



Budget builds commitment toward positive future for Indigenous children and families

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COAST SALISH TERRITORY/ VANCOUVER – The BC Aboriginal Child Care Society (BCACCS) welcomes the federal government’s 2018 budget, as an example of Canada’s commitment to improving its relationships with Indigenous Peoples, First Nations self-determination and self-government, and the safety and wellbeing of Indigenous children and families.

The 2018 federal budget commits an investment of \$4.76 billion over five years for Indigenous peoples and communities. In this, it continues 2017’s federal investments in early learning and child care (ELCC) of \$130 million per year over the next two years. An Indigenous ELCC framework implementation will be a key step toward nation-based and community-led First Nations self-governance in social policy. In this context, it is important that the federal government continue co-development work with First Nations toward the implementation of a National Indigenous ELCC framework this year. With First Nations, Metis and Inuit components, the draft Indigenous ELCC framework was endorsed by the National Chiefs of the Assembly of First Nations in December, 2017. “We look forward to working with the federal government as they move toward approving the Indigenous ELCC framework, and supporting Indigenous leadership and communities to lead the way in this important work,” stated Mary Teegee, BCACCS Board President.

“Though past approaches to ELCC policy development have not included our voices, First Nations are taking important steps with the government of Canada and regional partners that will see First Nations assuming control and authority over critical child and family supports, such as culturally-based early learning and child care,” added Ms. Teegee.

BCACCS completed a BC First Nations Leadership Council-mandated community engagement process from January to August 2017 that contributed to the development of the National Indigenous ELCC framework. “We will continue to work with BC First Nations, their communities and their long-challenged existing ELCC programs so that they are able to exercise their authority to determine the ELCC systems and structures, as well as the programs and services that provide support to them—in ways they develop and control,” said Karen Isaac, BCACCS Executive Director, “It is an important and exciting time.”

Though there will be challenges, BCACCS will continue to work with First Nation leadership, the provincial and federal governments, as well as the many remarkably dedicated and infinitely resourceful First Nations early childhood educators and their communities to secure capacity-development for these positive structural and systems changes to ensure young Indigenous and children, their families, cultures and nations thrive.

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Background Document:

[Update on the National First Nations and Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Frameworks](#)

BCACCS is committed to nurturing excellence through community outreach, education, research, and advocacy to ensure every Aboriginal child in BC has access to spiritually enriching, culturally relevant, high quality early childhood development and care services. [Link to BCACCS website](#)

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