

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
December 7, 2010

B.C.'S CHILD AND YOUTH REPRESENTATIVE SIGNS HISTORIC MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WITH B.C. FIRST NATIONS DIRECTORS FORUM

Victoria – A historic Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed today between the British Columbia's First Nations Delegated Agencies, known collectively as the First Nations Directors Forum and Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, B.C.'s Representative for Children and Youth (RCY).

The MOU signifies a strategic alliance between all parties to continue working together to improve the outcomes, safety and well being of First Nations children in the Province of British Columbia.

Mary Ellen Turpel-LaFond stated, "This agreement reinforces our commitment to continue to work together on behalf of young First Nations people in this province. I really value the work of those in Aboriginal agencies and their willingness to share information on a regular basis about the work they do with children. I think it's important that we sit down, listen to each other, work together and respect the work that has been accomplished. This MOU represents a common set of values that will guide our efforts to protect our most vulnerable population."

This MOU is significant in that Delegated Agencies are making an effort to ensure that there are no gaps in reporting out on outcomes of First Nations children and families.

Nita Walkem, First Nations Directors Forum Chair stated, "This historic signing creates opportunities for us to work collaboratively in an open and transparent manner to ensure that we are all working together to improve the lives for all First Nations children and families receiving services through our delegated agencies."

With the signing of the MOU, the RCY and First Nations Delegated Agencies can officially work together to advocate on behalf of First Nations children and youth to ensure that they are fully supported and receive culturally-appropriate, quality services from governments and agencies that addresses their needs, circumstances and aspirations.

For Further Information Contact:
Mary Teegee, Program Director, Carrier Sekani Family Services
Telephone: 250-562-3591