

Justice is
Needed AND
Deserved

Annual Report

2014-2015



First
Nations
Children's
Action
Research and
Education
Service



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
FACULTY OF EXTENSION

This report reflects activities from October 2014 to November 2015

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First Nations Children's Action Research and Education Service

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First Nations
Children's
Action
Research and
Education
Service



First Nations Child & Family
Caring Society of Canada



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA
FACULTY OF EXTENSION

About us

Established in 2013, FNCARES is a partnership between the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada (FNCFCSC) and the University of Alberta. Drawing on well-established research on the structural drivers of disadvantage for First Nations children, youth and families, we focus on translating this research into practical, community-based solutions, and to involving youth in this process. We respect and support First Nations self-determination, and are committed to engaging communities as partners and co-researchers in all stages of each project.

Along with research, FNCARES also organizes public events and develops resources to educate about the structural drivers of disadvantage and promote further discussion and action on culturally based equity for First Nations children and youth.

FNCARES Staff

Dr. Cindy Blackstock, Director

Dr. Melisa Brittain, Research Administrator



A message from the director

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) top Calls for Action focused on improving outcomes for Aboriginal children. FNCARES is well positioned to respond to the TRC's recommendations, given its mandate to partner with First Nations to address the structural drivers of the disadvantage undermining the success of First Nations children and their families. Established in 2013, FNCARES already has an impressive track record with its resource rich website, bi-annual public education seminar series, publication of the First Peoples Child and Family Review online journal, free searchable database and collaborations with interdisciplinary researchers around the world on projects relevant to Indigenous children and families.

Find the TRC's 2015 Executive Summary and Calls to Action here:

www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/index.php?p=890



Highlights of 2014-2015

- Published *First Nations Child Poverty: A Literature Review and Analysis*
- Co-Hosted *Reconciliation in Post-Secondary: Implementing the TRC Recommendations* to capacity audience at University of Alberta with Indigenous Peoples Education and Alberta Network for Environments for Aboriginal Health Research
- Awarded 3-year SSHRC grant for *First Peoples Child and Family Review*
- Produced and distributed two short films: Cindy Blackstock – *The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal on First Nations Child Welfare* and *Uncovering Colonial Legacies: Indigenous Youth in Child Welfare (Dis)Placements*

ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT THIS YEAR

Research and Publications

First Nations Child Poverty: A Literature Review and Analysis

Authors: Melisa Brittain and Cindy Blackstock

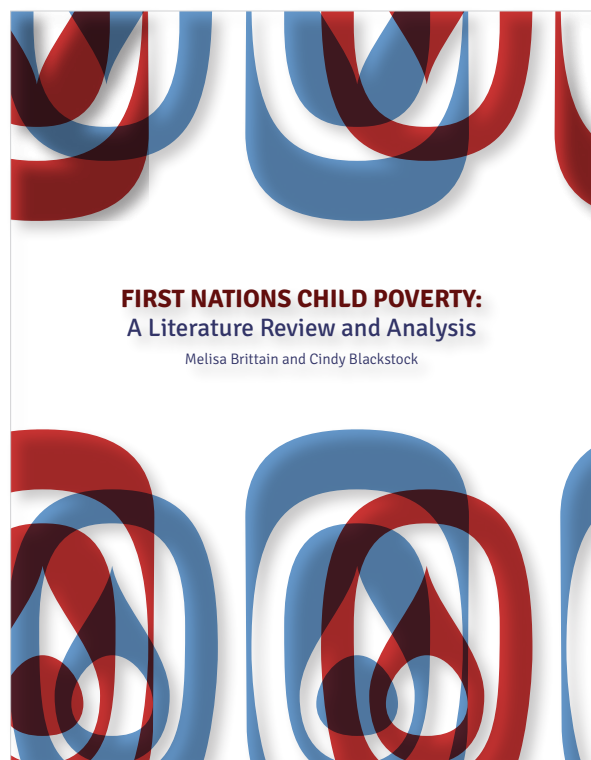
This five-chapter literature review and analysis of existing research on First Nations child poverty examines its historical and contemporary causes and effects. We also evaluate existing poverty measures and outline existing and proposed interventions to address the continued impoverishment of First Nations communities and children.

The main purpose of the review and analysis is to determine if existing research on the structural drivers of First Nations child poverty can be effectively translated into pragmatic, community-based solutions. The document will form the foundation for our design of a multi-year research grant proposal to explore community-based solutions, and is a valuable resource for researchers and organizations to identify areas for further research.

We would like to thank the Faculty of Extension at the University of Alberta for internal funding to complete this project, the University of Alberta's Grant Assist Program, and the editorial assistance provided by the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society and by students.

Find the document here:

www.fncaringsociety.com/fncares-featured-resources



First Peoples Child & Family Review (2004-ongoing)

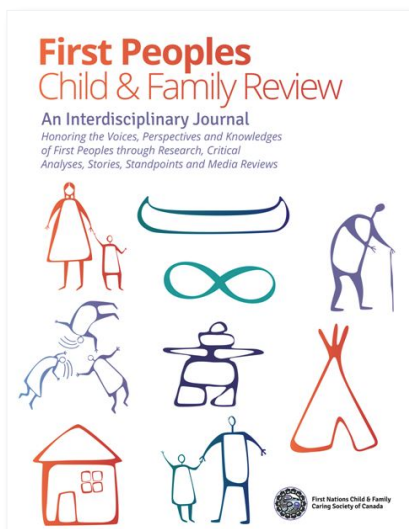
Editor-In-Chief: Dr. Cindy Blackstock

The **First Peoples Child & Family Review (FPCFR)** is a peer-reviewed, interdisciplinary journal that centres the voices and perspectives of Indigenous peoples on research, practice and policy concerning First Peoples children and families. The journal is hosted through the Open Journal System (OJS), which allows for open access to research and publishing.

Two editions of **FPCFR** are published each year. In 2015, the first edition was a special edition on custom adoptions, produced in partnership with the Siem Smun'eem Indigenous Child Well-being Research Network at the University of Victoria. The second edition, on the theme of Reconciliation, will be published by the end of 2015.

Visit the following site to access current and archived editions of the journal:

www.fncfcs.com/first-peoples-child-family-review



Building Research Capacity with First Nations and Mainstream Youth Protection Services in Quebec

Co-Investigator with Nico Trocmé (Principal Investigator, McGill University) and multiple collaborators

This SSHRC funded, multi-year, collaborative partnership researches the dynamics and outcomes of child protection services delivered to First Nations and non-First Nations children and builds the research capacity of youth protection organizations. Read more about the objectives, methods and individual projects here:

www.mcgill.ca/crcf/projects/brc



Exploring the rights of the First Nations child through the arts: Our dreams matter too

Co-Investigator with Dr. Mary-Elizabeth Manley
(Principal Investigator, York University)

Funded by a SSHRC Connection Grant, this research explores the links between arts education, rights education and Indigenous pedagogy to develop guidelines for teaching the UN Rights of the Child principles through culturally appropriate First Nations arts curriculum. Using dance, drama, storytelling, music and visual arts, the project involves exploratory arts education and creation residencies for children. Participants belonging to the Cree community of Attawapiskat created and presented the dance/theatre



work *Our dreams matter too: Guardians of the Muskeg* at the new Katawapiskat Elementary School in Attawapiskat in September 2014. Researchers are currently creating an educator/artist curriculum resource package for teaching rights education through arts education for those working with First Nations children.



Resource Development

Film: Uncovering Colonial Legacies: Indigenous Youth in Child Welfare (Dis)Placements

Short film by Daniela Navia and Melisa Brittain, 2015

This 3-minute film describes the research conducted by Daniela Navia in partnership with Calgary's Urban Society for Aboriginal Youth. These research partners collaborated with 20 Indigenous youth who shared their experiences in the child welfare system through dialogue, public presentations and art. The video garnered honourable mention in SHHRC's annual Storytellers competition, and the research project won the Chief David Crowchild Memorial Award from the city of Calgary.

Watch the video here:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=cM_kU_Iiooc

Film: Cindy Blackstock – Canadian Human Rights Tribunal on First Nations Child Welfare

Short film by Melisa Brittain (2015)

In this 6-minute film, Cindy Blackstock explains the reasons behind the Human Rights complaint filed against the Canadian government for racially discriminating against First Nations children in 2007 by underfunding of child welfare and essential services for First Nations children on reserve. For 6 years, the federal government tried to keep the case from being heard; however, in 2013, the case finally went before the Tribunal, and a ruling is expected in 2015. In this video, Dr. Blackstock also describes the Remedies the Caring Society is requesting from the Tribunal, and talks about how all Canadians can help.

Watch the video here:

www.youtube.com/watch?v=FEoNAGoQz10



Remedies

1. Make up funding shortfall
2. Restructure funding formula
3. Independent watchdog
4. Implement Jordan's Principle

Public Education and Engagement Events

Reconciliation in Post-Secondary: Implementing the TRC Recommendations

On October 14th at the University of Alberta, FNCARES, Indigenous Peoples Education and Alberta Network Environments for Aboriginal Health Research hosted a public talk on implementing the TRC's Calls to Action in Post-Secondary education.

Dr. Keavy Martin hosted a panel of three speakers: Charlene Bearhead from the National Centre on Truth and Reconciliation, Dr. Eber Hampton of the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta, and Dr. Cindy Blackstock. Over 260 people attended, and over 40 people joined the live stream of the talk.

Watch the video of the panel here:

connect.srv.ualberta.ca/p46argwcv1/?launcher=false&fcsContent=true&pbMode=normal

Check out event blogs on UAlberta's The QUAD:

"Reconciliation in Universities" by Cindy Blackstock:

blog.ualberta.ca/2015/10/a-consider-this-opinion-piece.html

"On Being Called to Action" by Keavy Martin:

blog.ualberta.ca/2015/11/a-consider-this-opinion-piece-on-being.html

Photo blog by Isabela Varela:

blog.ualberta.ca/2015/11/reconciliation-in-post-secondary.html



Dr. Eber Hampton and Dr. Keavy Martin wait for the crowd to settle at the Reconciliation in Post-Secondary event

Followed: Access to Info and Surveillance, November 25, 2014

Presented in collaboration with the Information Access and Protection of Privacy program (IAPP) at the University of Alberta's Faculty of Extension, this event featured a talk by Cindy Blackstock on the implications and impact of having her privacy breached by Federal officials as she worked towards ensuring equitable funding for First Nations children. Panellists Jill Clayton (Alberta's Information and Privacy Commissioner) and Mary Marshall (lawyer and Health Information Law expert) responded by discussing social trends and privacy breaches, and how these impacts the rights of citizens to have their privacy protected. Close to 50 people attended, and 22 followed the presentation via the live stream. To date, the video has received 475 views.

Watch it here:

<http://livestream.com/uAlberta/foe-followed-11-25-14>



Followed panel, left to right: Mary Marshall, Jill Clayton and Cindy Blackstock

Keynote Presentations

Dr. Blackstock delivered over 80 presentations across Canada and worldwide relating to reconciliation and Indigenous children, including the following Keynotes:

- Healing Our Spirit Worldwide: The Seventh Gathering leadership forum, University of Waikaito, Aotearora, New Zealand
- Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF Toronto) Persons Day Breakfast Gala
- Woodrow Lloyd Lecture, University of Regina
- Indigenous Scholars Conference, Indigenous Peoples Education, Educational Policy Studies, University of Alberta
- Gall Conference, John Humphrey Centre for Peace and Human Rights, Edmonton
- Imagining Canada's Future: National Forum, Federation for Humanities and Social Sciences, SSHRC and National Arts Centre, Ottawa
- J.R. Mallory (Distinguished Lecture Series), McGill University

Additional Community Outreach

Cindy Blackstock is a member of the University of Alberta's Speakers' Bureau, an initiative that connects public intellectuals with community audiences interested in their expertise. To book your talk, visit this website: uofa.ualberta.ca/university-relations/speakers-bureau

FNCARES participated in the Poster Session of the Engagement Scholarship Consortium conference, "Engaging for Change: Changing for Engagement," October 7, 2014



Cindy and RAATSICC team from Cape York/Gulf Remote area for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Care

Consulting

FNCARES was on the Advisory Committee for Edmonton's Vital Signs report "Aboriginal Life in Edmonton" (2015). Vital Signs is an annual report that combines data mining and statistical analysis with community consultation to provide information to the public, policy makers and researchers on "key quality-of-life" areas for Edmontonians.

Access the 2015 report here: www.vitalsignscanada.ca/en/localreports-165-edmonton-ab-2015-edmonton-community-foundation

Mentoring

FNCARES hosted University of Calgary, Bachelor of Social Work student Victoria Anderson for her academic student placement in the fall of 2014. Victoria worked on annotating articles for the website database, and on the Bibliography for *First Nations Child Poverty: A Literature Review and Analysis*. In November 2014, she attended the closing arguments for the Human Rights Tribunal on First Nations child welfare in Ottawa, assisting the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society in social media for the event, and completing a report on her experience to share with readers of the Caring Society's newsletter.

Academic Committee Service

In 2014, Cindy Blackstock was elected to the Board of Directors of the Federation of the Humanities and Social Sciences (the Federation), where she serves as Director of the Equity Committee. The Equity Committee has been focused on the theme of reconciliation. In line with this commitment, Dr. Blackstock was proud to moderate a Big Thinking keynote lecture by Truth and Reconciliation Commission Chairperson, Justice Murray Sinclair, at Congress 2015, on the role of post-secondary institutions in reconciliation. In response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action in its June 2015 report, the Federation adopted the **Touchstones of Hope** Principles and Processes to guide their work on reconciliation. Read about the Federation's commitment: www.ideas-idees.ca/issues/reconciliation

Awards and Honours

Cindy Blackstock received an Honorary Doctor of Letters from Thompson Rivers University (TRU) in June, 2015. She was honoured for her work as an internationally recognized researcher and advocate for Aboriginal rights, and for educating and engaging Canadians on inequities faced by Aboriginal children and families. According to TRU, Dr. Blackstock “represents TRU’s commitment to the betterment of society through the inclusion of Aboriginal learning, knowledge and research.”

She also received the Courage in Law Award from the University of British Columbia Indigenous Law Students’ Association.

Research Grants

In November of 2014, we were granted SSHRC’s Aid to Scholarly Journals grant for the *First Peoples Child & Family Review*. The award is for \$26,600 annually, for a total of \$79,800 to support this publication. The journal has received additional financial support from other organizations to help publish special editions.

Ruling of the Human Rights Tribunal on First Nations child welfare expected any day

Watch for the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal’s ruling on the human rights complaint alleging that Canada’s failure to provide equitable and culturally-based child welfare services to First Nations children on reserve amounts to discrimination on the base of race and ethnic origin pursuant to the Canadian Human Rights Act. The Tribunal heard testimony from 25 witnesses from 2013 to 2014. This historic case marks the first time in the world that a government is on trial for its contemporary treatment of a generation of Indigenous children before a body that can order a binding remedy. The ruling is expected any day. Visit the I am a Witness campaign page to read closing submission, and sign up to the I Am a Witness campaign to keep track and decide for yourself if the government is treating First Nations children fairly:
www.fncaringociety.ca/i-am-witness

i am a witness

