

Aboriginal Father Involvement Programs National Scan

Jessica Ball, MPH, PhD. & Sarah Moselle, BA

**Prepared for
Public Health Agency of Canada
Healthy Child Development Section**

March 2013

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	2
Search Approach	3
Parameters	3
What this scan covers	3
Methodology	4
Observations	5
Common elements of outreach and support initiatives	5
<i>Facilitators</i>	5
<i>Food</i>	5
<i>Male Friendly Resources & Programs</i>	6
<i>Men don't cry?</i>	6
<i>Humility</i>	6
<i>Cultures of Intervention</i>	7
<i>Challenges and successes</i>	7
Variety of auspices/agencies/programs within which fathers are reached	8
A continuum of approaches	10
<i>Successful Practices</i>	11
<i>Cultural Relevance</i>	11
Funding	11
A Spectrum of Fathers' Involvement Initiatives	12
Concluding Comment	15
Resources	16
Appendix	Inventory of Aboriginal Father Involvement Initiatives for each Province and Territory (listed alphabetically)

Note: The views expressed in this report do not necessarily represent the views of the Public Health Agency of Canada.

Aboriginal Father Involvement Programs National Scan

Executive Summary

This scan was requested by the Healthy Child Development Section of the Public Health Agency of Canada in response to anecdotal comments made at meetings and in communities which suggested that there is a growing grassroots effort across the country to create and implement strategies that support Aboriginal fathers' involvement with their children.

The results of 2 months of intensive search did not suggest a landscape richly populated with Aboriginal father support programs. There are large gaps, and the distribution of programs appears to be uneven, with British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Ontario having quite a bit of activity while other provinces and territories have fewer initiatives that could be found.

The scan methodology involved contacting 130 individuals or organizations identified as having knowledge of or running programs for First Nations, Inuit or Métis fathers. Contact was established with over half of these individuals, yielding descriptions of approximately 35 successful programs, the results of which have been compiled into a program inventory associated with this report.

Respondents in diverse locations, catering to a range of participants reported a number of overlapping obstacles to initiating and sustaining programming for fathers. There are difficulties finding and funding suitable father outreach workers, as well as challenges to attracting fathers or sustaining their involvement over time. These latter challenges include transportation barriers, underemployment and sporadic/seasonal employment, and residual fall-out from residential schools.

At the same time, the search identified a number of programs introduced in recent years that are having success and demonstrating a wide variety of promising practices that warrant further documentation and impact evaluation. Those communities that run successful weekly, monthly or annual events for fathers report that these programs benefit fathers, families, and the community in general. These benefits include strengthening families and fostering healthy relationships, and encouraging cultural connectedness.

Programming varies in terms of content, frequency and logistics, ranging from weekly drop-in groups to 12-week violence prevention programs. Despite their diversity, there were overlapping responses from program coordinators emphasizing that the strength and success of their program is rooted in the program's cultural relevance. In addition to the active programs identified in this scan, many communities described plans to initiate programs and events for fathers when funding is found to support these initiatives.

This report documents the challenges, successes and practices of the first steps in what could become a growing grassroots Aboriginal father involvement movement. There is much to learn from the diversity of community-driven programs identified in this national scan.

Aboriginal Father Involvement Programs National Scan

"Every man has the ability to be a father but they have to be taught how to be a dad, that's life-long learning. A dad has to have full participation; he's not just going to work and coming home... A father is a name on a birth certificate, but being a dad is what matters. 'Dad' is a medal of honour – I'd rather be called a dad than father."

– Vernon Linklater, Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre

Search Approach

Parameters

The purpose of this environmental scan was to learn about programmatic efforts across Canada to support positive Aboriginal fathers' involvement with young children. Targeted programs conform as much as possible to the following three criteria:

- 1) Participants are primarily Aboriginal fathers and father-figures;¹
- 2) Participants are fathers of young children (i.e., prenatal-6 yrs);
- 3) Programs systematically support a number of fathers at a time.

Therefore, this scan does not include:

- Fatherhood programming for a general populace that does not include a significant number of Aboriginal participants;
- Programs for parents of teenagers and young adults;
- Services that support Aboriginal fathers on a primarily individual basis. For example, a number of Child and Family Services organizations report that they work with Aboriginal fathers one-on-one, supporting them in accessing their children, providing food vouchers, etc. In general, because such services work with men individually, without predictable regularity, they have not been included in this scan. Similarly, the scan excluded some addictions centres and health care facilities that work indirectly to support fathers, but do not run outreach and support programs specifically to support positive father involvement.

What this scan covers

This scan *does* provide an overview of the various types of organizations across Canada that are making efforts to support Aboriginal fathers, and the variety of practices being used to reach out to dads. Effort has been made to include national and regional initiatives, Friendship Centres, Health Centres, Tribal Councils, Head Start Programs, family violence initiatives, and a selection of Family Services that run programs for fathers. This scan has uncovered a diversity of programs, from internationally recognized parenting curricula such as Triple P, to programs devised by a single staff member in a rural community drawing from what they could discover

¹ Throughout this report, "fathers" refers both to biological fathers and to father-figures including grandfathers, uncles, stepfathers, adoptive fathers.

from Google. From this, we are able to get a good sense of what sort of practices exist, where, what is successful, and what barriers are to getting programming for fathers off the ground.

For practical reasons, this scan cannot claim to be comprehensive. As far as we could discover, there is no directory to date of organizations that run targeted outreach and/or support programs for Aboriginal fathers, and it became clear early on that top-down searching would yield little fruit, because most programs for fathers are informal and grassroots. The most productive search methods were snowball sampling and web searches, followed up with email or telephone interviews where possible. This scan therefore has disproportionate coverage of organizations with websites, current phone numbers listed, and reliable email correspondence.

Method

This search began in three places:

- 1) Contacting national, regional, and provincial organizations including:
 - a. National Aboriginal Organizations (e.g., Pauktuutik, Congress of Aboriginal Peoples);
 - b. Regional councils and Provincial Territorial Organizations (e.g., Native Council of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council);
 - c. Regional Friendship Centre offices (e.g., Northwest Territories/Nunavut Council of Friendship Centres, Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres);
 - d. Government offices (e.g., Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, L'Institut National de Santé Publique du Québec);
- 2) Contacting organizations that had previously received resource materials on Indigenous Men's Journeys to Learn Fatherhood;
- 3) Reaching out to one of the author's (Jessica Ball) colleagues and asking for information and leads.

Because programs for Aboriginal fathers are often innovated by communities in response to demand by community-members, the most effective search method turned out to be web searches and contacting organizations that had previously purchased materials from Jessica Ball and commencing snow-ball sampling from there. 150 individuals or organizations were identified and contact was attempted with 130. Just over half of our contact attempts were successful, and from these discussions we learned of approximately 40 programmatic efforts. The results from these discussions have been compiled in a program inventory associated with this report.

Web searches alone are not sufficient to determine where programming for fathers is occurring, because these programs are often new, and 'hidden' within other programs and funding streams such as Maternal Child Health and Prenatal Nutrition Programs. Furthermore, when contacted, some organizations did not immediately identify their programs as 'promoting positive father involvement'. For example: the Bent Arrow Healing Society in Alberta runs a weekly Men's Circle, hosted by an Elder. Even though all of the participants are fathers, the reporter did not immediately identify this as a programmatic effort to support 'fathers'. This identification was only made through discussion. In contrast, some organizations advertise programs on their website that are now defunct. Some of this inconsistency has to do with fluctuating funding or availability of appropriate facilitators.

Observations

Common elements of outreach and support initiatives

Facilitators

Many programs (on-reserve, off-reserve, and programs run by non-Aboriginal agencies) have reported a dearth of suitable facilitators for fathers' programming. Many programs for fathers are coordinated by Head Starts, CPNP, MCH and Child and Family Services Agencies, which have a higher ratio of female to male staff. Accordingly, there is a wider availability of willing and able female facilitators. However, many reporters indicated that programming for men is best facilitated by men – ideally Aboriginal men. This was not the case with all organizations; the importance of male facilitation may vary according to community and program type.

While there has been a reported scarcity of qualified male facilitators, this scan also revealed a diversity of approaches to recruit and include men in facilitation. In many cases, regardless of whether the primary facilitator is a man or a woman, male Elders are awarded an honorarium to attend program sessions. Some programs attribute their success to the inclusion of Elders in facilitation. Elders fill a number of roles in men's programming. In Dad & Tot Drop-in Groups, Elders can teach traditional activities such as basket-weaving and moccasin-making. For programs of a more interventionist nature such as Family Violence programs, Elders can provide a cultural foundation to the curriculum by teaching about traditional family values. Elders can also act as role models because participants are able to connect with them, particularly when Elders tell stories from their own life.

Some communities have asked 'stand-out' dads to run men's programs. These programs tend to be successful while they last, because they are created *by* fathers *for* fathers. However, they may lack continuity because they are dependent on volunteers. As the population changes in the community, it may be difficult to find Aboriginal fathers who feel they have the leadership skills and emotional intelligence necessary to navigate facilitating such programs.

Food

Food is central to many of these programs, in one way or another. A number of Friendship Centres reported that the family activities that attract the most men and fathers are the ones that involve a dinner. In recognition of this, many men's programs are organized around a meal. This includes programs such as the Men's Luncheon at the Thunderbird Friendship Centre in Ontario, in which men attend a lunch once per month to meet other men and Elders, listen to a guest presenter, and learn about the health topic of the month. Other programs include meals for fathers and children, such as the program in Tillicum Lelum, in which fathers prepare and share the meal in the company of their children before the children go into day-care and the men's circle commences.

While food is often central to programming for fathers, it is not necessarily presented as a meal. Community gardens are a fun way for fathers to be involved with their children, while learning about and teaching their children the value of healthy eating and self-sufficiency. Community gardens are a flexible, on-going project that culminates in a harvest, which can be prepared and shared among family and friends.

In communities where parents are less able to be actively involved with their young children, food can be a way to demonstrate caring and support. For example, a Head Start

program in the Northwest Territories has begun asking different parents each week to provide nutritional provisions for the class, such as fruit or another healthy snack. These foods are sent to the Head Start with the children, and then presented to the class by the Early Childhood Educator, who then recognizes in front of the class the contribution the child's father or mother has made. By making these provisions available to the class, parents take ownership of their children's education, and children are able to take pride in their parents in the presence of their classmates.

Male Friendly Resources & Programs

Programming for Aboriginal fathers is in its nascent stages. As yet, there is no dedicated funding stream for fatherhood programming, and consequently many of these programs are being cobbled together from an assortment of departments and staff at the community level. This is a promising start that speaks to the urgency of programs and services that work with men in Aboriginal communities. The drawback to this grassroots initiative is that, out of necessity, many of the resources being used are implicitly targeting women or non-Aboriginal men. There is only a handful of materials that speak directly to Aboriginal men (an overview of these resources is included in this document).

A number of Maternal Child Health programs reported that they have made efforts in the recent past to include more fathers; however the very name *Maternal* Child Health is biased towards women. Similar linguistic biases are hidden in many stages of child-rearing, and this mother-centric language implicitly tells fathers that their involvement is not necessary. In an effort to counter this bias, some organizations are making more effort to use 'father-friendly language'. For example, an MCH program in Haida Gwaii makes a point of addressing all mail regarding children "to parents of *x child*" rather than "to the *mother* of *x child*".

Men don't cry?

At least three reporters who facilitate Men's Circles and Violence Prevention programs for Aboriginal reported a common barrier that had to be overcome: 'boys don't cry'. All men, perhaps especially Aboriginal men, have been socialized to believe that 'big boys don't cry'. From a young age, men are taught that sharing, crying and emotion are signs of weakness. One reporter described telling participants that young boys and girls are born with the same tools and capabilities but that in early childhood boys are not taught positive modes of expression, so a man that cries is simply a young boy who wasn't allowed to cry. Another reporter for a violence prevention program described telling participants that sharing what one feels is not a form of weakness but rather a form of courage – courage to confront what is inside and courage to tell those around you who you really are. In all of these instances, socialization into the ideals of the stoic male has proved to be obstacles initially, but these obstacles are not insurmountable. Changing one's perspective is the first step to changing one's behaviour.

Humility

Humility proved to be a recurring theme from British Columbia to Prince Edward Island. For programs that change to modify men's behaviour, humility seems to be one of the most profound and thought-provoking elements of the curriculum. Humility often comprises part of the cultural foundation for these programs. For example:

- Humility is one of the Seven Grandfather teachings that comprise the foundation of the Kizhaay Anishinaabe Niin (I Am a Kind Man) project in Ontario.

- The Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI's culturally-relevant violence prevention program teaches humility as one of the Seven Grandfather Teachings.
- The Tauhx Gadx/Whole Person program in British Columbia teaches 9 virtues and the reporter noted that humility is the virtue that generates the deepest discussion.
- Being humble is one of the five conditions for participating in the Str8 Up program in Saskatoon.

Just as men can be socialized into believing that 'boys don't cry', they are also taught that 'real men don't ask for directions'. Humility requires men to set aside these notions of rightness and self-sufficiency and learn to admit when they're wrong and when they need support.

Cultures of Intervention

While conducting this scan, we heard of instances where a community in one location endeavoured to run programs for fathers but for some reason these programs were unsuccessful; meanwhile, a community elsewhere could run an almost identical program that thrived. All of the evidence suggests that programming for Aboriginal populations must be tailored to the exact community – generic programs for Indigenous populations will require extensive modification to fit the community context. In part, this may account for the phenomenon described above. Another related factor could be that some communities or populations are not familiar with 'the culture of intervention', particularly interventions for men. For example, a reporter in Newfoundland noted that there is just beginning to be recognition among the community of what programmatic interventions are and what they achieve. These initial interventions targeted addictions and residential school trauma. The reporter suggested that now that there is an understanding of programmatic interventions, the community is ready for men's programming. The reporter planned to commence a violence intervention program for men in the spring of 2013.

Reinforcing this idea that community understanding of interventions may contribute to the success of men's programming is an anecdote from a reporter in Yellowknife, who described a long-standing movement in the North of women demanding programs and services for men and intervening on their behalf when necessary. Due to this history of women advocating for men's services, the reporter found the community easily adopted a program for Aboriginal Dads after Divorce and Separation (DADS program).

Challenges and successes

Every respondent was asked to describe obstacles or challenges they had encountered either in reaching out to fathers or to getting programming for fathers' off the ground. This question was followed by a discussion of what would be needed to overcome these challenges. Some respondents indicated that there had been no challenges. For those that did respond to this question, there was some overlap in the barriers they described:

- Transportation;
- Availability of suitable facilitators;
- Seasonal work patterns for men, thereby curtailing their availability;
- Substance abuse;
- Separation or unorthodox family structures.

Program coordinators devise ways to overcome these challenges, for example by providing bus tickets to participants or moving the location to a more accessible place. Despite these challenges, respondents were also able to describe a multitude of successes in reaching out to fathers, and benefits accrued to families and to the community as a whole by supporting fathers. Some of these successes include:

- Re-establishing traditional parenting values;
- Connecting young men and their children with Elders;
- Providing a network of peer-support between father-figures;
- Fostering supportive relationships between mothers and fathers, regardless of whether the parents are in a couple, live together or live separately;
- Educating fathers about parenting;
- Connecting fathers to relevant supports and resources.

Some respondents noted that the peer networks established within the program carried over into the men's lives outside the program. A selection of Maternal Child Health and Prenatal Programs at Friendship Centres and Health Centres were pleased to find that fathers who got involved in these early childhood programs then became involved in other offerings and utilized other services provided by these organizations. In some instances, programs were so successful that participants asked for follow-up programming or asked to take the program again. For example, the participants in a 12-week violence prevention initiative in PEI found the program so beneficial that they have asked for a follow-up activity drop-in group for fathers and children.

Variety of auspices/agencies/programs within which fathers are reached:

At the outset of this project, we expected to find the majority of programs for fathers within Head Start Programs and Friendship Centres. To some extent, this expectation was born out, however snowball sampling also led us to other organizations and outlets that reach out to Aboriginal fathers. Below is a categorization of organizations, programs, and outreach efforts that support Aboriginal fathers' involvement with young children.

1. Aboriginal Head Starts (on- and off-reserve)

Head start programs have a six-part mandate, one of which is 'parental involvement'. Less than half of the head starts contacted for this scan run activities specifically for fathers, and a number reported difficulty getting fathers engaged, due to men's' work schedules or disrupted family life. However, some head starts noted that fathers participate in all of the same activities as mothers, and a selection of head starts run programs or activity groups specifically for fathers and children. Head Start programs' efforts to reach fathers include:

- a. Dad & Tot Drop-in/Activity Group: these activity groups may occur on a weekly or monthly basis.
 - b. Involving fathers in the maintenance of the buildings and/or grounds.
 - c. Parenting classes or workshops, such as First Aid classes for fathers or Triple P parenting classes.
- To read an example, please see the Head Start program at the Labrador Friendship Centre in the Newfoundland & Labrador section of the program inventory associated with this report.

2. *Friendship Centres*

Friendship Centres are one of the largest driving forces of the movement for fathers' programming. The enthusiasm for fathers' program at Friendship Centres varies according to province or territory. For example, proportionally more Friendship Centres contacted in Ontario and B.C. reported programming for fathers than those in Quebec and Alberta.

Friendship Centres may support fathers in a variety of ways including:

- a. Family Violence or Violence Prevention Initiatives: support workers based out of Friendship Centres may coordinate, facilitate, or partner with an external agency to run violence prevention programs. The I Am a Kind Man program from the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres is perhaps the most notable example of this type of programming, and similar culturally-rooted Anti-violence initiatives exist at Friendship Centres across the country.
- b. Maternal Child Health, CPNP and CAP-C programs: while these programs have traditionally targeted mothers and infants, this scan found a number of MCH, CPNP and CAP-C programs that are trying to include men, either through individual departmental initiatives or through joint endeavours.
- c. Traditional Parenting Programs.
- d. Fathers'/Men's Sharing Circle.
 - To read an example, please see the Red Lake Indian Friendship Centre in the Ontario section of the program inventory associated with this report.

3. *Health Centres or Health Services*

On-reserve Health Centres or community health services operating under the directive of a regional authority (for example, Nunatsiavut Department of Health and Social Services) tend to provide similar services for fathers for Aboriginal populations on-reserve as Friendship Centres provide for off-reserve or urban Aboriginal populations. Community health centres on reserves may run MCH, CPNP, CAP-C activities for men, as well as sharing circles, violence prevention programs, and group counselling for men that includes fatherhood in the curriculum.

- To read an example, please see the Keeseekoowenin Health Centre in the Manitoba of the program inventory associated with this report.

4. *Correctional Institutes*

This scan found a handful of corrections-based programming for Aboriginal men, including a program in Saskatchewan for men currently in a correctional institute as well as a few programs in Saskatchewan and Northwest Territories in partnership with the John Howard Society that offer anti-domestic violence programs for recently sentenced men.

- To read an example, please see the Red Lake Indian Friendship Centre in the Ontario section of the program inventory associated with this report.
- To read another example, please see the John Howard Society of Saskatchewan's Str8 Up program in the Saskatchewan section of the program inventory associated with this report.

5. *Child and Family Services*

As described in the methodology section of this report, Child and Family Services typically do not meet the criteria for this scan because we were seeking *programs* specifically for

Aboriginal fathers and generally Child and Family Services do not meet this criterion. However, after contacting a selection of Aboriginal or Native Child and Family Service providers, we did learn of a selection of fatherhood series in B.C. and Alberta for fathers who are at risk of losing or do not currently have access to their children. These programs typically do not involve children. Topics for these sessions include anger management, substance abuse, traditional parenting and families, etc.

- To read an example, please see the Vancouver Aboriginal Child and Family Services Society in the British Columbia section of the program inventory associated with this report.

6. *Regional or Tribal Councils*

Particularly in the Atlantic provinces, where there are only a handful of Friendship Centres and the Aboriginal population is spread out, programming is often run by local Tribal Councils or regional councils such as the Native Council of Nova Scotia or the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of Prince Edward Island. These organizations face a unique situation of catering to a diversity of needs from the communities within their region. These councils have devised some innovative programming that directly or indirectly supports fathers. For example, the Native Council of Nova Scotia operates a decommissioned school bus that has been converted into a mobile resource library and play centre, thereby bringing the resources directly to communities.

- To read more about this example, please see the Child Help Initiative Program (C.H.I.P.), operated by the Native Council of Nova Scotia in the Nova Scotia section of the program inventory associated with this report.

7. *Social Media*

Regardless of organization or location, social media is a way to include fathers in the lives of their children. For example, an MCH program at a health centre in a small community in B.C. keeps a Facebook page with updates on upcoming and current activities. Many fathers in this area undertake seasonal work outside of the community. Social media serves the dual function of keeping the community (including fathers) up to date with events, and also encouraging a sense of inclusion and keeping fathers updated with what is going on with their small children.

- To read more about this example, please see the Skidegate Health Centre in the British Columbia section of the program inventory associated with this report.

A continuum of approaches:

The majority of the programs contacted are community-driven initiatives and therefore each tends to cater specifically to the needs of the community. As a result, outreach efforts vary considerably. As mentioned earlier in this report, a program that works in one community may not have traction in another. Successful programs run the gamut from structured three-month series organized around dinner and discussion with up to 30 fathers, to monthly drop-in activity days with 5-6 dads, to a yearly celebration of the traditional role of fathers.

Successful Practices

One of the questions we asked everybody we contacted was, “what successes would you like to share with other individuals or organizations trying to start fathers’ programs?” Responses varied dramatically. Some respondents advised facilitators to be as flexible as possible, patiently waiting until the fathers felt comfortable enough to come, share and return. Others said the key to fathers’ participation is ‘routine’ and clear expectations of what is required from the fathers and what the program will entail. In some communities, it is best to run programs in a safe, neutral location such as a school or health centre while in others it is more conducive to conduct programming out of participants’ homes. Some respondents said that men’s programming absolutely requires male facilitators, while a smaller number said this is not so important. The diversity of approaches we learned of is testament to the necessity of independently assessing each community’s needs and capacities.

Cultural Relevance

Although we heard of a continuum of approaches and many of the tips we received seemed to contradict each other, the vast majority of respondents emphasized that the strength of culturally-relevant curricula or activities. Cultural relevancy is brought to programs in a number of different ways. Some programs engage fathers and children in traditional arts such as basket-making or drumming. Others use traditional teachings to lend new perspectives and generate discussion in talking or sharing circles. One successful approach that appears to transcend geographic location or community-specific situations is the inclusion of Elders in programming. Elders may be brought in to facilitate discussions, share their knowledge, lead activities for fathers with or without their children, or they may simply act as a guiding presence from whom participants may seek council.

Funding:

As is evident in the program inventory associated with this report, one of the questions we asked respondents pertained to the cost of running programs. The majority of respondents either opted not to respond to this question or could not provide an estimate. When making contact with individuals or organizations, it was made clear at the outset that we had been contracted by and would be reporting to the Public Health Agency of Canada. This might have made respondents disinclined to describe their funding sources.

For those who did respond, it became apparent that funding comes from a variety of sources including:

- Public Health Agency funding streams, including CAP-C and CPNP;
- United Way Success By 6;
- Provincial Ministries of Child and Family Development;
- Regional Health Authorities;
- Local charitable foundations or fundraising efforts;
- Dad Central Ontario;
- Public Safety, Crime Prevention, Justice departments.

Programs may be joint efforts between different Health Centre departments or combined funding streams. For this reason, it was sometimes difficult for respondents to estimate the cost

of program delivery because they would be most familiar with their particular department's fiscal contribution.

Cost of program delivery varies according to the type, purpose and location of the program. Estimated costs of program delivery could include anything from a one-time expenditure to purchase supplies for a greenhouse, to dinner and craft activities, to a weekend parenting workshop on the land, to an 18 session intervention program with two facilitators, an honorarium for an Elder, transportation for participants and day care for children. The individuals behind these programs use the resources available to them in order to meet the needs of their community, and the results can be surprisingly innovative and inexpensive.

"The sad thing is they have to do a bad thing to get something good... Programming for fathers is out there but they gotta be bad to get it, which I think is wrong. This programming should be taught to them well before, so they can become good fathers and then good grandfathers."

– Vernon Linklater, Family Violence Program facilitator with the Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre

A Spectrum of Fathers' Involvement Initiatives

As this report describes, fathers' involvement outreach and support efforts must be uniquely tailored to each community's needs. Some communities may encounter more obstacles than others in involving fathers in the lives of young children. Obstacles can include transportation issues, seasonal work patterns for men, underemployment and poverty, substance abuse and addictions, and residual fallout from colonialism and residential schools including disrupted parenting practices and family life. After communicating with communities facing these challenges, we have learned of a spectrum of approaches to involve fathers depending on community capacity and need.

1. Sending snacks or show-and-tell items to school

In situations where it is difficult to generate any sort of parental involvement by either mothers or fathers, Head Start or Day Care teachers could ask a different child's parents each week to send a nutritious snack for the class. This approach does not specifically involve fathers; rather, it is a way to generate connection and pride in parents for children in situations where parents have limited involvement in the child's schooling due to geographic limitations, substance abuse, and/or illiteracy.

To read more about this, please see the Yellowknives Dene First Nation Aboriginal Head Start program in the Northwest Territories section of the program inventory associated with this report.

2. Annual school solstice celebration

For communities where it is not possible to develop programming for fathers, schools can involve fathers through annual celebrations, such as a solstice celebration. Each solstice can celebrate a different person in a child's life. For example, the cultural program in Eel River Bar First Nation (NB) celebrated fathers for winter solstice last year. A group of fathers and father-figures came to class and talked about traditional activities for men during the winter, and taught the class some of these activities such as snow-shoe making.

To read more about this, please see the Eel River Bar Culture Program in the New Brunswick section of the program inventory associated with this report.

3. *Mobile activity and resource provider*

The Native Council of Nova Scotia operates a mobile resource and activity bus that goes directly into communities on a monthly basis, connecting parents with relevant resources and supports and providing activities for families. This practice is suited for small communities that could not independently sustain this type of programming. Smaller or more rural communities can join together to mobilize this type of effort, or a regional authority or council might coordinate it.

To read more about this, please see the Child Help Initiative Program operated by the Native Council of Nova Scotia in the Nova Scotia section of the program inventory associated with this report.

Below: Child Help Initiative Program (C.H.I.P.) mobile resource bus, courtesy of the Native Council of Nova Scotia.



4. *Community garden*

For fathers who work seasonally or require a high degree of flexibility due to their work schedules, a community garden can be a fun, flexible and educational activity for families of young children. The Thunderbird Friendship Centre in Ontario operates a community garden with specific times of the week scheduled for fathers with children, mothers with children, families, Elders, etc. This provides an opportunity for fathers to teach children about self-sufficiency, dedication, and healthy foods. It is inexpensive to operate, and participants are rewarded with harvest at the end of the growing season, which can be shared with family and community members.

To read more about this, please see the Thunderbird Friendship Centre in the Ontario section of the program inventory associated with this report.

5. *Weekly drop-in groups*

Weekly drop-in groups can vary widely. They can include men's or fathers' sharing circles – an opportunity for men to gather and discuss the journey of parenting with its many joys and obstacles. For some Aboriginal men, fatherhood is a daunting journey because – as many reporters noted – many First Nations, Inuit and Métis grew up without a father in life.

'Fathers without fathers' is one of many issues that sharing or talking circles can help men come to terms with.

Talking circles typically do not involve small children, although some respondents noted that teenagers attended and benefited from these circles. Another popular weekly drop-in group is for fathers and young children. These groups provide an opportunity for men to engage with their children and they also offer a period of respite for mothers. Dad & tot drop-ins can take many forms: craft night, cooking, sports activities, etc.

A Friendship Centre in B.C. offers a 5 hour drop-in program every Saturday morning which is divided into three parts. In the first part, dads and kids learn 'Life Skills': the dads cook breakfast, and then share it with the group, after which one half supervises the children while the other half cleans up. The group then moves on to 'Traditional Teachings' (smudging, pipe ceremonies, debriefing about the week) before the children go into day care while the fathers attend a 'Parenting Skills Workshop'. The morning concludes with an hour of physical activity with the children. This program is quite extensive and may not be possible in all communities, but it has proved very popular. Any part of this program would constitute a solid foundation for a drop-in group.

To read more about this, please see the Tillicum Lelum program in the British Columbia section of the program inventory associated with this report.

6. *Anti-violence or behaviour-modification programs*

Although we had not targeted these programs at the outset, we were surprised to find that some of the places we contacted about 'programs for fathers' responded with details about violence prevention initiatives. In some cases participants are referred to family violence programs by the courts or by Child and Family Services. In these instances men often do not have access to their children, and gaining access is a large reason why men attend these sessions. That being said, there is a movement underway across the country to combat family violence in Aboriginal communities, and some of the organizations we spoke to offer violence *prevention* programs for young men. In either case, these programs are typically structured as 8- 10- 12- or 24- week sessions with a planned curriculum. These curricula vary according to location and desired outcome of the program, but almost all include a component on fathering and nurturing a positive relationship with children.

When asked about programming for fathers, some respondents described imminent violence prevention initiatives. In these cases, violence prevention is seen as both beneficial to the community and also as an 'in' into programming for fathers and men. As noted earlier, in some instances these time-limited sessions have grown into drop-in groups for men or fathers with children.

To read more about this, please see the Mi'Kmaq Family Confederacy of PEI's 'PRIDE' program in the Prince Edward Island section of the program inventory associated with this report.

Concluding Comment

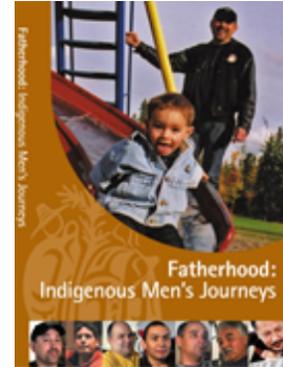
This search was motivated in part by anecdotal comments at meetings and in communities, which suggested that there is more effort being made to create and implement strategies that support Aboriginal fathers' involvement. The results of 2 months of intensive search did not suggest a landscape richly populated with Aboriginal father support programs. There are large gaps, and the distribution of programs appears to be uneven, with British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Ontario having quite a bit of activity while other provinces and territories have fewer initiatives that could be found.

There are difficulties finding funding to support a part-time father outreach worker to offer a program once a week, as well as challenges to attracting fathers or sustaining their involvement over time. At the same time, the search identified a number of programs introduced in recent years that are having success, and that are demonstrating a wide variety of promising practices that warrant further documentation and impact evaluation. As well, many communities described plans to initiate monthly or annual events, or weekly programs, when funding is found to support these initiatives.

The search was timely, as the first steps in what could become a growing Aboriginal father involvement movement are being taken in some regions. There is much to learn from the diversity of community-driven programs identified in this national scan.

Resources

1. Aboriginal Healing Foundation
Mussell, William J. *Warrior-caregivers: understanding the challenges and healing of First Nations men*. Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2005. Available at:
<http://www.ahf.ca/downloads/healingmenewebrev.pdf>
2. Ball & Moselle Consulting Inc.
Indigenous Fathers Resources (Resource package including DVD, 2 booklets, poster, worksheets). For order information contact: jball@uvic.ca
3. BearPaw Legal Education & Resource Centre
BearPaw Media Productions. BearPaw Media has produced a number of films to educate Aboriginal communities about legal issues. Available at:
<http://www.bearpaweducation.ca/videos>
4. Dad Central/Papa Centrale – Ontario
An online 'how-to' manual for dads: <http://www.newdadmanual.ca/index.php>
5. Father Involvement Research Alliance (FIRA)
Hoffman, John. *Father Factors: What Social Science Research Tells Us About Fathers and How to Work With Them*. Peterborough: John Hoffman, 2011. Available at:
<http://www.fira.ca/cms/documents/211/FatherFactorsFinal.pdf>
6. Gignoo Transition House; Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick
The Healing Journey Toolkit (Culturally sensitive resources on family violence in Aboriginal communities). Available at:
www.thehealingjourney.ca



7. National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health (NCCAHA)

a. *With Dad: Strengthening the Circle of Care* (Conference proceedings report and accompanying DVD). Prince George: NCCAHA, 2011. PDF of report available at: [http://www.nccah-censa.ca/docs/1913_with_dad_report-%20final%20\(English\).pdf](http://www.nccah-censa.ca/docs/1913_with_dad_report-%20final%20(English).pdf)

b. *Fatherhood is Forever: a resource booklet about fathering for First Nations and Métis parents in BC*. Prince George: NCCAHA, 2013. Available at www.nccah.ca



8. Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada

Parenting: An Inuit Father's Perspective (DVD).
Ordering information available at: <http://pauktuutit.ca/resources/>

9. Saskatchewan Prevention Institute

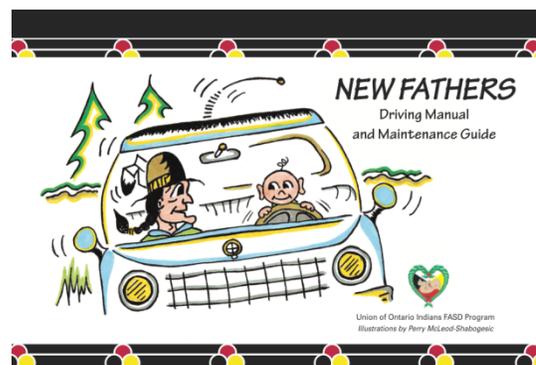
Sacred Children: Aboriginal Parent Education Resource Kit. Saskatoon: Saskatchewan Prevention Institute, 2008. Ordering information available at: <http://www.preventioninstitute.sk.ca/parenting-education/sacred-children>

10. Skookum Jim Friendship Centre

Traditional Parenting Program - Facilitator's Manual. Ordering information available at: <http://skookumjim.com/programs/traditional-parenting/>

11. Union of Ontario Indians

"New Fathers: Driving Manual and Maintenance Guide" produced by the Union of Ontario Indians Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) Program, 2008. Available at: <http://www.anishinabek.ca/download/NewFatherManual.pdf>



Initiatives to Support Aboriginal Fathers' Involvement

Alberta

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Ben Calf Robe Society

Province/Territory: Alberta

Date: Jan. 30, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Otenaw Iyniuk/Traditional Parenting; Walking in Balance

DESCRIPTION:

The Traditional Parenting program runs 4 times each week. In the morning, adults and children participate in an activity together, plan, and prepare a meal. After lunch, childcare is provided while parents learn about culture, history of residential school, and Aboriginal parenting.

The Walking in Balance program is a men's family violence support group program. Both services are part of the Kihci Awasisak Program, designed to support children and families.

LOCATION:

Ben Calf Robe Facility in Edmonton

FREQUENCY:

The Traditional Parenting Program runs Monday through Thursday from 9:45 to 3:30. Frequency of Men's Group unknown.

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

Children attend the Traditional Parenting program.

The parenting program is for men and women. The Walking in Balance program is only for men (there is separate family violence program for women).

BARRIERS:

SUCSESSES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society

Province/Territory: Alberta

Date: Feb. 4, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Men's Sharing Circle; Men's Traditional Parenting

DESCRIPTION:

Bent Arrow's Parent Link Centre offers information and support to Aboriginal parents and caregivers in Edmonton. They have run men's traditional parenting in the past. Presently, they run a Men's Circle on Monday nights, which is a sharing circle facilitated by an elder. The circle is not specifically for fathers, but the 6 current participants are all dads, and child care is provided in the event they want to bring their children. The facilitating Elder brings coffee, and a meal is provided by the Parent Link Centre's cook. Bus tickets are also provided. Men join after hearing about the circle via the newsletters and calendars posted by the Healing Society.

LOCATION:

Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society - Parent Link Centre in Edmonton.

FREQUENCY:

Monday evenings.

COST OF PROGRAM:

Free for participants. Program includes child care, meals, coffee, and bus tickets.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

The facilitating Elder is provided an honorarium for his time.

STAFF:

The sole facilitator is a male Elder.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

The program has run for a while, and its make-up changes over time. There are currently 6 men participating, all are fathers.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

None of the current fathers bring in their children, but children are welcome, child care is provided and has been utilized in the past.

PARTNERS?

No.

BARRIERS:

Reporter felt that they could advertise the program more, perhaps by making posters.

SUCSESSES:

Reporter could not describe, because she has never attended the meetings.

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

--

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Metis Calgary Family Service Society - Aboriginal Parent Link Centre

Province/Territory: Alberta

Date: Feb. 4, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Indigenous Triple P Parenting Program

DESCRIPTION:

Metis Calgary Family Service Society has ten certified Triple P facilitators, two of whom work at the Parent Link Centre. The program is the clinically-based, global Triple P program, adapted to fit the Aboriginal context (Indigenous Triple P). Parents learn parenting strategies and have homework to do throughout the program. Fathers attend the weekly group program. Both parents are encouraged to take the program, and there are also a few single fathers. They join through word of mouth, or after hearing about the program while participating in other services provided by the Family Service Society. Sometimes they may be asked to come by Support Workers.

The Parent Link Centre also runs Ke Mama Nnanik ('Our Mother Earth') which is a sharing circle on parenting that some fathers attend. Snacks and childcare are provided for the sharing circle.

LOCATION:

Parent Link Centre in Calgary.

FREQUENCY:

The group program meets one afternoon per week, other locations run in the evening and there are also individual programs.

COST OF PROGRAM:

Free for participants.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

Staff have to go through intense training and then do an accreditation. There are two trained facilitators at the Parent Link Centre.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

Demographics difficult to estimate. Single fathers come and some fathers come with their co-parents that they may or may not be married to or living with.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

Child care is provided.

PARTNERS?

The parenting program is for any parent.

BARRIERS:

One barrier to reaching a broader population of fathers is that a lot of fathers aren't educated enough to seek out help. Most of the fathers at the Parent Link Triple P were involved in other Family Services programs, but throughout the city men may not know/care that there are supports available.

SUCSESSES:

With men it is important to focus on the man's comfort level, given that a lot of the time these programs are female-based or run by females, which may make men uncomfortable. It is important to reach out to them and meet them at their comfort level.

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

--

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Creating Hope Society

Province/Territory: Alberta

Date: Jan. 31, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Father's Sharing Circle (Prospective Program)

DESCRIPTION:

The Creating Hope Society exists to address the impacts of child welfare and support healthier models of Aboriginal child care. In late 2012, as part of their Indigenous Fathers Initiative, the Society launched a Father's Sharing Circle, where Indigenous Fathers can come to share stories and create connections with Fathers. Due to a change in staff, the program was suspended and is being restructured before it's re-launch in February. The new plan is to have a weekly sharing circle with snacks, each attended by an Elder and the outreach worker who coordinates the program. They are planning to bring in guest speakers such as case workers and law officers, who can help explain to the fathers how the child welfare system works and how the court system works, because most Aboriginal dads will not know their rights and what resources are available to support them. Reporter note that Aboriginal dads face unique disadvantages because the odds are stacked against them the minute they walk into a court room, first because they are Aboriginal, and second because they are men. Another large focus will be on addressing intergenerational trauma associated with residential schools and fathers who are parenting without ever having had fathers. This is why it is especially important to have Elders and Aboriginal staff at the Society, so participants feel safe and can open up, knowing that the people looking out for them know the system and have also been through the system. Additionally, the Society is hosting a Father and Child Welfare Conference, based on the premise that if fathers were recognized as parents, there would be fewer children in care.

LOCATION:

Creating Hope Society offices in Edmonton

FREQUENCY:

Every Tuesday from 6:00-8:00pm

COST OF PROGRAM:

Free for participants.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

The program is funded through grants, including a \$75,000 grant to get it started. Funding is difficult because oftentimes children's services will not fund fathers' programs, they will only fund programs for mothers. Father's programs are sometimes funded through Crime Prevention.

STAFF:

The program is coordinated by an Aboriginal man who also works as the fathers' outreach worker. Each session also has an Elder present, and many sessions feature a guest speaker.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

Given their current case load, they anticipate 15-20 fathers, but the program is also open to grand fathers, brothers, uncles, etc. Fathers are motivated to attend because their attendance reflects well to Children's Services.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

Many fathers do not have custody of their children, but childcare will be provided for those fathers who bring children with them.

PARTNERS?:

The Creating Hope Society has other programs for both parents and for mothers. The Sharing Circle is only for men.

BARRIERS:

Poverty & Transportation: most fathers will not have a way to get to the meeting location, so bus tickets are provided. Intergenerational trauma is another barrier

SUCSESSES:

Respondent said the goal of the program is to give fathers the confidence to share their story between themselves and into the community.

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

Poverty & Transportation: most fathers will not have a way to get to the meeting location, so bus tickets are provided. Intergenerational trauma is another barrier to men's involvement, so coordinators must emphasize that they themselves are Aboriginal and understand the unique situation faced by Aboriginal parents, especially fathers, who automatically have the odds stacked against them when involved in child welfare claims.

Respondent said the goal of the program is to give fathers the confidence to share their story between themselves and into the community.

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Initiatives to Support Aboriginal Fathers' Involvement

British Columbia

ORGANIZATION: Dze L’Kant Friendship Centre, Smithers

Province/Territory: British Columbia **Date:** Feb. 21, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Full Circle Support Program

DESCRIPTION:

The Full Circle Support Program is a father-friendly family-centred program that provides strategies for families and persons living with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. Staff realized that FASD is an issue that needs to be treated holistically, with all of its attendant issues including alcoholism, family violence and parenting. In light of this, Dze l’Kant created a fathers group a number of years ago, which has since evolved into a bi-weekly drop-in Men’s Group. The purpose of the group is to strengthen communication skills, let go of socialized attitudes of self-neglect and patriarchy, and celebrate fatherhood and parenting.

The Men’s Group may take a number of forms. Sometimes Friendship Centre staff will prepare a lunch meal ahead of time so the group can tackle their project for the day and othertimes the format will be more relaxed, with the group preparing lunch together and taking it easy. Activities include: snowshoeing, canoeing, men’s cooking, and talking circles.

LOCATION:

The meeting place is the Friendship Centre in Smithers. Activities may take place at the Friendship Centre or elsewhere.

FREQUENCY:

The Men’s Group meets once every two weeks, for lunch on a Friday.

COST OF PROGRAM:

Free for participants.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

The Full Circle program is funded by Ministry of Child and Family Development. The cost of delivering the men’s circle varies according to the activity of the week, but usually averages to approximately \$100. This can include the cost of food and investment in equipment such as snowshoes.

STAFF:

The Men’s Group is coordinated by an Aboriginal male support worker trained to support families of children with FASD. However, he emphasized that his role is as a contact person and organizer; the participants themselves determine the structure of the group. His hope is that the group will become self-sustaining and participants will learn to conduct it on their own.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

The men’s group is organized as a drop-in, but there are currently 12 core members. These members are of varying ages, some of them are fathers, father-figures, grandfathers and Elders. It was originally created as a Dad’s Group, but due to sporadic attendance and popular demand, it became a Men’s Group a few years ago, which has proven to be more successful. Potential or expecting fathers are also involved.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

Small children are not involved in the talking circle component, but the Full Circle program runs activities for families. One participant began to bring his teenage son with him to the circle, after receiving consent from the other group members. The young son has proven to be one of the most active participants, and his presence tempers the behaviour of the older members because are conscious of being role models.

PARTNERS?

Women are not involved in the Men’s Group, but participants have expressed interest in hearing from women about violence against women, specifically, what the women want the men to change. The facilitator is currently liaising with the Northern Society for Domestic Peace, and is in the process of setting up a dialogue between a women’s circle and the Men’s Group.

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

BARRIERS:	SUCCESSSES:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment and seasonal work: some men are sporadically available because they have seasonal jobs or work intermittently as painters, wood-workers, or handymen. • Homelessness: due to gentrification, there is a problem of homelessness in the Smithers community and some men are fearful of losing their homes or fearful they will not find a home. • Group dynamics: a diversity of men attend the group, including fathers, grandfathers, men with a history of family violence, and men who do not currently have access to their children or are not in contact with their family. These things can affect the dynamic of the group. The group is supposed to be a safe space, so if a member becomes antagonistic, conflict resolution measures are in place. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A multi-faceted, versatile approach that addresses connections and related movements in the community. From this standpoint, a movement for fathers does not just benefit fathers, it also benefits the whole community. • Horizontal leadership: learn from the fathers what they need and want, and ask them for advice. Older fathers have experience and have made mistakes, and many have learned things that they can share to the benefit of younger fathers. • Striking a balance between fun and instruction. A well-trained facilitator can make challenging learning feel like fun. • Father-friendly language: too many parenting programs are directly or indirectly targeting women with their language. The Men's Group Facilitator and other Full Circle staff-members are trained and encouraged to use language that makes fathers, father-figures, grandfathers feel supported.
WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?	
<p>Fatherhood should be recognized as a knowledge resource. The reporter spoke about fathers that he knows who have met challenges and can offer knowledge of facing these challenges, but they do not participate in the circle because they do not feel they need to and there is no budget to bring them in as teachers. These men are valuable resources and there should be a way to recognize them as instructors.</p>	

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Friendship House Association of Prince Rupert

Province/Territory: British Columbia **Date:** Jan. 16, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Active Parenting 1234, Active Parenting for Teens 1234, Family Night, Culture Night

DESCRIPTION:

The Friendship House of Prince Rupert has tried in the past to offer programs for dads, but found that there was insufficient turn-out (1 or 2 dads). However, they offer 3-5 family activities per week that consistently have 1-2 dads participating, usually depending on the availability of child minding and the activity for that evening. There is a monthly potluck cultural dinner; Family night (weaving or carving); Culture Night (nutrition and exploration of culture); and Parent/Tot Drop-In (nutrition, arts and crafts, parenting information, networking with other parents).

LOCATION:

Most activities take place at the Friendship House in Prince Rupert, but some Friday night family activities such as swimming take place elsewhere. In the past, they have run nature-based programs.

FREQUENCY:

3-5 events per week that dads can participate in.

COST OF PROGRAM:

The activities are usually free for participants however, due to lack of funding, coordinators do sometimes ask that participants either bring their own materials (cedar, knives, etc.) or donate some money for materials. Respondent indicated that these donations build self-esteem in clients, as it gives them ownership of the project and necessitates budgeting skills.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

The staff is comprised of the largely female staff of the Friendship Centre, however there are also a few male staff members.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

1-2 per event, on average, but more dads come when there is child minding available, and more on Culture Night when the activities are more male-friendly (such as carving).

NUMBER OF KIDS:

Kids are welcome to attend, but for most events parents prefer to leave their kids at home so the parents can take time for "self-care".

PARTNERS?

The programs are for both or either parents.

BARRIERS:

- Child care: funding for child-minding has significantly impacted turn-out. They had a child-minder for 3 months, but after the budget for that ran out parent turn-out decreased.
- Materials: as funding decreases, coordinators have had to stop providing all materials (knives, beads, etc.) cost-free for participants, and clients may now be asked to bring materials or provide donations.
- Snacks: having food available was both a teaching

SUCCESES:

Respondent said the strenght of their program is their staff: everything is done as a team, and all staff members learn to care for their co-worker and care for themselves. Activities are not owned by a single staff member, but rather they are shared among staff to prevent burn-out.

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

- Child care: funding for child-minding has significantly impacted turn-out. They had a child-minder for 3 months, but after the budget for that ran out parent turn-out decreased.
- Materials: as funding decreases, coordinators have had to stop providing all materials (knives, beads, etc.) cost-free for participants, and clients may now be asked to bring materials or provide donations.
- Snacks: having food available was both a teaching tool (availability of fresh foods was designed to educate about healthy foods) and a necessity, given that many parents do not have time to make food and come to an evening activity. Due to lack of funds, there is no longer a budget for coffee or snacks.

Respondent said the strength of their program is their staff: everything is done as a team, and all staff members learn to care for their co-worker and care for themselves. Activities are not owned by a single staff member, but rather they are shared among staff to prevent burn-out.

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Hiiye'yum Lelum House of Friendship Society, Duncan

Province/Territory: British Columbia **Date:** Jan. 21, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Healthiest Babies Possible

DESCRIPTION:

This is a standard drop-in pre-natal program, primarily for mums to come in and get vitamins, talk to a nurse, etc. Because it is a drop-in program, dads have always been welcome but there is no predictability about when they will come. The reporter goes in two or three times a month and hangs out with the dads, sometimes using the Indigenous Fatherhood DVD as a conversation starter. This program reaches many economically disadvantaged on-reserve families. According to the reporter, the free lunch is a big draw.

LOCATION:

Hiiye'yum Lelum in Duncan.

FREQUENCY:

The program runs once a week

COST OF PROGRAM:

Free for participants.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

Funded by CAP-C and CPNP.

STAFF:

The reporter who currently facilitates the program noted that a more suitable facilitator would be a young Aboriginal man (most of the dads he works with are between 16-23).

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

The number of dads continuously changes. The average number of families is 15-20 and the number of dads present is usually 5-6, but there has been up to 12 and fewer than 2. They tend to come once, go away for a few weeks and months, and then come back again.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

This is a prenatal program so there is no programming for children.

PARTNERS?

Yes.

BARRIERS:

Reporter said that patience is key - waiting it out and being ready when the guys come in or come back, and try to be really open and accomodating with discussion (not to plan specific topics or issues). In general, the reporter suggests that there has been a demonstrated need for programs for aboriginal dads but there is a shortage of suitable facilitators.

SUCCESES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

--

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Kelowna Building Healthy Families Society

Province/Territory: British Columbia **Date:** Jan. 16, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Nurturing Fathers

DESCRIPTION:

Nurturing Fathers is 12-week program for all dads (from any culture, and dads of infants or teenagers) in the Central Okanagan region. The program was created in 2002, and initially it only received enough funding to run two sessions per year but as the number of referrals increased, United Way increased its funding to allow for three sessions per year. The sessions are divided into two components: learning to nurture yourself (creating self-understanding as a person and as a dad); and parenting skills (characteristics of an involved father, discipline, limits, fathering daughters and sons, stress and anger management, communication, conflict resolution, time, work).

LOCATION:

The program runs out of the Building Healthy Families Society building in Kelowna.

FREQUENCY:

Runs 1 evening per week for 2.5 hours.

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

United Way funds the program with \$4900, which is enough to run three 12-week sessions per year, with 8-10 dads per session. The facilitator is retired but is paid an hourly wage for his work.

STAFF:

The program is facilitated by the founder of Building Healthy Families Society and creator of the Nurturing Fathers Program in 2002. Prior to Building Healthy Families, the facilitator ran a therapeutic group home for twenty years.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

There are 8-10 dads per session; on average 1-2 are Aboriginal. Referrals usually come from the Ministry of Children and Family Development, but they can also come from Public Health or a community agency. Dads are welcome to join the group without a referral if space permits. (For example, one Aboriginal dad participated in the program a few years ago and then, by request, is participating again in the upcoming session).

NUMBER OF KIDS:

Kids are not involved in the program.

PARTNERS?

No.

BARRIERS:

Reporter found that the biggest obstacle to the dads' participation was a general disinclination among men to participate in groups and share. He says that it takes courage for men to join the program and continue for the full 12 weeks.

SUCSESSES:

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

The needs for the program have been met as needs evolved: as referral numbers increased, funding also increased. The respondent did not indicate a need for further funding or resources.

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Ladysmith Resources Centre Association

Province/Territory: British Columbia **Date:** Jan. 14, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Ladysmith Dads' Group

DESCRIPTION:

A weekly drop-in event for new dads and their kids every Saturday morning. Each session begins with a healthy breakfast, followed by activities (craft or project) and discussion. The program is successfully running into its sixth year. The purpose of the group is to offer new dads a chance to practice new ways of relating to their children and to meet new dads and share information in a low-key environment, as well as to give moms a break. The group operates on the premise that skilled father involvement "improves outcomes for children and provides valuable support for mothers, whatever the relationship between mother and father currently is... a father's interaction with a child often has a different style that is complementary to the style of care a mother gives." (qtd. from website: www.lrca.bc.ca/dads.asp) Sandra Marquis, the director of th Born Healthy program in Ladysmith, developed the program after observing a similar program in Abbotsford called 'Daddy and Me'. The program routinely has Aboriginal fathers attending, and the director is interested in creating a stand-alone group for First Nations and Métis dads.

LOCATION:

Ladysmith Resource Centre.

FREQUENCY:

Every Saturday morning.

COST OF PROGRAM:

Free drop-in meetings.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

Funded by the Ladysmith Resources Association and the United Way, as well as fund-raising with the Community Investment Fund, Coast capital Savings and the Queen Alexandra Foundation.

STAFF:

There is one paid staff and one volunteer.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

Typically between 6-10 dads show up, 2 of which are First Nations/Metis.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

Kids are involved, but dads, grand-dads, step-dads, uncles, and foster dads can participate whether the children are with them or not (for example, one dad showed up every week until his child was born). The two First nations dads always come with their children.

PARTNERS?

No, this is an opportunity for dads to practice new ways of relating to their children.

BARRIERS:

SUCSESSES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Tillicum Lelum

Province/Territory: British Columbia **Date:** Jan. 16, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Father's Circle of Friends

DESCRIPTION:

This is a new but highly successful drop-in program for dads with kids, which began in March of 2012. The reporter began the program in March because he had been working as a family support worker in Tillicum Lelum and saw that it was taking 3-6 months for fathers who wanted to be able to access their kids. Although it is a drop- in program, dads must be pre-approved for the safety of the children. Dads who are using or intoxicated are not permitted to join the group. Each 5 hour session is divided into three components: Life Skills (the dads cook breakfast, and then share it with the group, after which one half supervises the children while the other half cleans up); Traditional Teachings (smudging, pipe ceremonies, debriefing about the week); and Parenting Skills Workshop (during which a practicum student cares for the children). At the end is one hour of physical activity with the kids.

LOCATION:

Tillicum Lelum Health Centre in Nanaimo.

FREQUENCY:

Every Saturday morning from 8-1

COST OF PROGRAM:

Free for participants.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

\$300-350 per 5 hour session. This includes 2 facilitators, and materials for 10 participants with 12-15 kids.

STAFF:

There are two male facilitators for the program.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

10 on average

NUMBER OF KIDS:

12-15 kids

PARTNERS?

No.

BARRIERS:

- Transportation: the programs start at 8 am, and for dads with more than one child it is difficult to get to the health centre.
- Funding: the program has been created out of what's left over from other programs. The coordinator has applied for more funding.
- Child-minding: this was a problem initially but has since been resolved - a practicum student comes in and supervises the children for two hours.

SUCSESSES:

This program is successful because it is the first step towards meeting high demand for points of contact for fathers seeking access to kids. Since its inception, the Ministry for Child and Family Development has begun making many referrals to this program. The program also provides peer support networks that last into the week (outside of the 5 hour drop in program).

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

- More materials
- More funding
- More involvement from elders

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Ucluelet First Nation

Province/Territory: British Columbia **Date:** Jan. 25, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Strengthening Our Men; Men's Circle; Culture Night

DESCRIPTION:

Ucluelet First Nation has made a number of efforts to reach out to men and fathers, having varying degrees of success. In the fall of 2012, a VIHA employee based in Ucluelet attempted to include dads from the reserve in a 6-session father discussion group, but few-to-none attended. Also in the fall, the community put on a Traditional Parenting Program, which no men attended. However, UFN runs a successful culture night twice per week where a group of men and younger men are involved in drumming circles and dances, which demonstrate their beliefs and roles in family life. They have also initiated a new program called "Strengthening Our Men", which addresses the physical, spiritual, mental and emotional health needs of young (aged 15-30) men. The reporter indicated that fatherhood may comprise a program topic in the coming year. There are also traditional cleanses happening with healers from outside the community, and UFN is now starting a Men's Circle on an 8-week trial basis that may include fathers. However, this programming is not directly relating to fatherhood.

LOCATION:

FREQUENCY:

Culture Night runs twice per week; frequency of other programs not described.

COST OF PROGRAM:

Strengthening Our Men is funded through Vancouver Island Health Authority – Aboriginal Health.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

The Men's Circle is facilitated by the Nuuchahnulth Tribal Council Mental Health workers.

"Strengthening Our Men" has 15 young men, some of whom are young fathers.

BARRIERS:

Reporter said that most barriers can be traced back to the Residential Schools and "the various social pathologies resulting in disrupted family life, low education, communication skills, and self-esteem" as well as high alcohol and drug abuse and unemployment. There is a dearth of men who feel they have the leadership skills and emotional intelligence to facilitate a fathers' program. Furthermore, no men are requesting such a program.

SUCCESES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

--

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Vancouver Aboriginal Child and Family Services Society

Province/Territory: British Columbia **Date:** Jan. 24, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Strengthening Fathers

DESCRIPTION:

Strengthening Fathers is an eleven-week series that has run twice to date. The series begins with an orientation, mapping out the content and purpose of each week's topic. Facilitators do not shy away from difficult topics; part of the purpose of the program is to acknowledge past events and actions and move forward as stronger fathers. Many men have been left behind years ago and have been shamed into thinking it is better not to show up for their children; part of the purpose of the program is to allow these fathers to forgive their past and move forward with the positive model of family involvement that has traditionally been central to Indigenous life. Emphasis is placed on traditional teachings regarding children and the role of fathers and father-figures, for example: 'Children are a gift from the Creator.' Each session begins with a shared family meal, after which children are supervised separately while the men's group convenes. The curriculum has been drawn from the work that has been happening in America, but the program coordinator has tailored the curriculum to fit the context of Vancouver.

LOCATION:

Vancouver Aboriginal Families Service Society – community room.

FREQUENCY:

One evening (5:30-8:30) per week for eleven weeks.

COST OF PROGRAM:

Free for Aboriginal fathers.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

The series costs approximately \$10-11,000 to run, which includes meals, presenters and transportation costs.

STAFF:

An Aboriginal woman, who also coordinates the Strengthening Families program, coordinates the fathers' program. Two Aboriginal men, including one Elder, facilitate the series. Series may include guest presenters.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

The current series has over 30 participants signed up. It has grown rapidly since its inception. It was originally conceived as a drop-in program with 4-5 fathers, but each week more fathers attended. Dads were initially referred to the program by family support workers, but now many have joined through word of mouth. Some dads are choosing to repeat the program for a second series.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

Children are invited to share the meal. After the meal, VACFSS provides day-care for children 5 and under, and activities for children 6 and over.

PARTNERS?

Women may come to the program to support their partner and share the meal, however the group session is only for fathers and father-figures. Women may stay and play with their children in day-care or participate in activities with their youth.

BARRIERS:

There are no obstacles, because the initial orientation session makes it clear what the agenda is going to be for each week, so everyone understands what will take place. Additionally, VACFSS covers the cost of

SUCSESSES:

Consistency: having consistent facilitators who share passion vision and empathy. It does not work as well to have many faces coming in and repeating topics. The program coordinator spoke strongly about the

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

There are no obstacles, because the initial orientation session makes it clear what the agenda is going to be for each week, so everyone understands what will take place. Additionally, VACFSS covers the cost of transportation and meals, which precludes these issues from becoming barriers.

Consistency: having consistent facilitators who share passion vision and empathy. It does not work as well to have many faces coming in and repeating topics. The program coordinator spoke strongly about the importance of quality facilitators who share the same vision.

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

--

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Westview Child Care Centre, Roosevelt School of Prince Rupert

Province/Territory: British Columbia **Date:** Jan. 24, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Tauhx Gadx ('Whole Person')

DESCRIPTION:

The reporter created this men's support program after receiving requests from families who regularly attend the local parent/tot drop-in group known as "The Hub" in Prince Rupert. He had received requests for programs for men, and he created a program using the 9 virtues in the BC-ACCS traditional parenting manual ("Bringing Tradition Home: Aboriginal Parenting in Today's World"). He also drew inspiration from Albert Pooley's curriculum and teachings from Elders. "The Hub" has long run a family drop-in evening, so the reporter coordinated with the drop-in and created a separate space at Roosevelt School for the men to have a sharing circle. A typical evening involves the facilitator bringing out the Bringing Tradition Home manual and putting one of the 9 virtues on the table for discussion. Humility has proven to be the most engaging virtue, generating lengthy discussion. Recently, the reporter has been asked to create a men's program in the remote community of Hartley Bay. There are different challenges in Hartley Bay, which is a very small community (approx. 300). Initially he met regularly with one man, but more recently three others have joined (including one younger father). These evenings have been organized around meals, usually dinner but occasionally dessert. The reporter feels the meal is central to the Indigenous tradition; the feast hall is one place where there can be no feuding and politics, and he feels this is where you see First Nations at their very best. The facilitator will cook, sometime preparing traditional food with the assistance of one of the participating men. Then the group might watch a movie - usually something they can think about and talk about (because it brings out one of the nine core virtues), such as the film 'Running Brave'. The topics of discussion may be surprising. For example, one man who had recently become the primary care-giver to his daughters asked how to braid girls' hair. The purpose of the group is to create a safe space and a gentle place where the men can open up in their own time.

LOCATION:

In Prince Rupert, meetings take place in the same building as the Hub, at the Roosevelt School.
In Hartley Bay, the meeting place is in one of the men's house.

FREQUENCY:

In Prince Rupert: Thursday evenings around 6:30.
In Hartley Bay: Wednesday evenings.

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

The facilitator is a trained early-childhood educator and he is the sole facilitator in Hartley Bay, and in Prince Rupert he co-facilitates with an Elder.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

The program in Hartley Bay is now up to four dads, which is significant for a community of ~300. In Prince Rupert, there are 5 dads that he regularly meets with.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

The circle is strictly for men.

PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:

The reporter notes a general societal barrier: "our men don't believe there's anything wrong." He says young boys are not taught positive modes of expression the same way girls are taught to express themselves. He argues that the logic that big boys don't cry is flawed,

SUCCESES:

If any one else tried to run a similar program, he says the first thing they would need is an Early Childhood Educator, but they should also learn to accept help from as many people as possible and read as much as they can and listen to Elders. He argues that we need to

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

The reporter notes a general societal barrier: "our men don't believe there's anything wrong." He says young boys are not taught positive modes of expression the same way girls are taught to express themselves. He argues that the logic that big boys don't cry is flawed, a man that cries is just a boy that wasn't allowed to cry. Men and women are born with the same tools, but they are trained to behave differently. He also described challenges of working in the small isolated community of Hartley Bay: the community faces dependency issues so it can be difficult to get men to sit still for two hours. Additionally, in such small communities it can be especially difficult to get men to share because they fear repercussions.

If any one else tried to run a similar program, he says the first thing they would need is an Early Childhood Educator, but they should also learn to accept help from as many people as possible and read as much as they can and listen to Elders. He argues that we need to reject the knowledge hierarchy, because in his context it can be more productive to listen to an Elder than to listen to a PhD. The other key to his success he argues is the mantra: "Slow, Easy". It takes more than one month to launch a program, it requires closer to six months. Within a year, producing a one positive outcome should be considered a success. Having thirty people in the room immediately is unrealistic.

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Aboriginal CATCH

Province/Territory: British Columbia **Date:** Feb. 6, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Father's Panel (Past Program)

DESCRIPTION:

In February of 2012, the Aboriginal CATCH team in Kelowna held two panels on fatherhood, modelled after the NCCAH conference panel on fatherhood. Due to their view that fathers are not fully recognized when working with families of young children, Aboriginal CATCH organized two panels of eight panelists - all Aboriginal fathers considered to be strong role models. Panelists shared stories with the audience about growing up without father-figures, growing up in abusive households, the transmission of cultural teachings from fathers to children, and healing, prayer and compassion. It was agreed that values of traditional parenting, which had been negatively affected by colonialism and residential schools, can be reclaimed and there is a positive place for fathers and father-figures in children's lives. This panel was the first step in designing further efforts to reach out to fathers.

LOCATION:

The panel was held in two locations in order to minimize travel distance for families: Westbank First Nation and Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society in the Central Okanagan.

FREQUENCY:

Two panels were held in early 2012, with the goal of creating further outreach efforts to fathers.

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

Aboriginal CATCH is a coalition of early years professionals from West Bank First Nation, Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society, Metis Community Services of BC, Success by 6, and CATCH

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

Eight fathers and two Elders were on the panel. The audience was comprised of fathers and families from the Central Okanagan community.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:

SUCCESES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

--

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: BC Aboriginal Child Care Society

Province/Territory: British Columbia **Date:** Jan. 24, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: 2011 Annual Conference (Past Program)

DESCRIPTION:

At the 2011 Annual Conference, BC Aboriginal Child Care Society ran an interactive panel presentation workshop on the topic of Aboriginal fathering that was attended by 25-30 people. The goal of the workshop was to encourage the introduction of more programs related to father support. This workshop inspired the father's panel sponsored by Aboriginal CATCH in 2012.

LOCATION:

Vancouver

FREQUENCY:

This was a one-off event.

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

3 Aboriginal dads facilitated the workshop, and 25-30 people attended.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:

SUCCESES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Carrier Sekani Family Services

Province/Territory: British Columbia **Date:** Jan. 14, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Children Are Precious Project (Past Program)

DESCRIPTION:

This was a research study conducted with dads from eleven member First Nations in North Central British Columbia. Fathers with a child born within the previous 2 years discussed the challenges and obstacles they faced (feelings of isolation and stresses associated with their economic situation) and also talked about what they felt would help them be better dads. Results are being compiled to create a guidebook for new Aboriginal parents.

LOCATION:

Eleven member First Nations in North Central B.C.

FREQUENCY:

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:

SUCCESES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Laichwiltach Family Life Society, Campbell River

Province/Territory: British Columbia **Date:** Jan. 7, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: (Past Program)

DESCRIPTION:

Laichwiltach has facilitated fathers' groups in the past. Furthermore, the Aboriginal Success by 6 community table identified fathers as the priority of the 2012-13 year. In recognition of this, Laichwiltach brought in a speaker from the BC Council for Families to a lunch-and-learn session for the business community and an afternoon workshop for service providers to talk about father involvement and the growing number of single dads.

LOCATION:

FREQUENCY:

Fathers groups have run in the past. There have also been a number of one-off events such as speakers and workshops

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:

SUCSESSES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Elizabeth Fry Society, Prince George

Province/Territory: British Columbia **Date:** Jan. 7, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Babies New Beginnings (Prospective Program)

DESCRIPTION:

The Elizabeth Fry Society in Prince George runs a pregnancy outreach program for high risk pre- and post-natal women to receive services to assist with positive birth outcomes for a population that doesn't typically access prenatal health care. Participants often include their partners, and Elizabeth Fry is forming an imminent initiative to create a fathers group.

LOCATION:

FREQUENCY:

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

The pregnancy outreach program is funded by Northern Health.

STAFF:

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

The fathers group requires a male co-facilitator before it can begin.

Aboriginal fathers currently participate in the pregnancy outreach program and would be welcome to join the intended fathers group.

BARRIERS:

SUCSESSES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Skidegate Health Centre

Province/Territory: British Columbia **Date:** Jan. 29, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Id Gidgalang Daagwiiyah, Maternal and Child Health

DESCRIPTION:

The MCH coordinator in Skidegate has been working in that position for 10 years and during that time has made many efforts to include fathers/partners. Fathers occasionally come to the mother-goose program. The 'milestone lunches' seem to attract a significant number of males. Because they have found that women cannot create men's programming, there have been activity-based programs in the past that have been run by stand-out dads who decide what the program will entail and are paid with an honorarium. Over the years, the coordinator has learned many things and still makes efforts to include fathers.

LOCATION:

Skidegate Health Centre in Haida Gwaii.

FREQUENCY:

Men's programs have run intermittently in the past, depending on the availability of male facilitators

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

Male facilitators are awarded an honorarium, but the MCH staff are female and the coordinator has found that women cannot create successful men's programming.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

Father involvement is seasonal, and also depends upon the activity. However, fathers have requested to join the Facebook group, so they are able to stay up to date.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:

- In Haida Gwaii, father involvement is seasonal - currently most fathers are "in the bush" or away at fishing lodges.
- Men's programs need to be activity based and have only been successful when they are created and run by men.

SUCSESSES:

- 3 lessons to be successful:
- The MCH program always plans far in advance in order to allow moms and dad's the opportunity to get off work.
 - When mail regarding children is directed to the mother, the father is implicitly told that it does not involve him. The MCH program now addresses all mail, calls, and facebook communications 'to the parents of X child'.
 - Men's programming must be activity based, and lunch is always a draw.

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

--

Initiatives to Support Aboriginal Fathers' Involvement

Manitoba

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Better Fathers Inc.

Province/Territory: Manitoba

Date: Jan. 14, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Better Fathering: A Men's Issues Series

DESCRIPTION:

Better Fathering is a registered non-profit that runs three 8- or 12- week sessions per year. Participants can opt to register for these series or they can be referred by Child and Family Services, Justice, or family service professionals. The content of all sessions is confidential. BFI is dedicated to 'supporting fathers in the community, regardless of culture or income level'. Its core beliefs are that "all children are a gift of the Creator" and are the "most important persons in the family" and that "all parents or caregivers are the most important relationship for children". Sessions seek to provide support, 'address the needs of men as fathers within the context of their families and communities', and promote father participation. The program began in 1997 when social workers from Central Child and Family Service agency decided to do something about the lack of services for fathers of children in care.

Additional information retrieved from news article, available at: <http://www.winnipegfreepress.com/our-communities/metro/forum/Series-offers-valuable-advice-on-fathering-171228341.html>

LOCATION:

Sessions are held at various locations, including the Family Centre of Winnipeg and the Aboriginal Catholic parish.

FREQUENCY:

Three series run per year, each series is 8 or 12 consecutive weeks.

COST OF PROGRAM:

Free for participants.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

The program is run by three men, all social workers.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

Between 20-30 men participate in each group. To date, according to their website, 1300+ men have participated since 1997.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

Kids do not participate in the sessions, but Better Fathers tries to provide complimentary childcare (subject to funding).

PARTNERS?

No.

BARRIERS:

SUCCESES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Hilda Young Child Care Centre, Opaskwayak Cree Nation (On Reserve Program)

Province/Territory: Manitoba

Date: Jan. 29, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Parental Involvement, On Reserve Aboriginal Head Start

DESCRIPTION:

The On-reserve Head Start program has made efforts in recent years to reach out to fathers by advertising in the newsletter. In recent years, more fathers have become involved through word of mouth. The head start takes a holistic approach to child well-being, and provides parents with nutritional information (healthy eating habits, wearing hairnets and aprons while cooking at the preschool) and parenting lessons, as well as helping parents get their kids vaccinated and driving them to Service Canada if they want to get jobs. The Parental involvement component is successful at this head start: fathers and mothers are involved in every aspect of the program from planning field trips, to cooking meals, to designing an educational curriculum for parents. Parents plan what they want to do and learn about. Moms and Dads do the exact same activities: men learn to change diapers, cook, and sew. Moms and Dads take the children on field trips to the Trappers Festival, Log-sawing, and Ice Sculptures. Additionally, fathers are made to feel welcome by being involved in the maintenance of the school. For example: a small stipend is allotted for fathers to do snow-shovelling and snow-blowing.

LOCATION:

The Head Start has two rooms: the preschool room and the parent room. One room is for kids, the other is for parent education and meetings.

FREQUENCY:

There are no dad-specific events; instead, fathers are required to participate in all aspects of the head start, the same as the mothers.

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

All staff are trained Early Childhood Educators.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

4 fathers are currently involved at the head start, three single fathers and one father in a couple. This man is the one who takes the children to head start because he works nights while his partner works days. Grandparents and Elders are also encouraged to be involved. The program has 10 mothers and 4 fathers, which - according to the reporter - is 'a lot for our community'.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

9 children in the afternoon, 5 in the morning, ranging from 12 months to 3 years of age.

PARTNERS?

Respondent emphasized that men and women do the exact same things at the head start: men are taught to sew, and women attend the Trappers Festival field trip.

BARRIERS:

Reporter noted that men felt shy at first, but they were not only made to feel welcome, but expected to participate equally.

SUCSESSES:

Two key words have led to the success of getting fathers involved: Routine and Involvement. The staff did not use any resources or curriculum to get parents involved other than what they learned in their training and what they've gathered from Google.

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

--

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Keeseekoowenin Health And Wellness Centre (On Reserve Program)

Province/Territory: Manitoba

Date: Feb. 7, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Strengthening Families

DESCRIPTION:

Strengthening Families is a home-visiting program designed to encourage positive parenting skills and empower families. Mothers are either recruited prenatally, or the maternity ward at the hospital in Brandon (closest hospital to the reserve, one hour away) sends the public health nurse a discharge summary and mothers are asked if they want to be involved. There is only one home visitor, so they can only provide this program to fifteen families at a time. The home visitor goes to each home and delivers the Growing Great Kids curriculum. Fathers are invited, and sometimes join the meeting, but this is not always the case because the 'maternal' in 'Maternal and Child Health' throws the men off. MCH has also tried to run a fathers' activity group in the evenings but due to poor attendance, they decide it was not worth the time and money (activities occurred in the evening and supper was provided). The time when fathers are most involved is when MCH, CPNP and the On-reserve Headstart program pool their resources to take the 15 families to a hotel for a two-day workshop. Last year they ran a first aid session just for fathers. This is an opportunity for games, networking, and learning.

LOCATION:

The program is delivered at participants' homes. The workshop takes place at a hotel nearby.

FREQUENCY:

Families are assigned a level when they enter the program, this level determines how many visits each child is allotted. This can vary from four times a week to once a month.

COST OF PROGRAM:

Free for participants.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

Funding is not an issue for programming.

STAFF:

There is one home visitor (currently on vacation) and one MCH staff. She is looking to hire an administrative assistant.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

There are typically around 15 fathers in total. Only 3-4 fathers showed up at the fathers' activity night, but those that did show up benefited from it.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

Each family has at least one child.

PARTNERS?

Aside from the fathers' activity night that has been discontinued and the fathers' workshops, all programs are primarily targeted at mothers.

BARRIERS:

Engaging fathers can be difficult because you need to find something that grabs their attention. The program name is important. Maybe if there was something specifically for fathers that didn't use 'maternal' in the title, fathers might want to be more involved.

SUCSESSES:

Growing Great Kids is a good curriculum for their community because it can be used flexibly and incrementally. The separate manuals for each stage, from pre-natal to birth to 12 months, along with the different modules within each manual, is helpful because the home visitor and parent can decide between them what sections are most important. The program can be tailored to meet each family's needs.

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Space: the MCH coordinator purchased Jessica Ball's Indigenous Men's Journeys fatherhood DVD, and she would like to hold a sharing circle using the DVD but their Health and Wellness Centre has insufficient space to house something like this.

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Manitoba Metis Federation

Province/Territory: Manitoba

Date: Jan. 14, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Nēâh Kee Papa ("I am your father")

DESCRIPTION:

A parenting enhancement program that has been running since 1999, to support the active involvement of Metis fathers in their children's lives. Sessions may cover topics including: father's role, health and sexuality, effective communication, anger management, rights as a single parent or in custody relationships, and life skills.

LOCATION:

FREQUENCY:

Dads may enrol in an 8-session program or they can complete the program over a number of months.

COST OF PROGRAM:

Free for participants.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

Partners and spouses may participate in a separate program with a female facilitator, in a separate couples program, or they may join the men's group.

BARRIERS:

SUCSESSES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Initiatives to Support Aboriginal Fathers' Involvement

New Brunswick

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Gignoo Transition House Inc., Public Legal Education and Information Service of New Brunswick

Province/Territory: New Brunswick **Date:** Jan. 24, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: The Healing Journey Toolkit

DESCRIPTION:

The Healing Journey Toolkit is a community-adaptable, culturally-based resource for Aboriginal communities to address family violence. Its purpose is three-fold: Crisis Intervention; Public Education and awareness; and Prevention. It was primarily designed to be utilized by social and health service workers in on-reserve Mi'kmaq and Maliseet Aboriginal communities. While it is first and foremost a safety mechanism for women and children, it directly and indirectly aids positive father involvement by endeavouring to holistically address the emotional, mental and spiritual factors that can contribute to and prevent family violence. For further information, visit: <http://www.thehealingjourney.ca/main.asp>

LOCATION:

The toolkit is designed for on- and off-reserve Aboriginal people, but is particularly targeting the unique circumstances of on-reserve Aboriginals in New Brunswick.

FREQUENCY:

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

The toolkit is designed to be used by service providers who engage with Aboriginal people experiencing violence, including: crisis workers, social workers, guidance counsellors, police.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:

SUCSESSES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Oluwikoneyak Wechkuwapasihtit – Maternal Child Health (On Reserve Programs)

Province/Territory: New Brunswick **Date:** Feb. 12, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Oluwikoneyak Wechkuwapasihtit ('From the Womb to Beyond')

DESCRIPTION:

This culturally sensitivie Maternal Child Health Program has run fathers initiatives in seven communities around New Brunswick. These activities include "Drum Making for Dads", Father's Day Events such as sweatlodges, naming ceremonies, etc.

LOCATION:

Community mentors run these initiatives in seven communities in New Brunswick.

FREQUENCY:

Most of these initiatives are one-off events.

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:

SUCCESES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Eel River Bar

Province/Territory: New Brunswick **Date:** Feb. 14, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Culture Program (Past Program)

DESCRIPTION:

The Cultural Program in Eel River Bar is a program in which a Cultural teacher goes to the public school and teaches and engages students in the traditions of the Mi'kmaq people. One year, as part of this program, the students used the seasons to celebrate certain people in their lives – each solstice represented a different group of people. Winter solstice was in recognition of men. Some of the men who worked in the building came in to tal with the kids about traditional roles of males and what men would have done traditionally to prepare for the winter such as making snowshoes, weaving, etc. It was a great activity for the kids, and the children enjoyed seeing their relatives in the classroom – many of the men who came in were fathers, uncles and grandfathers. To compliment this, there was a solstice celebration in recognition of women, which was celebrated with a sweat, and another for children. To celebrate the children, volunteers (including fathers and men) came in and set up a booth where they taught about the seven teachings.

LOCATION:	FREQUENCY:

COST OF PROGRAM:	COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:	NUMBER OF FATHERS:	NUMBER OF KIDS:	PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:	SUCCESES:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is low participation of fathers in CPNP programs because these programs tend to be mother-centric. • Despite interest, many men do not know how to be fathers because they never had fathers themselves. It would be helpful to have a program that was geared towards men and modelled for fathers how to be involved and interested. Such a program is most needed when children are little because many people think that this is a time when the women have to take care of the little ones. • More services for men exist in cities, out of Friendship Centres and organizations that cater to larger populations. There is fewer programs, activity groups, and sharing circles in communities and reservations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The after-school leadership program has one male facilitator. It's rare to have males in these types of positions, which can be detrimental because men may not feel comfortable asking women for advice. The male facilitator of the after-school program gets fathers involved and also acts as a role model to the younger boys.

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

- Survey: the first thing to do is to find out what fathers in the community need! Fathers are rarely asked what their needs are. Most programs for prenatal and young children cater to the needs of women. Even though it is now recognized that fathers involvement is important, they are still largely ignored. A survey is in order to establish what the fathers' needs are.
- Male facilitators: even in the cities in New Brunswick, most facilitators of early childhood programs are female. Predominantly female staff inherently biases programs towards women, because just as some women may not feel comfortable asking men for advice, similarly men may not feel comfortable asking women.
- Male-friendly resources and programs.

Initiatives to Support Aboriginal Fathers' Involvement

Newfoundland & Labrador

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Labrador Friendship Centre

Province/Territory: Newfoundland & Labrador **Date:** Jan. 15, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Aboriginal Headstart Program

DESCRIPTION:

To promote father involvement, the Headstart program offers two activities per month specifically for dads or father figures and their children. One weekend per month there is a physical activity that varies according to season; this can include swimming or bowling, or cultural activities such as berry picking. There is also an evening drop-in activity each month for father figures and children at the Family Centre; activities for these nights include soapstone carving.

LOCATION:

Weekend activities occur at various locations, including in nature.
Weeknight activities take place at the Family Centre in Labrador.

FREQUENCY:

Two dad-specific events per month.

COST OF PROGRAM:

Free for participants.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

Funded by Public Health Agency of Canada.

STAFF:

The program director wanted a male staff for a male-based program but all of the Family Centre's staff are female. Some dads have led the program over the years but as the make-up of the group changes, a female Family Centre staff member now facilitates the group.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

Between 8-15 Metis, Innu and Inuit fathers participate with their children.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

All activities are for fathers with their children.

PARTNERS?

No.

BARRIERS:

- The director continues to try to find a male to facilitate the program.
- In a previous incarnation of the program, the weekend activities were for fathers and children and the evening activities were for dads only, but they found that it was difficult to attract sufficient numbers of dads to come out on their own to do crafts with other dads. Participation increased when dads were allowed to bring their children.

SUCSESSES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

--

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Nunatsiavut Government – Department of Health and Social Services

Province/Territory: Newfoundland & Labrador

Date: Feb. 25, 2013

PROGRAM NAME:

DESCRIPTION:

The Nunatsiavut government follows the Inuit tradition of focusing on the collective rather than on individual programming, therefore their programs tend to be geared towards a wider audience than only fathers. However, they run a variety of programs that include men and fathers, such as their prenatal programs: ‘Healthy You, Healthy Me’ and ‘Born a Non-Smoker.’ They are also doing extensive work on Inuit Intergenerational Trauma and Addictions Healing, which includes fathers.

In addition to these programs that include fathers, there is a 12 week program for boys ages 10-14 called “Boys 2 Men”, which promotes positive relationships, respect and self-esteem.

LOCATION:

Nunasiavut, Labrador.

FREQUENCY:

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:

SUCCESES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: St. John's Native Friendship Centre

Province/Territory: Newfoundland **Date:** Feb. 19, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: (Prospective Program)

DESCRIPTION:

The Friendship Centre in St. John's has recently received a grant from the Newfoundland government to conduct women's programming on violence prevention. The reporter hopes that there will soon be dual programming for men, for two reasons. First, women do not respond as strongly to violence prevention programming in the absence of other relevant themes, and addressing the men's role in violence prevention will make the program more dynamic. The second reason is that there has been demand from the community for increased programming for men. There has been a drumming program for men in the past, but it is currently on hold due to a lack of leadership. In the meantime, men have been showing up at the Friendship Centre looking for something to do. They are currently being given art projects such as faceless dolls project, but they have expressed interest in formal programming and show a willingness to engage in questions of violence against First Nations women. The women's program is going to culminate in a camp at the end of March, with activities such as skinning a rabbit and making soap from seal blubber, and the coordinator is looking for an opportunity to use this camp as a starting point for men's programming.

The reporter attributed some of the recent interest by men in formal programming to a relatively new cultural familiarity with interventions. Until recently, there had been few services in Newfoundland that offered sustained intervention or rehabilitation services, so men would go out of province for treatment programs such as addictions services. When they return back to Newfoundland, they experience an absence of systematic support. A formal program on violence prevention would help create continuity for these men.

LOCATION:	FREQUENCY:
------------------	-------------------

St. John's Friendship Centre, Newfoundland.

COST OF PROGRAM:	COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:
-------------------------	----------------------------------

The reporter has put together some research and recommendations that the board will vote on in the near future.

STAFF:	NUMBER OF FATHERS:	NUMBER OF KIDS:	PARTNERS?
---------------	---------------------------	------------------------	------------------

--	--	--	--

BARRIERS:	SUCCESSSES:
------------------	--------------------

--	--

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

--

Initiatives to Support Aboriginal Fathers' Involvement

Nova Scotia

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Indian Brook First Nation (On Reserve Program)

Province/Territory: Nova Scotia

Date: Jan. 17, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Aboriginal Headstart Program - Dad's Day

DESCRIPTION:

The Indian Brook on-reserve AHS runs a "Dad's Day" once per month at the Childcare centre. Each dad's day features a different activity with a different focus each time. For example, one day the focus might be Micmac history.

LOCATION:

Indian Brook Childcare Centre in Nova Scotia.

FREQUENCY:

One Saturday per month.

COST OF PROGRAM:

Free for participants.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:

SUCCESES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Native Council of Nova Scotia

Province/Territory: Nova Scotia

Date: Jan. 16, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Child Help Initiative Program (CHIP)

DESCRIPTION:

CHIP is a flexible support program for off-reserve Mi'kmaq and Aboriginal parents of children aged 0 to 6. CHIP facilitators help to create and support Aboriginal Parent Groups around Nova Scotia, by providing events, workshops and other activities that the Parent Groups decide is appropriate for their community. CHIP also works to holistically strengthen the family unit by providing guidance, advice and connections to resources and services such as parenting skills, prenatal care, nutrition, and recreational facilities. From April to November, CHIP uses a mobile Resource Bus to travel to various locations across Nova Scotia and provide information, library services, toy lending, crafts and games. The Mobile Resource Bus is a school bus that has been converted into a mobile play centre with a play circle, toys, library, and information for parents.

LOCATION:

CHIP is mobile and travels to all counties of Nova Scotia. Once a parent group is established it usually meets in the same place (ex: family resource centre, library, space within their own community).

FREQUENCY:

Parent groups happen once a month.

COST OF PROGRAM:

Free for participants. Money is made available to parent groups to do activities and support fundraising efforts.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

The annual budget is \$145,000. The program is funded through Public Health Agency of Canada.

STAFF:

3 facilitators, one in Liverpool, Truro and Cape Breton. The Truro facilitator is the administrator of the program and she is paid (trained as a family social worker).

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

Approximately 45% of the parent base are fathers.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

160 kids were reached in 2012.

PARTNERS?:

The program is for both or either parent.

BARRIERS:

Transportation: this program is for off-reserve Aboriginal families. In the urban areas, transportation is less of a problem, but in the rural areas outside of Halifax it is difficult for families to get to the meeting areas.

SUCCESES:

Respondent said the strength of their program is that they give the power back to the parents to make the decisions about what their family needs.

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

A bus to pick up families.

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Native Council of Nova Scotia

Province/Territory: Nova Scotia

Date: Jan. 17, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Parenting Journey Program

DESCRIPTION:

An aboriginal family support worker works with off-reserve Aboriginal families at their own pace to promote healthy growth and healthy development of children. The program is for children and parents of children between the ages of 3 and 16. This is home-based support using the medicine wheel approach, which the respondent felt was the biggest attribute. Referrals usually come from Child and Family Services, but they can also come from family members (for example, a single father's mother might request support for her son). The Program worker then makes contact and determines what form of support the family needs and has the creative license to innovate highly personalized support programs. The Native Council of Nova Scotia also provides less interventionist support for parents including social counselling, food bank, relieving poverty program, advocacy in court, etc.

LOCATION:

Home-based support, which respondent indicated was the strength of the program as it relieves a lot of the clients' anxiety as everything is done 'on your terms, on your time, in your home'.

FREQUENCY:

Varies if there are child protection concerns (specifically, if the agency has been referred to by Child and Family Services). If such concerns exist, the support worker will make home visits a few times per week, then once per week, and eventually once every two weeks.

COST OF PROGRAM:

Free for participants.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

One Aboriginal Family Support Worker for all off-reserve Aboriginal parents in Nova Scotia.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

Respondent indicated that she had 3 single dads in her active case load and additional dads that she continues to touch base with. This figure does not include fathers who are in a couple.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

Respondent only indicated number of children in her total active case load this month: 20. Kids are actively involved in the program, but if there are sensitive issues the support worker will work with parents alone at first.

PARTNERS?

The program is for both or either parent.

BARRIERS:

Respondent said that the positive reputation of the Native Council among the Aboriginal population in its surrounding region has eliminated possible barriers to father participation. She said that a lot of the obstacles she'd experienced in her previous work elsewhere that prevented men from opening up to support does not exist with the Native Council of Nova Scotia. Many participants in the program have already used some of the services the Native Council offers, such as employment services.

SUCCESES:

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

--

Initiatives to Support Aboriginal Fathers' Involvement

Northwest Territories

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Lutsel K'e Wellness Centre

Province/Territory: Northwest Territories **Date:** Jan. 23, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Traditional parenting program

DESCRIPTION:

Lutsel K'e Wellness Centre is remote branch of the Yellowknife Health and Social Services Authority that caters more directly to the surrounding Aboriginal community. Lutsel K'e provides community health and social programs. Under the Community Development Services mandate, Lutsel K'e runs a traditional parenting program as well as 'on the land workshops and interventions', which most likely include men and fathers.

LOCATION:

Lutsel K'e Wellness Centre, in the town of Lutsel K'e in southeast Northwest Territories.
Lutsel K'e is equipped with telehealth provisions, for tele-care with Yellowknife.

FREQUENCY:

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:

SUCSESSES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Yellowknives Dene First Nation Aboriginal Headstart

Province/Territory: Northwest Territories **Date:** Jan. 25, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Head Start – Parental involvement

DESCRIPTION:

The ECE teacher in charge spoke at some length about barriers that have prevented parental involvement. In most respects, the headstart program is outstanding. They have just introduced a new northern curriculum, the nutrition program is wildly successful, it is child-led and centred on newest brain research. Unfortunately parents are uninvolved. They do not read the newsletter the ECE teacher writes, they do not fulfill the 2 hour montly minimum for classroom volunteering. This year, the requirement was eliminated and replaced with four mandatory meetings per year, but most parents do not show up to these meetings. Of the 13 kids, 4 parents showed up to the last parent teacher meeting. Coordinator has tried to run parenting skills classes, nutrition classes, with no success. The reporter recently came back from a meeting with AHS coordinators from the province and evidently the situation is similar at the headstarts further north. However, the ECE teachers have made many efforts to reach out to parents and have made some insights into involving hard-to-reach parents.

LOCATION:

Aboriginal Head Start Centre in Yellowknives Dene First Nation

FREQUENCY:

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

One full time ECE teacher and one assistant teacher are in charge of parental involvement. The ECE teacher was trained in California.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

13 children in the Headstart program.

PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:

The respondent spoke at length about the difficulties reaching northern parents, but said that essentially there are two root barriers: residential school fall-out (parents have not been parented and there is a lot of healing that needs to happen before parents are healthy enough to be involved) and poverty. Many parents are very young, drink too much, and cannot read and be involved with their children's curriculum.

SUCSESSES:

One effective way to get parents in such difficult circumstances involved is to demand that they provide oranges (or some other nutritional provision), which the ECE teacher then presents to the kids and says "X's parents brought these for us". This allows the children to take pride in their parents and their parents' contribution to the class.

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

--

ORGANIZATION: Tree of Peace Friendship Centre & John Howard Society

Province/Territory: Northwest Territories **Date:** Feb. 19, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: DADS (Dads After Divorce and Separation)

DESCRIPTION:

For the past few years, a facilitator from the Tree of Peace Friendship Centre has partnered with the John Howard Society to run a program for fathers who have separated from their partners and may not be connecting with their children. DADS is a ten-session program that talks about how to re-establish contact and channel conflict into productive avenues. The program focuses on creating acceptance and changing behaviour so men are able to cease conflict with partners and children and instead forge strong connections. DADS is part of an evolving movement in the North to provide men with programming experience. This movement began with housing efforts – largely coordinated by the YWCA and Centre for Northern Families. This history of women advocating for services for men made it easier for the DADS program to thrive. The curriculum was imported from the John Howard Society in Durham, Ontario. The facilitators adapted the program extensively to make it applicable to the Aboriginal population. In the process of making these adaptations, the reporter has also spent the last six years creating a violence prevention program specifically for the Northwest Territories. This program has been contracted to an outside agency, and will commence in March of 2013.

LOCATION:

The program was designed to be delivered at the Friendship Centre, but so far it has run primarily at the correctional facility.

FREQUENCY:

The 10 week session is conducted over 5 weeks. The program runs primarily in correctional institutions where inmates' sentences are short-term, so for logistical reasons the program must be conducted over a short time period.

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

The program runs when the two facilitators (the reporter from Tree of Peace and a female member of the John Howard Society) are available for 5 consecutive weeks. It is important for there to be a female component in the facilitation to bring balance to the program.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

12 men per session.
170 men have participated in the program to date.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:

- Corrections is not the ideal place to deliver a program that hinges on sharing, because participants do not feel that this is a safe

SUCCESES:

- Using narrative therapy or talk therapy, the program has helped men overcome the shame and take ownership of responsibility. By looking for the

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Corrections is not the ideal place to deliver a program that hinges on sharing, because participants do not feel that this is a safe environment. They have to worry about whether the information they disclose will be put in their file. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using narrative therapy or talk therapy, the program has helped men overcome the shame and take ownership of responsibility. By looking for the story within, men have been able to change their behaviour and find their strengths.• The North is home to a culture that recognizes the benefit to representing men, and advocating for their well-being. As a result of women championing on their behalf, men have been able to stand up and feel okay about themselves. |
|---|--|

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

- A society that understands that representing men and helping them deal with their issues will bring benefit to the community around them.
- A society that encourages ownership rather than blame, because blame inculcates shame and shame is not productive.

Initiatives to Support Aboriginal Fathers' Involvement

Nunavut

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Ilisaqsivik Family Resource Centre, Clyde River

Province/Territory: Nunavut

Date: Jan. 11, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Men's Group & Ataata/Irniq (Father/Son) Trip

DESCRIPTION:

Ilisaqsivik runs programs for male youth, adults and elders to promote mental, spiritual and physical well-being and transfer Inuit Quajimajatuqangit. Inuit family roles have changed in the wake of modernization; Ilisaqsivik runs programs in which Inuit men may share knowledge and experience traditional, gendered tasks. The Ataata/Irniq trip pairs 16-18 'sons' with 16-18 'fathers' and Elders, for a winter or spring hunting trip by skidoo and dog team. The country foods gathered during the trips are shared with community members upon the group's return.

For more information see: <http://ilisaqsivik.ca/programs-and-services/land-based-programming/men's-group-father-and-son-program>

LOCATION:

On the land around Clyde River in Nunvaut.

FREQUENCY:

Annual trips run in the spring or winter.

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

16-18 fathers or father figures.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

16-18 sons or young men.

PARTNERS?

No.

BARRIERS:

SUCSESSES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Pulaarvik Kablu Friendship Centre

Province/Territory: Nunavut

Date: Jan. 25, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Prenatal Program

DESCRIPTION:

The prenatal program at Pulaarvik Kablu is comprised of various activities: in addition to providing basic nutrition to expectant mothers, the program also offers cooking classes on Monday and Thursday nights and sewing classes on Wednesdays. Fathers come to the cooking classes. Every few months, the prenatal program also hosts a family night for expectant mothers and families with children up to 18 months. A typical family event will attract 16 women and 4-5 fathers.

LOCATION:

In the gathering room at the back of the Pulaarvik Kablu Friendship Centre, in Rankin Inlet.

FREQUENCY:

Cooking classes take place every Monday and Thursday.
Family Nights typically take place every 3-4 months.

COST OF PROGRAM:

Reporter said the cost of hosting dads is absorbed by the CPNP program - it does not cost more to host them, as the money is already being spent on services for mothers.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

An ECE coordinator oversees the prenatal program and preschool. The CPNP program employs one full time and one part time employee.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

No estimates were provided for the number of fathers at cooking classes. Estimates for family night events placed the number of fathers at 4-5.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

No estimates provided, but kids under the age of 18 months attend the family night and cooking classes.

PARTNERS?

The prenatal program is primarily for mothers.

BARRIERS:

Space is the biggest concern: the back room at the friendship centre which serves as the gathering area is already cramped with the 16 women who regularly attend prenatal program services. When kids and partners are involved for family nights, the room becomes too small, but there are no affordable places in Rankin Inlet to move the program.
The other obstacle to reaching fathers is timing: dads cannot attend events during the day because they have to work.

SUCSESSES:

The prenatal program participants end up in more Friendship Centre activities for families after the birth of their child.

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

--

Initiatives to Support Aboriginal Fathers' Involvement

Ontario

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Niwasa Early Years Centre

Province/Territory: Ontario

Date: Jan. 29, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Men's Bundle

DESCRIPTION:

In addition to the family nights and other parental involvement requirements, Niwasa Early Learning Centre offers a monthly 'Men's Bundle' on a Friday evening. In January, the theme was 'Dad and Me', in which dads and kids came to the Centre and shared a meal, after which they did art and shared stories together. In February, the theme will be 'Traditional Hunting Teaching'.

LOCATION:

Niwasa Early Years Centre (at the Norman Pinky Lewis recreation centre).

FREQUENCY:

One weekend evening per month.

COST OF PROGRAM:

Funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada; also partnered with Ontario Early Years Centres.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

The Men's Bundle is facilitated by a trained ECE worker.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

Niwasa Aboriginal Education Programs serve urban Aboriginals (status and non-status Indian, Métis, and Inuit) in the Hamilton area.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

No, the Early Years Centre offers other programs for families, and others for mothers alone. The Men's Bundle is an opportunity for men to come in with their kids.

BARRIERS:

SUCSESSES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres

Province/Territory: Ontario

Date: Jan. 22

PROGRAM NAME: Kizhaay Anishinaabe Niin ('I am a Kind Man')

DESCRIPTION:

Kizhaay Anishinaabe Niin is a holistic community-based program designed to end violence against women and promote community healing. The target group are men, and there are related toolkits for youths and kids. It is likely that some participants are fathers. The program curriculum is culturally rooted in the Seven Grandfather teachings. The program content may vary across communities; according to the website (www.iamakindman.ca), part of the program delivery may include an emphasis on role modelling, engagement with children, and promoting healthy families.

For further information, visit their website. Additional information retrieved from a powerpoint, available at: <http://www.nwac.ca/sites/default/files/imce/Lance%20Logan-Keyes-%20Kizhaay%20Vancouver%20Presentation%20no%20script.pdf>

LOCATION:

The program is delivered in various friendship centres in Ontario. A related program is also delivered to inmates in 4 correctional institutions in Ontario.

FREQUENCY:

Approximately 160 workshops were delivered between 2007-2011 (retrieved from powerpoint).

COST OF PROGRAM:

The program is free for participants.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

There are approximately 60-70 trained volunteer facilitators across Ontario. In addition to this, there are 5 pilot sites with full time Kizhaay Anishinaabe Niin workers, and 1 program support/community activator dedicated to the program.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

As of 2011, over 1,700 men have participated in workshops.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

The program is community-based, so its form may vary according to location. Children may be involved.

PARTNERS?

It is possible for partners to be involved.

BARRIERS:

None.

SUCSESSES:

The strength of the program is that it is culture-based.

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

--

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre

Province/Territory: Ontario

Date: Jan. 11, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Father's Group at the Sivummut Head Start Program

DESCRIPTION:

The Sivummut Head Start Program for Southern Inuit has 6 components, two of which promote parent involvement and support. As the child's primary teachers, parents and guardians are encouraged to be involved in all aspects of the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of the program. There are many ways for parents to get involved, including assisting teachers, building maintenance, snow removal, helping at social events, etc. Fathers are encouraged to participate in group activities, socialize with both their children and other fathers through the Father's Group, which meets periodically throughout the year in order to provide social support for fathers.

LOCATION:

Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre.

FREQUENCY:

The Father's Group meets periodically throughout the year, but parents are encouraged to participate in other school activities.

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

Social Support and Parent/Guardian Involvement are encouraged and offered to both parents and guardians.

BARRIERS:

SUCSESSES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Red Lake Indian Friendship Centre

Province/Territory: Ontario

Date: Feb. 4, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Daddy Difference Program

DESCRIPTION:

In 2012, the Red Lake Indian Friendship Centre's CAP-C, CPNP, and two other departments pooled their resources to start a weeknight activity program for fathers and children. The purpose of the program is to encourage fathers to be involved in child rearing in a positive way. A typical night begins with a meal (provided), after which fathers and their children engage in activity together. Sample activities include: science night, cooking night, movie night. This gives the fathers a chance to work on whatever the kids are doing, share the experience, and ultimately have a shared activity in which dads talk with their children and to other dads about what they're going through with their kids. Fathers learn how to cook, they are offered a first aid class, and they learn that other fathers experience some of the same issues they experience, such as discipline problems. Importantly, they also learn how to ask for help. Fathers join the group voluntarily. It is advertised by posters, the community facebook page, emails, and the CAP-C and CPNP coordinators may also make phone calls to parents and single fathers they think might benefit from the program.

LOCATION:

Red Lake Indian Friendship Centre

FREQUENCY:

One weekday evening, per week.
*The Friendship Centre also offers a parenting program for 'brand new parents', and they do not run these programs concurrently. Presently, they think they will offer the 'brand new parents' training first, and then recommence the Daddy Difference program. They must assess what their community needs.

COST OF PROGRAM:

Free for participants.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

Difficult to estimate because it was combined through four programs, and they all took turns providing resources and meals. Reporter estimated \$250 per night, which would include meals for 16 people, transportation, activities, and an honorarium for guest presenter. Guest presenters are allotted an honorarium, and the program has brought in a First Aid instructor to teach basic First Aid.

STAFF:

The staff from the four collaborating programs alternate facilitating, but it is primarily facilitated by the female CAP-C coordinator.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

4-6 fathers per session.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

Every father has at least two kids so 10-12 children per session.

PARTNERS?

This is only for fathers, it is an opportunity for mothers to take time off.

BARRIERS:

- Fathers have been working the whole day and are often exhausted.
- Fathers may feel isolated and uncertain whether

SUCCESES:

- Single fathers are learning first aid, how to cook and how to help their children.

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Thunderbird Friendship Centre

Province/Territory: Ontario

Date: Feb. 7, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Aboriginal Family Support

DESCRIPTION:

The Family Support program in Geraldton runs many family programs, including a number of on-going programs that are specifically for fathers, or for fathers with young children (0-6 yrs). One of their most successful programs is an on-going Community Garden project. Separate times are set aside for single mothers, families, Elders, and fathers. The project runs through three-quarters of the year, from planting the seeds, to tending the garden, and then a harvest at the end. It is both a fun activity and a learning experience, because fathers learn about nutrition, growing food, and self-support. The project works well in large part because of its flexibility - men can come in with their children at various convenient times during the week.

LOCATION:

Community Garden at the Thunderbird Friendship Centre in Geraldton.

FREQUENCY:

This is a weekly activity. The schedule is flexible to provide maximum opportunity for fathers and children.

COST OF PROGRAM:

Free for participants.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

\$500-800 per year (this includes cost of materials, but not the cost of staff)

STAFF:

One dedicated staff-member who coordinates the CAP-C Aboriginal Family Support program.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

Between 5-11 depending on the season.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

Between 3-15.

PARTNERS?:

There are separate times at the Community Garden for families, in addition to the other family-oriented activities operated by the Friendship Centre

BARRIERS:

Fathers' availability depends largely on the season - some of the younger fathers go fire-fighting in the bush during the summer. Some may need to go away for a month at a time to check their trap lines. When the fathers are at home, it can be tricky to work around their work schedules. It is not always best to catch them at the end of the day, when they're tired and they're taking care of the little ones.

SUCSESSES:

The community garden is a great activity because it provides learning and self-sufficiency, and there is a harvest at the end. This year, they successfully applied for a Ontario Father Involvement Network grant of \$500 to build a green-house. Although it is still winter, many of the fathers are already getting excited for the spring when they will be able to build the green house.

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

--

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Thunderbird Friendship Centre

Province/Territory: Ontario

Date: Feb. 7, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Men's Luncheon

DESCRIPTION:

The CAP-C program at Thunderbird Friendship Centre has recently partnered with two other programs to provide a monthly Men's Luncheon. This is an opportunity for all men in the community, including fathers, to come to a lunch together and listen to a presentation by a guest speaker. This month's guest speaker will discuss diabetes, and previous topics include colon cancer, exercise, and hypothermia. Door prizes are provided and participants rarely leave without something related to the presentation. This has proven to be a good way to create connections between Elders and some of the younger men, who have begun talking and sharing knowledge from each other.

LOCATION:

Thunderbird Friendship Centre in Geraldton.

FREQUENCY:

Once per month

COST OF PROGRAM:

Free for participants.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

The monthly luncheon is a joint effort between the CAP-C program and two other departments.

STAFF:

Different guest speakers are brought in each month to present a new topic.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

This luncheon is for all men in the community, including fathers.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

This is an opportunity for the men to gather without women.

BARRIERS:

SUCSESSES:

The luncheon is an excellent educational opportunity, and it also fosters connections between Elders and younger men in the community, providing a network of support and knowledge.

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Wikwemikong Health Centre

Province/Territory: Ontario

Date: Feb. 21, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Maternal Child Health

DESCRIPTION:

In addition to running a headstart program and other services for children, Wikwemikong Health Centre runs a Maternal Child Health service for pregnant women and families with infants up to 6 years of age. They have recently committed to supporting increased participation of fathers and Elders for pregnant women and families with young children.

1 or 2 dads have been participating so far, but they are looking to create new programming to increase father participation. A new facilitator is going to attend training on father involvement at the Young Dads program in Toronto with Brian Russell.

LOCATION:

FREQUENCY:

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:

SUCSESSES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Initiatives to Support Aboriginal Fathers' Involvement

Prince Edward Island

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Lennox Island First Nation

Province/Territory: Prince Edward Island **Date:** Feb. 12, 2013

PROGRAM NAME:

DESCRIPTION:

Lennox Island First Nation has had a men's activity group for the past year that acts as a support group. Men from this group are going to begin the Mi'kmaq Confederacy's 12-session family violence program in February 2013.

LOCATION:

FREQUENCY:

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:

SUCCESES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

ORGANIZATION: Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI (On Reserve Program)

Province/Territory: Prince Edward Island **Date:** Feb. 12, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: PRIDE – Violence Prevention Program

DESCRIPTION:

PRIDE, the family support branch of the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI, runs culturally relevant programs and services to holistically support families in the two First Nations communities on PEI. In 2012, they began a violence prevention program as a culture-based alternative to the provincial anger management program that men in PEI have traditionally been referred to. The provincial program has no relevance, context, and understanding for First Nations men, and therefore does not produce successful outcomes. The reporter created the program using research and input from the community. As with any program, it must be tailored to the exact community it is being delivered in – this means having an Elder from that community participate, as well as conferring with community members with regards to logistics such as timing, etc. The reporter went to lengths to use only material that are culturally relevant, sourcing videos on violence prevention from Bearpaw Media Productions and using Jessica Ball's fatherhood DVD. Topics include: what is abuse and violence, power and control, social attitudes, jealousy, negative self-talk, and fatherhood. The new program for First Nations men is founded on the Seven Sacred Teachings. As with all PRIDE programs, an Elder is always present to bring cultural connection and knowledge to the program. The Elder opens the sessions with a prayer and compliments the curriculum with stories from his own life, which allows the participants to connect with him and bring the Seven Sacred Teachings to life. The Elder may also lead activities, such as basket-making. In Prince Edward Island, basket-making from ash wood is a men's traditional activity; within the context of the program, basket-making is used as a stress reduction activity. The culture-based PRIDE prevention program turned out to be significantly more successful than the provincial program. A formal assessment was conducted, indicating much higher levels of attendance (of the 10 participants, 8-10 attended each session). The participants wanted cohesiveness, so they had jackets made up, emblazoned with a logo they designed together. Now that the 12-session program has concluded, the men have asked to have a follow-up activity group for dads and their children, where they can engage in passive activities like baking and foster a nurturing relationship with their children.

LOCATION:	FREQUENCY:
------------------	-------------------

The program is delivered in the two First Nations communities in PEI. The fall session was delivered at Abegweit First Nation, and the current session is being delivered at Lennox Island First Nation.	Once per week for approximately 3 hours, for 12 weeks at a time that suits the community. The plan going forwards is to run these three-month sessions every fall, as an alternative to the provincial program.
--	--

COST OF PROGRAM:	COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:
-------------------------	----------------------------------

Free for participants.	The cost is the honorarium for the Elder (between \$50-\$75 per session) plus the cost of food. The cost of staff is included in their salary, and the Mi'Kmaq Confederacy of PEI has all of the requisite materials.
------------------------	---

STAFF:	NUMBER OF FATHERS:	NUMBER OF KIDS:	PARTNERS?
---------------	---------------------------	------------------------	------------------

In addition to the Elder from the community, there are always two facilitators: a female non-Aboriginal social worker from PRIDE who	10 men participated in the first session – each of them were fathers. Of these, 6 had been sentenced, but the program is also open to self-	Children do not participate in the Violence Prevention program, but the participants have asked for a follow-up activity	No.
--	---	--	-----

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

<p>In addition to the Elder from the community, there are always two facilitators: a female non-Aboriginal social worker from PRIDE who created the program, as well as a partner from the community.</p>	<p>10 men participated in the first session – each of them were fathers. Of these, 6 had been sentenced, but the program is also open to self-referrals. Reporter recommended that maximum group size be 12.</p>	<p>Children do not participate in the Violence Prevention program, but the participants have asked for a follow-up activity group for fathers and children.</p>	<p>No.</p>
<p>BARRIERS:</p>		<p>SUCSESSES:</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The program is delivered in small communities, where there are fears of confidentiality and anonymity. Some of the members had such concerns initially, but they all continued to come to the program. Now that the program has been done once, people are more open to it. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention-based rather than crisis-based • The program is successful because it is designed for and tailored to the communities. Efforts are made at the outset to assess what the community needs and at the conclusion to determine follow-up activities. • The curriculum emphasizes the strengths of peer participation, and doesn't focus on the individual blame that is typical of anger management programs. 	
<p>WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?</p>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PRIDE has been fortunate to have consistent funding, but the reporter mentions that this is important for any program to be successful and have continuity. • PRIDE is currently in the process of trying to get their violence prevention program accepted by the Crown as an alternative to sentencing. • Program deliverers must be humble and critically reflect every day. Delivering these programs is a learning process for everybody, so facilitators must be learners as well as advocates who really believe in what they're doing. • This is the only program in PEI that works with men. There is an absence of programming for men in Child and Family Services, all of the work is targeted at mothers; support and intervention cannot be done holistically until there are more services for fathers and father figures. 			

Initiatives to Support Aboriginal Fathers' Involvement

Quebec

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Rising Sun Childcare Centre

Province/Territory: Quebec

Date: Feb. 12, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Parent workshops

DESCRIPTION:

Rising Sun Childcare Centre is a provincially-subsidized Aboriginal day care that offers classrooms in English, French and Inuktitut. Families need not be of Aboriginal descent, but spaces are reserved for Inuit children. There are monthly parent workshops on different topics. Guest presenters may be brought in to facilitate the workshops. For example, the January workshop was on the topic of "parenting" and was facilitated by a consulting parenting coach from Montreal.

LOCATION:

Verdun, Quebec.

FREQUENCY:

COST OF PROGRAM:

The daycare costs \$7 per day per child.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

Childcare staff are all trained in ECE. Some are of Aboriginal descent. Guest presenters are brought in to facilitate parenting workshops.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:

SUCCESES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Val D'Or Native Friendship Centre - Head Start Program

Province/Territory: Quebec

Date: Feb. 12, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Aboriginal Head Start Program

DESCRIPTION:

Val D'or Native Friendship Centre coordinates a Head Start Program in two locations (Chiannou and Tiknagin Centres) with active parental involvement. There are no targeted programs for fathers, but fathers attend general parenting activities including: workshops on parenting skills ("No one is perfect"); sports, cultural, and social activities for parents and children; support programs for urban Aboriginal parents.

LOCATION:

There are two locations, catering to families of young children in Val-d'Or (Tiknagin) and Senneterre (Chiannou).

FREQUENCY:

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

Maximum of 8 children per group.

All programs are for both parents.

BARRIERS:

SUCCESES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Chibougamau Eenu Friendship Centre (formerly Cree Indian Centre of Chibougamau)

Province/Territory: Quebec

Date: Feb. 7, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: (Prospective Program)

DESCRIPTION:

The Friendship Centre in Chibougamau has put in a proposal to the Status of Women for a family violence program modelled after the I am a Kind Man initiative in Ontario. They are seeking culturally relevant programs that will provide intergenerational activities, in order to support the bond between Elders and community. The reporter described barriers that have hindered programs from thriving in Quebec. Many of the services/materials provided by the provincial health and social services are in French, and designed for a non-Aboriginal context. Thus, even when linguistic barriers are overcome, there is still an absence of cultural relevancy.

The executive director is planning to use family violence as an entry point into creating family programming for men.

One follow-up program that she has in mind is gathering circles for mothers and for fathers, reflecting on what parenting means today, what it has meant in the past, and if/how traditional values around parenting can be reflected in current society. She described an urgency for cultural literacy and parenting literacy within her community and the neighbouring communities that look to the Friendship Centre for guidance.

LOCATION:

FREQUENCY:

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:

SUCSESSES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Gesgapegiag Health & Community Services

Province/Territory: Quebec

Date: Jan. 28, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Consciences Parenting Group Session (Prospective Program)

DESCRIPTION:

Gesgapegiag runs a host of programs that cater to mothers, from the Maternal Child Health services to mom & tot drop-in group. The Consciences Parenting Group Session is targeted at both parents and grandparents but it remains to be seen how many fathers will be involved. The series is comprised of four one-hour sessions, covering topics that range from the early years to adolescence, sensitivity, bullying, and sibling rivalry.

LOCATION:

Gesgapegiag Healing Lodge.

FREQUENCY:

Four one-hour sessions every Tuesday at 10:00 am for the month of February. Participants can come to one or all four sessions.

COST OF PROGRAM:

Free for participants.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

A retired schoolteacher who has been certified to lead this series is being brought in.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

Program has not commenced yet.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

This series is for both parents and grandparents.

BARRIERS:

SUCSESSES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Initiatives to Support Aboriginal Fathers' Involvement

Saskatchewan

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Family Healing Circle Lodge

Province/Territory: Saskatchewan

Date: Jan. 29, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Journeys for Men

DESCRIPTION:

This is a family violence program that runs an evening group session for individuals (specifically targeting Aboriginal people but non-Aboriginal people are also welcome) with a history of abusive/dysfunctional relationships. The support group does not include children, but daycare is provided for participants who bring their child with them. The program also offers support to spouses and child victims of family violence, counselling, and home assessments.

LOCATION:

The Family Healing Circle Lodge in Saskatoon.

FREQUENCY:

Wednesdays from 6:30-8:30

COST OF PROGRAM:

Free for participants. Childcare included if scheduled by noon the same day.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:

SUCCESES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Four Directions Community Health Centre

Province/Territory: Saskatoon

Date: Jan. 14, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Focus on Fathers Support and Parenting Program

DESCRIPTION:

A public health nurse facilitates a weekly evening support and parenting program for fathers, including First Nations and Metis dads. Each session begins with a shared sit-down meal with the fathers and their children. The program seeks to recognize the inherent strengths of all fathers, regardless of circumstance, and to increase promote healthy families. The goal of the program is to increase men's sense of self-worth, thereby encouraging them to be pro-active and create a support network with other fathers.

LOCATION:

Four Directions Community Health Centre in North Central Regina.

FREQUENCY:

This is a drop-in program that runs on Wednesday nights. The program has run since 2003.

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

Facilitated by a Public Health Nurse with a focus on Mens Health.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

Fathers are encouraged to bring their children and share a sit-down meal at the session's commencement.

PARTNERS?

No.

BARRIERS:

SUCSESSES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

ORANIZATION: John Howard Society of Saskatchewan

Province/Territory: Saskatchewan

Date: Jan. 31, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Str8 Up

DESCRIPTION:

Str8 Up is a grass-roots non-profit gang intervention program based in Saskatoon. Saskatoon has high rates of gang membership (~300 people, or 1% of the population), mostly comprised of Aboriginal people, and most gang-related violence occurs in predominantly Aboriginal neighbourhoods. Str8 Up was conceived in the 1990s by a Chaplain at the Saskatoon Correctional Centre at the request of two inmates, who sought to exit gang life. Str8 Up is a four year, holistic intervention program organized around traditional Indigenous Plains philosophy and the Medicine Wheel concept of healing. Members must adhere to 5 conditions: end gang affiliation, confront addictions, be honest, be humble, and dedicate four years to the program. In turn, there are three goals: become a responsible citizen, become a faithful partner, and become a loving parent. Str8 Up helps men repair their relationships with their children, many of which were damaged during incarceration. By encouraging participants to overcome addiction, men are able to become healthier and participate more in their children's lives. Str8 Up directs members to fathering and traditional parenting programs and may make initial steps to setting up access to children in foster care.

To hear about the Str8 Up Program on CBC's 'The Current', please visit:
<http://www.cbc.ca/doczone/8thfire/radio.html>),

LOCATION:

FREQUENCY:

Str8 Up is a four year commitment, which includes a variety of programs and activities.

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

There are currently 65 members in the program, all of whom are fathers.

BARRIERS:

SUCCESES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Saskatchewan Literacy Network Inc.

Province/Territory: Saskatchewan

Date: Jan. 31, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Dad's Connection

DESCRIPTION:

Dad's Connection is a family literacy program for fathers at the Regina Correctional Centre. The program is facilitated by two Early Childhood Educators who provide incarcerated fathers (including Aboriginal fathers) with an opportunity to learn about parenting, communication, cultural identity and literacy. This program was featured in CBC reporter Geoff Leo's documentary, 'Blind Spot'.

To hear about Dad's Connection on CBC's 'The Current', please visit:

<http://www.cbc.ca/doczone/8thfire/radio.html>

LOCATION:

Regina Correctional Centre.

FREQUENCY:

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

The program is run by two non-aboriginal female ECE volunteers from the Saskatchewan Literacy Network.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:

SUCCESES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre

Province/Territory: Saskatchewan

Date: Feb. 4, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Family Violence Program

DESCRIPTION:

Saskatoon Indian and Métis Friendship Centre (SIMFC) provides a holistic program for family violence, including prevention, intervention and protection. The Aboriginal co-facilitator provided information about the group component: a weekly evening group session facilitated by an Aboriginal Elder-helper/Violence Worker, and a female psychologist. 80% of participants are referred through the courts, and must go for an initial education program before they can join the Traditional program.

Evenings begins with a smudge and a prayer, which is spiritual in nature and expresses acceptance of learning and being positive. Men are usually rebellious for the first five weeks, but by the fifth week, they begin to understand what the psychologist is telling them and they become keen to learn. The male co-facilitator endeavours to translate the teachings of the psychologist into ordinary English, teaching participants about family violence, triggers, etc. Elders are also brought in and they lead the group as they see fit for the evening. Although the program primarily deals with violence toward women, addictions and children also comprise a focus of the program. For example, one of presenters for the month of February is a doctorate who will explain the effects yelling can have on children's neural formation - how yelling hurts children and they will have to heal from that. They try to teach humility: being humble and admitting wrong-doing, despite the hard stance most of the men take and the internalized learning that 'boys don't cry'.

LOCATION:

Group sessions take place at the Community Hospital's nurses' wing, because this is more central to the 'core' neighbourhoods that most of the fathers live in.

FREQUENCY:

Wednesday nights from 5:30-7:45. Snacks and coffee are provided.

COST OF PROGRAM:

Free for participants.

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

The male Aboriginal co-facilitator has run this program for 3 years. He is a professional violence worker as well as an Elder's helper. He indicated that the biggest barrier initially was translating the knowledge the co-facilitating psychologist presented into language that participants could understand.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

There are 12 fathers in the current cohort. Approximately eighty percent of participants are court-ordered to attend.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

Most participants have a no-contact clause in their parole, and may try and secretly contact their children. The program discourages this, and instead seeks ways for the men to establish legal access to their children which is often granted halfway through the completion of the program.

PARTNERS?

Partners have a personal interview with the psychologist before the men comes in for training, so that facilitators can 'get the stories straight' (regarding the exact nature of abuse; men will sometimes attempt to minimize their anger by under-reporting the frequency/severity of domestic violence).

BARRIERS:

Addiction: most of the men are fighting alcohol and/or drug addiction. Reporter noted that many men report

SUCCESES:

In the three years since the program began, it has gone from a 55% success rate to a 70% success rate.

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

Addiction: most of the men are fighting alcohol and/or drug addiction. Reporter noted that many men report on the Wednesday evening that they spent the weekend drinking and sober up on Monday or Tuesday in time for the meeting. When they talk about addiction during the sessions, the men's whole body language changes and they become less responsive.

In the three years since the program began, it has gone from a 55% success rate to a 70% success rate. Reporter attributed this success in part to the characteristics of the facilitators, including himself: most of the participants are Aboriginal, and so they can look to Vernon as a positive example of what they could be. Vernon uses his own stories of addiction and fatherhood and shares these with participants, taking the teachings of the psychologist and putting them in understandable terms.

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

This program should be mandatory for pre-teens and teenagers. The program should be available at treatment centres for alcohol and drug addiction. The reporter noted that it is a shame that these men have to 'do a bad thing to get something good'. Why are there no preventative programs teaching boys to be fathers? Why are there more programs in prisons than in the community? He expressed a wish that the resources made available to convicts also be made available to the general public, explaining that there's not that much out there for Aboriginal fathers unless they have done something bad or have the funds to organize their own activities.

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORANIZATION: Saskatoon Tribal Council - Urban Family Services

Province/Territory: Saskatoon

Date: Jan. 29, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: CHUMS (Creative Healing for Urban Members) programs: Coffee & Confidence (Men's Talking Circle); Me and My Family (Traditional Native Parenting/Self-care); Dad's for Life workshops

DESCRIPTION:

The Saskatoon Tribal Council Urban Family Services unit offers a wide array of programs that support families, from family support work, to preschool (which has historically included a dad and tot drop-in group), family violence programs, and head start programs. Housed within the CHUMs stream (Creative Healing for Urban Members) are a number of initiatives that specifically reach out to fathers: the men's talking circle, which is a sharing circle open to all men including fathers, grandfathers, uncles; Traditional Native Parenting which teaches individuals self-care, parenting and family support practices; and Dad's for Life workshops.

LOCATION:

Saskatoon Tribal Council Urban First Nations Services - Family Centre.

FREQUENCY:

All CHUMs programs are 18 weeks in duration. The Men's Talking Circle occurs once a week (has run in the evening in the past, but the current series runs Tuesday mornings); two Traditional Native Parenting sessions are offered each week, one on a weekday evening and another on a weekday morning; Dad's for Life workshops are offered intermittently.

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:

SUCCESES:

The Medicine Wheel and Tipi Teachings are the foundation of all CHUMs programs.

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Saskatoon Tribal Council - Urban Family Services

Province/Territory: Saskatoon

Date: Jan. 29, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: PALS (Providers of Aboriginal Lifestyles Supports)

DESCRIPTION:

PALS is an in-home counselling and support service to families at risk of losing their children to the Department of Community Resources and Employment. Families may enter the program voluntarily or be referred by the DCRE. PALS sees the value of raising children in a manner that reflects First Nations traditions, and works to support at-risk families from having their children apprehended. This is done by stabilizing those in crisis, reunifying those who have been separated, and connecting families to resources. PALS is listed as a support for Aboriginal Fathers in the Saskatoon Men's Centre Resource Guide.

LOCATION:

At-home counselling.

FREQUENCY:

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

PALS has a dedicated staff of support workers.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:

SUCSESSES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

Initiatives to Support Aboriginal Fathers' Involvement

Yukon Territory

Inventory of Programs for Aboriginal Fathers

ORGANIZATION: Skookum Jim Friendship Centre

Province/Territory: Yukon

Date: Jan. 11, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Yukon Traditional Parenting Program

DESCRIPTION:

This parenting program combines two pilot projects: Traditional Motherhood and Traditional Fatherhood. It aims to encourage interest in and practice of traditional parenting values, preserve Aboriginal culture, promote health values and prevent the occurrence of FASD. It does so via three-day workshops, offered periodically throughout the year, with father-specific activities including setting fishnets and snares, berry picking and tanning hides. Activities are seasonal; for example, a workshop theme could be: Harvest Camp. The program uses a traditional parenting facilitator's manual developed by Skookum Jim Friendship Centre staff and approved by Yukon First Nations Elders. Elders also participate via the transmission of oral traditions including storytelling, the spiritual nature of child rearing and the role of extended family. For additional information, please visit the Skookum Jim website, available at: <http://skookumjim.com/programs/traditional-parenting/>
To view a video of the program, please visit: <http://vimeo.com/16833245>

LOCATION:

The program is offered at the Skookum Jim Friendship Centre but also offers outreach programming in Yukon communities.

FREQUENCY:

3-day workshops throughout the year

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

Each workshop is taught by an Elder from the community.

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

The target group is Urban Aboriginal parents but other ethnic groups are welcome.

NUMBER OF KIDS:

Children can accompany parents on workshops and camping trips.

PARTNERS?

The new program is for both parents, but includes a focus on fathers and children.

BARRIERS:

SUCCESES:

Elders play an essential role in the Traditional Parenting program, because they are the keepers of traditions and knowledge.

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?

--

ORANIZATION: Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in

Province/Territory: Yukon

Date: Jan. 23, 2013

PROGRAM NAME: Prenatal Program; Tr'inke Zho Childcare Centre

DESCRIPTION:

This is a prenatal program in Dawson City for pregnant and post-natal women and families with children up to one year of age. Fathers are encouraged to participate in the program. The program offers all of the usual prenatal services, as well as a biweekly fruit and vegetable subsidy, a travel stipend to Whitehorse (for delivery), resources and support library.

LOCATION:

Prenatal luncheons are held bi-weekly at the Community Suport Centre.

FREQUENCY:

COST OF PROGRAM:

COST OF PROGRAM DELIVERY:

STAFF:

NUMBER OF FATHERS:

NUMBER OF KIDS:

PARTNERS?

BARRIERS:

SUCSESSES:

WHAT WOULD YOU NEED IN ORDER TO ACHIEVE YOUR GOALS?