



(Dis)placed

Indigenous Youth and the Child Welfare System

TEACHING GUIDE – Grades 9 to 12

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CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION	2
About the Film	2
Accessing the Film for Screening in the Classroom	3
About This Guide	3
How to Use This Guide	4
Curriculum Connections	5
Learning Outcomes	5
Dealing with Difficult Subjects	5
Glossary	6
II. THEMED LESSONS	8
Pre-Screening	8
Lesson 1 Canada’s Colonial History: A Blueprint for Structural Inequity	8
Background Information	8
Pre-Screening Activities for Students	14
During Screening	16
Post-Screening	17
Lesson 2 Family, Culture, and Identity	17
Background Information	17
Discussion Questions	18
Activities	19
Lesson 3 Storytelling, Art, and Resistance	20
Background Information	20
Discussion Questions	21
Activities	22
Lesson 4 Taking Action: Activism, Advocacy, and Solidarity Work	23
Background Information	23
Pre-Action Activities	24
Suggested Resources for Lesson 4	25
Taking Action	25
III. RESOURCES	26
Additional Resources	26
Academic	26
Fact Sheets	26
Online Videos	27
References	28
Credits	32
IV. APPENDIX	33
Sharing Circles	33

Cover image: “Blue” by Tyler Blackface. “I originally started with a blue background because I find this colour to be somehow emotional. I was in a dark state of mind when painting this. The black represents my heritage, Blackfoot. And the white represents being raised in a foster home and the two colliding into something more beautiful, the grey.”

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I. INTRODUCTION

About the Film



Donovan Waskahat says that living in a group home was like being “trapped in the open.”

(Dis)placed: Indigenous Youth and the Child Welfare System (Brittain & Navia, 2017) 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. Adding to these insights, First Nations child advocate Cindy Blackstock traces the term “neglect,” the main rationale for child welfare removals, to its roots in the residential school system, and points to laws that codify structural discrimination as the leading cause of child welfare (dis)placements.

The film was shot and edited over two years in collaboration with peer researchers involved in the project *Uncovering Colonial Legacies: Voices of Indigenous Youth in Child Welfare (dis)Placements*. The youth featured in the film guided its direction 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 early edits of the film. All of this feedback was implemented into the final edited version.

For an educational preview of the film, email kingcripproductions@gmail.com

For more information about the film, see the film’s website:

kingcripproductions.com/displaced.html

All proceeds from the film are donated to non-profit organizations serving Indigenous youth.

Accessing the Film for Screening in the Classroom

Check with your school, library, board and/or district to see if they have already purchased the film. If they have not already done so, request that they purchase a copy. You may want to contact the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit education consultants (FNIM, FMNI or Indigenous consultants) connected with your school or district to see if they can help you order the film through your school or board. Purchases can be made through the following distributors:

Order through Vtape: Email distribution@vtape.org or order online at vtape.org/video?vi=8693

Order through McIntyre Media: mcintyre.ca/titles/210000

About This Guide

This teaching guide is designed to accompany the documentary film *(Dis)placed: Indigenous Youth and the Child Welfare System* (Brittain & Navia, 2017). It can be used along with the film to help students develop an understanding of the connections between Canada’s colonial history—especially residential schools—and ongoing inequities experienced by Indigenous children and youth.

Reconciliation in child welfare is at the very top of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s (TRC) Calls to Action (TRC 2015c). However, many Canadians still lack an understanding of the connections between Canada’s colonial past and the ongoing discrimination against Indigenous Peoples in Canada, which includes the continued removal of Indigenous children from their families at unprecedented rates. Learning about these connections is crucial to understanding what needs to change to ensure that Indigenous children have the same opportunities to grow up safely in their own homes and communities as other Canadian children have. Learning about these connections is also vital if we want young people to understand their role in meaningful and lasting reconciliation.

Designed for students in Grades 9 to 12, this guide provides teachers with necessary background information for teaching on this topic, as well as sample questions and activities, all structured around four themed lessons:

1. Canada’s Colonial History: A Blueprint for Structural Inequity
2. Family, Culture, and Identity
3. Storytelling, Art, and Resistance
4. Taking Action: Activism, Advocacy, and Solidarity Work

Lesson 4, “Taking Action: Activism, Advocacy, and Solidarity Work,” encourages students to turn their learning into action. This lesson provides multiple suggestions and resources for taking action, encouraging students to draw on their own strengths and talents to contribute to positive change, and to connect with local Indigenous communities on initiatives they deem most pressing.

At the end of the guide, teachers will find additional resources on many of the topic areas covered. These resources include journals and reports, fact sheets (particularly useful for quick research), websites, on-line videos, films, and other pertinent resources. We cite sources throughout the guide so that teachers and students are able to investigate these sources further if they want to deepen their understanding in a particular topic area.

How to Use This Guide

Pre-Screening Activities

- i. Before screening the film, teachers should read the background information provided for Themed Lesson 1: “Canada’s Colonial History: A Blueprint for Structural Inequity.” Reading the background information for each themed lesson prior to teaching that lesson will be crucial for providing students with the context they will need as they watch and discuss the film, and work through the questions and activities. You can share some or all of the context with students at the beginning of a discussion, or supplement their knowledge with details throughout the discussion, as needed.
- ii. Share the [Glossary](#) (p. 6) with students and “unpack” the words. Do more research and discussion about terms as necessary throughout the unit, adding to the Glossary as you go.
- iii. Guide students through the “Pre-Screening Activities for Students.” If you do not have time for all of them, select the activities that fit best with your class and schedule, and that will optimize student understanding of the issues raised in the film.

Screen the Film: 42 minutes

During Screening Activities

Before students are about to watch the video, explain that you will be stopping the video at certain points to help them understand and clarify ideas, and so they can ask questions about what they are seeing and hearing. You will find suggested stop times and questions under “During Screening” in Section II: Themed Lessons.

Post-Screening Activities

- i. Teachers should read background information provided for “Lesson 2: Family, Culture, and Identity” and “Lesson 3: Storytelling, Art, and Resistance.”
- ii. Guide students through the questions and activities for Lessons 2 and 3, supplementing student knowledge with background information whenever necessary. If you do not have time for all the discussion questions and activities, select the ones that fit best with your class and schedule, and that will optimize student learning.
- iii. Guide students through the “Pre-Action Activities” for “Lesson 4: Taking Action: Activism, Advocacy, and Solidarity Work.” Once these are completed, decide, as a class, which action(s) you will take on, and start planning how you will carry out your action(s). This lesson provides some excellent resources and suggested actions, but we also encourage you to develop your own.

Curriculum Connections

Social Studies, Civics, Geography, Native Studies, Indigenous Studies, First Nations Studies, Family Studies, Equity Studies, Canadian Studies, History, and Media and Visual Arts

Learning Outcomes

By watching the film and participating in the activities for each lesson, students will gain an understanding of the following:

- The direct links between residential schools and the child welfare system;
- The connections between Canada's colonial past and existing structural inequities for Indigenous children and youth;
- The role of family, community, and culture in identity formation and belonging;
- How art, storytelling, and the revival of cultural practices can be powerful sites of resistance and healing;
- How to address the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action on child welfare;
- How students can exercise their citizenship responsibilities through taking action, and how they can be part of an ongoing social justice movement.

In addition, students will have the opportunity to develop their skills in the following areas: research; oral presentations; writing; critical thinking; film interpretation; processing through creative practice; social justice literacy and action.

Dealing with Difficult Subjects

Certain topics can be difficult to talk about in a classroom setting. Issues presented in this film, such as colonialism, residential schools, child removal, the child welfare system, adolescent drug and alcohol use, homelessness, and racism can present a challenge to students, and to teachers presenting the film in their classroom. Although difficult, discussing these realities in a respectful and productive way in the classroom will provide students with a deeper understanding of the issues and equip them with crucial tools for unpacking and discussing difficult realities in their personal lives and in the civic realm.

Teachers may consider working with their school or district-based First Nations, Métis, and Inuit education consultants (FNIM, FMNI or Indigenous consultants) for guidance around teaching this film. When discussing this film, it is important to consider the following, and how you might navigate difficulties if they arise:

- There may be students in the class (Indigenous and non-Indigenous) who have been fostered/ adopted and/or apprehended by child welfare, or who have family members who have been fostered/adopted and/or apprehended by child welfare;
- There may be students in the class whose family of origin has fostered/adopted, and who reject the idea that fostering may be a bad thing for some children/youth;

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- Indigenous students may find the subject matter difficult, even if they did not spend time in child welfare care;
 - Indigenous students may experience backlash/racism from other students, i.e., individual students may be targeted;
 - Some students may be quite vocal in their attempt to discredit some of the claims put forward, possibly creating an unsafe environment for Indigenous students.

Being prepared to navigate difficult and possibly painful issues for students in your classroom is critical when screening this film. The following resources offer some excellent strategies for having those conversations:

- *Let's Talk! Discussing Race, Racism and Other Difficult Topics with Students*
tolerance.org/sites/default/files/general/TT%20Difficult%20Conversations%20web.pdf
- *Handbook for Facilitating Difficult Conversations in the Classroom*
qc.cuny.edu/Academics/Centers/Democratic/Documents/Handbook%20for%20Facilitating%20Difficult%20Conversations2.pdf

Glossary

Aboriginal – A constitutional term used to describe persons and groups identifying as First Nations, Inuit, or Métis. In Canada, the term Aboriginal has recently been replaced by the term Indigenous. Aboriginal appears in this guide in direct quotations or titles that use this term.

Assimilation – A process whereby individuals or groups are encouraged, coerced, and/or forced to give up their own language, culture, and beliefs, and their legal and ancestral identities, and adopt the language, customs, worldviews, laws, and practices of the mainstream or dominant culture. In Canada, “Indian policy” was designed to eradicate the cultural and legal identities of First Nations peoples through various means, including outlawing social and cultural practices, forcing First Nations onto reserves, enfranchisement, residential schools, and child welfare policies. First Nations people have vigorously and successfully resisted these assimilation attempts for over 200 years.

Child Welfare System – A set of government and private sector services supposedly designed to protect children from abuse and neglect. These services include apprehending children if authorities deem their safety is a concern and potentially providing supports for families to care for their children successfully. Canada has a decentralized system, with 13 provincial and territorial child welfare systems, plus Métis, First Nations, and urban Indigenous child and family services agencies. All agencies are governed by the child protection legislation of the province or territory in which they are located.

Colonization – A process designed to eliminate Indigenous Peoples and their cultures, through genocide and/or assimilation and settlement, in order to gain unfettered access to Indigenous territories and resources.

First Nations – Refers to persons who are registered with the federal government as “status Indians,” and those who self-identify as First Nations, regardless of “Indian status.” The term is also used to describe First Nation governments and communities (collectively).

Indian – A term used historically by Europeans to identify Indigenous Peoples of North, Central, and South America, it is considered by most outdated and derogatory. Since 1876, the term has functioned within Canada’s *Indian Act* as a legal status, and was originally used to differentiate First Nations people from Canadian “citizens,” who had the right to vote.

Indian Act – First passed by the federal government in 1876, the *Indian Act* is the main legislation defining the government’s interactions with 614 “Indian” (now First Nations) bands, band members, and reserve lands. It also defines the government’s responsibility for funding education, health care, child welfare services, and infrastructure for First Nations people on reserve. Imposed onto First Nations, the *Indian Act* is race- and gender-based, and is used to determine who has “Indian status.” It applies only to First Nations people who have Indian status under the act; it excludes many First Nations people, as well as Inuit and Métis Peoples.

Indian status – A category imposed by the Canadian government onto persons who meet its criteria for “being an Indian” pursuant to the *Indian Act*, which is administered by the federal government via Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (renamed in 2017 as Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs and Indigenous Services Canada). The government keeps an “Indian Register” to record the names of people they deem entitled to be registered as an “Indian” under the *Indian Act*. These people are deemed to be “status Indians” under Canadian law.

Indigenous Peoples – A collective term often used in an international context to refer to the First Peoples, Native Peoples, or original inhabitants of a given region. In Canada, Indigenous Peoples includes First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples. Whenever possible, and when referring to a specific community or group, use the specific names of local Indigenous groups, nations, communities, or bands, based on how they identify themselves.

Reserve(s) – Lands set aside for use by “Indians” pursuant to the *Indian Act*. First Nations people can live on reserves, but the Crown owns the land and governs its use. The creation of reserves meant relocation and displacement from traditional territories and limited access to resources, and thus vastly reduced economic opportunities for First Nations people living there. For settlers and industry, the reserve system frees up more land for occupation and development (see “colonization”).

Settler Colonialism – A process that endeavours to eliminate Indigenous Peoples and their societies, through genocide and/or assimilation, to gain unfettered access to their territories and create a new colonial society on the expropriated land.

II. THEMED LESSONS

Pre-Screening

LESSON 1 Canada's Colonial History: A Blueprint for Structural Inequity



Cindy Blackstock explains the connections between residential schools and the child welfare system.

Background Information

To fully appreciate the life stories of the young people represented in this film, it is important to understand how the relationship between Indigenous Peoples and the Canadian government has evolved since the time of first contact. While the entire history of this relationship is beyond the scope of this guide, the brief genealogy of relevant Canadian laws and policies below illustrates how the government's stated goals and policies of assimilation have created a structurally inequitable relationship, which has resulted in the overwhelmingly high rates of First Nations children removed from their homes.

We focus specifically on the colonial policies and laws aimed at assimilating First Nations people, since First Nations children are removed from their homes at much higher rates than any other group of children in Canada. This higher removal rate is largely a result of ongoing racial discrimination and structural inequities created by colonial laws and policies aimed directly at First Nations people through the *Indian Act* (covered below).

Pre-Contact

Prior to the arrival of European settlers to what is now Canada, the Indigenous population, approximately two million people, lived and thrived on this land since time immemorial as diverse, sovereign (self-

governing) nations consisting of distinct cultural groups. Each cultural group was made up of several nations that shared similar languages, social structures, and ways of living sustainably in their particular environment. Indigenous Peoples developed trading networks and sustainable economies, as well as complex systems of knowledge, governments, laws, and education (National Centre for First Nations Governance, n.d.; University of Toronto, n.d.).

Pre-Confederation

European exploration of North America began in the 11th century, initial trade relations began in the 1500s, and Europeans had established colonies in the Maritimes and St. Lawrence Valley by the early 1600s (Government of Canada, 2017). From the start, the English and French had imperial visions for North America, with little thought for the rights of the existing Indigenous Peoples. Nevertheless, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP, 1996) characterizes contact between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples in the late 16th and early 17th centuries as mutually beneficial, for the most part.

When New France was ceded to the British Crown in 1763, King George III issued a *Royal Proclamation*, setting out the British Crown's tenets for its treatment of "Indians" and settlement of Indigenous territories. The proclamation protected Indigenous lands from the incursions of greedy colonists by forbidding individual settlers from purchasing lands from Indians; "Indian" lands could only be ceded to the Crown by treaty or mutual agreement with Indian nations, which the Crown portrayed as self-determining political entities (RCAP, 1996).

After the war of 1812, the settler population grew rapidly, and the British government's need for First Nations allies waned. The fur trade and harvesting economies dominated by First Nations people were declining, and First Nations were increasingly displaced from their lands and food sources, suffering from severe poverty and dying in high numbers from starvation, settler aggression, and disease (Brittain & Blackstock, 2015; RCAP, 1996). It was under these conditions that many First Nations signed treaties with the British, and later the Dominion of Canada, whereby they agreed to share their land and resources with settlers in exchange for reserve land and other benefits, including the right to hunt, fish, and trap (RCAP, 1995).

After 1830, the British imperialist government began its attempts to "civilize" and "assimilate" Indigenous Peoples through "educational, economic and social programs delivered primarily by the Christian churches and missionary societies" (RCAP, 1996, p. 134). Legislation such as the *Gradual Civilization Act* (1857) actively and purposefully worked toward the goal of full assimilation of Indigenous Peoples to the Canadian state (Greenwood et al., 2007; Manzano-Munguia, 2011).

Post-Confederation

1867 – Constitution Act/Confederation

Section 91(24) of the *Constitution Act, 1867* gives the federal government of the newly formed Canada exclusive jurisdiction over "Indians, and lands reserved for the Indians" (*Constitution Act, 1867, Sec. 91(24)*). This legislation has had lasting and severe consequences for First Nations children and families. In addition to the federal government taking sole discretionary power over how First Nations are governed and operated, all funding directed to service delivery for individuals living on First Nations reserves flows from the federal government.

1876 – Indian Act

The first iteration of the *Indian Act*, passed in 1876, was a consolidation of all previous legislation directed at First Nation governments and First Nations people. It was a draconian attempt by the Canadian government to homogenize diverse First Nations groups and control them through a paternalistic relationship and forcibly assimilate them into the general population through legislative means.

Informally considered a “cradle-to-grave” piece of legislation, the *Indian Act*, which is still in place, states that First Nations people are “wards of the Crown,” and it grants Canada control over “Indian status,” bands, and reserve lands. From its inception, it allowed the government to ban traditional dress, prohibit ceremonies, place restrictions on hunting rights, and remove children from their families to attend residential schools, among many other things. By giving itself jurisdiction over “status Indians,” the government also made itself responsible for providing for its “wards,” including providing funding for on-reserve programs and services (Brittain & Blackstock, 2015).

While the *Indian Act* determines who has, or can be granted, Indian status, the “ultimate goal” of the legislation “was to bring Indian status to an end” (TRC, 2012, p. 11). The *Indian Act* was designed to encourage and sometimes force the loss of Indian status through a number of means. For instance, First Nations people were forced to forfeit Indian status and become “enfranchised” citizens (meaning that they could vote but were no longer considered Indians under the *Indian Act*), if they worked off reserve, attended secondary or post-secondary school, joined the military, or became Christian ministers (Brittain & Blackstock, 2015). And prior to 1985, when Bill C-31 was passed, First Nations women who married men without Indian status had their Indian status terminated. These women lost their treaty benefits, health benefits, the right to live on their Band’s reserve, and inheritance and burial rights. In addition, their children from that marriage were denied Indian status. This discrimination played a huge role in undermining the central role of women in First Nations families and communities, and it has made women more vulnerable to displacement and violence, contributing to the conditions that have led to the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women in Canada (Wohlberg, 2016).

While there have been amendments to some of the sections of the *Indian Act*, it remains in force today, governing the daily lives of First Nations people across Canada, both on and off-reserve. Although many describe the *Indian Act* as a form of apartheid for its discrimination against First Nations people on the basis of “race,” it also puts First Nations in a paradoxical situation, since it also “acknowledges that the federal government has a unique relationship with, and obligation to, First Nations” (Hanson, 2009). Simply abolishing the *Indian Act* would free the government from its unique relationship with and obligations to First Nations. First Nations leaders widely agree that any alternative relationship between First Nations and the Canadian government would have to be developed by both parties, rather than imposed by Canada, as the *Indian Act* was in 1876 (Hanson, 2009).

Indian Residential Schools (1876–1996)

Church-run boarding and industrial schools for First Nations children existed prior to Confederation and the 1876 *Indian Act*, but the Canadian government became a major player in the funding and operation of Indian residential schools soon after Confederation (Milloy, 1999; TRC, 2015a). In 1870, there were 47 day schools for Indigenous children (many on reserves) and only 2 residential schools (TRC, p. 152). However,

according to the Davin Report of 1879, day schools were ineffective at “civilizing” Indigenous children. For effective assimilation to take place, Davin recommended separating Indigenous children from their families and sending them to boarding schools (TRC, 2015b). John A. Macdonald agreed. In 1883, Macdonald argued in favour of residential schools, saying that they would be much more effective at assimilation, since they separated “Indian children ... from the parental influence” and made it easier for the children to “acquire the habits and modes of thought of white men” (as cited in TRC, 2015a, p. 3).

By 1900, there were 61 residential schools (TRC, 2015b), and approximately 130 Indian residential schools operated in Canada between 1883 and 1996, when the last one closed (TRC, 2015a). Throughout this time, First Nations continually pressed the government to establish more day schools on reserves so they could keep their children at home (TRC, 2015a, p. 114). And even though parents could be fined or imprisoned for failing to send a child to the school designated by the Superintendent General (*An Act to amend the Indian Act*, 1920), many resisted by refusing to enrol their children, or by not returning children to residential schools after holidays (TRC, 2015a, p. 114).

The federal government, also via the *Indian Act*, passed legislation in 1894 that gave power to Indian agents to force attendance at the schools if they thought that any “Indian child between six and sixteen years of age is not being properly cared for or educated, and that the parent, guardian or other person having charge or control of such child, is unfit or unwilling to provide for the child’s education” (TRC, 2015a, p. 60). In 1920, an amendment to the *Indian Act* made it compulsory for all “Indian” children between seven and fifteen years old who were “physically able” to attend either a “day, industrial or boarding school” (*An Act to amend the Indian Act*, 1920, A10[1]). However, children as young as 4 years old attended residential schools (Milloy, 1999).

Approximately 150,000 First Nations, Inuit, and Métis children were removed from their families and placed in residential schools (National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health [NCCA], 2017; TRC, 2015a). Many, if not most, of these children suffered cruelty under the tutelage of various church organizations, and sexual, physical, and emotional abuse were rampant in the schools (TRC, 2015a). Indigenous languages, which are the carriers of culture and worldview, were purposefully and sometimes violently stripped from students in the schools (Milloy, 1999; TRC, 2015a). In addition, children were poorly fed and housed in crowded and poorly ventilated spaces, causing massive outbreaks of infectious diseases, mainly tuberculosis (Titley, 1986). The TRC (2015a) documented over 5,000 deaths of children in residential schools; however, because records were often poorly kept or destroyed, the actual number of deaths will never be known.

By the 1960s, the Indian residential schools were increasingly beginning to house children who had been apprehended by children’s services (TRC, 2015a). By 1996, 59.1% of the children in nine residential schools in Saskatchewan were child welfare placements (NCCA, 2017). While the last school closed in 1996, the shutting down of most of the schools in the 1960s and 1970s coincided with the rise in child welfare apprehensions now known as the 60s scoop (TRC, 2015a).

60s Scoop (Child Welfare)

Canada’s child welfare system has simply continued the assimilation that the residential school started. (TRC, 2015a, p.138)

The 60s Scoop refers to a time period in Canada in which Indigenous children were removed from their families at unprecedented rates (NCCA, 2017; TRC, 2015a). By the 1970s, one in three First Nations

children was apprehended by the child welfare system. These children were placed in non-Indigenous foster or adoptive homes in Canada, the U.S., and other countries; this practice was labeled cultural genocide by Justice Edward Kimelman in 1985 (Sinclair, 2016). The onset of accelerated removals can be traced to a 1951 amendment to the *Indian Act*, Section 88, which allowed provincial laws to be applied to First Nations people on-reserve (Bennett, n.d.; Sinha & Kozlowski, 2013), despite the federal constitutional jurisdiction of “Indians and lands reserved for Indians” (*Constitution Act*, Sec. 91(24)).

Alarmed by the ongoing removal of their children at increasingly high rates, First Nations people organized, and First Nations child welfare agencies began to emerge in the late 1970s and early 1980s (NCCAH, 2017). First Nations agencies providing services on-reserve are required to comply with provincial laws and standards (as per Section 88 of the *Indian Act*), while the responsibility for funding child welfare services remains with the Federal government (Sinha & Kozlowski, 2013; Bennett, n.d.). These services have always been significantly underfunded.

First Nations Child Welfare Today

We are facing a humanitarian crisis in this country where Indigenous children are vastly disproportionately over-represented in the child welfare system. (Indigenous Services Minister Jane Philpott, as quoted in Barrera, 2017)

Each of the above-mentioned policies has brought about a “perfect storm” in which First Nations children and families are beset by the damages wrought by a devastating history of the colonial intent to assimilate coupled with inequitable funding from the federal government for service provision on-reserve. Despite the emergence of First Nations child welfare agencies and increased scrutiny of child welfare practices throughout Canada, the dismal state of Indigenous child welfare today is evident in the stark and appalling statistics of child apprehensions and removals of First Nations children.

In November 2017, Jane Philpott, federal Minister of Indigenous Services, declared that the number of Indigenous children in the child welfare system in Canada constitutes a “humanitarian crisis,” noting that out of 11,000 children in care in Manitoba, 10,000 are Indigenous children (Barrera). Statistics Canada (2017) reported that in 2016, approximately half of all children in the child welfare system under the age of four were Indigenous, despite making up only 7.7% of the Canadian population under four years old. In Alberta, Indigenous children accounted for 70% of the total number of children in the system in March 2018 (Alberta Human Services), and First Nations children in Alberta are more than 30 times more likely than non-Indigenous children to be in the child welfare system, while Métis children are six times more likely (Office of the Child and Youth Advocate of Alberta, 2016).

First Nations children removed by the child welfare system to foster or institutional care often experience cultural loss and abuse in ways similar to those who attended residential schools. The system often fails to protect them, and they experience higher rates of death in care, and higher rates of poverty and homelessness when they “age out” of the system. They are also vastly overrepresented in the prison system. In fact, many youth living in group homes have ended up in the adult prison system for minor infractions, violating their right to due process. (Brittain & Blackstock, 2015).

Residential schools and child welfare are frequently considered to be distinct systems. However, as noted in the film, they are intricately connected through their practices of removing First Nations children from their families, and through the rationale for doing so. First Nations children in the residential school era were often removed from their homes using the “not properly cared for” provision, which was replaced by the term “neglect” when provincial child welfare mandates were extended to First Nations reserves in the 1950s (Brittain & Blackstock, 2015). Today, the primary rationale for removal of Indigenous children by social workers is neglect, stemming from structural issues such as poverty (Sinha & Kozlowski, 2013). Colonial policies targeting Indigenous Peoples, particularly First Nations children, have directly resulted in the impoverished conditions that lead to removals for neglect (Brittain and Blackstock 2015).

Structural Inequities and Child Welfare: The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal

The overrepresentation of First Nations children in the child welfare system “is largely caused by structural risk factors that are beyond the control of individual parents: poor housing, poverty, substance misuse and, in many cases, lack of access to safe drinking water and adequate health care” (Brittain and Blackstock, 2015, p. 12). Each of these risk factors is a direct result of the chronic underfunding of services to First Nations, and the legacy of intergenerational trauma rendered through colonization, including residential school experiences.

As Blackstock (2015) notes about child welfare funding, “the federal government funds First Nations child welfare on reserves at less than 80 per cent of the funding levels provided to children off reserve by provincial governments” (p. 97). In the film *(Dis)placed*, Cindy Blackstock states that, “First Nations families, particularly families on reserve, are being set up for failure by state policy,” and that “if parents are held accountable for neglect, the government should be held accountable for neglect too.” The Canadian Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT) agrees.

In 2016, the CHRT ruled on a human rights complaint brought forward by the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society and the Assembly of First Nations filed nine years previously. The CHRT found that the underfunding of child welfare services on reserves constitutes racial discrimination by the federal government against 165,000 First Nations children. Further, the CHRT found that the overrepresentation of First Nations children in the child welfare system is a direct result of inequitable federal funding to First Nations agencies (*First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada et al. v. Attorney General of Canada*). The CHRT also found that the government’s outdated and flawed funding formulas for First Nations child welfare on reserves “provide(s) an incentive to remove children from their homes as a first resort rather than a last resort” (*First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada et al. v. Attorney General of Canada*, VII. Order, B). In addition, the federal government revealed that it regularly redirects funding allocated for infrastructure, including funding for “housing, water, sanitation, and the funding of First Nations schools,” to cover shortfalls in child welfare funding: a practice that increases the risk that children will be apprehended by child welfare under the neglect portfolio (Brittain and Blackstock, 2015, p. 79).

The CHRT ordered the government to “cease the discriminatory practice and take measures to redress and prevent it” (*First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada et al. v. Attorney General of Canada* VII. Order, B). This included immediate and full compliance with Jordan’s Principle, a child first principle that compels federal and provincial governments to provide public services to First Nations children without delay, including services in health, education, childcare, recreation, and culture and language (*ibid*; First Nations Child & Family Caring Society, 2018).

Since the CRHT ruling in January of 2016, the federal government has taken some measures to increase funding for First Nations child welfare, and to ensure First Nations children and youth have better access to healthcare services. However, since the ruling, the CHRT has issued four non-compliance orders, arguing that the federal government is still discriminating against First Nations children by continuing to restrict access to services under Jordan's Principle, and thereby denying many of the essential public services available to other Canadian children (First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada, 2017).

Learn more about the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal case and the federal government's non-compliance by exploring the *I am a witness* website (fnCARINGSOCIETY.COM/i-am-witness). Alanis Obomsawin's NFB film *We Can't Make the Same Mistake Twice* (2016) does an excellent job of documenting the Tribunal case and decision in a way high school students can easily follow (nfb.ca/film/we_can_t_make_the_same_mistake_twice)

Pre-Screening Activities for Students

- i. **Sharing Circle** – Facilitate a sharing circle so students can share what they currently know about Canada's colonial past, including residential schools, and the ongoing removal of Indigenous children from their families through the child welfare system. A well-run sharing circle will create a safe and ethical space for students where they can speak openly, listen respectfully, and learn from each other. The following resources will assist teachers who may need instruction in guiding this process:
 - *Sharing Circles* by Lisa Howell (See [Appendix](#), p. 33)
 - *About Sharing Circles* (ravenspeaks.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Sharing_Circle_Instructions_SECONDARY.pdf)
 - *Talking Circle: Fact Sheet* (learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/talkingtogether/facilitated_talking_circle_fact_sheet.html)
- ii. **Reflective Writing: Start Journal** – Have each student start their reflective journal for the unit by asking them to write for 5–10 minutes on the following question: How have your own experiences within your family and culture shaped who you are today? If you have not grown up within your own family and/or culture, reflect on how those experiences have shaped you. For ideas about how to instruct students about journal entries, sharing ideas from them, etc., visit facinghistory.org/resource-library/teaching-strategies/journals-facing-history-classroom
- iii. **Research and Share** – Individually or in small groups, have the students research one of the following and share with the class in a short presentation. If your class cannot cover all of these, focus on those with an asterisk (*):
 - The *Royal Proclamation* and Indigenous Peoples
 - The *Bagot Commission Report*
 - The *Gradual Enfranchisement Act*

- **Indian Act*
- Numbered Treaties (1–11) (Treaty that covers land where students reside, or research “unceded territory” if not on Treaty land)
- **Indian Residential Schools*
- **Report on Industrial Schools for Indians and Half-Breeds (Davin Report, 1879)*
- **The 60s Scoop*
- **Structural Risk Factors* (fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/Information%20Sheet%20_%20Structural%20Interventions%20in%20Child%20Welfare.pdf)
- Dr. Peter Bryce and Indian Residential Schools
- Duncan Campbell Scott and Indigenous Peoples
- **The Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s five Calls to Action related to Child Welfare* (trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf)
- *Statement of Apology to Former Students of Indian Residential Schools* (<https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100015644/1100100015649>)
- **Jordan’s Principle* (fncaringsociety.com/jordans-principle)
- *Shannen’s Dream* (fncaringsociety.com/shannens-dream)
- **Canadian Human Rights Tribunal case and finding of discrimination by Canada against First Nations children* (fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/PressRelease%20on%20CHRT%20Ruling.pdf and fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/Kids%20information%20sheet%20re%20CHRT%20Decision.pdf)

Big Thinking Question: After completing the above Pre-Screening Activities, and before watching the film, ask students to write down a question they have about the information so far. This should be a “big thinking” question, not to answer now, but something to keep in mind as they watch the film and work through the lessons. Have students **journal** about this question at different points throughout the lessons and revisit at the very end of the unit.

Start watching the film. It is 42 minutes long.

During Screening

Stop Times and Questions for Reflection/Discussion

Before students are about to watch the video, explain that you will be stopping the video at certain points to help them understand, clarify, and ask questions about what they are seeing and hearing. The following are suggested places to stop the video and questions to ask to increase comprehension and deepen critical thinking and inquiry. If you would rather not interrupt the film, supply these questions to students beforehand and ask them to choose two to answer at the end of the film either in discussion or in a **journal** entry:

1. **Stop the video at 3:09 minutes and ask:** What do you think this means: “There are now approximately three times more Indigenous children in the child welfare system than there were in residential schools at their height”? Does this surprise you? If so, why?
2. **Stop the video at 11:42 minutes and ask:** How do you think the way that Donovan was taken to the group home affected him? What do you think the biggest impact was and why?
3. **Stop the video at 17:24 minutes and ask:** What do you think the 3 most important things are that Cindy Blackstock shares about child welfare in Canada? Why?
4. **Stop the video at 28:40 minutes and ask:** How does Cindy Blackstock explain the role of social workers in residential schools and their role in child welfare in the past and in the present?
5. **Stop the video at 30:38 minutes and ask:** After listening to the youth share their experiences, what are some of the most profound consequences they have had to live through because of their experiences in child welfare?
6. **Journal:** At the end of the film, there are suggestions of ways to help. Ask students to take a moment to write in their journals about the film’s most resonating, emotional, or meaningful moments for them, and how they may become involved in making change. Invite them to share.

Post-Screening

LESSON 2 Family, Culture, and Identity



Tia Ledesma (with son Jaxx): “As native people, and our traditional ways, family is what our system is.”

Background Information

A cornerstone of settler colonialism has been a sustained assault on the “cultural identity” (Lavallee & Poole, 2010, p. 275) of Indigenous Peoples, and Indian residential schools were one of the most damaging illustrations. On June 11, 2008, former Prime Minister Stephen Harper offered an apology on behalf of the Federal government of Canada for the Indian residential schools. He stated that, “two primary objectives of the residential school system were to remove and isolate children from the influence of their homes, families, traditions and cultures, and to assimilate them into the dominant culture” (Harper, 2008). Although Harper (2008) also stated that, “the government of Canada now recognizes that it was wrong to forcibly remove children from their homes,” child welfare apprehensions of Indigenous children and youth today are still on the rise, and children are still being isolated from their families, traditions, and cultures in unprecedented numbers.

Raising children in First Nations communities has traditionally been a collective effort (Centre for First Nations Governance, 2009). A solid sense of spirit and one’s relationship to the ancestors, and to ancestral knowledge, is considered an essential part of children’s development: one that is not easily replicated outside of their cultural communities (Ball, 2012). As mentioned in the film, Indigenous children who are raised away from their families and extended kin networks are being denied access to familial connections and traditional knowledge, which can have devastating effects on their overall health and well-being (Bombay et al., 2014). As Carriere and Richardson (2009) have noted, “[t]he Aboriginal sense of self arises as a consequence of kinship bonds and communal life” (p. 57). Leroy Littlebear describes Indigenous

kinship networks as spiderwebs of relations (Carriere & Richardson, 2009). Removing even one child from this delicate ecosystem creates consequences for the entire community.

Problems with identity and self-esteem for Indigenous people have been linked to cultural discontinuity resulting from settler colonialism (Kirmayer et al., 2000). Separation from family resulting in identity disruption has long-term negative consequences. For instance, attacks on cultural identity have been linked to physical and mental health issues amongst Indigenous Peoples (Bombay et al., 2013; Lavalley & Poole, 2010). Children who are removed from their communities will often struggle with reconnecting after having been absent for a long period of time, since their bonds with family and community have been disrupted. Difficulties reconnecting can only add to the sense of disconnection that pervades extended placements outside of the community. This feeling of being disconnected can have deleterious effects on the health and well-being of Indigenous children and youth.

Given that languages carry the ways of knowing and being of Indigenous Peoples, the ban on Indigenous languages in residential schools, and loss of access to language speakers through child welfare removals, is particularly troubling. Equally distressing to Indigenous people is the disconnection from spiritual beliefs and practices. Studies have found that a positive and strong cultural identity achieved through cultural continuity is a protective factor for mental health issues, such as suicide (Carriere & Lavalley, 2009). Further, a positive cultural identity protects against the onslaught of discrimination and negative stereotyping experienced by Indigenous people (Bombay, et al., 2013). Growing up in child welfare care can be painful for an Indigenous young person. Indigenous identity formation is strengthened by access to cultural and ancestral knowledge, which helps to foster resilience in young Indigenous people (Gfellner & Armstrong, 2012).

Discussion Questions

1. How are the experiences of child welfare that Tia, Tyler, and Donovan speak about similar? What are some of the differences?
2. How do you think that isolating Indigenous children from their families and cultures affects their identity formation? How do you think it would affect you?
3. In the film, Tia says that being placed with her siblings was a positive part of her foster care experience. Why do you think it made such a big difference for her?
4. How do the young people in the film express their relationship to traditional knowledge and Indigenous cultural practices? How are they learning these things now, and why is it important to them?
5. Based on hearing Tia, Tyler, and Donovan's experiences of the child welfare system/foster care, how do you think that they experienced similar loss of culture, language, and identity as children sent to residential schools? What have they done to try to reconnect to family and/or community and culture, and what have their experiences of trying to reconnect been like?

Activities

1. **Journal:** Ask students to journal about their own relationships with grandparents and other elder relatives, and what they would miss if they did not have contact with the older generation in their families. Ask those who do *not* have contact with grandparents or other elder relatives what they think they would gain by having this contact.
2. Ask students to research the role of grandparents in Indigenous families and consider Donovan's experience of connecting with his *mosom* (grandfather) through community members in Frog Lake First Nation. How does he acknowledge this connection in his creative practices?
3. Have students compare the residential school system to the child welfare system using a Venn diagram or graphic organizer. They may have to do more research at this point on one or both of these systems. It may be a good time for teachers to share what they learned about these systems through their reading of the background information for Lesson 1.
4. Have students take another look at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's top five Calls to Action from the research and share exercise in Lesson 1, and discuss the connection between the changes called for in child welfare by the TRC, and those discussed in the film. (trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf)
5. If you have access to NFB films through your library, show the following clip of Alanis Obomsawin's film *We Can't Make the Same Mistake Twice*, where Hereditary Chief Dr. Robert Joseph, during his testimony, tells a story to illustrate his community's connection with children. After watching the clip, have students compare this rich connection between children and community to what they heard about the child welfare system from the Tia, Tyler, and Donovan in *(Dis)placed*. CLIP: Hiligwila Ceremony/ Enough Time Has Elapsed. Timecode: 1:51:18–1:57:00. Find film here: nfb.ca/film/we_can_t_make_the_same_mistake_twice

LESSON 3 Storytelling, Art, and Resistance



Tyler Blackface explains how his art reflects his experiences growing up in a white family in a way words cannot.

Background Information

Historical Context

Art/creative practices and storytelling are important aspects of Indigenous life, past and present. Most ceremonies among the Plains Cree, for instance, have some creative aspect embedded in them, such as singing, dancing, and drumming. Traditional arts such as beadwork, quillwork, and animal hair tufting are still practiced, and evidence of their long historical importance to Indigenous Peoples can be witnessed in museums and galleries around the world. Assimilation, as the stated goal of the Canadian government, often took the form of banning traditional spiritual and creative practices of Indigenous Peoples (Pettipas, 1994). Indian residential schools were sites where Indigenous children were removed from creative daily practices, which were their birthright. The apprehension of Indigenous children by child welfare constitutes a continuing site of denying these children their birthright of access to traditional knowledge via creative practices.

Resistance and Healing

Despite the banning and outlawing of creative/art practices of Indigenous Peoples, these practices have survived and are seeing a resurgence. This uptake in art-making and revival of cultural practices is a powerful site of resistance and healing. Further, engaging in storytelling through personal narratives is increasingly seen as “a rich tool for justice-seeking, truth-telling, and Indigenous self-determination” (Caxaj, 2015, p. 1). As noted by Navia, Henderson, and First Charger (2018):

[A]rt and storytelling provide a framework for youth to highlight how, by removing children and youth from home communities and kin, child welfare systems become complicit in the assimilation of Indigenous peoples, the perpetuation of gendered violence, and in turn the dispossession of land and resources. (p. 160)

The project upon which this film is based, *Uncovering Colonial Legacies*, engaged 20 Indigenous young people who had spent time in the child welfare system in sharing their personal narratives through art and storytelling (Navia, Henderson, & First Charger, 2018). Their stories chronicle the unabated damages wrought by settler colonialism. Moreover, their stories demonstrate incredible strength, resilience, and resistance in the face of overlapping harmful systems.

Navia, Henderson, and First Charger (2018) say for Indigenous youth involved in their project who grew up in the child welfare system, resistance is “a means to exert agency over imposed circumstances, facilitating survival and generating opportunities for creative expression” (p. 155). Storytelling through personal narratives is a cogent expression of resistance and marks an important and necessary step towards the reclamation of their self-worth and self-recognition (Navia, Henderson, & First Charger, 2018). Métis author Jo-Ann Episkenew (2009) states, “through story, we are able to recraft a new and healthier personal myth” (p. 74). She wrote extensively about how Indigenous autobiography interrupts the national collective myth of Canada that has actively silenced the voices and truths of Indigenous Peoples (Episkenew, 2009). Restorying this national collective myth through personal narrative is a particularly powerful form of resistance. It is through telling their stories that the young people in this film not only gain critical understanding of their own lived experiences (Archibald, 2008), but also offer testimony to a larger audience of the insidiousness of systemic injustice (Caxaj, 2015; Episkenew, 2009; Navia, Henderson, & First Charger, 2018).

Art making and engaging in other cultural practices can be a powerful way to facilitate healing from intergenerational trauma. Art making has been described as engendering a “creative high or cathartic release of positive emotion” (Abbott, Shanahan, & Neufeld, 2013, p. 75). In addition, researchers have found that art education as inquiry-based learning leads to an increase in self esteem, social participation, and a sense of agency (Cumming & Visser, 2009; Curl, 2008). Further, a number of studies have demonstrated a link between art education or art making and positive identity (Archibald & Dewar, 2010; DiBlasio & Park, 1983; Iwasaki, Barlett, Gottlieb, & Hall, 2009).

Discussion Questions

1. Tyler says that painting gives him a way to tell his truth in a way that words cannot accomplish. Both Tia and Donovan use poetry/spoken word as a medium for creative expression, and Donovan also sings and drums. How do you think their creative practices enable them to process their experiences in the child welfare system and resist assimilation? Do you have a creative/art practice that helps you process difficult experiences and tell your story?
2. Brianna states that “we have to give the youth a medium and a space” to talk about their experiences in navigating colonial systems. Why is this important to Brianna? How do you feel about this?

3. Tyler's painting *Blue* represents a conflict for him between his Blackfoot heritage and being raised in a white home. What do you think this means? How do you think this conflict is represented in the painting itself? Using examples from one or more of the youth's stories, explain why there might be a conflict for Indigenous youth raised outside of their culture.
4. Consider how Tia's poem at the end of the film expresses a particular experience in relation to loss of family and/or culture and resistance to ongoing colonialism.
5. Why does Donovan say that exploring different cultural outlets like singing, smudging, and drumming helped him feel comfortable with and proud of who he is? Why do you think he didn't get access to these things when he was in the child welfare system?

Activities

1. **Journal:** Ask your students to express how the film has affected them through a journal entry. They can also revisit their Big Thinking Question from Lesson 1, and write about how they would answer it now.
2. Have students explore the impacts of the film on them through a creative project (e.g. collaging, painting, song writing, poetry, beading, etc.). Have them share their art/creative projects through a Gallery Walk (where they provide an oral or written "Artist's Statement") and/or through more formal performances or presentations (whatever works best for your class and what they create).
3. Have your students research the art-making associated with one of the following and comment on how art-making in these contexts are acts of resistance. Ask them to share their findings with the class:
 - Standing Rock
 - Walking With Our Sisters
 - Onaman Collective
 - Idle No More
 - Redwire Native Youth Media Society
 - Native Youth Artist Collective
 - Soaring Eagles Camp
4. Have your students research the government's bans on the Potlatch, Tamanawas, and the Sundance ceremony via amendments to the *Indian Act*. They could present their findings in a formal or creative way (i.e., rant, skit, song, spoken word, shadow theatre, etc.).

LESSON 4 Taking Action: Activism, Advocacy, and Solidarity Work



Brianna Olson leading vigil on missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, Edmonton, 2014

Background Information

Action is the more important part of learning. If we don't take what we've learned and apply it to our lives we have not respected the learning that our Elders and teachers have given to us. (Project of Heart, Step 5 – Social Justice Action).

In studies on the impacts of reconciliation education in elementary and secondary classrooms, researchers found that including a social justice component that requires students to address a *contemporary injustice Indigenous people are experiencing* is crucial to achieving the transformation required for deep and lasting reconciliation (Smith, 2017; Howell, 2017). Often, when introduced to new and distressing information, such as the stories presented in this film, young people will express a desire to help in some way. This section is designed to give students an outlet for engaging in action in a positive and productive way. To this end, we encourage teachers to emphasize a social justice model of action, advocacy, and solidarity work over a model that emphasizes voluntarism and charity.

Project of Heart is an arts and activist-based residential school education project developed by Sylvia Smith and her high school students in 2008. In her Master's thesis, Smith (2017) studied how settler teachers took up Project of Heart, and assessed whether or not the teachers and students were “led to transformation,” as demonstrated through the disruption of “common sense” (racist) behaviours ... and engagement in social justice work” (Smith, 2017, p. i). Smith concluded that although Project of Heart offered many benefits for learners, not all teachers and students were led to the desired transformation. Part of the problem was that most teachers in her study did not complete the social justice element of the project, either because they did not know what “social justice” is, or did not know how to “do” social justice, despite resources provided by the project (Smith, 2017, p. 58, 116).

In contrast to citizenship education that mainly encourages voluntarism and charity, or participation in civic affairs, Westheimer (2008) argues for a social justice framework that extends beyond engaging students in food drives to exploring why people go hungry in the first place. He argues that social justice education involves teaching students how to critically assess a problem from multiple perspectives, and encouraging them to address its root causes. Social justice education teaches students to become independent thinkers who are informed about complex social issues and have the skills to contribute to making meaningful systemic change (Westheimer, 2008). In Smith's (2017) study, she found that teachers who did understand and complete the social justice element of Project of Heart said that students felt empowered afterwards; students learned that their contributions had the power to create positive change (p. 96).

While we realize that some teachers will not currently be trained in how to do social justice, or how it can be implemented in the classroom, we encourage you to learn along with your students by exploring the questions and exercises below, and taking a collective action with your students. Ideally, the action will contribute to the kind of transformation needed to challenge “common sense” racist ideas that maintain systems of assimilation, and help to end the structural inequities at the root of the “humanitarian crisis” in Canada, whereby “Indigenous children are vastly disproportionately over-represented in the child welfare system” (Indigenous Services Minister Jane Philpott, as quoted in Barrera, 2017).

Pre-Action Activities

Ask students to use the resources suggested below, and others they may find on their own, to research and discuss the following before deciding on a collaborative social justice action to carry out with the class:

1. Discuss the terms “equity” and “equality” using the resources below. Have students compare the two terms using the Frayer model (theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/frayer-model) or another model that works best for you.
 - “Equality is not enough: What the classroom has taught me about justice” (everydayfeminism.com/2014/09/equality-is-not-enough)
 - “Culturally Based Equity for First Nations Children and Youth” (fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/Information%20Sheet_Culturally%20Based%20Equity_May%202013_5.pdf)
2. Ask students to review what they have learned so far about the root causes behind the overwhelmingly high number of Indigenous children and youth in the child welfare system today, and to research what activists and advocates are currently doing to address these root causes. What changes need to be made within Canada for these child removals to end? What are their strategies for making change?
3. Have students discuss how your class could contribute to making these changes happen, either through participating in an existing action or campaign or by creating a new action. How could you do this in a way that respects and collaborates with Indigenous children and youth and their communities and/or Indigenous organizations working to make these changes?

Suggested Resources for Lesson 4

- First Nations Child and Family Caring Society’s website, especially “7 Free Ways to Make a Difference” (fncaringsociety.com/7-free-ways-make-difference); the “Events” section (fncaringsociety.com/events); and Jordan’s Principle (fncaringsociety.com/jordans-principle)
- *Spirit Bear Plan* (fncaringsociety.com/spirit-bear-plan)
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission, first five Calls to Action (trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf)
- *Maclean’s* article: “Fighting Foster Care” (macleans.ca/first-nations-fighting-foster-care)
- Cindy Blackstock – Canadian Human Rights Tribunal on First Nations Child Welfare (youtube.com/watch?v=FEoNAgoQz10)
- Canadian Human Rights Tribunal Ruling, Jan. 26, 2016 (decisions.chrt-tcdp.gc.ca/chrt-tcdp/decisions/en/item/127700/index.do?r=AAAAAQAtZmlyc3QgbmF0aW9ucyBjaGlsZCBhbmQgZmFtaWx5IGNhcmluZyBzb2NpZXR5AQ)
- *Implementing the CHRT Remedies: Canada’s Failure to Comply* (fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/CHRT%20remedy%20sheet%20Nov%2014%202016.pdf)

Taking Action

After completing the Pre-Action Activities, decide, as a class, which action(s) you will do, and take action! Share your ideas and actions with others through social media, in-school presentations, or presentations to your wider community.

A short list of possible actions:

- Shannen’s Dream for safe and comfy schools: fncaringsociety.com/shannens-dream
- Jordan’s Principle: fncaringsociety.com/jordans-principle
- I am a witness: fncaringsociety.com/i-am-witness
- Touchstones of Hope: fncaringsociety.com/touchstones-hope
- Honouring Memories, Planting Dreams: fncaringsociety.com/honouring-memories-planting-dreams
- School is a Time for Dreams: fncaringsociety.com/school-time-dreams
- Have a Heart Day: fncaringsociety.com/have-a-heart

Feel free to email information and photos of your actions to fncares@ualberta.ca and/or kingcripproductions@gmail.com, and we will share your efforts via social media and on the film’s website.

III. RESOURCES

Additional Resources

Academic

Canadian Child Welfare Research Portal

cwrp.ca

First Peoples Child & Family Review

journals.sfu.ca/fpcfr/index.php/FPCFR/index

First Nations Child Poverty: A Literature Review and Analysis

fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/First%20Nations%20Child%20Poverty%20-%20A%20Literature%20Review%20and%20Analysis%202015-3.pdf

Indigenous Knowledge Portal (research database)

fncaringsociety.com/ikp

Indigenous Policy Journal

indigenouspolicy.org/index.php/ipj

International Indigenous Policy Journal

ir.lib.uwo.ca/iipj/

Fact Sheets

BIG LEGAL VICTORY FOR KIDS! Canadian Human Rights Tribunal Decision on First Nations Child Welfare (January 26, 2016)

fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/Kids%20information%20sheet%20re%20CHRT%20Decision.pdf

By the Numbers: Canadian Human Rights Tribunal on First Nations Child Welfare

fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/By%20the%20Numbers%202017.pdf

CHRT on First Nations Child Welfare: Timeline of Procedural Delays

fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/Procedural%20Diagram%202007-2016.pdf

Culturally Based Equity for First Nations Children and Youth

fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/Information%20Sheet_Culturally%20Based%20Equity_May%202013_7.pdf

Dr. Peter Henderson Bryce: A Story of Courage

fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/Dr.%20Peter%20Henderson%20Bryce%20Information%20Sheet.pdf

First Nations Education

fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/Information%20Sheet%20%20-%20First%20Nations%20Education%20final_0.pdf

A General Profile on First Nations Child Welfare in Canada

fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/FirstNationsFS1.pdf

Information Sheet on Canadian Human Rights Tribunal on First Nations Child Welfare (January 2016)

fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/Tribunal%20Briefing%20Note%20January%202016.pdf

School Resource: First Nations Child Welfare Complaint at the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal

fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/Handout_child%20welfare%20case%20July%202014_8.pdf

Structural Interventions in Child Welfare

fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/Information%20Sheet%20_%20Structural%20Interventions%20in%20Child%20Welfare.pdf

United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child General Comment on the Rights of Indigenous Children

fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/UNCRCGeneralComment-RightsOfIndigenousChildren.pdf

United Nations Human Rights Council: Universal Periodic Review on Canada

fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/UN%20UPR%20info%20sheet%20draft%20FINAL.pdf

Victory for First Nations Children (information sheet on CHRT ruling)

fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/Information%20Sheet%20re%20CHRT%20Decision.pdf

Online Videos

First Nations Child & Family Caring Society Videos

7 Ways to Make a Difference

youtube.com/watch?v=jZE7YASM6ts

It Takes All of Us to Enforce the Law

youtube.com/watch?time_continue=3&v=7sZkB5p4e6c

Jordan's Principle Youth PSA

youtube.com/watch?v=SBLbl8szM2U

Reconciliation Begins With You and Me

youtube.com/watch?v=LpYcczGu1Is

NFB Films

Birth of a Family (Tasha Hubbard, 2017)

nfb.ca/film/birth_of_a_family

Foster Child (Gil Cardinal, 1987)

nfb.ca/film/foster_child

Hi-Ho Mistahey (Alanis Obomsawin, 2013)

nfb.ca/film/hi-ho_mistahey_en

Richard Cardinal: Cry from a Diary of a Métis Child (Alanis Obomsawin, 1986)

nfb.ca/film/richard_cardinal

Wards of the Crown (Andrée Cazabon, 2005)

nfb.ca/film/wards_of_the_crown

We Can't Make the Same Mistake Twice (Alanis Obomsawin, 2016)

nfb.ca/film/we_can_t_make_the_same_mistake_twice

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Credits

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IV. APPENDIX

Sharing Circles

Author: Lisa Howell

Before doing a sharing circle, it would be beneficial to have relationships with community members of the territory you are on. Having an Elder facilitate a sharing circle would be very powerful and helpful to learn the proper protocol. This way, the proper place-based honour is upheld. You can do it without an elder, but you must acknowledge the territory you are on and the traditions associated. Although the protocol around sharing circles varies from nation to nation, there are several common features:

- All members are treated equally and with respect in a safe and natural setting
- Follow the traditions of the territory
- Use a sacred medicine/object/talking stick used for turn-taking
- Participants are asked to speak from the heart
- When listening, participants listen from the heart, free of judgment

Sharing Circles are found in many cultures that have a strong oral tradition. They are found in many First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities here in Canada. When using sharing circles in the classroom, it is essential that students and teachers respect the protocol, teachings and traditions of the territory that they are gathering on. Not all Nations have the same protocol, and it is important to respect and understand this. Indigenous scholar Margaret Kovach (2009) writes that, “Indigenous peoples have never been appreciative of a “pan-indigenous” approach that attempts to homogenize their tribal practises” (p. 37). She explains that although Indigenous people understand each other because they share a worldview that holds common, enduring beliefs about the world, they contextualize to their own tribal affiliations. They do this because their knowledges are bound to place (2009). Conversations that explain and explore these fundamental understandings are essential to have with students. Stereotypes, insensitivity, categorization, generalization and abstractions are complex and systemic issues that must be investigated. Kovach calls the outsider view that “all natives do this, all natives do that” the “Indigenous Standard.” This notion needs to be deconstructed.

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