

Since inception, the child welfare system was designed to separate our children from our families, communities, people, and Nation. Today, we have close to 500 Métis children and youth in care that we know of. This has to change. We need a better system for our people. We have to do it our way, the Métis way. It is time for us to reclaim what we never relinquished – our jurisdiction over Métis children and families.

On January 1, 2020, Bill C-92, *An Act respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, youth and families*, came into effect. It seeks to implement Canada's obligations towards Indigenous child and family services under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action.

Bill C-92 provides Indigenous communities with a mechanism to exercise their inherent jurisdiction over the care of their children and families in accordance with their traditional laws and values. For the first time, the exercise of our jurisdiction over our own children and families can be recognized as law by the federal government and given priority over provincial child and family services laws.

As the Indigenous governing body representing the Métis communities in BC, MNBC's Ministry of Children and Families is in the process of affirming our nation's jurisdiction over child and family services in accordance with the Act. Next steps include:

- Providing notice of intent to exercise legislative authority to the Federal Minister and the Province;
- Requesting the Minister and Province to enter into a coordination agreement, which includes fiscal arrangements; and
- Drafting and adopting our own children and family services legislation, frameworks, and policies.

The jurisdictional transfer will be the fulfillment of our collective work – it is a part of a larger historical movement of the Métis Nation. It is an assertion of our inherent right to self-government.