# FIRST NATIONS DIRECTOR CASE PRACTICE AUDIT REPORT Ktunaxa/Kinbasket Child & Family Services Society (IAB, IAC, IAD)

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### FIRST NATIONS DIRECTOR CASE PRACTICE AUDIT REPORT

# Ktunaxa/Kinbasket Child and Family Services (IAB, IAC, IAD)

### 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of the audit is to improve and support child service, guardianship and family service. Through a review of a sample of cases, the audit is expected to provide a baseline measure of the current level of practice, confirm good practice, and identify areas where practice requires strengthening. This is the second audit of child protection for the Agency.

The specific purposes of the audit are:

- to confirm good practice and further the development of practice;
- to assess and evaluate practice in relation to existing legislation and the Aboriginal Operational and Practice Standards and Indicators (AOPSI);
- to determine the current level of practice across a sample of cases;
- to identify barriers to providing an adequate level of service;
- · to assist in identifying training needs;
- to provide information for use in updating and/or amending practice standards or policy.

Aboriginal Policy and Service Support is conducting the audit using the Aboriginal Case Practice Audit Tool. Audits of delegated agencies providing child protection, guardianship, family services and resources for children in care will be conducted according to a three-year cycle.

### 2. METHODOLOGY

This was a practice audit and an operational review of the Agency. The scope of the practice audit of Ktunaxa/Kinbasket Child & Family Services was three years. The audit of the physical files focused on the time frame of June 2007 to June 2010.

There were two practice auditors from MCFD Aboriginal Policy and Service Support who conducted the practice audit.

The practice auditors conducted field work from June 14-25, 2010. The computerized Aboriginal Case Practice Audit Tool (ACPAT) was used to collect the data and generate office summary compliance reports and a compliance report for each file audited. There were a total of 81 open family service files, 66 open child service files, 44 open resource files and 67 closed intakes (from the previous six months) at the time of the audit. A sample size of 16 family service

files, 13 child service files, 10 resource files and 17 closed intakes were audited or approximately 20% of the open family service, child service and resource files and 20% of the closed intake files. These files were randomly selected to ensure that a cross representation of files from each team member was reviewed.

Upon arrival at the agency, one of the auditors met with the Social Work Programs Manager to review the audit purpose and process. This auditor also met with the Coordinators at their weekly team meeting to review the audit purpose and process. At the completion of the audit, the same auditor met with the Social Work Programs Manager and was called into a Coordinators' meeting to discuss the preliminary findings of the audit. As well, the next steps of the audit process were discussed including the report and the recommendations process.

### 3. AGENCY OVERVIEW

# a) Delegation

Ktunaxa/Kinbasket Child and Family Services is currently delegated at C6 Child Protection. This level of delegation enables the Agency to provide the following services:

- Child Protection:
- Temporary custody of children;
- Guardianship of children in continuing custody;
- Support services to families;
- Voluntary care agreements;
- Special needs agreements; and
- Establishing Residential Resources.

In 2009, a Delegation Confirmation Agreement was signed enabling the Agency to provide services to the communities of Akisqnuk First Nation, Lower Kootenay Band, St. Mary's Band, Shuswap band, Tobacco Plains Band and the Kootenay Region Métis Governance Council.

### b) Demographics

Ktunaxa/Kinbasket Child and Family Services has been providing C6 Child Protection services since June 2004. The Agency has three offices located in Cranbrook, Invermere and Creston which serve the five communities of the Ktunaxa Nation – Lower Kootenay, Shuswap, St. Mary's, Akisqnuk and Tobacco Plains – and the Métis and Urban Aboriginal people in the Ktunaxa Territory. The Cranbrook office is the main office of the Agency. The communities and the corresponding catchment areas are in close proximity to their respective office and minimum travel time is required to visit these areas.

There are approximately 1064 registered on reserve band members for four of the five communities (the population for Tobacco Plains was unavailable). (source: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Aboriginal Peoples and Communities, Registered Population June 2010). The population numbers for the Urban Aboriginal and Métis families was not available

In addition to the range of services provided through their C6 Child Protection delegation, Ktunaxa/Kinbasket Child and Family Services also provides the following services:

- Infant & Early Childhood services;
- Reconnection services:
- Family Support services;
- Strengthening Families Program;
- Cultural Connections Services;
- Justice services; and
- Sacred Family Circle Services.

### c) Professional Staff Complement

At the time of the audit, the Agency's delegated staff consisted of the Social Programs Manager, the Family and Prevention Services Manager six (5 delegated and one non-delegated) Coordinators (Supervisors) and eleven social workers. All of the Managers, the Coordinators and the child protection and guardianship social workers are delegated at C6 Child Protection. The two Kinship Care social workers have C3 Voluntary Services and C4 Guardianship delegation respectively. Two of the social workers do not have a post secondary degree. The recently hired Executive Director has child protection experience and anticipates applying for C6 Child Protection delegation as well. The Social Work Programs Manager and one Intake Social Worker have been at the Agency under a long term secondment with MCFD.

# d) Supervision and Consultation

The Ktunaxa/Kinbasket Child and Family Services structure is based on six multidisciplinary teams or "Pods" as they are called at the Agency. Four teams consists of a Coordinator, a social worker (s) and a Family Support worker(s). Two of the teams also have Cultural Connections workers and one of these teams also has a Reconnection worker. The fifth team is a Kinship (resource) team and the sixth team is a Preventative Services team. The benefit of this approach is that the social workers work closely with the other members of their team in providing services to their families. The social workers know who they are referring to for family support or other services and the referral process is more efficient and collaborative. In addition to the Kinship Care social workers, the Kinship Care Coordinator has the supervision responsibility for the Ktunaxa House (the Agency's staffed resource) Coordinator and the Ktunaxa House Youth workers. Four of the teams are at the main office in Cranbrook, the fifth team is in Invermere and the sixth team is in Creston.

The Coordinators meet with their team members on a weekly basis for case consultation, Signs of Safety Mapping and Appreciative Inquiry. Individual case supervision is scheduled every one to two weeks to review specific cases. As well, all of the Coordinators have an open door policy and staff interviewed stated that they have open access to supervision as and when needed from their team Coordinator. The Coordinators are also available to assist with the supervision needs for the other teams if needed. The Coordinators have weekly meetings for themselves where they set the agenda for the meeting and while management is often invited, this meeting time is provided to address the needs of the Coordinators.

### 4. STRENGTHS OF THE AGENCY

One of the significant strengths of Ktunaxa/Kinbasket Child and Family Services is the Agency's use of Andrew Turnell and Steve Edwards' Signs of Safety approach to child protection practice. This is a strength based, safety organized approach to child protection work, expanding the investigation of risk to encompass strengths and Signs of Safety that can be built upon to stabilize and strengthen the child and family's situation (www.signsofsafety.net). The Agency was introduced to this approach in 2004 and began to pilot this approach in some of its work. The Agency formally began using this model in 2008 when it entered into a training relationship with Andrew Turnell. One of the KKCFS Coordinator became the Signs of Safety lead and began to supporting the implementation of this approach amongst the three offices. The Agency has made a significant commitment to training the staff in using this approach in the delivery of child protection and child welfare services. While some of the social workers have taken longer to change their practice, the Agency management and the Coordinators consider the use of Signs of Safety an expectation of the work being done at the Agency. The auditors were able to apply the AOPSI standards to the Signs of Safety documentation on all of the files audited. The social workers appear to have a very good understanding of their client's strengths and needs and the plans that were developed from this had their clients' cooperation and participation. The detailed information that was gathered on the files demonstrated that the social workers know their clients well. This approach provides a standard way of how the social workers work with families from their first contact at intake through to guardianship and resources. The language and tools used in an investigation are the same as those used in a planning meeting for a family or a child. However, the outcomes and plans that are developed are specific and comprehensive to the issues being raised. The auditors found that the plans clearly identified the issues, the plan to address them, responsibilities and that the plans were reviewed throughout the time of involvement. While the agency is not using the Comprehensive Risk Assessment, the auditors found that risk is being clearly identified and addressed through the Signs of Safety Mapping, Family Support Plans and Child Safety Plans.

Another strength of Ktunaxa/Kinbasket Child and Family Services is their use of the Best Practices database. This database has been instrumental in how they document information as an Agency and supports the practice model of the Agency. The Agency management has changed some of the features of the database so that the case note headings are the same as the Comprehensive Plans of Care sections which ensures that the social workers are documenting the information correctly.

The auditors identified several strengths of the Agency and of the Agency's practice over the course of the audit:

- Staff Commitment most of the staff have been at the agency for a number of years and they are extremely committed to the children and families they are working with. This was evident when speaking to them as well from the documentation of involvement on the files. Many of the staff are willing to help in areas that are outside of their own responsibilities.
- Organization of physical files the physical files were in good order with the documents being grouped into sections, in chronological order. As well, filing was up to date.
- Referrals for service The auditors found that the Agency social workers
  were determined to find the appropriate services for the children and
  families they served. The social workers effectively utilize the services
  provided by the Agency as well as outside sources to refer their clients to.
  Some of the social workers are working with children and families that are
  in other provinces and in the U.S and their knowledge of the various
  services in these jurisdictions was evident on the files.
- Cultural information Within each child service file there is a Cultural portfolio that is completed by the Reconnection Services worker. This portfolio contains valuable information on the child's individual Aboriginal or Métis heritage.

### 5. CHALLENGES FACING THE AGENCY

The auditor identified few challenges to the Agency and of the Agency's practice over the course of the audit:

- Support to the offices Some of the staff interviewed identified that creating a "team" across all three offices is quite challenging. To address this, the Agency management provides a team day each month to support all the staff being together.
- Communication Some of the staff identified the need to ensure ongoing communication occurs within the Ktunaxa Nation, Métis, Urban Aboriginal and other stakeholders regarding the Signs of Safety work being done at the Agency.

 Culturally Relevant Services – There continues to be the need to ensure services are culturally relevant.

### 6. DISCUSSION OF THE FOUR PROGRAMS AUDITED

The audit reflects the work done by the staff in the three offices of the Agency over the past three years.

### a) Investigation files

As previously stated, 17 out of 67 closed investigations were audited. This program area showed excellent work being done. Of the applicable standards, most were met with 100% compliance. Many positive aspects were found in the investigations including: appropriately receiving reports of suspected abuse and neglect, documenting supervisory approval, documenting the initial plan of investigation, informing the police, documentation of the social worker's knowledge of existing interagency protocols in the communities, seeing and interviewing the parent and child and following the time limits for investigations.

# b) Child Service files

As stated earlier, 13 out of 66 open child service files were audited. The audit revealed excellent compliance to many of the guardianship standards. A number of positive aspects found included: documented efforts to preserve the Aboriginal identity and providing culturally appropriate services, monitoring and reviewing the child's comprehensive plan of care, documenting supervisory approval for guardianship services, discussing the rights of children in care with the child and caregiver, providing the caregiver with information on the child and reviewing appropriate discipline standards, involving family and community when deciding where to place a child, meeting the child's needs for stability by ensuring there is continuity in their relationships, planning a move for a child in care, preparation for independence and documentation of the social worker's knowledge of the existing interagency protocols in the communities.

In some of the files, documentation regarding the social worker's contact with the child was missing.

# c) Family Service files

As previously stated, 16 of 81 open family service files were audited. Excellent work was found within this program area as well. Many positive aspects were found in the family service files including: documenting or accepting appropriate requests for service within the agency's delegation, obtaining information and making appropriate requests for service, involving the aboriginal community,

using and completing voluntary care agreements appropriately, transferring the family service file and knowledge of the various services and protocols within the community.

The social workers at the Agency use Signs of Safety Mapping and the Family Support Plan to document the planning and agreed upon service plans with the family members involved. These tools are used in place of the Support Services Agreement in an ongoing protection Family Service file. The auditors found that the family service plan was documented within the Mapping tool and the Family Support Plan. As well, the Family Support Plans are signed and dated by the social worker and the parents and are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure the plan is addressing the current needs of the family.

# d) Resource files

As previously stated, 10 of 44 open resource files were audited. Very high compliance was found within this program area. Two of the offices had 100% compliance for all applicable standards. Many positive aspects were found in the resource files including: documenting supervisory approval, complete application and orientation, home studies, training offered to and taken by caregivers and signed agreements with caregivers.

### 7. COMPLIANCE TO PROGRAMS AUDITED

Two auditors audited the family service, child service, resource and intake files at Ktunaxa/Kinbasket Child & Family Services. The 'not applicable' scores were not included in the total.

# a) Compliance to Child Protection Investigations

The files were audited for compliance to the Aboriginal Operational and Practice Standards and Indicators, C6 Child Protection including, but not limited to:

- Supervisory consultation regarding child protection;
- Prior contact check and registration;
- Assessment and emergency response;
- Deciding whether to investigate and determining the response time;
- Initial plan and steps in investigation;
- Recording and reporting the investigation results;
- Time limits for investigations to be completed; and
- Developing risk and assessment and risk reduction plans.

**IAB** - Seven (7) closed child protection investigations were audited. Overall compliance to the child protection standards was **96**%

**IAC-** Five (5) closed child protection investigations were audited. Overall compliance to the child protection standards was **97%.** 

**IAD** – Five (5) closed child protection investigations were audited. Overall compliance to the child protection standards was **97%**.

The following provides a breakdown of the compliance ratings:

Standard – AOPSI Child Protection	IAB	IAC	IAD
Standard 1 Receiving Reports of	100% compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Suspected Child Abuse and Neglect			
Standard 2 Prior Contact Check and	100% compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Registration			
Standard 3 Immediate Risk and	100% compliant	No files	No files
Emergency Response		applicable	applicable
Standard 4 Assessing the Child	100% compliant	100% compliant	4 files compliant
Protection Report			1 file non
			compliant
Standard 8 Cooperative Planning and		No files applicable	
Dispute Resolution			
Standard 9 Less Disruption Measures	100% compliant	No files	No files
and Removals		applicable	applicable
Standard 10 Deciding Whether to	100% compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Investigate			
Standard 11 Determining the	100% compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Investigation Response Time			
Standard 12 Supervisory Approval	100% compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Required for Child Protection Services			
Standard 13 Initial Plan of	5 files compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Investigation	2 files not		
	applicable		
Standard 14 Informing the Police	2 files compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
	1 file non		
	compliant		
Standard 15 Steps in the Investigation	100% compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Standard 16 Developing and	100% compliant	100% compliant	No files
Implementing a Child Safety Plan			applicable
Standard 17 Child Protection Agency	100% compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Protocols			
Standard 18 Seeing and Interviewing	100% compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
the Child			
Standard 19 Arranging a Medical	3 files compliant	No files	No files
Examination of a Child	1 file non	applicable	applicable
	compliant		
Standard 20 Seeing and Interviewing	100% compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
the Parent			
Standard 21 Deciding Whether or Not	4 files compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant

the Child Needs Protection	1 file non		
	compliant		
Standard 22 Action Taken When the	No files applicable		
Child or Parent Cannot be Located			
Standard 23 Reporting the	5 files compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Investigation Results	2 files not applicable		
Standard 24 Time Limit for	100% compliant	3 files compliant	2 files compliant
Investigations		2 files non	1 file non
		compliant	compliant
Standard 25 Deciding Where to Place	No files applicable		
the Child			
Standard 26 Take Charge	No files applicable		
Standard 29 Reportable	100% compliant	No files	No files
Circumstances		applicable	applicable
Standard 30 Case Documentation	6 files compliant	No files	No files
	1 file non	applicable	applicable
	compliant		
Standard 31 Transferring Protective	No files applicable		
Family Service Files			

# b) Compliance to Child Service Practice

The files were audited for compliance to the Aboriginal Operational and Practice Standards and Indicators, C4 Guardianship child service including:

- The quality and adequacy of the plan of care;
- The frequency and adequacy of the care plan review;
- The level of contact with the child:
- Placement stability and deciding when and where to move a child;
- The degree of stability and continuity provided to the child while in care;
- Informing the child and caregiver of the rights of children in care;
- Informing the child and caregiver of appropriate discipline policy; and,
- The level of file documentation.

**IAB** - Eight (8) open child service files were audited. The overall compliance was **91%**.

**IAC** – Three (3) open child service were audited. The overall compliance was **94%.** 

**IAD** – Two (2) open child service files were audited. The overall compliance was **90%**.

The following provides a breakdown of the compliance ratings:

AOPSI – Standard Guardianship and Voluntary Services (VS)	IAB	IAC	IAD
Standard 1 Preserving the Identity of the Child in Care and Providing Culturally Appropriate Services (VS 11)	100% compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Standard 2 Development of a Comprehensive Plan of Care (VS 12)	100% compliant	100% compliant	No files applicable
Standard 3 Monitoring and Reviewing the Child's Comprehensive Plan of Care (VS 13)	5 files compliant 1 file non compliant	100% compliant	1 file compliant 1 file non compliant
Standard 4 Supervisory Approval Required for Guardianship Services (Guardianship 4)	100% compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Standard 5 Rights of Children in Care (VS 14)	5 files compliant 3 files non compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Standard 6 Deciding Where to Place the Child (VS 15)	7 files compliant 1 file non compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Standard 7 Meeting the Child's Need for Stability and continuity of Relationships (VS 16)	100% compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Standard 8 Social Worker's Relationship & contact with a Child in Care (VS 17)	4 files compliant 3 files non compliant	2 files compliant 1 file non compliant	1 file compliant 1 file non compliant
Standard 9 Providing the Caregiver with Information and Reviewing Appropriate Discipline Standards (VS 18)	7 files compliant 1 file non compliant	2 files compliant 1 file non compliant	100% compliant
Standard 10 Providing Initial and ongoing Medical and Dental Care for a Child in Care (VS 19)	100% compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Standard 11 Planning a Move for a Child in Care (VS 20)	4 files compliant 1 file non compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Standard 12 Reportable Circumstances (VS 21)	4 files compliant 1 file non compliant	No files applicable	1 file non compliant
Standard 13 When a Child or Youth is Missing, Lost or Runaway (VS 22)	100% compliant	No files applicable	100% compliant
Standard 14 Case Documentation (Guardianship 14)	100% compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Standard 15 Transferring Continuing	100% compliant	No files	No files

Care Files (Guardianship 14)		applicable	applicable
Standard 16 Closing Continuing Care	No files	No files	100% compliant
Files (Guardianship 16)	applicable	applicable	
Standard 17 Rescinding a Continuing	No files applicable		
Custody Order (Guardianship 17)			
Standard 19 Interviewing the Child	100% compliant	No files	100% compliant
about the Care Experience		applicable	
(Guardianship 19)			
Standard 20 Preparation for	100% compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Independence (Guardianship 20)			
Standard 21 Responsibilities of the	100% compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Public Guardian and Trustee			
(Guardianship 21)			
Standard 24 Guardianship Agency	100% compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Protocols (Guardianship 24)			

# c) Compliance to Family Service Practice

The files were audited for compliance to the Aboriginal Operational and Practice Standards and Indicators, C4 Guardianship family service including:

- Information and referral for service;
- Supervisors approval regarding voluntary service;
- Family Service Plan and components for support;
- Review of Family Service Plan;
- Support Service Agreements with families;
- Voluntary and Special Needs Agreements; and,
- File Documentation.

**IAB** – Eleven (11) open family service files were audited. The overall compliance was **94%**.

**IAC** – Three (3) open family service files were audited. The overall compliance was **96%**.

**IAD** – Two (2) open family service file were audited. The overall compliance was **92%**.

The following provides a breakdown of the compliance ratings:

AOPSI – Voluntary Services Standards	IAB	IAC	IAD
Standard 1 Receiving Requests for	100% compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Services			
Standard 2 Supervisory Approval	100% compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Required for Voluntary Services			
Standard 3 Information and Referral	10 files	100% compliant	100% compliant

for Voluntary Services	compliant; 1 file		
	non compliant		
Standard 4 Involving the Aboriginal	100% compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
community in the Provision of			
Services			
Standard 5 Family Service Plan	9 files compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Requirements and Support Services,	1 file non		
Voluntary Care and Special Needs	compliant		
Agreements	1 file not		
	applicable		
Standard 6 Support Service	6 files compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Agreements	1 file non		
	compliant		
	4 files not		
	applicable		
Standard 7 Voluntary Care	100% compliant	100% compliant	No files
Agreements			applicable
Standard 8 Special Needs Agreements	No files applicable		
Standard 9 Case Documentation	9 files compliant	2 files compliant	100% compliant
	2 files non	1 file non	
	compliant	compliant	
Standard 24 Transferring Voluntary	100% compliant	No files	No files
Services Files		applicable	applicable
Standard 26 Closing Voluntary	100% compliant	100% compliant	1 file non
Services Files			compliant
Standard 27 Voluntary Services	100% compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Protocols			

# e) Compliance to Resource File Practice

The files were audited for compliance to the Aboriginal Operational and Practice Standards and Indicators, C4 Guardianship resources including:

- Application and orientation of caregiver;
- Home study of caregiver;
- Training of caregiver;
- Signed Agreements with caregiver;
- Providing caregiver with written information regarding child; and,
- Monitoring and reviewing homes.

**IAB** – Six (6) open resource files were audited. Overall compliance to the resource standards was **100%**.

**IAC** – Two (2) open resource files were audited. Overall compliance to the resource standards was **100**%.

**IAD** -Two (2) open resource files were audited. Overall compliance to the resource standards was **70%**.

The following provides a breakdown of the compliance ratings:

AOPSI – Voluntary Services Standards	IAB	IAC	IAD
Standard 28 Supervisory Approval	100% compliant	100% compliant	100% compliant
Required for Family Care Home			
Services			
Standard 29 Family Care Homes –	100% compliant	100% compliant	1 file compliant
Application and Orientation			1 file non
			compliant
Standard 30 Home Study	No files	100% compliant	1 file compliant
	applicable		1 file non
6. 1 1247	4000/ 1: 1	4000/	compliant
Standard 31 Training of Caregivers	100% compliant	100% compliant	1 file compliant
			1 file non
Standard 22 Signed Agreement with	100% compliant	100% compliant	compliant 1 file compliant
Standard 32 Signed Agreement with Caregivers	100% compliant	100% compliant	1 file compilant
Caregivers			compliant
Standard 33 Monitoring and	100% compliant	100% compliant	1 file compliant
Reviewing the Family Care Home	20070 00р		1 file non
,			compliant
Standard 34 Investigation of Alleged	No files applicable		
Abuse or Neglect in a Family Care			
Home			
Standard 35 Quality of Care Review	No files applicable		
Standard 36 Closure of the Family	No files applicable		
Care Home			

### 8. **RECOMMENDATIONS**:

Date: April 7, 2011

Present:

A/ Executive Director, Ktunaxa/Kinbasket Child & Family Services

Family and Prevention Services Manager, Ktunaxa Kinbasket Child & Family Services

Business & Contracts Manager, Ktunaxa Kinbasket Child & Family Services

A/Quality Assurance Manager, Aboriginal Policy & Service Support

Practice Analyst, Aboriginal Policy & Service Support

Quality Assurance Analyst, Aboriginal Policy & Service Support

The following recommendations and responses were developed in consultation with Ktunaxa Kinbasket Child and Family Services and MCFD Aboriginal Policy & Service Support (APSS). The timeframe for completion of the recommendations is three months from the date of final sign off.

Ktunaxa Kinbasket Child and Family Services Management will:

### Child Service:

1) Review the requirements of Standard 8 - Social workers relationship and contact with the child in care - with staff at the delegated staff meeting on April 20/11. As agreed, this review will increase the awareness amongst the staff and coordinators regarding the need to improve documentation on this standard.

Signatures on PDF final copy.