



COWICHAN TRIBES
Child and Family Wellness Legislation Project



Raising our Children our Quw'utsun Way:

Overview of Cowichan Child & Family Wellness Legislation Project

Update to the Community

March 29, 2022

Today's Agenda (6-8 pm)

6:00 pm – Opening, Elder

6:15 pm – Chief and Council Remarks

6:30 pm – Presentation

7:00 pm – Break

7:10 pm – First Draws (must be there)

7:15 pm – Question and Answers

7:45 pm – Draws (must be there),

Elder closing

8:00 pm – End of info session



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Presentation

Context

Why do we need a Cowichan Law?

Project History

About our Cowichan Law

Service Delivery

Staying Informed



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Context: Indigenous Children in Crisis

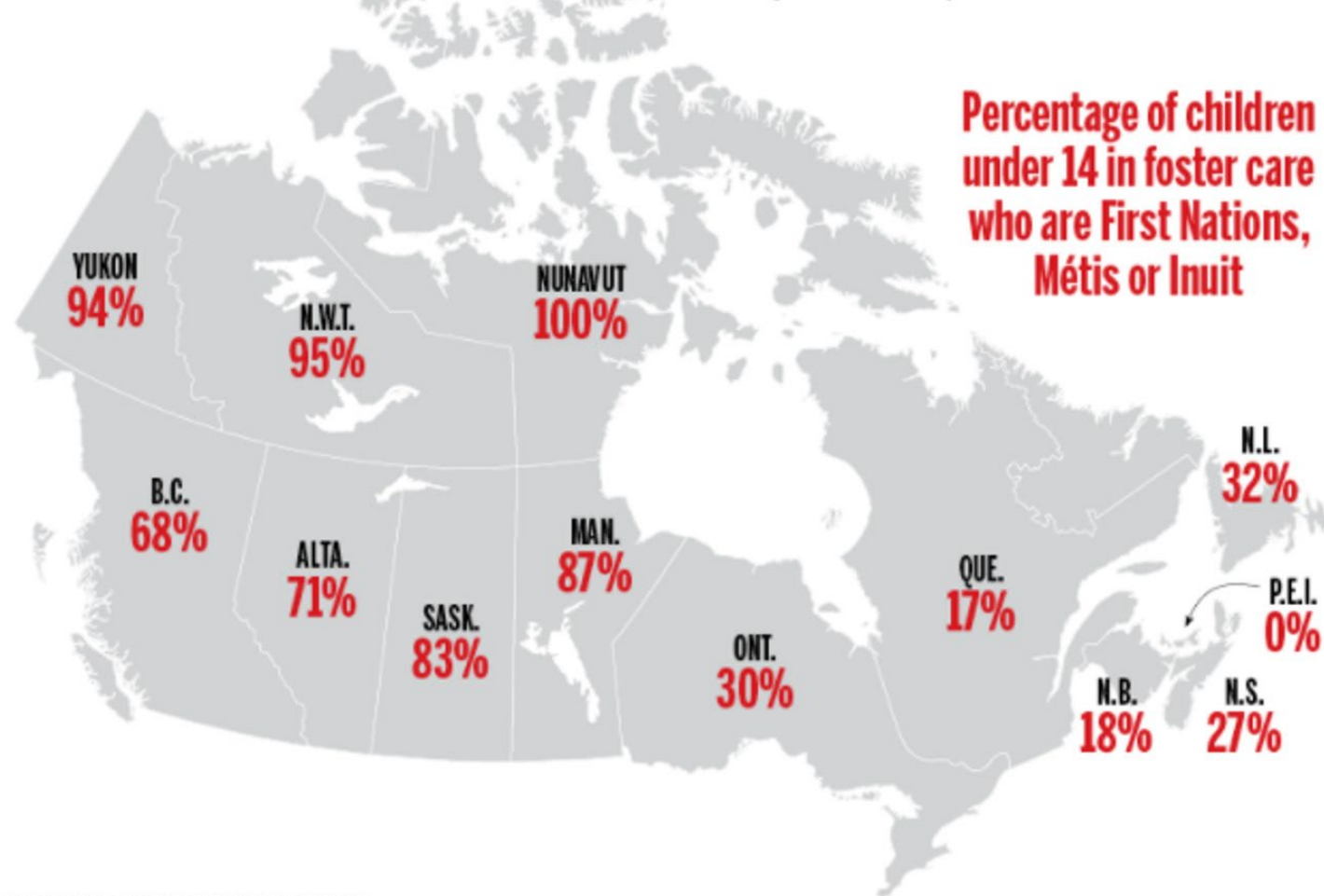
“There are more children in Canada’s child-welfare system today than there were at the height of residential schools, which housed Indigenous children forcibly taken from their communities in what the Truth and Reconciliation Commission said amounted to cultural genocide.”

— Justice Murray Sinclair, Chair of Truth & Reconciliation Commission in 2015



Caught in the system

Indigenous families make up 8 per cent of Canada's population, but First Nations, Métis and Inuit children are disproportionately more likely to be in foster care



SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA 2016 CENSUS; MACLEAN'S



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Significance of the new Act:

An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis children, youth and families (C-92)

- Recognizes our inherent right to care for our children and families (First federal law to do)
- The result of a long history of Indigenous advocacy
- Cowichan Tribes is the first Nation in BC to pursue this path to jurisdiction for Children and Families.



Why we need our Cowichan Law

- Community has been calling for our own law
- Provincial and federal laws are not consistent with our culture and teachings
 - Provincial laws do not recognize the importance of children to our community well-being and the role of families
 - Provincial laws do not provide our families with enough time or resources to overcome challenges
- We have our own teachings, our *snuw'uyulh*, that govern us
- Having our own law and jurisdiction will help keep Cowichan children in community



PROJECT HISTORY

The past is important



Timeline



LOU Signing January 2019



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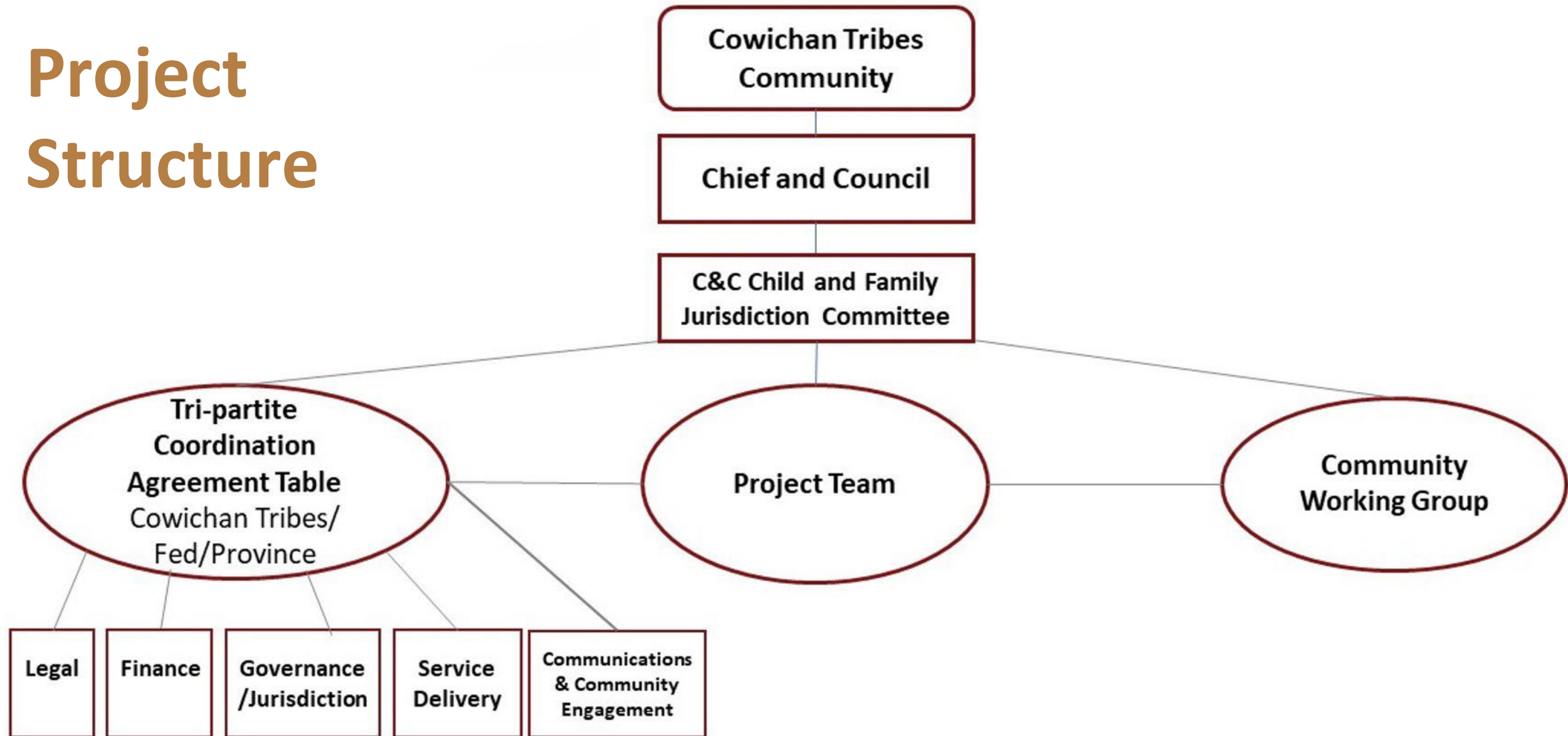
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WHO'S INVOLVED

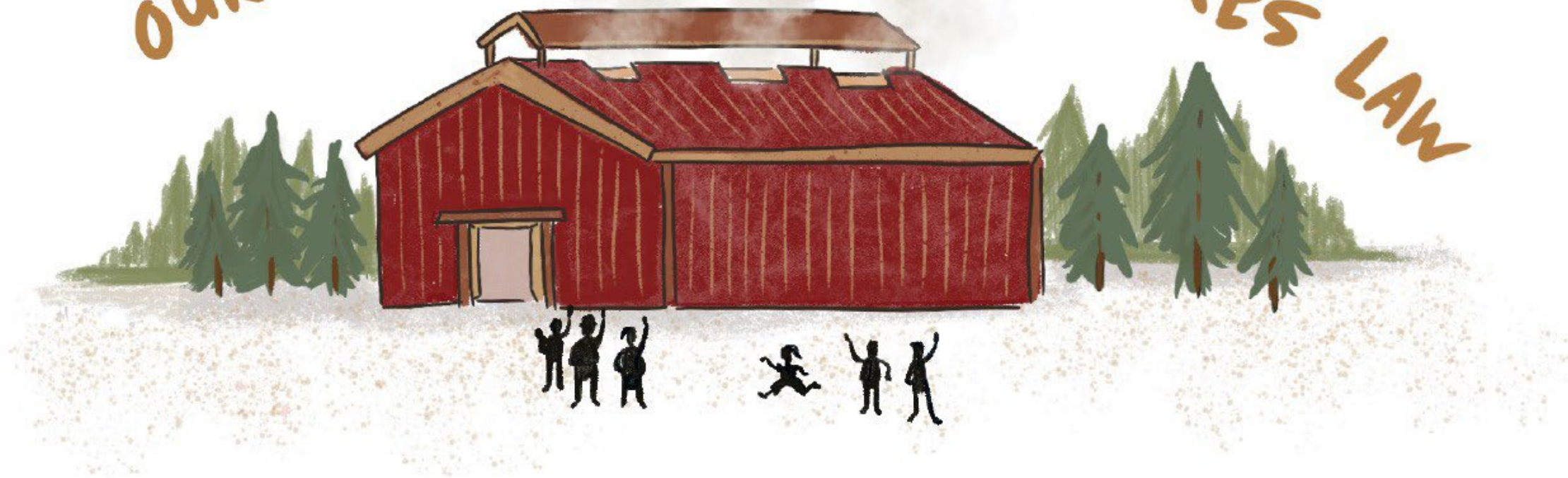
We're paddling together



Project Structure



OUR CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES LAW



Components of Cowichan Law

- Governance and Jurisdiction
- Culture
- Prevention
- Protection

The draft law is being developed and will be shared with community for input as part of this process.



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Rooted in our Snuw'uy'ulh

FAMILY | Is the Heart of Life. Families take care of family and families are built on the strength of every person in the family. Everyone has a role and responsibility.

CULTURE | Our culture makes us strong. It identifies who we are.

TEACHINGS | Are life-long, everyday practice. Teachings are lost in the English translation.

GOVERNANCE | Elders were our social workers and decision-makers regarding our families. Hereditary chiefs would come together to make decisions about community.



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Service Delivery

- **WHY** change - vision for the future
- **HOW** the change will occur
- **WHAT** the focus is on - keeping children in the community, resources, training





Launch of Project Logo



Charlene Johnny, Quw'utsun artist



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Project Website

<https://ourchildlaw.cowichantribes.com/>



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Staying Informed

- Updates in monthly Quw'utsun newsletter – including “Spotlight” series
- Social media updates on Facebook
- Project website (New!) ~ officially launches Friday April 1
- Community forums (more coming) including in person with opportunities to review law.
- Community working group – open to members – 3rd Tuesday of every month 6-8 pm over zoom
- To get invite email or ask questions: ourchildlaw@cowichantribes.com



Questions or Feedback

Email us anytime at:

Ourchildlaw@cowichantribes.com



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