

An Interdisciplinary Journal

Honoring the Voices, Perspectives and Knowledges of First Peoples through Research, Critical Analyses, Stories, Standpoints and Media Reviews

Foreword

In gatherings, conversations, and dialogue focused on Indigenous children and their wellbeing, a recurring theme often emerges: “children knowing where they come from.” There are those who do not understand the significance this holds for many Indigenous peoples in Canada. Since before the residential school system, through to the 60s and Millennium Scoops, and resonating into today, Indigenous children have been removed from their homes in a systemic attempt to assimilate. Because many sacred familial, communal and cultural bonds have been broken, there exist chasms in many communities throughout this beautiful country we call Turtle Island. Indigenous children and young people have been negatively affected by Canada from seven generations ago and now find themselves “at the head of every line you don’t want to be at the head of, and in the back of every line you don’t want to be at the back of.”¹ Children have been, and continue to be, displaced and many do not know where they come from or who they belong to.

At the same time, communities have shown strength and resilience in the face of adversity. Many communities want to ensure that traditions, teachings and ways of life from seven generations ago continue to thrive and grow in Indigenous Nations across the country and are passed down to future generations. Indigenous communities have asserted their rights to provide services to children and families in a way that reflects their needs and in ways that reflect Indigenous cultural traditions and practices.

The *First Peoples Child & Family Review* proudly presents this Special Edition on Custom Adoptions in partnership with the Siem Smun’eem Indigenous Child Wellbeing Research Network at the University of Victoria. This edition contains research articles, agency experiences, cultural perspectives and personal stories that highlight custom adoption from a historical and contemporary perspective.

We hope that you will enjoy this edition as much as we do.

Sincerely,

Andrea Auger & Brittany Martell
Co-ordinating Editors
First Peoples Child & Family Review

1 *Memorandum of Fact and Law of the Complainant First Nations Child and Family Caring Society* (Caring Society Tribunal Closing Submissions). p. 107. Retrieved from: <http://www.fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/Caring%20Society%20-%20Closing%20Submissions.pdf>