



Jordan's Principle: Panel discussion

November 21, 2024



Thank you to Holland Bloorview staff Tess Bardikoff, Emilie Morin, Naomi Kelly and Vera Nenadovic

for sharing their professional experience
supporting Indigenous patients and families
as they applied for funding or support under
Jordan's Principle.

Summary

Jordan's Principle is named after Jordan River Anderson of the Norway House Cree Nation, who died in 2005 at the age of five in the midst of a two-year battle between Manitoba and Ottawa over who would pay for his care.

In 2017, the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ordered Canada to process Jordan's Principle requests within a 12 to 48 hour time frame

2007

2005

2017

In 2007, the House of Commons adopted the principle in River's name and Ottawa launched the Jordan's Principle program in 2016 to compensate qualifying families for their children's health and therapeutic services.



Did you know

The rate-limiting step to accessing Jordan's Principle is having **Indian status**.

Having Indian status and Jordan's Principle

- According to the Indian Act of 1867, women were the property of their fathers and husbands. Indigenous women were penalized if they married a non-Indigenous man: they lost their status and treaty rights, as did their children. **Mary Two-Axe Early, Mohawk Elder and activist** fought the discrimination and had the law repealed under bill C-31. [Mary Two-Axe Earley: Crusader fought for equal rights for Aboriginal women - Windspeaker.com](#)
- Re-establishing status is not easy. It requires documents and Band Council approval. The Band can confer status even on non-Indigenous folks if they wish.
- Even with proof of status it may not be a guarantee as the federal government will be slow in payment, leaving bands on the hook for the costs.
- [Dr. Grant Bruno](#), a Nehiyawe autism researcher from Alberta mentions that funding for Jordan's Principle is problematic. [Source](#)



In the news

Ottawa failing to meet Jordan's Principle deadlines for First Nations kids' care most of the time (April 25, 2024)

Indigenous Services Canada is taking longer to respond to urgent requests to get First Nations children access to medical care and social services. [Source](#)

- The federal department is supposed to process such urgent requests for medical care and social services within 12 hours. **Experts say many children are likely to face irreparable harm if they don't get assistance within that window.**
- **Ontario saw the lowest compliance rate** of any province from April 1, 2023 to February 29, 2024 for urgent cases.
- Indigenous Services Canada responded to just 15 per cent of urgent cases in Ontario within the Jordan's Principle timeline, while the department met the deadlines in Quebec and the Atlantic region 54 per cent of the time — the highest compliance rates recorded.

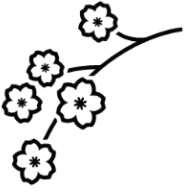
Mi'kmaw mother could lose custody of 3 disabled children after feds threaten to cut funding (November 1, 2024)

- [Mary Isaac, of Antigonish, N.S.](#), was informed by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) that she would be cut off of federal funding for her children's 24-hour in-home support and transportation services.
- Isaac's children are 4, 10 and 11. They have high needs with diagnoses such as fetal alcohol syndrome, autism and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.
- After Isaac was hit by a truck at an intersection while crossing the road in her wheelchair her children began receiving around-the-clock services through [Jordan's Principle](#) in September 2022
- ISC now doesn't want to continue funding support to Isaac's children because it believes this is a matter of provincial social assistance; however, Isaac has not been able to find an alternative solution with the Nova Scotia government, and she's on multiple wait lists for an accessible home.



Clinical Insight

Bloorview Staff's share their experience supporting Indigenous patients and families under Jordan's Principle.

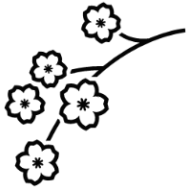


What has your professional experience been with Jordan's Principle?

“As a Clinical Instructor, I arranged a session with the Nurse Practitioner, in order to discuss systemic discrimination faced by First Nations children and explore actionable steps for future healthcare professionals. The goal is to empower students with the knowledge and tools to effectively advocate for their patients and minimize systemic challenges.”



Can you discuss the successes, challenges, and opportunities for improvement in supporting families during the application process?



Before beginning the application process with families



Educate yourself about Jordan's Principle, including its purpose, application requirements, and available resources, to provide accurate guidance.



Approach each interaction with cultural humility and an understanding of the unique challenges First Nations families may face.



Build a rapport with the family, ensuring they feel heard, respected, and supported throughout the process.



Have a list of resources or contacts available, such as knowledgeable professionals or community advocates, to whom families can be referred for specialized assistance.



Take a proactive and empathetic approach, recognizing that many families may feel overwhelmed or mistrustful of government systems due to past experiences.
