

December 23, 2015

**Statement of Support**

On December 15, 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission released its final report. It was an important moment in our country – shining light and truth on the traumatic and lasting impact of Residential Schools. For over 100 years, more than 150,000 First Nations, Metis and Inuit children were forced to attend the schools. The last Residential school was closed in 1996. There is a direct link between Residential Schools and the over-representation of Indigenous people in the child welfare system across Canada.

We are encouraged by our Prime Minister's commitment to a total renewal of the relationship between Indigenous People and other Canadians. We fully support his statement that this is not an Indigenous issue; it is a Canadian issue.

Sarnia-Lambton Children's Aid Society acknowledges the role that our agency plays in the lives of Indigenous families and the impact that we have had. We are committed to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. The first 5 Calls to Action relate specifically to child welfare.

For the past three years, we have been working closely with Aamjiwnaang First Nation, Kettle and Stony Point First Nation, Walpole Island First Nation and the Native Friendship Centre to develop relationships built on trust and understanding. We share with them the pain of the past and hope for the future for all our children and grandchildren – that they may grow up and experience a Canada that includes this important history and respect for each other.



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Executive Director

