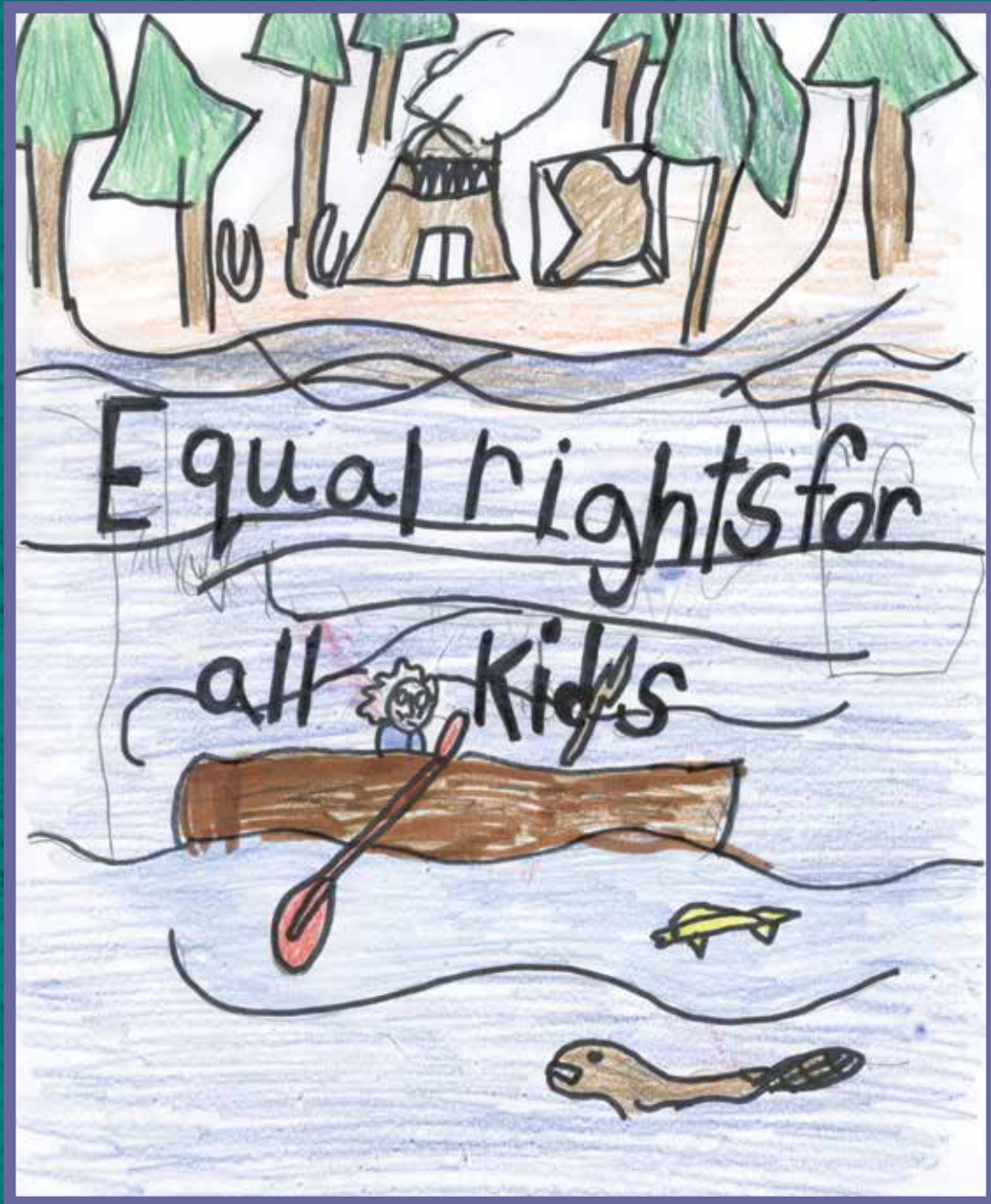


First Peoples Child & Family Review 2014



Cover Illustration by Owen

Respect and Equity Through Reconciliation
Special Edition by Children and Youth



**First Nations Child & Family
Caring Society of Canada**

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Contents



2 Honouring

3 Foreword

5 Editorials

5 *Chief Dr. Robert Joseph:*
The New Way Forward

6 *Beth Rhead:* Stop the Hurting: Education
and Health Care for All

8 *Shannen's Dream Club:*
Children Have Power



10 Truth Telling

11 *Sarah A.:* Sarah A.'s Letter

12 *Hoda:* Lettre de Hoda

13 Artwork from Hoda

14 *Justin:* Artwork from Justin

15 Lettre de Justin

16 *Jillian:* "It's Complicated"

17 *Isra:* Isra's Letter

18 *Senayah:* Artwork from Senayah

19 *Erin:* "Residential Schools:
But What Did They Learn?"



20 Acknowledging

21 *Shinequa:* Shinequa's Letter

22 *Aya:* Lettre de Aya

23 *Abeer:* Artwork from Abeer

24 *Zainab A.:* Artwork from Zainab A.

25 *Évelyne:* « Un jour tu te souviens »

26 *Nawal:* Nawal's Letter

27 *Jordan:* Lettre de Jordan



28 Restoring

29 *Jacob:* Jacob's Letter

30 *Abrar:* Lettre d'Abrar

31 Artwork from Abrar

32 *Gabby:* Artwork from Gabby

33 Lettre de Gabby

34 *Jaydeep:* Jaydeep's Letter

35 *Soumil:* "I Like My Pool"

36 *Sarah W.:* Sarah W.'s Letter



37 Relating

38 *St. Augustine School –
Kim Lacelle's Class:* Shannen's Dream:
The Dream for a School

40 *Zainab K.:* Artwork from Zainab K.

41 *Kate:* Kate's Letter

42 *Abigail:* "Shannen's School"

43 *Alinah:* Artwork from Alinah

44 *Peter:* Peter's Letter



Honouring

We acknowledge the traditional **Algonquin territory** where this Special Edition was produced.

We acknowledge **young people like Shannen Koostachin and Jordan River Anderson** who have become role models for others.

Thank you to all of the young people who submitted poems, essays, letters and artwork to this Edition. For each and every submission, we recognize all of your hard work and effort. We had so many submissions that we sadly could not choose them all. For those that were not selected, we look forward to keep hearing more about your amazing, dedicated work for equity for First Nations and other young people across the country.

We would also like to recognize and thank the following people and organizations for their contributions in making this edition possible:

- Owen
- Raiyah
- Chief Dr. Robert Joseph
- Bethany Rhead
- Pierre Elliot Trudeau Elementary School Grade 4 and 5 split class
- Pierre Elliot Trudeau Elementary School Shannen's Dream Club
- First Nations Youth Activism Group
- Lisa Howell
- All of the teachers and parents who have supported the young people featured in this Edition
- Sioux Lookout First Nations Health Authority
- Leah Gryfe

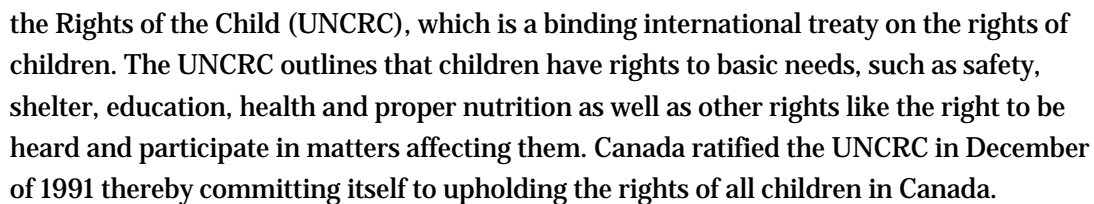
"I was always taught by the parents to stand up and speak out for myself. My message is to never give up. You get up, pick up your books and keep walking in your moccasins."

—Shannen Koostachin

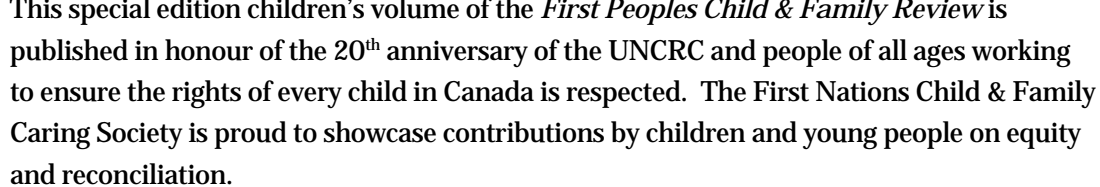




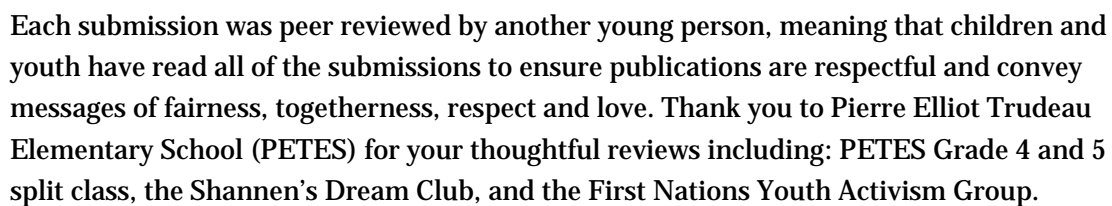
Foreword




November 20, 2014 marks the 25th anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which is a binding international treaty on the rights of children. The UNCRC outlines that children have rights to basic needs, such as safety, shelter, education, health and proper nutrition as well as other rights like the right to be heard and participate in matters affecting them. Canada ratified the UNCRC in December of 1991 thereby committing itself to upholding the rights of all children in Canada.



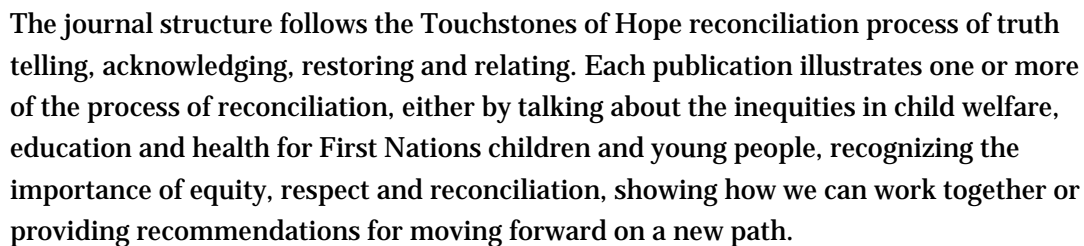
This special edition children's volume of the *First Peoples Child & Family Review* is published in honour of the 20th anniversary of the UNCRC and people of all ages working to ensure the rights of every child in Canada is respected. The First Nations Child & Family Caring Society is proud to showcase contributions by children and young people on equity and reconciliation.



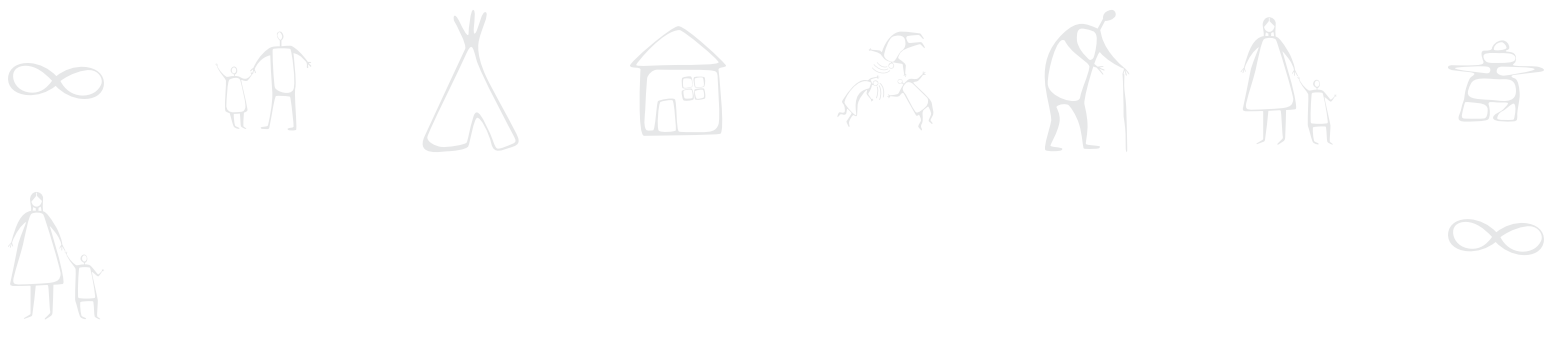
Each submission was peer reviewed by another young person, meaning that children and youth have read all of the submissions to ensure publications are respectful and convey messages of fairness, togetherness, respect and love. Thank you to Pierre Elliot Trudeau Elementary School (PETES) for your thoughtful reviews including: PETES Grade 4 and 5 split class, the Shannen's Dream Club, and the First Nations Youth Activism Group.



We are honoured and thankful to have special guest editors who share their powerful perspectives on reconciliation and equity. Chief Dr. Robert Joseph is a Hereditary Chief of the Gwawaenuk First Nation. In 2014, he testified at the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal for the case on First Nation child welfare (fnwitness.ca). Chief Joseph has given us permission to reproduce portions of his powerful testimony for his editorial, "The New Way Forward." Following Chief Joseph, Bethany Rhead, 2014 winner of the Peter Henderson Bryce award, provides insight into the importance of equality for all children in *Stop the Hurting: Education and Health Care for All*. The Shannen's Dream Club at PETES was also a recipient of the 2014 Peter Henderson Bryce award for courageous advocacy to benefit Aboriginal children and co-authored *Children Have Power* with the First Nations Youth Activism Group and teacher/mentor Lisa Howell. Their editorial contribution shares messages of equity and love for First Nations children and all children.



The journal structure follows the Touchstones of Hope reconciliation process of truth telling, acknowledging, restoring and relating. Each publication illustrates one or more of the process of reconciliation, either by talking about the inequities in child welfare, education and health for First Nations children and young people, recognizing the importance of equity, respect and reconciliation, showing how we can work together or providing recommendations for moving forward on a new path.



Thank you to all of the young people who sent us submissions for the journal. While we were not able to accept them all, we recognize and greatly appreciate all of the hard work that went into each and every submission. We encourage all of you to keep on doing the amazing things you are doing to make this country one that uplifts both First Nations and non-Aboriginal young people and their families by honouring the rights in the UNCRC and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

We look forward to the future with hope for a brighter, better Canada for all.

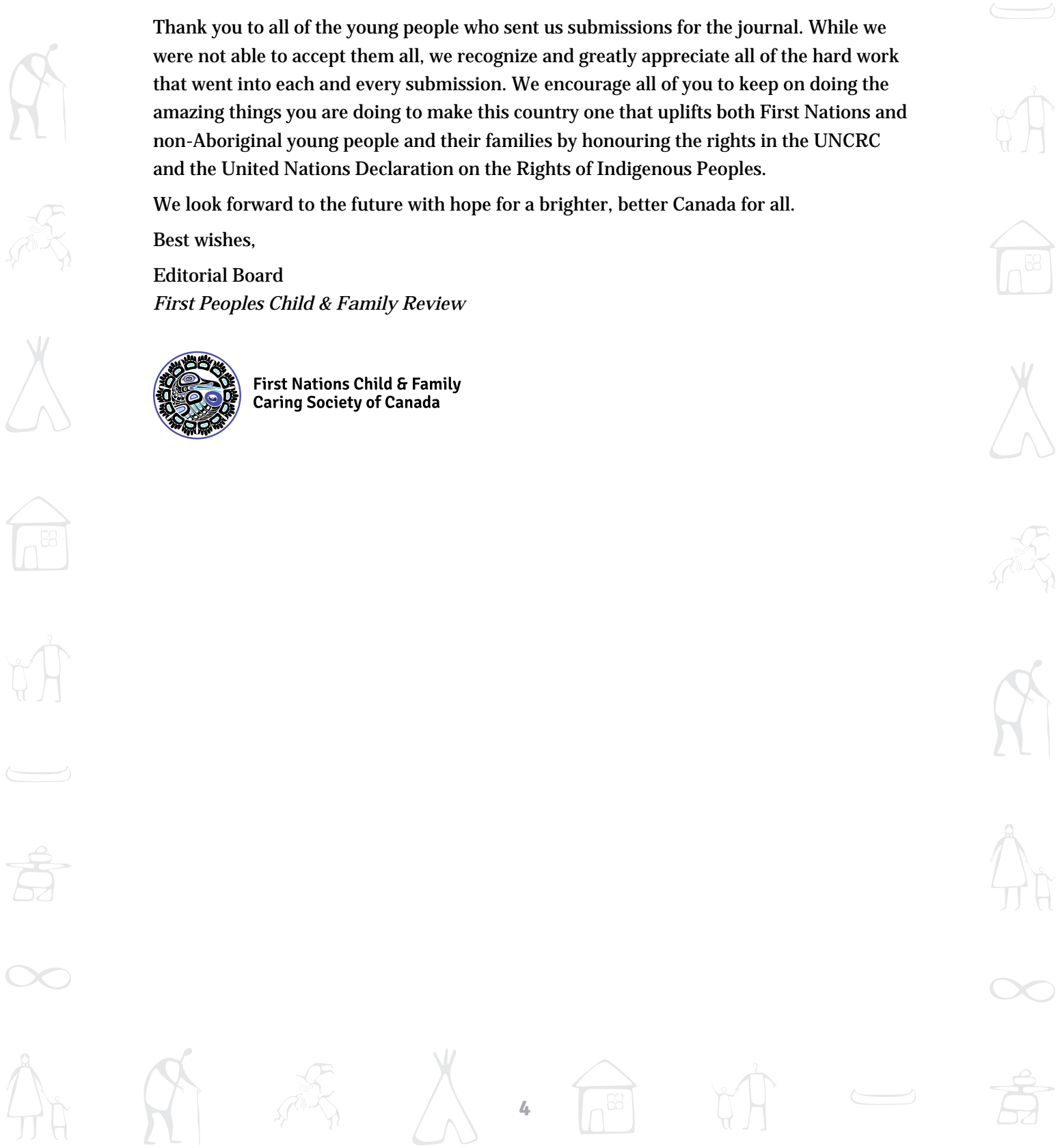
Best wishes,

Editorial Board

First Peoples Child & Family Review



**First Nations Child & Family
Caring Society of Canada**






Editorials




The New Way Forward


Chief Dr. Robert Joseph¹





I am a Kwakwaka'wakw person from the coast of British Columbia. Our group lives on the North Vancouver Island area of Vancouver and onto the mainland and we have a really ancient culture that has thrived there for thousands of years. And we still exercise and carry and practise some of the traditions that are important to us, including how we perceive children in our world and practices and perspectives around child-raising.





I think that one of the greatest tragedies of all of the little children who went to Residential Schools was that we never experienced love, it was just simply absent in our lives and it resonated in my life for a long time. In spite of all of those things that were broken and the things that we were not able to do for our children anymore, we still deeply love them, we still deeply desire to re-empower ourselves to raise our children in a way that we want to.




As Canadians, we share a responsibility to look after each other and to acknowledge the pain and suffering that our diverse societies have endured, a pain that has been handed down to the next generations. We need to right these wrongs, heal together and create a new future that honours the unique gifts of our children and grandchildren. I have been working in Vancouver, B.C., across the country talking about Canadians and talking about Aboriginal peoples and talking to all kinds of ethnic groups about who we are as Canadians. And everybody – in the boardrooms in Vancouver, British Columbia, the big wheel CEOs, the politicians, the ordinary people, the people who are public servants – agrees that this is the time that we ought to be starting this new discourse of who we are and start to talk about a new relationship between all of us that is different than anything we have had before this moment.

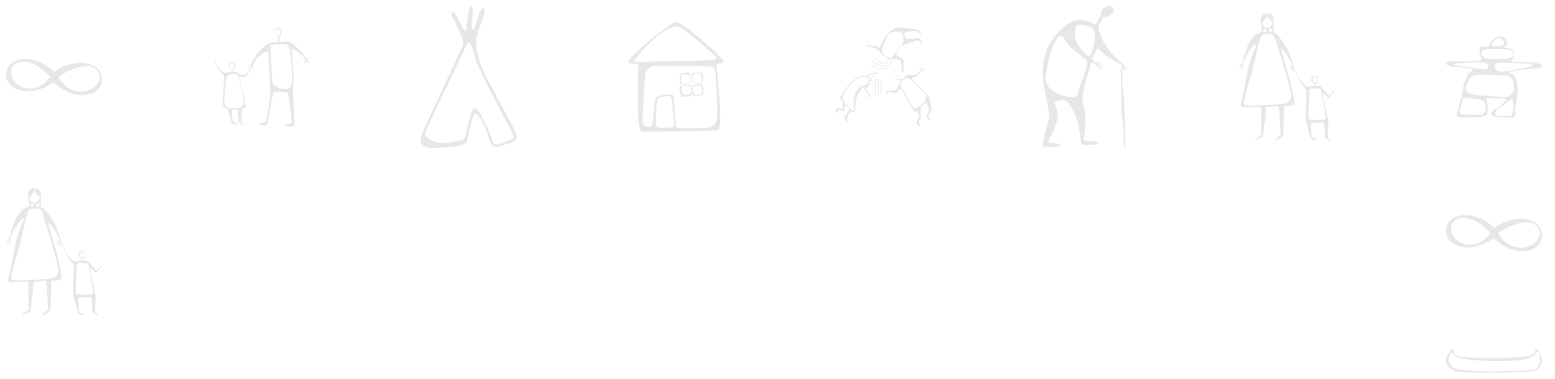


I think we can find a new way forward that is going to hold promise for every Canadian child born – that every kid can achieve their optimum potential. That is the dream and we can make it happen.



¹ Watch Chief Dr. Robert Joseph's testimony at: <http://aptn.ca/news/tag/kids-in-care>





Stop the Hurting: Education and Health Care for All

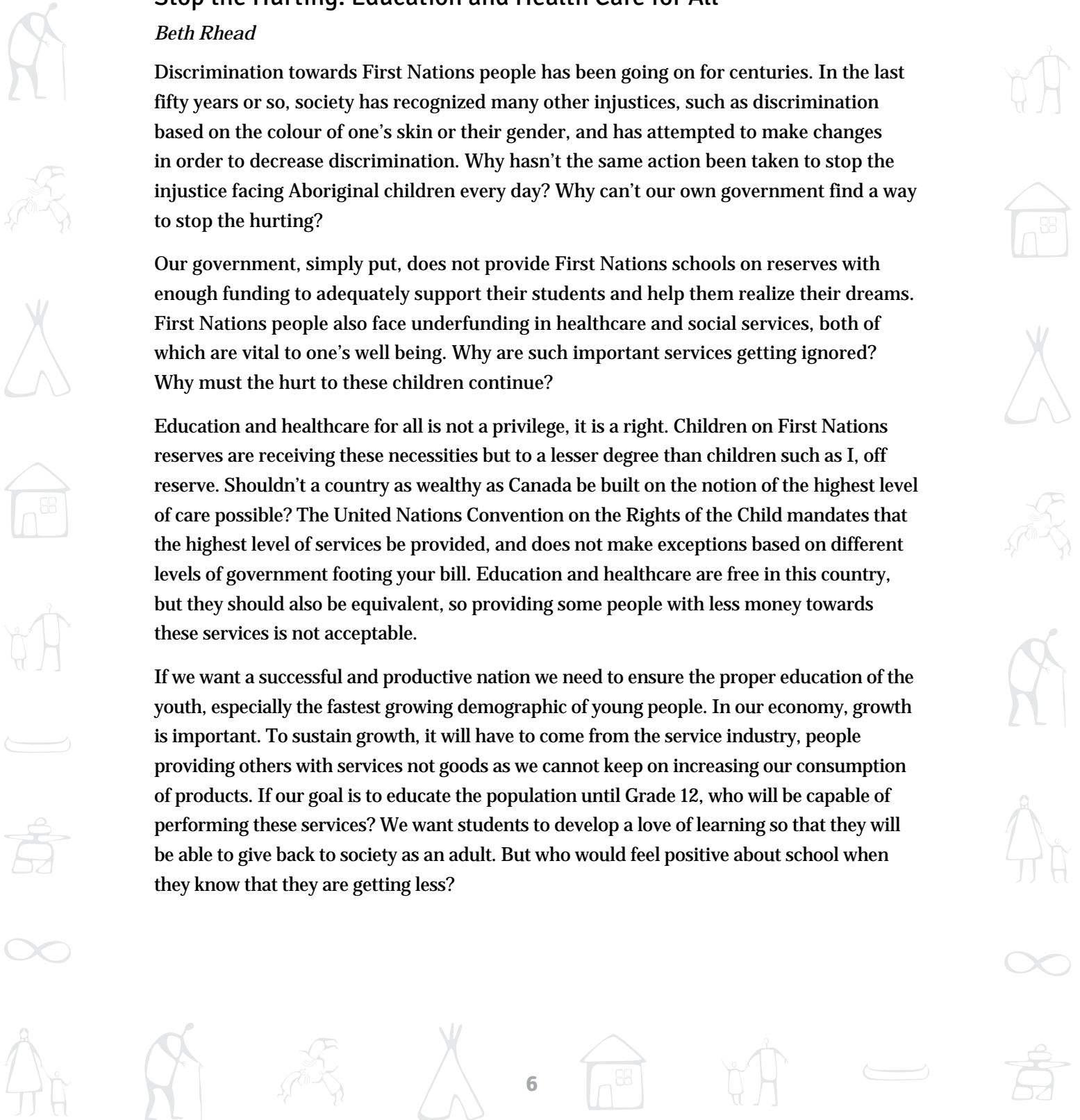
Beth Rhead

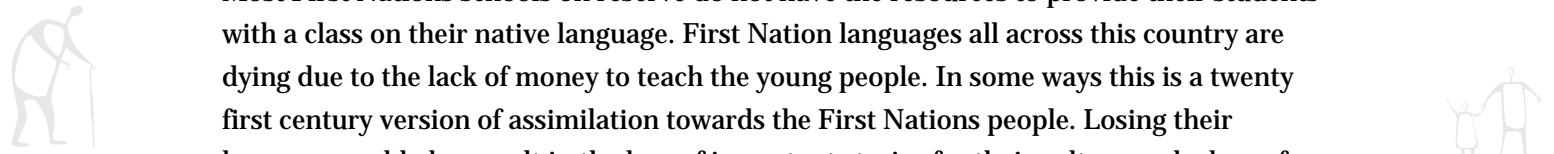
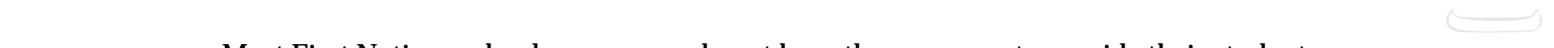
Discrimination towards First Nations people has been going on for centuries. In the last fifty years or so, society has recognized many other injustices, such as discrimination based on the colour of one's skin or their gender, and has attempted to make changes in order to decrease discrimination. Why hasn't the same action been taken to stop the injustice facing Aboriginal children every day? Why can't our own government find a way to stop the hurting?

Our government, simply put, does not provide First Nations schools on reserves with enough funding to adequately support their students and help them realize their dreams. First Nations people also face underfunding in healthcare and social services, both of which are vital to one's well being. Why are such important services getting ignored? Why must the hurt to these children continue?

Education and healthcare for all is not a privilege, it is a right. Children on First Nations reserves are receiving these necessities but to a lesser degree than children such as I, off reserve. Shouldn't a country as wealthy as Canada be built on the notion of the highest level of care possible? The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child mandates that the highest level of services be provided, and does not make exceptions based on different levels of government footing your bill. Education and healthcare are free in this country, but they should also be equivalent, so providing some people with less money towards these services is not acceptable.

If we want a successful and productive nation we need to ensure the proper education of the youth, especially the fastest growing demographic of young people. In our economy, growth is important. To sustain growth, it will have to come from the service industry, people providing others with services not goods as we cannot keep on increasing our consumption of products. If our goal is to educate the population until Grade 12, who will be capable of performing these services? We want students to develop a love of learning so that they will be able to give back to society as an adult. But who would feel positive about school when they know that they are getting less?





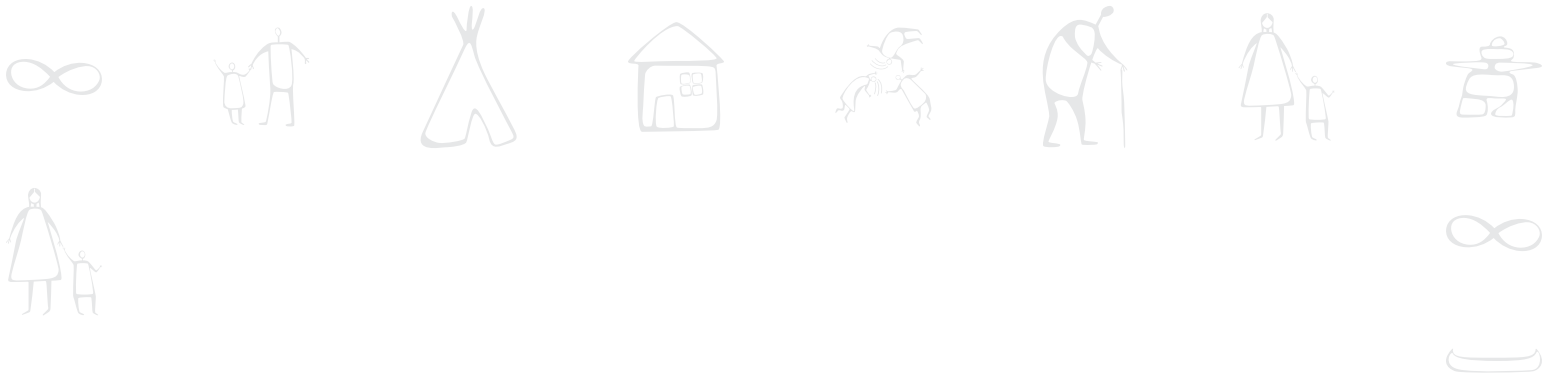
Most First Nations schools on reserve do not have the resources to provide their students with a class on their native language. First Nation languages all across this country are dying due to the lack of money to teach the young people. In some ways this is a twenty first century version of assimilation towards the First Nations people. Losing their language could also result in the loss of important stories for their culture and a loss of self-identity. If we want a diverse and open Canada for all people we need to support other cultures. Maybe a good place to start would be the culture that was here first.

Most of the youth at my school plan to go on to college or university after graduating, to receive a higher education to hopefully lead to a better career. These opportunities should be within the reach of all Canadians far and wide. I have no idea of a career path yet for myself, but I have been given the opportunity to be able to choose my own way – an opportunity that all children deserve. No one should be dropping out of school because they feel it is inadequate. No one should have to learn with their coats and mitts still on in order to prevent frostbite. This is not equality and this is not justice. This is not how we should be educating our youth, who will become our future.

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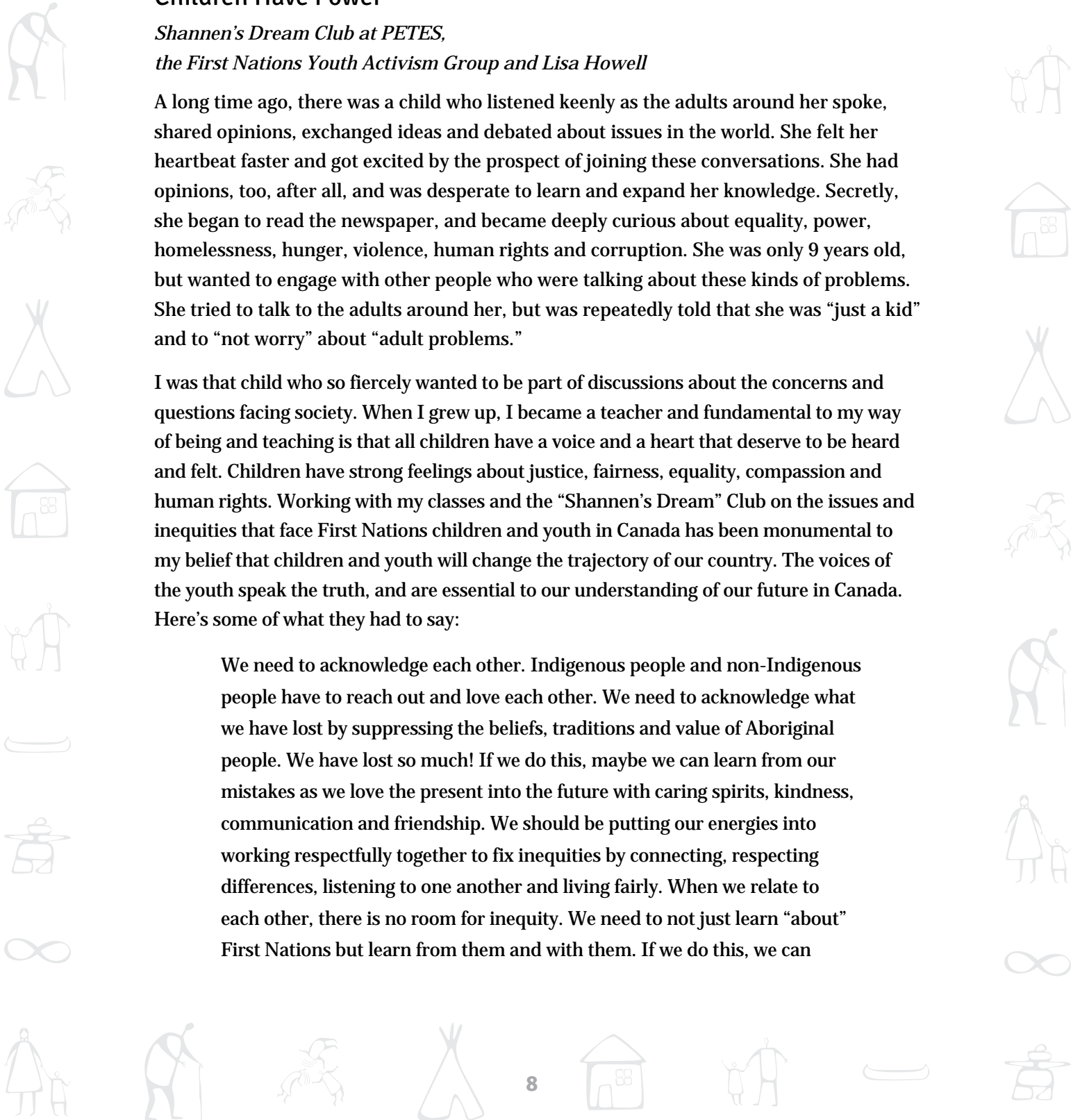
Children Have Power

*Shannen's Dream Club at PETES,
the First Nations Youth Activism Group and Lisa Howell*

A long time ago, there was a child who listened keenly as the adults around her spoke, shared opinions, exchanged ideas and debated about issues in the world. She felt her heartbeat faster and got excited by the prospect of joining these conversations. She had opinions, too, after all, and was desperate to learn and expand her knowledge. Secretly, she began to read the newspaper, and became deeply curious about equality, power, homelessness, hunger, violence, human rights and corruption. She was only 9 years old, but wanted to engage with other people who were talking about these kinds of problems. She tried to talk to the adults around her, but was repeatedly told that she was “just a kid” and to “not worry” about “adult problems.”

I was that child who so fiercely wanted to be part of discussions about the concerns and questions facing society. When I grew up, I became a teacher and fundamental to my way of being and teaching is that all children have a voice and a heart that deserve to be heard and felt. Children have strong feelings about justice, fairness, equality, compassion and human rights. Working with my classes and the “Shannen’s Dream” Club on the issues and inequities that face First Nations children and youth in Canada has been monumental to my belief that children and youth will change the trajectory of our country. The voices of the youth speak the truth, and are essential to our understanding of our future in Canada. Here’s some of what they had to say:

We need to acknowledge each other. Indigenous people and non-Indigenous people have to reach out and love each other. We need to acknowledge what we have lost by suppressing the beliefs, traditions and value of Aboriginal people. We have lost so much! If we do this, maybe we can learn from our mistakes as we love the present into the future with caring spirits, kindness, communication and friendship. We should be putting our energies into working respectfully together to fix inequities by connecting, respecting differences, listening to one another and living fairly. When we relate to each other, there is no room for inequity. We need to not just learn “about” First Nations but learn from them and with them. If we do this, we can

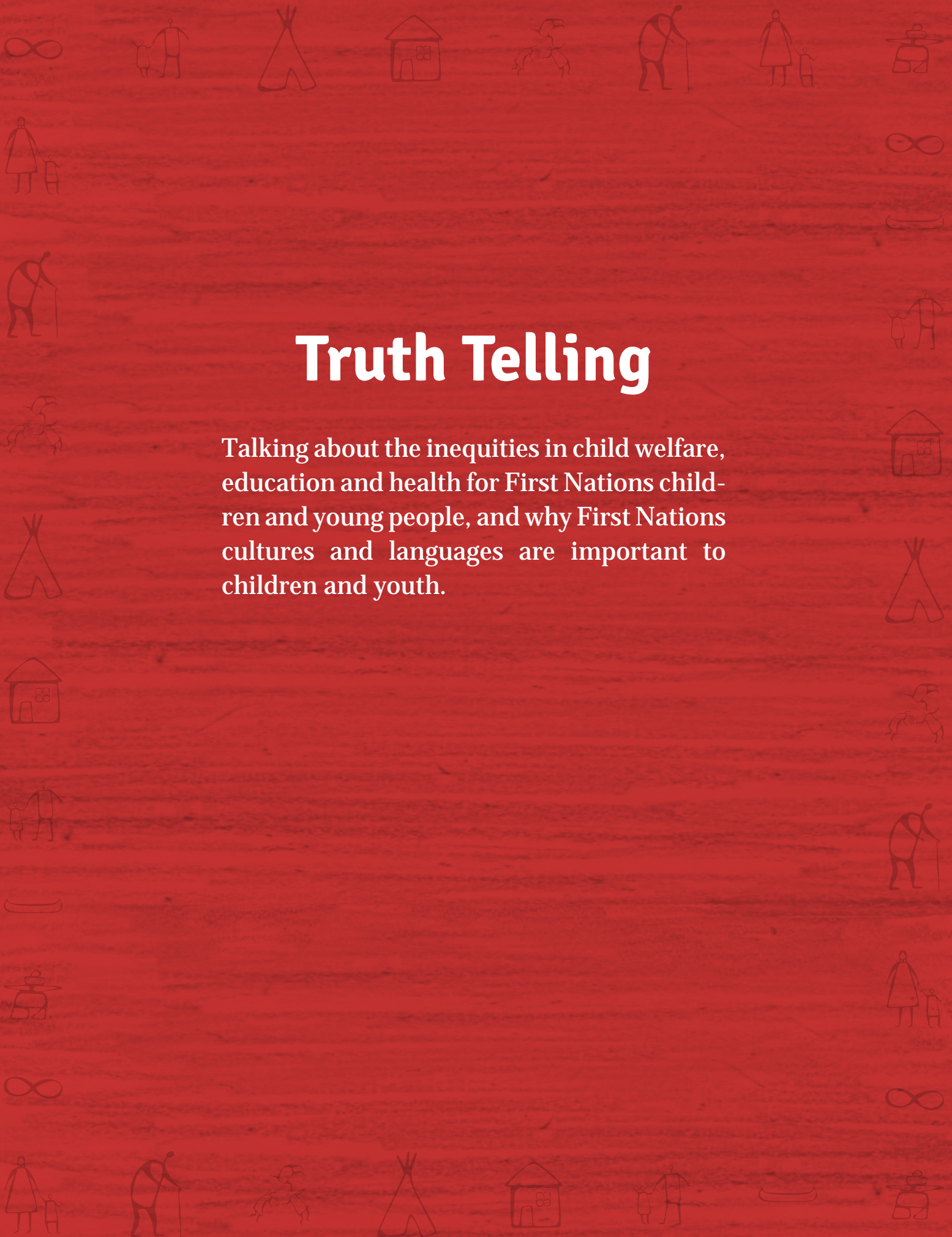


restore relationships and fix the harm that is happening to so many First Nations youth. How can we restore such a damaged past? We think we can by protecting equality, by being generous, by honouring treaties, by learning traditions, by knowing what land we live on. We definitely need to end inequities in education and child welfare NOW. We cannot do anything, though, if we do not tell the truth. So often adults lie to cover up things they are embarrassed about or don't want to have to explain. Kids see things clearly if they are given the opportunities to. Telling the truth is to see clearly and being courageous enough to speak it. It's about living your life to make a difference. Making a difference means taking a stand. If we all stand together, we'll stand strong and proud as friends. So speak up, and use your voice. Get involved, learn, share, have opinions and live by listening to your heart and your head.

The children and youth who wrote and illustrated the entries in this journal are not secretly reading the newspaper as I once was. They are strong leaders and visionaries who understand that caring is not enough. You must act. You must speak, sing and take a stand for a better Canada for us all. Join us!

Truth Telling

Talking about the inequities in child welfare, education and health for First Nations children and young people, and why First Nations cultures and languages are important to children and youth.



2/10/14

Honorable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A2

Dear Honorable Steven Harper:

I am writing to you today to express my absolute disgust and frustration with the way the Federal Government handles the care of First Nations children and their families. I find it completely shameful that without these people, Canada wouldn't be what it is today, yet we don't even have enough respect or love in our hearts to provide them with proper education, proper housing and clean drinking water

Every year, approximately 20,000 First Nations people have to make do and raise children on reserves that have no running water or sewage. As of July 2011, 126 First Nations communities with access to running water were under a Drinking Water Advisory that lasted well over a year. 1 in 4 Indigenous persons live in dwellings that require major repairs, and when it comes to education, Indigenous children only receive 60% of what non-Indigenous counterparts receive.

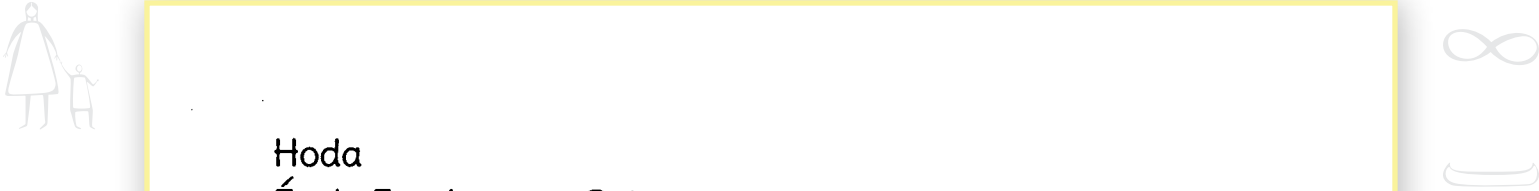

I believe we must now ask ourselves; are these people any less important than the rest of the population? Did they do something to deserve such treatment? No, in fact, they gave us everything they have. Your office wouldn't even be standing today on the land it is on had it not been for the First Nations people. Just some food for thought. No human being should have to endure such conditions. We're all equals, and as Mahatma Gandhi says, we are all children of God. I thank you for taking the time to read this letter and I hope you will take these points into consideration and finally hear the pleas of the First Nations people that have been silenced for generations.

Yours truly,



Sarah

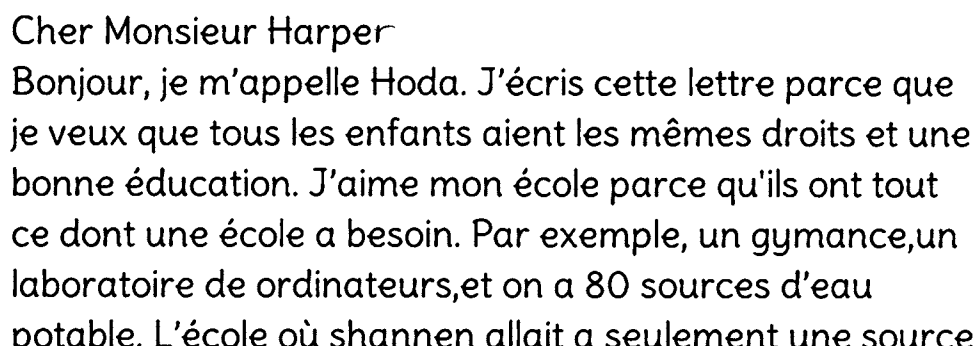
Sarah A.



Hoda
École Featherston Drive
1801 Featherston Drive
Ottawa, ON
K1H 6P4



Premier Ministre Stephen Harper
chambre des communes
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0C6



Cher Monsieur Harper
Bonjour, je m'appelle Hoda. J'écris cette lettre parce que je veux que tous les enfants aient les mêmes droits et une bonne éducation. J'aime mon école parce qu'ils ont tout ce dont une école a besoin. Par exemple, un gymnase, un laboratoire de ordinateurs, et on a 80 sources d'eau potable. L'école où shannen allait a seulement une source d'eau potable pour la communauté. On a 400 élèves et 1 lavabo pour chaque classe. Imagine que tes enfants va a un école avec seulement 1 lavabo et 1 toilet et il ya 350 élèves, qu'est ce que tu vas faire tu pouvais poursuivre le gouvernement si ton élève n'ont pas une bonne éducatons.



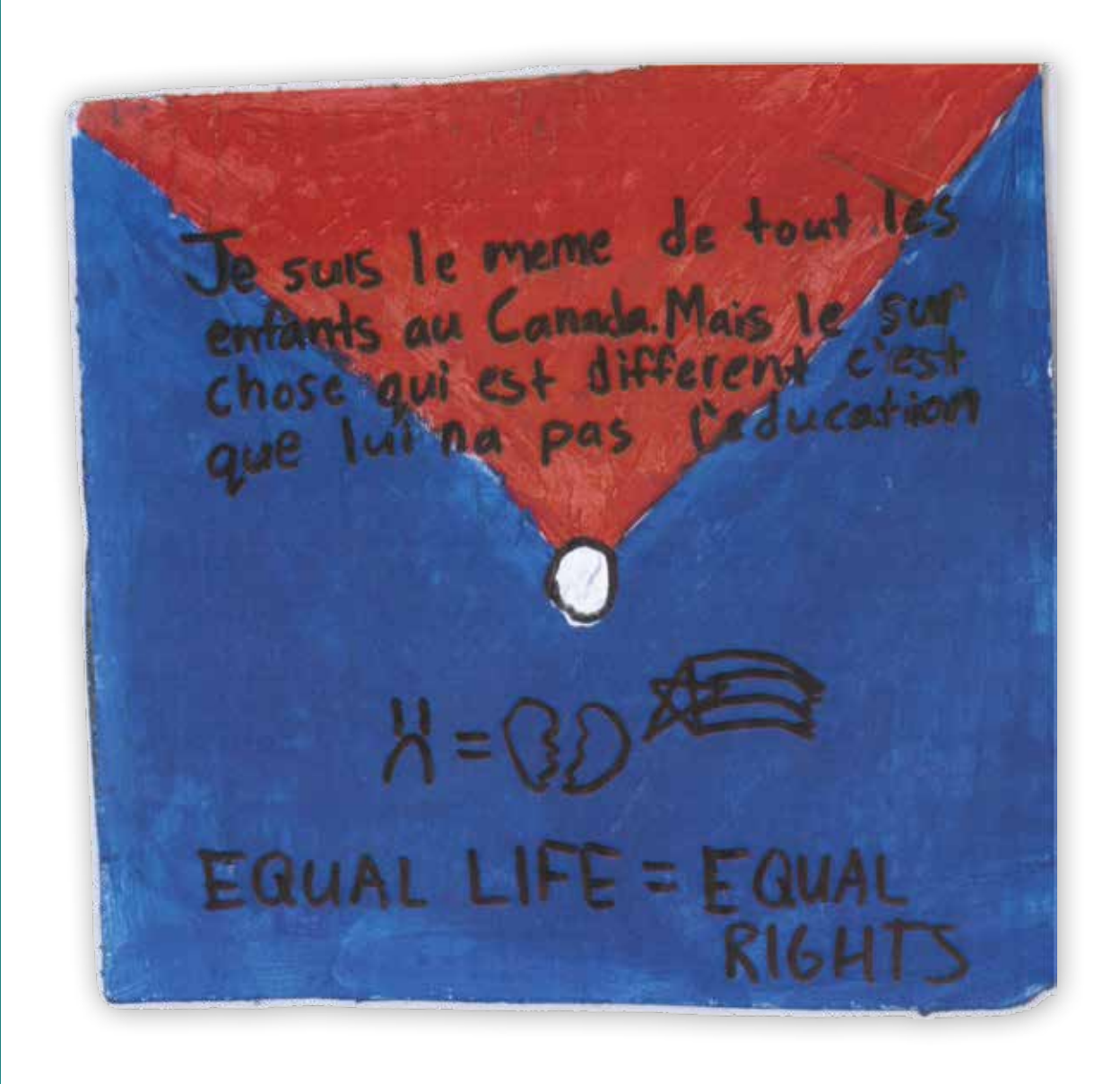
Sincèrement, Hoda



Hoda



Hoda



École Featherston Drive Public school
1801 Featherston Drive
Ottawa, ON K1H 6P4

Premier Ministre Stephen Harper
Chambers des Communes
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A1

Cher Mr. Harper

Tous les jours quand je vais à l'école c'est normal parce que j'assume que tous les enfants ont les même droits et éducation. Quand j'avais 5-9 ans, je pensais que l'école était une place spéciale parce ce que tout le monde peut avoir l'éducation qu'ils ont besoin. Mais je ne sa vais pas que Les Premières Nations dans tout le Canada ne reçoivent pas une éducation équitable parce qu'ils/elles sont Premières Nations et vivent sur les réserves. On a besoin de ne se battre pour l'éducation. **CE N'EST PAS JUSTE!** On comprend la situation vous ne pouvez pas la cacher. On droit construire/réparer les écoles. J'ai une bonne école, pourquoi pas eux.





It's Complicated

by Jillian

It's complicated.

Some may say it's simple,

but it's much more.

It's complicated.

They're arrogant with their lucky lack of taxes and free education

and they ask for more.

You give them an inch and they take a mile,

but it's not that way.

And it never was that way.

Why do we pretend to see when our society turns a nascent blind eye?

Why do we listen to the name calling

spitting out of stereotyped mouths

engulfed in lies?

Most are oblivious

and oblivion is eating away at our deteriorated relationship

that never really had a stage before deteriorated.

We got off on the wrong foot

and never decided to switch feet.

Today we find ourselves with scarves of ignorance wrapped around our necks

so tight that nobody will speak the truth.

Scarves that leave scars of guilt,

And it will keep flowing into the house and destroying the foundation until we rebuild the house. You see, we need to rebuild the house

that towers over our dystopian relationship to make things better.

But it's not that simple

and some may say it's simple.

But it's not.

It's complicated.



Friday, May 30th, 2014

Dear Prime Minister Harper,

My name is Isra and I am a student at Featherston Drive Public School. At school, I have an opportunity to grow and develop safely. Also at my school, I feel I can be who I am and I feel like I belong, but for the First Nation Indian kids they did not feel the same way because they had to go to a school far away from their home and their parents couldn't even say no and were forced to send their children to boarding school. At that boarding school the Canadian government tried to change those kids and they were not allowed to sing, dance or speak their languages. In the summer the kids were allowed to go see their parents but if you lived too far away you could not go and see your parents. And the worst thing was the government did experiments on the kids by not giving them milk for a year to see what would happen to the kids.

How would you feel if you were one of those kids? Miserable. Can't you see that they think their life is better? They should not need to change. Sure, they might not have a lot of buildings or medical services, but they are taught religion, faith, how to hunt and how to take care of their families some day.

A lot of kids died at that boarding school and some even committed suicide at the age as small as 9! You all should feel really bad for what you did. Some kids have forgiven them but some have not and all still have bad memories about that boarding school. I know they thought it

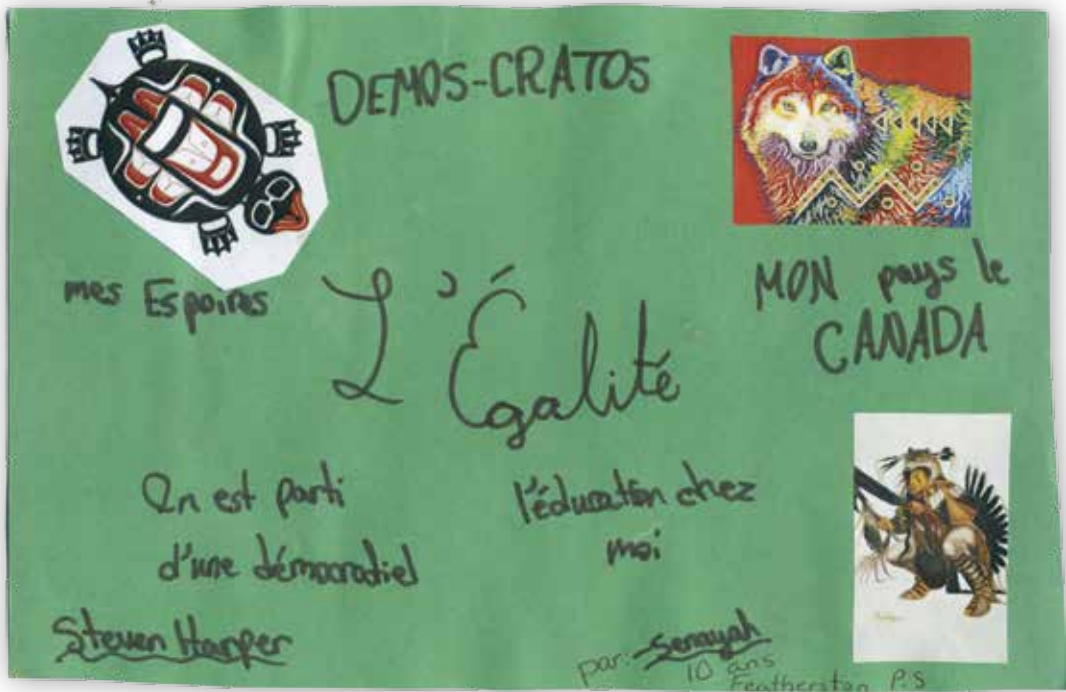
would be the best for them but was it really?

Look at them and look at me, we are the same so let them be!

From:

Isra

Isra



RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS:

BUT WHAT DID THEY LEARN?



Erin



Acknowledging

Learning from the past, recognizing the importance of equity, respect and reconciliation and seeing one another with new understanding to move forward on a new path.

January 21st 2014

Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington street
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A2

Dear Mr. Harper:

I am writing you this letter today concerning First Nations children on reserves. These children are not being funded with the proper education. Why do First Nations children receive less funding from the Federal Government of Canada than all other children who are funded Provincially?

All across Canada, there were only a handful of new schools built on the reserves, in fact, the same number that were built in Ottawa. Schools are built for "average Canadian children" when we need them. Why isn't it the same for first nations community? It's not fair. This is their land. Children shouldn't have to beg for an education. For all you know the cure for cancer could be in the minds of one of these children, but these children will never be funded with the right education for us to ever find out.

I hope you can take what I've said into full understanding. I know you can make a difference and change lives for First Nations children, and give them the proper education they need, want, and deserve. End the discrimination today! You have the power to do it.

Yours sincerely,



Shinequa

Le 12 mai 2014
Aya
École Featherston Drive
1801 Featherston Drive
Ottawa, ON K1H6P4

Premier Ministre Stephen Harper
Chambre des communes
111, rue Wellington
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6



Cher M. Harper
Imaginez aller à l'école où, vous ne vous sentez pas confortable parce que l'école n'est pas sécuritaire. Les fenêtres sont cassées, il n'y a pas d'eau potable, il n'y a pas de chaleur et pas de fournitures scolaires. De plus, ils utilisent des portatives et tu dois te salir pour changer de classe. Maintenant il y a 29 écoles qui ont besoin de réparation majeure et 48 écoles nécessaires dans les communautés Autochtones.

Mon nom est Aya et je vais à l'école publique Featherston drive. Je suis en 6e année. Featherston est une très bonne école. Ici, les enfants veulent vraiment aller à l'école parce qu'on s'y sent en sécurité. Dans mon école il y a une bibliothèque, laboratoire informatique, 80 sources d'eau potable, presque 20 activités extracurriculaires et ma classe va sur des voyages beaucoup. Cependant les enfants qui sont Premières Nations, sont forcés d'aller à l'école parce qu'ils veulent de l'éducation même si leur école ne sont pas sécuritaires. Mais je crois que les élèves de 8e année reçoivent l'éducation des élèves de 3e année. Le gouvernement ne finance pas :

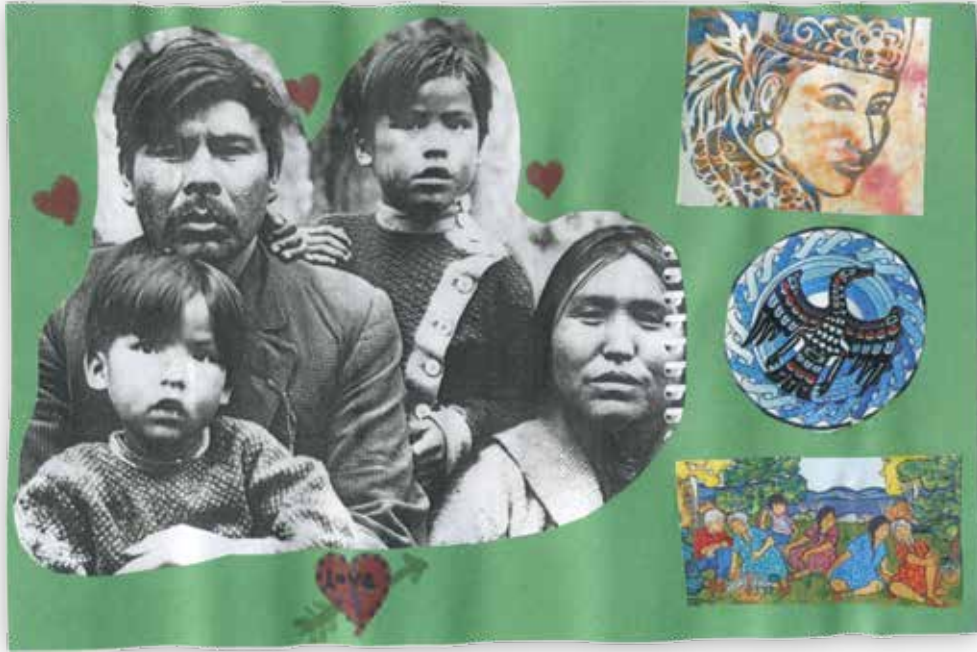
1. 0 \$ pour bibliothèque
2. 0 \$ pour les ordinateurs, logiciels et formations des enseignants
3. 0 \$ pour les activités extracurriculaires
4. 0 \$ pour les services de 2e et 3e niveaux (comprenant financement des activités de base, conseils scolaires, gouvernance et recherche en éducation)
5. 0 \$ pour des langues en danger d'extinction
6. 0 \$ pour la direction, le conseil d'administration, les supports pédagogiques et le développement d'un curriculum qui respecte la culture

J'espère que tu comprends maintenant comment les Premières Nations se sentent après avoir lu cette lettre !

Cordialement, Aya

Aya

22



Tous les
familles
sont
Importantes!!

pari Abeer
Featherston
MFI 5

Tout le
monde a
Besoin de
L'ÉDUCATION

par: Zainab A
pour: Mr. Steven Harper



Zainab A.



Un jour tu te souviens

Un jour, tu te souviens, tu jouais gaiement sans te soucier de ce qui arriverait demain. Puis des gens sont arrivés et ils te l'ont pris.

Tu rejoignais ta mère pour faire fumer le poisson et tu allais pêcher avec ton papa sans hameçons. Puis des gens sont arrivés et ils te l'ont pris.

Un jour tu te souviens, tu passais les heures dans la forêt à écouter les oiseaux chanter, à cueillir des herbes saines et les manger. Puis des gens sont arrivés et ils te l'ont pris.

Tu habitais la terre, tu la respectais et tu l'aimais. Et même cela, ils te l'ont pris.

Aujourd'hui, t'aimerais seulement vivre en harmonie avec les autres, pas en avoir plus, pas en avoir moins, être juste comme tout le monde. Égal. Mais ils te le refusent.

Il te reste ton désir de justice, et cela ils ne pourront jamais te le prendre.

-Évelyne, 11 ans



Évelyne

25

Dear Steven Harper,

Going to school has been a pleasure. Free education is more valuable than anything. So I wonder, why didn't you give this pleasure to the first nations? Why did you cut their and let them drink at the age of 9? I mean, it's no surprise that basically all children with developmental delays don't get any help seeing as you cut their funds and pay attention to richer provinces. I mean, imagine if all your classes were only 30 minutes long? What, if you had to wash your hands and had to wait 200+ in line because there was only 1 sink for 200 students and staff? In Ottawa there are over 100 schools, but in Attawapiskat, there isn't even 5! I honestly don't get it! Then on top of that you don't even mind if strangers chop their trees when the first nations can't themselves! Do you understand justice, because that doesn't seem fair to me! I mean you need education, it's basically life, so why do you say you let them live if you don't give them school? All I'm asking is to share resources and think about Shannon and her dream.

- Nawal

Nawal

Le mardi 17 juin 2014

**Jordan
école Featherston Drive Public School
1801 Featherston Drive
Ottawa, ON
K1H 6P4**

**Premier Ministre Stephen Harper
Chambre des Communes
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A2**

Cher Monsieur Harper,

Bonjour, je m'appelle Jordan. Je suis dans la 6ième année dans une classe Français Immersion. Je suis très fâchée de ce que tu as fait. Tu n'étais pas là pour les autochtones et Shannen Koostachen. A mon école, on a de la bonne nourriture et 7 fontaines d'eau potables. Presque TOUT mon école est fâché de toi, Stephen Harper. Tu peux donner de l'argent aux autochtones. Tu peux avoir des peuples qui sont fière de toi. Tu peux Stephen Harper, tu peux! Tu va voir que nous sommes correctes à l'école! Je pense que tu peux , Mr. Harper! Je crois en toi!

Merci!

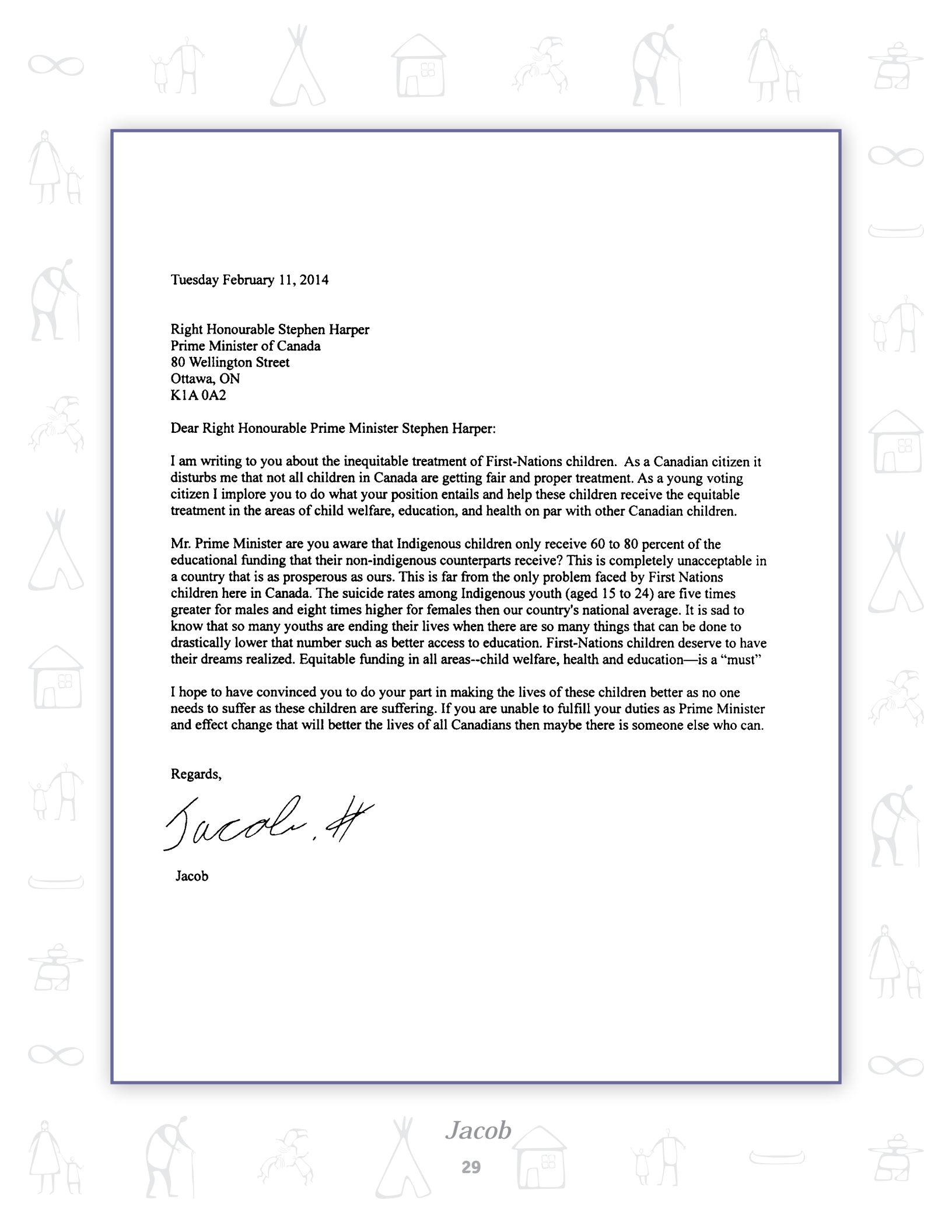
Sincèrement,

Jordano
Jordan



Restoring

Doing what we can to fix the harm and make changes to ensure it does not happen again in order to promote First Nations child and youth well-being.



Tuesday February 11, 2014

Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A2

Dear Right Honourable Prime Minister Stephen Harper:

I am writing to you about the inequitable treatment of First-Nations children. As a Canadian citizen it disturbs me that not all children in Canada are getting fair and proper treatment. As a young voting citizen I implore you to do what your position entails and help these children receive the equitable treatment in the areas of child welfare, education, and health on par with other Canadian children.

Mr. Prime Minister are you aware that Indigenous children only receive 60 to 80 percent of the educational funding that their non-indigenous counterparts receive? This is completely unacceptable in a country that is as prosperous as ours. This is far from the only problem faced by First Nations children here in Canada. The suicide rates among Indigenous youth (aged 15 to 24) are five times greater for males and eight times higher for females than our country's national average. It is sad to know that so many youths are ending their lives when there are so many things that can be done to drastically lower that number such as better access to education. First-Nations children deserve to have their dreams realized. Equitable funding in all areas—child welfare, health and education—is a “must”

I hope to have convinced you to do your part in making the lives of these children better as no one needs to suffer as these children are suffering. If you are unable to fulfill your duties as Prime Minister and effect change that will better the lives of all Canadians then maybe there is someone else who can.

Regards,



Jacob

Le 20 Mai 2014

Abrar

École: Feartherston

1801 Feartherston Drive

Ottawa, ON K1H 694

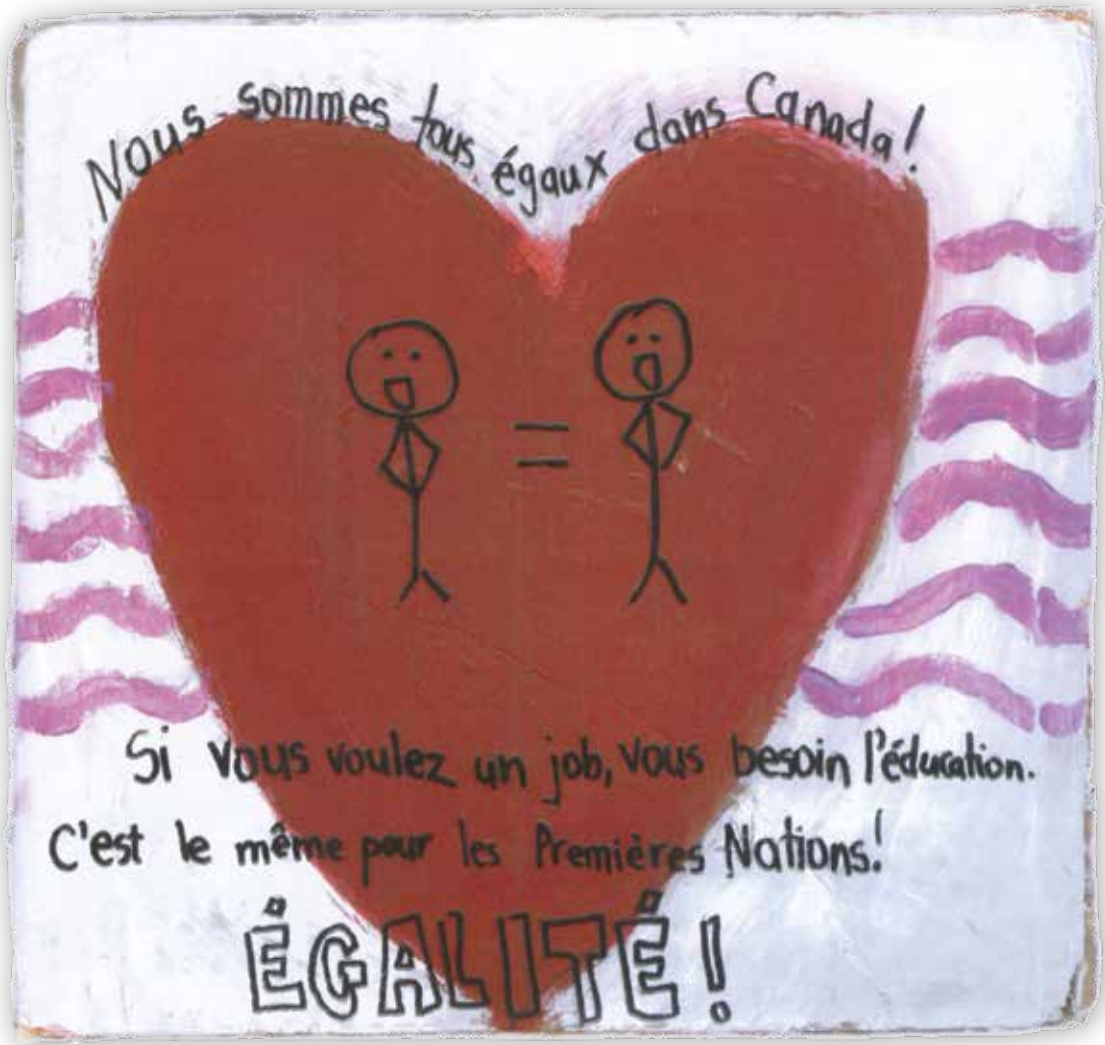
Cher Premier Ministre Harper, Je m'appelle Abrar. Je vais à l'école Feartherston Drive. J'aime aller à l'école Feartherston parce qu'il y a une bonne éducation, plus de 20 classes, 2 salles de sport, plus de 10 fontaines d'eau et 8 toilettes. Pourquoi les Premier Nations doivent se battre pour leur éducation. Ce n'est pas égale. Tu dois aider les Premières Nations. Tu dois payer plus d'argent pour leur éducation, Santé, vêtement, nourriture E.T.C. Est-ce tu peux retirer ton objection du le Canadian Human Rights. Je rêve et souhaite que tout le monde va être égale. Merci pour de lire mon lettre.



Sincèrement Abrar

Abrar





Gabby

21/5/14

Gabby

1801 Featherston Drive
ottawa ON k1h 6p4

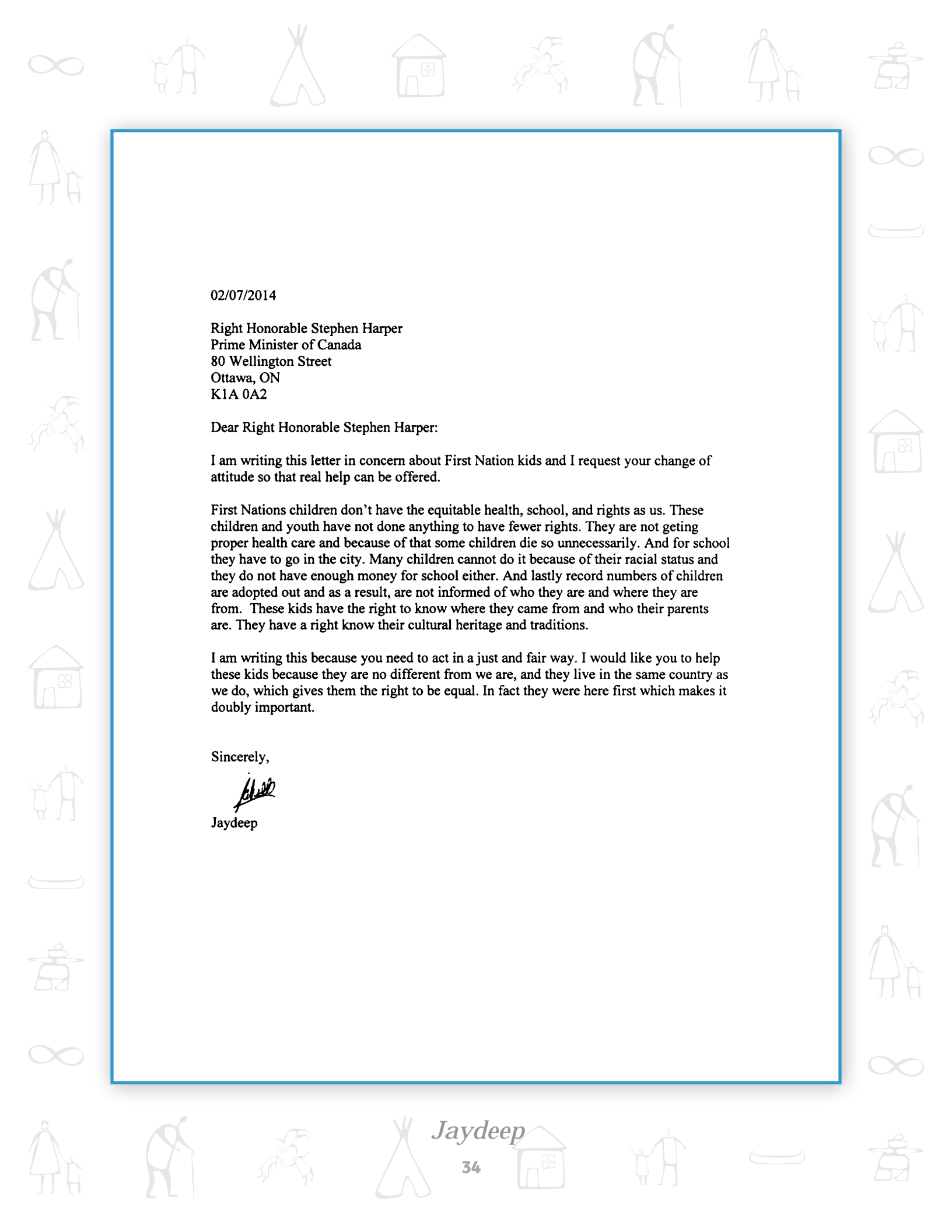
Stephen Harper
chambre des communes
Ottawa ON

Cher Premier Ministre Stephen Harper

Bonjour je m'appelle Gabrielle. A mon école presque tout le monde est gentil. La loi dit que tout le monde a le droit d'être traité également et d'avoir une bonne école. Le rêve de Shannen était d'avoir une bonne ^{école}. Maintenant il, ont construit des écoles mais il regarde les financements de les écoles il justes donne l'argent pour une école. Mais qui va donner les choses pour mettre dans l'école. Je pense que tu dois arrêter de penser à toi-même. finalement je n'aime pas la discrimination



Gabby



02/07/2014

Right Honorable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A2

Dear Right Honorable Stephen Harper:

I am writing this letter in concern about First Nation kids and I request your change of attitude so that real help can be offered.

First Nations children don't have the equitable health, school, and rights as us. These children and youth have not done anything to have fewer rights. They are not getting proper health care and because of that some children die so unnecessarily. And for school they have to go in the city. Many children cannot do it because of their racial status and they do not have enough money for school either. And lastly record numbers of children are adopted out and as a result, are not informed of who they are and where they are from. These kids have the right to know where they came from and who their parents are. They have a right to know their cultural heritage and traditions.


I am writing this because you need to act in a just and fair way. I would like you to help these kids because they are no different from we are, and they live in the same country as we do, which gives them the right to be equal. In fact they were here first which makes it doubly important.

Sincerely,



Jaydeep





February 9th, 2014

Right Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A2

Dear Rt. Honourable Stephen Harper

The time has come for you, and your government to take responsibility for the injustice shown to First Nations youth. These children, no different than any other Canadian child, are our future. They are the children who will one day be in your place, and other places of power in this great nation. Enough is enough. It is time to accept responsibility and give these children the same opportunities available to every other Canadian child, opportunities I assume you would want for your own children.

First Nations children only receive 60 to 80 percent of the education that their non-First Nations counter-parts receive. As of July 31st, 2011, 126 out of 633 First Nations communities with access to tap water were under a Drinking Water Advisory. 25% of those lasted over one year, while 20,000 Indigenous people on reserves have no access to running water or sewage disposal. Suicide rates of Indigenous youth are 5 times the national average for males and eight times the national average for females. Something needs to change. This is a serious problem. I participated in the Nishiyuu walk last year. I was greatly disappointed to hear that you, choosing to prioritize international relations over relations with your own people, did not meet these incredible young people, and instead chose to welcome pandas to the Toronto Zoo.

This, as well as the repeated dismissals of the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal on First Nations Child Welfare, has led youth in my age group to lose a great deal of respect for you. If you had simply admitted to the negligence of your government towards First Nations youth in education, child welfare and health, and taken responsibility for the appalling conditions that so many First Nations youth live in, that would not be so.

I am of voting age, as are a great number of my friends, and not a single person I have spoken to in my age group is impressed. You must remember that we are your future. We are a new generation of people to impress. A new generation of youth who are passionate and driven towards change has stepped up. If you could simply take responsibility for the situation, perhaps you could gain respect from my generation.

We will no longer blindly follow. We have seen the strength we have when we work together, and we demand change. We demand that you honour your responsibilities to First Nations children and youth. Help them as if they were your sons and daughters. Give them the chance to live and dream as other Canadian youth can. Show them and the rest of us that you desire the best for this country, because the strength of a nation is shown by the equality of opportunities presented to its youth and children.

*Louis Trudey,
Sarah*

Sarah W.

Relating

Working respectfully together
to fix the inequities and make
a better Canada for all.

Shannen's Dream

The Dream For A School



Class Time Line

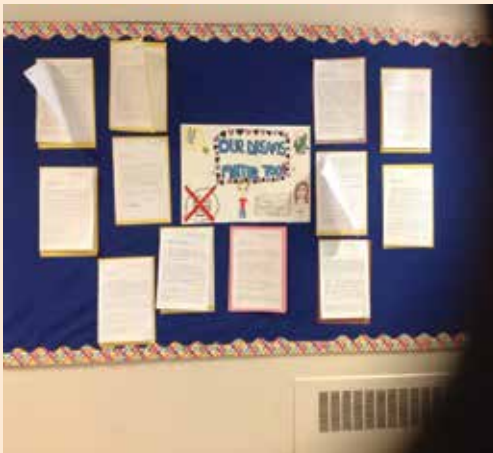
- First we started reading the book and got really interested in it.
- Then we started doing inquiry questions and homework assignments about the story.
- We started answering questions about the book on edmodo for homework. Also, we started doing [padlet](#) walls about Shannen's Dream.
- For homework one time we made [presentations](#) about someone who stood up for human rights like Shannen and Serena her sister.
- After a while Jennifer King came to our school from [First Nations Caring](#).
- Then we started writing letters to the Government to tell them about Attawapiskat.
- After all the work we were asked to go to the walk on June 11th.

June 11, 2014 Our Dreams Matter Too

On June 11, 2014 the Grade 5 students attended the annual "Our Dreams Matter Too" event. Our class wrote letters and two of our classmates were chosen to speak.



Letters to Prime Minister and MPP's

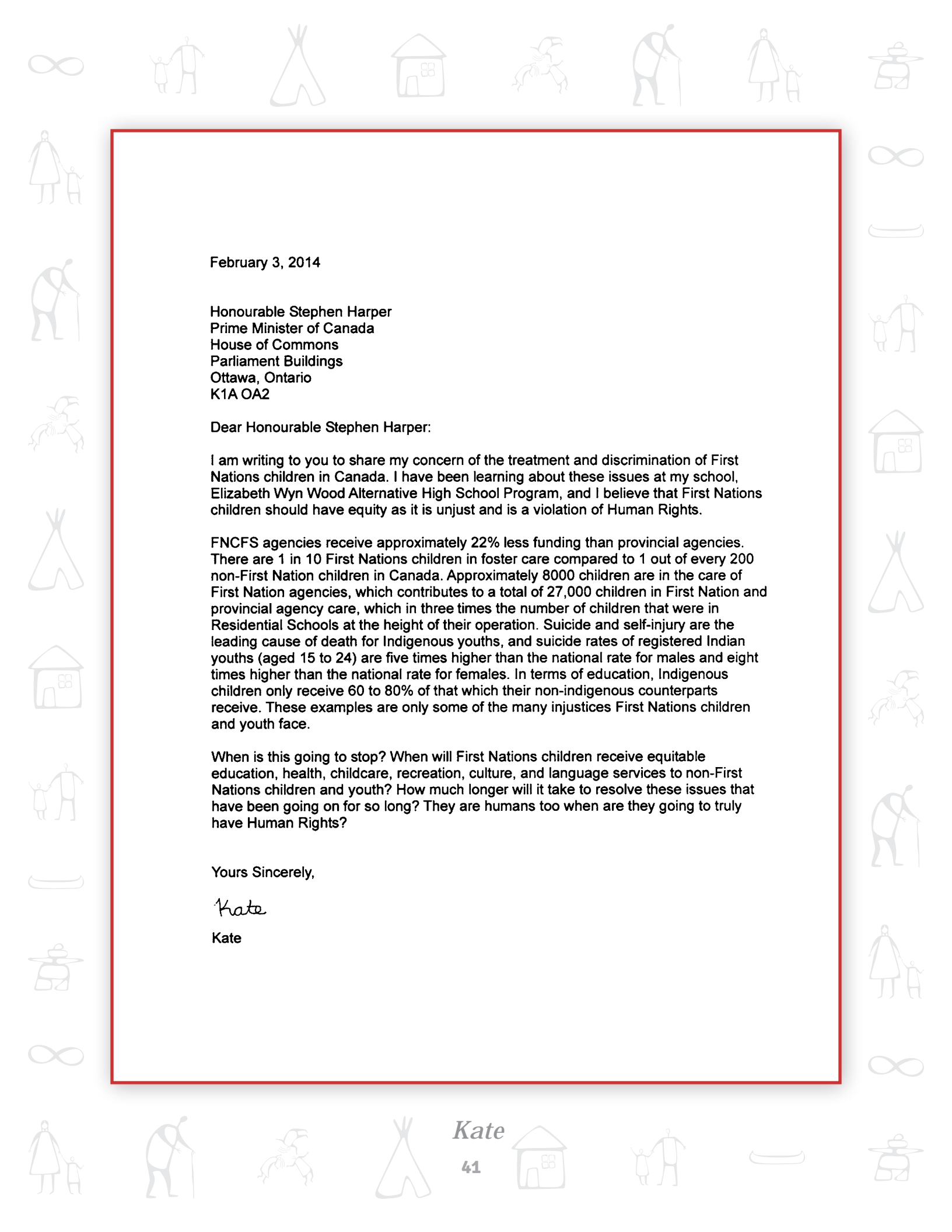


These are the letters we wrote.

St. Augustine School, Kim Lacelle's Class



Zainab.K.



February 3, 2014

Honourable Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
House of Commons
Parliament Buildings
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A2

Dear Honourable Stephen Harper:

I am writing to you to share my concern of the treatment and discrimination of First Nations children in Canada. I have been learning about these issues at my school, Elizabeth Wyn Wood Alternative High School Program, and I believe that First Nations children should have equity as it is unjust and is a violation of Human Rights.

FNCFCS agencies receive approximately 22% less funding than provincial agencies. There are 1 in 10 First Nations children in foster care compared to 1 out of every 200 non-First Nations children in Canada. Approximately 8000 children are in the care of First Nation agencies, which contributes to a total of 27,000 children in First Nation and provincial agency care, which in three times the number of children that were in Residential Schools at the height of their operation. Suicide and self-injury are the leading cause of death for Indigenous youths, and suicide rates of registered Indian youths (aged 15 to 24) are five times higher than the national rate for males and eight times higher than the national rate for females. In terms of education, Indigenous children only receive 60 to 80% of that which their non-indigenous counterparts receive. These examples are only some of the many injustices First Nations children and youth face.

When is this going to stop? When will First Nations children receive equitable education, health, childcare, recreation, culture, and language services to non-First Nations children and youth? How much longer will it take to resolve these issues that have been going on for so long? They are humans too when are they going to truly have Human Rights?

Yours Sincerely,

Kate

Kate

Shannen's School

Shannen was in Grade 8 when she spoke out about her dream. She wanted a new school for the children in her community. The school she had was awful, it was freezing in the winter time, it had rats, mice and bugs and it had sewage dripping in the hallway.

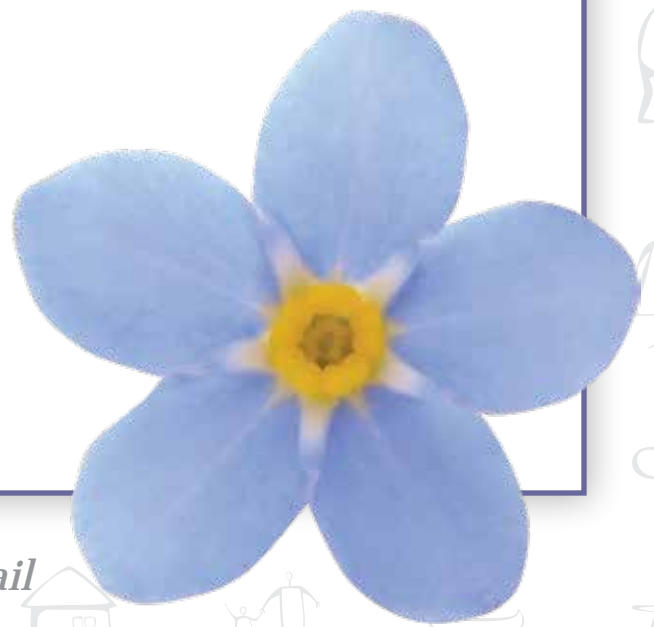
They had a proper school, but it was leaking dangerous chemicals and had to be closed and then torn down. It was a really sad day for all of the people of Attawapiskat.

Shannen started her project "Shannen's Dream" when she was in Grade 8. This project was about getting the government to get them a new school. Unfortunately, the government had already promised them a new school, but never gave came through on their promise. They had promised the in 2015. And if they ever got a school, then it would take a long time to build. And all people should have a school all of the time.

Shannen was a girl who wanted to have equality for the people of Attawapiskat and now we can make a change and help.

Help make Shannen's Dream a reality!

Abigail
student of St. George





Alinah

Monday Feb 12, 2014

Stephen Harper
Prime Minister of Canada
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A2

Sincerely Prime Minister Harper;

I am writing to you in regards to the continuing issue involving the aboriginal youth, the continued underfunding of aboriginal youth and neglect of support for the aboriginal people particularly their youth. I believe that this has gone on much too long and that the actions and attitudes leading to this underfunding need to end immediately starting with realizing that aboriginal youth are Canadians as much if not more-so then any of us and as such deserve far more then the treatment they have been receiving for many years past.

As a starting point FNCFS(First Nations Child and Family Caring Society) agencies continue to receive 22% less funding than provincial non-aboriginal agencies. Approximately 50% of the 30000 children in foster care are aboriginal, 3 times as many youth as during the residential school era. There are 1 in 10 First Nations children in care compared to 1 in 200 non-aboriginal children in Canada. In education, Indigenous children receive only 60-80% the funding than other children receive.


As is shown by some of the numbers I have listed, aboriginal children are clearly being neglected or at the very least being treated differently than other children in Canada through lack of funding and other such neglect. I ask you, how can this be seen as fair, they are Canadian citizens as much as any of the rest of us and should be treated as such, not as if they are members of some shamed inferior society of lepers. Canada's evolved European culture has not given non=Aboriginal Canada a more superiour society standing than aboriginal society and therefore to treat aboriginals as they are is an unforgivable act of discrimination. With a world such as we live in today how can we justify neglecting any such human beings simply due to differences in society, I implore you to see the error of the actions of underfunding and discriminatory neglect towards aboriginal youth by your government. As a Canadian citizen and legal voter I hope you do something about these problems and prove that maybe there is some hope in our government after all.

Regards,



Peter

Peter



**IF WE FORGET
OUR HISTORY**, *we will never
be able to correct our mistakes. So we
remember, we dream and although
our walk today is short, it is part of a
longer journey for equality and justice!*

—Raiyah