

9A AMH-E 4219 -11 -032 PRA CibM #263840
Child Youth and Family Services in Labrador

February 22, 2008

QUESTION

What is INAC doing in the two communities of Labrador to address Child Youth and Family Services?

SUGGESTED RESPONSE

- Through an agreement with the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, INAC funds the province to provide child welfare services, in accordance with provincial legislation and comparable to services provided off reserve.
- Safe houses for children at risk were constructed and opened in both communities in 2007, providing a safe place for children and youth suffering from substance abuse or other social ills such as family violence.
- In Natuashish, a new wellness center and a healing lodge opened in June 2007, providing facilities for improved healing programs and addictions treatment, children's programs and family support programs.

BACKGROUND ADVICE

Child Youth and Family Services for the two Innu communities in Labrador (Natuashish and Sheshatshiu) are provided by the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Through an agreement with the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, INAC funds the province to provide child welfare services to Aboriginal children on or off reserve. These services are in accordance with provincial legislation and comparable to services provided off reserve.

Through its agreement with the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador, INAC strives to ensure children are in safe and healthy environments. Through the Maintable Tripartite Process and the Labrador Innu Comprehensive Healing Strategy, INAC is working with the province and the two Innu communities to address social and child youth and family issues.

Specific to addressing this and other related issues, a concerted effort is being made to reinvigorate the Child Youth and Family Services Subcommittee of the Maintable Tripartite Process.

There has been an investment of \$101.8 million through the Labrador Innu Comprehensive Healing Strategy from 2001-2005. INAC also committed an additional \$15 million per year (Health Canada provides \$5.5 million annually towards health and healing) for five years, from 2005-2010. Of this amount, \$5.5 million per year has been allocated for Child Youth and Family Services agreements and activities within the Labrador Innu Comprehensive Healing Strategy. This strategy takes a holistic, family and community-centred approach to healing.

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Sheshatshiu First Nation submitted a comprehensive funding proposal in October 2006, totalling \$4.6 million (\$1.1 million for housing) which we were unable to fund. We continue to provide housing assistance through regular housing programs.

Although much progress has been made to date in many areas, the Government of Canada recognizes there are no quick solutions to the longstanding challenges facing the Innu.

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