

Editorial

Indigenous Education: Creating and Maintaining Positive Health

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This theme issue of the *Canadian Journal of Native Education (CJNE)* is a cooperative editorship among the four co-principal investigators listed above for the BC ACADRE (Aboriginal Capacity and Developmental Research Environment), which is sponsored by the UBC Institute for Aboriginal Health/College of Health Disciplines and the First Nations House of Learning. Until now, theme issues of *CJNE* have not given attention to the relationship between education and health. The journal theme “Indigenous education: Creating and maintaining positive health” provides an opportunity to present research and scholarly articles that bring education and health together in meaningful, transformative ways.

The call for papers resulted in a rich variety of articles that span lifelong learning to include contexts of early childhood education, elementary and high school, postsecondary, and adult community programs. In each context, Indigenous knowledge and culture is the consistent thread that binds research, education, and health matters together in a secure yet flexible manner, in order to respect the diversity of Aboriginal people and their communities. An exciting capacity-building outcome of some of the research presented in this issue is that Aboriginal students in elementary and high schools became co-researchers with university researchers. The students determined the research topics, used digital media as a research tool, and recommended ways to improve the health education they receive. Experiences such as these will help overcome the negative legacy of research experienced by generations of Aboriginal people.

The BC ACADRE began in 2002 as a provincial initiative to promote Aboriginal community-determined research, support health research education and training, develop ethical research practices based on Indigenous knowledge, and promote holistic wellness in mental health and addictions. The article “Creating Transformative Aboriginal Health Research: The BC ACADRE at Three Years” by Jo-ann Archibald, Eduardo Jovel, Rod McCormick, Richard Vedan, and Darien Thira highlights how education and health were brought together in British Columbia to devel-

op the research capacity of Aboriginal communities and postsecondary institutions to undertake health research. Another article that highlights developments in a burgeoning area is Margo Greenwood's "Children Are a Gift to Us: Aboriginal-Specific Early Childhood Programs and Services in Canada." Greenwood's historical review of policies, programs, and services experienced by Aboriginal parents and their young children is critical of the lack of a national policy for Aboriginal children and their families.

Ted Riecken, Michele Tanaka, and Tish Scott's article "First Nations Youth Reframing the Focus: Cultural Knowledge as a Site for Health Education" demonstrates the effectiveness of digital video as a research tool for young people. The Aboriginal high school students are co-researchers who determine a health topic of interest, create a video about it, and then present it to their community. They use Aboriginal knowledge and culture as their chosen paradigm for bringing health and education together in ways that are relevant to them. A similar outcome is evident in Tish Scott's article "Watch Out for the W/HOLE! Student Multimedia Projects and Culturally Based Education." This article focuses on Aboriginal community members' observations and perceptions of Aboriginal elementary students' self-directed multimedia projects. Scott's qualitative case study shows the importance of intergenerational interaction between grades 6 and 7 students and community Elders through culturally based education and research.

In "Bullycide Prevention Sqilxwcut, Through Filmmaking: An Urban Native Youth Performance Project," Monique Giard presents a powerful performative and poetic representation of young Aboriginal people's personal narratives about racist bullying and suicide attempts as a result of bullying (bullycide). Through cooperative filmmaking, the Aboriginal young people engage in transformative health, education, and leadership experiences. Elizabeth Banister and Deborah Begoray's article "Adolescent Girls' Sexual Health Education in an Indigenous Context" identifies successful research and literacy education strategies that were used in a mentoring sexual health program with Aboriginal girls. They combine feminist and Aboriginal conceptual frameworks to create a safe and respectful environment for all the research participants.

The next set of four articles use aspects of Indigenous holism and traditional Aboriginal education. The physical and spiritual domains of an Indigenous holistic framework and education and health are brought together through attention to the body. Denise Nadeau and Alannah Young present key principles that helped urban Aboriginal women deal with the effects of sexual, racial, and colonial violence: remembering, reclamation, and collective witness. Their article "Educating Bodies for Self-Determination: A Decolonizing Strategy" makes an important contribution to developing decolonizing education and health strategies

through Indigenous knowledge and cultural resilience. Lee Brown's article "The Native Training Institute: A Place of Holistic Learning and Health" demonstrates the significant effect on Aboriginal adult learners of a holistic Medicine Wheel curriculum and program. The personal experience stories of seven former students of the Native Training Institute highlight elements of transformational healing and learning approaches.

Barbara Harris shows how the transformative principles of community, context, care, and culture related to traditional Aboriginal education shaped the development of a community-based First Nations Bachelor of Social Work degree program. Her article "What Can We Learn From Traditional Aboriginal Education? Transforming Social Work Education Delivered in First Nations Communities" presents helpful and innovative insights based on practical experience in this important area. In "Creating and Sustaining Positive Paths to Health by Restoring Traditional-Based Indigenous Health Education Practices," Dawn Marsden reflects on a recent research project that included Indigenous health practitioners, health facilitators, or their clients. Once more, Indigenous holistic principles and traditional knowledge created a foundation on which to build a seamless health and educational approach. Her work also honors and advocates recognizing the pluralistic nature of Indigenous knowledges.

As co-editors of this theme issue "Indigenous Education: Creating and Maintaining Positive Health," we raise our hands in thanks and respect to the authors of the articles in this issue. The Musqueam First Nation Elder Dr. Vincent Stogan gave us this prayerful teaching when working together. He would say,

My dear ones,

When we stand in a circle, we join hands to show that we care for one another and that we will work together. With our left hand we extend our palm upward to reach back to receive the teachings of the Ancestors. As we learn these teachings and put them into our everyday living, we then have a responsibility to share this knowledge with others. We extend our right hand with palm facing downwards to symbolize sharing these teachings with others. In joining hands, we create a strong circle of caring and sharing.

Elder Vincent Stogan also taught us that there is always room for one more person to join the circle. We look forward to the ever-expanding circle that so meaningfully brings health and education together. We look forward to the transformative Aboriginal research results that will benefit the lives and well-being of Aboriginal peoples and Aboriginal communities now and into the future.

All my Relations.