



Children deserve safe, caring homes filled with love, kindness and opportunities to learn, grow and maintain their cultural identity.

### Aboriginal families caring for Aboriginal children

It's difficult for children when they need to leave their family homes and communities. That's why it's so important that they find a safe home with a loving family who can understand them and provide the comfort of a familiar home life.

### For more information

Please talk to your local Child and Family Services Authority or Delegated First Nation Agency.

Call: **1-888-643-1889**

Or visit: [www.AbandoriginalCaregivers.ca](http://www.AbandoriginalCaregivers.ca)

# Our Children Need Us



*"It's important for our children to keep connected with their own culture."*

Many Aboriginal children are in care and need homes.

Please open your heart and your home to an Aboriginal child in care.



Traditionally, Aboriginal children were taken care of within the circle of family and community. Today, many Aboriginal children are in care and waiting for Aboriginal families.

Aboriginal caregivers are needed to ensure Aboriginal children in care stay connected to their communities and cultures.

## Aboriginal children need Aboriginal homes

*“The best part of being a caregiver is being able to embrace kids with our culture – traditionally, spiritually, mentally and emotionally.”*

Aboriginal communities are working very hard to place Aboriginal children in need of care in Aboriginal homes – preferably with caregivers from their own communities.

The cultural identity of Aboriginal children should be preserved and nurtured. Aboriginal children who are placed in Aboriginal homes are better able to learn about their history, language and unique cultural traditions. They are better able to identify with their caregivers. They have better opportunities to stay connected to their communities and cultures.

Sadly, there are not enough Aboriginal caregivers. As a result, many Aboriginal children in care are growing up without fully knowing who they are and where they belong.

### Can you provide a safe and loving home for an Aboriginal child?

### What can I do to help?

The greatest help you can provide is to offer a safe, nurturing, healthy and stable home for an Aboriginal child in need of care. By becoming an Aboriginal caregiver, you’ll give a child the opportunity to learn and grow in a way that supports their cultural identity and personal development.

### What are Aboriginal caregivers?

They are mentors, role models and support systems – everything a child needs to grow up to become a healthy and successful adult. Aboriginal caregivers can provide kinship care, foster care, private guardianship or adoption.

### Why aren’t there enough Aboriginal caregivers?

Many Aboriginal people don’t realize that so many Aboriginal children are in care. Others are unsure what sort of help is needed or how to become a caregiver. Some haven’t thought before about becoming caregivers and need basic information. Others assume that they don’t qualify and count themselves out before finding out. Some are basing their decisions on wrong information. In reality, the need for Aboriginal caregivers is great and more people like you are needed to provide homes for many Aboriginal children in care.

### How do I become a caregiver?

There are several steps you will need to take. These include: completing the application forms, getting training and undergoing a criminal screening and home assessment.

If you are interested in becoming a caregiver, talk to your local Child and Family Services Authority or Delegated First Nation Agency for more information. Don’t disqualify yourself. Your support worker is available to help you through the process.

### What kind of support do caregivers receive?

Financial support is available. For example, kinship care compensation starts at \$600 per month. Other assistance and support may also be available. For example, if you need an additional bed, some assistance is available. There is additional support for children with special needs.



### Is it true that each child must have a separate room?

No. There is no requirement for each child to have a separate bedroom. Most important is that you can provide a safe and suitable home for children.

### What’s a criminal screening?

To be approved as a caregiver, you will need to get a criminal record check. If someone in your home has a criminal record you will not necessarily be disqualified. A number of factors will be looked at – such as the nature of the charge, the person’s age at the time of the charge, and so on. This is discussed during the application process.

### How long does it take to become a caregiver?

In urgent situations, kinship care can be arranged very quickly. Applications for foster care, private guardianship and adoption will take several months to complete.

