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Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network | Réseau de connaissances des Autochtones en milieu urbain
Western Research Centre

Final Paper

Giving Voice to Urban Aboriginal Families

UAKN Western Regional Research Centre

Authors and Affiliations:

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The Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network, the UAKN, is a community driven research network focused on the Urban Aboriginal population in Canada. The UAKN establishes a national, interdisciplinary network involving universities, community, and government partners for research, scholarship and knowledge mobilization. For more information visit: www.uakn.org



Social Sciences and Humanities
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Canada



Final report

Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network (UAKN)

Title: Giving Voice to Urban Aboriginal Families

Authors and Affiliations:

- Beverly Smith, Adjunct Professor, Department of Psychology, University of Victoria
- Suzanne Jackson, Aboriginal Engagement Coordinator, Success By 6 (south Vancouver Island)
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- Helen Raptis, Associate Dean, Faculty of Education, University of Victoria
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Background:

Recent reports by Indigenous and government organizations have identified the urgent need to preserve cultural identity for Indigenous children and families.

In the South Vancouver Island – Early Years Action Plan 2015-2020 the need for articulating the urban Aboriginal voice has been identified as a priority:

It is important to acknowledge that Aboriginal children and families living in urban settings can and should help contribute to the vision of services offered in the capital region as many of these families are or could be accessing a range of non Aboriginal services.

In the report of the BC Aboriginal Child Care Society (BCACCS), An Environmental Scan of Public Policy and Programs for Young Aboriginal Child in BC: a Cold Wind Blows (2014) it states:

The population of Aboriginal children in BC is growing at a faster rate than that of other children ... this growth means that it is more crucial than ever to develop culturally appropriate ECDC, education, health and social services (BC Stats 2006 Census Fast Facts).

The Premier of BC has identified the need for improvement in the services delivered for Aboriginal ECDC. The Guiding Principles of the Child, Family and Community Services Act state:

Aboriginal people should be involved in the planning and delivery of services to Aboriginal children and their families ... The cultural identity of Aboriginal children should be preserved

www.bclaws.ca/civix/document/id/complete/strategy/960460_1

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada states:

We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate early childhood education programs for Aboriginal families (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Call for Action section

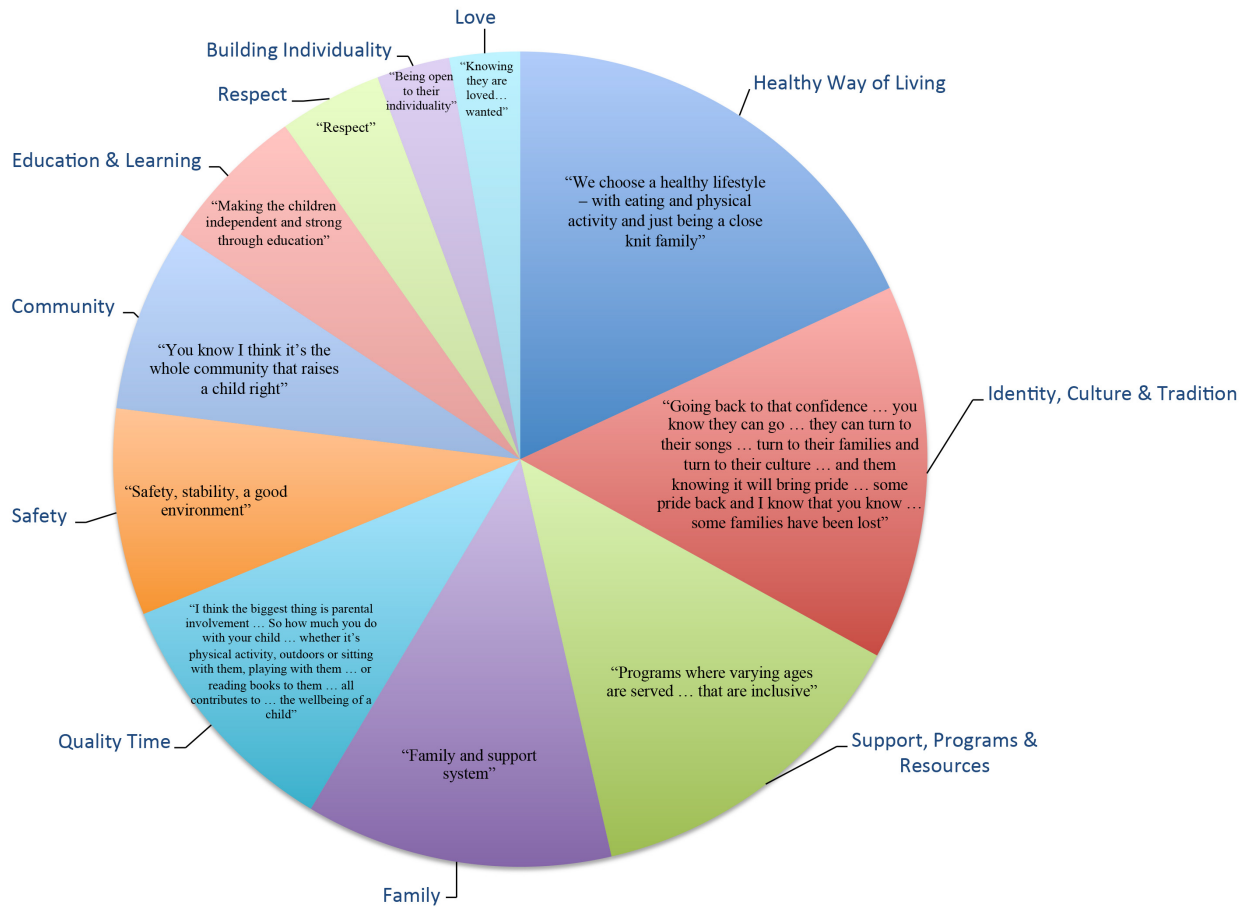
http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Call_to_Action_English2.pdf)

Objectives:

The objective of this research was to give voice to the values and beliefs of those most directly involved with young Indigenous children, to articulate their values and beliefs about the well-being of their children.

Engagement with the Community:

Interviews were held in community. 108 individuals, raising or working directly with young (0-6 yrs), Indigenous children across southern Vancouver Island, were asked what contributed to the well-being of their young children. Their responses (846) were sorted by 5 community members. The themes identified and representative quotes for each theme are shown below:



A film depicting these themes, *Echoes of First Nations and Métis Values*, can be viewed at <http://aboriginalearlyyears.ca>

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