



ADR-Link provides access to several streams of service for families/youth involved with Children's Aid Society offices. Brochures are available for each service:

- Family Group Conferencing
- Indigenous Approaches to ADR
- Child Protection Mediation
- Ready, Set, Go Response
- 4th Option

Indigenous Approaches to ADR or Original Dispute Resolution (IAADR/ODR) is a term used to describe ADR that draws on traditional ways of knowing and decision making, problem solving and resolving disagreements. The term ODR reflects the fact that dispute resolution has been used for generations in Indigenous communities. Respectfully accessing the wisdom, guidance and knowledge of Elders in Indigenous communities often provides insight and commitment leading to positive plans for the care of Indigenous children. These services are purposely delivered in each community in ways that may be unique to that First Nation, Inuit, or Metis (FNIM) community.

› Indigenous Approaches to ADR/Original Dispute Resolution (IAADR/ODR) is primarily used when:

- Any family/caregiver involved in a case identifies as having an Indigenous background (living on or off reserve)
- A family/caregiver does not consent to a plan for a child's care that will form the basis of a court application put forward by the CAS (in process or contemplated)
- Family and/or other caregivers and CAS are willing to work together to create a plan to care for children
- Access, placement, adoption/openness, supervision orders are in discussion
- Participants are willing to come together (in person or virtually) to work together to focus on best plans for the child(ren)'s care and usually includes:
 - Family members/caregivers
 - Band representative and/or Elders
 - Other community supports
 - CAS worker (public society or FNIM organization)
 - Practitioner
 - OCL if assigned
 - May include child(ren)
- All parties agree to participate voluntarily and accept that CAS is involved with the family

› Is Indigenous Approaches to ADR/Original Dispute Resolution (IAADR/ODR) fair?

- The practitioner doesn't take sides, make decisions for you, or judge you
- The practitioner will make cultural considerations a large part of the path to resolution – conscious of historical and systemic issues that impact child rearing in FNIM communities/families and their relationships with CAS services
- The practitioner will help the family describe the parts of the CAS's plan they do not agree with and talk it through with the group
- Everyone works together to reach an agreement on care for the child(ren)
- IAADR/ODR may help reduce your time spent in court and the time your family/caregivers and child(ren) are unsettled

Indigenous Approaches to ADR/Original Dispute Resolution practices are tailored to each family's needs.





- IAADR/ODR can improve the relationship between the family, the caregivers, and their worker(s) by helping to develop inclusive and respectful communication
- There is no cost to the family to participate
- Practitioners are independent, neutral and not employed or selected by CAS
- IAADR is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time if you wish
- Practitioners are trained in the delivery of IAADR/ODR through various Indigenous practitioners that are independent (currently working to develop a registered provincial roster of practitioners) – Indigenous and non-Indigenous practitioners provide this service

› What Is The Process?

1. Family/caregivers meet with their worker (referring organization)
2. Worker offers ADR to clients and then processes a referral to ADR-Link (including notifying the family's band representative of the referral)
3. The ADR Practitioner:
 - will reach out to CAS and other parties listed on referral form
 - will arrange time(s) and space for conference meetings (family/caregivers, practitioner, worker attend – children 12 yrs and older may attend – OCL may attend but other lawyers do not generally attend)
 - after appropriate ceremony to open the circle, helps to ensure communications are clear around addressing issues of child safety and wellbeing, supports needed and expectations as a group and that all participants have a voice in the circle
 - ensures the referring worker and, if applicable, other support people are invited to speak regarding the concerns and hopes for the child(ren)'s care
 - sets up the family/caregivers to continue the meeting without any professionals in the room to create a plan
 - with the worker (and OCL if applicable) review the plan with the family, work together to finalize it, confirm it adequately addresses the safety and wellbeing of the children and confirm agreement with the plan with all present
 - produces a written copy of the final plan and sends it to each participant within 10 days of the conference – participants are encouraged to review the agreement with their lawyer prior to signing it
 - may meet with the group to sign the agreement
 - will arrange followup meeting if requested
4. Participants move forward with a clear understanding and commitment to the care plan for the child(ren)

› What if IAADR/ODR Does Not End In An Agreement?

If there is no agreement, the case continues just like it was before it was referred.

› What if I'm Not Satisfied With the Process?

Please reach out to ADR-Link@ifcc.on.ca to offer feedback.

Or contact us another way

- **Phone:** 519-282-6991
- **Fax:** 519-679-4234
- **Web:** www.ifcc.on.ca/adr-link

ADR-Link connects parties in dispute with an independent Child Protection Mediation Practitioner, Family Group Conference Practitioner, Indigenous Approach or Ready, Set, Go Practitioner. None of the Practitioners are employees of London Family Court Clinic (LFCC) or affiliated with LFCC. All mediators are certified in child protection mediation by the Ontario Association for Family Mediation and listed on its roster. All family group conference coordinators have been trained and mentored through the George Hull Centre and are listed on its roster. By participating in ADR-Link services, you acknowledge that ADR services are not provided by LFCC and agree to hold harmless ADR-Link and LFCC for any and all claims, actions, suits etc brought against ADR-Link directly or indirectly.

ADR-Link is administered by London Family Court Clinic - info@ifcc.on.ca for contact