

# CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES STANDING COMMITTEE REPORT ON ACTIVITIES

2020 - 2021 FISCAL YEAR



First Nations of Northern  
Manitoba Child and  
Family Services Authority



The General Child  
and Family Services  
Authority



# Table of Contents

CHILD AND FAMILY (CFS) STANDING COMMITTEE .....	2
PURPOSE STATEMENT .....	2
LEADERSHIP COUNCIL .....	2
MISSION STATEMENT .....	2
MEMBERSHIP .....	2
CORE AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY .....	3
1. PRACTICE .....	3
Practice: Internal .....	4
Practice: External – Community Collaterols.....	6
Practice: Presentations and Consultations with Key Stakeholders .....	6
2. FINANCE/FUNDING .....	7
3. LEGISLATION/REGULATION/STANDARDS/POLICY/ RECOMMENDATIONS .....	7
Legislation.....	8
Regulation .....	8
Standards.....	8
Policy .....	9
Recommendations.....	9
TRAINING.....	9
EVALUATION AND REPORTING .....	10
STRATEGIC GOALS FOR 2020/2021 .....	10
CONCLUSION .....	11

# CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES (CFS) STANDING COMMITTEE

## PURPOSE STATEMENT

Standing Committee's purpose is "to provide leadership, support, and guidance in the development and implementation of strategies to inform and influence services and policies, as well as to **actively participate in setting the overall direction** and to ensure resilience for child welfare in Manitoba".

The role of the Standing Committee is set out in section 30(2) of *The Child and Family Services Authorities Act*, which states:

*The Standing Committee is to serve as an advisory body to the authorities and the government, and is responsible for facilitating cooperation and coordination in the provision of services under this Act.*

Standing Committee meetings serve as a vehicle to stay up-to-date and participate in decisions relating to changes impacting child welfare practices. Additionally, meetings provide an opportunity to bring forward the voice of staff of Authorities agencies and raise any concerns with the Department of Families to determine and facilitate solutions.

## LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

As per *The Child and Family Services Authorities Act*:

### Leadership Council established

[29\(1\)](#) A Leadership Council is established consisting of persons designated in accordance with the regulations.

### Role of the Council

[29\(2\)](#) The role of the Council is to provide a forum to discuss issues related to child and family services. The members of Standing Committee recognize their respective political leadership and value the collaborative working partnership.

## MISSION STATEMENT

Standing Committee's mission is "to collaboratively provide a framework and structure to our agencies to support the needs of families, children, and their communities while respecting and honouring the various aspects of diversity".

## MEMBERSHIP

Standing Committee meets monthly and is comprised of the following members:

- The Chief Executive Officer or designate of the First Nations of Northern Manitoba Child and Family Services Authority;
- The Chief Executive Officer or designate of the Southern First Nations Network of Care;
- The Chief Executive Officer or designate of the Metis and Inuit Child and Family Services Authority;
- The Chief Executive Officer or designate of the General Child and Family Services Authority;
- The Director of Child Welfare or designate of the Child and Family Services Branch, Department of Families, Government of Manitoba; and,
- An additional designate from the Metis and Inuit Child and Family Services Authority.

## CORE AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY

Standing Committee has established five core areas of responsibility it responds to:

1. Practice
2. Finance/Funding Decisions
3. Legislation/Regulation/Standards/Policy/Recommendations
4. Training
5. Evaluation and Reporting

Standing Committee's Report on Activities for 2020-2021 is summarized under each of the five core areas of responsibility as follows:

### Practice

Standing Committee's key objective for practice is to develop, lead, and implement best practice which prioritizes that children have safety, stability and permanency from childhood through to adulthood. This is achieved by supporting families and communities in their commitment to care for their children.

Standing Committee strives to ensure collective practice decisions reflect the diversity of services required for families and children involved with child welfare in the province. A transparent, coordinated, collaborative effort is not only required within the child welfare system (internal), it is also required in the work with community and

departmental collaterals (external). Working with 'external' organizations helps to move practice towards a shared understanding of need.

Standing Committee meetings provide an opportunity for Authority and Child and Family Services Branch (CFS Branch) leadership to remain informed of, and to influence and implement changes relating to practices impacting child welfare.

The areas of practice, internal and external, which Standing Committee addressed during the 2020-2021 fiscal year include:

## Practice: Internal

### Birth Alerts

The Minister of Families announced an end to the practice of issuing birth alerts effective April 1, 2020; however, full implementation was delayed due to the COVID-19 Pandemic and operational impacts for Public Health and the Child Welfare System. Public Health was focused on their response to the COVID-19 pandemic to help reduce the spread of the virus, while the CFS system was ensuring compliance with public health orders and shifting operationally to prevent virus spread. Neither system were in a position to implement a broad system change that would place additional pressure on the health care system. As a provisional measure, the province issued an interim policy for CFS agencies regarding their work with high risk expectant parents. The oversight provided by the CFS Authorities and the transition to the new practice model resulted in significant reductions in birth alerts issued by agencies during this interim period.

The CFS Branch and the Authorities worked collaboratively on the proposed new standards and communication materials. Updates to Standards 1.2.2 (outlining the new voluntary model of care) and 1.3.1 (with birth alerts removed from child protection services); a Frequently Asked Questions document for CFS; an information sheet on making a referral to Public Health; an information sheet on how to enter the new model on the Child and Family Services Applications (CFSA); and, a diagram showing the flow of working with a high risk parent under the new practice model, was distributed to the CFS Authorities and CFS Agencies for implementation July 1, 2020.

A quality assurance framework is being collaboratively developed to monitor implementation and ensure outcomes of the new practice model are as expected. This data will guide continued practice improvements and strategic service delivery planning.

### Child and Family Services Applications (CFSA) User Group

The CFSA User Group completed the work tasked to them by Standing Committee in 2020-2021, which included:

- Updates to the Child and Family Services Application:
  - Updated terminology from the term Shaken Baby Syndrome to *Traumatic Head Injury – Child Maltreatment*
- Form Storage, ownership and retention work: ensuring that the most recent versions of all forms, policies, protocols and circulars approved by Standing Committee are stored and maintained on CFSIS.
- The Child and Youth Services Division (CYSO) conducted initial review of forms including the creation of folders to house forms, protocols, circulars etc.
- Phase 2 included engagement with key stakeholders on identifying form ownership, form updates required (currently in progress).
- Phase 3 includes final identification of forms/form owners and form updates required.
- Review and update of CFSIS staff records was completed and an annual review and approval process put into place.

### COVID – 19 Response

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 virus a pandemic. On March 12, 2020, Manitoba had its first presumptive case and, as a result, provincial public health began providing information and implementation of various strategies including, social distancing, hand washing, and remaining at home if symptomatic, to limit the spread of COVID-19.

As the number of confirmed and presumptive COVID-19 cases in the province grew, additional measures were implemented by Public Health. As part of pandemic planning, the Emergency Management Team (EMT), comprised of representatives from the four Child and Family Services Authorities and the Child and Family Services Branch, was established. The agreement outlines EMT's role and responsibility which is to act as the overall coordinating and decision-making body within the CFS system (regarding child welfare programs and services); act as a central hub for communication and surveillance; and to develop agreements to guide decision-making in an emergency situation.

In 2020/21, highlights of the EMT committee include:

- Hold regular teleconference meetings to facilitate information sharing, ensure coordination of responses and clarity on public health guidelines and orders relative to essential child welfare service delivery.

- Tracking of essential data related to COVID-19 including creating and supporting changes to electronic case management to support tracking and retention of data; one example is vaccinations of children in care.
- Practice guidelines were created and regularly updated based on Public Health orders; and implemented and supported by Standing Committee.
- Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) was ordered and dispersed in partnership with CFS Authorities and Agencies; including guidance on when and how to use PPE.
- Information sharing that supported responses to the pandemic were regularly done and balanced with ensuring families receiving services, children in care and their alternate caregivers had accurate information, tools to ensure access to school and families were constantly being monitored and addressed.
- Balancing responses and compliance with Public Health Orders with best practice was a regular aspect of all day to day operational work.
- Testing, contact tracing, and vaccine roll out were some of the key issues addressed.
- Practices related to family visits, supports and protection services were altered and continue to adjust to balance essential service needs with Public Health order in place to reduce transmission.
- 65 COVID-19 Specific Circulars were issued in order to support child welfare essential service delivery and overall practice based on Public Health orders and advice.

Throughout the pandemic, the CFS system has had to be nimble and flexible. They have provided supports to families, communities and to children in care. Service delivery shifting to remote practices has had both positive impacts and posed challenges. Learning from the pandemic will be important because it will inform best practice and identify impacts on families; especially those which are the most vulnerable.

**Foster Parent Applicant and Adoptive Parent Applicant *Personal Health Information Act (PHIA)* Medical forms and policy** were revised to ensure PHIA compliance and clarity on the purpose of minimal disclosure with respect to medical references/reports required as per *Foster Homes Licensing Regulation (M.R. 18/99)*, Section 3(2) and the *Adoption Regulation (M.R. 19/99)*, Section 17(1).

These forms now include a preamble which provides details on the collection, including minimal and reasonably necessary disclosure to meet the needs to assess the applicants' suitability or support needs if they adopt or foster. Additionally, the form and policy provide clarity on use, disclosure and retention of the information provided on an individual's medical report. Implementation included a Standing Committee approved circular which will be distributed to key stakeholders in April 2021.

#### **Improved Communication Strategies to support changes to practice, policy and legislation**

The use of Circulars beyond those used to message COVID-19 changes to practice was adopted by Standing Committee. Consultation and/or approval by Standing Committee on proposed Circulars by the CFS Branch to advise CFS Authorities and its agencies of major changes to legislation, policy and practices including new forms or supporting documents (for example FAQ, protocols). This will ensure ease of access, clear communication and input from the CFS agencies to ensure that policy and practice changes are applicable and understood. Consistent messaging and ease of access to information is a key objective.

#### **Foster Home Policy and Practice Subcommittee (FHPP)**

##### *Cultural Training for Foster Parents*

Standing Committee tasked FHPP sub-committee to join a working group with the Joint Training Team (JTT) to address the Child Welfare Legislative Review recommendation for mandatory cultural training for all foster parents. In January 2020, the province advised that one-time funding was available to assist in the development and roll-out of this. JTT members worked with their respective Authorities on proposals to access this funding, which were submitted in March 2020 and approved. Due to COVID-19 and various complicating factors Authorities have not been able to proceed as planned. Development of the training and roll-out is planned for 2021-2022 pending public health orders and return to normal work processes post pandemic.

##### *Foster Parent Appeals and Adjudicators*

Discussions occurred regarding adjudicators lack of knowledge regarding two key areas: the impacts of colonization; and second, the federal legislation, *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*, (the Federal Act) specifically the need to consider placement priorities as part of the foster parent appeal process. This resulted in the below three actions:

- 1) Clarification on the role, responsibility and qualification required to be an Adjudicator (appointed by the Minister of Families). A collaborative recruitment strategy to enlist Indigenous adjudicators and agreement that all new adjudicators would be formally vetted and approved via Standing Committee.

- 2) Training for Adjudicators was developed that ensures knowledge of the Federal Act and how this must be applied and the need for training that includes cultural components including the impacts of colonization; and that this training would be provided by two trainers to ensure Indigenous content is taught by an Indigenous person.
- 3) Development and distribution of materials to the CFS sector, foster parents and key stakeholders about the removal of a child from a foster home, the steps, the applicability of the Federal Act and the legislative requirement and importance of placement priority.

#### *Removal of a Child from Foster Home Documents*

Standing Committee approved various documents to support practice regarding when a child in care moves to a new placement. A circular entitled *When a Child Moves - Working Together towards Placement that Ensures the Best Interests of Children* is a practice guide to assist agencies and Authorities in both collaborative case planning and documentation that provides clear rationale for the decision. A Frequently Asked Questions document was created to provide information to various key stakeholders and to ensure consistency in the messages about this practice area.

#### **The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) - Standardized Procedure for Processing Requests**

In 2018-2019, Standing Committee agreed to the development of a shared procedure to process FIPPA requests received by Authorities to ensure consistency of response across the system.

Due to COVID-19 and organizational changes, the Information & Privacy Policy Secretariat will continue to reach out to Authorities to complete delegation forms and provide support and training if requested.

#### **Standing Committee and the Office of the Child and Family Services Standing Committee (OCFSSC)**

The Standing Committee Report on Activities for 2019-2020 was approved September 2020 and based on a previous recommendation by the Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth, future reports will be available to the public on-line.

#### **Practice: External – Community Collaterals**

##### **B & L Resources for Children, Youth and Families (B & L Resources Inc.)**

On August 20, 2020, the Province of Manitoba gave notice to B&L Inc. indicating it would no longer be utilizing B & L Resources Inc. as a foster care provider. Standing Committee agreed to the development of a Transition Team to support the required transition activities. A transition team with representation from the CFS Branch and CFS Authorities, was established to transfer licensing, management and support of the foster homes to CFS agencies. Regular and on-going communication occurred to ensure all foster parents, B & L Resources Inc. staff, the CFS agency and Authority, and Provincial staff worked collaboratively, so that the change did not disrupt services to children. The transition of these foster homes began in October 2020 and was fully implemented December 2020.

#### **Practice: Presentations and Consultations with Key Stakeholders**

**Child Protection Centre:** Representatives from Winnipeg Regional Health Authority presented an overview of the proposed changes to their therapeutic model and services that include Trauma Informed, Cognitive and Behavioural Therapy (CBT), and culturally appropriate CBT within a safe environment. A shift towards providing therapeutic services as part of their continuum of forensic, medical and life specialist service delivery model. Standing Committee was provided an opportunity to provide feedback to ensure that the revised service model meets the needs of children and families, who are mutual clients.

**Collaboration with Women’s Corrections Facility:** Standing Committee received an overview of the *CFS Collaboration with Women’s Corrections*, including an overview of The Walking Bear Therapeutic Community that was opened by Corrections on October 6, 2020.

The CFS Branch is collaborating with Women’s Corrections to develop a pilot presentation to mothers in custody providing them with a better understanding of the CFS system, their rights as mothers, and what to expect generally when working with CFS and system navigation. Standing Committee approved establishment of a short-term collaborative working group with a key objective of bridging the connections and developing a pathway of communication between Women’s Corrections and CFS agencies.

**Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre:** Presented to Standing Committee on three key areas in order to engage and consult to ensure programs and service delivery models meet the needs of CFS agencies and the families they serve:

1. Sexual Exploitation Continuum of Service Delivery Shift
2. Family Group Conferencing and expansion with a fee for service option
3. Circle of Care group care program

**The Manito Ikwe Kagiikwe (Spirit Woman Teachings) – The Mothering Project:** Mount Carmel Clinic presented an overview of its services and provided a detailed summary of the Mothering Project. This prevention and early intervention project is one option to provide supports to mothers, as part of the elimination of birth alerts and a practice shift towards voluntary support services. The Mothering Project has developed positive working relationships with CFS agencies and the part-time CFS Liaison person on staff has continued to foster and strengthen collaborative approaches.

#### **Research Requests made to Standing Committee**

Standing Committee was provided an overview of the process for approving external research requests. Further discussion is planned for 2021-22 regarding consideration of OCAP (ownership, control, access, and possession) principles, approval processes depending on the type of research request, and reporting back to Standing Committee on Director approved research requests.

#### **Manitoba Centre for Health Policy Data Repository (MCHP) – Access to Child and Family Services Data**

The CYSD is responsible for approving access to CFSA data contained within the MCHP Data Repository. When the results of research are deemed relevant to child and family service delivery or when results will be disaggregated by Indigenous identity, a request is made to the researcher to provide an overview of their work to Standing Committee prior to approving access. This promotes dialogues with Standing Committee and a forum to ask questions, express concerns, actively participate or otherwise be informed about ongoing research using CFS data.

The University of Manitoba presented an overview of a research project *Using linked administrative data to examine the experiences of families involved in Manitoba's child protection system*. Standing Committee approved the research project.

#### **Parenting Booklets**

Standing Committee received an overview on the work completed on Parenting Booklets for First Nations, Inuit and Metis families in Manitoba, with children aged birth to 5 years. Based on the success of this work and community demand, the CFS Branch is involved in a joint initiative with the National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health to develop a similar resource for First Nations, Inuit and Metis families in Manitoba, this time with a focus on children aged 6-12 years. *A Parenting in the Present: A resource for First Nations, Inuit and Metis parents and caregivers of children aged 6 to 12 years in Manitoba* booklet has been created with CFS Authorities feedback, which is anticipated to be released in fall 2021.

#### **Provincial-Territorial Data Report on Indigenous Child Welfare**

The *Indigenous Children and Youth in Care Working Group – Data Reporting Project* PowerPoint was presented, providing an overview of the working group, which was created in 2015 to use intergovernmental channels to improve outcomes for Indigenous children and youth in care.

One of the main challenges is collecting and comparing provincial/territorial (PT) data. The primary conclusion of the report is that it is not currently possible for PTs to create a harmonized report on Indigenous child welfare data, due to differences in legislation, policy, practices, and service delivery models. The report is now being shared for validation and the CFS Authorities were provided an opportunity to submit any desired changes to the Legislation and Strategic Policy Branch.

#### **Supporting Youth Transition Initiative**

An overview was provided on the Canada Manitoba Housing Benefit (CMHB) which will be stacked with Rent Assist to reduce or eliminate housing need in particularly vulnerable target populations, and will enable greater access to the private rental market. The CMHB will begin as a targeted program with three streams, one of which is youth aging out of care of Child and Family Services and will be portable within Manitoba. Standing Committee is supportive and work to ensure uptake by eligible youth.

## **Finance / Funding**

Standing Committee's key objective for finance is to critically review and examine funding agreements and models in order to support effective services to children and families and to ensure financial expenditures are outcome driven.

This objective is accomplished via tri-weekly meetings attended by: the Assistant Deputy Minister of the CYSD, Authority Chief Executive Officers and Authority Chief Financial Officers to review and fully implement Single Envelope Funding (SEF). While SEF is not a direct discussion point at Standing Committee, any practice implications are brought to Standing Committee as required.

#### **Office of the CFS Standing Committee Budget**

Standing Committee reviews and annually approves the Office of the CFS Standing Committee budget for this fiscal year.

### **Legislation/Regulation/Standards/Policy/Recommendations**

Standing Committee's key objectives for legislation, regulations, standards and policies are to support families, improve permanency and belonging, and reduce the number of days care by shifting and influencing the child and family services system through legislation and policy which directly impacts practice. Work on these objectives are captured throughout the body of this report and some are highlighted below.

#### **Legislation**

##### ***An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families***

Standing Committee continues to actively discuss the implications of the Federal Act, including how it impacts current and future practice. Key areas of discussion have focused on placement priority, notice of significant measures and continued increase of Indigenous Governing Bodies. Given the implications of the Federal Act and the need to ensure coordination of child welfare services as IGB's come forth across Canada, this will remain as a standing item on the Standing Committee agenda. This will ensure sharing of information, consistency in interpretation and practices related to compliance with the Federal Act and seamless service delivery for children in the province.

#### **Regulation**

##### **Transfer of Guardianship Improved Administrative Process**

In October 2020, with the support of Standing Committee, the Statutory Director of Child and Family Services implemented a new streamlined and efficient electronic process to approve Transfer of Guardianship Applications, resulting in reduced administrative burden on CFS agencies and Authorities while continuing to adhere to the required formal sign off by the Provincial Delegate.

Standing Committee raised the need for a regulation amendment regarding Foster Parent Appeals given it does not align with the Federal Act and placement priorities and the rights of Indigenous children.

#### **Standards**

##### **Inter-Authority Standards Working Group (IASWG)**

Standing Committee established IASWG to ensure consultation and collaboration on the ongoing maintenance of the Child and Family Services Standards Manual. The following work occurred in 2020/2021:

*Court Particulars* - In October 2019, IASWG was tasked with the development of standardized Court Particulars for use across the system. The Court Particulars form has been updated in consultation with CFS agencies, Authorities and their legal counsel to reflect provincial and federal legislation requirements and alignment with the Federal Act. These changes will achieve consistency, clarity and standardization across the Child and Family System and support court processes. The new Court Particulars form was approved by Standing Committee and will be implemented into practice with a continuous improvement review date.

*National Standards Working Group* - In preparation of the Federal Act, on January 1, 2020, Standing Committee established the National Standards Working Group. The working group, composed of Authority and CFS Branch representatives, were tasked with developing interim practices and procedures that align with the Federal Act, as well as communications and any associated training that may be required for CFS agencies.

The initial focus of the working group was to develop an interim standardized Notice of Significant Measure form and support documents for use by CFS agency staff, however this work was not fully implemented but each Authority chose to use portions or establish new mechanisms to support compliance with specific obligations within the Federal Act, such as notice of significant measures.

**Standards Modernization Project** - It was agreed that current standards lack clarity, are not user friendly, too prescriptive and contain information that is either irrelevant, outdated and often unattainable. Given there is no legislative review requirements in the Act, Standing Committee supported the Collaborative Standards Modernization Project. The Modernization project will be based on the creation of Provincial Foundational Standards that can be supplemented by Authority Specific Standards to reflect culturally appropriate service delivery needs and expectations.

Standing Committee approved the following three phases of this project:

- 1) Review: reviewing online format for ease of use and verifying all web-links and deleting all inactive and broken links.
- 2) Refresh: review of each Standard to ensure consistency, remove redundant and outdated information, consolidate and shorten where able to without impacting content.
- 3) Return to foundational: redevelop Standards to consider the requiring foundational standards, ensure standards are usable by CFS workers and give consideration to Authority Specific Standards that are culturally based. -This work will continue in 2021/22.

## Policy

**Standardizing Child Abuse Committee Records:** Standing Committee approved a standardized process for opening Child Abuse Committee (CAC) files and documenting of CAC (electronic CFSIS records) file information.

**Standardized Abuse Finding Definitions:** Standing Committee approved clear, standardized Abuse Finding definitions. Authority and agency feedback on the proposed changes was sought prior to implementation and electronic record keeping systems were updated to reflect these changes.

Category A Findings - No Conclusion Can Be Drawn

*Pending Investigation:* Abuse investigation remains active and a conclusion cannot yet be drawn as information continues to be gathered.

*Incomplete/Suspended:* Abuse investigation is unable to be completed and the investigation file is closed. This finding is selected when a significant step of the investigation cannot be completed and thus the information available does not allow for an accurate representation of any finding.

*Inconclusive:* The investigation is unable to draw a conclusion as the balance of probability is equally weighted and an outcome cannot be drawn. The legitimacy of the alleged incident remains unknown.

Category B Findings - Conclusion Drawn

*Invalid - Did Not Occur:* The investigation has determined on a balance of probability that the alleged incident most likely did not occur. The allegations are most likely invalid and there was no abuse.

*Valid Incident - No Abuse:* The investigation has determined on a balance of probability that the alleged incident most likely did occur. However, the incident does not meet the definition of child abuse as per the Child and Family Services Act.

*Valid Incident - Abuse Occurred:* The investigation has determined on a balance of probability that the alleged incident most likely did occur and meets the definition of abuse as per the Child and Family Services Act.

## Recommendations

### **Manitoba Advocate for Children and Youth (MACY)**

#### ***Process for Independent Investigations, Reviews and Public Reports***

The Authorities continue to be involved with MACY relative to public reporting, implementation of recommendations and Special Investigation Review reporting that is focused on system change. MACY reports and recommendations that have practice implications across the system are discussed at Standing Committee to ensure feedback and subject matter expertise is obtained at all levels. All recommendations and actions will continue to be discussed, reviewed and formally vetted through Standing Committee as a standing item on the agenda.

## Training

Standing Committee's key objective for training is to provide relevant, modernized training for the diverse workforce in the child and family services system that supports a trained work force and which is consistent with the core areas of responsibility of Standing Committee. Training is addressed by Authorities, Provincial Training and by the Joint Training Team (JTT), a sub-committee of Standing Committee.

### **Joint Training Team (JTT)**

The purpose of the JTT is to develop a professional, qualified, culturally competent workforce in the CFS system. JTT is responsible for developing, coordinating, implementing, and evaluating education and training activities for CFS staff and caregivers. JTT is also responsible for assisting in the development and evaluation of education and training curricula. During 2020/21, this working group met monthly to coordinate training efforts across the CFS system and share information related to curriculum updates, development and to support the collaboratively developed training priorities that would be funded and supported by the Provincial Training Program.

In addition to the JTT, each Authority continues to provide a significant amount of practice training to their agencies. For more detailed training statistics, please refer to the Annual Reports of each of the four Child and Family Services Authorities.

In addition to the training facilitated by the Authorities, the Department oversees and collaborates with Authorities to support and implement provincial training programs. Following a review of the Core Competency based curriculum, a training needs analysis three key training objectives and needs were identified. The collaboratively designed new training program was developed in the 2020/21 fiscal year and pertains to Abuse Training, Clinical Supervision and Standards training which is linked to the Standards Modernization Project. Standing committee endorsed partnerships that has fostered modernized approaches to training with up to date curriculum that is responsive to identified gaps in training. CFS Authorities through JTT continue to evaluate training needs and outcomes of the newly implemented training platforms and curriculums.

#### Modernization of Training

*Child and Family Services Application Training* – In consultation with Standing Committee, the CFS Branch piloted online CFSIS/IM training, which was highly successful and lead to full implementation of a virtual training environment. This initially occurred to respond to COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing needs but has resulted in increased access to training, reduced costs and promotes timeliness based on needs.

*Child Abuse Training Pilot* – Standing Committee agreed on a proposal for a Child Abuse Training pilot to address the need for this abuse investigations training, and the CFS Authorities were in agreement with moving forward with the pilot. An in-depth evaluation is to occur to inform the future state.

*Clinical Supervision Training* – Standing Committee requested that JTT complete a review of existing training and bring back recommendations to Standing Committee. A revised training curriculum for supervisor training is under development.

#### Online Standards Training

- The CFS Branch and the CFS Authorities will work collaboratively to overhaul the existing Standards, with a goal of making them more user and service friendly.
- Discussion occurred at Standing Committee regarding options to move forward with consistent, easily accessible Standards training. A draft work plan has been develop and shared with Standing Committee.
- The Technology Learning Group has been contracted to develop the online training. They will be assisted by a working group, comprised of Standards experts from each Authority, who will be tasked with providing guidance on the accuracy of the content.

## Evaluation and Reporting

Standing Committee's key objective for evaluation and reporting is to determine, develop and define objectives that ensure measurable outcome reporting related to the work of Standing Committee. In 2020-2021 the following occurred:

**Department of Families Annual Report - Reporting of Children in Care Statistics** - To ensure consistency in the Department and Authority Annual Report child in care statistics, Standing Committee established a working group of Authority and CFS Branch representatives.

The working group established in 2019/20 a data set based upon a methodology approved by Standing Committee to report on the number of children in care in each entity's Annual Report. In 2020/21, Standing Committee agreed to a phased collaborative methodology that promoted regular validation of the data to ensure accurate and timely annual reporting of numbers of children in care and families receiving services.

## Strategic Goals for 2021-2022

The key goals of Standing Committee for the 2021-2022 fiscal year include:

- Continue to work in collaboration with the Department of Families on shared priorities based on the pillars of Manitoba's Child Welfare Reform.
- Continue the work associated with the implementation of Single Envelope Funding.
- Continue to define, direct and support the work that ensures a continuum of services that prevents entry to care and reduces days care for children and maintains their connection and belonging with family and community, including:
  - Customary care

- Modernization of Adoption Financial Assistance and alignment of this program with guardianship supports
  - Rate structure work
  - Prevention Pilots, Family Preservation and Reunification
- Collaborate on best practices for high and complex needs children and youth.
  - Support further devolution of Child and Family Services that aligns with coordination of service delivery with Indigenous Governing Bodies.
  - Continue to develop and implement policies, procedures and practices related to the Federal Act, *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*.
  - Continue to implement and evaluate Provincial Training pilots and ensure all training provided is meeting the needs of the system.
  - Continue to prioritize the Standards Modernization Project to ensure it is reflective of foundational best practices, attainable and relevant; and supplemented by Authority specific standards that reflect culturally appropriate standards.

## Conclusion

The Child and Family Services Standing Committee is pivotal in promoting cooperation and collaboration with other governmental systems including: education, justice, health, employment, and housing. Members of Standing Committee are in a position to develop approaches in working with these other systems that ensure jointly developed protocols and procedures are adhered to by their respective Authority and service agencies. Additionally, the CFS Standing Committee promotes continued, collaborative working relationships between the four CFS Authorities, their collaboration with their Indigenous Leadership, and the CFS Branch. Having this coordinated approach to decision making helps to streamline service provision and facilitate best practice in working with children and families coming into contact with child and family services offices in the province of Manitoba.