



Northwest Inter-Nation Family Community Services Society and Bill C-92 Information Sheet and Community Liaison Officers

Bill C-92 - *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families* is an Act to affirm and recognize First Nations jurisdiction over child and family services. It came into force on January 1, 2020.

Northwest Inter-Nation Family Community Services Society (NIFCS) is an Aboriginal based agency that provides family support, guardianship, and caregiver services to seven First Nations communities in the Northwest region of British Columbia. Our member communities are: Kitselas, Haisla Nation, Lax Kw'alaams Band, Gitxaala Nation, Gitga'at Nation, Kitsumkalum Indian Band, and Metlakatla First Nation.

In 2021, NIFCS applied for funding under the Community Well Being Jurisdiction Initiative (CWJI). The Community Well-Being and Jurisdiction Initiatives Program funding is targeted to First Nation communities to lead, develop and deliver prevention programs and services that:

- are culturally appropriate
- are in keeping with the best interests of the child, as determined by the community
- support First Nations capacity in child and family well-being

NIFCS goal is to support our communities in the ongoing dialogue on the *Act respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Children, Youth and Families*. With the CWJI Program Funding, NIFCS has contracted Community Liaison Officers from July 11, 2022 to September 30, 2022 to increase engagement, provide more awareness of Bill C-92 as well as gather input and feedback.

While this initial engagement for some communities may require a reflection on how the community historically took care of their children and families, it is also an opportunity for each community to provide feedback on the direction of childcare in the future.

One of the NIFCS communities, Lax Kw'alaams Band, has undertaken prevention utilizing the Na Gan Ts'i'stk Grandmother's Group. The Grandmothers Group are already taking steps to care for their children and families. Lax Kw'alaams Band has an existing framework and may want to dialogue on how it will enact their own laws and jurisdiction.

NIFCS would like our member communities to work together and explore options. The Community Liaison Officers will be engaging with their respective community to speak one-on-one or with groups to dialogue and engage. The Community Liaison Officers are as follows:

Joanne Ross, Haisla

Sharon K Bryant, Kitsumkalum

Susan Clayton, Kitselas

Helen E. Campbell-Johnson, Lax Kw'alaams

NIFCS respects and acknowledges that we are not the rights holders, but with over 20 years of sharing and collaborating with our member communities, we believe we can offer value when it comes to exploring future opportunities with respect to children, youth, and families. Under the child welfare legislation, we see an opportunity to support the elected leadership and others the elected leadership would like to engage with such as Hereditary Chiefs, Elders, knowledge holders, families, and youth to move this work forward in a good way.