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PRESS RELEASE

Child and Family Services: Our Dreams Matter Too!

Edmonton, Alberta, Treaty Six Territory, April 18, 2012 - The Chiefs of the Confederacy of Treaty No. 6 are very pleased with today's Federal Court's decision to allow for the human rights case against the Federal Government for discrimination against First Nations children, by under-funding child welfare services on reserves, to proceed on its merits. "Today, the federal court has upheld the right for our First Nations children and families to have access to justice and fairness," said Cameron Alexis, Grand Chief of the Confederacy of Treaty No. 6 Chiefs."

The Federal Court of Canada today ruled that the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal's dismissal last year of the discrimination complaint filed jointly by the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society (FNCFCs) and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), was wrong; the complaints were valid; and have ruled that the applications for judicial review are granted; and that a new panel be appointed to hear the applications.

"For a long time we have asserted that the funding given to First Nations to administer Child Welfare services, as well as health and education have been inadequate and now we will have the opportunity to present our evidence," said Chief Alexis, "We applaud Cindy Blackstock and the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society (FNCFCs), and acknowledge the AFN for their continued perseverance in advocating for fairness and culturally equitable treatment for all our children.

"We look forward to the hearing and we would also like to thank FNCFCs legal counsel, Stikeman Elliot for undertaking this case on behalf of First Nations children," concluded Chief Alexis.

The Chiefs of the Confederacy of Treaty Six First Nations represent the 18 First Nations in Treaty No. 6 Territory in what is now known as the province of Alberta.

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