

RESEARCH SNAPSHOT

RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS AND KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION



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Supporting youth permanency

What you need to know:

Youth who age out of care without achieving legal permanency are at higher risk for a range of negative outcomes. Indigenous youth are at higher risk of both being in care and aging out of care without achieving legal permanency.

What is this research about?

Of the youth who aged out of care in British Columbia (BC) in 2019, approximately half were Indigenous. Many permanency approaches in Canada have not been informed by Indigenous worldviews. Permanency provides youth with a greater sense of security and can be achieved in a number of ways.

The BC Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) is interested in learning about perspectives and practices rooted in Indigenous knowledges that supports youth in achieving permanency to better support Indigenous children and youth in BC.

This literature review mainly focused on programs that support youth in the care of the Ministry for whom family reunification is not an option, and also included several programs that support family reunification.

What did the researcher do?

The researcher performed a literature review exploring perspectives and practice for supporting youth in achieving permanency. The researcher used the University of Victoria (UVic) Libraries' search engine and Google Scholar to search for academic articles, and also searched the journal "First Peoples Child & Family Review" to collect articles about permanency from an Indigenous perspective.

The researcher reviewed the article abstracts, and if they met the inclusion criteria of an Indigenous knowledges or practice related to permanency or described youth legal permanency programs or stakeholder perspectives, they were included in the review. The researcher analyzed for key themes and recommendations for practice and research.



UVic researchers reviewed literature to support youth in achieving permanency (Photo credit: Karolina Grabowska from Pixabay).



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What did the researcher find?

This literature review included 37 articles, which were reviewed to identify six themes:

1. Significant challenges to youth permanency are in systems
2. Honouring Indigenous knowledge and cultural practices
3. Centering youth voice
4. Prioritizing relational permanency
5. Focusing solely on legal permanency is problematic
6. Creativity is necessary in approach

No specific program in the literature provided enough evidence to justify its recommendation in addressing youth permanency. Each theme addressed different aspects of youth permanency. There were some limitations identified from the research because specialized youth programs reviewed were not designed to support Indigenous youth, and programs reviewed that were based in Indigenous knowledges and practices were not specifically targeted towards youth.

Suggestions for future research:

- Jurisdictional scans and interviews with practitioners supporting youth permanency
- Widen focus to programs designed for both children and youth permanency or children specific permanency

How can you use this research?

This research will help practitioners, policymakers and other stakeholders develop policies, programs and resources to support Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth permanency. Suggestions for supporting Indigenous youth permanency are based in Indigenous knowledges and practice. The report provides recommendations for each identified theme.

About the researchers

Kari Duerksen is a UVic graduate student. This project was completed as part of the [Graduate Studies \(GS\) 505](#) course and supervised by instructors Dr. Sibylle Artz and Ms. Thais Amorim. 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

Youth permanency; legal permanency; physical permanency; relational permanency; cultural permanency

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Territory acknowledgement

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

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