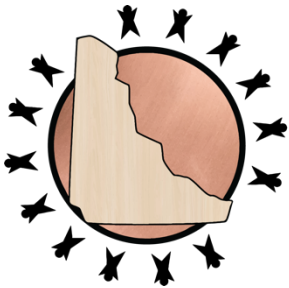


YUKON FIRST NATIONS ENGAGEMENT
LONG-TERM REFORM OF CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES &
JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE

OUTCOMES & RECOMMENDATIONS



**Council of Yukon
First Nations**



**YUKON
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Engagement Context	3
2. Child and Family Services Program Funding Reform	4
General Comments and Feedback	4
Feedback on individual funding components	7
3. Jordan’s Principle Reform	11
General Comments and Feedback	11
Feedback on Capital Requests	11
Feedback on Delegation of Jordan’s Principle	12
4. Review, Evaluation, and Accountability measures for Child and Family Services and Jordan’s Principle	13
Feedback on a National First Nations-Led Secretariat	13
5. Conclusion	14



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1. ENGAGEMENT CONTEXT

PROJECT BACKGROUND

The (national) Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is negotiating a final settlement agreement for long-term reform of the First Nations Child and Family Services Program (FNCFS) and Jordan's Principle. Canada and the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society are Parties to the negotiations. To support the AFN's advocacy, AFN Yukon Region partnered with the Council of Yukon First Nation (CYFN) to seek input from Yukon First Nations on priorities, recommendations, and concerns regarding the proposed program reforms, especially as they relate to funding Yukon First Nations and Yukon First Nation organizations.

QUALIFICATIONS

1. Neither the Agreement-in-Principle (AIP), nor the draft Final Settlement Agreement was shared with Yukon First Nations for this engagement. The recommendations that follow were developed from information gathered through published reports, documents, presentations, and meetings with the AFN, the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society, the Government of Canada, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT), and the Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy. Recommendations were developed with feedback, and information, provided by CYFN, AFN Yukon Region, Yukon Government, Yukon First Nations, and families involved with child and family services.
2. Yukon First Nations leadership has authorized the submission of these recommendations with the strong caveat that further discussion and planning is required before final feedback can be provided. While there is unanimous agreement that changes to FNCFS and Jordan's Principle are overdue, and time is of the essence, our families (and future families) need us to get this right. Proper consideration and planning by Yukon First Nations and Yukon First Nation organizations around their individual and collective vision of child and family services will take time. The allotted timeline for review and consideration of proposed reforms, and the embargo on the draft final settlement agreement under negotiation, has not allowed for the thorough review, analysis and visioning required.

REGIONAL BACKGROUND

The 14 Yukon First Nations are deeply interconnected through kinship and history. They are independently governed, and each has their own unique cultural, and community priorities. The Yukon has no reserves, and compared to many First Nations across Canada, our First Nations are small and remote.

Yukon is one of the few regions in Canada funded through First Nation Child and Family Services (FNCFS) with no First Nations-led Agency. In the Yukon, the FNCFS program funds Yukon Government to provide child and family services in accordance with Yukon legislation, including protection (child protection, guardianship, and support), maintenance, and care. Historically, Yukon Government held all accountability for child and family services, but funding stemming from CHRT decisions and C-92 obligations increased First Nation-led programs and services. Unlike other jurisdictions in Canada, 100% of all CHRT prevention dollars were directly allocated to Yukon First Nations.

In addition to Yukon Government-led and Yukon First Nation-led initiatives, the Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN) operates a robust family preservation program, including prevention services, and cultural connections programming to Whitehorse-based Indigenous clients. CYFN case manages over 200 families, including Indigenous families from across Canada who are otherwise ineligible for supports from Yukon First Nations. This initiative has been funded through a mishmash of funding sources, including the now-discontinued CWJI funding and Jordan's Principle; CYFN has no core funding and is currently ineligible for AIP funding streams as funding is going to Yukon First Nations directly.

Eleven (11) Yukon First Nations have Final and Self-Government Agreements and three (3) are governed by the Indian Act. Those with Self-Government Agreements have had the ability to draw down the FNCFS program and enact legislation with authorities that exceed C-92, for almost 30 years. Some Yukon First Nation governments are exploring the possibility of assuming control of their own child and family services program, but at the current time, FNCFS funding has Yukon Government accountable for protection, maintenance and care. Yukon First Nations and CYFN are increasingly providing supports and services, including cultural and prevention programming, prenatal and family support services; CYFN has been contracted by Yukon Government to develop and operate programming (cultural, prenatal) to meet its C92 obligations.

While direct funding has supported Yukon First Nations in expanding child and family programs and services, Yukon has no historical funding and no First Nation -led Agency to build upon. Developing First Nation-led programs – through C92, service draw down or other mechanism – will require visioning and significant capacity development. This includes human resource capacity, as well as infrastructure and operations, program development, and the creation of new policies and governance structures from the ground up.

2. CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES PROGRAM FUNDING REFORM

GENERAL COMMENTS AND FEEDBACK

The funding components proposed through the draft final settlement agreement for long-term reform to child and family services (enhanced core funding and top-ups) are comprehensive. Yukon First Nations expressed support for the intention to use block and flexible funding mechanisms to allow for responsive, prevention-focused programs and services, and agree all funding should be adjusted upward for population growth and inflation. In Yukon, these mechanisms exist through Yukon First Nations Self-Government Agreements.

However, population-based funding alone does not reflect the requirements of building, or sustaining, programs and services in small, remote communities, and baseline funding should consider both need and fixed costs – not population numbers alone.

The funding model proposed does not correlate with Yukon First Nations' governance structure or its child and family services model. The proposed final settlement agreement directs prevention and representative services funding to individual First Nations, and all other funding defaults to the FNCFS service provider – which in Yukon is the territorial government. Yukon First Nation children and families are best served when maximum funding is directed to Yukon First Nations and to Yukon First Nation organizations, nor the Yukon Government. Further, funding should be allocated to both Yukon First Nations and a central organization – not

either/or funding, as has been suggested, but funding for both without detriment to the other in recognition of the unique capacity challenges faced by Yukon First Nations.

A funding model that envisions base funding and top-ups directed to Yukon First Nations and Yukon First Nations organizations – not towards the enhancement of Yukon Government’s budget – is required. This funding model must be entrenched within baseline budgets and multi-year commitments.

Recommendation #1: A funding model that correlates to Yukon First Nation governance has not yet been envisioned. There must be a clause in the final settlement agreement that allows for distinct negotiations around implementation in the Yukon. This ensures that Yukon First Nations governments and Yukon First Nation organizations are the lead in implementing long-term reform, and the primary beneficiaries of the enhanced funding allocations.

Recommendation #2: Funding models used in negotiations to date are based on agencies with existing service infrastructure and do not contemplate the costs associated with developing a child and family services program from scratch. A funding stream to support establishment costs should be negotiated within any final settlement agreement.

Current agencies, including First Nation-led agencies, receive funding based on numbers of kids in care. This incentivizes apprehension. Transitioning funding towards prevention and community wellness-based programming will take time to develop and test. Yukon First Nations said they notionally agree with the 10 funding top-ups identified but recommend additional funding allocations for program and capacity development. Further discussion is required to ensure proposed funding enhancements support Yukon First Nations governments and Yukon First Nation organizations’ vision, and do not default to Yukon Government because they currently deliver the FNCFS program.

In the AFN presentation made to Yukon First Nations leadership about possible funding dollars for Yukon, both the budget and population numbers were different than those in the Yukon Government’s Consolidated Budget reporting and the Yukon Bureau of Statistics. The AFN indicated that the numbers had been verified by Canada, but the local CIRNAC office also questioned the budget and population as presented.

Recommendation #3: As negotiations continue, we strongly encourage the national AFN to work closely with Yukon First Nations and their implementation negotiators, CYFN, in addition to Canada, to ensure all First Nations living in Yukon are accurately represented through the negotiations, and child and family services funding allocations are accurately understood by all parties.

The allocation of 100% of prevention dollars to Yukon First Nations is widely supported. The \$2500 per capita funding model used is logical and has allowed Yukon First Nations to consider a great role in child and family programs and services. However, without supplementary baseline funding, clarity around yet-to-be allocated geographic top-ups, program and capacity

development support and recognition of urban demographics, inherent inequities are created and uncertainty over long-term funding for long-term reform remain.

A community's ability to provide comprehensive prevention services with the current funding allocations is influenced not only by their population size, but also their geographic proximity to services. In the Yukon, close to 80% of the population lives in Whitehorse. The capital is home to both the Ta'an Kwächän Council and Kwanlin Dün First Nation. It is a major hub for Yukon First Nations from across the territory, as well as Indigenous people from northern British Columbia, Western Arctic, and beyond.

Some Yukon First Nations aim to provide programs and services in both their home community (settlement land) and in Whitehorse, but resource challenges – both financial and human – are common when trying to build and provide comprehensive programs and services in any community, let alone two. For example, a Yukon First Nation with 200 people might only be able to hire a part-time navigator for their home community. A funding rate of \$283 per capita for 500 people is not enough to build and provide comprehensive programs and supports in both a rural community and an urban setting – and geographic distance makes sharing resources difficult. Further, a per capita funding allocation has no correlation to need, potentially creating a large disconnect between resourcing and need. In many communities, this is less funding than they had access to when Yukon Government provided funding for Family Support Workers.

Any Yukon First Nation resident living in Whitehorse can access supports and services through CYFN. They also support urban Indigenous families who are not Yukon First Nations and would otherwise have no access to Indigenous-led supports and services. CYFN does not have long-term funding source for these services and they are ineligible for funding provided through the AIP and not currently included within any prevention dollars allocated for the Yukon.

The presence of Yukon First Nations and Indigenous people living in urban centres is not unique to Yukon. It is arguable that cultural connections and prevention programming are most needed on a national level. Likewise, the inequality created by funding programs based only on population size can be felt nationally.

Recommendation #4: A goal for long-term reform should be ensuring that all Indigenous people in Canada have access to equitable programs and services, regardless of the size of their Nation or where they choose to live. Even though ISFD is considering urban requirements in future research phases, any final settlement agreement on long-term reform should include a commitment to expand future funding to equitably support all Indigenous Canadians. Many families and children receive supports from both their First Nation *and* urban agencies. Funding programs should recognize these as complimentary supports, not competitive ones.

There is significant concern amongst Yukon First Nations leaders that long-term reform funding commitments are only for five years, since Canada has not committed to funding year six and beyond. Theoretically, upward adjustments/escalators in the funding profile are allowed, which Yukon First Nations support. However, it is not confirmed whether a baseline budget has been included federally. Without any certainty around long-term commitments for this funding, it is incredibly difficult for Yukon First Nations to develop new programs, to develop capacity and to retain existing staff.

Recommendation #5: The Government of Canada needs to provide, in writing, confirmation that baseline funding for FNCFS and Jordan’s Principle has been permanently allocated. Funding may be adjusted upward to reflect inflation and population growth, etc., but block funding will be made available to qualifying First Nations indefinitely.

FEEDBACK ON INDIVIDUAL FUNDING COMPONENTS

Baseline Budget

The proposed funding model to increase baseline funding for the Agency delivering FNCFS programming does not work in the Yukon because Yukon Government is the FNCFS Agency of record.

Recommendation #6: For Yukon First Nations and Yukon First Nation organizations to benefit from increased, baseline, funding, the distribution model must change to reflect the regional context in the Yukon.

Prevention Activities Funding

When asked what would be required to provide comprehensive services for Yukon First Nations, no Yukon First Nation was able to fully respond. Departments are at or beyond their capacity responding to immediate needs in their communities, trying to build teams, and juggling other program demands. Prevention funding is relatively new, and with it arriving on the heels of the COVID-19 pandemic, there has not been ample time to do community engagement and forward-looking planning. Those Yukon First Nations who are planning for long-term priorities visioning are still in their early stages. Most respondents said it is too early to identify what resources and partners are required for long-term program development, capacity building, and implementation.

Recommendation #7: Yukon First Nations and Yukon First Nations organizations would benefit from more time to engage in discussions around long-term reform to properly develop programs, and build capacity to implement programming.

Post-Majority Support Services (PMSS)

PMSS should support those transitioning from care back to their community. One of the issues Yukon First Nations identified with providing PMSS is the historic disconnect between Yukon First Nations and their children in care. It has only been in recent years – through the 2019 *Honouring Connections* collaboration between the Government of Yukon, Yukon First Nations, and CYFN – that Yukon First Nations started receiving information – with data – about their children in care. Prior to this, a Yukon First Nation may not have known children from their communities were under the care of Yukon Government, and a tremendous disconnect defined the relationship. With this in mind, it is not a surprise that as of November 2022, no requests for PMSS have come from the Yukon. Yukon Government is already mandated and funded to



**YUKON
REGION**



**Council of Yukon
First Nations**

provide this service, and Yukon First Nations are likely disconnected with any young adult who might qualify.

Recommendation #8: Jordan's Principle should be expanded to include young adults eligible for PMSS.

Recommendation #9: To ensure every youth transitioning from care back to their community is supported, a long-term plan to engage Yukon First Nations in providing or co-providing PMSS should be developed as a natural continuum to investments in *Honouring Connections*.

Without being responsible for PMSS, Yukon First Nations have no data to understand what PMSS are or could be required, and what the theoretical demand could be, it is not possible to accurately reflect on any program requirements at this time.

First Nations Representative Services Funding

In Yukon, funding for First Nations Representative Services disrupts funding Yukon First Nations had been able to access from Yukon Government in support of Family Support Workers. With the current allocation of \$283 per qualified citizen, several Yukon First Nations are eligible for less funding than they had previously for family supports.

Recommendation #10: Confirm that First Nation Representative Services funding can be used for any priority allocation Yukon First Nations require.

Recommendation #11: Consider additional funding for small communities to ensure representative services can be provided based on need, not population alone.

Measuring to Thrive and Results Funding

Yukon First Nations expressed support for evidence-based data collection with recognition that it will take time and investments to build capacity and infrastructure for it.

Recommendation #12: Create a prevention funding methodology that ensures Yukon First Nations and Yukon First Nations organizations have the capacity and infrastructure to gather and report information about the wellbeing of children and families in their community.

A methodology that ensures appropriate data sharing and accountability between Yukon Government, who delivers the FNCFS program, and Yukon First Nations, who hold the prevention mandate, must be established. It is too early to determine what the right metrics are for tracking and reporting.

Information Technology Funding

While the Yukon is unique in that every community is served by internet and cellular connectivity, and within a few years more than 80% of the population will have access to fibre-



**YUKON
REGION**



**Council of Yukon
First Nations**

based services, the cost of IT infrastructure and connectivity in Canada's north is exponentially higher than other jurisdictions.

Without knowing how funding components would be allocated to Yukon First Nations, it is not possible to comment on the proposed top-up percentage. However, given the high cost of IT and connectivity in the North, additional funding is likely required to adequately support Yukon First Nations.

Recommendation #13: Account for the high cost of IT and connectivity in the Yukon in the funding methodology.

Emergency Fund

It is not possible to comment on the efficacy of the 2% top-up identified without understanding how funding could be allocated between Yukon First Nations.

Yukon First Nations are closely interconnected through familial and matrimonial ties. Consequently, crises frequently impact multiple communities, and support for Yukon First Nations to work collaboratively in building clinical and cultural capacity territory-wide is recommended.

Recommendation #14: The emergency funding methodology should reflect the costs and realities of responding to crises in the Yukon (travel, accommodations, multiple partners, etc.). It should also reflect the lack of services, and service providers, available within the territory and its communities. Funding to develop supports and build capacity to respond to emergencies is required.

Poverty Top-Ups

Proper funding to address lower socio-economic outcomes, including adequate housing, basic community infrastructure, culturally appropriate education, food insecurity and to support wealth creation by Yukon First Nations, would go far in alleviating poverty. Until structural inequalities are addressed permanently, poverty top-ups and Jordan's Principle support is immediately required to prevent poverty-related child and family services interventions.

Similar to the other funding components, it is difficult to understand if the proposed percentage is sufficient. We do not support directing these funds to Yukon Government through the FNCFS program; they should be allocated through Yukon First Nations, Yukon First Nation organizations, and/or directly to families.

Recommendation #15: Irrespective of how funding is allocated, it must reflect the significantly higher cost of living in the Yukon, and the significant cost difference between living in Whitehorse and other Yukon communities. Yukon has several communities where the only source of groceries is a few aisles of food stuff attached to a gas station seasonally, or when staff are available to open it. Some communities do not even have that resource.



Remoteness and Geography Top-Ups

Living in remote locations and in challenging geography increases living costs, decreases infrastructure and social supports, and creates barriers to travel and recruitment/retention. It is impossible to comment on the efficacy of a remoteness and geography top-up when the amount is yet-to-be-determined, and the funding allocation within the context of Yukon's governance model is unknown.

Recommendation #16: A funding methodology that properly addresses increased costs associated with program delivery and the cost of living in the Yukon must be developed. Top-ups related to remoteness must go to support programs and services led by Yukon First Nations and Yukon First Nation organizations, not the current FNCFS provider (Yukon Government). The methodology should include funding for drivers to support families in, and between, their communities and Whitehorse.

Funding for central supports that can be accessed by individual communities would also be beneficial, since not every community can sustain all supports that its citizens may require. Even Yukon First Nations with adequate financial resources struggle to find sufficient human resources to meet their needs.

For example, we heard frequently that Yukon First Nation staff in communities are a team of one, and they find value in having a network, with a local hub that they can draw on for expertise, navigation of best practices, research, mentorship, and support. These networks help alleviate isolation, expands staff capacity, and ensures families unwilling to work in their own community are properly supported. It also means that individuals living in remote communities can draw on the expertise and connections of a network and are not left isolated in navigating casework alone.

Capital Assets Funding

To date, Yukon First Nation and Yukon First Nation organizations do not have access to FNCFS capital funding. Therefore, a funding model that only supports the maintenance and replacement of assets cannot be supported by Yukon First Nations.

Recommendation #17: A funding mechanism that supports Yukon First Nations and Yukon First Nation organizations in accessing funds to purchase and build, maintain and replace, capital assets is essential for supporting a comprehensive, culturally vibrant, wellness approach. It is critical for any capital funding approach to be inclusive and holistic. It cannot be seen through the strict lens of office space, supervised visit space, and group homes (as examples).

Capital funding allocations must adequately address the infrastructure gap Yukon First Nations face, including the high cost of building, operating and maintaining infrastructure, as well as the high cost of living in Yukon communities.



**YUKON
REGION**



**Council of Yukon
First Nations**

Any capital asset funding enhancements must go to support Yukon First Nations and Yukon First Nation organizations.

In addition to any capital funding provided through Yukon First Nation Final Agreements, financial support to meet the basic needs of children and families, including housing, transportation, education and cultural spaces, transition and supportive housing, utilities, and telecommunications, must be considered essential in the context of prevention supports, and family and community wellness.

3. JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE REFORM

GENERAL COMMENTS AND FEEDBACK

Jordan's Principle must be fully implemented, but simultaneous steps should be taken to address systemic gaps that Jordan's Principle is filling (ex. NIHB, education). Yukon First Nations should be funded appropriately to provide services for their citizens equitably to other Canadians. Canada must be held accountable to properly fund programs, services, and infrastructure in Indigenous communities. Jordan's Principle should continue to fund gaps as an interim measure until appropriate funding mechanism for substantive equality is achieved.

Recommendation #18: First Nations should not have to justify the long-term effect of residential schools, the 60s scoop, multi-generational trauma, poverty, and/or racist policies for every application. The underlying causes for inequality should be agreed to and inherently understood by all parties.

Recommendation #19: The reasoning why access to First Nations culture and language, or culturally appropriate services, qualifies for Jordan's Principle support should be inherently understood without extensive justification.

Recommendation #20: Jordan's Principle should be expanded to include support to First Nation youth aging out of care, as well as those who require ongoing supportive living.

FEEDBACK ON CAPITAL REQUESTS

Capital requests through Jordan's Principle are taking many months to be reviewed, creating significant delays shovel-ready projects.

Further, recent applications from Yukon First Nations and Yukon First Nation Organizations to Jordan's Principle have been denied because they do not support existing Jordan's Principle services. The CHRT] does not reference "existing" services in their Order (paragraphs 532[E] and 532[F]), and this narrow view of capital funding does not meet the spirit and intent in which the Order was issued.

Since the Yukon is such a small jurisdiction, CYFN has been the main point of contact from all 14 Yukon First Nations in submitting requests to ISC and very few Yukon First Nations have "existing" Jordan's Principle Services. As such, Yukon First Nations are being denied access to financial support for infrastructure that has been deemed a priority for long-term reform by Chief

and Council who, rightly, understand that Jordan's Principle services need to be housed before programs built. Further, FNCFS governance in Yukon means that Yukon First Nations and Yukon First Nation Organizations have no access (historically or current) to FNCFS capital funding, leaving them no access to capital upon which to build their child and family programs and services. There are many valid reasons why capital is needed prior to operational and programmatic support. The narrow interpretation that infrastructure investments must be tied to historic Jordan's Principle funding is contrary to our legal interpretation of the Order and will fundamentally impede the ability of Yukon First Nations and Yukon First Nations organizations to meet the objectives of long-term reform.

Recommendation #21: Capital requests should be funded quickly, efficiently, and in the spirit and intent of prevention-based programs and services as defined by First Nations and First Nations organizations, and as envisioned in the CHRT Order.

FEEDBACK ON DELEGATION OF JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE

In conversations with Yukon First Nations about Jordan's Principle, and the possibility of assuming control over portions of it, these questions were raised:

- Who defines substantive equality?
- Who would monitor implementation if decision-making was delegated to Yukon First Nations?
- How can we ensure equity or consistency between Yukon First Nations and Yukon First Nation organizations to ensure Yukon families are not disadvantaged based on where they seek support to apply to Jordan's Principle?
- Do Yukon First Nations have the capacity to deliver service coordination of Jordan's Principle?

These questions need to be thoroughly considered before Jordan's Principle is delegated, as a way of ensuring the program meets its intended vision.

There is no clarity about how much funding would meet Yukon's needs in the short- and long-term, and how that funding could be accessed and allocated between communities. In 2019-2020, Yukon saw a 50% increase in funding requests to Jordan's Principle. This rate of growth is expected in the medium-term, at the very least. Additionally, a very quick scan of known capital projects identified hundreds of millions in capital needs dollars that would be eligible for consideration if the spirit and intent of capital asset funding is adhered to in future.

Recommendation #22: Yukon First Nations require further education and awareness of Jordan's Principle to help them understand how Jordan's Principle is currently being used by individual Yukon First Nations and across the country. If Yukon First Nations assume greater control of the Principle, its mandate, supports, policies, and parameters would be needed to ensure the transition has a positive impact on Yukon First Nations.



**YUKON
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**Council of Yukon
First Nations**

Recommendation #23: Reform of Indigenous Services Canada is necessary, and Yukon First Nations want to have an active voice in the reform to ensure the changes meet the needs of Yukon First Nations.

4. REVIEW, EVALUATION, AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES FOR CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AND JORDAN’S PRINCIPLE

Yukon First Nations expressed support for the development of a robust review, evaluation, and accountability mechanism, that is supported by an accessible, and timely dispute resolution process.

Recommendation #24: Any dispute resolution process must have the authority to implement, enforce, and prevent the recurrence of funding-based discrimination and narrow implementations of the reforms. At the conclusion of a Final Settlement Agreement on Long-Term Reform, the mechanisms that exist through CHRT Orders that hold Canada accountable will no longer exist. Given the significant challenges remaining with fully implementing Jordan’s Principle (especially with capital requests) while existing CHRT orders are in place, any new accountability mechanism and dispute resolution process must have substantial powers to enforce its decisions.

Recommendation #25: Accountability mechanisms must be in place to hold not just Canada to account but also Yukon Government, who currently retains authority over all of Yukon’s Child and Family Services FNCFS program.

FEEDBACK ON A NATIONAL FIRST NATIONS-LED SECRETARIAT

The vision for an independent First Nations-Led secretariat that provides operational support and guidance on best practices would be valuable. To achieve real change, a focus on data and evidence-based decision making is essential. Support in undertaking annual evaluations, and access to support from a Centre of Excellence on operations and programming, could benefit Yukon First Nations.

Recommendation #26: Any national entity should be supported by regional entities. This would ensure workshops, learning opportunities, training and program development support is applicable, culturally appropriate and reflective of local needs and realities. Any Secretariat or Centre of Excellence must include expertise on the Yukon context, including its geography, demographics, and its unique governance structure.

Implementing long-term reform, and transformative community wellness results within five years will be challenging, especially for regions without established First Nation-led agencies, child and family programs, data collection protocols, existing capacity and infrastructure. Metrics used to support funding negotiations beyond year five must recognize every First Nation/community

is embarking on long-term reform from a different starting point. Reform will be incremental and long-term. Implementation funding models – and metrics – must reflect this.

Further discussion is required before additional feedback and recommendations from the Yukon can be provided on the potential roles and responsibilities of the Secretariat.

5. CONCLUSION

As previously stated, the recommendations made in this document were developed from publicly available information and a brief period of engagement with Yukon First Nations. Neither the Agreement-in-Principle for Long-Term Reform of Child and Family Services and Jordan’s Principle or the draft Final Settlement Agreement were shared for this project.

The resources provided, the timeline given, and depth of engagement of Yukon First Nations was insufficient. **Yukon First Nations leadership authorized the submission of these recommendations with the strong caveat that further discussion, visioning, engagement, and planning is required before giving final recommendations.** Further, Yukon First Nations request additional resources for deeper engagement and visioning. This would ensure long-term reform is given the detailed consideration it requires. While there is unanimous agreement that changes to FNCFS and Jordan’s Principle are overdue, and time is of the essence, families (and future families) need us to get the policies, funding, and accountability mechanisms right.

A significant challenge for the Yukon is that the proposed funding model does not correlate with Yukon First Nations’ governance structure, or its child and family services model. While the individual funding components proposed through the draft final settlement agreement are comprehensive, there is no funding model envisioned for Yukon First Nation governance, geographic, or population realities. Any final settlement agreement must include both guarantees of baseline support and clauses that allow for ongoing negotiations. This would give Yukon First Nations confidence that they can build programs that truly support long-term reform, while also ensuring that their needs and realities are met after the CHRT orders that led us to this stage are closed.