

ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS



ASSEMBLÉE DES PREMIÈRES NATIONS

Update from the National Expert Working Group (NEWG) on First Nations Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC)

Presentation to the Chiefs of Ontario Early Learning and Child Care Gathering

June 26, 2023

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History of the NEWG

- AFN Resolution 39/2016, *First Nations National Working Group on Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC)*, established the National Expert Working Group (NEWG) on First Nations ELCC to lead engagement with First Nations to develop a First Nations ELCC Framework.
- NEWG Membership:
 - Co-chaired by AFN and Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC)
 - Representatives from each AFN region
 - Representatives from Indigenous Skills, Employment and Training Strategy (ISETS)
 - Representatives from AFN Health and Languages & Learning Sectors
 - Representatives from Indigenous Services Canada and Public Health Agency of Canada



National First Nations ELCC Policy Framework



Vision: Happy and healthy First Nations children and families are supported by a regionally-driven ELCC system rooted in Indigenous languages and cultures, governed by First Nations.



Guiding Principles:



Indigenous knowledges, languages and cultures



First Nations governance



Quality programs and services



Inclusive, accessible and flexible



Transparent and accountable



Collaborations and partnerships



Capacity development



NEWG's Recent Work & Advocacy

- Pursuant to AFN Resolution 08/2022, *Early Learning and Child Care Legislation*, the AFN and NEWG made a submission to the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Skills and Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities in March 2023, focused on:
 - **Canada's obligations and commitments to upholding First Nations rights**, including obtaining free, prior and informed consent, and providing funding for First Nations-led engagement.
 - **Affirming First Nations jurisdiction** by acknowledging the inherent rights to self-determination and jurisdiction of First Nations to care for their children.
 - **Funding for First Nations ELCC**, including statutory funding to ensure long-term, sustainable and predictable funding for First Nations ELCC that is distinctions-based, Treaty-based and needs-based.
- Read the AFN's submission [here](#).



NEWG's Recent Work & Advocacy

- In accordance with several AFN resolutions regarding the funding allocation model, including AFN Resolutions 59/2018, 64/2019, 20/2020 and 05/2021, the AFN has retained the Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy (IFSD) to lead research with First Nations to develop a First Nations-specific funding model for ELCC.
- Timeline:
 - **April – May 2023:** Research underway
 - **June – August 2023:** Continued research, discussions with NEWG and regions towards the development of recommendations for NEWG consideration
 - **September – December 2023:** Engagement in regions on recommendation
 - **December 2023:** Return to First Nations-in-Assembly for approval of recommendation



Next Steps

- Co-development of a results and evaluation framework for First Nations ELCC with ESDC and the NEWG.
- Continued work towards a First Nations-determined ELCC funding model.
- Continued advocacy for First Nations rights and self-determination as Bill C-35 continues in the legislative process.