

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
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FIRST NATIONS CHILD WELFARE SERVICE PROVIDERS VINDICATED . . . AGAIN.

Prince George – The Directors Forum, a coalition of executive directors of First Nations child and family service agencies serving 156 out of the 198 First Nations communities in British Columbia received further vindication for their long struggle against the under funding of child and family service for First Nations communities.

After years of feeling like a lone voice in the wilderness, we are now one more in the choir. Along with the Assembly of First Nations, The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada, the Auditor General of Canada, we can now add Parliament's own Standing Committee on Public Accounts who reported that, "Continuing to use a flawed funding formula means that First Nations child and family services agencies are often underfunded, and First Nations children and their families do not receive the services that they need. "

We have consensus. A formula that funds agencies based solely on the number of children brought into care is inherently wrong. We also acknowledge that the Federal government is making some progress. This progress, however, is not timely and children in our communities continue to pay the price for the slow pace of bureaucratic change.

There is a simple solution. Take action now. There is ample information in regards to funding First Nations agencies in a more equitable way. An interim funding model could easily be implemented today with bridging and reconciliation mechanisms for any final bureaucratic decision. Pick one. We need to stop victimizing First Nations Children and families because of the government's inability to act.

We would encourage you to visit our website www.fndirectorsforum.ca and join our campaign for equitable child welfare funding for First Nations communities now. Please write the Honourable Chuck Strahl, Minister for Indian and Northern Affairs and your Member of Parliament and urging them to take immediate action.

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