

these Aboriginal children died while in the care of a provincial child-welfare agency, and twenty-nine died in the care of an on-reserve First Nations child and family service agency.

### **Delivery of child-welfare services**

There are over 300 child-welfare agencies in Canada operating under provincial and territorial jurisdiction. In addition, Canada provides funding to over 100 agencies delivering child and family services to First Nations families under the framework of provincial legislation.<sup>25</sup> In 2010–11, there were 9,241 First Nations children outside the parental home and in the care of these First Nations child and family service agencies, representing 5.5% of on-reserve children.<sup>26</sup> A few larger Canadian cities (such as Toronto and Vancouver) also have Aboriginal child and family service agencies.<sup>27</sup> In Manitoba, there is also an agency serving Métis families. There are, however, no Aboriginally controlled agencies in the three northern territories; child-welfare services to Aboriginal families there are provided through the same government agencies that serve all children. In two out of the three territories, Aboriginal people make up a majority of the members in their legislatures and cabinets.

Although the federal government acknowledges its responsibility for child-welfare services to First Nations families, Métis communities are not well served. The Commission believes that adequately funded, Métis-specific, child and family services must be made available to Métis children and families. The Government of Canada should not let unresolved jurisdictional disputes stand in the way of the acceptance of such responsibilities. Similarly, the Commission believes the Government of Canada should ensure the development of adequately resourced Inuit child-welfare services in the North and in urban centres such as Ottawa and Montreal that have a significant Inuit population.

### **Lack of adequate funding**

Proof of the effectiveness of First Nations child and family service agencies is still preliminary, but anecdotal evidence and case studies suggest that First Nation agencies are more effective than non-Aboriginal agencies in providing service to First Nation clients.<sup>28</sup> But, it is troubling that the ability of First Nations child and family services agencies to develop culturally appropriate services has been constrained by limited funding. Of twelve First Nations agencies surveyed in 2005, 83.4% reported that they did not receive adequate funds to ensure culturally appropriate services.<sup>29</sup> It is clear that the way in which Canada has funded Aboriginal child welfare has hampered First Nations agencies in providing effective services. This shortfall continues to inflict pain on Aboriginal families and