




FAMILY IS THE FOCUS

NATIONAL COLLABORATING CENTRE
FOR ABORIGINAL HEALTH



CENTRE DE COLLABORATION NATIONALE
DE LA SANTÉ AUTOCHTONE



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PROCEEDINGS

Families are at the heart of healthy Indigenous communities. In the words of Dr. Margo Greenwood, academic leader of the National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health (NCCAH), “Families touch our individual and collective being from the personal to the professional to the political. To be strong as nations, we must nurture and support our families and communities. It is within our families that we as individuals come to know our place in the world and to know ourselves as part of a larger collective.” Yet First Nations, Métis and Inuit families have long survived multiple assaults and disruptions to their well-being as a result of colonization and colonial policies. Some of these include forced displacement and relocation; interruptions to inter-generational relationships through the removal of children via the residential school and child welfare systems; and cultural discontinuity due to the dispossession of Indigenous languages and ceremonial practices.

Strengthening and improving the health and well-being of Aboriginal children, families and communities is a key focus for the NCCAH. As part of this effort, the NCCAH has hosted a series of national events on children and families, including *Messages from the Heart: Caring for our Children* (2009), *With Dad: Strengthening the Circle of Care* (2011), *Sacred Space of Womanhood: Mothering across the Generations* (2012), and *Family is the Focus* (2014). All four gatherings explored traditional and contemporary

roles of First Nations, Inuit and Métis children, parents and families and how they can be strengthened and best supported.

This report summarizes *Family is the Focus*, the fourth and final national gathering in this series, which was held on the traditional territories of the Tsleil-Waututh, Squamish and Musqueam Peoples in Vancouver, British Columbia from February 18-20, 2014. Spanning generations and nations, this event brought together over 140 people. Sons, daughters, grandparents, aunts, uncles, mothers, and fathers, in addition to community members, practitioners, and policy makers shared information, knowledge, and experience on the roles and responsibilities of family in the health and well-being of Indigenous communities; the supports needed for family well-being; and the programs, practices and resources focused on rebuilding the cultural strengths of families.

A wide range of keynote speakers and panelists were invited from across Canada, the United States and New Zealand. Honouring and nurturing Indigenous families, and recognizing their resiliency and vibrancy centered the discussions over the three days. The first keynote address was delivered by Albert Pooley, who grounded the gathering by acknowledging that, “There is nothing more important and precious than family. Nothing. As Native people, we believe that family is where we start.”



Opening Keynote Address

Albert Pooley

Albert M. Pooley is of the Hopi and Navajo Nations and lives in Mesa, Arizona (USA). A husband, father and grandfather, his work as President of the Native American Fatherhood and Families Association supports healthy family development.

Mr. Pooley began his address by acknowledging that family is the heart of First Nations people. Traditionally, First Nations peoples placed great value on marriage. Today, however, high rates of divorce are breaking down family relationships. Mr. Pooley pointed out that in his practice of supporting families, he has found that selfishness, emotional immaturity, and complacency lead to family breakdown, separation, and divorce. He has also witnessed how relationships can be renewed and strengthened when both spouses practice the following five basic truths with one another: kindness, fairness, safety, joy and laughter. He said, "kindness is already in your veins. It's in your DNA". He pointed out that successful relationships are bonded

through love, appreciation and safety. Spouses need to know that they are not taken for granted. They also need to know that they are emotionally and physically safe to grow, develop and be themselves within the relationship. The ability to exercise joy and laughter is good medicine to be extended to, and experienced by, both partners.

Turning to children, Mr. Pooley emphasized that learning fosters their health and well-being. It is a sacred principle that mothers and fathers teach their children the desire to learn. He also stated that our collective histories are rich and should "inspire and motivate us to transition to the next level of improving our lives."

Concluding the first day of the event, Mr. Pooley invited participants to think about Indigenous peoples' belief in the Creator and the use of prayer to invite the Creator into our lives. He shared this because it is his understanding that prayer grounds us in how we care and strengthen ourselves and others, our relationships, our families, and our communities.

Albert Pooley

There is nothing that will determine your happiness or success more than attitude. It is 'the POWER of one'.

We've always valued marriage & family & these bring value to us.

DIVORCE:

- 1) Selfishness from elevating oneself above the other
- 2) Emotional immaturity: whine, complain, blame, get jealous.
- 3) Laziness: asleep at the wheel → apathy

STRENGTHENING BEHAVIORS:

- 1) Tell the truth
- 2) Kindness both in your presence & absence
- 3) Be fair
- 4) Appreciate your partner
- 5) Safety
- 6) Joy & Laughter

Our history is so rich. Let it motivate us so that when we meet our forefathers we tell them we have been good fathers, good mothers, sisters & brothers & they will be proud.

Building Strong Native Families

Be a life long Lover of learning. Learn to take instruction & prayer from your experience.

Believing in the Creator & prayer connect us to our Cultures.

NCCA Family is the Focus Feb. 18, 2014

Lillian Stevenson

Addressing Violence in Families — Albert Pooley

Fatherhood is Leadership

- Lead your family by bringing them safety & happiness
- Start with your full & equal partner, your wife

Motherhood is the strongest force on earth.

Working with our people

1. Uplift
2. Encourage
3. Assist
4. Teach

Family is the heart of Native Cultures

If you walk away from your family you destroy your culture.

Your children are your treasuries

We come from Greatness & must return. Our roles as fathers & mothers are SACRED.

CHANGE

Knowledge doesn't change people. Hope + Gratitude + Confidence. These change people.

We Are Not Sick We Are Not Broken

We Are Strong Like Tempered Steel

NCCA Family Is the Focus Feb. 18, 2014

Lillian Stevenson

“There is nothing more important and precious than family. Nothing. As Native people, we believe that family is where we start.”

Albert M. Pooley



Albert Pooley Part 2

Domestic Violence is true identity theft

Oppression becomes Depression

We work to uplift our people
"You are a miracle; you can change"

Our same sex brothers & sisters belong to us & we belong to them

Womanhood is the greatest creation of the Creator
Both men & women need to honour this

Golden Johnson

The Abuser

- Condemns truth
- limits freedom
- lacks confidence in other's
- Seeks power & control

The Recipient

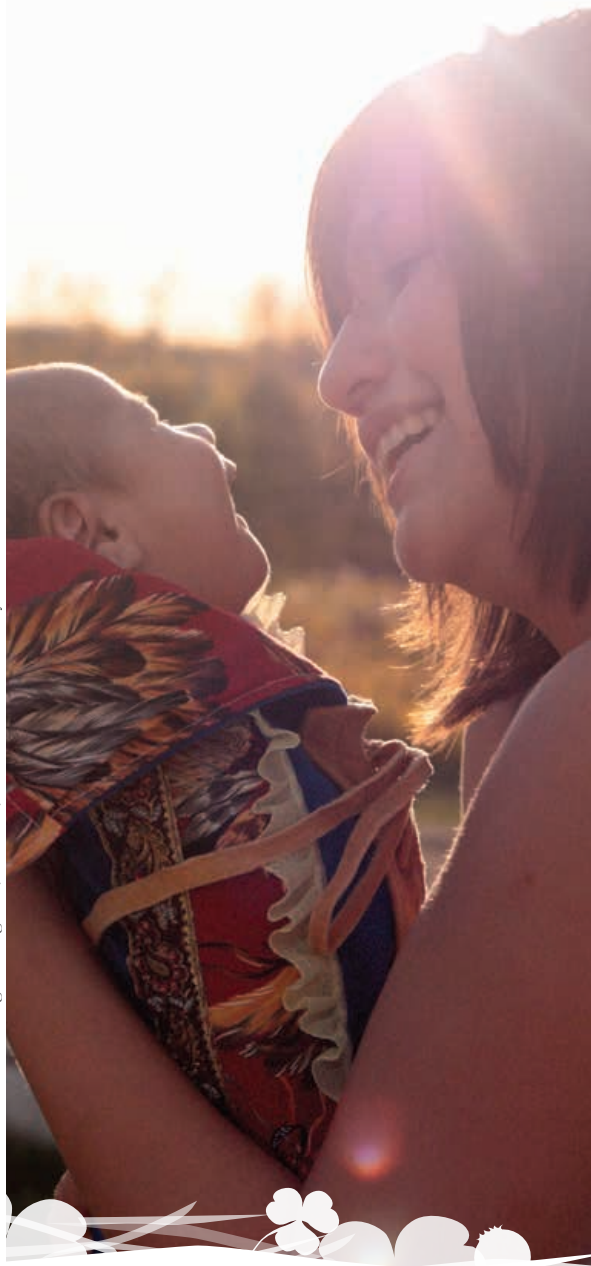
- loses confidence & opportunities
- become dependent
- never know or experience true happiness

There is no known Native Culture that allows us to abuse, neglect, violate or harm in any way others especially children

NCCAH Family is The Focus Feb 18, 2014

Understanding
The Best Thing You Bring to any Relationship
No Judgement No Condemnation

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Welcoming Address

Deb Martel & Margo Greenwood

Participants were warmly welcomed to the second day of the gathering held at the First Nations Longhouse on the University of British Columbia campus by Associate Director, Deb Martel. She described the history of the longhouse, commenting on the symbolism of the beautifully carved supporting cedar posts, each of which was created by a different First Nations artist.

In her welcoming address, Dr. Margo Greenwood pointed out that this was the last in a series of four NCCAH gatherings on children and families. In her personal reflection on family, she recalled how her childhood kitchen table was a place for some memorable debates, discussions, planning and decisions. Her childhood role was to set the table for the family and guests. Similarly, she saw the role of the participants at the "Family is the Focus" gathering as setting the table for the young ones and the coming generations. Dr. Greenwood concluded by extending her appreciation to all of the participants and sponsors of the gathering.

Prior to the morning's first keynote address, facilitator Dan George welcomed participants. Mr. George thanked the NCCAH for the opportunity to assist in all four children and family gatherings. He stressed the importance of identifying problems and solutions in a positive manner, and listening generously.



"Picking up the Pieces"

Keynote Address

Maria Campbell

Maria Campbell is a renowned author, playwright, filmmaker, researcher and educator. She is a Cree/Métis Elder hailing from Saskatchewan. A mother, grandmother and great-grandmother, Maria is a tireless volunteer and advocate for Aboriginal women, children and communities.

Maria graced the audience with the story of her grandmother's small log and plastered house. She described her grandmother's handmade table that was covered by a yellow flowered oil cloth, her collection of blue china teacups, her polished wood stove, and her quilted double bed. "Nohkom's house was always a sacred place. It was a place where we could go alone or together; that included parents and children. And we could be reminded in her house that there was lots of goodness in the world. We could be reminded that we were family and that no matter how terrible things got, if you came here, you would be okay because just by her presence, she reminded us that we were loved and that we could be better than we were if we just tried."

While her grandmother's home illustrated the importance of family, love, peace and sacredness, Maria recognized that many Aboriginal homes and communities today are marred by fear and pain. This, she explained, is caused by many factors rooted in colonization: alcohol and drug addictions; family violence; missing and murdered men, women and children; and more children in foster care than were in residential schools at their height of operation. She said at times these impacts are paralyzing for people, including her. Yet she has witnessed the resiliency and connection families have continued to display,

“Regardless of how broken things have become, our families somehow have managed to hang on to each other.” For example, she relayed how her siblings were fostered out as children, only to be reunited after twelve years. When they returned home, they were angry at what had happened to them. Her father and the old people taught them how to be healthy again through stories and traditional activities. Through these collective and community-based efforts, her siblings were able to regain their identity.

Teachings passed on to her throughout her girlhood comforted her later in life. She recalled how despite the trauma experienced by her own parents, they were still able to show love. Though this may not have been done through conventional forms of communication, her parents transferred love to their children through the provision of

hand grown food and handmade clothes, the telling of funny stories, and the use of endearing childhood nicknames. She remembered lessons shared by grandmothers who encouraged the young girls to put on their best clothes to make them feel good and beautiful. Maria shared the significance of witnessing how the generations connected through ceremonies and rituals. She told these stories to illustrate how rich and empowering our experiences and memories are.

Maria then recalled a collection of stories authored by Christopher Vecsey entitled “Imagine Ourselves Richly.” The title was thought-provoking for her because it reminded her of power words in the Cree language. In one case, a word was used to describe beauty, texture, character, richness, colour, and quality in a person or a thing. The book also reminded her that some

people came from troubling pasts, though in the midst of it all were some precious memories and stories that are important to share with children and grandchildren. Ms. Campbell noted that imagining ourselves richly could prompt kindness, generosity and inclusiveness towards future generations.

She concluded by referring to the words of an Elder who emphasized that those trying to reunite their communities need to “pick up the missing pieces of the puzzle and bring them back together.” Part of this is recognizing the integral role of grandparents as knowledge holders for families and younger generations, which was a significant part of the subsequent panel of grandparents.



“Families touch our individual and collective being from the personal to the professional to the political. To be strong as nations, we must nurture and support our families and communities. It is within our families that we as individuals come to know our place in the world and to know ourselves as part of a larger collective.”

Dr. Margo Greenwood, Academic Leader, National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health (NCCAH)

“Sharing 500 Years of Learning”

Grandparents’ Panel

Paul Skanks, Landon Pearson, Madeleine Dion Stout, and Lillian Elias

Facilitator Dan George welcomed the grandparents’ panel and asked them to speak to their understanding of the roles that grandparents play in families.

Paul Skanks began the panel by pointing to the importance of understanding the richness of our history. For him, one of the roles of becoming a grandparent is to be the family ‘historian.’ As such, he can trace his Mohawk family genealogy back to 1778. Indigenous people knew how to survive, even though efforts have been made over the past several hundred years to disconnect them from their families, communities, and Mother Earth. He is hopeful for the future of the family and stated, “My grandchildren’s mothers may not be Aboriginal; however, my grandchildren are aware

of where they come from. Mothers are strong and highly respected in our cultural beliefs.”

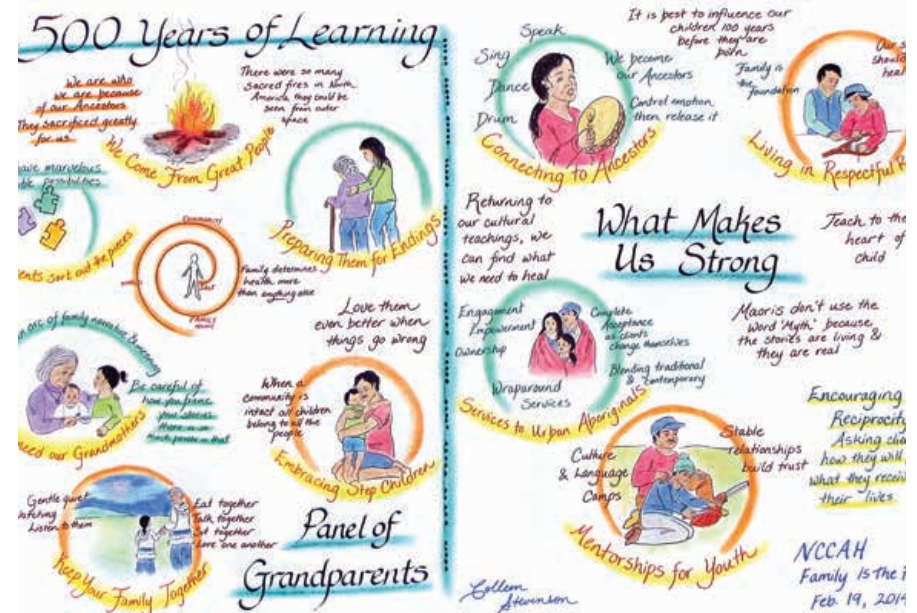
Landon Pearson followed this by recognizing that women are valuable for keeping the family alive. She said: “Grandmothers are important for maintaining the family’s survival. As a grandmother of 12 grandchildren, my role has been initially to help my children get through the first years of their grandchildren’s lives. As my grandchildren grew older, I developed relationships with them.” She agreed with Paul Skanks that the role of a grandparent is to be the “bearer of the family stories.” For her, as a grandmother, “It is important to convey to the children and family their histories. Part of a grandmothers’ role is to spin the narratives in a positive direction.”

Madeleine Dion Stout, a grandmother of three, acknowledged the importance of strong family connections: “Family is a powerful health

determiner. We start with the self and our homes before spiraling out into the world.” She urged the consideration of the family as the biggest authority on health determinants and the importance of considering how grandparents fit into the family. She stated that we are hardwired to our children and grandchildren and reflected upon the mutual connection she shares with her granddaughter, “My young granddaughter loves it when I call her ‘iskwev’ - the Cree word for woman.” It is important to promote attachment and connections with our children and grandchildren. “When ties are severed, it is traumatic for both parties. It is important to seize the teachable moments – although sometimes they are not always easy to see.”

The final panelist, Lillian Elias expressed how delighted she was to be attending this gathering with her granddaughter. She pointed out that a grandparent’s role is to love and care for their grandchildren. In her own experience, her

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grandmother taught her many things, including how to sew shoes: “My grandparents never said ‘you’re doing it wrong.’ Instead they showed us how to do things properly. It is important to eat together, sit together, love one another and help each other; this is what I’m teaching my grandchildren. Listening is most important.”

The panel honoured the esteemed role of grandparents in preserving and passing on the wisdom, stories, and knowledge of families. They are role models to “the way to walk the right way.” Grandparents instill valuable lessons to children about their history, language and culture, and importantly, that life is a cycle including youth, maturity, old age and death. A grandparent’s wisdom and gift is preparing for the next cycle in life, acknowledging that all life comes to an end, but also continues.

“Indigenous Families, Historic Trauma, and Our Collective Resilience: We’re the Living Proof”

Keynote Address

Dr. Patricia Makokis, TANSI Business Development Group and Bigstone Cree Nation, Treaty 8 Territory

A veteran educator and now businesswoman, Dr. Patricia Makokis resides on the Saddle Lake Cree Nation located in north-eastern Alberta. Patricia is married to Eugene Makokis. She is a mother of two and a grandmother. Along with her family, Patricia practices her Cree ceremonies. She sees herself as a servant of the people, working to improve the quality of overall health and well-being for Indigenous families.

Dr. Makokis began by stating that the Elders acknowledge that there are no such things as ‘coincidences.’ She described her family relationship to the early establishment of Blue

Quills College in the 1970s through her mother and father-in-law, who among others believed that Indigenous people held answers within themselves.

Graduating with her doctorate in 2000, Patricia had a passion and a vision shared by others to build a leadership program by First Nations and for First Nations people. “We had no money. We were working in an old residential school. Out of that we built our own programs based on a vision of what we wanted education for Indigenous people to be.” She and her colleagues built certificate, diploma, and degree programs. The Indigenous people of Treaty 6 supported the development of these programs.

Dr. Makokis left her work in the academy to enter the world of business with the same idea. One of the business partners she works with is the Bigstone Cree Nation in Treaty 8 territory. As part of her work, she never forgets her spiritual connectedness to the land as she engages in equitable and equal partnerships.

Dr. Makokis referenced the image of an iceberg. This is a metaphor that reminds us that just below the surface is the resilience of Indigenous people. There is complexity in the trauma that continues to affect Indigenous communities today. She added that efforts are needed to unlearn patriarchy and to learn how to practice Indigenous leadership.

As a young parent, Dr. Makokis explained, she made career choices based on the needs of her family. However, now that her children are grown, she has the support of her family to take on different kinds of work. She pointed out that Elders have told her that education is the current day buffalo of Indigenous people. Makokis added that equitable and ethical business development with communities may be the new buffalo for Indigenous people.



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Ceremony and traditional teachings are very important to Dr. Makokis’ family. Sweet grass teaches about kindness, and through ceremony, strength can be found. She often reminded her children that despite any challenges they faced, they had the strength to carry on in pursuit of their careers. Her son is now being mentored by Elders who have entrusted their traditional medicine, ceremonies and knowledge with him. As a physician, he is able to bridge Cree teachings and western medicine.

In sharing the experience of fasting with her family, Patricia imparted her belief that ceremony is in the DNA of every person. She draws upon this when teaching health promotion. Oftentimes students are hard on themselves; they tell her that ceremonies have not been practiced by their families and so they are at a loss as to how to access or participate in them. She pointed out that she knows very few people that grew up with

ceremony, but those who are thirsting for it can find mentors to bring it into their lives. “Through ceremony we find our own strengths within us. Resilience is in our DNA.”

Dr. Makokis showed an image called “The Natural Law” which represents the teachings of Indigenous peoples in their relationships with each other and the world. Reciprocal relationships and spiritual connectedness are central to this ethic. Dr. Makokis uses this image as the foundation of her teaching.

Oppression has created significant pain in Indigenous peoples’ lives, starting even before confederation. As a student, Dr. Makokis started to explore the historical roots of intergenerational trauma. Colonization situated Indigenous realities as myths and dominators’ stories as reality. Resentment, frustration and anger at colonization result in lateral violence, barriers to Indigenous development, social breakdown, crime, and high

risk behaviors. Teaching students about historic trauma allows a light bulb to go on: “All of a sudden they start to see that our people are kind, loving, caring people who are suffering this pain.” The disruptions to family, language and identity caused by colonization continue to impact all Indigenous people and the work that we do.

Dr. Makokis showed pictures of the training programs she delivers to Bigstone Cree Nation. These programs start by helping students understand historic trauma and oppression, and move into employment readiness for entering the workforce. The program is designed to help prepare band members to work in various roles in camps devoted to the industry development sector on their territory.

In closing, Dr. Makokis shared a Hopi prophecy, “The people will say we are waiting, and the answer will be we are waiting for ourselves.” She continued by stating, “I would suggest that

everyone in this room has answers and solutions to what it is that we should be collectively doing in the service of our people and for the greater good of all humankind.”

“What Makes Us Strong?”

Panel

Hohepa Tamehana, Shirley Tagalik, Kim Scott, Colette Trudeau, John Stuart Jr.

This panel was convened to discuss “What makes us strong?” The panelists were asked to draw upon their own experiences to describe how the strength of families and communities is connected to culture, traditional practices, education, and language. Collectively, they recognized the implicit roles played by women, men, Elders, children and youth to create, support, and maintain respectful and resilient families.

Hohepa Tamehana, a Maori from New Zealand, opened the panel by acknowledging the importance of using cultural practices to help people struggle through difficult times: “When we sing our songs, when we dance our dances, when we speak our language, we are in the presence of our ancestors, we become our ancestors.” He emphasized the importance of maintaining connections with our past and heritage, pointing out that “culture is the essence of our being. It is the prayers of our ancestors, the cries of our Elders, the anger of our parents, the pride of our generation, and the strength of our children.” Mr. Tamehana also pointed out that children need a sense of pride and identity. They need to be reminded through culture to control their enthusiasm, control their concerns, control their passion, and find a way to release their emotions through performance (using stomping, words, volume, tears, sweat, eyes, and tongues).



Shirley Tagalik acknowledged the consistency across Indigenous worldviews, pointing out that similar ideas emanate from all communities. Indigenous worldview is based on truths provided to the people from the creator. Ms. Tagalik explained that she had been adopted into a Nunavut community where she worked with Elders to redesign the education system based on what Inuit people knew to be true. Over the past 15 years, with the assistance of Elders, efforts have been made to bring truths back to life and make them real for Inuit children and grandchildren. As the research journey began, the Elders talked about living in respectful relationships within changing environments and families. A multi-module parenting curriculum developed with Elders' advice has now been delivered six times in her community of Arviat, in ten other communities across Nunavut, and has been requested by several others. Ms. Tagalik urged for more opportunities to build up future generations and curtail the loss of traditional teachings.

Kim Scott echoed the importance of amplifying family strength. She reviewed a number of programs across Canada, including Neah Kee Papa (Winnipeg, MB), Healthy Children, Healthy Futures Program at Hiiye'yu Lelum (Duncan, BC), Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre (ON), Kids First (Regina, SK), Wraparound Services for Families at Native Child and Families Services of Toronto (ON), and Working Together to Help One Another at Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre (Winnipeg, MB). These programs focus on strength and leadership in which parents are seen as the "agents of change." They are, in effect, parent controlled and parent facilitated. The organizations rely on the engagement, empowerment and ownership of families and communities. She said, "When our families and communities are involved in decision-making roles, things work better and feel right." Ms.

Scott acknowledged that culture is good medicine. She reiterated the importance of leadership and commitment, and noted that learning opportunities may serve as very useful starting points in a journey where more therapeutic services may be needed. Families in need are more likely to participate in a learning opportunity when trust and relationship are established and this sets the stage for other interventions in the healing process.

Youth delegates, Colette Trudeau and John Stuart Jr., were invited to draw upon their own experiences and learnings from the conference in order to share their thoughts on the supports needed for youth and families. Colette began by stating that family is a community. She also described her experience of finding out about her Métis roots and the pride she felt in having researched her identity and family ancestry. John Stuart Jr. from the National Inuit Community Society said that Inuit youth are reconnecting with their culture through immersion language and culture camps. Both youth pointed out that a sense of belonging and connection to their culture were important to them.

Audience members highlighted programs such as Aboriginal midwifery, performing arts, cultural camps, parenting programs and language learning. Commentators noted the importance of community and youth involvement. Since government funding is often not available, many of these programs rely on volunteers to operate. According to panelist Shirley Tagalik, parental involvement is crucial. She said, "There have been conversations about culture being key in reinforcing parental responsibility. Adults need to be involved.... It is important to put knowledge into action in the family and the community."



© Credit: www.aboriginalimages.ca, ID 0924, "Métis Baby with Sash"

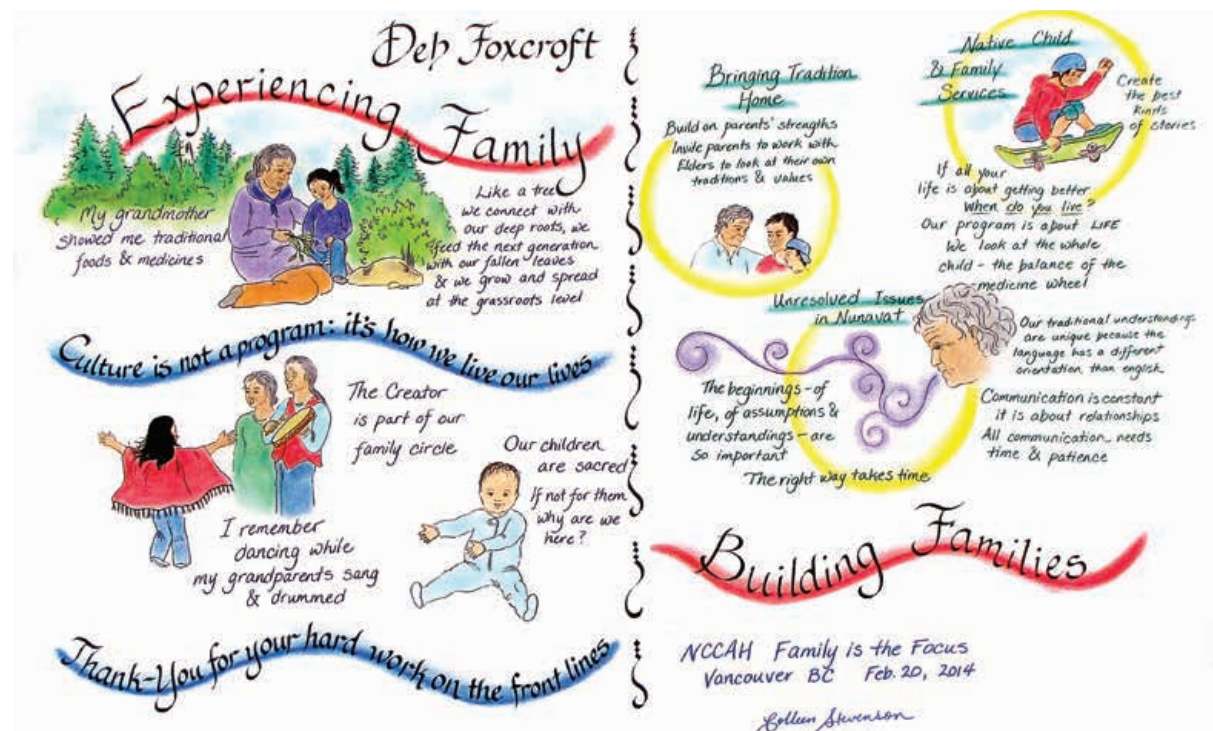
Facilitator Dan George welcomed participants to the last day of the Family is the Focus gathering. He summarized themes raised in the discussions including recognition of culture and tradition as healing medicine; thinking about future generations and how we can influence children's well-being 100 years before they are born; respect for self, others and the environment; the importance of collaboration and partnerships; and family as the foundation for healthy Indigenous communities. He then recognized the roles that can be played by leadership and community organizations in the health and wellness of families. With that, he invited the first keynote speaker, Deb Foxcroft.

"Reflections on the Importance and Strengths of Families"

Keynote Address
Deb Foxcroft

Since 2013, Deb Foxcroft has been the President of the Nuuchahnulth Tribal Council. A leader in her community, she took a retrospective look at her own experiences growing up and the roles her parents and grandparents played in her development. In particular, she spoke of how her commitment to traditional language and culture was shaped by the way her grandparents shared dances, songs, stories, legends, and prepared and gathered traditional foods and medicine.

Although her parents held education in high regard, Ms. Foxcroft spoke of the impacts that residential school had on her father which extended to the larger family. Like other survivors of the schools, her father rejected his traditional culture and their family was impacted by mental illness and alcoholism. She said that drugs, alcohol, gangs and violence break apart many Aboriginal families and communities.



Families need to listen, laugh, show more love and nurturing, live a good life, and feel safe and protected in their families and communities. Stability is key for healthy children and youth. We need to be proud of who we are and where we come from and instill that in our children and grandchildren. Child and family well-being is not solely the responsibility of parents, but of grandparents, aunts, uncles and everyone in a community, including leaders, neighbours and extended family members. Children need to be happy and healthy. They need to be free from any abuse or neglect. Children need to be children, not little adults with too many responsibilities. The commitment to supporting positive changes for families and communities is paramount to the well-being of our children, grandchildren and the future generations.

Deb noted that there are caring people working on behalf of their communities and that people have incorporated positive efforts into services and programs. Good family support services which incorporate our traditional teachings and values are critical to the overall success of our nations at the community level.

Ms. Foxcroft stressed the importance of gratitude and appreciating time with family, and concluded by asking for guidance in her daily prayers, for herself, her family and her community. She hoped for health, happiness, healing, love and strength for the gathering and beyond.

“Building Families: Promising Practices”

Panel

Karen Isaac, Jeff D’Hondt, and Joe Karetak

This final panel was brought together to meet the gathering’s objective of sharing their involvement in culturally-relevant, strengths-based programs, practices and resources offered to Aboriginal families.

The first speaker, Karen Isaac, works as the Executive Director at the BC Aboriginal Child Care Society. Her presentation highlighted a culturally relevant teaching resource produced in 2010 through her organization with funding from the Public Health Agency of Canada called *Bringing Traditions Home: Aboriginal Parenting in Today’s World*. This product is based on traditional child-rearing values and practices, including respect, sense of belonging, love, honour, humility, courage, wisdom, generosity, and celebration. One of its unique qualities is the way that activities can be adapted to include traditional teachings from any community. Its strength is in the inclusion of knowledge keepers with specific cultural skills and knowledge.

Delivered across Canada, it is a flexible program based on three-hour gatherings that welcome Elders as knowledge keepers, encouraging them to share languages, traditional parenting practices, stories and strengths. The goal of the project is to empower parents to share and practice the teachings with their children (to bring tradition home). The more knowledge that can be shared with parents, the more empowering the program can be for family well-being. Over 250 facilitators have been trained across BC and in other provinces.

Mr. D’Hondt is the Manager of Clinical Services at the Native Child and Family Services. He reviewed

his experiences as a social worker and his more recent focus on children’s mental health.

During Mr. D’Hondt’s life and career as a social worker, he gained some memorable experiences. He sought healing through various means of therapies and ceremony, until he remembered wisdom from his grandfather: life on its own was about healing and encouraged him to focus on living a good life, in addition to pursuing healing. As a result of his grandfather’s advice, he started writing and showing affection to others.

Jeff’s personal experiences should not overshadow the teachings hidden within them: living a full life is as important as healing. Children need to play; it is how they get to know one another, have fun, laugh and feel alive. The Native Child and Family Services of Toronto program was focused on mental health, and complied with the required regulations; however, they organized therapy around play, cultural events, family events, ceremonies, indeed life, to ensure that children receive therapy alongside the chance to be children. He concluded by noting that greater efforts were needed to adjust the system, to make room for different methods of healing, trust building, and relationship building.

Mr. Karetak explained that as a child, he grew up in an Inuktitut language system. Children were exposed to traditional knowledge and culture from birth.

He recommended that efforts were needed to accommodate Inuit culture in the government education system. Different dialects and an equal number of men and women needed to be involved in teachings. He explained the criticalness of effective communication. The Inuit culture acknowledged relationships with everything – even the stars and the rocks. To help address communication issues with other communities,



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it was important to hear both sides of an issue. Anything of importance requires time, patience and understanding.

He indicated that generations have been taught in schools where there is a standard way of processing information. By the time it was discovered that a child had a learning problem, the best opportunity for addressing it may have been missed. When children were taken from their communities, they were taught in residential schools to read and write. Many were culturally dysfunctional when they returned to their communities, and faced challenges while trying to revive their identity.

The “Wrap-Around Program” is a community-based solution focused on meeting the child where he or she was at, and then moving to required supports. The program is still in the development stages; however, it looks promising for resolving some of the current challenges. He concluded by noting that understanding (rather than avoidance) was the premise from which resolution could be achieved.



“Family is the Focus: Reflections and Next Steps”

Closing Keynote
Jo-ann Archibald

Jo-ann Archibald, Q’um Q’um Xiiem, from the Sto:lo and Xaxli’p First Nations, is Associate Dean for Indigenous Education, the Director for the Native Indian Teacher Education Program, and Professor in the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia.

In her closing keynote address, Dr. Archibald acknowledged how the gathering had touched her heart, mind, body, and spirit. She reflected upon the Coast Salish tradition of ‘witnessing’, when people were called to gather, to listen and observe (with their ears, their mind and their heart). During the Family is the Focus gathering, she had witnessed stories and perspectives coming from Indigenous knowledge systems, communities and families. Much had been said about respect for people, land and culture, and about “our responsibilities to children, grandchildren, our families and each other.” She heard about the importance of understanding the roles of kinship, community history, kindness, trust, resiliency, strength and creativity for family well-being.

The gathering highlighted the traditional principle of passing Indigenous values, stories, and teachings to younger generations. This intergenerational learning was critical not only for maintaining connections between families and communities, but also with nature and the land. Traditional ways of knowing help strengthen the actions and emotions of individuals, families and communities and should be applied to everyday practices. To this she urged participants to, “keep our histories vibrant. They are not just in the past. The past is us and the past is our

future.” All family members have a role in this intergenerational endeavour.

She then shared a story, which had been told to her by an Elder, the late Vi Hilbert of the Upper Skagit people of Puget Sound. Sometimes the smallest creatures can teach us lessons. This story is about a creature named Lady Louse who tried to clean up the rarely-used and rarely-cared for community long house. Years ago, the long house was used to reconnect families and communities, to share food, stories and songs, and to pass on cultural teachings, history, language, and values. Feeling badly about the state the long house was in, Lady Louse decided to start cleaning up. She started to sweep, but only stirred up a tremendous amount of dust. As she thought of all the work that had to be done, she swept harder and harder. By the time she reached the middle, she was lost in a dust cloud. Dr. Archibald recalled her one understanding of the story’s meanings including that many people had lost their families in the dust of our colonial history. There are many meanings that can be attributed to that story, but one thing was clear – eventually the dust would settle and bring out a new opportunity to move forward.

Like Maria Campbell, Dr. Archibald imagined Aboriginal families, cultures, programs, and organizations richly. The NCCAH, for example, should be commended for finding ways to bring participants together over these four gatherings, and for creating excellent learning materials for all to use.

Dr. Archibald concluded by asking what the participants might consider next steps as they returned to their families. She acknowledged that everyone had been enriched by spending time together with those who cared about family and had put family as the focus. She extended best wishes to all for a safe journey home.

NCCAH
Family is the Focus
Vancouver BC
Feb. 20, 2014

Visioning the Future

Treating families as equals when working with them. Engage with them.



Open doors to those who are not included

Offer integrated services
Share resources between services



Check in after meetings

* Be mindful of spiritual teachings & possible damage to people's spirits in the health field

Giving families voice

We commit to solutions



* Letting go of what is not working



* Building more Aboriginal Head Start programs - We know it works

* Structural Violence
Where you live determines the services you get

* Semantics can destroy our relationships even before they start

Share Our Successes & Celebrate!

Measure impacts on children's lives v. measuring programs

Never again do we want a First Nations, Métis or Inuit child have to recover from their childhood

Nothing about us without us!

* Our identities are a rich weave of BOTH AND

Every Family is a child development centre



Lolleen Stevenson



VISIONING THE FUTURE

Conference facilitator Dan George summed up the feedback from the World Café discussions on programs and services, and the diversity of knowledge within the room. Based on the gathering's discussion, the following consensus statement was developed from which the collective could move forward:

"We commit to solutions, building upon what is currently in place or is working in our families and communities.

We commit to advocacy, championing the needs identified by our people at the individual, family, community and nation levels.

We commit to communicating effectively and efficiently across families, communities, sectors and systems.

We commit to freely sharing our gifts, celebrating who we are, and where we are from.

We commit to continuous improvement, measuring the impact our work has on the health, social and cultural outcomes of our children.

We commit to healthy behaviours, creating happy and safe homes for our children.



We commit to inclusive practices that are welcoming to all and rooted in the family.

We commit to advancing our rich and vibrant cultures on all fronts.

We commit to lifelong learning embracing each opportunity as a teachable moment.

We commit to establishing services where they are needed, ensuring that where a child lives doesn't limit the services they receive.

We believe that every family is a child development centre.

We accept the responsibility for our children.

We believe in our greatness.

This is our truth."



THANK-YOU

Elder Mary Charles

Elder Mary Charles, of the Musqueam First Nation, who opened the gathering and warmly welcomed participants to the traditional territories of the Tsleil-Waututh, Squamish and Musqueam peoples.

Mr. Dan George

Mr. Dan George, of Four Directions Management Services, who with great insight and respect, facilitated the event.

Ms. Colleen Stephenson

Ms. Colleen Stephenson, a graphic artist who visually captured in real time the words and thoughts of speakers and participants in colourful artwork.

Big Soul Productions

The crew of Big Soul Productions, who filmed the gathering and put much care into producing the DVD *...Family is the Focus*.

The NCCAH would also like to acknowledge and thank our keynote speakers and all panelists for sharing their time, experience, insights and wisdom.

This event has been made possible through a financial contribution from the Public Health Agency of Canada. The views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of the Public Health Agency of Canada.



ARTWORK

Carla Joseph

Carla was born in Prince George, BC with Cree roots in Green Lake, Saskatchewan. Carla started drawing and painting consistently in 1994. Many of Carla's accomplishments are a result of designing logos for non-profit organizations and causes throughout the central interior of BC.

Many of Carla's paintings are an amalgam of Coast Salish and contemporary wildlife, mostly acrylic and oil on canvas. Carla's love of the west coast style developed under the tutelage of both her children's and spouse's culture, as well the experience of being born and raised in BC.

Future ventures for Carla include a web page and a business.

Contact her at: hummingbear@shaw.ca



Credit: Reproduced with permission © 2015 Carla Joseph

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Albert Pooley

Mr. Albert Pooley MSW, MPA is the founder and President of the Native American Fatherhood and Families Association (NAFFA) in Mesa, Arizona. He is internationally known for his culturally-sensitive Fatherhood/Motherhood Is Sacred program. This curriculum is currently being used in 100+ Indian tribes and 11 urban centers and some non-native agencies in the US. Albert has extensive working knowledge of tribes and promotes workshops designed to strengthen families through healthy marriage and responsible parenting as role models for their children.

Mr. Pooley has given more than 100+ keynote presentations for crowds spanning 10 to thousands of people. Audiences have included the Child Support Enforcement National Regional Office, Washington DC; First Things First, Arizona; Early Childhood Conference, Cocopah Hualapai; Southern Ute Fatherhood Conference Durango; Selkirk First Nations Grand Council of Chiefs, Pelly Crossing, Yukon Canada; Navaho Head Start, Fort McDowell; Intertribal Council Parenting Conference, Tucson; International Fatherhood Conference, Baltimore MD; National Fatherhood Rally, National Monument, Washington DC; Oglala Sioux Childhood/Childcare Conference, Rapid City, SD; National Conference of the Office for Family Assistance, Washington, DC; Native American Procurement Conference, AZ; Child Care Program Navajo Division of Social Services. Albert also conducts training workshops, lectures, seminars and conference workshops including presentations at the National Head Start Conference in Orlando Florida, National Indian Welfare Association and Native American Childhood and Family Conference, Southwest Consortium of Indian Head Start Programs, Inc.

He has been married to his wife, Julia, for 44 years. They have six children and 13 grandchildren.



Maria Campbell

Maria Campbell is an author, playwright, filmmaker, researcher, educator and Cree/Métis Elder from Saskatchewan. Her publications include *Halfbreed* (1973), *The Book of Jessica* (1987), and *Stories of the Road Allowance People* (1995). Among her plays, *Jessica* won the 1986 Dora Mavor Moore National Award for Playwriting, and *The Crossing* won the 2008 Spirit of Saskatchewan Award. In film and television work, Ms. Campbell has produced and directed over 35 documentaries, mostly in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples.

Ms. Campbell's artistic work has always been grounded in social justice and a commitment to community. She has been doing

volunteer work for over 40 years, working mostly with women and children in crisis. Her work has included being one of the founders of the First Women's Halfway House as well as the Women and Children's Emergency Crisis Centre in Edmonton, working with youth in community theatre, setting up food and housing co-ops, facilitating women's circles, and doing workshops on leadership and community organizing. Ms. Campbell was the translator and helper for the "Elders' Blockade" to stop logging in traditional Cree territory in Northern Saskatchewan in the 1990s. She has also worked with the Lubicon Lake First Nations in their struggle for land claims.

Awards for Ms. Campbell include an Officer of The Order of Canada, a Saskatchewan Order of Merit, a Canada Council Molson Award, and a National Aboriginal Achievement Award. Ms. Campbell holds four honorary doctorates and is a former professor from the University of Saskatchewan and First Nations University of Canada. She has held several writer-in-residence positions and is currently the Elder in Virtual Residence at the Centre for World Indigenous Knowledge, Athabasca University. She is also a co-applicant on two national research projects and a Trudeau Mentor.

She has four children and is a grandmother of seven and great-grandmother of four.



Patricia Makokis

Dr. Patricia Makokis resides on the Saddle Lake Cree Nation located in north-eastern Alberta along with her husband Eugene, and occasionally, their two adult children, Janice and James. Pat has been an educator (front line teacher, Vice Principal, and Principal) along with post secondary instructor for the past 25 years. She has worked with youth from across Canada and the Territories. Her front line work had her working with youth with addictions, their families and a drug and alcohol team. Pat currently teaches part time at the University of Alberta and works full time in 50-50 business partnerships with Indigenous Nations located in northern Alberta. Her current work has her interfacing front line with Nations in economic development partnerships, industry, government (federal and provincial) and post secondary institutes. Pat and her family are practitioners of their Cree ceremonies. She sees herself as a servant of the people, working to improve the quality of overall health and well-being for Indigenous families.



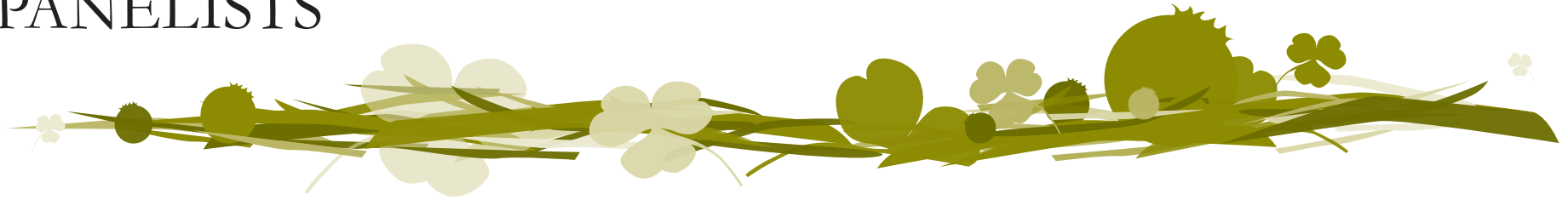
Jo-ann Archibald

Jo-ann Archibald, Q'um Q'um Xi'em, from the Sto:lo and Xaxli'p First Nations, is Associate Dean for Indigenous Education, the Director for the Native Indian Teacher Education Program (NITEP), and professor in the Educational Studies Department in the Faculty of Education, University of British Columbia. Jo-ann received a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.) degree from the University of British Columbia, a Master of Education (M.Ed.) degree and Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) degree from Simon Fraser University. At UBC, Jo-ann has held the position of Director of the First Nations House of Learning from 1993-2001. She received a National Aboriginal Achievement/Inspire Award in 2000, an honorary Doctor of Letters from Capilano University and the Simon Fraser University Outstanding Alumni Award for Academic Achievement in 2012. In 2013, she received a distinguished career achievement award from the American Education Research Association, Scholars of Colour. Jo-ann is the author of the book, *Indigenous Storywork: Educating the Heart, Mind, Body, and Spirit* published in 2008 by UBC Press.



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PANELISTS



Madeleine Kétéskwew Dion Stout

Madeleine Kétéskwew Dion Stout, a Cree speaker, was born and raised on the Kehewin First Nation in Alberta. After graduating from the Edmonton General Hospital as a Registered Nurse, she earned a Bachelors Degree in Nursing, with Distinction, from the University of Lethbridge and a Masters Degree in International Affairs from the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University. She serves on several Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal boards and committees, including the National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health and the First Nations Health Authority Board in BC. In August, 2007 she was appointed to the Mental Health Commission of Canada as an inaugural Vice-Chair of the Board of Directors. Madeleine is a past President of the Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada and appointee to the National Forum on Health.

In March 2010 she won the National Aboriginal Achievement Award in the health category.

Lillian Elias (Inkiqlik)

Lillian Elias was born and raised in the Mackenzie Delta. She went to Residential School at the age of nine and stayed for four years. She is an Interpreter/translator Teacher Specialist in her language, culture and tradition. She was the first teacher to teach her language of Inuvialuktun in the Samuel Hearne Secondary School in Inuvik, NT. She taught for 10 years. Her goal is to encourage youth to keep their culture and language alive. She is still teaching today, even though she retired about ten years ago. She teaches drum dancing at the elementary school twice a week and teaches the Inuvialuktun language twice a week.

Lillian received the Diamond Jubilee Award in Ottawa in March 2012 for her dedication and service to her peers, community and to Canada. She also received the Keeping Our Culture Alive Award and other numerous awards.

Paul Skanks

Paul Skanks was born in Toronto and raised in Kahnawake, a Mohawk Reserve in Quebec. His spirit name is Tiao Re Hen Sere, which means the first light of day, and he is of the Turtle clan. His life is based on the principles of “The Great Law” of the Haudenasaunee (People of the Long House). Paul has been a resident of Ottawa/Gloucester, Ontario since 1978. He has three granddaughters from two of his three sons. He was a Board Member and Elder of the Ottawa Head Start Program with a focus on Aboriginal pre-school curriculum, and he continues work with their Ontario Regional Organization. Paul is also “on call” with friendship centers, government, health centers and other organizations to provide teachings/ceremonies and/or personal counseling.

Paul retired from Bell Canada in 1994 after 29 years of service. Since his retirement, he has undertaken a rewarding new career of his cultural rebirth. To this end, he actively pursues knowledge based on traditional teachings and does his best to lead a life based on these principles. He feels he has been blessed by learning from many gifted Elders/teachers from various First Nations cultural backgrounds across Turtle Island. Paul believes it is our responsibility to help others who are attempting to live a balanced life in harmony with Mother Earth.

Hohepa Tamehana

Hohepa Tamehana is a Māori from Aotearoa (New Zealand). He is a member of the Tūhoe Nation. For the past 25 years Hohepa has been tutoring Māori performing arts. His fields of expertise are in traditional culture and custom and how these can be transformed and applied to today's Māori. He has a degree in Māori education and is completing a doctorate in Indigenous Studies. He currently works for Te Wānanga o Aotearoa which is a Māori educational institution that delivers diplomas, and undergraduate master's degrees, that address current issues being faced by Māori.

John Stuart Jr.

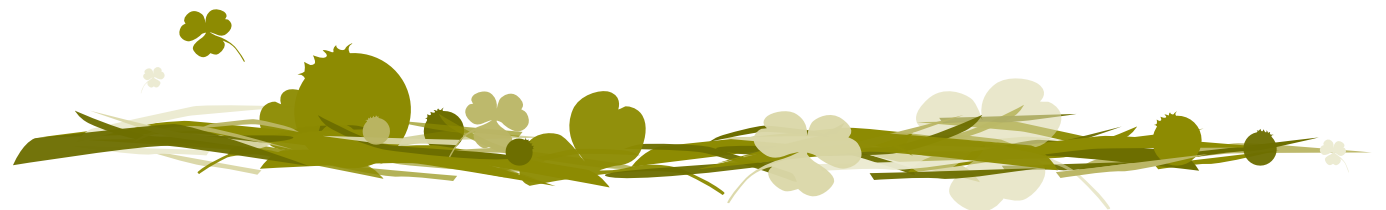
Originally from Tuktoyaktuk, a small Inuvialuit community in the Northwest Territories, John Stuart Jr. lives and works as a Regional Youth Wellness Coordinator in Inuvik. John began working with youth when he was 15 years old with the goal of preventing youth suicide. He is a certified ASIST (Applied Suicide Invention Skills Training) trainer and is certified in mental health awareness. Through his governance training, he teaches youth to practice good governance in their youth councils and organizations. John is actively involved in the cultural life of his community and coaches six different national sports. In addition to his community-based work, John is part of an international research group dedicated to preventing youth suicide in the circumpolar north. John is the proud father of a son.

Shirley Tagalik

Shirley Tagalik is an educator who has lived in Arviat since 1976. She worked at all levels of the school system. In 1999 she joined the newly formed Government of Nunavut Department of Education as the Manager of Early Childhood and School Services with the Curriculum Division. Her main task was to redesign the educational system within a framework of Inuit knowledge and to begin the rewriting of the curriculum to fit this framework. She worked extensively with Inuit Elders to document their cultural knowledge, Inuit Qaujimagajuqangit. Retiring in 2009, she established Inukpaujaq Consulting which provides research, facilitation and consulting services. Her research includes suicide prevention and issues around mental health; youth engagement; early childhood development; food security, nutrition and obesity prevention; language enhancement and reclamation; and articulating Indigenous cultural knowledge frameworks. Shirley is very active in local health and wellness issues at the community and territorial levels. She continues to live in Arviat with her husband, children and grandchildren.

Kim Scott

Ms. Scott is founder and principal of Kishk Anaquot Health Research (KAHR), an independent, Indigenous owned and operated consultancy specializing in strategic planning, program design, performance measurement, partnership development and environmental sustainability with a varied client base of universities, government departments, professional associations, international and non-governmental organizations, school boards, health centres and communities. Her career spans a broad spectrum of activity related to public health, international and community development, training, governance and comprehensive sustainability planning. Her professional interests are currently focused on amplifying action on the nexus between energy, environment and public health. Ms. Scott holds a Master of Science degree from the University of Waterloo, sits as a board member of the Ottawa Renewable Energy Cooperative, is a lifelong student of traditional medicine and an external advisor to the Evaluation and Performance Measurement Review and Audit Committees of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada.



PANELISTS



Colette Trudeau

Colette Trudeau is a young Métis leader and the Director of Youth for Métis Nation British Columbia. Colette has worked hard to support Métis youth governance within the Métis Nation British Columbia. She supports eight provincially elected youth who sit on the Métis Youth British Columbia (MYBC) Committee.

Colette is passionate about youth voice and is an active member of the Unified Aboriginal Youth Collective (UAYC). She has also been fully engaged in BC's Off-Reserve Aboriginal Action Plan which has been composed of partners such as the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, Métis Nation BC, and federal and provincial governments in order to ensure Aboriginal communities, families and children are empowered to achieve their full human potential by improving socio-economic outcomes for off-reserve Aboriginal people in BC.

Landon Pearson

The Honourable Landon Pearson O.C. is a long-time advocate for the rights and well-being of children. As the wife of a Canadian diplomat she brought up their five children in five countries and learned first-hand about the challenges confronting the world's children. She also learned to listen to her own. Prior to her appointment to the Senate of Canada in 1994, where she became known as the Children's Senator as well as the Senator for Children, she had extensive experience as a volunteer with a number of local, national and international organizations concerned with children.

As Vice-Chairperson of the Canadian Commission for the International Year of the Child (1979), she edited the Commission's report, *For Canada's Children: National Agenda for Action*. From 1984 to 1990, she served as President and then Chair of the Canadian Council on Children and Youth. She was a founding member and Chair of the Canadian Coalition for the Rights of Children from 1989 until she was summoned to the Senate. In May 1996, Senator Pearson was named Advisor on Children's Rights to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and in 1998 became the Personal Representative of the Prime Minister to the 2002 United Nations Special Session on Children. She then coordinated Canada's response to the Special Session entitled, *A Canada Fit for Children*.

Upon her retirement from the Senate in 2005, Landon Pearson moved with all her documents and papers to Carleton University where she directs a Resource Centre for the Study of Childhood and Children's Rights that has been established in her name. The Landon Pearson Resource Centre is devoted to promoting the rights of children and youth through disseminating knowledge about the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, mentoring students, sponsoring youth participation in a variety of settings, organizing lectures and seminars, and coordinating a growing network of child rights scholars across Canada. Landon Pearson is also adjunct professor in the Pauline Jewett Institute of Women's Studies.

Landon Pearson has published two books and a number of articles on child-related issues, and she continues to write about and to lecture on children's rights, especially the rights of children in difficult circumstances. She has received many awards, including the Canada Volunteer Award in 1990 and several honorary doctorates. In 2005, she was one among 1000 women world wide nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize for her work on behalf of children. In July 2008 she was appointed to the Order of Canada as an Officer.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Bringing Tradition Home: Aboriginal Parenting in Today's World

Karen Isaac and Mary Burgaretta,
BC Aboriginal Child Care Society

BC Aboriginal Child Care Society (BCACCS) is committed to nurturing excellence through community outreach, education, research and advocacy; to ensure every Aboriginal child in BC has access to spiritually enriching, culturally relevant, high quality early childhood development services. In April 2010 the BCACCS released its parenting resource: Bringing Tradition Home: Aboriginal Parenting in Today's World (BTH). The aim of BTH is to present traditional values and cultural practices to help parents, grandparents and other family caregivers to raise healthy children in today's urban Canadian context. Healthy children, with involved parents, lead to healthy communities. While there are many differences among Nations, there are some universal values, beliefs and practices that the program builds upon, such as story-telling, the spiritual connection to child-rearing, and the involvement of the extended family. BCACCS staff provide facilitator workshops upon request.

Learn more at: www.acc-society.bc.ca/files_2/bringing-tradition-home.php

Native Child and Family Services of Toronto

Jeff D'Hondt

This clinical unit strives to provide families and children the necessary support services and advocacy required to assist and empower them in achieving a healthy quality of life. A client/family centered plan is developed based on a holistic path to healing and recovery, including preventative and healing services for children, women and men using a combination of traditional cultural approaches to health and healing and contemporary counseling techniques.

Learn more at: www.nativechild.org

Unresolved Issues in Nunavut

Joe Karetak

Finally recognition is being given to the need to provide supports and programs directed to dealing with unresolved issues. For Inuit, these issues are the colonial legacy that has disconnected families, devastated our youth, and contributed to the high levels of substance use, family abuse and youth suicide. Wraparound is a caregiving intervention process that was developed in Alaska in communities where formal services were either not available or were inadequate. It is very similar to the Inuit process of aajiqatigiiniq, long used to promote healing and ensure that harmony and balance was present in our communities.

Regina Early Learning Centre

Mary-Ann McGrath and Lorna Wesaquate

The Regina Early Learning Centre is a child and family development centre which works with low income families to foster the healthy development of children from prenatal through five years of age. Programs offered include: KidsFirst Home Visiting; Parents as Teachers Home Visiting; and Preschool Family Outreach (group programs for parents and/or parents and children). The Centre currently serves between 230 and 250 children and their families.

Learn more at www.earlylearning.ca



PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health

Belinda Larente and Sandi DeLaronde

The Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health is an urban, non-profit, community-based health care centre that provides programs and services for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. Established in the National Capital Region in 1998, the mandate of the Wabano Centre is to prevent ill health, treat illness, and provide support and aftercare programming. Services and programs are offered in a culturally sensitive way that welcomes, accepts and represents all Aboriginal peoples.

Learn more at: www.wabano.com

Mi'kmaq Family PRIDE Program

Marilyn LeFrank and Stacey Bishop

The Mi'kmaq Family PRIDE Program provides prevention and protection supports to PEI's First Nation children and families living on reserve. Using a holistic approach to individual and family wellness, the objective of the program is to strengthen families and reduce the risk of harm to children. The program was developed based on the belief that children, families and communities benefit most from services that are sensitive to and congruent with their cultural beliefs and traditional values. The program provides a variety of services to children, youth and families and also serves as a link between the provincial child protection program and the PEI First Nations.

Learn more at: www.mcpei.ca/FamilyPRIDE

Métis Community Services Society of BC (MCSBC)

Val Richards

Métis Community Services Society of BC (MCSBC) coordinates a number of strength-based family focused programs that are facilitated within a “wrap-around” style of service delivery that includes individual, family, and community levels of practice. MCSBC is unique in that it has a co-location agreement with the Ministry of Children and Family Development. Seven delegated social workers and a team leader provide family service and guardianship services from within the Métis community office, and work closely with Métis cultural and support staff to strengthen vulnerable Métis families. MCSBC was nominated for a Premier's Award in 2013 for this unique style of collaborative service delivery.

Learn more at: www.mcsbc.org

Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre

Karen Baker Anderson

The vision for the OICC is very simple: strong culture, strong families, strong community. In partnership with parents and the community, the mission of the Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre is to foster strong and proud Inuit children, youth and families. Working with parents is not a separate program but is a way of being in our agency. Fifty percent of our board of directors are parents of the children enrolled in programs. We have an Early Years Advisory Committee where all 10 members are parents. Parents volunteer in the program and we always recruit new staff through community. Every day at the centre, whether it is a parent who has come in to ask for support or to volunteer or to just hang out and have a coffee, they all know that the OICC will welcome them and that they have a place to call home - a home that is safe, nurturing and values their culture because we know that where there is strong culture and strong families, there will be a strong community.

Learn more at: www.ottawainuitchildrens.com



Shared Care Child Care Society

Chris Mikeeuneak, Shared Care Society

The Shared Care Society is a volunteer group who offer early years programming in Arviat, NU. With one of the highest per capita birth rates in Canada, Arviat has a focus on healthy support through the provision of pre-natal/infant programs, early intervention, Aboriginal Head Start for all 3 and 4 year olds, and child care for infants to 6 year olds. All the programs are delivered in Inuktitut through culturally embedded practices.

BC Council for Families

Joel Kaplan

BCCF is an organization that trains and supports professionals throughout BC. Our trainings for professionals supporting and working directly with families are comprehensive, in-depth, challenging, and effective. Each session is developed using a rigorous set of criteria to include relevant, informative content, encourage participant interaction, and emphasize practical skill building. Whether you're looking to refresh

your facilitation skills, learn the basics of home visitation, or sharpen your storytelling skills, BCCF can help.

Trainings include: Integrated Strategies for Home Visiting, Risk Management for Home Visitors, My Tween and Me, Reaching IN, Reaching OUT, Nobody's Perfect, Parent Child Mother Goose Teacher Training, and Changing Fathers, Evolving Practices and Journey to Healing: Suicide Postvention for Youth.

Journey to Healing: Suicide Postvention for Youth is a two-day training that brings together family service professionals, community and youth leaders who support Aboriginal youth, to explore the lived experiences of bereaved youth, and to develop strategies to support them effectively. The ultimate goal of the training is to prevent youth suicide and adverse mental health effects in Aboriginal communities throughout the province.

Learn more at: www.bccf.ca

Healthy Child Manitoba

Lisa Murdock and Louanne Beauceage

Healthy Child Manitoba is the Government of Manitoba's long-term, cross-departmental strategy for putting children and families first. Healthy Child Manitoba bridges departments and governments and, together with the community, works to ensure the best possible outcomes for all children in Manitoba. Based on research and best practice evidence, through Healthy Child Manitoba the Province has invested in a number of core programs and strategies for healthy child and adolescent development, from the prenatal period to adulthood. All of Healthy Child Manitoba's programs aim to serve Métis, Inuit and First Nations families living off-reserve. Several programs serve First Nations families that live on-reserve: The Healthy Baby

Manitoba Prenatal Benefit (MPB) is universally available to eligible First Nations women living on-reserve; Triple P training is provided to practitioners living and working in First Nations communities; Parent Child Coalitions can and do provide funding to programs in First Nations communities; the Roots of Empathy and Seeds of Empathy Programs are delivered in First Nations communities through HCMO-facilitated training for local staff; HCMO supports collection of the Early Development Instrument (EDI) for interested First Nations communities.

Learn more at: www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild



EVENT PHOTOS



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