Child and Family Services (Child Protection)

Program Overview

Child and Family Services (CFS) is the foundation of PBCFS's mandate under The Child and Family Services Act of Saskatchewan. This program holds delegated authority to receive and investigate reports of children in need of protection, provide support to families, and — when necessary — ensure the safety of children through voluntary or court-ordered intervention. The program operates with deep respect for Cree culture and the principle that, wherever possible, children belong with their families and communities.

Program Philosophy

PBCFS believes that strong families make strong communities. Child protection work is carried out in a spirit of partnership — not punishment — guided by the understanding that most families involved with CFS are doing their best under difficult circumstances. The program honours the inherent right of Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation children to grow up connected to their culture, language, land, and community. Intervention is always the last resort; support to families is always the first.

Program Goals

- Ensure the safety and wellbeing of children and youth in PBCN communities and in Prince Albert.
- Keep families together whenever it is safe to do so, through early and meaningful support.
- Ensure that children who cannot remain at home are placed within their extended family or PBCN community wherever possible.
- Uphold children's connections to Cree culture, language, Elders, and traditional practices throughout all stages of involvement.
- Work collaboratively with families, Elders, and community leaders in all case planning and decision-making.

Operational Information

Population Served	Children and youth (birth to 18) who are residents of Peter Ballantyne Cree Nation communities or the Prince Albert area,

	and their families, where there are concerns about safety, wellbeing, or neglect.
Settings	Services are delivered in family homes, PBCFS offices in Prince Albert and on-reserve communities, schools, community locations, and other settings as needed across all PBCN communities and Prince Albert.
Hours of Service	Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. After-hours emergency response is maintained at all times.
Days of Service	Every day of the year, including weekends and statutory holidays.
Frequency of Service	Contact frequency is determined by the level of risk and the needs of the child and family. Cases are reviewed regularly and adjusted accordingly.
Payers / Funding	Indigenous Services Canada (ISC)
Fees	No fees. All services are provided free of charge.
Referral Sources	Reports and referrals are accepted from any member of the community, including family members, schools, health professionals, law enforcement, other agencies, and individuals who are concerned about a child's safety. Self-referrals are also accepted.

Services Offered

Intake and Investigation

PBCFS receives and screens all reports of children who may be in need of protection. Trained child protection workers investigate concerns, assess risk and safety, and determine the appropriate level of response. All investigations are conducted in a culturally respectful manner, with Elders and community members engaged where appropriate.

Services are provided directly by PBCFS child protection staff.

Family Assessment and Case Planning

Where concerns are substantiated, workers collaborate with families to develop a case plan that addresses the identified risks while building on family strengths. Extended family, community supports, Elders, and cultural connections are central to this planning process.

Services are provided directly by PBCFS child protection staff.

Ongoing Case Management

Workers provide ongoing support, monitoring, and coordination of services for children and families with open cases. This includes coordinating with health, education, mental health, addictions, and other services as needed. Referrals are made to internal PBCFS programs (such as Prevention Services and Mental Health Services) as well as to external providers.

Case management is provided directly. Specialized services are accessed by referral to internal programs and external providers.

Court Services

When voluntary arrangements are not possible or sufficient to ensure a child's safety, PBCFS initiates the appropriate court processes under The Child and Family Services Act. Workers prepare documentation, attend hearings, and support families throughout the legal process.

Provided directly by PBCFS staff, with legal counsel accessed by referral as required.

Cultural Support

Throughout all stages of involvement, PBCFS connects children and families to Cree cultural supports including Elders, ceremonies, land-based activities, and traditional practices. Cultural planning is embedded in every case plan.

Provided directly and through referral to Elders and cultural practitioners.

Service Modalities and Personnel

Primary Modality	Strengths-based, trauma-informed, family-centred case management integrated with Cree cultural values and practices.
Additional Modalities	Family group conferencing; safety planning; solution-focused approaches; culturally grounded practices including Elder involvement, ceremony, and land-based programming.
Personnel	Child Protection Workers (BSW or equivalent required; MSW preferred for senior roles). All staff are supervised by a qualified supervisor (MSW or equivalent). Cultural knowledge and community connection are considered essential qualifications. Training in trauma-informed practice, risk assessment, and Saskatchewan child welfare legislation is required.