



## Podcast - Hearing the stories of our health: Perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis youth - Anzel Labatch-Patrick

### Description

The NCCIH undertook a national digital storytelling project, *Hearing the stories of our health: Perspectives of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis youth* to better understand what health and well-being mean to Indigenous young people. Nine of the digital storytellers participated in this podcast series where they could further reflect on their lives, their communities, and what health really means to them in a world that often forgets to ask them.

### Bios

#### Victoria Grisdale



I am Victoria Grisdale, I am an Anishinaabe woman from Brokenhead Ojibway Nation and Filipino. I am 24 and attending the University of Winnipeg studying Human Rights. I have been working and advocating for First Nations youth since I was 19 in multiple roles, from working in a youth shelter to working in youth housing in First Nations government. I am passionate about making real positive changes for First Nations youth and amplifying other youth voices on issues important to us.

#### Anzel Labatch-Patrick

My name is Anzel Labatch-Patrick, I am from Saik'uz traditional territory and I am sixteen. When I was seven years old my auntie graduated from her university law program and I thought "that's the direction I want to go in!". So I am going to pursue being a lawyer.



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## Transcript

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**Victoria Grisdale:** Welcome to *Hearing the stories of our health: Perspectives of First Nations, Métis and Inuit youth*, a podcast series produced by the National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health, in partnership with Birchbark Collaborative.

My name is Victoria Grisdale, and I am the host of this podcast. From May to July of 2025, 13 Indigenous youth came together in Winnipeg, Prince George, and Ottawa to develop digital stories on what health means to them.

This podcast isn't a polished studio production; it's real talk. It's about Indigenous youth reflecting on their lives, their communities, and what health really means to them in a world that often forgets to ask them.

In this episode, Anzel Labatch-Patrick speaks about the importance of family to her health and her inspiration to become a family lawyer to help advocate for Indigenous families impacted by the CFS (Child and Family Services) system.

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**Victoria Grisdale:** First, I'm going to ask you to introduce yourself, including your name, community, and age.

**Anzel Labatch-Patrick:** Hi, my name is Anzel Labatch-Patrick. I'm from the Saik'uz traditional territory, and I am 16 years old.

**Victoria Grisdale:** Thank you so much for being here today. I wanted to know what your future goals are?

**Anzel Labatch-Patrick:** When I was 7, my auntie graduated from the Thompson River University law program, and I thought, "that's the direction I want to go in!" So, I am going to pursue being a lawyer.

**Victoria Grisdale:** Hey, amazing. We need more Indigenous lawyers, so I cannot wait to see what direction you go with that. Are you thinking about what kind of lawyer you wanted to be?



**Anzel Labatch-Patrick:** Yeah, Family Law, because I've had some family taken away wrongfully in the Ministry, but the lawyers and our parent office is working to get them back into community and working in community with other youth and their parents again. So, I'm going to start towards that because I've had family taken away.

**Victoria Grisdale:** Amazing, that's an incredible goal to have, especially with the amount of kids in the CFS system that are Indigenous. We need more Indigenous lawyers fighting for our kids, and so that's incredible.

So, if you could describe what your digital story is about, what would you say?

**Anzel Labatch-Patrick:** My digital story is about my family and how they're always uplifting you to follow your dreams and do what you want to do but also impact the community and help the community grow, and be more prosperous for younger generations.

**Victoria Grisdale:** And what is important to you about health as an Indigenous youth?

**Anzel Labatch-Patrick:** What's important to me about health is your mental health because so many kids struggle with so much different stuff. I lost a family member to suicide and we didn't know if he was sad or anything because people are hiding it, and I don't want people to be able to hide it. I want them to talk about it so you can help them, so they can find their own help, so we don't lose any more people.

**Victoria Grisdale:** Yeah. That's a big issue for a lot of our people, and definitely an issue that needs to be taken seriously and given the proper supports.

Did the workshop impact the way that you think about health?

**Anzel Labatch-Patrick:** Yes, it did. Hearing everybody talk about their stories, like little bits and pieces here – I'm super excited to see what everybody made – but I know most of it is focused on mental health because teens struggle a lot with that. So, it opened up a way for me to be able to see what other people are thinking, not just what I think. Like seeing how my sister is talking about how she got taken into care and how she's focused more on horse riding. Now she's doing Gym Canadas and rodeos and stuff.

So, seeing how people get through tough things and still pursuing what they want to do is opening my eyes because it's new. You don't see lots of Indigenous youth following what they want to do.

**Victoria Grisdale:** Yeah, getting to see those different worldviews too and inspire each other.



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So, how was the workshop experience for you?

**Anzel Labatch-Patrick:** It was fun overall because we got to just work, we got to learn new things. And I thought it was fun and easy because Meadow was really good at showing us what to do. So, I think it was a good experience. I would definitely do it again.

**Victoria Grisdale:** All right, I'm glad to hear that.

Were there any skills in particular that you were excited to learn or you're glad you learned?

**Anzel Labatch-Patrick:** Mostly just editing the video and speaking into a mic, because I never got to do that.

**Victoria Grisdale:** And if you did another digital story about health, will there be anything else you'd want to say or anything you wanted to add?

**Anzel Labatch-Patrick:** Maybe a few more things, but most of it is just being able to talk to people when you're struggling and to ask for help when needed. Because I struggle with that a lot, so I usually just don't talk to anyone if I need help, and then they'll realize and then they'll help me. So, it's being able to voice when you need help and stuff. So, I really think that's important for youth to understand that.

**Victoria Grisdale:** Yeah, it definitely is. That's definitely a skill that takes some time to learn. I'm 24, and it's still a struggle sometimes, but it's definitely something that is important to learn and realize.

Is there anything you'd like to share with other Indigenous youth who watch your video?

**Anzel Labatch-Patrick:** I'm hoping that when Indigenous youth do watch my video, that people learn not to only depend on themselves [but] also ask for help when needed. And with schooling, because not all people have parents who support you going to school, you can always find other people to help you with school.

Because I know my mom didn't have a lot of support growing up, and then she went to UNBC (University of Northern British Columbia) and became a nurse. My Auntie Teresa, my grandpa, and my Aunt Sue, they really supported all my family to go to school, so, I'm going to law school. My cousin Dan, who just graduated this year, is going to go to CNC (College of New Caledonia) for heavy duty mechanics, I think. But he's taking a gap year to just work and be able to get money so that he can start focusing on school and stuff. So, he's going to do that. I'm not sure what my elder siblings are doing; I know my other brother Miles is going to do something because it's exciting – he just told me, but I don't know if I can say it yet.



I definitely want to be a mentor for younger kids because I have lots of younger siblings and nephews and nieces and cousins, and I know they don't always have a stable background. So, I know that when I'm with them, I always help them talk about things, so I'm really happy that I do that with the kids.

**Victoria Grisdale:** Do you want to tell me more about your desire to be a lawyer and a bit more about your goals around that?

**Anzel Labatch-Patrick:** Yeah. Me wanting to be a lawyer is really hard because it's lots of school – I struggle with school. But also, being able to voice what I want to do is really helping me. And I have lots of supportive family members, because I was trying to figure out which law program to go in this year and just figure out before I do graduate high school. So, my dad and my brothers are talking with me and I'm like, “I might do this law and this law,” and they're like, “No, I think you should do this law,” and then we all sat down, we all figured it out. They said family law would be best for me because I've had struggles with family being taken and lots of other stuff. So, I think that would be one for me.

**Victoria Grisdale:** Amazing. I mean, law school is a lot of critical thinking, and memorizing words, and referencing old cases. So, thankfully, not too much math...

**Anzel Labatch-Patrick:** I'm not good at math.

**Victoria Grisdale:** I'm not either. But I think you'll be okay, it's just stretching those brain muscles.

**Anzel Labatch-Patrick:** And most of my family went to the same university, Simon Fraser, and my Auntie Chrissy graduated two years ago, or a year – I'm not 100% sure, but we were there. My Auntie Irene had a stroke recently and made me promise her that I was going to go to SFU (Simon Fraser University) for my bachelor's and then go to law school, and I told her I would because I said I would. So, I'm going to keep that promise and keep going.

**Victoria Grisdale:** Do you know where you want to go to law school?

**Anzel Labatch-Patrick:** Thompson River University. I would go abroad for my Master's. The exact same programs my Auntie did.

**Victoria Grisdale:** Following in her footsteps.

I think that's kind of all the questions I had for you. We went through them super quick. Great. Was there any other final things you wanted to say about youth or Indigenous health, or the workshop?



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**Anzel Labatch-Patrick:** The workshop was really fun. I'm really grateful that CSFS (Carrier Sekani Family Services) put out the opportunity for me to do this, and I really want more youth to be doing this because it is really fun. And I know lots of other kids and youth have stories of their own to share with Canada and how they want to inspire other people, and I know if they did the program again – I wouldn't be returning, but I hope my other cousins would because I think they'd really enjoy it because they have their own stories to share.

**Victoria Grisdale:** Yeah, amazing. I think every Indigenous youth across Canada has so many stories to share, but I'm so glad that you were able to be a part of it and to work with us on this project. It's been great having you here, and your sister here, keeping us entertained.

So, it's been great getting to know you. You're such a bright young woman and I cannot wait to see where the future takes you. I think you'll be a great lawyer and get to do a lot of amazing things and help a lot of people.

**Anzel Labatch-Patrick:** I'm really excited.

**Victoria Grisdale:** Yeah, your heart is in such a good place, and I think you're going to do amazing work. So, thank you for joining me today on this podcast.

**Anzel Labatch-Patrick:** Thanks for having me.

**Victoria Grisdale:** Of course.

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**Victoria Grisdale:** To hear more podcasts in this series, head to the *Hearing the stories of our health: Perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis youth* on the National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health website, [nccih.ca](http://nccih.ca). Music on this podcast by DJ Taj Rashid, is licensed and royalty free under Final Cut Pro software, used as part of this project. Finally, a special thanks to the TD Bank Group for generously supporting this project.

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