

**Ontario's Mandate  
through the  
Ontario Indigenous Children  
and Youth Strategy  
and Child Welfare Redesign**

**Ministry of Children, Community and  
Social Services**

Chiefs of Ontario Forum  
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# Purpose

- Provide an overview of Ontario's general mandate under the Ontario Indigenous Children and Youth Strategy and Child Welfare Redesign.
- Provide information on Ontario's specific mandate to work with representatives of First Nations peoples on the development and implementation of their own child and family services systems and models, including those governed under First Nations laws.

# Child Welfare Redesign

- On July 29, 2020, the Ontario government released its **plan to redesign the child welfare system**.
- The strategy was developed with input from youth, families, caregivers, First Nations, Inuit and Métis partners, lawyers, community organizations, frontline workers and child welfare sector leaders. The multi-year strategy focuses on:
  - **Strengthening families and communities** in partnership with cross-sector providers through enhanced community-based prevention and early intervention;
  - **Addressing systemic racism and the disproportionalities and outcomes disparities** for Indigenous, Black, LGBT2SQ+ and other equity-deserving populations in child welfare; and
  - **Continuing to improve the service experience and outcomes** for children and youth that need protection services, including more family-based placements.

# Distinct Indigenous Approach

The ministry continues to implement the **Ontario Indigenous Children and Youth Strategy (OICYS)**, the strategic framework co-developed with First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and urban Indigenous partners across Ontario to improve outcomes for Indigenous children and youth. The distinct Indigenous approach to the Child Welfare Redesign Strategy will also advance as part of the OICYS.

## The Ontario Indigenous Children and Youth Strategy

### VISION

First Nations, Métis, Inuit and urban Indigenous children and youth are healthy, happy, resilient, grounded in their cultures and languages and thriving as individuals and as members of their families and Nations/communities

### GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- ▶ Children and youth centred
- ▶ Culture and identity as foundational
- ▶ Respect rights and jurisdictional aspirations
- ▶ Co-development and partnership
- ▶ Outcomes focus
- ▶ Responsive to youth voice
- ▶ Flexibility
- ▶ Shared accountability
- ▶ Reconciliation (acknowledge the past, act now, and look to the future)

### PILLARS

#### First Nations Jurisdiction and Control / Métis, Inuit and Urban Indigenous Control

First Nations, Métis, Inuit and urban Indigenous communities/ organizations have authority to care for their children and youth.

#### Prevention, Culture and Opportunities

First Nations, Métis, Inuit and urban Indigenous children and youth have access to preventive services focused on well-being, culture and opportunities

#### Coordinated and Responsive Circle of Care

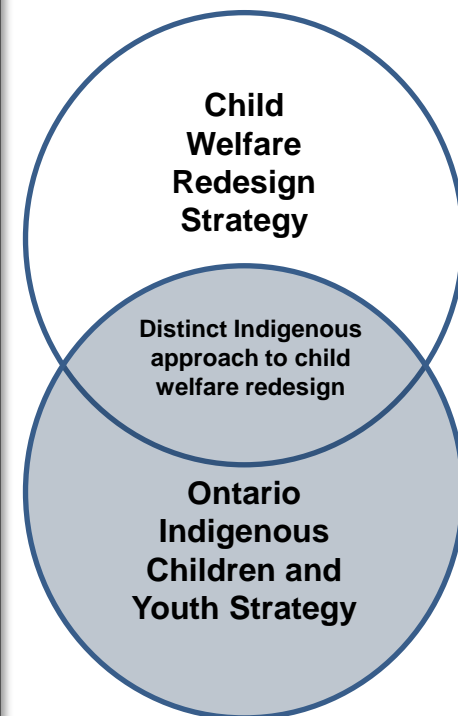
The child and youth service workforce is equipped to provide high quality, integrated and culturally appropriate services

#### Monitoring, Evaluation and Shared Accountability

Progress is tracked through culturally and contextually appropriate monitoring and evaluation approaches

#### Transformed Relationships and Collaborative, Holistic Action

Systemic change through collaborative action and transformed relationships with First Nations, Métis, Inuit and urban Indigenous partners



# Implementing Indigenous-Led Models

- The ministry has received a mandate to work with representatives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples to **implement their own Indigenous-led models** for child and family services, **including those governed under Indigenous laws.**
- The ministry's mandate includes a mandate to work with representatives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples who are pursuing self-governed models for child and family services, which includes **entering into coordination agreements pursuant to the federal statute *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*** ("federal Act").
- The ministry's mandate in this respect is ***not limited to processes under the federal Act, and the ministry's overall mandate is not limited to work on self-government.*** Some First Nations, Inuit, or Métis peoples may seek to develop and implement models that are not self-governed.

# Changes Within the Provincial System

- Under the OICYS and CWR, the ministry is providing \$5 million each year for bands and First Nations, Inuit and Metis communities (as defined in the CYFSA) to **implement prevention-focused customary care**.
- The ministry is working with First Nations and other Indigenous partners to develop potential **changes to how customary care is funded and overseen within the provincial system**, in order to:
  - **Expand access** to customary care arrangements across the spectrum, from prevention through to protection;
  - Help to maintain **children's connections** to their culture, community and support networks; and,
  - Help ensure that customary care, as practiced within the provincial child and family services system, **better reflects the customs** of bands and First Nations, Inuit, and Métis communities.

# Questions?

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