

MOVING BEYOND NEGLECT

Recommendations for Policy Makers

We recommend that policy makers implement the following outstanding recommendations on child neglect :



Acknowledge that Federal, Provincial and Territorial Governments have allowed the needs of children - in particular, First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children – to go unmet, by failing to provide resources and services essential to their development and well-being.



Fully implement Jordan's Principle and ensure the equitable funding and delivery of services to Indigenous children living on and off reserve.



Establish and fund programs and services within and outside of child welfare agencies that address the root causes of neglect including poverty, inadequate housing, lack of affordable childcare, substance misuse, and mental illness.



Enshrine in child welfare legislation a distinction between cases in which a caregiver neglects a child's needs, and cases in which a caregiver is unable to meet those needs because they lack access to essential resources and services such as stable housing, affordable childcare and a livable income.



Mandate that no child be removed from a caregiver on the basis of poverty, inadequate housing, or unmet service needs.



Shift the funding model for child welfare from one that emphasizes threshold-based protection services to one that invests in universal and holistic prevention and support services, both within child welfare agencies and at the community level.



Establish policy structures that allow agencies to share information and jointly deliver services, thereby promoting an integrated approach to child and family well-being.

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Amend child welfare legislation to recognize culturally diverse approaches to caregiving, in particular traditional Indigenous caregiving practices.



Partner with communities, particularly Black and Indigenous communities, and those with lived experience in the child welfare system, in making decisions on any policy and programming changes that will affect them.



In recognition of Indigenous nations' inherent sovereign right to oversee child welfare services in their own communities, support and fund Indigenous communities in developing child welfare services.



Provide sustainable funding for community-based, culturally responsive prevention and family support programs in Indigenous, Black, and other marginalized communities.