

Key Messages

Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat

- Davis Inlet was settled as a Mushuau Innu community in 1967. At the request of the Mushuau Innu, and pursuant to the Innu-Canada-NL 1996 Mushuau Innu Relocation Agreement, the community was relocated to Natuashish, Labrador in 2002.
- Children and youth engaged in solvent abuse had been removed from their families and taken to the Grace Hospital in St. John's in 2001. The Governments of Newfoundland and Labrador and the Mushuau Innu First Nation were well-intentioned in jointly removing the children from the community at that time; however, it did not solve underlying problems in the community that may have led to those children and youth abusing solvents; and does not now appear to have been an effective strategy. Such underlying problems appear to persist, and healing in these communities requires the full engagement of the community itself, with the requisite support from Canada and the Province, rather than governments or the Innu continuing to throw money at the problem.
- Having learned from the experience of removing children from their community, the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador has made considerable efforts to address the social problems in Natuashish, but from the position of assisting and supporting the Mushuau Innu with the social problems that plague their community.
- In June 2001 the **Labrador Innu Comprehensive Healing Strategy (LICHS)** was created to improve the Innu's social, economic and cultural well-being and act as a mechanism for the devolution of programs and services. **Federal funding has annually approximated \$20M**, above and beyond normal federal funding to First Nations on Reserve.
- In February 2011, the Innu withdrew from the LICHS and proposed an "Innu Round Table" in its stead, which would be Innu-led, with the funding and support of the governments, rather than the government-led LICHS.
- This Innu Round Table would, like LICHS, provide a forum to discuss community challenges and act as a mechanism for the devolution of programs and services. The federal and provincial governments have indicated the support in principle for the Innu Round Table, and federal-provincial-Innu meetings to refine the structures, processes and administration of the new Innu Round Table are forthcoming.
- The LICHS saw some successes, and blazed a trail for future achievements. One such success was the devolution of K-12 education to the Innu in 2009; it is hoped that a similar successes can be achieved for Income Support and Child and Family Services, two areas which have been the focus of devolution discussions through LICHS.

- Despite the dissolution of LICHs and pending proposal for the Innu Round Table, the parties have continued the work of the Income Support and CYFS subcommittees towards devolution.
- The Province recognizes the importance of sustainable communities, and has exerted significant efforts to assist the Labrador Innu in achieving greater self-reliance in order to support and sustain communities and assist the Innu in preserving their culture and heritage while participating in the modern economy. Achievements in this area include:
 - The 2008 Tshash Petapen (New Dawn) Agreement, which resolves key issues relating to matters between the province and Innu Nation surrounding Innu land claims, the Lower Churchill Impacts and Benefits Agreement (IBA) and Innu redress for the Upper Churchill hydroelectric development.
 - Consultations on a variety of developments in Labrador, including capacity funding on several major projects for consultation and/or environmental monitoring, such as Lower Churchill, Voisey's Bay, and Western Labrador / "Labrador Trough" mineral developments.
 - Creation and support of the \$30M Labrador Aboriginal Training Partnership.
 - The 2004 "Philpott Report" from Memorial University, on the educational needs of Innu children. The Province committed to work with the Innu and the federal government to begin addressing the issues identified by Dr. Philpott and to prepare for the devolution of the schools to the Innu, which was achieved prior to the 2009-10 school year.
 - The Province continues to fund the operation of the health clinic in Natuashish despite the fact Health Canada funds such services on numerous isolated Reserves elsewhere in the country.
 - In 2001, the Province purchased "Lobstick Lodge" for approximately \$350,000, and transferred it to the Labrador Innu at no cost for use as a treatment facility. Government also provided funding in 2005 to reopen the Shushepishipan Group Home in Sheshatshiu.

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