

Minute for Right Relations
Have a Heart Day
February 14, 2023

Did you know that the Government of Canada gives less funding for important services like child welfare, education, and healthcare to First Nations children than other kids in Canada? That is why the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada and the Assembly of First Nations filed a human rights complaint against the Government of Canada in 2007. In 2016, the Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) tribunal found that Canada's funding practices discriminate against First Nations kids and constituted systemic human rights violations.

On January 4th, 2022 the Government of Canada and the parties to the complaint came to a \$40 billion agreement-in-principal regarding the First Nations Child and Family Services program and Jordan's Principle. The final settlement agreement on compensation would provide \$20 billion to compensate children, youth and some families who were removed from their homes and an additional \$20 billion to address long-term reform of the First Nations Child and Family Services program.

In October 2022, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal decided against approving this settlement agreement citing concerns around the distribution of compensation and timeline. Meanwhile, children, youth and families are still waiting to be compensated.

The case is ongoing with some parties supporting the original compensation agreement and others opposing it, stating it does not do enough. The Assembly of First Nations and other Indigenous organizations (including the First Nations Caring Society) are calling on the Government to pay those who are eligible to receive funding immediately while the details get worked out. People have waited too long for this compensation.

This year is as important as any other to celebrate Have a Heart Day!

What can you do? Below you will find some ideas of how you can celebrate **Have a Heart Day**:

Have a Heart Day

Have a Heart Day is a child and youth-led reconciliation event that brings together caring Canadians to help ensure First Nations children have the opportunity to grow up safely with their families, get a good education, be healthy, and feel proud of who they are.

Have a Heart Day takes place on February 14, 2023. You are invited to take action to remind the government that all children in Canada deserve safe schools, clean water, and access to quality, culturally safe services no matter where they live or who they are!

Snow Bear Activity

Get outside, and show your support! Start by learning why we celebrate Have a Heart Day, and then get outside to create your own snow bears with signs or messages in support of equity for First Nations children.

Have a Heart – Send a Valentine

Send a Valentine's Day card or letter supporting Have a Heart Day to the Prime Minister and your Member of Parliament. Create your own card or letter or get creative using the letter or colouring pages found here

<https://fncaringsociety.com/have-a-heart>

Get Cooking

Bake some **Have a Heart Day** cookies with your group, or family. Find Spirit Bear's Bearcipe cards here

https://fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/38363_sb_recipe_cards_v3f_0.pdf

A few more ideas:

- Learn more about Jordan's Principle and the First Nations Child and Family Services case. fncaringsociety.com and fnchildcompensation.ca are great places to start.
- Write to the Prime Minister and your local MP urging them to honour the settlement agreement and immediately pay the statutory minimum of \$40,000 to each victim.
- Read Spirit Bear and Children Make History – which tells about the case at the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal and the very first Have a Heart Day!
- Adults and older teens check out Alanis Obomsawin's documentary We Can't Make the Same Mistake Twice.

*Adapted from resources by First Nations Child & Family Caring Society
On behalf of the Canadian Shield Regional Council Right Relations
Resource Team
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