



# Jordan's Principle Long-term Reform Leadership Forum

March 13 – 14, 2024  
Prairieland Park – Saskatoon, SK

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION .....	3
Jordan’s Story .....	3
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT .....	4
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	5
BACKGROUND .....	6
INSIGHTS AND INFORMATION SHARING .....	7
Jordan’s Principle – First Nations Caring Society.....	8
Back-to-Basics Approach for Jordan’s Principle .....	11
Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy (IFSD).....	13
Saskatchewan First Nations Service Coordinators Panel .....	17
First Nation’s Needs, and How I Learned to Love Information Requests .....	19
First Nations Child and Family Services, Jordan’s Principle, Trout Class – Navigation Support Plan ...	20
FSIN Education Presentation .....	22
RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION .....	24
APPENDIX A – OVERALL FEEDBACK.....	25
APPENDIX B – AGENDA .....	26

## DEDICATION

The FSIN Jordan's Principle Leadership Forum Report is dedicated to the late Jordan River Anderson and will carry on the sacred responsibility of honoring his life and legacy by referencing the full name of Jordan's Principle.

### Jordan's Story



“Jordan River Anderson was a First Nations child from Norway Cree House Nation in Manitoba. Born in 1999 with complex medical needs that could not be treated on-reserve, he spent more than two years in a hospital in Winnipeg before doctors agreed that he could leave the hospital to be cared for in a family home. However, because of jurisdictional disputes within and between the federal and provincial governments over who would pay costs for in-home care, Jordan spent over two more years in hospital unnecessarily before he tragically died in 2005. He was 5 years old and had never spent a day in a family home.”

—Source: First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada, August 2014



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN), Health and Social Development Secretariat (HSDS) and Morris Interactive Ltd. would like to acknowledge the life of Jordan River Anderson and the sacred responsibility of Jordan's Principle. Gratitude is extended to the Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations Leadership and Executive and Charmaine Pyakutch, Director of Jordan's Principle, for taking the lead on this forum and arranging the pipe ceremony to greet each new day in a good way with tobacco and prayers. Thank you to all the moderators, panelists and contributors including Elder William Ratfoot and Elder Betty Peekeekoot (Pipe Ceremony) and Elder Joe Quewezance that provided the prayers to open and close the forum and bless the meals. A special acknowledgement to the Elders and mental health therapists that were available throughout the forum for support and guidance. Thank you to all of the Jordan's Principle coordinators and staff that approach each day with compassion and drive to make the lives of others easier.



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) Health and Social Development Secretariat hosted a two day in-person and virtual Jordan’s Principle Leadership Forum on March 13 – 14, 2024, at Prairieland Park, Saskatoon, SK. The forum was focused on the reform of Jordan’s Principle in Saskatchewan. The discussions centered on the current status of Jordan’s Principle – the non-compliance order against the Government of Canada – as well as what is working, and what areas of opportunities are for improvement in the day-to-day delivery.

The forum consisted of presentations from the family of Jordan River Anderson, the First Nations Caring Society, the Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy (IFSD), Waapihk Research, Deloitte, and Deloris Netmaker (FSIN). There was also a panel of First Nations Service Coordinators that shared their insights, successes, and challenges. Throughout the forum, Mentimeter, (an online, interactive tool) was used to engage the participants to gather feedback on their experiences and challenges.

Similar to 2023, a strong theme arising from this year’s forum is the need to return to the original intent of Jordan’s Principle. Jordan’s Principle is a child-first principle to ensure First Nations children get the services they need when they need them. Jordan’s Principle is being used to address systemic poverty, rather than focusing on the needs of children. The number of claims has skyrocketed in the last couple of years, and the backlog of claims in the Saskatchewan region now exceeds 8,000 claims.



The 2024 forum was focused on educating leadership and front-line workers on the evolving changes to Jordan’s Principle. On December 12, 2023, the Caring Society filed a notice of motion to the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal regarding Canada’s non-compliance with the Tribunal’s orders on Jordan’s Principle. On March 15, 2024, AFN and Canada

Affidavits are due, and on Wednesday, March 27, 2024, the Caring Society Reply Affidavits will be filed. There are a series of other key cross-examinations and factums over the next few months, with the process culminating in a hearing in Ottawa June 3 – 4, 2024. A plea from FSIN’s leadership and the Caring Society was made to all participants – to share their examples of Canada’s non-compliance with the Caring Society before the March 27<sup>th</sup> affidavit timeline. This evidence will be submitted directly to the tribunal for consideration.

Jordan’s Principle has been successful to date with over 4,000,000 Jordan’s Principle services, products and supports being delivered. Jordan’s Principle is making a difference, and is helping children, and although there are still hurdles to overcome, we are grateful for the sacrifice made by Jordan River Anderson, that has provided these supports and services for others.

# BACKGROUND

The Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations (FSIN) Health and Social Development Secretariat hosted a two day in-person and virtual Jordan’s Principle Leadership Forum on March 13 – 14, 2024. FSIN has held four previous forums on Jordan’s Principle: One in 2019, a virtual forum in 2021, and a hybrid in-person and virtual forum in 2022, and an in-person forum in 2023. Forum evaluations have consistently noted the need for ongoing forums of this nature.



The two-day forum began with opening remarks from the FSIN Vice-Chief David Pratt who acknowledged the importance of those working with Jordan’s Principle children and families. He asked everyone to share their challenges, issues and things that aren’t working, so that changes can be made to make Jordan’s Principle successful. Vice-Chief Pratt asked for prayers to lift up all the leadership and workers working on Jordan’s Principle – to stop the discrimination once and for all, to stop the discrimination and damage to First Nations children.

Chief Erica Beaudin from the Jordan’s Principle Chiefs Political Task Force also provided welcoming remarks acknowledging the bravery of Jordan’s family and gratefulness to Dr. Blackstock and the Caring Society as they are working to provide the best life possible for all First Nations children. First Nations children are meant to live a good life as the Creator intended. Children with special needs are gifts from the Creator, sent to be teachers to us on earth – to go back to kindness, love, understanding, and respect. All gifts benefit from Jordan’s Principle, and we would not have had the opportunity to win court cases or have programs and services without the bravery and courage of those like Jordan River Anderson, Dr. Blackstock, and Dr. Gaspard. Our responsibility is to provide the best life for the children – our love, ceremonies, and connection.

Charmaine Pyakutch followed with opening remarks, welcoming everyone to the forum, and sharing her personal connection to Jordan’s Principle, as a mother of a child with special abilities. FSIN hears the challenges faced with social, education and medical support and is looking to ensure substantive equality. Charmaine extended her heartfelt gratitude to all of the Jordan’s Principle coordinators who work tirelessly to ensure every First Nation child receives the support they need.



The information shared at the two-day forum, will inform the actions of FSIN, and the Caring Society, as they continue to advocate for the First Nations children in need.



## Jordan's Principle – First Nations Caring Society

– Dr. Cindy Blackstock, Executive Director First Nations Child and Family Caring Society

### Overview of Child and Family Services:

Dr. Blackstock presented an overview on Child and Family as well as Jordan's Principle. Some key facts:

- First Nations children over-represented in care at 17.2 times the rate of other children (First Nations CIS - 2019)
- 72% of First Nations children in care are **off reserve** (predominantly served by provinces)
- Main reason why First Nations children go into care is neglect:
  - ✓ Addictions
  - ✓ Domestic violence
  - ✓ Mental health
  - ✓ Poverty
  - ✓ Poor housing

The problems that need to be solved are:

- The drivers of child maltreatment
- Stop Canada and the Province's discrimination and ensure substantive equality
- Accountability to children and youth – need to support children in our own communities

Bill C-92 creates a pathway to jurisdiction for Child and Family Services. Jurisdiction can address the cultural pieces that's missing from legislation and the definition of neglect where people are unwilling or unable to care for their child. It may not address issues that are structural problems, such as lack of water, trauma, or housing issues.

Children deserve substantive equality, and that cannot be confused with equality. Substantive equality is the recognition that not all people start off from the same position and that these unequal opportunities make it more difficult for some to be successful. Treating everyone the same is only fair if they are starting from the same position.

*“There is nothing more unequal than the equal treatment of unequal people”  
– Thomas Jefferson*

### Successes to date:

Although there are challenges and there is work to still be done – it is important to focus on the successes to date. Here are some highlights:

- Over 4 million services, products and supports have been provided for Jordan's Principle.
- Over \$20 Billion in new supports for child, youth and family services.
- \$23.4 Billion in compensation for victims of Canada's discrimination.
- For First Nations agencies, up until 2016, the maximum amount for prevention was \$35,000 per year. Now starting to see prevention going into the communities and supporting families the way they should be supported.

### **Notice of non-compliance:**

Notices of non-compliance are the last resort. There have been several non-compliance motions over the past 8 years:

- 2016 – CHRT10 (General non-compliance)
- 2016 – CHRT16 (Discriminatory definition)
- 2017 – CHRT35 (Discriminatory definition)
- 2019 – CHRT39 (Compensation)
- 2020 – CHRT36 (Discriminatory eligibility)
- 2024 – Pending (General non-compliance)

The current non-compliance motion was put forward December 12, 2023 and the Caring Society put forward their affidavits in January, 2024. On March 15, the Assembly of First Nations and the Government of Canada filed their affidavits. On March 27, 2024, The Caring Society filed their response affidavit, and there will be some cross-examinations over the next few months, concluding with the Tribunal Hearing on June 3 – 4, 2024.

Dr. Blackstock encouraged all participants to provide examples of non-compliance they have experienced on their Nation to The Caring Society, so they could be included in the submission of evidence to the Tribunal on March 27, 2024.

### **Supreme Court Decision – Bill C-92:**

The Supreme Court ruling on Bill C-92 was a good decision. It affirms the constitutionality of C-92:

- Centers child and family services in the honour of the crown
- Adopts UNDRIP as a presumption
- Mentions Jordan’s Principle – since Jordan’s Principle applies to First Nations children off-reserve, will want to build on this for CFS, since 72% of the children in care are off-reserve
- Provinces cannot use the notwithstanding clause
- Upholds the act of Canada’s 91(24) jurisdiction in relation to Indigenous Peoples instead of section 35

As Nations build their constitution, it will be important to develop their own criteria for recognizing children that are off-reserve. Any agreements presented to First Nations from Canada should be thoroughly reviewed and understood before being signed.

### **Liability:**

With the transfer of control over Child and Family Services (CFS), there is an increased liability to First Nations. First Nations must be aware of the liability provisions in the agreements they are signing. For First Nations delivering prevention and CFS a court would likely find the First Nation liable for delivering secondary and tertiary prevention or protection resulting in harm to a child. Nations require special insurance against abuse. The class actions happening against government today, could potentially be brought against Nations in the future. There is protection for employees, knowledge keepers, contractors, etc. today. Building in good liability safeguards is especially important. Good governance, exercising good faith decisions, having policy, avoiding arbitrary decision making, and keeping thorough records are all good practices. Nations must advise their insurer of all the services they are providing and keep them informed as additional services are introduced.

### Questions & Answers – with Dr. Blackstock:

Q: Why doesn't Saskatchewan have a First Nations Child Advocate to speak on behalf of support for children and families? A First Nations child advocate could be a bridge to close the gap between First Nations and Federal and Provincial governments.

*A: The Assembly of Seven Generations (A7G) report talks about what effective advocacy looks like to young people. We don't just want someone to talk, we want people to do things. They will have to litigate against the government in some cases. Dr. Blackstock would like to see advocates in the community as well as at the Regional and National level.*

Q: At the last census there were 4,700 urban Indians in PA, Saskatoon and Regina. Understanding when looking at Jordan's Principle that provincial partners can apply for social support. Provincial school boards can apply. At a meeting not long ago, we asked school boards what they bid for and what support was provided, but they state they cannot disclose the information due to privacy laws. This can lead to children not being registered in school or attending school, and no one doing anything about it. What provisions can we make to ensure they aren't overlooked?

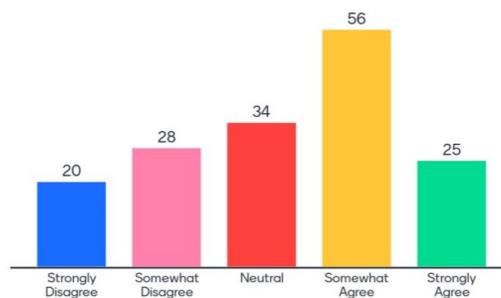
*A: There are very high needs in education. We need funding in culture and language; we also need schools without black mold in it! There is a report that shows how Jordan's Principle is filling gaps in education and medical transportation, as examples. The government needs to adequately provide services in the first place, Jordan's Principle shouldn't be the only way to address inequality. A plan to cost out all inequalities – water, housing, education medical transportation, etc. will create a holistic plan to deal with this.*

Q: What can First Nations do when the provinces are not providing financial information related to CFS?

*A: If a Nation is working under Bill C92, your laws have supremacy over provincial and federal laws, so you can have confidentiality and privacy rulings. You have the inherent right to share the information with the child's circle of care, sharing in the best interests of the child.*

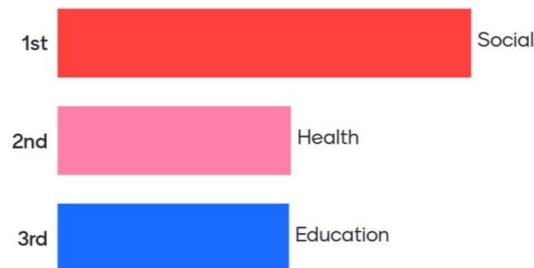
### Menti

## Jordan's Principle is working well in my community



## Menti

Rank the area of usage for Jordan's Principle in your community from highest to lowest.



## Back-to-Basics Approach for Jordan's Principle

– First Nations Child and Family Brittany Mathews, Director of Reconciliation and Policy

The Back-to-Basics approach was born out of meetings between the Caring Society and the government of Canada, when they entered into negotiations to end discrimination of First Nations Children, as the roadmap to implement Jordan's Principle was not working.

The key elements of the Back-to-Basics approach are:

- Non – discrimination
- Children's needs and their best interests must be the center of decisions
- Jordan's Principle must be simple to access and must be timely
- Need to reduce the administrative burden on families
- Must ensure substantive equality
- ISC team members will exercise compassion, common sense, and a reconciliation-first approach
- Ensure culturally relevant service providers

Under Back to Basics – substantive equality is PRESUMED. Any reference to normative standards cannot be used to deny requests.

***“The normative standard of care should be used to establish the minimal level of service only. To ensure substantive equality and the provision of culturally appropriate services, the needs of each individual child must be considered and evaluated, including taking into account any needs that stem from historical disadvantage and the lack of on-reserve and/or surrounding services.”***

2017 CHRT 14, para 69

### **Timeliness:**

Jordan's Principle must be timely. Lack of coordination between government departments should not be borne by the children and their families, if ISC feels something should be funded through a different program, they need to figure that out, not the families and parents.

ISC is ordered to determine requests within the following timelines:

- Individual
  - Urgent: 12 hours
  - Non-urgent: 48 hours
- Group:
  - Urgent: 48 hours
  - Non-urgent: 1 week

### **Additional key presumptions:**

The following are other additional presumptions of Back to Basics:

- Parents are acting in the children's best interests
- Professionals and Elders/Knowledge Keepers are acting within their area of expertise in recommendations
- Request is specific to the child and their needs
- Minimum information is required for ISC to approve an urgent request and risk mitigation plans but be put in place where the request is unlikely to be determined within tribunal timeframes.

### **Documentation to support a request should be reasonable and not another barrier:**

Requests for Jordan's Principle were becoming bogged down with documentation requests, as such parameters were put in place to minimize the amount of information required. For example:

- One letter is sufficient to cover every requested product, service, or support required
- Quotes, cost estimates and length of service are not needed to determine requests
- A child will not be asked to undergo an assessment for ISC's administrative purposes
- ISC staff will review previous requests and any relevant letters already on file for a child, to support new requests that are clearly linked
- In urgent cases, only verbal or written consent from the parent or guardian is needed; documentation can follow, once the child's immediate needs are met

The Caring Society has been tracking concerns and suggesting remedies for years, and unfortunately has seen the severity of harm, due to non-compliance with the Tribunal hearings. By ISC's own reporting, only 29% of urgent individual requests, and 24% of group requests are handled within the timeframes outline by the Tribunal.

In addition to timeliness, concerns have been raised regarding the denial rationale, determination timelines and backlog. Some recommendations have been put forward to pre-approve low dollar value claims, as an example. Today, all claims are treated with the same process – no matter the dollar value requested.

Jordan's Principle is filling gaps created by underfunding in other programs. An assessment of the shortfalls in other programs should be undertaken, so Jordan's Principle can be used to obtain substantive equality for children.

### Questions & Answers with Brittany Mathews:

Q. How does this impact Saskatchewan, with 9,000 applications backlogged?

*A. Check out the non-compliance motions – there is a workplan of sorts, that suggests solutions. Part of this is that the government should have the human resources to manage the backlog. There should be a triage approach so urgent requests are handled first, and other needs addressed next.*

Q. I just went through orientation, and the documentation still speaks about professional letters, and everything that was stated “no longer need to do” in the presentation, is still being done. We are still hearing that ISC is still putting up barriers.

*A. We need to support the service coordinators. If you are seeing things crop up again and again, we encourage you to reach out to the Caring Society. There is an affidavit going in to the Tribunal at the end of the month, and this could be put to them directly.*

Q. How do you reconcile this, with the Department of Finance releasing their priorities of cutbacks.

*A. Really good question – with the non-compliance in place, the Tribunal needs to take jurisdiction over this and there will be orders over this, and hopefully ensure no further delays. If you see ISC denying requests previously approved or making a disruption – reach out with those instances. Jordan’s Principle is a legal rule, the government cannot sneak out of this.*

Some suggestions offered, to those that brought up frustration with the time it takes for determination of support and applications:

- Keep reminding ISC that the application is time sensitive and becoming urgent
- Write your MP – let them know this is a legal order and Canada is not following through
- Contact the Caring Society for additional information
- If continue to see issues, write to the Caring Society

### **Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy (IFSD)**

- *Dr. Helaina Gaspard – Director, Governance and Institutions*



The Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy (IFSD) collects data to help support decision making, and to understand public policy challenges. The first part of the work done by IFSD on Jordan’s Principle was to determine if it is achieving substantive equality. IFSD could not answer that. IFSD’s findings are:

- Jordan’s Principle is addressing needs
- There is a high frequency of requests for small dollar values
- People are accessing basic necessities

What hasn’t been determined, is why people are accessing Jordan’s Principle in the first place. They know there are inequalities, but why? Current reporting practices give

plenty of data on the inputs (the money, people, and tools), and the output (the programs and services provided), but the context is lacking. Context around the starting point, the environment the family is coming from, the housing, water quality, opportunities, even how where they live impacts their needs. Information is lacking on why issues are occurring, and also what happens to the children after services are provided. Are services one-time in nature, or are they coming back because their needs are long-term? Data collected on the ground is so important for this reason. Understanding the why will allow for better development of policies and funding decisions.

In reviewing the data over 2019, 2020 and 2021, it is apparent that there is a huge increase in requests over time (approximately 50% Canada-wide, and requests are up 102% in Saskatchewan). Requests by category over this period were highest in education, followed by healthy child development and medical transportation. By contrast, the Menti results from the Leadership Forum today show that social requests have now superseded education and health requests, for those in attendance.

The data from 2019 – 2021 shows most of the requests were for supports and services under \$5,000, however claims of every size go through the same adjudication process. It was originally thought that Covid contributed to a large increase in claims, however, the data show only about 10% of the claims were Covid related.

By province, Quebec and Manitoba are the most efficient at adjudicating claims, with the majority of their claims turned around in 2 days. Saskatchewan came in around 37%. The data also shows that if claims are escalated to the National office, they are likely to be denied, with only 20% being approved. As data continues to be collected, there is a need to meet across the regions, and understand why the process works so well in some regions and not in others.

IFSD's mandate for part 2 of Jordan's Principle is to respond in part to the recommendations from part 1, and also to propose options for the long-term sustainability of Jordan's Principle through development of a policy framework, and a review of existing programs and services. Options will be defined and considerations for reforming the operationalization of Jordan's Principle. Finally, the financial analysis and costing of the baseline and proposed reform will need to be completed.

IFSD needs the help of the workers on the ground and have engaged regional working groups to define a common understanding of Jordan's Principle and its goals. They are looking to standardize the significant regional variation in approvals, and to define a common approach to data gathering to understand the needs and gaps.

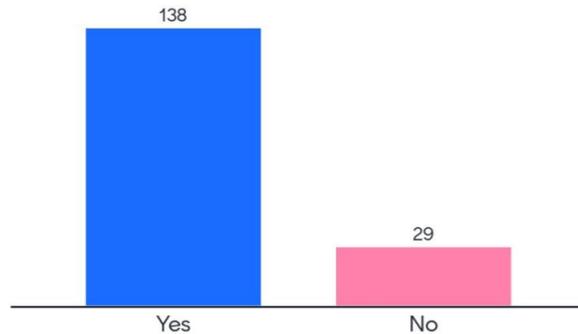
Supporting the holistic well-being of children requires understanding and quantifying the root causes of applications, defining the gaps in existing programs, and recognizing that no single program or service will address all of the challenges. Collect your own relevant data, build your evidence base, and make decisions and advocate with greater effectiveness.

#### **Comments from participants:**

Why does the Saskatchewan region have a backlog? We hear it is the time, attention and energy it takes to train an intake person at the region level, rather than having the nations take the intake. The region is still asking for too much detail with the requests. We hear Canada went back to ask for more money for Jordan's Principle, why did they not expect to have to hire more personnel? We should all be asking questions.

## Menti

Is Jordan's Principle moving away from it's original intent?

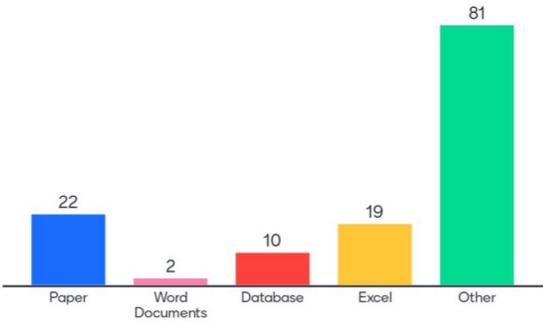


## How is Jordan's Principle moving away from its original intent?

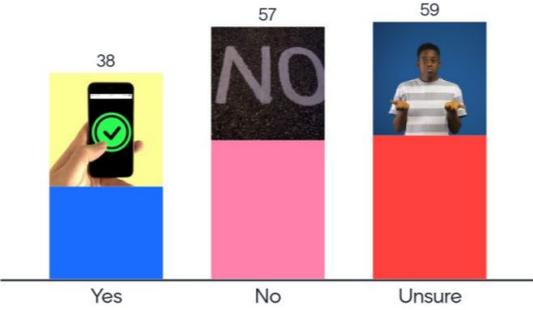
This was an open-ended question that had over 133 responses from participants. The main themes coming out of the answers were:

- The social requests are overshadowing the medical, educational and mental health requests
- There is a lack of training and support for staff
- Jordan's Principle is being used to alleviate poverty (a Band-Aid solution), rather than for children with complex needs
- The 24 – 48 hour response for emergency submissions
- There are more denials than approvals
- Commitment from the government is fading
- There is a duplication of social assistance services, and lack of training
- People are using the funds for groceries and furniture (some abuse of the system)
- Children with special needs are not receiving the help they need, or it is taking too long
- Jordan's Principle has evolved and has uncovered the issues that have always been there for our children and families (colonization)
- Jordan's Principle has become a gap supplement program
- We continue to jump through the government's hoops – we are still being controlled
- Still denying our children the basics to our inherent teachings and practicing our traditional ways through Kinship. Too much red tape to go through.
- Have come full circle – and children with complex needs are once again being overlooked, due to huge amount of social requests
- There were a number of people that believe it has not moved away from its original intent

# How does your Nation gather Jordan's Principle data today?



# Does your Nation understand their liability, given today's discussion?



Day 2 of the forum opened with a pipe ceremony and prayers by the Elders to start the day in a good way. This was followed by a recap of the Day 1 presentations and an outline of the agenda for day 2.

### Saskatchewan First Nations Service Coordinators Panel

- Quinn Amyotte-Bear, Montreal Lake Cree Nation
- Marge Turner-Wichihin, James Smith Cree Nation
- Gil Lerat, Cowessess First Nation



The coordinators shared the insights, experiences, successes, and barriers to delivering Jordan's Principle in their communities. It is noted that Jordan's Principle has made a positive impact and there have been many successes that have enriched the lives of many children and families. It has brought some funding to the Nations, to meet the needs in a more timely manner. The Jordan's Principle coordinators appreciate the fact that they can work in their own communities, where they know the families, and can see the positive outcomes from the support

offered.

One of the biggest challenges is the number of social requests, which have increased substantially in the past few years. There are many families struggling with poverty, and they are accessing social funds to purchase groceries and furniture. There have been instances of abuse of the system as well. Some suggestions to limit abuse are to use purchase orders for items, or for the Jordan's Principle worker to buy the groceries and deliver them to the family, rather than giving gift cards or cash assistance. A data tracking tool that is fully integrated across the province would drastically improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the application process, and would provide quick visibility to the coordinators, of any duplication of requests.

The ISC application process is also a challenge, mainly in regards to the length of time it takes for applications to be acknowledged and fulfilled. There are some instances of applications being escalated to the national office, without rationale for the escalation.

The Back-to-Basics application for service coordinators is causing some ethical dilemmas, forcing decisions every day as to which applications are financial hardship and which are not. A suggested practice one nation follows, is to track who is caring for the children when people ask for Jordan's Principle. They ask for a letter from the partner, as to who has the children in care. When the service coordinators are making decisions, they can face backlash from community members.

One of the current insights, is that applications used to be submitted with the true intention of Jordan's

Principle, but now, they are not seeing that as much. Curious if those families also are seeing Jordan's Principle as a social program now. Jordan's Principle was created for children because they were being left on the back burner, but now, that is happening again. Most of the emergent social requests are tied to poverty. We need to focus on the children this program was put in place to protect. We are still here for the children that need extra help and don't want them to be forgotten about.

**Question & Answer with the service coordinators:**

Q. When you first introduce Jordan's Principle, do you start with the emergency fund right away, or do you start submitting applications to the region?

*A. To start, applications are just submitted to the region.*

Q. With regards to the gift cards – was there ever an investigation into why they were selling the gift cards? Was there any indication that it was easier to get funds from Jordan's Principle than other programs? Curious if they are using the money to access other services, rather than trying to go through NIHB.

*A. Speculating, but yes, thinking other communities are dealing with that. ISC should be providing support without having to exploit Jordan's Principle.*

Comment: I'm listening and puzzled about the communication – why does it take so long for ISC to respond? Is it them leaving requests on a desk? We have to control our own destiny and speak up for our people.

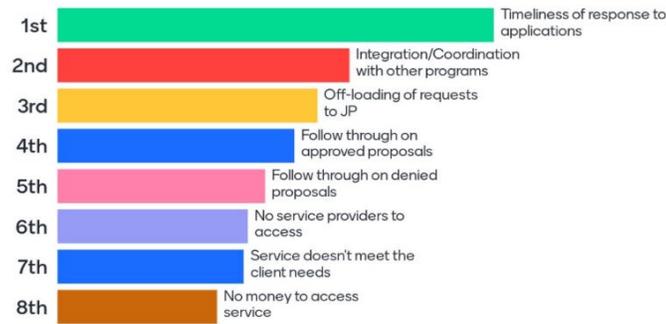
Comment from a service coordinator: I am the only staff in my community, and I spend 90% of my time doing service requests, and I can't stay on top of them. The concern is with the social requests, and having to call other communities to make sure they haven't accessed funding elsewhere. They often have members from small towns around them, that make requests, and they support them. However, service coordinators are asked to call around, but the region doesn't contact the Nation before fulfilling requests. The calling around takes valuable hours. It is hard to make sure families are getting services, and kids are not falling through the cracks.

Comment: Service Coordinators are taking the brunt of the frustration and challenges brought by clients. All of the service coordinators are facing the same challenges – this is an offload to manage their poverty. Huge challenge to FSIN, or the National partners – how are we going to get this back on track to be a successful program? People need us. Service coordinators are doing all the legwork on the ground – there needs to be a data collection system. There is double dipping – and how do you morally draw the line on that? The original intent has lost its appeal and is no longer servicing kids that need their help. Provincial organizations servicing kids with needs, need occupational health and therapy. We have to put the program back where it was intended to go. We are being disrespectful to Jordan's name.

Comment: As a mother, and worker, I had a child who was badly hurt in a rollover on a First Nation in 2004. He had no help with mental health until 2009. We need Jordan's Principle for children with special needs – my son was treated very differently because of his brain injury, because of his mental health. Parents and grandparents showed their children how to work – it was always instilled that they need to work. With Jordan's Principle, people are becoming dependent on the Band. We have to get away from the idea that people are going to save us, and we need to look after our own destiny. I am a firm believer in not creating reliance – everyone has their own issues and problems. Jordan's Principle should be for those in need of the medical care.

## Menti

Rank these barriers to accessing Jordan's Principle funding from highest to lowest



## First Nation's Needs, and How I Learned to Love Information Requests

– Waapihk Research, Dr. Alain Beaudry, Michael Pereira, Alexander Gowriluk

Waapihk Research conducts data-driven research, with a supporting role on Indigenous healthcare. They are trying to shape policy and understand how they can get the data that Indigenous people and their children are entitled to. They conduct qualitative and quantitative analysis at a regional and national level. Their goals are to have equitable health outcomes across all communities, and the purpose of their research is to end the chronic disparities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in health.



Some of the work they do is critical reports (annual report), community health profiles – assessments of community health status, complex grant applications, and micro-costing analysis, which is needed to know how much a program costs. In addition, they also do tailored services, to solve specific problems, and they provide consulting services.

They have compiled some case studies on Manitoba's First Nations Alternative Federal Budget, as well as a case study on on-reserve health care in Manitoba. Their case studies are available on the internet. They also have documents on their website Waapinhk.com – with information on OCAP, Truth and Reconciliation, Freedom of Information Requests, and more.

They gave an overview of the Freedom of Information Act (FIPA), and how to utilize Freedom of Information requests to gather information for analysis. Some data they have gathered regarding Jordan's Principle demonstrates that the government has planned significantly less spending on Jordan's Principle, than what the actual spend has been (which shows that demand is exceeding their plan). Despite the fact that Jordan's Principle is to be funded, there are always administrative barriers, and this continues, and in some ways, is used to cap the spend on Jordan's Principle. The true cost of Jordan's Principle is hard to determine, as funds could be pulled out of CFS or health to cover.

## First Nations Child and Family Services, Jordan's Principle, Trout Class – Navigation Support Plan

– *Deloitte*, Dr. Lana Potts, Byron Jackson

The First Nations Child and Family Services, Jordan's Principle, and Trout Class Settlement agreement, brings together the consolidated Class Actions of the Assembly of First Nations and Moushoom Plaintiffs and the Trout Action. This represents a total of \$23.3 Billion.

Deloitte reviewed the classes: Removed Child Class, Jordan's Principle Class, Trout Class, Essential Services Class, Kith Child Class and the caregiving parents or grandparents of Removed Child, Kith Child, Jordan's Principle and Trout Child Classes.

The role of Deloitte as the claims administrator is:

- 1) Administer the claims process – safeguard the best interests of and minimize the administrative burden on the claimants.
- 2) Liaise with First Nations communities and provide navigational supports
- 3) Monitor and report on outcomes, including systemic issues
- 4) Ensure First Nations perspectives are reflected in the consultation with the settlement implementation committee
- 5) Provide notice to the class members who have been approved as eligible for compensation

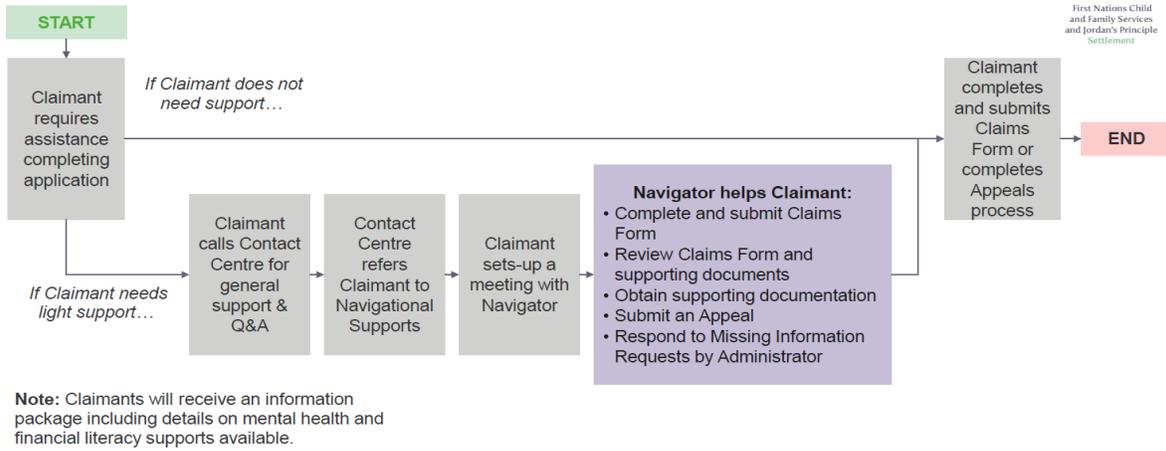
The guiding principles for the Navigational Support Model are:

- Preserving Class Members' dignity and respecting their experiences
- Recognizing the healing journey
- Representing First Nation Diversity
- Focusing on individual empowerment

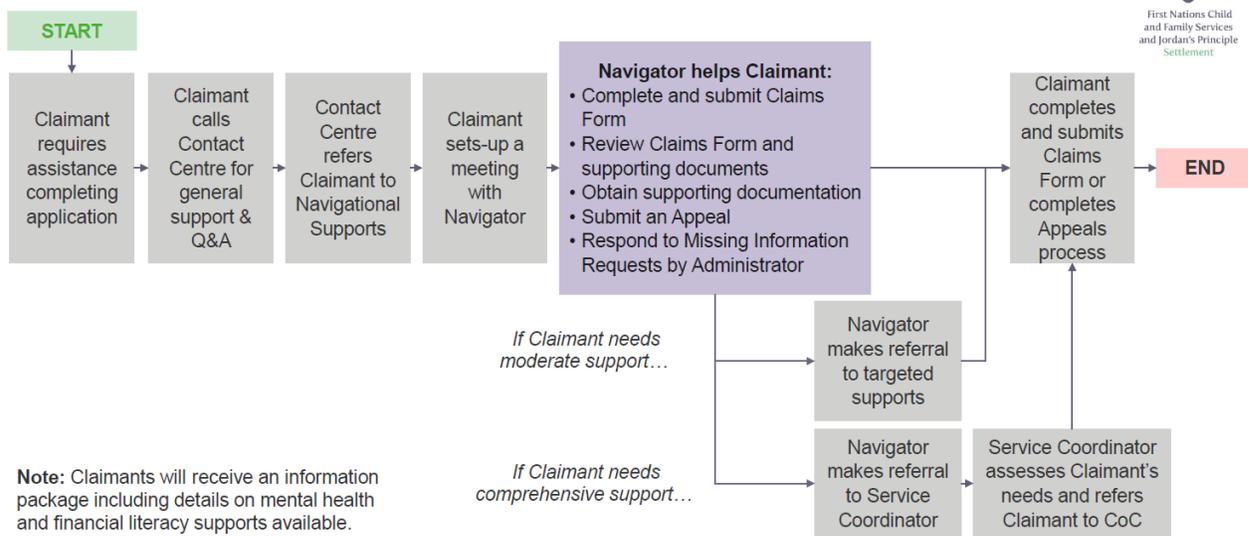
There are 4 components to support within the agreement, including service coordination and care teams, health and cultural supports, access to mental health counselling and a help line. Additional support such as mental health and financial literacy will be available to First Nations from Canada.

There were two models presented for navigating support:

### Navigational Supports for Claimants Requiring Little- to No Support



### Navigational Supports for Claimants Requiring Moderate to Comprehensive Support



More information can be found at [www.fnchildcompensation.ca](http://www.fnchildcompensation.ca)

Comment from a participant (a residential school survivor): There is so much trauma (5 generations), and people are mentally and emotionally struggling. There needs to be a good vetting process for mental health therapists, to ensure they understand and can help those in need. Many of the people impacted are homeless, will need to find a way to get them compensated, and need to recognize that some areas will have more needs than others.

## FSIN Education Presentation

– Deloris Netmaker, Executive Director

Deloris reminded everyone to get familiar with the history of Jordan River Anderson, to understand where Jordan's Principle came from. She suggested watching the video on Jordan – the Messenger.

There are many challenges faced by First Nations, but Jordan's Principle has opened the door to help children with special needs, and we are very thankful for that.

Some of the issues that have been raised by the frontline workers are:

*Time, proposals, great need, lack of funding, and response time. The waiting time for approval and funding is too long. The list of students that need to be assessed is very lengthy.*

Government has set up Nations to act in silos – health, education, etc., but these areas need to work together, especially with Jordan's Principle.

The long-term reform of Jordan's Principle must return to the original intent. Jordan's life was a gift, and the cost of that gift was his life.

## Menti

### How does your Nation gather Jordan's Principle data today?

This was an open-ended question with 103 responses. The main themes were:

- Paper and Excel
- Excel
- Paper Files
- Excel, with paperwork trail
- Applications, and then information in Excel
- Database and paper
- Paper, Microsoft office and purchased database software
- Fax
- Paper and Word
- Excel, Google docs, Word and Paper
- Dadavan database
- Kiyam
- Xyntax Native systems
- Scanned PDFs
- File it or shred it
- Keep it in school files

## What do you do with data not captured in applications?

There were 61 responses to this question, with the major themes being:

- File it
- Scan as a PDF and save in the client's paper and electronic file
- Keep in a file folder, then after one year, it is stored securely
- Shred it
- Keep all documentation in the client files, in a locked cabinet
- Scan a hard copy, or write a brief summary and provide advocacy if needed

## How does your nation expedite requests?

There were 67 responses to this question, and a summary of the answers are as follows:

- Send them to the intake desk of ISC
- Phone for updates
- Check the box "time sensitive"
- Email
- Use the social fund
- Help to gather the support letters, documentation and assessments, have the families sign a release of information and prioritize referrals.
- Include the client's e-mail, so ISC can contact them as well.
- Chief and Council, urgent letter – cannot wait – help and figure it out later

## RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The FSIN Jordan's Principle Leadership Forum provided a timely update on the rapidly evolving changes related to the long-term reform of Jordan's Principle, as well as the current non-compliance order filed against the Federal Government.

Many of the themes from previous forums continue to emerge today, such as the concerns around the complexity of the application process, concerns around the timeliness of processing claims and the current backlog in the Saskatchewan region. In addition to these themes, Jordan's Principle continues to be plagued by a very high number of social claims, thereby detracting from the original intent of Jordan's Principle, and masking the gaps that are present in other programs, like NIHB.

From the discussions and themes that emerged over the two days, some recommendations were put forth for consideration:

- 1) It is important to hold Jordan River Anderson's story at the forefront of Jordan's Principle, and to remember the original intent.
- 2) There is a need to continue to support the Jordan's Principle Coordinators emotionally, as well as with tools such as databases and technology to assist with the compliance aspect of service delivery.
- 3) There is a need to continue to educate First Nations and coordinators on the changing aspects and requirements of Jordan's Principle applications, using forums, such as this Leadership Forum.
- 4) There is a need to share the challenges faced with Jordan's Principle with the Caring Society, as they continue to hold the government accountable through the non-compliance motion.

The stories shared by the Anderson family, and the Service Coordinators were an excellent reminder to keep the focus on the children and their caregivers, and to never forget the original intent of Jordan's Principle to ensure that all First Nations children can access the health, social and educational needs they need when they need them.

A summary of overall feedback is available in Appendix A.

## APPENDIX A – OVERALL FEEDBACK

The overall feedback from the forum was overwhelmingly positive.

A summary of the positive comments are as follows:

- Very Informative
- Excellent Forum and opportunity to share experiences and challenges
- Good information
- Amazing
- Provides important information and networking, which is extremely helpful
- Have learned a lot
- Excellent, relevant speakers
- Wonderful to have the Anderson family attend
- Respect for those advocating for Jordan's Principle
- Great location
- Mentimeter is a great tool to collect information

A summary of areas for improvement are:

- Too much focus on the negative – there are many needs being met
- Continue to share the information province wide – and continue to have forums
- Need to stop working in silos – there should be more collaboration on what can be accessed or how to be successful with applications
- Would like to see more solutions, how to progress the queue
- Would love to have heard of more resources to help the frontline
- Would like to see a streamlined application approval process implemented across the province
- Wish there were breakout rooms available for some sessions that are less relevant to people on the ground
- There were side conversations going on at the tables, which was disrespectful to the speakers, and the attendees trying to hear the speakers – have the MC remind participants to take side conversations out of the room.
- Would like to see booths available for shared resources

## APPENDIX B – AGENDA



MARCH 13 & 14, 2024 - PRAIRIELAND PARK (HALL C) - SASKATOON, SK.

### AGENDA - DAY 1 - MARCH 13, 2024

- |         |   |
|---------|---|
| 7:30am  | <b>Pipe Ceremony</b> - Elder William Ratfoot & Elder Betty Peekeekoot<br><b>Elders on site</b> - Elder Joe Quewezance and Elder Vera Poitras  |
| 8:00am  | Breakfast   |
| 9:00am  | <b>Opening Prayer</b> - Elder Joe Quewezance<br><b>Welcoming Remarks:</b><br>Chief Bobby Cameron - <i>FSIN</i><br>1st Vice Chief David Pratt - <i>FSIN</i><br>Chief Erica Beaudin - <i>Cowessess First Nation &amp; Chiefs Political Task Force</i><br>Charmaine Pyakutch - <i>FSIN Jordan's Principle Director</i> |
| 9:30am  | <b>Remarks from Jordan River Anderson's Family</b><br>Ernest Anderson, Jerleen Sullivan & Caroline Anderson   |
| 9:45am  | Health Break  |
| 10:00am | <b>Jordan's Principle</b><br>Dr. Cindy Blackstock, Executive Director,<br>First Nations Child and Family Caring Society   |
| 12:00pm | Lunch   |
| 1:00pm  | <b>Morris Interactive - Menti Survey</b>  |
| 1:15pm  | <b>Back to Basics Approach for Jordan's Principle</b><br>Brittany Mathews, Director of Reconciliation and Policy<br>First Nations Child and Family Caring Society   |
| 2:30pm  | Health Break  |
| 2:45pm  | <b>Jordan's Principle: A roadmap to long-term sustainability</b><br>Dr. Helaina Gaspard, Director, Governance & Institutions<br>Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy   |
| 4:00pm  | <b>Morris Interactive - Menti Survey</b>  |
| 4:15pm  | Day 1 wrap up and closing remarks   |

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**MARCH 13 & 14, 2024 - PRAIRIELAND PARK (HALL C) - SASKATOON, SK.**

## **AGENDA - DAY 2 - MARCH 14, 2024**

7:30am	<b>Pipe Ceremony</b> - Elder William Ratfoot & Elder Betty Peekeekoot <b>Elders on site</b> - Elder Joe Quewezance and Elder Vera Poitras
8:00am	Breakfast
9:00am	Overview of Day 1 and Outline of Day 2: Facilitator/moderator
9:15am	<b>Saskatchewan First Nations Service Coordinators Panel</b> Quinn Amyotte-Bear, Montreal Lake Cree Nation Marge Wichihin, James Smith Cree Nation Gil Lerat, Cowessess First Nation
10:30am	Health Break
10:45am	<b>First Nations Needs, and How I Learned to Love Information Requests</b> Dr. Alain Beaudry, Principal - Waapihk Research Michael Pereira, Research Consultant - Waapihk Research Alexander Gowriluk, Research Consultant - Waapihk Research
12:00pm	Lunch
1:00pm	<b>First Nations Child and Family Services, Jordan's Principle, Trout Class – Navigation Support Plan</b> Dr. Lana Potts, Senior Indigenous Advisor - Deloitte Byron Jackson, Director - Deloitte
2:30pm	Health Break
2:45pm	<b>FSIN Education Presentation</b> Deloris Netmaker, Executive Director
3:45pm	<b>Morris Interactive - Menti Survey</b>
4:00pm	Day 2 wrap up, closing remarks and door prizes Closing prayer - Elder Joe Quewezance

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