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Happy Holidays from FNCFCS!

We offer our heartfelt thanks to our members, partners, funders and board members for their generous support and guidance this past year that made the following projects possible:

- Completion of the Caring Across the Boundaries curriculum which is designed to promote increased collaboration between Aboriginal child and family service providers and the voluntary sector and philanthropic community
- Hosting of three sessions of the Caring Across the Boundaries professional development program with one program being hosted by, and for, Aboriginal young people.
- Launching of the First Peoples Child Welfare Review on line Journal
- Completing a strategic planning session with Aboriginal ECD providers to guide the implementation of the Aboriginal ECD Network and Clearinghouse.
- Updating of our online database that now includes over 1000 annotated articles on Aboriginal child welfare
- Publication of secondary analysis and publication of research articles on the data relevant to Aboriginal children and families in the Canadian Incident Study on Child Abuse and neglect.
- Supporting the participation of First Nations child and family service agencies in the second round of the Canadian Incident Study on Child Abuse and Neglect.

Very warm wishes and much appreciation from all of us at FNCFCS.

The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society and the Center of Excellence for Child Welfare are proud to announce the launch of the first edition of the First Peoples Child Welfare Review. This peer reviewed online journal privileges Indigenous knowledge in child and family studies. This edition includes articles by Cindy Blackstock, Marlyn Bennett, Kathy Absolon and Cam Willet, Marlyn Bennett, Kelly E. McShane and Paul Hastings, Raven Sinclair, Chris Walmsley, Kathleen Earle Fox, Kathy Bent, Wendy Josephson and Barry Kelly, Kenn Richard.

Looking ahead, we are proud to announce the launch of our youth mentor writer program. This innovative program supports the broader sharing of wisdom by providing Aboriginal peoples who have important knowledge to share (but perhaps not the time to write) with talented young writers who will help put this wisdom onto paper so it can be shared with others. This year we will be recruiting and training mentor writers and next year we will pair the writers with Aboriginal peoples who wish to share their knowledge.

Watch for the upcoming call for submissions for our next edition and updates on how you can be involved in the youth mentor writer program by visiting our website www.fncfcs.com.

Many thanks to the authors who shared their knowledge and works and congratulations to all members of the First Peoples Child Welfare Review editorial board and to the journal editor, Marlyn Bennett, for their fantastic work!

FNCFCS presents at the ISPCAN conference in Brisbane, Australia

Announcing the Premier Issue of the First Peoples Child Welfare Review on line Journal
I am honored that Cindy asked us to share with you a new project that has begun in Saskatchewan. It is with great honor that we have received a grant through the Saskatchewan Arts Board and have been sanctioned by Aboriginal Leaders on the board to offer Heritage workshops for Aboriginal adoptees in the Saskatchewan community.

The history of adoption with the Aboriginal people has, for the most part, not been positive.

The effect on the Aboriginal adoptee that has not been connected to their culture or their birth history is that there is a sense of loss and displacement. Many stories that come to rest in books, research papers and documentaries tell about the apple children, the ones who feel that they are red on the outside and white on the inside. The stories of their adoptive families can be full of equal loss and pain. Their attempts made to connect their adopted children to a culture of which they have little understanding fall short but for their desire to fill those needs for the children. To date in Saskatchewan there has not been any kind of substantial programming or services that address the issue of lost culture for the Aboriginal adoptee.

Our goal for this program is to have cultural Leaders connect Aboriginal adoptees to their ancestral roots through a variety of Aboriginal art genres; making drums, drumming, traditional singing, dance and expressive writing. Throughout the program the participants will have the opportunity to sit with Aboriginal leaders in the community, listen to their stories, hear their music, dance with them and learn about their birth culture. With the guidance of their Leaders they will establish a link with their community, their history and their culture.

The Adoption Support Centre of Saskatchewan Inc is the primary information and resource centre for adoption in Saskatchewan. The objectives of ASCS are to provide outreach services, provide a network of support groups around the province, develop and provide programs and services for the adoption community, to educate the public about adoption issues, to educate the adoption community about developments occurring around adoption, to advocate for and on behalf of those affected by adoption and adoption-related issues and to provide information services and referrals to those who contact the Adoption Support Centre with inquiries. Toll Free: 1-866-869-2727

Greetings from Saskatchewan!
Caring Across the Boundaries
– Young people taking the Lead

The Caring Across the Boundaries (CAB) professional development program is intended to promote greater access to culturally based voluntary sector resources for First Nations children, young people and their families. The program accomplishes this by providing baseline information to Aboriginal child and family service providers, voluntary sector organizations, philanthropists, governments on how they can work respectfully together to support First Nations in providing quality of life services as well as services to children, young people and families at risk.

In September of 2004 a national posting process was completed to recruit youth curriculum writers for the project who will work under the guidance of a mentor with expertise in Indigenous curriculum. We were honored to have received so many promising applications and are very pleased to announce that Melanie Ferris and Ginger Gosnell were selected to write a Caring Across the Boundaries program to benefit Aboriginal young people. Once the curriculum is completed FNCFCS will be hosting train the trainer program for the youth Caring Across the Boundaries curriculum. Our long term goal is to expand the train the trainers program ensuring that Caring Across the Boundaries is available in as many communities as possible.

Thanks to the generous support of the J. W. McConnell Family Foundation, Caring Across the Boundaries will be provided in five First Nations child and family service agencies across Canada this year. The effectiveness of the program is being evaluated when the training is delivered as well as in periodic follow up calls with all participants. The follow up evaluation component is particularly important as CAB is meant to inspire participants to build relationships to support First Nations children and families.

In addition to the five First Nations child and family service agency pilots of CAB, FNCFCS was also very honored to work with N8TV Youth in BC to host a pilot of the Caring Across the Boundaries program at the Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre on October 13,14, 2004. Young people instructed this very successful event and early indications are that both participants from the voluntary sector and Aboriginal youth organizations are moving forward with finding ways of collaborating to benefit Aboriginal young people. Special thanks to N8TV youth, Crystal Sutherland, Jocelyn Formsma, Ginger Gosnell and Manjeet Uppal who worked so hard to make this pilot a great success!


Building on the recommendation of the Joint National Policy Review of First Nations Child and Family Services, FNCFCS is proud to work with the National Policy Review Advisory Committee (NAC), and NPR funding design team to identify funding formula options that reflect the recommendations contained in the NPR and then to take the next step to identify the information needed to run simulations of the various funding options. This work is being undertaken by Dr. Fred Wien and Dr. John Loxley in partnership with the NPR Funding Design Team and will include consultations with a sample of First Nations child and family service agencies representing various

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FNCFCS is a proud member of the United Nations NGO Subgroup which supports the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). Countries, such as Canada, which have ratified the CRC indicate their commitment to uphold the rights of children resident in their countries. Examples of these rights include the right to an education, health care and the right to be supported to live in their families whenever possible. The CRC is also the only United Nations convention that specifically includes a reference to the rights of Indigenous children – such as cultural and language rights and the right to grow up with members of their group.

In 2003, the United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child hosted a Day of General Discussion on the Rights of Indigenous Children in light of its concern that Indigenous children worldwide face disproportionate risk and discrimination. In keeping with the spirit of the Day of Discussion, the NGO Working group has established a sub group to specifically focus on Indigenous children. The establishment of this NGO working group is still in early stages but the vision is to make it as inclusive as possible and to provide strategic opportunities for Indigenous peoples and organizations as well as non-Indigenous peoples and organizations to work together to ensure the rights embodied in the CRC are more fully realized by Indigenous children, young people and their families worldwide. Look forward to continued updates on this exciting initiative in future issues of this newsletter.

FNCFCS Annual General Meeting

The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society sends special thanks to the Fort Folly First Nation for their warm welcome and hosting of the Annual General Meeting. The following roster of board of directors was confirmed at the meeting:

Elsie Flette, Board President
Joan Glode, Vice President
Bill Gillespie, Treasurer
Raymond Shingoose, Board Member
Carolyn Peacock, Board Member
Kelowa Edel, Board Member
Harry Sock, Board Member
Linda Deer, Board Member

Many thanks to the Board of Directors for their commitment and significant contributions to the society!

FNCFCS membership information

If you would like to join the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society as a Member under one of the following categories:

- Individual Membership ($75)
- Student Membership with ID ($5)
- Small FNCFCS Agency Membership: 1 - 50 employees ($350)
- Large FNCFCS Agency Membership: 50+ employees ($600)
- Small Associate Membership: Organizations with 1 - 50 employees ($350)
- Large Associate Membership: Organizations with 50+ employees ($600)

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