

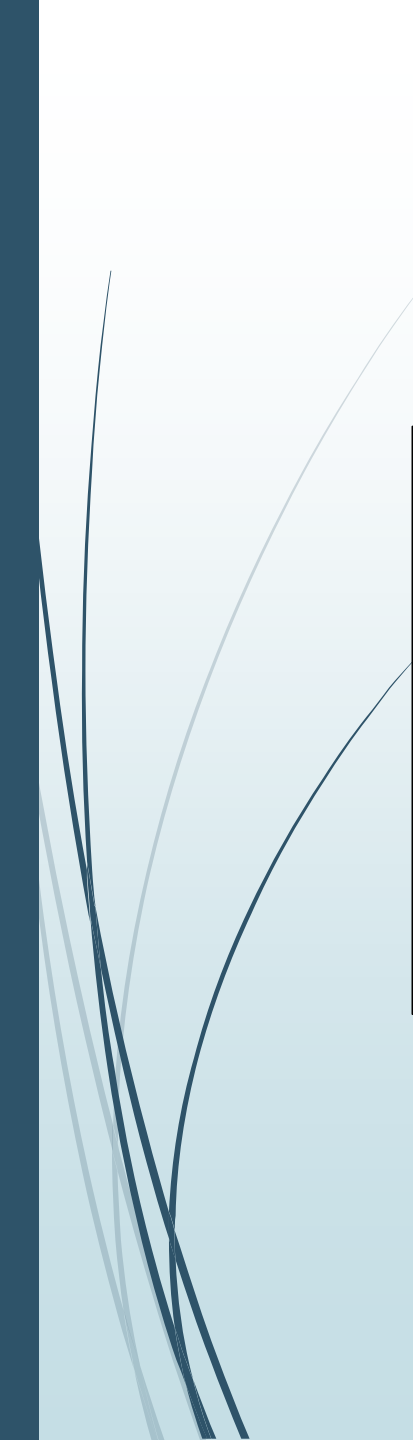
Seven Generations: Indigenous Early Childhood Development, Health & Well- Being in Canada

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International Network for Research on Inequalities in Child Health
(INRICH) workshop

June 7-8, 2019 – Toronto, Ontario



We are currently located on land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations. This is the Dish With One Spoon lands. The last known stewards of the land are the Mississaugas of Credit First Nation.

We honour, recognize and respect these nations as the traditional stewards of the lands and waters on which we meet today.



CHILDREN ARE A GIFT FROM CREATOR

EACH CHILD CHOOSES THE FAMILY IT WILL ENTER. THE CHILD COMES WITH GIFTS AND ABILITIES THAT FAMILIES ARE TO NURTURE TO ASSIST WITH DEVELOPING FOR THE GOOD OF THE CHILD, FAMILY, COMMUNITY AND NATION

History Leading to Aboriginal Early Childhood in Canada



- ❖ Royal Proclamation of 1763
- ❖ British North America Act 1867
- ❖ Indian Act 1876
- ❖ Residential Schools 1600-1996
- ❖ White Paper 1969
- ❖ Red Paper 1970
- ❖ Indian Control of Indian Education 1972
- ❖ World Summit for Children 1990
- ❖ Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1994-6
- ❖ Announcement of AHSUNC 1993

Quick History

► 19th century, relationships began to change because:

1) **Formation of Canada – 1867 *British North America Act*** to mark confederation. In Section 91, European writers made Indigenous Peoples “wards of the state” – Health & Education are Provincial responsibilities while First Nations are federal

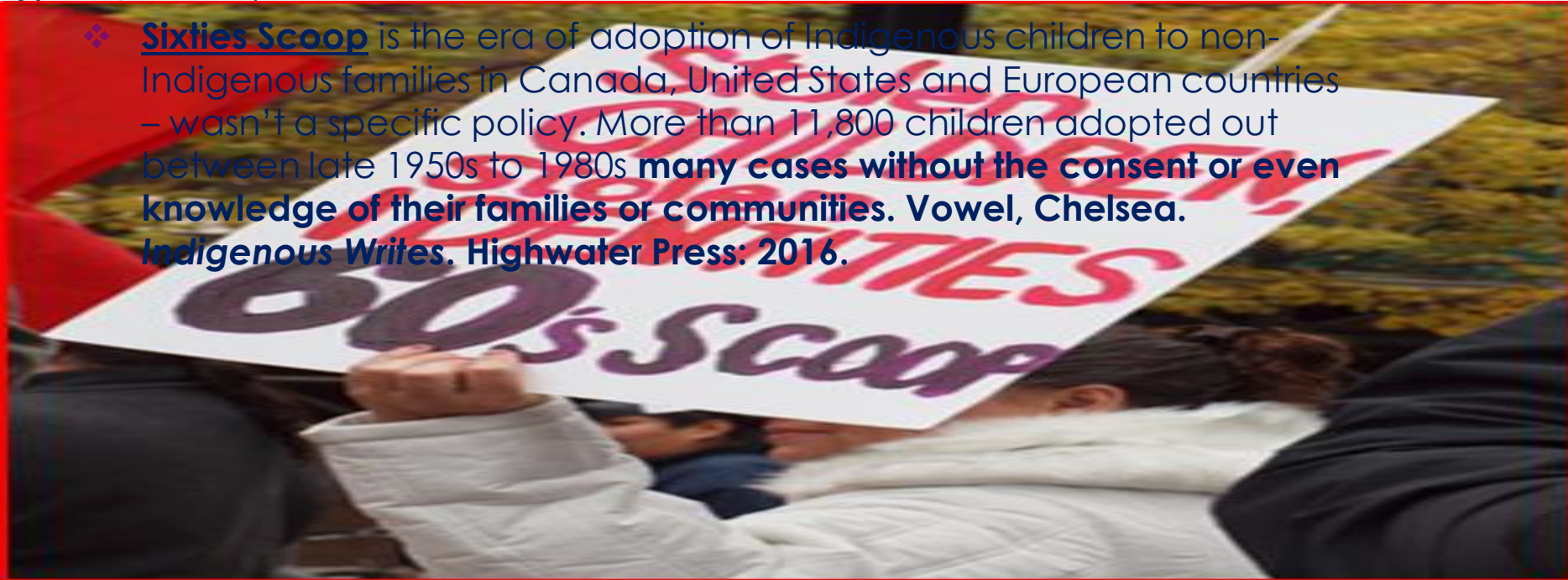
2) ***Indian Act of 1876 & some of the amendments:***

- ✓ Indian self-government abolished
- ✓ Child welfare was federal responsibility until 1951
- ✓ Lands reserved for Indians controlled by the government
- ✓ Not allowed to practice cultural ceremonies or speak language(s)
- ✓ Not allowed to hire lawyers
- ✓ Not allowed to vote unless you give up Status
- ✓ If you become a doctor, lawyer, teacher, or go to war, or enfranchised
- ✓ Introduction of the Pass System

Last 60 Years

- ❖ **Residential schools** begin closing in the **1960s**, and most children have integrated into mainstream schools by the **1980s**...last one closed in **1996**
- ❖ Status First Nations given an unconditional **right to vote between 1960 and 1969 depending on the province**
- ❖ **Partnership** between the **churches and gov't** ended in **1969**, and the government began **transferring control** of the schools to individual bands.

- ❖ **Sixties Scoop** is the era of adoption of Indigenous children to non-Indigenous families in Canada, United States and European countries – wasn't a specific policy. More than 11,800 children adopted out between late 1950s to 1980s **many cases without the consent or even knowledge of their families or communities.** Vowel, Chelsea. *Indigenous Writes*. Highwater Press: 2016.



At a Glance – Indigenous Statistics

- ❖ **Children in care** – **52.2%** of children in care in Canada (14,970 of 28,665) are Indigenous children but they are only 7.7% of the total child population
- ❖ **Poverty** - 38% of Indigenous children live in poverty compared to 7% of non-Indigenous children (2011 NHS)
- ❖ **Health crisis** – life expectancy is **10-15 years less** for Indigenous Peoples in Canada (StatsCan, 2017)
- ❖ **Water crisis** – 400 of 618 FN were under at least one water advisory; 58 long term drinking water advisories (May 2019)
- ❖ **Language crisis** – 15% of Indigenous people use an Indigenous language at home (StatsCan, 2016)
- ❖ **MMIW:** Between 1980 and 2012, there were **1,017** Aboriginal female victims of homicide in Canada, which represents **16%** of all female homicides – far greater than their **4%** representation in Canada's female population – **estimates are over 5,000 Indigenous women & girls are murdered or missing between 1980 and the present day**
- ❖ A rich resource of data can be found at CICH Profile: <https://cichprofile.ca/module/7/>

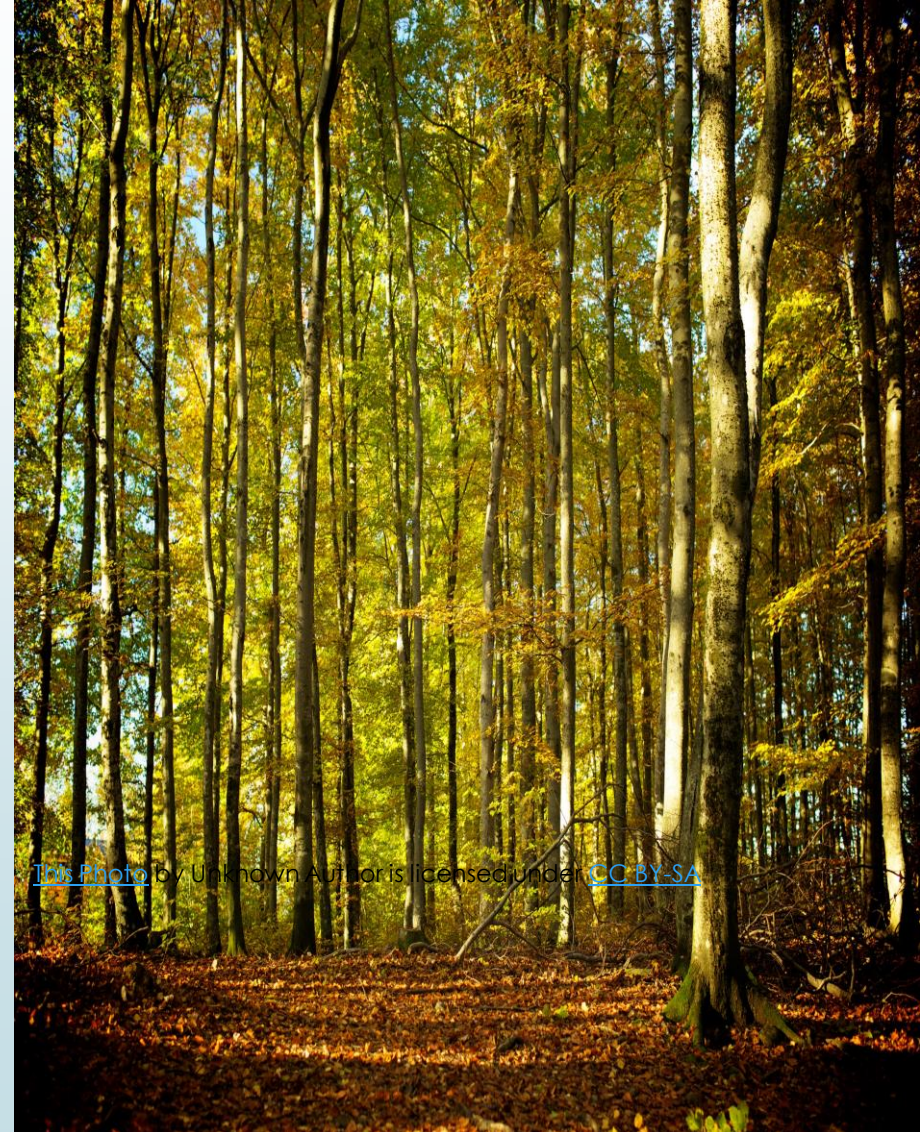
Homelessness, Poverty & Food Security

- ▶ **Homelessness** for Indigenous people in urban areas is 1 in 15 compared to 1 in 128 for the general population (Belanger et al, 2013).
- ▶ **Poverty** is a serious issue with 40% of Indigenous children living in poverty; they are 2.5 times more likely to live in poverty than non-Indigenous children (Manitoba has 52% of Indigenous children living in poverty). *Our Health Counts* found 78.2% of Indigenous people in Hamilton made less than \$20K/yr.
- ▶ **Food Security** is an issue because of poverty. Indigenous households twice as likely (27%) to be food insecure than general population



What is happening in a positive way?

- Programs like: Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program (CPNP), Urban Aboriginal Healthy Living Program, Aboriginal Head Start, Akwe:go and other school based nutrition programs
- Land-based education is being used in early childhood learning
- Policies at federal and provincial governments are slowly changing to provide support for ECD/ECE as well as improved funding of many programs (still not long term)



Act Respecting FNMI Children, Youth & Families (2018)

Introducing Bill C-92

An Act respecting
First Nations, Inuit
and Métis children,
youth and families

Canada.ca/indigenous-families-together



Indigenous Services
Canada

Services aux
Autochtones Canada

Canada

- Work to fully implement all orders of CHRT & reform child & family services with flexible funding model
- Focus on prevention & early intervention
- Support communities to exercise jurisdiction & look at co-developed federal child & family services
- Accelerate trilateral tables
- Support Inuit & Metis leadership
- Develop data & reporting strategy
- All based from Dr. Cindy Blackstock & AFN work

Jordan's Principle – To cooperate or not?

Between July 2016 and April 30, 2019

more than

227,000

requests were
approved under

Jordan's Principle



speech therapy



educational supports



medical equipment



mental health services

and more



- Jordan River Anderson from Norway House Cree Nation was 5 years old when he died in 2005 – NEVER having spent a day in his family's home
- Rare muscular disorder that required specialized home care – federal & provincial governments argued for 2 years
- December 2007, Private members Motion to Support unanimously passed
- 2009 Ontario adopts Jordan's Principle in health & social services
- 2010 Federal & provincial approach outlined
- In January 2016, CHRT ordered the federal government to implement the full meaning of Jordan's Principle
- 2017 – CHRT ordered substantive equality

Aboriginal Head Start Urban & Northern Communities



Federal Early Learning Program

- ▶ 3 to 5 year olds Aboriginal children at risk; ½ day program; Day Nurseries Act (Ontario) controlled
- ▶ Created by Aboriginal parents, Elders, organizations and Health Canada; Currently funded by Public Health Agency of Canada

❖ Six Core Components:

- Culture & Language (based on the local community);
- Education & School Readiness (preschool curriculums);
- Social Support (networking/events);
- Health Promotion (generalized);
- Parental and Family Involvement (volunteering);
- Nutrition (hot meal and a snack).

Statistics of Ontario Urban Aboriginal People

Children's Population	Year of Collection
17,400 – Ontario for 0 to 4 years old	2001
111,675 – Ontario under 15 years old	2011
575 – Sault Ste. Marie	2011

Ontario Aboriginal Population	Year of Collection
147,820	2001
242,490	2006
301,425	2011

Only serve **560** children in Ontario a year; maximum of 32 in Sault Ste. Marie





Health and Wellness Assessment

Date: _____
Code: _____

ACHWM Tool & Project

Aboriginal Children's Health & Wellbeing Measure created by Wiikwemkoong's Health Director Mary Jo Wabano & Dr. Nancy Young at Laurentian University to guide local health planning & delivery for children & youth

Children & youth are guided through physical, spiritual, mental, social and emotional health questions on a tablet which were developed with Indigenous children & youth, Elders, and community members.

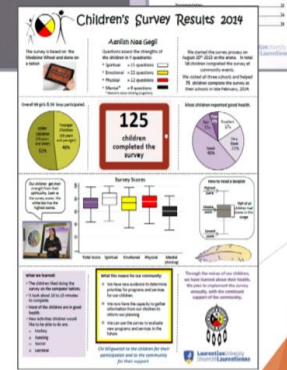
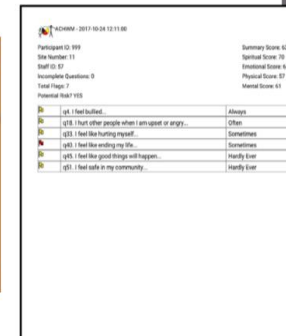
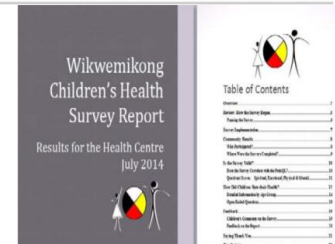
Reports are generated at individual, community or regional levels and can be used in conjunction to other tools for specific issues.

Creating community report cards that included health & well-being measures for CMA areas with statistics from different surveys including ICES data helped with creating directed programs and services

The following answers were given during the completion of *Aaniish Naa Gegii (ANG) survey*. The research team would appreciate your expert assessment. Please provide services based on your assessment and contact parents if appropriate. Please return this form with your decision about the appropriateness of this referral. We will use the results to improve our screening tool.

	Never	Hardly Ever	Some-times	Often	Always
3. I feel afraid or scared ...					●
4. I feel bullied ...					●
18. I hurt other people when I am upset or angry ...				●	●
19. I do things to keep myself safe ...	●				
21. I feel lonely ...					●
23. I break things when I am upset or angry ...				●	●
24. I feel safe at home ...	●	●	●		
26. When I get sad or upset I get over it quickly ...	●				
28. I stay home from school ...					●
31. I get mad or cry when something small goes wrong ...					●

- Health Centre & Health Director
- Community
- Mental Health Worker
- Child Feedback



Recommendations for Systemic Change



- Increase training & knowledge of Indigenous peoples in health profession programs
- Build life-long relationships with Indigenous peoples, organizations, and communities
- Increased research by and for Aboriginal early childhood learning and development
- Allow Indigenous people to be part of the research team – even if they are not in post-secondary

Don't forget that these policies, programs and research are for our future.... the children!!!

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Chi-Miigwetch

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