



BC ASSOCIATION *of*
SOCIAL WORKERS

BC Association of Social Workers
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For immediate release

BC SOCIAL WORKERS SUPPORT NEW INDIGNEOUS CHILD WELFARE DIRECTOR POSITION

(Vancouver) BC social workers welcome the BC government's creation of the new position of Indigenous Director of Child Welfare and express our interest in working with the incumbent to ensure the provision of high quality and culturally appropriate child welfare services to Indigenous children, youth, and families.

The BC government recently created a new Indigenous child welfare director position that will help better ensure the safety, wellness, and access to community and culture for Indigenous children.

"We honour the commitment and dedication of Indigenous peoples and leadership who have made repeated calls for change to the child welfare system and repeated calls for the creation of this position" said BC Association of Social Workers President Michael Crawford. "As the number of children and youth in care decreases overall, the percentage of Indigenous children in care remains high and we look forward to the positive influence the Indigenous Director of Child Welfare will have on policy and practices."

Historical approaches to child welfare with Indigenous peoples have failed and only further oppress Indigenous peoples. The BCASW will support the Indigenous Director of Child Welfare to move forward with a decolonizing, trauma-informed approach to policy and practice.

"The Indigenous Director of Child Welfare must be situated at a place within the Ministry of Children and Family Development where they will have the appropriate authority to create change" said Susan Soloman, Indigenous Liaison to the BCASW Board. "We encourage the BC

government to support and adequately resource the Indigenous Director of Child Welfare to fully recognize the inherent jurisdiction of Indigenous peoples over their children and families.”

The BCASW notes that to be successful the new Indigenous Director of Child Welfare will require support.

- The BC government must ensure that Indigenous peoples are provided with the resources and capacity necessary for the care of their children and families, and
- The BC government and the Indigenous Director of Child Welfare must establish a committee of Indigenous leadership, Indigenous child welfare experts, Elders, and those with lived experience to continue the ongoing efforts to redefine policy and practice that supports and protects the rights of children and families and to serve as an oversight committee for the Indigenous Director of Child Welfare.

BC government release - <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2024CFD0002-000292>

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BCASW is a voluntary, not-for-profit membership association that supports and promotes the profession of social work and advocates for social justice. BCASW is one of the provincial/territorial social work associations in partnership with the Canadian Association of Social Workers (CASW). Through CASW we support the work of the International Federation of Social Workers. BCASW was incorporated in 1956 and has branches and members (including students) throughout BC.

BCASW acknowledges that our office is in the unceded territory of the Coast Salish Peoples, including the territories of the Musqueam, Squamish, and Tsleil-Waututh Nations and that our members live and work in unceded territories across British Columbia. We also express appreciation to Métis and Inuit peoples across British Columbia.