APPENDIX A Literature Review

Let's Get It Right: A Literature Review of Cultural Considerations, Tools and Programs for Aboriginal Children in Care

Appendix A Part 1 forms part of the report titled,

"LET'S GET IT RIGHT:
CREATING A CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE TRAINING MODULE
AND IDENTIFYING LOCAL URBAN ABORIGINAL RESOURCES
FOR NON-ABORIGINAL CAREGIVERS OF ABORIGINAL CHILDREN
IN NEW BRUNSWICK"

2018

Let's Get It Right: A Literature Review of Cultural Considerations, Tools and Programs for Aboriginal Children in Care

For

UAKN Atlantic Research Centre

By

Dr. Hilary Harrop Archibald

November 2017

Table of Contents

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

1 Introduction to Literature Review

This literature review is part of a larger project aimed at determining what social workers and non-Aboriginal foster parents need to know, and practices they should be aspiring to, around Aboriginal child apprehension and placement in care in New Brunswick. Thus this review focuses on cultural considerations for Aboriginal children in care and includes academic literature, grey literature and the Internet. The potential scope of the subject makes a thorough examination of all sources impossible. However, by examining many sources of information from a wide range of Aboriginal agencies, government groups, and academic researchers across Canada, it is possible to identify trends and gaps in service delivery, and provide an overview of the types of tools and programs available to address key issues. Notably, many of the tools and approaches listed in this review are not mutually exclusive. Further, most of the case studies come from four provinces (Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and BC) because this is where the vast majority of Canadian Aboriginal people live, and where the most progressive and abundant research/ literature is coming from.

2 Background on Aboriginal Children in Care

2.1 Child Welfare and Aboriginal Agencies

Government run child welfare agencies across Canada are struggling to find adequate policy, practice, and resources to better serve Aboriginal (Métis, First Nations and Inuit) children, families, and communities (Rousseau 2015). Each province has its own child welfare legislation (Sinha and Kozlowski 2013), and the resulting policies and practices as they apply to Aboriginal children across Canada are highly variable (Appendix A). Over the past decade, many Aboriginal leaders, communities and organizations have strongly advocated for reclaiming jurisdiction over their children's welfare. This is considered a necessary step towards safeguarding their cultural heritage which has been shaken by the impacts of colonization, the legacy of residential schools, and intervention by the mainstream child welfare system (Ferris et al. 2005). Although outside the scope of this report, there is extensive documentation addressing the systemic abuse and oppression of Aboriginal children which has resulted in intergenerational trauma and the ongoing overrepresentation of Aboriginal children and families within child welfare systems (e.g. Bennett and Blackstock 2002, Ball 2008). Further, there are a wealth of resources (Appendix B) available to help better understand both the past and contemporary impacts of the residential school system and the mainstream child welfare system on Aboriginal families and communities (Irvine 2009).

One of the most common service delivery models for Aboriginal children involves the transfer of responsibilities described under provincial or territorial child welfare legislation from a province or territory to an Aboriginal child welfare agency (Sinha and Kozlowski 2013). Many Aboriginal communities in Canada now have delegated Aboriginal agencies to deliver child welfare services through the Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) program (Rousseau 2015). Two types of Aboriginal agencies are in place: delegated Aboriginal agencies, which are governed by Aboriginal bands and associated with reserves, and which receive federal funding; and delegated Urban Aboriginal agencies, which are governed by independent Aboriginal boards, are not associated with reserves, and which receive provincial funding only (Rousseau 2015). In both cases, responsibilities can be transferred incrementally to Aboriginal agencies (Sinha and Kozlowski 2013), with the most formal system for transfer in BC (Appendix C). Notably, although the Aboriginal band or Aboriginal community assumes

governance responsibility, they remain bound to provincial or territorial legislation (Sinha and Kozlowski 2013). As the Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Child and Family Caring Society and other Aboriginal groups point out, there are many inadequacies in the FNCFS program, including reliance on mainstream provincial legislation, policy, standards and grossly inadequate funding structures (Rousseau 2015). These Aboriginal organizations continue to advocate for autonomous Aboriginal child welfare structures that reflect relevant cultural practice, policies, and standards and equitable funding (Rousseau 2015).

2.2   Urban Aboriginal Services

Urban Aboriginal peoples have been identified as the fastest growing segment of the Canadian population (Statistics Canada 2011). Although the numbers vary province to province, according to the census of the population done by Statitics Canada in 2016, 79.7% of the Aboriginal population in Canada lives off-reserve, and 74.6% of the Aboriginal population in New Brunswick lives off-reserve. A relatively recent surge of government studies, round table discussion groups, surveys, and reviews by social action organizations have revealed a startling lack of employment, health, housing, educational and social services designed to meet the needs of urban Aboriginal people (Irvine et al. 2004). Designing targeted services and programs for this population is further compounded by the considerable diversity that exists within the group as evidenced in the assortment of languages, cultural practices, legal status, ancestry, spiritual beliefs, political ideologies and social concerns associated with Aboriginal people in urban areas (Irvine et al. 2004). This situation is compounded by the fact that urban Aboriginal peoples are more mobile than the general Canadian population; Aboriginal peoples are more likely to move frequently, not only from a reserve to an urban area, but between urban areas (Blackstock and Child 2004). A lack of a permanent address or phone number makes it difficult to access services with waiting lists, such as subsidized day-care and housing, and it makes it difficult to establish trusted service relationships and social support networks (Blackstock and Child 2004).

There was an Aboriginal Children's Survey done between 2006 and 2007 with Aboriginal people living off-reserve (Statistics Canada 2008). This study found that many persons, including extended family and community members, are involved in raising young Aboriginal children. For example, among children under the age of six years old, 67% of First Nations children living off reserve, 69% of Métis, and 71% of Inuit received focused attention from their grandparents at least once a week. Furthermore, 26% of First Nations children, 24% of Métis children, and 35% of Inuit children received focused attention from Elders at least once a week (Statistics Canada 2008). That said, there is a very clear over representation of urban Aboriginal children in foster care. Unfortunately there is very little data available on the nature and extent of culturally appropriate services for Aboriginal families who come into contact with the child welfare authorities off reserve (Blackstock and Trocmé 2005).

2.3   Over Representation of Aboriginal Children in Care

Clearly, keeping a record of how many off-reserve and on-reserve Aboriginal children are in care is essential for understanding the depth and scope of the situation (Jodoin 2017). However, it is difficult to identify the number of Aboriginal children in care in Canada; accurate figures are not available because there is no nationally consistent method of counting children in care (McKenzie et al. 2009). Another key barrier to tracking the number of Aboriginal children in foster care is the difficulty of identifying Aboriginal children off-reserve; If the child looks visibly Aboriginal, or if the family name is recognizably Aboriginal, then the service provider may know, but many Aboriginal

children may not be visibly Aboriginal or have a traditionally Aboriginal name (Jodoin 2017). That said, available figures indicate that approximately 40% of the children and youth placed in out of home care in Canada are Aboriginal (Farris-Manning and Zandstra 2003). Other estimates suggest that as of 2007, as many as 27,000 First Nations children were in care (Assembly of First Nations 2013). To put this into context, this is more children in care than at any point in history, including the residential schools era (Ball 2008).

According to the Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (2008), the reason the vast majority of Aboriginal children are removed from their homes is neglect, which is more often than not associated with poverty, poor housing, and substance misuse (Trocmé et al. 2004, Blackstock and Trocmé 2005, Galley 2010). This is significant because most Aboriginal societies believe that parents should only be accountable for things they can reasonably change, and society must work with families to deal with factors outside of the parent's direct influence (Blackstock 2007). In other words, poverty is not an adequate reason to remove a child from their home, instead, resources should be made available so families can safely care for their children at home (Blackstock 2007).

2.4   Institutional Discrimination

As previously discussed, there are more children in care in Canada today, then at any point in our history (Ball 2008). Yet this somehow goes unnoticed by the general public, and it is unclear if or how this situation is communicated to social workers. It is absolutely essential that social workers be better educated about how systems of oppression impact the lives of their Aboriginal clients; too often social workers focus on the parent's lifestyle and poor choices and do not consider how colonization and discrimination impact the parent and their situation (Jodoin 2017). Too help overcome this, it has been suggested that mandatory professional level courses are needed for non-Aboriginal social workers (Jodoin 2017). Further, it is strongly suggested that part 1 of 'A Literature Review and Annotated Bibliography on Aspects of Aboriginal Child Welfare in Canada' by Bennett et al. (2005) be made required reading for all child welfare workers.

2.5   Cultural Safety in Child Welfare

The term 'cultural safety' was developed in the 1980s in New Zealand with respect to health care for Maori people (Williams 1999). Cultural safety moves beyond the concept of cultural sensitivity and cultural competency by addressing issues around power imbalances, institutional discrimination, and colonial relationships in a service delivery context. Specifically, the concept of cultural safety challenges the previously accepted standard of cultural competency by transferring the power to define the quality of service to Aboriginal recipients of the service according to their ethnic, cultural and individual norms (Brascoupé and Waters 2009). In other words, "the person who receives the services defines whether it was culturally safe. This shifts the power from the provider to the person in need of the service" (Assembly of First Nations 2008). Unlike training associated with cultural competency (i.e. acquire knowledge of Aboriginal culture), training under cultural safety focuses on the nature of cultural safety itself (respect, trust, sharing) and on the history of Aboriginal people (colonization, residential schools, etc.) that contributes to the contemporary conditions of many Aboriginal people (Brascoupé and Waters 2009). It has been suggested that the people most able or equipped to provide a culturally safe atmosphere are people from the same culture, and that culturally safe environments for Indigenous peoples are rare, in any area of service delivery (Williams 1999).

On that note, guidelines and evaluation processes for culturally appropriate child welfare are strongest when established by Indigenous communities, reflecting local culture and context (Blackstock and Trocmé 2005). In order for child welfare practices to be culturally safe, there must be respectful engagement that supports and protects many paths to well-being (Ball n.d.). As stated by the Meadow Lake Tribal Council Administrator in BC, "Finding our way to wellness among diverse communities of children and families requires many pathways. No one approach, no one program model, will reach or work for everyone" (Ball n.d.). Further, cultural safety requires that child welfare professionals be respectful of culture, which is different from being neutral or oblivious of these aspects of a person; culturally safe practice reinforces that each person's knowledge and reality is valid and valuable (Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies 2012). In other words, to work effectively with Aboriginal families child welfare professionals need to work from a level of consciousness that allows them to consider an Indigenous worldview, and recognizes different options to protect children (Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies 2012). Finally, while service planners and providers need to increase their knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal peoples to ensure they are delivering culturally safe programs, caution is advised to make certain overgeneralizations about Aboriginal culture do not obscure individual needs and the variation within the Aboriginal population (McKenzie & Morrissette, 2003).

2.6   Cultural Diversity in Child Welfare

There are many differences in cultural and social practices amongst Aboriginal people across Canada. Each community is a unique entity with potentially different belief systems, social structures, and cultural teachings, and engagement with each community needs to occur through appropriate and respectful adherence to community protocols (Rousseau 2015). Given the diversity of communities and nations that make up the mosaic of Aboriginal cultures in Canada, there can be no 'one size fits all' fixed teaching module on cultural protocols, values and traditions for social workers, foster parents etc. For example, within NB, depending on whether or not the child is Mi'kmaq, Maliseet, Passamaquoddy, Cree, or Inuit, different resources may be required for foster parents (Jodoin 2017). This is consistent with the Canada wide movement away from a Universalist approach to what children and families need toward a dialogical approach that encompasses parents' and communities values, goals and strengths (Ball 2008). This diversity also necessitates that Aboriginal communities be actively involved with cultural planning, which includes cultural safety, for Aboriginal children in care (Carriere 2008).

2.7   Culturally Appropriate Services

The national trend toward culturally appropriate services is problematic as there is no agreement on what constitutes culturally appropriate practice (Blackstock 2008). For example, as observed by the Office of the Auditor General of BC (2008), neither cultural sensitivity nor cultural appropriateness appears to have been formally defined by the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD). Instead Ministry staff and delegated agency directors have their own variable personal definitions of these terms. For some, but not all, cultural sensitivity means understanding and respecting Aboriginal children and families and their values. And culturally-appropriate services are generally understood to mean those services that are acceptable to an Aboriginal community and delivered with respect and understanding (Office of the Auditor General of BC 2008). However, programs labelled as culturally appropriate tend to be based on western culture with some modifications made for Aboriginal peoples (e.g. Aboriginal modifications for PRIDE, Section 3.3.1); this is important

because these programs rarely consider the significant differences in world view between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples (Blackstock 2008).

Implied in the term 'culturally appropriate service' is the need for the ongoing building of a relationship between the service provider and community (Office of the Auditor General of BC 2008). This is supported by the Aboriginal Healing Foundation (2006) which advocates for collaboration between child welfare professionals and a wide range of Aboriginal community organizations to help provide cultural context in order to support Aboriginal families in their healing. It has also been suggested that there is a need to legitimize informal relationship building, which utilizes non-authoritative approaches to collaboration in Aboriginal communities, because this practice provides the groundwork for gaining trust, and trust is required to work effectively (Rousseau 2015).

Finally, it is not possible to provide cultural appropriate services if you have not identified a child as being part of a specific culture. This is significant because in NB there are no protocols in place to guide social workers in how to ask whether or not a client is Aboriginal (Jodoin 2017), and because of this some Aboriginal children inevitably are not provided with the services they need. Further, by not requiring social workers to collect this information, it implies to service providers this information is not relevant or important (Jodoin 2017). Several child welfare program managers in NB have identified the necessity for the province to work with local Aboriginal organizations to develop appropriate provincial guidelines and protocols to instruct social workers in how to collect this information (Jodoin 2017).

2.8   Aboriginal Children in Non-Aboriginal Foster Care

The practice of placing Aboriginal children within non-Aboriginal foster homes has come under intense scrutiny by Aboriginal leaders, communities, organizations and other child welfare advocates (Richard 2004, Blackstock and Trocmé 2005, Andreychuk and Fraser 2007, Blackstock 2007, Tait et al. 2013). It has been argued that even when Aboriginal children are exposed to their cultural heritage via foster care cultural planning, this exposure may only amount to enhanced cultural literacy rather than a true sense of cultural belonging (Richard 2004). This is because it is through everyday interactions with one's community that culturally prescribed values, beliefs and behaviours are learned (Yeo 2003); If an Aboriginal child is being raised in a non-Aboriginal environment they will acculturate within its cultural context (Richard 2004). Furthermore, it has been said that placing Aboriginal children within non-Aboriginal foster homes exposes them to both subtle and overt forms of discrimination that can lead to psychological trauma and interferes with their lives and life chances (Elliot and Fleras 1992, Locust 2000). This is supported by several child welfare program managers in NB who have stated they have concerns with placing visibly Aboriginal children with visibly non-Aboriginal foster parents as this can have an impact on the child as they grow up (Jodoin 2017). To compound this issue, foster home placements are often determined by availability (Price et al. 2009) rather than cultural compatibility. This is because situations that result in a child being removed from their biological family are often urgent. Unfortunately, due to this urgency, cultural differences between foster children and foster parents are rarely addressed in placement decisions (Bird 2015).

2.9 In Community Placement

To combat issues around the placement of Aboriginal children in non-Aboriginal foster care, there has been a Canada wide focus on the creation of systems of in-community placement for Aboriginal children needing temporary out-of-home care (e.g. kinship guardian networks, customary care, and Aboriginal foster care).

2.9.1 Customary Care

For thousands of years, Aboriginal communities across Canada had their own systems of looking after their children when their parents were unable or unwilling to do so (Blackstock 2003). Customary care builds on this history and is an important strategy for avoiding the cultural displacement of Aboriginal children. Although custom care arrangements vary based on the traditions of each Nation (Carrière 2007), in general customary care involves caring for children through extended family members in ways that are grounded in the traditions, values and customs of the child's community (Ferris et al. 2005, Strega and Esquao 2009). For example, within some Aboriginal cultures, grandparents would traditionally be given the first-born grandchild to raise as their own child (Carrière 2007). It is important to note that Aboriginal concepts of family and European-Canadian concepts of family often differ; for many Aboriginal cultures Aboriginal families are composed of a caring community of people, some related by blood, some tied by clan or other indigenous social structures, who all have responsibility for the good and welfare of the community's children (Richard 2004, Saskatchewan Child Welfare Review Panel 2010). Thus customary care arraignments build on existing family and community relationships, and these arrangements facilitate easier and more frequent contact with birth parents (Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societiese 2012). It is important to note that customary care is about more than alternative care arrangements; it is a way of life that ensures natural cultural resiliency and promotes positive cultural identity by way of language, clan and family (Ferris et al. 2005).

2.9.2 Custom Adoption

Custom adoption is a traditional cultural practice where a non-biological family takes responsibility for raising a child. This is a private arrangement between two Aboriginal families and their community, with all of the people who are affected supporting the decision and plan (Saskatchewan Child Welfare Review Panel 2010). The understanding and agreement between those involved is not that the child is leaving one family for another, but rather it acknowledges that another layer of care and responsibility has been added for this child's benefit. This process has long been part of Aboriginal tradition, with variations on the same approach to child welfare in Aboriginal communities across Canada. Examples of best practice models for culturally based permanency planning options in Canada include: Open Custom Adoption Program, Yellowhead Tribal Service Agency, Alberta; Lalum'utul'Smun'eem Adoption Program, Cowichan Tribes of Vancouver Island; and the Adoption Program at Native Child and Family Services of Toronto (Saskatchewan Child Welfare Review Panel 2010).

2.9.3 Case Study: Lalum'utul' Smun'eem Adoption Program

In the Lalum'utul' Smun'eem approach to cultural agreements there is an explicit commitment from the adoptive parents ensuring they keep Cowichan children connected to the extended family, membership, culture and community through a signed cultural contract. The cultural contract outlines obligations the adoptive parent/s have to ensure they are actively involved in cultural planning for Cowichan children, that they have visits with the birth family, and are also involved in

the custom adoption ceremony (Grzybowski 2012). The cultural contract also outlines the roles and responsibilities of Cowichan Tribes; Tribes must ensure the adoptive family is aware of cultural events, that they receive copies of the Cowichan Tribe's newsletter, and that they have cultural resource information (Grzybowski 2012). Protocols have been developed with MCFD regarding roles and responsibilities for both MCFD and Lalum'utul' Smun'eem when they are working together as part of the adoption program. There is also a training component for adoptive parents and other people involved in the process, and an orientation for the Cowichan Elders (Grzybowski 2012).

3   Models and Approaches

3.1   Competing Child Welfare Orientations

In addition to the call to shift a large proportion of child welfare resources from non-Aboriginal agencies to Aboriginal agencies, new service paradigms have also surfaced (Hudson and McKenzie 2003). These new paradigms move the focus from investigative and protective functions to a service model oriented to early intervention, family support and community development. Notably, shifting resources from one service modality to another will likely require additional funding. For example, the use of in-home support staff likely costs more than alternative care even if it is the intervention of choice in many cases (Hudson and McKenzie 2003). Furthermore, a shift to mediation services and family group conferences will also require additional financial investment on the part of government, and a more community-based service model is quite likely to result in increased referrals and upward pressures on costs (Hudson and McKenzie 2003). The literature identifies three frameworks for the organization of child welfare services: the child protection orientation, the family services orientation, and the community caring orientation (Hill et al. 2002, McKenzie et al. 2009, Connolly and Morris 2011).

3.1.1   The Child Protection Orientation

The child protection orientation has been the dominant approach to child welfare in Canada and is characterized by factors such as a reliance on risk assessment instruments, an emphasis on children's rights and child protection, and a concentration of resources on families identified as high risk. The child protection orientation is consistent with other western social work practices based on the medical model and is focused on problem or deficit assessment approaches (Graybeal 2001). Within this model, prevention and support services are generally reserved for those families who have met a "threshold" for intervention. In other words, families are often not able to get help through the child welfare system until issues become crises (Saskatchewan Child Welfare Review Panel 2010).

3.1.2   The Family Services Support Orientation

The family services support orientation is still concerned with child protection and emphasizes safety, but this is embedded in a broader family services framework designed to strengthen the capacity of families to care for their children as a first response (McKenzie et al. 2009, Wright and Hiebert-Murphy 2011). Unlike the child protection orientation, the role of the state in family life is legitimised through health and educational discourses rather than risk assessment strategies and legislative regimes directed at child protection. For example, this framework has more resources devoted to early intervention and support, an emphasis on family connections and flexible family-based service responses, and assistance is not restricted to those who reach a 'threshold of risk'.

This model is more common in western European countries such as Belgium, France, and Germany (Baistow and Wilford 2000, Hetherington and Piquardt 2001, Marneffe 2002).

3.1.3   The Community Caring Orientation

The community caring framework is a less well-recognized orientation, although it's value is reinforced by research on community oriented approaches to child care and research on community building (Kufeldt 2014). Community approaches to child welfare reflect a dual position that communities have the right to determine what is best for their children and communities have the responsibility to ensure their children's well-being and protection from harm (Barter 2001). This orientation builds on the family support orientation by incorporating an emphasis on building community capacity. For example, this model: views the whole community as a 'kind of family'; considers jurisdictional control over child welfare an essential component in building community caring; uses cultural conceptual models along with a return to tradition as a means of asserting strengths; and uses collaborative service responses and community-oriented practice approaches such as Family Group Conferencing (McKenzie et al. 2009). The concept of Family Group Conference originated in the 1980's in New Zealand and is grounded in the Maori culture. Family Group Conferencing was developed in response to significant concerns regarding social services in New Zealand. These concerns include: 1. Disproportionately high numbers of Maori children in care. 2. Heavy over representation of Maori families on Social Worker caseloads. 3. A need to challenge the placement of Maori children with white European families. 4. Virtually no Maori Social Workers. 5. Institutionalised racism (NetCare, n.d.). These concerns are currently echoed by Aboriginal communities across Canada.

Since its inception, Family Group Conferencing (FGC) has been applied in more than 20 countries around the world (George Hull Centre, 2011). For example, within Atlantic Canada, FGC is offered by Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services in Nova Scotia. Notably, New Brunswick enacted amendments to its child welfare legislation in 2009 requiring child protection services to consider FGC as part of its system-wide reform of the child welfare service (George Hull Centre, 2011). Currently, FGC services within NB are offered as part of the Family Enhancement Services; According to the NB website, Family Enhancement Services are intended to engage the family, to enhance family functioning, to maintain the child's security or development, and to support the family when a plan for the care of a child is developed and implemented (Government of New Brunswick, n.d.). However, aside from one comment stating FGC practice in NB is 'culturally respectful', the author found no references specific to the needs of Aboriginal families and communities, or cultural safety.

3.2   Least Disruptive Measures

Child welfare law throughout Canada either directly requires that families be provided with least disruptive measures prior to considering removal, or such a provision is clearly assumed in legislative guiding principles and social work practice. Provincial and Territorial CFS legislation with particular reference to least disruptive measures statements are available in the appendices of Shangreaux et al. (2004). It is important to note that least disruptive measures are intended to keep children safely in their homes or, if they have been removed, to reunite them back with their family as soon as possible (Shangreaux et al. 2004). Examples of least-disruptive measures include: in situ rather than out-of-community foster placement or adoption; support for improved parenting; more supervision of children through day-care placement; local access to services for children and parents; and supplementary food resources (Ball 2008).

3.3 Family Preservation Models

Family preservation services are short-term, family-focused services designed to assist families in crisis by improving parenting and family functioning while keeping children safe. These services build upon the conviction that many children can be safely protected and treated within their own homes when parents are provided with services and support that empower them to change their lives (Littell 2001, Walton et al. 2001).

3.3.1 The Homebuilders Model.

Homebuilders is the oldest and best-documented family preservation program in the USA (Kinney et al. 1991, Forsythe 1992). This program was designed to address the needs of families with children in "imminent danger" of placement. The core strategies were to provide families with flexible, short term, intensive preventative home based services (Shangreaux et al. 2004). With this model, the caseloads of social workers are much lower than traditional caseloads to ensure ongoing accessibility. In addition, this model is organized around the provision of a range of services tailored to the needs and preferences of each family for an intensive period of time (Shangreaux et al. 2004).

3.3.2 The Wrap Around Model

The Wrap Around process was originally developed in the United States for children and youths with serious or complex needs (e.g. autistic children). Based on ecological theory, Wrap Around is a team-based planning process intended to provide individualized and coordinated family-driven care to meet the complex needs of children who are involved with several child and family-serving systems, are at risk of placement in institutional settings, and who experience emotional, behavioral, or mental health difficulties (Clark et al. 1996, Burchard et al. 2002). The principle elements of the Wrap Around Model are: community-based services; individualized services; cultural respect; families are partners; flexibility in funding; team-approach to problem solving; a balance of formal and informal services; interagency collaboration; and family implementation (Burns and Goldman 1999). The Wrap Around model has been adopted by multiple organizations in Canada. In the context of this review, the most important of which is the National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC); the NAFC Urban Aboriginal Strategy outlines how Friendship Centre "Wrap Around" services increase urban Aboriginal peoples' access to education, improve employment and skills development, and reduce barriers to economic inclusion (NAFC, n.d.). Other examples of this service delivery model can been seen via the Wrap Canada website. Wrap Canada is an incorporated non-profit organization dedicated to providing support and education for Wrap Around services across Canada (Wrap Canada, 2013).

3.4 Differential Response Model

The Differential Response (DR) model, also referred to as an alternative stream/track model, contains a range of potential response options customized to meet the unique needs of each family involved with child welfare (Connolly 2005, Saskatchewan Child Welfare Review Panel 2010). Differential response typically uses multiple "tracks" or "streams" of service delivery. This includes a high-risk track to handle reports of sexual abuse, serious physical or emotional harm, and other cases in which criminal charges may be laid. Less urgent cases are shifted to an alternative "assessment" or "community" track, which is a preventative strengths-based approach (Conley 2007) focused on brokering and co-ordinating services to address the short and long-term needs of children and families. Generally, decisions about what track to use are based on factors such as the type and severity of the alleged maltreatment, number and sources of previous reports, and

willingness of the family to participate in services (Kaplan and Merkel-Holguin 2008). Essentially, family support services provided as an early intervention can provide situation management for children at risk before they reach the statutory threshold for protective intervention (Connolly 2005).

Ontario, Alberta, and British Columbia have all implemented DR models in their child welfare response (Saskatchewan Child Welfare Review Panel 2010). For example, Child welfare in British Columbia is organized around a DR model known as the Family Development Response (FDR). The essence of FDR is a conscientious shift towards providing a range of community-based services and supports designed to keep children at home, and a corresponding move away from investigations and apprehensions as a default response (Saskatchewan Child Welfare Review Panel 2010).

3.4.1   Case Study: Hulitan Family and Community Services Society

The Hulitan Family and Community Services Society provides social and emotional support to Aboriginal children, Aboriginal youth and Aboriginal families living in the Capital Regional District of British Columbia while ensuring families and youth have access to culturally appropriate programs and services regardless of financial ability. The Family Development Response program provides short term (3 to 6 months) intensive service to Aboriginal families who have been identified as being in need of interventions, and who are at high risk of removal due to issues impacting the safety and well-being of their children. The Family Development Response Worker visits the family's home and works collaboratively with the family to develop goals and activities to assist in reducing risks identified by MCFD. In home support includes Aboriginal perspectives on: addictions & parenting; trauma & parenting; communication skills and boundary setting; breaking the cycle of violence; grief & loss; positive parenting & child development; life skills; nutrition; self-care & identity (www.hulitan.ca).

3.5   Strength Based Approaches

Many authors advocate a strengths based approach for dealing with the families of children in care; this approach involves the systematic identification of skills, abilities, survival strategies, knowledge, and resources which can be used to meet a families goals (e.g. Early and GlenMaye 2000). Within this context, Aboriginal culture itself is considered a source of strength and can be used as a tool in the healing process (Hardisty et al. n.d.). Strength based child welfare approaches may include recognition of a child's varying abilities as gifts, a holistic view of child development, promotion of skills for living on the land, respect for a child's spiritual life and contribution to the cultural life of the community, transmission of a child's ancestral language and an emphasis on building upon strengths rather than compensating for weaknesses (Ball 2008). Importantly, when dealing with parents, a strengths based approach means refusing to overlook successes in what appears to be a long line of failures, and it requires practitioners to share power, have faith in the client, and engage in ways which promote dignity and respect (Hardisty et al. n.d.). Further, the emphasis on strengths and competencies is a key aspects of empowering practice which functions to reaffirm the health and vitality of traditional systems, role models, strong leadership and self-respect in Aboriginal communities (Hardisty et al. n.d.).

3.6   Family Engagement

Family Engagement is a family-centred strengths-based approach of partnering with families to make decisions, set goals, and achieve desired outcomes for children in care (Child Welfare

Information Gateway 2010). It is founded on the principle of communicating openly and honestly with families in a way that supports disclosure of family dynamics, culture, and personal experiences in order to meet the distinct needs of every family and child. To build on a family's resources and kinship connections, family engagement activities focus on both immediate family, extended family, and the family's natural support systems (Child Welfare Information Gateway 2010). Family engagement is successful, as evidenced in family group conferencing, because when families are part of the decision-making process and have a say in developing plans that affect them and their children, they are more likely to be invested in the plans and commit to achieving objectives and complying with treatment that meets their individual needs (Child Welfare Information Gateway 2010). Furthermore, through collaboration, caseworkers and families are better able to identify a family's unique needs and develop relevant and culturally appropriate service plans that address these underlying needs. This is significant in part because better fit in services often leads to a more effective use of limited resources.

Specific strategies that reflect family engagement (Appendix D) include: frequent and substantive caseworker visits; family group conferencing; motivational interviewing; collaborative strategies; father involvement; family search and engagement; mediation; parent partner programs; and foster family-birth family meetings (Child Welfare Information Gateway 2010). Family group conferencing is one of the most frequently used approaches to family engagement in recent years (Desmeules 2007, Wien 2011); a more comprehensive overview of this approach can be found in Appendix E. Finally, Appendix F lists some of the key casework elements that support successful family engagement practice (Child Welfare Information Gateway 2010).

3.7   Specialized Stream of Practice

It has been suggested that focusing on creating a specialized streams of practice within government child welfare departments, where the capacity of culturally competent Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal professionals is tapped into, makes considerably more sense than another rhetorical attempt to Indigenize government organizations (Rousseau 2015). The impact of effective team leaders and specialized management streams with dedicated resources to create equitable policy and practice approaches may lead to better use of highly committed and knowledgeable Aboriginal professionals; these teams may provide better services for Aboriginal children, families and communities until autonomous community control of Aboriginal children services becomes a reality (Rousseau 2015).

4   Foster Parents

4.1   Foster Parent Demographics

A two-year study involving 941 foster parents from every province and territory across Canada determined that the vast majority of foster parents were European-Canadian (78%), whereas Nine percent of caregivers self-identified as Aboriginal (3% Métis, 3% First Nations and 3% Inuit) and three percent as French Canadian (Leschied et al. 2014). Over three–quarters of the foster parents (68%) stated that they had cared for children from a culture other than their own, and only six percent (6%) reported kinship foster placements. Just over half of foster parents (51%) met with other foster families on a routine basis as part of their system of collegial support; this figure has been included because membership with a foster parent association has been identified elsewhere as a potentially important variable in foster parent retention (Anderson 2014, Bird 2015). Within the study foster

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

parents reported face-to-face contact with a worker on an average of twice a month, as well as seven contacts by telephone, and six by email (Leschied et al. 2014).

It is clear that Aboriginal foster children are overrepresented in the foster care system while Aboriginal foster parents are underrepresented. Furthermore, given the richness and diversity found between and within First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples as well as the shortage of Aboriginal foster homes available, the potential for cross-cultural fostering by Aboriginal foster parents and Aboriginal foster children is quite high (Bird 2015). This may be an important consideration if one of the goals of placing Aboriginal children in out-of-home-care with Aboriginal foster parents is to prevent the loss of cultural knowledge (Bird 2015). Particularly as there does not appear to be a requirement for a cultural plan for Aboriginal children placed with Aboriginal foster parents even if the children and foster parents are from different Aboriginal cultural groups(Bird 2015).

4.2   Foster Parent Perspectives

A common thread emerging from interviews with foster parents is that they do not have enough training or support (McKenzie et al. 2009). For example, one study noted that foster parents felt ill prepared to deal with the racism their foster child experienced (de Haymes and Simon 2003). On that same note, foster parents have identified difficulty talking to foster children about their cultural identity (Daniel 2011). However, there is clearly a need for and benefits of foster parents speaking with their birth and foster children at home about ethnic and cultural differences when the foster parents are of a different ethnicity and or culture than the foster children (Leve et al. 2012). Clearly training for foster parents on how to address issues around racism and culture is necessary.

Another challenge that foster parents with transcultural foster children face is the expectation that they are not only aware of and knowledgeable about a child's culture, but that they should be the ones responsible for keeping the child engaged in said culture (Brown et al. 2009). In multiple studies, foster parents have noted challenges accessing resources for foster children when they lived away from their cultural community (Bird 2015). For example, Daniel (2011) found that for foster parents who lived off reserve, awareness and engagement in cultural activities that were part of life in the community declined and had a negative impact on their ability to foster the cultural development of those children. This highlights the need for cultural resources for foster parents of Aboriginal children, including urban Aboriginal children. On that note, cultural activities offered through places like Head Start programs, Aboriginal Family Resource Centres, and Friendship Centres may be a valuable resource for the cultural development of Urban Aboriginal foster children.

It has been suggested that one of the ways to combat some of these issues is the development of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal foster parent associations; these associations speak for foster parents, facilitates meetings, training, support, and information around fostering (Anderson 2014). Bird (2015) has also suggested building on existing connections in Aboriginal communities via the recruitment of foster "communities" to care for children where caregiver skills are spread across different adults.

4.3   Foster Parent Training

There is a large range of foster parent training resources available from across Canada. Following is a brief overview of the type of information that has been identified as necessary for Non-Aboriginal foster parents of Aboriginal children. Subsequent sections outline three different examples of

different types of resources used for foster parent training: government programs (PRIDE); resources created by Aboriginal agencies (the cultural manual); and non-affiliated resources (Landy Andersons book).

4.3.1 Key Information for Non-Aboriginal Foster Parents

Jodoin (2017) identified a list of key information that non-Aboriginal foster parents need to know. This includes: 1. that they have an Aboriginal foster child in their care; 2. what the child's culture and community is; 3. what their day-to-day life experience is; 4. what their family culture is; 5. what the child's experience has been; 6. why they have ended up in care; 7. who the links are between the youth in their care and their home community; and 8. how to use these links to best care for the child.

4.3.2 Parenting Resources for Information Development and Education program

The Parenting Resources for Information Development and Education (PRIDE) program is designed to strengthen the quality of family foster care and adoption services. PRIDE provides a standardized, consistent, structured framework for the competency-based recruitment, preparation, and selection of foster parents and adoptive parents, and for foster parent in-service training and ongoing professional development (Child Welfare League of Canada 2013). Module 7 in the Trainer's Guide focuses on promoting children's personal and cultural identity (Child Welfare League of Canada 2013), and PRIDE classes may be available through local Children's Aid Societies or local child protection authorities. This training is being used in Saskatchewan, and an Aboriginal version of PRIDE is under development (Saskatchewan Child Welfare Review Panel 2010). This is consistent with the findings of Jodoin (2017), who states that although PRIDE briefly addresses multiculturalism and the importance of recognizing a child's culture and religion, it needs to be updated to be more culturally sensitive and to provide more information specific to Aboriginal youth.

4.3.3 Cultural Manual for Foster and Adoptive Parents

There is a cultural manual for foster and adoptive parents of Aboriginal children that has been compiled by the Social Service committee Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy Network (Nakuset et al. n.d.). The manual contains: information on status entitlements; socio-cultural impacts of the residential school system; and the A-list adoption register; common myths about Aboriginal peoples; several greetings in four different Aboriginal languages; a list of cultural activities (Appendix G); a list of outstanding Aboriginal role models; and a resource list of services in Montreal (e.g. culturally appropriate counselling services).

4.3.4 The Foster Parent Survival Guide: How to Navigate the Child Welfare Matrix

'The Foster Parent Survival Guide: How to Navigate the Child Welfare Matrix' written by Landy Anderson (2014) is a potentially valuable resource for both foster parents and child welfare social workers. Landy Anderson has 27 years' experience in child welfare, and has supervised staff operated group homes and foster care departments for various child welfare agencies in the greater Toronto area including an Aboriginal Children's Aid Society. Further, Landy has been a foster parent to over 100 teenagers spanning a decade, where some teenagers stayed for days and others many years. Finally, Landy's Aboriginal husband has shared his experience with her as a child who survived Canada's Sixties Scoop. He offers powerful and practical knowledge that can only be derived from being an Aboriginal child in care. In short, Landy's unique experience as a foster parent, partner,

child protection worker and supervisor contribute to her expertise in the delivery of foster care services.

5 Cultural Planning

5.1 Cultural Planning for Children in Care

Protecting the identities of Aboriginal children is necessary to maintain the strength and continuity of Aboriginal families and communities (Carriere 2008). Further, relationships are the cornerstone of Aboriginal communities, and the nature and expression of community is the foundation of Aboriginal identity (Cajete 2000). Within this context, cultural plans must include provisions that facilitate the building of relationships between Aboriginal children, their families, communities, and their Elders. Elders play a critical role in the identity formation of Aboriginal children as they hold a deep understanding of Aboriginal cultures (Hart 2002, McGregor and McGregor 2010), and they teach young people the skills they need to be strong community members (Carriere 2008).

It is clear from the numerous resources (e.g. Campbell River Joint Transition Committee 2013) available for social workers and foster parents, that within the context of an Aboriginal child's comprehensive plan of care, the caregiver must assist the child to maintain positive contact, involvement and participation within their aboriginal community. However, there is not a clear framework to assist caregivers in accomplishing this end. Furthermore, cultural planning is challenging when those plans have to be completed by caregivers who may not understand the full cultural context of an Aboriginal child's identity (Klamn 2009).

Carriere (2007, 2008) has developed several resources that can be applied to help preserve the identity of Aboriginal children in care (Appendix H); according to Carriere these resources take into consideration both traditional Indigenous views and contemporary work on resilience. Information that should be gathered to help develop cultural plans includes: the child's heritage, genealogy, language, traditional foods, spiritual practices, extended family and access to traditional teachings to ensure there is a continuity of the child's culture while in foster care (Ministry for Children and Families 2001, Carrière 2007). Further, cultural plans should clearly describe how the adoptive parents and the Aboriginal community will share in the responsibility of preserving the child's cultural identity and connection with his or her siblings, extended family and community (Ministry of Children and Family Development 2009).

Historically there have been many issues with the creation and implementation of cultural plans. For example, it has been noted that all too often cultural planning does not occur until the adoption phase, sometimes years after a child has been in the care of child welfare authorities (Carriere n.d.); this situation is unacceptable. As suggested by participants in the Grzybowski (2012) study, cultural planning should be legally binding, should start when a child first comes into care, have clearly communicated expectations, be implemented by regional committees rather than provincial committees, have increased financial supports, and increase staffing such as ROOTS workers. ROOTS workers are part of the 'A Child's Roots are Forever- Aboriginal Services' Program which was developed in response to the fact that at least half of the children and youth in the care of MCFD are Aboriginal. The role of the Roots worker is to: 1. explore the Aboriginal child's family and community for the purpose of cultural connections, relationships and permanency; 2. develop and facilitate

programs in order to support cultural connections for children and their families, and to promote cultural understanding for caregivers and staff (MCFD position description 2007).

5.1.1   Two BC Case Studies of Cultural Planning

Within BC, MCFD is responsible for developing a Comprehensive Plan of Care (CPOC) for each child in care. In 2011, an audit examined the lives of 100 randomly selected children and youth in continuing care from all MCFD regions and Delegated Aboriginal Agency (DAA) offices across the province (BC Representatives for Children and Youths 2013). Of the 100 children whose files were audited, 60 were identified as Aboriginal, and only three of those children had a cultural plan; cultural plans are a critical element for ensuring children remain connected to their traditions and cultural heritage (e.g. Appendix I), and they are required by law (by BC legislation) according to the Child, Family and Community Service Act. Further, none of the cultural plans were up to date, and the audit showed very little participation in any of the CPOC's by the children, caregivers, families or any other significant people in the children's life. The audit states that this situation is clearly unacceptable, and that it is "evident that extensive training is required for workers to be able to write effective cultural plans and develop strategies that help preserve the child's unique identity and maintain connections to their community" (BC Representatives for Children and Youths 2013, p.54). The audit goes on to say that a single attendance at potlach or other cultural ceremony is not representative of a comprehensive and meaningful cultural plan, and that it is critical the community (be it urban or on reserve) is actively involved in all stages of cultural planning. Recommendations for cultural plans can be found in Appendix J.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, there are positive examples of cultural planning (Grzybowski 2012). A participant in Grzybowski (2012) shared how a Roots Social Worker developed a plan with the adoptive parents, social workers and asked the community for:

> "concrete things supporting the family, supporting the child to get to know their culture, get to know their community, who is here in the community in [city] who can support them that has knowledge or is from their home community and we actually ended up having a circle here at [Agency] and we there must have been about 20-25 people here and what I was really surprised about is there is four or five people of that child's home community that we did not know about that came...We all sat around and talked about how we would support the child and how we would support the adoptive parents in helping raise the child."

In another example, this same participant explained how they had helped adoptive parents to make something for the child they were adopting, and how this was a very positive experience:

> "traditionally, when mothers were expecting they would start to make things for this unborn baby, you know like whether that would be a pair of moccasins or a cradle board...this woman made a pair of really beautiful moccasins that were beaded like we taught her, brought in an elder to show her how to bead, how to make the moccasins and that is what she gifted to her daughter that she was adopting."

Finally, this participant goes on to explain the concept of 'circle of support' and what that means in terms of the relationship between the adoptive parent and community:

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

"It is not giving them our kids say here you are taking care of them it is, no we are inviting you into our culture and you become part of our family and as part of the family we are asking you to take care of these children which is much different. That we are going to hold you accountable so if you are not at a ceremony, you can bet someone is going to be calling you or the next time they see you, say, "hey where you, you know we thought you would be here" and to allow more of that peer to peer kind of accountability rather than being the heavy as the delegated agency saying, "hey you need to take this kid to this event...so it changes the feel of it quite a bit."

5.2   Best Practices

There is an unpublished literature review of Best Practices in Child Welfare accessible on the internet (Wright n.d.), and child welfare workers may find the authors model on direct practice elements useful (Appendix K). But perhaps the best resource for best practice are the 'practice tips' outlined in the document 'Working with First Nations, Inuit and Métis Families who have Experienced Family Violence: A Practice Guide for Child Welfare Professionals' (Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies 2012). Although there are sections that specifically deal with violence in the home, there are some very helpful guidelines for Aboriginal child welfare practice such as how to support the family and community, considerations for preparing a foundation for building trust with families who become involved with child welfare, suggestions for a systemic and holistic case management approach, and suggestions to support Aboriginal culture via training for child welfare workers and resources for children (Appendix L). Additional best practices mentioned in the literature include: sharing information and decision making with involved Aboriginal individuals and communities, resisting an expert orientation, acknowledging system impacts, and being comfortable with not always having the answers (Rousseau 2015).

6   Tools

6.1   Touchstones of Hope

Touchstones of Hope for Indigenous Children, Youth, and Families (Blackstock et al. 2006) was developed by 200 Aboriginal leaders who attended the Reconciliation: Looking Back, Reaching Forward event in 2005. The intent of the document is to both serve as a foundation for the development of community-based action plans, and to provide a reconciliatory framework to engage mainstream child welfare system participants in an effort to reconceptualise how services are designed, implemented and delivered.

Blackstock et al. (2006) highlight a set of five guiding values (Appendix M) that should be considered in legislative and policy development, program design, and service delivery pertaining to Aboriginal children in care. Many organizations across Canada have used the Touchstones of Hope guidelines to shape and direct their efforts to develop innovative, culturally sensitive, and effective child welfare responses. Examples include: Northern British Columbia Touchstones of Hope; Ottawa Children's Aid Society; Yellowhead Family Service Agency, Alberta; West Region Child and Family Services, Manitoba; Lalum'utul'Smun'eem Child and Family Services, Vancouver Island, British Columbia; First Nations Family Helpers, Regina, Saskatchewan; Saskatchewan First Nations Family and Community Institute; and the Family Group Conferencing Model, Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services, Nova Scotia (Saskatchewan Child Welfare Review Panel 2010).

6.2   Harmony Circles

In Aboriginal cultures there is a consistent recognition that people are interconnected and must rely and care for each other in order to survive and do well in life; This interconnectedness is sometimes referred to as the natural protective network principle (Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies 2012). The Aboriginal teaching of the Harmony Circles provides a visual image of how child welfare services for the family can be designed (Appendix N). This model recognizes that while moving children out of their extended families and communities can address their immediate physical safety, it can have a negative impact on children's emotional well-being and spiritual life.

6.3   The Life Cycle Wheel

Several child welfare policies recognize that differential responses are required based on the family and each family member's individual needs (Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies 2012). The Aboriginal teaching, the Life Cycle Wheel, incorporates all members of the community at different phases in their lives (Appendix O). This tool highlights and acknowledges that each person has a gift to bring and a role to play in the community, and emphasizes the importance of meeting physical, mental, emotional and spiritual needs throughout the Life Cycle Wheel (Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy 2009). The Life Cycle Wheel has been consistently used by the Ontario Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy to develop programming in each community that responds to each stage (Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies 2012).

6.4   Life Books

One of the ways social workers, caregivers and foster parents can help support a child's sense of identity is through the development of a life book (Fulcher 2005). Life books are a record of significant information or events and often take the form of a scrapbook or photo album. They can include: photos, drawings, information about the child's birth history and family, details of their time in each foster care placement, a record of their immunizations, favourite toys, and school achievements and awards (BC Representatives for Children and Youths 2013). Photos of birth parents, siblings, and/or extended family members are particularly important for children in care as they can help facilitate future reunions for both adoptees and birth families (Carriere and Scarth 2007). Life books should be created when children first come into care, so children have their story of where they began (Grzybowski 2012). And life books should be given to children when they leave care as a record they can refer to as they grow older (BC Representatives for Children and Youths 2013).

7   Conclusion

This literature review begins to map out how we can move towards more culturally safe practices when dealing with Aboriginal children in care. This review has made clear that the route to improved Aboriginal child welfare outcomes lay in greater involvement and control of child welfare policy and services by Aboriginal people, and in broader inclusion of and respect for traditional approaches to healing. Further, if the goal is culturally safe cross-cultural engagement, there is a very real need for improved education for child welfare workers that demonstrates how cultural safety theory can be put into practices to better support Aboriginal children, families, and communities at risk and involved with child welfare agencies. It is also important to recognize, that unlike training to better understand Aboriginal culture (i.e. training in cultural competency), training under cultural safety focuses on the nature of cultural safety itself (respect, trust, sharing) and on the history of Aboriginal

people that contributes to the contemporary conditions of many Aboriginal People (colonization, residential schools, the sixties scoop etc.). It would also be helpful if there was a provincial clearing house of resources for social workers, non-Aboriginal foster parents, and Aboriginal agencies working with Aboriginal children in care. Examples of what these resources might look like includes: 1. a directory of Aboriginal organizations, services, and resources that child welfare workers can turn to in order to better support the Aboriginal youth in their care; 2. guidelines outlining the steps that a child care worker should take when working with Aboriginal families to ensure that the services they receive are culturally safe; and 3. case studies of culturally safe practice to promote best practices in an applied context. There are many opportunities to enhance the quality of care Aboriginal children receive across the province, and it is clear that better collaboration between government, academe, and Aboriginal community partners will result in better outcomes for Aboriginal children in care.

8   Appendix

The following appendices provide additional information on resources mentioned in the main body of the document. Each appendix title alludes to the appendix content and is followed by the reference from which the information came. In most cases, the appendix was copied directly from the reference.

8.1   Appendix A: Considerations in Primary Provincial or Territorial Legislation

Reference: (Sinha and Kozlowski 2013)

Province or Territory	Legislation	Band notification of court or placement	Aboriginal involvement in case management	Aboriginal involvement in service planning or delivery	Prioritization of kinship care	Band submission of cultural connection plan invited	Connection to Aboriginal culture -best interest of child
British Columbia	Child, Family and Community Service Act	√		√	√	√	√
Alberta	Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act	√	√	√		√	√
Saskatchewan	Child and Family Services Act	√	√				
Manitoba	Child and Family Services Act; Child and Family Services Authorities Act	√	√	√	√		
Ontario	Child and Family Services Act	√	√	√	√	√	√
Quebec	Youth Protection Act			√	√		
Nova Scotia	Child and Family Services Act	√ª					
New Brunswick	Family Services Act						
Prince Edward Island	Child Protection Act	√	√			√	√
Yukon	Child and Family Services Act	√		√	√		√
Northwest Territories	Child and Family Services Act	√				√	
Newfoundland and Labrador	Child Youth and Family Services Act	The Labrador Inuit Land Claim Act takes precidents over the Child Youth and Family Services Act (no other special considerations).					
Nunavut		Because Inuit represent the majrity ethno-racial group, the Aboriginal-specific provisions assessed here are not necessarily directly applicable to Nunavut legislation.					

Note. Based on 2010 legislation and specific statements about Aboriginal children, families, and communities.
ª In Nova Scotia, the First Nations child welfare agency, which serves all First Nations (reserve) communities, is notified, as opposed to the child's band.

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

8.2   Appendix B: Residential School & Child Welfare Resources

Reference: (Irvine 2009)

Residential School

Books

Alexie, R. (2002). Porcupines and china dolls. Don Mills, ON: Stoddart Publishing.

Highway, T. (2000). Kiss of the Fur Queen. Toronto, ON: Doubleday Canada

Jack, A. (Ed.). (2007). Behind closed doors: Stories from the Kamloops Indian residential school (rev. ed.). Penticton, BC: Theytus Books.

McKegney, S. (2007). Magic weapons: Aboriginal writers remaking community after residential school. Winnipeg, MB: University of Manitoba Press.

Olsen, S., with Morris, R., & Sam, A. (2002). No time to say goodbye: Children's stories of Kuper Island residential school. Winlaw, BC: Sono NIS Press

Sterling, S. (2002). My name is Seepeetza. Toronto, ON: Douglas McIntyre.

Videos

Beyond the shadows (1992)

Violation of trust (2004)

Internet Resources

Hidden from history: The Canadian holocaust http://www.hiddenfromhistory.org/

Indian Residental School Survivor's Society http://www.irsss.ca/

Where are the children? Healing the legacy of the residential schools http://www.wherearethechildren.ca/en/home.html

Indian Residential Schools Settlement – Offical Court Website http://www.residentialschoolsettlement.ca/English.html

Pelican Falls Residential School Gathering by Cal Kenny http://media.knet.ca/node/1161

Child Welfare

Books

Bensen, R. (2001). Children of the dragonfly: Native American voices on child custody and education. Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press.

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

Culleton, B. (1983). April Raintree. Winnipeg, MB: Peguis Publishers Ltd.

Stolen Generations. (2003). Book of voices: Voices of Aboriginal adoptees and foster children. Winnipeg MB: Stolen Generations.

Wagamese, R. (1994). Keeper'n me. Scarborough, ON: Doubleday Canada Ltd.

Videos/Movies

Richard Cardinal: Cry from a diary of a Métis child (1986)

Rabbit-proof Fence (2002)

Internet Resources

National Youth in Care Network http://www.youthincare.ca/

Native Child and Family Services of Toronto & Budgell, J. (1999). Repatriation of Aborginal families – issues, models and a workplan. Toronto, ON: Author. http://www.nativechild.org/uploads/rep_rpt(1).pdf

Southern Manitoba First Nations Repatriation Program http://www.wrcfs.org/repat/services.html

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

8.3 Appendix C: Six Stages of Gradual Delegation in British Columbia

Reference: (Sinha and Kozlowski 2013)

Level of delegation	Child welfare activities
Pre-planning	Agency has completed an application to offer child welfare services and is engaged in preliminary discussions of service development.
Planning	Agency is operationalizing service delivery plan.
Start-up	Agency engages in activities that actualize development plans.
Voluntary-service delivery	Agency offers support services to families, handles voluntary care agreements, and handles special needs agreements.
Guardianship service delivery	Agency offers the same services in voluntary service delivery stage, as well as guardianship services for children in care. These include services such as handling plans of care for children in care, permanency planning, transition to independence services, and quality care reviews.
Fully delegated service delivery	Agency offers the same services as agencies in guardianship service delivery stage, as well as child protection services. These include investigation of reports of child abuse or neglect, development of protection plans, placement of children in care when necessary, and obtaining court orders or taking other measures to ensure a child's ongoing safety and well-being.

Note: Adapted from British Columbia Ministry of Children and Family Development (n.d.)

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

8.4 Appendix D: Specific Strategies That Reflect Family Engagement

Reference: (Child Welfare Information Gateway 2010)

The Child Welfare Information Gateway is a clearing house for information on child welfare. The purpose of the service is to promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of children, youth, and families by connecting child welfare, adoption, and related professionals as well as the public to information, resources, and tools covering topics on child welfare, child abuse and neglect, out-of-home care, adoption, and more. The service is part of the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Following is a list of specific strategies outlined by the Gateway that reflect family engagement practice.

1. **Frequent and substantive caseworker visits**

   Workers must have frequent and meaningful contact with families in order to engage them in the work that needs to be done to protect children, promote permanency, and ensure child well-being. States where caseworkers have regular and well-focused visits with the child and parent have demonstrated improved permanency and well-being outcomes in the CFSRs. Frequent visits with parents also are positively associated with better client-worker relationships; better outcomes in discipline and emotional care of children; timely establishment of permanency goals; timely filing for termination of parental rights; and reunification, guardianship, or permanent placement with relatives.

2. **Family group decision-making (FGDM)**

   This is an effective and increasingly popular case-level strategy for engagement in the United States and around the world. FGDM is an umbrella term for various processes in which families are brought together with agency personnel and other interested parties to make decisions about and develop plans for the care of their children and needed services. FGDM strategies differ in meeting format, the stage during case meetings when they are held, the extent of family preparation, the extent of family privacy time, and other characteristics. The models are known by a variety of names and include:

   - Family group conferences
   - Family team conferences
   - Family team meetings
   - Family unity meetings

     www.americanhumane.org/protectingchildren/programs/family-group-decisionmaking

3. **Motivational interviewing**

   This is a directive counselling method for enhancing intrinsic motivation and promoting behaviour change by helping families explore and resolve ambivalence. This technique, which relies heavily on listening reflectively and asking directive questions, has shown positive results in working with child welfare populations with substance abuse issues.

http://motivationalinterview.org

4. **Collaborative strategies**

This type of strategy emphasizes working in partnership with families in a strength-based way to support achievement of case goals and objectives. Examples include Collaborative Helping, the Signs of Safety approach, and solution-focused practice.

- Madsen, W. C. (2009). Collaborative helping: A practice framework for family-centered services. Family Process 48, 103-116

- www.signsofsafety.net/signsofsafety

- Berg, I. K., & De Jong, P. (2004). Building solution-focused partnerships in children's protective and family services. Protecting Children 19, 3-13

- Antle, B. F., Barbee, A. P., Christensen, D.N., & Martin, M.H. (2008). Solution-based casework in child welfare: Preliminary evaluation research. Journal of Public Welfare 2(2), 197-227

5. **Father involvement**

This strategy recognizes the importance of fathers to the healthy development of children. Agencies are increasingly reaching out to fathers and working to enhance their positive involvement with their children. Fatherhood programs vary greatly. Some are outreach efforts to include fathers in assessment and case planning processes; others help fathers address stressors or behaviours that affect their ability to support their children.

www.abanet.org/child/fathers/

6. **Family search and engagement**

Family search and engagement encourages broad-based participation in family decision-making to leverage kinship connections and increase placement/ permanency options.

www.hunter.cuny.edu/socwork/nrcfcpp/info_services/family-search.html

7. **Mediation**

Mediation has been adopted by many agencies and courts in the USA, and allows agency representatives and families to work with a neutral facilitator to arrive at a mutually acceptable plan.

8. **Parent Partner Programs**

Parent Partner Programs engage parents who were once involved with the child welfare system to serve as mentors to currently involved parents, providing support, advocacy, and help navigating the system. Parent Partner Programs also use the birth parent experience to influence changes in policy and protocol, encourage shared decision-making, strengthen individualized plans, and educate the community.

http://www.cebc4cw.org/topic/parent-partner-programs-for-families-involved-in-the-child-welfare-system/

9. **Foster family-birth family meetings**

Foster family-birth family meetings encourage birth families and foster families to share information, help model parenting skills, and support participation of foster families in placement conferences that contribute to reunification efforts.

8.5   Appendix E: Family Group Conferencing

Reference: (Wien 2011)

This article was the result of a joint research project by the School of Social Work at Dalhousie University, Mi'kmaw Family and Children's Services in NS, and a Mi'kmaq lawyer, Tuma Young.

At its core, FGC involves bringing together the extended family of a child and his/her immediate caregivers, as well as other key community persons as designated by the client. In convening the group for an extended family conference that may last several hours, the responsibility for the resolution of the child welfare situation shifts to the family and the community, with the child welfare agency acting essentially as the facilitator of the process. That said, the child welfare agency staff member (facilitator) must also endorse the outcome of the proceedings. If courts are already involved, they would be aware of the meeting and in some cases would need to endorse the outcome.

Typically, a family group conference would involve six phases:

- **Phase I** is the pre-conference preparation stage and involves talking with the client and others, deciding on participants, and explaining the process of FGC to all involved.
- **Phase II** consists of the opening ceremonies, which includes an opening prayer or smudge, introductions, and establishing ground rules for the FGC.
- In **Phase III**, there is sharing information about the situation, discussion of the issues and of alternative courses of action.
- **Phase IV** involves a family caucus. Family members have the option of meeting among themselves to decide on the course of action they wish to pursue without social workers, therapists, and others.
- In **Phase V**, the family reports back to the larger group on the agreement that it has reached. Responsibilities and time frames are clarified. It is necessary that the agency approve the agreement.
- **Phase VI** consists of follow-up meetings. These are held as necessary to monitor implementation of the agreement and to adjust the plan as necessary.

For additional information on Family Group Conferencing see:

Desmeules, G. 2007. A Sacred Family Circle: A family group conferencing model. In Putting a human face on child welfare: Voices from the prairies, ed. I. Brown, F. Chaze, D. Fuchs, J. Lafrance, S. McKay and S. Thomas Prokop, 161-188. Toronto, ON: Prairie Child welfare Consortium and Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare.

MacDonald, N., J. Glode, and F. Wien. 2005. Respecting Aboriginal families: Pathways to resilience in custom adoption and family group conferencing. In M. Ungar (ed.), Handbook for working with children and youth (pp. 357-369). Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

Wien, F., 2011. Evaluating Family Group Conferencing in a First Nation Setting: An Example of University-First Nation Child Welfare Agency Collaboration. *in Child Welfare*, p.139.

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

8.6   Appendix F: Key Casework Elements

Reference: (Child Welfare Information Gateway 2010)

The Child Welfare Information Gateway is a clearing house for information on child welfare. The purpose of the service is to promote the safety, permanency, and well-being of children, youth, and families by connecting child welfare, adoption, and related professionals as well as the public to information, resources, and tools covering topics on child welfare, child abuse and neglect, out-of-home care, adoption, and more. The service is part of the Children's Bureau, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Following is a list of specific strategies outlined by the Gateway that reflect family engagement practice.

Key casework elements that foster the development of supportive and trusting relationships, which are necessary for family engagement practices include:

1. **Clear, honest, and respectful communication** with families, which helps set a foundation for building trust
2. **Commitment to family-centered practice** and its underlying philosophy and values
3. **Sufficient frequency and length of contact** with families and their identified formal and informal supports
4. **A strengths-based approach** that recognizes and reinforces families' capabilities and not just their needs and problems
5. **Shared decision-making and participatory planning**, which results in mutually agreed upon goals and plans reflecting both the caseworker's professional training and the family's knowledge of their own situation
6. **Broad-based involvement** by both parents, extended family members, informal networks, and community representatives who create a web of support that promotes safety, increases permanency options, and provides links to needed services
7. **Understanding of the role of confidentiality** and how to involve partners in case planning in a manner which is respectful of the family, but which also enables partners to plan realistically to protect the child and work toward permanency
8. **Recognition of foster and adoptive parents as resources** not only for the children in their care, but for the entire birth family
9. **Individualized service plans** that go beyond traditional preset service packages (e.g., parenting classes and counseling) and respond to both parents' identified needs, specific circumstances, and available supports
10. **Concrete services** that meet immediate needs for food, housing, child care, transportation, and other costs, and help communicate to families a sincere desire to help
11. **Praise and recognition of parents** who are making life changes that result in safe and permanent living situations for their children (including reunification, adoption, kinship placement, or guardianship)

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

8.7   Appendix G: Enhancing Cultural Pride Through Activities

Reference: (Nakuset et al. n.d.)

Many of the following suggestions are specific to Quebec. However, they may provide some guidance on similar activities that can be sourced in New Brunswick.

1. Become a member of the NETWORK. The website is www.reseaumtlnetwork.com and receive their monthly newsletters. Community events and cultural gatherings are listed.
2. Watch free documentaries online about Aboriginal peoples on CBC Passionate Eye website: http://www.cbc.ca/passionateeye/
3. Watch APTN (Aboriginal Peoples Television Network) on TV or online.
4. Subscribe to The Nation or the Eastern Door (Aboriginal newspapers).
5. Join Tasiutigiit, an organization that supports cross-cultural families of Inuit and Aboriginal children; Tel: (450) 479-6827
6. Attend cultural events with your child. Each year there is a Pow Wow in Kahnawake (always the second weekend of July).
7. Spend Aboriginal day with your child. June 21 is National Aboriginal day. There are always festivities in the city. You can learn more in the NETWORK newsletter.
8. For cultural events check out Terres en vues/Landinsights at nativelynx.qc.cc
9. Check out the McCord museum to learn about their culture (514 398-7100).
10. Bring your child to traditional ceremonies. Be willing to do some research into finding ceremonies that match your child's nation. Seek out an Elder from your child's community. Call the NETWORK for additional information.
11. Bring your child to the First Nations Garden at the Botanical Gardens.

8.8   Appendix H1: The Circle of Connectedness for Aboriginal Children

Reference: (Carriere 2008)

Jeannine Carriere is a professor at the University of Victoria in BC who's research priorities are situated in Indigenous child and family issues including community cantered practice and the resurgence of traditional family systems of care.

Spiritual Development

Spiritual development is delicate and complex, and it can be supported by appropriate engagement in practice settings. Working with respected local Elders is one way to help identity formation. Often the process of developing, with Elders, a basic understanding of protocols and ways of being remains a lifelong and cherished learning. Whether it is through storytelling, picking medicines, or sitting in ceremony, children can gain much knowledge and comfort from knowing that Elders are in the background of their lives to assist in their spiritual development. Through these relationships, children can also learn how their creation links them to ancestral knowledge and kinship ties. This work can be facilitated by workers who make connections for children with Elders from the child's community and kinship circle.

Mental Development

Interaction and communication are mechanisms to encourage identity development. Educational tools such as books, games, drama, dance, sports activities, and audiovisual educational resources can be used. Caregivers and adoptive parents can engage in this process by networking with Aboriginal agencies and organizations as important sources of information. Subscribing to newsletters and other forms of Aboriginal media is a helpful tool in gaining this information. Participating in community groups or volunteering for community events is a means to demonstrate the value that caregivers place on maintaining their child's Aboriginal identity.

Emotional Development

Identity confusion may be a strain on the emotional self for the Aboriginal child. It is important to prevent confusion by engaging children in activities where they can explore their family and community. Examples of exercises include artwork, family collages, scavenger hunts, and visits to community events and facilities. Regular contact with a child's birth family and community will help alleviate fears about the unknown family and lessen identity confusion.

Physical Self

Engaging children in physical activity enhances their wellness and directly contributes to mental, emotional, and spiritual health. It is important to acknowledge that not all children have the ability to be the next star hockey player, but they can be engaged in movement in activities such as dance or nature walks to learn about their ancestors' traditional medicines. Learning traditional tribal games from their nation is another example of learning through the physical self. An exploration of self through activity is a powerful experience.

8.9   Appendix H2: Conceptual Model - Extended Family Tree of Adoption

Reference: (Carrière 2007)

This model demonstrates the critical environmental factors for an Aboriginal child's development within adoption which considers a broad spectrum of family and cultural ties.

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report
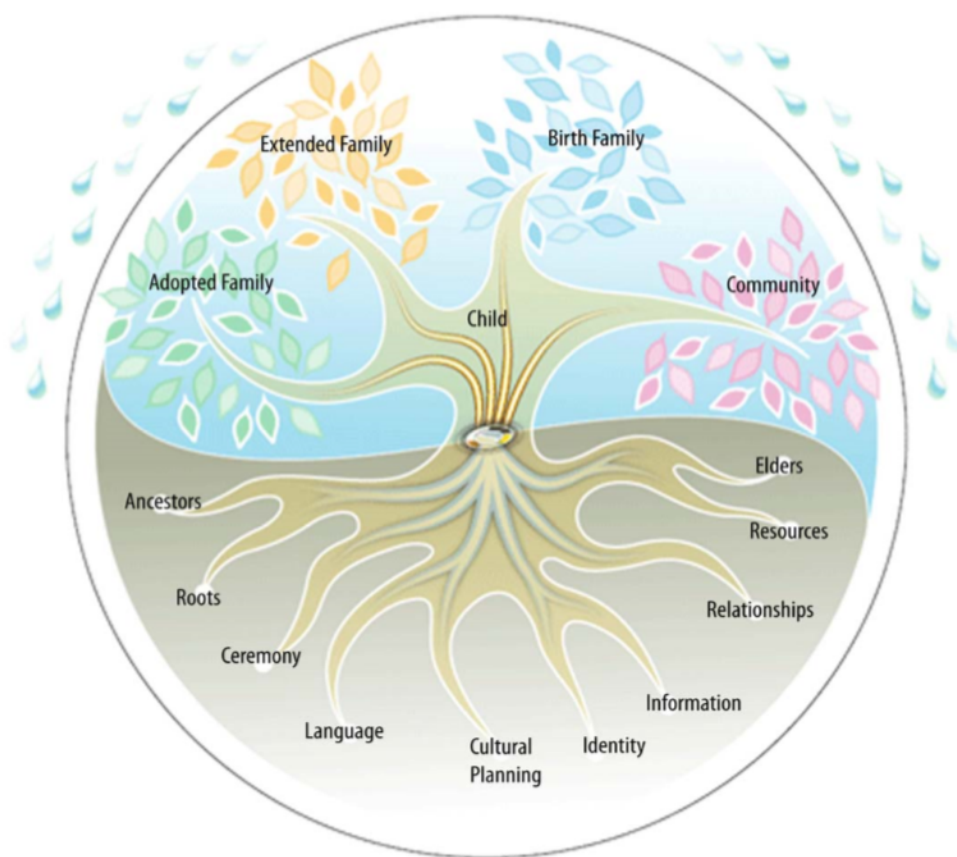
8.10 Appendix I: Cultural Plans in BC

Reference: (BC Representatives for Children and Youths 2013)

Cultural planning in BC is accomplished through a Cultural Safety Agreement, formally known as a "Cultural Plan" that MCFD adoption social workers must develop for the preservation of cultural identity for the Aboriginal child who is being adopted into a non-Aboriginal home. MCFD (2009) developed guidelines for adoption social workers of suggested key components which "must" be included in the Cultural Safety Agreement, which are:

- Responsibilities of the Adoptive Parent
- Responsibilities of the Aboriginal Community
- Maintaining Relationships with the Child's Siblings
- Contact with the Birth Parents and Extended Family
- Community Events

The intention of the Cultural Safety Agreement is to outline the "agreed" shared responsibilities of the adoptive parent/s and the Aboriginal community to protect the adoptive Aboriginal's child's inherent right to maintain a relationship with his or her First Nation community and family. Ministry guidelines also suggest the delegated worker collect information on:

- What band/community the child belongs to
- If the child eligible for membership
- How the band/community will participate in this child/youth's life
- Who will gather or assist the child/youth in gathering information such as family and genealogy, language, cultural ceremonies, traditional foods, spiritual practices, etc.
- How the child will participate in culturally sensitive ceremonies

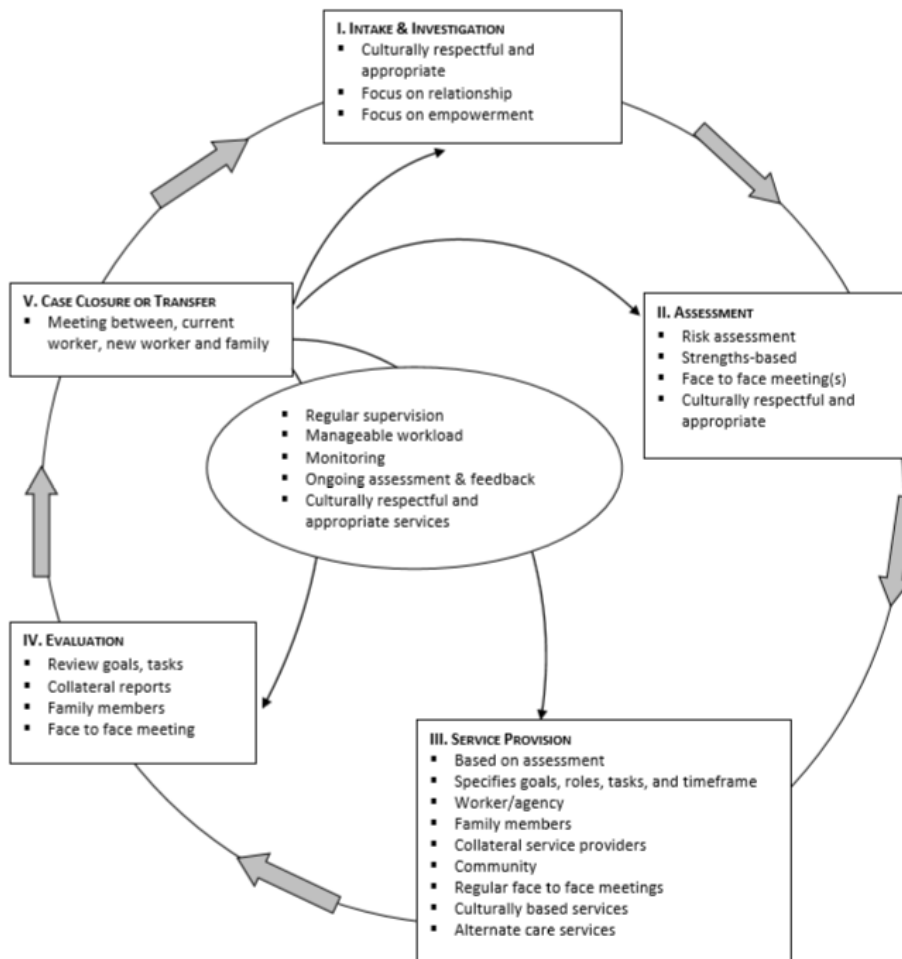However, the ministry's cultural plan guidelines do not specify a format or template for cultural plans.

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

8.11 Appendix J: Recommendations Re: Cultural Planning for Aboriginal Children in Care

Reference: (BC Representatives for Children and Youths 2013)

• Development of a standardized cultural planning tool to meet the needs of Aboriginal children in care. The tool must be flexible to tailor to the many different and unique customs, practices and traditions of Aboriginal people.

• Development of clear content requirements for cultural plans and provision of tools, resource materials and supervision to enable social workers to facilitate collaborative development of a cultural plan that emphasizes true cultural connections. This will require social workers to be supplied with the necessary links to Aboriginal supports that can provide competency in customs, languages, traditions and cultures. Social workers will also need to have good relationships with the range of Aboriginal communities and service providers in B.C.

• Supervisors to ensure that Aboriginal children and youth participate in discussions about their spiritual beliefs, interests and practices. Particular attention to be paid to customs that acknowledge and celebrate culture while respecting the history and experience of Aboriginal peoples, and allowing children and youth to discover the positive and essential aspects of that relationship.

• A commitment to build a culture of respect of the rights of Aboriginal children and youth and supporting them to claim their rights.

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

8.12 Appendix K: Direct Practice Elements in Child Welfare

Reference: (Wright n.d.)

I. INTAKE & INVESTIGATION
- Culturally respectful and appropriate
- Focus on relationship
- Focus on empowerment

II. ASSESSMENT
- Risk assessment
- Strengths-based
- Face to face meeting(s)
- Culturally respectful and appropriate

III. SERVICE PROVISION
- Based on assessment
- Specifies goals, roles, tasks, and timeframe
- Worker/agency
- Family members
- Collateral service providers
- Community
- Regular face to face meetings
- Culturally based services
- Alternate care services

IV. EVALUATION
- Review goals, tasks
- Collateral reports
- Family members
- Face to face meeting

V. CASE CLOSURE OR TRANSFER
- Meeting between, current worker, new worker and family

(center oval)
- Regular supervision
- Manageable workload
- Monitoring
- Ongoing assessment & feedback
- Culturally respectful and appropriate services

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

8.13 Appendix L: Examples of Child Welfare Best Practices

Reference: (Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies 2012)

The following information comes from a Practice Guide is designed to support child welfare professionals to develop: 1. Personal knowledge and understanding of their own worldview and that of others; 2. Skills and abilities when working with Aboriginal families and Communities; and 3. Ability to be an advocate to support systemic change both in child welfare and more broadly in the province (Ontario) so that Aboriginal communities can assume full responsibility for the protection of their children.

To support the family and community:

1. Use a case conference within 1-2 weeks, with a broad circle of community and family members
2. Be an advocate for the whole family — outreach to other service providers and community organizations
3. Coordinate an immediate planning conference and involve family, community members and service providers, and establish roles, responsibilities and support
4. Talk to community members to build alliances
5. Establish a shared care model of support
6. Ask Aboriginal families: "Are there any services in your community that you would like to use?"

Preparing a foundation for building trust and make connecting easier when meeting an Aboriginal family for the first time:

1. Who in the community can help you to make a connection with the family?
2. Who can help you decide on the best place to meet with the family so that they feel most comfortable?
3. Who can be present during an initial visit so that the family feels more comfortable talking about their child and family?
4. Has the parent(s)/primary caregiver(s) been invited to bring extended family members to the meeting?
5. Is there adequate time scheduled so that the family does not feel rushed?
6. What is the family's preference for future appointments?
7. What is the best way and time to contact the family?"

Suggestions for a systemic and holistic case management approach:

1. Create immediate response teams that can offer wrap around support care circles to each family member
2. Talk about the power imbalance between the workers and families and how to create balance in the relationship

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

3. Work with the family as part of a supportive team that includes Aboriginal service organizations, Elders, other family members and community members that the family identifies as helpers

4. Have weekly case management meetings with the team to explore questions together:

- What are the issues in this family?
- What are the strengths of this family?
- What are the risks to this family?
- How can we address them?
- How can we support this family?
- How can we engage this family?

5. Have formal and informal community service workers go with child welfare professionals in the home visits
6. Have formal and informal community service workers involved in investigations
7. Pass the file on to the family service workers right after the investigations
8. Involve other relevant workers (e.g. FASD worker, perinatal worker, housing staff, or anyone else working to help the family) early in the process
9. Develop the service plan with the family and call it a family plan
10. Identify the key worker that will be the lead and review the family's progress
11. ***Reduce the number of workers a family has to interact with

***Within this study focus group participants noted that they are continuously repeating their story to various workers. There are different workers for the biological parents, foster parents and the children in care, which creates division between workers. Ongoing communication amongst workers can avoid unnecessary tensions. Child welfare professionals must work in collaboration to meet the needs of all parties involved, while ensuring that the focus is always child-centred.

Suggestions to move cultural literacy forward (as stated by the organization), including training in the following topic areas:

1. Respecting Aboriginal worldviews, teachings and traditions
2. Experiential, cultural training, to allow time for reflection and knowledge development
3. Training about traditional ways, including Aboriginal history, the clan system, ceremonies, the life cycle wheel
4. The traumas suffered by Aboriginal peoples, including real life stories
5. Understanding and respecting the Treaties
6. Formal and informal approaches to building relationships (e.g. seeing an Elder, participating in formal training, participating in community activities)
7. Working with Aboriginal and community organizations to establish a circle of care for children and families
8. Collaborative and cultural case management involving extended family, band council and Elders to create cultural safety
9. Anti-oppressive practice training (currently being provided in many CAS locations)

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

10. Understanding unique challenges of co-occurring mental health issues, and availability of alternative treatments (sweatlodge or other traditional care approaches)
11. Stereotypes and how they affect the assessment process
12. Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder and how to support families
13. Addictions and substance misuse, including prescription drugs
14. Knowledge about their local community, including:

    - What has happened historically in the community they work in?
    - Who are the original peoples and what geographical area did they inhabit?
    - Where do they live now?
    - What are the dynamics in the community between non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal peoples?

Suggestions to support Aboriginal culture for Aboriginal children in foster care:

1. Provide supplementary training for foster parents caring for Aboriginal children, to provide them with cultural knowledge.
2. Create a peer support group for foster/adoptive parents of Aboriginal children
3. Address the systemic barriers preventing Aboriginal families from being foster parents. Some of the criteria for foster parents are embedded in class based assumptions (e.g. the number of children who can share a room), which is contrary to traditional ways of child-rearing.
4. Establish a better connection between foster parents, the child welfare agency and community organizations to ensure the child's cultural needs are met in a respectful way.
5. Put specific expectations and conditions on foster parents who have the care of Aboriginal children, to ensure that children maintain family and cultural connections (e.g. key ceremonies that relate to the child's time in the lifecycle and reinforce the lessons that children need to be learning at this time in their development).
6. Explore the variety of culturally appropriate care options to ensure that cultural identity is maintained, including: Customary Care, Kinship Care, Open Adoptions, and Customary Adoptions.

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

8.14 Appendix M: Touchstones of Hope

Reference: (Blackstock et al. 2006)

The Touchstones of Hope is a set of principles to guide a reconciliation process within all aspects of society and is the basis for a respectful and meaningful relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. The success of the movement rests on the fact that it is a community driven process that fosters relationships and provides opportunities to have respectful conversations about reconciliation. This includes concrete steps for moving forward together so that all Indigenous children, youth and their families are healthy and living with dignity.

1. **Self-determination**

   - Indigenous peoples are in the best position to make decisions that affect Indigenous children, youth, families, and communities.

   - Indigenous peoples are in the best position to lead the development of child welfare laws, policies, research, and practice that affects their communities.

   - Non-Indigenous child welfare workers need the capacity and understanding to work effectively with Indigenous communities, experts, children, youth, and families.

   - Only adequate and sustained resources will enable Indigenous communities to implement self-determination in child welfare.

   - The role of children and young people in making decisions that affect them must be recognized.

2. **Culture and Language**

   - Culture is ingrained in all child welfare theory, research, policy, and practice. There is no culturally neutral practice or practitioner.

   - Child welfare policy and practice are most effective when they reflect and reinforce the intrinsic and distinct aspects of Indigenous cultures.

   - Guidelines and evaluation processes for culturally appropriate child welfare are strongest when established by Indigenous communities, reflecting local culture and context.

   - Language is the essence of culture, and child welfare knowledge, policy, and practice are most relevant when expressed in the language of the community served.

3. **Holistic Approach**

   - Child welfare approaches that reflect the reality of the whole child preserve the continuity of relationships and recognize the child is shaped by her/his culture (including traditions, spirituality, and social customs), environment, social relationships, and specific abilities and traits.

- Effective child welfare services take a lifelong approach to making decisions, and give due consideration to both short- and long-term impacts of interventions.

- Relevant child welfare interventions acknowledge that non-Indigenous and Indigenous children and youth are citizens of the world. This means that the child welfare systems must ensure all children and youth in their care have opportunities to understand, interact with, and respect peoples of different cultures.

4. **Structural Interventions**

- Protecting the safety of children and youth must include resolving risk at the level of the child, family, and community. Without redress of structural risks, there is little chance that the number of Indigenous children and youth in care will be reduced.

- Consistent with United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, child welfare providers should not remove children or youth from their homes due to poverty. Impoverished families must be provided with the economic and social supports necessary to safely care for their children and youth.

- Social workers must learn to differentiate between structural (also known as distal) risks and family risks to a child or youth, and develop meaningful responses to both.

- Substance misuse is a major problem, and child welfare must develop programs to redress neglect arising from parental substance misuse— preferably in tandem with culturally based addictions experts and services —within the context of the economic poverty of many communities.

5. **Non Discrimination**

- Indigenous children and youth receiving child welfare services should not receive inferior services because they are Indigenous.

- Indigenous peoples are entitled to equal access to child welfare resources that are responsive to their needs, and the unique cultural context of their experience.

- Indigenous peoples are entitled to equal access to ancillary resources related to child welfare, such as services supported by the voluntary sector, corporate sector, and all levels of government.

- Indigenous ways of knowledge must be given full credence when child welfare work is carried out with Indigenous children, youth, and their families, and Indigenous interventions used as a first priority.

8.15 Appendix N: Harmony Circles

Reference: (Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies 2012)

The following information comes from a Practice Guide is designed to support child welfare professionals to develop: 1. Personal knowledge and understanding of their own worldview and that of others; 2. Skills and abilities when working with Aboriginal families and Communities; and 3. Ability to be an advocate to support systemic change both in child welfare and more broadly in the province (Ontario) so that Aboriginal communities can assume full responsibility for the protection of their children.

The Harmony Circles concept describes how each circle strives to be in balance. If each circle is in balance then we have harmony between circles; if one circle is not in balance and is not caring for its basic needs, then it can negatively impact on the other circles. The circle nestled inside a circle shows how each part of community is connected from the individual to the largest socially organized structure.

In Aboriginal families, the child is in the middle of the circle. All the other circles around the child represent the relationships that the child can have and the people who can have a positive or negative influence on the child. The first circle around the child is the family. An Indigenous worldview often does not distinguish the nuclear family unit from the extended family, so a dotted line is used to reflect the interconnection. In other words, an auntie or grandmother can have equal status with a mother or father in their nurturing role and responsibilities to that child in the family. According to this model it is essential that Aboriginal children stay within these circles so that cultural identity is never compromised. Importantly, the circles can continue to expand outwards, and these outer circles can include non-Aboriginal service providers and foster homes that care for Aboriginal children.
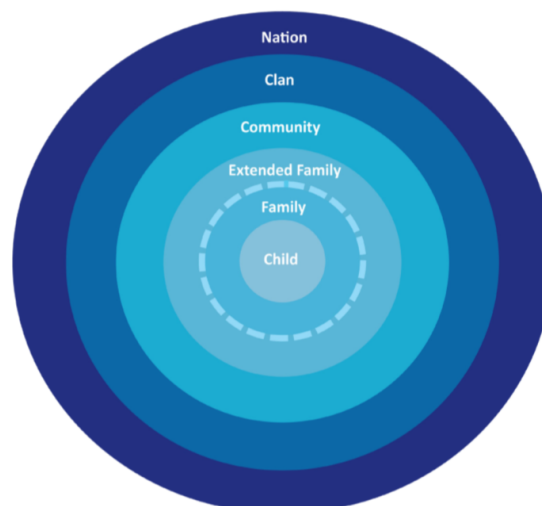
Nuclear family: Immediate family, mother, father and siblings

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

Extended family: Aunties and uncles on the mother's and father's side, cousins, second cousins, maternal and paternal family lineage

Community family: The membership of the First Nations community

Nationhood family: These are all members of the Nation, regardless of jurisdiction, provincial territories or countries
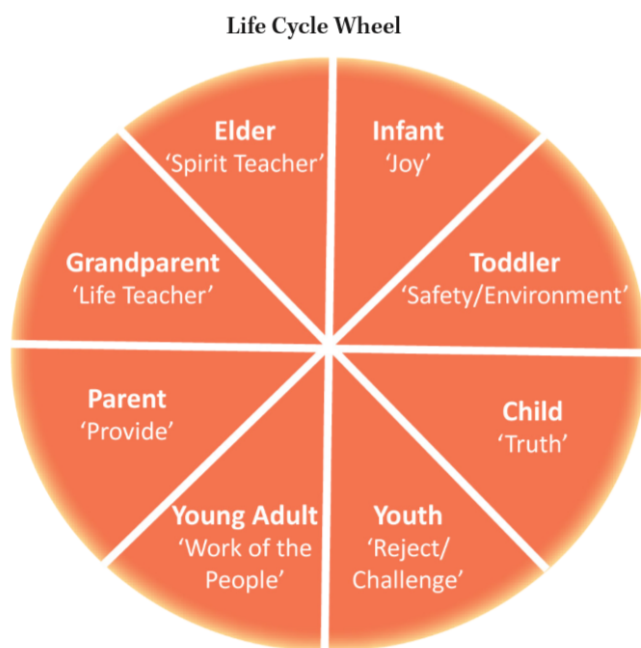
Clan family: This structure is based on the teachings of the clan system and the relationship to the spirit world

Cultural family: This is linked to the ceremonial aspects of the Nation

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

8.16 Appendix O: Life Cycle Wheel

Reference: (Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy 2009)

The Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy combines traditional and mainstream programs and services to help improve Aboriginal health and reduce family violence. These community-based programs and services are available to Aboriginal people living on-reserve and in urban and rural communities. The Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy is a joint program between the Ontario government and First Nations and Aboriginal organizations.

Life Cycle Wheel

- Elder 'Spirit Teacher'
- Infant 'Joy'
- Toddler 'Safety/Environment'
- Grandparent 'Life Teacher'
- Child 'Truth'
- Parent 'Provide'
- Young Adult 'Work of the People'
- Youth 'Reject/Challenge'

Infants: are a sacred gift bringing joy, and an infant's birth is celebrated by her/his family and community. The family and community are responsible for instructing and supporting her/his healthy (physical, mental, emotional and spiritual) development.

Toddlers: are curious and possess a heightened capacity for learning; they observe, explore and test their surroundings in order to learn and understand their relationship with their environment. Toddlers need to experience safety and a safe environment. Consequently, all caregivers are responsible for ensuring that toddlers have their physical, mental, emotional and spiritual needs met within home and other environments. The toddler's environment must be stable and nurturing, without sexual, substance/alcohol abuse or violence, and promote safe play and exploration.

Children: or childhood represent the formative years, which involve increased learning, training and teaching about truth. During this stage, positive interactions with other children and nurturing adults help children learn how to trust and what feeling safe and secure means. This stage aids development of a child's ability to discern what "truth" is in future situations.

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

Youth: is a transitional stage between childhood and adulthood. Youth often challenge and/or reject beliefs and attitudes held by family, community and the larger society, and propose their own alternatives based on an "ideal." Youth need to be encouraged and supported and taught the history and culture of their people. At the end of this stage, they will be matured, caring, knowledgeable and skilled young adults.

Young adults: are responsible for making their own decisions and creating their own paths. They have the knowledge, caring, skills and respect for life to lead healthy lifestyles and be responsible within the community. They begin to understand their responsibilities to their communities and their Nations. At this stage they wander out into the world to develop a better idea of their responsibilities and roles. It is during this stage that they do the "work of the people."

Parents: draw upon their knowledge, skills, caring, teaching and the love that they have experienced through their own Life Cycle, to be providers and caregivers to their family and community. They provide for the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being of the people.

Grandparents: need to be respected and provided with care. Through wisdom, grandparents are the life teachers to all those who come after them. They share and teach cultural knowledge, life-skills, history and personal knowledge they gained on their own life journey.

Elders: are highly regarded not only for the wisdom accumulated along the Life Cycle, but also because they are the spirit teachers of the people. They are the people who help us understand the relationship and interconnectedness of our physical and spiritual realm. It is the Elders who are more often healers, medicine men and women, spiritual guides/leaders and keepers of Aboriginal teachings and ceremonies.

9 References

Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy. 2009. Phase III longitudinal study: Final report. AHWS Joint Management Committee, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Aboriginal Healing Foundation. 2006. Final report of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation. A healing journey: Summary points. AHF, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

Anderson, L. 2014. The foster parent survival guide: How to navigate the child welfare matrix. Keewatin Press, Oshawa, Ontario Canada.

Assembly of First Nations. 2008. First Nations Cultural Safety in Post-Secondary Education.

Assembly of First Nations. 2013. FACT SHEET – CHILD WELFARE Assembly of First Nations.

Baistow, K., and G. Wilford. 2000. Helping parents, protecting children: ideas from Germany. Children & society **14**:343-354.

Ball, J. 2008. Promoting equity and dignity for Aboriginal children in Canada. IRPP Choices **14**:1-30.

Ball, J. n.d. Cultural Safety in Practice with Children, Families and Communities.*in* U. o. V. School of Child and Youth Care, editor. Early Childhood Development Intercultural Partnerships, Victoria, BC, Canada.

BC Representatives for Children and Youths. 2013. Much More than Paperwork Proper Planning Essential to Better Lives for B.C.'s Children in Care.

Bennett, M., and C. Blackstock. 2002. A literature review and annotated bibliography focusing on aspects of Aboriginal child welfare in Canada. First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada.

Bird, R. L. 2015. Emotional and Spiritual Challenges of Aboriginal Foster Parents. The University of Western Ontario.

Blackstock, C. 2008. Rooting mental health in an Aboriginal worldview. Ottawa, ON: Prepared for the Provincial Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health at CHEO. Retrieved June **3**:2014.

Blackstock, C., and F. N. Child. 2004. Keeping the promise: The Convention on the Rights of the Child and the lived experiences of First Nations children and youth. First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada.

Blackstock, C., T. Cross, J. George, I. Brown, and J. Formsma. 2006. Reconciliation in Child Welfare: TouchStones of Hope for Indigenous Children. Youth and Families. First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada, Ottawa.

Blackstock, C., and N. Trocmé. 2005. Community-based child welfare for Aboriginal children: Supporting resilience through structural change. Social Policy Journal of New Zealand **24**:12-33.

Brascoupé, S., and C. Waters. 2009. Cultural safety: Exploring the applicability of the concept of cultural safety to Aboriginal health and community wellness. International Journal of Indigenous Health **5**:6.

Brown, J. D., N. George, J. Sintzel, and D. S. Arnault. 2009. Benefits of cultural matching in foster care. Children and Youth Services Review **31**:1019-1024.

Burchard, J. D., E. J. Bruns, and S. N. Burchard. 2002. The wraparound approach. Community treatment for youth: Evidence-based interventions for severe emotional and behavioral disorders **2**:69-90.

Burns, B. J., and S. K. Goldman. 1999. Promising Practices in Wraparound for Children with Serious Emotional Disturbance and Their Families. Systems of Care: Promising Practices in Children's Mental Health 1998 Series. Volume IV.

Cajete, G. 2000. Native science: Natural laws of interdependence. Clear Light Pub.

Campbell River Joint Transition Committee. 2013. Children and Youth in Transition: A Toolkit for Effective Transitions BC Ministry of Children and Family Development.

Carriere, J. 2008. Maintaining identities: The soul work of adoption and Aboriginal children. Pimatisiwin: A Journal of Aboriginal and Aboriginal Community Health **6**:61-80.

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

Carriere, J. n.d. You Should Know That I Trust You: Strengthening Cultural Plans for Aboriginal Children and adoption. Indigenous Child Welfare Research Network, Victoria.

Carrière, J. 2007. You Should Know That I Trust You: Cultural Planning, Aboriginal Children and Adoption. First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada, Victoria.

Carriere, J., and S. Scarth. 2007. Aboriginal children: Maintaining connections in adoption. Putting a human face on child welfare: Voices from the prairies:205-223.

Child Welfare Information Gateway. 2010. Family Engagement.*in* Y. a. F. C. s. B. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children and Families Administration on Children, editor., Washington, DC.

Child Welfare League of Canada. 2013. Parenting Resources Information Development Education (PRIDE).

Clark, H. B., B. Lee, M. E. Prange, and B. A. McDonald. 1996. Children lost within the foster care system: Can wraparound service strategies improve placement outcomes? Journal of child and family studies **5**:39-54.

Conley, A. 2007. Differential response: A critical examination of a secondary prevention model. Children and Youth Services Review **29**:1454-1468.

Connolly, M. 2005. Differential responses in child care and protection: Innovative approaches in family-centered practice. Differential Response: A Common Sense Reform in Child Welfare.

Daniel, E. 2011. Fostering cultural development: Foster parents' perspectives. Children and Youth Services Review **33**:2230-2240.

de Haymes, M. V., and S. Simon. 2003. Transracial adoption: families identify issues and needed support services. Child welfare **82**.

Desmeules, G. 2007. A sacred family circle: A family group conferencing model. Putting a human face on child welfare: Voices from the prairies:161-188.

Early, T. J., and L. F. GlenMaye. 2000. Valuing families: Social work practice with families from a strengths perspective. Social Work **45**:118-130.

Ferris, P., E. Simard, G. Simard, and J. Ramdatt. 2005. Weechi-it-te-win Family Services: Utilizing a Decentralized Model in the Provision of Bi-Cultural Services First Nations Child and Family Caring Scoiaty of Canada.

Forsythe, P. 1992. Homebuilders and family preservation. Children and Youth Services Review **14**:37-47.

Fulcher, L. 2005. Cultural safety and the duty of care. Child Welfare: Issues in child welfare **4**:285.

George Hull Centre. 2011. Family Group Conferencing/Family Group Decision Making Coordinator Manual for Ontario. FGC Ontario Provincial Resource. Available at: http://www.georgehullcentre.on.ca/usercontent/resources/FGC-Manual-Eng.pdf (accessed November 2017).

Government of New Brunswick. n.d. Family Group Conference. Available at: http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/services/services_renderer.201139.html (accessed November 2017).

Grzybowski, K. 2012. Voices from Aboriginal Child and Family Agencies in British Columbia: Supporting Aboriginal Adopted Children with Cultural Planning. University of Victoria.

Hardisty, V., G. Martin, K. Murray, and J. Ramdatt. n.d. Kunuwanimano Means "Keeping Our Own" Practicing from a Perspective of Strength. First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada.

Hart, M. 2002. Seeking mino-pimatisiwin: An Aboriginal approach to helping. Fernwood Books Limited.

Hetherington, R., and R. Piquardt. 2001. Strategies for survival: users' experience of child welfare in three welfare regimes. Child & Family Social Work **6**:239-248.

Hudson, P., and B. McKenzie. 2003. Extending Aboriginal control over child welfare services: The Manitoba child welfare initiative. Canadian Review of Social Policy/Revue canadienne de politique sociale.

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

Irvine, K. 2009. Supporting Aboriginal Parents: Teachings for the Future. National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health.

Irvine, K., C. Blackstock, and F. N. Child. 2004. Crisis response in First Nations child and family services. First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada.

Jodoin, L. 2017. Discussions with Off-Reserve Child Welfare Agencies in New Brunswick: An Effort to Better Understand the Needs of Aboriginal Children in Care. Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network Atlantic.

Kaplan, C., and L. Merkel-Holguin. 2008. Another look at the national study on differential response in child welfare. Exploring Differential.

Kinney, J., D. Haapala, and C. Booth. 1991. Keeping families together: The homebuilders model. Transaction Publishers.

Klamn, R. 2009. Helping First Nations children-in-care develop a healthy identity.

Kufeldt, K. 2014. Child Welfare: Connecting research, policy and practice. Wilfrid Laurier Univ. Press.

Leschied, A., S. Rodger, J. Brown, W. den Dunnen, and L. Pickel. 2014. Rescuing a critical resource: A review of the foster care retention and recruitment literature and its relevance in the Canadian child welfare context. Child Welfare League of Canada.

Leve, L. D., G. T. Harold, P. Chamberlain, J. A. Landsverk, P. A. Fisher, and P. Vostanis. 2012. Practitioner review: children in foster care–vulnerabilities and evidence-based interventions that promote resilience processes. Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry **53**:1197-1211.

Littell, J. H. 2001. Client participation and outcomes of intensive family preservation services. Social Work Research **25**:103-113.

Marneffe, C. 2002. VOLUNTARY CHILD PROTECTION WORK IN BELGIUM. International Perspectives on Child Protection:110.

McGregor, L., and L. McGregor. 2010. FOUNDED IN CULTURE: Strategies To Promote Early Learning Among First Nations Children In Ontario. The Best Start Resource Centre, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

McKenzie, B., B. Kennedy, A. S. Balla, and L. Lamirande. 2009. An Exploratory Regional Study on Child Welfare Outcomes in Aboriginal Communities. Ontario: Association of Native Child and Family Services Agencies of Ontario. Available at: http://www. fncaringsociety. com/sites/default/files/docs/ANCFSAO-Final-Report-Nov2009. pdf (accessed November 2016).

Ministry for Children and Families. 2001. Practice Standards and Guidelines for Adoption. Victoria, BC, Canada.

Ministry of Children and Family Development. 2009. Aboriginal Operational and Practice Standards and Indicators: Operational Standards. Victoria, BC, Canada.

Nakuset, M. Durrum, B. McDonald Simon, A. Phillips, and I. Qavavauq. n.d. Cultural manual for foster and adoptive parents of Aboriginal children. Social Service Committee Montreal Urban Aboriginal Community Strategy Network.

National Association of Friendship Centres. n.d. The New Urban Aboriginal Strategy. Available at: http://nafc.ca/en/uas/ (accessed November 2017).

NetCare. n.d. An Introduction to Family Group Conference. Available at: http://www.netcare-ni.com/media/uploads/Practice%20and%20theory.pdf (accessed November 2017).

Office of the Auditor General of BC. 2008. Management of Aboriginal Child Protection Services ISBN 978-0-7726-5988-0, Ministry of Children and Family Development.

Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies. 2012. Working with First Nations, Inuit and Métis Families who have Experienced Family Violence: A Practice Guide for Child Welfare Professionals. Steering Committee, Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies, Canadian Child Welfare Research Portal.

Rousseau, J. A. 2015. The elusive promise of reconciliation in British Columbia child welfare: Aboriginal perspectives and wisdom from within the BC Ministry of Children and Family Development. First Peoples Child & Family Review **10**:44-61.

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report

Saskatchewan Child Welfare Review Panel. 2010. Saskatchewan Child Welfare Review Panel Report: For The Good of Our Children and Youth. Saskatchewan Ministry of Social Services.

Shangreaux, C., C. Blackstock, and F. N. Child. 2004. Staying at home: Examining the implications of least disruptive measures in First Nations child and family service agencies. First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada.

Sinha, V., and A. Kozlowski. 2013. The structure of Aboriginal child welfare in Canada. International Indigenous Policy Journal **4**.

Statistics Canada. 2008. Aboriginal Children's survey, 2006: Family, community, and child care – Analytical paper., Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division, Statistics Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

Statistics Canada. 2011. Aboriginal Peoples in Canada: First Nations People, Metis and Inuit. Statistics Canada, Ottawa.

Statistics Canada. 2016. Aboriginal Peoples in Canada: First Nations People, Metis and Inuit. Statistics Canada, Ottawa.

Walton, E., P. Sandau-Beckler, and M. Mannes. 2001. Balancing family-centered services and child well-being: Exploring issues in policy, practice, theory, and research. Columbia University Press.

Wien, F. 2011. Evaluating Family Group Conferencing in a First Nation Setting: An Example of University-First Nation Child Welfare Agency Collaboration. in Child Welfare:139.

Williams, R. 1999. Cultural safety—what does it mean for our work practice? Australian and New Zealand journal of public health **23**:213-214.

Wright, A. n.d. A Review of Best Practices in Child Welfare.

Wright, A., and D. Hiebert-Murphy. 2011. The application of family-centered practice in the child welfare context. Pages 445-458 *in* K. Kufeldt and B. McKenzie, editors. Child Welfare: Connecting research, policy and practice. Wilfred Laurier University Press, Waterloo, Ont.

APPENDIX A: LET'S GET IT RIGHT Report