



## **UBCIC Calls on BC to Fully Implement BC Representative for Children and Youth Recommendations**

**PRESS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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(Coast Salish Territory/Vancouver, BC) - The Union of BC Indian Chiefs is calling on the Ministry of Children and Family development to fully implement the recommendations made by the BC Representative for Children and Youth, Mary-Ellen Turpel-Lafond. The recommendations were made in a report entitled "Amanda, Savannah, Rowen and Serena: From Loss to Learning" released earlier on this morning before the Legislative Standing Committee in Victoria. The recommendations follow an in-depth independent investigation conducted by Turpel-Lafond into the deaths of four children in the North Region.

The Office of the BC Representative of Children and Youth is an independent officer of the BC Legislature, which was created as a result of the recommendation made by the Hon. Ted Hughes in his report "BC Children and Youth Review: An Independent Review of BC's Child Protection System" released on April 7, 2006, which outlined in 62 key recommendations on improvements to the child welfare system in British Columbia. The Union of BC Indian Chiefs has supported Mary-Ellen Turpel-Lafond's work since her appointment in November 2006.

The Union of BC Indian Chiefs has reviewed the 11 recommendations made by Turpel-Lafond and calls on the Ministry of Children and Family Development to demonstrate the same level of commitment to implement these recommendations as they committed to the recommendations of the Hughes' Report.

"We have achieved significant and historic agreements such as the New Relationship, the Transformative Change Accord and Memorandum of Understanding for Aboriginal Children. Any implementation MCFD plan must be in keeping with the spirit, intent and commitments of these historic agreements," said Chief Phillip. "We need to be full partners in the development of any and all plans with our communities' priorities at the forefront."

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip has further commented "We cannot afford to continue to look the other way as our communities are in crisis. With the barrage of youth suicide rates, combined with drug- and gang-related violence, it is more important than ever that we continue our focus on our children. We cannot afford to stand by silently as the child apprehensions occurring in our communities reach epidemic proportions".

The Union of BC Indian Chiefs has strived to work in conjunction with the Ministry of Children and Family Development towards the creation of Regional Aboriginal Authorities for the past five years. The full implementation of these 11 recommendations made by Turpel-Lafond would give a clear demonstration of on-going efforts by the Ministry of Children and Family Development to work with BC First Nations exercising their inherent right to the health and well-being of our children.

For more information:

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