Applying Maslow's Hierarchy Theory

to the Research Needs of FNCFS Agencies Participating in Cycle II of the Canadian Incident Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect

Marlyn Bennett and Corbin Shangreaux

With assistance from Estelle Simard, Clifford Manyheads, Therese Tupper, , Kathy Bent, Lori Rose, Vincent McKay, Janet Douglas and Melanie Scott[1]

Abstract

This paper evolved from the outcome of a feedback meeting held between the principle researchers of Cycle II of the Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (CIS), the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and a number of representatives of the First Nations Child and Family Service Agencies (FNCFS Agencies) which participated in Cycle II of the CIS (CIS-2003) and numerous Research Assistants tasked with collecting information from the FNCFS Agencies. The authors present a profile of the historical and contemporary experience of Aboriginal children and families who come into contact with the child welfare system and include a discussion on some of the findings from two analyses that have been conducted on the data from the 1998 Canadian Incident Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (CIS-1998). An overview of the challenges as well as the positive aspects of the study from the perspectives of the FNCFS Agencies and the Research Assistants is included along with an examination as to why research may not figure prominently among the service priorities of FNCFS Agencies. The strengths of challenges of participating in CIS-2003 provide rich insight into the perspectives of the Research Assistants and FNCFS Agencies who participated in this national study. The paper concludes with recommendations by the FNCFS Agencies and the Research Assistants on how to improve the data collection process with FNCFS Agencies for future Cycles of the Canadian Incident Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect.

Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge all of the FNCFS Agencies that participated in Cycle II of the CIS, including various community participants and numerous Research Assistants in who provided advice in the writing this collaborative inquiry. Without their involvement, this experience on the First Nations' reflections of participating in CIS-2003 would not have been possible. The work that went into the feedback process and in producing this paper has been a tentative process of crossing cultural boundaries and successfully building relationships based on cooperation, collaboration and respect.

Introduction

Within Canada there are over 120+ First Nations[2] Child and Family Services Agencies (FNCFS Agencies) funded through the First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) Program of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND). These agencies are primarily funded by DIAND to assist First Nations in delivering culturally sensitive child and family services to on-reserve communities, and to ensure that the services provided by the agency to First Nations children and their families on-reserve are comparable to services available to other provincial residents in similar circumstances. However, since child and family services is an area of provincial jurisdiction, FNCFS Agencies are required to obtain their mandate and authorities from their respective provincial or territorial governments. Further, FNCFS Agencies are expected to function in a manner consistent with existing provincial or territorial child and family services legislation. According to DIAND "FNCFSA are mandated by the province in accordance with provincial legislation, to deliver: (1) prevention services to families, in order to keep children in the home; (2) protection services to children at risk; (3) adoption services where required by provincial legislation" (Shangreaux & Blackstock, 2004). DIAND's commitment to assist in the development and establishment of FNCFS Agencies

to serve First Nations people residing on-reserve can be seen in the growth of the number of FNCFS Agencies from 34 in 1989 to 105 by 2000 and in the increase of overall FNCFS program expenditures which increased more than 61% from 1992 to 1999 (Shangreaux & Blackstock, 2004).

In essence, FNCFS Agencies are charged with the responsibility of helping families and children by protecting children, strengthening and preserving families, and helping to build healthy communities through the provision of child and family services. Although there is variance in the degree of mandated and statutory responsibility from province to province, most FNCFS Agencies have been mandated by their First Nations communities and by their respective provincial/territorial authorities to deliver a range of child and family services, including child protection services, services to children in care, adoption services, services to families and services to community (Shangreaux et al., 2004). The delivery of child welfare services to First Nations children, families and communities is as diverse as the Aboriginal peoples within Canada. In addition to this diversity, the field of First Nations Child Welfare is unique in that culture is a significant and key ingredient incorporated into the delivery of child welfare services to First Nations children and families. Child welfare practice in First Nations communities also varies considerably from agency to agency and from region to region depending on how FNCFS Agencies organize themselves (Bennett, 2004a).

Most FNCFS Agencies recognize the need as well as the importance of gathering and reporting information about the child welfare needs, realities and trends in their respective communities. Such information is essential for planning their community based services; for evaluating child welfare practices that affect the lives of children and families in their communities; and for summarizing their resource needs to federal, provincial, and other funding sources. Yet, gathering and presenting comprehensive statistical and demographic information is not always

an easy task. Increasingly FNCFS Agencies are being asked to participate in local and national research projects. Although such invitations are generally welcome, becoming a community partner or participant in research initiatives poses some unique obstacles that limit the research participation by FNCFS Agencies that must be understood by those who inevitably wish to do research with them. Invariably participating in research requires an agency to expend resources such as personnel time and technical assistance by frontline staff, management and finance personnel, as well as time from board members and committee members, which can severely strain their existing funding and human resources. In most FNCFS Agencies, the time that managers, supervisors, and frontline staff have to devote to research initiatives is scarce as they may lack professional expertise, technological tools and computerized database systems that would simplify the statistical recording and reporting processes regularly required for mandatory reporting to funding bodies and research initiatives. Some FNCFS Agencies, while aware of the importance of research, are reluctant to participate in research because of the time and energy involved and the sense that research has been misused in the past (Bennett, 2004b; Davis & Reid, 1999). There is also a belief that findings have been simply ignored by the government when it is more convenient to do so than to implement the recommendations that come out of research (Blackstock, Cullen, D'Hndt, & Formsma, 2004b). To outsiders, it might appear that FNCFS Agencies do not place a great deal of priority on participating in research initiatives, but such is not the case. It is important to understand at the outset that there are many challenging factors that directly impact on the ability of FNCFS Agencies to participate in research (Bennett & Brown, 2005). Debatably, it is not that research is not important but that research is an activity that often competes with other endeavours which dominates the majority of FNCFS agency's time, human resources and funds. These endeavours include ensuring that fundamental and basic needs of children, families and community members are met first. On the scale of importance,

when compared to the fundamental and basic needs of children and families, research is of less significance. Yet, despite these competing endeavours (as articulated later in this paper), FNCFS Agencies do know and see the value of participating in research initiatives like the CIS II 2003. Research serves a critical role in the triangulated relationship that exists between policies, practices and research. Documented findings can influence changes in policies, service provisions and the way funding is allocated to meet research findings. However, the opportunity to participate in research activities is threatened by lack of adequate funding and personnel.

This paper evolved out of the feedback received from a meeting among the principle researchers of the Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect, the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), the government body which funded both cycles of CIS (1998 and 2003), representatives from geographically diverse FNCFS Agencies who participated in both CIS 1998 and 2003 as well as numerous individuals contracted with collecting this information from the participating FNCFS Agencies. The authors present a profile of the historical and contemporary experience of Aboriginal children and families who come into contact with the child welfare system and include a discussion of the some of the findings from two initial analyses of Aboriginal data from the CIS 1998. An overview of the challenges as well as the positive aspects of participating in the study from the perspectives of the FNCFS Agencies and the Research Assistants is presented. The authors, utilizing a theoretical construct put forward by the Psychologist Abraham Maslow on the "Hierarchy of Needs", offer a comparative "FNCFS Agencies' Hierarchy of Needs" to examine and hypothetically explain why research may not figure prominently among the service priorities of FNCFS Agencies, even though at times they may benefit from the results of research (Davis et al., 1999). These hierarchical models help to solidify this understanding. The article concludes with recommendations that evolved out of the feedback provided by the Research

Assistants and the FNCFS Agencies on how to improve the data collection process and ideas for encouraging and engaging more participation by FNCFS Agencies in future cycles of CIS. It is hoped that the knowledge gained from the feedback meeting will translate into effective changes aimed at strengthening the recruitment, participation and retention of future FNCFS Agencies and research personnel in Cycle III of the Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect slated for 2008.

I. The Historical And Contemporary Experience of Aboriginal Children And Families

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) Report (1996) describes the special place that children hold in Aboriginal cultures:

> *According to tradition, children are gifts from the spirit world and have to be treated very gently lest they become disillusioned with this world and return to a more congenial place. They must be protected from harm because there are spirits that would wish to entice them back to that other realm. They bring a purity of vision to the world that can teach their elders. They carry within them the gifts that manifest themselves as they become teachers, mothers, hunters, councilors, artisans and visionaries. They renew the strength of the family, clan and village and make the elders young again with their joyful presence.*

The special place that children hold in Aboriginal cultures is increasing threatened by family dysfunction and family breakdown. The impacts of colonization have eroded Aboriginal family systems of care. Consequently, many Aboriginal "at risk" families breakdown resulting in Aboriginal children coming into protective care. These Aboriginal children continue to be placed in out-of-home care at a disproportionate and alarming rate. The phenomena of Aboriginal family breakdown has not gone unnoticed by community leaders, government officials,

educators, human services professionals and grassroots people, all of whom share the view that something must be done to help these families. Many believe that intervention in families "at risk" should come earlier, before problems escalate to the point of breakdown. Aboriginal family breakdown and the disproportionate risks faced by Aboriginal children have garnered international attention as well. The United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child has called for Canada to take action to address these inequalities (United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child: 34th Session, 2003).

Examining the Causes of Aboriginal Family Breakdown

It is important to recognize at the outset of this paper a contextual review of the historical factors that have impacted Aboriginal families. The negative impacts of colonization, the federal residential school policy, misguided mainstream child welfare practices, the debilitating effects of poverty, and apathy by the voluntary sector of society are issues that face Aboriginal families today (Nadjiwan & Blackstock, 2003). Non-Aboriginal social workers often do not understand the depth of feelings and the impact that past historical policies and practices have on First Nations peoples today. Nonetheless, these early negative historical legacies, coupled with the current poor socioeconomic conditions that are endemic to many reserve communities, have played a large part in family breakdown and result in children and youth being removed from their parents and placed in out-of-home care arrangements. The multiple factors that have contributed to the breakdown of Aboriginal families are discussed in more detail in the paragraphs that follow.

The Impact of Colonization on Aboriginal Family Systems

McKenzie and Morrissette (2003) noted that on reserves unemployment is almost three times the national average, and in

some First Nations communities 90% of the community is unemployed which is viewed as one of several causes related to the social problems found within Aboriginal communities. Unemployment and the lack of access to money leads directly to poor health, housing, a cycle of poverty and cultural disintegration. The Aboriginal population in Canada is growing more rapidly than the general population and is a considerably younger population than the overall population (Castellano, 2002; Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 2003). Children under 15 accounted for 35% of all Aboriginal people in 1996, as compared with only 21% of Canada's total population. The 1996 Census reveals that almost one-third of Aboriginal children under the age of 15 lived in lone parent families, twice the rate within the general population (Hull, 1996). Infant mortality rates are still twice as high in First Nations communities in Canada as a whole (Statistics Canada, 2003; Luo et al., 2004). Suicide rates are average two to seven times that of the population of all of Canada (Kirmayer, Simpson, & Cargo, 2003), and chronic diseases such as diabetes and heart disease are increasing (Young, Reading, Elias, & O'Neil, 2000). The incarceration rates of Aboriginal people are five to six times above the national average (RCAP, 1996) and Aboriginal children are overrepresented among those taken into care by the child welfare system (Mandell, Carlson, Blackstock, & Fine, 2003; Trocme, Knoke, & Blackstock, 2004). Aboriginal women are more economically deprived than non-Aboriginal women and Aboriginal men (Hull, 1996). A study done by the Ontario Native Women's Association found that eight out of ten Aboriginal women have experienced physical, sexual, psychological, or ritual abuse, and that these factors were related to drug and alcohol abuse in Aboriginal communities (Ontario Native Women's Association, 1989). Such issues are associated with problems of child care according to McKenzie and Morrissette (2003) which helps explain the disproportionate rate of family breakdown in Aboriginal communities.

The current challenges that Aboriginal families face are rooted in a history of struggle that began with colonial governments and continues today with modern society and its insistence on absorbing "Indians" into mainstream Canadian culture and society.

First Nation families have been in the centre of a historical struggle between colonial government on one hand, who set out to eradicate their culture, language and world view, and that of the traditional family, who believed in maintaining a balance in the world for the children and those yet unborn. This struggle has caused dysfunction, high suicide rates, and violence, which have had vast inter-generational impacts (McDonald, Ladd, Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Child and Family Service Agencies, & Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 2000).

Consistent with the findings of RCAP, the Joint National Policy Review's Final Report, completed in 2000, describes a list of historical and socio-economic issues that influence the health and well being of First Nations families today. First Nations peoples are still striving to overcome the historical trauma of colonization that resulted in the disenfranchisement of First Nations peoples from their lands and the concordant destruction of traditional economies and ways of life. The colonization of First Nations peoples in Canada took the form of compulsory education, economic adjustment programs, social and political control by federal agents, and much more. These policies, combined with missionary efforts to civilize and "Christianize" First Nations people resulted in widespread fractures to traditional cultures, autonomy and feelings of self-worth (Kirmayer et al., 2003).

Contact with Europeans, or postcolonial contact, has caused intergenerational stress and historical trauma among Aboriginal Peoples spanning many generations. The policies developed and implemented by the early Canadian government regarding Aboriginal people devastated North American Indigenous cultures and life ways that has produced what some have

called "historical trauma" (Struthers & Lowe, 2003). The symptoms resulting from historical trauma are numerous and affect the psychological, social, economic, intellectual, political, physical, and spiritual realms of Aboriginal peoples. Links have been made between the phenomenon of historical trauma and states of imbalance and disease. Responses to trauma manifest psychologically as unresolved grief across generations, high rates of substance abuse including alcoholism, depression, suicide, and overeating. Social concerns resulting from historical trauma include poverty, crime, attainment of low education levels, and high rates of homicide, accidental deaths, child abuse, and domestic abuse and violence. Effects of historical trauma occurring on the physical plane include hypertension, heart disease, diabetes, being overweight, and cirrhosis, among many other physical maladies. In the spiritual realm, historical trauma is referred to as wounding of the soul (Struthers et al., 2003).

The Legacy of the Residential School Experience

The sad legacy of the federal residential school policy has become part of Canadian history and it represents a sad chapter in history of the dealings of the federal government with First Nations peoples (Milloy, 1996; Milloy, 1999). The residential school policy was designed to assimilate "the Indian" through the eradication of his language and culture (Milloy, 1996). The physical and sexual abuse that First Nations children suffered while in these schools is well documented and the wrongness of it all has been recognized and indeed there is a process underway today to offer compensation to the victims of abuse (Law Commission of Canada, 2000). The residential school experience has had a profoundly negative and painful impact on family functioning that "reverberates through successive generations … resulting in "layers of pain" that touch whole communities as well as individuals" (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996; Castellano, 2002; Brant Castellano, 2002). The experience affected the development

of healthy parental skills among students. For children, the residential school deprived them (and future generations) of healthy parental role models, replacing the nurturing loving parent with a cold and often cruel "dean or matron" who served as a surrogate parent. In turn, when these children became parents, many of whom suffered from "a diminished capacity as adults to care for their children" (Bennett & Blackstock, 2002).

Misguided Mainstream Child Welfare Policies

First Nations families have also suffered because of past child welfare policies (Hudson, 1985). In a phenomena known as "the Sixties Scoop" (Manitoba, 2001; Union of BC Indian Chiefs, 2002) provincial child welfare social workers, in a misguided notion that they were helping, removed thousands of Aboriginal children from the care of their families and placed these children in non-Aboriginal adoptive homes throughout Canada and the United States. RCAP (1996), quoting statistics compiled by the Department of Indian Affairs, noted that over 11,000 status Indian children were placed for adoption between the years 1960-1990. This statistic does not even include those children whose status was inadvertently not recorded or non-status Aboriginal children (Blackstock & Trocme, 2004a).

The "Sixties Scoop" points to two major problems that have been associated with the practice of mainstream child welfare in Canada, problems that continue today and now plague First Nations child welfare practice. First, "child removal was relied upon as the primary intervention in child Abuse cases versus the intervention of last resort" (Blackstock, Trocme, & Bennett, 2004c). Secondly, as the removals took place there was little effort by governments to address the etiological drivers of child abuse such as poverty, unemployment and sub-standard housing conditions or the lack of culturally based prevention services (Union of BC Indian Chiefs, 2002; Blackstock, 2003).

The Debilitating Effects of Poverty

Statistics about the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal social conditions indicate that the life chances of Aboriginal people as a whole lag far behind those of the general Canadian population. "The Human Development Index (HDI) published by the United Nations Development Programme is a widely quoted measure of well-being (Beavon & Cooke, 2002). It quantifies the standards of education, income and life expectancy (as a proxy for health status) prevailing in nation states and ranks them on a composite index. Canada has regularly ranked number one in recent years. An analysis done by the Research and Analysis Directorate of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) using 1996 census and INAC departmental data indicated that registered Indians on-Reserve would rank 62nd and registered Indians on- and off-reserve would rank 47th on the HDI" (Castellano, 2002; Brant Castellano, 2002; Beavon et al., 2002). The social and economic conditions experienced by many on-reserve First Nations people are similar to those experienced by families in third-world countries. Pervasive poverty, substandard housing conditions, widespread alcohol and solvent abuse involving adults and children, and high suicide rates among youth are stark realities (Kirmayer et al., 2003).

The negative impact of poverty on early childhood development is well documented throughout the world and it continues to be one of the most important determinants of life chances (Campaign 2000 & Hubberstey, 2004; Blackstock et al., 2004b; Pelton & Milner, 1994; Harlem, 1999; UNICEF, 2003). The condition of poverty threatens the health and well-being of children and risks excluding children from the chances and opportunities to succeed. The impact of poverty on Aboriginal children and youth in Canada is also well documented, while the depth of the governments' commitment to addressing the issues spawned by poverty is questionable. The government's demonstrated commitment to the cause of children's rights suggests that some

populations have been less well-served than others. First Nations, Métis and Inuit children and youth are a case in point. Not only do they suffer from significantly higher rates of morbidity and mortality than other Canadian children, but poverty is endemic in many First Nations and Inuit communities, resulting in a sub-standard quality of life and widespread alienation (Dion Stout & Kipling, 1999; Blackstock et al., 2004b).

A United Nations report on a decade of child poverty in Canada found that

> Among Aboriginal children, whether living on or off reserve, almost one in two lives in poverty. Aboriginal people are 4 times more likely to report experiencing hunger than the non-Aboriginal population. Furthermore, Aboriginal children and families especially in northern remote communities cannot afford healthy affordable foods because of the high costs of shipping which leads to multiple health consequences such as diabetes, which is prevalent in many Aboriginal communities. Many children in First Nations' communities do not have access to the essential public services that most people in Canada take for granted. Among all Aboriginal households (owners and renters), an estimated one-third have 'core needs'; that is, their housing does not meet today's standards for adequacy, suitability and affordability. … Most of the nations that have been more successful than Canada at keeping low levels of child poverty are willing to counterbalance the effects of unemployment and low paid work with substantial investments in family policies (United Nations, 2002).

While the impact of poverty on early childhood development is well understood, the impact of poverty and its attending problems on First Nations families whose children are placed in out-of-home care due to child abuse is only starting to be documented. According to the 1998 Canadian Incidence Study of Reported

Child Abuse and Neglect (CIS-98) (Trocme, MacLaurin, Fallon, et. al, 1998), Aboriginal families experience an extremely high rate of hardship. Aboriginal families were characterized as experiencing significantly less stable housing, greater dependence on social assistance, younger parents, more parents having been maltreated as children, higher rates of alcohol and drug abuse, and being investigated more often for neglect or emotional abuse. Higher rates of suspected and substantiated cases and child welfare placement were explained by the disproportionate presence of risk factors among Aboriginal families (Blackstock et al., 2004c).

Before turning our attention to the analyses on Aboriginal specific findings from the 1998 CIS data, general socio-economic conditions, as highlighted above are important to recognize when reviewing the historical context of the Aboriginal experience, but there are limitations to such information. First, conditions and circumstances vary considerably among different Aboriginal individuals, groups and communities. Second, any description of these problems is incomplete without a discussion of causality. Finally, this information reflects a problem-focused description that gives inadequate attention to the strengths and resiliency of Aboriginal people. These positive characteristics must be recognized as most Aboriginal communities and FNCFCS Agencies endeavour to operate from a strengths-based model of practice (McKenzie & Morrissette, 2003) despite the lingering legacies of colonization and racism. Added to this is recognition that there are distinct worldviews and cultural diversity among Aboriginal people which requires further consideration.

II. The Canadian Incident Study of Report Child Abuse and Neglect, 1998 and 2003

Until recently there was no source of comprehensive Canada-wide statistics on children and families investigated because of suspected child abuse and neglect. Although statistics on child abuse are routinely kept by provincial and territorial governments, the different definitions and methods for counting abuse statistics makes it difficult to aggregate this information in a systematic way that could be applicable across the country (Trocme et al., 2001). Statistical information specifically about Aboriginal children and families receiving child welfare services has been even more difficult to ascertain (Blackstock et al., 2004b). National data and statistics on First Nations children in care are kept by the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, which funds child welfare services on reserve (Trocme et al., 2004). The statistical information about other Aboriginal children (e.g. Métis, Inuit, non-status Aboriginal people and especially those residing off reserve) are embedded within, but not necessarily identified, the statistics produced by the 13 provincial and territorial child welfare jurisdictions. With respect to cross cultural placement concerns, it is regrettable that not all provinces/territories track the degree to which Aboriginal children in care are placed in Aboriginal homes; however, the available data suggests that much improvement is needed. For example, in 1998 the British Columbia Children's Commissioner found that only 2.5% of Aboriginal children in the care of the Ministry for Children and Families were placed in Aboriginal homes. The increasing numbers of First Nations children in care coupled with the lack of a cultural match in placement does not support Aboriginal children in maintaining their connections with family, culture and community (Blackstock et al., 2004a).

The 1998 Canadian Incident Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (CIS-1998) became the first national study to examine the profile of children and families coming into contact with the child welfare system in a systematic way and includes the tracking of information about Aboriginal children and families receiving child welfare services (Blackstock et al., 2004a). In 1998, 51 randomly chosen child welfare authorities including three Aboriginal service providers participated in the first cycle of CIS (Trocme, Phaneuf,

Scarth, Fallon & MacLaurin, 2003). A sample of 7,672 reports of suspected child abuse or neglect was culled from these participating authorities. Case openings for service between October 1 and December 31, 1998 were screened by investigating workers to identify cases that met CIS-1998 definitions of suspected Abuse. The CIS documents 22 forms of abuse that are subsumed under four categories: (a) physical abuse; (b) sexual abuse; (c) neglect and (d) emotional abuse (Trocme, Phaneuf, Scarth, Fallon & MacLarin, 2003). Trocme, et al (2001, 2003) state that this classification reflects a broad definition of child abuse and includes several forms of abuse not specifically included in some child welfare statutes (for example, educational neglect and exposure to family violence).

Information for CIS-1998 was obtained through the use of a three page response form which was designed to capture information directly from investing child welfare workers about their clinical observations regarding the child's caregivers, information about the family's child welfare service history and specific information about each child under investigation including specific investigation outcomes (Trocme, et al, 2001, 2003). The study did not track unreported cases of abuse or cases that were investigated by police alone, nor did it track cases that were screened out by child welfare authorities before being fully investigated. Also, new reports on cases already opened by child welfare authorities were excluded (Trocme et al., 2004). A more complete analysis and overview of the findings from this study can be obtained from the final report jointly authored by, MacLaurin, Fallon, Daciuk, Billingsley, Tourigny, Mayer, Wright, Barter, Burford, Hornick, Sullivan, and McKenzie (Trocme et al., 2001).

Two statistical analyses from the CIS 1998 study about children from the three Aboriginal groupings (e.g. First Nations, Métis and Inuit) have been published to date. The statistical analysis of the Aboriginal samples presented in this paper are drawn from two previous analysis of the CIS-1998 dataset done by Blackstock, Trocme & Bennett (2004) and Trocmé, Knoke & Blackstock (2004). In both sets of analysis, the authors' caution that because CIS-98 was not originally designed to provide national estimates for Aboriginal children, the finding within the two analyses should not be used to derive precise statistical estimates specific to Aboriginal children. Nonetheless, the CIS-1998 stands as the only source of comparative data available on abuse and neglect issues for Aboriginal children in Canada.

The first analysis of Aboriginal data from CIS-1998 was conducted by Cindy Blackstock, Nico Trocmè and Marlyn Bennett (2004) who found that 16% of children under the age of 16 comprise only 5% of the Canadian population. In comparing children of Aboriginal origin to children representing other visible minorities (14% of investigated children) and to Caucasian children (70% of investigated children), the analysis found that Aboriginal families have significantly higher rates of poverty, less stable housing, younger parents, more parents who were maltreated as children, and higher rates of parental substance abuse and impaired functioning. Blackstock, Trocme and Bennett found that reports about Aboriginal children to child welfare authorities are more likely to be substantiated (50% of Aboriginal cases are substantiated in comparison to 38% of non-Aboriginal cases). Furthermore, when placed in care, Aboriginal children are nearly twice as likely to be placed in out-of-home care (the statistics reveal that 9.9% of Aboriginal children in the sample were placed in care as compared to only 4.6% of non-Aboriginal children) (Blackstock et al., 2004c).

The second analysis conducted by Nico Trocmè, Della Knoke and Cindy Blackstock builds upon the first analysis which statistically explains the higher rates of case substantiation and pathways to overrepresentation of Aboriginal children in out-of-home placements in comparison to Caucasian children in Canada. The findings in this second analysis show that Aboriginal family heads are younger (49.5% of the Aboriginal sample of parents were 30 years or younger compared to 35.6% from the

Caucasian sample) and more often single (56.5% versus 51.2% for the Caucasian sample), dependent on social assistance (58.1% vs. 37.7%) and living in unsafe housing (7.9% vs. 4.6%). These families are more likely to have moved multiple times in the year prior to the study (17% versus 8.3% for Caucasian families). Aboriginal families are statistically more likely to have previous child welfare case openings (67.1% versus 46.3% of the Caucasian sample). Most of cases of substantiated abuse involve neglect (57.9% compared to 34.9% for Caucasian families) as opposed to physical abuse. Alcohol abuse is noted as a concern for almost two-thirds of the Aboriginal parents, compared to 22 percent of Caucasian parents. Drug abuse, criminal activity, cognitive impairment, and lack of social support are also statistically more common among Aboriginal parents. On the other hand, Trocme, Knoke and Blackstock's analysis indicates that the child functioning variables (e.g. emotional or physical harm, depression or anxiety, and self-harm behaviour) for the Aboriginal children in this sample do not differ significantly when statistically compared to Caucasian children. Their analysis does suggest that 74% of investigations involving Aboriginal children are classified as suspected or substantiated compared to 59% of the investigations involving Caucasian children. Also, it appears from the analysis of the data that 10% of Aboriginal children are placed in out-of-home care during the protection investigation while only 4.6% of investigations of Caucasian children were placed in out-of-home placements during investigation. Thus, from Trocme, Knoke and Blackstock's analysis, it appears that the pathways to overrepresentation of Aboriginal children in substantiation and out-of-home placement data may be related to a combination of complex factors that reflect on multiple disadvantages experienced by Aboriginal families. It is plausible that the high rates of parents' own histories of childhood abuse contribute to the complexities of the problems facing Aboriginal communities; experiences of abuse, particularly in residential schools might undermine the capacity of the

present generation of parents. The multiple disadvantages and challenges documented among Aboriginal families place Aboriginal children at higher risk for future abuse.

In 2003, the Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare launched the second cycle of the Canadian Incident Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (CIS-2003). The study is being led by Nico Trocmé (University of Toronto) and a team of researchers including Bruce MacLaurin (University of Calgary), Richard Cloutier and Daniel Turcotte (Université du Québec), Ken Barter (Memorial University of Newfoundland), Richard Sullivan (University of British Columbia) and Cindy Blackstock (First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada) (Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare, 2003).The main objective of CIS-2003 is to track changes and trends in cases of child abuse and neglect investigated by child welfare authorities since the first CIS was conducted in 1998. With child abuse investigation rates increasing rapidly in most jurisdictions across the country, Dr. Trocmé, one of the principle investigators, stated that CIS-2003 will help identify some of the key factors driving this increase.

> The second cycle of the CIS will enrich the understanding of the nature and extent of child abuse and neglect in Canada and in developing a system of cyclical data collection, analysis and interpretation, we can build on the foundation of CIS-98, begin to identify changes in the incidence of child abuse and better assess the effect of child welfare policies and programs (Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare, 2003).

With the assistance of the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada (the national networking organization for the First Nations Child Welfare Service Agencies in Canada and one of the co-investigators of CIS-2003), a total of eight First Nations Child Welfare Service providers were invited to participate in the second cycle of this national study. This composition includes five new First Nations service providers including the

original three FNCFS Agencies who participated in CIS-1998. In addition to the FNCFS Agency involvement, a total of over sixty child welfare service providers from across Canada participated in Cycle II the study. The continued participation of the original three First Nations Service providers in Cycle II of the study provides an opportunity for rich information which will track changes in Aboriginal child welfare services not previously available. As in the first cycle, the data collection phase for CIS-2003 focused on case openings over a three month period from October 1 to December 31, 2003 however to accommodate the late participation of some of the FNCFS Agencies in the study the collection phase focused on case opening between November 1 and January 31, 2004.

Although there was an expression of interest by many, agreement to participate in Cycle II of the Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect was not in all cases readily given by some of the First Nations CFS Agencies approached. Many found the timing was not conducive to their present circumstances and many were clear that they just did not have the time or the personnel in which to be able to participate. In one particular case, it was necessary for the main principle researcher along with the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society to meet in person with the FNCFS Agency's Board of Directors to explain the CIS-2003 study in-depth. The meeting provided the FNCFS Agency Director, staff and board members to ask more questions, to get an understanding of the depth of the research and provided an opportunity for answers as to how the CIS would benefit their agency and their communities. This meeting was also necessary before consent could be granted to the researchers to undertake the CIS II study with their agency.

In addition to the recruitment of FNCFS Agencies, various individuals were also recruited to act as liaisons (hereafter called "FN Research Assistants") between the CIS Research Team and the FNCFS Agencies participating in CIS-2003. Where possible, the majority of individuals recruited for the FN Research Assistant positions were Aboriginal but came from outside of the FNCFS Agency and their respective communities. These Research Assistants provided assistance to the FNCFS Agencies in gathering and verifying the data required under CIS-2003. In addition to answering questions from the FNCFS Agency staff, the Research Assistants confirmed that the data collection forms provided complete information and that the responses provided within the form were logical before they sent in completed forms to the central CIS office at the University of Toronto.

Prior to attending at the FNCFS Agency, most of the FN Research Assistants, along with other Research Assistants involved in the study, participated in two days of comprehensive training with the principle researchers of the CIS-2003. The training consisted of an introduction to the CIS objectives, methodology and the three-page data collection form. A guidebook was provided detailing the study's methodology, procedures, definitions and explanations about each item found on the three-page response form. The Research Assistants were also trained on how to fill out the form using information from case vignettes. In addition, the First Nation Research Assistants also participated along with the other CIS Research Assistants in regular follow-up conference calls to ensure the data quality was consistent and as a way of learning from each other. During these calls the CIS research team provided updates about the study's progress and answered questions posed by the all Research Assistants collecting data from multiple sites (Tonmyr, 2005). These conference calls were valuable in assisting the FN Research Assistants with understanding what was happening at other sites and provided insight into scenarios and questions posed by other non-Aboriginal child welfare agencies who were also engaged in the CIS data collection process.

After initial training, the FN Research Assistants traveled to each FNCFS Agency with one member of the CIS research team for the purpose of providing training to the FNCFS Agencies about the objectives,

methodologies and how to use the CIS-2003 data collection forms. All workers identified as having some responsibility for investigations were invited to attend the training session along with supervisors and managers who would support the workers in following through with the data collection. Prior to this training, each FNCFS Agency was asked to fill out a short questionnaire detailing how the agency operates, how intakes occur in the agency, how many cases had been opened the previous year as well as within a given month, how cases are tracked (were they recorded manually by recording case numbers or was this done by a computer) and the process for intakes, screening, and investigation. After the initial visit and comprehensive training, the FN Research Assistants scheduled at least three monthly follow-up visits. However as the study progressed it become evident that the staff at the FNCFS Agencies required more assistance than was anticipated and that follow-up visits in some cases, needed to be more frequent than once a month. The actual number of visits to each of the FNCFS Agencies by each of the FN Research Assistants ranged from four to eight depending on the extent of the assistance that was required within the FNCFS Agency.

As previously indicated, the data collection phase for the FNCFS Agencies started a month later in comparison to the other child welfare service provides. Consequently completion of CIS-2003 with the FNCFS Agencies wrapped up much later due to a number of unforeseeable problems which are elaborated on more fully in the discussion below on the challenges and benefits of participating in the CIS-2003 study as expressed by the FNCFS Agencies and First Nations Research Assistants.

The CIS-2003 data collection from the eight First Nations Child and Family Service Agencies, for the most part, wrapped up in the fall of 2004, somewhat later in comparison to the other non-Aboriginal child welfare agency participants because of their late inclusion in CIS II. Data collection for all sites has now been completed but preliminary statistical analysis

of the information is yet to be released. A final report including an analysis of the Aboriginal data obtained from the eight participating Aboriginal service providers will be available in October 2005 through the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). The specific data collected from the First Nations Sites will be available from the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society. The First Nations Child and Family Caring Society will assist in statistically analyzing the Aboriginal specific data from CIS-2003 and will make this information available to all, including the participating FNCFS Agencies, as it becomes available.

III. Feedback from First Nations CFS Agencies regarding CIS-2003

In connection with the CIS-2003 study was an opportunity to evaluate the process and obtain feedback from the FN Research Assistants tasked with obtaining the data from the eight participating FNCFS Agencies. Such an opportunity came in February 2005 at a follow up meeting held in Winnipeg, Manitoba between the principle researchers of CIS-2003, the Public Health Agency of Canada, the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society and the FN Research Assistants. Initially only the FN Research Assistants were invited to the meeting but it was quickly realized that such a meeting would be missing a key ingredient and a holistic understanding of the pros and cons of the CIS-2003 data collection process with the FNCFCS Agencies. An invitation was then extended to key persons from each of the eight participating FNCFS Agencies to attend the feedback meeting as well. The feedback meeting provided the FN Research Assistants and the participating FNCFS Agencies with an opportunity to reflect on their experiences and perspectives regarding their participation in the CIS 2003 study. It was also an opportunity to reflect on ways in which the data collection process with FNCFCS Agencies could be strengthened and to look to the feedback participants for ideas and recommendations on improving data quality for future cycles of the CIS.

Strengths of Participating in CIS-2003

The FNCFS Agencies and FN Research Assistants were excited to be a part of the CIS-2003 national study and were eager to contribute to the research process. When the invitation was extended to them to attend the feedback meeting, the FNCFS Agencies were just as eager to participate in sharing their experience in participating in the study and on brainstorming ideas to make it a more effective experience for other FNCFS Agencies and communities in the future. Of the five FN Research Assistants, only three were able to attend in the feedback meeting. While all eight FNCFS Agencies in the CIS-2003 expressed a desire to attend, only six were able to attend. The six individuals who attended on behalf of the First Nations CFS Agencies indicated that it was necessary to share their experience and that their participation in the feedback meeting would be instrumental to the community and the agency. They saw themselves as key actors in the process of enforcing accountable and respectful sharing of First Nations knowledge. Their willingness to participate in the feedback session signifies the importance of reciprocity placed on the research process.

Relationship building was seen as an important element to the success of the CIS study among the FNCFS Agencies and FN Research Assistants. It was acknowledged, in particular by the FNCFS Agencies present at the feedback meeting, that the CIS study had been instrumental in building relationships that did not currently exist between their agencies, the CIS research team and the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada. The relationship building process was seen as a necessary ingredient that contributed to increased trust essential for the success of the study. The relationships that were established before, during and after were seen an opportunity useful for building upon the established relationships in the future.

Participating in CIS for the most part has contributed to a learning process that many participants felt would enhance the data collection process for the next cycle of CIS and that perhaps knowledge gleaned from this participation would also attract more agencies to participate in the future. The chance to participate in the study also created an understanding of each agency's role in terms of the various challenges and opportunities that exist at a frontline/research level.

Some of the more positive comments shared by the FNCFS Agency participants include the reference back to the two analyses of Aboriginal data from CIS-1998 which were discussed earlier. Some of the FNCFS Agencies participants indicated that their agencies used both of these analyses from time to time to support their planning within the community. Many also noted that these analyses were also useful in assisting their agencies in justifying requests for increased funding from DIAND. The FNCFS Agencies are aware of the magnitude of the study and noted that it helped their agencies understand the different capacities of FNCFS Agencies to provide services. More importantly they also saw the study as imperative for improving upon the access to more factual based Aboriginal data that does not presently exist. Participants in the feedback session felt that more comparable Aboriginal data similar to what exists in the literature about mainstream service providers was greatly needed in the literature.

Challenges of Participating in CIS-2003

As is typical in the child welfare field, FNCFS Agencies are very busy and conducting research is an activity that does not fit within the mandate or purview of their everyday activities. There were concerns expressed by the participating FNCFS Agencies that the timing of the study was not optimal for them as data collection period occurred prior to, during and after a peak holiday and vacationing season. This reason alone made it difficult to connect with agency staff to participate in the training sessions and to assist the FN Research Assistants with collecting the case data and agency contextual information within the timeframes of the study. This fact was also consistent with all the other child welfare agencies that participated in Cycle II of CIS (Tonmyr, 2005)

Due to the busy and demanding schedules and workloads of the agency workers, FN Research Assistants noted that in some cases throughout the data collection period, both during and after, it was difficult connecting with staff members who were in possession of the data. Many of the participating FNCFS Agency staff felt that their time was more valued elsewhere given their workloads and thus any sense of responsibility for completing the response forms fell to the wayside. Some of the FN Research Assistants expressed frustration with the fact that it took a long time to get the data collection forms completed due to the schedules and workload of staff. This information was also particularly difficult to obtain when staff left on vacation or for extended periods of leave stretching past the data collection phase. In many cases only one individual was in possession of the needed information and other staff within the agency simply could not step in and complete the data collection form for those individuals. Some of the activities that the FN Research Assistants observed which dominated staff's daily responsibilities included travel to the various communities served by their agency including various emergencies. Understandably, many FN Research Assistants noted that scheduled meetings sometimes had to be cancelled due to emergencies in the field. This was particularly frustrating for those FN Research Assistants who had to travel considerable distances from outside the community.

For those FNCFS Agencies that participated in the CIS 98 study, they were less apprehension about participating in CIS 2003 study. Some of the FNCFS Agencies participants, while wanting to participate in the CIS 2003 study, were apprehensive about the amount of time required of the staff to participate in the training and filling out of survey forms. Many indicated that the 10 to 20 minutes of time allotted in which to complete the survey had been misjudged. Many of the FNCFS Agency staff felt that it actually took much longer to complete the survey forms than was conveyed to them in the training sessions. Some also noted that the way in which the information was collected in the data forms did not reflect the social work practices of the participating Agencies and communities thus making it difficult to complete the survey forms.

Feedback participants also pointed out that effectiveness of the vignettes utilized in the training sessions would be better enhanced if the scenarios reflected within this tool reflected the realities of families living within First Nations communities. Although this suggestion was only a minor concern, it was seen as being a more effective measure of the realities within in First Nations communities that would aid the FNCFS Agency staff with understanding how to fill out the three page form.

In terms of the training sessions, both the FNCFS Agencies and FN Research Assistants expressed concern that one training session was not enough time for them to fully grasp the extent of the research project and what their respective responsibilities would be under the study. The FNCFS Agencies and FN Research Assistants felt that it would be more beneficial to schedule more than one day of training with the agency well before the start of the data collection period. One First Nation CFS Agency indicated that more additional training sessions needed to occur. Another Research Assistant also noted that there had been long periods of time between data collection which can cause a loss of focus in regards to the information that needed to be collected.

One agency representative talked about the need for trust to be established before their agency was willing to pass on case data and statistics or agency contextual information. FNCFS Agencies need to be assured that the data being gathered was not going to be used against them at the provincial or federal level. They reiterated that their involvement in the CIS-2003 study be used to strengthen and support their positions with government. The FNCFS Agency participants also noted that all of the data extracted from CIS-2003 needs to be contextualized within the historical and contemporary framework of First Nations experience in Canada.

Both the FNCFS Agencies and FN Research Assistants agreed that a better match between CIS collectors and FNCFS Agencies needed to be considered in the future. The cultural requirements to work in the community needs to be better understood. Language was in some instances a barrier to communication. It was noted that ways of communicating within agencies varied between First Nations communities and for this reasons many of the FNCFS Agency representatives felt that in the future qualified individuals from within either the FNCFS Agency or from within the communities should be hired as Research Assistants because of their knowledge of protocols within these communities and agencies. On the other hand, some of the FN Research Assistants felt that they were not really part of the study holistically, and were only present as the "token" Aboriginal person and consequently felt devalued in the process. Although the individual making this comment wasn't present at this feedback meeting, she did ask that in her absence her observations be passed along to the principle researchers of the CIS-2003 study as a consideration for the recruitment of research assistants for future cycles of the study.

FNCFS Agencies also acknowledged that the geographical distance between sites, compounded by structural changes and staff turn-over all contributed to difficulty in collecting the data on a timely and consistent basis. One FNCFS Agency participant pointed out that there is an absence of strength based research on Aboriginal people. Others noted that a process seemed to be missing a key element that would allow an opportunity to share the research analysis and other research ideas specific to the Aboriginal sample within the study that have come forward as a result of this study and that perhaps this information should be shared at the outset when training sessions are scheduled for participating FNCFS Agencies. Many also felt that research is not high on the agenda within their agency, boards of directors and/or regional bodies.

At that meeting, one of the representatives of the participating FNCFS Agencies posed some challenging questions to the principle investigators and funders of the CIS-2003 study regarding the role of research and its applicability to the goals of FNCFS Agencies. How can research help FNCFS Agencies? What are the impacts of research on FNCFS Agencies? This individual summarized his recollection of the history of First Nations Child Welfare in Canada and reiterated as many others have, that to date, it seems that research has not made any impact in the way that the federal government funds on-reserve child welfare services or the way in which Provinces go about making child and family services legislation. The essence of his question is paraphrased as follows:

> In the early 70s it appeared as if money grew on trees but as the years went by, funding became more restrictive and soon thereafter a national funding formula was imposed on FNCFS Agencies. FNCFS Agencies deal with multiple changes to provincial legislation, trying to find funding formulas that will fit their particular style of service provision while at the same time, the numbers of children in care continue to rise. Today FNCFS Agencies are consistently being asked to participate in national research studies but what good is research given the past and the constant jurisdictional changes, policies and practices as dictated by the provinces? The ability of FNCFS Agencies to respond to these changes is determined by funding and legislation, two processes of which are entirely outside of First Nations control.

This individual's question and framework of reference provide a good background for addressing the issue of why more research is needed as well as, what kinds of research, the approaches taken to gather research data and issues surrounding the ownership of the data collected. First Nations people, in general, do not have much reason to trust either the federal or provincial governments when it comes to research. What has research been used for in the past? How is it that many facts that "fly in the face" of government are routinely ignored; like the endemic nature of child poverty among

Aboriginal people and the chronic problems of alcohol abuse and domestic violence, and other socioeconomic problems that contribute to family breakdown? These problems are at the very center of child welfare, they are core problems that lead to family breakdown, but the governments' (both federal and provincial) commitment to solving them is questionable, at best.

Still, research into the causes and solutions to Aboriginal family breakdown is necessary and can be of use to help move governments and to help shape public policy in the future. In the next section of this paper, we turn our attention to the concerns expressed by the FNCFS Agencies in the feedback meeting regarding the perception that they are not committed to participating in research generally. The next section provides a reasoned argument using Maslow's theory on the "Hierarchy of Needs" as to why research is not necessarily high on the agenda of FNCFS Agencies.

IV. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Abraham Maslow, a psychologist, developed a "Hierarchy of Needs" framework to show human potential (1943). Essentially, Maslow argues that a human being cannot achieve "self actualization" at the top of the hierarchy without having first met his needs at the lower levels. Maslow constructed his hierarchy of needs, as a theoretical framework comprised of five sets of basic needs, to explain motivation in human behavior. The hierarchical elements as described by Maslow are reproduced below:

1. The 'physiological' needs: These needs that are usually taken as the starting point for motivation theory because they are the most dominant of all needs. The human being who is missing everything in life in an extreme fashion is most likely motivated to meet his physiological needs first, before turning his energy and attention to others needs. A person, who is lacking food, safety, love, esteem, and a higher education, would most probably hunger for food

more strongly than for anything else.

2. The safety needs: If one's physiological needs are relatively well gratified, then a new set of needs emerge, which are the safety needs. A human being requires shelter to be safe from the extremes of temperature and he requires a sense of safety in society wherein he feels protected from criminals, assaults and murder, tyranny, etc. As these needs are largely satisfied, they no longer become the dominant motivators of behavior. Just as a man who reposes after a fine evening meal no longer feels hungry, a safe man no longer feels endangered.

3. The love needs: If one's physiological and safety needs are fairly well gratified, then the love, affection and belonging-ness needs emerge. A human being requires a family, friends, and sense of belonging in order to feel complete. While he may no longer be starving, he will hunger for affectionate relations with his family, friends and people in general; he will be motivated by the need to achieve this goal.

4. The esteem needs: Human beings have a need or desire for self respect and self esteem, or a high evaluation of themselves. Human beings are motivated by the need to achieve and the desire for freedom, independence, strength, mastery and confidence in the face of the world. Human kind is also motivated by the need to be respected by other people, by a desire for reputation or prestige, recognition, attention, importance and appreciation. Satisfying the self-esteem need leads to feelings of self-confidence and self worth, while thwarting these needs produces feelings of inferiority and helplessness.

5. The need for self-actualization: Even if all these needs are satisfied, most human beings will still experience a new discontent and restlessness unless the individual

is doing what he is fitted for. This need is called self-actualization. It is a desire for self-fulfillment, a desire to be all that a person can potentially be. "A musician must make music, an artist must paint, a poet must write, if he is to be ultimately happy. What a man can be, he must be." The specific form that these needs take varies greatly from person to person (Maslow, 1943).

Maslow's thoughts about the preconditions for the basic need satisfactions point to the kind of environment necessary to achieve self-actualization.

There are certain conditions which are immediate prerequisites for the basic need satisfactions. Danger to these is reacted to almost as if it were a direct danger to the basic needs themselves. Such conditions as freedom to speak, freedom to do what one wishes so long as no harm is done to others, freedom to express one's self, freedom to investigate and seek for information, freedom to defend one's self, justice, fairness, honesty, orderliness in the group are examples of such preconditions for basic need satisfactions. Thwarting in these freedoms will be reacted to with a threat or emergency response. These conditions are not ends in themselves but they are almost so since they are so closely related to the basic needs, which are apparently the only ends in themselves. These conditions are defended because without them the basic satisfactions are quite impossible or at least, very severely endangered (p.384).

According to Maslow, mankind's behavior is dominated by the desire to achieve, to satisfy the basic needs on this hierarchy and to maintain this sense of satisfaction. As his needs are met at one level, man experiences a newer emerging need to satisfy other needs at a higher level. This emergence of new needs and the motivation to satisfy them is a cycle that repeats itself, as one area of need is met and new centers of need arise. Lower level needs are more dominant than are higher level needs in this hierarchy; consequently man is not as motivated to meet his higher level needs as he is to meet the lower level

of needs. In some extreme instances the desire to have a basic need satisfied can be so great that other needs become non-existent or non-important, as in the case of a man who is starving. He, most likely, will not be thinking about philosophy and religion, instead all of his energy and his mind will be turned to satisfying his hunger. In most cases however, it is common for an individual to be partially satisfied in all of the basic needs on the hierarchy, while being partially dissatisfied in all of these needs as well.

The Hierarchy of Needs for First Nations Child and Family Services Agencies

Maslow's "hierarchy of needs" as a motivation of human behavior is a useful model or tool (a system of ranking and organizing things (Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia, 2005)) for analyzing the hierarchy of needs of FNCFS Agencies and their motivation and ability to reach higher levels of success, be it in service, research or in achieving autonomy in child welfare matters. The philosophical, funding and service challenges faced by FNCFS Agencies today include frontline socioeconomic conditions in their communities that are formidable, coupled with operational funding that is generally inadequate. The scope of mandated responsibilities and the community's capacity to respond to the child welfare needs in their communities needs to be accomplished with a recognition of Aboriginal ways, values, and world views and the research support to integrate this knowledge into practice, cumulating ultimately in self actualization or self government type control and autonomy in child welfare matters.

It is our opinion that research is a higher needs activity on the hierarchy of needs and that other lower level needs on the hierarchy dominate the time, energy and resources of the agencies. In some respects then, participating in research initiatives is more of a luxury for most agencies, than it is a priority. The primary reason lies in the fact that a FNCFS Agencies' mission is to serve

families and children at risk, so their focus is primarily on service and not on philosophical issues such as research for instance. To assist in understanding our analysis a diagram depicting the comparative interface between Maslow's theory on the hierarchy of needs and the hierarchy of needs of FNCFCS Agency is presented below in Figure 1.

Figure 1.
<u>Source</u>: Diagram developed by Corbin Shangreaux based on discussions between the two principle writers of this paper.

 In Maslow's hierachy of needs, it is difficult (if not impossible) for human beings to achieve self-actualization without first meeting the basic needs of food, shelter, safety, love, and a sense of self worth. Likewise, for FNCFS Agencies specifically, we believe that it is very difficult to achieve the higher levels of need reflected in Maslow's hierarchy theory simply because FNCFS Agencies' time, energy and resources are consumed by the more dominant socioeconomic needs of families that lead to family breakdown within the community at the lower levels. As well, the basic needs at the front lines of child welfare in most First Nations' communities are formidable. Consequently time, energy, and resources expended by FNCFS Agencies' are more likely spent on responding to the multiple needs of individuals from within the communities that they service. Having to respond to the many child welfare needs at the front line community level is often an overwhelming task because the sheer volume of families and children needing support, intervention, treatment and restorative services are

© Bennett and Shangreaux et al.

enormous. Added to this reality is the fact that FNCFS Agencies' service more than one community, making distance another complicated factor in meeting individual and community service needs. These needs can easily monopolize an agency's consciousness, time, energy and resources, leaving little time to priorize and conduct research.

 Among the challenges faced by FNCFS Agencies as they attempt to reach the higher levels of the hierarchy are:

1. Socioeconomic Needs:

 An FNCFS Agencies spends most of its time, money, and human resources responding to basic needs. By design, First Nations' communities expect the Agencies to respond to basic child welfare needs which at times can be difficult to undertake. Who has the time and resources to pursue "higher ideals" or other such luxuries further up the hierarchy? Also, chronically poor socioeconomic conditions coupled with substance abuse impact families and contribute to the breakdown of family systems and higher rates of child Abuse. In some communities, these conditions are seemly endemic and unchanging and they continue to overwhelm the helping systems of many families. Furthermore, the numbers of First Nations children in care continues to rise and many of them have extensive and complex needs that extremely tax the capability and resources of FNCFS Agencies. FASD children, for instance, continue to represent a formidable cost to the system.

2. Funding Adequacy:

 FNCFS Agencies are funded, on average, 22% lower than mainstream Agencies making it not only difficult to meet their legislative requirements but participate in research as well (McDonald et al., 2000). In addition, these Agencies – like all child welfare Agencies – must balance the important work of responding to child and family crises against carrying out research activities. Particularly when funding and resources are scarce, child and family crises take precedence over research activities.

 The Joint National Policy Review Final Report lists 17 recommendations aimed

at improving the funding levels of FNCFS Agencies. The National Policy Review, which is largely driven by First Nations' concerns, is leading to changes in the way the federal government funds FNCFS Agencies. The current federal funding formula for operations is mainly driven by the on-reserve 0-18 threshold of child population statistics, which generally increase from year to year, but not in all cases (McDonald et al., 2000). This funding is susceptible to decreases, if the child population declines or in some cases is not properly reported.

The current federal funding formula is not driven or geared toward high needs communities or Agencies that deal with high needs communities. Some family systems are characterized by chronic dysfunction that is intergenerational and extremely complex which makes assisting these types of families difficult. While child population is a good place to start, FNCFS Agencies require adequate funding and support that will enable them to respond in a comprehensive way to immediate child welfare needs and to the high needs of families and kinship systems (McDonald et al., 2000).

Most FNCFS Agencies, and in particular the agencies impacted by small child population counts on reserve, do not have an adequate level of funding available to them to do policy analysis and research. There is inadequate federal funding to allow FNCFS Agencies to follow a "least disruptive measures" model for at-risk families and to support children staying at home while the family receives family support and family preservation services. The Flexible Funding Option for Federal Child Maintenance Funding allows FNCFS Agencies the flexibility to design and deliver community based child welfare services in an alternative way that is more culturally appropriate than common mainstream approaches (McDonald et al., 2000; Shangreaux et al., 2004).

Furthermore, FNCFS Agencies continue to be impacted by size, resources, time and technological tools. Added to this is the fact that many FNCFS Agencies are impacted by geographical challenges, some are urban and some are remote. As a result,

staff travel (which is) necessary in order to respond to child protection, family support and treatment situations is not just a given, it is a must – if an agency is to properly fulfill its mandate. Staffing levels must be adequate so that Agencies can properly respond to all child welfare situations. The Agencies require up to date technology, software, and database systems in order to take advantage of the huge technological advances that are currently available in this internet and information sharing age. FNCFS Agencies are impacted by the number of First Nations communities served by the agency and the uniqueness of each of these communities, their needs, and capacity (Shangreaux et al., 2004).

3. Mandate and Community Capacity:

FNCFS Agencies are First Nations empowered entities and as a result are expressions and an extension of a community's helping systems. Their primary purpose is to support traditional community kinship systems for the benefit of families and children in need of support, intervention, rehabilitative and restorative services. However, their ability to support and intervene is dependent on being mandated, first by the First Nations that they serve and secondly by the provincial government under whose legislation they must operate. In addition, FNCFS Agencies' ability to intervene and provide effective services at the community based level is impacted by the quality and quantity of human resources available upon which they can draw to find community based helpers, family support workers, alternate caregivers, etc. In addition to these individuals, most FNCFS Agencies rely upon their community Elders, kinship systems, and traditional values as a well of traditional knowledge about families handed down through grandparents and parents to guide child welfare practice. Without this traditional knowledge and the complementary wisdom of the Elders, the Agencies would be lost and no different than the mainstream Children's Aid Society Agencies. FNCFS Agencies are part of the community. Most were created in response to the needs of the community and the desire that a FNCFS Agencies provide service to

them. FNCFS Agencies also have multiple involvements in other endeavours beyond the community such as being part of tribal councils and regional organizations and they now are part of a national networking organization in the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada.

4. Recognition and Research Support:

FNCFS Agencies have gained increasing recognition and funding support from federal and provincial governments as the proper entity to respond to First Nations' child welfare issues. Despite this recognition, FNCFS Agencies lack the funding, time, and human resources to engage in critical research and analysis. There is a need to better understand why some families resort to child abuse in hard socioeconomic times and the best ways to help these families to prevent children from being abused. There is a need to develop, implement, and replicate effective community based prevention programs that target high risk families to prevent FASD, HIV/AIDS, etc.

An increasing number of Agencies are building their capacity through higher education distance programs for their staff and agency participation in research like the Canadian Incidence Studies (CIS 1998 and CIS 2003) into reported child abuse and neglect. Activities in this area are only now starting to gain momentum, but haven't yet reached a critical mass. Increasing the number of First Nation and Aboriginal University Graduates in the child welfare field will impact practice in a positive way (Bennett & Blackstock, 2005).

"Best Practice" models should be identified, and merit based and innovative approaches should be funded, researched and replicated where possible. These programs should be characterized by their flexibility in approach that allows them to respond to situations with both a structured application and in a case- by- case manner. They should be cost effective and supported by good outcomes. Targeted prevention, intensive treatment and comprehensive family support programs should be developed to help FNCFS Agencies deal with the chronically

dysfunctional families that end up being "recurring cases and cost drivers of child welfare". Early Intervention, Early Childhood Education, Young Families Support Programs, Comprehensive Coordinated Community Response Programs to deal with FASD, AIDS, etc. – should be researched, funded, developed and replicated.

5. Self Government:

FNCFS Agencies are compelled to use provincial legislation and rely upon outside funding to deliver services at the community level. As such, funding agreements require FNCFS Agencies to follow provincial legislation and practices. Consequently, Agencies impose non-Aboriginal standards and expectations on families, when less intrusive measures would be more effective. Also related to this is the fact that there is no national First Nations Child Welfare Act despite the call for such legislation for the past 20 years. To date, there is also no National Statement on Native Child Welfare Principles despite the need for such a document to guide child welfare practice for mainstream social workers serving Aboriginal families and children. The Aboriginal Justice Inquiry-Child Welfare Initiative is significant as it is leading to the restructuring of the child welfare system in Manitoba and recognizing the off-reserve jurisdiction of FNCFS Agencies throughout Manitoba. However, the process is considered to be an interim measure and is dominated by resource transfer activities that leave some FNCFS Agencies with the impression that they are not being given adequate resources to effectively carry out their new responsibilities under this initiative (Hudson & McKenzie, 2003).

Stability of funding and control of the decision making (as opposed to being always compelled by legislation) leads to increased flexibility and the ability to respond to community needs, as opposed to always "reacting" to these needs. On-reserve child population is a natural place to start, but FNCFS Agencies and First Nations communities need increased funding so that they can respond to emerging needs in their communities and

offer family support services in a manner that is respectful, protects children, and enables agencies to intervene, when needed, in a least disruptive manner.

Like many families, FNCFS Agencies need a "hand up" (not a hand out) in order to reach the higher levels of the hierarchy. In the case of FNCFS Agencies, they need to "join hands" with others of like mind in the community so that they can build momentum and "move up" the hierarchy by expanding their circles of understanding and support. Indeed, they only way they can reach the top of this hierarchy is by expanding their circles of relations through giving and receiving support to each other throughout the whole process (see Figure 2).

BUILDING COMMUNITY CAPACITY & FNCFSA CIRCLES OF RELATIONS

Figure 2.
Source: Diagram developed by Corbin Shangreaux based on discussions between the two principle writers of this paper.

FNCFS Agencies have to build capacity and it starts by increasing the involvement of the larger community in child welfare matters, so that it becomes a "community owned" approach to supporting children and families in need. The higher up the hierarchy FNCFS Agencies are able to go, the more they require the understanding and support of community and political leaders, Aboriginal

and non-Aboriginal alike. The challenge for FNCFS Agencies is to build effective relationships within each circle…a process that requires mutual respect and cooperation.

V. Recommendations

Given the discussion above, a number of general recommendations that arose from the feedback discussion that may help strengthen the perceptions around research and encourage more participation from FNCFS Agencies wishing to participate in the next round of the CIS. They are offered as a suggestion of strengthening the role of research as part of the ongoing services provided by FNCFS Agencies. Some of the recommendations identified by the participants in CIS-2003 include:

1) *The need for more agency staff trained to undertake and assist in research related activities:* From attending this feedback meeting it is clear that FNCFS Agencies do not have the personnel in house or the funding to be able to hire additional research personnel so that they can participate effectively in requests to assist numerous research initiatives such as CIS-2003 or any other research project. In consideration of their funding needs it is vital that FNCFS agencies receive additional funding over and above their maintenance and operating costs to cover the salary of a full time policy analyst and/or in house researcher so that FNCFS Agencies can effectively contribute to more evidence based research and discourse that incorporates culturally relevant and competent perspectives on the multiple aspects of service delivery within FNCFS Agencies;

2) *Meaningful analysis of all statistics gathered by FNCFS Agencies:* In connection with recommendation 1 above, the information that FNCFS Agencies are required to collect and forward to their funders (e.g. Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Development) as part of their funding agreements are being collected without an analysis on what this data may reveal
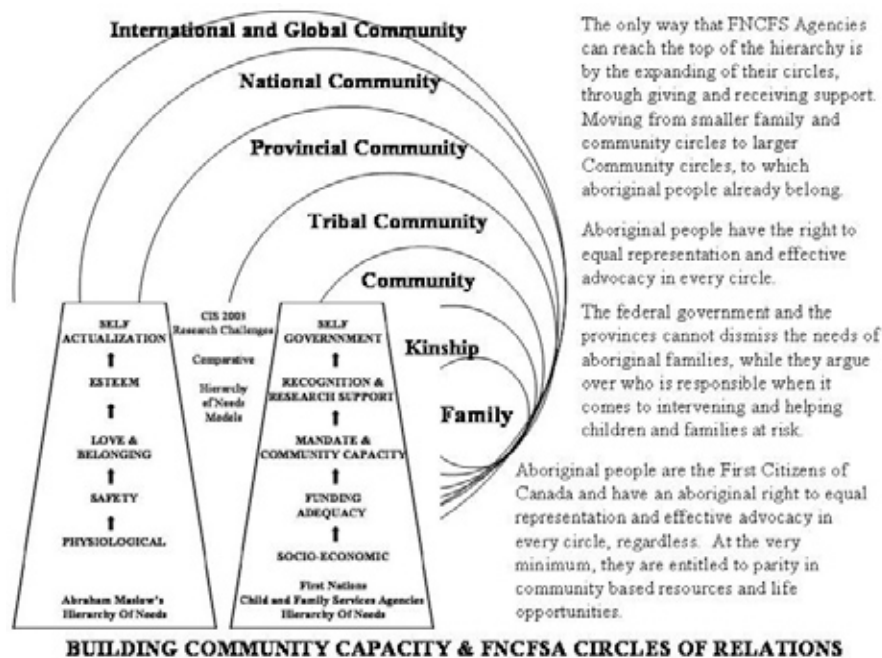
locally, regionally and nationally in terms of the current trends in Aboriginal/FN child welfare. An understanding of that data is needed so that trends can be monitored, and sound information can be provided to those who develop and evaluate policy and programs that affect Aboriginal people. For example, very little is known about the birth outcomes among First Nations versus non-First Nations children in urban areas (Luo et al., 2004). Another example can be found in the Criminal Justice System which shares one attribute with child welfare systems in that both record an overrepresentation of Aboriginal populations in both systems. The challenge of collecting data on Aboriginal people in the Criminal Justice System as of late has also focused its attention on need for better statistics and analysis of those statistics (Kong & Beattie, 2005). Moreover, information and statistics collected by FNCFS Agencies for DIAND reporting purposes is in many cases used against the agency as well[3]. The funds to hire researchers would be useful in providing a trend analysis of this information from a perspective that is rooted in the community and the culture (Bennett et al., 2005). If information is the key to prosperity in the new knowledge-based economy, it follows that the richness of that information and the knowledge that can be drawn from it are critical to the success of FNCFS agencies. As is the case in all communities, better data leads to better knowledge leads to better public policy. Having authentic, highly accessible, quality information about Aboriginal peoples can facilitate cross-community and cross-cultural education and learning needed to tackle Aboriginal issues in child welfare in a more meaningful way (Jock, Simon, Fox & Nickerson, 2004).

3) *Access to information and communication technologies:* The technological needs of FNCFS Agencies, particularly for more remote and geographically disbursed Agencies, are great. As Bennett and Brown (2005) noted in their short

commentary, among the many research challenges faced by FNCFS Agencies is the lack of access to sophisticated computer equipment, updated software, computerized databases including appropriate infrastructures and adequate funds to support such an environment as well as specific expertise to utilize such resources in an effective manner. Disparities in technology and Internet connectivity between Aboriginal and mainstream Canada are well known and captured in concepts like the "Digital Divide" and "learning divide" (Sciadas, 2002; Downing, 2002). These facts are supported by Statistics Canada's research on the digital divide in Canada, which indicates that there are large differences among income groups characterized as 'haves' and 'have-nots' (Sciadas, 2002). Rural and remote First Nations communities in particular are considered among many of the 'have-nots' with respect to the Internet and the convergence of information and communications technologies (often referred to in the literature as ICTs) (Jock, Simon, Fox, & Nickerson, 2004). Although there have been significant improvements to bridge this digital divide, there is still a long way to go before FNCFS Agencies and communities are able to effectively and equitably engage in research activities and the emerging and evolving knowledge based economy within Canada. ICTs hold the potential for Aboriginal communities to break down the barriers of geography and scale and would significantly increase their ability to address the critical cultural, economic and social needs within their communities (Jock et al., 2004). The opportunity to benefit from new technology obviously requires money and funding for this purpose therefore needs to be increased to FNCFS Agencies so that they are able to fully participate in and enjoy the benefits of using ICTs as a way of improving service delivery to the citizens within their communities. Access to the new emerging technology will provide FNCFS Agencies with more effective means of collecting,

using, managing, increasing skill levels, and sharing information (knowledge transfer) in a more timely fashion.

4) *Dialogue on the development of new laws:* This is not a new idea but there is a need to create a law (or at the very least, principles) that governs the way non-Aboriginal child welfare Agencies deal with Aboriginal children when Aboriginal children come into mainstream care (Northwest Indian Child Welfare Institute, 1987);

5) *Research and analyses that focus on the strength based aspects of FNCFS Agencies:* Research has until now focused more on deficit models of service provision (McKenzie et al., 2003) and it was recognized by the feedback participants that there needs to be more analysis from within the CIS-2003 data which focuses on the strength based models being utilized by FNCFS Agencies in the delivery of child and family services to children and youth who have been abused and/or neglected;

6) *Respectful research that is community-based and collaborative:* A need to ensure that research processes are respectful of Aboriginal/First Nation's communities, protocols and structural processes (McKenzie et al., 2003; Davis et al., 1999). The participants agreed that individuals from within the FNCFS Agencies or communities should be hired as Research Assistants in future Cycles of CIS. These researchers already come equipped with understanding the community, the protocols and as well, understand the structural processes that exist within the communities and how FNCFS Agencies provide services. Such an individual would likely be more effective in obtaining the data that needs to be collected and can further solidify collaborative relationships with outside researchers. Furthermore, the FN Research Assistants recruited to assist the training sessions that will be specific to the agency they will be assisting;

7) *Training Sessions tailored to the realities within First Nations communities:* Training sessions for FNCFS Agencies on the objectives, methods and how to fill out the forms needs to be scheduled over two days for optimal learning and understanding by the agency staff as to the goals and objectives of CIS. Training should be delivered by Aboriginal researchers and consultants where necessary and if available;

8) *Modification of the three page data collection forms:* Future CIS data collection forms should undergo some modification to make the questions more specific to the realities within First Nations communities (for example, see the sections on public housing and caregiver sections).

9) *Modification of training material and access to specialized training to assist in the analysis of CIS data:* Future CIS orientation and training with FNCFS Agencies should include First Nations specific information, data and analysis of the Aboriginal data as well as access to general CIS data sets and information. Case vignettes utilized during the training session with the agency needs to reflect Aboriginal realities and scenarios; This would also require opportunities to attend training sessions on how to utilize the SPSS database to analyze the data such as was done at the Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare's Research Forum on the Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect at Val David, Quebec in 2001 ;

10) *Implementation of an Aboriginal Advisory Committee:* An Aboriginal advisory committee should be established to oversee the recruitment of FNCFS Agencies, including monitoring the data collection process, all research activities and overseeing the research outcomes that result from the CIS-2003 Aboriginal data and future studies. The role of this Advisory Committee should also be to monitor how researchers take and give back to communities, including making sure that research participants'

information, knowledge and/or statistics are returned and shared with Aboriginal communities in an accessible format and a respectful manner (Cottrell, 2001);

11) *A longer recruitment process:* The recruitment process in the efforts to encourage and engage more FNCFS Agencies in future cycles of the CIS must be done well in advance of the training and data collection periods. This will obviously mean that it may take longer to get FNCFS Agencies on board. The recruitment process is important to the process of building relationships so that trust can be established between the FNCFS Agency and the CIS researchers. Relationship building is necessary and crucial to the success of the CIS;

12) *Opportunity for more feedback from FNCFS participants:* Despite the amount of time it takes, getting and giving feedback and information at every stage is critically important, particularly during the planning stages. Without constantly checking in with the groups involved, projects can be undermined and money wasted. CIS organizers must go to into First Nations communities and engage FNCFS Agencies in the process and spend time with them so that it is possible for people to share their ideas. The principle researchers of CIS need to ensure that scheduled feedback sessions with community members as well as FNCFS Agencies are conducted during and after research to ensure correct collection and interpretation of the data as well as a means of evaluating the process of participation (Davis et al., 1999);

13) *A national First Nations specific study:* Last but not least, many participants strongly voiced the need to undertake research, including longitudinal research on child abuse and neglect, with all FNCFS Agencies in Canada. As was noted, the inclusion of only a few FNCFS Agencies in the CIS-2003 study does not provide a statistically significant understanding of maltreatment issues for this vulnerable sector of society. A First Nations CIS focused study is viewed as necessary in order to understand the trends occurring in First Nations communities around child maltreatment and neglect issues. Undertaking such a study no doubt requires time to develop an approach and money to support such an undertaking. This will also require the funders and principle researchers of CIS, the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada and FNCFS Agencies and community to engage in more collaborative dialogue and planning as to how this can be effected for the future.

VI. Conclusion

There is a range of historical factors that have impacted First Nations children, families and communities which continues to encumber subsequent generations of children, families and communities. Colonization, the legacy of the residential school experience and earlier misguided child welfare policies have all played a part in the cultural disintegration of protective factors that were once a natural aspect of Aboriginal families prior to contact. The ongoing impoverishment within First Nations communities continues to threaten and significantly challenges the strength and well-being of children and families and. Poverty is seen as one of the etiological drivers of the child welfare industry yet very little research exists which looks at the connection between poverty and the involvement of child welfare in the lives of Aboriginal peoples, families and communities. The two comparative analyses published to date on Aboriginal data from the CIS-2003 is just beginning to uncover and help us understand some of the pathways that lead Aboriginal children and families into the child welfare systems within this country. This information, of course, would not be possible except by conducting research. Research is a timely and costly process, not just for those who engage in research on a full time basis but those who are asked to participate or collaborate in such endeavours. While First Nations have

adamantly and rightly argued they have been researched to death, there is not yet enough evidence-based research which reflects the unique and conflicting realities of practice and service provision by FNCFS Agencies in First Nations communities. Research plays a valuable role in the process of change and evolution for FNCFS Agencies. We have attempted to highlight some of the perceptions on the challenges and strengths of partaking in the CIS-2003 study. In reflecting upon the challenges and strengths of the experience of FNCFS Agencies in CIS-2003, we have endeavoured to bring about awareness as to the unique challenges faced by FNCFS Agencies in the efforts to engage their organizations in contributing to evidence based research. While research is laudable and recognized as important to FNCFS Agencies, it is an activity that competes with the very real reasons why FNCFS Agencies exist. Utilizing Maslow's theory on the hierarchy of needs reveals that research, even though important in and of itself, figures outside the needs of agencies. Though research outcomes may in the long run benefit FNCFS Agencies and is necessary for bringing about change, in the short term, research to some extent hinders a FNCFS Agency's ability to meet the immediate and very real needs of children and families in their communities. FNCFS Agencies are charged with the responsibility of helping families and children by protecting children, strengthening and preserving families, and helping to build healthy communities through the provision of child and family services but research is critical to understanding and exploring new ways to ensure that this comes about. The recommendations from the feedback with FNCFS Agencies and the FN Research Assistants provide some answers as to how this conflict with research can be solved and how more research activities within FNCFS Agencies can be supported in the future cycles of CIS. As researchers, we need to be prepared to address and adopt alternative research practices and recognize the auxiliary learning that occurs when researchers conduct research in FNCFS Agencies and communities. The implications of sharing this critical reflection are compelling.

Marlyn Bennett

Ms. Bennett is employed by the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada as the Director of Research for the First Nations Research Site, one of four sites associated with the Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare. Ms. Bennett also operates a Consulting, Research and Event Planning Company and has been involved in a number of program evaluations for the federal government and non-profit Aboriginal organizations. Ms. Bennett serves on the boards of Child Find Manitoba, Beyond Borders, and Animikii Ozoson Inc. (a new child welfare agency operating in the City of Winnipeg). Ms. Bennett is the coordinating Editor of the First Peoples Child & Family Review and is involved with the editorial boards of the Envision Journal of Child Welfare in Manitoba and Native History of Manitoba (which publishes manuscripts on Native history in Manitoba in conjunction with the University of Manitoba Press). She is involved with the Manitoba Strategy on the Prevention of Child and Youth Exploitation and is professionally affiliated with the Faculty of Social Work at the University of Manitoba. Ms. Bennett holds a B.A. and an Interdisciplinary Masters of Arts, has completed two years of law school and will undertake an Interdisciplinary Ph.D. at the University of Manitoba in January 2006. Ms. Bennett has authored and co-authored various articles on Aboriginal Child Welfare in Canada and assisted with data collection for the Canadian Incident Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect in 2003. Ms. Bennett is a member of Sandy Bay First Nations, Manitoba and is the proud mother of a 12 year old daughter.

Corbin Shangreaux

Mr. Shangreaux is the Executive Director of Animikii Ozoson Child and Family Services, a new child welfare agency operating in the City of Winnipeg. Mr. Shangreaux is a Native American graduate of Montana State University. He obtained a Bachelor of Arts in Theology in 1975, a Bachelor of Science and Education in 1981 and a Masters Degree in Education in 1985. In 1988 Corbin moved to Canada

with his family and became a member of Peguis First Nation. Corbin has three children. Mr. Shangreaux has over 25 years of experience as a director/senior manager in Native child welfare services (in both Canada and the U.S.). Prior to moving to Canada, Mr. Shangreaux was a foster parent for American Indian youth. He has served as the Coordinator for Volunteers in Services to America (VOA) providing case management, supervision, recruitment and training of American Indian foster parents in addition to developing culturally appropriate programs for American Indian children and their families being served by VOA. Mr. Shangreaux was the founder and Executive Director of The In-Care Network, Inc., an agency which serves emotionally disturbed American Indian youth. Upon moving to Canada he worked for West Region Child & Family Services for 10 years as a senior manager overseeing culturally appropriate child protection, family support and community based prevention services to 9 First Nations. In addition, Mr. Shangreaux has worked as a program consultant and has significant research experience having recently assisted in the collection of First Nation data for the second cycle of the Canadian Incident Study on Reported Child Abuse and Neglect in 2003. Mr. Shangreaux has diverse knowledge regarding federal funding policies in relation to First Nations Child and Family Services in Manitoba. Most recent, he completed research for the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada regarding federal funding formulas on First Nations Child and Family Services within Canada. Mr. Shangreaux has assisted in the review and evaluation of child welfare services in the Northwest Territories and other provincial jurisdictions in addition to writing and co-publishing various articles and research findings on Aboriginal child welfare.

(Endnotes)

[1] These individuals represent some (but not all) of the First Nations Research Assistants who assisted the principle investigators in collecting data for the 2003 Canadian Incident Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect study. While they did not have a direct hand in writing this paper, it is based on

their collective comments from participating and sharing in the February 2003 feedback meeting regarding the challenges and successes to collecting data for the CIS-2003 study. Draft copies of this paper were circulated in advance to all First Nations Research Assistants for additional comments and/or clarification before it was submitted for publication to this journal.

[2] "First Nations" refers to those persons identified and registered as "Indians" within the meaning of the Federal Indian Act legislation. Although the term "First Nations" is predominantly used throughout this paper, no legal definition of it exists. The term "Aboriginal" refers to one three groups of people (First Nations, Inuit and Métis) who have been constitutionally recognized under the Constitution Act, 1982.

[3] Personal communication. Confidentiality requirements prevent identifying these individuals by name or position.

References

Beavon, D. & Cooke, M. (2002). An Application of the United Nations Human Development Index to Registered Indians in Canada, 1996. Ref Type: Unpublished Work

Bennett, M. (2004b). A Review of the Literature on the Benefits and Drawbacks of Participatory Action Research. *First Peoples Child & Family Review, 1*, 19-32.

Bennett, M. (2004a). *First Nations Fact Sheet: A General Profile on First Nations Child Welfare in Canada.* Ottawa, ON: First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada.

Bennett, M. & Brown, I. (2005). Research Challenges for First Nations Child Welfare Agencies. *Canada's Children, Winter,* 38-39.

Bennett, M. & Blackstock, C. First Nations Child and Family Services and Indigenous Knowledge as a Framework for policy, practice and research. *Positive Systems of Child and Family Welfare: International Comparisons (Vol.2),* (in press).

Bennett, M. & Blackstock, C. (2002). *A Literature Review and Annotated Bibliography Focusing on Aspects of Aboriginal Child Welfare in Canada.* Winnipeg, MB: First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada and the Center of Excellence for Child Welfare.

Blackstock, C. (2003). First Nations Child and Family Services: Restoring Peace and Harmony in First Nations Communities. In K.Kufeldt & B. McKenzie (Eds.), *Child Welfare: Connecting Research, Policy, and Practice* (pp. 331-342). Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Blackstock, C. & Trocme, N. (2004a). Community

Based Child Welfare for Aboriginal Children: Supporting Resilience through Structural Change. In M.Ed.I.P.Ungard (Ed.), *Pathways to Resilience: A Handbook of Theory, Methods and Interventions* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Blackstock, C., Cullen, J., D'Hndt, J., & Formsma, J. (2004b). *Keeping the Promise: The Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Lived Experiences of First Nations Children and Youth.* Ottawa, ON: First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada.

Blackstock, C., Trocme, N., & Bennett, M. (2004c). Child Maltreatment Investigations Among Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal Families in Canada. *Violence Against Women, 10,* 901-916.

Brant Castellano, M. (2002). *Aboriginal Family Trends: Extended Families, Nuclear Families, Families of the Heart.* Ottawa, ON.: The Vanier Institute of the Family.

Campaign 2000 & Hubberstey, C. (2004). *One Million Too Many: Implementing solutions to Child Poverty in Canada - 2004 Report Card on Child Poverty in Canada.* Campaign 2000.

Castellano, M. B. (2002). *Aboriginal Family Trends: Extended Families, Nuclear Families, Families of the Heart.* Ottawa, ON.: The Vanier Institute of the Family.

Centre of Excellence for Child Welfare (2003). Research - Canadian Incidence Study, Second Cycle. Centre for Excellence for Child Welfare website [On-line]. Available: http://www.cecw-cepb.ca/Research/ResearchCIS.shtml

Cottrell, B. (2001). Working with Research Ethics: The Role of Advisory Committees in Community-Based Research. *Atlantis: A Women's Study Journal, 25.*

Davis, S. M. & Reid, R. (1999). Practicing Participatory Research in American Indian Communities. *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, 69,* 755S-759S.

Dion Stout, M. & Kipling, G. D. (1999). *Emerging Priorities for the Health of First Nations and Inuit Children and Youth.* Paper prepared for Strategic Policy, Planning and Analysis Directorate, First Nations and Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB).

Downing, R. (2002). *Bridging Aboriginal Digital and Learning Divides: Report on Office of Learning Technologies Support to Aboriginal Communities.* Ottawa, ON: Office of Learning Technologies, Government of Canada.

Harlem, G. Dr. (1999). Breaking the Poverty Cycle: Investing in Early Childhood. In Paris, France: World Health Organization.

Hudson, P. & McKenzie, B. (2003). **Extending Aboriginal Control Over Child Welfare Services:** The Manitoba Child Welfare Initiative. *Canadian Review of Social Policy, Spring/Summer,* 49-66.

Hudson, P. a. M. B. (1985). Child Welfare and Native People: The Extension of Colonialism. *The Social Worker, 49,* 63-88.

Hull, J. (1996). *Aboriginal Single Mothers in Canada, 1996: A Statistical Profile.* Winnipeg, MB: Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (2003). Registered Indian Population by Sex and Residence 2003. Indian and Northern Affairs Canada [On-line].

Jock, R., Simon, M., Fox, G., & Nickerson, M. (2004). Finding an Aboriginal Digital Voice. *Policy, Politics & Governance, 7.*

Kirmayer, L., Simpson, C., & Cargo, M. (2003). Healing traditions: culture, community and mental health promotion with Canadian Aboriginal peoples. *Australasian Psychiatry, 11,* S15-S23.

Kong, R. & Beattie, K. (2005). *Collecting Data on Aboriginal People in the Criminal Justice System: Methods and Challenges.* Ottawa, ON: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada.

Law Commission of Canada (2000). *Restoring Dignity: Responding to Child Abuse in Canadian Institutions.* Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services.

Luo, Z.-C., Kierans, W. J., Wilkins, R., Liston, R. M., Uh, S.-H., & Kramer, M. S. (2004). Infant Mortality Among First Nations Versus Non-First Nations in British Columbia: Temporal Tends in Rural Versus Urban Areas, 1981-2000. *International Journal of Epidemiology, 33,* 1252-1259.

Mandell, D., Carlson, J. C., Blackstock, C., & Fine, M. (2003). Aboriginal Child Welfare. Partnerships for Children and Families Project [On-line].

Manitoba. (2001). Chapter Nine: Violence Towards Aboriginal Women and Children. Winnipeg, MB, Manitoba. Aboriginal Justice Implementation Commission: Final Report.
Ref Type: Serial (Book,Monograph)

Maslow, A. H. (1943). A Theory of Human Motivation. *Psychological Review, 50,* 370-396.

McDonald, R. J., Ladd, P., Assembly of First Nations, First Nations Child and Family Service Agencies, & Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (2000). *First Nations Child and Family Services Joint National Policy Review: Draft Final Report.* Ottawa, ON.

McKenzie, B. & Morrissette, V. (2003). Social Work Practice with Canadians of Aboriginal Background: Guidelines for Respectful Social Work. *Envision: The Manitoba Journal of Child Welfare, 2,* 13-39.

Milloy, J. S. (1996). *"Suffer the Little Children …" A*

Milloy, J. S. (1999). *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System, 1879 to 1986.* Winnipeg, MB: The University of Manitoba Press.

Nadjiwan, S. & Blackstock, C. (2003). **Annotated Bibliography on the Nature and Extent of Collaboration Between the Voluntary Sector and First Nations Child and Family Service Agencies in Canada.** Ottawa, ON: First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada.

Northwest Indian Child Welfare Institute (1987). *Cross-Cultural Skills in Indian Child Welfare: A Guide for the Non-Indian.* Portland, Or: The Institute.

Ontario Native Women's Association (1989). *Breaking Free: A Proposal for Change to Aboriginal Family Violence.* Thunder Bay: Ontario Native Women's Association.

Pelton, L. & Milner, J. S. (1994). Is Poverty a Key Contributor to Child Maltreatment? In E.Gambrill & T. J. Stein (Eds.), *Controversial Issues in Child Welfare* (pp. 16-28). Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996). *For Seven Generations: An Information Legacy of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.* Ottawa: Canada.

Sciadas, G. (2002). *The Digital Divide in Canada.* Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada.

Shangreaux, C. & Blackstock, C. (2004). *Staying At Home: Examining the implications of Least Disruptive Measures in First Nations Child and Family Service Agencies.* Ottawa, ON: First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada.

Statistics Canada (2003). *Aboriginal Peoples of Canada: A Demographic Profile.* Ottawa: Statistics Canada.

Struthers, R. & Lowe, J. (2003). Nursing in the Native American Culture and Historical Trauma. *Issues in Mental Health Nursing, 24,* 257-272.

Tonmyr, L. (2005). Surveillance and Research Through Child Welfare Agencies: Lessons from the Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect.
Ref Type: Unpublished Work

Trocme, N., MacLaurin, B., Fallon, B., Daciuk, J., Billingsley, D., Tournigny, M. et al. (2001). *Canadian Incident Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect.* Ottawa: National Clearinghouse on Family Violence and Health Canada.

Trocme, N., Knoke, D., & Blackstock, C. (2004). Pathways to the Overrepresentation of Aboriginal Children in Canada's Child Welfare System. *Social Services Review, 78,* 577-600.

UNICEF (2003). The Millennium Development Goals: They are About Children. In.

Union of BC Indian Chiefs (2002). *Calling Forth our Future: Options for the Exercise of Indigenous Peoples Authority in Child Welfare.*

United Nations (2002). *Putting Promises Into Action: A Report on a Decade of Child and Family Poverty in Canada. The UN Special Session on Children, Campaign 2000.*

United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child: 34th Session (2003). *Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Canada.* Geneva, Switzerland: United Nations Committee on the Rights of the Child.

Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia (2005). Hierarchy. Wikipedia Encyclopedia [On-line]. Available: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hierarchy

Young, T. K., Reading, J., Elias, B., & O'Neil, J. (2000). Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus in Canada's First Nations: Status of an Epidemic in Progress. *Canadian Medical Association Journal, 163,* 561-567.