding on the actual needs of first nations children and families. This is consistent with our experience in Nova Scotia.

In 2009, the agency went to the enhanced funding approach based on the Alberta agreement. This increased our funding by \$10 million, approximately \$2 million per annum over a five-year period, and was badly needed in order for us to avoid significant deficits. This new funding merely brought the agency closer to the funding available to a provincial agency in the 2007 year but does not address the current inequities of funding. This increase does not represent the actual real needs of the agency but was simply an amount decided upon by INAC. Enhanced funding is public policy somewhat akin to funding the building of a bridge over three-quarters of a river. INAC can say it has done something, but it is not enough for children to cross over safely. The vulnerability of our families cannot be underestimated, and shortchanging the children will lead, in our view, to a much higher cost to government later on.

INAC undertook an internal evaluation of the implementation of the enhanced funding formula in Alberta and summarizes the findings in a presentation deck entitled "Implementation Evaluation of the Enhanced Prevention Focused Approach (EPFA) in Alberta: preliminary findings, May 14, 2010". This evaluation demonstrates some significant shortcomings in the enhanced prevention-based approach. INAC, however, continues to offer the enhanced approach with all of its flaws as the exclusive funding alternative. It does not appear that INAC has taken any meaningful steps to redress the flaws of the enhanced approach identified by the Auditor General in 2008.

Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services of Nova Scotia is in the third year of the five-year business plan. As we predicted at the outset, we are again experiencing difficulties meeting our mandates due to inadequate resources, particularly staffing. The 2010-2011 fiscal year will almost certainly end in deficit. During the year, the province increased the board rate for children by 5%. Staff salaries have increased by 6.8% since the inception of the EPFA model. We are experiencing an unusual increase in children with exceptionally high special needs. All of these factors have heavily impacted costs, and yet there is no provision for additional funding to cover the increased costs.

• (0905)

**The Chair:** If you can, Ms. Johnson, please summarize and bring that to a close. We are a little over the ten minutes there. So if you could, that would be great, and if there's a part that you've missed, you can maybe pick that up in the answers to some of your questions.

Go ahead.

**Ms. Arlene Johnson:** All right.

We have recommendations that we have included:

One, INAC must take immediate steps, in full partnership with first nations, to fully redress the inequities and structural problems with Directive 20-1 and the enhanced funding approach as identified by the Auditor General of Canada in their own evaluation of the Alberta model. There is no acceptable rationalization for ongoing inequities affecting first nations children given the range of solutions available to the department to redress the problems and the wealth of the country.

Two, INAC must support other funding and policy options proposed by first nations for first nations child and family services, other than the enhanced approach, Directive 20-1 and the 1965 Indian welfare agreement, which the Auditor General has found to be inequitable.

Three, INAC needs to plan on changes to funding levels necessitated by McIvor, as the increased numbers of children and families served will strain even further the existing funds of the first nations child welfare agencies.

Four, INAC must fully and immediately implement Jordan's Principle across all government services to ensure that no first nations child is denied access to government services available to all other children. It must avoid the inefficient and ineffective case-by-case approach currently being advanced by INAC and other federal departments.

And the last one, five, INAC must immediately provide training to INAC staff, so they are fully briefed on all reports, including the reports of the Auditor General of Canada on INAC's first nations child and family service program, so they are in a better position to implement outstanding recommendations.

Thank you very much.

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

And now we'll go to Ms. Elsie Flette. Elsie joins us from the Southern First Nations Network of Care, which is Manitoba as well, I understand.

Ms. Flette, go ahead with your presentation.

**Ms. Elsie Flette (Chief Executive Officer, Southern First Nations Network of Care):** Good morning. Thank you for the opportunity to present to the committee this morning.

In Manitoba there are 14 first nations child and family services agencies operating throughout the province providing CFS services on reserve. Eight of those 14 fall under the umbrella of the Southern First Nation Network of Care, or what I'll refer to as the Southern Authority. The two other agencies provide services only off reserve.

In Manitoba, the first nations CFS agencies were established in the early 1980s. Many of us have recently been celebrating 25- or 30-year anniversaries, so they're agencies with considerable experience. However, until late 2003 the agencies were limited to providing mandated services on reserve. In Manitoba, with the restructuring of CFS under the aboriginal justice inquiry child welfare initiative, those mandates were extended, so all of our agencies now provide services on and off reserve. They are funded both provincially and federally, so they have lots of experience in dealing with two different funders and sometimes inequity in that funding.

The Southern Authority was established in 2003 through the CFS Authorities Act. It's one of four authorities. As an authority, in addition to being responsible for regulating and monitoring the services that agencies provide, we also have the authority to mandate them or limit their mandates or in fact remove their mandates. We are also responsible for funding them for their provincial services. So we are well aware of the funding they receive from the province, and through our monitoring role we are very well aware of what they are receiving from the federal government.

Also, with the Southern Authority we, along with our agencies, were quite involved in working with both the province and INAC on the working group to establish the new funding model under the enhanced prevention approach.

In addition, up until 2003 I was the executive director of West Region Child and Family Services, which is a first nations agency that has been involved with INAC on unique around-the-block funding of maintenance. So we have some experience with a funding model that takes a proactive approach and tries to reinvest savings on the maintenance funds.

Given that Manitoba is moving towards the prevention-focused funding model, I'm not going to dwell too much on Directive 20-1. I'm told the committee is already fairly well informed about that directive. But I do believe there are some experiences we have had concerning the directive we should pay attention to, because there are lessons that should be learned from that. As we move together with the province and INAC into a new funding regime, some of those experiences and those lessons will in fact be learning opportunities so that we don't repeat the same mistakes and end up in the same situation that agencies have found themselves in.

I personally was very involved when Directive 20-1 was first implemented. At that time, the agencies rejected the directive. INAC went ahead with it anyway and implemented it. It was clear to us at the time that INAC had established a bottom line and then developed a formula that would kind of fit into that bottom line. It's one of the concerns we have again as we move into the enhanced prevention funding.

There are a number of concerns with how the funding formula in that directive was arrived at, and we see some similar concerns arising with the new prevention-focused funding. For example, the long-term effects of the model are essentially driven on child population. Child welfare is not a universal program; it is specific for children at risk and their families. So a model that is weighted heavily on child population does not really always address need. Large communities don't necessarily have more child welfare needs. In fact, we have a number of examples of smaller communities that have much higher caseloads. In the larger communities you often have more resources, such as day care, schools, and so on, that help families that are struggling or that support families in raising their children, and those resources may not be there in smaller communities.

Other concerns include the lack of prevention funding that existed in the directive and the base amounts that were used in the formula. I think the lack of articulated methods to review that funding in an ongoing way has been one of our biggest issues with the directive. It's been in place for over 20 years, and up until recently we were still working with 1992-1993 dollar values, and there had been no formal review of the directive.

• (0910)

Although INAC and the federal government's policy is that the agencies have to be mandated under provincial law, there is often no connection between what we get in funds and the standards and the requirements of the provincial legislation.

A number of issues played out with the formula. For example, it did provide agencies with cost-of-living increases. But after the first two or three years, we saw the federal public service implement a freeze on all salaries and we were not exempt from that freeze. But we were exempt when the freeze was lifted, and we continued to not get cost-of-living increases. They were not done until very recently. So agencies cumulatively lost a lot of resources that way.

The funding model also did not deal with the realities of what you pay in salaries. We have to remain competitive. We struggle to build an aboriginal work force. Qualified aboriginal social workers are in high demand in the province, and our agencies have to remain competitive, at least with the provincial pay scale. Directive 20-1 did not pay any attention to that.

The other problem we had with the directive is it didn't clearly define what was included and what wasn't. It had an operations line, and in general it said this is there, this is there, this is there.... What we saw play out over the years were things that INAC had funded on reimbursables, under maintenance. All of a sudden INAC took the position that it was included in our formula, and they were no longer going to pay it.

A good example of that was the services to families money was 100% eliminated within three or four years of the directive coming in. Those were dollars that were given to agencies to provide services to children while still in their own home, to reduce or mitigate the risk for those children. INAC's own documents indicate they have seen the result of that: increased children in care. Certainly in Manitoba, when you look at our statistics from the time that cut happened, the increase in maintenance costs and the increase of children in care are very apparent.

Another example of that was legal costs for children in care. Prior to the directive, agencies were able to build those costs against that child's maintenance. Those are costs agencies have no control over. They have to go to court, they have to have a lawyer in court, and those costs can be very substantial. We had one agency this year that had \$250,000 in legal bills, just on one case alone. INAC now expects agencies to take those out of operations, although there was no adjustment to operations to factor that in. There is a need to be clear about what is covered in the new enhanced formula and what isn't, so those surprises don't happen.

Manitoba is just moving now into the prevention enhanced model. We are just in the process of our agencies completing their business plan. We are in year one of that model, and our funding is effective back to October. No one has yet seen any of that money flow because it is conditional on those business plans being done. The model's being phased in and is expected to be 100% funded by year three.

In Manitoba, we are expecting a \$144 million increase over the three years: \$36.9 million for operations, \$91.5 million for prevention, \$46 million for maintenance growth, and \$2.5 million for capacity building. As Carolyn Loeppky has already indicated, the new funding model has the following elements: it establishes core funding, which is shared with the province—60% is the provincial contribution, 40% the federal. It includes key positions like the executive director, finance director, child abuse coordinator, human resources manager, and quality assurance coordinator; and factors in some variances for large, medium, and small agencies.

There are two categories under the service delivery: protection and prevention. Those are case-sensitive. The province will be adjusting on an annual basis, based on cases. As with the directive, the federal model is once again heavily weighted on child population and they are making assumptions that 7% of your child population will be in care—note, that number reflects your cases—and 20% of your families will require service. That's how they factor in the cases.

We have agencies right now who are already beyond those percentages, both on the family line and on the children in care line, and they will very quickly be in some difficulty in having adequate resources.

● (0915)

Going into the model, all of the agencies will see increases. In Manitoba, in year one when the model is funded, it will be around \$6 million for the southern agencies—the eight agencies.

**The Chair:** I will just ask you to bring that to a wrap-up, if you could, Ms. Flette. Thank you.

**Ms. Elsie Flette:** All right, maybe some of the other issues will come up when you ask the questions.

Maybe I'll go to the recommendations then.

We are recommending that INAC establish an understood process for reviewing the funding model. At the present time INAC is not prepared to review it for five years. They have told us very clearly that they are not going back to Treasury Board for five years. We see some of the same difficulties that we had with the directive surfacing in those five years. In particular, because this is a new model, we believe it's very important that we stay on top of what is happening with that model and make those adjustments.

We also believe that INAC, together with first nations agencies and child welfare experts, should rework the proposed method of funding maintenance and they should come up with a method that has a reinvestment strategy. As agencies are hopefully able to reduce the numbers of kids in care, those dollars will not be lost, they will be reinvested into preventive programs.

We also believe that INAC and the province should take the lead on operationalizing Jordan's Principle; that plays out in child welfare with high-needs children, who cause a funding pressure for the agencies.

We also ask that INAC, together with the agencies and child welfare experts, determine appropriate outcomes for first nations CFS, including how to measure those outcomes that cannot be unilaterally done by INAC; and that INAC itself, within the department, also seek to have qualified staff who understand child welfare so we have subject-matter experts who take our case forward to Treasury Board and to governing bodies.

Thank you.

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

[Translation]

Mr. Lemay, you have a point of order.

**Mr. Marc Lemay:** I have a point of order, Mr. Chairman.

Ms. Johnson and Ms. Flette, I believe you were to make recommendations and submit a brief or documents. I don't know whether you have submitted them to our clerk, but if that is not the case, I would like you to do so, please, so that they can be translated and we can get them, because your recommendations are important, and I would like us to be able to have them so that we can work, please.

Do we already have those documents?

● (0920)

**The Chair:** In fact, we have the documents, but in English only.

**Mr. Marc Lemay:** From both witnesses, Mr. Chairman?

**The Chair:** Yes, from both.

**Mr. Marc Lemay:** Perfect! So you'll have them translated and sent to us. All right, thank you.

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

For the first round, the first member to speak will be Mr. Russell.

You have minutes.

[English]

**Mr. Todd Russell (Labrador, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And good morning to each of you. Thank you for being with us.

Your presentations, Ms. Johnson and Ms. Flette, in particular, were quite illuminating when it comes to the whole situation of child and family services.

When INAC testifies before our committee, they never make a public admission that services are not comparable or are not being funded at an appropriate level. Even under Directive 20-1, there's never been that public acknowledgement that this situation exists. Now we're being told in their testimony that the new way forward, and the only way forward, is the enhanced prevention model. They use Alberta, because that was the first province where it was instituted, as the frame in which they assess it. They continue to say that it works in Alberta, even though preliminary evidence says it's problematic.

I want to go back to the analogy used by Ms. Johnson about a bridge going across a river. If it was two-thirds of the way across with Directive 20-1, and now it's a little further along under the enhanced prevention model, it's still not across the river, still not providing comparable services, still not delivering what's required for children and their families in first nations either on or off reserve.

I know your recommendations. I would love to hear from the Province of Manitoba as well, Ms. Loepky. Are we going down a wrong road? Are we not shortchanging first nations children and their families if we put all our eggs in this enhanced prevention basket? Can each of you tell me that there will be services comparable with those of provincial agencies? Will you be able to meet the standards as prescribed by the provincial legislation in each of your provinces?

Second, I'm not getting a clear picture of where Jordan's Principle is under this enhanced prevention model. Is it being fully implemented, or are there excuses being made? Are there still internal squabbles over who will pay in particular circumstances?

The three of you can respond.

**The Chair:** Go ahead.



**Ms. Brenda Cope (Chief Financial Controller, Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services of Nova Scotia):** With the enhanced model, no, we can't provide equitable services. The enhanced model merely brought us up to about the 2007 standard, and we're now in 2011. So, no, we don't have sufficient funds. We're short-staffed, and we're still experiencing difficulties.

Yes, we are still having problems with Jordan's Principle as to who will pay, particularly in Nova Scotia, between Health and INAC. It's always the other person who's supposed to pay. We have to provide these services, and we just go ahead and do it and worry about who's going to pay for it later.

**Mr. Todd Russell:** So you implement Jordan's Principle as a delivery agency, but you're still finding that the province and the feds will squabble?

**Ms. Brenda Cope:** Even the feds and the feds will squabble.

**Mr. Todd Russell:** INAC and Health Canada?

**Ms. Brenda Cope:** Yes.

**Mr. Todd Russell:** Okay, thank you.

**Ms. Elsie Flette:** I think, for us, it's the same with Jordan's Principle. None of our agencies has received any instructions or protocols as to how it will in fact be operationalized. We've heard from both the province and the federal government that they've adopted it and it's great, but there's been no direction as to exactly how it will work. What we see at the agency level, and the way it's always worked, is that our agencies spend an inordinate amount of time, on a case-by-case basis, trying to figure out how they will get their money back.

You're right. The agencies, as the delivery agents, implement it, because we have the children. If a child needs a feeding tube, you have to buy it. You can't sit and wait for someone to figure out who's going to pay for it. The agencies are left with that cost, and until they sort out who pays, they don't get their money back. So it comes out of operations and creates funding pressures. Some of these children—medical, but not limiting the scope of Jordan's Principle to medical-needs children—are very high-needs kids, and their cost of care is very expensive. In some cases, we're talking \$300, \$400, or \$500 a day. For an agency to have to put that kind of money out and wait months and months and months before someone figures out who's going to pay for what portion is very difficult for them.

On the comparable services front, I think the enhanced prevention approach holds some promise. I agree with what Mi'kmaw Children's Services says. To some extent, it just brings us up to comparable levels. I think it's critical that we implement it and do very close monitoring of how it's playing out. I'm reminded of Dr. Trocmé, who raises the comparison. If you have a clinic that treats children with colds and a clinic that treats children with cardiac arrest, are you going to fund them the same way? Certainly we know that the service needs, the complexities, and the issues facing our first nations children and the over-representation of those children in the child welfare system require a resourcing level that differs from what is provided to the non-aboriginal agencies if you are going to have service equity.

• (0925)

**The Chair:** Excuse me, there's less than a minute left here.

I know that we wanted to hear from all three. I'm sorry, Mr. Russell. I didn't want to jump in, but could we just go to Ms. Loepky now?

Go ahead.

**Ms. Carolyn Loepky:** Thank you very much.

One of the things that happened in Manitoba was that in our discussions with INAC, the authorities, and our agencies, we did something different from what is happening, from what I can understand, in other provinces. While most of the other provinces focused on what was referred to as the enhanced prevention model, we went a little further in terms of looking at how we could actually build a funding model that would include both prevention and the protection differences we have experienced in our province.

When we began to look at how we would shape the funding to an agency, we looked at what an agency would require to meet its mandate. We went through the development of ratios and formulas to address that. In Manitoba right now, the provincial government funds the authorities 100%, and that's for the oversight. Currently we still have work to do on what we call designated intake agencies. For our operations, we fund jointly, with the federal government, core and protection funding as well as prevention. We still have work left to do on child maintenance, on residential placement resources, and on our business information system.

**The Chair:** Okay, we'll have to leave it at that.

[Translation]

Thank you, Mr. Russell.

Now it's your turn, Mr. Lemay.

**Mr. Marc Lemay:** I see we have two more guests joining us. It would perhaps be appreciated if we could hear their comments first. I don't know what you think, Mr. Chairman.

[English]

**The Chair:** They just arrived, and they're getting settled.

Do you want to go ahead? Mr. Cameron and Mr. Gaudry, are you ready to go?

**Mr. Howard Cameron (Beardy's and Okemasis Band Member, Kanaweyihimitowin Child and Family Services Inc.):** Yes, we are.

**The Chair:** Okay, let's go ahead, and then we'll come back and pick it up at the questions, Mr. Lemay.

I'd like to introduce now Mr. Howard Cameron, from Beardy's and Okemasis Band. He's a member of the band. This is Kanaweyihimitowin Child and Family Services. Welcome.

We have about ten minutes. If you want to divide the ten minutes between the two of you, go ahead.

Go ahead, Mr. Cameron, with your opening comments.

**Mr. Howard Cameron:** [Witness speaks in his native language].

My name is Howard Cameron, Senior, of the Beardy's and Okemasis First Nation, Saskatchewan. I am the ceremonial keeper for my community. As I hold this title, the role of the elder is inclusive. I am a father, grandfather, and great-grandfather.

I am honoured and humbled to have this opportunity to address the hearing. I bring to you a unified message on behalf of the first nations of Saskatchewan.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to be here today. I believe the committee's decision to convene on this topic is a positive step in moving toward reconciliation by beginning to address the real needs of first nations children.

While I appreciate all of the witnesses' testimony that has occurred, Canada is not a uniform country. All first peoples vary greatly from region to region. I feel that I must address the unique challenges and needs of Saskatchewan first nations.

While there are numerous studies relating to the health and well-being of first nations children and youth in Canada—"UNICEF Aboriginal children's Health: Leaving no child behind" and "Best Interests of the Child"—there has not been much research specifically relating to Saskatchewan first nations children and youth. In February 2009, the Saskatchewan Children's Advocate Office released "A Breach of Trust: An Investigation into Foster Home Overcrowding in the Saskatoon Service Centre". The Saskatchewan Children's Advocate Office illustrated the startling and often shocking realities of Saskatchewan children and youth.

I recently participated in the Saskatchewan child welfare review as a panel member. Over an eight-month period, we heard from over 1,200 participants—many first nations chiefs, first nations child and family service agencies, and many first nations people. What the panel heard is that there must be fundamental change in the provincial child welfare system and that the Saskatchewan government must do better to address the over-representation of first nations children entering and remaining in the child welfare system.

First nations children and youth in Saskatchewan face complex issues that adversely affect health conditions, nutrition, and their mental health. These issues, coupled with jurisdictional funding and challenges between the federal government and the Province of Saskatchewan, often make access to services extremely problematic. In some cases, the complexities of jurisdictional disputes prevent the development and implementation of needed programming and services.

We know from the 2005 "Wen:de: We are Coming to the Light of Day" report that there are three times as many indigenous children in care today as there were at the height of the operation of residential schools in the 1940s.

In Saskatchewan, as of June 2009, there were 3,519 children currently in care of the Province of Saskatchewan Ministry of Social Services. As of March of 2009, 1,209 first nations children have been placed in the care of first nations child welfare agencies on reserve, according to "Child and Family Services Statistical Report", 2009. The Saskatchewan Children's Advocate has identified that within the Saskatoon Service Centre alone, 63% of children in care of the province of Saskatchewan are first nations children—"A

Breach of Trust: An Investigation into Foster Home Overcrowding in the Saskatoon Service Centre", 2009. In December of 2010, the Children's Advocate's final report, "For the Good of Our Children and Youth", states: "While Aboriginal people in the province account for roughly 15 percent of the population, nearly 80 percent of children and youth in out-of-home care in the province at the end of the 2008-09 fiscal year were Aboriginal".

The eighteen Saskatchewan first nations child and family agencies located on reserve in Saskatchewan operate under a delegated model of child welfare, under agreements from both provincial and federal governments. First nations children and family service agencies in Saskatchewan are funded by the federal government through Directive 20-1 and receive a small portion of funding from the Province of Saskatchewan. However, not only must the first nations child and family agencies comply to reporting mechanisms provincially and federally; they are also held accountable to their boards, individual first nations, and to regional standards outlined in the 1994 Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Indian Child Welfare and Family Support Act.

● (0930)

A joint national policy review on Directive 20-9 completed in 2000 found that the funding provided to first nations child and family services agencies was inadequate and outdated. The funding formula for child and family services has not been reviewed since 1988. The last inflation-related adjustment occurred in 1995. Funding provided by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to the first nations child and family services agencies remains capped at an annual growth of 2%, while actual costs of operation for first nations child and family services agencies increase by 11% annually. Many of the recommendations of the national policy review have yet to be addressed.

In 2008 Saskatchewan first nations child and family services agencies received \$104.8 million to implement the Saskatchewan prevention framework. There has been no investment in Saskatchewan by INAC since that initial investment. Many, but not all, of the 18 Saskatchewan first nations child and family services agencies have moved forward with prevention as part of their front-line work. A focus of the prevention framework is to reduce the number of first nations children in care on reserve. The first nations agencies are block-funded. Many are in the third year of this agreement and the increased number of cases, especially high-needs cases, causes a financial burden that impacts the ability to manage operational and maintenance budgets.

Increased transfers of cases from off reserve to on reserve increase the caseloads on reserve in moving them to INAC jurisdiction when placement breakdowns occur. The significant increase of cases on reserve is currently viewed by INAC as a contradiction of the Saskatchewan prevention framework. Increased numbers of high-needs cases overburden already challenged budgets to first nations child and family services agencies and severely impact maintenance and operational budgets further.

Saskatchewan first nations child and family services agencies have been funded for prevention but the funding set out by INAC has primarily been targeted to operations and salaries. The first nations child and family services agencies have very little flexible funding to purchase services. The resource for purchase of services for prevention in the formula is derived by calculating 6% of the population of first nations children on reserve in the catchment area that the first nations child and family services agency services. The other funding that is included in the prevention stream is for family enhancement workers, and it is not flexible funding but set funding for the agency.

An additional impact is that INAC does evaluate and make a budget adjustment to re-profile funds; however, these re-profiled funds are not provided back to the first nations child and family services agency. Re-profiling funds decreases the amount that the first nations child and family services agency would receive and is itemized as a budget adjustment by INAC. The funding formula disclosed during the development of the Saskatchewan first nations prevention services model and accountability framework agreement and the costing model did not outline the process of re-profiling funds, nor were agencies aware that they would lose access to these portions of funds. It is unclear at this time what has happened to the re-profiled funds, and in light of the re-profiling of funds by INAC, the first nations of Saskatchewan have requested a mid-term evaluation of prevention funding. First nations share a need to remain in their communities, where their ties to their culture, language, and value systems have the most impact and provide the greatest chance of success, by nurturing healthy adults and ultimately creating healthy parents, to disrupt the cycle of despair created by intergenerational effects of the residential schools.

If underfunding is not addressed as a priority matter, we will continue to see first nations children removed from their homes, families, and communities because of the lack of funding. Services cost money. Many first nations communities are not able to provide programs or services, not because of the lack of desire or expertise but because of the lack of funding.

● (0935)

We have seen the results from the residential schools. Let us learn from our mistakes and let us do better.

*Merci beaucoup.*

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Cameron.

I'd also like to recognize Mr. Dwayne Gaudry, who is also here on behalf of the agency.

We have about 30 seconds left. I don't know if you want to say anything, but maybe you can participate—

● (0940)

**Mr. Dwayne Gaudry (Executive Director, Kanaweyihimitowin Child and Family Services Inc.):** I'll just introduce myself. I'm the executive director with the Beardsley's child and family services.

It's an honour to sit in front of you and to share again what Howard has said. I echo everything.

I appreciate the attention. *Gitchi-Meegwetch.*

**The Chair:** That's great.

[Translation]

Thank you. Then we'll resume.

Mr. Lemay, you have seven minutes.

**Mr. Marc Lemay:** I'll try to be delicate.

When this matter of Jordan's Principle and so on was put on the table, I admit that, at first, I wondered whether it was worth the trouble.

I believe that my colleagues who raised this matter may have suspected the problem that was going on, but they didn't suspect that we were going to open such a Pandora's box. I'm impressed and at the same time outraged, and I feel powerless in the face of what you've just told us.

I'm going to say what I think. I've taken notes, and we're going to prepare a report. I'll let you respond. It seems to me that there are far too many officials who operate by operating this operation which doesn't operate, and no one is attending to it... The priority isn't the children. You'd think we'd lost sight of them.

The point is to determine who will pay for the pair of crutches. I know what I'm talking about because I've had a cane and crutches for a few months now. And I'm not criticizing you; one would say you're being told to deal with the problem and that perhaps someone will send you a cheque.

I think we should recommend eliminating this Directive 20.1. Something will have to happen. I agree with Mr. Cameron. This makes no sense. Things will get serious in the next few months. We haven't heard any witnesses from Quebec, but I'm very sensitive to that because the situation is the same in Quebec.

Should the federal government withdraw? Should it lower its expectations about being one of the funding parties? When I'm told that there are agreements spread over five years, I think that raises a problem: you have to go to Treasury Board every year, and that's year after year.

I want to hear what you have to say on that question. I'm going to leave you the rest of my time to answer—three or four minutes. What can we members do here to help you, to prevent what Chief Cameron said? I sense that this is coming on like a tidal wave and that's it's going to hurt us. Would a commission of inquiry be necessary? There have already been some.

What can we do in concrete terms to help you, and what we can include in the report that we are going to draft over the next week? That's quick.

[English]

**The Chair:** We have about one minute each for the four of you. If you could, please capsulize an answer in about one minute.

Let's go to Mr. Cameron or Mr. Gaudry and then we'll go across the table.

**Mr. Dwayne Gaudry:** I'm glad you mentioned that and asked, "What do we need to do?" Every year we have to bring it again before Treasury. We've set out a five-year plan through the enhancement project, but again, as Howard was mentioning, it's reprofiling those moneys; there are no real new moneys to change. It's just changing it. I'm sure that Canada or INAC announced the \$104 million in that area, and we got excited, but again, it's just reprofiling those dollars. There's really no change.

**The Chair:** Okay.

Ms. Loepky.

**Ms. Carolyn Loepky:** A minute is a very short period of time in which to talk about as big an issue as you present to us.

One of the things we need to do is work in partnership with levels of government and with those people who have a jurisdiction to provide service.

One of the things that we know as we move forward is that child welfare cannot do its job by itself; recognizing that there are other departments that we have to work with is also a very important component of what we do. We have to work every day, every week, every month, every year in pursuit of improving the services we have for children. It's not something that can be done with an overarching, futuristic kind of approach.

One of the things we can do is be very vigilant about what we're doing, how we're doing it, and when we're doing it. If we leave things too long, we see what has happened over time historically in terms of services. The kind of work that needs to be done has to be done looking at not only the funding but also the quality of services we are providing. We have to match those two components together and begin to look at ways of doing things differently.

• (0945)

**The Chair:** Thank you.

Ms. Flette.

**Ms. Elsie Flette:** If you make a recommendation that they do away with Directive 20-1, they will agree with you, because they are saying they're already doing it. So I think we should go a step further and ask, as we're doing away with Directive 20-1, what we are putting in its place. I think it's your job as parliamentarians to keep the spotlight on this thing. These are kids, at the end of the day, who are affected.

It would be helpful if there were some kind of external mechanism—not an inquiry, but an accountability structure—outside of INAC for INAC to report to on a regular basis. The Auditor General's report has helped us a great deal, but it's a question of having some body that INAC has to report to on the state of affairs for first nations children working with the first nations. There's lots of expertise there that they're willing to bring to the table.

**The Chair:** Okay.

Ms. Johnson.

**Ms. Arlene Johnson:** I'd like to say one thing. Where we would like our funding to go has been covered, but I would like to say that INAC must direct its legal counsel to allow the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal to decide the case on first nations child and family services on the merits and not on legal loopholes.

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Lemay.

Now it's your turn, Ms. Crowder.

[English]

And I thank Madame Crowder for filling in for me briefly. I appreciate it.

Go ahead, Ms. Crowder.

**Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP):** I want to thank the witnesses.

I have a couple of very brief comments, before I turn it over to questions, on Jordan's Principle.

I was a mover in the House of Jordan's Principle in 2007. What we have continued to see is a virtual snow job about its implementation. Quite frankly, most of us are fed up with the snail's pace of implementation. Although provinces such as Manitoba have taken some small steps, what we heard clearly from the deputy minister in British Columbia last week was that the federal government's attempt to limit the scope of Jordan's Principle was not acceptable to the Province of British Columbia, and I'm sure it's not acceptable to others. We would hope, with your compelling testimony, that more attention will be paid to implementing the full scope of Jordan's Principle, not just the very limited scope that the federal government approach currently is undertaking.

Ms. Johnson, I have a very quick question. You referred to a May 2010 evaluation that was being conducted on the enhanced prevention model in Alberta. Do you happen to have a copy of it? I've just had my staff check INAC's website and the Treasury Board website, and we can't find a copy of it. Do you actually have a copy of that evaluation?

**Ms. Arlene Johnson:** I don't have it with me, but I can make it available.

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** That would be lovely, if we could get it from you, since we can't seem to get it from the INAC or Treasury Board website. Or maybe the parliamentary secretary would be happy to share it with us.

On the whole issue around the enhanced prevention model, I agree with Ms. Flette's comments that if we just do away with Directive 20-1 and the government merely implements enhanced prevention—we're already hearing problems from it—there is a big concern around the fact that it appears first nations were not consulted in the development of the enhanced prevention model. Can you comment a little more on that?

I'll start with you, Ms. Johnson. To your knowledge, were your agencies or the Province of Nova Scotia consulted in the development of that model—not in its implementation, but its actual development?

**Ms. Arlene Johnson:** I'm going to refer that question to Brenda, because I'm not sure where it stands.

**Ms. Brenda Cope:** No. There were discussions around the funding we would get from the model, but they had already determined how much it was, and it wasn't based on any practical or real need, but just on how much they decided they would give us. It was a done deal before we even started theoretically negotiating.

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** Ms. Flette.

**Ms. Elsie Flette:** Yes, we were involved.

In Manitoba we had a slightly different process. We had a working group that involved the province, because we were at the same time working on a provincial funding model, because our agency is unique: we do on- and off-reserve service there.

We did have limitations from INAC. First of all, they told us we had a choice about going in there, but if we didn't go into this process and chose the standard Directive 20-1, there would be absolutely no further increases coming to any agency under Directive 20-1. It was a choice, but a gun-to-your-head kind of choice.

The working group sent up its recommendations; not all of them were accepted. We don't know who made the decision about what should go in and what shouldn't; it always comes back to us as "Treasury Board decided". We don't have the privilege of seeing documents that go to Treasury Board, so we don't know what was cut where.

That wasn't unique to INAC. There were things in the model that the provincial treasury board also did not approve.

I think we can live with this, to some extent, if we have some comfort that there will be some close monitoring and some adjustments made to this model as we move forward.

• (0950)

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** Ms. Loepky.

**Ms. Carolyn Loepky:** We had, as Ms. Flette indicated, a working group and a consultative process that changed the type of approach we used. For us it's not, as you referred to it, the "Alberta model"; our model is quite different, because it involves an entire funding model looking at both protection and prevention, and it is something that we built together with the agencies and the authorities at the table, and also with INAC and the province at the table.

It's very new; it is something that has just been initiated. It's something we will want to look at carefully as it is implemented and as we find out what the results of it are going to be. The partnership we were able to form with INAC was something that led to a significant increase in resources, both from the province and from the federal government, but we recognize that we have more work left to do, because it's something about which we don't want to say that we're now done. There are other components that we've agreed to come back to the table to discuss further and develop further.

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** Thanks, Ms. Loepky.

Mr. Cameron.

**Mr. Dwayne Gaudry:** Thank you.

In Saskatchewan, we had at least three months' notice, so we have to more or less buy in to the program.

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** But you weren't actually consulted in the development of the program.

**Mr. Dwayne Gaudry:** No. In Saskatchewan we have 18 agencies, and I think 17 agencies have bought into it. It's to enhance what we already have through the operations, but it more or less caps our maintenance. If we as an agency happen to apprehend more than 50 children, we don't have the maintenance to cover that. But we have a lot of prevention money.

So we have to balance all these things out, and it goes year by year. If we have an influx one year, we get less the following year. Again, it's capped; it's blocked.

As to enhanced prevention, the original letter I got from INAC stated that it was \$250,000, and when I wrote the business plan and sent it in with all the information, we only got \$148,000, because we had fewer than 1,000 children. Basically, INAC is putting a price tag in. If I had 999 children and if I had 1,000, there's an \$80,000 difference. It's not needs-based; it's a formula. It's a hard decision to make.

I have to bring this forward. As the young lady earlier was saying, if we didn't enter into it, we wouldn't get anything extra. We would still have to fight from top to bottom with the province and INAC.

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** It sounds like a "take it or leave it" proposition.

**Mr. Dwayne Gaudry:** We have to eat it, yes.

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

We'll go to the parliamentary secretary, Mr. Rickford, for seven minutes.

**Mr. Greg Rickford (Kenora, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thanks to the witnesses for coming today. I appreciate the presentations.

I want to give a special welcome to my neighbours in Mantario. I actually consider myself a Mantarian. We, coming from the great Kenora riding, recognize that in health and in some social services there are first nations communities that are well served by hospitals and family service agencies in Manitoba.

Carolyn, I want to start with you. I was struck by the differential response model. This province-wide application to fund all child welfare services speaks, in my view, to a certain consistency and comparability. I'm wondering just how broad it is, because of the model. For example, in your quantitative and qualitative analysis, does this benefit the authorities and the agency in its understanding of quality around salaries and caseloads and the like? Can you comment on that?

● (0955)

**Ms. Carolyn Loepky:** In the model we worked on developing, there are the similar—or the exact same, you might say—components that are funded for every agency we have in Manitoba, whether they provide services on and off reserve or off reserve only. We've looked at quantifying the agencies; we have a small, medium, large categorization that we have used. And then we looked at all of the different components we would be able to fund over the start of the implementation of the new funding model. Our ratios and formulas are very similar in terms of how we get to the end result of the funding that is provided. At times we use different methods to get there. But when we've done the analysis, it's very similar in terms of how we get to the end result in terms of dollars.

**Mr. Greg Rickford:** I want to get to a few more questions. And I appreciate....

To get to where you're talking about, it strikes me that the authorities, themselves, with the province must have gone through a fairly rigorous consultative process—that is to say, despite some of the nuances and differences. I've worked extensively in northern Manitoba. I can appreciate especially Mrs. Flette's observations or comments earlier about the different kinds of communities. Small communities sometimes pose much greater challenges, certainly in costing models.

Could you briefly describe the consultative process there? It strikes me that given the disparity between some of the reports we've had from different provinces, such as here today, we may benefit from a consultation on a larger platform.

**Ms. Carolyn Loepky:** One of the big differences you will see across the country is that Manitoba's model of governance is very different. With the aboriginal justice inquiry child welfare initiative, the province and the first nations entered into a different kind of agreement in terms of how we work together.

The consultative process started, first of all, with the province and the authorities representing the agencies when we had one of the components that was left to be done, which was the development of a new funding model, as a result of the aboriginal justice inquiry child welfare initiative. When we started to do that work, we realized very early on that we needed to have the federal government and its officials at the table in order to do justice to the job that needed to be done.

We did start some preliminary work without INAC at the table, but very early on we invited it to the table to help us with the work it needed to take the responsibility for in terms of its funding component. That is something we worked on for probably two to two and a half years—some of that period of time, as I said, was with the province and the authorities, and the rest of it was with the partnership we developed with INAC.

**Mr. Greg Rickford:** In a broader sense, is there a benefit to a bigger consultation among provinces? Manitoba doesn't stand alone in some regards. We appreciate the great work it has done, but it seems to me there is a certain likeness across the provinces. Would that be beneficial? I realize there are different agreements operating here, but that notwithstanding.

**Ms. Carolyn Loepky:** Any time you have shared jurisdiction, whether it's with respect to funding and/or for services and funding,

the opportunities that present themselves if you can do collaborative work and reach some agreements that are going to have benefits for children and for families, whether they're living on or off reserve, are definitely a plus.

**Mr. Greg Rickford:** Thank you for that.

My colleague Mr. Dreesen is going to ask you some questions, Elsie, so I'll go to Arlene Johnson.

First of all, I appreciate the limitations of the 20-1 directive with respect to its limited prevention services. But I also appreciate, with the greatest of respect, that over the past ten years, which takes us out of political partisan lines here, the federal government has doubled its funding nationally to child and family services.

The concern, as I mentioned earlier, is that.... The only thing, specifically with on-reserve children in care, is that we've stabilized the rate at 5.3% nationally on reserve. I'm not completely persuaded that this is an increased funding mechanism. I think we're prepared intellectually to go to that next step, if we were to break down things just a little bit more.

What I want to ask you is your department did open a prevention services unit—is that true?

● (1000)

**Ms. Arlene Johnson:** Yes.

**Mr. Greg Rickford:** And did you see an increase in the number of people providing that service? Can you comment on some of the positive things about opening that unit and what it was able to do in the context of the services that you provide?

**Ms. Arlene Johnson:** When we were able to do the prevention work with our families, it allowed us to keep children at home and deal directly with the families, and provide services to families without removing children from their homes and communities.

We said in our report that the average increased cost for reimbursement for actual expenses for children outside the family home was 25.3%, and when we diverted the funds to a more proactive model in our prevention model, the rate of increase per annum was 4.3% over—

**Mr. Greg Rickford:** Those are some real positive aspects of your delivery, that's great. Thank you.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Rickford.

Let's go to our second round now. This will be the same format, but just five minutes instead of seven, so it forces us to be even more succinct.

Let's go to Ms. Neville, for five minutes.

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

Thank you all for coming, and a particular welcome to the Manitoba delegation.

I'm sitting here actually somewhat in shock as I'm listening to your presentations this morning. I'm not saying this in a partisan way at all. I'm sitting here somewhat amazed at what appears to be, for at least two of the jurisdictions, a real lack of consultation with the communities and INAC.

It seems to be a top-down or an INAC-directed approach. I'm sitting here and thinking what's made Manitoba different, and to some extent, Ms. Loepky, you've talked about the aboriginal justice inquiry, which we all lived through one way or another.

Let me just ask, has any research been done on the enhanced research model, or has it been put into place on speculation? Has there been any significant research done?

**Ms. Elsie Flette:** Not that we're aware of. We are aware of a preliminary evaluation that was INAC-driven on the enhanced implementation in Alberta. We don't know what research they used to arrive at 20% of the families, which is very key to the model. We know the 7% in Manitoba comes directly from children-in-care statistics. We know the Wen:de report that did a lot of research—

**Ms. Anita Neville:** That's what I'm comparing it to.

**Ms. Elsie Flette:** —would not completely support the way INAC is moving ahead with it, and we are wondering why they didn't rely on that research.

We also know that in the western region of Manitoba there was a block that was supported and funded by INAC. That block funding pilot was evaluated a couple of times by independent evaluators and has seen some real successes. The question we had was, why would INAC not try to replicate that? Because as they forced that agency into this enhanced model, that actually worked to the detriment of that agency because they are well ahead of the game in terms of developing an enhanced prevention program.

That agency, within three years of implementing a preventive approach by reprofiling and reinvesting their maintenance dollars, saw their children in care drop from 10% of their population and they have maintained it between 6% and 7% over the last ten years. So there's been some considerable success there. Now, with this new model, they are actually losing money and are going to be taking a step backward if we can't find a way to address that anomaly for them.

• (1005)

**Ms. Carolyn Loepky:** I think the other factor that has to be looked at is that while we're working with a very specific model that's tied to a funding scheme, overall when you begin to look at the prevention initiatives that have been embarked upon across the country and in other countries, there are significant evaluations that are attached to many of them. The fundamental premise they are built on is that if you can invest in families, if you can keep children with families and support them in their communities, you will see better outcomes for children. I think when we begin to look at individual models that are being evaluated, there may be different criteria or circumstances that are attached to them that may impact their outcomes.

When we started to look at prevention, we did some research. We looked at the Alberta model, and we looked closely at what was happening in some of the states in the United States and also in other countries. We started off by actually building our own conceptual framework for prevention, which we used very much as a guide when we started our discussions with the federal government.

I think the funding parameters that impact a model also have to be looked at. We're very new into this, and one of the things we want to

do as we move forward is to look at the funding model, at how the funding model and the premises of the funding model impact on the outcomes we see for children and families but also on the other services that are there for a community that may not be specifically child-welfare-driven. That's something we know as we move forward: there are going to be health services, community development services, and economic issues of communities that are going to impact the results of what we can do within our sector.

**The Chair:** Okay. That's it. Believe it or not, it runs rather quickly.

Thank you very much, Ms. Neville.

We'll go to Mr. Dreeschen, who will be followed by Monsieur Lévesque and Monsieur Clarke.

Mr. Dreeschen, go ahead.

**Mr. Earl Dreeschen (Red Deer, CPC):** Thank you very much, Chair.

Thank you to the witnesses.

Actually I would like to pick up on what you just mentioned, Ms. Loepky. One of the commentaries we have of course has to do with whether or not we have the proper type of training and how we're going to expand and look at things such as culturally appropriate child services. I know that the Saskatchewan child welfare report, for example, spoke to this type of concern as well. I just wanted to quote part of it. On page 14 of the child welfare report it said the following:

Commentators and researchers are increasingly clear on the fact that the conditions which contribute most to a child's risk are conditions that the child welfare system itself often does not have the mandate or capacity to directly address. As noted earlier, we use a child welfare solution when the primary drivers are outside the child welfare service mandate.

So there are a lot of concerns and a lot of issues that are involved here. One of the witnesses we had, last week I believe, talked about the training that is out there so that when case workers are looking at situations they're actually dealing with culturally appropriate solutions.

I'm wondering if you could perhaps comment not only on how significant the culturally appropriate solutions are in dealing with the services in that manner but also on the training of the individuals who are providing this in your jurisdictions.

**Mr. Dwayne Gaudry:** According to the panel review you're talking about, no matter what changes the Province of Saskatchewan makes—there were 12 recommendations that came out of it, and Howard was a part of that—no matter what kinds of risk models or safety models.... You talk about things being “culturally appropriate”, but you still have staff by the province, which is under unions. There are so many great aspects of the Saskatchewan Ministry of Social Services, but you still have people there who clock in from nine to five. They have no idea what culture is. They have no idea of the socio-economics that come from the first nation. A lot of these people move from the first nation into the city because of opportunity, and then you have culturally inappropriate things, and pretty soon you have staff and people out there who have no compassion. All they follow is policy. So when you have policy and culture...no money is going to pay for it.

• (1010)

**Mr. Earl Dreeshen:** Do you have some ideas as to how we can shift that?

**Mr. Dwayne Gaudry:** Ron Pollock has been with the ministry of social services for 38 years. It's a great honour to have Ron sit as my chairperson; we got some backing.

**Mr. Ron Pollock (Chairperson, Kanaweyihimitowin Child and Family Services Inc.):** Excuse me, I wasn't expecting to speak, so I'm totally unprepared.

I think what you find, when you look across the province at culturally appropriate services, is that it's going to vary greatly from region to region within the province you move to. There are about four different dialects within Saskatchewan, such as Saulteux, Sioux, Cree, Dene, and they all have their own cultural base. Some of these cultural bases, even within the Cree community, communities that are close to each other, will vary.

I think it almost has to be done by community. There has to be consensus within the community in relation to what kinds of services are going to get provided and how it's going to occur. That may be quite different from one reserve, for example, to another reserve.

I think cultural appropriateness really needs to be determined at the local level.

I hope that makes sense to you.

**Mr. Earl Dreeshen:** Thank you very much.

Ms. Loepky, did you...?

**Ms. Carolyn Loepky:** When we started looking at the new model for the delivery of services in Manitoba, there were a couple of key things that were identified as needing to be in place. One was that the authorities were going to be looking at the mandating of agencies. And they are culturally representative of their communities. You have first nations north, first nations south, and the Métis community, as well as a general authority.

We considered the issues of workers in the system as one of our key issues when we looked at the need to have culturally identified people working within the agency. We were very aware of the need to look at opportunities for people within the communities to gain professional expertise, as well as having the local flavour of the culture they were representing.

Early on we looked at some investments in both of our universities, and also in a new program called the aboriginal focus program at the University of Manitoba. That was to look at offering a variety of different academic and university-level programs, both at the diploma level and the social work level, to increase the number of aboriginal people working within our systems. I think Elsie will be able to talk a bit more about this.

This is a continuing initiative. It needs to be something we continue to look at as an emphasis or focus. I think when we begin to look at changing hands for our system, in terms of what the intent of the aboriginal justice inquiry was all about, we are still in the process of that. More attention needs to be addressed to it, but I think we're on a path where we will see more aboriginal people working in the system and working for the people they represent.

**The Chair:** All right, we will have to leave it there. We're well over time.

Thank you very much, Mr. Dreeshen.

*Maintenant, Monsieur Lévesque, pour cinq minutes.*

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvon Lévesque (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, ladies and gentlemen.

I quite often see colleagues left speechless by the evidence that's presented here when it concerns the first nations. I stopped being left speechless a long time ago. Every time, in a number of fields, including education, health and, today, child services, this confirms the poor understanding of a department that may be too big, one that I consider a government within the government.

I heard my colleague the parliamentary secretary play with words earlier. It made me smile, for one rare instance in this case. He mentioned "Mantario"; he could have said "Hommanitoba", and that would have been more meaningful, I believe.

Ms. Leopky, you said you had to work with a number of departments. Do you mean federal or provincial departments or a combination of the two? Can you state all the departments you have to operate with?

• (1015)

[English]

**Ms. Carolyn Loepky:** We work with departments, both at the provincial level and at the federal level.

At the provincial level, we work collaboratively with the health, justice, and education departments, primarily, and with an area we call healthy living. In those different sectors there are different programs that affect child welfare and children in families.

At the federal level, we work cooperatively with the Department of Health, FNIHB, and INAC. Primarily those would be the three we would tend to work with. At some points, too, we work with the area that deals with child care, because we also have in our portfolio the area of early learning and child care. So there are probably about eight different departments overall we tend to work with.



In Manitoba we work with some formalized structures inside our own provincial government in terms of looking at the overlapping and/or supporting and complementing jurisdictions. We have Healthy Child Manitoba. It has a very formalized structure and legislation in place to look at cooperation and collaboration between and within our own government.

With the federal government we have a couple of things we work on. We have a Manitoba children's agenda that has been in place probably for about seven or eight years. We work collaboratively with the federal government to identify children's issues that cross over multiple departments. Then we have, at the working level, as I indicated earlier, a working group with INAC that looks at the variety of different issues related to child welfare. In addition to that, we also are working with the audit and evaluation sector in INAC in a collaborative effort to look at quality assurance reviews, in terms of financial areas, of all the first nations agencies we have.

So when we begin to look at the variety of intersects and the people who have responsibility or the mandate to serve children and families, it is an array. It does require a lot of cooperation, collaboration, and at times negotiation to try to reach an end result that we believe will help children and families.

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvon Lévesque:** That's a lot of people, madam! And I understand. One word was said earlier, when we talked about geographical decisions on assistance granted to the communities, rather than talk about a decision that mainly concerned the facts or the situation.

Since you regularly work in this field, I wonder whether, at some point, in a free moment, you've imagined a single, combined organization that would have the necessary powers to operate directly. After imagining that, would you have had the opportunity to put that down on paper so that you could propose it to the committee, which might perhaps support it?

[English]

**Ms. Elsie Flette:** I can tell you that the main drivers in Manitoba for children coming into care are addictions, domestic violence, and housing. Those are all under the umbrella of poverty. If we had a good anti-poverty organization, that would be key. We know that first nations families are disproportionately poor. So that, I think, would maybe be the dream way to go.

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Lévesque.

The next member to speak will be Mr. Clarke, followed by Ms. Crowder, Mr. Weston and Mr. Russell.

[English]

**Mr. Rob Clarke (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to thank the witnesses for coming in today. For some it's been a long journey.

First of all, Mr. Cameron, you sat on the child welfare panel, correct? Now, one of the three major observations made in the Saskatchewan child welfare review panel report, "For the Good of Our Children and Youth", was on the nature of the system itself. Can

you describe from the report the threshold system? It was mentioned that it was for the most part the main problem.

**Mr. Howard Cameron:** One of the things that needs to happen in the province of Saskatchewan is that the whole fundamental way we look at the system has to be fixed. It was a recurring theme we saw in all our travels. Even the ministry admitted to themselves that the system had to be changed.

In the Cree language, *awâsis* is a child. *Awâsisak* is children, and the literal translation of *awâsisak* is the shining ones. That's how powerful our children are, and we're losing them. They're being adopted out of our communities into non-first-nations homes. They're losing contact. They're losing their language and their culture. So we need to develop a strategy that is culturally appropriate, but we also need to be able to utilize the services in the existing system as we speak right now.

• (1020)

**Mr. Rob Clarke:** Which leaves me with the province of Alberta. You mention "culturally appropriate". Can you explain that further and the endeavours that the province is undertaking to make it culturally appropriate?

**Ms. Carolyn Loeppky:** One of the things we recognize is that your workforce should be reflective of the population it is serving. In looking at who works in child welfare in Manitoba, there were definite efforts to ensure that we were on a path to try to change who was working in our system.

I'm going to let Elsie talk a bit about some of the efforts in the Southern Authority.

**Ms. Elsie Flette:** I think who's providing the service is a big thing. We have a number of initiatives to do with training. We think a paradigm shift is needed even for how our aboriginal workers approach their work. They are trained in the mainstream social work faculties. They have a protection focus in how they are trained. So we're working hard to revamp some of the training from an indigenous knowledge perspective that looks at indigenous ways of caring for children and communities supporting those children.

I think the other big piece is that those communities can define some of their own services. In the south we have Dakota, Cree, and Ojibway communities, and they are different nations and different cultures.

One of the big barriers is not so much legislation or standards as funding rules. The funding rules hamper you from moving ahead. Things that are done in the first nations communities, when you try to do them or pay for them, everybody raises their eyebrows, but there are things that mainstream western society accepts as ways of doing business that no one raises an eyebrow at.

I think flexible funding to the agencies would be helpful. I don't mean open chequebooks. I mean flexible funding rules that allow for some of those measures to be built in, defined by those communities, and implemented by experts and professionals who know the business.

**Mr. Rob Clarke:** Mr. Cameron, knowing your background and having worked with various first nations myself, I know your involvement in the school system as an elder.

There is a correlation between poverty and education. What is the school trying to do to bridge that gap, to keep the students in school to educate them? Because the underlying issue is poverty.

**Mr. Howard Cameron:** In our teachings, the buffalo was our main caregiver. Now we fast-forward to the year 2011, and the school is our buffalo. In order for us to empower our youth to take responsibility and ownership for the decisions they make, they need education. It's a struggle when we're teaching positive skills in a school environment and the home structure is unhealthy.

We're trying to build that bridge by giving them a good healthy experience in school. We provide them with a hot meal. We provide them with sports, culture, and recreation. We hope that when that little bulb clicks in their mind, they will choose the education, the healthiness, rather than the unhealthiness that faces our community today.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Clarke.

Let's go to Ms. Crowder.

• (1025)

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** I want to talk about comparability. In the Auditor General's report, she indicated that INAC needs to define what is meant by reasonably comparable services and find ways to know whether those services that the program supports are in fact reasonably comparable. In some back-and-forth that happened at the public accounts committee, INAC seemed to be saying that they haven't done the work on comparability. Yet we have a variety of reports—Wen:de and other work—and we've heard from Yukon first nations that they've done work on comparability.

I'd like to hear from Ms. Johnson, Ms. Flette, Mr. Cameron, and Mr. Gaudry. Could you comment on what work has been done on providing comparable services and funding? This enhanced provincial model has continued to perpetuate the inequity, even though it's an increase in funding.

**Ms. Arlene Johnson:** I'm going to have to refer that question to Brenda. I'm acting in this position, and I'm not fully briefed on all of the programs.

**Ms. Brenda Cope:** And unfortunately I'm in finance, not social services, so it's a bit difficult.

It's hard sometimes to compare apples and oranges, and on the provincial system they would have programs that we just do not have access to. They have family resource centres in communities. They have food banks. They have boys' and girls' clubs. All of these things are not available on reserves.

On child welfare, we get funded, and even if we received exactly the same amount as the Department of Community Services in Nova Scotia, it still wouldn't be a comparative service, because they're getting funding from a variety of other sources, including foundations. Again, an agency in Nova Scotia would deal with a small geographical area, whereas we deal with the whole province.

Socio-economic conditions are different on reserve from what they are off, so sometimes it's hard, as I say, to compare. It's kind of like apples and oranges.

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** That's an important point, though: that you have to recognize the socio-economic conditions and all the other factors in terms of delivery of services.

Ms. Flette.

**Ms. Elsie Flette:** Similarly, I think if we were all on a level playing field to start with, then the comparability question might be a bit easier to do, but we're not. We did the same when we were doing the AJI transfer stuff and looking at what services are going to the agencies and what services the province provides to its agencies.

When we looked at the provincial agencies that have civil service commissions and all kinds of other people who do their purchasing for them, who lease their buildings for them, and so on and so forth, there is a whole list of things we identified, and when you cost it out, none of that goes to the child welfare agency.

Just from services alone, I think what we would really be looking for is an equality in service benefit. When we look at the first nations agencies, we see that their primary caseload is children in care—permanent wards, mostly—so all our money goes to support that work. When we look at the non-aboriginal agencies, it's the reverse picture. They have way higher numbers of family cases and fewer numbers of children in care, so they are able to work with families and prevent children from coming into care.

Even if you give me the same dollars that you're giving them, their dollar can go to families to prevent kids from coming into care. My dollar has to go to sustaining these children in foster homes and in placements and not stopping the intake of new kids coming in.

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** Thanks.

Mr. Cameron or Mr. Gaudry.

**Mr. Dwayne Gaudry:** You talk about comparability. Just take the words “off reserve” and “on reserve” off, which is an assimilation policy from INAC. We as Indian people even use it against our own people. We say “We can't help you because you're off reserve”. Or we say “We can't help you because you're on reserve”. Indian agents used to do that to us in the 1800s and the 1900s, and again I'm hearing it today, right at this table.

We sat there with Jordan's Principle, and we had the Ministry of Health, Saskatchewan Health, and they all knew what Jordan's Principle was. They all had a definition, but each one of them interpreted it totally differently. I don't understand.

If you take the words “off reserve” and “on reserve” off, and say “child”, it's applicable across.... Yet at INAC, it's the same thing: “We won't help anyone off reserve”. The Province of Saskatchewan: “We won't help anyone off reserve”. But they're trying to put everybody on the reserve.

We just don't have the resources. It's a 22% difference in funding from Saskatchewan to a first nation. It's way different funding, and yet we live under the same jurisdiction of the Province of Saskatchewan. We have to answer to INAC. We have to answer to the province. I have to answer to my board and my chief. I have to answer to membership. So yes, I have to read a lot of policy manuals, and it's not fun any more.

•(1030)

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

We'll go to Mr. Weston, and then back to Mr. Russell.

Go ahead, Mr. Weston, for five minutes.

[Translation]

**Mr. John Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for being here today.

My mother worked in the adoption field in British Columbia. Like her, I am sure that, even though we talk about policies, as we have just done, we are all dedicated to the welfare of children.

I like Howard's description of children as the shining ones.

[English]

I think that's beautiful.

What if we asked ourselves, "What if you're a shining one to be born in the year 2050?" How will we have gotten beyond some of these frustrating things that my colleague Marc described? I think we all share that sense. You can think of children. You can probably put names to the kids you're talking about as we talk about these policies.

Anyway, to bring it down to something concrete.... I only have three minutes, so with forgiveness from the others, I'm just going to ask you, Elsie. You talked about best practices. Maybe that's the most optimistic theme that we could pull out of all the discussion this morning. What are some of the best practices you could elaborate on that could get us to the year 2050, where we're talking about not 7% of kids being in care and not 20% of families needing care, but 1% or less?

Maybe you can talk about some of those best practices.

**Ms. Elsie Flette:** Well, if I used the words "best practice", I apologize, because I don't like that term. It seems to imply that there are some practices that are better than others, and when we're looking at culturally appropriate services, we want good practice. There can be many different practices that are good, and for their communities those are the best practices.

I think fundamentally what's important is that we quit seeing the child as somehow standing alone. I know the child welfare system talks a lot about the best interests of the child and really focuses on that idea. I personally think that's a mistake. Children don't live in a vacuum; they're part of a family and part of a community, and especially for the first nations that is critical. We often hear it asked, as long as the child has a loving home, why are you so worried about the children being in their culture? It is because a child grows up; the

child is not a child forever. It is wrong to think of them as somehow isolated.

I think that what we often see with child welfare in the mainstream becomes bogged down around that piece. We will do all kinds of things and spend all kinds of money to support a child, for example, in care. We'll put the child in a foster home, and without question there's daycare, there's respite, there are camps, there's hockey—there are all kinds of things that are paid for. But when we lobby to have even an hour's worth of respite put into the family, everybody says you can't be paying people to look after their own children.

Fundamentally we have to get away from the notion that the child is isolated. If we're going to help the child, it means helping the family and helping the community. "Good practice" is a model that really gets this, that really works with families and communities to build a circle of care around the kids.

**Mr. John Weston:** To tie this in a little to past testimony, we heard last week from British Columbia's deputy minister and minister about education and vocational directions. Do you want to focus a little bit on education as a way to pull us out of some of the bad numbers we're hearing?

**Ms. Elsie Flette:** There is considerable research out there, specifically around children in care, that says the one variable that makes a difference to reaching good outcomes for kids in care is education, much more than where they're placed, much more than how many therapists see them or how many counselling sessions they have. If they have good outcomes in school, they are likely to have better outcomes growing up.

So I think the child welfare system and the education sector—and maybe this is a Jordan's Principle issue as well—need to work much much better together. We have some evidence saying that if we invest our money in that, those kids are going to do better.

There are some real challenges for us in child welfare. We're not good at working with education, and education likewise is not good at working with us, because our kids come to the school with issues and with needs and with problems. And yet, if we want to focus somewhere in order to have something better for the child welfare kids than jail and prison down the road and have them be productive and raise families and be proud of who they are and contribute to their communities, that would probably be a very good place for us to focus.

•(1035)

**Mr. John Weston:** Well, thank you on behalf of the shining ones.

**Ms. Elsie Flette:** *Meegwetch.*

**The Chair:** Thank you very much, Mr. Weston.

Now we'll go to Mr. Russell for five minutes. Then I have a very brief question; I'll take one of the slots afterwards.

Go ahead, Mr. Russell.

**Mr. Todd Russell:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I appreciate the opportunity to ask a couple of questions. I'm getting a bit of a different impression from the Government of Manitoba from what I'm hearing from the agency, in terms of collaboration, in terms of whether there's adequate funding, whether there is flexibility, and those types of things.

I hear people saying that the enhanced model was imposed, that it doesn't meet the needs rather than meet some formulas that were introduced and some ratios and percentages that were introduced.

That being said, I'm going to make a request of our analysts. One is that we need to get a comparison between what happened in Manitoba in terms of negotiations between INAC and Manitoba and what happened in Alberta. Is there that much of a difference? Is there that much more flexibility in Manitoba? And we could probably even include Nova Scotia in this, to see. This seems to be the impression that we're getting.

But there are problems. I think all of our committee members would say there are problems with the enhanced prevention approach. What are the consequences to the children and families if we do not fix it? I think that's what we're ultimately trying to get at. What happens to the children and what happens to the families if we do not fix this enhanced prevention approach, which is now the direction the federal government wants to go in?

Turning to the Government of Manitoba—everybody else made a recommendation or two—I'm just wondering, Ms. Loeppky, whether you could make a recommendation to us as a committee. What would you like to see us as a committee recommend to the federal government?

This is to each of you.

**Ms. Carolyn Loeppky:** Thank you.

As I said earlier, this is something fairly new for us, an initiative we've worked on with INAC that we're just beginning to implement. Our hope is that we would be looking at the implementation and its impact on a very regular basis. We would want to see what the outcomes of it are and have the ability to come back to the table to look at areas that we feel that problems and/or in which we need to change direction, if any kind of evaluation we do so indicates. We have agreement that we will be looking at an evaluation framework for this, and that's something we would want to see built jointly with our authorities, agencies, and ourselves.

**Mr. Todd Russell:** And what are the consequences for children and families if this model is not fixed? There seem to be problems from the outset—at least that's what I'm hearing.

**Ms. Carolyn Loeppky:** When you refer specifically to the enhanced prevention framework, which is something that is being implemented in many jurisdictions, as I indicated earlier, the question is broader for Manitoba than the enhanced prevention framework, because we have included the entire spectrum of what we offer in the funding model. One of the things we talked about earlier was that there are some criteria or conditions set out that need to be looked at on an ongoing basis.

**Mr. Todd Russell:** I appreciate that, and we're going to look at this to make sure that's the case.

What are the consequences in Nova Scotia and Saskatchewan?

**Ms. Arlene Johnson:** We're in the third year of our enhanced funding and we're going to end in a deficit this year. That's going to continue, of course, as long as we're using the enhanced formula.

This leaves us in a bad situation. It is already our experience in our foster care system that we don't have equitable services, as the province has, although in Nova Scotia the provincial Department of Community Services has been very good to us and supports our efforts to secure foster homes and training. This impacts upon service delivery to children. Our children are not receiving the same types of services as our counterpart in Nova Scotia receives. Yes, it leaves our children—

• (1040)

**Mr. Todd Russell:** I just have 20 seconds left.

**Ms. Arlene Johnson:** I'm sorry.

It leaves our children at further risk, and we're not able to access the same services because we don't have the funding available to do it.

**Mr. Dwayne Gaudry:** You're going to get large increases and lose more and more culture, and you'll lose more and more children to the system. That's the end result, if you don't take care of it.

**Ms. Elsie Flette:** We have one agency now that already has 14% of their child population in care, so all of their money is going to go immediately to protection services. They have communities in which 40% of their child population is in care. The rest of Canada would be outraged. They couldn't fill the kindergarten class last year because all of those children were in care and out of the community. That's what's going to happen, if we don't get this right.

**The Chair:** We have to leave it there.

Thank you, Mr. Russell.

I have one brief question to Ms. Loeppky.

In your opening comments you referred at one point to the federal percentage formula used in Manitoba as a target number of around 7%, or said that the federal funding equates to that. I'm assuming that's referring to percentage of population in care. Then you went on to say that the provincial component uses the actual numbers.

Could you expand on that, so that we're clear on what distinction to draw between the two? You cited some other numbers in that argument, and I want to make sure we have a good grasp of that explanation.

**Ms. Carolyn Loeppky:** In the funding formula, the federal government uses 7% of the child population within the jurisdiction—so it's not of the children in care—to calculate the funding for the different agencies. As Elsie said, in at least two to three agencies right now, we know that the population being served in child welfare is higher than that. For the provincial government, on an annual basis, we look at the actual number of children in care and rework our ratios and our formulas based on the actual number of children in care.

One of our goals, in looking at the new process that we have, is to look at ways to better support families so that children don't have to come into care. We've had some preliminary discussions about what we call a reinvestment strategy, so that resources that were formerly put into children in care, into maintenance, could be looked at in a different way to increase the resources we would have for prevention services.

**The Chair:** I appreciate that clarification.

I don't have any other speakers on the list. At this point, I'd like to thank each of you for your presentations and for your responses to members' questions this afternoon.

I'm sorry, Mr. Cameron, you had something else to add?

**Mr. Howard Cameron:** Mr. Chairperson, again, we thank you for having this opportunity to be here. In my culture, when we talk about children, they're sacred. Their future is in our hands. They don't have the power to make the decisions that we are able to, to guide them to that good place. On behalf of my community, on behalf of the first nations in Saskatchewan, we want to offer the chairperson and the honoured members this gift of tobacco on behalf of our children in Saskatchewan and all of Canada.

Thank you.

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Thank you, sir.

We thank you.

[English]

Thank you very much, members.

We'll be back here Thursday morning at 8:45. We have two hours set aside for Nutrition North Canada, subsequent to our last meeting.

Mr. Russell, you had another point, sorry.

**Mr. Todd Russell:** Yes, Mr. Chair, I'm not sure if you.... I had a question.

**The Chair:** Go ahead, Mr. Russell.

**Mr. Todd Russell:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Can we get a clear sense of what has been negotiated with Manitoba, Alberta, and Nova Scotia in terms of what's in there, the formulas, the assumptions, what's covered in one province and others? There seems to be some variability around these things.

**The Chair:** You're talking about the enhanced prevention agreement?

**Mr. Todd Russell:** Yes.

**The Chair:** You're asking to put a question to the department to provide that information?

**Mr. Todd Russell:** Yes. Is that okay? I don't think it's readily available. They just announced frameworks. I asked the analyst this question.

● (1045)

**The Chair:** Is there agreement that we make that request of the department, then?

I saw Ms. Neville's hand up, and Ms. Crowder's.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** Could you ask for any research they did upon which they established the program?

**The Chair:** Background research that compelled the design of the enhanced prevention program?

Ms. Crowder.

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** It would be helpful to have the evaluation of the Alberta model that was mentioned by the witnesses, because that's the enhanced prevention model. So it would be useful to look at what the preliminary evaluation on that was.

**The Chair:** Okay. This is our last meeting with witnesses for this particular study, so we'll get that question to the department and we'll have to wait for that to come back.

You'll recall that if we do finish the Nutrition North report in sufficient time on Thursday, we will need to be prepared to provide instructions to the analysts on this report as well on Thursday, if there's time. If we don't have time, it will move to the next meeting.

Thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen. Have a good morning and remainder of the day.

Our meeting is adjourned. *Merci beaucoup.*

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