

WHY IS THERE SUCH A LARGE OVER-REPRESENTATION OF ABORIGINAL CHILDREN IN THE CANADIAN CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM?

THE REASONS

RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

Abusive, underfunded, government and church-sponsored schools intended to assimilate Aboriginal children into Canadian society.

POVERTY

ASSIMILATION

The process through which one distinct cultural group is absorbed into another cultural group, both socially and psychologically.

SIXTIES SCOOP

The mass removal of Aboriginal children from their families into the child welfare system, in most cases without the consent of their families or bands throughout the 1960s.

COLONIALISM

The over-representation of Aboriginal children is a result of the colonial impulse to take Aboriginal children away from their families, first witnessed in the form of residential schools.

INDIAN ACT

Canadian federal law which authorized the creation of residential schools and allowed the government to regulate the affairs of registered Indians and reserve communities.

INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA

Survivors of residential schools suffered a variety of mental, physical, and emotional trauma that left them disadvantaged and without a role model for parenting and healing. Generations to come still feel the reverberating effects of residential schools.

DISCRIMINATION

LAND DISPOSSESSION

HETEROPATRIARCHY

The Indian Act imposed a combined patriarchal and heterosexual dominance that disenfranchised women and established a system whereby men could become democratically-elected chiefs.

ABUSE

Trauma often surfaces in the form of domestic and substance abuse

TRUE RECONCILIATION

True reconciliation means moving beyond the theoretical model championed by governments and moving towards practical solutions. This includes the inclusive foster care model but ultimately requires a paradigmatic shift and increased awareness about the violent history of Indigenous-settler affairs and the effects of intergenerational trauma.

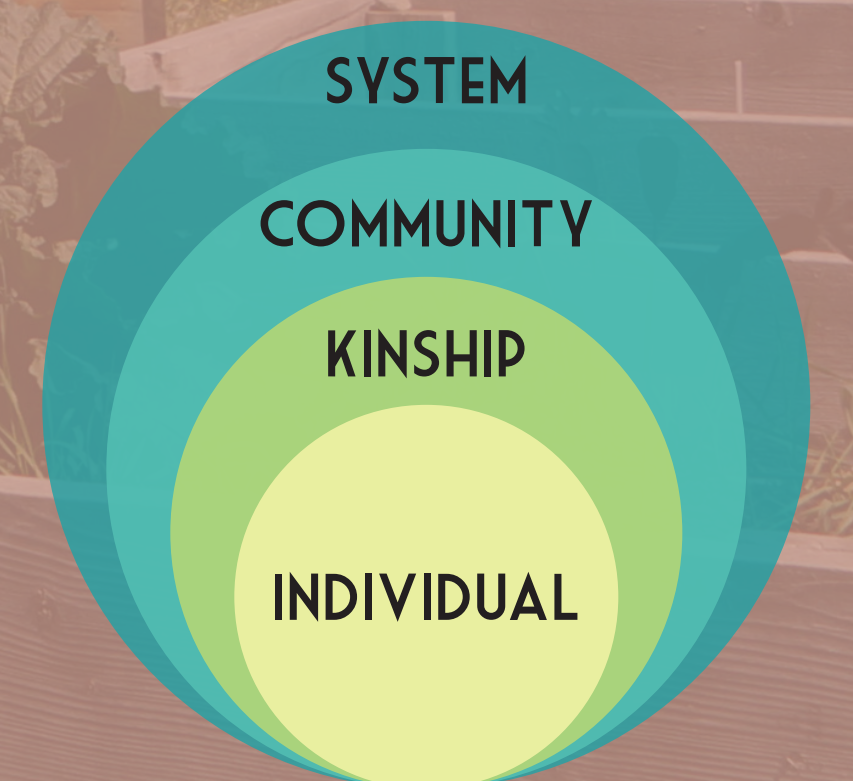
INCLUSIVE FOSTER CARE

Inclusive foster care helps ensure that children are raised feeling safe, loved, and connected with extended family. It is about forming relationships between birth parents, extended family and foster parents, and working together to resolve differences and care for the children in the best possible way. The focus is the best interests of the children and the goal is preserving the children's family ties whenever appropriate.



"IT TOOK ME UNTIL MY ADULT YEARS TO ACCEPT THAT I WAS SECWEPEMC BECAUSE I WAS BRAINWASHED INTO THINKING I WAS A 'DIRTY INDIAN'... WHEN YOU GO TO RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL, YOU ARE TURNED AGAINST YOUR OWN CULTURE."
- ELDER MARY THOMAS

When comparing the residential school system and the foster care system, it is crucial to take a multilateral approach. This visual provides us with some insight into the various levels of analysis upon which each system can be analyzed. Inclusive foster care aims to unite these levels of analysis and sees the merit in each level.



"HOW DO YOU TEACH CULTURE WHEN YOU LIVE CULTURE? GOING TO A CRAFT GROUP AND MAKING MOCCASINS ISN'T EXPERIENCING CULTURE... IT TAKES A COMMUNITY TO RAISE A CHILD."
- BARBARA JONES, SOCIAL WORKER