



BC Aboriginal
Child Care Society

Caring for our Children newsletter

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*Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond and ACCS Board Member Sue Sterling.
(Photo credit: David Wu)*

Keynote Address:

Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, Representative for Children and Youth, BC Office

During our Opening Plenary Session on Friday morning, Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond, B.C.'s Representative for Children and Youth, expressed hope that Canada will soon have a National Children's Commissioner. She spoke about what we need for our children to do well and highlighted the importance of ensuring strong supports in the early years for healthy development, access to quality child care and support for moms (particularly in the vulnerable post-partum period). She also talked about our need for a provincial poverty plan with a particular focus on Aboriginal poverty so that we are able to give our children the best possible opportunities to become happy and contributing members of society.

She spoke of the need for accurate reporting of Aboriginal children's outcomes so that their needs can inform the development of social policy designed to support them. She also praised the values Aboriginal parents instill in their children, such as ensuring they have compassion for others and understand that every child is a gift and is born perfect, regardless of any special needs they may have. She commended Aboriginal families for raising children with a strong commitment to family, caring for community, a strong work ethic, and reminded us that in working together, we have an even stronger voice.

*Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond was appointed BC's first
Representative for Children and Youth in November 2006.
The Representative is an independent Officer of the Legislature.
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