

# ENCARES

First Nations  
Children's  
Action  
Research and  
Education  
Service



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION

2016 - 2017  
ANNUAL REPORT





First  
Nations  
Children's  
Action  
Research and  
Education  
Service

This report reflects activities from *January 2016 – May 2017*.

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**First Nations Children's Action Research and Education Service**





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# ABOUT US



First Nations Children's Action Research and Education Service



UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA  
FACULTY OF EDUCATION



First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada

Established in 2013, FNCARES is a partnership between the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada 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 on involving children and 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 organizes and hosts numerous public events throughout the year, including lectures, workshops, film screenings, panel discussions and student engagement activities. We also develop resources to educate about the structural drivers of disadvantage and promote further discussions and action concerning culturally based equity for First Nations children and youth.



**Cindy Blackstock**  
*Director*



**Melisa Brittain**  
*Research Associate*

# A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Thanks to our academic and community partners, FNCARES has had another exciting year, and we are proud to present this annual report. The year kicked off with a public lecture co-hosted with Jenna Broomfield from the Aboriginal Law Students' Association on the landmark Canadian Human Rights Tribunal decision on First Nations child welfare and Jordan's Principle at the University of Alberta. This event was enriched by the participation of First Nations leaders and organizations across Alberta who have been demonstrating leadership in child and family services for many years. We then partnered with Indigenous young people and groups like McEwan University, United Way of Calgary and Metro Cinema to host several public viewings of the film *[Dis]placed: Indigenous Youth and the Child Welfare System*. This powerful film features the voices and art of Indigenous youth who were previously in the child welfare system sharing their ideas on how to improve child welfare. It is a great educational tool for young people, families, persons working in child welfare, and the general public, and all proceeds from the sale of the film go to benefit organizations serving Indigenous children and youth.

In January of 2017, we were honoured to partner with the National Film Board of Canada and Metro Cinema to host a sold-out viewing of legendary filmmaker Alanis Obomsawin's documentary on the landmark human rights case that found the Canadian Government's flawed and inequitable provision of child welfare and other children's services on reserves to 165,000 children to be discriminatory. *We Can't Make the Same Mistake Twice* takes you inside the hearing rooms to hear the witnesses and the legal arguments whilst showing the first-hand experiences of families enduring the dire results of Canada's discriminatory conduct.

Other projects include the publishing of more information sheets on the relationship between First Nations child poverty and lifelong wellbeing and collaborating with the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society team to publish two editions of the *First Peoples Child and Family Review*.

While I accepted a position as a Professor at McGill University School of Social Work in August, I am so pleased to announce that FNCARES, thanks to the great work of Melisa Brittain and all our community and academic partners, moved to the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta in the Spring of 2017, after five successful years at the Faculty of Extension. Melisa and I are very grateful to former Faculty of Education Dean Randy Wimmer and Dr. Lynette Schultz, Director of the Centre for Global Citizenship Education and Research, for the warm welcome, and we are looking forward to hosting our next public lecture featuring Dr. Alika Lafontaine, a respected First Nations physician and equity activist.

Many thanks to our academic and community partners for all of your support. You made 2016/17 a great year for FNCARES, and we are going to work to do even better in the years ahead!

*Respectfully,*  
Cindy Blackstock



# ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT THIS YEAR

## OUR NEW HOME IN THE FACULTY OF EDUCATION

On May 1, 2017, FNCARES moved to our new home within the Centre for Global Citizenship Education and Research (CGCER) in the Faculty of Education at the University of Alberta. This new partnership has already fostered exciting opportunities for expanding our work on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's top Calls to Action regarding child welfare, Jordan's Principle, and education. We are grateful for support from the Faculty of Education and CGCER, and look forward to many years of fruitful collaboration.



*Dean Randy Wimmer supports Jordan's Principle on Bear Witness Day*



*Lynette Shultz welcomes Melisa Brittain to the CGCER office*



*Faculty of Education building*

# PUBLIC EDUCATION AND ENGAGEMENT EVENTS

- FILM SCREENINGS AND PANEL DISCUSSIONS •

## *We Can't Make the Same Mistake Twice*

Dir. Alanis Obomsawin  
NFB, 2016

### FILM SCREENING AND Q & A WITH ALANIS OBOMSAWIN AND CINDY BLACKSTOCK

February 12, 2017

In collaboration with Reconciliation in Focus and the Metro Cinema, we screened this film to a sold-out audience at the 500-seat Garneau Theatre in Edmonton. This NFB documentary by legendary Abenaki filmmaker, Alanis Obomsawin, follows the 9-year long Human Rights case launched against the government of Canada by the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society and the Assembly of First Nations for racially discriminating against First Nations children.

FAVA TV live-streamed and taped the Q & A session, which we edited and made available on YouTube as an educational tool to accompany the film. In the lobby, over 350 audience members participated in the Have a Heart Day campaign by making valentine's day cards calling on the Prime Minister to have a heart for First Nations kids and honour the CHRT ruling to end discrimination.



Audience members write valentine's to PM during intermission



Alanis Obomsawin and Cindy Blackstock at the Metro Cinema



Linda Duncan, MP, delivers 350 valentine's day cards to PM Justin Trudeau for Have a Heart Day



*(Dis)placed on the Garneau Theatre's Marquee*



*Elder Marilyn Buffalo and Panelists at Edmonton launch*



*Film collaborators (left to right) Daniela Navia, Melisa Brittain and Tia Ledesma*

## ***(Dis)placed: Indigenous Youth and the Child Welfare System***

Dir. Melisa Brittain

2017

### **EDMONTON FILM LAUNCH & PANEL DISCUSSION**

*November 13, 2016*

In collaboration with Reconciliation in Focus, we premiered our film *(Dis)placed: Indigenous Youth and the Child Welfare System* at the Metro Cinema in Edmonton to a crowd of over 150 people. The screening was followed by a lively panel discussion featuring youth collaborator Tia Ledesma, researcher Daniela Navia and Elder Marilyn Buffalo.

### **CALGARY FILM LAUNCH & PANEL DISCUSSION**

*November 27, 2016*

We launched *(Dis)placed* at the Glenbow Museum in Calgary, where 160 people attended and stayed for the panel discussion. This panel also featured Tia Ledesma and Daniela Navia, who were joined this time by Cindy Blackstock and Elder Randy Bottle, with Michelle Robinson as moderator.

### **MACEWAN UNIVERSITY SCREENING & PANEL DISCUSSION**

*March 23, 2017*

*(Dis)placed* screened to an audience of 200 people at MacEwan University, where Elder Rick Lightning, Jo-Mary Crowchild-Fletcher and Derek Chewka spoke on a panel that was chaired by Amber Dion. This event was co-organized with MacEwan's Department of Sociology, Aboriginal Student Club and School of Social Work.



*Thanks to everyone who worked hard to make these launch events possible:*

Rita Henderson, Daniela Navia, Katherine Meloche, Pete Harris, LeeAnne Ireland, Levi First Charger, Alissa Overend, Amber Dion, Jo-Mary Crowchild-Fletcher, Will Woodford and Elder Rick Lightning.

*Thanks, also, to our co-sponsors of these events:*

Metro Cinema; University of Alberta: Faculty of Arts and Faculty of Extension; United Way Calgary & Area; MacEwan University: Department of Sociology, Aboriginal Student Club and School of Social Work; National Film Board of Canada



## • PUBLIC TALKS •

### *The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal on First Nations Child Welfare*

Public Lecture by Dr. Cindy Blackstock

March 15, 2016

As part of the University of Alberta's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Week, Dr. Blackstock discussed the January 2016 ruling by the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal, which ordered the federal government to immediately cease its discriminatory practices against 165,000 affected children and take measures to redress and prevent further discrimination.

In this talk, Dr. Blackstock connected discrimination against First Nations children in residential schools to current treatment of First Nations children by the federal government, outlined the remedies ordered by the Tribunal and discussed what the ruling means for First Nations children's rights in Canada moving forward.

Thanks to Jenna Broomfield, Juris Law Candidate (2017) and co-President of Aboriginal Law Students' Association, UAlberta, for introducing Dr. Blackstock.

For more information about the case

[fnwitness.ca](http://fnwitness.ca)

To read the ruling

[tinyurl.com/jv7ulho](http://tinyurl.com/jv7ulho)



*Cindy Blackstock speaks about the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ruling and implications for First Nations children's rights*



*Jenna Broomfield and Cindy Blackstock*

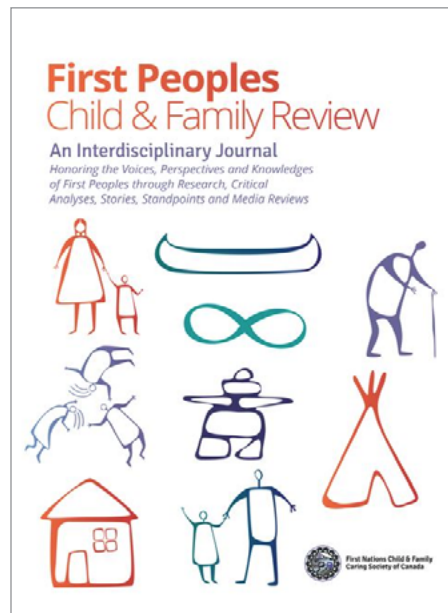


*Attentive audience at public talk on the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal on First Nations Child welfare*

# RESEARCH AND PUBLICATIONS

## **Online Journal: First Peoples Child and Family Review**

Editor-In-Chief: Dr. Cindy Blackstock



*The First Peoples Child and 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. The most recent edition focuses on the “Sixties Scoop” and Indigenous Child Welfare, and the next will be a Special Edition by Children

and Youth on Indigenous children, youth and families in the next 150 years. A committee made up of children and youth will review submissions for the special edition, which will feature letters, poems, artwork and essays that reflect on the past 150 years and articulate hopes and dreams for the next 150 years.

Call for Submissions 12(2): Special Edition by Children and Youth  
*Deadline September 30, 2017*

[tinyurl.com/y8buwsao](http://tinyurl.com/y8buwsao)

To access current and archived editions of the journal, visit  
[fnfcs.com/first-peoples-child-family-review](http://fnfcs.com/first-peoples-child-family-review)

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## **Online Research Database**

Our research database consists of over 2500 annotated resources focused on Aboriginal children and families in Canada and similar countries, and includes journal articles, reports, literature reviews, guides, films, booklets, studies, journal articles and presentations.

The database follows OCAP principles, is entirely free, and is updated regularly to ensure it includes the latest information on a variety of topics related to Aboriginal peoples. Search the database at [fncaingsociety.com/publications/search](http://fncaingsociety.com/publications/search).

# RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT & DISTRIBUTION

## • FILMS •

### ***(Dis)placed: Indigenous Youth and the Child Welfare System***

Dir. Melisa Brittain

2017 - 42 min

*(Dis)placed* features the voices of Indigenous youth as they reflect on their prior involvement with child welfare and share their multiple strategies of resistance to assimilation and state control. This film was shot and edited over two years in collaboration with KingCrip Productions and peer researchers involved in the project “Uncovering Colonial Legacies: Voices of Indigenous Youth in Child Welfare (dis)Placements.” Interviewees guided the direction of the film by providing feedback on edited versions of their own interviews, and by joining others who were part of the original research project, both Indigenous and non-Indigenous, in giving feedback on two rough cuts.

This film is distributed through VTape ([vtape.org](http://vtape.org)), has been screened at numerous community events, and has been purchased by universities, libraries, social work organizations and government agencies.

Our heartfelt thanks go out to the many amazing people who contributed to making this film: Tyler Blackface, Cindy Blackstock, Tia Ledesma, Donovan Waskahat, Brianna Olson, Daniela Navia, Rita Henderson, Deloria Many Grey Horses and Levi First Charger. Proceeds from the film go to non-profit organizations supporting Indigenous youth.

Film website

[kingcripproductions.com/displaced.html](http://kingcripproductions.com/displaced.html)



Dir. Melisa Brittain, 2017.

Painting: Blue by Tyler Blackface



Still image of Tia Ledesma and son Jaxx from *(Dis)placed*

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### ***We Can't Make the Same Mistake Twice***

**Q & A SESSION WITH ALANIS OBOMSAWIN AND CINDY BLACKSTOCK**

*(Shot by FAVA TV; edited by Melisa Brittain)*

This video captures the Q & A session with Alanis Obomsawin (Director) and Cindy Blackstock after the screening of Obomsawin's *We Can't Make the Same Mistake Twice* (NFB, 2016) at Metro Cinema in February 2017. Thanks to FAVA TV for live-streaming and capturing the footage, and to Metro Cinema for co-sponsoring this video, which is available on YouTube: [youtube.com/watch?v=AZDmv4UhJMs](https://youtube.com/watch?v=AZDmv4UhJMs).



Still from *We Can't Make the Same Mistake Twice* – Q & A Session with Alanis Obomsawin and Cindy Blackstock (courtesy FAVA TV)

(l-r) Cindy Blackstock, Alanis Obomsawin, Katherine Meloche, Melisa Brittain

## • INFORMATION SHEETS •

In collaboration with the Caring Society, FNCARES regularly creates reader-friendly information sheets that make our research and activities accessible to the public.

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## • WEBSITE •

Nested within the website of the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society, our website is highly accessible to visitors and ensures staff can easily update and connect overlapping content. The Caring Society website hosts more than 10,000 sessions per month, and saw an increase in visitors of 72 percent in 2016.

The FNCARES website features academic articles and media stories that contribute to our knowledge of the effects of structural disadvantage on First Nations children and youth, and resources that help us address these disadvantages. You will also find a photo and video gallery, news and events section, and links to the *First Peoples Child and Family Review* and our Research Database.

[fncaringsociety.com/fncares](http://fncaringsociety.com/fncares)

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## • KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS •

Dr. Blackstock delivered 87 keynote presentations across Canada and worldwide this past year, for academic, professional and community conferences. The following list includes some of the highlights and shows the diversity of audiences and topics:

- University of New South Wales, Bringing them Home 20th Anniversary - Engaging children in reconciliation
- Equity and Child Welfare, London, UK - Engaging children in equity
- College of Alberta School Superintendents - Equity and First Nations children
- Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences – Government’s Great Failure: Not Doing Better for First Nations Children when they Knew Better
- Defense for Children International – Canadian Human Rights Tribunal
- Broadbent Institute Progress Summit - Incremental equality
- Elizabeth Fry Society of Quebec – First Nations children and Reconciliation
- Presbyterian Church of Canada – Reconciling history

# AWARDS AND HONOURS

Dr. Blackstock received 29 honours and awards this past year, including 8 Honorary Doctorates. Here are a few highlights:

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## • AWARDS •

- Amnesty International, Ambassador of Conscience Award
  - Canadian Labour Congress, Award for Outstanding Service to Humanity
  - United Church of Canada, Human Rights Award
  - Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs Honouring
  - BC First Nations Leadership Forum on Child Welfare Honouring
  - Jack Layton Award, Broadbent Institute
  - Law Society of Upper Canada, Human Rights Award
  - Defense for Children International, Champion for Children
- 

## • HONORARY DOCTORATES •

- Doctor of Iyiniw Kiskeyihtamowing Asonamakew (Passing Knowledge on) - Blue Quills First Nations University (2016)
  - Doctor of Laws: Osgoode Law School, Ryerson University, University of Winnipeg, Waterloo University, Mount Saint Vincent University, University of Northern British Columbia, University of Saskatchewan, University of Western Ontario
- 

## • ADVISORY BOARDS/EXPERT ADVISOR ROLES •

Dr. Blackstock is honoured to take on the following new advisory roles:

- Commissioner for the Pan American Health Organization's Commission on Health Equity and Inequity in the Americas
- Steering Group Member for the Global Child research project to develop compliance indicators for the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### ***Incremental Equality = Discrimination: First Nations and Public Services***

**A FREE PUBLIC TALK BY ALIKA LAFONTAINE AND CINDY BLACKSTOCK**

Sept. 14, 2017

11-12:20

University of Alberta, Medical Sciences Building - 227

Event is sold out. Watch the livestream: [connect.srv.ualberta.ca/r7di62y2et1/](http://connect.srv.ualberta.ca/r7di62y2et1/)

Video will be edited and posted shortly after event. Email [fncares@ualberta.ca](mailto:fncares@ualberta.ca) to be notified.

Co-sponsored by University of Alberta's Faculty of Education; Office of Safe Disclosure and Human Rights; Division of Community Engagement, Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry

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### ***(Dis)Placed: Indigenous Youth and the Child Welfare System***

**FILM SCREENING AND PANEL DISCUSSION**

CGCER 2017 Conference, University of Alberta

October 27, 5:30 - 7pm

Location TBA

Panelists include Derek Chewka, MSW, RSW (Sessional Instructor, Social Work Program, MacEwan U), Jesse Downing (student, MacEwan U), and Melisa Brittain (film's director and Research Associate, FNCARES)

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Email [fncares@ualberta.ca](mailto:fncares@ualberta.ca) to get email notifications about events and advocacy opportunities.

Visit the Caring Society's website to find 7 free ways to make a difference: [fncaringsociety.com/7-free-ways-make-difference](http://fncaringsociety.com/7-free-ways-make-difference)

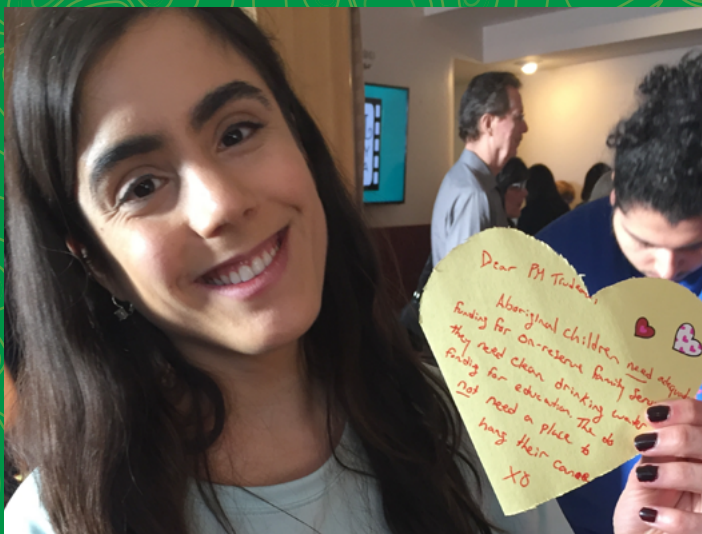
# EVENT PHOTOGRAPHY (2016 - 2017)



Panelists Tia Ledesma and Cindy Blackstock at Calgary launch of (Dis)placed



Métis Elder Terry Lusty mails his valentine to the Prime Minister



Katherine Meloche of Reconciliation in Focus writes her valentine to PM Trudeau



Panelists (l-r) Derek Chewka, Mary-Jo Crowchild-Fletcher, and Elder Rick Lightning at MacEwan Screening of (Dis)placed



Dinner with Director Alanis Obomsawin after the screening (l-r) Katherine Meloche, Christine Sokaymoh Frederick, Alanis Obomsawin, Melisa Brittain, Doreen L. Cardinal



Panelists Elder Randy Bottle and Daniela Navia, with Moderator Michelle Robinson at Calgary launch of (Dis)placed



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