

# RESEARCH SNAPSHOT

RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS AND KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION



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## How can collaborating on child welfare empower Indigenous Communities?

### What you need to know:

Indigenous communities' needs are not met by current child welfare policies. Indigenous people must have power over the child welfare process to address this. Policymakers also need to understand Indigenous oppression to make informed decisions.

### What is this research about?

In 2007, the First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada filed a complaint with the Canadian Human Right Tribunal (CHRT). They found that Indigenous communities were not receiving culturally appropriate child welfare services. CHRT upheld this claim in 2016.

Gaps between current policies and real challenges in their communities concern many Indigenous People. Indigenous communities want to have a say in the policies that apply to their families.

As a result, the Aboriginal Policy branch of the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) wants to work with Indigenous communities to create policy addressing these challenges.

This research looks at best practices in working with Indigenous communities to create child welfare policy.

### What did the researcher do?

The researcher reviewed written materials and held in-person interviews. The researcher did interviews with an Indigenous community member and a senior executive with MCFD.

The researcher used these methods to find out how best to work with Indigenous communities in creating child welfare policy.



GS 505 student Fanie Collardeau found that the best collaboration comes from shared decision-making (Photo credit: StockSnap from [Pixabay](#)).



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## What did the researcher find?

Research findings showed that the best collaboration comes from shared decision-making. This includes making sure community partners feel heard and agree on timelines in the decision-making process. The researcher suggests that the ministry empower Indigenous communities to create child welfare policies collaboratively.

It is important for the ministry to increase awareness of Indigenous oppression among their staff as well. This way staff collaborating with Indigenous communities can more fully understand the challenges faced by the communities policies affect.

The researcher also sets out to put their recommendations into action in the full report. For the full report please contact Research Partnerships and Knowledge Mobilization (RPKM) at [communityresearch@uvic.ca](mailto:communityresearch@uvic.ca).

## How can you use this research?

This research shows steps government staff can use to share decision-making power with Indigenous communities. This research is useful for aligning government policy with Indigenous community needs.

The researcher offers ways to bridge gaps between projects and the actual needs Indigenous communities identify for themselves. Researchers and community organizations can use this as a guideline for developing projects that benefit communities they work with. Indigenous communities can use this research to guide their partnerships.

## About the researchers

Fanie Collardeau, M.Sc. is a University of Victoria (UVic) graduate student. This project was completed as part of the [Graduate Studies \(GS\) 505](#) course and supervised by instructors Drs. Gord Miller and Wayne Mitic. Facilitated by UVic [Research Partnerships and Knowledge Mobilization](#), GS 505 is a partnership between MCFD and UVic. This project was prepared on behalf of MCFD.

## Keywords

Policy; Indigenous; Aboriginal; Metis; Inuit; children and family; human and social development; child welfare

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## Territory acknowledgement

We acknowledge and respect the lək'wəŋən peoples on whose traditional territory the university stands, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and W̱SÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.

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