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# Structural Risk Factors Affecting Poor Outcomes for First Nations Children & Youth

First Nations Children's Action Research and Education Service

One in four First Nations children live in poverty compared to 1 in 9 other Canadian children (UNICEF, 2009); "Food security is an issue for almost 50% of reserve residents" (Chiefs Assembly on Education, 2012, p. 2)

"poverty is associated with increased substance use" (Reading and Wien, 2009, p. 3)

"Youth substance over-use and violence as well as behaviour problems in children have been linked to over-crowded living conditions (Reading and Wien, 2009, 4)

## Poverty

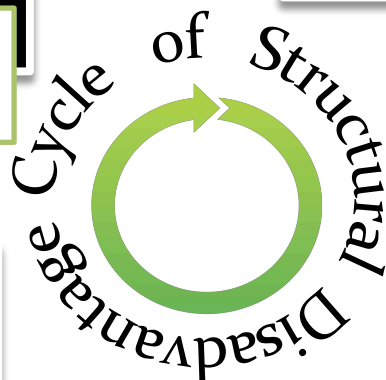
## Substance Misuse

"First Nations children more frequently come into contact with child welfare as a result of neglect and risk factors associated with poverty rather than referrals for physical or sexual abuse" (Trocmé et al., 65)

"Almost half (48.1%) of all children aged 14 and under in foster care [in 2011] were Aboriginal children" (Statistics Canada, 2013)

"Among First Nations, 28% lived in a home requiring major repairs. On reserve, housing disparities were greater with approximately 44% of First Nations residing in homes in need of major repairs. (National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health, 2011a, p. 2)

"Socio-economic barriers [to equity in health services] include lower levels of education and income." (National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health, 2011b, p. 2)



## Substandard Housing

## Inequities in Government and Voluntary Sector Services (education, child welfare, health services, clean drinking water)

"Approximately 47% of First Nations currently need a new school"; "Funding has been identified as the MAIN challenge by over 55% of First Nations Schools" (Chiefs Assembly on Education, 2012, pp. 3-4)

"Poor housing conditions such as mold, lack of safe drinking water, and overcrowding have been associated with increased risk of morbidity from infectious disease, chronic illness, injuries, poor nutrition, and mental disorders" (National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health, 2011a, p. 1)

"Health and safety of students is a concern for 72% of First Nations schools, and 32% of schools have an issue with access to clean drinking water." (Chiefs Assembly on Education, 2012 p. 3)

"Jurisdictional disputes involving the costs of caring for First Nations children are common, with nearly 400 occurring in 12 First Nations child and family service agencies sampled in one year alone" (Canadian Paediatric Society, 2012)

Sources: Canadian Pediatric Society. (2012). *Are we doing enough?: A status report on Canadian public policy and child and youth health*. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Pediatric Society; Chiefs Assembly on Education (2012). *A Portrait of First Nations and Education*. Gatineau, QC: Assembly of First Nations; National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health. (2011a). *Housing as a social determinant of First Nations, Inuit and Métis health* [Fact Sheet]; National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health. (2011b). *Access to health services as a social determinant of First Nations, Inuit and Métis health*. Reading, Charlotte Loppie and Fred Wien. (2009). *Health inequalities and social determinants of Aboriginal Peoples' health*. Prince George, BC: National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health [Fact Sheet]; Statistics Canada. (2013). *Aboriginal Peoples in Canada First Nations People, Métis and Inuit*. Analytical Document from the National Household Survey, 2011. Canada: Minister of Industry; Trocmé, N., MacLaurin, B., Fallon, B., Knoke, D., Pitman, L., & McCormack, M. (2006). *Mesnimmik Wasatek/Catching a drop of light: Understanding the over-representation of First Nations children in Canada's child welfare system: An analysis of the Canadian incidence study of reported child abuse and neglect (CIS-2003)*. Ottawa, ON: First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada; UNICEF. (2009). *Aboriginal children's health: Leaving no child behind*. UNICEF Canada.