



Special Committee To Prevent The Abuse And Exploitation Of Children Through the Sex Trade

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**SPECIAL COMMITTEE TO PREVENT THE ABUSE AND EXPLOITATION
OF CHILDREN THROUGH THE SEX TRADE
2000**

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Saskatoon Greystone

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Don Toth
Moosomin

Kevin Yates
Regina Dewdney

The committee met at 1:30 p.m.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — I think we should officially call our meeting to order. I want to welcome our special guests and I'm going to let Arlene introduce you both in a moment, Marcia. I know you know Arlene so we thought it might be nice if she formally introduced you. I want to welcome you, Todd and Marcia. I want to welcome you both.

We're just a . . . just very briefly, I thought that it might be nice if members of the committee introduce themselves formally to you and the other staff who are here. Todd, I know you've had a chance to meet some folks here already.

Just before we do that I wanted to point out that it's Margaret's birthday today — and Margaret, happy birthday.

The committee members sang *Happy Birthday* to Margaret Woods.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Now, Margaret, how many times do you have a chance to have your birthday recorded in *Hansard*?

Ms. Wood: — Definitely not many times.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Anyway, that's a little testimony of the committee's affection for you.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — We wish you a really wonderful day.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Margaret, I know that there's a couple members of our legislative staff that are new here and maybe you'd like to introduce them to all members of the committee.

Ms. Woods: — As Peter was saying there's two new members of the Legislative Assembly staff that are here today, and they're here to get a look at how our committees work here in Saskatchewan. The first is our new Clerk Assistant of committees, Viktor Kaczkowski.

He comes to us from the Ontario Legislative Assembly where he was a committee clerk as well, so he's got about eight years experience there; and so we're very pleased to have him with us. He will be taking over the Crown Corporations Committee — so those of you who are on that committee will get a chance to work with him directly. He will also be attending to table duties in the Assembly when the House comes back into session.

The second staff member is Maria Swarbrick. She's seated at the back of the room. She's the new member services librarian. She also started, like Viktor, just last week. She is going to be providing the committees of the Assembly with some specialized research services so you'll be able to call upon her for assistance.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — I want to welcome you both. Thank you for joining us today. I think just before we get

started, for Todd and Marcia's benefit, why don't we have committee members introduce themselves. And, June, let's start with you.

Ms. Draude: — I'm June Draude. I'm the MLA (Member of the Legislative Assembly) from Kelvington-Wadena. Welcome.

Mr. Toth: — I am Don Toth, MLA Moosomin.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Arlene Julé, MLA Humboldt and co-chairing the committee.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — I'm the other Co-Chair and I'm Peter Prebble, the MLA for Saskatoon Greystone.

Ms. Jones: — And I'm Carolyn Jones, the MLA for Saskatoon Meewasin.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Kevin Yates, who has just stepped out of the room represents one of our Regina ridings. And we'll introduce a couple of our staff who are seated around the table here. Randy Pritchard is our technical adviser, and Margaret Woods is our Clerk for the committee.

I'm going to turn it over to Arlene to formally introduce both of you.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — We have to also mention there is one more committee member, Ron Harper. He's sick today so he won't be able to be with us.

Okay, and I'd just like to introduce to the committee and welcome certainly Marcia Gordon. Marcia is a member of the Pasqua Band and she's a concerned citizen. In the last couple of years I've had some conversations with Marcia about this issue of the sexual exploitation of children. And we did a lot of informal discussion and even met in Saskatoon once with other concerned citizens.

And so I really welcome you today, Marcia, and I'm very pleased to have you with us to present to the committee some of your knowledge and your understanding, and certainly some of your ideas about how to address this issue.

And we also have Chief Todd Peigan, Pasqua First Nation chief. Todd, I can't tell you how happy we are to see you here. This is very, very good on your part to come as a chief and to assist the committee, and in fact to assist the Government of Saskatchewan in being able to address this issue. So thank you very much.

We'll just invite you, either one of you, whoever you wish, to start your presentation. And feel comfortable. We're just sort of ordinary human beings here and we want you to be comfortable and to start your presentation in any way that you feel is good for you.

Ms. Gordon: — Thank you, Arlene . . . (inaudible) . . . We've compiled the presentation together. It's a three-page document that I've given, and you can question us from the document. Probably the best thing to do would be just to read it out loud

into script I guess. And we'll take it from there.

It's my mother's birthday today too and she's 81. So she's seen quite a bit.

First of all, good afternoon, members of the committee, guests, and fellow presenters. And I don't see any more fellow presenters here today, but anyway. It's probably because our time got switched.

I'd like to thank Arlene Julé for extending an invitation to make the views of the urban First Nations known on the issue of child and youth prostitution.

This report that I'm going to give, we've done it according to the interim report which I must say a lot of work has gone into it and has been done since our last meeting so many years ago. And it's looking very nice, very well, and it's good that everyone's looking after business.

First Nations in urban centres live in social and economic conditions that are sometimes beyond the belief in a country like Canada that likes to pride itself as one of the most socially and economically advanced in the world.

We need a public education system to inform the public about the extent to which First Nations children and youth are being exploited for the sexual gratification of the sexual predators. We need to expose these predators and hold them up to public scrutiny so that the general public will become involved in devising ways to punish and/or rehabilitate them.

The public must become aware or/and take responsibility for the social circumstances that have spawned these predators. Children and youth must be protected from the predators, and where they have already been exploited, remedial support must be provided to enable them to lead good and productive lives despite what has been done to them.

There are many First Nations living in the city of Regina. Because of bureaucratic wrangling between the federal, provincial, and municipal governments, services and support for First Nations in urban centres is poor and ineffective. Because of the special needs of First Nations people in urban centres, we need specific types of services and support to support our people to build the kind of services and institutions we need.

The First Nations community in the city of Regina should be working with federal, provincial, and municipal services on a day-to-day basis to deal with issues such as child prostitution. The First Nations community must be involved in and take responsibility for our people who are in trouble and in . . . need help. The First Nations people can design and deliver the type of assistance and support that is required for children and youth in urban centres.

Some of the causes of child and youth sexual exploitation and abuse — there's many causes but we've tried . . . I've tried to flag as the priority . . . the ones most in priority.

Children and youth who live in poverty are vulnerable to abusers with cash for food, clothing, and other essentials. A

major portion of children and youth who live in poverty are neglected by parents or are left to fend for themselves. A major portion of First Nations persons — parents — have lost the ability to be supportive parents, through generations of cultural breakdown, abuse, poverty, and neglect.

First Nations communities have a high degree of sexual abuse within families and communities from the residential school syndrome. Discrimination against First Nations has instilled low self-esteem that is so pervasive that it prevents First Nations people from living up to their potential.

The instant financial returns to children and youth who are sometimes in desperate need of cash is a major incentive to children and youth to sell sex for cash. Many times children and youth have addictions to maintain — drugs, alcohol, sniffing, etc. — which have to be dealt with as part of the prevention and rehabilitation.

What are the front-line agencies and services? I notice in your report that you've listed several. And so we've put in our opinion as to what we would like to see from some of the front-line services.

Front-line agencies and services must be assessed to determine whether they are effective and where emphasis must be placed to achieve greater success. First Nations people should be in the front line as the persons who deal with children and youth who are being exploited. Provincial and municipal services and organizations should have First Nations employees to deal with First Nations community.

Laws must be changed to protect the children and punish the perpetrators. These laws must be workable in the First Nations community or they will be ineffective. The First Nations community in the city of Regina should be working with the people who are drafting legislation for that purpose.

Intervention on a case-by-case basis — and this may be expensive — but we feel it should be done. Files and profiles should be kept on children at risk. Workers in the front line should know who the children are; who the parents are; and the reasons why children and youth are on the street.

Children and youth should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis to ensure greater success of providing incentives for that child and youth who move towards a lifestyle that will avoid and prevent exploitation. There's a typo there, sorry.

Remedies, the Abuse. Youth are in the best position to help youth into a healthier and more productive lifestyle. First Nations youth should receive special training to work with their peers in social, economic, employment, recreation and development programs. Youth can work on public education programs designed to build self-esteem and educational opportunities for youth. Youth can design programs on healthy lifestyles and programs to prevent drug and alcohol and sexual abuse.

Schools can adopt programs on child sex abuse and develop programs and initiatives to keep children safe in and out of school.

Community services such as a telephone call-in centre on sexual abuse or sexual predators could be set up to allow for intervention.

Children and youth should have access to a safe house and support programs on a short-term and long-term basis. Children who have been exploited sexually must participate in programs to heal and build their self-esteem and a healthy lifestyle. Above all, children and youth must have adequate housing, food and shelter.

The abusers, not the children, must be treated as the criminals. Why are the children being treated as the offenders instead of the persons who are actually committing the crime? The children and youth should not be charged. They should be protected from the people who are paying to abuse them sexually.

On March 7, 2000, Regina police estimated they charged approximately 300 youth under the age of 18 with prostitution. Did they charge the 300 persons who are trying to buy sex from those youth? Why are the victims being charged instead of the persons who are preying on them?

One — these are some of the action plans — police should apprehend all abusers approaching children. Fines for approaching offenders must be high.

Offenders should have to do community service in the community and/or make restitution in public by paying support to the child the offender intended to abuse.

Offenders who actually commit a sexual act on children must receive a jail term.

Abusers must be monitored and tracked by police.

Files and profiles on johns/abusers must be kept by police.

Spouses and families must be aware of the abuser in their midst.

Police must stop charging children and charge the adults who commit the act.

Information on abusers should be disclosed to the public and the community.

Community Watch programs should be supported.

Community members could identify license plates, cars, take photos and videos of children and johns on the street and send them to police for action.

First Nations community members should be involved in strategies to eradicate the sexual exploitation of children and youth.

And I believe that's . . . I'd like to thank you for hearing our points of view and hope that this will be of some assistance as we go and that you may be able to use some of the points in what you're endeavouring to do. And with that . . .

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — That's much appreciated. You certainly thought a great deal about all of this, and certainly, from your experience, you've pinpointed a number of things that you feel could be used as recommendations to the committee.

I'm just going to invite Chief Peigan to make any comment that you would like to. We'd love to hear from you.

Chief Peigan: — Thank you, and good afternoon to the panel. The number of issues that are plaguing not only First Nations community but all of the Canadian society, specifically in children in the child prostitution, I'm going to key in on just the First Nations.

I want to I guess restate what the child advocate worker mentioned in regards to the residential school and the effects it had community and on family and parenting. A parent in First Nations culture when you're growing up, your grandmothers, your grandfathers teach you the respect of the land of everything around you — the trees, the birds, the animals, even right to the rock. Each thing has a significance.

When children were picked up, as my elders tell me in my First Nation, by an Indian agent and taken to school 10 months out of the year, their parents cannot instill that in those children, so these children lost that. And their children went to these residential schools as well and lost that parenting, that bonding.

As in the city of Regina or in the urban centres as on Pasqua First Nation, is that the high alcohol and drug rates that I have to deal with day in and day out as I mentioned to Kevin, is that as political people we're supposed to have all the answers, and unfortunately we don't.

And looking at your report, a number of concerns, a number of issues you raise in regards to how to deal with child prostitution. And I guess the big question is how to attack it without violating Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the person's constitution that they would argue.

They talk about street people going underground. A lot of those people on the streets are my friends and they're street people. And my view is that once a child is caught for prostitution, that child is not the one that should be penalized but the one that should be lend a helping hand to.

As the child advocate worker said in her report is that the children know the answer. All we have to do is listen. And that's what I try to do is listen to the children and what they want. Because if you don't listen — all we want to do is come up with a resolution and we don't listen to the children — it's going to be all for naught.

What do we do for the children in the after care? Do we put them in homes where our institutions today to a child is a jail — is it Dojack, is it Ranch Ehrlo? Is it the youth facilities? No, it has to be a home where children are cared for. Because children are smart, and I'm going to use an example.

My missus's nephew is in the provincial system and he gets moved from home to home. And when he doesn't like it there,

he'll act up so he can get put in a new home. If he finds a home that's comfortable, he'll stay there for a while, until the rules have been broken, he doesn't like it any more, he'll move on. And he's 13.

Children that are involved in prostitution, we have to look at their family — we have to look at mom and dad, grandma and grandpa, uncle, aunt. How are their lifestyles? If mom and dad are alcohol and drug abusers, are they . . . if they're not caring about themselves, how are they going about little Jane, or little Tommy, little Sally? They're not going to.

We have to also look at the johns. When someone in general society is charged for child abuse by way of sexual abuse, that person goes to jail. What about the johns? Isn't that a form of child abuse, sexual abuse on a child? They get a fine, some community service, and probation. So that in itself is also sex abuse on a child, but in this case it's a child they don't even know.

I think once you . . . a person is found in a sexual act with a child that that person's name should be publicized so that everyone would know who that person is; so that that person won't cause harm to any more children because children are all our responsibility. I have a child and it's my responsibility.

But I also have children on the reserve that are my responsibility but are not my children biologically, but they're my family. And I extend that to the city of Regina, my First Nations people, my band members — their children. Those are also my children. I have to find a way to try to help them.

But in terms of programs — how do we address that? We have to find a way to turn around and tell these people . . . and we know where the area is. We know the red light district; you would want to call it. We in the First Nations community, we call it moccasin flats. And we know where it is. Because of the drugs and alcohol that are happening in the city of Regina, I'm involved in them day in and day out because I have to deal with that on my reserve as well. But it's pretty hard for me to have a panel that I could have my people come and address because as chief of my reserve I'm supposed to have the answers.

I hope the recommendations that this committee hears, they take it to heart. Because we can't just keep on studying. The children are going to get . . . at some point in time the children are going to get mad and say, we're being studied to death. You know, the First Nations view out there is, geez they're doing another study on us Indians again.

Well the children are going to take that same view. And once we keep studying the children, they're going to get that view of no one cares so I'm going to keep on doing what I'm doing.

Now comes the bigger picture in regards to the financial commitment that has to happen to these children if obviously mom and dad are involved with alcohol and drugs at home and that and they can't help out little Sally and Sally is out on the street.

Well there has to be a safe place for Sally to go. I look at your report, talks about 72 hours. Streetwise, streetwise is that child

is not going to say anything. That child is not going to say who their pimp is because they're going to get a licking, their family may be threatened, so they're not going to say anything. And you're going to keep them for 72 hours and 72 hours . . . although in here, it recommends maybe 72 hours, even keeping them 72 hours, they're going to still come out and get a licking because that's the way of the street.

Now there has to be a place for the children, a place to go. There has to be an intervention of the immediate family if the immediate family is capable. There has to be a process in place of keeping a child -- as in the foster care system -- keeping a child's whereabouts confidential, the placement of that child. And above all, and not the least, is the people working in there cannot think of it as employment only. They have to think of it as something that they want, something that they want to do, they want to help.

That's why I've come to know Marcia is that she brings all these issues up to me; she raises these concerns. And as chief of my First Nation, that I'm in somewhat in a position to do something about it. If it wasn't for Marcia explaining to me about what's happening here today, I wouldn't be here because I wouldn't have known. Because in the letter you say . . . it says in the letter you sent it out to the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations. Well that's just the organization. It's not me. And if it wasn't for Marcia, I wouldn't have known about this today. And it is a serious concern out there.

Imagine one day these children are going to be our leaders; they're going to make our decisions for us. And if they're dysfunctional and their families are dysfunctional, what are they going to teach their children? And they're going to teach their children. And the generation is going to get bigger and bigger and bigger. I tell you we're not going to be in a position to fix the problem because the problem and the perpetrators in that problem are going to outnumber the people that want to fix it.

So we could continue still studying without any answers or we could start doing something. And I'll be more than willing to help out this committee, to help out the provincial government any way I can.

And it doesn't mean that I have to go through, or you have to go through, the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nation. I have a phone number too. And like I've always stated, I'm me. I'm not the federation. I'm just me with a concern.

With that I know you may have questions and I want to thank you for this time. I know I get a little worked up once in a while but it's an issue I tackle every day. I'm with it every day. I'm in there every day. Talk about the drugs and alcohol, I deal with it every day with the police officers in Fort Qu'Appelle from my reserve.

We thought it was only in the city of Regina but now it's back home on our reserve, the drug sellers. So I guess that's why I get frustrated when I start talking about these things. So with that I don't mean to offend any one. I'm just speaking my concerns and I want to thank you all.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you very much, Todd. On

my part, certainly you didn't offend any one and I thank you for your very powerful and meaningful presentation. It was very enlightening for us. I know the committee members here will have some thoughts that they'd like to discuss with you and some questions possibly so maybe we'll just start with committee members. Are there any members that would like . . . Kevin.

Mr. Yates: — I'd like to ask a number of questions around the support mechanisms that we could perhaps look at together to deal with children in this situation. Because after a period of time, let's say theoretically -- because at this point we haven't made any decisions which way we go -- but theoretically we can take the child out of the immediate situation, stabilize the child for, you know -- 72 hours probably isn't sufficient -- but stabilize the youth so that they have an opportunity to deal . . . start . . . begin to deal with perhaps a drug and alcohol problem and some of the other presenting problems.

But then is, in your opinion, is there an opportunity to work with the First Nations bands across the province and with the reserves to find safe places for them to go back in their original communities or to have support from people, extended families on the reserve, the types of things that take them away if their parents aren't . . . put them in a better environment for a period of time, the parents aren't able to deliver that environment, some non-institutional-type environment, some supportive family environment away from the centre of activity?

And that's why I'm thinking away from Regina or Saskatoon where we have the problems or other communities where we have the problem, but some place that is perhaps safer for them in a supportive environment. Do you see that as a real possibility?

Chief Peigan: — Yes, I'll go back to 1993, the Qu'Appelle family services, the child welfare when we got into an agreement with the provincial government. What was seen was a need to bring the children, our children, our First Nation children, back home out of the provincial system — and it's no disrespect to the provincial system — but what we want to do is get back of who they are, where they are, and why do they exist.

And some of the realities, stories out there that I've attended to, in regards to foster parents in the province, is when am I going to get my cheque? You know, my mortgage is due this month or my car payments are due. It was just a process for foster parents to supplement their income to taking First Nations children into care.

So then the First Nations Child Family Services took shape and you have a number of them now in the province. And where I am from is the Qu'Appelle Child and Family Services. So we've seen that need and now we have a large number of our First Nations children placed in First Nations reserves, being monitored by the First Nation workers.

And taking your question in regards to children on the street. They're not the ones that created a crime. I see that those children on the street, that if they could be brought in somehow with their own willing, you know . . . as what I mentioned in

my comment is first we have to listen to them and what do they want.

And those children that are 13, 14, 15 -- the thing is we're stupid. We don't know anything because they know everything. But we still have to listen to them and what they want. Their comments are going to be, I don't have to listen to you, you know, to tell me what to do. But then also the home that that child's in; how at fault are they as well.

And I think what has to be looked at is a mechanism. I'm going to refer to the Muskowekwan home that was done for the Qu'Appelle Child and Family Services, the Yorkton Child & Family Services, Touchwood Child & Family Services and File Hills, is bringing those type of children in, into the Muskowekwan home, formerly the Muskowekwan Indian Residence.

And in there they've renovated the school to have two home accommodations where they bring in the family. But the family also has to have rehabilitation. And they also have to gain that right in order to visit their children. The family has to gain the right because in this sense the children is not the one that's being looked as the criminal.

So before they're allowed to visit their children, they have to also make that first step that they want the help. But that first step they have to make also is, do I want the help for my child or do I want the help for me first? Because before I can help my child, I've got to look after me first. So I'm no good to anybody if I don't look after myself first.

And that's . . . I'm just leading to your question yet. And that's how we have to help these children is that when we take them, we're not saying, okay, you're going to be in an institution. Children, in their mind right away, institution is the Dojack, Ranch Ehrlo, and all these homes. That's, in the children's mind, institutions.

So we have to develop it in the sense of saying that, no, you could leave when you want. But it's someplace that you could come that people are going to care for you.

And again it goes to the caring. The people that are going to work there are . . . or be involved with that can't look at it and say, oh geez, I could apply there and maybe I'll get a job. It's people that are already doing it. There's people out there already doing it. Look in the city. There's a lot of people doing it.

You know, I look at the Almon House. It started out; they bought the house for a dollar. Pasqua furnished it. It takes people that are street people, no place to go, that are sick. But they started just by getting a . . . buying the home for a dollar. And Pasqua helped renovate it and furnish it. Now they're into their second home. And their second home is looking at children.

Chili for Children. When it first started out, because these children had . . . not a fault of their own. Their mom and dad took their social assistance or their family allowance and spent it. It's not the children's fault. In a lot of senses, there are

children who believe that it's their fault. That if they ask mom and dad for something, they get mad, because they may have gotten back from a binge.

And another person . . . Why I'm sitting here today is Marcia. She deals with a lot of that as well. But like I said, you don't see these people. There's people out there. They don't ask for governmental aid, but they're out there helping people. And there's a lot more people.

And that's one thing I'm afraid of — in answering your question, Kevin, — is when a province, if the province turns around and says, well we want to start a new program to sort of helping these children in the sex trade; you know, we want to look at . . . you're going to have a flock of organizations developing, saying, well we want to help them. We want to do this, we want to do that. All of a sudden there's a care out there.

Like I want to say, like in any country, as soon as you introduce money into Indian country, there's a need. And it's no different than when the province introduces new funds for a new program; all of a sudden everyone's going for that program. But where were they before the program wasn't there? Were they operational? No, they weren't.

And in answer to that, Kevin, my view is that, sitting with Qu'Appelle Child and Family Services, the Muskowekwan, is that home and we're working towards that with the federal government. And I don't know if the province is involved with it in regards to bringing those children home — children that . . . underprivileged children, children that have no place to go in the provincial social service system, foster home system. No place in the First Nations system to bring them to that home so that they have warmth, shelter; they have food, clothing, schooling, and also to contact . . . the re-contact with their family. If it can't be their mom and dad, brother or sister, maybe uncle, aunt, kimosôm, kohkom.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you very much, Todd. Did you have any more, Kevin? June Draude, you had a question.

Ms. Draude: — Thank you very much for your presentation.

I guess I have a number of questions. I'm not sure where I should start.

Todd, you had indicated to us that the problem was basically brought to your attention through Marcia even though it's been there for a while, but I guess your responsibilities as chief you can't know everything until somebody brings this forward to you.

As a committee we had gone forward at the beginning and talked to the FSIN (Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations) and asked them if they wanted to do a representation, and as a representative directly from that organization we didn't hear from them. And I'm concerned if we want to form our recommendations -- and I don't know what they're going to be, we've had lots of material to go through -- if we go directly to you and say the chiefs or the individual First Nations should deal with the problem, is it something that's going to be picked up on? Is it going to be accepted by your governing body? Does

it look like we're ignoring them?

I think the last thing we want to do is come forward and say here we have an idea that's going to work and this is what should be happening in your community. That wouldn't be beneficial to anyone if we don't feel like everybody isn't buying into it. So it's going to be a concern if we just come in, I don't know if I should say the back door, but we have to make sure that we go through the right steps and that's a concern that I have.

Chief Peigan: — You know my comments I made about not knowing about this. I know about the issue but about the committee hearings and that here today is what I didn't know. Going through the report here it talks about a letter sent to the federation, the Metis nation association of Saskatchewan, and the response you got back. And one of those responses was the federation and you just kind of summed it all up.

I think it goes back down to this committee not contacting the federation but contacting the First Nations. I'll use an example, the national native alcohol and drug abuse program, a federally-funded program for alcohol and drug abuse counselling. Our work has a number of clients in the city of Regina that is not living on-reserve. The program is only . . . the federal government only funded the program for on-reserve. You know, you run these programs on your reserve — NNADAP, the drug abuse program.

So do I tell my NNADAP workers that when someone from my band from the city of Regina wants help to get into a treatment centre, do I tell him, well no you're living off the reserve so you go see the province. We don't say that. We try our best to help what is best way we can — you know, the support and the travelling — and albeit it does take a lot of money to move the person from here to, for example, Cree Lodge in the North. And what we try to do is, when a person is finished their stay we don't send them a bus ticket and say, well come home now. No, we send someone to pick them up to show that, you know, what you did was really cool, was right on, you know, and we're supporting you.

And unfortunately it takes funds that we don't have. And that's the big question that going to be posed to you, is what kind of funding are we going to work on from the First Nations, from particularly the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nation. They're going to ask, well what kind of programs? We'll put a budget together, a proposal. Then it's an issue. Like right now because there's no funding, there's not an issue.

Ms. Draude: — I understand and I know that you have responsibility for your people off-reserve and on-reserve, and just because they don't live . . . if they live in the city of Regina they still consider you their chief. And so as a group, should we be talking directly to you? Will each nation require something different?

And it's not possible as a government or as a committee to say this First Nations group should have this kind of help. I mean you can't do that. But how can we actually start addressing the problem if we're not sure what the ground rules should be?

Chief Peigan: — I guess I'll take my lumps at the federation when I address that question there, when they say . . . when you turn around and tell them, well this is Chief Peigan's comments and that we should be addressing with each First Nation. And those are always my comments in the federation is that: no, you don't speak for me, I've got to speak for my band members and I've got to try and get the best possible programs and the caring for my people.

Now obviously it's, no disrespect again, is that the bureaucratic red tape I call it, but now it's the brown bureaucratic red tape, you know, that we've created. You know, at the federation, you've got the tribal councils, you've got the agencies, and you've got the First Nations. So we're creating all those levels ourselves.

And I try and get involved as much as I can by saying no, I'm the Chief of Pasqua, not Perry Bellegarde, not Matthew Coon Come. I'm the chief and I tell him what to do; he doesn't tell me what to do. The vice-chiefs, I tell them what to do; they don't tell me what to do. So you could turn around and tell them Chief Peigan said he tells you what to do and this is what he said should be done. And then I'll address that there.

Mr. Toth: — Yes, when you're talking about some of the situations you face, and I think Marcia brought out the fact of residential schools, and we've certainly heard that. And a number of the presentations have had a very integral part in some of the problems that your First Nations people are facing.

We also, I think, Todd, you mentioned something about foster care and what have you. And we've heard from individuals who have been in the foster care situation, girls on the street. One of the things that they pointed out very clearly was the fact that they viewed a foster home much the same, with much the same regard that many people view the residential home. And probably along the lines the fact that most of the foster care is a white community.

And the feeling was, well there were some very good homes. There have been some homes that children have been put into in foster care that really weren't supportive homes.

And the thing that was brought out very clearly as a need — to begin to work with even the extended family. And rather than maybe using maybe the term safe house, like maybe taking a child out and putting them in a safe home or safe environment for a while using, maybe working with extended family members to provide that safe place of refuge for a time until the matters are dealt with in the home environment that that child is coming from.

And I'd to hear your thoughts in regards to that rather than just . . . whether it's the Indian family services or the welfare agencies just coming and removing a child and putting them in a foster care. Do you have any thoughts in regards to beginning to look at working with extended family members -- be they First Nations or otherwise -- in dealing with children and really making a concerted effort to put that child back or give them the opportunity to be placed back in their home. I think it was one girl said, yes it may be abusive situation, I may not be treated well, but they're still my parents.

Ms. Gordon: — I'd like to say something before the chief does in regards to this. And just expand more on the 72 hours that you were talking about for just say holding a child or detaining a child.

When a child is detained for the 72 hours, it states in your report that maybe to get them detoxified may take another seven days. So what I see the committee looking at and just by your question, is what types of programs and what types of educational curriculum should we be using to be able to achieve this end I guess.

And after they're done with the seven days then you -- hopefully if we do have a safe house in Regina at one time or another -- that they would have access to this house where they will further get assessment and to see how far along they . . . if they're going to actually take the treatment or they will return back to the street immediately or whatever.

Then the next area you deal with is transition, dealing with both the parents and families, and seeing how they would best come back into the community.

With a law that charges pimps — which is a good law — but you've got to remember that the people that are within the community, just say the core area, maybe that's all they know. That's how they were raised, that's all they've seen is the alcohol, the drugs, the abuse. They've been left alone or maybe they've been abandoned for weeks at end. You hear of all types of apprehensions like that where children . . . they find them in these conditions.

So what you do is you charge the pimp, just say, and you get a restraining order. So you talk this kid into doing this, the police do, and say this is the right thing. And it is the right thing to do.

But there's no backup programs like your safe house or your transition houses to hold them. And so they have to return back to the street. So if you are going to do this, my suggestion is you've got to put all these forward at the same time — your front line, and your transition houses, safe houses, and your law. Otherwise you're going to have a backlash where the poor child has nowhere to go and is returned back into the street or the community where they came from.

You're going to have one really irate pimp that's saying okay, I'm going to use you as an example. And so that nobody else does it, and this is what's going to happen to you.

So you have to be able to provide them . . . which is safety first, and this is the underlying message I get from your report, the safety first of the child and how you're going to achieve it. And what Chief Peigan has given is definitely you do have to work with the parents and you do have to work with the children together. In some cases, you have parents that do want to help their children; in other cases, you've got parents that put them on the street.

So you have to know when to draw the line. You know which parents are workable and which ones, you know, you have to keep your children or the child away from and that they can never return, otherwise they're going to go straight back into

what they're doing.

So I feel that you have to have within the homes now that you're going to start with — the parents. And so this is about the third stage with the transition, and they're all going to work together. You have to have and re-install . . . and because . . . the reason why I'm harping on the native aspect of it is because it's so high. It's so high that it's a lot of our people that are out there.

So you have to . . . basically they've been deculturalized through the residential system and all what's happened. So now you have to reculturalize them and you have to tell them who they are, this is what it is to be an Indian. You know you've got brown skin but this is what it is to be an Indian.

Now with that, installation comes by way of legends, working with the little kids, telling them stories in a way where you're imbedding in them again, once again, moral conduct, dignity, pride, honour. And that's where your self-esteem comes up and that's one of the big kickers in your report, is self-esteem, and how do you do that.

Well you have to be aware of the people that you are servicing. And if it is the majority Native, Metis, White, or whatever, Vietnamese, or whatever, you're going to have to address those cultural issues on all basis. Whether it's Indian or White, you're going to have to address them and let them know who they are and why it's so important that they get the education, because here's the alternative. You have to provide them role models. You have to show them.

Okay, in one aspect we may have a bad apple functioning right now in Saskatchewan, our dear SIGA (Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority) man. But anyway, on the flip side of the coin, you have a Douglas Cardinal who happens to be an Indian architect and who designed the museum in Ottawa. So you have all sorts of very, very competent Native role models that could come and do these talks at schools, say here's the formula for success.

A lot of them you'll find are residential syndrome. They have overcome it, either by way of therapy or just be their own Indian . . . reverting back to their own Indian culture. But once they've overcome this, this is the problem, then they've blossomed into these really productive citizens.

And so those are the people that you have to reach out and bring to the young Indian children and youth — youth role models. I guess you can look at the Lafontaine Kids. They were self-taught at home and they go around performing all over the place because someone has taken an interest in them.

And when we say on a case-by-case basis, because of the damage . . . the damage is so bad or sometimes just irreversible, you basically have to have that. Now who is going to have the funds to be doing that? This can't be short term. It can't be something where you're in there seven days and you're back out on the street again with nowhere to go and nothing to do because it's ineffective; you're not going to accomplish what you want.

It has to be in a way where you're walking that child through its . . . maybe from eight years old to eighteen, that very crucial section of youth, to become a productive citizen. And it's not something that's going to be, you know, a year or two years. You're in it for a while.

And, you know, they may . . . the systems have to be done in a way that you give that victim the opportunity that, okay, I've come back here six times, you know, maybe they won't want me but I'll try again. And maybe that sixth time, they finally do change. So you can't have, you know, very stringent limitations on them because they're already broken. They're already in pieces. They don't know it. And so your job to do the programming is to be able to reach those people through that programming to fix that. Sorry.

Chief Peigan: — Don, your question with regards to residential schools, foster care, extended family, foster abuses, some good, some bad. And I guess getting right down to the meat and potatoes, what if the child doesn't want to leave mom and dad because that's my mom and dad.

Well I guess my question is, what if mom and dad knows it happens? What if mom and dad knows it exists? Mom and dad let it go on. Is that not a form of child abuse by letting little Sally go out and do what she has to do and she's only 12, 13? Now if that parent . . . didn't want to leave that parent, and that parent is made aware of what this child is doing and the parents do not want to do anything about it, and they know and they see it exists, they themselves too are the abusers.

Mr. Toth: — I agree with you on that and I guess . . .

Mr. Peigan: — And then when I say that, if I finished on they themselves are abusers, so here I am at home. I drink, I take drugs, leave my son home all the time. Social Services finds out. What they do? They apprehend my boy. What happens in this case?

Social Services should apprehend through — Kevin's question — Qu'Appelle Child and Family Services or the First Nations agency, by working together. I'll use an example. The child family services and this provincial government have a case . . . a protocol agreement on case transfers, on sharing of information. And that can exist.

So it comes right down to, is that mom and dad knows it, they themselves are the abusers. It happens in DSS (Department of Social Services). You apprehend the child. So in this case the child should be apprehended, but through consultation with the agency, through consultation with the immediate family — might be an older brother, older sister that have their own family now, or uncle and aunt, or a grandfather, grandmother.

Mr. Toth: — I guess that's the point I was bringing out, that some of the witnesses we've heard from have indicated that even though they knew the abuses or they had complained about it, they're still considering that home. And how do we deal with that.

We have to provide that environment, or somebody has to provide that environment. And to be very candid with you, I'm

not exactly sure, if you will, using the term the white community, is going to be perceived as being able to answer all the problems. We're going to need to work with the First Nations people. I think the First Nations people — and I think you've brought that out this morning — have to take some leadership and direction there too.

And it may take a chief like yourself who is willing to say, I'm not prepared to just stand here and watch. We've had all these platitudes through the years, and coming up with some ideas and making them work maybe on your First Nation reserve and just setting it as a model if you will, just because of the initiative you've taken, and then expanding it to show that we can work together.

Because in that regard too, I agree with the fact we need to get rid of some of the paper shuffle we have between Social Services and the First Nations welfare agencies, so that we're not . . . do away with the duplication. Because we've got too many people falling through the cracks while we're trying to figure out where they belong and who's responsible.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you, Don.

Ms. Jones: — Thank you both for your presentation. Just to follow up a bit about what you're saying about the children whose parents are abandoning them, perhaps knowing that the exploitation of the children is taking place and not taking any steps to prevent it. And you said, are they not abusing the children? In my opinion they are.

So do you see them in the — the abusers, not the children section — do you see any legal action being taken against the parents who are allowing their children to be abused. And we know, and you know, that many times it's the family who puts the children on the street. And in many other cases the children are on the street because the conditions are preferable to those at home.

And this isn't just in your community. This is in the community of any child who's on the street. They in most instances wouldn't be there if that wasn't a preferred place than home. There are exceptions where children are experimenting or they are just being rebellious and they come from perfectly fine homes. But in the majority of cases they're there because it's a better place to be than their home.

So I'm wondering about the responsibility, the parental responsibility. And I mean should parents be regarded as pimps and predators? And indeed we also know that a lot of children who are on the street were sexually abused at home. So do you have any thoughts on whether pimps should also be regarded by the justice system as pimps and predators and abusers?

Ms. Gordon: — Okay. I know right now down in the States they are looking at parents taking some responsibility for this — for their children shooting up schools, everything else like that. And it is a necessity.

But when it comes to Indian people you have to look at the reasons why they're in this predicament that they are in. And I think, yes, they are the abusers; they become the abusers. But

they've been abused too, maybe by three, four generations, just say.

So how do you tackle that? What would you do?

Well I feel that if you are going to make them abusers as well and put them in that category, to be able to get the child out into a more safer environment, that would be fine. But I think what they have to do first and foremost is besides that, they have to teach those people that they are charging how to be parents. And I know that there are programs now that try to teach a more healthy lifestyle and better parental skills.

But in some cases . . . I can remember as a child going to a reserve home. The home was clean but maybe it had like two sticks of furniture in it and the cupboards weren't full. The people were good people; there was nothing wrong with them. They were just poor; they had nothing.

So you have children growing up in environments like that and some of the outcome can be positive. But in areas where it is not positive, then I feel that the parents have to have parental skills taught to them. And that could be within the transition period that you have.

I mean if they're prepared to counsel, I think it's in the Manitoba legislation, prepared to counsel the pimps on — what is it? johns, john something . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . yes, johns school, then maybe they should have a parents' school and be able to teach them how to . . . and by assessment through that, if they still see that forget it, these guys are not going to be parents at all, because there are people that should never be parents. You know, there's just some people that just don't have it. Then I think alternative methods should be looked at to move that child to a different environment.

I feel that there should be like the two parents . . . I mean the two system that they're doing out in Muskowekwan could be beneficial where the two learn — one learns how to be a child and one learns how to be a parent all over again. No statistics as the outcome, as to whether or not it will be a continuing trend or be a positive outcome, but you've got to try things like that to see if they work.

But, yes, I would if it's a parent that's absolutely . . . like there's some parents that put their little girls out on the street like that, women, and they're drug addicts. And I see them sometimes too. Like they're so lost. They're lost in their own addiction and they're lost . . . that little kid isn't even a human being any more.

So I think they should be given an opportunity to dry out to see exactly what they are. And if they're totally a lost cause, then I think you're going to have to look for alternative methods with that child. Because they cannot go back there. That's all.

Chief Peigan: — Just quickly is that our mission with the Qu'Appelle Child and Family Services is that we don't want to apprehend children. Apprehension is the last stage. So we give the parents the option of having parenting skills, to take parenting skills, what is a good parent, you know. Waking up in the morning to wake up your child to go to school. When is it

time to feed your child. You know, it doesn't have to be brand new clothes but as long as they're clean clothes.

The children are going to be what they see in their parents. And if they see mom and dad not drinking, taking drugs, that's what they're going to be.

So then our last resort is apprehension. If mom and dad . . . We give all the . . . (inaudible) . . . mom and dad. And if they said no, well then obviously they don't really want to care for their children. So then comes the apprehension.

And that's how I'd like to respond to that question is that if I'm living in the city of Regina, have a wife, we have good jobs, and if I had a daughter, let's say she was doing that. Now I know it exists. And if I go and see some kind of agency to help me or if I just keep giving my daughter heck, tell her don't do that, don't do that, and I don't really do anything about it, yes, then you're at fault in some sense if you don't go for that proper help for your child.

And some people have drawn the line saying, I'll sign the order where you take my child and put him in an institution and then go to proper counselling. And the child kicks but they're off the street. The child is not going to like it for the first week, first two weeks. But gradually the child has to start learning that and knowing that somebody cares. And it just may be a rebellious child, but mom and dad have to do something about it. They can't let it continue by just putting her in . . . putting the child in — what do you call it? — I'm going to do this to you for two weeks, not suspend . . .

A Member: — Ground.

Mr. Peigan: — Ground. I never grounded my child so I don't . . . You never grounded your child. You never discipline him. You never seek help for them. So is mom and dad somehow at fault by letting them go out in the evening knowing that one day that the police may come to their house and say, you know, we have bad news for you and we found your child. Those are the realities that they're going to have to live with. Those are the realities that I've seen.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you. Peter, I'll turn it over to you.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Yes. Well I want to thank you for a very insightful presentation, both of you. And I have many questions I could ask, but there are two that I would like to ask just in light of time, because we'll have other witnesses fairly soon waiting to present.

But in terms of two important issues that you've raised — one of course is the question of your ability to deliver your own services for your own people, which you've already demonstrated a strong capacity to do. And I guess what I hear you saying is that you feel that you've got to be involved in a major way in helping children from your First Nations who may be abused on the street here in Regina, get through the healing process.

And I guess just to . . . obviously we can't get into too much

specifics here. This isn't quite the right forum for it. But I think we need to explore it enough to be able to make a recommendation on it. Are you envisaging . . . you know, I think . . . I've been involved in setting up a safe house in Saskatoon, working in conjunction with the Saskatoon Tribal Council.

And starting with the safe house, I mean, do you see the place of safe refuge for a child who lives in Regina but whose family is members of your First Nations, do you see that child going to stay in a safe refuge in Regina? Do you see that refuge being a 72-hour lock-up or do you see it being a sort of an open facility where they can come and go? Or do you see that safe house being on your reserve?

Where should the safe house be? Should it be a locked facility or not? And obviously, you know, do you see yourselves operating it or do you see yourselves operating it in conjunction with the province? You know, what kind of a partnership with the province do you envisage?

And obviously, I'm taking for granted here for a minute that there would be financial resources from the province to make this possible.

But I guess in terms of what the vehicle for delivery is . . . and I'm particularly wondering about it at the beginning. Because it seems to me that as you move forward into the transition process further along, through the healing process, that there we've got models already that you've made work on your reserve.

So I guess I'm particularly wondering about what we do in the first stages, you know, when we've pulled a child off the street. I think members of the committee — a lot of us anyway — agree with your notion that the child shouldn't be the victim, so we don't charge that child and we want to take that child to a place of safety.

And then of course we've got to work out the nitty-gritty of, you know, assuming the financial resources are in place. Who runs that? Should it be a locked facility or not? How long should, you know, the child stay there? Where should it be located — in the city or on the reserve?

And part of the — I'll just make one final comment — part of the dilemma for the province, because there are many, many First Nations communities, obviously, all who have kids in the city of Regina. You know, should they all have . . . if they've got a significant number of children in Regina, do we look at a safe house on each reserve or do we look at something that you jointly run in Regina? Would you be willing to work with other First Nations communities to run a safe house jointly in the city?

You can see there's a lot of stuff to work out and I'm not trying to ask you to answer it all now. But I am very interested in the idea of facilitating a process in which you work as partners with the province. I believe you could do a very good job.

And I guess I'm just wondering about how we tackle those first days when we need to get children off the street. I'm not

expecting your response to be a final answer in any way. We're just having a discussion on this and we can negotiate all this over time.

Ms. Gordon: — Well it sounds good, this discussion. I mean that's nice that you're including us in the whole sphere.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — You see the safe house operating?

Ms. Gordon: — First of all I think that the legislation, and I don't know if you have to totally adopt the law of the 72 hours completely with how it's drafted in Alberta, but I think you should take the best of the both laws and see if you can come up with one comprehensive one that's going to facilitate the child.

Secondly, I think in some cases because their bodies are so small, like one example you give in here some poor girl was held for how many, 16 hours, and how many men they brought into the freezer there, 42. They're probably very drugged up and stoned just to keep going, and you do need a detoxification. You have to try and get them — you cannot expect somebody to make a rational decision when they're even craving for drugs or under drugs, or coming . . . well going through withdrawals even.

So I think that it should be twofold. There should be in the more severe cases, there should be a lock-up facility. Secondly, after your assessments are done, where you know that the individual is going to maybe perhaps take the program seriously and would be on an honour basis I guess, where you know that they are going to exit the street or are very good candidates to exit the street.

In some cases children are, even though they're saying they're being revictimized by the law, it's better to be kept in a safe place like what the outreach lady says, rather than be turned back out into the street, back to the drug dealer, and back to the pimp that's going to have you working in the next hour or so again. So there has to come a point in time where you know, government has to decide what is right for that individual that's not of age.

Secondly, they're definitely . . . and what I have stated, we do have to work with the city, with the province, with the federal governments, with the Indian communities, all the communities that are involved to be able to come up with . . . because there are extenuating circumstances in specific to First Nations communities that have to be understood and have to be re-taught, and a lot of things redone.

I mean there's extermination on the board, back in the 1800s. We can't run away from that and the cause and effect has come out. But we do have an urban group called the RTSIS (Regina Treaty Status Indian Service) . . .

Chief Peigan: — Status Indian Service.

Ms. Gordon: — Yes, that we do have working, that do deliver services. We do have tribal councils just say within Regina and Yorkton that would be able to network with the federal and the provincial governments to start to strategize and set up

programs and do studies that are geared to what you're saying, which is a safe house. There definitely has to be someplace for them to go. Whether they're going to take advantage of the long term or not, there has to be someplace for them to go.

I feel that I would like to see something . . . I'd like to see it monitored so that it reaches the kids. Not so that it doesn't become so bureaucratically built so that nobody sees them again and they're lost again. I'd like to see more hands on and that's what a safe house does. It's hands-on treatment, person-to-person basis, because that's the one that's suffering is that individual. I don't know if I've answered the question.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Well I think you've made a very good effort to start. It was a very tough question.

Chief Peigan: — I just like to add is that is that what Marcia alluded to the Regina Treaty Status Indian Services or RTSIS. There is already an operative protocol agreement with the Prince Albert Grand Council, Yorkton Tribal Council, Saskatoon Tribal Council, and the Southeast Treaty Four Tribal Council for programs and services. And your question alluded to in regards to . . . (inaudible) . . . there is so many reserves out there, do we have an agreement with every reserve?

If we have an agreement at Pasqua, look after Pasqua's children along with Pasqua people. Well that's what those agreements are for is that when I have band members sitting in the city of Prince Albert, do I have to set up an office out in Prince Albert to look after them?

That's where they go with this. And I think they've . . . it's Regent Park School. Well it used to be Regent Park School, but they bought it and they re-renovated it and they have a day care, the AB programming. And they have all kinds of services in there. The First Nations employment centre, the Silver Sage Housing. They call it the one-stop shopping concept.

And also you look at the Muskowekwan. And my views is yes, it should be in the city because if I'm on the street and I'm a youth and I'm in trouble, where can I run to? As a child you don't go to the police. Why? You're afraid that stereotyping of the police — well they came to the house, they picked up mom, dad, kimosôm, kohkom, brother, sister, aunt, uncle, whoever it may be. So then the children hear is their view is from their older family about the police — you know, cops, pigs, you know, all that stuff. You know the names are all out there.

So then well I'm not going to see them . . . (inaudible) . . . And that's why I deal with the (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) in Fort Qu'Appelle. So the only time my people see you is when you come pick up somebody. That's all. And that's what is entrenched in these children.

So then they have to know a place to go out and see them if they're on the street working. You know if you have any problems and you come here and that. It's nothing to do with the law. It's place where you could be safe. Stay as long as you want.

Look at the women's safe shelters. You know there's not a court order for the women to go there. It's something there to

help them, to protect them. So the abuser . . . the person involved in the abusive relation can't go there and demand them to leave.

And I think that's what the children ask. Something they could do where they could make up their mind. And as that's going on, you have the counselling services.

But I do agree, it should be the city of Regina. It's happening out . . . it's happening here. It's happening in Saskatoon. It's happening in Prince Albert. The major cities. And that it should be set up in those centres because it's where it's happening. It should be set up right around where it's happening because you've got to be able to run there.

So if it's set up in the south part and the red light's in the 5th Street, that's a long ways to run. These children aren't driving yet. They're walking to work so they're in that area. They're walking to work.

Ms. Gordon: — I think within these homes too that our elders should be brought in and they also should be screened because there's some . . . there's good elders and bad elders too these days. But the elders should be brought in and they should be taught.

Doesn't mean that you got to take them and fling them into a sweat lodge or whatever. But you can start teaching them by . . . Like, for example, my grandfather, old Dan Kennedy, he made the march — he was eight years old — from Cypress Hills to Carry the Kettle and he was eight years old. He come through Regina. There was just the creek here, Wascana. Next time cavalry tents. Next time he saw just buffalo carcasses and towns, okay.

So we grew up with those types of stories, sitting around his armchair and instilling in us who we were, how proud it was to be an Indian, what we had, the governance systems we had, our matriarch systems, our marriages, what this song meant, why you sing that, why there's a death song — stuff like that.

And so with that came the respect. Okay, we respect people when they die. This is what we do to care for them when they die.

We respect the old people and their ceremonies when they're handling this or doing that because this is what it means. Okay, we know we're supposed to stay away from drugs and alcohol because we're told by our old people that it starts as a fire above the head if you drink, and then it consumes the head and then the body.

Well it may be very symbolic but in a sense what it's doing is saying keep your spirit clean, stay away from that and you'll be okay.

But that's what needs to be done within these homes too is to be able to . . . when they're rational enough and settled down and are ready to learn, because it won't be right away, then to try and implement their culture again back on them. And maybe if they're proud enough, they won't hit that street again.

But we've tied you up long enough and I didn't realize it's 5 to 3 . . . or 10 to 3.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Well actually, Marcia, you haven't tied us up at all. The conversation and the dialogue has been very, very fruitful. I think I have 101 questions, as I always do, but I think we're going to have to recognize that we do have other presenters coming.

Ms. Gordon: — Phone number or anything for later?

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Yes, we'll certainly get it. Our technical adviser most likely will get it from you hopefully. But you can give it to us today.

But I have to ask you one question. I'm going to take about one minute to do that. After all is said and done . . . and you know we have already identified in the province that there are a number of services that exist. There are a number of gaps in service, okay. Those things have been identified.

The ability for First Nations and government and the entire population to work together has been stressed as very important. An understanding of the issue has to be understood — has to be understood. The residential school syndrome and how that's contributed to the situation, at this point, I just want to mention that we have a number of Caucasian families that haven't been involved in that kind of treatment but their children are on the streets too.

So even though we don't have the residential school syndrome in the Caucasian community, we have sort of a behaviour that leads kids to the streets, and we have behaviour on the part of johns and pimps that is also very sick and has some sort of origin. And there's various, various reasons why this happens.

So I guess what we're trying to do is to understand that we want to take some steps. We want to try to ensure that everything that we can possibly do is in place. That in spite of the fact that there is, we have agencies in place and so on and we notice . . . and in spite of the fact too that you have done such wonderful work at Pasqua, the numbers of children on the streets are increasing and that's a major, major concern.

And I'm just wondering with the . . . when we look at the numbers and we think there is some sort of an insidious thing happening in our society, that we just cannot stop this sort of ugly fire; it's rampant.

So when you had mentioned that you have . . . what's the name of the . . . I was asking you for that Muskowekwan home — oh, I'm sorry okay, Muskowekwan. I'm just wondering, it's a facility obviously, a renovated school to address the rehabilitation of families.

So in proximity to the numbers of children and families needing this kind of services, how well are you faring in being able to deal with the big problem that we have? How many families can you take care of or help through this initiative? And if that's not enough, how can we look for the assistance that, and where can we look for it quick enough in order to help the numbers of children that need to have these healing services?

And I know that it will help for us to be in dialogue constantly and so on, to put forward some initiatives that must be taken. We also have to talk about finances of course.

But could you just answer how many families are you able to address? And I believe it's successful but do you think it's the tip of the iceberg?

Chief Peigan: — It's just the beginning and all we could do is just renovate because we had to go through with the federal government . . . and they're saying, well it's going to be based on per diem rates; number of children. And so all we could do is renovate enough space in the residential school to accommodate two families at a time. But when I say families, that's mom and dad, all the families. So you've got two families but then the number of children in care I believe is a total of 16 to 20, the number of children in care. And the children that are in care are through the foster system.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Is this children in care on the reserve?

Chief Peigan: — No. This is the children in care on the reserve — not only on the reserve but also in the province in regards to that they're our high needs children, that are at-risk children that have been through the system, the DSS foster home system, the prostitution. They've been through that so now where are they going to go?

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — So do you have 16 to 20 identified as from Pasqua First Nations? Is that what you're saying?

Chief Peigan: — No.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — No? What are the 16 and 20 numbers referring to?

Chief Peigan: — They're referring to the children that they have from File Hills, Qu'Appelle, Touchwood, Yorkton.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — The tribal council?

Chief Peigan: — Yes.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Okay, thank you.

Chief Peigan: — All those four tribal councils.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Okay.

Chief Peigan: — And there's more identified but all we could fill up was . . . like we're full. Like they're open, they're full.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Right. And the other question I need to ask you, and this is mostly for my own, you know, to increase my knowledge and understanding of it, you've taken an initiative, your Child and Family Services have taken the initiative to do this. Obviously it takes funding and you say you're getting the funding from the federal government.

Now I've been told before that if there's that initiative taken by

Pasqua, for instance, to assist children that are off-reserve that once belonged or do belong to the Pasqua First Nations, that if you take the ones from off-reserve and help them, you are at a deficit as far as your budgeting goes with the feds. So I'm just wanting you to answer whether that's what happens. So just, I need clarity on this.

Chief Peigan: — I can't tell you because then we'll get into an argument over funding.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Yes.

Chief Peigan: — No, I'm just funning with you.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — But it becomes very difficult . . .

Chief Peigan: — Everyone's being so serious today. No, it's worked out through the federal government, through the rates of Child and Family Services, the rates that we get reimbursed for.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — So do you on Pasqua . . .

Chief Peigan: — And it's an agreement between . . . tri-party agreement between the feds, province, and in this case, Qu'Appelle Child and Family Services. So now the four agencies developed the Muskowekwan Home that created the corporation body, and each agency has the chairman represented and the director represented at the board of the group home, the Muskowekwan Home, that work in conjunction with the federal government on the way Child and Family Services funding flows but now to Muskowekwan.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — All right. So the tribal council has this agreement in place and they've got this moving along very well. To your knowledge, it sounds to me like you've . . . the funding that you have from the federal government, I realize to most, I think, to most bands it's a global funding. So do you then . . . have you determined that you would do line budgeting, for instance, for Child and Family Services and use that amount of money to address the needs of these families with this program you have?

Chief Peigan: — No. You see, what with the global budget we have to set the need and that. So with the parenting skills and that we don't get no funding for that. We have to find it internally. And the problem we're having right now with the feds is that they're saying well, we don't fund you for parenting skills. And we said, we know, but we're using some of that funding that's targeted for keeping children in care, for keeping the children out of care, by helping the parents.

The Muskowekwan Home is somewhat dissimilar, is that when you have a number of children in care, you'll get funding. The federal government bases it on format. If you have 10 kids in funding, I mean in care, you get so much per day, per child. That's the way the federal government is running.

And so each agency is trying to give some money to Muskowekwan, and Muskowekwan would have to go on the per diem basis that the federal government sets for per child in care, per day. So it's contingent on how quick you can do your reporting, get into the system, into the federal government in

order to get reimbursed.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Todd and Marcia, can I ask you one other question, and that is with respect to page 4 of your brief. The last sentence under the heading called the abused, where you say above all children and youth must have adequate housing, food, and shelter; and I think it's clear from that that you sense that at least some children right now don't. What do you think the province needs to do to address this issue?

Ms. Gordon: — I don't know, this is such a . . . That's a big question. I can do a whole brief on it but, okay . . . When we refer to adequate housing, right now we do have Silver Sage low-income housing. But in a lot of cases you have people that are still renting from slum landlords; the housing conditions are deplorable in some cases. And Chili for Children would not have sprang up if it wasn't for the need to feed the children.

And so what we would like to see is an extension, not only by way of education, but an extension where when these families do come out of the system, where they are prepared to take on the parenting skills, to take on being parents and the children are willing to exit the life, there should be facilities such as this to be able to accommodate them.

And under low-rental housing there is such a long list, like it's terrible. Under every, every group's low-rental housing, the list is very long, so whether you can access it at the time that you require it, is another thing.

You may be in good shape now and you're ready to have a house, but nothing for another month or so. You're looking at limitations of, just say they're low-income so they can't afford to pay the 5 or 550 a month, so they go back into the welfare system even. Back to whatever amount they get paid for rent, and thus it takes them back into that same neighbourhood. So I think you are going to have to look at adequate housing for the little ones to be able to put them in.

So with adequate housing, adequate food . . . Like we were talking about that today too, that even on the reserve, because the way funding is set up . . . I talk to him even though I know that there's very little he can do to help us off of the reserve. Even though he's our chief and he's to represent all of our people, the way funding is distributed, we would have to come and see the province to see if we could start something and have him . . . And then you run into jurisdiction. You run into all kinds of other things, which isn't very pleasant when you're trying to get to the root of the problem.

So with the safe house and with proper housing and food programs, you can supply a family to be well on their way to rebuilding itself and becoming more healthier. You definitely need a shelter, definitely for . . . and it has to be located in the city.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Okay, Marcia, in regards to the comment that you just made, and you had mentioned this previously, that there's definitely a need for a safe shelter. And Todd has also mentioned that there's a need for children to . . . to ask the children so that they sort of are in on it and they can

volunteer to go into a safe place and leave the streets.

But oftentimes, when they're afraid for their lives, that they're going to get beat up and if they're sort of addicted to drugs or alcohol or whatever and it's also the issue of easy money or money needed or supplies needed of some kind, so they're not really in a mental place where they can make good decisions for themselves because of all of those things. How would you suggest that children initially reach that place of safety if they're entrapped in the street life?

Like what can be done or how would they end up being identified as children who need some assistance and are really in danger but . . . if they're not volunteering themselves, how would they reach this place of safety?

Ms. Gordon: — That's where your community comes in and being able to liaison and work with them and keep them educated and informed. Because they can basically identify — they live there — they can identify who's walking the streets. Like he said, one of his relatives lived in such an area and they knew which girls were doing what and whatever. So people watch. They see.

And I believe that the community has to network with the front-line workers to be able to do those identifications. And the police really should move on it rather than say that they can't do anything.

The only way that you can try and get a person into such a program, I suppose, is you're going to have to have other Indian people probably — or both, Indian and White — talking with them right on the street and asking them, asking them, you know, do you want to change your life, and if you do, there are facilities, there are places that can help you do this.

And that way it keeps the community involved, it keeps them in touch with the changes, and it also empowers them to bring about change where you otherwise can't really get at it because of lack of involvement.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Okay. Well thank you very, very much. It was great of you to come today and to meet with us. We want you to know that the committee was formed because we do care. We do care.

And it's just been wonderful to have you dialogue with us today and to talk about this issue. And there is a lot of good suggestions that you've put forward and you've certainly broadened our knowledge and understanding on each of the elements in this issue. So we thank you again for coming and we . . .

Ms. Gordon: — We hope we'll hear from you and that you'll send us a report as to the outcome.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — We will. You'll definitely get our report and hopefully they'll be much ongoing discussion beyond today once that report is finalized. Thank you very, very much.

Ms. Gordon: — Thank you and I'm glad to see that you're all

working.

Chief Peigan: — I have one question.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Yes, it's your turn to ask us some questions. We've been asking you all these questions.

Ms. Gordon: — Well that's what he said, will I get the chance to ask some questions?

Chief Peigan: — I want to ask one — that's all I was telling Marcia — I guess maybe two. In the report you sent us, is there a major report that was done, because I know you're referring to page 191, page 127.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — What that is, Todd, is we have transcripts of all the testimony, and the references to page numbers are the references to the *Hansard* transcripts of all the witness testimony. And you can . . . our staff will show you how you can link up with our web site. If you want to you can go through and read you know, yes.

Ms. Gordon: — .aecca or something like that? Is that the one? Okay.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — Yes. So that's what that's referring to. We haven't, apart from the report that you already have, we haven't actually published any other reports yet, but when we publish our final report you'll get a copy right away.

But meanwhile you can link into that testimony and look and see what anybody, you know, who has testified before the committee has said. There's a few in camera that don't, you know, that aren't recorded, but everybody else from around the province you can see the transcripts of the testimony.

Chief Peigan: — And I guess my last question is that at the end of the day when all this is said and done, I guess it's may be, might be more of a question of a statement is that I hope that as you mentioned, Arlene has said, you care. And at the end of the day and I hope, like I mentioned in my earlier comments, is that it's not just a study.

You may say you care, but hey we studied it, and something gets done about it, that there has to be a process in place to get done about it. And like I mentioned earlier, there's people already doing it, you know, but they're just not being recognized for doing it.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Or they don't come after . . . there's been loopholes in between.

Chief Peigan: — And just Peter's comments is that . . . or no, it was Arlene's comments in regards to how to educate. If you build it — have you ever seen that show *Field of Dreams*? — if you build it, they will come. When they know that there's someplace safe that they don't have to go where there's people of authority from the legal system there.

And if they know that there's someone there that cares, they're willing. They're on the street, they see them counselling, working, scaring the pimps, scaring the johns away — not

physically but like because they're visible, you know. Then they'll know that oh, there's someone that cares. So if you build it, they will come.

I want to leave that with you. And I want to thank you all for this afternoon, and I hope good comes out of this.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you very much, Todd. Thank you.

Ms. Gordon: — I wanted to say the same thing. I'm just glad that you're all doing something about it because they really need help, those little kids. And it's a blessing and you'll be all blessed for your work.

The Co-Chair (Ms. Julé): — Thank you, Marcia, and thank you, Todd.

Mr. Toth: — Maybe if I could make one comment. Todd, as chief of a First Nations people, I really want to thank you as well because I haven't had any other chief really show that much concern, take the time to come out and recognize that there is an issue out there that needs to be dealt with. So we want to thank you for being upfront with us.

Chief Peigan: — And just remember that letter you sent out now, when you send it out to Perry and say that in that letter Chief Peigan said.

The Co-Chair (Mr. Prebble): — We'll take a break until 3:30 when our next witness will be presented.

The committee met in camera for a period of time.

The committee adjourned at 5:05 p.m.