



Funded by / Financé par



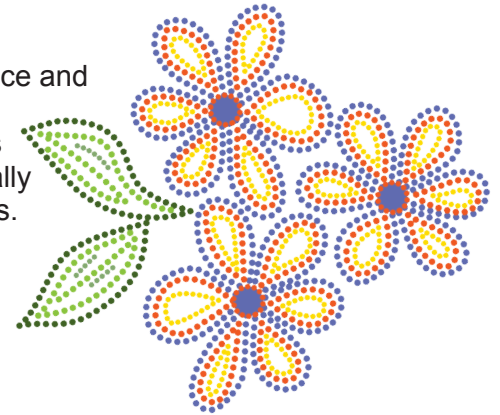
Public Health  
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé  
publique du Canada

## Provincial-Level Policy Considerations

### Provincial Child Welfare Laws

High rates of Métis child apprehension undermine reproductive justice and parenting autonomy. Provincial child welfare systems have a direct and lasting impact on Métis reproductive justice. High rates of Métis child apprehension are rooted in colonial policies that have historically undermined Métis families, parenting practices, and kinship systems. The fear of surveillance or child removal can deter Métis parents from accessing prenatal care, harm reduction services, or mental health supports, particularly during pregnancy and the postpartum period. These dynamics interfere with the right to parent in safe and supported ways.



Reproductive justice at the provincial level requires child welfare laws and practices that prioritize family preservation and Métis self-determination. Provinces must shift from reactive, punitive interventions toward preventive, strengths-based supports that address the social conditions shaping family well-being. This includes embedding Métis governance into decision-making processes and ensuring that child welfare systems are aligned with culturally grounded prenatal and postpartum supports that respect Métis family structures, community ties, and healing practices.

#### *Considerations:*

- ∞ Strengthen Métis governance in child welfare decision-making.
- ∞ Expand preventive supports (housing, harm reduction, parenting support) to avoid unnecessary interventions.
- ∞ Integrate trauma-informed, culturally grounded family support into prenatal/postpartum programs.

To further advance reproductive justice, provincial child welfare reform must address structural and legal barriers that continue to drive disproportionate Métis child apprehension. Provinces should align child welfare legislation with the principles of family integrity and self-determination by recognizing Métis jurisdiction and authority over child and family services, consistent with Métis rights and existing federal frameworks.

#### *This includes:*

1. Addressing systemic bias and surveillance within child welfare risk assessments
2. Ensuring accountability and transparency in apprehension decisions
3. Supporting Métis-led data collection and oversight to monitor outcomes.
4. Implementation should prioritize early, voluntary, and community-based supports: legal advocacy, family reunification services, and kinship care
5. Implementation should reduce reliance on coercive interventions that undermine trust and discourage Métis families from seeking prenatal and postpartum care.

