



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FNFAO Hosting a National Conference on *Bringing Our Children Home*

Treaty One Territory, Manitoba – The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs First Nations Family Advocate Office (FNFAO) will host its ***Bringing Our Children Home*** National Conference, a conference that will discuss First Nations jurisdiction and sovereignty in the area of children and families. It takes place on November 25th to November 27th at the RBC Convention Centre and will welcome over 400 participants from across Canada including First Nations leaders and their representatives in the areas of families, child welfare, and social welfare.

“Through the work of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and the direction of our First Nations leadership, we have been working on innovative initiatives to support the reunification and preservation of First Nations families. The FNFAO is mandated by our Chiefs-in-Assembly to work outside of the provincial Child and Family Services to help our families navigate the system and return children home. This office is the first of its kind in Canada, and has made substantial changes in the lives of many of our First Nations families and children,” stated Grand Chief Arlen Dumas.

The AMC made the recommendation to the National Inquiry into the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Final Report, that calls for the establishment of an Advocate with the mandate of Indigenous children and youth (Call to Justice 12.9).

“This National Conference is an opportunity for participants to learn how they can begin the process of developing their own First Nations Family Advocate Office in their regions through specific breakout sessions,” said Swan Lake First Nation Chief Francine Meeches, chair of the AMC Women’s Council. “At the end of each day, we will have Open Forums for participants to share their best practises in the area of child welfare and how they are restoring jurisdiction over children and families.”

“As we are in the midst of a transition, it is important we have these discussions on First Nations jurisdiction, so we can effectively maneuver these political interest and support what is most important in this life and that is our children and families,” concluded Grand Chief Arlen Dumas.

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About the First Nations Family Advocate Office

The Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs opened the First Nations Family Advocate Office on June 1, 2015. The office supports and advocates for Indigenous families involved with the Child and Family Services system by challenging existing jurisdictions, policies, laws, and organizations using Indigenous knowledge, customary laws, traditions, and belief systems to create positive change for our children, families, and communities. We work to strengthen our sovereign rights to empower First Nations individuals, families, and communities while ensuring improved health, support, care, and safety for our children.

For more information, please contact:

Andrew Thunder

Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs

Email: athunder@manitobachiefs.com

Phone: (204) 987-4117