NIŁ TU,O Collaborates with Federal Thinktank to Reduce Discrimination & Underfunding

NIŁ TU,O Child and Family Services Society (NIL TU,O) is collaborating with the Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy (Institute) to reduce the discrimination, underfunding and colonialism in Indigenous Services Canada First Nations Child and Family Services.

NIŁ TU,O is proud to announce a new collaboration with the Institute of Fiscal Studies and Democracy, at the University of Ottawa. Through the collaboration, NIŁ TU,O will influence the necessary reform of Indigenous Services Canada First Nations Child and Family Services (ISC) in addition to the creation of a new, well-being-focused approach for Indigenous Child and Family Services (Agencies) providing programs and support for First Nations families.

IFSD is a Canadian think tank working in collaboration with the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), the First Nations Caring Society (FNCS) and the National Advisory Committee (NAC) on Children and Families, to conduct research and analysis to inform upcoming policy changes.

IFSD completed Phases 1 and 2 of this work, identifying funding gaps in "prevention, poverty, information technology, and capital," before collaborating with NIŁ TU,O.

Additionally, IFSD research helped establish the Measuring to Thrive framework, an "expression of a collective vision of holistic well-being defined by FNCFS practitioners."

IFSD will partner with NIŁ TU,O and 27 other collaborators on Phase 3 of its work, to develop the capacity of Indigenous-led agencies like NIŁ TU,O. Through its role in the collaboration, NIŁ TU,O intends to ensure preventative, needs-based funding by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC).

NIŁ TU,O's collaboration with IFSD comes at a critical moment. In January 2016, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal found the ISC - FNCFS program engaged in discrimination by underfunding First Nations child and family services on reserve.

NIŁ TU,O views its collaboration with IFSD as an opportunity to ensure the impending policy reforms include the decolonization of the ISC - FNCFS program to the greatest extent possible. While this is the first time NIŁ TU,O has participated in Federal reform of policies that impact local children and families, this collaboration is a continuation of work already underway.

Shares Executive Director Katharina Stocker: "We have always known that the challenges of Coast Salish children and families are rooted in colonialism and its institutions. Our services seek to remedy the damage caused by colonialism, based on what our families tell us they need. We are really excited to have the opportunity to share our successes in prevention-based programming to help reform Indigenous Services Canada First Nations Child and Family Services."

This collaboration is just another instance of NIŁ TU,O's extensive work decolonizing the Canadian approach to child and family services and moving towards a model which ethically upholds Coast Salish laws and practises while supporting preventative actions.

NIŁ TU,O looks forward to its ongoing work with IFSD for the benefit of all First Nations children and families, but especially those here in Coast Salish territory.

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