TITLE:	Support for Child Welfare
SUBJECT:	Social Development
MOVED BY:	Chief Bill Montour, Six Nations of the Grand River Territory, ON
SECONDED BY:	Grand Chief Mike Mitchell, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, ON
DECISION:	Carried by Consensus

WHEREAS:

A. Article 23 of *The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples* (UNDRIP) affirms: "Indigenous peoples have the right to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development. In particular, indigenous peoples have the right to be actively involved in developing and determining health, housing and other economic and social programmes affecting them and, as far as possible, to administer such programmes through their own institutions."

B. The Auditor General of Canada expressed concern in the *2011 June Status Report* that "there has yet to be a notable change in the number of First Nations children in care". She also highlighted the lack of follow-up to the recommendations made in the *2008 May Report* to improve the First Nations Child and Family Services Program. These recommendations include that "INAC has not defined what is meant by comparability", nor has it "conducted a review of all social services available in the provinces to see whether they are the same as what is available to children on reserves."

C. The Enhanced Prevention Focused Approach of the First Nations Child and Family Services Program funded by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC)has been evaluated in the Alberta region without the involvement of regional First Nations organizations, leadership and/or the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) and similar evaluations are occurring in other regions, such as Saskatchewan and Nova Scotia.

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D. Numerous pieces of research including, the 2008 *Canadian Incidence Study on Reported Child Abuse and Neglect*, the *First Nations Child & Family Services Joint National Policy Review*, and *Wen:de: We are Coming to the Light of Day*, have provided solid rationale to the proposed recommendations for immediate action and necessary changes to the First Nations Child and Family Services program.

E. The *Canada – First Nation Joint Action Plan* released on June 9, 2011 by the AFN and AANDC does not specifically address issues regarding child welfare.

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

1. Direct the AFN to support and advocate for those First Nations seeking to have administration of programs and jurisdiction for child and family services in their respective territories through advocacy with Provincial governments and the Federal government officials responsible for Child and Family Services.
2. Direct the AFN to strongly encourage discussions between the Federal government, Provincial governments and First Nations governments to create a coordinated strategy on First Nations Child and Family Services.
3. Request that the AFN ensure that these discussions are respectful of the unique situations and needs of each region, such as that of Ontario, the 1965 Welfare Agreement and must also include relevant partners and stakeholders including, but not limited to: Provincial child advocates offices, law makers and enforcers, mainstream child and family services agencies, First Nations child and family service technicians, and all related and relevant Federal and Provincial government department representatives.

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