

## **RESEARCH PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT**

**Between**  
**BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres**  
**(hereafter referred to as BCAAFC)**  
**&**  
**Caring for First Nations Children Society**  
**(hereafter referred to as CFNCS)**  
**&**  
**Indigenous Child Welfare Research Network**  
**(hereafter referred to as ICWR)**  
**&**  
**Métis Commission for Children and Family Services BC**  
**(hereafter referred to as MCCF)**  
  
**(collectively referred to as the “Partners”)**

### **Overall Purpose of Research Partnership Agreement (RPA)**

The purpose of this document is to outline the relationship, objectives, and decision-making structure of a research partnership between the Partners.

### **Parties to the RPA**

BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres  
Caring for First Nations Children Society  
Indigenous Child Welfare Research Network – University of Victoria  
Métis Commission for Children and Families

### **Objectives of Partnership**

For the term of this agreement, the Partners intend to pursue and/or meet several objectives:

- a) To stimulate a working mutually beneficial relationship between all Partners;
- b) To utilize the research expertise, skills, human resources and capacity of all Partners;
- c) To collaborate in pursuing funding opportunities for research and/or program development to help each Partner to achieve its mandate and/or the objectives laid out in this agreement.

- d) To involve Elders and Youths in all our work for support and guidance. As Partners we agree that we do not want to overwork our Elders and Youth and will use discretion when inviting them to meetings.
- e) To strategize as a collective diverse approaches, methods and analyses in research, policy and practice that will benefit the future of our children.

**Dates:** Sept 2010 – September 2015

### **Partners Background**

#### **BCAAFC**

The BCAAFC is a registered Society within the Province of BC and was created for the following purposes:

"The purposes of the BCAAFC are:

1. To improve the quality of life for Aboriginal people by supporting the activities of Aboriginal Friendship Centres in the Province of British Columbia.
2. To establish and maintain communications between Aboriginal Friendship Centres, other Provincial Associations, and the National Association of Friendship Centres.
3. To act as a unifying body for Aboriginal Friendship Centres. To provide an Association for Government Agencies to communicate through and obtain information from. This, in no way takes away a centre's right to negotiate directly with any agency.
4. To advise the Government, when requested by the collective centres, on how and what programs, policies, and information may assist Aboriginal Friendship Centres, in the delivery of services to improve the lives of Aboriginal people in British Columbia."

#### **CFNCS**

The members of the CFNCS are dedicated to providing culturally based professional development programs and information to First Nations Social Development Employees in British Columbia. Established in 1994, the Society works in cooperation with Social Development programs to protect and foster the well being of First Nations people by reaffirming traditions and beliefs, encouraging progressive and effective social development service delivery and empowering the voices of First Nations peoples.

#### *Mission Statement*

To provide professional development, research and liaison services for First Nations who protect and promote the well being of First Nations children and families by respecting and reaffirming traditional values and beliefs, encouraging innovative and quality child and family service delivery and empowering the voices of First Nations peoples.

#### *Mandate*

- Development and delivery of professional development programs for child and family services staff employed by First Nations agencies.

- Policy analysis and research on child and family service matters.
- Promote networking and information sharing amongst First Nations child and family services employees.
- Establish and maintain resource database on First Nations child and family services.

## **ICWR**

The Indigenous Child Welfare Research network was established in 2009 as a B.C. strategy for protecting and strengthening the voices of our children. ICWR is an interdisciplinary project of Indigenous faculty, students, community members, policy makers and community agency practitioners throughout BC with an interest in Indigenous child welfare. The creation and maintenance of this research network is a collaborative process between universities, agencies and communities. It is currently housed in the Faculty of Human and Social Development at the University of Victoria.

The vision of ICWR is that one day our children will laugh and play freely in their communities with their families. Our mission includes celebrating the strength of our families, communities and people and highlighting what's working in our communities in relation to research, community projects and practice.

The objectives of ICWR include:

- Provide Indigenous child welfare research training
- Highlight what's working within Indigenous child welfare research and practice
- Provide access to resources, people and projects that will enrich the lives of Indigenous children and families
- Mentor students, practitioners, academics and community researchers
- Re-claim, re-search and provide a space to re-story child rearing practices and re-generate traditional teachings

Ultimately, ICWR strives to be a place to share ideas and provide community with access to resources that will enrich the work that is done for our children in the province of British Columbia.

## **MCCF**

### *Mission*

The Métis Commission for Children and Family Services BC

- Builds stronger, healthier Métis communities families and children;
- Revives and supports Métis traditional values;
- Links Métis communities with other communities, stakeholders, and governments

### *Vision*

The Métis Commission for Children and Family Services BC will be a center of services, resources, information and culture for the Métis communities of British Columbia

### *Values*

In all its operations and work toward the accomplishment of important ends policies, the Métis Commission for Children and Family Services BC values:

1. Open and transparent conduct of its operations and activities;
2. Neutral and unbiased conduct of its operations, activities and professional relationships;
3. Non-partisanship, integrity and arms-length relations with political bodies;
4. Inclusion of, accessibility to, and cooperation with all Métis communities;
5. Fairness, honesty, trust and respect for others;
6. Cooperative and respectful resolution of disputes;
7. Full accountability for all that it does.

### *Purposes and Mandates*

The purposes of the Commission are:

1. To restore and strengthen the concept of "community" among Métis people;
2. To promote government and Métis policies and actions that value families, especially the extended family, as the core of society;
3. To eliminate poverty and promote the self-sustaining capacity of Métis individuals and communities;
4. To promote traditional Métis social values of vigorous respect for individual autonomy and service to the community; and,
5. To protect Métis children as the core of Métis communities and of the future of Métis people.

### **Guiding Principles of the Research Partnership**

- To endeavor to include the wisdom of Elders and youth in all of our work
- To engender mutual respect between Partners, engaging in a way that reflects Indigenous values
- To carry out our project with a high standard of ethical conduct
- To treat data with respect, conducting research that honours the community and the teachings and stories of the community
- To conduct our business, research and meetings with integrity
- To remember that all of our work is for our children, for improving their wellbeing and for facilitating effective change in the lives of children and families
- To respect the boundaries and capacities of communities and organizations by not overburdening them
- To operate through the principle, concept and process of relational accountability, both between Partners and in the community
- To honor Indigenous ways of knowing and doing, and to endeavour to embody these knowledges and practices in our conduct
- To recognize the commitment of the Partners to one another, and to acknowledge that relationship building is lifelong
- To honour community protocols

- To acknowledge that communities own any research done in/about/for their community
- To prioritize protocol in our relationships to communities and people

### **Decision Making**

The Partners agree to a collaborative process for decision-making. When the Partners collaborate on a project, decision-making processes will include input and representation from each partner. Decision-making will be based on consensus. In the event that consensus cannot be reached through discussion, each partnering organization will receive one vote whereby the decision will rest with the majority.

### **Goodwill**

The Partners agree that their respective activities will be supportive of other Partners and their projects. The Partners agree to be committed to this process by attending Partner meetings or by appointing a delegate in their absence. Each Partner will be respectful of communities by not burdening them with multiple training events – we will communicate with each other as to when we enter communities.

### **Amendments**

Suggestions for amending this RPA will be considered by a Committee composed of representatives of all Partners, to be accepted by consensus of the Partners. Amending a section detailing the responsibilities of a specific Partner must have the agreement of that Partner. Adopted amendments will be incorporated into the RPA effective immediately, but not retroactively.

### **Disputes**

In the case that a dispute or difference cannot be resolved between the Partners, a Partner may, following a 30 day written notice to the other Partners, and without causing prejudice to any Partner, opt out of the RPA.

### **Duration of the RPA**

This RPA shall enter into force on the day of its signature until the end of its five year term when it may be renewed. The RPA may be nullified if one party withdraws or all Partners feel the project has achieved its goals and the partnership can be dissolved.

### **Accountability and Reporting**

Partners agree that accountability will be to the ceremonial relationship between each other and to the communities and people we work with. Partners will be respectful of the diverse Indigenous protocols that we engage with.

Partners sign this RPA on the understanding that all Partners and any resultant partnership project(s) will meet the accountability requirements and reporting guidelines of funders and of their respective organizations

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the undersigned representatives, being duly authorized thereto by their respective Organizations, have signed this RPA. This document will be signed by an executive representative of each Partner who indicates their agreement to abide by the conditions and agreements contained in this document.



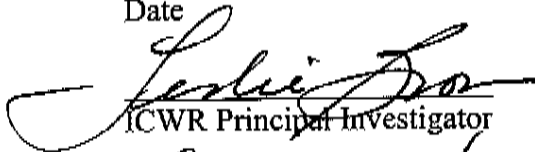
Executive Director  
BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres

Nov 4 / 2010  
Date



Executive Director  
Caring for First Nations Children Society

Oct 19, 2010  
Date



ICWR Principal Investigator

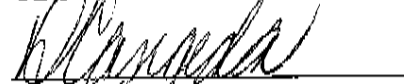
October 26/10  
Date



ICWR Project Manager

Oct-25/10  
Date

CEO Metis Commission for Children and Families



Date Oct 13, 2010