

**“Kids & Communities:  
Celebrating Progress,  
Embracing Opportunity”**

**2005 National Child Day Forum**

**FORUM FINAL REPORT**

**November 17 & 18, 2005**

**Fort Garry Hotel- Winnipeg, MB  
222 Broadway, Main Floor**



Room 219 - 114 Garry Street  
Winnipeg MB R3C 4V6  
CANADA

Tel: (204) 945-2266  
Toll Free: 1-888-848-0140  
FAX: (204) 948-2585

114, rue Garry, bureau 219  
Winnipeg (Manitoba) R3C 4V6  
CANADA

Tél: (204) 945-2266  
Sans frais: 1 888 848-0140  
Télééc.: (204) 948-2585

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Dear Friends of Children,

Thanks to your excellent participation I can happily say that we have had yet another highly successful Early Childhood Care and Development Forum. I hope you will find this report informative, encouraging and useful. Our sincere thanks to our friends at Healthy Child Manitoba who always do such a great job of capturing the essence of our deliberations.

I am sure all of you felt as proud as I did when Fiona Stanley recognized our province as one of the leaders in the field of ECD. We have no doubt that it is your efforts that have earned us this enviable reputation. The presence, at the Forum, of 4 government ministers is also a mark of the esteem in which your work is held. Of course, we are also aware that this places a great responsibility on us to continue to work towards providing the best start in life for all our children.

I am particularly encouraged by your comments that community partnerships are continuing to grow stronger. I also appreciate your exhortation that we need to expand the circle even further to include constituencies such as business and councilors. You will be happy to hear that HCM, in collaboration with CAYC, will be launching a special initiative to identify champions for children in the business community and to encourage more businesses to become involved in supporting the efforts of those who are working for the well-being of all Manitoba's children and their families. You will receive further information about this in due course.

I also appreciate your reminder about the importance of continuing to strengthen the connections between schools and the child care and pre-school communities. In this regard I can tell you that MCCA and MAST, who have led this dialogue in our province, will be meeting with a committee in January to continue to move this dialogue forward. You will be kept informed of any further developments.

By way of expressing my warm gratitude for all your invaluable work I conclude with the poem that I shared, while carrying our grandson, at the closing of the Forum.

Sincerely,

Strini Reddy

## SHOULDERS

A man crosses the street in rain,  
stepping gently, looking two times north and south,  
because his son is asleep on his shoulder.

No car must splash him.  
No car drive too near his shadow.

This man carries the world's most sensitive cargo  
but he's not marked.

Nowhere does his jacket say  
FRAGILE, HANDLE WITH CARE.

His ear fills up with breathing.  
He hears the hum of a boy's dream  
deep inside him.

We're not going to be able  
to live in this world  
If we're not willing to do what he's doing  
with one another.

The road will only be wide.  
The rain will never stop falling.

~ Naomi Shihab Nye ~

# **Kids & Communities**

## **Celebrating Progress, Embracing Opportunity**

### **National Child Day Forum**

#### **November 17 and 18, 2005**

National Child Day was proclaimed by the Government of Canada on March 19, 1993, to commemorate two historic events for children – the adoption of the United Nations *Declaration on the Rights of the Child* in 1959 and the UN adoption of the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* in 1989.

In keeping with these historic events, *Healthy Child Manitoba* hosted a forum for Parent Child Coalition Members and community partners, entitled *Kids & Communities: Celebrating Progress, Embracing Opportunity* on November 17 and 18, 2005.

#### **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

The keynote address was presented by Professor Fiona Stanley, AC, Director, Telethon Institute for Child Health Research and Executive Director, Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth.

#### *Complex Pathways to Child Outcomes: Implications for Research, Policy, and Practice*

Professor Stanley opened her presentation by noting that Canada, specifically Manitoba and British Columbia, are acknowledged internationally as leaders in research and program delivery that put children first on national and provincial agendas. Her presentation focused on three areas of research and a number of implications for further research, policy and practice.

#### **1. Early experiences influence health throughout life.**

Research indicates that five factors play a critical role in the development of pathways to resilience. The factors are genes, healthy pregnancy (reduced maternal smoking, alcohol and drug misuse), healthy nutrition in utero and throughout childhood and adolescence, social and economic environments supportive to child rearing (especially absence of poverty and exposure to violence), and responsive parenting. When these factors are in place, optimal brain development in utero and during early childhood are achievable. Positive pathways in turn lead to a sense of self-efficacy and self-worth, a sense of social connectedness, healthy beliefs and clear standards, and ultimately to personal achievement and emotional resilience.

Clearly, healthy child development is dependent upon many factors, with no one factor being the primary determinant. Of the factors in play, low birth weight, the impact of white colonization on aboriginal health, and an environment of violence are of particular significance.

Professor Stanley stressed the importance of examining these causal pathways if sustainable solutions are to be found

## 2. **Social influences are pervasive and powerful predictors of health outcomes.**

The underlying causes of socio-economic gradients in health status (death, disease, disability, health) include individual lifestyle, physical environment, social, economic, and psychosocial conditions during development, and differential access to services. Paradoxically, these gradients have a disproportionate influence on the health status in wealthier countries as opposed to poorer countries. The socio-economic gradients in health status have remained unchanged over the last 100 years in spite of changes in diseases.

Research (both animal/non-human primate and human) indicates that early stress influences child health and development; as does maternal stress. Professor Stanley noted a number of stress-inducing changes in Australian society that parallel the Canadian experience:

- Divorce, single parents, blended families
- Conflict, violence, isolation, homelessness
- Smaller families, contraction of the extended family
- Mothers working, child care
- Hours of work, work stress, work mobility
- Children needing fostering
- Insecure neighbourhoods, decreased connections
- Decreased social capital (trust, cooperation, civic engagements and reciprocity)

Professor Stanley pointed to the protective effect of positive parenting on the gene that handles stress and noted that early childhood educators and Parent/Child Coalitions are very well positioned to enhance the coping skills of both parents and children.

## 3. **Modernity's Paradox**

*Modernity's Paradox* (Keating and Hertzman, 1999) states that:

*In spite of economic prosperity, there are:*

- *increases in health (& other) problems in children and youth, and*
- *no improvement in social gradients.*

Indicators of poor developmental health among Australian children and youth can be classified into three categories:

- Health Outcomes
  - Low birth weight
  - Complex diseases (asthma, diabetes, obesity)
  - Mental health problems, suicide
- Lifestyle Risk Factors
  - Child abuse/neglect/domestic violence
  - Behavioural problems, substance abuse

- Others
  - Juvenile crime
  - Learning disorders
  - Disabilities (intellectual, physical)

## **Implications for Research, Policy, and Practice**

Professor Stanley noted the characteristics of child and youth problems. Problems are occurring among younger children and the number of girls with developmental problems now equals the number of boys.

Even though social gradients are increasing, the most affected children and youth are in the middle income groups. Child and youth problems are costly to treat and often practitioners are unable to treat or manage them. These difficulties are creating a crisis in health, mental health, education, family services, and justice. Researchers have discovered no indication of improvement. Clearly the causes of poor developmental health among children and youth are complex and do not operate in isolation. For example, if the incidence of child abuse and neglect was eliminated or dramatically reduced, the school drop out rate would be reduced as well.

She also outlined the trends in problems affecting children and youth in today's world:

- Many problems are increasing in incidence.
- There is a rise in complex problems, such as mental health problems and obesity.
- Problems affecting children and youth require complex information to monitor, study, and prevent them.
- These trends and problems are inadequately researched.
- Current research is fragmented, done in separate silos, and does not inform solutions.

Professor Stanley divided the implications for research, policy, and practice into four major categories.

Research must focus on early childhood development; an unpacking of social gradients is required; effective strategies may be outside specific portfolios; and there is a need to influence “big picture” socioeconomic effects.

Professor Stanley discussed the parameters of the NMHRC Road Map Strategy. In 2002, the National Health and Medical Research Council (Australia) recognized the need to develop a cohesive and coordinated approach to address the health research needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders. The NHMRC Aboriginal Road Map is a framework for improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health through research and a final reporting of community consultations.

Her discussion of the future of population health research included a number of imperatives:

- Investigate why income distribution influences health so profoundly.
- Research must be cross disciplinary – biology, genetics, psychology, and social sciences.
- It should include genetic/molecular epidemiology AND social epidemiology (avoid “them and us”).

- Integrate results from different levels of analysis (within and between populations; individual and ecological).
- A large total population data base is required, with family linkage and linkage to exposures.
- Adequate legislation is required to protect population data and record linkage without consent for public good research.
- Research must include the contexts in which risk factors arise (social, economic, societal, and global) to inform effective intervention.
- Researchers need to partner with those influencing economic, family related and other policies in order to evaluate health and developmental effects.

With respect to the implications for policy and practice, Professor Stanley advocated for a **universal** service for all, with a **targeted** approach for those in need. She identified a number of areas that need attention; maternal health in pregnancy and after birth, support for parents/caregivers, protecting children, promoting mental health and wellbeing, support for healthy behaviour, and different approaches for those most in need, especially Aboriginal families. New ways of working (collaboratively with clients, governments, NGO's, and across disciplines, sectors, and levels of government) and a community focus (connecting at the local level) were recommended as effective strategies for building healthy pathways to resilience. The need for accurate program and service evaluation was noted as well. Professor Stanley described the first building block of cycles of economic prosperity and national capacity this way:

**Most Children Commence their Lives in  
Environments Which Enable Full  
Opportunities for Healthy Child Development.**

She concluded her presentation with a quote:

*“We need to place social and environmental sustainability and population health ahead of economic growth as a national goal, and develop social policies that enhance equity, social stability and trust. Our response must extend beyond conventional frameworks for social and economic policy.”* (Butler, Douglas & McMichael, 2001)

## **PROGRESS AND OPPORTUNITIES: FACILITATED DISCUSSION**

Forum participants were invited to engage in table conversations that would become the basis of an agenda for discussions with Healthy Child Committee of Cabinet Members scheduled for the following day of the Forum.

Participants were asked to reflect on two questions as they listened to Professor Stanley's presentation:

- Where do you feel we have made the greatest progress in meeting the needs of young children and families?
- What are the areas where you feel we have the greatest opportunities to better meet the needs of young children and families?

Participant responses were discussed and recorded by the table groups. Each table group was asked to contribute two areas of progress and two areas of opportunity. These were subsequently grouped into four streams to form the basis of the following agenda for the Facilitated Discussions with Members of the Healthy Child Committee of Cabinet:

### **1. Children are Everyone's Business**

Forum participants acknowledged the progress of the Parent Child Coalitions at the grassroots level across Manitoba, the responsiveness of government to community stakeholders, and a new “big picture” awareness of the importance of early childhood development. As well, it was felt that our communities are now seeing the benefits of quality child care facilities.

It was felt that business should be encouraged to “invest” in early childhood development, especially within the context of the creation of an educated, productive workforce. Encouragement could be provided through the use of tax incentives for business, cost benefit analyses, engaging decision makers in a child focused society, and the development of community champions to promote early childhood programs and activities.

#### **Facilitated Discussion with The Honourable Tim Sale, Minister of Health**

##### **Discussion Themes:**

- To succeed, everyone needs to be on board with respect to a “children first” agenda for Manitoba. For example, government could use tax benefits to encourage food stores to promote the purchase of healthy foods, rather than junk foods.
- Forum participants are working hard to make local politicians and community leaders aware of how important support for young children and families is to the health of the community as a whole. This is a particularly difficult task in Northern Manitoba, where communities are small and isolated and where poverty is substantial.
- To create a child-focused society, children must be at the centre, with the rest of society (schools, child care, politicians) working together, not competing with one another.
- Governments must listen to community stakeholders. Participants acknowledged a greater responsiveness across government departments in recent years. “We've come a long way!”



- Current coalition funding levels are not adequate for meeting the identified needs within our communities.

- ***Strengthening Partnerships***

Participants noted that progress has been made with respect to the dismantling of “silos” by government departments and community agencies and with respect to the visions and funding of the Early Development Instrument (EDI) and the Parent Child Coalitions.

Forum participants reported that while much progress has been made towards the building of strong community partnerships that support children and families, there is much to be done to enhance and cement partnerships with:

- child care facilities,
- community/resource agencies,
- parents/community members,
- business, and
- Government.

Specific suggestions included the allocation of funds for preventative services, Manitoba-wide “Triple P” programming, and stronger connections with rural partners.

### **Facilitated Discussion with The Honourable Tim Sale, Minister of Health**

#### **Discussion Themes:**

- Developing trust among community partners has been a long process, but it continues to grow. We need a communication strategy that encompasses Ministers, management personnel, and front line workers in government departments.
- Communities need more funding for preventative services. There is an urgent need to fund programs and services that help children overcome the effects of family violence.
- Parenting programs have been “hugely” successful in some rural communities. It is, however, very difficult to come up with effective ways to support parents who have FAS/FAE and struggle to raise their children.
- Participants acknowledged that we are moving to a more holistic approach toward family supports, but that we must look at the root causes of the problems facing families.
- Combining child care and parent resource centres would be a dream come true!

## **1. Support for Positive Family Choices**

It was noted that parenting programs are increasingly seen in a more positive light by society and that there has been a shift from reactive to preventive models for addressing community needs. Reactive models lead to over reliance on band aid solutions and emergency services, such as Koats for Kids and Winnipeg Harvest, to address community needs. Forum members acknowledged that steps have been taken to reach out to and engage fathers in early childhood education and programming.

Participants identified a number of opportunities for increasing support for parents, noting the importance of providing parents with a “stay at home” option. Examples of support include an increase in child care spaces, tax credits for “stay at home” parents, extended maternity leave, and assistance for parents to attend school. Other areas of opportunity include an increased emphasis on the importance of the early years (especially for brain development and literacy), the provision of universal programs in multiple settings, and an increase in the wages of early childhood educators who work outside the child care worker system.

It was noted as well that our communities, with the help of government, must look beyond crisis management programs and address systemic issues that give rise to cycles of poverty. Recommendations included incentives for the working poor, overnight and evening child care, child care for all ages, including newborns, and flexible family programs and resources.

### **Facilitated Discussion with The Honourable Christine Melnick, Minister of Family Services and Housing**

#### **Discussion Themes:**

- Parents should have options, including the option to be a “stay at home” parent. Income levels affect choices. Working parents need flexible programs and services that are available in the evening or on weekends.
- Parents living in poverty need educational opportunities. Educational success enhances self-esteem and improves family dynamics. Part time child care spaces would facilitate adult education.
- Early childhood education is closely related to the school system, however, it is important to note that one is play based and the other is education based. Child care facilities within a school setting create opportunities for new alliances. Sweden takes a universal approach to child care. In that country, every parent has a home visitor assigned to him/her. Home visitors provide parent education information.
- Engaging dads in parent /family programming is a challenge. Fathers need to be welcomed into parenting groups and encouraged to feel comfortable about being nurturing parents. Programming should be family centered, not mother centered. Pay equity would provide moms and dads with more options. The “I am Your Father” Program (Manitoba Metis Federation) is a good example of a program for fathers that reflects their interest in becoming more active parents.
- Increased wages for early childhood educators, working in parent child settings rather than the child care system, are needed.

### **3. Responding to Community Needs (Universal/Targeted)**

Forum participants recognized that much progress has been made by Parent Child Coalitions, with coalitions being able to respond to family/community needs at the grassroots level. They noted that early support for families with newborns, a move to more universal programming, and increased opportunities for Aboriginal families reflect the progress made by coalitions throughout the Province.

However, a number of opportunities for further work and development were identified as well:

- Recognize, celebrate, and build on the successes of Aboriginal people.

- Bridge gaps in understanding between Aboriginal groups and non-aboriginal groups.
- Better meet the needs of rural, remote, and northern families and communities.
- Increase evening and summer programs for parents and children, free of charge.
- Reach out to adolescent parents.
- Further expand society's understanding of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome.
- Provide parent programs for expectant parents while interest in child development is high.
- Nurture the inclusion of all community members in coalition programs and supports, with special effort being made to engage intergenerational families, families coping with special needs, and Canadian newcomers.

### **Facilitated Discussion with The Honourable Gord Mackintosh, Minister of Justice**

#### **Discussion Themes:**

- School curricula should include instruction in life skills. (“Teach life skills to kids before they have kids.”) Topics could include budgeting, parenting, and building healthy relationships with others.
- Behavioural problems often arise around the time children reach nine to eleven years of age. Often parents are working and grandparents are parenting with little or no support. Children need after school activities. Violence is a cultural issue (video games, TV, etc.) that affects children by desensitizing them to violence at an early age. Anti-violence education has to begin early and must address cultural shortcomings. Project Peacemakers, Roots of Empathy, and Turnabout are examples of programs that address issues of violence and disrespectful behaviour.
- The effect of a positive adult role model in a child's life can not be over estimated. Programs that encourage fathers to take an active and responsible role in their children's lives are required.
- We should look to the Alberta Child Secretariat as an organizational model for advocating on behalf of children. It is acknowledged that programs on aboriginal reserves often get tangled up in jurisdictional and bureaucratic issues. Governments need to cooperate at all levels.
- We are looking at the symptoms of family crisis, rather than the root causes. The stresses of parenting and the absence of hope that comes with living in poverty contribute to violence and other family problems.

#### **4. Healthy Families/Healthy Lifestyles**

Areas of progress include a better understanding of the a holistic approach to healthy families, preventative health programs for families, and excellent literacy programs such as “Focus”, “Rock and Read”, and “Mother Goose”.

Participants noted that our communities must avail themselves of every opportunity to address issues of obesity, diabetes, inactivity, and to promote healthy lifestyles generally. It was suggested that Healthy Child Manitoba, The City of Winnipeg Recreation Services, and school divisions work together to provide free facilities for children's and parents' programs that teach healthy living strategies.

## **Facilitated Discussion with**

**The Honourable Theresa Oswald, Minister responsible for Healthy Living and Chair of the Healthy Child Committee of Cabinet**

### **Discussion Themes:**

- School divisions, city recreational services, and government systems must partner and complement one another in order to create a holistic approach to children's health.
- Funding and the provision of transportation for community members are essential for successful programming and on going community capacity building.
- Children learn from adults/parents who model healthy lifestyle choices (physical activity, healthy diets).
- Transportation to grocery stores and “healthy lunch” education would help parents make healthy food choices for their children and themselves.
- Developing positive relationships with community members takes time. Community programmers, service providers, and families must work together!

*Educaring: Public Education aligned with Early Childhood Education and Care*

Participants discussed the pros and cons of the Early Development Instrument (EDI) Progress is reflected in the use of the EDI to drive early childhood programming. A stronger relationship between some schools and early childhood education has created a welcoming transition process for both children and parents as children move from preschool programming into grade school.

Participants noted that the connection between schools and preschool/child care organizations needs to be strengthened. Suggestions include universal free daycare, school readiness programs for four and five year olds, school curricula that include child development, establishment of a junior kindergarten program in all Manitoba schools, and early identification programs that identify speech, hearing, and other developmental difficulties.

## **Facilitated Discussion with**

**The Honourable Theresa Oswald, Minister responsible for Healthy Living and Chair of the Healthy Child Committee of Cabinet**

### **Discussion Themes:**

- Rural communities do not have as many options as cities do in terms of space in schools for child care. Space for programming may be available one year, but not the next.
- School personnel need time to reach out to preschool and child care personnel. Community members should be talking to teachers and school trustees, especially at election time, about the concept of “Educaring”.
- Child cares and schools need to work together to identify needs and develop action plans to address those needs.
- Parents need to provide leadership in educating school division staff and school trustees about the critical importance of early childhood education.
- Communication between the school sector (teachers, principals, trustees) and the early childhood sector (early childhood educators, family daycares, child care centres) is essential for healthy early childhood development.

## CLOSING SESSION

Following the facilitated group discussions, Ministers Oswald, Melnick, Sale and Mackintosh addressed the Forum. The Ministers appreciated the opportunity to hear from members of the Parent-Child Coalitions and early childhood educators from across Manitoba and applauded the progress that has been made to date.

The Honourable Theresa Oswald, Minister responsible for Healthy Living and Chair of Healthy Child Committee of Cabinet, noted the importance of making school facilities available for use by communities generally and for early childhood education specifically. She agreed with participants that early learning needs to be a provincial priority and noted the need for grassroots programs that address nutrition issues, such as obesity and eating disorders.

The Honourable Tim Sale, Minister of Health, acknowledged that government departments do sometimes struggle to keep abreast of what other departments are working on. He referred to the web of policy issues surrounding food security, learning, and child development, and noted that these issues are linked directly to issues of poverty. Minister Sale supported the concept of “champions of early childhood education.” These champions would share the Healthy Child vision and promote the cause of early childhood education within their communities.

The Honourable Christine Melnick, Minister of Family Services and Housing, referred to various topics addressed in her discussion group, including support for stay at home parents, making parent programs available to working parents, and allocating child care spaces for low income families, part time workers, and adult students. She acknowledged the need for twenty-four hour child care facilities and noted coalition efforts to engage fathers in parenting/ family programming.

The Honourable Gord Mackintosh, Minister of Justice, referred to the challenges of parenting and noted a suggestion that parenting skills be included in school curricula. While pointing to the need to include anti-violence programming at the preschool level, Mr. Mackintosh noted that the reduction of violence is more than a school responsibility. Violence is a cultural issue. A relationship with a positive adult role model and after school activities can affect children's lives in healthy and constructive ways.

The Ministers of the Healthy Child Committee of Cabinet urged participants to continue to build strong community partnerships as they work to build healthy communities and improve the lives of children. We were reminded that government can play an important role in making that difference.

Strini Reddy closed the Forum by noting that over the years there has been a shift in the focus of the Healthy Child Forums; a shift from examining problems to discovering opportunities. Mr. Reddy pointed out that there is helpful data available that can be used to prove the value of taking care of kids. The fragility and vulnerability of children calls us to work together, to nurture respect and empathy, and to eliminate marginalization. A world that is fit for children is a world that is fit for everyone. To quote Minister Sale, “If we get it right for kids, we get it right for all of us.” Mr. Reddy ended his remarks by stating that Parent-Child Coalitions and their community partners “are perfectly placed to make a difference!”

# 2005 National Child Day Forum

## FORUM FINAL REPORT

### **Keynote Speaker: Fiona Stanley**

#### *Complex Pathways to Child Outcomes: Implications for Research Policy and Practice”*

Early life experiences influence whole of life chances. Changes in contemporary society such as longer work hours, childcare, divorce, blended families and the family structure itself impact on children and youth. These influences can impact child development and have been shown to be strongly mediated by the nature of the local community and the extent to which it operates to support families and schools in their shared task of child rearing.

Communities cannot be expected to do this on their own. For local initiatives to be sustained they will need the backing of a more integrated policy framework for children which places greater emphasis on desired childhood outcomes and which incorporates the growing knowledge of what can be done to optimize the key processes in children's development.

### **Professor Fiona Stanley AC**

Named Australian of the Year in 2003, Professor Stanley is a vocal advocate for the needs of children and their families.

Born in Sydney in 1946, she moved to Perth with her family in 1956. She studied medicine at the University of Western Australia and practised in hospitals for two years before going to the United Kingdom and USA for further training in epidemiology (the science of describing and explaining the occurrence of disease in populations), biostatistics and public health.

Professor Stanley is the founding Director of the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research that was established in Perth in 1990. The Institute is multi-disciplinary and researches prevention of major childhood illnesses. It currently has nearly 400 employees and students.

Professor Stanley is also the Executive Director of the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, a national organisation that was formally constituted in June 2002 with an agenda to improve the health and well-being of young Australians.

In 2004, Professor Stanley was honoured as an Australian “Living National Treasure” by the National Trust. She is married to Professor Geoffrey Shellam. They have two daughters.

## **A1 – *Personality Dimensions and Leadership*** **– Ginella MacIntyre**

Different personality types have different "languages" and preferred communication strategies. Increase your effectiveness as a leader by understanding more about the four distinctive types from Personality Dimensions™

### **Genella MacIntyre**

Genella MacIntyre, Principal of Partners in Discovery, is a training, coaching and consulting company committed to improving the quality of personal and professional living. Her background includes human resource management, executive leadership, coaching, counselling, and training with a Masters of Arts degree in Applied Psychology from the University of Saskatchewan.

## ***A2 – Working with Aboriginal Communities*** **– Garry Robson, Myra Laramee**

Garry and Myra will provide an overview of the Aboriginal perspective of the development of a child and discuss some similarities on parenting. They will also share some ideas that you should know when working with Aboriginal people.

### **Myra L. Laramee**

Myra Laramee is a member of the Fisher River Cree Nation. I am a grandmother, mother, sister, and daughter. These roles are of great importance and have been significant in shaping the person that I am today.

I have been an educator in the Inner City District of the Winnipeg School Division for the past 30 years. I taught Early Years, Senior High and became a Guidance Counselor. I became an administrator 15 years ago first as a Vice Principal at Hugh John Macdonald Junior High for 3 years and as Principal of Niji Mahkwa Elementary School for the last 12 years.

I hold a Bachelor of Teaching, Bachelor of Education and Masters in Education. Presently I have been accepted at the University of Manitoba as Doctoral student and have begun a Ph. D. program in the area of Aboriginal Education and the acquisition, utilization, research and writing of Indigenous Knowledge. I have been an instructor for the University of Manitoba for the past 15 years and conduct an annual Summer Institute in Aboriginal Education as well as 3-4 other courses in Aboriginal Education during regular session.

I carry a traditional bundle for the Indigenous people of this territory and have made a vow of commitment to be a person of peace in the work that lies in my path. I personally believe that lack of knowledge amongst people is cancerous and spend most of my time seeking and imparting knowledge for capacity building and the development of truthful relations.

As a traditional woman I am responsible for the transmission of knowledge and ceremony for women and children through the use of a Tipi Lodge. Care of children and has been and will continue to be a lifelong commitment.

### **Garry Robson**

Garry Robson, an Ojibway from the Peguis First Nation, is an Aboriginal Awareness Consultant with the Aboriginal Education Directorate over the past 25 years. A member of the Turtle Clan, Garry provides traditional culture and historical overview, as it relates to present day, to classrooms, teachers, administrators, parents, community agencies and government departments within the province of Manitoba. Garry is also a poet and story teller. Garry also know stories of the traditional life of his people, some of things are the Clan System, Prophecies, 7 Stages of life and Cradle Board to name a few.



## **A3 – *Play: The Developmentally Appropriate Way to Learn*** **– Gayle Robertson**

A day without play is a day without learning! What do children learn? Language, confidence, competence, social skills, problem-solving, thinking skills, and much more. This session will address questions about developmentally appropriate practice and learning through play. Participants will be able to share ideas and learn a few new ones.

### **Gayle Robertson**

Gayle has been working with young children from 3 to 9 for most of her adult life. She has recently retired from the Winnipeg School Division where she was the early years consultant for 6 years and a support or classroom teacher for more than 25 years. She has been the early years consultant for Manitoba Education, a sessional lecturer at the University of Manitoba, a former National President of the Canadian Association for Young Children, and is currently teaching Early Years at the University of Winnipeg, doing some independent consulting and enjoying life.

## **A4 – *Engaging Dads***

– Kyle Monkman, Terry McCharles, Donovan Lapensee,  
Dean McIvor, Donovan Tomlinson, Paul Malloy

Historically, dads have been seen as secondary players or supporting roles in the lives of their children. Although there has been a gradual shift in perception in recent years, parenting programs, parent-child programs and children's programs are frequently focussed on the mother-child relationship. This session deals with the importance of inclusiveness in programming, including tips for creating a welcoming environment for fathers.

### **Kyle Monkman**

Kyle has been working in the helping profession for the last 6 years, more specifically with dads and the Neah Kee Papa program, for the last 2 years. Kyle is a father of three and is a strong advocate for fathers and believes that father's play an integral role in the upbringing of their children.

### **Donovan Lapensee**

Donovan is a single father of three children aged 11, 9, and 7, and is their primary caregiver. Donovan is very active in the ongoing upbringing of his children. Donovan is a strong advocate for dads and is tireless in his advocacy for FASD awareness given that he has a young child who is experiencing this disorder. Donovan is constantly upgrading his knowledge and skills and has attended both the Neah Kee Papa program and the Better Fathers group. Donovan has given back in the form of guest speaking at both groups.

### **Terry McCharles**

Terry McCharles is married with two grown children, and four grandchildren, ages nine months to eighteen years.

He is a graduate of the Metis Child, Family and Community Services Diploma Program. Terry began assisting in the Neah Kee Papa (Fathers parenting program) while still a student. Terry has been facilitating the program for the last two years, and has worked with many Fathers in that time.

## ***A5 – Making the Race Fair for Our Children*** **– Marni Brownell, Terra Orlikow, Kim Johnson**

Recent research from across Manitoba shows that the social gradient in educational outcomes is much steeper than previously thought, and that initiatives in the early years may hold the best hope for future improvements.

Come and hear about how communities can use their local Early Development Instrument (EDI) data to assist them in determining the early years programs and services that meet the specific needs of their community's children.

The Early Development Instrument (EDI) is a province-wide data collection that tells communities how 'ready for school' their children are when entering grade one. 'Readiness for school' reflects children's early years and the factors that shape their early years, including parenting styles, family relationships, community support, and socio-economic factors. Communities use their local-level EDI data to assist them in determining the strategies, programs and services that meet the individual and specific needs of their community's children.

A local example of turning EDI results into community-level action comes from Families And Communities Together (FACT), the parent-child coalition for the North End Point Douglas community. FACT brings together parents, community members, community service providers, school divisions, health professionals, and the child care community to support children and families in the areas of parenting, nutrition and health, literacy and community capacity building.

### **Terra Orlikow**

Terra Orlikow is a Program and Policy Consultant with the Healthy Child Manitoba Office, and is responsible for the coordination of the Provincial Early Development Instrument (EDI) project.

### **Marni Brownell**

Marni Brownell is a Senior Researcher with the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy and Assistant Professor in the Department of Community Health Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, University of Manitoba. She holds a Canadian Institutes of Health Research New Investigator Award and is a core member of the Social Sciences and Research Council of Canada's New Investigators Network. Dr. Brownell is particularly interested in the impact of social factors on the health and development of children.

### **Kim Johnson**

Kim Johnson is the co-chair of F.A.C.T. (Families and Communities Together), the North End/Point Douglas parent-child coalition. She has been the co-chair of the coalition for the last two years.

## ***A6 - Putting the Pieces Together: Part 1***

This two-part session will provide information on Manitoba's Early Childhood Continuum-programs offered throughout the province to strengthen early childhood development, learning and care. Come to learn more about these programs and share ideas of how to connect and work together in your communities.

### **Healthy Baby - Shannon Dennehy**

Healthy Baby is a two-part program that includes the Manitoba Prenatal Benefit and Healthy Baby Community Support Programs. This initiative supports families during pregnancy and the child's infancy with financial assistance, social support and nutrition and health education.

### **Shannon Dennehy**

Shannon Dennehy is the program consultant for the Healthy Baby program. For the last six years, she has worked in programs with a focus on pregnancy, birth and infancy. Prior to that, Shannon spent 10 years working with families as a front line social worker.

### **Families First - Darlene Girard**

Families First is a home visiting program offering information and support to families as they raise their children, from pregnancy to school entry. It is designed to link with related services in the community. Families First is delivered across the province through the public health program of Regional Health Authorities.

### **Darlene Girard**

Darlene Girard is the provincial coordinator of the Families First program. She has worked with the program since the inception of BabyFirst in 1998. Darlene has two beautiful daughters and strongly believes that work/family balance is key to her families' well-being.

### **Early Childhood Development Initiative (ECDI) - Marilyn Robinson**

The ECD Initiative is designed to support school divisions in partnership with coalitions, parents and the community to respond to local priorities. Learn about initiatives to support preschool programming and services, and talk about existing partnerships and opportunities..

### **Marilyn Robinson**

Marilyn Robinson is a consultant with Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth. She has worked with her department's early Childhood development Initiative since its implementation began 4 years ago. She is also involved with various ECD-related initiatives including the provincial ECD Advisory Committee and the Educaring committee. In addition to her work in early childhood area, her MECY role is also focused on Aboriginal education.

### **Manitoba Child Care Program – Margaret Ferniuk**

Learn more about Manitoba's exciting plans for building, expanding and enhancing community-based and non-profit early learning and child care programs and services in nursery schools, full time centres and family child care homes.

### **Margaret Ferniuk**

Margaret Ferniuk is the Manitoba Child Care Program's New Initiatives/Communications Coordinator. She has worked in the field of early learning and child care for 23 years, including frontline work as an early childhood educator, child care director and later as a child care coordinator with the Government of Manitoba.

## **B1 – *Conducting Productive Meetings*** **– Judith Cameron**

This session will explore methods of achieving a successful meeting outcome through the use of specific and effective tools and tips and through active participation of all meeting members.

### **Judith Cameron**

Ms Cameron has over 15 years experience as both a Human Resources Consultant and as a Corporate Trainer having delivered seminars and workshops on a number of topics including Board Roles and Responsibilities, Governance Methods, Team Building, Volunteer Recruitment and Effective Meeting Strategies. She has provided consultations in Human Resources for the Empress Hotel in Victoria, BC, The Royal York in Toronto and Sam Lord's Castle in Barbados as well as working with Law Enforcement Agencies in the United States, designing recruitment protocols and procedures. Her company, Cameron Consultants is providing assistance to select clients to help build efficient, effective and progressive organizations. Ms Cameron has also delivered Career and Employment Counselling Sessions for Aboriginal Youth throughout rural and Northern Manitoba and is currently developing foundation documents for a newly created Aboriginal and Metis Woman's Group. Ms Cameron is currently the Chair of the North East Interlake Early Child Coalition and is active on numerous committees throughout the Interlake region both as a volunteer and as Director.

**B2 – *Done for the Love of It!***  
***Creating a Culture of Authentic Accountability***  
**– David Church**

"What is done is done for the love of it, or not really done at all." (Robert Frost) David will share his ideas on ways of constructing plans that are infused with such passion that monitoring and accountability occur as natural expressions of joyful accomplishment. Come prepared to share the secrets of your success, and to learn from others.

**David Church of Wildwood Consulting, Inc.** is a Winnipeg-based facilitator and organizational development consultant. David works with organizations to design and create desired change. He is recognized as an advanced facilitator by the Institute of Cultural Affairs Canada.

## ***B3 – Putting the Pieces Together: Part 2***

### **Children's Programs - Tracy Moore**

Participants will receive an overview of the Children's Programs Branch, with emphasis on the Children's Special Services Program and the Manitoba Child Care Children with Disabilities Program.

### **Tracy Moore**

Tracy Moore has been involved in the area of childhood disability for over 15 years and is currently the manager of Children's Programs.

### **Triple P - Steven Feldgaier**

Triple P – Positive Parenting Program is a world-renowned parenting system which promotes positive, caring relationships between parents and their children and helps parents learn effective management strategies for dealing with a variety of childhood developmental and behavioural issues. Triple P resources for families will be implemented throughout Manitoba over the next 2 years.

### **Steven Feldgaier, Ph.D., C. Psych.**

Dr. Steven Feldgaier is a clinical child psychologist and the Provincial Manager of the Triple P – Positive Parenting Program at Healthy Child Manitoba. Dr. Feldgaier is currently on secondment to the Healthy Child Manitoba Office from the University of Manitoba where he is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Clinical Health Psychology in the Faculty of Medicine. Dr. Feldgaier also serves as an Adjunct Professor in the Faculty of Education and is a member of the Clinical Health Psychology Program staff at St. Boniface General Hospital. He is a Past President of the Manitoba Psychological Society and the Manitoba Association of School Psychologists. Dr. Feldgaier has also served on a number of local and provincial advisory committees and boards. He is a frequent speaker to parent groups, school personnel, and others in the community on topics related to children's mental health. Dr. Feldgaier's clinical and research interests are in the areas of prevention and health promotion as they relate to parenting and families and to child anxiety and stress.

### **FASD Prevention and Support Strategy – Jill Isbister**

The presentation will focus on specific prevention, intervention and support programs that comprise components of the FASD strategy. Coalitions will be invited to explore opportunities to connect with this initiative in their communities.

### **Jill Isbister**

Jill Isbister works as a Program and Policy Consultant at Healthy Child Manitoba Office. She began with HCMO in 2000 providing support to the Early Start program, and since 2002 has worked primarily in the area of FASD (Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder). Jill works with government funded organizations and community agencies regarding FASD prevention and intervention initiatives, and providing support to individuals who are affected. She is the evaluator for the Stop FAS program and provides on-going staff training and program development support. She has presented at national and local conferences in the area of women and addictions, and FASD.



## **Early Childhood Health Promotion - Dale Brownlee and Julieta Hernandez**

This presentation will focus on a description of the role of the health system toward the promotion of the best possible health and development for all children in Manitoba, with a focus on the prenatal months to the early years.

### **Dale Brownlee**

Dale Brownlee is currently the Director of Manitoba Health and Healthy Living's Healthy Populations Branch. Healthy Populations focuses on the broadly defined health needs of children, women, seniors and persons with disabilities. In addition, the Branch is the Health lead for several prevention, and early intervention initiatives such as the province's Healthy Schools initiative and projects to enhance physical activity and healthy eating.

Previous work experience has included Healthy Child Manitoba/Children and Youth Secretariat, Child and Family Services Directorate, and the Community Living Program serving children and adults with disabilities and their families.

Volunteer activities have included founding member of the first noon and after school day care centre in Portage la Prairie. Big Brother's Association of Portage la Prairie, Community Agencies Council of Portage la Prairie, and current board member of the Child and Family Services General Authority and the Rehabilitation Centre for Children

### **Julieta Hernandez**

Julieta Hernandez is one of the consultants from Regional Support Services Branch of Manitoba Health. She liaises with the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. Her portfolio includes Women and Children's Health.

Graduated from the University of Manitoba, Faculty of Nursing. Her background is varied which includes hospital and community health nursing. She worked as a public health nurse in Winnipeg for 13 years. She was also involved in the Blood Recipient Notification Project in 2001 and the Manitoba Hepatitis C Assistance Program within Manitoba Health.

Member of the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg and Sexuality Education Resource Centre.

## **C1 – *Writing Winning Proposals: Strategies for Success*** **– Gerdi Stewart**

Get the funding you need with this informative look at what makes a winning proposal. Learn tips and strategies that will give your proposal a winning edge. Learn about the decision makers and how they select winning proposals. This presentation will leave you eager and excited to write your next proposal or funding application.

### **Gerdi Stewart**

Gerdi Stewart is a dynamic speaker, trainer and consultant in effective business communications. She began her business, Pursuit Communications, in 1997 and has been helping organizations improve their written and oral communications ever since.

As a professional, with degrees in human Ecology and Education, and experience as a senior manager, business owner and educator, Gerdi brings both knowledge and real life experiences to her presentations. Her sense of humour and passion add excitement and energy to every session.

As a mother of two, Gerdi appreciates the work of Healthy Child Manitoba and is eager to help you with your written communication so you can get on with your work of improving the well-being of Manitoba's children.

## ***C2 – Holistic Community ECD Networks: Practical Methods to Link Up With New Partners and Resources*** **– Kathleen Guy**

Providing examples from Manitoba, Canada and around the world, this workshop will highlight how communities can mobilize existing resources to build a more holistic community-based system of early child development that supports the diverse needs of local families with young children. Come with your successes, challenges, and questions.

### **Kathleen Guy, President of Guy Associates**

Guy Associates is a consulting firm specializing in strategic planning, policy development, fundraising, public education and community mobilization. Clients include:

The Council for Early Child Development, UNICEF in New York City, Friendship Press, New York City, Canadian Institute for Advanced Research, Department of Health Canada, Department of Social Development Canada, The University of Toronto, Community Foundations of Canada

## **C3 – *Story Telling***

### **– Linda Blomme**

What is it? People from all over the world tell stories. They even write about them. All in their unique way they talk about their history. Aboriginal people of Turtle Island were no different.

### **Linda Blomme (Zhaabonigan)**

Linda was born in 1950 in central Manitoba. She was raised on the Pine Creek Reserve till she was 15 years old. She got married in 1968. She has two daughters and four sons. She also is the grandmother of a girl and two boys.

Zhaabonigan attended the University of Manitoba and has worked mostly in social services field.

Zhaabonigan's education started in residential school at the age of five till she was 15 years old. Her maternal grandfather, Jerome Nepinak gave her his great-grand mother's name Zhaabonigan since then she has followed the traditional / spiritual way of life.

Zhaabonigan is the resident elder at the Circle of Life Thunderbird house. She has been there since it opened in 2000. She provides counselling and other traditional ceremonies to any one that comes or wants to learn about the traditional way of life.

## ***C4 – The Science of Early Child Development: Red River Interactive Training*** **– Mia Elfenbaum**

The Science of Early Child Development is an innovative, on-line multimedia resource. It explores cutting-edge research using an engaging, interactive format. An overview of this exciting resource will be given with an emphasis on the topic of children's self-regulation. Professional development and training opportunities will also be discussed.

### **Mia Elfenbaum**

Mia Elfenbaum, B.A., M.Sc., is an Early Childhood Education Instructor at Red River College. She has worked in the child care field for over 20 years as an ECE, Centre Director and College and University Instructor.

**C5 – *Partnerships for Inclusion: Mobilizing the Early Childhood Community through Community Partnerships***  
– Debra Mayer

The **Inclusive Child Care Capacity Building Project** is an exciting new initiative sponsored by Community Living Manitoba with funding by Families Forward, the Parent-Child Centred Coalition in the River Heights-Fort Garry area. Learn how community partnerships can help transform practices, enhance quality, and create more inclusive communities for children with disabilities and their typically developing friends.

**Debra Mayer**

Debra Mayer is the early childhood consultant for Community Living Manitoba and offers technical assistance to the early childhood community and parents around the inclusion of children with disabilities in community based programs. She is a long time advocate for children and the people who care about them. Debra was the developer of Healthy Child Manitoba's Small Steps, Big Futures: A Parenting and Child Development Curriculum for the use by HCM programs (2005). Debra is the Chairperson of the Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada and a board member for SpecialLink, the National Centre for Early Childhood Inclusion.

## **C6 – *Team Building - The FISH Way*** **– Michelle Grant, Linda Green**

Here is your chance to discover the team building secrets of the World Famous Pike Place Fish Market. The language of FISH is simple: Play, Make Their Day, Be There, and Choose Your Attitude. Come and Catch the Energy...Release the Potential. Rediscover what motivates you!

### **Michelle Grant**

Michelle has been involved in Manitoba's early childhood community for over 25 years as an early childhood practitioner, centre director, adult educator and volunteer. She is a past board member of MCCA and CCCF, and Ethics Guide and Mentor. Michelle currently is an instructor and workshop facilitator with Yellowquill College and travels into Manitoba and North Western Ontario communities.

### **Linda Green**

Linda has been in the education field for 30 years in adult education. She is the past board member of the child care centre and a women's Shelter. For the last 7 years Linda has been delivering professional development workshops for First Nation Communities and organizations in the areas of team building, board development and management.

## **D1 – *The Write Stuff – Writing for Results*** **– Gerdi Stewart**

Get a more polished, professional image by improving your writing skills. This fast-paced session will show you ways to save time, get better results and increase your confidence by writing more clearly and concisely. You'll learn how to avoid common writing errors, get rid of excess words and clear up any pesky grammar issues.

### **Gerdi Stewart**

Gerdi Stewart is a dynamic speaker, trainer and consultant in effective business communications. She began her business, Pursuit Communications, in 1997 and has been helping organizations improve their written and oral communications ever since.

As a professional, with degrees in human Ecology and Education, and experience as a senior manager, business owner and educator, Gerdi brings both knowledge and real life experiences to her presentations. Her sense of humour and passion add excitement and energy to every session.

As a mother of two, Gerdi appreciates the work of Healthy Child Manitoba and is eager to help you with your written communication so you can get on with your work of improving the well-being of Manitoba's children.



## ***D2 – Key Elements in Building and Sustaining Community Partnerships*** **– Anita Moore and Community Facilitators**

How do we engage community members and develop meaningful partnerships?  
This session will provide participants with practical skills and tools to strengthen relationships within their communities.

### **Anita Moore**

Anita Moore holds a Bachelor of Nursing and Masters degree in Public Administration. Currently, Anita is a Community Area Director with the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. Ms. Moore's 21 years of experience and expertise in health promotion, prevention, public policy and community development has contributed to the development and implementation of a number of new strategies such as the Diabetes Strategy for Older Adults, Healthy Start for Mom and Me, creation of Healthy Community Winnipeg Initiative. Anita has also facilitated various workshops on community development. Her commitment to community and social action has her serving on local, provincial and national boards and committees such as the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg, Manitoba Healthy Communities Network, Manitoba Public Health Association.

### **Vince Sansregret**

Currently work with the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority (WRHA) as a Community Facilitator in the River East community. Have been with the WRHA for three years. A primary role of a Community Facilitator is to work with community groups, agencies, and residents towards the development and implementation of community initiatives that ultimately serve to enhance the overall health and social-well being of residents. Prior to coming to the WRHA, worked in the West Broadway community for seven years as a community development worker. Have sat on the board of directors for numerous inner-city non-profit groups.

### **Sharon Walters**

Sharon has a MSW degree from the University of Toronto with a focus on Community Development. She has been employed with the WRHA as a Community Facilitator in the St. James-Assiniboia area for the past nine months and previously worked for many years with both the city and provincial governments in policy development and the development of education and training initiatives. Throughout her career, developing and maintaining partnerships with community members, businesses, non-profit agencies and government departments has been the cornerstone of Sharon's work.

**D3 – *From the Inside Out: Community Development***  
– Dilly Knoll, Heather Block

This workshop will outline how Andrews Street Family Centre was created, and continues to operate, “from the inside out”, putting John McKnight’s theories to practice in a community that was thought unable to operate effectively. ASFC has since become a leader in exemplifying community development.