



# URBAN ABORIGINAL KNOWLEDGE NETWORK

WWW.UAKN.ORG

## NEWSLETTER

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## **UAKN Network Developments**

***Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network—Research for a Better Life***

The Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network (UAKN) is a national network comprised of urban Aboriginal communities, policy makers and academics, engaging in community driven research with the goal of contributing to a better quality of life for urban Aboriginal people. The UAKN national network provides a different type of partnership by developing stronger relationships, through a community driven process.

The UAKN Secretariat been busy gathering updates over the summer from all the UAKN research projects. We are pleased to announce that as we enter year three of the five year project the UAKN has 27 Research Projects to report on. We are excited to highlight these projects on our new and improved website.

Regional Executive Committees represent the heart of the research in their regions. They are responsible to oversee and monitor the regional research projects in their regions. The centres are comprised of practitioners, academics, representatives of urban Aboriginal communities and government policy makers. Each centre is responsible for planning projects, broadening stakeholder engagement and ensuring knowledge exchange is taking place in their region of Canada. A large focus on the Network Council's discussion is bringing together ideas on a national scope UAKN project. The UAKN is now in the beginning stages to implement a national scope project ti-

tled, "Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network's National Project: The Urban Aboriginal Service Delivery Landscape: Themes, Trends, Gaps and Prospects". More information on the request for proposal can be found in this newsletter and on our website at [www.uakn.org](http://www.uakn.org).

The UAKN Secretariat is also busy planning for the upcoming UAKN Aboriginal Circle and Network Council meeting being held in Ottawa, November 26-28, 2014. These meetings will provide an opportunity for members to meet and discuss about the research that is occurring across their regions, discuss the UAKN National Project implementation and how the UAKN can further mobilize this knowledge with stakeholders, policy makers, researchers, community partners and academics.



Follow us on Twitter at:  
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Aboriginal Knowledge  
Network**

For more information on the UAKN  
Network Council please visit:  
[www.uakn.org](http://www.uakn.org)

# UAKN Regional Research Events Coming Up!

## UAKN Atlantic Research Centre Meet and Greet in Nova Scotia – October 16<sup>th</sup>, 2014

The UAKN Atlantic Research Centre will host a meet and greet that is co-hosted by the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre and the Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network (UAKN) Atlantic Research Centre. This is an opportunity to learn about community-driven urban Aboriginal research and UAKN Atlantic funding opportunities. To learn more visit:

<http://uakn.org/atlantic-research-centre-nova-scotia-meet-greet/>

## UAKN Western Research Centre Symposium in Prince George, BC – October 17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup>, 2014

University of British Columbia (UNBC) is hosting a conference on October 17-18, 2014 along with the Prince George Native Friendship Centre as a co-organizer. This conference will look at research with Aboriginal communities and community based research. Members of Aboriginal communities and academics will attend.

Stay tuned for more information by visiting the UAKN website at: [www.uakn.org](http://www.uakn.org).

## UAKN Aboriginal Circle and Network Council Meeting in Ottawa, Ontario - November 26-28<sup>th</sup>, 2014

Stay tuned for more information by visiting the UAKN website at: [www.uakn.org](http://www.uakn.org)

### UAKN Regional Research Centres:

For more information on the RRC projects, contact information, and research summaries please visit our Regional Research Centres webpage at:

<http://uakn.org/research-centres/>

# New and Improved UAKN Website!

The UAKN is pleased to announce the launch of our new and improved website. The UAKN website has been revamped to be more user friendly and interactive. We invite you to look at the new tools and functions. To visit the site, go to: [www.uakn.org](http://www.uakn.org).

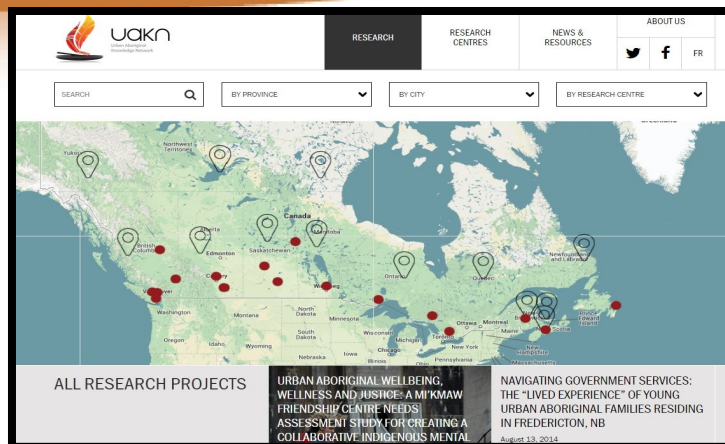
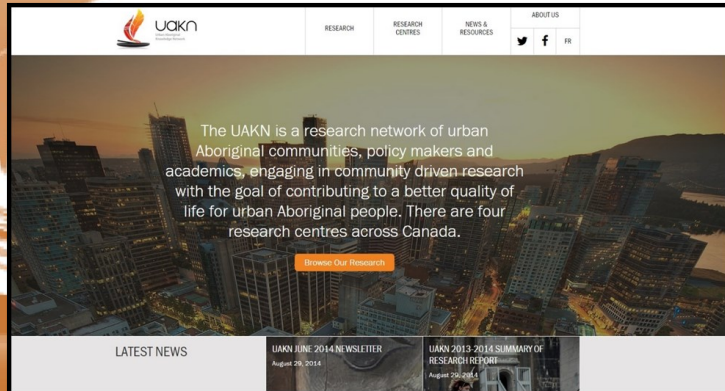
A new feature of the UAKN website is that each project has its own page where we can post the abstract, final papers when ready, facts and other relevant information. All these projects can be searched through our new UAKN Research Map tool. The UAKN Research Maps tool also features the latest statistics from the 2012 Aboriginal Peoples Survey and the 2011 National Household Survey. The APS is a national survey of First Nations people living off reserve, Métis and Inuit aged six years and over and the 2011 National Household Survey (NHS) data is a new survey which replaces the long census questionnaire.

For more information on 2012, APS data visit:

<http://bit.ly/1x1Zx2h>

For more information on the 2011, NHS data visit:

<http://bit.ly/1rrYmWK>



*The UAKN would like to thank all the hard work of the Regional Research Centres.*

# UAKN Prairie Research Centre Update

## Spotlight on the Community: Defining Food Security for Urban Aboriginal People

Researchers Dr. Jaime Cidro (University of Winnipeg) and Tabitha Martens (University of Manitoba graduate student) are in the final stages of data collection for Phase 2 of their project on Indigenous food sovereignty and "upskilling" in Winnipeg as a part of the Prairie Research Centre.

The cultural food research series has finished five of the six focus group sessions. Each session began with a food demonstration around cultural food growing, harvesting, and processing and was followed by a focus group to discuss whether this new knowledge has resulted in shifts in their consciousness around access to cultural food in the city.

The food demonstrations and focus groups have focused on: planting three sisters, cooking with bison, fishing and filleting, reinventing bannock and wild teas. Participants in the workshops are community members from the north end of Winnipeg and program participants from the Indian and Metis Friendship Centre and North End Food Security Network who are both partners in the project.



*Participants in the "Fishing in the City" focus group session  
Photo Credit: Jesse Vanderhart*

As one respondent said in the focus group: *"I've been trying to eat, to live healthier and go back and to live a good life so glad I joined this, when I heard about this I was like 'Yes, sign me up!'"*



*Participants in the "Fishing in the City" focus group session  
Photo Credit: Jesse Vanderhart*

Phase 1 of the Indigenous food sovereignty project is complete and the final paper can be found online at:

<http://uakn.org/research-project/winnipeg-research-project/>

*This article was authored by Dr. Jaime Cidro and Tabitha Martens*

## Does your community want to get involved with UAKN Research?

### UAKN Research Themes

- 1-Human Development:** needs and outcomes of individuals and families;
- 2-Social Cohesion:** community well-being, education, justice;
- 3-Economic Development:** economic participation, education & skills development, employment, entrepreneurship, income; and
- 4-Civic Engagement:** urban Aboriginal councils and/or urban Aboriginal community organizations role in the city and with other local organizations.

We will also come to your community and present on the UAKN through coordination with our Regional Partners.

To learn more or to discuss community opportunities, please contact Pam Quart at (613) 563-4844 ext 328, toll free at 1-877-563-4844 or by email at to [pouart@nafc.ca](mailto:pouart@nafc.ca)

# UAKN Western Research Centre Update

## Spotlight on the Community: Kindergarten Transitions II: A Scan of Existing Supportive Programs for Aboriginal Children and Families in British Columbia (2014)



For many children and their families, transitions from early childhood settings to Kindergarten are filled with both excitement and apprehension. Tillicum Lelum Aboriginal Friendship Centre (TLAFC) in Nanaimo, BC wanted to understand the issues and challenges experienced by Aboriginal children, families and their educators with regard to the shift from home and child care settings to kindergarten. TLAFC believed that considering these issues more fully would inform the agency's plan to develop a program that would support healthy and happy transitions and strengthen communication between home and school over the long term. TLAFC partnered with Vancouver Island University's BC Regional Innovation Chair for Aboriginal Early Childhood Development (BCRIC for AECD) to examine Canadian and international literature on the subject. The *Transition into Kindergarten: A Community Approach to Integrating a Child's Fragmented World* (2013) provided highlights of the importance of healthy early childhood development, explored the literature on the early transition from home/child care to kindergarten and the related issues, and discussed in particular the considerations for Aboriginal children, their families, and their educators related to transitions into the school system. As well, the discussion paper provided recommendations for TLAFC and their community partners as they pursued the development of the new transition program.

Immediately following the completion of this first Transitions project, TLAFC Centre and VIU's BCRIC for AECD recognized that while they had provided a review of the key literature on the topic they still were not clear

about what programs were available in BC to support Aboriginal children and families experiencing transitions to school. The Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network funded a second project that would build on the earlier work. *Kindergarten Transitions II: A Scan of Existing Supportive Programs for Aboriginal Children and Families in British Columbia* (2014) investigated the existence of transition programs.

The project methodology included an initial on-line scan of programs and subsequent telephone interviews with the administrators of those programs that met specific criteria, that is that programs were: focused on supporting children as they transition from childcare or home settings into kindergarten; serving Aboriginal children and their families; and located in urban centres (outside of reserve communities). Additional programs were also identified by word of mouth. For example, interview participants were asked if they knew of programs meeting those criteria and follow up calls were made. In total fourteen interviews were documented and data collated and analyzed.



*Child Participant in the Kindergarten Transitions Project*

In summary, findings reinforced the importance of: building and strengthening communication across *all* stakeholders at *all* stages of planning, development and implementation; family-centred approaches; culturally inclusive approaches throughout the program including language, cultural and traditional knowledge and practice; play-based learning; joint professional development activities for both school teachers and Early Childhood Educators; and developing collaborative approaches to related policy development for all settings. While the number of transition programs (specifically for Aboriginal children and their families) appeared to be limited, the conversations in which researchers and interview participants engaged further reinforced the critical importance of developing good quality transition programs for children and their families. These programs can provide vital opportunities to both support healthy, holistic child development and set the stage for ongoing, meaningful, and culturally sensitive engagement between families and their children's teachers.

*Documents (authored by Wendy Beaton & Linda McDonnell) summarizing both Transitions projects are available on-line at <http://www.viu.ca/chairaecd> and <http://www.tillicumlelum.ca/research-publications.html>.*

# New NAFC-Pathways-PEKE Project!

An exciting new project that has been underway at the NAFC is the NAFC-Pathways-PEKE Project! The PEKE is a part of the Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR) signature initiative Pathways to Health Equity for Aboriginal Peoples. The goal of the Pathways initiative is to develop a better understanding of how to design, launch and scale-up interventions in four exemplar areas: suicide, tuberculosis, diabetes/obesity and oral health.

The goal of the NAFC-Pathways-PEKE is to ensure that Friendship Centres are meaningfully and ethically engaged throughout the course of the Pathways initiative.

To ensure this, the NAFC will focus on the following:

**Building community capacity to partner in Pathways research.**

**Building capacity of community to turn research into action by supporting the development and implementation of community specific knowledge mobilization plans.**

**Building researcher capacity to understand and respect the urban Aboriginal research environment.**

**Brokering and supporting research relationships between Friendship Centres and IRTs.**

**Promoting urban Aboriginal research opportunities among post-secondary students.**

**Supporting and facilitating the scale-up of interventions.**

**Contributing to knowledge translation and dissemination activities.**

The NAFC-Pathways-PEKE will impact Friendship Centres in two key ways. First, through their participation in Pathways related activities Friendship Centres will be in a position to guide research and leverage findings to advocate for additional program and service funding. Second, Friendship Centres will have the opportunity to develop or increase their capacity to participate in and/or conduct research within their communities.

**For more information visit:**

<http://nafc.ca/urban-aboriginal-knowledge-network/nafcepe/>

Catherine Graham  
NAFC-PEKE Manager  
National Association of Friendship Centres  
[CGraham@nafc.ca](mailto:CGraham@nafc.ca)

## How to get involved in UAKN Research?

At the UAKN, we believe community driven research is truly innovative and we are always looking to expand our network, to partner Aboriginal organizations with academics and to include government decision makers as best possible. Our best partners are Friendship Centres and other Aboriginal community based organizations. We encourage you to contact us if you have any research you wish to conduct to leverage your centre or organization with public and private sector funding opportunities.

To learn more or to discuss community opportunities, please contact Pam Quart at (613) 563-4844 ext 328, toll free at 1-877-563-4844 or by email at to [pouart@nafc.ca](mailto:pouart@nafc.ca)

**To subscribe to the UAKN newsletter:**

Send an email to: [uakn@nafc.ca](mailto:uakn@nafc.ca)

## Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network

275 MacLaren Street  
Ottawa, ON K2P 0L9  
Tel: (613) 563 - 4844  
Fax: (613) 594 - 3428



National Association  
of Friendship Centres  
Association nationale  
des centres d'amitié



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