

# Memorandum OF Understanding

BETWEEN THE

**Métis Nation British Columbia**

AND

**the Representative for Children and Youth, for British Columbia**

- Whereas**
- A. The Parties to this agreement recognize the rights and aspirations of Métis Nation British Columbia to be self-determining and self-governing.
  - B. The Parties recognize that Métis possess inherent rights and responsibilities with respect to the safety and well-being of their children and youth. These rights include a special collective right to transmit a unique cultural identity and to sustain that identity, including a sacred relationship from time immemorial with their ancestral territories and their peoples, as well as the rights conveyed in the United Nations' Convention on the Rights of the Child and Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the Child, Family and Community Service Act.
  - C. The Parties agree that the number of Métis children and youth in care or custody must be safely reduced. They further agree that Métis children and youth in care or custody must be supported in their families, extended families, kin, neighbourhoods, and communities whenever possible without jeopardizing the safety of children and youth. They further agree that the successes and strengths of Métis children and their families and communities must be recognized.
  - D. The Parties agree on the need for a respectful and ongoing relationship and dialogue on all issues relating to the safety and well-being of all Métis children and youth in the province of British Columbia, so that they can be supported, respected throughout society, and able to participate without barriers in life, while retaining and enjoying their distinct rights and identity as Métis people.
  - E. The Parties agree that the relationship established will be based on mutual trust and mutual respect acknowledging the protocols of Métis in discussing matters essential to the future existence of their Nation.
  - F. The Representative for Children and Youth is committed to ensuring that the fulfilment of her mandate, including the preparation of policies and services, and the monitoring and reviewing of services, are responsive to the circumstances of Métis children and youth, and recognizing the context of the Métis Nation Relationship Accord and the Transformative Change Accord particularly in relation to supporting children, families and communities.

- 1.0 Purpose**
- 1.1 The purpose of this Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is to establish a joint dialogue and advocacy process regarding general and systemic issues relating to the safety and well-being of Métis children and youth, and to:
    - (a) recognize that Métis Nation British Columbia maintains jurisdiction over their children and youth, regardless of residency;
    - (b) recognize and support the Representative for Children and Youth as an independent officer of the Legislature of British Columbia, with a statutory mandate to advocate on behalf of children and youth, to monitor programs and services and to review and investigate critical injuries and deaths;
    - (c) aim to reduce the number of Métis children and youth in care or custody; and,
    - (d) aim to support Métis children and youth in their families, extended families, kin, neighbourhoods, and communities whenever possible, without jeopardizing the safety of children and youth.
  - 1.2 The joint dialogue and advocacy process will focus on:
    - (a) advocating on behalf of Métis children and youth to ensure that they are fully supported in their well-being and development from birth to adulthood, including that they receive culturally-appropriate levels and types of services from government and agencies of sufficient quantity and quality to address their needs, circumstances and aspirations;
    - (b) supporting Métis peoples to be effective advocates for their children and families;
    - (c) advocating for the development of programs and services that respond to the experience of the Métis communities;
    - (d) advocating for the well-being of Métis children, including keeping Métis children within Métis communities whenever possible and minimizing unnecessary disruption to their lives;
    - (e) providing advice to the Representative for Children and Youth regarding issues affecting Métis children and youth;
    - (f) identifying and collaborating on research that supports Métis children and youth; and
    - (g) other topics or issues as mutually agreed upon by the Parties.
  - 1.3 The joint dialogue and decision making process will be carried out by the Representative for Children and Youth and the Métis Nation British Columbia.
  - 1.4 Nothing in this agreement should be interpreted in a manner that implies endorsement or acceptance of provincial legislation or policies by the Métis Nation British Columbia.

- 2.0 Term and Review**
- 2.1 This MOU shall come into effect on the date on which it is signed, and will remain in effect for a (5) five-year time period from that date (the "Term").
  - 2.2 This MOU and activities associated with it will be reviewed annually by the Parties during the Term.

*Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond*

Mary Ellen Turpel-Lafond  
Representative for Children and Youth



*Bruce Dumont*

Bruce Dumont  
President, Métis Nation British Columbia



*Daniel Pitman*

Daniel Pitman  
Minister of Children and Families, Métis Nation British Columbia



*Kate Elliot*

Kate Elliot  
Minister Responsible for Youth, Métis Nation British Columbia

