



**PUBLIC STATEMENT
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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**BC First Nations Leadership Council views recent MCFD
Deputy Minister appointment as a positive step for
Aboriginal children and families in BC**

Coast Salish Territory/Vancouver – On Friday, April 21, at a meeting of provincial Aboriginal child welfare representatives held in Richmond, the BC First Nations Leadership Council was introduced to Ms. Lesley du Toit, the newly appointed Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

The First Nations Leadership Council welcomes Ms. du Toit's appointment to this important position. Ms. du Toit has extensive experience, having been involved in the reformation of South Africa's child and youth welfare system as it emerged from the apartheid era.

The BC First Nations Leadership Council views the appointment of Ms. du Toit as a positive step. Given her background and experience in child welfare reforms in South Africa, and in light of the fact that approximately 50% of children in MCFD care are Aboriginal, it is expected she will provide valuable advice to the provincial government on the important transitions that are required in this province.

The First Nations Leadership Council looks forward to working closely with the provincial government on the full recognition of First Nations communities and their responsibilities for their children, as it is absolutely clear the current system is broken and that no amount of tinkering will fix it.

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The First Nations Leadership Council is comprised of the political executives of the First Nations Summit, Union of BC Indian Chiefs and the BC Assembly of First Nations. The Council works together to politically represent the interests of First Nations in British Columbia and develop strategies and actions to bring about significant and substantive changes to government policy that will benefit all First Nations in British Columbia.

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