

THE ACT TO AUTHORIZE THE COMMUNICATION OF PERSONAL INFORMATION TO THE FAMILIES OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN WHO WENT MISSING OR DIED AFTER BEING ADMITTED TO AN INSTITUTION

FOURTH ANNUAL REPORT (MARCH 1, 2024 TO FEBRUARY 28, 2025)



2019 – The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls requested that the “Quebec government to provide Indigenous families with all the information it has about children who have been apprehended following admission to a hospital or any other health center in Quebec”.

June 3, 2021 – The Québec government adopted the *Act to authorize the communication of personal information to the families of Indigenous children who went missing or died after being admitted to an institution*.

THE ACT IN BRIEF

The preamble seeks the **families’ quest for the truth, healing process, and reconciliation**.

The Act makes accessible to the families certain information held by the institutions, public bodies, and religious congregations to enable them to shed light on the circumstances surrounding the disappearance or death of a child. For the Act to apply, the child must have been admitted to an institution prior to December 31, 1992.

It considers the families’ linguistic and cultural particularities and their psychological and spiritual needs.

Without the adoption of the Act, the medical records of less than 13.4% of the children that the Direction de soutien aux familles is now seeking would have been accessible to their families.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

The Direction de soutien aux familles (Secrétariat aux relations avec les Premières Nations et les Inuit) administers the Act and supports the families in their research.

Awacak – Petits êtres de lumière comprises families concerned by the death or disappearance of a child and offers the families emotional support.

The **monitoring committee on the carrying out of the Act** has 9 permanent members (Indigenous organizations) who formulate recommendations, and 4 observer members.

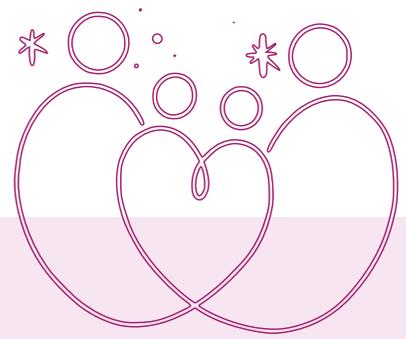
- ◆ It made 12 recommendations between 2021 and 2024.
- ◆ In 2025, it issued a new recommendation to establish a fund in memory of the children who went missing or died after being admitted to an institution.

The **committees** coordinated by the Direction de soutien aux familles: the Comité interministériel sur l’application de la Loi, the Comité interministériel sur les exhumations, and the Réseau des accompagnatrices et accompagnateurs en santé et services sociaux.

The **institutions** that contribute day-to-day in the families’ quest for the truth.



ACHIEVEMENTS



Since 2021:

121 applicants have sought 209 children under the Act;

- ◆ more than 78% of them are women;
- ◆ the Atikamekw Nation (39.7%), Innu Nation (30.6%), and Anishinaabe Nation (17.4%) are extensively represented;
- ◆ most of the applicants are the siblings of the children subject to the searches.

Some **369** requests for medical records and 17 requests for administrative archives have been submitted to health and social services institutions and hospitals.

The Directeur de l'état civil has received **215** requests and the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux has received **168** requests for death registrations.

Parishes or cemeteries have received **279** requests and **80** requests have been submitted to religious congregations.

Initiatives under the Act during the past year

Awacak - Petits êtres de lumière has made several presentations in the context of talks and cultural events to publicize the organization, its services, and the realities of the families.

The Awacak - Petits êtres de lumière website was established online awacak.ca.

7 meetings between families and physicians who are members of the Réseau des accompagnatrices et accompagnateurs en santé et services sociaux took place during the past year.

A third exhumation was carried out through collaboration between the Direction de soutien aux familles, Awacak - Petits êtres de lumière, the Bureau du coroner, and the Laboratoire de sciences judiciaires et de médecine légale.

1 application for review is pending at the Commission d'accès à l'information.

Staff from the Direction de soutien aux familles made **13** trips to meet in person with one or more families in addition to participating in numerous videoconferencing follow-up meetings and several trips to pinpoint interment sites, broaden knowledge of certain sites, and conduct archival research.

Works related to the Act were covered by **28** articles in the print media, 10 radio broadcasts or podcasts, and eight television programs.

An agreement has been implemented between the Direction de soutien aux familles and Bibliothèque et Archives nationales du Québec (BAnQ), which has facilitated thorough documentation of the coroner's records and changes in them, the organization of several awareness-raising meetings with religious institutions, and the establishment of long-term partnerships with the regional offices of BAnQ.

For the second consecutive year, the main causes of the children's deaths, their medical trajectory, and burial site have been presented.

THE CONCLUSION OF THE RESEARCH: HONOUR THE CHILDREN'S MEMORY

Over the past year, at the request of the families, the Direction de soutien aux familles organized **4** remembrance ceremonies, two of them attended by Awacak - Petits êtres de lumière.

The families organized **2** reburial ceremonies for children following their exhumation.

10 research files have been closed over the past year.