

All Our Relations



Forum on Supporting Aboriginal Capacity and Resiliency in North Central Alberta Child and Family Services Authority

February 2-3, 2012

Table of Contents

Introduction	2
Welcome from the Board and CEO	3
How it began	4
Masters of Ceremony	5
Day 1—Opening Prayer	6
Welcome	7
Welcome from the Deputy Minister	8
Greetings on behalf of Alberta’s Child and Family Services Authorities	10
Greetings on behalf of the Métis Nations of Alberta	11
Keynote speaker—Cameron Henry	13
Day 2—Prayer and Greetings	14
Keynote speaker—Catherine Twinn	20
The Stories of Resiliency	25
Vignette #1: Resiliency and Capacity in Aboriginal Families	25
• Circle Discussion	28
Vignette 2: Cultural Connections for Children in Care	31
• Circle Discussion	31
Vignette 3: Casework Experiences in Bridging Culture	34
• Circle Discussion	35
Voices of Youth	37
Cultural Showcase	38
Closing Prayer	41
Resources	42
Acknowledgements	43

Introduction



Across North Central Alberta, as in other jurisdictions, the over-representation of Aboriginal children and youth in care is a significant concern. Although Aboriginal children comprise less than a quarter of the number of children in the Region, they make up almost two-thirds of child protection cases. Despite the efforts of many stakeholders, this situation is not getting better.

Aboriginal children can face very complex problems like poverty, violence, addictions, abuse—and a growing despair. Many Aboriginal youth report feeling hopeless about their future and a loss of identity, distanced from their culture and roots. The result can be a young person who is lonely, afraid, anxious—and at risk to enter the destructive cycle of poverty, violence and addiction.

What is driving this problem? How can we better respond to it? Those were key questions at the February 2-3, 2012 forum that brought together many different stakeholders including Aboriginal elders, caseworkers, supervisors, policy planners, and senior government officials. The forum, entitled *All our Relations*, aimed to create a safe space for the sharing of collective wisdom and experience. Through workshops, presentations and discussion circles, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal forum participants spoke candidly and honestly. They acknowledged the cultural, social, economic, and historic realities that have traumatized generations of Aboriginal families. They also identified crucial steps for moving forward in new and positive directions.

This document summarizes the discussions and serves as a historical record of the event, with speeches transcribed as spoken. In the spirit of continued collaboration, we hope this record invites continued dialogue on how partners can work together to support Aboriginal resiliency and capacity. This document can be used as a tool for future discussion, to encourage others to explore the ideas raised at the Forum and to ultimately translate what we learn into practice.

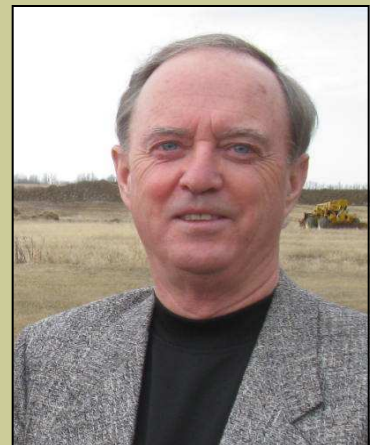
Welcome from the Board and CEO



I am thrilled that staff have an opportunity to attend a conference that takes a look at Aboriginal families, individuals and the impacts and impressions made on them. The theme, “All Our Relations,” speaks to the shift towards treating children, youth and families who are receiving services like you would treat your own family. I think this is a bold and positive step in helping the healing process and paving the way to a bright future rich in collaboration and culture.

~ Audrey Franklin, Aboriginal Co-Chair

Aboriginal Engagement is a priority for not only Region 7 but for the province of Alberta. This forum is a wonderful opportunity to reach out to our Aboriginal communities and partners and receive firsthand knowledge about the issues that are most prevalent and relevant to our work. The opportunity to hold this event is an honour for Region 7 and the possibilities for learning and growth are truly endless. I would like to thank everyone for attending and I hope that everyone takes away a little more knowledge on the topics of Aboriginal people, families, history and culture.



~ Brian Broughton, Co-Chair



There is immense power in the telling of a story. Stories can be told, written, painted, or acted out. During the forum, participants heard stories from people directly impacted by the work we do. It is my hope that from these stories we will learn about what is successful in our work and what can be improved. I encourage everyone to share their own stories, experiences and ideas and listen to those around you. We have an opportunity to share and to gain not just *head* knowledge, but *heart* knowledge as well.

~ Dr. David Rideout, CEO

How it began

In late 2011, a handful of dedicated Child and Family Services partners met to explore an exciting idea. They wanted to create a dynamic opportunity for staff to learn about Aboriginal culture and how to better connect with Aboriginal children, families, communities.

The group decided very quickly that the best way to learn about Aboriginal culture and values is to bring in the people that know it best. With that in mind, the North Central Alberta Child and Family Services Authority brought together a committee from within the CFSA and Ministry, along with Métis and First Nations partners.

This divergent committee shared a common goal—to improve outcomes for Aboriginal children, youth, families and communities. They worked together to plan a unique event that would be a forum to share knowledge and experience. In the spirit of collaboration, this important event would also honour Aboriginal traditions and culture.

As interest in the forum grew, the invitation list also grew to include representatives from other Regional Authorities and Board Members as well as partnering organizations such as the Office of the Child and Youth Advocate, Ministry of Human Services, Delegated First Nations Agencies and Native Counseling Services of Alberta. A diverse group—all connected by a common vision. And from that mutual spirit and intent came the conference theme, *All Our Relations*, which symbolized the spirit of caring for all children and families as we would our own.

The goals of the forum were to help participants:

- receive first-hand knowledge from an Aboriginal perspective
- learn more about Aboriginal culture
- work together to achieve common goals
- build networks for future collaboration
- educate and inform staff to achieve the greatest outcomes
- access more resources
- share experiences
- learn how to better support the Aboriginal population
- hear meaningful and memorable stories
- be encouraged in their work



Masters of Ceremony



Pauline Cardinal

Pauline Cardinal has worked in the field of Child Protection since 1998. She has worked for Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council – Child Welfare Program, North Peace Tribal Council – Child and Family Services, Little Red River Cree Nation Child and Family Services Program and Saskatoon Tribal Council – Urban Services. In 2007, Pauline began her employment with North Central Alberta Child and Family Services Authority.

In her various jobs, she has worked in the capacity of Caseworker, Casework Supervisor, Acting Director, Home Study Facilitator and In-Home Family Support.

Pauline is a proud member of the Bigstone Cree Nation but was raised in the community of High Level. She takes pride in her involvement in many different First Nation communities throughout Northern Alberta.



Caleb Anacker

Caleb Anacker is the Acting Assessor at the Bonnyville office of the North Central Alberta Child and Family Services Authority.

Caleb has been a Caseworker since January 2011 and has worked in a Children's Services capacity as a Youth and Family Support Worker since 2006.

Caleb studied coaching and received a Bachelor's Degree in Physical Education from the University of Alberta 2004-2009. He has worked with and coached children and youth since 2002.

Caleb's professional interests include child, youth and family advocacy, conflict resolution, mediation, and interview strategies.

Day 1 – Opening Prayer

Elder Eva Cardinal



Elder Eva Cardinal is a Cree Elder from Saddle Lake who raised her family of seven as a single parent. She received an honorary doctorate for her work in Cree language, her knowledge regarding Cree culture and spirituality, and her commitment to passing this knowledge forward to the next generation.

At 5:00 p.m. on Thursday, Masters of Ceremony Pauline Cardinal and Caleb Anacker welcomed more than 100 guests to the “All Our Relations Forum on Supporting Aboriginal Capacity and Resiliency in Region 7,” held at the St. Albert Inn.

The opening prayer was lead by Elder Eva Cardinal:

“I am humbled to be here and I want to thank you for being a part of this conference. I would like to ask you to remember our leaders: our leaders in the province, our leaders in our work offices, our leaders who mastermind the setting up and also the paperwork that takes place and must take place. A lot of times the chances are great we may not understand but we journey on to understand. And I am really grateful that we are all here.

In your prayer I'd like to ask you to remember these people that I have mentioned. Also, remember those foster parents. We as parents know that sometimes it is difficult to raise even our own children so we remember those parents that look after our children in their homes. I have great grandchildren in foster homes and I must say they did a very productive job in raising my great grandchildren. Often I take off my hat to them. Please remember them in your prayer.

And also for yourselves, please remember that sometimes we may not always agree in some matters. But talking, I think this is the purpose of this meeting, this conference, that we can begin to really speak on matters that are before us. I invite you with this prayer:

Heavenly Father, I humble myself to you. I ask you for blessings. Pass on endearments to each and everyone of us who are in this conference. Heavenly Father I ask you to bless these people, especially the parents who have left their children back home. Give them good health, give them that blessing where they will return to their homes to be happy with their families. Guide them, protect them. Heavenly Father, for this food we are about to receive may it nurture us, may we be given good health.”



Welcome



Dr. David Rideout

Dr. David Rideout, CEO, North Central Alberta Child and Family Services Authority

Thank you Elder Eva for that gracious prayer. And thank you Elder Linda for joining us. I trust both elders will be able to participate in some of the dialogue tomorrow and share their insights in those conversations. We'd certainly appreciate and look forward to that.

It is my pleasure to extend formal greetings and welcome on behalf of North Central Alberta Child and Family Services Authority, CFSA Region 7. I would like to acknowledge our Aboriginal colleagues who helped so much in the planning: for example, Valerie Wood, Director from Saddle Lake; Debbie Willier LaRiviere, from Lesser Slave Indian Regional Council; Lillian Parenteau from Region 10 CFSA; and Jo-Ann Woloshyniuk from the Metis Nation of Alberta. We also had Kathleen Gadwa, Director from Tribal Chiefs East, who was involved in the planning, as well as a number of others.

The planning process was a very rich experience for us because it allowed us to put into practice what we want to do in the Forum, and that is create dialogue and conversation that would lead to good outcomes. And at the end of the day I think that's exactly what we're looking to achieve through this event.

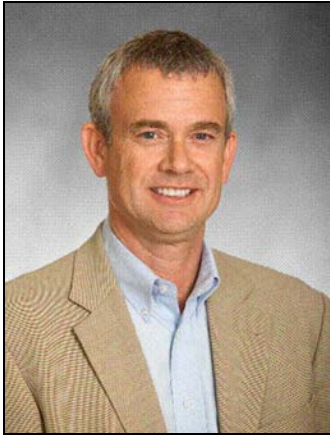
I'm a strong believer in the power of the word. Words are powerful when they're used for good, and they're powerful when they're used for bad. The intent of this Forum is to create a setting where we can talk together. In the *talking* we'll learn together and hopefully in the *learning* we'll come to *act* together. In the forefront of the planning committee's mind has been the notion that we want to connect with our minds, with our hearts, and with our spirit. If we connect with the heart and the spirit it translates into action. If we only connect with the mind, we will have failed.

It is certainly a pleasure for me to see this Forum come together. When I brought this to the planning committee at the end of November and early December, we had 101 reasons why we couldn't organize this event so quickly—but we did it anyway! And certainly kudos to the whole planning team for pulling out all stops, even meeting with us a couple days before the Christmas break. Please take the time to look in your binder and see the planning committee members who are all listed there. I would like the silent lady who doesn't always like to be in the spotlight, Bonda Thompson, and the other co-chair of the committee, our own Pauline Cardinal, who is one of the MCs, to stand and be recognized. Could we also have the planning committee members who are here to stand and be recognized?

We're absolutely delighted to have our Deputy Minister here tonight. Steve MacDonald has a wealth of experience with our work, having been an Assistant Deputy Minister with us previously. Then, after having gone off to some new experiences within Government, he came back to share his wisdom and leadership as the Deputy Minister of Children and Youth Services. When this huge Ministry of Human Services was created all of us were naturally wondering who our new Deputy Minister would be. Within Children's Services, for those of us who had worked closely with Steve, we were delighted that he was chosen - because we recognized the passion and the vision he brought to the work. His commitment has been phenomenal. He doesn't just want talk, he wants action... and that's something I certainly respect and appreciate because it motivates us to go beyond the conversation into actually doing things that make a difference in the lives of people. In his newest role he's demonstrated a tremendous calmness of spirit and he projects that - and it actually calms us a little bit. So it's my privilege to invite Steve to come and share his words with us this evening.

"We want to connect with our minds, with our hearts, and with our spirit. If we connect with the heart and the spirit it translates into action. If we only connect with the mind, we will have failed."

Deputy Minister Welcome



Steve Mac Donald is Deputy Minister of Human Services. His role is to enable Human Services staff to work better together ensuring Albertans receive the supports they need to have safe, productive and happy lives.

Steve has served in the Alberta Public Service since 1980 in a variety of senior positions in various ministries, including Treasury Board, Advanced Education, Learning, Executive Council, Energy and Children and Youth Services.

During Steve's career in the public service, he has helped design and deliver programs and services that meet the needs of clients and stakeholders. He strongly believes in achieving results through relationship building, strong leadership, innovative thinking and modeling the public service values of respect, accountability, integrity and excellence.

Born in Alberta, Steve is a University of Alberta graduate. He lives in Edmonton, is married and has three grown children.

Steve MacDonald, Deputy Minister, Human Services

Thank you very much, David, for those kind words and thank you to Elder Eva and Elder Linda, who I haven't had a chance to get to know yet but I'm sure we will over time. I have to talk a bit about my friend Elder Eva. Thank you for taking me under your wings the last two years. Eva's taken a lot of time to share her wisdom with me and give me great guidance on a lot of difficult decisions. She's leading a lot of important work for the Ministry and I thank her. Her words are always inspirational for me.

I'm really pleased to be here on behalf of the 6,000 employees of Human Services and of course our Minister, Dave Hancock, who has a great interest in the Aboriginal file. I know he'd like to be here if he wasn't in Jasper right now with the rest of his Caucus.

I was looking through the list of attendees and it's amazing. We've got participants here from Regions 1, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10; several DFNAs; and the Child and Youth Advocate's office. It's just so great to see all the staff together and learning together. I think that's absolutely what we need to do and it's very reassuring. Thank you to Region 7 and all the organizers for making this event happen. It's just so important that we get together to learn from each other.

In this new Ministry, supporting Aboriginal youth and families remains an absolute priority and these kinds of conversations that you're going to have are so important to build on that knowledge and wisdom. I'll say a little bit about the new Ministry. We really are the "humungous" Ministry. We are quite large but when the Premier created this Ministry she really believed it would be better together, that bringing together all these different pieces would allow us to deliver services in a more effective, efficient way and deliver improved results for our clients. So you know we'll support foster parents, we've got workers, we've got employers, we've got immigration, we've got job seekers and basically we've got something for all vulnerable Albertans and I think that's very, very important. What's different now is we can focus on the whole person. We've got all the pieces together around homelessness and that we can't point to somebody else. It's at this Ministry of Human Services that we will make a difference. And the focus now I think is more on the whole person, not just program and services but on people. I think that's a huge gift we've been given and I'm really looking forward to making a difference with this large Ministry.

One of the priorities that remains is the Aboriginal community and we're working on a whole array of initiatives to make sure that that focus doesn't drift in any way under this larger Ministry. One of the things that we are

working on is the connecting the dots exercise and hopefully you're a little bit familiar about that because part of that is really about developing a workforce strategy for Aboriginal people. We have strategies focused on younger workers, older workers, but on the Aboriginal community we're now developing a strategy specifically to focus on that. And why is that important? Because attachment to the labour force gives hope and that's a big part of what's missing with our clients, our children, or the adults in their families, that sense of hope. An attachment to the labour market will make a difference on that one so that's very, very important and a real nice piece to have under our Ministry.

continued...

Deputy Minister Welcome continued...

The other thing is the creation of the Aboriginal Policy and Community Engagement Division with Catherine Twinn as the ADM leading that work. She's going to talk to you more tomorrow and I won't go into the work she's doing. I know the theme around this Forum is storytelling and Catherine brought together community dialogues to also do some of that. I had a chance to sit with some Aboriginal mothers recently to hear their stories about the work we do.

And it's one of those things where you're always a bit nervous in terms of hearing whether or not we have been successful in making a difference in their lives. These women had incredibly difficult lives, almost from the day they were born, and then raising their children with addictions, drugs, violence, all those fundamental issues they had. But it was interesting, you know, as they talked that sometimes we didn't do a great job; but they always said there was that one caseworker, that one relationship with our Ministry, that changed their lives forever. And they said, you guys can do better but thank God you were there because otherwise we wouldn't be here. And they were all on sort of that road to recovery. They all had hope for their children. They wanted to break that cycle. You're going to hear more powerful stories as you go along and I think we can learn a lot from that. I think that's the right perspective. We're doing great things but we can do better and will do better together.

*"In this new Ministry,
supporting
Aboriginal youth
and families remains
an absolute priority"*

I know there's lots of great work going on within Region 7 itself. But the other thing I'd like to talk a bit about is Gene Zwozdesky. Our Minister knew he'd have this huge Ministry and it would be hard to focus on all the things that he needs to do so he asked MLA Gene Zwozdesky to get involved on this file and he's now leading the secretariat that's focused on improving outcomes for Aboriginal children and families. He is working very closely with Catherine to make things happen, and it's great to have an elected official because we have elected officials on the Aboriginal side. It's nice to have an elected official leading the work on our side and being there basically full time to get things done. He's working on the MOU, that protocol agreement, to make a difference in terms of establishing roles and responsibilities.

We've invested a little bit of money to help the DFNAs and councils to get together and do their work better. I know there's a great protocol David in your Region that you've developed with the Tribal Chiefs Child and Family Services East that sets out those roles and responsibilities and allows you to move forward on the work.

A big part of Catherine's work is re-establishing trust. And what you'll hear her talk about tomorrow is what we can do to actually change fundamentally those systemic issues around addictions, mental health, violence and the sort of production line and actually make a difference for the long term. I think that's very, very good.

So collaboration is huge. We've got a real focus on collaboration. I know the DFNAs and the CFSAs are working more closely together than ever before. There's going to be another meeting for us coming up in the end of February. So I'm just really optimistic around that.

One last thing I wanted to talk about is what the Premier asked us to do in focusing on the development of a social policy framework. That social policy framework is about establishing the new sense of roles, responsibility, and direction around what we want Alberta to be for all Albertans. This will help us align services a little better so we get better outcomes.

Thank you so much for allowing me to be here. I'm going to listen and learn a bit tonight, break some bread with you, and my thoughts will be with you over the coming days. Learn lots and keep making a difference in the lives the Aboriginal Albertans and all Albertans.

Greetings on behalf of Alberta's Child and Family Services Authorities

Lillian Parenteau, CEO, Métis Settlements Child and Family Services Authority

Thank you to our Elders for your prayers and for your attendance here and for guiding and contributing to the discussion over the next day.

I am here tonight to bring greeting on behalf of the CEOs of the 10 CFSAs in Alberta. I would like to say thank you to David for this initiative, for this gathering, and I also had the privilege of also being on the organizing committee. I think it was really wise in terms of how he did this because he had a number of perspectives that helped plan it and I think there was a lot of richness in that dialogue. We probably could have been here for a week if we had proceeded with all the ideas that came forth from the various people! So I really congratulate you and commend you, David, for taking this on, as well as for gathering your staff here. I think this is absolutely the right thing to do.

The theme you have over the next few days around *All of Our Relations* includes vignettes on really timely topics of resiliency and capacity in Aboriginal families, cultural connections, and inclusive experience in bridging culture. Everyone knows we struggle with the disproportionate number of Aboriginal children who are in care and we collectively have a responsibility to do something about that. I think it's a timely conversation in that you're going to hear over the next two days a lot of perspectives from our Aboriginal people around how they see things. One of the things we struggle with in the work we do is that everyone has their lens in terms of how we do that work with Aboriginal kids and families. I invite you over the next day to put yourself in the shoes of the Aboriginal people whose voices you will hear and try to imagine your case work in terms of that experience.

“Everyone knows we struggle with the disproportionate number of Aboriginal children who are in care and we, collectively, have a responsibility to do something about that.”

You'll hear Cameron Henry talk about a whole history of Aboriginal people and the fact that there have been experiences we've had historically that still impact us today. In our Region we recognize and honour that and we don't judge it. We reach out because we can't work with children in isolation of their family and community. And I think the crux of this conversation is: “How do we do that?” How do we begin to bring in family and community because they all have the answers. Because we are Aboriginal in our Region, and we have such a close relationship and connection to our families, we've learned how to do that really well - to hear the family, treat them with dignity and respect, not judge where they come from, and still find ways to be able to honour that family. We don't agree, like most of us don't in this room, with some of the behaviours that put children at risk. But we have to be able to work with families and communities in ways that heal and in ways that build families because those children are our children. We don't want to lose our children. We want to be in a place to provide the safety and the stability that our children need.

I challenge you over the next day to think in those terms. How can we support family, how can we engage community so these Aboriginal children have the best chance of being able to stay with their family? A sense of belonging is important for all of us. Even when our children are in healthy homes and they leave our communities, we have many experiences of them coming back to find out where they belong. So we have an opportunity to do it right from the beginning. When you hear the voices over the next day, put yourselves in those shoes and think about how you would want to be treated. And what you would want for your grandchildren or your children?



Lillian Parenteau

Continued from previous page

I am a grandparent and I come from the Fishing Lake Métis Settlement. I was born and raised there and I think sometimes of the way I was raised. I was the oldest of seven in my family in a 3-bedroom house, and many mornings I woke up with five or 10 pairs of toes in my face. I shudder to think that if we had come to the attention of Child Welfare at that point in time we probably would have been taken from our families. And you know I don't think I turned out too bad in spite of that experience. I was also a single parent raising two children and I don't think I did too bad on that front either. I've got a kid in the NHL and another is a teacher for children.

So I think we need to be able to look at the experience of our families through a different kind of lens. And so I ask you to do that over the next couple of days. I understand Region 7 hopes to extract the learnings from all of your voices and look at how things could be made better. I know that all of our CEO colleagues are also really interested in that experience and I think in many ways it will be paving the way for all of us to create new opportunity for this kind of learning. So I also welcome you and congratulate you for being here.

Greetings on behalf of the Métis Nation of Alberta

Jo-Ann Woloshyniuk, Métis Nation of Alberta (MNA)

Good evening. Thank you for having us here and I would like to extend sincere apologies on behalf of our President, Madame Audrey Poitras, who is unfortunately unable to attend this forum. On her behalf, I would like to acknowledge the new position of Assistant Deputy Minister, Aboriginal Policy Community Engagement Division, and extend a heartfelt welcome to Catherine Twinn.

“Imagine where we could go with families if we worked with them in meaningful ways that assisted them to see the potential of where they could be, rather than focusing only on the deficits and the risk.”

The saying it takes a whole community to raise a child is very true within the Métis nation and in many ways, both formal and informal, that practice is still in place today. Métis parents, families, friends, and community do take on various roles to ensure that the children are taken care of, and more importantly knowing that they belong and are loved as it is an inherent right for our Métis children to be Métis. The theme of this forum is *All of Our Relations*. This term is appropriate as a focal point when working with Métis children and families as the strength of the community is built on foundations of relationships.

When a child enters care this process affects the entire community and it is through positive, meaningful relationships that the best possible outcomes for that child can be achieved. The MNA sector staff often hear of families describe scenarios that they've had with CFSA staff when their child was perceived to be a risk or taken into care.

The stories are sometimes not that pleasant and describe a paternalistic approach that often speaks down to individuals and labels them as unfit, unworthy, or unable.



Jo-Ann Woloshyniuk

Greetings on behalf of the Métis Nation of Alberta

Jo-ann Woloshyniuk, continued from previous page

We understand that sometimes conversations we have are difficult ones, but imagine where we could go with families if we worked with them in meaningful ways that assisted them to see the potential of where they could be, rather than focusing only on the deficits and the risk. Providing a balance of deficits coupled with strengths would engage the families to feel like a partner rather than a recipient and the worker as a facilitator or coach for that desire change, and it would improve the outcomes in the lives of the children and the community.

The Métis Nation of Alberta has signed a protocol agreement with CFSA 7 to ensure our working relationship is one of mutual interests, pertaining to the well-being of Métis children. Since this protocol agreement has been in place we have collaboratively worked to facilitate the creation and development of a Métis resource position. The relationship has grown from one of formalities to one of engagement at all levels to allow for meaningful dialogues and problem solving to occur. Well over 50 children at PGO status have returned home as a result of this partnership.

This forum is an example of how we can work collaboratively to inspire the front line staff to work with our families in a manner that will inspire hope and promote change. On behalf of the Métis Nation of Alberta I would like to commend David Rideout, CEO of CFSA 7, whose vision helped this forum to become reality. This initiative clearly demonstrates the commitments of CFSA 7 to ensure the strength, wisdom, and capabilities of Aboriginal community will be recognized as tools for the front line staff to utilize when working with our children and families, and thereby ensuring we are achieving the best possible outcomes. It is our hope through this gathering that existing relationships and new ones created through this forum will have us all move together collaboratively to ensure that all Aboriginal children have the best possible outcomes as a template for the rest of the province. Thank you.



Keynote—Cameron Henry



Cameron Henry is the Executive Director, Policy and Planning for the Department of Intergovernmental, International and Aboriginal Relations.

Cameron has worked for the Government of Alberta in the field of Aboriginal relations for 25 years. Beginning as a research officer with the then Métis Development Branch, Cameron has been involved with most of the major initiatives undertaken by the Government of Alberta in Aboriginal relations. These have included the development of the Métis Settlements legislation passed in 1990, laying the foundation for the approval of the Government of Alberta's Aboriginal Policy Framework in 2000, and the discussions leading to the signing of the Protocol Agreement on Government to Government Relations in 2008.

Originally from Ottawa, Cameron has a degree in law from the University of Toronto.

relationship in the past 100 years. In the end it's about things that make sense to everyone and we have a lot of history to overcome."

Cameron Henry, Executive Director, Policy and Planning, Intergovernmental, International and Aboriginal Relations

Cameron Henry provided a candid and factual conversation about "Aboriginal Relations from 1537 – Present Day."

Henry, who is the Executive Director, Policy and Planning for the Department of Intergovernmental, International and Aboriginal Relations brought with him more than 25 years of experience on the subject of Aboriginal relations.

The factual account of the legal and political structures of the First Nations and Métis provided insight and understanding to the participants.

The presentation focused on Aboriginal perspective, values and approach and stressed the importance of relations as well as the Aboriginal peoples, their history, politics, and the impact relations have had on culture. The presentation was rich in history and explored how some of the controversial pieces of Aboriginal Canadian history such as residential schools, the *Indian Act*, and the "Sixties Scoop" were originally intended to help the Aboriginal population.

Henry suggested the current relationship between Aboriginal peoples and government is one of respecting culture and diversity, working with Aboriginal organizations, partnerships, and the concept of government-to-government relationships.

"It will take time to produce results because the issues are large and the differences broad but the point is sitting down and trying to figure it out together. Remember this was not the



Day 2 - Prayer and Greetings



Florence Gladue

Florence Gladue, Chair, Aboriginal Committee North Central Alberta Child and Family Services Authority Board

It's a blessing to be here and an honour to see so many beautiful faces in this room. It's also an honour for us to be here working together on this Forum, *All Our Relations*. It's one of my ultimate dreams to see us working together like this. With that I will say a prayer first in my language and then in English. Elders, if I make any blunders please forgive me. I am an Elder in training.

Creator, you have the kindness in your heart. Teach us to work with the same kindness that you hold. Mary, Virgin Mary, you too have the highest regard in womanhood because you have Jesus. You too are the kindest person for children. This is what we strive for in our communities, to work with our children. Too many have been taken. We want to stop that. We want your help in organizing this and helping us to see what paths we need to take.

Gord Johnston, Assistant Deputy Minister Child and Family Services Delivery, Ministry of Human Services

Good morning. It's such an honour and a privilege to be here this morning. I have to tell you that when I came in last night I saw a lot of familiar faces and it hit me that I've got a significant history with Region 7, which some of you may know.

I want to begin by thanking the Elders and Florence for those nice opening prayers. Thanks to Region 7 board members for your leadership and guidance, and thank you of course to all of Region 7 and all of the partners here today from Delegated First Nation Agencies and other Child and Family Services Regions across the province.

I'm very pleased to be here today to bring opening remarks or greetings on behalf of the new Child and Family Services Division. Our Division was actually created within the broader Human Services context and for all intents and purposes it comprises all of the Child and Family Services from across the province, as well as a variety of leadership support from the department. I just wanted to let you know, as you would have heard our Deputy Minister talk about last night and every chance that I've had to hear our Minister, the Honourable Dave Hancock, talk over the course of the past number of months, they have made it very, very clear that their number one agenda has and will continue to be the well being of children. So through the creation of this division we will ensure that the voices of children and the expertise of community-based organizations that all of you represent are not lost.

This Region and its team members, and its community-based partners, should be incredibly proud of the work you do each and every day in serving children and youth and the families. As you chat today, I hope that you not only focus on challenges but also focus on what's going well, because I'm here to tell you I hear a whole bunch of good news stories on a regular and ongoing basis.



Gord Johnston

Prayer and greetings continued

All of you do tough work. There's no question about it. So please take the time to focus on the successes that each and every one of you have every day in terms of serving vulnerable kids in this province.

I have to tell you, I was having a really bad day yesterday prior to coming here. We were dealing with budget issues for next year and legislative session begins next week, which is always a crazy time for folks like me. Human resource issues, challenges, etcetera, and then I receive an email from my friend Lil, Lillian Parenteau. Lil emailed to give me an example of a great news story from one of her team members, Shannon Ballas and I think Shannon's here too. I don't mean to embarrass you but it's a great news thing. So as many of you know the Métis Settlements Child and Family Services region has a great partnership with Region 7 called *Finding Your Way Home*. This partnership recently resulted in a 16-year-old PGO who has been in care for more than 10 years being returned to his biological family. He is attending school, planning for transition to adulthood, and has reintegrated into his family successfully. So let's have a round of applause.

These are truly successes that are built in the spirit of partnership and we have a collective responsibility to build on those successes across this province. This is the task that I, and I think we, have been given—to build on what is going right in serving kids and families in this province and ensure that we learn from what we could have done better. We need to celebrate our successes. We need to learn from each other, from Elders, frontline team members, Delegated First Nation Agency team members, governors, caring community members, etcetera, etcetera. We need to mobilize the collective knowledge of the caring and dedicated team members here today to ensure that we all have an opportunity to learn from successes and challenges. Only in this way will we continue to evolve and do the best job possible in serving children, youth, and families in need.

We know there's a lot of work that needs to be done to develop and strengthen our relationships and further engage communities in finding ways to care for their children. This Forum is one opportunity of I hope many to come for each and every one of you to share your experiences, your ideas for how we can improve outcomes for Aboriginal children, youth, families, and communities. Steve MacDonald, our Deputy Minister, spoke last night about how our new combined Ministry of Human Services is focused on working better together and that collaboration and relationships with Aboriginal communities is a priority. I just want to let you know that my division of Child and Family Services, in partnership with the Child and Family Service Authorities and Delegated First Nation Agencies and Métis communities, is going to be part of this journey toward improved outcomes and partnerships.

I'm very much looking forward to learning from you today and to listen to your perspectives.

“Métis Settlements
Child and Family
Services has a great
partnership with
Region 7 called
*Finding Your Way
Home* that resulted
in a 16-year-old who
has been in care for
more than 10 years
being returned to his
biological family. He
is attending school,
planning for
transition to
adulthood, and has
reintegrated into his
family successfully.

These are truly
successes that are
built in the spirit of
partnership.”

Day 2—Greetings

Debbie Lariviere-Willier, Director Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council



Debbie Lariviere-Willier

Good morning Elders, ladies and gentlemen. It's a pleasure to be here today and I thought this morning that I really should have brought more staff. I only have one assessor here and one case manager. And I thought, Region 7 has a whole lot of assessors here, so if you get a chance to have Yvonne in your group, feel free to ask her some tough questions because she's down there on the front line meeting these families, working hard, and building some relationships down there and that's what's very important to work with those families.

Thank you for having us here. Three years ago I don't think I knew Dave or Lillian so we're already starting to build relationships. And I hope that's what we can do here today. So thank you for this opportunity to do just that.

Del Graff Child and Youth Advocate Province of Alberta

Good morning. I'd like to first acknowledge the Elders who are in the room and helping us to find the right path. As the Child Youth Advocate for this province, I also want to acknowledge the traditional territory we're on. Where I come from we sometimes overlook those things and they're the things that make us feel solid and like we're doing what we're supposed to be doing.

My role as the Child and Youth Advocate is changing in this province. I'm going to be reporting to the Legislature in a very short while and that's going to mean some differences for what we do. What we've been doing in the Child and Youth Advocate's office has been mostly about individual advocacy.

“Every child needs to belong somewhere and for me that's a critical piece of why we're here today.”

And one of the things that happens with individual advocacy is that young people come to us and have issues with the system. We try to help them to have their voices heard and have their rights acknowledged. And we've done a lot of that for quite a number of years.

One of the things that we haven't done adequately is engaging with people who are invested in those children. That means we need to find new ways to engage with Aboriginal communities, with Aboriginal groups who represent those children, who have interests in what happens to those children, and who also need their voices to be heard. So when I think about what the new legislation for me means it means a different kind of engagement with people than what we've perhaps had in the past. That's not saying that some of what we've had in the past hasn't worked. It has. But it hasn't always worked in the right context. It may have worked in the Ministry, it may have worked in specific foster homes or group homes or residential situations. But it hasn't worked in communities, not the way that I want to see it work. And that's for children to be connected. Every child needs to belong somewhere and for me that's a critical piece of why we're here today.



Del Graff

Del Graff continued

I'm glad to be here. I'm glad that I could come up and say a few words. I met many of you already. I'm going to meet more. That's exciting for me. It's exciting for me to listen to what people have to say about what we need to do as an Advocate's Office and what the Ministry needs to do to start being more responsive to the needs of children.

Douglas Longmore, Director, Family and Community Support Services, and Band Designate, Cold Lake First Nations

Thank you very much. First of all I'd like to acknowledge that I'm standing on the traditional territories of the Cree and the Métis people of this area and as much I would have respect for the Elders, the children, the environment, the customs while I'm here. I was introduced as a Band Designate for Cold Lake First Nations and through Chief and Council, our portfolio of Child and Family Services, we thank you for inviting us here so that we can be part of the process.



Douglas Longmore

I think it's important to acknowledge where we are. Through one of the presenters yesterday we heard about the three Treaties which cover all of Alberta and each one of those areas have traditional owners, traditional custodians if you will, and the Dene people also have probably over 1 million square acres of traditional territory around Cold Lake and part of Saskatchewan. I think we have a little less than 3,000 Dene Suline people but we don't have our own Children's Services yet. But in saying so I'd like to acknowledge that we are working very well with the Cold Lake Children and Family Services Authority, CFSA Region 7. We appreciate Bonda Thompson and Sandra Bracegirdle and their team, who we're very happy to work with, but our long term plan is to build our

own Children's Services for our Dene people. Again thank you for inviting us here and of course we bring greetings to everybody from the Cold Lake Nations.

Mark Hattori, Assistant Deputy Minister, Program Quality and Standards Ministry of Human Services

It is always a pleasure to be at events like this. Until the recent formation of the Ministry of Human Services, I was basically all about Child Intervention; after the amalgamation into the new Ministry, I'm still all about Child Intervention! So that's basically my role. The difference now being that there is now a Child and Family Service Delivery Division within that Ministry. So my role becomes the policy end of it. It's very critical and important that if you think about how policy gets created, how it gets directed, formed, and what its impact is in terms of delivery for the practitioners or the people that are doing the real work on the ground, it's critical that people like me hear the voices of people like you. So it's a privilege for me to be here.

I'd like to thank the Elders, I'd like to thank the community members, board members, Dr. Rideout and his team, and all of you for giving me this opportunity to hear about the real work that's going on, which will help shape the kinds of enabling policies that let people do the work assigned to them.

I look forward to working with all of you, hearing from all of you, and continuing our good, collaborative relationship as we move forward into the future.



Mark Hattori

Day 2—Greetings (con't).

**Valerie Wood, Director
Wah-Koh-To-Win Child Care Society
Saddle Lake First Nation**

Good afternoon. My name is Valerie Wood. I'm the Director for the Saddle Lake Wah-Koh-To-Win Child Care Society. We are the delegated First Nation Agency serving Saddle Lake First Nations and I'm very pleased to be here.

I want to thank David for the invitation to be part of the planning and to participate in this event. I'd like to extend greetings to everyone in the room and I just really appreciate what I think is evolving in our relationships with one another. Our theme is *All Our Relations* and I think that it's a good idea to focus on.



Valerie Wood

I'd like to acknowledge the new dialogues that are happening between the DFNA directors and the CEOs in this province. And we started that as an outcome of a meeting that was hosted by our Deputy Minister, Steve MacDonald, who organized that initial meeting. Out of that grew new opportunities. This forum is creating these new dialogues and partnerships. And we are actually seeing partnerships develop. I was just, at lunch time, listening to Leanne from Tribal Chiefs East tell about their partnership with Region 6. And as for myself I'm also in the process of developing a partnership with Region 6 to have something very similar to what Tribal Chiefs East has set up. And what we're looking at is trying to put people in positions where we are thinking they will make a difference. I honestly believe that collectively we do have the answers and the more we can listen openly, and not be defensive, and really try to hear what other people are saying, the better it will be.

“When you hear the emotion in my voice, as we did with the speakers today, it's important that you take the time and interpret what is really being communicated. .. obviously it's very close to people's hearts ”

I was thinking about this just over the course of the last few days of how, and really I was thinking about my relationship with my own adult children, and I was thinking about why is it sometimes we end up butting heads where it's not what the intention is. When I'm speaking with them and trying to get them to make the decisions about their families and then I get the resistance and we end up butting heads, all of a sudden it came to me and I said to my daughter, I think you need to kind of take a moment and think about.

I said, when you hear the emotion in my voice, as we did with the speakers today, it's important that you take the time and interpret what is really being communicated. So I said when I start to become emotional and in the situation I was talking with my daughter about, she's having some health issues and we need to, as a family, come together to address the planning around that. I said when you hear emotion in my voice you need to understand that it should be that way. I said when I'm talking to you about a very serious illness I'm a mom... my baby has a very serious illness... and I should have a lot of emotion and you need to hear that and instead of putting this barrier up and interpreting what I'm saying as trying to be controlling about your decision making, because it was with regards to her child. So I said you need to put it in the right perspective. I think similarly in the conversations and dialogue that we engage in around this issue which we've heard today, obviously it's very close to people's hearts and I know it's very close to mine, and I think sometimes maybe I get myself in situations where I do get very emotional. I know that when I speak that it comes across and I need to say that that's a good thing because that's about my caring about the issue, my caring and

my commitment to helping to make things different. And it really is not about trying to be on the attack about what is wrong.

continued...

Valerie Wood continued...

So I hope and I invite and I want to engage people in pondering that thought. And I do see evidence that we're moving to good things. We are starting to speak to each other in forums where it doesn't become a shouting me against you....that maybe some of us have witnessed at other forums. So again I'd like to thank David and his team and everyone for being part of this.

**Leighann Edwards, Business Manager
Tribal Chief Child and Family Services East Society**

(photo not available)

Hello everyone. I'm here on behalf of Kathleen Gadwa, our director. I'd also like to thank David and his team for all of you being here and for all of the good work that we're starting to do together.

We do have a Collaborative Planning Protocol with Region 7 and also we have a joint position with Region 6, so Tribal Chiefs East is really actively engaging with the province and trying to do some better work for kids, the children and families that we're serving.

I'd just like to say I'm really glad to be here and I'm glad that we're starting to work much better together and also agree with everything that Val said.



Keynote—Catherine Twinn



Catherine Twinn is Assistant Deputy Minister of Aboriginal Policy and Community Engagement, Human Services.

Catherine plays a leadership role in collaborating and partnering to bring together processes and knowledge teams of local communities, governments, scholars and others to shift paradigms and enable change.

Catherine's role in the newly formed division since September 2011 is a key part of the Human Resources Ministry's shared responsibility for ensuring the supports and services to Aboriginal children, youth and families meet their unique needs and are culturally appropriate.

Catherine has been a lawyer over 30 years. Her diverse experience includes: leadership, board governance, and community service.

Good morning everyone. It's good to be here and I thought this morning I would like to talk about addressing Aboriginal over- and under-representation, which was a theme in the 2010 Expert Panel Report and its 12 recommendations - 10 of which the Government of Alberta accepted. One of those recommendations was to establish a position within the Ministry, an Assistant Deputy Minister position, to try to create some influence and some space for Aboriginal influence to have more muscle and to be felt more vigorously throughout the system. Another piece that report noted was that Aboriginal over-representation is not diminishing. Over time it's increasing and as of June 2011, 67 per cent of the children in the Child Intervention system are Aboriginal.

I was speaking with someone yesterday, Janet Fox, wife of Chief Wallace Fox from Onion Lake, and she was telling me that the rates in Saskatchewan and in Manitoba are even higher. And that's something that my division will be drilling into. We're still very, very busy trying to wrap our minds around the scope of this human situation. ... When I look at Aboriginal over-representation 360 degrees, not just child intervention but the courts, the prisons, poverty, unemployment, single parent families, poverty, diseases, addiction and on and on—it's huge!

There's also another piece of this, the other side of the coin, what I call Aboriginal under-representation in the blessings. Yesterday I had a conversation with Region 6 board about the Parent Links and that there's an under-utilization by Aboriginal people of that resource. Since I started on September 6th I've been trying to learn by meeting people and listening and I have a lot more to do in that regard, a lot more, and it's going to be constant and ongoing. But in one of my travels I met Dr. Val Massey on fetal alcohol syndrome and she expressed to me her view that there is also an Aboriginal under-representation in terms of accessing those services and those supports.

"This problem, this human, human tragedy is growing. And the capacity of the system to implement intended change is often wanting."

The Expert Panel Report also noted that this problem, this human, human tragedy is growing. And the capacity of the system to implement intended change is often wanting. What does that mean—capacity of the system to implement intended change? People want to do right, they want to do better. But the system itself, being so complex, so disconnected in so many ways, has a very, very difficult time mobilizing together in a shared awareness, in a shared vision, and in a shared agreement in terms of what those collective actions need to be taken. This challenge set out in that report is not new. We have report after report after report after report in this country and in this province that goes to the very same issue.

continued...

I think about the Cawsey Task Force Report on the Impact of the Criminal Justice System on Indian and Métis People. When I first met the new Minister, David Hancock, shortly after the creation of the Ministry of Human Services, each ADM was required to come in and do a PowerPoint presentation to brief him a little bit about each Division within this Ministry. I was very new, I think I'd been in the role a little over a month. And what I was focusing on was the report, Aboriginal over-representation, and we cannot keep doing the same thing over and over expecting different results. That is a form of insanity.

He spoke after and he said that when he was a young student, I think it was around 1970-71, something like that, the very first paper he did in university was on Aboriginal over-representation in the criminal justice system. Years later, when he became the Minister of Justice, it hadn't improved. So this is a condition, this is a situation that's been with us for a very, very, very long time. And when I look at Aboriginal over-representation I ask myself what is driving it? What's beneath it? Because that's a symptom. And what I see beneath it are things that are very complex problems such as poverty, addictions, violence, despair.

I just want to speak a little bit about the addiction piece. In November of 2011 there was a poll released which I understand was undertaken through an initiative with the Assembly of First Nations, Canada Health and a non-profit Aboriginal Health organization. They did a survey. 83 per cent of the Aboriginal respondents said that substance abuse was the main barrier to community well being. In that same month of November there was a national study that came out, *Remember the Children*. It surveyed First Nations Children in the Child Intervention system in this country. Of the investigations involving maltreatment, suspicions of child maltreatment, 65 per cent involved issues, questions of substance abuse by the lone parent, single parent.

In 2004, Canada Health did a study in which 73 per cent of Aboriginal respondents identified alcohol as a problem. We know that substance abuse is itself a symptom. So we're dealing with very, very complex problems that have been with us for a long time. When I look at the demographic projections and I look at the current trends, I'm very, very concerned and I think everybody in this room is very concerned. We need to be concerned because it's those young people over there who, by the way, the Tapwe Warriors, I was invited by an Aboriginal Youth gathering to join them in November at Nordegg which I did. I went to Golden Eye Centre. There was about 120 Aboriginal Youth who had gathered and the Tapwe Warriors, there were seven of them and they spoke, they sat in a half circle and they shared their stories of they went three rounds. The first round was what does violence look like to you, how have you experienced it? They talked about what that violence looks like within their families, within their communities. They talked about the lateral violence, the put downs, the gossips, the exclusions, the marginalizations, the assumptions, the attributions, the dehumanizing things that happen that take away confidence, that take away safety, that take away one's sense of well being, one's identity, one's place within the group. The second round they talked about how this impacted them. They talked about falling into a dark spiral of descent. Then they talked about the blessings, what they have learned. And what they have learned by coming together and sharing their stories is very powerful. These are very developing human beings with a very attuned sensitivity and consciousness.

“[Aboriginal youth] talked about the lateral violence, the put downs, the gossips, the exclusions, the marginalizations, the assumptions, the attributions, the dehumanizing things that happen that take away confidence, that take away safety, that take away one's sense of well being, identity, one's place within the group.”

continued...

Keynote — Catherine Twinn

continued

In December my Division organized three days of what we call community conversations to bring together people within this very complex system who wouldn't ordinarily ever hear each other, see each other, share with each other. And one of those conversations was with Aboriginal youth and the Tapwe Youth Warriors, two of them were present who are present today. There were other Aboriginal youth who were in the circle who are in care. They came in and sat down with their eyes down and you could feel the pain. But when the Tapwe Youth Warriors started sharing and telling their stories and their journey, the heads started to lift up, eye contact started to happen, bodies started to move forward, listening intently. And then the questions started coming. At the end of it those youth in care wanted to know how to become part of Tapwe.

As I think about how we can come together to begin to work on these really complex problems, I was very lucky to be given a paper, called *Collective Impact*, published in The Stanford Review in 2011. It describes a very structured process being used to bring people together from within this very, very, very complex system to begin to talk, to begin to determine if we have a common agenda, and how we can work together. What indicators would we want to use to measure our progress as we work through these complex problems? What strong backbone organization is needed to try to support in a secretariat way those conversations? How can we engage in continuous communication and mutually reinforcing activities so that we can really begin to address these complex problems and begin to peel away the layers and get to the very roots?

We have a system today that often works like an emergency room. By then there's a lot of harm that's already happened. Now this process of community conversation to identify collective actions, to make collective impact, is being used on problems such as a river that's completely poisoned and fish cannot survive. And it wasn't one person that poisoned that river. It wasn't one industry or one community or one activity or one period of time. This has been going on for a very, very long period of time and it's going to take many to come together to figure this one out.

It means that people have to jump out of their organizational silos and come into a common purpose to make that happen. It's also being used to address the crisis in the public education system in the U.S. It's being used on poverty reduction in New Brunswick for example. And in that process what they did is they brought the people together who are living in poverty. What happened, how did you get here, what's holding you here, what needs to happen for you to move forward? And through those personal stories you begin to see and identify those issues of public interest and even legal content. As those conversations proceeded they started to layer in more and more people from throughout this very complex system of governance—from government, from private industry, and bring them together. And it went all the way to the very top, to the Premier of New Brunswick.

There were three keepers of this process, one appointed I believe through the Premier's office, one through the private sector, and probably the other through the public sector. At some point in the process the leader of the opposition who was involved in this went on a bit of an ego trip. He went public and he said to the press, that Premier, he should have amended that law, that law is keeping people at a very low minimum wage and that's contributing to the poverty.

“They talked about how this impacted them. They talked about falling into a dark spiral of descent. Then they talked about the blessings, what they have learned. And what they have learned by coming together and sharing their stories is very powerful. These are very developing human beings with a very attuned sensitivity and consciousness.”

continued...

Well, that law and maybe other laws had also been identified in the process for amendment. But this process also structures and confirms collectively who's going to be taking what actions within their power control and responsibility when. And it wasn't time for that to happen. Normally the Premier would have to jump in and defend himself and get into a bit of a little match with his opposition, his political opponent or rival. But this time that didn't happen because the keepers of the process intervened publicly and they said, "Leader of the opposition, with all due respect, you've violated the solemn agreement of this process. The Premier did do what he undertook to do. He did amend laws." When he did so in the House, the entire House stood up and applauded and that leader of the opposition gave his commitment to respect those decisions that had been reached through that process.

Now let me give you a little story and somebody has to keep me on time here because I'm terrible with the clock. I was talking to somebody from Indian Affairs because after I arrived in this position on September 6th, one of the things that I asked was a whole series of questions because I want to know what the data tell us.

There is a doctor by the name of Dr. Jeffrey Brenner and if you Google him it's Dr. Hotspots. He was an emergency room doctor in Camden, New Jersey. Camden, New Jersey is one of the poorest cities in North America. Large Black population, poverty that you cannot imagine, violence, addictions, poverty diseases, on it goes and one night he's in his place and he hears gunshots. He gets the call, there's a young person who's been shot and who's down a few blocks away. So he runs out and he arrives and he sees this young Black man laying on the ground and the police are off elsewhere. He detects a pulse but the young man's not breathing. He tries his best but the young man passes. He's so upset and he says to the police, why weren't you trying to help him? What kind of society are we becoming? And he offers to work with the police on this issue of violence, which is a very complex problem. And they turn him down.

So he goes back to the emergency where he works and he starts crunching data, analyzing who's coming in, what they're coming in for, how often they're coming in, etcetera. And all of a sudden through this data analysis hot spots begin to emerge. For example 1 per cent of the population is accounting for 30 per cent of the costs. Now normally what does an emergency room doctor do? He just stays in his place, he waits for the injured person to come in, he treats the presenting problem, and off they go. He did something very different. He put together a team of people with very diverse experiences. So a social worker, a nurse, others and they started connecting in a very, very real way with that 1 per cent,. In fact he starts with the guy that's costing the system the most money. They build the relationship. They're invited into his home. They have tea. The man has been hospitalized 30 times in six months through the emergency. And when they're in his home they see it's full of black mould. The family's living on \$1,000 a month. There's no way alone they can solve that problem. So what this team did is they mobilized into this very complex system and together they worked with him and the family to find a solution to the mould. The next six months he's hospitalized twice. They were able to bring down the cost to the system 40 to 50 per cent while increasing the quality of care by working together in a very humanistic way and breaking out of their silos and probing and being curious and moving from the heart.

So when I arrived at the Ministry I asked a series of questions because I want to find out what the data tells us. For example is this really intergenerational? At one of the community conversations in December it was Aboriginal moms who have lost their children to the system. One of the mothers told her story. She said, "My mother started hooking out me and my siblings from the York Hotel. We went into care, into different homes, I went through I think it was 37 homes, experienced some sexual abuse in some of the homes, wasn't believed by the worker, developed addictions, have five children, five children are in the system in different homes, my 12-year-old son has been in 32 homes already."

"How can we work
together to build
community conversations,
to create that hopefully
sacred space where we
can all come together and
create the conditions for
this collective wisdom
to arise?"

continued...

Keynote – Catherine Twinn continued

Continued from previous page

And we know that every time a child moves school, their chance for succeeding diminishes. I heard my colleague Del talk about the need for connection. In those stories what I heard, what I saw was fragmentation, dislocation, disconnection, separation, loneliness, fear, anxiety, and those are all setups for addiction. Because all of that does impact brain development. Science tells us that. We know that. So we're working on the data.

We know that it's going to be a collaboration across the divisions and across the Ministries. We hope that that information can be brought into these community conversations. My division wants to connect with all the ADMs and with the Regions and with the DFNAs and whoever else out there, to find out about your presenting issues. Where are your hotspots? How can we work together to build community conversations, to create that hopefully sacred space where we can all come together and create the conditions for this collective wisdom to arise because I believe that that wisdom is all there. We just have to come together. And then we need to identify all those actions that really need to be taken to make things right.



(Left to right) Bonda Thompson, Caleb Anacker, Catherine Twinn, Pauline Cardinal, Dr. David Rideout

The Stories of Resiliency

In all walks of life, the stories we hear and tell can shape our understanding of the world. Traditionally, Aboriginal people use stories to convey their thoughts. With that in mind, the Forum allowed for the telling of various stories—or vignettes. Speakers were invited to share their stories around the following vignette themes:

- Resiliency and capacity in Aboriginal families
- Cultural connections for children and youth in care
- Casework experience in bridging culture.

Participants were asked to divide into small groups to discuss what was shared by the speaker and how frontline workers could learn and benefit from the stories. The groups recorded and shared their discussion with the larger group after each smaller session concluded.

Vignette #1: Resiliency and Capacity in Aboriginal Families.



Dianne was born in Northern Saskatchewan and raised on a trap line with her kookum, moshum, aunts and uncles, her first language is Cree, spoken and written, she has also been a Native Arts and Cree language teacher for the past 25 years.

Dianne's strengths include working with youth and elders and a passion about preventing harm to children and reducing or eliminating behaviors which may place the child and family at risk and helping to prevent unnecessary out of home placements.

Dianne McKay, Kookum, Lac La Biche

I'd like to welcome everybody here this morning. All my Elders, all the youth that are here today, welcome. My Indian name is Wolf Tracks Woman. My given name is Dianne McKay and I married a Ludwig, a Ukrainian man.

First of all I guess I'd like to talk about some of the things that my grandparents taught me and I'd like to tell everybody a little bit about myself. I'm a Sun Dancer. I go to a Sun Dance every summer and I'm gone for 10 days. And while I'm there I pray for the little children. I pray for the little children so that they'll have that connection with their families and for the ones that are taken, that they will be given back to their parents. These children belong to the parents. They do not belong to anybody else whether or not they're Aboriginal, non-Aboriginal, or whatever. I would not want to be placed in a home that I did not belong in. Just think of what they're going through.

"I pray for the little children so that they'll have that connection with their families..."

I see that every day in my working in the school system. I've been in that school system for 25 years and I see and I hear them and I see them walking, walking because they don't know where they belong. They don't know because they were taken at a very young age from the hospital and taken to a home, a home that is not theirs. And as Lillian said yesterday in the '60s if we would have had Social Services I myself would have been taken because I belonged to a big family and we all used to sleep together in the same bed because there was only two rooms in our house. I want to thank my sisters for being here today. I have three of them here and I want to thank them because they give me strength. And to Christine, thank you. I have a lot of respect for you.

continued...

Vignette #1: Resiliency and Capacity in Aboriginal Families.

Continued from previous page.

OK let's start. *Pastahowin* is a negative action by someone to another person, either by what they say or what they do. *Pastahowin* as explained to me by my moshum and my kookum was the worst thing you could do to someone else and could have a negative effect to yourself or your families for generations to come.

On May 5, 2010 our lives were ripped apart because our granddaughter, great granddaughter was apprehended by Social Services. The mother and common-law husband were called into the office at which point they demanded the child. She was apprehended without any investigation. The grandparents were notified of the granddaughter being put into care. They took her and they put her in a home. Since the apprehension the mother, the grandparents have made several attempts to get back this little girl. She was taken to another province with her paternal grandparents. Her alone being taken, she's losing her identity. How is she going to learn that being a Métis child is so very important? Please think about that when you take children.

From my understanding, kinship is in place to help keep families together. There is a balance and harmony in the natural laws of creation and not all living things are one. In my walk through life I have witnessed some of our service agencies break our natural laws in many different ways.

"The relationship now with the manager in Lac La Biche is one of respect and listening. This gives me hope for our children..."

I have seen where families have been ripped apart, torn to pieces because the service agencies felt people were incapable of looking after their own. Without any respect of our cultural approach, whatever happened to our age-old practice where the kookum and the moshum would look after their grandchild? Why are they being placed in homes where they do not know the individuals they will be staying with? What happened to the aunties and the uncles who loved these children so much that they would care for these children at a moment's notice? Were they ever contacted? I don't think so. Or has this practice been applied to different cases whenever convenient? Where is the Minister of these service agencies? Do they have any knowledge as to how many children are being taken? Their identity and their language is being lost.

This is a repeat of what happened in the '60s and I firmly believe and have the impression that there is a quota on how many children are taken from their homes. Clearly history has not been observed or practiced. As a result it is being repeated and furthermore there are more children in care now than there was in the residential school era. Because of what happened my family that I was speaking of has separated because they could not stand the pain. Workers need to know our family and community cared. A family group conference was never offered. I am a cultural teacher. I have teachings from elders and I try and teach the culture to the youth. The relationship now with the manager in Lac La Biche is one of respect and listening. This gives me hope for our children that through relationships outcomes will be better than my story. Thank you.



Elsie Anderson, Kookum, Lac La Biche

I've never stood in front of so many people to speak. But what I'm gonna tell you is my experience and how you take it and do with it is up to you. But this is my story. In 2004 I had to deal with the system. Two of my grandsons were taken. To this day I don't know where they are. They're lost. I don't know if they're OK, I don't know if they're alive. I don't know anything. From 2004 until 2007 the system came into my home again. They said that they were smoking pot, smoking crack or whatever they do with crack, I don't know. And they took two of my grandchildren. One was a First Nations; she went back and another one was brought back into a group home. But I went to court and I got private guardianship of the two children.

And then in 2007, I had come for my Round Dance in Fort McKay. The system came into my home again. The next day there was RCMP came into my house, asked where the children were—they weren't in my place.... And the worker asked if I would look after him... he didn't tell me the RCMP would come and pick him up and take him somewhere else. But that day was so tragic. I remember first my husband went to jail and then the rest of my family went to jail. I couldn't figure out why no charges were laid against my children. They just wanted to find out where the other five children were that were supposed to have been in my house. They were with their grandmother in St. Paul.

The workers went there and they had signed a paper, my daughter and my son-in-law, giving permission to the other grandmother to look after the kids until everything blew over, I guess. I don't know. But the worker came and said when he seen that paper, he said this is nothing. Those kids were taken, told that the parents didn't want them. They were put in separate homes, and I cried for a week.

And then I thought, "when Elsie wants something, she never lets anything stop her." So I started fighting back. And we got our children back about a month later with a supervision order. It was just so that we could get our children back. They were in a home where an 8-year-old had to wear Pampers because he soiled himself. Now being in an environment where you're not used to, you don't know anything about these people because they were placed in a white home, not used to that kind of life. For one month he had to wear Pampers, an 8-year-old. Can you imagine the humiliation that child was put through and you say that it's for the better of the child, that you have to protect them? As a result of this I formed a group called Silent Cries of our Aboriginal Children in Lac la Biche and I go to court, meet with the social workers, try and help families who don't know what to do.



Elsie was born and raised in Buffalo Narrow, Saskatchewan. She is the proud mother of five children, four boys and one girl. After she moved to Lac La Biche in 1989 she worked at Alberta Vocational College, which is now known as Portage College, as dean of Residence, was landlord for two years at Julianna Manor, worked for Heritage Consultation as an in home support worker and driver, and worked at Métis Nation Wilderness Camp for four years as a correction worker.

Elsie resigned from her job in 1997 when her youngest son was murdered in Edmonton.

Elsie is now an independent individual who works to help people with court issues, meeting with child workers and assists in other matters of this nature whenever she receives the request to do so.

Vignette #1: Resiliency and Capacity in Aboriginal Families

Continued from previous page.

And I think in closing I would say please don't take our children's identity away. Please work with us. Let us help you understand where we're coming from. We, as Métis people, Aboriginal, look after our own. We don't just scoop them up and put them somewhere else. We love all our children, grandchildren, and atapan. I have a great grandson who is in the Yukon which I seen once in three years and it hurts me because I talk to him and he cries. And when he came to visit he said grandma, he said, this is my home. That's all I have to say. Thank you.

“Please work with us. Let us help you understand where we're coming from. We, as Métis people, Aboriginal, look after our own.”

Circle Discussions

Forum participants were asked to consider the challenges and opportunities for building resiliency and capacity in Aboriginal Families. They discussed several questions and the following comments summarize their responses:

Question 1: What are the issues?

- Lack of communication
- Loss of identity
- Despair
- Child and Family Services is perceived as a threat to Aboriginal communities
- Cultural Sensitivity: listening and relationship building
- Family finds genealogy prior to assessments



Question 2: What works?

- Aboriginal managers
- Training and cultural competency
- Focusing on the child
- Kinship placements and family/cultural connections
- Being creative
- Caring workers, practicing from the heart
- Ability to share stories with a clear message
- Connection to and celebration of culture
- Giving youth a voice of their own
- Reciprocal respect
- Persistence
- Tools from the community
- Relationship building
- Family Group Conferencing



Question 3: What doesn't work?

- Separating families (siblings)
- Repeating same actions with no improvements
- Poor communication
- Lack of contact
- Shame-based teaching
- Distancing children from their culture
- Foster parent resistance
- Misunderstanding the meaning of culture



Vignette #1: Resiliency and Capacity in Aboriginal Families—con't.

Question 4: What needs to change?

- Creating better relationships between Aboriginal families and workers
- Crisis creates change
- Training and educating care providers on culture
- More Aboriginal homes
- Attitudes and perceptions
- No intervention without advocacy, dialogue, connections.
- Invest in early prevention



Question 5: What else can be done?

- Advocacy for people, community involvement
- Children need to understand
- Elder involvement
- Family/community connections
- Understanding of cultural system/beliefs/values/ community/nation
- Build resiliency within natural support system, family, friends and community
- Inform family during investigation, prior to decision. Give them a chance to provide input or placement.



Vignette #2

Cultural Connections for Children in Care

Sweetgrass Hoof

Hello. I'm not really good at this. I've never spoken in front of a huge crowd before, so it's my first time. I ended up in foster care at the early age of eight. This is because my mother was an alcoholic and my father was never there for me. I never really felt a sense of belonging anywhere. This was a time that my foster family, Louann and Jerry, made me feel so welcome. I felt so honoured to be with them. I will forever owe them for everything they've done for me. They helped me graduate. I've now moved out, I have my own car and I got my driver's—and it's all because of them.

"I felt so honoured to be with [my foster family]. I will forever owe them for everything they've done for me.."

At age 14, I started a wonderful new connection with my grandma, the lady in the blue right there. Because of Children Services I was able to start this connection. They gave me the resources, they gave me the opportunity, and they gave me the courage to go and meet my family again.

My grandma's the most beautiful person and strongest person I know. She has taught me a great deal. She taught me how to make bannock, she taught me my cultural beliefs, she taught me how to speak some

Blackfoot, and because of her my culture is able to carry on. My grandma always told me that I had to be strong like the buffalo because the buffalo, no matter what storm they're in, no matter the weather, they kept carrying on.

It is because of Children Services that my support system has doubled. They gave me a bus ticket every month to go visit my grandma and I look forward to that every time. And even in the summers I was able to visit my grandma for a whole month. And those were my fondest memories. Thank you for taking the time to listen to me today. It's been an honour.



Sweetgrass Hoof was raised in the care of Child and Family Services in Alberta. She has lived on her own since June 2010 when she graduated from high school. She is currently working full-time and her future plans include attending college in the field of Forestry.

Sweetgrass loves sports; she was active in soccer and basketball throughout her junior and senior high years.

Circle Discussion

Question 1: What works?

- Important to remain connected
- Look to band designate for resources available and build connections with Bands
- Be made aware of resources that are available
- Resolve barriers and listen to one another
- Be non-judgmental
- Recruit more foster parents on Reserve.



Vignette #2: Cultural Connections for Children In Care—con't.

Question 2: What doesn't work?

- Important to remain connected
- Lack of connection with Bands
- Lack of knowledge about available resources
- Inability to resolve barriers and listen to one another
- Judgmental attitudes
- Lack of foster parents on reserve.



Question 3: What needs to change?

- Education on Cultural connection - for workers, foster parents and Ministry
- Need more of these stories, giving thanks for the things that went well in her life.
- Region to have more contact with Aboriginal communities
- Workloads and staff turnover in respect to social workers
- Working together to move forward
- More connection to family
- Stable placements needed

Question 4: What else can be done?

- Direct family teachings
- Break the barrier– identify point person for Métis and First Nations people
- Stories within the process - gather, share stories
- Pass on what we know.
- Validate importance of relationships



Vignette #3

Casework Experiences in Bridging Culture

Bernadette Cardinal

My name is Bernadette Cardinal. I have to say I have more experience working with DFNA agencies. I started out in 2004 and I worked with Big Stone; that's my home community, Wabasca. And then I worked with Regional Council for probably about six years. I guess I had an agenda written out what I wanted to say but I wasn't sure if that was what was going to come up because the words that I give you or share with you are not from me. They're from the Creator that I have to share something with you so I'm playing it by ear.

I've only been with Region 7 since July of last year. I've noticed a lot of differences. I think there is a big difference between being a provincial worker and a DFNA worker. Being an Aboriginal person it's easy for me to work on a reserve. I'm with my people. On the first day of work with the province I went to the office, I felt I didn't belong there because I'm native and there's mostly white workers. And I wasn't even sure if I should say White, Caucasian, non-Aboriginal. There's one I won't even say it. But I didn't feel I belonged there. It's part of my Aboriginal-ness but I can fit in anywhere most of the time.



As an Aboriginal case worker one of the favourite things I like

“One of the favourite things I like about being Aboriginal and working in the back lakes, the language, I can speak Cree.... And the thing about the Cree language, it's very, very emotional.”

about being Aboriginal and working in the back lakes, the language, I can speak Cree. I have one of my kids on my case load, he speaks better Cree than I do but we have an awesome, awesome conversation. And the thing about the Cree language, it's very, very emotional. He can relate how he feels better in Cree than you would in English and you can connect – a feeling that you know you connect to this child.

The other thing too that really bothers me as an Aboriginal person, the standards that we tend to place. I don't know if it's conscious or subconscious, however it is. We will use a negative term like 'rez standards.' The standards on the reserve are less than us off reserve, which shouldn't even be a case.

One of the things I was talking with Darise about last night, was because she's white and I'm Native, if she was going to the rez to apprehend they would not be as receptive to her as opposed to me. I was saying to her that because you're non-Aboriginal you already have that against you going to the reserve. You already have that block. When they see you, they don't like you. As an Aboriginal person they're still not going to like me because I'm in child welfare and nobody wants child welfare in their face but they will talk to you. Maybe they'll be more willing to talk to you than they would a non-Aboriginal and I think one of the ways to fix that is to come and do stuff on the reserve with the DFNAs. It's always like the DFNAs fight harder for their children. We should be working harder with the DFNAs to help them get their children back to their families.

Bernadette Cardinal is a Caseworker with the Slave Lake Office of North Central Alberta Child and Family Services of Alberta (CFSA). Bernadette completed her Bachelor of Social Work in 2004 with the University of Calgary. She began her role with the Slave Lake CFSA Office in July 2011.

Bernadette has seven years experience, working with Kee Tas Kee Now Child and Family Services (KTC) Tribal Council – Child and Family Services, Bigstone Child and Family Services and Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council – Child Welfare Program. She began her career working with community agencies such as Brighter Futures, Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) and the Food Bank. Bernadette is a Band Member of the Bigstone Cree Nation, the mother of five children, with one child at home and is currently raising two of her grandchildren.

Continued...

Continued from previous page

The other thing was for me, was the cultural aspect. It is not easy to define culture. One family might be more in to Christianity than sweat lodge. I had a family that said, 'do not teach my kids about the jingle dress or the sweat lodge, we go to the Pentecostal or the Born Again, a religion, not sweat,' and you have to respect that because these children are not in care forever. There should be training for defining culture - coming from the family you're working with, not us. We do not define culture. That's not our role I think.

The other thing that I thought of when I was saying 'rez standards', and how we grew up, it came up this morning where there are family beds and there are two-room homes and who are we to say, okay we have this policy that this child can only be one child in one room or two children in one room. We just accommodate what works for that family. When we're looking at kinship we shouldn't be creating blocks.

As an Aboriginal woman and caseworker, social worker, my personal experiences help me to be who I am as a caseworker. I do believe there should be more Aboriginal caseworkers in the Region for sure. And maybe they should get paid more because they have more knowledge. Thank you for listening.

Circle Discussion

Forum participants were asked to consider the casework experience in bridging culture. They discussed several questions and the following comments summarize their responses:

Question 1: What works?

- Knowing a family's cultural beliefs/values/traditions
- Don't assume, check it out
- Educate/learn about culture/community before hand
- Emotional connectedness to language is critical and therapeutic
- Understand how people/cultures learn/teach
- Be patient - slow down, listen with heart
- Learn, build relationships
- Open minded
- Good balance of positive/negative
- Cultural defined by family
- Aboriginal frontline/supervisors/managers and CEO's
- Learn culture from within

Vignette #3

Casework Experiences in Bridging Culture ~con't.

Question 2: What doesn't work?

- Impatience
- Systemic prejudice/discrimination
- Assumptions
- Too much emphasis on negatives
- Too much talking, not enough doing.
- Policy barriers
- Practice barriers



Question 3: What needs to change?

- Aboriginal awareness education for children/ foster parents/caseworkers
- Positive Aboriginal role models (professionals)
- Better connections (caseworkers not always the best)
- Focus on engagement/connections of the family as a whole to their community
- Greater time to complete home studies, 60-90 days.
- More out-of-the box-thinking
- Greater use of community resources



Question 4: What else can be done?

- Supports for parents who have kids in care.
- Recognize everyone has own culture and ask the family
- Resource booklet on available resources
- Connect to Band Designate
- Relationship building between DFNA and CFSA
- Whole team should attend Band consults to build relationships
- Call Band members when apprehending
- Training for caseworkers on Aboriginal perspectives
- Recruit Aboriginal staff and maintain standards
- Grandparents' programs
 - Support
 - More Aboriginal homes for children
 - Networks and team work
 - Education
- Culture to be defined by the family
- Caseworker participating in cultural events
- Capacity building around culture
- More supports for Aboriginal workers.
- Stress the importance of language
- Same point of entry, same goals, common ground.
- Focus on building positive rapport and relationships between DFNA and CFSA

Voices of Youth



The Métis Settlement Youth Network Society is represented by youth from the eight settlements in Alberta and those who live off settlement. These youth are TAPWE warrior facilitators or are being mentored for training.

As a collective group, they have made it their mission to ensure Aboriginal young people have a voice in issues that relate to their experience. They are the voice of prevention of family violence and bullying and lateral violence in their communities. They have provided leadership in presentations on issues such as youth suicide, racism, children in care and drinking and driving.

MSYNS also believes in being contributors to their communities and have raised funds for victims of the devastating wildfires that decimated their communities.

These youth discussed barriers such as the lack of opportunities on settlement as well as not having the opportunity to express opinions, and self esteem issues.

Cody Chalifoux, Delaney Cunningham, Kelli Cunningham, Ryan Hansen, Greg Patenaude, Waylon Sparklingeyes and Tori Stuart were present at the Forum to share their personal stories with the group. The stories they shared included drugs, addictions, poverty, gangs, racism and abuse. To respect their privacy, we have not include their individual testimonials in this document.

We are grateful to them for their honesty and candor during the discussions. Their words resonated deeply with all participants.

Cultural Showcase





With Dance MC Lillian Gadwa, attendees were taken through some of the history and types of Pow Wow dancing. Autumn, Janessa, Jayda, Kenneth and Rayden regaled audiences with their wonderful and difficult dance routines.

Not to be outdone, Metis fiddler, Colton Bear, provided a musical repertoire that had everyone clapping their hands and tapping their toes. Some participants could not help themselves and started to jig.

The cultural showcase was the perfect ending to a day dedicated to the Aboriginal people in North Central Alberta and all of Alberta.



Cultural Showcase—con't.

The Métis Sash

Waylon Sparklingeyes from the Métis Settlements Youth Network Society shared the story of the Métis sash and what it represents to the Métis people.

The sash is an important cultural symbol to the Métis people. The three-metre long finger-woven cloth is worn ceremoniously by men as a belt and women as a sash,

The original Métis sash is made distinct by its identifying colours—red and white represents the union of two cultures. The blue depicts the sky and water; green represents fertility and growth; and yellow depicts the sun.

Sashes are often presented as special gifts to honour a person or his or her accomplishments.



Waylon Sparklingeyes



Sandra Bracegirdle, Casework supervisor from North Central Alberta CFSA in Cold Lake shared a collection of her family's personal items. Handmade items, photographs, and more were on display in the foyer of the hotel.

Closing Prayer

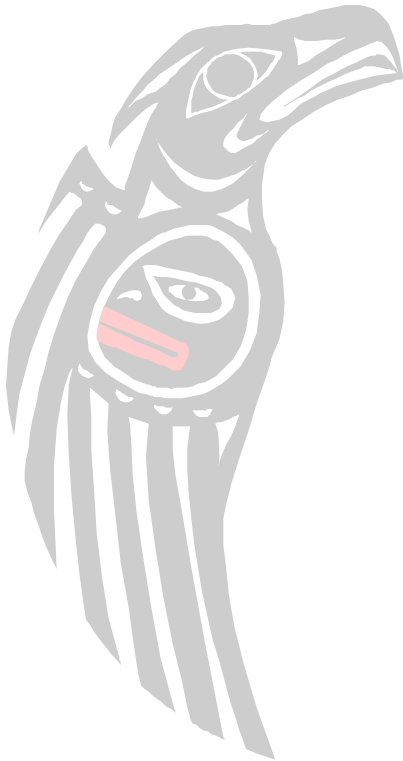


Elder Linda Boudreau-Semaganis

Elder Linda Boudreau-Semaganis

I'd like everybody to get up off your chairs. We probably all have bannock butts from sitting down. So if you could form a circle and just hold hands and we'll try and strengthen that circle of helping and looking toward better futures for not only our children but our families and our elders and our workers because being a social worker is not easy either. And many of us that sit in the community, Joanne wants a round dance. It's not easy so I'd just like to ask that on one hand you give and on the other hand you receive so that all the good energy, send it to each of us. And I'm not going to use the mike to pray. You'll hear my anyway. I'm a mother and a grandmother and I'm used to yelling.

“Creator of grandmothers and grandfathers I give thanks for the sharing, the honour and the respect that was shown here today. For all the words that people had to share in their thoughts and the emotional sharing from those young people whose courage and bravery never cease to amaze me.



And I ask Creator to bless them and bless their path in life so that they can have success and that their journey will be easier from here on in. I give thanks for all the workers who work so hard out there to try to do the best they can for the children. And I pray for our parents, the parents of all those children because sometimes they're powerless over their addiction and powerless over their behaviour. And we pray that one day they'll wake up and honour that gift that they were loaned because we never know for how long those gifts are loaned to us. Creator I ask that you open the roads for all those that have to travel today so that they'll get to their home fire safe. And that you take care of all those who are dealing with losses and grief and sadness and the hungry and homeless. And know that we give thanks for the good life that we are living.”

Resources

8th Fire—Web Resource: <http://www.cbc.ca/doczone/8thfire/index.html>

Aboriginal People Fact Sheet: http://www.aboriginal.alberta.ca/documents/AboriginalPeople_FactSheet.pdf

A Literature Review and Annotated Bibliography on Aspects of Aboriginal Child Welfare in Canada: http://www.cecw-cepb.ca/sites/default/files/publications/en/AboriginalCWLitReview_2ndEd.pdf (*Please note this article is approximately 250 pages.*)

Chances are it's Aboriginal! http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/DAM/DAM-INTER-HQ/STAGING/texte-text/ach_lr_ks_rrds_fd_1302786193164_eng.pdf

Delegated First Nations Agencies Map: http://www.child.alberta.ca/home/documents/DFNA/DFNA_Map.pdf

First Nations in Alberta: http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/DAM/DAM-INTER-AB/STAGING/texte-text/fnamarch11_1315587933961_eng.pdf

First Nations Music: http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/DAM/DAM-INTER-HQ/STAGING/texte-text/ach_lr_ks_rrds_mus_1302786312987_eng.pdf

Guide to Aboriginal Organizations and Services in Alberta: http://www.aboriginal.alberta.ca/documents/2011_AboriginalOrganizationGuide.pdf

Metis Settlements and First Nations In Alberta: Community Profiles: http://www.aboriginal.alberta.ca/documents/2011_MetisSettlementProfile.pdf

My summer on the Pow-wow Trail: http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/DAM/DAM-INTER-HQ/STAGING/texte-text/ach_lr_ks_rrds_pw_1302786718875_eng.pdf

Acknowledgements

“All Our Relations” Forum Planners

Pauline Cardinal, Co-Chair – Casework Supervisor, Slave Lake
Bonda Thompson, Co-Chair – Manager, North Central Alberta CFSA

Caleb Anacker, Caseworker, North Central Alberta CFSA
Elden Block, Senior Manager, North Central Alberta CFSA
Sandra Bracegirdle, Casework Supervisor, North Central Alberta CFSA
Kathleen Gadwa, Director, Tribal Chief Child and Family Services East Society
Kara Jackson, Caseworker, North Central Alberta CFSA
Peggy Kosheiff, Executive Assistant, North Central Alberta CFSA
Teri Lepard, Field Operations Unit (Department)
Shawn Miller, Manager, North Central Alberta CFSA
Joy Ohashi, Senior Manager, Métis Settlements CFSA
Lillian Parenteau, CEO, Métis Settlements CFSA
David Rideout, CEO, North Central Alberta CFSA
Jennifer Ruthenburg, Caseworker, North Central Alberta CFSA
Charity Wallace, Communications Coordinator, North Central Alberta CFSA
Jo-Ann Woloshyniuk, Manager, Métis Nation of Alberta
Valerie Wood, Director, Wah-Koh-To-Win Child Care Society, Saddle Lake

Special thanks to:

Bev Ducharme, Accounting Officer, North Central Alberta CFSA
Annabell Van Zalen, Administrative Assistant, North Central Alberta CFSA



(Left to right) Dr. David Rideout, CEO of North Central Alberta CFSA presents Pauline Cardinal, Caleb Anacker and Bonda Thompson with a small token of appreciation for their hard work and dedication in making the “All Our Relations” Aboriginal Forum such a success.



Please look for the forum video on YouTube:
All Our Relations Aboriginal Forum.



NORTH CENTRAL ALBERTA
CHILD AND FAMILY SERVICES AUTHORITY

Regional Authority Office

Box 4742

2nd Floor, Administration Building

5143 - 50th Street

Barrhead, AB T7N 1A6

Phone: (780) 305-2440

www.northcentralalbertacfsa.gov.ab.ca

Alberta