

Haida Gwaii

Re: How are children cared for in the community? What is the role of families in caring for children?

- *Traditionally, extended family and/or community members would step in to take over care – e.g. adopt - and/or teach the children. This is the case for any/all families and especially when families need help*

Re: What should happen if parents are having challenges looking after their children? Who needs to be involved?

- *Seek solutions within the extended family (e.g. via Family Group Conferences)*
- *Use collaborative processes, such as arranged adoptions*

Re: What are traditional values?

- *Children are sacred; our future*
- *Children need to know who they are and where they come from: their traditional name, clan, rank, and role within the community*
- *Importance of ceremony and transmitting knowledge about ceremony (e.g. Feast system)*

Re: What should change in MCFD legislation / child welfare practice?

- *Legislation and practice (practice standards) should be guided by the traditional ways of communities; existing legislation doesn't fit with traditional child rearing practices*
- *There needs to be an appeal process (and recognition of Haida Gwaii jurisdiction)*
- *Families' and children's voices need to be heard with regard to: where the child will live; any concerns that the family may have; what families are safe; and how the family will be involved in caring for the child*
- *Aboriginal children should not be placed in non-Aboriginal homes outside the community*
- *Policies need to focus on providing support/resources to birth families*

- *Need to focus on prevention-related programs and activities for children and families: recreation, sports, arts/creative outlets, traditional/cultural activities and foods*
- *First Nations (Delegated) agencies need to have more information about Aboriginal CICs; a central FN agency should have information about all Aboriginal CICs*
- *Families need to have more information about their children who are in care (e.g., care plans and custodial agreements) and more knowledge about their rights in being involved in their children's care*
- *First Nations agencies need to have the authority / autonomy to supervise own staff*
- *Need for Aboriginal social workers and culturally safe workers*
- *Need to address inequities in funding (e.g., differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal foster homes, etc.; differences in level of services in different communities; differences between funding provided to birth families vs foster families)*