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KKCFS ʔAkisq̓nuk Divison Completes Delegation Requirements

Columbia Valley - The ʔAkisq̓nuk Division of the Ktunaxa Kinbasket Child and Family Services Society (KKCFS) recently completed all delegation requirements and has now received all files from the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) Invermere Office. The ʔAkisq̓nuk Division will cover the areas on and off reserve from Canal Flats to Edgewater, and offers a full complement of services including kinship care, guardianship services, child protection, reconnection work, family support services, family meeting facilitation and group work and counselling/art therapy.

“This is another step towards establishing ourselves as the Aboriginal Authority over child welfare within our traditional territory” said Cheryl Casimer, KKCFS President. “This once again shows what can happen when there is a willingness between First Nations and government to work together on a common goal to provide quality and accessible services to all Aboriginal children and families.”

This now enhances the delegated authority which first was achieved in the 2003 landmark agreement between the Ktunaxa Nation, Métis Nation, provincial and federal governments. The KKCFS assumed full responsibility for the delivery of child welfare services from the MCFD in the Cranbrook area in 2005, followed by the Creston area in 2006.

Chief Wilf Teneese of ʔAkisq̓nuk First Nation sees this as great benefit to his community and the rest of the Ktunaxa Nation. “We are very pleased to have these culturally directed services available for our children and families. This marks a historic moment in our healing from past incidents of apprehension, fostering and adoption of the children from our communities. We would like to commend the determination and amazing dedication of all those involved during the transition process.”

Mike Paradis, the Kootenay Region Métis Association representative on the KKCFS Board agreed. “The delegated authority of the ʔAkisq̓nuk office once again shows how the Aboriginal people in the Kootenays can work together for positive change. Since the agreement was signed between the Ktunaxa and the Métis people, we have seen great advancement in being able to deal with our children and family issues. In order to be in touch with the community needs, we need to be in the community with our people.”

For more information on the Ktunaxa Kinbasket Child and Family Services Society please visit:
www.ktunaxa.org/fourpillars/social/

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