

healing words

Volume 4 Number 2

A Publication of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation

Message from the Editor

Healing Words is now 5 years old and has grown from a few pages to considerably more. It has also gained wide appreciation for its content and lay-out. The comments we have received from our readers show that they appreciate how much we care about the issues we write about, and it has kept our passion and energy alive. Thank you so much. I know also that you find this publication useful and relevant to your personal and professional lives: we receive daily requests from many of you, who find our newsletter interesting, encouraging and worth using in a variety of settings: Home, Schools, Universities, Correctional, Health and Mental Health institutions, Women, Men and Youth organisations etc. ...

As you must have learnt by now, the efforts by the AHF and by Canada-wide Aboriginal organisations and communities have not resulted in an extension of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation's mandate. We are therefore engaged in a winding down process. As part of this process, our newsletter will now be published three times a year.

Among other topics, Healing Words has, over the years, examined the relationship between the sexual and physical abuse and the present-day situation of many different Aboriginal people: Women, Men, Youth, and Elders, the Incarcerated (women and men). Our last newsletter, which focused on Aboriginal Men's issue in the context of residential schools, has been extremely well received. Our winter/spring newsletter will be dedicated to the impact of residential schools on Inuit society. In this present Summer/fall issue, we have applied the lens to the effects of Residential Schools on Metis people and communities. In general, Metis history and certainly the segment of their history that deals with Residential Schools is not well known.

Although the Residential School System was originally designed as a means to assimilate First Nations children, families, communities and nations, it also extended its destructive influence to Inuit and Metis peoples. The one common denominator was that the sexual and physical abuse in the Residential School system was perpetrated against children, with the same consequences on their lives, the lives of their families and communities. There are, however some differences in the Metis perspective and experience of Residential Schools which are worthy of consideration.

The participation of Metis in the Residential school system is explored in excerpts from a study commissioned by the AHF and prepared by Larry N. Chartrand in October 2002. This issue also offers articles on Incarceration and Metis people in Manitoba and British Columbia as well as several articles developed by the Metis Survivor Family wellness program, sponsored by the Manitoba Metis Federation and funded by the AHF. Our winter issue

I recently read a powerful book on the health situation of Aboriginal people and its relationship with the Residential School system. Colonizing Bodies, by Mary-Ellen Kelm, is the winner of the 1999 Sir John MacDonald Prize for best book on Canadian History and truly brings new understanding on the concept of physical abuse and its intergenerational repercussions in the context of residential schools. I have included an extract of chapter 4, entitled "A scandalous Procession": residential Schooling and the reformation of Aboriginal bodies. I hope these few paragraphs will give you the taste for the whole book. It is an excellent read for everyone, including Teachers and Students.

The use of a combination of Aboriginal traditional and Western, contemporary healing approaches has been cited by a majority of projects and communities as a best practice. You will find in this issue a brief introduction to the TIDAL model. It has been used in various cultural contexts and I hope the article describing its application in a Maori context will be of interest.

Some of the photos in this issue are from the catalogue accompanying the exhibition Where are the Children, a joint initiative project from the National Archives of Canada, The Aboriginal Healing Foundation and the Legacy of Hope Foundation and curated by Jeff Thomas, a well-known Aboriginal artist-photographer.

As the majority of the participants at the AHF Regional Gatherings have told us: the trauma we suffered lasted for hundred of years. Healing cannot be achieved in a mere few years. Learning about what has worked best in the last four years of the AHF and Aboriginal communities' healing initiatives will also need some years' retrospective. But we have

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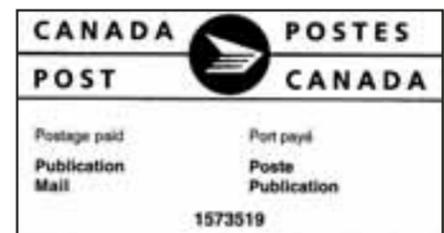
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I am an Aboriginal Community Worker in Calgary and find your publication fantastic. Could I be put on a mailing list to receive some here for my colleagues and I in our work with community?

Thanks.

- SHARON SMALL,
Aboriginal Community Worker.

Hi! Sharon

We have placed you on our mailing list. Our next newsletter, our Fall issue, will be distributed the first week of October, so watch out!

Thanks for your encouragement, it is much appreciated, Sharon

Best regards,
- Giselle, AHF Communications.

*

Hi, I receive the Healing Words publication and I would like to have our mental health therapists in community receive the publication as well.

Could you add the following positions to your mailing list to receive your *Healing Words* publication.

Thank you,
- DARLYNNE HILDEBRANDT,
STC Mental Health Specialist.

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Healing Words

To receive *Healing Words*, write to us at Suite 801, 75 Albert Street, Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 5E7 or phone 1-888-725-8886. (In Ottawa, phone 237-4441). Our fax number is (613) 237-4442 and our email is grobelin@ahf.ca or wspear@ahf.ca. Keep in mind that the newsletter is available in French and English and is free. Also available on-line! <http://www.ahf.ca>

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healing words submissions

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Submit your articles, letters, or other contributions by fax, mail, or email to:

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Please include a short biography with your submission as well as a return address and phone number. We may need to contact you about your submission.

The AHF does not pay for published submissions, but we do provide contributors with copies of the newsletter.

The views expressed by contributors to *Healing Words* do not necessarily reflect the views of the AHF.

All submissions are subject to the approval of the editorial team and may be edited for spelling, grammar, and length.

men and healing issue

A SPECIAL
THANK-YOU TO
ALL OUR
CONTRIBUTORS

... continued from front cover

begun the process of evaluating progress so far. You will find in this issue some extract from the most recent evaluation of community healing programs financed by the AHF, entitled Journey and balance (available upon request) and articles from projects that have applied some promising healing practices.

As always, you will find in Healing Words poems and stories contributed by our readers. We hope that you will enjoy this issue, find food for thoughts, and that it will inspire you to write to us.

I am looking for information for an article I would like to research and publish in our next newsletter. I would like to explore the concept of the power of names. Our identity as human beings is so completely intertwined with the physical world that surrounds us that when we cannot summon the names that have, since the beginnings of our particular collective cultural memory, given substance and meaning to this world, we become wanderers in a shadowy, ghostly landscape. Losing the names of our outer world is losing the connection with our own inner world. Where once the names of trees and rivers, of sunlight and snow, of the creatures of the earth, sky and waters, of humble and important places could become alive with meanings by summoning their name, there is only silence, and even when the forgetting has settled, when the power of our ancestral names have been worn down by the new ones, there remain like a twisting of spirit at the call of the foreign, empty sounds.

There is such healing power in giving things, creatures and places their true name, using them again is bringing back the light and the life to them. The same goes with personal names.

I would like to highlight in our next issue the healing power of renaming the Aboriginal world, and also of Aboriginal naming ceremonies. They played a central role in giving Aboriginal children and youth a solid sense of who they are as a person, and of the role they could play in the life and destiny of their community and nation. Almost all Aboriginal communities and Nations practiced naming ceremonies, many still do. I know some of these ceremonies are not meant to be shared publicly, and all respect is due to this preference. But if you have a story that can be shared, please write.

We are all on the healing path, and on behalf of the entire Healing Words team, I wish you a safe healing journey.

- G. R



Dear Darlyne

We have entered all the contacts you sent us on our mailing list. Thank you very much for your interest in our publication. Our next issue is coming up on the first week in October. This issue will explore the impact of the Residential schools on Metis people. I hope you will find the articles interesting and useful.

Best regards

Giselle, AHF Communications

*

Hello Giselle,

I have scanned the publication on the internet and have seen much material that I am interested in. Would you be so kind as to send 5 copies in English and 1 copy in French to:

I will share them with other friends and colleagues.

Prior to moving to Edmonton in August 2002, I was very involved in working as a volunteer at William Head Institution and in particular with the Restorative Justice Coalition and the Native Brotherhood. In my quick review of the publication I did not see mention of the new Native Health Centre at William Head Institution which provides a significant place in which to begin or continue healing journeys behind a prison wall.

I hope to be in touch with you in the future concerning a project I am developing through my company Just: People, Places, Design & Development Inc. It focuses on the importance of a school education versus a prison education and the numbers of people involved. Currently it is aimed at the total populations in all of North America.

Best wishes,
David Hough.

Hi! David

I will mail a package to you today, with pleasure. Thank you very much for your interest. If there is a topic you would like us to research and publish on Healing Words, don't hesitate to let me know..

I wish you a very good day.

Giselle

*

Hello Giselle,

I trust this message finds you safe and well in these trying times. I hope the funding is renewed for this most worthwhile project and newsletter. It is extremely important that all Aboriginal People are on the same page of the resistance and renewal plans for the self determination and governance goals. Canada is the 2nd largest country in the world, as well as one of the richest, there should not be any excuses for not continuing the Healing Fund. After all, it took 400 years of colonization and genocidal





policies, i think it fair to assume funding for more years would be justifiable.

I know the people in our remote village enjoys Healing Words. I'm a non-aboriginal community development social worker for the village of Yekooche.

I work here as an ally in their struggle for self-determination. I've been given permission to share this poem with you to publish, if you so desire. But first, keep up the good work. "La Lotto Continua." (The struggle continues).

Peace & Love.
- CHUCK.

Hi! Charles

Thank you so much for your kind message, we appreciate it very much. I don't think at this stage the Foundation will be continuing its original mandate beyond the time frame allocated by the government. But we will do our utmost to help until the money runs out.

I am working on the next newsletter and am very happy when I receive e-mails like yours with poems or other contributions. Charles, can you get both authors to send permission to publish in writing?

Because of the sensitive nature of the topics we cover, we have a protocol in place and require written permission from author. Take good care, Charles and, likewise, keep up YOUR good work. My greetings to your community too.

- Giselle.

*

Dear *Healing Words*,

You asked for submissions and I thought I would send you material that we use to help people. Note that one is used for human being healing, and healing according to their own traditions and culture. It makes perfect sense and I know that it works for everyone. We also specialize to suit each person and we call this an Individual Holistic Healing Plan. I would be happy to share this with you some day. Thank you and you can print this in your newspaper.

- Wanbdi Wohita Miyu do
SMOKING EAGLE

Smoking Eagle's contribution appears in this issue

under Four Steps to Healing, Healing Principles and a poem entitled Grand-Father. Thank you, Smoking eagle, from the *Healing Words* team.

*

I pray that this finds you safe and well. I am writing in hopes that you may offer services to Native Americans here at the prison. The systems here at Walla Walla pretty much is zip-nah-da! I am praying to establish connections for guidance and direction that we of the hoop here can employ – better guide and heal. Can you offer some advice? Once again, my heart felt prayers go out to you and your families.

Wakaytayka nici un...
Aho! Mitakuye Oynsiq
- M. W. HIGHTOWER (WOLF)

Dear Michael

Thank you for your letter and good wishes. Both are very much appreciated. We have included you on our mailing list, so that you will be able to receive our newsletter, *Healing Words*, on a regular basis, at least until the Foundation ends up it operations. I have also prepared a package with some back issues.

I have enclosed some additional copies of each, so you can share them with some of your fellow inmates. We hope this will be of some help to you. All of us at *Healing Words* wish you a safe healing journey.

PS. I have also added a copy of a publication we produced on Residential Schools you might find interesting.

In the Spirit of Healing,
-Giselle, AHF Communications

*

SPECIAL LETTER

Good morning Giselle.

I recently sent you a e-mail to be put on your mailing list to receive the healing words newsletter. I am an aboriginal programs officer at Bowden Institution and I truly believe that words can be very healing. I have been a songwriter for 20 years. I got my education early in life so that I would be able to perform my music while I was young. I had played on the road for 10 years trying to promote my song writing but it was missing a very important element. I eventually got off the road and

started working for the CSC in 1991. I had put my music to the side as I felt it had let me down and I had let myself down. About a year ago I was sent away on training to Saskatoon. I was blessed to have met the lady who facilitated our Aboriginal parenting program Louise Halfe, Sky Dancer. The program, Kisewatowin was developed by the Cree people in Saskatchewan. The entire week my emotions were high, I wasn't sure what was happening to my spirit. The day before us trainee's were to graduate a few of us attended a sweat. After the sweat Louise invited us to her home to share some food and good conversation. During the visit I had mentioned to her that I was once a writer and singer. She then mentioned to me that I still was.

I left that night feeling unsettled like I had felt the last time I had performed in front of people. I went back to the hotel and tried to go to sleep. I was awoke to fighting and yelling in the hallway of some young aboriginal people who were partying. They finally had to be escorted out by the police. I felt sad at this, as our young people, our precious gifts that the creator has left us to pass on our stories to are not in touch with their spirit.! I couldn't sleep so I started to finish a song I was trying to write a year prior. It was like a feather was igniting a small flame that burned inside me to say something, send a message, I don't know, I just needed to do this. Our graduation was that afternoon.

To my surprise Louise had asked me to sing an honor song for the elder. I was so scared as I did not know what the protocol was or what song to sing as I thought people were given songs to sing. Louise sensed my insecurity and looked me right in the eye and said "just do this." When the elder came in I asked everyone to close their eyes as I sang part of the song I was trying to write for the elder. On the plane back that evening I felt a fire start to burn hard in my chest. That something that was missing from my songwriting was revealing itself to me through my spirit, my hands, my heart. I was once told along time ago that our own gifts sometimes go to sleep if we are not using them in a good way, but they will be awakened when we can be true to ourselves and with our gifts.

I would like to send you this song as I feel I need to share this with whomever will read it. Thank you Healing Words. And thank you Louise Halfe for giving me the feather to wake up the spirit.

In good spirit and faith,
-DONNA BISHOP.

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Métis Residential School Participation: A Literature Review

Excerpts from the document prepared by Larry N. Chartrand for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, October 2002. The integral report which provides an overview of Métis participation in residential schools based on published and unpublished archival materials, can be obtained from the Foundation.

A historical overview of the people of the Métis Nation

There is considerable evidence that Métis attended residential schools in considerable numbers. Available statistics indicate that at least 9% of those who attended residential schools identified as Métis. In the early period, Métis were often accepted by church authorities into residential schools for various reasons and with little resistance from government authorities. As long as they were seen as culturally Indian, it made sense that they should attend residential schools to assimilate them into mainstream society.

However, as the federal government began to develop its official policy vis à vis the rights of the Métis, official tolerance of Métis attendance at residential schools dissolved. Since Métis rights were extinguished and not legally considered Indians, therefore, not the responsibility of the federal government that funded residential schools, they were not allowed to attend. There were, of course, exceptions even after the government's policy of not accepting Métis became clear. Some churches, without federal funding, set up schools for the Métis, such as St. Paul's in Saskatchewan. Still, other churches included Métis in existing Indian residential schools where room permitted or by ignoring official policy altogether. Nonetheless, by the 1930s, most Métis were excluded from formal education because of federal government policy. They were also often not included in provincial operated schools due to social, racist and economic reasons until well after formal education in provinces became entrenched and freely available to all residents without cost or discrimination.

The impact of residential schools on Métis children who did attend was similar to the experiences of Indians who attended such schools. In some cases, those Métis who did attend residential schools would sometimes be treated as "second class" since the church did not receive any sponsorships for Métis students.

It is reasonable to conclude after reviewing the

literature on Métis and residential schools that it is completely unacceptable to hold the view that Métis were not part of the residential school legacy and that they were not affected in any significant way. Such views simply are not true. However, Métis attendance at residential schools and their impact on this Aboriginal community remains largely unexplored in the research. More Métis specific research attention is needed in this area.

The main intent of the European authorities at Red River was to subjugate the Métis through the work of the Catholic Church. According to Rempel, the main function of the priest was to convert children and expose them to the Catholic religion to create family units based on Christian principles.

The Métis, whose roots in Western Canada date back to the eighteenth century, were acculturated in their society under the influence and direction of both their maternal and paternal ancestors. For the most part, neither the foreign civil or religious authorities showed much interest in the formal education of Métis children in the early stages of evolution of the Métis nation. By the end of the eighteenth century, there were two distinct groups: the Red River Métis who occupied the Red River/Assiniboine basins and the Great Northern Plains of what is now the northern United States and the prairie provinces; and the country-born whose ancestries were essentially Cree and Anglo-Saxon.

From that period on, there was a smattering of interest in the formal education of children of the country-born by Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) employees who fathered children mostly among the Cree of the Woodland area. These initiatives were in violation of the formal policy of the company, which did not want to be burdened with the children of its employees. While few children were given the opportunity to receive an education, some were quite successful. Two of the most prominent ones were A.K. Isbister who received a law degree from England and William Kennedy who became a medical doctor.

The persistent influence of the HBC employees, along with the need of the company to respond to the independence of the Native people and other trade pressures, enabled them to have the rudiments of a formal education for their children on an ad hoc basis.

At Red River, the situation was quite different. The first generation of offspring of the Cree or

Ojibway women and their French spouses were raised by both parents for the most part. For one thing, the main traders who were from the Montreal area tended to encourage men to live among the Natives to solidify their trade with them. It was not until the Métis solidified their nationhood at the turn of the nineteenth century that the local European authorities, under the direction of the Hudson's Bay governor, that formal education was addressed for Métis children.

After the defeat of Governor Semple at the Battle of Seven Oaks in 1816, Lord Selkirk decided to invite the Catholic Church to set up missions among the Plains Métis. This was the beginning of the intellectual colonization of the Métis people in western Canada. The educational system was highly hierarchal with no input from the people regarding control, development, administration and curriculum of the educational system. This was a completely new approach to enculturation of the Métis who, until then, had taught their children by example and experience.

The main intent of the European authorities at Red River was to subjugate the Métis through the work of the Catholic Church. According to Rempel, the main function of the priest was to convert children and expose them to the Catholic religion to create family units based on Christian principles. "They were always about their business, preparing the 'children for their admission into the church and instructing the Indian women with a view to baptizing and marrying them" (1973:86). Provencher was particularly hopeful for the Métis children, "Our Bois Brules .. give us great hope, they are easily taught, they are generally intelligent, they will learn to read in a short time" (Rempel, 1973:87).

The missionaries often described in glowing terms the potential of Native education. Selkirk writing to Plessis stated: "Mr. de Lorimier . . . informs me that the inhabitants and especially the old Canadian voyageurs and their Métis families, evidenced an excellent disposition to profit by the instructions of the missionaries; and that the Indians also showed that respect that causes one to believe that they also will be disposed to listen" (Rempel, 1973:107).





The first order of Catholic nuns to work among the Métis were the Grey Nuns who came to Red River in 1843 and were followed by several other orders in western Canada. One of the most noted was the Sisters of Notre Dames Des Missions. The Catholic Church effectively denied the Métis parents a meaningful role in the education for their children by establishing mission schools in Métis communities. One of the most controversial education practices of the church run schools was the attempt by the church to obliterate the culture of the Métis by substituting their Mechif language for that of the French Canadian language. They deemed the Mechif language inferior to the formal, universal textbook French taught in schools throughout the world. While the Métis people saw the need to educate their children, they resented the cultural conflicts the church imposed upon their people and most of them did not like the heavy emphasis on the teaching of a French based curriculum and the prominence of religion in school.

The second school by the Grey Nuns was established at Granttown or, as the priest called it, St. Francois Xavier. In 1850, the teachers arrived there to provide the children with a French confessional type of education.

The non-participation of parents in the education system left children vulnerable when emotional and physical abuse occurred or when students were exposed to incompetent teachers. As discussed in other sections of this report, these abuses did not differ materially from those suffered by Indian or Inuit students. The curriculum content and presentation by teachers foreign to the Métis students proved to be damaging. Many students were often ridiculed by their mentors and classmates. For several generations, virtually nothing was done to redress this wrong. It was not until the second half of the twentieth century that educators began to question their system as it had failed to meet the needs of students who showed poor results and often left school prematurely.

Métis Participation in Residential Schools: Social and Policy Rationale

The educational experiences of Métis youth were varied and the experiences depended much more on perceived identity and lifestyle than it did on any formal legal classifications. Métis that were identified as having much in common with their indigenous relatives (i.e., Cree) would arguably be more negatively effected by residential schools than Métis who identified more with their European relatives. Like their Indian relatives, they likely spoke an indigenous language and came from cultural and religious backgrounds similar to their Indian relatives. Thus, for such Métis, they would have also experienced the

policy of banning their languages, culture and religious beliefs. They would have suffered equally with their Indian relatives in terms of the impact of such colonial policies on their self-esteem and identity. This would also be true for those Métis that identified and belonged to a distinctly Métis culture and lifestyle different from both their Indian and European heritage.



Regardless of whether the Métis were included with the blessing of official policy or were "secretly" admitted, they were regarded as expendable and were seen as second-class beneficiaries of residential schools.

To the extent that such Métis also attended residential schools, their language (Michif), culture and lifestyle would also no doubt be perceived by missionaries and government authorities as a threat to colonial "civilization" efforts. Furthermore, Métis with similar backgrounds and appearance to status Indians were also more likely to be "drafted" by school authorities when room was available to continue receiving funds from Indian Affairs by fulfilling the school quota. Métis that identified more with their European relatives (French/Scottish) or did not appear "Indian" enough were not as readily targeted by school authorities for admission.

Churches tended to pressure the government to accept all Métis into their schools. The federal government, however, refused to allow for carte blanche acceptance of all Métis. Many Métis were excluded not because the government thought, as is often mistakenly assumed, that Métis were not within the jurisdiction of Indian Affairs, but because they were already regarded as "civilized" enough. Over time, however, the federal policy that the Métis were not the responsibility of the federal government became increasingly more entrenched, particularly after the turn of the century (Miller, 1996:102-103). The legal classification of Métis eventually replaced the cultural classification. If a person identified as Métis, that person would not be allowed/required to attend residential schools since even if the person was culturally and linguistically Indian. However, there are many instances of schools not following the "official" policy.

The interim report by Tricia Logan entitled, *The Lost Generations: The Silent Métis of the Residential School System* provides an excellent overview of how the Métis were divided up into various classes to measure their level of "civilization" prior to making residential school



admission decisions. In general, Métis went to residential schools either because they were poor and it was a charitable act or they were identified as living the Indian mode of life. In some cases, it was because the school itself accepted Métis and Indians alike (or more often if room was available). There were schools specifically for Métis that included the famous St. Paul des Métis residential school operated by Father Lacombe, the Ile a La Crosse school in Saskatchewan and the St. Paul residential school in the Yukon.

Findings of the 1936 Report of the Royal Commission on the condition of the Halfbreed Population of the Province of Alberta confirmed that the Métis were characteristically without educational services or were provided in residential schools (Government of Alberta, 1936:7). The chairman of this commission stated that as a result of the federal government scrip policy, "large numbers of the Métis population are at this time, in this Province, destitute, and their health is jeopardized, their education neglected, and their welfare in the worst possible condition" (Ewing, 1935:11). The commission was silent, however, in describing the experiences such Métis children had in residential schools.

Regardless of whether the Métis were included with the blessing of official policy or were "secretly" admitted, they were regarded as expendable and were seen as second-class beneficiaries of residential schools.

△



The Impact of Residential Schools on the Métis

Because of the quasi-official acceptance of Métis children in residential schools, their experiences often differed in terms of quality of services than "official" Indian students. In cases of abuse, however, their status would not seem to be a relevant factor. If abuse was a part of the school's culture, Métis children did not escape its clutch. The study by Hansen and Lee described instances of cultural and physical abuse experienced by Métis individuals in Saskatchewan institutions (1999:57).

Abuses that occurred were similar to those documented in other sources dealing with status Indian experiences. One informant described the experiences of Ile a La Crosse school that was set up for Métis children. Physical and sexual abuse was common in the school: older boys molested younger boys at night in the dormitory and priests and supervisors molested their "favorite boys." In addition to physical and sexual abuse, cultural abuse was also prevalent. Ile a La Crosse is a Cree-Michif speaking community and this language was banned in the school. The informant stated that much of the loss of traditional culture and language was a direct result of the residential school and its treatment of Métis communities.

The informant also noted differential treatment between the Ile a La Crosse school for Métis

with the Beauval residential school for Indian children that was located nearby. He recalled that the Ile a La Crosse school could not afford what the treaty kids received such as new sporting equipment, "whereas the Métis kids received used equipment and hand-me-downs from southern benevolent societies donating to the Ile a La Crosse Mission."

Tricia Logan's report on the Métis experience in residential school devotes a chapter to the experiences of Métis children. She states that, "in mainstream Canadian society and in the school system, the Métis were made to feel they were lesser than either of their halves, not Indian enough for benefits or Aboriginal rights, but not "white" enough to be seen as equal to the dominant society" (2001:30).

Thus, there is some evidence that differential treatment existed between Treaty and Métis children in some institutions and within mixed Treaty and Métis institutions. Some anecdotal evidence suggests that Métis children had to work longer and more often at jobs to maintain the school's upkeep. The accounts of disproportionate discriminatory treatment of Métis vis à vis Indian children is consistent with the theory behind residential schools as a means to civilize. For example, if the Métis were regarded as already half way to being civilized, then there was less need to formally educate them. Thus, the educational authorities could justify putting them to work more often and for longer times to

maintain the school than was required of Indian children. There was also the justification that since the federal government did not support their education, they should also work to earn their way. As Logan states in her report, "it is not possible at this stage to determine if they, as a group, suffered a greater or less amount of abuse in comparison with their First Nations classmates but just that their experiences were unique" (2001:26).

Conclusions

One can conclude from this synthesis that Métis attended residential schools in Canada. In many cases, they attended as minorities in largely Indian residential schools. Their experiences were equivalent to Indian student experiences and, in some cases, because of their minority status and lack of "official" sponsorship were discriminated against. There were also several situations where Métis were the majority of students and, in some cases, the only students that attended residential schools. St. Paul's residential school for the Métis created by Father Lacombe is perhaps the most well known example. Although some literature was uncovered that is specific to the Métis and their attendance at residential schools, little is known about their experience in residential schools. Where there is some evidence of disproportionately negative effects of residential schools on the Métis, further research is needed to fully appreciate and compare such experiences with Indian children.



Help!

Healing Words is looking for pictures of residential schools and Aboriginal people for upcoming issues. You can send electronic copies or the pictures themselves – we will handle them *very carefully* and keep them only long enough to scan them (a few days). We also receive many requests for school pictures from Survivors and their descendants. In some cases the schools no longer

exist and family members have passed on, and so pictures and records are among only a few ways these people can learn about their family's and community's history. You'll be helping us out and contributing to the telling of the residential school story as well ...

For more information, please contact us at *Healing Words* (see page 2 for address).

The Impact of Residential Schools on Metis People

"No one can understand the enormous effects of residential schools upon Metis people without some basic awareness of the foundations upon which Metis culture and family life is built. Most Canadians are aware that fiddling, jigging, beadwork and the Metis sash are characteristic cultural symbols of Metis people."

- Metis Survivor Family Wellness

Many Canadians know that Louis Riel and Gabriel Dumont were famous Metis leaders, and that the Metis were renowned bison hunters, makers of pemmican and key players in the fur trade history of the country now called Canada. Fewer Canadians, however, are aware that Metis people have their own distinct language (with various dialects and usages) which is referred to as Michif. Nor do many Canadians understand the deep and historical roots of Metis aspirations to reclaim their cultural and political heritage as a distinct nation within Canada.

Having adapted characteristics from both sides of their heritage -- be it First Nations (mostly Cree, Ojibway, Saulteaux and Dene) on the one side, and either French or British (including Scottish) on the other -- the Metis became a distinct culture in the early 1800's. Some aspects of being a distinct society began appearing even prior to the establishment of the Red River Settlement, in the vicinity of Sault St. Marie ON.

Like First Nations, Metis people relied on hunting, fishing, trapping and gathering for survival. Additionally, being children of the fur trade, Metis people became highly skilled as traders, including trade involving exchange of money.

Freedom, independence and self-sufficiency as a group were qualities that were highly respected in the Metis way of life. Forerunners of the historical Metis Nation were groups referred to as 'the freemen' or 'voyageurs'. Later, once a distinct identity emerged, Cree people referred to the Metis as Otipemisiwak, meaning "the people in charge of themselves". When government land surveyors came to mark boundaries on the land where Metis were living, the Metis either tried to stop them or they moved further west in order to be free to live their way of life.

These same qualities, however, were viewed very differently from European eyes. What the Cree saw as responsibility, the settlers referred to as a "permissive" or "licentious" Metis way of life.

That is why Europeans believed that Metis children had to be removed and isolated from the influence of their families. Metis people were widely viewed by the dominant interests and by the newly arrived flood of settlers as "wild, immoral and savage-like."

The high importance attached by Metis people to the extended family can best be understood from within a traditional Metis context. If the extended family as a group, or a group of extended families survived, the individual survived - not the other way around as it is in Euro-Canadian society. You proved yourself to be a true Metis by demonstrating your commitment to the family group, not by American or European styles of nationalism or patriotism.

One of the main ways you proved yourself to be a good family member was by providing food. Whenever food was needed, you simply got out your gun, net, or trap or used your hands (for gathering) to get the food or goods that creation provided. Every member of the extended Metis family unit had a role (job) in finding and preparing food. However, when the industrial revolution and market forces took hold and grew throughout the country, it split up the family unit by forcing some members to move away from the family in order to get "jobs" in the centralized economy imposed in Canada after the fur trade. Having a job in the market economy was not the same thing as fulfilling your role in the traditional Metis family.

Together with the dominant forces of industry and commerce, residential schools seriously eroded the traditional Metis family unit. On one hand, younger adults were forced to leave the family to secure an income and on the other hand, the children were often separated from the family unit to be 'educated' (so they too could get an income later on). Education and the economy are often viewed as value-neutral influences by the dominant society but their influence upon Metis people radically altered the very fabric of the Metis family, thus shattering Metis identity. In view of state/church agenda to colonize and civilize, it is clear that those in positions of authority realized that by destroying the Metis extended family unit, you effectively offset the development of a Metis Nation.

Many Metis people who attended residential schools continue to carry the burden of very painful and horrifying experiences including physical and sexual abuses they endured at school. Others feel shame about their identity as Metis because they were taught that their culture and traditions were wrong and primitive.

Still others live in fear of harassment by the dominant society because they were forbidden to speak Michif at school and practice their way of

life. There are some Metis who say that, as far as schoollife goes, their experience was uneventful and tolerable except for bouts of loneliness for family. They point out that they would never have learned to read and write or find out about ways of life other than their own, if they had not gone to residential schools.

Although the experience of Metis people in residential schools may vary, it is the purpose of this paper and the Metis Survivor Family Wellness Program to deal with the physical, sexual, mental, spiritual and cultural abuse that took place. Was learning to read, write and do arithmetic worth it for those who were beaten or raped? Was it worth the cost of not being raised in a warm, caring environment with a loving family? Was it worth the cost of undermining the culture and being assimilated into mainstream society?

One of the factors that contributed to the negative experiences of many Metis students was the way in which residential schools were organized and operated. The structure and methods of learning imposed by these schools was clearly not based on the needs and learning styles of Metis children and their families. Metis, like other Aboriginal peoples, learn best through "practice" and "doing" in the actual context. Sitting in a classroom isolated from the real life situations where you were expected to simply repeat information according to formulas established by outside authorities is foreign to many Metis people. The frequent punishments applied to students in residential schools shows that the real issue was one of control and power, not awakening minds and hearts to a life-long journey of learning and growing within their own social and cultural context.

It is one thing to consider the impact that a foreign model of learning and structure has on a people with their own distinct culture. It is quite another matter to understand or make sense of the immediate and long-term effects of the more outrageous actions committed by residential school authorities and others, such as caretaker personnel and older students.

It is important to come to terms with the reasons why the day-to-day experience of so many residential school students was such a horrible and miserable existence. How can anyone possibly make sense of the brutality that took place? Are such cruelties just part of the daily annoyances and frustrations to be expected in schools that are rigid and strict? Can the atrocities be passed off with rationalizations of incompetence or people who are unsuited to the tasks they have been assigned? Was it just the presence of some "bad apples"? Or was it the imposition of a whole new way of life?





While the 'bad apple' excuse may be an acceptable explanation to mainstream society, it clearly evades the truth. The anguish and gloom experienced by most students in residential schools came as a result of a deliberate, well thought out, long practiced policy undertaken to achieve specific results. There is very little that cannot be justified in the controlling, top-down, class structure on which residential schools were modeled.

When one adds to this mix the belief that Aboriginal peoples were inferior to Europeans, any action, no matter how inhumane, can be justified. If it is deemed necessary to destroy and replace a people's culture, it follows that the violation of the bodies of these people will be tolerated as well. One need look no further than recent conflicts in eastern Europe involving "ethnic cleansing" for contemporary examples.

The public record of physical, sexual and psychological/emotional abuses have been made painfully clear: violent beatings, racist outbursts, rape, buggery and other horrifying sexual abuses by staff and sometimes by older students. A variety of means and ways of abusing residential school students were applied under the guise of discipline and development of character. There are many similarities between such punishments and the treatment endured by prisoners-of-war.



Note: Donna's song is published in this issue of *Healing Words*.

Dear Donna

I am very touched by your story, Donna. The way you have expressed your experience and discovery goes right to the heart. I have no doubts that whatever you write and sing will prove to be a powerful way to touch people for the good, because it carries your spirit, which is a gift, and a part of the Great Spirit.

I need you to give me your official permission to print your story and song in the next *Healing Words*, with your name and address clearly stated. This is just a formality, but I have to ask you that (it's in the rules!)

I wish you many wonderful moments, Donna, along your life path

- Giselle.



"Pupils at Hay River School", 1928.

Source: *Anglican Church of Canada General Synod Archives*

JOURNEY & BALANCE

This article has been extracted from the second AHF Evaluation Report, entitled Journey and balance. The first report focussed upon the evaluation of process and only touched lightly on impact. Journey and Balance focuses on results. It discusses the contribution made by AHF-funded project activity in realizing the desired and unintended short term outcomes. This report can be obtained on request by contacting the AHF.

This report is also a way for the Aboriginal Healing Foundation to be accountable to various primary stakeholders and to provide valuable, relevant information for users and decision makers. Case studies (13 in total) were used as a way to examine a few select priorities in depth and include representation from all Aboriginal groups, special need categories and communities as well as a full range of project types. Community Support Coordinators (CSCs) were enlisted to complete case studies with the facilitative guidance of an external evaluator.

Over time, it became clear that tracking project influence on community rates of incarceration, children in care, physical and sexual abuse or suicide were not sufficiently sensitive to detect the early contributions of funded activity. Rather, it makes the most sense to track individuals over time; however, no direct measurement of participants was conducted due to ethical concerns. To secure several lines of evidence, the results of document review and the national process evaluation survey were used to supplement case study information.

Context and Participant Characteristics

Of the ten completed case studies, there is at least one site per region (British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, North and Atlantic), except for Quebec where the study is currently underway. There are striking differences in the social, economic and cultural environments in which projects operate. Yet, patterns appear even across such diversity, including poor economic conditions, unemployment and housing shortages. Participants in the case study projects varied according to program goals and target group. This diversity is evident in the following examples:

While the case studies provide project-specific information about participants, the national survey allows for a look at the broader picture. The survey found that addictions, victimization

and abuse are clearly the most severe participant challenges affecting the majority of projects (69%, 58%, and 58%, respectively). Other common challenges reported as severe by a sizable group include denial or grief, poverty, and lack of parenting skills. In only two target groups did males outnumber females: gay/lesbian and incarcerated. All others included more women participants (survivors, later generation, disabled, and Elders).

Impact on Individuals

The planned impact of funded activity upon project participants includes: increased awareness and understanding of the Legacy, increased participation in healing and strengthened capacity of Aboriginal people to heal others.

Many felt that raising awareness and understanding of the Legacy was a pivotal first step to successful healing and the need for continued sharing of Legacy information and experience was regularly reinforced. Where denial is strong and trust still needs to be established, information sessions were more highly attended than therapeutic ones and Legacy education motivated others to break the cycle of physical and sexual abuse.

At least 48,286 individuals have participated in healing programs, almost all of whom had never participated in a similar healing program before. Projects have imagined healing as a broad range of ideas and behaviours and while dramatic change was observed in some participants, others showed little or no change and there was often disagreement about the depth and extent of change.

Connecting survivors to one another, ensuring clarity about their rights at the outset and ensuring they had access to skilled counsellors with whom they could identify worked well to establish safety. Large public forums, widespread publicity and group counselling offered survivors union. Counsellors who were non-judgmental, sincere, gentle, respectful, committed, patient and culturally sensitive were clearly credited with creating a safe therapeutic climate. Changes in cultural awareness were more easily influenced than changes in parental involvement. Some developed leadership skills, greater goal orientations, enhanced self-esteem, improved family relations and peer support. They felt better able to face homophobia, deal with their sexuality, address their addictions or reunite with their families and communities. They described cultivating a stronger sense of self, becoming more attentive to their families, committed to passing on cultural teachings, spending time with Elders and personal wellness. They felt less alone, more forgiving and returned to school or made career moves.

Some were better able to cope and became more confident and stable although lower levels of improvement were noted for those simultaneously participating in addictions treatment and known violent perpetrators. Others appeared better able to maintain sobriety, seek and secure employment, disclose past trauma, display physical affection, seek spiritual fulfilment, recruit others to participate, demonstrate pride in their heritage or identify as Métis. Parent child interactions were characterized as more patient, relaxed, confident and nurturing.

Although reports were based upon immediate assessment of outcomes, there is some evidence to suggest that intensive therapies create enduring results. However, those who return to correctional facilities or remote regions may not get the support they require and complete recovery can remain elusive in scenarios where aftercare is in question. At least 10,938 received training, yet there was a common belief that teams would have benefitted from greater capacity. Although most projects could make referrals when the special needs of their groups exceeded capacity, others had no choice but to try to address special needs with whatever resources they had. They also made the case for counsellors specifically trained in residential school abuse but warned against simultaneous program delivery and training. On occasion, teams and beneficiaries were equally impacted by the Legacy. Strong, positive participant satisfaction leads to the conclusion that the training and experience of some teams were well suited to facilitate healing.

Impact on Communities

While it is too early to examine long term outcomes, progress can be measured through the analysis of anticipated shorter term outcomes. At the community level, these include: increased understanding and awareness of the Legacy; increased ties between survivors and healers; increased capacity to facilitate healing; evidence of strategic planning with a focus on healing; increased partnerships; and increased documentation of the history of residential schools.

Not all of the case study projects addressed all of these outcomes, but there is evidence to suggest that progress is being realized, especially in two areas: addressing the Legacy and increasing the capacity of communities to facilitate healing. The community healing process, like individual healing, goes through distinct stages or cycles.





The first stage often begins with a commitment by a core group of individuals to address their own healing needs. A growing recognition of social problems such as addictions or suicide can motivate key agencies to also become involved.

The second stage of community healing is characterized by an increase in healing activity and recognition of the root causes of addictions and abuse. Understanding of the Legacy can be a pivotal first step in individual healing, and when history is shared, a social context is created for addressing the problem. Over the past four years in La Ronge (Kikinahk), there have been at least three community-wide awareness workshops and a radio talk show in Cree on the Legacy. These media represent a distinct environmental difference from even just five years ago as hearing the radio talk show in Cree made it okay for individuals to talk in other venues. For the Nisichawayasinhk Cree Nation (Pisimweyapiy Counselling Centre), more open discussion about and different attitudes toward the Legacy, together with public acknowledgment of high profile perpetrators, suggest that the climate has changed.

I da wa da di training sessions for front-line workers were especially successful in increasing participants' knowledge of the Legacy and this new understanding was used in their healing work with clients. The theatrical production honouring residential school survivors, *Every Warriors Song*, was built around the experiences of survivors and it involved them in the research phase and as advisors throughout the project. This project documented residential school history and impacts. Guided discussions with the audience after each performance led one person to observe that conversation is opening up as family members attend together, "all crying, all supporting, all spoke. The healing was transpiring right before our eyes."

By the third stage of community healing, a great deal of progress has been made but momentum is beginning to stall. AHF-funded projects provided community-level employment and training opportunities not previously available. Large numbers of Aboriginal people have been hired and trained and are now participating actively in community healing initiatives. This represents a significant contribution to building a healing capacity within participating communities. In addition, AHF has placed considerable emphasis on developing partnerships and cooperative relationships and there are good reasons for this. The Foundation does not wish to foster dependency on a fund with a ten-year life span, and partnerships are one way of promoting longer term sustainability. During the fourth stage, healing is more

integrated with other community development initiatives and the focus shifts from fixing problems to transforming systems. Significant reductions in rates of physical and sexual abuse, children in care, incarceration and suicide are most likely to occur at this stage. It is still too early to assess the contribution of AHF-funded projects by measuring improvements in the environment based on these social indicators.

Addressing the Need

The majority of projects (55%, n=234) were able to accommodate all who needed therapeutic healing or desired training. But, teams also admitted to facing a service demand that exceeded resources and needs that went beyond team abilities. At least 7,589 individuals with special needs (e.g. suffered severe trauma, inability to engage in a group, history of suicide attempt or life threatening addiction) were identified and, on average, more than a third of participants in every project required greater than normal attention to deal with their special needs. In addition, some target groups remain difficult to engage and information about barriers to participation remains unclear. Projects also filled identified service gaps such as: providing services to gay and lesbian youth; offering a non-mandated, culturally sensitive blend of traditional and contemporary parenting skills program; whole family therapy; or celebrating and reinforcing Métis culture.

Lessons Learned

More women than men participate in healing and there is some evidence to suggest that men may be more resistant to the therapeutic process itself. The literature on treating male survivors of sexual abuse points decidedly to the need for more research, more gender-specific treatment programs, more male therapists and more understanding of the effects of therapy on men and boys.

In light of the Legacy, one of the more disturbing consequences is the potential for male survivors of unresolved sexual trauma to commit sexual offences. While the links between victimization and offending are not fully understood, there is a need for greater understanding of the therapeutic healing needs of male survivors and intergenerationally impacted men and boys. This is a precondition to creating effective programs that engage male participants.

The interim evaluation reported that many projects affirmed the value of traditional healing and the need to increase the use of traditional healers, Elders and cultural teachings, either

alone or in collaboration with other methods. However, more specific and detailed information is required about the blending of traditional and western approaches and how this actually works in the therapeutic environment. For example, which specific traditions and western approaches work well together, in what ways have they been blended, in what proportions and with what results? Given the significant variation in Aboriginal cultures and communities and the corresponding variation in western therapies, a great deal more needs to be known about integrating these two approaches.

For many of the case study projects, culture and traditions played a supportive rather than therapeutic role. Schools were reported to be very interested in finding Elders who are knowledgeable in traditional ways; some projects incorporate on-the-land excursions and camps; and social activities such as feasts and dances brought people together.

The report cites a number of examples of learning that took place at the project level, including the following:

- Improved networking, especially among the directors of health services, would guarantee program complementarity.
- The importance of whole family therapy and traditional ways has been key to keeping families together.
- Bunk beds and the use of flashlights on night patrol are clear triggers for some clients. Other triggers of in-patient treatment are related to food quality, which is not always optimal in institutional environments.
- Family-of-origin discussions are essential to breaking through self blame.
- There appeared one major lesson learned, and that was the underestimation around what effort was actually needed to organize the youth.
- Bring in more male-female training teams.
- The project was hesitant to start a men's group unless men can get healing and training to support the group; the men wanted experienced group facilitators.
- There is a critical need for training/healing Aboriginal caregivers.
- I learned a lot about accountability and going slower - being better prepared.
- Guard against team burnout.
- Targeting efforts at youth who are more open may be the best use of resources.

Best Practices

Legacy Education

Legacy education was commonly recognized as a catalyst for healing. Awareness campaigns felt safe to the majority prompting further action to address the Legacy often before a crisis. Many felt that schools were particularly important partners in this regard and that greater efforts with students should be undertaken.

The Healer

Selecting highly skilled survivors, fluent in their language who could model successful healing worked very well and was further reinforced if healers were like their target group on a variety of other dimensions (e.g. gay or lesbian, teens, female, male, parents or grandparents and respected members of the community). Survivors wanted respectful, non-judgmental, culturally sensitive, patient, committed, role models able to facilitate independent decision-making in a way that supported self-esteem and feelings of safety. Caring for the caregiver meant preparatory work to ensure they did not assume the role of rescuer, continuous processing of the intense emotional nature of their work and regular professional development opportunities.

The Environment

When serving a regional population, using an already established centre of healing worked to lend credibility to AHF-funded projects. When servicing a local population, it may be more important for projects to have an identity and location of their own. Sufficient space and private facilities with soundproof rooms for one on one counselling sessions were considered basic essentials and an environment that reinforced cultural identity was silent but powerful. Residential programs need to be particularly mindful of potential triggers (e.g. bunk beds, night watchmen with flash lights, low budget menus)

Therapeutic Approach

Therapy was best initiated with some clarity and education regarding client rights. Developing whole programs or specific activities to meet the unique needs of special groups (e.g. transgender youth, teens, men, parents, women, Elders, students) appeared to maximize program influence. Sometimes, unique solutions were created based on individual needs and one on one counselling functioned well in this regard. Emphasizing personal responsibility together with self trust also worked well. Blending traditional and western therapies was popular

although traditional healing alone was also recommended for those open and willing to engage in cultural reclamation. Fun was an important element in the healing equation especially with teens. Light-hearted family outings offered important bonding experiences and was a welcomed break from the heavier emotional work done in counselling. Connecting and sharing was often cited as a best practice and included examples such as conferences, active outreach, home visits, role modelling, healing circles, whole family treatment and voluntary services where Aboriginal people could empower one another.

Program Administration

Letting the target group make program decisions ensured that activities remained relevant and evolved to best suit survivors' needs. Ensuring participants are well screened and selected from those who genuinely want personal transformation as well as from the group with needs that best "match" the services offered set fertile ground for growth. Service access was ensured by scheduling evening and day sessions, promoting services in and out of the community and providing childcare or travel when it was needed.

Partnerships

Schools were often mentioned as powerful allies not only in Legacy education but also as institutions which could guard Aboriginal cultural integrity. Establishing working relationships with complementary services meant more holistic care could be provided and offered an avenue for survivors to still engage in healing, even if their needs exceeded the expertise of the project team. These same alliances were important when it came to planning and ensuring adequate aftercare. Lastly, but perhaps most important, supportive leadership played a pivotal role in contributing to desired outcomes.

Conclusions

Legacy education created a climate that facilitated movement toward healing without first facing crisis and a constructive framework for training. But, informants were clear that their work was not complete in this regard. Many more felt intimately familiar with and capable of responding to survivors' needs and effectively managing crisis. Still, on occasion, the connection between survivors and potential healers was not the best 'fit' because survivors' needs exceeded team capacity and embracing hard to reach groups will be an ongoing challenge.

There are examples among the case studies selected which indicate that, years of

development and careful attention to survivors' needs were undertaken to develop a strategic therapeutic plan. Funded activity has been credited with contributing to a shift from crisis management to more effective long term wellness planning and community development that often functioned to reduce gaps in service, but most projects are at risk because they have been unable to secure long term financial commitments.

Indicator data show that suicide, physical abuse, sexual abuse, children in care and incarceration rates remain high and there is no consensus among key informants that these problems are decreasing. But a ripple effect is being witnessed, as many informants spoke about how participants' families and partners have benefitted. Within projects, there appears to be large differences between individuals. While some move quickly toward desired outcomes, others apparently do not and it is still unclear what the differences are between these groups. Although it is premature to conclude that activities have developed lasting healing from the Legacy, it would be safe to say in some programs there is tremendous instant gratification for survivors. In some communities, progress is slow because the project is reaching only a small number of its target group and creative solutions are needed to dismantle denial not just in a community context but also for individuals.

A variety of reasons have been offered or discovered to account for the changes observed. Some credited participant motivation or therapeutic approach. Others believed that team characteristics and community dynamics played a role and no effort can discount the contributions of the broader context and historical events. At last, healing from institutional trauma is not well understood. In fact, research scientists haven't yet come up with reliable and valid ways to measure healing from physical and sexual abuse or institutional trauma in Aboriginal populations. Many more immediate outcomes need to be identified and precise information on what happened, who it happened to, and for how long the intervention occurred was not always available.

Recommendations

The following recommendations are not presented in order of importance or frequency. Rather, they should be viewed as equally important in addressing the Legacy of physical and sexual abuse in residential schools.

Recommendation 1 - Shape the vision

The vision must reflect what is known about individual and community stages of healing and emphasize support and guidance beyond the first stages to ensure that survivors and communities work through the longest and most arduous tasks of reclamation and transformation. ▶



Recommendation 2 - Develop creative, effective and unique strategies for men. Address the unique needs of men. Men in the community should be asked directly about their healing needs and preferences. Secure gender balance in project teams.

Recommendation 3 - Continue and reinforce efforts to dismantle denial and reduce fear. Depending upon the contagious influence of successful healing is a passive approach and will likely NOT break the cycle in families or communities that endure very isolated social conditions whether they are self or geographically imposed. To effectively and completely break the cycle of physical and sexual abuse, creative forms of active outreach and continuous, reinforced efforts in Legacy education are required. Consider substituting the word 'healing' with a word or phrase that accurately reflects the courage to engage in a process of reclamation or transformation; one that suggests the process is about boldly exercising an inherent right to a life of peace and balance.

Recommendation 4 - Profile the Healer. Highly regarded Counsellors and trainers must be studied in greater detail so that other projects may be able to screen or detect potential team members with the same experience and skill. More practical detail is required about their qualities, roles and responsibilities so that others can be trained to address survivors' unique needs. What factors enable them to make long term commitments to their work and what professional development opportunities and support are required to manage and process the intense emotional nature of their work.

Recommendation 5 - Strengthen and maintain partnerships. To Strengthen and maintain partnerships, a variety of approaches, long term commitment and the ability to support a morally independent and culturally appropriate approach are best.

Recommendation 6 - Support the achievement of results. To Support

the achievement of results, it is important to identify what is different about those for whom the program worked versus those for whom the program did not work. Be clear about the distinction between activities and outcomes and offer projects defensible tools and methods to assess change that is relevant to their unique goals (e.g. resiliency, healing from sexual abuse, self esteem). In addition, offer a quick and universal measurement tool for all projects that address the short term outcomes of the Foundation as a whole. Explore the nature of the "blend" between western and traditional therapies and determine under which circumstances the impact is maximized.

Recommendation 7 - Focus. Avoid the temptation to know all and heal all. Impact was maximized when unique needs were addressed with special strategies. Projects should be encouraged to aim for realistically attainable outcomes with reasonably restricted targets groups.

Recommendation 8 - Share the good news. Much has been learned and many rewards attained. These stories need to be told. An essential part of this campaign could include honouring the leaders who have passionately supported the effort.



Mary Caesar

A Dedication

This is a dedication for the residential school survivors who passed on.
There were so many.
They will not be forgotten.
They have suffered but did not survive to tell their stories.
But we know that their suffering and pain were not in vain.
Their lives were not wasted.
They were our freedom fighters.
They were our silent, humble warriors.
Their lives of hardship and suffering were the evidence and testimonies of their experiences in the residential school system.
Their memories will forever be carried in our hearts and honoured and revered in our history.

Mary Caesar's Biography

My name is Mary Caesar, I am Kaska Dena from the Liard First Nations from Watson Lake, Yukon. I am a mother of two sons, an artist and a writer. I am also a residential school survivor.

I am currently attending Malaspina University College, in the 2nd year of the Fine Arts Program.

My goals include completing the Diploma program at Malaspina and then obtaining a Fine Arts Degree from the Emily Carr Institute of Art & Design in Vancouver, B.C

Another of Mary's poems, entitled Beyond Pain is published in this issue.

Keeping Her Family Strong

BY BARBRA NAHWEGAHBOW

Reproduced with permission from the from Volume 3, Issue 1 – March 2003 - of the I da wa da di Quarterly.

Darlene LaForme, Cayuga from Six Nations of the Grand River is a wife, mother, community educator and manager. She's also a residential school survivor. The Mohawk Institute in Brantford, Ontario was her home for four years, from 1965 until it closed in 1969. A graduate of the Community Care Program at Mohawk College in Brantford, Darlene works for Ganohkwa 'Sra Family Assault Support Services, Six Nations. She is the Supervisor of Community Education.



Above: The "Mush Hole" in 1932.

The Mohawk Institute, known as the "mush hole" to people who attended, opened as a residential school in 1834. It was operated by the New England Company, a protestant missionary society based in England. The Institute was staffed by Anglican clergy missionaries.

Six years old when she went in, Darlene was ten when she left the Institute. With sisters, brothers, nieces and nephews there at the same time, loneliness was not a big feature of her life there. Her mother visited once a month and Darlene and her siblings, boys included, were allowed to share a table at mealtimes on Sundays. This family contact combined with the knowledge that her mother was close by helped her cope in a strange institutional environment. "My mother came once a month but in the time that we were there, it seemed like a lot," she says, "because nobody else saw their mom."

Not entirely sure why she was sent to the Institute, Darlene thinks that her grandfather, her mother's dad, played a role in the decision. "Our dad died in 1963. He [my grandpa] probably figured she couldn't handle five kids," she says. "I found my mom was very quiet, she never complained. If her dad told her to do something, she'd do it without arguing." She adds, "I'm probably totally opposite what my mom was."

When she was fifteen, Darlene got married and had her first child. The importance of family is predominant in her life. Keeping her family strong, together and stable is everything to her. She admits to being over-protective as a mom, but "whether that came from residential school or my grandpa being so strict, I'm not really sure. I just know I didn't want my children to be hurt."

She and her four brothers and sisters were placed in foster homes when they came out of the Mohawk Institute. Her mother had a two-room house built and that's when Darlene and her sister joined her. The loss of a brother to suicide when he was seventeen, a year younger than her, is a painful memory for her. Unknown to the family, he had gotten involved with drugs and alcohol. She remembers him as "being very philosophical, always thinking, deep in his thoughts."

Darlene says she was fortunate with her choice of a husband. "We didn't always get along," she says, "but he stayed with me and he always worked so I didn't have to." They had four children, one of whom they lost as a week-old infant. Their oldest daughter is now in her twenties.

Their commitment to family have led them to foster many other children, one of whom is now a young man of twenty-eight. "We've had him for fourteen years," she says, "and he considers our family as his family." They're in the final stages of adopting Jordan who's twenty-two months old. A twelve-year old foster daughter brings the number in their household up to nine, recently reduced from eleven.

Darlene sees the dysfunction in Native communities – violence, family breakdown, sexual abuse, loss of culture, traditions and language – not just as products of residential schools. She feels the cause is much broader, that our problems are the direct result of assimilation attempts by the government. Residential schools were just one of the tools that were used.

"Even when schools were on the reserve, even if you had Native teachers, they didn't speak the language to you. We've been told, you shouldn't know your culture, this one's better, or this type of spirituality is better." She remembers a Native woman she once worked for and not long ago, who told her she was "a heathen because you don't go to church".

To address the problems that exist in our communities today, Darlene says we have to "understand our history to make sure it's not repeated; see what effect the history has had and try to mend that." We have to start at an individual level by picking up our responsibilities to learn and pass on the teachings.

"There's a lot of people I know who say they want to learn the language and the culture, but they're not doing anything about it," she says. "You've got to do something about it. You've got to be able to have something to pass on to your kids if you say you're proud of your culture. Mothers need to get out there and get educated, show your kids that there's something positive in the culture."

Darlene mentions community resources for people who want to learn and heal. "In programs like I da wa da di and Lost Generations, you're learning about tradition and culture; you're hearing the language."

Metis People and Residential Schools

Many diaries, journal entries, newspaper articles, editorials and political speeches of the time are full of remarks dripping with superiority and contempt for indigenous cultures. This attitude is further demonstrated by the fact that most residential schools only provided up to a Grade 8 education. In the minds of government decision-makers providing the funding, the "primitive" nature of Aboriginal people indicated they were only good enough for manual and domestic jobs. In effect, residential schools discouraged Metis students from pursuing further education thus denying them entry into mainstream society. It is clear that the not so hidden agenda of residential schools was to wipe out the ways of life, cultures, languages, traditions and beliefs associated with the people of this land.

According to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation , 'residential schools' refers to "the Residential School System in Canada attended by Aboriginal students. It may include industrial schools, boarding schools, homes for students, hostels, billets, residential schools with a majority of day students or any combination of the above". Some Metis people today may be more familiar with the term 'mission schools', not to be mistaken with the schools initiated by Metis people in the mid-1800's, which are also included in the definition of residential schools.

Residential schools were officially set up for children of First Nations (status Indians) and Inuit families. The federal government had entered into Treaties with Indian people, not Metis , and, therefore, made itself responsible for First Nations in a trustee-type relationship.

Nevertheless, accounts exist of Metis children being rounded up and sent to residential schools. Evidence indicates that the government funding system for residential schools, based as it was on school attendance, spurred on Indian agents and religious authorities to collect Metis children and ship them off to these schools simply to increase the registration and in turn receive more government funding.

This is probably why official records of residential schools rarely mention the Metis identity of these children. Usually the darker or more visibly Indian children of Metis families were chosen for placement in residential schools, partly because they were seen to be more "savage". Metis children were the minority (about 20-30%) of residential school populations and were often made to feel as outcasts. All of these factors explain why Metis people who attended residential schools are sometimes referred to as the invisible or silent survivors of residential schools.

The late 1800's and early 1900's saw a determined effort by government to rid Indian reserves of any Metis people or people who were viewed by government as non-status Indians. Intermarriage of Indian women with non-Aboriginal or non-Indian (possibly Metis) men resulted in many women and their children losing their status as Indians and, therefore, their Treaty rights. It was brought to the attention of the government that the children of such unions were growing up illiterate with no opportunity to

receive an education. As a result of negotiations with the Government by a Roman Catholic Bishop an agreement was reached to educate the Metis in Boarding & Industrial schools in the same way as the Treaty Indians.

In one study of the Government of Canada's Indian Registry by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, they estimated that 9,600 Metis children were sent to residential schools. However, the number of Metis students that attended the residential schools is very difficult to determine. For one thing, often the more visibly Indian or darker Metis children were selected to attend residential schools. This was done for two reasons: 1) increase the enrolment of residential schools for Indians or people that could be seen as Indian and so get more government funding; and, 2) the more Indian you looked, the more you needed to be separated from your Aboriginal parentage and "civilized."

In effect , government and church officials created a modified class system when deciding which Metis students would be accepted into the schools. Those Metis who lived the 'ordinary settled life of the country', such as farming, were told to go to the province for their education because they were considered as "white children". Such policies assisted government efforts to eliminate any Aboriginal claims the Metis had regarding land or other Aboriginal rights. However, children whose families lived the "Indian way of life" were admitted to the schools along with the "illegitimate" offspring of Indian women (meaning children born out of wedlock as a result of a union with a white man). In other situations, the parents of Metis children required to attend residential schools were told by school authorities that they would have to pay tuition. These children were kept at school only as long as their parents continued to pay for the tuition (about \$25 per month). Early evidence suggests that these children were still counted in the official enrollment sent to Ottawa in order to receive government funding. This may explain why there is so much missing information about Metis identity in the official records of some residential schools in Manitoba.

Another practice that has been identified was to fill any openings in Indian residential schools with Metis children when these schools were not filled to capacity. They would remain there until children covered by Treaty came in and then the Metis would have to leave. This resulted in Metis children being transferred from school to school and further away from their homes and families.

The enrollment of Metis children in Roman Catholic residential schools was very high. In fact, most Roman Catholic schools were established near large and established Metis communities. However, when school authorities determined that the parents had Treaty money to draw on, their children would be given priority for admission. Some schools would still try to establish various arrangements with Metis families who could not afford the tuition through the donation of goods or volunteer work for the church by the parents.

Churches saw themselves as being very charitable by allowing the families that lived on road allowances or in low quality housing to be allowed admission to their schools. Even though there was a public school nearby, Metis children often had no choice but to attend a Catholic school much further away from their homes because, in the public school that was closer, they were often viewed as the "dirty Half-breeds."

Metis Communities and the inter-Generational Impacts of Residential Schools

It is often the case that when children are continuously subjected to such violent behaviour, later on in life the abused often become the abusers, particularly in their own families. Abuse becomes a way of life, a learned behavior considered normal because it was practiced repeatedly by those who are viewed as role models.

While Metis children may have been invisible as far as official records were concerned, they suffered the same abuses as other children. Many Metis survivors feel it was worse for Metis people because of the stigma associated with the term, "Half-breeds". They were not accepted by those considered as Indians nor were they accepted by white society. Some even tell of a practice in which Metis students whose parents were paying tuition or "acted white" were given special treatment in residential schools whereas those Metis families who "acted Indian" were treated worse. This may help to understand why some Metis people tend to emphasize their European roots rather than their Aboriginal identity.

Residential schools disrupted the usual passing on of cultural beliefs, skills (such as parenting), and world knowledge from one generation to the next. The experience of being denied the protective and caring environment of family life often caused severe and permanent damage to the child. This effect was multiplied when the children returned to their families and their communities. The residential school experience severed the bond between the young ones and the older ones in the village. Furthermore, it undermined the role of the adults and Elders in a child's education and contradicted everything these children had learned at home from birth.

Metis family life placed a large measure of responsibility on the child's shoulders. It was understood that every child had a responsibility to ensure the survival of the Metis family. In residential schools, work became a "chore," something you did out of fear of punishment, not as a demonstration of manhood or womanhood. In reality, these schools demanded very little in comparison to the commitment encouraged in a

traditional Metis family. When children returned home, parents usually found that their children had changed for the worse. The children were no longer interested in fulfilling the tasks and duties involved in the survival of the family. They no longer spoke their mother tongue and parents felt left out when their children spoke English.

A common effect for those who attended residential schools was a lack of support for the future education of their children and grandchildren because of what they experienced. Many survivors also suffer from a condition that psychologists refer to as "residential school syndrome", a personality disorder shown in an individual's specific actions and behaviour. Without knowing why, people exhibit similar behaviour as was demonstrated by authorities in residential schools. The absence of appropriate attention for this condition in the early stages often leads to a pattern of physical or sexual abuse in following generations. This can be compared to the spread of disease among a people who have never been inoculated or exposed to the original germ.

When the children arrived at the residential schools in September they were not allowed to go home until June. Even though some Metis children could see their home, they were never allowed to go there, show emotions about missing their family or talk to brothers and/or sisters attending the same school. Staff members in these schools were often very harsh with Metis students, referring to them with insulting names such as "dirty Indians" or "Bannock-eaters." Metis students were often perceived as children of drunkards and made to feel worthless.

Residential school survivors were not taught the warmth and love that can only be experienced in a family setting. Subsequently, former residents of these schools have found it very challenging to show or express love. As a result of not having been raised in a family environment, they may find it difficult to become responsible parents, elders, or community spirited people. The abuse they suffered during their childhood was carried on in a cycle of abuse to future generations.

Going with the tidal flow

<http://www.tidal-model.co.uk/Theory3.htm>

Many healing projects and communities are using, as best healing practices, a combination of Aboriginal traditional and western approaches. Here is a contemporary approach to healing based on empowerment. It offers useful insights into the process of trauma and distress.

“Like the ocean, the human condition of the distressed person ebbs and flows, as if in response to some invisible tidal influence. The central task of care is to help the person develop awareness of how experience ebbs and flows; how distress comes and goes and – most importantly – what the person, or others, are doing that appears to influence it.”

Mental health problems are inherently disempowering. Regrettably, all too often, the experience of care and treatment emphasizes this sense of powerlessness. The Tidal Model, developed by Dr Phil Barker, focuses on the change process that lies dormant within us all, and which helps reveal the meaning of our experiences, as we reclaim those aspects of our lives, which have been submerged by mental distress.

A research team at the University of Newcastle, led by Professor Phil Barker and Dr Chris Stevenson, spent five years developing a professional understanding of what people might actually 'need' when they are in the state of powerlessness called mental illness. At a time when great emphasis is placed on ensuring that people 'comply' with their various treatment orders, this international study – embracing urban and rural sites in England, Northern Ireland and Eire – developed a provisional theory about the value of, and need for, care in mental health. Unsurprisingly, people with a history of serious mental ill health – along with their family members and life partners – placed great emphasis on the value of being heard and being understood. Indeed, many saw this as a prerequisite for the more technical business of 'treating' their mental ills. A parallel study, by the same team, explored the nature and function of 'empowering interactions' within the professional-patient relationship. From this emerged a discrete model of mental health care, which synthesized the core ingredients of empowerment.

Since 1995, Professor Barker and his clinical team colleagues within Newcastle and North Tyneside had been exploring the possibilities of an alternative approach to mental health nursing. In 1997 they began to use their emergent research findings, as the basis for the development of the Tidal Model. Since then, several other disciplines, as well as user and consumer advocates, have become involved in the development of what has become a radically different model of mental health care.

The Tidal Model is an interdisciplinary model of care, which emphasises the core need for empowerment. It recognises that many different individuals, groups and disciplines may be required – at different times – to arrange and deliver this kind of care, from traditional health and social care workers to family members, friends and others who have had experience of the recovery journey.

It acknowledges that experience is characterised by instability and impermanence. Such fluctuations of feeling or behaviour are often the commonest human features of the states we call mental illness. Like the ocean, the human condition of the distressed person ebbs and flows, as if in response to some invisible tidal influence. This tidal metaphor holds the key to the model's unique set of assessment and intervention methods, all of which emphasise the need to adapt care, constantly, to fit the changes occurring in the person's presentation. The central task of care is to help the person develop awareness of how experience ebbs and flows; how distress comes and goes and – most important – what the person, or others,

are doing that appears to influence it. The Tidal Model assumes that here, within the person's everyday lived experience, lies the possibility for resolution and the beginning of recovery.

Mental distress is something that has to be experienced, to be fully understood. For those of us who think that we have never really been “mad” or “seriously mentally ill,” the best that we can do is to develop our sense of empathy. We try to fit ourselves, as much as we are able – or as much as we dare – inside the experience of those who really “know.”

Many people today are afraid of talking about the human nature of mental distress, and think that 'spiritual' either mean religious, or some kind of New Age weirdness. Sally Clay knows that the experience of madness frightens us - even when we refuse to admit that we are frightened.

The Tidal Model is based on a few, simple ideas about 'being human' and “helping one another.” To some, these ideas may appear “too obvious,” or “too simple” to address the complexity of mental distress. However, these ideas have been largely forgotten for the simple reasons that they seem so obvious. We deceive ourselves into thinking that complex problems always need complex solutions.

Although I have never been to the moon, I have viewed it through a telescope. I can remember watching Neil Armstrong take his first big step for mankind on TV, over 30 years ago. However, studying things “from the outside” isn't the same as having insider knowledge. If I wanted to know what it was like to travel to, and walk upon the moon, I would need to ask an astronaut - someone who has gone far beyond the boundaries of my experience. There is much that Neil Armstrong could teach me about moon-walking, even if I have no intention of following in his footsteps.

The analogy holds true for the experience of mental distress. There is much that we can learn about what it is “like” to be in the grip of various kinds of mental distress. Even if we think that we shall never follow our “patients” into “madness,” there is much that we can learn about that alien experience. By learning something of those experiences, the people in our care will become less like “aliens,” and we may come to understand them better.

The Tidal Model emphasises an appreciation of the fluid nature of human experience, if not of life in general. "All is flow" as Epictetus said. Many models of human functioning try to “freeze-frame” experience, assuming that human experience can, in some way, be stable. Some models even deceive us into assuming that people are like rocks when the nearest analogy to the human state is water. In the Tidal Model we have used water as the core metaphor for both the lived experience of the person who becomes the psychiatric “patient,” and the care system that attempts to mould itself around the person's need for nursing.

The water metaphor is apposite for a number of reasons.

- The ebb and flow of our lives is reflected in the way we breathe in and out, like waves lapping at the shore
- All human life emerged from the ocean
- All of us emerged from the waters of our mother's wombs
- Water is used, universally, as a metaphor for cleansing of the spirit.
- Water evokes the concept of drowning, used frequently by people who are overwhelmed by their experiences.
- The power of water is not easy to contain. We can scoop water from the sea, but we cannot scoop out a whole ocean
- The only way we can cope with the power of water, is to learn how to live with its forces – we learn how to swim in water, or we build boats that float on the waves. Ultimately - however - the power of water is unpredictable.





The Tidal Model begins from four simple, yet important starting points:

- The primary therapeutic focus in mental health care lies in the community. People live on an “ocean of experience” (their natural lives) and psychiatric crisis is only one thing, among many, that might threaten to “drown” them. Ultimately, the aim of mental health care is to return people to that “ocean of experience,” so that they might continue with their “life journey”
- Change is a constant, ongoing, process. Although people are constantly changing, this may be beyond their awareness. One of the main aims of the interventions used within the model, is to help people develop their awareness of the small changes that, ultimately, will have a big effect on their lives.
- Empowerment lies at the heart of the caring process. Nurses help people to identify how they might take greater charge of their lives, and all its related experience
- The nurse and the person are united (albeit temporarily) like dancers in a dance. When effective nursing happens, as WB Yeats might have remarked, “how do we tell the dancer from the dance?” Nursing is something, which involves caring with people, rather than for them or even just about them. This has implications not only for what goes on within the relationship, but also for the kind of support nurses might need from others, to maintain the integrity of the caring process.

In talking about the “ocean of experience” I acknowledge the spiritual journey that underpins life, and which is writ large in the experience of mental illness or madness. Of course not all people describe their distress in spiritual terms. However, I have yet to meet someone who was mentally distressed and who was not seeking meaning – trying to find “the truth about themselves and their lives.” The developmental journey made by people as they move through various stages in their lives, is a journey of exploration and discovery. It yields not only the opportunity to discover new lands, but also carries many risks: metaphorical storms, as well as the risk of running aground, or of the ship sinking. The seaworthiness of the ship may be an apposite metaphor for the person’s health status or

constitution. Clearly, the extent to which we are able to journey across our ocean of experience is dependent on the physical body on which we roll out the narrative of our human lives.

However, when people experience a disruption of their sea-journey, they may become becalmed at sea. Depression often has just such a becalming effect. Or, they may be thrown violently on to the rocks. Psychosis often appears like the experience of shipwreck. Either way, a signal emerges that something special needs to be done – crisis care – and, if this is to be ultimately successful, needs to be followed up with a range of interventions – from simply keeping the person afloat (community support) to deep sea-diving (exploring the submerged causes of the crisis).

The Tidal Model aims to provide person (or family) centred care. This should recognise the person’s fundamental need for security – both existential and physical; acknowledging the person’s capacity for adaptation to changing life circumstances; emphasising the person’s existing resources, both personal and interpersonal. The model acknowledges that we should aspire to do as little as we need to do to help support the person. Intervention should be our watchword, not interference.

Other Tidal Model Publications

Barker P (2001) The Tidal Model: developing an empowering, person-centred approach to recovery within psychiatric and mental health nursing. *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing* Vol. 8 (3) 233-40

Barker P (2000) The Tidal Model: The lived experience in person-centred mental health nursing care. *Nursing Philosophy* ,” (3) 213-223

Barker P (2001) The Tidal Model: A radical approach to person-centred care *Perspectives in Psychiatric Care* Vol. 37 (2)

Barker P (2000) Turning the tide. *Open Mind* Vol. 106 Nov/Dec

Barker P (2000) The Tidal Model of mental health care: personal caring within the chaos paradigm. *Mental Health Care* 4(2) 59-63.



Gordon Indian Residential School, Saskatchewan.

Source: *Anglican Church of Canada, General Synod Archives.*

Legacy of Hope Foundation

Thanks to all our corporate friends for all their support with our 4th Annual Charity Golf Tournament held at Loch March Golf & Country Club. Over \$11,000 was raised for the Legacy of Hope Foundation. All monies raised for the Legacy of Hope Foundation will be used to support the health of Aboriginal people and communities affected by the Canadian Residential School System. We believe the Legacy of Hope Foundation will play an important role in raising public awareness about the healing and reconciliation process. Awareness and recognition are important elements that contribute to allowing Survivors, their families and descendants to begin their healing journeys.



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Addressing the Legacy of Abuse by Residential Schools

How a person reacts to the oppression experienced in residential schools varies from person to person, as well as from culture to culture. Some common ways of dealing with awful and terrible things that happen to people is to deny that it ever happened, “keep it under wraps”, feel ashamed or live in fear. This way of dealing with the trauma caused by residential school experiences leads to other problems. Such problems include anger, rage, alcoholism, drug abuse, depression, suicide or suicidal behaviours, and an inability to deal with day-to-day life in general.

Consequently, a common experience of a significant number of residential school survivors or later generations is time spent in jail and/or having their children apprehended by child and family agencies. In this way, the cycle of abuse has come full circle: once again Aboriginal people are being separated from their families and communities.

We know from other studies that focus on Metis populations and from years of applying Metis specific services (employment and training, child and family, education, etc.) that Metis people suffer from the same problems as reported by First Nations. However, for some reason, Metis people have been more reluctant than other Aboriginal peoples to “tell their stories” and make the connection between the current troubles they may be suffering and life in residential schools.

There are a number of factors that bring about this reluctance. One factor certainly has to do with the Cree word that captures the original spirit of Metis people: “Otipemisiwak.” A people whose culture views “being in charge of themselves” as a virtue will have greater difficulty admitting that residential schools robbed them of their power and independence. Furthermore, the French Metis, a major influence among Metis people in Manitoba, have historically held and continue to hold a close association with the Roman Catholic church. This association poses a challenge for Metis survivors to identify themselves and talk about the abuses they suffered.

A survivor’s readiness to “tell his/her story” and acknowledge the abuse can give an individual the freedom to further explore his/her victimization. This is the first step in the healing process. It is absolutely vital that this first step of acknowledgement be done in a supportive and safe environment. Also, sharing your story with

people who share a common experience and history certainly has its advantages. There is something about acknowledging that you were wronged with a group of people with whom you hold much in common that makes both the sharing and the receiving of the story easier. It can release a person from a huge burden and also allow that person to see more clearly what needs to be done about the abuse suffered.

After acknowledging the abuse a survivor usually has a need to go further and do something about the situation. There are a number of options to consider but there is no universal solution for everyone. Because the actions of residential school authorities that are part of the legacy of physical and sexual abuse are actually crimes, the means provided by the Canadian legal system are clearly among the options to be considered. But these options by themselves may not address the emotional, psychological, cultural and spiritual needs identified by most Metis survivors.

As more people become aware of the history of physical and sexual abuse and more survivors choose to identify themselves, major concerns have arisen regarding the adequacy and appropriateness of services and resources for residential school survivors. Most of the services and resources that do exist are not “user friendly,” Metis specific and/or are ill equipped to deal with the many issues survivors have. In some areas of Manitoba, community resources are non-existent (especially in the north).

Are regional health authorities, mental health workers, physicians, registered nurses and those who are employed in “contact health” fields able to understand issues faced by Metis survivors?

How receptive are these workers to residential school survivors? Can services provided by the government which are not based on Metis culture, such as Addictions Foundation of Manitoba and Mental Health services, be effective for Metis survivors? Are teachers in the school system able to deal with the inter-generational impacts that the residential schools have on the children and grandchildren of survivors?

What service agencies exist to deal with the effects of first removing Metis children from community and family life and then returning them later in altered condition to a weakened family and community? How can family wellness be achieved when Metis families continue to be separated by the courts through prison sentences or foster homes and other institutions? With this movement of renewal comes a greater openness to what traditional ways have to offer when something goes wrong.

If culturally based treatment services for Metis people were actually implemented, what would

they look like and how would they be different? Have Metis people who were not born and raised in settings where the Metis way of life still has shaping influence become adapted to and comfortable with services based on mainstream models?

Some Metis survivors prefer the use of healing methods that come from the Aboriginal side of Metis heritage (e.g., medicine wheel, sweat lodges, ceremony, language, medicine people). Other Metis may relate better to the healing power of traditional Metis foods, fiddling, jigging, gatherings, or wailing (as in traditional Metis wakes). Certainly, the restoration of the Metis extended family group is a key factor in bringing about the healing required to bring closure to the trauma inflicted by residential schools.

Whatever means are used to deliver services needed or to bring about healing, it is important that the methods used are in harmony with the cultural traditions that were condemned in the residential schools. It is these very same customs that held the Metis family together and nourished the cultural identity. That is why transferring responsibility for services Metis people require to Metis governance is so important. It is a key factor in establishing an approach that is culturally-based rather than culturally deprived.

Restoration of Wellness and Healing for Metis Survivors

The fact that some churches have asked residential school survivors for forgiveness and expressed their openness to reconciliation has brought about a dilemma within the Metis communities of Manitoba. Those who attended the residential schools and had tolerable experiences resulting in ongoing involvement with the church may tend to defend the church and accept apologies by church officials. However, those who were subjected to physical and sexual abuse in the residential school continue to feel a lot of anger towards the church. Still others have dealt with their anger, but are now determined to make sure that justice and accountability are distributed to the offenders and offending institutions. The variety of responses within the Metis community means that these concerns must be addressed with a great deal of sensitivity and tact.

Some Metis survivors still accept Christianity and claim they have found closure to their pain through their faith in the Biblical teachings about reconciliation and forgiveness. Can those who find this way to have helped them accept the fact that other Metis survivors may find traditional or holistic approaches to be more fitting for them? Can both those aligned with the





church and those more comfortable with traditional ways accept other Metis who choose to take advantage of mainstream and secular counseling, therapy and treatment services?

Whatever approach Metis people find helpful in dealing with the legacy of physical and sexual abuse in residential schools, the effects of abuse and violation do not disappear just because some church authorities have taken some of the responsibility and asked for forgiveness. Clearly, the abuses had an impact upon following generations, the children and grandchildren of survivors. Furthermore, it cannot be forgotten that the attempts by the churches and the government to Christianize and/or civilize Metis people led to a loss of language, culture, family, sense of pride and traditional Metis ways of life. At the very least, the church/state efforts to stem cultural identity may have effected many Metis people to hide or be ashamed of their Indian heritage. Some church leaders may have communicated a genuine sense of regret about harm inflicted in the past but saying "I'm sorry" is clearly not the end of the healing and restoration process.

By means such as shaming, humiliation, banning of traditional languages and customs, and by outright lies, churches managed to distort students' views about their own cultural roots. The government did its part by actually making it illegal to practice certain customs (e.g., sun-dances and potlatches) and other customs were banned by the church (e.g., sweats, traditional medicines). In some Metis communities the church would collect and burn all the fiddles in the community and would forbid dancing or jigging. The church taught that such activities were pagan or heathen practices and that they were part of the savage and primitive nature of Aboriginal peoples.

The attempts at cultural genocide in the past were not entirely successful. Today, there is a rekindling of interest and awakening to cultural roots and heritage. The renewal of interest in Michif among Metis people demonstrates that the strength and aspirations of the Metis Nation has not been wiped out. Recently Pemmican Publications, a Metis publishing house established by the MME, published a book called, *Past Reflects the Present: The Metis Elders Conference*. It is a collection of the stories of current Metis Elders about what traditionally was done in their communities when someone did something that was against the law or did not fulfill their obligations to their children and family. Metis people had ways of dealing with sickness and physical or emotional injuries, ways that draw upon the gifts provided by nature.

The desire among Metis people in Manitoba to consolidate a strong sense of family and reestablish a vibrant community life bodes well for the future of family and community wellness. Along with this movement of cultural renewal comes a greater openness to what traditional ways have to offer when something goes wrong. In fact, it is the very customs and practices that were banned, condemned or made illegal that have the potential to bring about the healing that is desired. As the old and time-tested ways are restored in the context of today's reality, and families are freed from the trauma of the past, Metis people will once again be known as 'Otipemisiwak' – the people in charge of themselves.



A Prayer

Oh great Spirit
Whose voice I hear in the winds
And whose breath gives life to all the world, hear me.
I am small and weak.

Let me walk in beauty and make my eyes
Ever behold the red and purple sunset.
Make my hands respect the things you have made
And my ears sharp to hear your voice.
Make me wise so that I may understand
The things that you taught my people.
Let me learn the lessons you have hidden
In every leaf and rock

I seek strength, not to be superior to my brother,
But to fight my greatest enemy- myself.
Make me always ready to come to you
With clean hands and straight eyes,
So when life fades, as the fading sunset,
My spirit will come to you without shame.
To reap the rewards of your bountiful treasures
And sit with those who have gone before me
Amidst the Sacred Circle of Elders!

The Tidal Model and the Maori Context

Jacquie Kidd

Before I can begin to discuss the application of the tidal model to a Maori context, that context should be explored. It is important to state at the outset that being Maori is both a collective and a highly individual experience. The collectivity is represented in our creation mythology, in the concepts created through our language – although there are many dialectical variations, and in the recognition we have with and for each other. This recognition is sometimes an overt search for connection; “where are you from?” “Who are your family?” Sometimes simply a smile or a raise of the chin acknowledges the kinship of being Maori.

Individuality is represented by the varied way that individuals go about the business of ‘being’ Maori. An ancient culture, we have been colonized in many different ways; forcibly by the British throughout the 1800s and early 1900s, coercively by laws and politics, benevolently by intermarriage, and now voluntarily (it seems) by the American culture. Being Maori can, therefore, take many forms. Notwithstanding these later influences, each iwi (tribe) had their own kawa (lore, protocols) and dialect, so that even in pre-European times the experience of being Maori would differ between regions.

My experience of being Maori is influenced by early intermarriage, assimilation through all levels of my education, and moving away from the region where our iwi belong. So, my words here are those of an individual, writing as an individual but sharing some common beliefs with whanau (family), hapu (wider family group), iwi (tribe) and the Maori nation. Some Maori who read this will debate my perspective, and in that debate is a celebration because while we are exploring who and what are Maori, the powerful voice of colonization is hushed.

The Maori word for spirituality is wairua. Literally translated, wairua means two waters. This immediately creates an affinity with the Tidal Model metaphor of water, with images of the duality of water being life giving and life threatening, calming and violent, supportive and overwhelming, peaceful and powerful. The chaotic nature of water with its mysterious nature and elemental power reflects the consistent mobility of life and the unknown nature of the forces that impact on us. My conceptualization of the Tidal Model is that it models a way of being with people that is grounded in spirituality.

Spirituality for Maori contains the essence of all that is important in life. Water holds a central place in Maori spirituality, which is evidenced by the mihi (greeting) shared when Maori meet. The mihi makes specific reference to the body of water that is sacred to that person. For me, reference to “my” lake, Omapere, offers not only a landmark so that people will be able to identify my home, but also an acknowledgment of my source of spirituality. Going home to cleanse in one’s spiritual waters is akin to the symbolism of returning to the womb and being reborn. In using water for its core philosophical metaphor, the Tidal Model offers a model of care that fits with the use of water for healing and cleansing, and for guiding us towards new beginnings or at least refreshed continuation of the journey.

While water can be a powerful metaphor, it is also grounded in reality. In addition to returning to home waters for cleansing and renewal, water is used for symbolic cleansing of a person, article or place. Then there is the healing power of walking beside a river or beach, the healthful properties of drinking water, and the physical relief of floating in deep water. Water is a central theme to spiritual and physical life for Maori, and therefore Tidal Model is a comfortable match in symbolic and metaphorical terms.

In a practical sense, the Tidal Model views mental health problems as “problems of living,” and as such acknowledges the importance of human connections. The humanity of this approach reflects the Maori focus on family. Family is, however, much more than a nuclear group. Family is whanau, hapu and iwi. Family begins with tupuna (ancestors) many generations removed, and includes all the cousins, aunts, uncles, nieces and nephews that were generated by those ancestors. As Maori, one is a part of a whole. Standing alone is not perceived as being healthy or complete.

The nursing implications of working with people who hold this worldview about whanau (family) are far reaching. Issues of consent, privacy and confidentiality are revisited. In a whanau who continue with traditional ways, the person with the identified mental health issue may not be the person who consents to treatment. The person who consents may be an older person, perhaps a kaumatua (elder man) or kuia (elder woman).

The whanau may refer to this person as “auntie” or “uncle,” and it can be very confusing for the care team to have this person hold so much power while often seeming very innocuous, even shy. The Tidal Model offers a way to be with the whanau in their “mental health” experience.

Without defining the human system within which the person exists, the Tidal Model validates the structure of the whanau and appreciates the variations that occur.

The tupuna (ancestors) who figure so prominently in the Maori world also occupy a key position in the concept of mental illness for Maori. By maintaining an open door between this world and the last, by keeping the past alive and relevant, and by taking an active part in the lives of many Maori, tupuna can look like symptoms of psychosis to western eyes. The Tidal Model requires that carers ask the person what their illness and their symptoms mean to them. Thus, the Tidal Model affords Maori a real chance to describe the difference between distressing symptoms and the comfort or challenge of tupuna involvement in everyday life. By locating the person at the center of their experience, previously marginalised beliefs and events can be drawn into the healing experience.

My experience of Maori in the “mental health system” is that a great deal of energy can be expended by the care team in an effort to align the person’s progress with a pre-determined idea of wellness. This often results in the loss of the individual person as they say “I don’t know how to be the way you want me to be. Show me, save me.” The Tidal Model actively promotes the use of healthcare professionals as involved helpers who engage in mutual discussion to determine the course of healing, thus endorsing the person as they work towards the image of wellness that is culturally real for them.

My experience of using the Tidal Model in my practice has not been extensive, as I had only about 12 months in practice after I “discovered” it, and before I moved into the education sector. But my use of it nonetheless been practical and satisfying for me as the nurse, but more importantly for the people in care I encountered during that year. My purpose in writing this is to express the ease with which the Tidal Model fits with my worldview as a Maori nurse, and the comfort and delight people expressed when I introduced them to care the Tidal Model way. It is my hope that the Tidal Model will continue to grow and evolve as people, both in the water and reaching out to them, use, critique and use again.

He aba te mea nui te Ao? He tangata, he tangata, he tangata. [What is the most important thing in the world? It is people, it is people, it is people.]

Arohanui
[Much love]

The Stages of Healing

Excerpt from: The Courage to Heal:

A Guide for Women Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse

BY LAURA DAVIS AND ELLEN BASS

It is important that people who support survivors understand the healing process. Healing is never a straightforward progress. It might best be described as a spiral. A survivor on her healing journey climbs upward, but she re-traces her steps at various points along the way. If you, a supporter, understand this, you will be better able to support the survivor you know.

There are a number of ways to describe the healing process, many are both valid and help us to understand the healing process. The medicine wheel, used by many Aboriginal cultures in North America is one way to describe healing and balance that we all strive for. Another description, often used by survivors and community-based organizations, is by Ellen Bass and Laura Davis.

Bass and Davis have described the stages of healing a survivor goes through. Most of these stages are necessary. However a few or them - the emergency stage, remembering the abuse, confronting your family, and forgiveness - are not applicable for every woman. While these descriptions are directed to a survivor - male or female - this information is vital for any supporter, be they partner, family member, friend, therapist, or other professional helper. The more we understand about abuse, its effects and the healing, the more we are able to support the survivors in our lives and heal ourselves. Here is how Bass and Davis describe the steps in the healing journey.*

The decision to heal

Once you recognize the effects of sexual abuse in your life, you need to make an active commitment to heal. Deep healing only happens when you choose it and are willing to change yourself.

The emergency stage

Beginning to deal with memories and suppressed feelings can throw your life into utter turmoil. Remember, this is only a stage. It won't last forever.

Remembering

Many survivors suppress all memories of what happened to them as children. Those who do not forget the actual incidents often forget how it felt at the time. Remembering is the process of getting back both memory and feeling. Believing it happened

Survivors often doubt their own perceptions. Coming to believe that the abuse really happened, and that it really hurt you, is a vital part of the healing process.

Breaking the silence

Most adult survivors kept the abuse a secret in childhood. Telling another person about what happened to you is a powerful healing force that can help you get rid of the shame of being a victim.

Understanding that it wasn't your fault

Children usually believe that abuse is their fault. Adult survivors must place the blame where it belongs - directly on the shoulders of the abusers.

Making contact with the child within

Many survivors have lost touch with their own vulnerability. Getting in touch with the child within can help you feel compassion for yourself, more anger at your abuser, and a greater intimacy with others.

Trusting yourself

The best guide for healing is your own inner voice. Learning to trust your own perceptions, feelings and intuitions becomes a basis for action in the world outside.

Grieving and mourning

As children being abused and later, as adult struggling to survive, most survivors haven't felt their losses. Grieving lets you honour your pain, let go, and more into the present.

Anger: The backbone of healing

Anger is a powerful and liberating force. Whether you need to get in touch with it or have always had plenty to spare, directing your rage squarely at your abuser, and at those who did not protect you even if they could have done so, is essential to healing.

Disclosures and confrontations

Directly confronting your abuser is not for every survivor, but it can be a dramatic, cleansing tool.

Forgiveness

Forgiveness of the abuser is not absolutely required as part of the healing process, although it is often the most recommended. The only essential forgiveness is to forgive yourself.

Spirituality

Having a sense of a power greater than yourself helps you in your healing process. Your spirituality is unique to you. You might find it through traditional cultural practices, through organized religion, meditation, nature, or a support network.

Resolution and moving on

As you move through these stages again and again, you will reach a point of integration. Your feelings and perspectives will stabilize. You will come to terms with your abuser and other family members. While you won't erase your history, you will make deep and lasting changes in your life. Having gained awareness, compassion, and power through healing, you will have the opportunity to work toward a better world.

Excerpt from: *The Courage to Heal: A Guide for Women Survivors of Child Sexual Abuse*, by Laura Davis and Ellen Bass Harper & Row, New York, 1988 pages 58-59

<http://www.tamarashouse.sk.ca/stagesofhealing.html>

Les Métisses ... Mothers and Grandmothers

Women! No fur-trade would have been, without you. Women! No man would have been, without you. Women! No children would have been raised. Women! No "Metis Nation" would be alive today. None will forget the hours of toil and care you have given. None will forget the hours of happy memories. None will forget the guiding hands and peaceful countenance. None will forget your unprejudiced love. It is you who have done the most to forge today's prosperous and secure presence. It is you who will light the path to a strong and healthy tomorrow. Listen again to our women-les Metisse!

Mary Rose McCallum

Mary is about 85 years old. She was born in the month of February. The year she doesn't remember-but, it appears to be the last decade of the 19th century. She was born at Canoe River. All her brothers and her mother were also born there. Her father worked for the Hudson's Bay Company at Canoe River and area for forty years. Mary's mother died in 1903 in a flu epidemic. It was after her death that her father moved the family to Ile-A-La-Crosse.

"My husband died at Pinehouse. In the springtime I moved back to Ile-A-La-Crosse. There were quite a few families here then, almost like today. They were mostly older people living here. There were quite a few young people around, but you never saw them walk around. I didn't go to school, but my younger sisters did after my mother died."

"My father had to give up the cattle he had, and the gardens at Canoe River when they moved to Ile-A-La-Crosse. For, father had to work and my sisters went to school. Everyone had to work hard to make their living. Families were large and everyone had to help. I remember I used to go check the nets even when there was a storm in the middle of winter. My mother told us that the old people then made things with what they had. Now people throw away so many things that just need a little fixing."

"We used to go to the bush and make a hole in a birch tree and let the syrup drip into a pail. We had a couple of pails at a time. The syrup is sweet, and the pails fill up in no time. We would boil this syrup in a large open fire. We would let the pails hang in the fire until the syrup starts to turn its colour. We'd add a little flour and sugar. Gradually, it would thicken. You can eat this syrup on your bannock and on anything. It's really good!"

"About picking berries and storing them, we used to store them in baskets of birch. We used to dry them and put them in bags. They looked like raisins."

"In the fall, you make your fish-hang them out to dry, and store them to have during the winter. You clean them, pull them through a long stick and then hang them out to dry. Put them out in a shack or something and freeze them. Then, just go out and get them when you feel like fish. If you gave these to someone now, they would make a face."

"When it was Christmas, or any holy day, people would come to town from everywhere. In the summer, there were tents everywhere. In the winter, people were filled up in the homes. Horses and dogs were tied up everywhere. Now, people don't realize when these days come around."

"Everyone would go visiting in different homes. The older people would invite people over for a bite to eat and drink. This was the time when people came in to see their relatives and friends. Before sunrise, there would be gunshots heard, meaning, the people shooting were sending their greetings out and would be waiting to get invited for tea. Everything is dying out today."



Les Métisses ... Mothers and Grandmothers

continued ...

VICTORIA BOUVIER
Introduction by VYE BOUVIER

Two miles from the Primrose Lake Air Weapons Range and ten miles from Cole Bay, at the end of a drive on a narrow, winding gravel road, lives an eighty-three year old wonder of a woman. She serves you strong black tea when you enter and offers you whatever she has if you haven't eaten. She told me where the Metis had lived around Canoe Lake, who was related to whom, about how she used to sail her canoe and she taught me Cree, to improve my meager vocabulary. I left feeling wealthy in having known the wisdom of this strong, intelligent woman.

Born on February 6th, 1900, Iron Bouvier Victoria still walks out into the bush to trap. She lives with Donald, a thirty year old adopted son, who loves the bush as much as she does. Victoria's paternal grandmother, was known as one of the best herbalists in the area. Victoria and her sisters are carrying on that tradition.

"My father, Jean Iron, was the first chief of Canoe Lake reserve (Nehiyow Opasehk). He signed treaty 10 in Ile-A-La-Crosse in 1906. I was there too, I was six at the time. Monsigneur (Bishop) Pascal was there visiting people in their "megiwahp" (tepee lodges) at the tip of the peninsula. There were no houses situated there at the time, but tepee would spring up whenever there was a church occasion or treaty day. The people of Ile-A-La-Crosse lived in the surrounding area." "My father spoke only Cree. He taught me to write Cree syllabics. I went to school for four years and learned to speak French. I would do my father's

book work for the stopping place he ran for horse freighting teams."

"I was twenty when when I married Pierre Bouvier in Beauval. Pierre was from Ile-A-La-Crosse, and had moved to Beauval to work with his father Francis. He was the only son. I am in the same situation, I have one daughter and many sons."

"We later moved to Canoe Lake. My father wanted me to live on the reserve, but, because of Government regulations that said that an Indian woman who married a non-Indian, could no longer live on the reserve, we settled on other land. We moved out here, to the north end of Canoe Lake. You can see our original home from here; it's on that point. I still stay there sometime; we still have a house there. Many other treaty women who married Metis men settled around here. Ambrose Maurice still has a place at the mouth of the Canoe River."

"In the fall, Pierre would go to Ile-A-La-Crosse to make hay for Pere Remy. I would stay behind to care for the children. I would fish and keep the cows. I would send off the younger cows when I wanted to go out on the lake to fish. I would take my children with me. I loved to sail in the canoe. I would put up a pole and attach some canvas to make a sail."

"Once my father lent me a new canoe to pick potatoes across the lake. A big wind came up while we were loading two sacks of potatoes. My son, Theodore was with me. I found poles on the shore and I took the canvas and tied it to the poles. We sailed off. I steered and Theodore held the sail. The canoe was tilting wildly. My father had said, don't go in deep water. When I neared our house, two older women, Alooska and Labonne (nicknames) were shouting that I'd tip." "I had twelve children, eleven boys and one girl. Two of my children died as children and one as an adult. I adopted three grandchildren when their father died in a car accident. I also took in a grand-nephew. In all, I raised thirteen children. My

children all lived around here when they got married. they all had their patch of land."

"It was when the government wanted to create a village and when the school was built in the mid-1960's, that my children moved to what is now the village of Cole Bay, and other families created the village of Jans Bay, also on the shore of Canoe Lake."

"When we moved to this site, fifty years ago, Pierre and I used horses to move here. One of my sons was learning to trap beaver." "Pierre and I had a cabin at Arsenault Lake, which is now included in the bombing range. We had our cabin at Nistam Seepee (the first river). We had to cross a long portage between Canoe and Arsenault Lake. Women and men would haul canoes, blankets, clothing, guns, traps and supplies over the four mile portage. The first Women's Peace Camp that was held in late August, was held on this portage. Pierre received \$500 from the federal government when we lost our cabin and our hunting, trapping and fishing rights forever. Some of my relatives from the Canoe Lake reserve received \$3000 in compensation before the Metis were even considered. The Indians had the Department of Indian Affairs to speak for them, whereas the Metis had no contact with the outside world."

"Today I will prepare herbs for people from Green Lake, Beauval, Patuanak and Ile-A-La-Crosse. I use a big dish in which I lay out the different roots and stems which I label, as some of them look similar. I pulverize the plants, combine them and then package the medicines in portions. I have treated lung and kidney ailments, epilepsy, back pain and fever. These are just some of the illnesses I treat."

"I use a cane now when I walk on the trapline. They say I'll fall, but I tell them I still have a firm hold. They tell me to quit, but I still trap. When I go to my dad's trapline, I still miss him a lot, although he did live a long time. I still enjoy sewing moccasins, although my vision is getting worse."

The ABORIGINAL HEALING FOUNDATION'S

Board of Directors invites you to attend the 2003 REGIONAL GATHERINGS

The Aboriginal Healing Foundation's Board of Directors will be gathering in 5 communities to meet with you. AHF Board & staff will present the 2003 Annual Report, provide an update on Foundation activities and prospects, and respond to questions and concerns.

Regional Gatherings are usually scheduled from 9 AM to 4:30 PM. The public is welcome to attend each gathering, but participants must cover their own travel costs. The Foundation will provide refreshments and a light lunch.

For more information or to register:
(613) 237-4441, or toll-free (888) 725-8886.
Giselle Robelin (Extension 309), Miche Jette (extension 300).

To register by email: special@ahf.ca

The Regional gatherings will take place in the following places:

October 16, 2003:
Vancouver, BC.
Directors Georges Erasmus,
Bill Lightbown, Elizebeth Palfrey
& Grant Severight.

October 28, 2003:
Sudbury, ON.
Directors Georges Erasmus,
Garnet Angeconeb,
& Susan Hare.

October 30, 2003:
Montreal, QC.
Directors Richard Kistabish,
Viola Robinson,
& Charles Weaselhead.

November 19, 2003:
Iqaluit, NU.
Directors Georges Erasmus,
Angus Cockney,
Rose-Marie Blair-Smith,
& Helen Tologanak.

January 2004 [day to be determined]:
Watson Lake, YK.
Directors Georges Erasmus,
Angus Cockney, Rose-Marie
Blair-Smith, & Susan Hare.



Community Needs Assessment for Métis Offenders in Manitoba

Excerpts from the study report undertaken by the Manitoba Métis Federation -Winnipeg Region and the Research Branch, Correctional Service of Canada, in September, 2001. This qualitative survey included approximately 50 respondents from each of three target groups – Métis inmates, family members, and community representatives. The aim of the study was to obtain a sense of what the needs of Métis inmates and their families are, and what services they would find most supportive to successful reintegration. In addition, service providers were also consulted.

“One of the most worrying aspects of the residential schools was abuse. Mistreatment, neglect, and abuse by the staff were common...The historical problems of many Aboriginal peoples stem directly from assimilation, which fundamentally changed the economic, political and social life - indeed the very culture - of First Nations people...This cultural crisis can be linked to specific internal problems that currently plague Aboriginal communities including disproportionate levels of Aboriginal incarceration, poverty, unemployment, alcohol abuse, domestic violence, and an absence of economic self-sufficiency and business infrastructure.”

Although the facts make it clear that the Métis population associated with the criminal justice system deserve special consideration, the supply of culturally-appropriate services is almost non-existent.

Aboriginal people and the criminal justice system

The Métis have played a central role in the history and development of Canada, especially western Canada. Formal recognition in the Canadian Constitution as one of Canada's Aboriginal peoples has placed the Métis people in a strategically important position to pursue their individual and collective interests within the changing character of Canadian society.

The Government of Canada recognizes the inherent right of all Aboriginal peoples to self-government (Minister of Public Works & Government Services Canada, 1995). Although negotiations for the exercise of this inherent right are a top priority for the Métis people, various factors contribute to the frustrating fact that progress toward Métis self-government is going to be prolonged. One important barrier is the restricted scope accorded to Métis peoples without a land base. The lack of a land base means that self-government negotiations with most Métis people are confined to limited forms of public government, the devolution of programs and services, and the development of service delivery institutions.

These barriers to the achievement of self-government will eventually be overcome. In the interim, however, it is useful for the Métis to consider all opportunities to improve the condition of their people by enhancing their autonomy and encouraging social institutions to take account of the unique Métis culture and heritage. One of these opportunities for improvement resides within the criminal justice system.

Many Metis people who attended residential schools continue to carry the burden of very painful and horrifying experiences, including physical and sexual abuses they endured at school.”

Metis Survivor Family Wellness program – Journey to Wellness

The Métis are seriously over-represented in Manitoba's federal correctional institutions. For instance, there is a 3 to 5 times greater proportion of Métis men in federal corrections than in the general population. Such over-representation is particularly severe with respect to young adults, who are needed to take on leadership roles within the community. Moreover, as serious as this over-representation currently is, short-term projections make it clear that demographic forces are moving to exacerbate current problems in the next decade.

Although the facts make it clear that the Métis population associated with the criminal justice system deserve special consideration, the supply of culturally-appropriate services is almost non-existent. A survey of service providers reveals that conventional agencies make little or no adjustment for Métis-specific needs, that Aboriginal agencies tailor their products to First Nations' clients, and that Métis institutions are hardly involved in criminal justice reintegration issues.

Current public policy concerns are often identified by examining the “representativeness” of a specific group within a particular institution. For example, when women are found to be under-represented in university appointments, policies are directed to remedy this imbalance. Similar procedures are used for a range of target groups across extensive number of institutions. Applying this assessment procedure to the situation of Métis within Manitoba's two major correctional facilities yields some revealing insights.

Various official sources estimate the Métis population of Manitoba in the mid-1990s to be approximately 41,000, of which 22,685 were men (Manitoba Bureau of Statistics, 1997; 1998). These same sources indicate that the non-Métis Aboriginal population included 39, 675 men. By comparison, the province included about 480,000 non-Aboriginal males during the same time period.

Expressed in percentages, Métis men comprised about 4% of the male population in the province. However, Métis men currently constitute 21% of the population in Manitoba's medium security institution (Stony Mountain) and 14% of those in the minimum-security facility (Rockwood) (Correctional Service Canada, 2000). In interpreting these statistics it is important to note that, on the whole, the Métis are less likely than other Aboriginal groups to self-identify and declare their Aboriginal status. This results in official statistics typically being underestimates. Considering these factors, it is clear that the Métis population is over-represented (by 3-5 times) in Manitoba's federal prisons.

Besides their over-representation, the experience of Métis, both during and after incarceration, indicates the need for targeted services. The typical circumstance is as follows. When Métis offenders enter federal institutions they are identified as “Aboriginal people.” This is a correct designation since the Métis are one of the 3 distinct Aboriginal peoples in Canada. However, as a matter of practice, the term “Aboriginal” in federal institutions is currently translated as meaning “First Nations” peoples.





This restricted identification of Aboriginal people as members of First Nations leads to one of two undesirable consequences for the Métis within federal institutions. First, because they do not identify themselves as First Nations peoples, many Métis inmates simply do without any Aboriginal content or supports during their institutional confinement. Alternately, those Métis who desperately seek an Aboriginal connection while institutionalized are forced into programs and services that include practices that are not part of their culture (such as, sweat lodges and sweet grass). These institutional alternatives, that either neglect the Métis or direct them into culturally inappropriate programs, do a disservice to the legitimate needs of Métis inmates.

A parallel set of circumstances confronts Métis offenders upon release. Like First Nations people, the reintegration process of Métis offenders and their families is assisted by post-release supports and services. Such services are very inadequate in the Métis case. Again, there are several programs and services supported by Indian Affairs, but these are not available to Métis individuals and families.

Beyond these obvious humanistic reasons for giving Métis inmates special consideration are two pragmatic reasons for doing so. These pragmatic reasons relate to the current and future conditions of the Métis people. Currently, about 15% of non-Aboriginal inmates in Stony Mountain and Rockwood are between 18 and 24 years of age (Correctional Service Canada, 2000). By comparison, 29% of Métis inmates are in the 18-24 years category. In other words, young Métis men (18-24 years) are twice as prevalent in Manitoba's prisons as non-Aboriginal inmates. Having such a disproportionate percentage of young men currently incarcerated away from Métis communities has serious repercussions for the both the inmates, their families, and the larger collective.

As if the current conditions are not startling enough, projections make it clear that future profiles will be more severe than current ones. The best current estimates indicate that the Métis population in the province will increase by 47-49% by 2016 (Manitoba Bureau of Statistics, 1998). Moreover, the achievement of such population growth means that, in the near future, the Métis population will contain even greater proportions of young people.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A review of the evidence shows that the Métis are over-represented in Manitoba's federal prisons. This over-representation is particularly acute in

the family-formation age categories (18-24 years). Moreover, socio-demographic projections indicate that in the near future this Métis over-representation will become even more exaggerated. In short, with respect to the federal incarceration system in Manitoba, the Métis present a serious and growing justice system challenge.

This expanding challenge on the demand side is not being addressed on the supply side. Information provided by a broad cross-section of service providers who assist inmates during and after their incarceration shows that almost no Métis-specific programming is in place. This misalignment between the extensive needs of Métis inmates and their families and the limited resources available reduces the chances of successful community reintegration. The recognition of the lack of a comprehensive, Métis-specific approach to inmate reintegration is not restricted to official agencies; Métis inmates, their families and community representatives all share concerns about the need for Métis-specific services.

Elements of reflexion

The criminal justice system is often viewed as imposing "others' justice," since Métis inmates typically experience alienation from current correctional processes. A strong Métis presence in operating correctional facilities and parole services might help reduce this social distance.

While in prison, Métis inmates feel cut-off from their local communities. Stronger family and Elder visitation programs might help keep inmates connected to their communities.

A lack of self-esteem and disconnection from Métis culture are often identified as leading to crime and inhibiting the reintegration process. Métis culture and spirituality needs to have a much stronger presence in prison and post-prison life.

Inmates and their families often report that the prison experience did little to rehabilitate the Métis offender. This suggests that alternatives to incarceration might be worthy of exploration.

These recommendations contain a broad set of ideas. For them to be operational and useful they need to be integrated into a meaningful action plan. Therefore, we propose that the next phase of justice reintegration for Métis people is the development and implementation of a pilot project.

Charles Fraser



Bouncy The Res Dog

Bouncy leads this motley crew
Of furry rag-a-muffins
The father of most of them
Half shepherd and something big
You can tell by the size of his friendly head

Scars on their faces
Indicate its tough on the res
They lay around relaxing, when they can
At any moment, something might happen
To cause them to howl and bark:
Could be the scent of a grizzly;
Or a freshly killed moose;
Or an evil spirit drifting by.

They have no dog houses
Or regular meals
You can bet
They'll never see a vet
Always happy and ready to play
With children on their way to school

You won't find Poodles
In this vicinity
All have lost their virginity
Its tough being a res dog
Especially a pup.

No fancy collars

Or bowls with their names
They make the most
Of a harsh life.

There's nothing better
Then chewing a moose hoof
On a winter's day
Or a bear paw
In Spring's thaw.

Bouncy and the crew
Take life as it comes
No fences or rules
It ain't that bad, here on the Res.

Journey To Wellness

*Metis Survivor Family Wellness Program
A project of the Manitoba Metis Federation,
Funded by the AHF*

Acknowledging The Past...

«One of the key operating principles of residential schools was the separation of children from their families and normal community life. Isolated from their cultural context, role models and traditional ways of raising a family, residential school authorities saw children as more adaptable and easily influenced towards their aim of "civilizing the savage" or "bringing salvation to the heathen»

In order to understand what took place in Canada with respect to residential schools, it must be understood that when European explorers and settlers first came to this country, there was very little, if any, separation between church and state in their home countries. In fact, the significant influence and virtual control of the church upon the state was considered normal in Europe.

Therefore, in 1615 when the Jesuits sent the first missionaries to the "New World" to spread the word of God and make "disciples of all Nations," it was done with the full cooperation and assistance of the state. The forerunner of residential schools in Canada was the mission established in 1633 by the Jesuits for members of the Huron Nation. We now know that this mission and other Jesuit activity associated with it was a significant factor in almost wiping out any trace of Huron Indians.

The French in New France continued to try to civilize Native people by converting them to the Roman Catholic church. Clearly, the efforts of the church to culturally assimilate Native peoples served the French government's interest in further developing the fur trade. The name of a school set up by Ursuline nuns in the early 1800's is quite telling about the true nature of the church/state alliance. It was called the School of Victorian Culture on Domesticity, and it emphasized subservience, submission and obedience. The early 1800's also saw the first forays of Protestant missionaries along the same lines as established by the Catholic missionaries. In 1857, the Government of Canada established the "Civilization Program for Indians" with the authority of the Gradual Civilization Act.

As recently as 1920, the Department of Indian Affairs made it mandatory for all Indian children of school age to attend industrial schools. They did so with the belief that colonization of Native people would successfully alter their cultural life

to fit in with the social, political and economic goals of the dominant society.

The first school in Manitoba with a residence was established at the Red River Settlement in 1820. Records show that a Rev. John West, an Anglican, brought students to this school from as far away as York Factory. From the 1830's through the 1860's, some Metis people in Manitoba initiated the establishment of schools for Metis children under the auspices of the Roman Catholic church. These schools, often referred to as 'mission schools', were abandoned in the 1870's when the Dominion of Canada established its Indian residential school policy. In 1872, a residential school was established at Garden River near what is now the Ontario/Manitoba border, however, it was soon moved to Sault St. Marie, ON.

In 1879, the Roman Catholic and Methodist churches pressured the Government of Sir John A. Macdonald to allow them to take care of the provision for education in the recently negotiated western Treaties. In fact, during the 1880's, the Indian Department changed its funding policy for residential schools by providing grants based on the number of students attending in any given year. Previously, the Indian Department was only providing small grants to churches for building costs and food rations at these schools.

One of the results of the change in government funding policy was that church organizations such as the Church Missionary Society of the Anglican Church in England no longer took responsibility for paying the salaries of their school principals as they had prior to 1910. It also led to the development of Canadian-based, church-controlled administrative structures for the running of residential schools.

In 1920, every Indian child between the ages of seven and fifteen was required to attend what was then called "industrial schools" by law. By the 1930's, a total of 80 residential schools were being administered in all provinces and territories except New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland. In 1945 records show that there were 9,149 Aboriginal children in residential schools, with only slightly more than 100 at the grade eight level and none beyond grade nine.

A review of its residential school operations led the Anglican Church to stop running these schools in April 1969. In the same year there was also an end to the formal partnership between the government and churches in the operation of residential schools. As a result of this, the federal government took direct control of the 52 remaining schools. In 1970, there were 7,704 students enrolled in residential schools whereas 60% of the total Aboriginal student population in Canada was enrolled in provincially run schools.

The last residential school in Manitoba closed its doors in 1983.

One of the key operating principles of residential schools was the separation of children from their families and normal community life. Isolated from their cultural context, role models and traditional ways of raising a family, residential school authorities saw children as more adaptable and easily influenced towards their aim of "civilizing the savage" or "bringing salvation to the heathen."

A number of other methods were used to achieve the goal of civilizing or christianizing Aboriginal people. A system of strict rules was harshly imposed and children had to wear "strange" uniforms, practice marching, form into lines for most activities, and everything about where they ate, slept and learned was just the same. In such a setting, it was easier for the authorities to apply the social control mechanisms and the chain of command required to replace the child's previous way of seeing the world with a European perspective. Similar approaches are used by the military and most police forces when training new recruits.

Since most residential schools were run by a church, naturally the authorities in these schools were the priests, nuns and missionaries. Many of the people sent by the church to the usually isolated locations where residential schools were established were in the lower ranks of the church structure. It may well be that some of the priests, nuns, ministers and missionaries that ran residential schools had good intentions and motivations from a European perspective. They believed they were sacrificing their lives in order to do "good works" as a service to God. Sending inexperienced and poorly qualified people to isolated places, or those who were unacceptable in more central places, is a common way that religious and other institutions control their own people. Most of the teaching staff at residential schools, whether sent by the church or not, were not well trained because qualified teachers did not want to go to a far away community for low pay. Many teachers employed by residential schools had not even graduated from Grade 12 themselves.

The churches that were involved in building or running residential schools for the Government were: Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist and Presbyterian. The latter two churches later joined forces with other churches to become the United Church of Canada. The ultimate responsibility for residential schools lay in the hands of the Government of Canada as administered initially through the Dominion Indian Department, later called the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. But as was the case in 17th century New France, there was clearly an alliance between church and government with respect to





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The more evangelistically oriented churches were quite clear about their motivation in operating residential schools. It was very simply to convert Aboriginal people to Christianity. Methodists believed that the conversion of Aboriginal society would come through the Christian schooling of Aboriginal children. Most churches believed that through strict discipline, even if harshly applied, they would make Native people into "children of God."

The publicly stated aims of the churches and the government were somewhat different. However, this is beside the point. The makeup of the church/state alliance was such that their aims fed into and off each other. Whether the goal was to save their souls or take their land, one led to the other and together, the church/state alliance brought about the almost complete destruction of the cultures of First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples. The ultimate goal of the church/state alliance was to make sure that the way of life in the "new world" was similar to the way of life in the old world. Within that overall purpose there

were several objectives. In order for the economic goals of the Dominion to move forward freely, Aboriginal people either had to be isolated or made to "fit in" with a society that saw itself as a "Christian" society. Colonization could never have been accomplished with Aboriginal autonomy and cultural differences standing in the way.

Another objective was to rescue and save Aboriginal peoples from their "lost and backward" conditions. Native customs and lifestyle were considered primitive, savage and uncivilized. The fact that church authorities often referred to Aboriginal peoples, including Metis, as heathens indicates a bias - that European culture was more advanced and that its religious beliefs represented the absolute truth.

As Prime Minister John A. McDonald himself said, "secular education is a good thing among white men but among Indians the first object is to make them better men, and if possible, good Christian men by applying proper moral restraints."

Whenever one culture sees itself as superior to another, it does not require a great leap to employ various means of violent punishment and to accept or tolerate physical and sexual abuse of people seen as inferior. In order to root out the "savage nature" of Aboriginal peoples, they had to be beat into submission. After that, they could be taught to be "civilized" people and subjects of the Crown. Humiliation and shame also help to establish domination.



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The Aboriginal Healing Foundation

Métis offenders in British Columbia:

An examination of needs in the institution and upon release

- John-Patrick Moore
*Research Branch,
Correctional Service of Canada*
- Tim Low
*Métis Provincial Council
of British Columbia*
- Frankie Berland
Métis National Council

As is the case for First Nations and Inuit, Métis people are over-represented in the federal correctional system. While Métis account for 0.7% of the total Canadian adult population, Métis offenders comprise 4% of the federal offender population.⁴ Furthermore, research suggests that the profile of Métis offenders is distinct from First Nations and non-Aboriginal offenders. This points to the need to examine the issues facing Métis offenders and their diverse needs for correctional programming.

The Correctional Service of Canada (CSC), Métis Provincial Council of British Columbia (MPCBC), and Métis National Council (MNC) established a partnership to examine the needs of Métis offenders. The information could be used to enhance correctional programs and reintegration services to better meet the needs of Métis offenders, their families, and communities. Furthermore, the findings could be used to be better informed about how Section 81 and 84 of the Corrections and Conditional Release Act (CCRA) can be used to assist Métis offenders in making successful transitions back into the community.

Structured interviews were conducted with 64 Métis federal offenders in British Columbia, and 17 family members. In addition to background information, the interviews focused on current program participation and the needs of offenders and their family. Additional data were extracted from offender files, as was information on comparison groups of First Nations and non-Aboriginal populations in British Columbia.

Characteristics of Métis offenders

Métis offenders in British Columbia are fairly similar to First Nations and non-Aboriginal offenders on demographic characteristics. As with First Nations and non-Aboriginal offenders, large proportions of Métis offenders were less than 35 years of age (69%), single (47%), had not

completed high school (77%), and were unemployed at the time of admission (74%). However, Métis offenders were significantly younger than non-Aboriginal offenders. Approximately two-thirds (69%) of Métis offenders were less than 35 years of age at the time of admission to the federal institution compared to one-half (55%) of non-Aboriginal offenders.

A considerable number of Métis offenders (83%) were currently incarcerated for violent offences. The largest proportions were currently incarcerated for homicide (35%) and robbery (24%). Excluding those serving life sentences, the average aggregate sentence length for Métis offenders was approximately 61/2 years. The current criminal offence characteristics of First Nations and non-Aboriginal offenders were similar.

Métis offenders differed somewhat from non-Aboriginal offenders in terms of criminal histories, but not substantially from First Nations offenders. Larger proportions of Métis than non-Aboriginal offenders had youth court convictions (73% versus 55%), previous community supervision (91% versus 74%) and provincial terms (84% versus 70%).

Métis offenders were rated as having some or considerable need in a variety of areas, such as personal/emotional issues (98%), substance abuse (95%), criminal associates/social interaction (84%), attitudes (84%), employment (77%), marital/family issues (74%), and community functioning (70%). Some of these needs were different from other groups. In particular, Métis offenders were more likely to have some or considerable substance abuse (95% versus 76%) and employment (77% versus 62%) needs than non-Aboriginal offenders. A large number of Métis offenders were also classified as "high risk" to re-offend (79%). However, differences between Métis offenders and other groups on risk were not significant.

Métis offenders differed from First Nations offenders on some areas. While Métis offenders tended to live in urban areas (86%), smaller proportions of First Nations offenders lived in urban areas (75%). Furthermore, there are differences in culture, as shown in Aboriginal language, involvement in Aboriginal activities, and identity. In sum, Métis federal offenders were in their early 30's, single, had low education and high unemployment, which was similar to First Nations offenders and the Canadian Aboriginal population generally. Furthermore, Métis offenders had more extensive criminal histories and different needs than non-Aboriginal offenders. However, there were fewer differences between Métis and non-Aboriginal offenders than between First Nations and non-Aboriginal

offenders. The areas where differences emerged between Métis and First Nations offenders related to where they grew up, and culture. Differences in the characteristics of Métis offenders may point to a need for different interventions for Métis offenders than are currently in use for First Nations offenders.

Program participation

As illustrated in Figure 2, Métis offenders participated in a wide variety of programs. Almost all of those interviewed (98%) said that they had participated in some form of programming in the institutions. The largest proportion (77%) reported participating in substance abuse programs. Furthermore, approximately two-thirds participated in anger management (66%), cognitive/living skills (66%), and educational programming (62%). Over one-half of the Métis offenders also received psychological services (57%), counselling (57%), and were involved in employment (56%) programs. Smaller proportions participated in pre-release (18%) and sex offender programs (7%). The majority of offenders reported completing a program (90%). Almost two-thirds (61%) of respondents reported involvement in Aboriginal-specific programming. They reported Aboriginal programs including substance abuse, anger management and specific cultural initiatives. However, only two respondents reported having been involved in Métis-specific programs, such as substance abuse counselling.

Findings demonstrated that respondents with high need at intake were involved in a multitude of programs in the institution. Furthermore, those with high need in specific areas participated in need appropriate programming. For instance, large proportions of respondents with high need for substance abuse intervention participated in substance abuse (80%) and cognitive/living skills (66%) programs. In addition, considerable proportions of those rated as having high need for employment-related interventions participated in employment (58%) and educational (62%) programs. Although the results suggest that Métis offenders are involved in programs that attempt to address their needs, it is unclear whether the spiritual and cultural needs of Métis offenders were adequately met by correctional programming.

Needs of Métis offenders

Métis offenders were admitted to federal facilities with a variety of needs for intervention and those who had needs in one area tended to have needs in other areas. As illustrated in Figure 3, as is the case upon admission, Métis offenders also tended to have some or considerable need upon release to the community. However, some need ratings





were significantly lower at the time of release than at admission. Respondents appeared to have lower substance abuse (average 3.6 versus 3.2), personal/emotional (average 3.8 versus 3.5) and attitude (average 3.4 versus 3.0) needs at the time of release into the community, suggesting that some of the issues facing Métis offenders were met inside the institutions.

Offenders were also asked about their needs in the institution. Over one-half (54%) of those interviewed felt the need for more knowledge or awareness of their Métis culture. More than one-quarter (28%) also reported the need for more Métis-specific programs and a further 28% reported the need for Métis program facilitators. Put together, these findings suggest that a substantial portion of Métis offenders place importance on culturally-sensitive programming in the institutions. Moreover, respondents appear to require programs tailored to the experience and issues of Métis peoples.

When asked what their needs would be at the time of release, the largest proportion of respondents reported that they would need the support of the Métis community (40%). Respondents also noted the need for financial support (22%), employment (16%), cultural support (15%) and adequate housing (15%). Findings suggest that Métis offenders not only place a great deal of importance on community mechanisms of support, but also acknowledge their need for economic stability upon release.

In general, Métis federal offenders as a group tended to view their needs as unique from the needs of others. Over one-half (57%) reported that their needs were different from those of non-Aboriginal offenders and approximately one-quarter (27%) felt that their needs were unique from the needs of other Aboriginal offenders.

Needs of family members

Apart from examining the needs of Métis offenders, the needs of the families were also investigated. Almost one-half (48%) of offenders thought their family members needed more contact with them while incarcerated. In addition, one-fifth of offenders felt that their families needed a better understanding of the offender (21%) and support from others (21%). Smaller proportions noted the need for financial support (14%), adequate housing (5%) and medical benefits (5%). At the time of release, the largest proportion of Métis offenders reported that their families needed a commitment from them to change or avoid trouble while in the community (35%). In addition, over one-quarter (29%) of offender respondents reported that

their families needed contact with them, and one-fifth felt their families required support (21%) and counselling (19%) upon release.

Of the 17 family respondents, 14 responded to questions concerning their needs while the offender is incarcerated. Forty-three percent of these family members noted the need for support from other family members and the community at large during the offender's incarceration. Smaller proportions reported the need for contact with the offender (21%), understanding (7%) and counselling (7%). Family members reported similar needs upon release of the offender. Among those who answered questions about their needs at release (n = 12), over one-half (58%) felt they would need supports in place to assist them with the transition of their family member, and one quarter (25%) would require access to counselling.

These findings highlight the importance of professional support services and community involvement to families of Métis offenders. Both offender and family members emphasize the need for access to a comprehensive support network that can provide on-going assistance from the time of incarceration to the point of successful reintegration.

Conclusion

Profile information indicates that Métis federal offenders in British Columbia are in their early 30's, unemployed at admission, display a wide variety of needs at admission, possess extensive criminal backgrounds and are incarcerated for violent offences. Results also indicated that some profile characteristics of Métis offenders differed from other offender groups, suggesting that Métis offenders may have needs for intervention that are unique from those of First Nations and non-Aboriginal offenders. For instance, Métis and First Nations offenders differed in culture and whether they grew up in urban or rural areas.

Overall, Métis offenders in British Columbia participated in a variety of core programs inside federal facilities. Furthermore, needs presented at intake were addressed by correctional programming. Findings indicate that Métis offenders also had specific self-identified needs in the institution and upon release. Large proportions reported the need for Métis-oriented programs and enhanced knowledge of their Métis culture while incarcerated. Upon release, large numbers expressed the need for support from the Métis community and economic assistance. However, the degree to which current programs addressed these areas is not available.

Results demonstrated that families were in need of a comprehensive system of supports during the period of incarceration and upon release. Large proportions of offender and family respondents emphasized the importance of formal and informal methods of intervention. Families appeared to require a combination of psychological services and support from community members in order to deal with the difficulties they experience.

Findings have implications for Métis offenders, their families, Métis communities and CSC. Information from this study can be used to improve the implementation of Sections 81 and 84 of the CCRA. Successful reintegration may be enhanced by offering programs that address the specific cultural needs of Métis offenders in the institutions and community. It may also be imperative to allocate professional support resources to family members who plan to assist in the reintegration process. The emphasis placed on the community by offenders and families highlights the importance of providing Métis communities with a better understanding of Métis offender needs and issues. Ultimately, the successful reintegration of Métis offenders into their communities strengthens the chance of improving the quality of life for all Canadians.

This project was the first phase of a three phase process that examined the specific needs of Métis offenders within the correctional system and as they prepare to be released. The second phase will involve a needs assessment in those communities that Métis offenders have identified as the likely place they will go upon release. This process will examine existing services available and the level of support and assistance these communities are prepared to offer to the offenders and their families in the future. Building on the information from the first two phases, the final phase of the project will work to establish Section 81 and 84 programs and services in the identified communities. This could lead to the establishment of Métis transition houses, training facilities, healing programs, or other services.

Words of Wisdom

“The distinctive work of the grandparents is that of acquainting the children with the traditions and beliefs of the nation. The grandparents are old and wise. They have lived and achieved. They are dedicated to the service of the young, as their teachers and advisers, and the young in turn regard them with love and reverence. In them the Indian recognizes the natural and truest teachers of the child.”

- Ohiyesa, 1858-1939,
Santee Sioux, Minnesota.

“It will be difficult for many of us who attended the residential schools to talk about our experiences there and how they affected our lives after we left the schools because of the simple fact that they bring back too many painful and unhappy memories. But the silent suffering has to end. It is time for the healing to start, and the only way that will happen is if we acknowledge the past, face it, understand it, deal with it and make sure nothing like it ever happens again.”

- Chief Bev Sellars, Soda Creek First Nation.
From “Opening Address to the First National Conference on Residential
Schools, Vancouver, June 1991.”
Taken from *Victims of Benevolence* by Elizabeth Furniss.

“Dreams have always been an important part of my life. I think that is true for most people who are searching for spirituality and go out and fast. Dreams guide you; they show you the way that you should be living, or the direction, or give you signs to help someone else, and they are gifts.”

- Jackie Yellow Tail, Crow Woman.

“...if there is one thing that characterizes Indian life today, it is poverty of the spirit. We still have human passion and depth of feeling, which is something rare today, but we are poor in spirit because we are not free, free in the most basic sense of the word.”

- Clyde Warrior,
Ponca, Oklahoma, 1967.

“Love is something you and I must have. We must have it because our spirit feeds upon it. We must have it because without it we become weak and faint. Without love our self-esteem weakens. Without it our courage fails.”

- Chief Dan George,
Coast Salish.

Has anything changed in your life?

WHAT

The Aboriginal Healing Foundation (AHF) would like to know if there have been any changes in the lives of participants since attending a healing activity funded by AHF. The AHF has developed an **Individual Participant Questionnaire** for participants to **voluntarily** complete, whether the participant completed a healing program or not. The first step in our evaluation process was a survey sent in January 2001 to all projects and the second was a report on thirteen case studies of selected projects. The participant questionnaire is part of the third step of the AHF evaluation.

WHO

We are asking all participants who attended an AHF project healing activity to complete this questionnaire if they have not done so already. Please note this is **voluntary** on the part of participants. All information will be kept confidential. Participants should **not include their names** on the questionnaire.

If a participant chooses to fill out the questionnaire, that person is giving consent for the use of the information for AHF evaluation. The participants should also be aware that anonymous quotes may be published in an evaluation report.

There are no right or wrong answers, only answers that are true for the participant.

WHY

Completing the participant questionnaire is very important to the work of the AHF. The information gathered from this questionnaire will help the AHF understand what impact healing activities had on the lives of Aboriginal people who participated in them.

WHEN

The extended deadline for completion of the questionnaire is **31 December 2003**.

WHERE

A copy of the Individual Participant Questionnaire entitled “Your Experience on the Healing Journey” will be sent, once again, to all current projects. A reference guide will also be included to help answer any questions that may arise. If you have questions about a particular item that the reference guide does not address, please contact Flora Kallies at 888-725-8886 extension 318 or email at fkallies@ahf.ca. If you would like additional copies, contact the AHF or photocopy as many as you need. The Individual Participant Questionnaire is also available on the AHF website: <http://www.ahf.ca>. *Please return all completed questionnaires directly to:*

Aboriginal Healing Foundation
801-75 Albert Street
Ottawa, ON K1P 5E7

Attention: Research Department

*Thank you for taking the time to complete the Individual
Participant Questionnaire.*

ABORIGINAL HEALING FOUNDATION AHF PROJECT GATHERING

On March 28, 2003 in Ottawa, ON, the Aboriginal Healing Foundation (AHF) brought together ten funded projects from across Canada to provide an overview of their programs and to discuss their successes, best practices, challenges faced, and lessons learned. The projects illustrated the broad range of activities funded by the AHF. Details regarding each project follows.

NATIVE ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE COUNSELING ASSOCIATION (NADACA) OF NOVA SCOTIA

AHF Contribution:
\$410,200.00

Start & End Dates:
4/1/02 - 3/31/03

Primary Contact:
Mrs. Nellie Cremo
Financial Comptroller
Tel: 902-379-2262
Fax: 902-379-2412

Email: nadaca@istar.ca Organization Address:
P.O. Box 7820
Eskasoni, NS B1W 1B4
Presenter: Darlene MacGregor

Project Overview

The AHF provides funding to NADACA for its "A Journey of Healing" program. NADACA includes two treatment centres: Mi'kmaw Lodge in Eskasoni First Nation and Eagle's Nest in Indian Brook, and employs 40 workers, six of whom work for the "A Journey of Healing" program.

The "Journey of Healing" program methodology combines traditional and western practices in a blend of social and cultural activities, including barbeques, pot luck dinners, box socials and drum making workshops, in the delivery of healing services to Survivors. Further services include one to one counseling, and a 35-day treatment program on the effects of residential school, Mi'kmaw history, parenting, anger, addiction, self-esteem and anxiety. Throughout programming drumming, song and talking circles, sweats, smudging, art therapy, spirituality and traditional crafts and outings are utilized. Women's and Men's Retreats and healing conferences in Millbrook and Eskasoni, and staff training have also been offered.

Successes and Best Practices

- using a grass roots, community development model that combines traditional and western methods;
- listening to the input of Survivors and giving their ideas and concerns a voice in guiding the program's direction and activities;
- hard to reach areas are requesting service and/or are more receptive to services being provided;
- spontaneous events are happening in the community including craft and talent nights;
- non-threatening and free social activities introduce the program, provide an opportunity for Survivors to socialize, remind of traditions lost, and create a new beginning for the community;
- drum making workshops engaged people with no previous exposure to healing or traditional activities, and increased feelings of cultural pride, and empowerment;
- cultural activities provide a safe place to socialize and offer new skills, including a Songwriter's Circle that offers a forum for local songwriters to share knowledge and to work with others beginning their healing journey, (an activity that engages mostly men);
- talking and sharing circles feature a guest speaker presentation followed by group discussion;
- healing conferences in Millbrook and Eskasoni were attended by large numbers of Survivors and assisted in breaking through barriers and reluctance of Survivors to talk about their Residential School experiences;
- partnership with the Maritime School of Social Work to train 20 staff to work in the communities with Survivors as part of the program's legacy; and
- many of the Survivors have become the program's greatest supporters.

Challenges Faced and Lessons Learned

- encouraging the community to break the silence regarding the Legacy of Sexual and Physical Abuse in Residential Schools;
- difficulty of efforts to remain neutral and walk the line between traditional and western practices;
- reluctance of Survivors to participate in Eagle's Nest's programs given its proximity to the location of Shubenacadie Residential School;
- at the first focus group there was significant issues of anger, negativity and cynicism;
- overcoming people's fears of losing control, anger, and retraumatization; and
- learning that some people who were helpers did not realize how people could be retraumatized that lead to improved safety and support measures.

WASESKUN HEALING LODGE

AHF Contribution:
\$300,000.00

Start & End Dates:
9/1/02 - 8/31/04

Primary Contact:
Mr. Stan Cudek
Executive Director
Tel: 450-883-2034
Fax: 450-883-3631

Email: wn27@waseskun.mail Organization
Address:

P.O. Box 1059

Kahnawake, QC J0L 1B0

Presenters: Stan Cudek, Executive Director and
Charlie Hill

Project Overview

Located in St. Alphonse-Rodriguez in the Laurentian foothills, the Waseskun Healing Lodge facilitates the relocation of formerly incarcerated Aboriginal individuals (mostly male) into the community at large through the restoration or development of physical, emotional, mental and spiritual balance,





based on and using traditional Aboriginal teachings and contemporary practices. The Lodge utilizes counselors, clinical staff and Elders in its work, and its residents are generally conditional release-federal, and/or conditional release or conditional sentence-provincial prisoners. As the only Healing Lodge east of Manitoba, Waseskun draws from three different regions, and receives many admission applications that it is unable to accommodate.

The purpose of the Lodge's AHF funded Waseya Program, "A Healing Program for Sexual and Violent Offenders" is to address the unresolved trauma of the physical, sexual and emotional abuse suffered by the residents in residential schools or in families or communities affected by residential schools, and to restore a balance in peoples relationships with their world. Treatment goals are for the residents to accept responsibility for offences; confront denial/justifying behaviour; modify negative perceptions of others; modify deviant sexual arousal behaviours; develop an awareness of the impacts on victims; relapse prevention; attitudinal change; and understanding and managing risk. The program's residents are First Nations, Inuit or Métis who attended or were intergenerationally impacted by residential schools. Residents remain in the program a minimum of two years and have remained up to seven years.

Successes and Best Practices

- program philosophy that "the road to redemption is through revitalization of traditional teachings";
- training is provided to all new staff to improve their awareness of traditional teachings;
- wholistic approach including re-connection to the land and teachings, and personal responsibility to self and others;
- affirmation that residents need healing rather than additional punishment;
- program model based on a "Wellness Wheel";
- requirement for residents to develop an Individual Healing Plan relating short and long term goals, in a wholistic framework, to spiritual, physical, mental and emotional objectives; and
- use of contemporary cognitive-behavioural approaches emphasizing self-regulation of behaviour in both traditional (i.e. healing and community circles, cleaning ceremonies, sweat lodges and traditional feasts) and contemporary (relaxation training, systematic desensitization, assertion training, meditation, anger management, and self-management training) approaches.

MANITOBA MÉTIS FEDERATION

AHF Contribution:
\$1,054,280.00

Start & End Dates:
12/1/02 - 11/30/04
Primary Contact: Mr. Len J. Sawatsky
Program Director
Tel: 204-586-8474 ext. 222
Fax: 204-947-1816
Email: traceyt@mpcbc.bc.ca Organization
Address:
150 Henry Avenue 3rd Floor
Winnipeg, MB R3B 0J7
Presenter: Len Sawatsky

Project Overview

The AHF funds the Manitoba Métis Federation's program for Métis Survivors of Residential Schools that targets Métis who attended residential schools and their descendants in the Northwest, Pas, Thompson, and Southeast regions. The program started its first year with a survey of needs that received more than 1,000 responses, and that raised awareness of the program and its operations. In its second year, the program established Wellness Advisory Groups in a sharing circle format that allowed people to share their stories regarding residential school or the intergenerational impacts that they had experienced. The focus of the program in its third year has been on a community wellness planning process.

Successes and Best Practices

- one-on-one counseling using a blended traditional and western approach;
- Wellness Advisory Groups utilizing a sharing circle format and applying social learning theory and solution focused approaches;
- providing information on Métis history puts healing in the context of Métis culture and identity;
- in home visits is an important means of completing surveys; precipitates a positive response from people, an increased willingness to share experiences, and increased trust in the interviewer;
- use of Elders made activities greater successes;
- regional and provincial grass roots gatherings focusing on "barriers to the healing journey" and incorporating traditional Métis activities such as fiddle playing, gifts to honour Elders, and the presentation of Métis sashes to Survivors;
- pilot project tested on four communities to create a community profile/story and to develop

a community plan;

- developing wholistic healing practices and creation of an environment that supports, encourages and reinforces healing;
- quarterly Elders Council round tables;
- creation of a video that was presented to an Annual General Assembly and will be shown on APTN and other channels in April 2003;
- creation of a Youth Wellness Advisory Group;
- development of group guidelines and training manuals on small group processes and program development to allow people to carry on the healing work when the funding runs out;
- development of a counsellor code of ethics;
- networking with community services; and
- recognition of the importance of humour to healing.

Challenges Faced and Lessons Learned

- much of the program's budget is utilized for travel to remote, fly-in communities;
- overcoming confusions about cultural identity;
- dealing with issues of denial;
- individuals who are connected with and influenced by religious organizations resist discussion of residential school because they feel it is criticizing;
- internal concern of lateral violence;
- funding levels; and
- need for trauma intervention to assist people in filling out surveys relating to their experiences.

MA MAWI WI CHI ITATA CENTRE

AHF Contribution:
\$396,600.00

Start & End Dates:
6/1/02 - 5/31/04
Primary Contact: Ms. Diane Redsky
Director of Programs
Tel: 204-925-0300 ext. 326
Fax: 204-946-5042
Email: dredsky@mamawi.com Organization
Address:
94 McGregor Street
Winnipeg, MB R2W 4V5
Presenters: Wally Chartrand, Joanne Beauchamp and Edwin Twoheart





Project Overview

AHF funded Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre's Saki(hi)towin Maamawinom (Couples Gathering) offers a maximum of ten couples the opportunity to come together in an alcohol and drug free environment to explore ways to better understand their relationships with one another. The program addresses the loss of the understanding of the roles and responsibilities of men and women, as individuals, siblings, and parents, as a result of the residential school experience, and has five components: getting to know each other; yesterday; today; tomorrow. The components utilize traditional and western healing practices such as getting acquainted exercises; team building techniques; sweatlodge, opening, binding, letting go and closing ceremonies; sharing circles; drawing/arts/psychodrama exercise; meditation; and problem-solving techniques.

Successes and Best Practices

- supporting participants with pay for their travel, meals, accommodations and childcare costs;
- use of a buddy system, men with men and women with women, to support one another throughout the five days;
- encouraging participants to form relationships with others of the same sex;
- use of traditional practices, such as sweatlodge ceremonies and sharing circles;
- incorporation of traditional teachings regarding how men and women should relate to one another;
- letting go ceremony where each person has the opportunity to verbalize what they wish to let go of - whatever is holding them back in their relationship - and to commit to letting it go;
- discuss the importance of talking about sex and intimacy;
- participants have begun to break down the isolation and to connect with one another;
- participants are "owning the process" of becoming healthier, happier and stronger men and women, couples and families;
- individuals and couples continue their healing through treatment, counseling and therapy; continuing their education and traditional way of life; and pursuing employment and training opportunities;
- couples agree to a code of honour;

- a women's gathering, a men's gathering, an Elders program, a strong parent's program and a volunteer program network;
- one to one, couples and family counseling;
- provide learning opportunities for sister organizations around team building, learning organization framework, learning organization conferences, personal mastery, family group conferencing, residential school impacts, capacity building, healing art of storytelling, and grief and loss healing.

CENTRE FOR INDIGENOUS SOVEREIGNTY

AHF Contribution:
\$547,228.00

Start & End Dates:
12/1/02 - 11/30/04
Primary Contact: Mr. Gordon B. Peters
President & CEO
Tel: 416-972-0077
Fax: 416-972-0857
Organization Address:
22 College Street Suite 305
Toronto , ON M5G 1K2

Presenters: Janice Longboat and Barb Nahwegahbow

Project Overview

The AHF funds the I Da Wa Da Di Project based at the Earth Healing Herb Gardens & Retreat Centre, Six Nations of the Grand River, sponsored by the Centre for Indigenous Sovereignty. The project utilizes traditional healing approaches in its work with Aboriginal women to help them to heal the trauma of physical and sexual abuse suffered at residential schools, or the trauma suffered.

while growing up in families and communities made dysfunctional by the legacy of residential school abuse. Project participants range in age from 42 to 72 years of age, and are taught of the role of women as the foundation for the home, family and community. The project goals are to engage Aboriginal women in a safe, nurturing, culture-based group healing process; to provide Aboriginal women survivors with opportunities for learning about Aboriginal traditions, culture and spirituality; and to increase the capacity of Aboriginal women service-providers to work more effectively with female survivors. Program components include four-day residential healing retreats; three-day fasting retreats; circle of healing - four one-day workshops and an eight-week program; awakening the spirit - three-day annual gathering; nine training workshops; and quarterly newsletters.

Successes and Best Practices

- encouraging participation by offering traditional foods and the opportunity for sharing stories;
- linkages with various community partners;
- providing a wholistically safe healing environment;
- offering supportive group sharing opportunities;
- evaluation and accountability to the community through various means;
- data indicates that the project is making a difference in the lives of Aboriginal women and their families;
- effective promotion evidenced by number of communities represented by participants; and community support - partnerships increased from 3 in the first year to 11 in the last year.

Challenges Faced and Lessons Learned

- need for greater education around the meaning of "intergenerational survivor";
- transportation problems for some participants;
- lack of employer support for participants to attend;
- need for staff and resource people to be on their healing path;
- older Survivors tend not to participate; and
- delays in notification of funding approval.

WABANO CENTRE FOR ABORIGINAL HEALTH

AHF Contribution:
\$272,280.00

Start & End Dates:
11/1/02 - 10/31/04
Primary Contact: Ms. Allison Fisher
Executive Director
Tel: 613-748-7144
Fax: 613-748-9364
Email: afisher@wabano.com Organization
Address:
299 Montreal Road
Vanier , ON K1L 6B8
Presenters: Alison Fisher, Nancy Currie, Jim Albert, Mindy Denny, and Irene Lindsay.





Project Overview

The AHF funded Wabano Child and Family Art Therapy Program, hosted by the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health in Vanier, Ontario, offers an integrated, wholistic approach to health services by complementing contemporary medical practices with traditional healing methods. Its program model is based on traditional practices that recognizes children as being at the centre of a vibrant community life with many adults who were equally important to them. This model provides support to the children and also to the parents who may not have had the skill, interest, or time to be solely responsible for providing everything that children require for a healthy life.

Program activities include an Art Therapy program; parent support circles; communal meal and other group parent/child activities to practice parenting skills. As well, activities include recruitment and training of youth and grandparents as ongoing resources for children, parents and caregivers; development and maintenance of inter-agency referral and case coordination mechanisms; providing opportunities to learn about the impacts of residential school abuse; and evaluation activities.

Success and Best Practices

- use of art therapy as a non-verbal process to express feelings and emotions through art materials;
- involvement of children and parents, grandparents or caregivers;
- teaching adults that their words and behaviours are models for children;
- emphasizing respect for each other and sharing/caring for each other;
- program is wrapped in a cultural approach with teachings, ceremonies and respect for all relations being central;
- teaching the 7 Stages of Life and offering children support and understanding;
- honouring non-verbal forms of communication and expression of feelings;
- empowering sole support parents to learn more about their culture and Aboriginal traditions;
- offering support to off-Reserve First Nations new to the urban environment;
- creation of family talking stick and introduction to the talking circle;
- working as a support team to provide support and understanding to program participants;

- daily staff de-briefing to share information on families and to develop unique approaches to fit each situation; and

- taking a gentle approach to teaching.

Challenges Identified and Lessons Learned

- western model of family therapy, based on the western concept of the nuclear family, was not useful - from the perspective of Aboriginal teachings it is insular, isolating, and inherently dysfunctional; and
- no therapeutic intervention on its own can work effectively for our people without culture and community.

KEESEEKOOSE FIRST NATION

AHF Contribution:
\$162,448.00

Start & End Dates:
4/1/02 - 6/30/03

Primary Contact: Chief Philip Quewezance
Chief

Tel: 306-542-2012

Fax: 306-542-2922

Organization Address:

Box 1704

Kamsack , SK S0A 1S0

Presenter: Judy Hughes and Vicki Shingoose

Project Overview

The Keeseekoose First Nation AHF funded program Seeking Balance and Harmony, is an - Elders support program designed to meet the needs of the Elders of the Keeseekoose First Nation specifically those who attended the St. Philip's Residential School and other Residential Schools. The program activities include sharing/healing circles; Elders support system; counseling; conferences, forums and gatherings; compilation of biographies and photographs; development of a resource network; professional development; traditional and cultural activities; and workshops on the Residential School experience.

Successes and Best Practices

- residential school workshops to address trauma, to enhance healing;
- sharing circles utilized for self-disclosure and to encourage listening, understanding and empathy;
- emphasis on confidentiality;
- use of facilitators who understand the legacy of Residential Schools;

- use of healthy Elders as resources;

- psychodrama bodywork training (three levels: personal development, counseling/group therapy training);

- invitation to mental health therapists to attend all activities;

- provision of after care and de-briefing services;

- bi-weekly residential school workshops and weekly sharing circles and annual cultural camps;

- survivors have taken ownership;

- participation level has increased;

- higher self-esteem and self-confidence of the participants;

- Elders are more confident sharing traumas;

- trust is secured;

- planning and coordinating is a high priority;

- support from Health Department and Mental Health and networking and positive feedback from community;

- staff are on their healing journey and follow guidelines, code of ethics and a policy manual;
- residential school workshops are unique to survivors;

- foster self-identify, self-esteem and self-respect;

- positive lifestyles are being established involving traditional culture and respecting Elders;

- outgoing correspondence for the Elders and the community incorporating spiritual content (calendars, notices, radio, posters and various advertisements); and

- home visits enhancing communication with Elders.

Challenges Faced and Lessons Learned

- funding sustainability issues have to be addressed;

- 10% holdback of funds creates problems;

- creating trust and confidence;

- staff criticism and lateral violence in first year;

- Elders misunderstood services offered by the program and expected to receive per diems; and

- inability to use funding for capital purchases.





BLUE QUILLS FIRST NATIONS COLLEGE

AHF Contribution:
\$1,157,287.00

Start & End Dates:
4/1/02 - 6/30/04
Primary Contact: Mr. Vincent Steinhauer
Co-Ordinator
Tel: 780-645-4455
Fax: 780-645-5215
Organization Address:
Box 279
St. Paul , AB T0A 3A0
Presenter: Vincent Steinhauer

Project Overview

The AHF funded Blue Quills First Nations College's Kitoskatowin project is intended to help people to heal and to overcome their fears instilled in through the genocidal effects of the Residential School experience.

The project worked with area Elders and scholars to develop 10 modules that are 45-hour long university modeled courses providing training and education based in healing. Module topics are: Colonization/Decolonization; Family of Origin; Grief and Loss; Communication; Aboriginal Parenting; Inner Child Journey; Community Wellness Leadership and Facilitation; Choosing Healthy Lifestyles; Celebrating Ourselves; and Newo Iyiniw Cultural Camp.

Successes and Best Practices

- use of a steering committee of community members as a resource;
- roles of youth and Elders are intertwined throughout the whole process;
- cultural screen is applied to every aspect of the program including rules and policies; goals and measurements; customs and norms; training; ceremonies and events; management behaviours; rewards and recognition; communications; physical environment; and organizational structure;
- ongoing monitoring and evaluation to determine what is working, barriers and successes, and to make improvements to the delivery of programs;
- gatherings for healing and celebration with daily ceremonies, circles and healing activities;
- legacy of healing will be left for every community;
- overcoming peoples' fears; and

- use of education as a medium for healing – teaching in circles, using Elders.

INTER TRIBAL HEALTH AUTHORITY (ITHA)

AHF Contribution:
\$1,065,403.00
Start & End Dates:
7/1/01 - 9/30/02
Primary Contact: Ms. Mary Knox
Program Manager
Tel: 250-753-3990
Fax: 250-753-0570
Organization Address:
534 Centre Street
Nanaimo , BC V9R 4Z3
Presenters: Mary Knox and Terry Fox

The AHF funds the Inter Tribal Health Authority to provide its First Nations House of Healing program. Operating from the Tsa Kwa Luten Lodge on Quadra Island, healing programs are offered October to April annually, providing 6,500 person/days of residential programs and outreach work with community workers and groups. Programs offered are targeted to Aboriginal people on Vancouver Island who are affected by the legacy of physical and sexual abuse in Residential Schools. Three levels (introductory, basic and intense) of residential healing programs are offered, and summer youth and early intervention adolescent camps are also provided.

Successes and Best Practices

- programs are targeted to meet the special needs of guests;
- community workers are trained as referral agents;
- sessional teams recruited as needed with only three permanent administration staff;
- outreach workers follow up with community workers regarding ongoing client needs;
- use of self-directed healing; buddy system; holistic approach; and maximum intake;
- linkage to the community through workers;
- guests encouraged to get out of their heads and are kept physically active;
- fluid base of resource people;
- healing environment conveys respect; and
- provision of aftercare services.

Challenges Faced and Lessons Learned

- healing must take place in an environment of safety;
- healing is a journey, not an event;
- responsibility for healing must be with self;
- culture and nature are key components in healing;
- government support required for continued operation; and
- require increased capacity in community to provide non-residential programs.

THE COMMITTEE ON ABUSE IN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS SOCIETY

AHF Contribution:
\$168,216.00
Start & End Dates:
2/1/01 - 1/31/02
Primary Contact: Ms. Jackie MacLaren
Treasurer
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Email: jackiem@yt.sympatico.ca
Organization Address:
Box 30030
Whitehorse , YT Y1A 5M2
Presenter: Jackie MacLaren

Project Overview

The AHF funded Committee on Abuse in Residential Schools Society (CAIRS) addresses and makes recommendations regarding issues stemming from the impact of the Residential School experience on the First Nations people of the Yukon and Northwestern BC. CAIRS is a non-profit society run by a volunteer Board comprised of alcohol and drug free members who are role models to project participants. A Community Healing Model is reflected in CAIRS's operations and incorporates individual direct and indirect healing services and community direct and indirect healing services.

Successes and Best Practices

- priority is placed on meeting the needs of survivors and their families;
- more men than women are involved;
- working collaboratively with other programs, including Yukon College, Mental Health Services, and other non governmental organizations;





- bi-weekly offering of a traditional lunch with clients, their families and counselors;
- use of spirit houses to educate probation officers, RCMP and jail workers on the impact of residential schools on communities;
- healing cultural losses recognizing that the cultural component can open the door to therapy;
- incorporating traditional practices;
- offering opportunities for talented artists to flourish;
- fund-raising using artists' talents and renewable resources to encourage ownership of the centre;
- use the healing process of playing music to deal with unresolved grief;
- giving people hope and belief that they can do anything;
- 14 gatherings and conferences;
- independent, non-profit and have a good reputation in the community; and
- changes to peoples lives and realization that there is an incredible resiliency in Survivors.

Challenges Faced and Lessons Learned

- rescheduled bi-weekly lunches to occur when people had not just received social support monies as some problems had occurred with people abusing alcohol prior to the lunches;
- political environment;
- funding;
- liability insurance is difficult for non profit societies to obtain without western certified counselors;
- training for alcohol and drug certification programs does not exist; and
- fund-raising potential is limited given CAIRS unwillingness to do fund-raising that is alcohol or gambling related.



history BRIEFS

THE MOHAWK INSTITUTE

The Mohawk Institute, or “mush hole,” was the first residential school in Canada to reach one hundred years of continuous operation, in 1931.

The Rev. W. Hough, of the New England Company, was the first resident missionary. He remained only a few months and was succeeded by the Rev. R. Luger, in 1827. In 1830, construction of a manual labour school was begun. A mechanic's shop was erected and two large rooms were occupied for boys to work in carpentering and tailoring. In addition, quarters were secured for the teaching of weaving and spinning to girls.



Above: Students at the “mush hole,” 1943. Anglican Church Archives.

The Rev. A. Nelles – who in 1837 became chief missionary for the New England Company – was placed in charge in 1831. In 1834, the New England Company expanded the school by opening residential quarters for 10 boys and 4 girls. These were taught along with the day pupils, both in the classroom and in the manual arts. In 1838, there were buildings and equipment for 30 boys and 10 girls, increasing to 45 pupils in 1844. By 1847, there were 50 in attendance, with 50 on a waiting list.

In 1859, the Mohawk Institute was rebuilt on the New England Company's 10-acre lot, which was a few hundred yards from the old site near the Mohawk Chapel. The new white brick three-story building accommodated 90 pupils

In 1869, three girls (Helen Johnson, Susannah Carpenter and Jemima Maracle) and two boys (Henry Johnson and Nelles Monture) were sent to Hellmuth College, London.

In 1895, 110 children were at the Mohawk Institute, and four years later 125 students were enrolled.

In April, 1903, the main building was destroyed by fire. It had been erected in 1859 but had been added to from time to time. A few weeks later the barns were burned, and a little later again, the boys' playhouse, temporarily used as a residence, was destroyed by fire. According to the Department of Indian Affairs, there was “no doubt that incendiarism on the part of pupils was responsible.”

The new building was first occupied in October, 1904.

The Mohawk Institute closed in 1969, and the building today houses the Woodland Cultural Centre.

Adapted from DOMINION OF CANADA ANNUAL REPORT OF THE DEPARTMENT OF INDIAN AFFAIRS FOR THE YEAR ENDED MARCH 31 1930.

Where Are The Children?

National Archives of Canada – Exhibition Room B
395 Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
June 22, 2002 to February 2, 2003

For more information: Angie Bruce
Toll-free: (888) 725-8886
In Ottawa (613) 237-4441



The exhibition, *Where Are The Children? Healing the Legacy of The Residential Schools*, emerged from the silence and shame endured by former residential school children. As guest curator for the exhibition, I wanted to find a way to break the silence; to respond to the questions that today's Aboriginal youth are asking: What did these schools look like? What happened to our parents and grandparents there? Why is our generation still suffering from the inter-generational effects of these schools?

It was in these schools that an organized and systematic erasure of language and culture, including community role models, occurred. I believe that the exhibition photographs can begin the process of desilencing the experiences of all Aboriginal peoples. Despite very public revelations of what took place in the schools, some people continue to insist that they were necessary and even beneficial for Aboriginal children. Yet one need only look at the statistics on substance abuse, suicide rates and prostitution; the disproportionate number of Aboriginal people in prisons; the higher-than-average high school drop-out rates; gang street culture; and the systemic racism that Aboriginal people deal with on a daily basis, to know that this is not true.

And one need only look at the faces of the children in the photographs to begin to imagine the horror that they endured. If you did not attend a residential school Imagine being one of these children: separated from your family, taught to be ashamed of your culture, and thrown into a new world where what you had learned and experienced in your own community is now vilified as 'pagan', 'savage' and 'uncivilized'.

Or imagine being a parent of these children, seeing them taken away and knowing that many of them never return. Perhaps you know another family whose child has run away from the school and returned home only to be taken back again. And the children that do return home are now foreigners to you – speaking another language, ashamed of their culture and community, with skills that have nothing in common with the traditional way of life.

And imagine knowing that these effects were intentional on the part of the government and churches. The following words of the Indian Commissioner in 1884 illustrate this program of ethnocide:

The Indians show a reluctance to have their children separated from them, but doubtless, time will overcome this obstacle, – and by commencing with orphans and children who have no natural protectors, a beginning can be made, and we must count upon the judicious treatment of these children by the principals and teachers of the institutions eventually to do away with the objection of the Indian parents to their children being placed under their charge.

- E. Dewdney, Indian Commissioner, 1884

So how do we begin to heal? Photographs can provide a space to begin asking questions. Part of my research involved a visit to the Gordens reserve in Saskatchewan, where I met three generations of women. I asked the grandmother if she had any photos of herself while at residential school. Although she had been reluctant to talk about those days, once she opened her photo albums, the stories about her experiences emerged. Her granddaughter listened to many of these stories for the first time.

One thing I saw in the many of the archive photographs was a sense of resistance in the faces of the children. Their body language and eyes stood out like beacons of light. The legacy of this resistance continues in the exhibition with five portraits of contemporary Aboriginal people who not only survived their residential school experiences, but have made important contributions to the Aboriginal community. Without this resistance, how could we have made it this far?

Jeff Thomas,
Guest Curator.

a photographic history of residential schools across Canada. The images in the exhibition are drawn primarily from The National Archives of Canada as well as nine additional archival sources, including four church archives. The historical narrative begins with a photograph taken in 1884 and concludes with new photographic portraits of contemporary survivors of the residential schools who are positive figures in today's Aboriginal communities.

Aboriginal-based lawsuits have reframed the way the photographs are interpreted and used today. We look to the past to understand today's systemic problems. Why is the Aboriginal population's rate of drug and alcohol abuse, poverty and unemployment, sexual and physical abuse, suicide rates, and incarceration so much higher than the rest of the Canadian population? Canada's failed program of social engineering and the sexual, mental and physical abuse that took place in residential schools, have had devastating inter-generational consequences. The exhibition encourages Aboriginal youth to question and seek solutions. To see the past is to understand the present and to move towards a healthy future.

The Exhibition has closed at the Wanuskewin Heritage Park in Saskatoon and is now getting ready to be housed in Yellowknife by the Prince of Wales Northern Heritage Park. The Exhibit will be displayed in Yellowknife at the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories and at Sir John Franklin High School. The Exhibit will open September 24, 2003 where it will remain until November 21, 2003.

For more information and/or updates, contact Laura Milonas or Angie Bruce at the Aboriginal Healing Foundation: (888) 725-8886 (In Ottawa 613 237-4806).