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# **+ RECONCILIATION**

## **ADVANCING RECONCILIATION WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES**

It is unacceptable that anyone living in Canada should not be able to safely drink the water that comes out of their taps. No person should be forced to live in overcrowded and unsafe homes, and no young person should have to move far from home to get a good education. Yet, all over Canada, these are exactly the challenges faced by Indigenous Peoples. Indigenous Peoples, non-Indigenous Canadians and the Government agree that this must change. Together, Canada and Indigenous Peoples are forging a new relationship, based on recognition of rights, respect, cooperation and partnership.

### **MEASURES**

#### **Clean and Safe Drinking Water**

The Government is committed to eliminating all long-term drinking water advisories on public water systems on reserve by March 2021. As of February 12, 2018, 52 long-term drinking water advisories on public water systems have been lifted. Through Budget 2018, the Government is building on investments of previous budgets, with new funding to accelerate the construction of new water systems and renovate existing ones. With these investments, the Government will ensure that more affected water systems will become functional earlier than 2021. New investments would also support efforts to recruit and train water operators—as well as establish innovative First Nations-led service delivery models.

#### **Ensuring That Indigenous Children Are Safe and Supported**

Indigenous children under the age of 14 make up less than eight per cent of all children in Canada, yet they represent more than half of the children living in foster care in private homes in the country. This needs to change. The Government is committed to helping Indigenous children and families to be safe and

supported within their communities. With Budget 2018, the Government is proposing to increase support for First Nations service providers and support prevention, well-being, and family preservation efforts within communities.

#### **Distinctions-Based Housing**

Safe, adequate and affordable housing is essential, but for too many Indigenous Peoples, this remains out of reach. Nearly one in five Indigenous people live in housing that is in need of major repairs, and one in five also live in housing that is overcrowded. Indigenous leaders have told the Government that when it comes to housing in First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation communities, the best approach is one that respects the distinct needs of each Indigenous group. The Government agrees. To address these issues, the Government is providing new, distinctions-based support through Budget 2018 for a First Nations-led housing strategy, an Inuit-led housing plan and the Métis Nation's housing strategy.

#### **Healthier Communities**

There are significant gaps in health between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Infant mortality rates for First Nations and Inuit children are

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up to three times higher than in the Canadian population. Suicide rates among First Nations youth is up to seven times higher. And the prevalence of tuberculosis in the Inuit population was 270 times the rate for the Canadian-born, non-Indigenous population in 2015. We must bridge these gaps. The Government, through Budget 2018, is enhancing the delivery of culturally appropriate addictions treatment and prevention services in communities with high needs, responding to high rates of tuberculosis in Inuit communities, and supporting access to First Nations-controlled quality health care, all of which would lead to improved Indigenous health.

## Skills and Employment

Indigenous Peoples are less likely to be employed than non-Indigenous Canadians, and typically earn less. These ongoing employment gaps must be addressed to improve the potential for Indigenous Peoples to fully participate in the economy and strengthen their communities. The Government has consulted with Indigenous leadership and recognizes the importance of a distinctions-based approach. To this end, the Government is announcing through Budget 2018 the creation of a new Indigenous Skills and Employment Training Program, which would provide distinctions-based support for First Nations, the Métis Nation and Inuit, as well as urban and non-affiliated Indigenous Peoples. These investments will support Indigenous Peoples to develop employment skills and pursue training for lasting employment.

## Supporting the Recognition of Rights

Canada has advanced a number of modern treaties and agreements since the 1970s, but in many cases, the pace of progress has been slow. Negotiations can take a decade or more, and Indigenous communities are forced to take on debt in order to participate. Through Budget 2018, the Government is taking new steps to increase the number of modern treaties and self-determination agreements, in a manner that reflects a recognition of rights approach. As part of this new approach, the Government will replace the use of loans with non-repayable contributions to fund Indigenous participation in the negotiation of modern treaties. Furthermore,

the Government will engage with affected Indigenous groups on how best to address past and present negotiation loans, including forgiveness of loans.

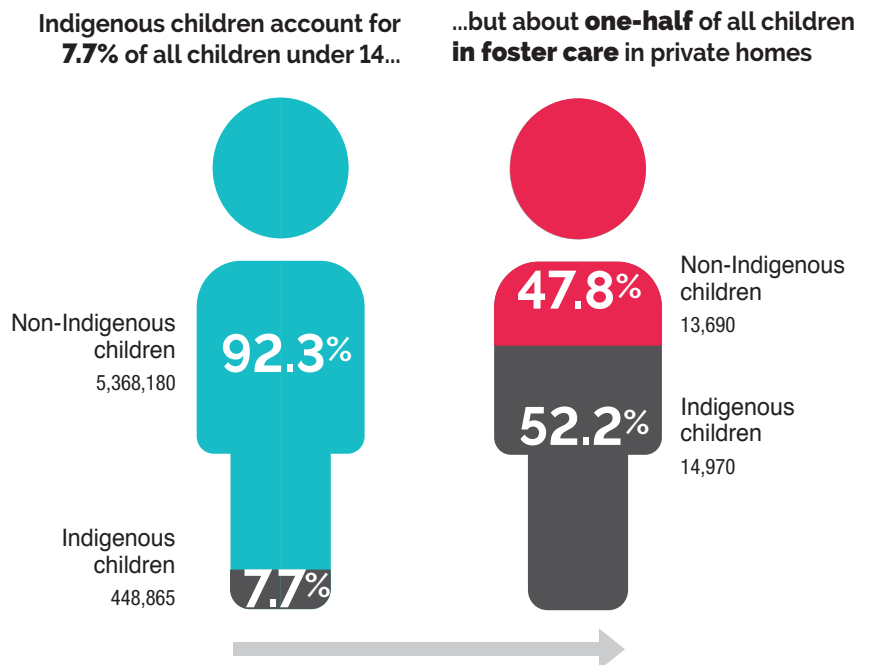
## Helping Indigenous Nations Reconstitute

Indigenous groups are seeking to rebuild their nations in a manner that responds to their priorities and the unique needs of their communities. The Government supports this vital work. Budget 2018 provides new capacity development for Indigenous peoples, to support activities that facilitate their own path to reconstituting their nations.

## Permanent Bilateral Mechanisms

To better serve Indigenous Peoples engaged in the important work of advancing self-government and greater self-determination, the Government created Permanent Bilateral Mechanisms with First Nations, Inuit and the Métis Nation to enable Crown-Indigenous cooperation on annual priority-setting and joint policy development. Through Budget 2018, the Government is proposing increased and ongoing support for

## OVERREPRESENTATION OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN IN FOSTER CARE IN PRIVATE HOMES



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the Permanent Bilateral Mechanisms. This will enable the Bilateral Mechanisms to move beyond the first year of initial engagement and allow First Nations, Inuit and the Métis Nation to work on their own priority projects.

## **New Fiscal Relationship**









The Government recognizes that in order to advance reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples and facilitate greater self determination—including self-government—a new fiscal relationship is needed. As a part of this, Budget 2018 provides new funding to better support First Nations communities, to support strong Indigenous institutions and to advance the new fiscal relationship with First Nations. The Government, with First Nations partners, will also conduct a

comprehensive and collaborative review of current federal government programs and funding that support First Nations governance.

This will help ensure that these programs provide communities with sufficient resources to hire and retain the appropriate financial and administrative staff to support good governance, plan for the future and advance their vision of self determination. Through Budget 2018, the Government is also providing support to begin the implementation of new fiscal policy reforms that have been co-developed with self-governing Indigenous Peoples in Canada. This funding will go to support key priorities, including the closing of socio-economic gaps, infrastructure, data collection and governance.

## **WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE CLEAN AND SAFE DRINKING WATER**

**With Budget 2018, the Government is taking further steps towards reconciliation between Canada and Indigenous Peoples. Investments will lead to:**

-  Long-term drinking water advisories on reserve being lifted
-  Communities having access to clean drinking water
-  Indigenous children and families being safe and supported within their communities
-  Better housing for First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation communities
-  Indigenous Peoples receiving the skills training they need to participate in the economy
-  First Nations, Inuit and Métis Nation leaders having a permanent forum for joint priority-setting with the Government of Canada
-  Strong Indigenous institutions that play a leading role in the delivery of public services to Indigenous Peoples
-  Sustainable and sufficient health resources available in each community