



## BC ASSEMBLY OF FIRST NATIONS

1004 Landooz Road  
Prince George, BC V2K 5S3  
Website: [www.bcafn.ca](http://www.bcafn.ca)

**BCAFN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**  
**September 19-21, 2023**  
**Hybrid - In person & online via Zoom**

**Resolution 18/2023**

**SUBJECT: DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN AND DAY OF ACTION AGAINST DISCRIMINATION**

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**MOVED BY: CHIEF JAMES HOBART, SPUZZUM FIRST NATION**

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**SECONDED BY: KHELSILEM, CHAIRPERSON, SQUAMISH NATION**

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**DECISION: CARRIED**

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**WHEREAS:**

- A. Since time immemorial, First Nations successfully used traditional systems of care to ensure the safety and well-being of their children;
- B. Canada and British Columbia's colonial laws and policies have specifically targeted First Nations children and the family structures they are nested within;
- C. those colonial laws and policies, implemented via the residential school system and subsequently the child welfare system, have devastated our cultures and our family life;
- D. Canada's own Minister of Indigenous Services has referred to the impact of the child welfare system on First Nations families as a "humanitarian crisis;"
- E. our children continue to suffer and die within the colonial child welfare system;

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**Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of September 2023**

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**Terry Teegee, BC Regional Chief**

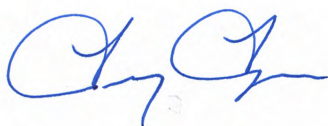
- F. Canada was found to have knowingly discriminated against First Nations children and families in the funding of First Nations child & family services, and was ordered by the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal to end that discrimination and to compensate the victims of discrimination;
- G. the Representative for Children & Youth has found that British Columbia continues to perpetrate the same type of discrimination against Indigenous children in the funding of off-reserve child & family services;
- H. Canada ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1991, and in 2021 passed the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*, which affirms the declaration as an international human rights instrument, which includes provisions specific to children;
- I. British Columbia has not developed or ratified a provincial child rights framework but has passed the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*;
- J. the BC Office of the Representative for Children and Youth has demonstrated a strong commitment to protecting and upholding the rights of First Nations children; and
- K. the watershed commitment made by the Province of British Columbia in 2002 in support of the Tsawwassen Accord must be reaffirmed, given the urgency of the humanitarian crisis in the child welfare system.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:**

1. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly directs the Regional Chief to work with the First Nations Summit and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs as the First Nations Leadership Council and in collaboration with the BC Representative for Children and Youth to develop a Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Children; and
2. The BCAFN Chiefs-in-Assembly designate Universal Children's Day (November 20, 2023) as a Day of Action to end discrimination against First Nations children, including British Columbia's ongoing discrimination in the funding of off-reserve child & family services.

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**Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 20<sup>th</sup> day of September 2023**



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**Terry Teegee, BC Regional Chief**