



Creating Hope Society

The Sixties and Seventies Scoop: Aboriginal Children in Care



2016-2018

Biennial Report



JANUARY 18, 2018

CREATING HOPE SOCIETY

9538 107 Avenue NW, Edmonton, Alberta T5H 0T7



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Who We Are

The Creating Hope Society is an accredited and charitable non-profit organization established in March 2006 to recognize that the sixties and seventies child welfare scoop of Aboriginal children is a continuation of the Residential School era. Creating Hope was initially established during a period of time when research studies indicated there was a pattern of symptoms similar to those of post-traumatic stress disorder within the Aboriginal population and directly linked to the children confined to Residential Schools. We believe that it is time to halt the cycle of Aboriginal children being separated from their families and communities.



Why We Are Doing This

Creating Hope Society is carrying forward a healing process, for Residential School survivors and to those who are products of a Child Welfare system that has perpetuated the legacy of the Residential Schools.

Mission

Our Organizational mission is to build on our strengths to create hope for the future of Aboriginal people impacted by the Child Welfare system. This will be accomplished through opportunities that create and promote healing processes, support, and reconciliation by sharing what we learn from each other.

Vision

Our vision is to learn from the real life experiences of those who have survived the sixties and seventies scoop and create renewed hope for the third generation of Aboriginal children who are still being apprehended.



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Principal

- ✓ Building on the resiliency of survivors
- ✓ Not forgetting the past, but looking forward
- ✓ Learning / acknowledging from the past to move forward

Creating Hope Society Goals

- To provide services and resources on a status-blind basis
- To explore and identify the connections between the worldviews and beliefs of service providers that contribute to the ongoing oppression of Aboriginal children
- To develop a model for addressing and reconciling these experiences in a variety of contexts to promote healing and planning for the future of Aboriginal children
- Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal caregivers, agencies and community members will work together to achieve a new understanding of services that will cease the repetition and reverse the cycle of HT (Historical Trauma)
- To offer services that are appropriate socially, culturally and spiritually



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Since its inception, Creating Hope Society's mission has been focused on breaking the cycle of Aboriginal children entering the Child Welfare System. CHS' vision is to provide client-focused services that would help Aboriginal families navigate their involvement with Alberta's Child and Family Services with a goal of seeing less children coming into care. In addition, CHS staff is aware of the generational trauma that the Residential School, the 60's and 70's Scoop has had on families and how it impacts their sense of belonging in their community.

We are committed to continue to raise public awareness and come to an understanding of how and why the child welfare system has negatively impacted Aboriginal children, families and communities since the 1960s. It is time to continue to bring hope to families by reuniting parents and children as well as by building the capacities of parents and other family members to more successfully navigate the complex Child Welfare system.

We are confident that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada and the Child Welfare Call to Action has brought awareness and an awaken to all public sectors to those that work in child welfare that change has to happen within the larger system of Child Welfare System.





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A WORD FROM OUR CO-PRESIDENTS

Greetings from Creating Hope Society's Co-Presidents

As spring descends to re-new our lands and our lives, we at Creating Hope Society give thanks for our many blessings for another year of helping those that benefit from our programs and services and for our contributions to the greater good of humanity. While there were many challenges over the last year in these tough times, we give thanks that we remain strong to continue in our work going into the coming year.

Creating Hope Society has been working really hard to bring children back home and standing with our declaration "An Aboriginal Home for Every Aboriginal Child in Care by 2025". Putting forward this declaration it has tromped the community to move forward and acknowledge that it is time to work with our families, children, and youth in a holistic approach.

We would like to acknowledge Bernadette lahtail, Executive Director and her staff to continue the best efforts to manifest its mission of promoting on our strength to create hope for the future of Indigenous peoples impacted by the Child welfare System, only through healing programs, providing emotional, mental, and spiritual supports can we achieve positive outcomes for all.

All the best to Creating Hope Society to have an exciting 2018 and we hope that you can join us for up-coming events and celebrations.

In the Spirit of Creating Hope,

Brenda Blyan
CHS Board of Directors Co-President

Rhonda Spence
CHS Board of Directors Co-President



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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2016-2018 has been full of exciting times to celebrate the work of Creating Hope Society. We thank the funders, private donors, practicum students, volunteer board, volunteers, staff, our participants, supporters and the Edmonton community. For the past 12 years, the agency developed a grassroots practice model that connects and re-connects children back to their families. Creating Hope Society continues to make connections and to work collaboratively with the Child Welfare Systems, Children Advocate, coalitions, organization and other services to ensure that the voices of families and children are heard.



Through our milestones the society continues to be creative, innovative and developing programs, events, symposiums and community conversation that has brought over 4000 people together.

Strategic Planning

With our four-year strategic plan ending, Creating Hope Society's Board will undertake strategic planning to confirm the organization's future directions. We've come a long way since our first strategic plan was developed and created in 2006. It was a time where the untold history of Sixties and Seventies child welfare scoop conversation hardly existed. Time has changed where now we need to incorporate the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, the 94 call to action recommendations, Idle No more movement, Jordan's Principle and Human Right Tribunal into policies.

As the Executive Director and Co-founder, I am excited about creating hope and opportunities that New Year brings.

In the Spirit of Creating Hope

Bernadette Lahtail, RSW
Executive Director / Co-Founder



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Aboriginal Mother's Advocacy Program (AMAP)

The Aboriginal Mother's Advocacy Program (AMAP) provides participant centered support, liaison and advocacy that are based on individual needs and goals. During our work together, the participants are provided knowledge regarding their rights with respect to different systems/organizations they may be involved in for example child welfare, justice. AMAP staff work in accordance with Alberta Child, Youth and Family Enhancement Act which includes Collaborative Service Delivery and Signs of Safety when working with the participants. With the CSD approach, AMAP staff work in collaboration with the case workers, Band Designates, support workers, ADAAC, mental health, and justice to name a few. The Signs of Safety approach is a strength based model that assists in achieving goals rather than focusing on the participants deficits.



One of AMAP's goal is to connect/refer participants to community resources that will empower them to make positive change. In addition, connecting participants to community resources assists in developing a support system that will ensure their healing journey will be one that will be sustained over a long period of time. It is our hope that we, as a team will empower participants in finding their voice, using that voice to exercise their rights

and the hope that they have a new sense of belonging within their family, community and society as a whole.

Knowing your Rights/Peer to Peer

Knowing your Rights workshop is a 12 week program that empowers and provides emotional, mental and spiritual supports for Mothers, Grandparents, Fathers, Couples, Family members, and individuals that have Child Welfare involvement. This group meets weekly to learn and support each other in negotiations with Child Welfare and the Legal System. Guest speakers, partner agencies, and staff support including Registered Social Workers are accessible through this program.

DECLARATION

"An Aboriginal Home for Every Aboriginal Child in Care by 2025"



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Reclaiming Our Own Ways – Mentorship Program

The Youth Mentorship Program is to create an exciting experience, new friendships, as well as to build upon and strengthen self-esteem to encourage



individuality and collective resilience within Indigenous youth and to build bridges between non- indigenous communities.

The focus of the mentorship program is to have the youth create a knowledge base on what setting healthy

boundaries and building healthy relationships looks like. This includes setting healthy boundaries, building relationships, human rights, and racism awareness with an overview of indigenous history and how we can help support the youth in reconnecting to culture through traditional methods and teachings. The program helps youth establish a peer support among each other and in the community.

The mentorship program is being held at three different school locations; Spruce Ave Junior High, H.E. Beriault Junior High and Britannia Junior High. The program being held at H.E. Beriault is in collaboration with the Braided Journeys program. Britannia is being held in collaboration with an elder who comes into the school once per week. Currently the program is being held at Spruce Ave twice a week. The program is unique to each school as the youth play a big role in the planning of activities and outings.

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Youth, Elder, Parent Cultural Program

The Youth, Elder, Parent Cultural Program (YEP) is part of collaborative working group known as 'Wapekin' which includes: Paul First Nation, Edmonton Child and Family Services, McMan Youth Family and Community Services Association, and Native Counselling Services of Alberta.

The program works toward increasing confidence, the emotional, mental, physical and spiritual health that will help reduce the risks of youths participating in unhealthy criminal and/or violent behavior and/or substance abuse, and encourage positive leadership for youth, their peers and their families.

The program provides individual and group support: such as one on one support or family sharing circles, in-school support and programming, promotes the building of healthy lifestyles and healthy relationships between participants and their families, assists in nurturing and supporting children, youth, and families to strengthen their cultural identities and what it means to be Indigenous, and supports children, youth, and families to look after their physical, mental, and spiritual well-being.



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Connect the Dots

Connect the Dots project is multi-layered strategy that targets the Indigenous people in crisis, connects them to resources or supports, and prepares the individuals towards housing readiness through addressing sustainability for long term solutions towards health, wellness, and housing.



This is a two stream approach with 1) crisis intervention and outreach services that would include; community kitchen, life skills, budgeting and liaison with community agencies. 2) qualified and culturally relevant follow-up services that helps their connection to community resources and through effective case management, eventually progresses towards preparation into housing readiness and eventual ability to sustain permanent housing.

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Events

National Aboriginal Day Celebration

Creating Hope Society formed a National Aboriginal Day community partnership with organizations that include Red Road Healing Society, Candora Society, SAGE,



E4C, RJ Scott School, and Norwood Parent Link Centre. We received funding through Canadian Heritage to oversee and organize a high quality day of celebration for National Aboriginal Day. This event took place at RJ Scott School June 21st, 2017 in Edmonton, Alberta. This community driven celebration hosted an array of family oriented activities that include a pipe

ceremony, traditional song and dance, contemporary music performances by award winning artists, free Aboriginal food and many other family activities.

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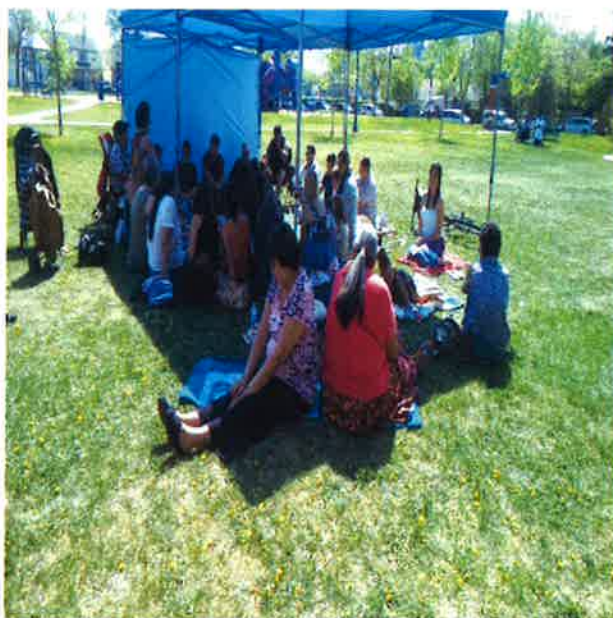
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9th Annual Blanket of Remembrance Round Dance

An estimated 9000 Aboriginal Children are currently in the care of the Child Welfare System, with a focus on the multitudes of children who have died while in



this System, historically, and in the present. Nine per cent of Alberta children are aboriginal, yet they account for a staggering percentage of children in care. It is these children and families that have been the spark for the 9th Annual Blanket of Remembrance Round Dance, held to honour Aboriginal children who died and who are still in care, and assist the families left behind through a Traditional Honouring Ceremony and

healing process at Central McDougall Park on May 28, 2017.

The Blanket of Remembrance Round Dance Annual Project is not only aimed for Aboriginal people; we extend our invitation to various ethnic and racial groups. Our intent is not only to acknowledge the children who died in care but to explore how we can keep our children from entering the Child Welfare System.

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3rd Annual Dads Matter Too! Golf Tournament

Our third golf tournament was a huge success. We hosted the tournament on July 20, 2017 at The Ranch Golf and Country Club. We had 23 teams registered.



We would like to thank our sponsors for all the prizes that were donated. Sponsors include:

- Mobility Moving
- Andrew Law
- City of Edmonton – Indigenous relations
- Wicked Stitches & Promotions
- F12.Net
- Edmonton Eskimos Football Club
- Anderson Financial
- MNP LLP
- Digitex
- Sign Source Signs & Graphics
- CBS Event Planning & Project Management
- Land & Bug Photography
- CABS PLUS A.B.
- Original Joe's – The Grange
- Mother Earth Essentials
- Norm Kachur
- Hot 107
- Alberta Job Corps
- Clean It Green It
- Native Counselling Services of Alberta
- Nails by Michelle
- CIVEO
- Voice Construction

Special thanks to Carrie Kachur for all the hard work that you put in to make our golf tournament a huge success.

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5 Days of Reconciliation

The purpose of this project was to engage in a conversation with all Canadians about what happened in the Indian Residential School's and include the Truth and Reconciliation Commission 94 calls to action recommendations. In agreeing with the TRC's view that reconciliation between diverse people requires ongoing cultivation of mutual respect and understanding as well as opportunities for us to leave work learn play well together.

Our goal was to bring indigenous and non-indigenous peoples together in ways that will raise awareness of historical and current issues surrounding reconciliation. The "5 Days of Reconciliation" is to raise awareness and promote a deeper understanding and a greater appreciation for the lives of Indigenous peoples in Canada.

The day of the event includes; opening prayer, smudging ceremony, honor song, mini roundance, 10 minute reconciliation documentary, keynote speakers, panel, entertainment, and a celebration of our Indigenous ways. Our activities Includes expressing ourselves through collage, or a pledge, and writing a statement of "What does Reconciliation mean to me?"

"What's so funny about Reconciliation?"



Our first event was held on May 18th, 2017. This event was to invite our Elders to share their knowledge, their life experiences, and focusing and finding solutions to bring awareness and understanding of reconciliation.

Thank you for your participation in our forum and your willingness to share your experience of "What Reconciliation Means to Me?"

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Addiction and Child Welfare

Our second event was held on September 15th, 2017. Our discussion was focused around mothers and fathers and how we can provide support for families who are struggling with the ongoing effects of drugs and alcohol stemming from residential school, the 60's and 70's child welfare scoop, and today's Child welfare system.



International Children's Round Dance

Our third event was held on November 18th, 2017. As a society we celebrate all the lives of Indigenous and non-Indigenous children. This year's theme was "Growing Together" and it was a day full of fun activities for all ages.



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Youth and Reconciliation

Our fourth event was held in the evening on November 18th, 2017. Creating Hope Society put out a call out looking for youth's to submit a documentary on "What



Reconciliation Means to Me". We received many entries for the documentary contest. We finished the evening off with a dance for our youth. Congratulations to all our winners.

Bannockfest

Our fifth and final event was held on December 9th, 2017. Bannockfest was a huge success. This event was a day full of celebration of bringing families and communities



together. We had 25 entries in our bannock contest. Congratulations to the winners of the bannock contest.

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Call to Action Round Dance

In partnership with Candora Society, Abbotsfield Recreation Centre and Alberta Health Services we hosted a Call to Action Round Dance on March 3, 2017. The round dance was a huge success with close to 300 people in attendance. Thank you to all partners and volunteers for the hard work and dedication that went in to this round dance to make it a huge success.

Welcome Home Ceremony -“Our Families, Our Communities, Our Responsibility”

“Our Families, our communities, our responsibility” Welcome Home Ceremony was held October 18, 2017. The intent of the ceremony is bring families together that have



been part of the “Aboriginal Mothers Advocacy Program” to celebrate their successes in reuniting their families after Children Services involvement. In a sense welcoming them back to the circle.

Included in the ceremony is smudge and prayer, opening remarks from guest speakers, presentation from the Aboriginal Mother’s Advocacy Project staff, feast, and the Welcome Home Ceremony for the families who have successfully reunited with children/grandchildren

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Multicultural Round Dance

In partnership with Candora Society, Homeward Trust, Northlands Coliseum, City of Edmonton, E4C, iHuman, and Somali Canadian Women and Children Association a



Multicultural Round Dance was held December 17, 2017 in honor of supporting reconciliation and saying farewell to Northlands Coliseum as they close the doors.

The goal of the Round Dance was to build relationships and repair damaged relationships with Indigenous and non-Indigenous people of Canada. Our hope with the round dance was to enhance knowledge and understanding that

lays ground work for reconciliation using the following; 1) TRC 10 principles of reconciliation, 2) 94 Calls to Action, 3) 46 articles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).

The evening was a huge success with approximately 1700 people in attendance throughout the evening from all over Turtle Island. Thank you to all our partners, sponsors, and volunteers for making this round dance a huge success.

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Upcoming Events at Creating Hope Society

10th Annual Blanket of Remembrance Round Dance – May 18, 2018

National Aboriginal Day – June 21, 2018

4th Annual Dads Matter Too! Golf Tournament – June 20, 2018

Welcome Home Ceremony – To be determined

Creating Hope Society's Casino – April 15th and April 16th, 2018



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Acknowledging our Funders

Creating Hope Society would like to thank our funders from the past and the present. (In no particular order)

- National Crime Prevention
- Community Investment Operating Grant (CIOG)
- Edmonton and Area Child and Family Services
- Human Rights Citizen and Multiculturalism Education Fund
- Canadian Heritage
- City of Edmonton – Hosting and Operating Grant
- Status of Women Canada
- Alberta Health Services
- Alberta Foundation of the Arts
- The Anglican Church of Canada
- New Horizons for Seniors
- Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development
- Government of Alberta – Employment and Immigration
- Reach Edmonton Council for Safe Communities
- Christmas Bureau
- Public Safety Canada
- Edmonton Community Foundation
- Correctional Services Canada
- ECALA
- Human Resources and Skills Development Canada
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada
- Department of Justice Canada

We would also like to thank all our partners and supporters and those who help us continue our mission:

- Office of the Child and Youth Advocate
- Canadian Native Friendship Centre
- Alberta Native Friendship Centre Association
- The Works Festival
- Edmonton Food Bank
- Norquest College
- Edmonton Police Services
- Centre for Race and Culture
- Multicultural Health Brokers
- Jasper Place Health and Wellness
- Yellowhead Tribal College
- Kings University
- Child and Family Services
- University of Calgary – Faculty of Social Work
- The City of Edmonton

If we have forgotten anyone we offer our sincerest apologies

Volunteers

Creating Hope Society acknowledges and appreciates our volunteers who have helped us in so many ways. Without your volunteerism, we would not be who we are today. Thank you to those who helped us in the past and in the future.

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