

An Interdisciplinary Journal

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

Foreword

Marc St. Dennis¹

¹Coordinating Editor of *First Peoples Child & Family Review*, First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada
Contact: mstdennis@fncaringsociety.com

Dear readers,

It is my great pleasure to present volume 13(1) of the *First Peoples Child & Family Review*, which includes 7 brilliant published submissions from researchers and community experts. Thank you to all of the authors for sharing their knowledge, experiences, and stories, and to the peer referees for their thoughtful feedback. For those that were not selected for publication in this issue, we honour your hard work and look forward to your ongoing participation in the *First Peoples Child & Family Review* community.

Knowledge is shared throughout all of the life stages; therefore the editorial team and I are thrilled that the authors in this issue represent a balance of youth and adults voices. The *First Peoples Child & Family Review* is honoured to provide a platform for these diverse voices to be heard, all contributing to a respectful dialogue of social justice and cooperation to ensure a better world for Indigenous and non-Indigenous children, youth, and their families.

Readers will be delighted to see three poems showcasing dreams for a better future for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. This issue also includes a speech calling on Canadians to stop ignoring the real problems that many Indigenous families encounter on a day-to-day basis and to start acting for meaningful change. In addition, we are pleased to publish an essay on bridging the digital divide, a literature review on Indigenous adults with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder, and a summary of an evaluation conducted about an innovative program entitled Live in Family Enhancement.

Hayley Harder's slam poem, *Life as a clock*, is a haunting reflection on 150-plus years of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada. Harder questions the status quo and challenges readers to stand up for meaningful change. Time pushes us forward but it is up to us to choose a better path.

Melanie Samaroden's literature review entitled *Challenges and resiliency in Aboriginal adults with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder* starts with the observation that Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) is a lifelong ailment. However, there is very little research that is specific to supporting Indigenous *adults* with FASD (whereas there is abundant research and interventions for Indigenous *children* with FASD). Samaroden reviews the available literature and highlights opportunities for respectful and inclusive research that could empower Indigenous adults with FASD.

Fair, by Hamza Hussain and Yuktha Kowlessur, and *Give children all rights*, by Aliya Garasia, are two short poems that highlight the inequitable nature of Canada's two-tiered education system, where Indigenous children often receive far less than non-Indigenous children. Inspired by Shannen Koostachin, the authors of these two poems want nothing less than safe and comfy schools and culturally appropriate education for all children in Canada.

For those of us who live in urban centres, it may seem like computer technology and telecommunication options are abundant and easily accessible. Katalina Toth, Daisy Smith, and Daphne Giroux – authors of *Indigenous peoples and empowerment via technology* – remind us that the technology many take for granted is often neither available nor accessible to Indigenous communities. This is irrespective of whether the community is located in remote regions or urban centres. Toth et al. suggest that bridging the digital divide, if done respectfully and in partnership with Indigenous communities, has the potential to alleviate some of the difficulties Indigenous communities encounter.

Lawrence Deane, Jenna Glass, Inez Vystrcil-Spence, and Javier Mignone were commissioned by Metis Child, Family, and Community Services to conduct an evaluation of the child welfare agency's innovative program entitled Live-In Family Enhancement (LIFE). *Live-In Family Enhancement (LIFE): A comprehensive program for healing and family reunification* summarizes some of the important findings from the evaluation conducted by Deane et al. The authors note that the LIFE model, by leveraging existing funds, has great potential to be utilized and adapted by other agencies to provide families with the services they need, to increase reunification rates, and even as a means of prevention.

It is shocking that a country as rich as Canada actively created the conditions of poverty in many Indigenous communities and continues to perpetuate this legacy by refusing to equitably fund basic services that all humans have a right to, such as clean drinking water and healthcare. In *Une honte nationale*, author Katalina Toth brings the reader's attention to some of these injustices and challenges us to act so that every family in Canada has equitable access to the services they need, when they need them.

Thank you to our readers and community members who make the *First Peoples Child & Family Review* a great learning resource to respectfully share and engage with knowledge generated by and in allyship with Indigenous children, youth, and families. I hope you will enjoy reading this issue and find inspiration in the wonderful contributions contained within.

In good spirit,

Marc St. Dennis