



FACTSHEET

7 (Free) Ways You Can Make a Difference

How we can all support culturally-based equity for First Nations children

Content developed from a video featuring Cindy Blackstock, PhD, Associate Professor, University of Alberta, Executive Director for the [First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada](#).

In the video, [7 \(Free\) Ways to Make a Difference](#), Cindy Blackstock reminds us that every child should get an equitable opportunity to succeed, and a person of any age, or an organization or institution can help this vision become a reality.

The following seven campaigns/programs are featured in this video, all bound by the idea of culturally-based equity for all children, with a particular focus on First Nations children:

1) Jordan's Principle: In Canada, the federal and provincial governments often do not agree on who should pay for services for First Nations children, even when these same services are readily available to other children. When these disputes happen, **Jordan's Principle**, named for Jordan River Anderson, a First Nations child from Norway House Cree Nation, advocates that the child receive the service from the government of first contact. By seeking payment later, it means that children will receive necessary care in an appropriate timeframe.

2) Shannen's Dream for Safe and Comfy Schools: When it comes to First Nations students, it is estimated they receive \$2000-3,000 less per student/per year for education funding than others in Canada. This means that there is less money for teachers, libraries, equipment, learning resources etc. for students to benefit from. This organization is named in memory of Shannen Koostachin, a youth education advocate from of the Attawapiskat First Nation in Ontario. Shannen was one of only forty-five children in the world to be recognized by the Nobel laureate for the actions she took to improve the education rights of First Nations children on reserves.

3) I am a witness: In 2007, **the Caring Society and the Assembly of First Nations** filed a human rights violation against the government of Canada alleging that they were racially

discriminating against First Nations children. This discrimination resulted in underfunding of child welfare services and providing less benefits under child welfare laws. Supported by 1,400+ witnesses, the campaign asks for support by encouraging people to educate themselves on whether they believe the government is doing enough for First Nations children, and in doing so, becoming witnesses themselves.

4) Touchstones of Hope: Touchstones of Hope is a set of principles to guide developing a vision for healthy children. This vision is best implemented by community members, child welfare workers, Aboriginal, and non-Aboriginal people having necessary conversations around culturally-based and equitable funding that is used to its maximum benefit.

5) Many Hands, One Dream: This campaign is similar to **Touchstones of Hope**, but focuses on health. It is a long-term initiative dedicated to optimizing health outcomes for Aboriginal children.

6) Child and Youth Engagement: Encouraging youth to participate in culturally-based equity and social justice movements is an important part of making change in the lives of First Nations youth. The **First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada** promotes ways and opportunities to engage youth in addition to providing examples of past successes.

7) Learn More: Continue to educate yourself, your family, and others about the many ways you can become involved and make a difference.

You can become a member of the **First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada** to keep up to date with current issues related to the welfare of First Nations children in Canada.

Learn more here: <https://fncaringsociety.com/main>