

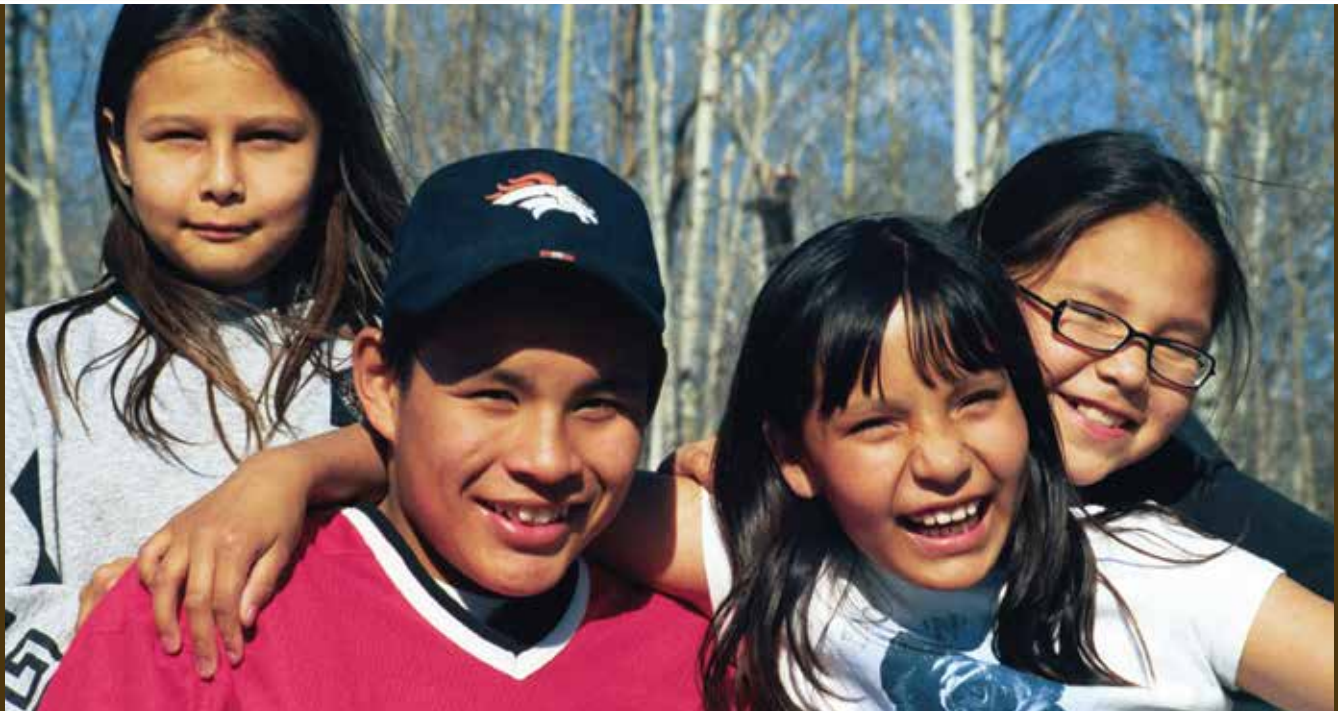


Indian and Northern
Affairs Canada

Affaires indiennes
et du Nord Canada

PROGRESS REPORT | for the year ending March 31, 2007

First Nations National Child Benefit Reinvestment



*Strong families ensure a bright future for Canada.
The most important investment we can make as a country
is to help families raise their children.*

Speech from the Throne, October 2006

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AB	Alberta
AHRDA	Aboriginal Human Resources Development Agreement
BC	British Columbia
CRA	Canada Revenue Agency
IA	Income Assistance
INAC	Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
HRSDC	Human Resources and Social Development Canada
NCB	National Child Benefit
NCBS	National Child Benefit Supplement
CCTB	Canada Child Tax Benefit
MB	Manitoba
NCBR	National Child Benefit Reinvestment
PEI	Prince Edward Island
SK	Saskatchewan
YK	Yukon

DEFINITIONS

Income Assistance: a program of last recourse that provides financial supports to meet basic needs (food, clothing, and shelter) and special needs, and employment-related support for individuals and families. Also commonly referred to as “social assistance” and “welfare”.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Indian and Northern Affairs Canada's (INAC)¹ National Child Benefit Reinvestment (NCBR) is the on-reserve counterpart to one component of the broader National Child Benefit (NCB) initiative, a child poverty initiative that was jointly established in 1998 by federal, provincial, and territorial governments. The lead federal department for the NCB initiative is Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC).² As per the federal/provincial/territorial NCB partnership, provinces and territories administer the NCBR off-reserve, while INAC is responsible for the NCBR on-reserve in collaboration with HRSDC.

The NCB has three objectives:

- to help prevent and reduce the depth of child poverty;
- to promote attachment to the workforce by ensuring that families will always be better off as a result of working; and,
- to reduce overlap and duplication by harmonizing program objectives and simplifying administration.

To achieve those objectives, the NCB consists of two key components:

- a financial benefits component for low to middle income families with children, consisting of the federal Canada Child Tax Benefit and the National Child Benefit Supplement, and in some provinces/

territories an additional provincial/territorial “integrated” child benefit; and,

- a reinvestment component (the National Child Benefit Reinvestment), which funds community-based supports and services that attend to the needs of the target population.

Through INAC's NCBR, First Nations are able to direct reinvestment funding to self-prioritized activities in line with the stated objectives of the NCB. Given the unique scope and flexibility of the NCBR, First Nations have been able to establish and operate a wide range of programs and services that otherwise would not exist in many communities.

In 2006-2007, First Nations reinvestments in projects for low income parents and their children amounted to almost \$53 million; since the beginning of the initiative in 1998-1999, reinvestments on-reserve have totalled more than \$466 million. A total of 90,645 families and 192,314 children benefited from NCBR programming during the fiscal year. This report describes the goals, expenditures, and types of projects offered, and reflects the shared efforts of First Nations and the Government of Canada in providing supports to reduce the depth and effects of child poverty in First Nations.

1. At the time of publishing of this report, the common name of this department has changed to Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC). However, during the fiscal year 2006-2007 covered by this report, it was known as Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC).

2. At the time of publishing of this report, the name of this department has changed to Human Resources and Skills Development Canada. However, during the fiscal year 2006-2007 covered by this report, it was known as Human Resources and Social Development Canada.

INTRODUCTION: PROGRESS REPORT ON FIRST NATIONS REINVESTMENTS



The First Nations National Child Benefit Reinvestment (NCBR) is the INAC-managed, on-reserve counterpart of one component of a broader initiative: the National Child Benefit (NCB) initiative. The NCB initiative was established in 1998 by federal, provincial,³ and territorial governments with three objectives:

- 1 – to help prevent and reduce the depth of child poverty;
- 2 – to promote attachment to the workforce by ensuring that families will be better off as a result of working; and,
- 3 – to reduce overlap and duplication and simplify the administration of benefits for children.

To achieve those objectives, the NCB initiative has two components:

- 1 – a financial benefit component for low to middle income families with children comprised of the Canada Child Tax Benefit (CCTB), National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS), and applicable provincial/territorial integrated child benefits; and,
- 2 – a reinvestment component, whereby freed-up funds finance projects that attend to the needs of the target population.

The Federal government provides financial benefits directly to low income families with children through the CCTB and the NCBS, while the provinces, territories, and First Nations reinvest “savings” made

possible by the initiative in programs and services that address the needs of low income families with children. With the funds that are available through the reinvestment component of this national undertaking, First Nations are able to create or provide otherwise unavailable programs and services to improve the conditions of life for low income families and children in their communities.

In compliance with the reporting requirements of INAC’s NCBR, this annual report:

- provides background information on the National Child Benefit, including the National Child Benefit Reinvestment component;
- outlines the purposes and activities of the First Nations National Child Benefit Reinvestment;
- describes examples of the kinds of projects established by First Nations using reinvestment funding;
- presents quantitative data to illustrate the scale and impacts of the projects; and
- highlights the specific achievements of First Nations under the initiative from its inception through the 2006-2007 fiscal year.

The sources of information for this eighth annual report are First Nations project administrators, departmental records, and program evaluations.

3. While the Government of Quebec agrees with the basic principles of the NCB, it did not take part in NCB development. However, Quebec’s family policy is consistent with that of the NCB, and First Nations NCBR projects do operate on-reserve in Quebec.

NATIONAL CHILD BENEFIT: BACKGROUND



Reducing Child Poverty

The need for development of a National Child Benefit was identified by Premiers in their Ministerial Council Report on Social Policy Reform and Renewal (March 1996) and adopted as a priority during the August 1996 Annual Premiers Conference. The National Child Benefit (NCB) initiative was introduced in the 1997 federal budget in response to the Government of Canada's commitment to improving assistance to children in low income families. The program was launched in 1998 as a joint initiative of federal, provincial and territorial governments, with a First Nations component that is collaboratively administered and delivered across a number of provinces/territories. To ensure that all Canadian children have a good start in life and that families with children are able to provide adequate care and nurturing for their children, the initiative funds a range of financial, social, and health benefits for low income families and their children.

A fundamental principle of the initiative is that the most effective approach to reduce poverty over the long term is to help low income families enter and participate successfully in the labour force.

The National Child Benefit initiative has two components, (1) a monthly financial benefit (the *Canada Child Tax Benefit*, *National Child Benefit Supplement*, and applicable *provincial/territorial integrated child benefits*), and (2) the National Child Benefit Reinvestment.

(1) The Financial Benefit Component

Under the *Income Tax Act* the Government of Canada has established the *Canada Child Tax Benefit* (CCTB), a base benefit aimed at low and middle income families (approximately 80% of Canadian families receive the CCTB), and the *National Child Benefit Supplement* (NCBS) (approximately 40% of families are eligible for some portion of the NCBS). Eligibility is established by means of an initial CCTB/NCBS application (upon the birth or addition of a child), and in subsequent years by a Canada Customs and Revenue Agency income test, calculated on the basis of information contained in income tax returns. The benefit year runs from July to June each year (e.g., a family's 2005 income tax return will determine the benefits they receive from July 2006 to June 2007); families whose total income is not greater than the applicable maximum level receive monthly payments in accordance with the number and ages of children and their net income.

The CCTB and NCBS benefits for low income families are tax free and adjusted to stay in line with increases in the cost of living. Since its beginning the NCBS has been increased annually, and, from January 2000, both the NCBS and the CCTB have been fully indexed. Maximum allowable income levels have also been raised. For the period from July 2006 to June 2007 the maximum annual payments (both base benefit and supplement) were increased to \$3,271 for the first

child, plus \$3,041 for the second child, and \$3,046 for the third and each subsequent child. Families whose net annual income was below \$20,435 (2005 income tax return) were eligible for maximum CCTB/NCBS benefits, families with income above \$20,435 but under \$36,378 were entitled to maximum CCTB and partial NCBS, while families whose net income was above \$36,378 were eligible for the base benefit CCTB only.⁴

In addition to the federal supports from the NCB initiative, provincial or territorial supplements to the CCTB and NCBS are also available to low income families in some jurisdictions. For most of these benefits, families do not need to submit a separate application; the Canada Revenue Agency obtains the required information from the NCBS application form and subsequent annual income tax returns, and benefits are paid as an “integrated child benefit” (i.e., federal and P/T child benefits together on one monthly cheque to families). The supplementary provincial/territorial programs in force in 2006-2007 included:

- Northwest Territories Child Benefit;
- Nunavut Child Benefit;
- Yukon Child Benefit;
- British Columbia Family Bonus;
- Alberta Family Employment Tax Credit;
- Saskatchewan Child Benefit;⁵
- New Brunswick Child Tax Benefit;
- Nova Scotia Child Benefit; and,
- Newfoundland and Labrador Child Benefit.

A significant feature of the financial benefit component of the National Child Benefit initiative is that benefits are payable to families who meet an income test whether they are working or receiving income assistance. Thus, parents who find employment but have low earnings will still receive child benefit payments to help them maintain the independence they have gained as members of the workforce if their income should fall below the established threshold.

(2) The Reinvestment Component

As per the terms of the F/P/T National Child Benefit Governance and Accountability Framework, introduction of the National Child Benefit Supplement allowed provinces and territories to reduce their social assistance rate schedules by an amount up to or equal to the NCBS without negatively affecting the overall monthly income of families in receipt of social assistance. This was part of the design of the National Child Benefit, so that while overall financial benefits to families would not decrease, the provinces/territories would realize social assistance “savings”. The agreement was that provinces/territories would then reinvest these savings into services and supports for children in low income families – this is the National Child Benefit Reinvestment (NCBR).

Most provinces and territories have opted to modify their social assistance schedules and use the freed-up funds for National Child Benefit Reinvestment (NCBR) programming, with the exception of New Brunswick (which has chosen not to recover the NCBS, so has no funds available to NCBR programming) and Manitoba (which recovered the NCBS from families for NCBR, but ceased doing so in 2005). To determine on-reserve NCBR funding allocations, INAC mirrors the reinvestment model used by the reference province/territory – therefore, the NCBR on-reserve does not operate in the provinces of New Brunswick and Manitoba. Appendix A to this report provides more detail, outlining the various approaches taken by provinces, territories, and First Nations in offsetting social assistance funds for NCBR projects/programming within their respective jurisdictions.

4. The level of this benefit also decreased as taxable income increased, and was fully phased out once income reached \$99,128.

5. In 1998, when Saskatchewan reformed its welfare system to the integrated child benefit approach, the province structured it so that provincial contributions to the integrated child benefit (the Saskatchewan Child Benefit) would be offset by federal increases to the NCBS. In July 2006, the NCBS increases reached the point of fully offsetting any provincial contribution to the benefit; therefore, the Saskatchewan Child Benefit was discontinued, and from that point onward in Saskatchewan any increases to the NCBS flow directly through to families.

Provincial/territorial (off-reserve) programming funded through NCBR fall under one or more of the following six (6) activity areas:

- *Child/Day Care Initiatives* – to create new or support existing child care spaces, so that low income families are better able to access affordable child care while working or attending training;
- *Child Benefits and Earned Income Supplements* – to provide low income families with additional financial supports so that parents/guardians/youth may remain employed while working toward higher wages;
- *Early Childhood Services and Children-at-Risk Services* – to help children get a healthy start in life by providing supports to low-income families when their children are young;
- *Supplementary Health Benefits* – to provide health/dental benefits, so that families do not forfeit these types of supports when they move from welfare to low income employment;

- *Youth Initiatives* – for a range of benefits and services designed to assist and support youth, with particular attention to youth-at-risk; and
- *Other NCB Programs, Benefits, and Services* – other programs and services for children in low income families, as determined by individual provinces and territories.



THE NATIONAL CHILD BENEFIT IN FIRST NATIONS



(1) The Financial Benefit Component

Low income families in First Nations communities receive the federal Canada Child Tax Benefit (CCTB) and National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS) payments from Canada Revenue Agency under the same eligibility conditions that apply to families in other areas of the country. On-reserve families are required to file an initial application and an annual income tax return to provide Canada Revenue Agency with the information needed to calculate their entitlement; the amount of the benefits provided to help with the cost of raising children is based on the family's net (taxable) income as well as the number and ages of the children.

In provinces/territories that have implemented an integrated child benefit, the benefit is extended to families on-reserve through the same Canada Revenue Agency process as applies to families off-reserve. In terms of support for integrated child benefits, INAC has in place agreements with Saskatchewan and the Yukon Territory to reimburse them annually for the on-reserve cost of the P/T portion of the benefit. In the sections and tables that follow in this report, these reimbursement funds to P/Ts are identified as the "additional investment envelope".

(2) The Reinvestment Component

INAC's NCBR was initiated by the Government of Canada in collaboration with First Nations as the on-reserve counterpart to provincial and territorial NCBR activities. The government is committed to working with First Nations to combat poverty, improve health, close the gap in life opportunities for children in First Nations communities, and support the preservation of cultural identity. In recent years there has been a stronger emphasis on strengthening the family unit as a whole with services that facilitate opportunities for parents to raise their children within a stable, nurturing environment that fosters their growth into healthy, active, and contributing members of their communities.

The activity areas between on-reserve and off-reserve NCBR vary, as the NCBR has been designed to offer some supports and benefits on-reserve that are uniquely tailored to the needs of First Nations. This is consistent with the structure of the broader NCB initiative, which allows the NCBR to be adapted to regional variations in availability of social supports. Activity areas on-reserve were developed in collaboration with First Nations, and have been designed to ensure community-based identification of needs and priority setting as well as to allow for culturally appropriate programming. Further, the NCBR on-reserve has been designed to differ from the off-reserve NCBR to avoid duplication of services of programs/benefits that are already available

on-reserve through other social/health programs – programs that are not generally available off-reserve. For instance, the provinces and territories have used the NCBR off-reserve to provide supplementary health care benefits, but on-reserve most residents receive those types of benefits through First Nations Non-Insured Health Benefits. To use the NCBR on-reserve for these supplementary health benefits would be direct duplication of an available support, and would therefore not be an efficient use of government funds. Projects conducted on-reserve under INAC’s National Child Benefit Reinvestment are categorized under one or more of the following five (5) activity areas:

- *Child Care/Day Care* – to create additional child care spaces and enhance existing day care facilities, so that more families with low incomes are able to access day care or have their child care costs reduced;
- *Child Nutrition* – to support projects such as school meal programs, and workshops for parents on family nutrition and meal preparation, to improve the health and well-being of children in low income families;
- *Support to Parents* – for projects such as parenting skills classes, parent-child support classes, and drop-in centres to help parents/guardians provide their children with a healthy start in life;
- *Home-to-Work Transition* – to provide supports that reduce employment barriers, including training to enhance skill levels to help parents/guardians/youth become and/or remain employed; and,

- *Cultural Enrichment* – for projects that teach traditional culture, provide peer and family support groups and bring together elders, children and youth.

Projects funded under the NCBR vary from First Nation to First Nation and cover a wide range of services according to the needs and preferences determined by the communities themselves. This flexibility is an important feature of INAC’s NCBR, as it permits First Nations to implement projects that not only are targeted at alleviating the effects of child poverty, but also are culturally relevant and responsive to the unique characteristics of each community.

The following table shows the number of projects that First Nations have carried out with reinvestment funding since 2001-2002. First Nations in all participating regions have used NCBR funds to implement numerous new services and benefits, or expand existing services to make them available to greater numbers of people. The number of projects each year has varied. When interpreting the data, it is important to understand that a project that received \$2000 funding counts as one project, just as a project that received \$100,000 funding – therefore, regional project numbers should be viewed comparatively with regional project expenditures (Table 8) for a greater understanding of the true scope of NCBR in First Nations.

Table 1 : Numbers of NCBR Projects for the Years 2001-2002 to 2006-2007, by Region

Region	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Atlantic ¹	9	15	7	18	17	9
Quebec	427	78	64	99	109	105
Ontario	140	78	52	202	248	489
Manitoba ²	80	248	99	0	0	0
Saskatchewan	174	81	72	180	218	616
Alberta	148	163	157	187	331	285
British Columbia	99	642	959	873	499	457
Yukon	11	29	13	10	7	5
Total	1,088	1,334	1,423	1,569	1,429	1,966

¹ Figures for the Atlantic Region include First Nations in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island only, as New Brunswick does not recover funds for NCBR programming.

² From 2004-05 onward, the Province of Manitoba ceased recovering the NCBS, instead allowing the NCBS to flow directly to families; therefore, there were no funds available for NCBR programming in Manitoba Region.

In redirecting resources into social supports and services, many First Nation administering authorities consult with the community at large to identify and prioritize service gaps and possibilities before undertaking to create new or expanded supports for low income families and their children. This process has led to a wide range of supports and services that vary greatly among First Nations and are based accordingly on local needs. As previously noted, supports provided by the First Nations National Child Benefit Reinvestment fall under one or more of five activity areas: child care/day care, child nutrition, support to parents, home-to-work transition, and cultural enrichment.



Activity Area: Child Care/Day Care

The main purpose of child care/day care projects is to provide new or additional spaces in child care facilities for children from low income families whose parents are working or enrolled in training programs. Although the creation of additional spaces is stressed, subsidies may also be issued to help meet the operational costs of existing facilities thereby reducing the direct costs to parents who are working or in training. If such subsidies are permitted, they are paid directly to the child care facility operators; they may not be paid directly to the parents.

First Nations conducted 165 child care/day care projects with NCBR funding in 2006-2007. Table 2 shows the NCBR expenditures for this type of project and the numbers of reported service beneficiaries.

A Success Story:

Lennox Island First Nation Community Day Care Centre

This Prince Edward Island First Nation used \$29,512 of NCBR funding, supplemented by support from other partners (Health Canada's Aboriginal Head Start, Aboriginal Human Resources Development Agreement (AHRDA), and Tots Program) to provide community services to parents with children. The funding was particularly useful for parents who were seeking employment and needed to place their children in the Lennox Island Community Day Care Centre.

The Lennox Island Health Program and Education Program as well as Social and Cultural Program and Physical Activity Programs adopted a holistic approach to supporting the parents and children who had been dependent on income assistance. There was a strong feeling in the community that this NCBR-supported program made a very significant contribution to the well-being of the children and their parents.

Additional examples of child care/day care projects funded substantially or exclusively through the NCBR are provided in Appendix B.

Table 2: Distribution of NCBR Funds (\$ 000's) for Child Care/Day Care Activities, and Numbers of Beneficiaries, by Region: 2006-2007

Region	Expenditures (\$ 000's)	# Families	# Children
Atlantic ¹	387.5	118	242
Quebec	455.9	912	1,932
Ontario	183.0	245	455
Saskatchewan	455.6	272	442
Alberta	853.0	3,519	6,528
British Columbia	922.8	2,010	2,694
Yukon	3.0	102	197
Total	3,260.8	7,178	12,490

¹ Figures for the Atlantic Region include First Nations in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island only.

Activity Area: Child Nutrition

This activity area includes projects intended to support the health and well-being of low income children, for example, by providing meals and snacks in the school setting, by delivering food hampers to homes of low income families, or by educating parents about meal preparation and the nutritional needs of their children. The scope of this activity area may also cover funding for summer day camps, Christmas food hampers, food banks, and community kitchens.

During 2006-2007, First Nations across Canada carried out 510 projects of this type. Table 3 sets out NCBR expenditures for child nutrition purposes, and the numbers of beneficiaries by region.

A Success Story:

Pelican Lake First Nation School Nutrition Program

The Pelican Lake First Nation in Saskatchewan reported that they saw a need for this program because, for many different reasons, children were coming to class in the morning without having had a morning meal. The total project funding of \$35,000 came from the NCBR.

In 2006-2007, the program operated out of the Pelican Lake First Nation School home economics room, with breakfast starting at 8:30 each morning. Students received their meal at a table by the classroom door to avoid having anyone having to walk into the room after the class had started at 9:00 o'clock. The breakfasts included a choice of a fresh apple or banana, orange or apple juice, toast with jam, and once each week as a special treat, yogurt was available on a first-come, first-serve basis. On average, 96 juice boxes, a large box of apples and a large box of bananas were consumed every two days, plus 40 yogurt servings weekly.

The program administrators have reported that for many of the students, the nutrition program has had a noticeable positive impact in that they come to school earlier and their mood is better during the mornings. They report that 240 students have benefited from the project. Pelican Lake has been planning to extend the program to the elementary school students, and to add a hot meal (porridge) during the winter months.

Additional examples of child nutrition projects funded substantially or exclusively through the NCBR are provided in Appendix B.

Table 3: Distribution of NCBR Funds (\$ 000's) for Child Nutrition Activities, and Numbers of Beneficiaries, by Region: 2006-2007

Region	Expenditures (\$ 000's)	# Families	# Children
Atlantic ¹	401.7	158	308
Quebec	728.6	1,079	2,910
Ontario	4,436.2	3,232	6,820
Saskatchewan	4,152.9	11,307	29,165
Alberta	1,894.7	5,980	13,039
British Columbia	2,174.5	6,218	11,222
Yukon	71.0	102	197
Total	13,859.6	28,076	63,661

¹ Figures for the Atlantic Region include First Nations in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island only.

Table 4: Distribution of NCBR Funds (\$ 000's) for Support to Parents Activities, and Numbers of Beneficiaries, by Region: 2006-2007

Region	Expenditures (\$ 000's)	# Families	# Children
Atlantic ¹	539.7	391	787
Quebec	599.2	1,219	1,968
Ontario	1,662.1	1,904	4,035
Saskatchewan	1,164.1	3,140	5,473
Alberta	2,230.9	6,669	13,945
British Columbia	1,387.6	5,399	7,350
Yukon	33.0	102	197
Total	7,616.6	18,824	33,755

¹ Figures for the Atlantic Region include First Nations in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island only.

Activity Area: Support to Parents

This category covers projects designed to support and equip low income parents to give their children a sound start in life. Examples include after school homework programs, developmental screening projects, drop-in centres for parents, and parental skills training. This activity area represents opportunities to assist students in the area of school readiness and ability to learn as well as supporting greater participation by parents and guardians in their communities.

There were 339 support to parents projects in First Nations across Canada in 2006-2007. Table 4 indicates First Nations reported NCBR expenditures in this activity area, and the numbers of beneficiaries.

A Success Story:

Samson Cree Nation Healthy Families Services

Services to parents/guardians and their children and women expecting a child were provided by the Healthy Families initiative of Samson Cree Nation in Alberta. The cost of the project was approximately \$550,000, which included NCBR funding as well as funding from Health Canada, the Canada Prenatal and Nutrition Program, Aboriginal Head Start On-Reserve, and "Care for a Smile". The project served approximately 70 children.

The overall objective of the project was to assist families to prepare and care for their children, from newborn up to five years of age. Specifically, the project was intended to:

- promote positive parenting skills;
- promote children's health and growth; and,
- decrease the risk of serious problems later in life.

The goals established for the Healthy Families program were to:

- systematically assess the family's strengths and needs and provide information and referrals where appropriate;
- enhance family functioning by building trusting relationships, teaching problem solving skills, and improve the family's support system;
- promote positive parent-child relationships; and
- promote healthy childhood growth and development.

The services provided to clientele included voluntary home visitation, nutrition coupons, monthly information sessions, the Nobody's Perfect parenting course, "Care for a Smile", referrals to agencies as required, transportation to prenatal classes, and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) awareness.

Additional examples of Support to Parents projects funded substantially or exclusively through the NCBR are provided in Appendix B.

Activity Area: Home-to-Work Transition

This activity area covers projects that work to achieve the goal of assisting families to become or remain attached to the work force. NCBR funds are used for projects that reduce employment barriers, and projects that build skill levels such as summer student work programs, general job skills training, specific trade and business training, internships, craft workshops, and personal skills development that may improve employment prospects.

First Nations reported 556 home-to-work transition projects with INAC NCBR funding in 2006-2007. Table 5 illustrates the extent of NCBR expenditures for home-to-work transition activities by First Nations in the different regions, and the number of reported beneficiaries.

Region	Expenditures (\$ 000's)	Families	Children
Atlantic ¹	327.8	87	180
Quebec	1,014.3	573	963
Ontario	880.6	502	1,092
Saskatchewan	13,940.1	13,898	26,059
Alberta	2,707.7	3,166	8,813
British Columbia	823.3	1,593	3,150
Yukon	243.0	102	197
Total	19,936.8	19,921	40,454

¹ Figures for the Atlantic Region include First Nations in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island only.

A Success Story:

Kehewin Cree Nation "Kehewin Employabilities"

NCBR funds were used to establish the home-to-work transition project, Kehewin Employabilities, by the Kehewin Cree Nation in Alberta. The total cost of the project was \$530,000, carried out in collaboration with Human Resources and Social Development Canada's AHRDA program and Service Canada. The project served low income adults; 18 participants were accommodated based on continuous intake with an expansion to 60 participants.

Participant referrals were made by welfare administrators. Applicants went through an interview process, and if accepted they were placed on a three week probationary period. At the end of the probation, if they met the requirements they were approved for the program and provided employment with an hourly wage of \$7.00.

The Kehewin Employabilities project provided hands-on training, but more importantly developed personal skills to help participants maintain their employment once their placement in the project was completed. The program included provision of all safety tickets required for employment in some trades, as well as job skills enhancement, and included efforts to address identifiable barriers to employment. Job placement varied from two months to a maximum of six months; the average placement was three to six months.

A significant challenge has been providing transportation for those who have children. Addictions have also been identified as a barrier, and the project was expanded to include personal development training aimed at addressing addictions.

The project has had full support from the leadership and the community as a whole; in its first three years of operation, 112 people have participated. Information about the project has been shared through joint presentations with other communities.

Additional examples of home-to-work transition projects funded substantially or exclusively through the NCBR are provided in Appendix B.

Activity Area: Cultural Enrichment

Participation in cultural activities contributes to the development of pride in one's heritage, which in turn can increase an individual's overall sense of self-worth.⁶ By reconnecting with traditional practices, children's self-esteem improves. A positive cultural identity helps to promote resiliency in the community and support the ability to "bounce back" from adversity. A strong sense of self-worth and healthy self-esteem, along with resiliency, contributes to longer term productivity and employability.

A wide variety of cultural enrichment projects were conducted by First Nations with NCBR funding in 2006-2007. Projects with a cultural focus included: summer literacy training; youth centres; group activities for elders, children, and youth; and family and community supports such as life skills, teaching of traditional culture (e.g., language, art, music, and storytelling), celebrations, youth support projects, peer support groups, and cultural exchange programs.

During 2006-2007, there were 419 cultural enrichment projects carried out by First Nations. The following table shows the extent to which First Nations used reinvestment funds for such purposes.

Region	Expenditures (\$ 000's)	Families	Children
Atlantic ¹	387.5	118	242
Quebec	246.9	846	1,679
Ontario	1,954.9	1,991	4,545
Saskatchewan	1,467.4	4,356	8,692
Alberta	1,597.1	4,662	19,807
British Columbia	1,182.4	4,571	6,792
Yukon	370.0	102	197
Total	7,206.2	16,646	41,954

¹ Figures for the Atlantic Region include First Nations in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island only.

A Success Story:

Skookum Jim Friendship Centre Keish Summer Day Camps

The Skookum Jim Friendship Centre, Whitehorse, Yukon Territory, combined financial support from NCBR with grants from Urban Multipurpose Aboriginal Youth Council; Young Canada Works, Government of Yukon programs, and the Skookum Jim Friendship Centre administration, to meet the \$23,300 total cost of the Keish Summer Day Camps project.

In 2006-2007, Keish Summer Day Camps were held in the Skookum Jim Friendship Centre; participants returned home at the end of the day. The hours of operation were from 9:00 to 4:30 p.m., and there was a maximum of twelve participants in each week-long session. The project served urban Aboriginal children and youth from seven to 14 years of age with a range of cultural enrichment, as well as child care, child nutrition, and support to parents services. In 2006, the third year for the project, there were 102 participants during the eight one-week long summer camps.

Activities selected for the children were intended to be safe, inspiring, and fun, within a positive learning environment. Lunch was served each day as well as two snacks. There were three full-time staff persons and three summer students to coordinate supervision, planning, and implementation of camp services and activities. Information on the Summer Day Camps was shared with others through written reports. Verbal feedback, written evaluations, and parent's comments were solicited as a means of evaluating the program. The community response has been consistently positive, and the program has been widely seen as having provided significant benefits to families and children.

Additional examples of cultural enrichment projects funded substantially or exclusively through the NCBR are provided in Appendix B.

6. Kathy Bent, Wendy Josephson, and Barry Kelly (2004). "Effects of an Aboriginal Cultural Enrichment Program on Adolescent Mothers' Self-perceptions." In *First Peoples Child & Family Review*. http://www.fncfcs.com/sites/default/files/online-journal/vol1num1/Bent_et_al_pp83-100.pdf.

Summary: Activity Areas by Project/Beneficiaries

Table 7 below shows the cross-Canada total number of projects and beneficiaries for each activity area for 2006-2007.

Table 7: Number of NCBR Projects and Beneficiaries by Activity Area for the Year 2006-2007

Activity Area	Number of Projects	# Families	# Children
Child/Day Care	165	7,178	12,490
Child Nutrition	510	28,076	63,661
Support to Parents	339	18,824	33,755
Home-to-Work Transition	556	19,921	40,454
Cultural Enrichment	419	16,646	41,954
Total	1,966¹	90,645	192,314

¹ As some projects cover more than one activity area, this number is not the sum of the numbers above; this is the total number of projects for 2006-2007.



Summary: Total Expenditures by Activity Areas

The amount of reinvestment funds available to individual First Nation communities is calculated regionally. Often, the funds available to a smaller community may not be large, but the local administering authority may leverage the impact of reinvestment dollars by linking them with funds available from other resources such as day care funding, general band revenue, or funding for job creation programs. In many cases, funding partnerships have been also arranged with other programs serving Aboriginal communities, such as Brighter Futures, Aboriginal Head Start, Aboriginal Healing Foundation, Pathways, and Training Employment Skills Initiative.

Given that child care, income assistance, and other social programs are provincially-mandated, differences in regional NCBR spending by activity area may also reflect to a significant extent the relative availability (or lack of availability) of those services

under the reference provincial/territorial regime.⁷ Therefore, data on activity area expenditures across regions should not be interpreted as directly comparable; the level of need for particular supports will vary across regions, as influenced by the suite of available provincial/territorial social programming.

Table 8, below, displays NCBR expenditure levels for each activity area by region. Largely due to expenditures in Saskatchewan Region, the home-to-work transition activity area had the highest percentage of NCBR expenditures in 2006-2007, claiming \$19,936,800 (37.9 percent) of the total national reinvestment. The next most common activity area for reinvestment spending was child nutrition, with expenditures of \$13,859,600 (26.3 percent of the total), followed by support to parents at \$7,616,600 (14.5 percent), cultural enrichment at \$7,206,200 (13.7 percent), and child care/day care at \$3,260,800 (6.2 percent).

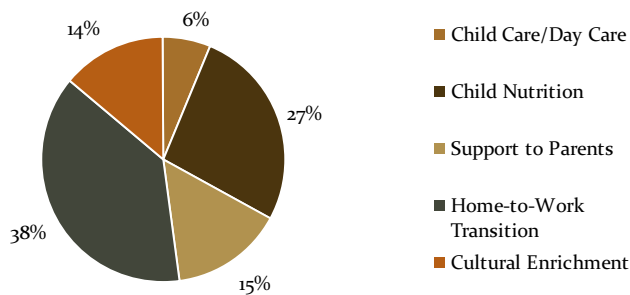
Table 8: Reinvestment Funds (\$ 000's) by Activity Area and Percentages of Total Expenditures, by Region: 2006-2007

2006-2007	Child/ Day Care	Child Nutrition	Support to Parents	Home- to-Work Transition	Cultural Enrichment	Subtotal	(Additional Investment Envelope)	Total
Atlantic ¹	387.5 18.96%	401.7 19.65%	539.7 26.40%	327.8 16.04%	387.5 18.96%	2,044.2 100.00%		2,044.2 100.00%
Quebec	455.9 14.97%	728.6 23.93%	599.2 19.68%	1,014.3 33.31%	246.9 8.11%	3,044.9 100.00%		3,044.9 100.00%
Ontario	183.0 2.01%	4,436.2 48.66%	1,662.1 18.23%	880.6 9.66%	1,954.9 21.44%	9,116.8 100.00%		9,116.8 100.00%
Saskatchewan	455.6 2.10%	4,152.9 19.12%	1,164.1 5.36%	13,940.1 64.18%	1,467.4 6.76%	21,180.1 97.51%	540.0 2.49%	21,720.1 100.00%
Alberta	853.0 9.19%	1,894.7 20.41%	2,230.9 24.03%	2,707.7 29.17%	1,597.1 17.20%	9,283.4 100.00%		9,283.4 100.00%
British Columbia	922.8 14.22%	2,174.5 33.50%	1,387.6 21.38%	823.3 12.68%	1,182.4 18.22%	6,490.6 100.00%		6,490.6 100.00%
Yukon	3.0 0.31%	71.0 7.40%	33.0 3.44%	243.0 25.31%	370.0 38.54%	720.0 75.00%	240.0 25.00%	960.0 100.00%
Total	3,260.8 6.19%	13,859.6 26.32%	7,616.6 14.46%	19,936.8 37.86%	7,206.2 13.68%	51,880.0 98.52%	780.0 1.48%	52,660.0 100.00%

¹ Figures for the Atlantic Region include First Nations in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island only.

7. For example, there is comparatively little need to use NCBR funds for home-to-work transition in Ontario because First Nations may choose to access most of these types of services and activities directly through the employment supports component of "Ontario Works", Ontario's social assistance program.

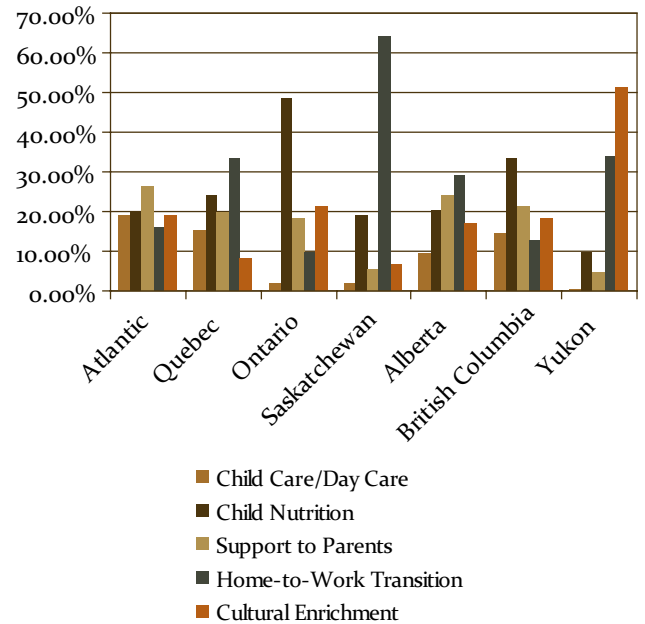
Figure 1: Percentage of Total NCBR Expenditures by Activity Area, 2006-2007



Across regions during the fiscal year 2006-2007, there was significant variation in the percentages of funds that First Nations decided to invest in activity areas. For child care/day care activities, the range was from about nineteen percent in Atlantic region to less than one percent in Yukon region. Cultural enrichment expenditures varied from approximately thirty-nine (39) percent of total regional expenditures in the Yukon to about eight percent in Quebec. Child nutrition expenditures ranged from a high of close to forty-nine (49) percent in Ontario to about seven percent in Yukon.

Within regions, there was varied distribution of funds by activity area. For example, Saskatchewan region allocated the highest percentage of their funding to home-to-work transition activities, placing sixty-four (64) percent of available funding into these projects, but only two percent of funding into child care/day care. By contrast, British Columbia region and Atlantic region opted to distribute funding more evenly across the activity areas. The percentage of total NCBR expenditures by activity area for 2006-2007 are illustrated in the following chart.

Figure 2: Percentage of Regional NCBR Expenditures by Activity Area



Accountability and Monitoring

First Nations reinvestment projects are obliged under the NCBR management framework to reflect the primary goal of the federal/provincial/territorial NCB partnership to reduce the depth and effects of child poverty. The Department is required to ensure that all relevant accountability requirements are met, particularly in yielding positive results for the funds invested in projects. To this end, the Department conducts regular evaluations of the NCBR.

To support the sound and effective administration of NCBR projects and activities, the Department developed the *Proposal Development and Reporting Guide* for First Nations NCBR project administrators. The guide describes (1) the steps involved in planning and processing a proposal, including accessing funding, roles and responsibilities of staff, writing the proposal, a proposal checklist, and submitting the proposal; (2) reporting requirements, including time frames for reporting; and (3) background information on the NCB initiative. Included in the guide is a proposal template.⁸

Information on activities and outputs is an important part of the program management process because

8. An electronic version of the guide is available on the department's NCBR website: <http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/hb/sp/ncb/index-eng.asp>.

it provides feedback from First Nations on innovations, challenges, and other aspects of NCBR projects. Formal reporting on outputs and results is required at all levels.⁹ Project administrators report on all activities generated by reinvestment funding; annual reports list project titles, along with short descriptions outlining the purpose, activities, schedule, and resources used for each project during the fiscal year. Descriptions of project outputs and accomplishments for the year, including the number of project beneficiaries, are included. These First Nations reports are used as the basis for a yearly summary report on reinvestment activities from each region to INAC Headquarters; the regional reports, in turn, are used for the Department's input to the annual federal/provincial/territorial report to Ministers Responsible for Social Services.

The annual First Nations National Child Benefit Reinvestment Progress Report is distributed to First Nations, INAC Regional offices, provincial/territorial governments, and the general public to inform the various interested parties about the achievements of INAC and First Nations in using the National Child Benefit Reinvestment mechanism to create and administer services for low income families and children.

First Nations NCBR projects reached significant numbers of families and children in every participating region. However, it has been recognized and acknowledged that the numbers include multiple counting of participants. Although NCBR project coordinators do their best to accurately record the number of children and adults involved in each project, because there may be more than one NCBR project in operation in a community at any given time the issue of multiple-counting of beneficiaries is exacerbated. For example, if the same child participates in three different NCBR projects, they may be counted (and reflected in the data) as three children. INAC Regions and Headquarters have begun to revise the NCBR data collection instrument to help cut down on the extent of multiple-counting of participants.

A further factor in rolling up the collected data is the differences in reporting 'youth' (e.g., 16-17 year olds). Youth under the age of 18 are eligible for NCBR

programming, however the INAC data collection instruments only include fields to record number of 'children' and 'families'. This has led to a data quality issue, given the descriptors have been left very open to interpretation. For example, if a 17 year-old single youth (not living with parents, but without any children of their own) has participated in an NCBR project, they may be reported by some project administrators as a 'child', but by others as a 'family' (given they are no longer living with parents), depending on the perspective/interpretation of the administrator. This data issue has also been recognized, and the work being done on the data collection instruments intends to address this to improve the validity and reliability of the data.

Table 9: Numbers of Families and Children Benefiting from NCBR Projects in 2006-2007

Region	# Families	# Children
Atlantic	872	1,759
Quebec	4,629	9,452
Ontario	7,874	16,947
Saskatchewan	32,973	69,831
Alberta	23,996	62,132
British Columbia	19,791	31,208
Yukon	510	985
Total	90,645	192,314

9. With the exception of some First Nations funded under multi-year block funding agreements. Under some multi-year agreements, separate reporting on NCBR activities is not required; however, many block-funded First Nations choose to voluntarily report on their NCBR activities.

OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS



Impacts for Families and Children

Fiscal year 2006-2007 has seen significant use of NCBR to address child poverty in First Nations communities. While funding levels have varied over the years (which is expected, given the NCBS reinvestment mechanisms), the number of projects increased from 1,429 in 2005-2006 to 1,966 in 2006-2007.

Table 10 traces overall NCBR expenditures from the beginning in 1998-1999 through to 2006-2007. Since the introduction of the NCBR, there has been a high level of participation by First Nations across the country.



Table 10: First Nations NCBR Expenditures (\$ 000's), by Region: 1998-1999 to 2006-2007

Region	1998-1999	1999-2000	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	Total
Atlantic ¹	1,000.0	2,100.0	3,000.0	1,548.6	991.4	757.1	3,908.3	2,573.9	2,044.2	17,923.5
Quebec	6,824.2	8,539.5	8,539.5	8,539.5	8,160.7	6,202.0	3,314.6	3,134.1	3,044.9	56,299.0
Ontario	2,700.0	3,500.0	5,217.5	7,355.3	8,118.1	7,343.8	8,856.0	9,168.3	9,116.8	61,376.3
Manitoba ²	4,300.0	8,400.0	7,785.6	5,322.1	3,209.1	1,763.9	0	0	0	30,780.7
Saskatchewan	4,400.0	8,600.0	11,440.8	15,391.7	16,851.4	18,815.5	19,763.2	22,709.6	21,180.1	139,152.3
Alberta	1,700.0	7,000.0	9,667.2	8,566.1	9,756.7	10,173.9	9,422.7	10,079.8	9,283.4	75,649.8
British Columbia	2,300.0	3,470.0	4,324.0	4,174.1	5,972.9	6,268.5	6,918.8	6,603.6	6,490.6	46,522.5
Yukon	200.0	300.0	264.1	341.1	488.5	438.5	564.5	344.9	720.0	3,661.6
Subtotal	23,424.2	41,909.5	50,238.7	51,238.5	53,548.8	51,763.2	52,748.1	54,614.7	51,880.0	431,365.7
Additional Investment Envelope ³	YK	0	240.0	240.0	240.0	240.0	240.0	240.0	240.0	1,920.0
	SK	6,700.0	8,100.0	3,799.2	5,522.9	2,198.8	1,173.8	2,139.0	3,193.7	540.0
Total NCBR	30,124.2	50,249.5	54,277.9	57,001.4	55,987.6	53,177	55,127.1	58,048.4	52,660.0	466,653.1

¹ Does not include New Brunswick, because the province/region does not recover any part of the NCBS (full NCBS flows directly through to families), and therefore does not have reinvestment funds available for NCBR.

² Since January 2004, the Province of Manitoba has paid all children's benefits directly to families. Therefore, reinvestment funds are not available for NCBR programming.

³ Funds provided by INAC to reimburse the on-reserve costs of the P/T portion of integrated child benefits.

There has been considerable variation in the percentage of expenditures and types of activities delivered by First Nations since NCBR was first implemented. The variation is seen not only in the amounts by region, but also, as table 11 demonstrates, by levels of expenditure with respect to the types of activities. In 2006-2007, home-to-work transition and child nutrition activity areas reported the highest expenditures.

Table 11: NCBR Expenditures for the Years 2000-2001 to 2006-2007 (\$ 000's), by Activity Area

Activity Area	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Child/Day Care	617.0	813.7	984.2	865.8	2,323.4	3,246.3	3,260.8
Child Nutrition	5,002.7	6,971.8	7,053.3	5,111.3	12,459.1	12,761.8	13,859.6
Support to Parents	3,463.2	1,288.9	947.3	1,750.0	4,994.8	12,584.2	7,616.6
Home-to-Work Transition	5,078.5	5,738.5	7,900.2	8,886.0	17,508.7	17,102.6	19,936.8
Cultural Enrichment	8,821.5	19,219.4	18,971.5	12,491.3	15,462.1	8,919.3	7,206.2
Subtotal	22,982.9	34,032.3	35,856.5	29,104.4	52,748.1	54,614.2	51,880.0
Additional Envelope	4,039.2	5,762.9	2,438.8	1,413.8	2,379.0	3,433.7	780.0
Total	27,022.1	39,795.2	38,295.3	30,518.2	55,127.1	58,047.9	52,660.0

Table 12 below reports the total numbers of families and children receiving services over the period from 2000-2001 to 2006-2007. The numbers have varied, but should be interpreted with regard to the data quality issues concerning reporting on beneficiaries explained earlier in this report. Further, the substantial drop in both families and children numbers in 2006-2007 was due at least in part to the national data roll-up system used in the preceding two years, which led to significant over counting, most particularly in Ontario and Saskatchewan regions. For the 2006-2007 fiscal year, the national data roll-up method was improved to yield a more accurate summary.

Table 12: Numbers of Families and Children Benefiting from NCBR Projects in the Years 2000-2001 to 2006-2007, by Region

Region	2000-2001	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007
Atlantic ¹							
Families	593	683	574	431	1,281	1,087	872
Children	963	1,086	81	776	2,608	2,229	1,759
Quebec							
Families	14,214	4,379	3,945	2,971	4,994	4,333	4,629
Children	20,433	9,610	8,720	5,984	10,583	10,854	9,452
Ontario ²							
Families	2,998	4,500	7,958	2,945	22,960	28,480	7,874
Children	6,101	9,713	16,240	7,768	52,429	68,701	16,947
Saskatchewan ³							
Families	1,294	3,117	7,404	33,363	85,533	154,482	32,973
Children	3,599	9,598	18,803	76,474	209,520	346,308	69,831
Alberta							
Families	3,396	8,218	5,998	9,798	11,910	16,503	23,996
Children	8,354	22,273	15,054	21,460	23,826	36,620	62,132
British Columbia							
Families	17,046	15,125	25,238	40,693	32,722	21,355	19,791
Children	28,907	26,088	43,409	74,586	59,088	35,131	31,208
Yukon							
Families	165	250	98	479	363	326	510
Children	253	506	526	366	1,266	1,327	985
Total							
Families	39,706	36,272	51,215	90,680	159,763	226,566	90,645
Children	68,610	78,874	103,433	187,414	359,320	501,170	192,314

¹ Figures for the Atlantic region include First Nations in Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island only.

² Figures for 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 reflect significant over counting due to data collection and national data roll-up methods in effect.

³ Ibid.

Benefits of the NCBR for First Nations

Since its inception, the First Nations National Child Benefit Reinvestment has generated numerous benefits, both directly and indirectly, for communities:

- The flexibility of NCBR has enabled First Nations to identify their own needs and priorities in addressing social, health, and economic problems;
- The funding has allowed First Nations to redirect resources into services to improve the conditions of life for low income parents and their children, enabling them to participate more fully in social, economic, and cultural activities of the community;
- The management of NCBR-funded projects has benefited First Nations governments and agencies by promoting and developing local initiative and decision making. Local officials and administrators have developed knowledge and abilities that are transferable to other tasks and undertakings, for the betterment of their communities; and,
- Cultural enrichment activities, such as raising awareness of community social, economic, and cultural traditions and values, has fostered a sense of cultural pride and individual self-esteem, which can result in increased levels of employability.

First Nations and the Government of Canada continue to work together to achieve the shared goal of improving the quality of life for Aboriginal peoples. The benefits gained by First Nations children in low income families across the country through the NCBR are a significant result of this common effort.



APPENDIX A: PROVINCIAL/TERRITORIAL AND FIRST NATION REINVESTMENT MODELS



As part of the design of the National Child Benefit (NCB) initiative, the National Child Benefit Supplement (NCBS) was introduced so that P/Ts (and accordingly, First Nations) could reduce their social assistance payments to families by an amount up to the full amount of the NCBS without negatively affecting families' overall level of income, while producing social assistance savings at the provincial/territorial (P/T) and First Nation level. According to the terms of the NCB Governance and Accountability Framework, jurisdictions that chose to "recover the NCBS" were required to put the resulting savings toward National Child Benefit Reinvestment (NCBR) programming. Alternately, P/Ts could choose to allow the full amount of NCBS to flow through to families, but those jurisdictions that chose not to recover the NCBS would thereby not have funds available for NCBR.

Provinces and territories have been able to implement NCBS recovery through one of three mechanisms. For First Nations programming, INAC Regional offices (which fall within the same geographic boundaries as provinces/territories) follow the recovery mechanism of the reference province/territory.¹⁰

The details of each of the reinvestment models (i.e., three methods of NCBS recovery, and the no-recovery model) are provided below:

1. Social Assistance Offset

Under this approach, child-related benefits remain within income assistance, but P/Ts (and accordingly, First Nations) either deduct the NCBS as unearned income, or they reduce their income assistance rates by an amount up to the full amount of the NCBS. In the case of an unearned income deduction, welfare recipients see a direct deduction on their social assistance cheque, for an amount up to the full amount of their monthly NCBS payment. This approach is used in Prince Edward Island, Ontario, Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut. In the case of rate reduction, welfare recipients do not see any direct deduction from their social assistance cheque. Instead, their monthly social assistance entitlement has already been reduced by an amount up to the full NCBS payment. Alberta uses this approach.

¹⁰. INAC Quebec Region is the exception. Because the province of Quebec calculates funding allocations for services for children in low-income families outside of any NCB mechanism, INAC Quebec Region bases the First Nations NCBR funding amount on historical allocations, with the aim of providing sufficient funding for provincially comparable standards of service.

2. Integrated Child Benefit Offset (with adjustment)

The integrated child benefit offset (with adjustment) approach is used by the provinces of British Columbia and Saskatchewan.

Under this approach, the welfare program has been restructured to remove child-related “basic needs” benefits from social assistance. Instead, the P/T child benefits are paid together with the CCTB and NCBS on one monthly cheque to families. At the time of restructure, out of the savings realized by the reduced social assistance benefits rates the P/T puts an amount up to the full amount of the NCBS into NCBR programming; the remainder of the savings is provided to Canada Revenue Agency to pay out to families as the P/T portion of the integrated child benefit.

With this method, P/T contributions to the integrated child benefit are offset by increases to the federal NCBS. The additional P/T savings due to the offset may be reinvested into NCBR programming (i.e., when the NCBS increases, funds available for NCBR also increase), or the P/T may have chosen to “freeze” the amount for reinvestment at the amount available at the time of restructure.

3. Integrated Child Benefit Offset (without adjustment)

The integrated child benefit offset (without adjustment) approach is used by the provinces of Newfoundland/Labrador and Nova Scotia, and while Quebec does not participate in the NCB it has adopted a similar approach in its own regime of benefits for children.

Under this approach, the welfare program has been restructured to remove child-related “basic needs” benefits from social assistance. Instead, the P/T child benefits are paid together with the CCTB and NCBS on one monthly cheque to families. Out of the savings realized by the reduced social assistance benefits rates the P/T puts an amount up to the full amount of the NCBS into NCBR programming; the remainder is provided to Canada Revenue Agency to pay out to families as the P/T portion of the integrated child benefit.

With this method, P/T contributions to the integrated child benefit are *not* offset by increases to the federal NCBS (i.e., when the NCBS increases, funds available for NCBR do *not* increase).

4. No Reinvestment

Some P/Ts have chosen not to recover the NCBS payments through their social assistance programs, nor through offsets to any applicable P/T child benefit regime. In these P/Ts, families keep the full amount of their NCBS entitlement. Therefore, there are no funds available for NCBR programming in these regions.

The Province of New Brunswick utilizes this approach, as does the Province of Manitoba.

APPENDIX B: ADDITIONAL FIRST NATIONS NCBR SUCCESS STORIES



Since 2001-2002, there have been more than 8,000 reinvestment projects carried out by First Nations in all regions of Canada. The following examples of projects were submitted by NCBR project administrators.

Atlantic Region

Membertou First Nation Training Assistance Initiative Reinvestment

The Training Assistance Initiative Reinvestment (STAIRS), a home-to-work transition NCBR project, was dedicated to moving income assistance clients into the workforce through education, training, and job placement. The total project cost was approximately \$500,000. Over 50 income assistance clients participated in STAIRS, which enabled them to access funding for education, skill development, and training.

Clients found part-time or full-time employment or continued their studies by participating in the following STAIRS funded programs:

- Trades: carpentry, electrical, plumbing, heating, auto mechanics, fisheries, forestry, landscaping, small engine repair, etc.;
- Business: computers, paralegal, information technology, clerical, and office administration;
- Services: early childhood development, teacher's aid, paramedics, cooking, tourism, adult care, industrial cleaning, etc.; and

- Personal skills and education: interviewing skills, résumé writing, job search skills, self-esteem/confidence workshops, literacy programs, educational upgrading.

Project funds covered tuition fees, registration/graduation fees, mobility/travel allowance, child care, equipment, books, required work clothes, and other training-related costs.

Three challenges that were encountered by the project included: linking school graduates to employment, lack of case managers, and no access to day care.

Client feedback was obtained annually as part of the case management delivery of the project. There has been strong interest from other First Nations in this program.

We'koqma'q First Nation Mid-Morning Snack Program

The experience of this Cape Breton First Nation demonstrates how a community may use NCBR funding to conduct a successful child nutrition project. There had been concern in the community about children eating “junk food” at school as well as some children missing breakfast in the morning. To deal with these nutrition-related concerns, the Mid-morning Snack Program under the NCBR child

nutrition activity area received funding of \$10,000 to set up a nutrition project for the 154 students in kindergarten to Grade 6 at the We'koqma'q Elementary School. Each day, the children were provided nutritious snacks, including fruits and vegetables, and cartons of milk. For children who did not eat breakfast in the morning, cereal or toast and fruit were available at the beginning of the day at the school.

Positive feedback was received from the elementary school staff and from parents, who were pleased to see their children develop healthy eating habits. Moreover, the First Nation's Social Development Administrator was approached by administrators from other communities who were interested in We'koqma'q's achievements and needed information for possible implementation of similar programs in their own communities. The principal of the school has stated that the program was essential to promote healthy living, and contributed to better academic performance by the students.

Quebec Region

Timiskaming First Nation Developmental Screening

This Support to Parents project was carried out by Timiskaming First Nation in collaboration with Education Services and Health Canada, at a total cost of approximately \$10,300. Eighty-seven children from newborn to age five, from fifty families in the community, participated in the project.

The primary objective of this NCBR project was to provide support to parents by identifying developmental delays of young children, and to help the parents learn more about their child's development and how to remedy any identified delays. With the approval of parents, children were tested by a professional. When delays were identified, the professional discussed remedial plans with parents and recommended in-depth testing and referral to specialized services, as indicated by test results.

The staff of the project arranged promotions and advertising. They also assembled a list of children with

family contact information, and the developmental consultant contacted parents/caregivers for approval and a screening date/location. The screenings were conducted by the developmental consultant. Where indicated, remedial plans were pursued involving the following actions:

- Discussion of activities to enhance the child's development;
- Recommendations based on further monitoring/screening;
- Discussion of resources available for in-depth evaluations;
- Request for written parental consent for release of a report to a third party, when required; and,
- Setting up a tracking system for follow-up screenings.

Referrals were made for the services of an audiologist, pediatrician, speech language pathologist, occupational therapist, optometrist, psychologist, and other specialists as required. Parents have been found to be very cooperative and appreciative of the help, and have been very involved in the process. There has been a marked improvement in the readiness of children for school. The project has demonstrated that awareness is fostered when parents are involved in the monitoring process.

Abitibiwinni First Nation ImplicAction Training

Though a relatively small community with a population of approximately five hundred, this First Nation was able to meet the challenge of making its ImplicAction Training program happen by combining NCBR funding with resources from the income assistance program and the local First Nations Commission to meet the total cost of \$95,000.

This NCBR home-to-work transition project has been running in the community for a number of years, and is aimed at helping income assistance clients develop techniques for returning to the labour market. ImplicAction Training takes place over a maximum of eight weeks, and includes three internships. A preliminary assessment with a remedial teacher who specializes in life skills coaching has provided guidance for possible participants. Many income assistance clients have found full-time employment in the

community or have returned to school to complete their high school studies through this project.

During the project's most recent training sessions, it proved difficult to recruit participants because many income assistance clients were new arrivals to the community, and/or persons with severe limitations. Further, younger clients have often not been interested in the training because they had recently left school due to problems and lack of responsible outlook. The project's training material has been revised with a view to generating interest among the younger clients in returning to school. The training was based on self-management and self-awareness, to help guide participants toward potentially returning to school or entering the labour market.

Training has consisted of participatory training on various themes, including:

- Aspects of personality;
- Self-esteem;
- Irrational beliefs and statements;
- My strong points;
- My passions and dreams;
- My definition of success;
- Professional objectives;
- Research on occupations and training;
- Communication;
- Procrastination;
- Emotional intelligence;
- Getting back on track;
- Support networks;
- Stress map; and,
- Employment workshops and business tours.

The eight-week program has included five weeks of training and a three-week internship in a private company. At the conclusion of the training, participants were required to work together to plan and develop a project that would demonstrate their ability to work as a team and to practice the skills they had learned. They were given a budget of \$1,000 to develop a project that would benefit the community; some examples of past projects have included a collective kitchen, Halloween party for children, and games for school children.

Ontario Region

Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte After School Homework Program

Combined NCBR funds and financial contributions from the First Nations Technical Institute and Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte provided the \$10,800 needed to operate an After School Homework Program, an NCBR support to parents project.

This project was aimed at students from Quinte Mohawk School; there were 24 full-time and several part-time project participants. Children and youth were assisted with their homework and provided help to deal with problem areas by student helpers who were recommended by teachers and worked with the students on a one-to-one basis. There were also three facilitators and a number of volunteers who worked with the students. The project helped students improve their grades, solve problems, resolve conflict, and strengthen their communication and social skills. By participating in the project, the Grade 12 student helpers obtained credit for community service hours needed to graduate.

The students were also provided a healthy snack before the homework session began. Twice a week they used educational software to reinforce their skills in reading and writing.

Saskatchewan Region

Kawacatoose Cree Nation Hot Lunch Program

Kawacatoose Cree Nation established the Hot Lunch Program for students in Kindergarten through to Grade 12, with NCBR funding toward the total project cost of \$23,700. Approximately 200 students participated in the project. This community-based initiative has received active support from Elders, education staff, parents, and volunteer staff from the Asiniw-Kisik Administration Campus. This Child Nutrition project helps low income families and their children by:

- providing an appealing and nutritionally sound food program for students;
- providing meals that would help to meet the daily nutritional and caloric needs of the children;

- providing program that would teach the children, and some parents, healthy eating habits for lifelong healthy development; and,
- assisting low income families to provide at least one balanced meal each day for their children.

The Hot Lunch Program offers one hot meal per day, three days a week, for 27 weeks. The benefits that the community gained from the program included:

- improvement in school attendance;
- improvement in student behaviour;
- improvement in the area of academic achievement and interpersonal development;
- increase in children's alertness, attention span, and energy level;
- children and some parents becoming aware of healthy eating habits which increase lifelong healthy development;
- increased parental involvement in school activities, not only the Hot Lunch program but in other areas of extra curricular activities; and,
- parents who volunteer increased their awareness of how to budget more effectively.

Because the school operates on a tight budget, the project administrators sought out additional funding sources to offset project costs. Donations of wild meat during the hunting season were also sought to help meet the needs of the program. Information about the program was shared with interested neighbouring First Nations who see a need for similar programs in their own communities.

Alberta Region

Piikani First Nation Piikani Youth Centre

The Piikani Youth Centre, a Cultural Enrichment project, was operated mainly with NCBR funding. Up to the fall of 2006, the total cost of the centre was \$189,000; NCBR contributed \$135,000, Piikani Youth and Education Foundation gave \$10,000, and Piikani Child and Family Services \$44,000.

The centre was open from noon to 8:30 p.m., Monday to Sunday. Most parents dropped their children off at the centre, which is situated in a central location, but some children walked or rode their bikes to the centre. There were four full-time employees, plus ten students who worked in the program in summer. New activities, including cultural activities, were held everyday. The children participated in various fundraising undertakings to offset the costs of the activities they took part in. The centre provided lunch and snacks for the children each day.

Children from the ages of eight to 17 participated in events and activities that were hosted by the youth centre during the 2006-2007 year. During the first two years after the centre opened in 2005, the centre had approximately 4,500 children and youth pass through its doors. In the summer of 2006, 2,500 children participated in various events and activities.



Chipewyan Prairie First Nation Milk and Diaper Voucher Program

The Milk and Diaper Voucher Program was developed as a Support to Parents project to help parents in receipt of income assistance. The project has been entirely funded by NCBR.

The program was intended to serve income assistance clients with young children who need funds to purchase diapers, milk, and related supplies for newborns, as well as healthy snacks for young children at certain times of the month. Income assistance clients contact the Income Assistance Administrator on an as-needed basis to obtain vouchers for local stores to purchase necessary supplies for their children. The value of the vouchers during a month may range from \$50 to a maximum of \$80 for an income assistance recipient with children.

The voucher program has been operating for more than three years, and is considered to provide an important financial resource for income assistance families who have limited funds at certain times of the month.

British Columbia Region

Namgis Band Youth Support/Wellness Program

This community used NCBR funding, supplemented by band funds and community fundraisers, to meet the total \$17,000 cost of the Youth Support/Wellness Program nutrition project. This Child Nutrition program provided daily breakfast and lunch and dinner twice a week for the approximately 130 students from the local high school who participated in the program. Tutorial support and life skills training were also provided. The program was staffed by a youth mentor, teachers who volunteered their time, and volunteer cooks.

The nutritious breakfast and lunch foods were intended to ensure that the community's youth had a healthy diet, and to improve their grades. It also encouraged students to stay in school longer and to graduate. Youths participating in the program felt supported, nurtured, and cared for.

Namgis Band also used NCBR funds, often combined with other funding, to support other important initiatives as well:

- after school child and youth program;
- hot lunch program in the elementary schools two times per week;
- young parents nutrition program;
- summer day camp;
- Christmas food hampers;
- off-island grocery shopping for young parents;
- Indian blanket making with moms and children; and,
- nutrition for parents attending life skills courses/training.

These programs were also supported by community fundraising endeavors which created a sense of wellness for the participants because they became part of a team that created solutions. The self-esteem of the participants grew with every opportunity to contribute to community wellness.

Nisga'a Nation Laxgalts'ap Breakfast and Lunch Program

Nisga'a Nation launched their child nutrition project, Laxgalts'ap Breakfast and Lunch Program, a \$57,700 project, with NCBR funding. Additional resourcing was obtained from the Employment Initiative which covered the costs of hiring three project workers. Special Needs incentive benefits were used to purchase a birthday cake to acknowledge birthdays each month.

Beneficiaries of the project included all elementary school children, from Kindergarten to Grade 7; 140 pupils from approximately 95 families.

The three project workers began their day at 5:30 a.m. by cooking breakfast for the children. A multi-purpose room and kitchen in the church basement were used to serve the meal from 7:00 to 8:30; lunch was available from 12:00 to 1:00 p.m. The meals were served Monday to Friday throughout the school year. The breakfast menu included bacon, eggs, sausages, French toast, waffles, porridge, cereal and toast. The lunch menu consisted of sandwiches and soup, hot dogs, spaghetti, pizza, macaroni and cheese, fish and rice, seasonal vegetables, dessert, and drink.

Children were required to maintain order and respect while at the program. A part of the Nisga'a culture includes teaching children while they are eating, an Elder was called in as often as possible to tell the children stories and Nisga'a laws during lunchtime. Nisga'a believes the children retain the knowledge if they "swallow" it along with their food. The Breakfast and Lunch Program staff monitored the children's attendance and behaviour at the program, and collaborated with the school for weekly incentive draws of \$10 gift certificates for 20 to 30 children each month. Parents who could afford it contributed financially to cover the costs of the incentive draws.

The program has continued for three years, and the village government and staff have received positive feedback from both the parents and the school staff. The parents have said that the program helped food supplies at home to last longer. School staff stated that they saw an improvement in the children's attendance, behaviour, and attention span. The program has proven to be worthwhile and beneficial in many ways.

Yukon Region

Carcross Tagish First Nation Community Day Care Centre

Carcross Tagish First Nation offers an example of a community that has used reinvestment funding to establish a community day care centre as an ongoing operation. NCBR funds totaled \$39,000, with additional funds for the project coming from the First Nation government, HRSDC, and Yukon Territory Government.

The centre provided care for 20 children five days each week, and served the children a hot, nutritious meal as well as two snacks per day. Attendance at the centre was consistently high, and the people in the community considered that the project made a significant positive difference for the children and their families.

The day care centre also used its funding to pay the wages of employees, and to purchase arts and crafts supplies for the children. Using NCBR funds for these specific purposes enabled centre management to use financial support from other sources to upgrade staff knowledge and skills in the area of care services for children.

Liard First Nation Kaska Youth Summer Camp

The Kaska Youth Summer Camp was operated by Liard First Nation as a Cultural Enrichment project with NCBR funding and additional financial contributions from Brighter Futures, Liard Aboriginal Women's Society, Work Opportunity Program, and the National Native Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program. The total cost of the project was \$140,000.

Approximately 100 children, each accompanied by an adult, participated in the camp situated 107 miles outside of Whitehorse.

The camp brought Elders to work with the children. One Elder said they were happy to work with the younger generation because they got to know each other better and were better able to communicate. Elders worked with the participants to make dried meat and fish, and picked plants and tree bark and roots, helping the children to understand how to practice traditional medicines. Community meals were offered twice a week. The camp provided Elders with a warm place to stay all summer. Tutors worked with the children to include a language component in the native language, as well as English and French.



PROGRESS REPORT

for the year ending March 31, 2007