



Michael Gravelle, M.P.P.

Thunder Bay – Superior North

MEDIA RELEASE

The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board Receives Over \$2.9 Million to Expand Child & Family Centres for Indigenous Children

February 23, 2018 – The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board (TBDSSAB) is receiving over \$2.9 Million from the province to support child and family programs for Indigenous children.

Michael Gravelle, MPP Superior-North was at the Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre today to make the announcement. Five Indigenous organizations in the District of Thunder Bay were successful in their applications through The Journey Together off-reserve funding program:

- Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre
- Thunderbird Friendship Centre
- Dilico Anishinabek Family Care
- Anishnawbe Mushkiki
- Bingwi Neyaashi Anishnaabek

The need for Indigenous-led early years child and family programs is significant in the District of Thunder Bay. The Journey Together funding will help create culturally relevant child care and learning spaces that celebrate the rich history, cultures and languages of Indigenous people while reducing wait times for these programs.

As part of [The Journey Together: Ontario's Commitment to Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples](#), the province is enhancing existing and supporting new child care and child and family programs in 58 off-reserve projects led by Métis, Inuit and urban Indigenous organizations. This includes culturally relevant programming, personal connections, resources and play- and inquiry-based learning for Indigenous children and families.

QUOTES

"As part of our government's commitment to reconciliation through Journey Together we are expanding access to off-reserve child care and child family programs, with an investment of \$2.9 million that is funding five local projects across the region. Developed and delivered by Indigenous community leaders, this investment will help establish and enhance child care programs, allowing families to get the help and support they need so their children can lead happy and healthy lives."

— *Michael Gravelle, MPP Thunder Bay – Superior North*

"I believe our journey together starts with our children. With the help of Mishomis, our families can come together, our stories can be told, and our gifts can be shared... with all."

— *Charlene Baglien, Executive Director, Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre*

"With the 2018 Journey Together announcement, Anishnawbe Mushkiki Health and Wellness is excited to develop programs that support optimal early learning and child development for Indigenous children. This new EarlyON Indigenous Child and Family Centre in the District of Thunder Bay will be a culturally safe place to gather and attend programs with the ultimate goal of leaving no child behind." — *Audrey Gilbeau, Board President, Anishnawbe Mushkiki*

"Dilico Anishinabek Family Care is pleased to be a part of this exciting new announcement. This means, indigenous children will now have access to culturally appropriate early years services."

— *Darcia Borg, Executive Director, Dilico Anishinabek Family Care*

"We are very appreciative to have the opportunity to offer culturally responsive early years programming and services to families. This will provide many families with a chance to positively support their child's overall well-being while also strengthening their family circle."

— *Camille Borysewicz, Director of Family Services, Bingwi, Neyaashi Anishinaabek First Nation*

"Expanding Indigenous led early years and child care programs will improve accessibility for families. The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board will work with our Indigenous partners to implement programs based on respect, unity and the restoration of cultural identity. Through the Journey Together, we will better support families and their children."

— *Lucy Kloosterhuis, Chair, The District of Thunder Bay Social Services Administration Board*

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