

# FIRST NATIONS LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

## News Release

September 23, 2022

### FNLNLC Applauds Major Child Care Savings for Families in BC

(xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and səilwətał (Tsleil-Waututh)/Vancouver, B.C.- September 23, 2022) – Today the Minister of Education and Child Care (MECC) Jennifer Whiteside, and the Minister of State for Child Care, Katrina Chen, announced that families in British Columbia with children ages zero to Kindergarten, in licensed and participating childcare facilities, will receive childcare fee reductions of up to \$550.00 per month, per child, by December 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022.

In addition to automatic fee reductions for eligible families, Minister Chen announced: that the number of \$10.00 a day spaces in ChildCareBC Centres for children, ages zero to five, will be nearly doubled by December 2022; that there will be increased access to the Affordable Child Care Benefit program, for families with a combined income up to \$111,000 per year; that a “fee floor” will be established, setting a minimum fee charge by providers for childcare; and, that fee increase thresholds, by each Service Delivery Region, will be established, limiting child care fee increases to a 3% max of the median cost of child care by participating child care providers.

Cheryl Casimer, First Nations Summit Political Executive, stated: “We applaud the announcement made today by the provincial government on additional funding for reduced childcare rates. This marks a significant step in the right direction. Many First Nations people find themselves at the bottom of the economic ladder in Canada. Unfortunately, for them, childcare and preschool have been an unreachable ‘luxury,’ which they could simply not afford. This increased funding will allow all First Nations parents, no matter how low their income, to send their children to preschool and daycare, inclusive of First Nations’ culture and language.”

“The massive changes announced today increase First Nations access to affordable childcare; however, ongoing efforts are needed to prioritize and address long-standing gaps in access to affordable childcare experienced by First Nations in rural, remote, and reserve communities,” stated Regional Chief Terry Teegee, British Columbia Assembly of First Nations. “We look forward to engaging with the Province to discuss distinction-based funding opportunities and supports for First Nations on reserve wanting to establish licensed childcare facilities.”

Kukpi Judy Wilson, Union of BC Indian Chiefs Secretary-Treasurer, stated “Fee reductions come at a critical time, as zero to six years in early childcare is essential for early learning and well-being, especially having cultural and language learning provided by our Knowledge Keepers. That is key in our communities.”

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*The First Nations Leadership Council is comprised of the political executives of the BC Assembly of First Nations (BCAFN), First Nations Summit (FNS), and the Union of BC Indian Chiefs (UBCIC).*

#### For further comment please contact:

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