Foster Care

Program Overview

PBCFS recruits, trains, approves, and supports a network of foster families to provide safe, nurturing, and culturally connected homes for children and youth who are unable to remain with their birth families. Foster Care is a distinct program within PBCFS's continuum of care, grounded in the principle that children do best when they are cared for within their own community and culture. PBCFS prioritizes placements with extended family (kinship care) and PBCN community members.

Program Philosophy

Every child deserves a home where they are safe, loved, and connected to who they are. Foster families are not just service providers — they are partners in caring for some of the most vulnerable children in the community. PBCFS deeply values and supports its foster families, recognizing that their commitment is at the heart of the program. The recruitment and support of Cree foster families who reflect the cultural identity of the children in care is a priority, so that children placed away from their birth families do not also lose connection to their community, language, and traditions.

Program Goals

- Provide safe, stable, and nurturing family-based care for children and youth who cannot safely remain at home.
- Prioritize kinship and community placements that maintain children's connections to their PBCN family and culture.
- Recruit, train, and retain a sufficient number of approved foster families to meet the needs of children in care.
- Support foster families with the training, guidance, and practical resources they need to provide excellent care.
- Ensure that cultural identity, Cree traditions, language, and Elder relationships are maintained for all children in foster care.
- Work toward reunification with birth families wherever this is safe and in the best interest of the child.

Operational Information

Population Served	Children and youth (birth to 18) in the care of PBCFS who require family-based out-of-home placement. Also includes foster families who provide that care.
Settings	Approved foster family homes located in PBCN communities and in Prince Albert.
Hours of Service	Foster care is provided 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. PBCFS support to foster families and case management is available around the clock.
Days of Service	Every day of the year.
Frequency of Service	Children in foster care receive the continuous care of their foster family. PBCFS workers conduct regular home visits and maintain ongoing contact with foster families and children in placement. Frequency of formal contact is guided by case plan requirements and individual need.
Payers / Funding	Indigenous Services Canada (ISC).
Fees	No fees. Foster care services are provided free of charge to children and families.
Referral Sources	Children are referred to foster care placements internally by PBCFS Child and Family Services (Child Protection) workers when an out-of-home placement is required.

Services Offered

Foster Home Recruitment and Approval

PBCFS actively recruits prospective foster families within PBCN communities and Prince Albert. Applicants undergo a thorough screening and approval process, including home studies, reference checks, criminal record and vulnerable sector checks, and training. PBCFS maintains its own approved roster of foster homes.

Provided directly by PBCFS Resources staff.

Foster Parent Training

All foster parents complete required pre-service training covering child development, trauma-informed care, the needs of children in care, cultural identity and reconnection, and the role of the foster parent within the PBCFS system. Ongoing training and development opportunities are provided throughout the foster parent's involvement with PBCFS.

Provided directly by PBCFS staff, with Elders and cultural practitioners contributing to cultural components.

Placement Matching and Case Management

When a placement is required, PBCFS works to identify the most appropriate home, prioritizing kinship and PBCN community placements. Workers provide ongoing case management and regular contact with the child, the foster family, and the birth family throughout the placement.

Provided directly by PBCFS Resources and CFS staff.

Foster Family Support

PBCFS provides ongoing support to foster families, including access to respite care, crisis support, consultation with workers, and connections to community resources. Foster families are recognized as essential partners and are treated with respect and appreciation.

Provided directly by PBCFS staff; respite accessed through PBCFS resources.

Cultural Planning for Children in Foster Care

Each child in foster care has a cultural plan that is part of their overall case plan. Workers ensure that children maintain relationships with Elders, participate in ceremonies and cultural activities, and stay connected to their extended family and community, regardless of where they are placed.

Provided directly, in collaboration with Elders and cultural practitioners.

Service Modalities and Personnel

Primary Modality	Family-based out-of-home care with active case management and foster family support. Trauma-informed and culturally grounded.
Additional Modalities	Kinship care; home study assessments; training and coaching; respite care; cultural planning; reunification support.
Personnel	Foster Care/Resources Workers (BSW or relevant human services training). Supervised by a qualified supervisor (BSW/MSW or equivalent). Foster parents are approved and trained by PBCFS and are integral members of the care team.