TITLE:	Support for Mentorship for Young First Nations Women
SUBJECT:	Leadership development
MOVED BY:	Chief Maureen Chapman, Skawahlook First Nation, BC
SECONDED BY:	Ovide Mercredi, Proxy, Acho Dene Koe First Nation, NT
DECISION:	Carried by consensus as part of an Omnibus Motion, Moved by Chief Maureen Chapman, Skawahlook First Nation BC & Seconded by Chief Marcel Head, Shoal Lake First Nation, SK

WHEREAS:

A. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples states:

Article 21

1. That Indigenous peoples have the right, without discrimination, to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including, inter alia, in the areas of education, employment, vocational training and retraining, housing, sanitation, health and social security.
2. States shall take effective measures and, where appropriate, special measures to ensure continuing improvement of their economic and social conditions. Particular attention shall be paid to the rights and special needs of Indigenous elders, women, youth, children and persons with disabilities.

Article 22

2. Indigenous individuals have an equal right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health. States shall take the necessary steps with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of this right.

B. Indigenous women in Canada continue to face significant challenges with respect to their physical, mental, emotional and spiritual health and well-being. Statistical evidence demonstrates that Indigenous women face many serious socio-cultural challenges including:

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 19th day of July, 2012 in Toronto, Ontario

- the percentage of Aboriginal women living in poverty is more than double the percentage of non-Aboriginal women.
- many Aboriginal women still experience social barriers that have prevented them moving out of low income, attaining higher levels of postsecondary education, and having higher levels of both individual and family incomes when compared to Aboriginal men as well as non-Aboriginal women and men in Canada.
- the average income of Aboriginal women was $21,773, compared to an average income of $28,272 among non-Aboriginal women in Canada.
- while the proportion of Aboriginal women with a university degree ranges from 3% (among Inuit women) to 8% (among off-reserve Registered Indian women), the proportion among the non-Aboriginal population is 19%.
- Aboriginal women are over-represented in the federal prison system. They represent only 3% of women in Canada, yet account for 32% of the women in federal prisons.

C. Cultural oppression and marginalization contribute to high levels of mental health problems in Aboriginal communities and intervention and prevention needs to begin with youth and emphasize community empowerment.

D. The female Aboriginal population in Canada is relatively young: 32% under 15 years of age compared with only 18% of their non-Aboriginal females.

E. Women played strong leadership roles in pre-contact Indigenous societies. These have been undermined through colonization and need to be restored.

F. Chiefs and leaders have acknowledged the need to mentor and engage youth as leaders and the importance of encouraging young women to become politically active.

G. The Assembly of First Nations Women's Council (AFNWC) works with the AFN Secretariat to ensure that the concerns and perspectives of First Nations women inform the work of the AFN.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Chiefs-in-Assembly:

1. Support the development of a collaborative initiative to promote and mentor young First Nations women, thereby assisting and preparing them to assume positions of leadership.
2. Direct the AFN and AFN Women's Council to support research partnerships to further understand how engagement of young Indigenous women in mentoring initiatives may positively impact their overall self-perception of health and well-being.

Certified copy of a resolution adopted on the 19th day of July, 2012 in Toronto, Ontario