

The human rights of Indigenous children in Canada: Comments prepared by BC ACCS for Canada's report to the UN Committee, Convention on the Rights of the Child ^[1]

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Description:

In this response, BC ACCS provides comments to Heritage Canada's call for recommendations regarding Canada's report to the UN Committee on Child Rights regarding Canada's implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 2003-2007. Comments on action and recommendations are provided.

Excerpts:

"An almost complete lack of coordination between the federal and provincial governments in ELCC programs for Indigenous children results in overlapping efforts and large gaps in services. The ongoing confusion is compounded when responsibility for programs is shifted, as it often is, from one Department or Ministry to the next. This is a particular problem in the Province of BC which is inclined to making frequent shifts or re-organizations in the Ministry for Children and Families, Education and Health. We have frequently been informed by caregivers that parents and families may not seek services because they are discouraged by the uncertainty and the complexity surrounding the changing funding rules and regulations relating to resources for Indigenous children with disabilities."

"At the beginning of this decade, all levels of government agreed to expand and enhance early childhood development/ early learning initiatives to address the gap in life chances; however, the expansion of these initiatives has not continued since 2006 when a new Federal government was elected with different priorities for ELCC and related initiatives of the previous government. As noted previously, services for children with additional support needs are minimal and largely non-existent in rural and remote communities and the quality of their lives and their human potential is diminished."

"In BC, in 2008, over 50% of the children in care are Indigenous according to the Representative for Children and Youth, although they are about 8% of the population of children in the province. Special needs children are overly represented in the number of children in care."

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