



*Aboriginal Research for the
Community Action Research -
Community Integration Leader
Project*

First Nation, Inuit and Métis Report

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Johnston Research Inc. 

96 Serene Way, Vaughan, ON L4J 9A2
TEL: 905-889-4430
FAX: 905-889-9961

andrea@johnstonresearch.ca
www.johnstonresearch.ca

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

The City of Toronto has, for the most part, aligned its strategic plan for children's services with the province's comprehensive plan of action to improve the outcomes for children prenatal to 3.8 years of age. In Toronto, three sites have undertaken activities to improve the quality of programming and services for families and children by investigating ways to integrate these services into the local community. Toronto's Community Integration Leader Project (CILP) was established to investigate the integration processes undertaken by these three sites.

Toronto Children's Services is leading the development of the framework for locally integrated service planning for families with children up to 12 years old. This work will in turn inform the provincial *Best Start Child and Family Centre* (BSCFC) model. The three sites of practice partnering in developing this framework are Regent Park service providers, the Scarborough Native Child and Family Life Centre and the O'Connor Child Care Centre. Each site is focusing on certain aspects of the framework: the O'Connor site is examining integration of city services within the BSCFC, the Regent Park site is exploring a model that includes city and community services, and the Native Child and Family Services in Scarborough is looking to define culturally responsive programming and Aboriginal outcomes. All three sites or practice combined are seeking to determine and inform practice of optimized balance of universal and targeted programs.

This report is designed to inform the BSCFC provincial framework for delivering family and child services to First Nations, Inuit and Métis families. The Aboriginal community is recognized in the Toronto Child Care Service Plan (p. 7) as a population with unique needs, thus requiring a flexible and adapted approach. The literature shows that when compared to the Canadian population, Aboriginal communities have higher rates of poverty and a greater percentage of single parent families. They also have a recent history of colonial exploitation including forceful enrolment of their children into residential schools and Children's Aid, creating widespread negative impacts on their psychological and physical well-being, while also affecting attitudes towards institutions and reluctance to trust mainstream social services. Finally, the Aboriginal societies have important cultural differences in worldview regarding children, family, community, and the role of early childhood education.

Structure of Report

The report begins with a review of literature on the unique needs of families and children in these communities, particularly those in urban environments and effective means of supporting these families in a culturally responsive way. It then reports on a case study research conducted at the Regent Park and Scarborough sites to assess the progress on the integration efforts and to identify ways to address the community's cultural needs within the BSCFC Model. The research involved stakeholder interviews with 95 respondents. Interviews were conducted with: 1) representatives of the relevant city departments as well as from the Aboriginal Advisory and Planning Committee; 2) program managers, frontline staff, and parents or caregivers at the Scarborough Native Child and Family Centre; and

3) integrated service partners and parents/ caregivers working and/ or living within the Regent Park area. In addition to the interviews, just under half of the respondents also participated in three parent/ caregiver focus groups. Focus groups were conducted at the Scarborough Native Child and Family Centre, Miziwe Biik Employment and Training, and the Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre.

The final section of the report discusses the main areas where the strategic outcomes of the BSCFC model can have an impact on Indigenous early childhood and family service needs, and, based on both the literature review and the case study research completed for this project, how the model and its strategic outcomes should be adapted to meet these needs. This discussion concludes on the following points of accord:

- The Indigenous view of children and their role in the world measures outcomes and sets achievement objectives for not only the child, but also the family and community (City of Toronto 2010:2-4).
- The service outcome domains of the city's Outcomes Framework include community and family engagement, equity and accessibility. The literature reviewed herein supports the approach that community and family engagement are critical elements in promoting better outcomes for Indigenous families.
- The intention is to develop outcomes that are tailored specifically to the communities in which they are located. This, combined with the diversity principle to "promote/fund cultural-based programs and services" (p. 10), represents a promising practice for Indigenous early childhood family service provision.

Research Findings and Recommendations

The case study research at the two sites had a number of key findings. Aboriginal parents in both catchment areas indicated a clear preference to access Aboriginal-specific services, preferably located within their neighbourhood. When forced to choose between a locally provided non-Native service and a distant Aboriginal service, most were willing to travel significant distances within reason to access Aboriginal-specific services.

The research showed that education levels act as a barrier for parents in situations such as completing application forms and accessing information. In a case where an application process requires several appointments, the need for leaving the home acts as a further barrier, particularly for single parents with more than one child.

Aboriginal clients of the Scarborough Centre see the centre as a hub and focal point in their community, and they are involved in determining how the centre is run. The Centre also acts as a "hook": once parents become engaged through having their child enrolled, other services they need are more accessible to them, whether those that are offered through the Centre, or those offered by partners to which the Centre can link clients.

The Scarborough Centre was seen as honouring the community's culture. It provides services from a family perspective and a community focus instead of divorcing the individual from these two realms. The services honoured and respected cultural values and ways of being, which the program participants referred to as a 'non-judgmental' approach.

If services are not explicitly targeted to Aboriginal families, these families can feel and become “invisible” to service providers and will often not access these universal services. If Aboriginal families do not feel a welcoming environment, they are reluctant to identify as Native, Inuit or Métis.

Non-Aboriginal service providers indicated a motivation and willingness to become more educated and aware about Indigenous culture, approaches, issues and service needs, but they were not aware of any obvious channels for doing so.

In terms of integration, it is still early to be able to assess the progress of integration. At Scarborough, the site has just recently completed an expansion process and is adjusting to becoming fully operational under the new conditions. In Regent Park, the working group finalized its terms of reference early in 2012.

The research findings generated a list of recommendations for the city’s services strategy. The City of Toronto should:

1. Ensure the further development of Indigenous outcome indicators, engage Indigenous service providers in the finalization of such indicators, and support further research in this area.
2. Develop a community engagement strategy to ensure that the Framework is finalized with community input. The engagement strategy should be vetted by Aboriginal representatives to ensure its cultural appropriateness.
3. Improve access and equity in childcare services at the ward level and conduct targeted outreach to segments of the Indigenous population in Toronto who remain underserved.
4. Undertake to acquire more granular population data to reflect actual population numbers and to identify neighbourhoods with high concentrations of Indigenous families.
5. Undertake to acquire systemic data on barriers to access by Indigenous residents at universal centres.
6. Provide mainstream service providers with the opportunity to become culturally responsive to Indigenous children and families, and involve Indigenous organizations in developing such a strategy.
7. Explore the development of a child and family home visiting component to the Scarborough Centre to enhance early identification of problems and special needs, and provide the “intentional support” often needed by families with complex needs.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AANDC	Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
AHF	Aboriginal Healing Foundation
AMHB	Aboriginal Mental Health Board
BSCFC	Best Start Child and Family Centre
CCL	Canadian Council on Learning
CILP	Community Integration Leader Project
ECA	Early Childhood Assistant
ECE	Early Childhood Educator/Education
FNIM	First Nations, Inuit and Métis
INAC	Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
NCFS	Native Child and Family Services
RCAP	Royal Commission on Aboriginal People
TTC	Toronto Transit Commission

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1. INTRODUCTION AND PROJECT SCOPE

1.1 Project Background

In 2009, working as the advisor to the Premier on Early Learning, Dr. Charles Pascal prepared a report outlining four strategic recommendations to improve early learning and increase success for Ontario's children (Pascal 2009). Dr. Pascal recommended the integration of the many child and family services that were operating in isolation in an effort to create higher quality programming for Ontario children. This was the birth of the *Best Start Child and Family Centres* (BSCFC) proposal, a vehicle for integrating existing child and family services with each other and with schools. The BSCFC would be managed by the municipalities and lay the foundation for seamless access to a range of programs and services ranging from prenatal programming and daycare, to developmental screening either in virtual or physical centres. In his report Dr. Pascal also specified the need for a targeted system and approaches to better meet the early learning needs of Aboriginal children (Pascal 2009:20). Toronto became a natural pilot site for the *Best Start* approach given that a number of child and family service organizations were already engaged in integrated service delivery strategies.

An update to Dr. Pascal's report was released in June 2011 (Pascal 2011). It outlined next steps in achieving the vision of integration and included the Integration Leader Project (of which this report is a part). Toronto's Community Integration Leader Project (CILP) was established to investigate the integration processes that three sites of practice in Regent Park, O'Connor and in Scarborough, have undertaken to improve the quality of programming and services for families and children in their communities both historically and in response to Dr. Pascal's report. Each site represents a different community and integration focus. For example, the O'Connor Child Care Centre is examining integration of city service within the BSCFC while Regent Park service providers are exploring a model that includes city and community services and Native Child and Family Services in Scarborough is looking to define culturally responsive programming and Aboriginal outcomes. All three sites or practice combined are seeking to determine and inform practice of optimized balance of universal and targeted programs.

As part of the implementation of the *Best Start Plan: Toronto's Vision for Children*, an Aboriginal advisory group was established within the Toronto Child and Family Network in 2007 with representation from agencies across Toronto who work directly with Aboriginal children and their families. Currently named the *Aboriginal Advisory and Planning Committee*, this committee provides advice on the particular needs of the Aboriginal community and ensures that child care service programs reflect the cultural, linguistic, political and historical needs of Toronto's Aboriginal population. The Aboriginal Advisory and Planning Committee is also represented on the City of Toronto Steering Committee. This involvement enables Aboriginal stakeholders to influence the ways the services for Aboriginal people are integrated at the level of the system. The membership of this committee can be viewed in Appendix C.

The report begins with a review of literature on the unique needs of families and children in First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities, particularly those in urban environments and effective means of supporting these families in a culturally responsive way.

1.2 Terminology used in this report: Discussion

“Aboriginal”

The Aboriginal population of Canada includes the First Nations, Inuit and the Métis, three constitutionally recognized, distinct groups, each with their own characteristics and needs. It includes more than fifty distinct groupings among First Nations, a variety of Inuktitut dialects among the Inuit and the speaking of various languages by the Métis, including their own distinct language, Michif (Spotton, n.d. p. 7; Senate Canada 2009:39). Aboriginal peoples in Canada expect this diversity of culture and language to be recognized and affirmed, rather than having their particular situation seen through a pan-Aboriginal lens that glosses over the key differences in their history and current health needs. The term “Aboriginal” tends to have a colonial reference in many minds and is now less preferred to either “Indigenous”, or the phrase “First Nation, Inuit and Métis” to preserve the distinctiveness of each group. In this report, we use these terms interchangeably.

The three constitutionally recognized Aboriginal groups in Canada are:

First Nations: Descendants of the original inhabitants of North America. Although the term “First Nations” is now widely used, there is no legal definition for it (AMHB 2006:4, citing INAC). The Indian Act continues to use the legal definition of “Indian” to refer to First Nations people living on reserve, who are recognized by the government as having “status”, and therefore, are subject to the Indian Act. There are also “non-status” people of First Nations ancestry who reside either on or off reserve.

Métis: means a person who self-identifies as Métis, is of historic Métis Nation Ancestry, is distinct from other Aboriginal Peoples and is accepted by the Métis Nation (AMHB 2006:4, citing Métis National Council, 2002)

Inuit: Inuit are the Aboriginal people whose homeland is primarily in Nunavut, the Northwest Territories, Labrador, and Northern Quebec. Inuit means “the people” in Inuktitut, the Inuit language (AMHB 2006:4, citing INAC). Most Inuit live in an area known as Inuit Nunangat, which is comprised of four regions created through the signing of land claims (and from west to east,) includes the Inuvialuit Region in the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Nunavik north of the 55th parallel in Quebec and Nunatsiavut in northern Labrador (Tait 2008:7).

For this report, we acknowledge that the population of Inuit in Toronto is thought to be very small, and there are challenges to identifying the Métis population; however, we will use the acronym FNIM to refer to First Nations, Inuit and Métis, interchangeably with “Indigenous”. We use the term “Aboriginal” when we cite literature that uses the term. During the case study research conducted for this report, we estimate that the people we interviewed were almost exclusively First Nation, non-Status Indian or undisclosed Métis in identity; many of them prefer to use the term “Native”; where they do so, we also use the term.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW: FIRST NATIONS, INUIT AND MÉTIS EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAMS

2.1 Background: The Aboriginal Population in Canada and in Toronto

Census data from 2006 records 1,172,790 people in Canada who identified as First Nations, Métis or Inuit (FNIM), representing 4% of the total population (Environics 2010:23). The Indigenous population is the fastest growing segment of the Canadian population, having increased by 45% between 1996 and 2006 compared to an 8% increase in the Canadian population overall (Environics 2010:24).

Urban First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples: Currently, the majority of FNIM people live in urban areas, this being the most rapidly growing segment of the Indigenous population. Statistics Canada figures show that the proportion of Indigenous people living in urban centres increased from 47% in 1996 to 49% by 2001, and to 54% by 2006. A recent major study of Aboriginal urban life in Canada notes that non-status First Nations peoples (or non-status Indians) and Métis are the most urbanized, with 74 percent and 66 percent, respectively, living in urban areas. Among status First Nations peoples (or Registered Indians), 38 percent live in urban centres while among Inuit, less than 30 percent do so (Environics Institute, 2010:25). One source estimates that about 11,000 Inuit live outside of the traditional territory (Nunangat), predominantly in Ottawa-Gatineau, Yellowknife, Edmonton and Montreal. The population of Inuit in Toronto is thought to be only 1.4% of the total Indigenous population in Toronto (City of Toronto: Aboriginal Profile).

Toronto's "Aboriginal Profile" document uses 2006 Statistics Canada Census data to estimate that 13,605 Aboriginal people lived in the city in 2006, out of which an estimated 1,825 were children 0-9 years of age (City of Toronto, Aboriginal Profile). These estimates are most likely significantly lower than actual numbers—the same document refers to consultations with agencies serving the Aboriginal population that put the estimate at 60,000 to 70,000. Several problems of accurately surveying the FNIM population have been present for a long time. For example, census data is collected from private home owners when a major study of urban Aboriginal peoples released by Environics Institute in 2010 illustrated that data based only on private home owners would under-report FNIM in the city. In their research sample, only 18% of respondents were homeowners; of the remainder, 56% were renting, 17% were living with friends or family, 4% were living in a rooming house or hostel, and 3% were living in a temporary shelter (Environics 2010:21). We did not have access to any accurate data on where FNIM people live in Toronto although it is known that there is a high concentration of FNIM residents in Aboriginal-specific housing developments such as Gabriel Dumont in Scarborough.

2.2 Understanding the Unique Needs of Indigenous Children and Families

Percentage of Low-income Families

A recent evaluation of the federal government's Urban Aboriginal Strategy reported that the percentage of children living in low-income families, while having declined in recent years, remains more than double the percentage of non-Aboriginal children living in low income families. This element of Canadian Indigenous demography has implications for programmatic needs of First Nations, Inuit and Métis women, children and families (AANDC 2011:16). Research studies have demonstrated that, as the gap in income equality widens, "the social environment deteriorates, trust decreases, involvement in the community declines, population health deteriorates, and the incidences of hostility and violence increase." (NAFC n.d.) One of the most deeply felt effects of poverty, according to population health researchers, is "the lack of control poverty creates, with resulting anxiety, insecurity, low self-esteem and feelings of hopelessness" (Reading-Loppie & Wien 2009:9). Another author noted that interventions that relied on strong community connections to improve health status met with limited success. Brough (2007:198) noted that a study of peer education in a deprived South African community showed few positive outcomes "...because of the dominant structural conditions of poverty." This example points to the need for a comprehensive understanding and approach to the complex interplay of social determinants of health in communities where poverty dominates the social ecology.

Percentage of Single-Parent Families in Urban Areas

In 2006, more Aboriginal women than men resided in urban areas, many of them single parents who left reserves for family-related and housing reasons (INAC n.d.). Statistics from a 2006 survey show that 41% of FNIM children off-reserve lived with a single parent as compared to 17% in the general population (CCL 2009:37). A recent discussion paper of research on urban Aboriginal health issues notes that "women leaving reserve communities and moving into cities are often relocating due to intimate partner violence or other forms of violence" (Browne et al 2009:27). Aboriginal women are 15% more likely to be single parents, and twice as likely as non-Aboriginal women to become mothers before they reach the age of twenty-five (Browne et al 2009:9).

Experiences and Perceptions of Racism

A 2006 EKOS survey showed that 42% of off-reserve FNIM people reported exposure to racism or discrimination; of these experiences, 28% took place in schools (CCL 2009:59). The Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study also showed that most urban FNIM report experiencing racism (Environics 2010:10). First Nations peoples (50%) and Inuit (48%) are more likely to say their negative experience with a non-Aboriginal service relates to being poorly treated (and particularly experiencing racism and discrimination) than are Métis (36%). Poor treatment is also a more common concern in Toronto (59%), Edmonton (55%) and Regina (54%) than in other cities (Environics 2010:84). These findings have natural implications for peoples' willingness to engage with services.

Gaps in School Readiness

Indigenous children in Canada are not equally ready for school at the equivalent age as the majority of other Canadian children. For example, assessments using the Early Development Index (EDI) in B.C. showed that Indigenous children there are “not ready for school in at least one of the five domains assessed” (CCL 2009:36)

Indian Residential School Effects

The effects of Indian Residential Schools (IRS) have been pervasive and destructive to individual, family and community health to such an extent that some Indigenous people attribute almost all current mental health (and to an extent, physical health) problems to residential school trauma. A recent Environics survey found that two thirds of respondents stated that they were affected by residential school trauma (Environics 2010:54).

Approximately 130 schools were in operation across Canada from 1831 to 1998 and hundreds of thousands of Aboriginal children were taken from their communities to stay at the schools. The underlying aim of the schools was to assimilate “Indians” into mainstream culture and eradicate Indigenous cultures in the process (Chansonneuve 2007:10). The Final Report of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation (AHF), whose mandate was to promote healing of residential school trauma, noted that “Aboriginal people were forbidden from using their language, interacting with opposite sex siblings, and having warm familial connections to parents and grandparents, which meant that important cultural and psychological influences were stripped from young lives. The austere, institutionalized setting where generations of children were raised often extended no nurturing, personal liberty, privacy or safety; that, in turn, left generations of young Aboriginal people ill equipped for families of their own” (AHF 2006:1). The AHF report goes on to note the limited degree to which the average Canadian, and even many Aboriginal people themselves, know or understand the extent of residential school effects: “Recognition that the experience of residential schooling had long-lasting damaging effects on Aboriginal children has emerged slowly in the consciousness of Canadians. Aboriginal people themselves, in many cases, have been unaware of the connection between the deprivation, humiliation and violence that they experienced in residential schools and subsequent challenges to their physical, social, emotional, and spiritual well-being. The physical and sexual abuse at the schools has left a trail of low self-esteem, anger, depression, violence, addiction, unhealthy relationship and parenting skills, fear, shame, compulsiveness, bodily pain and anxiety (AHF 2006, p.2). Having the residential school history as a background to present day experience can have powerful effects on Indigenous peoples’ attitudes towards, and uptake of, educational programs (Dockett 2008); and in fact, low child and family program participation rates have been noted in the literature (Mellor & Corrigan 2004; Pfannenstiel 2006; Dockett 2008; JRI 2011).

The government of Canada has issued a formal apology to Aboriginal survivors of Indian Residential Schools, saying that the policy of cultural assimilation enacted through the schools was “wrong, has caused great harm, and has no place in this country” (INAC)

2.3 Elements of Effective Indigenous Early Childhood Programs and Support

Research and program evaluations specific to Indigenous early childhood family interventions are very scarce in the literature (National Institute for Literacy 2006:19; Ball 2007:5,9; Nutton 2011:4; Escobar et al 2011:5). While there is a scarcity of research on the topic of “what works” in Indigenous child and family services (Raham 2010), there is some evidence that has been cited in the literature which we briefly discuss below.

Vital Importance and High Valuation of Education

In a sense, one of the goals of present day Indigenous early education is to reverse the destructive effects of Indian Residential School and other colonial traumas; the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples wrote that the goals of Aboriginal parents regarding their child’s early childhood education go beyond cognitive development to “reinforcing Aboriginal identity, instilling the values, attitudes and behaviours that give expression to Aboriginal cultures (RCAP Vol 3, 1996, cited in Canadian Council on Learning 2009:32). A recent survey of urban Aboriginal peoples shows that most “believe that education also encompasses what is taught in Aboriginal schools and “life-long learning” from Elders (Environics 2010:9). Early childcare and development is seen as “essential for protecting and enhancing the physical health, psycho-social well-being and positive cultural identity of Indigenous children and their families” (Ball 2010:29).

Holistic

Holistic programming is most effective for FNIM children because it most reflects an Indigenous worldview in which the emotional, physical, spiritual and intellectual domains are equally important and ideally, in balance; and where the child is not seen in isolation but as a part of the community (CCL 2009:36; Anderson n.d.:4). Early childhood education expert, Jessica Ball quotes a First Nation Elder from Lil’wat Nation in B.C. who expressed the importance of this by saying: “Our children need to be understood as part of a whole that includes their family, community, culture and the natural environment” (Ball 2010:43, quoting Martina Pierre).

Culturally Explicit and Culturally Responsive

In 2002, the Romanow Commission promoted culturally-defined concepts of health, and flexible, integrated and community-driven services for Indigenous peoples (Ball 2010:29). A 2010 Environics survey showed that “regardless of how much interaction they have with non-Aboriginal services, there is broad agreement among urban Aboriginal peoples that it is very important to also have Aboriginal services” (Environics 2010:73). More than seven in ten surveyed said that Aboriginal child care or daycares (73%) are very important (Environics 2010:85). The Canadian Council on Learning (CCL), in their report on the state of Aboriginal learning in Canada, also conclude that Aboriginal children’s school performance is better if they are enrolled in an Aboriginal-specific ECE program that promotes cultural values (CCL 2010:33). The CCL report goes on to note that only 18% of off-reserve FNIM children in Canada were in such programs; most of this number were Inuit children. By contrast, in New Zealand, 25% of Indigenous Maori children in an early childhood setting were in a Maori

immersion family program (CCL 2010:34). In addition, research shows that programs that foster a positive sense of Aboriginal identity through supporting and teaching Aboriginal culture, providing “cultural safety” and employing locally trained ECE staff and Elders are more successful (JRI 2006; Dockett 2008:24; Ball 2010:38; Robinson et al 2011:4; Del Grosso et al 2011). Other sources also show that programs employing a strengths-based approach tend to be more effective (Dockett 2008).

While it is recognized as important to provide culturally specific programming for success, the wide diversity within the FNIM population in Canada requires that the degree to which the program is culturally-based should be determined in consultation with the local community (Raham 2010:3). That being said, when urban FNIM peoples in Canada were asked in a survey what were the most important aspects of Aboriginal culture to pass on to the next generation, the highest priority was given to language, followed by customs/traditions, family values and spirituality (Envionics 2010:62). The literature supports the view that children’s literacy progress is better if they are instructed in their first language (Raham 2010).

The Canadian Council on Learning concludes that Aboriginal learning is “holistic, lifelong, experiential, spiritually-oriented, community-based, rooted in language and culture, and provides opportunities for an integration of Aboriginal and Western knowledge. An Indigenous-specific or culturally responsive learning environment for FNIM children is one in which children can learn by doing (experiential learning; CCL 2010:05; Ball 2010:31). It has been said that being “culturally responsive means to be sensitive, aware, and capable of employing cultural learning patterns, perspectives, family structure, multiple worldviews...it requires adaptation to the local community and environment” (McLeod n.d.:07). The literature does not promote one specific program model as most effective; rather, culturally-specific programs are best if flexible and adapted to the specific population in an area (Layzer et al 2001; Ball 2010:44). Research has shown that the contribution of Indigenous educators, Elders and other involved community members, enhances ECE programming (Raham 2010:8; CCL 2010:05).

Skilled Instructors

The value of skilled instructors for Indigenous early learners is noted in the literature as one significant element in the success of Indigenous students and therefore, investments in teacher training and professional development are a critical component of ensuring positive outcomes for Indigenous early learners (Layzer et al 2001; Raham 2010). The national government of New Zealand has made these kinds of commitments in its early childhood education policy.

Child and Family Centre as “Hook and Hub”

The concept of early childhood centres located in schools as “hook and hub” were probably first coined by Jessica Ball, who has focused her work predominantly on Indigenous ECE (Ball 2007; 2010). Ball believes that the co-location of early childcare and development services with other family support services in one location can first “hook” parents through their enrolment of their children into ECE. Once families are engaged, they can then “ladder” to other support services such as language, nutrition, community kitchens, health, etc. This more intensive involvement of families also supports the early identification of problems and/or

special needs, enabling earlier intervention and increasing the likelihood of positive outcomes (Ball 2010:42; Pfannenstiel 2006). Ultimately, family involvement would ideally extend to planning and playing a role in governing the programs through participating on Boards. The centre of these services then becomes a community “hub” that strengthens the entire neighbourhood or community and builds social capital (Ball 2010:41; Raham 2010:8). The Centre can also involve the whole community through hosting community-wide events such as holiday feasts. The 2009 Pascal report suggests that schools would be the preferred site for co-location of some services at a “centre” in the same spirit as Ball’s “hook and hub”(Pascal 2011: 9, 14, 17). It goes without saying that if these centres are to engage families, they need to be welcoming places where Indigenous families can feel included and culturally safe.

Community-Driven

By adopting a hub model, services are responding to community-defined needs and are community driven (Ball 2010:43). As mentioned above, input from the local community is crucial for developing child and family services that meets local needs. The importance of having early childhood and family services be locally driven is emphasized elsewhere in the literature (Raham 2010; McLeod n.d.); and is a concept to which Toronto has committed to in its strategy. Being community-driven goes beyond initial consultation; ideally, community direction would come through formal decision-making structures (Raham 2010:5). Research shows that “success rates for Aboriginal learners improve when parents and community are involved in the education of their children (Raham 2010:5; Ball 2010; Anderson n.d.).

3. METHODOLOGY FOR THE FIRST NATION, INUIT AND MÉTIS RESEARCH COMPONENT

3.1 Approach and Data Collection

This project undertook the design and completion of primary and secondary data collection for the Aboriginal Research component. The research objectives were to:

1. Determine and inform practice of optimized balance of universal and targeted programs
2. Identify research that would inform culturally responsive¹ programs
3. Define Aboriginal outcomes

The goal of this report is in effect to understand the extent to which service needs for Aboriginal children differ and where they align fully or partially within the overall BSCFC concept. Specifically, the research addressed the questions of what comprises culturally-relevant early childhood integrated service needs; the extent to which, and how these have been achieved in the past; and how best to incorporate these into an integrated service delivery model moving forward in Toronto and Ontario.

This research examined the historical and contextual factors of a fully functioning and effective integrated service model for Aboriginal children. The JRI team's cultural understandings and interpretations were critical to the discussion processes as this ensured that the lens of optimal balance, cultural responsiveness and appropriateness was applied to all aspects of the research.

Community Based Participatory Action Research

Given the participatory approach and in consideration of the limited window of opportunity for the research project, the Aboriginal community was represented within a tri-committee model by members of the Aboriginal Advisory and Planning Committee as well as early childhood and family services providers located in the two sites of practice of this research study: Scarborough and Regent Park. It was critical to have participation from all of the key players at the onset of the research to ensure engagement and to contribute to the process of facilitating information sharing, cross-project learning and uptake of research findings.

1. The City of Toronto was the project manager and also shared the management role of the research project with representative agencies of the Aboriginal community of Toronto (referred to as the project management committee). This committee consisted of The City of Toronto (Project Coordinator), and other delegates, such as Native Child and Family Services of Toronto and Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto. Project

¹ This study carefully investigates worldviews so as not to limit the focus to culture, which can be misleading in this context, since there are many cultures within the category "Aboriginal".

deliverables were first provided to this committee for review and comment. This committee was responsible for overseeing all aspects of research planning and implementation.

2. JRI struck an internal review panel, consisting of experts in the field of Aboriginal early childhood and youth education as well as the cultural knowledge and traditions. These individuals were Dr. Jessica Ball, Dr. Cyndi Baskin, and Elders Dianne Longboat and Jacqui Lavalley. This panel provided feedback and comments on the project deliverables, as well as providing advice around the foci of the research project (such as best practices in Indigenous early learning), and locating culturally responsive education reports and evaluations.
3. Final community reviews occurred with the Aboriginal Advisory and Planning Committee. This review was thought to mainly act as a review in principle of the project deliverables. Detailed review and comments were welcomed at every step, though not required of the committee, since the previous two review stages were assigned the detailed review. This review stage acted as a mechanism for reaching a wider range of the Toronto Community and Toronto Aboriginal community.

Primary Data Collection

Key stakeholder interviews were conducted with 95 respondents (tools can be viewed in Appendix E). Forty parents/ caregivers out of these also participated in three focus groups. Interviews were completed with: 1) representatives of the relevant city departments as well as from the Aboriginal Advisory and Planning Committee; 2) program managers, frontline staff, and parents or caregivers at the Scarborough Native Child and Family Centre; and 3) integrated service partners and parents/ caregivers working and/ or living within the Regent Park area. Focus groups were completed at Scarborough Native Child and Family Centre, Miziwe Bik Employment and Training and the Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre. The number of interviews completed were as follows.

1. representatives in the relevant city departments and management committee agencies (n=6);
2. experts, program managers and frontline staff at the Scarborough Native Child and Family Centre (n=15) and parents and caregivers (n=26); and
3. Sample of integrated service partners (n=15) and parents/ caregivers in the Regent Park area (n=33). Nine of the service partners were employed at non-Native agencies in Regent Park and six were employed at Native agencies.

3.2 Strengths and Limitations

One of the strengths of the project design was the use of a community based participatory action approach to the research. Parents and staff felt listened to and trusted their information would not be misused. This increased the reliability of the information that was shared. A

significant number of parents participated in each of the sites of practice. It was estimated that about 25 percent of current Aboriginal families accessing services at the three Native agencies participated in the data collection processes in Gabrielle Dumont and Regent Park, where a total of two sessions were held in each site of practice.

Another strength of the project was its use of multiple methods. The literature review findings were often corroborated by the interviews suggesting strong external validity of the project itself. Against this common background, the interviews served to provide a more in-depth account of the context of Toronto.

A limitation of the study was the lack of service uptake trend data from the sites. This would represent quantitative data that would further increase the reliability of our data.

4. DEFINING THE PARAMETERS OF SERVICE DELIVERY

Toronto Children's Services is leading the development of the framework for locally integrated service planning for families with children up to 12 years old. This work will in turn inform the provincial Best Start Child and Family Centre (BSCFC) model. The three sites of practice partnering in developing this framework are Regent Park service providers, the Scarborough Native Child and Family Life Centre and the O'Connor Child Care Centre. Key strategies in this initiative were guided by the Child and Family Service System Continuum and the Toronto Child and Family Outcomes framework. Under the CFC provincial framework, agencies are expected to integrate existing services for children (prenatal to 12 years old) and families, reflecting the unique needs of neighbourhoods through a community planning processes. The full implementation of the CFC provincial framework is expected to improve the health and well-being of children and families in the community. The current report is designed to inform the preparation of the CFC provincial framework.

4.1 Regent Park Child and Family Services

In the Regent Park area, Toronto Children's Services organized an working group. The work carried out by this group would determine how service providers in the Regent Park neighbourhood could develop an integrated service delivery based on evidence, research, and best practices, as laid out in the CFC. The Regent Park Working Group membership represented all the sectors that work with children birth - 12 years of age and their families. A number of the agencies participating on the planning group responded to our research survey; these agencies are listed in Table 4.1. The types of services that are represented in the group include:

1. **Health:** comprehensive services to meet the healthy birth outcomes and developmental needs of children. *Example:* Pre and Post natal support, health and dental care, mental health services, nutrition, family planning.
2. **Early Learning and care:** Nurturing, high quality services where children's care and learning needs are met. *Example:* Licensed child care, before and after school, full day early learning kindergarten, school readiness and literacy.
3. **Family support:** Range of support services for parents and caregivers of children in their caregiving role. *Example:* Play based learning, information, resources and referrals, caregiver training and education Programs.
4. **Early intervention:** Early access to identification and assessment services for all children birth to five years, plus referral and intervention services for children with extra support needs. *Example:* Well baby check, specialized supports and services, consultation.

It was indicated that other service providers and community groups would be invited to participate in the planning group when necessary.

The goals of the working group were:

- Provide equitable access to a continuum of early intervention, health and family support services that provide flexible programs that recognize the complex needs of families
- Use Service integration to create a seamless system that is easy for families to navigate and access the services they require with minimal wait times
- Reduce duplications in services and intake in order to simplify the application process for families and better utilize resources
- Share effective training and information that will improve knowledge of available services, increase multiple-disciplinary skills of staff, and help staff transition to an integrated service model and organizational culture

The service providers identified in Table 4.1 below provide services to families and children living in the Regent Park area. This runs from Front Street in the south to Carlton Street in the north, and between Broadview Avenue and Church Street. There are six core mainstream agencies in the service delivery area that provide services for children and families. There are also three Aboriginal-specific organizations that support children and families in some unique way, but do not exclusively focus on that. Another mainstream agency that was reported to be involved in the Working Group was the Gerrard Resource Centre. However, it is located outside the geographic borderlines of the Regent Park area and as such has not been included in Table 4.1. As well, Native Child and Family Services of Toronto is located outside of the Regent Park area; however the agency is an active member of the working group. Again, since their agency is not located in the Regent Park area it is not reported in Table 4.1, even though they did also participate in this research project as respondents. Further, two of the three Aboriginal agencies have recently not been participating in the Regent Park Working Group: Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre and Anishnawbe Health of Toronto.

As one of Toronto's oldest districts, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal service providers in the area are well-established and have a long history of providing services to the many communities located in the Regent Park area. Of the service providers, the Yonge Street Mission is the oldest and most comprehensive provider offering not only family programming but also addressing other issues such as food, shelter and Christianity-based spiritual needs. While these providers indicate that programs and services are, for the most part, available to anyone, they are primarily used by low income families. Aside from the Yonge Street Mission, there were no "one-stop-shop" providers for children and families in the Regent Park area, in particular for families who needed secular services. However, when taken together the service providers in the area provide comprehensive services and programming for local families including educational, social and athletic programming, health and development and supportive programming for parents and families.

The three Aboriginal organizations in the neighbourhood, while not child and family specific, provide services that are rooted in Aboriginal culture and are based on creating an open atmosphere where clients feel respected and free of judgment. They are also described as informal environments with limited bureaucracy thus enabling them to effectively support clients in emergency or high need situations.

Table 4.1. Regent Park Working Group Service Providers that Participated in this study

Service Provider	Target population	Family/Child Services Offered
Providers that are not Aboriginal Specific		
<p>Yonge Street Mission (est.1896)</p>	<p>Religion-based organization focusing on people living in economic, spiritual or social poverty.</p>	<p>Childcare (3 months – 5.5 years): Licensed daycare with educational programming for children 3 mos. – 5.5 years of age and school readiness program with parents on-site for ages 2 – 4 years.</p> <p>Children’s Programming (Grades 1-8): Breakfast club, afterschool clubs (basketball, homework/computer skills, music club, parent/child field trips, summer camps, leadership and mentorship training)</p> <p>Youth Programs (Grades 7-12): Education-based courses: youth computer time, homework support, formal computer training (animation, movie making, business technology), after-school programs, leadership programs, Boys and girls groups, drop-in basketball and camps.</p> <p>Adults/Parents: workshops, events and programming in ESL, employment support, parenting, women’s computers, building better life, volunteer opportunities, food bank, meal program, knitting circle, addiction recovery, housing supports, advocacy for women, court supports, anti-violence advocacy. Parents also help plan special events, cook for the programs.</p>
<p>Toronto Kiwanis Boys & Girls Club (est. 1920’s)</p>	<p>Open to all young children and youth and focuses on encouraging young people reach their potential.</p>	<p>Lord Dufferin Junior and Senior Public School (JK – Grade 8): provides an international language program and school nutrition program which provides breakfast, lunch and a morning meal.</p> <p>Dundas Junior Public School (JK – Grade 5): provides an afterschool program. Works on reducing barriers (such as cost) and does focused outreach in each of the communities where they’re running programs. First Nations School is located here and so the Kiwanis program includes Aboriginal families.</p> <p>As a newly renovated centre, the Toronto Kiwanis Boys & Girls Clubs reopened in 2012 and offers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Miles & Kelly Nadal Youth Centre • Rogers Technology Centre • Loblaw Companies Fitness Room • BMO Amphitheatre • The Lowes Kitchen • TD Bank Library • Junior Creative Arts Room • Junior Reading Room • Gymnasium • Performing Arts Floor • Recording Studio

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dance Studio • Indoor Climbing Wall
Regent Park Community Health Centre (est. 1973): Parents for Better Beginnings	provides a wide range of programs and services with a broad health focus, including family focused child and parent programs	<p>Children (0 months – 3 years): Pre-natal and post-natal.</p> <p>Children (4 – 6 years): School readiness, preschool speech and language support.</p> <p>Child and Family Services (prenatal – 6 years): Family resource, parent and child groups, home visiting, child and family advocate, early years social worker, child development clinics.</p> <p>Youth Programs (Grades 7-12): youth advocate/support for justice system and homework club and pathways.</p> <p>Adults/Parents: childcare provided for parents attending a program/session, parenting skills workshops, housing advocacy, assistant completing forms/navigating system.</p>
Toronto Centre Rosedale Ontario Early Years Centre (est. 1980s)	Began as a family support program that was later merged into the local elementary school, St. Paul Catholic School	<p>Children (0 months – 12 months): Parent and child Mother Goose.</p> <p>Children (0 – 18 months): Make the connection, Baby and Me, enhanced 18 month baby well-being home visits as public health measure.</p> <p>Child and Family Services (prenatal – 6 years): Parent and child interactive learning, music and movement, growing together program, developmental screening, cooking with kids, reading circle.</p>
Toronto Public Library: Parliament Street Location (historical location, among first libraries in Toronto)	This library used to be connected to a house and was part of the neighbourhood information post in the community	<p>Children (0 months – 18 months): Baby time</p> <p>Children (18 – 36 months): Toddler time</p> <p>Children (3 – 5 years): Pre-school time</p> <p>Children (Grades 1 - 6): Beginning French, French homework club</p> <p>Children (Grades 1 - 6): March Break Shakespeare for kids, Black History month, Asian Heritage, holiday and Summer Reading clubs, Music/Piano practice space for kids (1 hour per child)</p> <p>Adults/Parents: job search workshops, volunteer opportunities</p>
Toronto’s Aboriginal Specific Providers located in/near Regent Park		
The Native Women’s Resource Centre of Toronto (est. 1985)	Welcoming atmosphere for all Aboriginal women and their children in the Greater Toronto Area.	<p>Children (0 - 6 years): Aboriginal Healthy Babies/Health Children, toddler gymnastics.</p> <p>Children (6 – 12 years): March Break camp, Fun Under the Sun summer camp.</p> <p>Family Services (0 – 6 years): drop-in services, home visits, parent relief, physical well-being, case management.</p> <p>Youth Programs (Grades 7-12): Homework, outings,</p>

		<p>craft making, workshops.</p> <p>Adults/Parents: workshops, events and programming on parenting, prenatal, Parenting Together, It Starts with Me, Beyond the Basics play-based 10 week parenting workshop (court recognized), Community Kitchen, food bank, Health Eating at Nekenan, how to cook healthy meals, FAD, Medicine Walk.</p>
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4.2 Scarborough Native Child and Family Life Centre

The current Native Child and Family Life Centre at Scarborough Centre was born from an apartment unit operation at the Gabriel Dumont Non-Profit Homes complex established in 1986 in Scarborough. This complex has 80 units in two structures which are 3-stories high and targets Indigenous families. In about 2000, the apartment-based family services was providing childcare and parenting programs that very quickly outgrew the available space. The community lobbied for and acquired funding to purchase an old heritage house down the street from Gabriel Dumont, and began to offer the services there instead of at Gabriel Dumont. This small heritage house was named the House of Ghesig and operated culturally-based services, such as a sweat lodge in its backyard that was well utilized. This Scarborough based program operated on the “it takes a community to raise a child” model and NCFS honoured this goal by offering family socials, cultural nights, organizing a youth community council, and so on. The services included intake program, counseling, therapy, Elders, domestic violence shelter, art therapy for children and youth, and community social hours.

In 2004, the City of Toronto received Best Start initiative funding to expand their childcare activities. The original scope of services was reduced, however the Aboriginal basis was maintained for expansion. An Aboriginal Advisory Group was struck to consider how best to allocate the funding. Initial requests were from Eastview School (located behind Gabriel Dumont) to build an Aboriginal Early Years Center into the school. However, the NCFS (also a member of the advisory group) commissioned an environmental scan employing a community involvement strategy that identified the need for a family oriented centre. The Scarborough Centre by Gabriel Dumont was identified as having the priority need for such a service, as their services at the time were under-resourced.

The community, the advisory group and the City of Toronto preferred investing in and supporting the existing services offered by NCFS in Scarborough. NCFS was able to raise additional funding through the Best Start funding the city had acquired. In late 2011 the doors of the new Native Child and Family Life Centre (Scarborough Centre) were opened. In preparation for the opening, NCFS arranged for Mothercraft to be contracted through Miziwe-Biik Employment and Training to offer training to Aboriginal women in the ECA and ECE. An evaluation performed at the end of the training program found that almost all of the women who took the program were later employed.

It has been in development for quite a while. It started four years ago when they started the Mothercraft pilot ECE program that I was involved in. The purpose was to engage Aboriginal people in an educational environment. The community was involved through questionnaires and council meetings about what was needed and the barriers. (Scarborough Centre Staff Respondent)

Table 4.2. Key Aboriginal Elements of the Scarborough Native Child and Family Life Centre Site of Practice

Geography	<p>Where</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walking distance (less than five minutes) to Gabriel Dumont Non-Profit Homes
Brief Description of the Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service delivery model/approach • Family centred
Target Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aboriginal children 0 – 14 and their parents, families, living in Toronto, primarily Gabriel Dumont
Universal or Targeted Program Elements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal and Targeted Programs. The Scarborough Centre has universal elements (i.e. diversity, equity, etc.) but it targets specific populations (low income, unemployed, and explicitly provides Aboriginal culturally-based services).
Critical Elements of Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One-stop / Hub service provider • Holistic model where culture is embedded in all activities/programs (i.e., smudging, the seven grandfather teachings, language) • Creating a community environment: staff are approachable, accessible, and non- judgmental and clients feel respected • Limited bureaucracy: informal efficient ways for clients to access services especially in times of crisis or high need situations • Informal opportunities for families to provide input on programming and take ownership of events or activities (i.e. fundraising, planning etc.) • Continuity of staff [i.e. low staff turnover] contributes to trust building with families • Centre goal to empower parents (i.e. providing ECE training to Centre parents who may eventually become employed at the daycare)
Partnerships and integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key partnerships (East View elementary school, local food bank, Boys and Girls Club) • Integration mechanisms/strategies

Promotion/community outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Culture Nights • Community Kitchen • Evening programming • Little League team • Pow wows
Promising Practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rooster: each day, a staff member is designated to respond to general requests coming from parents walking in to the Centre • Auntie/Uncle Program in the daycare • Culture Nights • Linkage with Eastview Head Start Program (i.e., joint staff meetings) • Community–driven activities (e.g., championship softball)
Staff Perspectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Primarily a Native staff employed who are dedicated to serving the community and who enjoy the culturally responsive atmosphere and events
Program Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building trust with parents and families that have had difficulties with child protection agencies in the past • Resources to provide more of what they have and to provide other programming/services • Full engagement from all families • Getting families to accept help in terms of child behavior, speech and language pathology
Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to increase family and community ownership in the Centre including administration, programming, fundraising etc.

4.3 Comparative Analysis Between the Sites of Practice

Service Delivery

The Regent Park and Scarborough models operate under very different contexts and almost opposite approaches to delivering services within their respective communities. The Scarborough Centre offers Aboriginal culturally-based programming for children, youth and families in a single agency in a neighbourhood where the Aboriginal population is primarily centralized in one apartment complex within a five-minute walk to the Centre. By all indications the Scarborough model is an ideal approach as described by Dr. Pascal. Core programming includes a daycare which includes pre-school programming based on the Aboriginal Head Start model. They also offer Child and Family Services, afterschool programming for children and youth, day programs for adults, weekly evening event for

families and special events, and other activities held throughout the year. While the Centre is based in Aboriginal culture it is open to all including Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal families, although the majority of the families are Aboriginal.

By contrast, in Regent Park child and family services are scattered throughout an essentially squared section of the city that measure about 900m on each side. There is not a non-secular one-stop service provider in the area and while there are three well-established Aboriginal child and family focused organizations in the area, none provide comprehensive child and family services. However, when all the service providers in the area are taken together, the services offered are quite comprehensive. As one of the Best Start Child and Family Centres foci, the focus in the past year has been on improving integration and coordination of the child and family services in the neighborhood to produce better outcomes for children in childhood and as they grow older. As discussed below, the integration process is in the beginning stages.

Service Gaps

Regent Park parents and caregivers indicated that service gaps were around more immediate needs, while the Scarborough Centre parents focused on more secondary and tertiary needs. An immediate need could include any of a wide spectrum of childcare services (all ages) and basic parenting programming that do not currently exist. Secondary needs refer to an enhanced childcare or parenting services, such as longer hours or special group for grandmothers. A tertiary need would be related to moving parents beyond parenting classes and into programming that is more directly related to employment readiness.

The Regent Park service gaps included expressed needs for a “one-stop shop”. They needed afterschool programs for 7 – 12 year olds, programs for 13 – 16 year olds to keep them off the streets, daycare for children under two years, exercise and nutrition services, workshops for recognizing family member roles (babies, toddlers, teenagers, young adults, adults, fathers), positive parenting, Aboriginal boys and girls clubs and group homes with cultural mentors.

The Scarborough Centre service gap needs were focused on longer hours for childcare to enable parents to attend appointments or do grocery shopping, special groups for young moms or grandmothers, more outreach programs for adults, such as employment assistance, and opportunities for parents to work within the Centre as a means for improving their job readiness for full-time employment.

Integration Progress

At the time that this research was carried out (April 2012) the Regent Park Working Group had only been operational for about one year with the terms of reference for the group formalized in January 2012. As a result the group has not had sufficient time to do little more than discuss integration, find common ground, and begin to form the relationships that are necessary to building an integrated approach to service delivery. Moving forward there is a need to strengthen the current working group in order that they can jointly determine community needs, plan services, address service duplication and existing gaps, as well as, develop common outcomes and plans to measure them.

As discussed above the Scarborough site offers families the most important services under one roof. However, the expansion of the site to include the daycare as well as the other services was newly completed in October 2011. The staff and management indicated that they were

still in the process of becoming fully operational and were not, at the time of the data collection (March –April 2012) offering all of the programs and services they wanted to offer or had offered prior to the expansion. For example, the Centre expects to begin offering fitness outings to the local YMCA in the near future. Essentially, the Centre expects to continue to adapt and expand programs within its network of service providers to ensure the most comprehensive array of services possible. It was also noted that the research did not find any evidence of an working group in the Scarborough site of practice.

5. PRIMARY RESEARCH KEY FINDINGS

5.1 Trends in Access to Services and Programs

Statistical Trend Data

Pascal proposes the development of an “Early Years Index” that would track key data on indicators such as what families use which services and how; the number of parents able to work because of the availability of affordable care; and the proportion of children living in poverty in the community. This was advised by Pascal as work that should be done at the neighbourhood level. (Pascal, C., 2009: 38) These data were not available for the Aboriginal programs in either site of practice in this study.

Geographical Location of the Programs and Services

In the Scarborough location, all of the service providers serving Aboriginal program participants are within a 5- to 10-minute walk of each other. A few of the Regent Park district agencies are located near each other on Gerrard Street but the catchment area is the entire district which is about a 40-minute walk from east to west and a 30-minute walk from north to south.

In Scarborough, the primary clients live within a 5-minute walk from the Centre across a major roadway in a 3-story apartment complex that features income-based rental plans for qualifying residents. In Regent Park there are no known Native housing units, however there are a number of subsidized residences, including high-rises.

Aboriginal parents in both catchment areas indicated a clear preference to access Aboriginal-specific services preferably located within their neighbourhood. In fact, when forced to choose between a locally provided non-Native service and a distally located Aboriginal service, most were eager to travel within reason to access Aboriginal-specific services. Parent respondents in both the Scarborough and Regent Park sites of practices areas mentioned their need and willingness to travel across town for Aboriginal-specific services. TTC costs were stated as an issue; while Aboriginal programs were said to provide reimbursements for TTC upon arrival, some families were hard-pressed to afford the fare to get to the program in the first place. Parents indicated that if they were unable to access an aboriginal-specific service, they would potentially use a non-Native provider; however, most reported that they would likely forego the service especially if it was not related to a core need such as housing, food, or a legal obligation.

Many parents had interactions with non-Native workers who the parents felt were judging them and this led to a general mistrust of non-Native workers. Parents expressed the perception that there was a general lack of understanding of Native values and beliefs among non-Native workers. As a result, almost all parents were motivated to go out of their way or felt forced to travel in order to attend Aboriginal programming.

They promised to help me with a lot of my affairs, like my housing, so when the worker came to do a home visit she started to talk about taking my children away from me. (Regent Park Parent Respondent)

Subsidies and Application Processes

The Scarborough Centre requires that parents or caregivers engage in an application process when subsidy spots become available. This is problematic since education levels act as a barrier for parents completing the application forms, who are usually embarrassed or unmotivated to ask for help. The fact that several appointments are needed acts as a further barrier (e.g., to inquire about the services, to review the application, to discuss specifics when the application is approved). Making it to appointments can be exceptionally challenging for parents who need to get all their children ready on time when the parents and children may lack the discipline of routine. Aboriginal families averaged 2.2 children in the 2006 Census and almost a quarter of families were single parents. These families are often new to the city and are just learning to do activities outside of the home. They are also more likely to have more than two children, each about a year apart in age. The Scarborough Centre is not equipped to conduct home visits even though a home visiting model for the application process is much more realistic. Home visiting would alleviate the issue of access to services by enabling the family to stay in an environment they are comfortable in, introduce them to a new element to their routine at home, and put the parents more at ease and open to familiarizing themselves with the programs and services offered at the Scarborough Centre. The Regent Park childcare providers noted also that subsidized daycare spots are hard to come by and the barriers Aboriginal face in the application process mean that it is unlikely that an Aboriginal family would access these services.

Once families are using the childcare services, the centre serves as an access point for the program staff to the parents. The fact that they are dropping their child off and picking them up at the Scarborough Centre daily enables staff to strike conversations and draw parents into the other programs at the Scarborough Centre. The goal is to work towards employment for all of the parents. The fact that the Scarborough Centre can offer a wide-range of services is very conducive to attracting parents to the centre, and helps ensure that they return for other programming, such as parenting classes and cultural nights. This fact was well captured in an interview

Head Start ...is free. It is a preschool and offers 2.5 hours of programming. It is 100% federally funded, it is easy to access, just that same as one would access the public school system. We have to work really hard to help through the subsidy process and need more staff to work with parents on the application process. Aboriginal parents are losing out on our services. We concentrate on providing a safe, healthy, 'have fun', social, physically active environment – these principles all come natural and then you feed into that.
(Scarborough Centre Staff Respondent)

The Invisible Native in Mainstream Services

From the interviews, some of the non-Native service provider respondents in the Regent Park area were not aware if they had any Aboriginal program participants. None of the non-Native program staff had previously been employed in a Native environment, and while they had been providing frontline services, almost none of them knew if they had been serving Aboriginal program participants. One agency had one Aboriginal worker on frontline staff that identified a couple of Aboriginal clients. Many of the Native service provider respondents also commented that the previous non-Native organizations at which they were employed had not been aware and had no information about Native services, such as Aboriginal Legal Services or Anishnawbe Health (which they thought should be known within all agencies as the very

basic Native services). Non-Native and Native staff respondents also pointed out that in the non-Native environments there is no guide or protocols in-place for determining good ways for non-Native staff to better work with Aboriginal participants and how they should go about appropriately identifying Aboriginal participants. There was fear on both sides that there was a fine line that non-Native staff should not cross and there was also recognition on both sides that Aboriginal participants deserved improved access to programs within non-Native agencies.

You know a worker has taken cultural training when they pull out the Medicine Wheel and start referring to how everything is in a circle and is interconnected. That's when you know you cannot trust them [because it is assumed they do not really know the culture]. (Regent Park Parent Respondent)

5.2 Level of Access to Universal and Targeted Programs

The primary concern was the invisible nature of the needs of Native families in non-Native settings. Since the design of the services is not Native in the universal providers, Native families failed to see the need to identify themselves as Aboriginal. Parent respondents justified not identifying as Aboriginal, since they believed the agency itself would not change from the ground-up and because they failed to see anything of themselves reflected in non-Native environments.

It was actually seen as even more of a concern to parents that they would either fall subject to racism or be met with disappointment and feelings of alienation should an agency, not created from within the Native community attempt to deliver Native programming. In fact, such an attempt was seen as a token approach and not a wrap-around cultural approach (see subsequent sub-section). The token approach was considered inherently racist since it was recognized as a compensation for not providing a Native-based service. Many parents expressed this as violating their inherent right to services and referred to the government's fiduciary responsibility to status Indians in Canada to provide housing, health, and education programs and services. Regent Park parents were more concerned about the government's neglect to targeted services for Native people while the Scarborough Centre parents felt less threatened and showed greater satisfaction with the services they were receiving.

You know I have walked all over Toronto, up and down, East and West, and everywhere I look I see hundreds of Churches and Mosques all around the city. There are a whole bunch of Native kids who don't have any cultural services. There needs to be more of it around and our kids getting more cultural knowledge and better awareness of it. There are many Aboriginal kids in the West end without the services. Then I come out here to Regent Park and walk in here at Miziwe Biik and there are beautiful murals of nature and animals and not churches and not crosses. When we have our services non-Native people also use them; so why are there not more Native services? We have wide open doors and non-Native people don't seem to have any problem using our services. (Regent Park Parent Respondent)

The Scarborough Centre staff members were concerned around referring program participants out to non-Native centres. All the parents here were convinced that as much as possible, they should stay with Native-specific services and many stated that they never refer to services

outside of a Native program. Scarborough Centre staff expressed that they ensured that the agency they were making a referral to was aware of the Centre and educated on the “cultural needs and the history that has been in our families and know that what is happening now could be a result of past traumas”. The staff worked to facilitate the connection to the other agency and once the parent was connected, they ensured that the agency was able to work in a holistic approach, provide enough support and did not lose the link to the parent. The Scarborough Centre has at times brought in an Elder to facilitate access in a universal services setting. The staff has also been known to be available after the connection is made as well to provide the cultural view point and to assure the parents that the Centre is always there to provide support.

Having it under one roof is doable -- we even used to do that here before we got the new building. It's beneficial to have it under one roof because they don't have to travel anywhere. The Aboriginal community lives here. [Another] agency providing the services to them has to be familiar with the population -- become aware of their values and history and have information on hand that they can pass to them. (Scarborough Centre Staff Respondent)

5.3 Factors Influencing Access

Services Driven or Governed by the Community

At the Scarborough centre, the services are community-driven, the staff greets program participants at the door, and there is a bowl and medicines at the reception to “smudge” (a cleansing ceremony). The opinions of the program participants are heard and often implemented, such as bringing in a Service Canada agent to provide social insurance cards to parents. The staff and management keep an open-door policy and provide services to program participants outside of scheduled appointments. The response to the youth council was so well received that it became quickly apparent that an alternative school would greatly benefit the youth. NCFS applied for a license and brought an alternative high school program into the Scarborough Centre.

Social Activities: Cultural nights are all about bringing the community together. The attendance at cultural nights at the farmhouse started with 15 people, and has grown to over 60 community family members at the new Scarborough Centre. The parents rally around community events, like soccer matches or dinner outings and conduct fundraising drives on their own, with minimal help from NCFS. For example, this past February parents from the community made Valentine's gift bags. The past summer the community formed the first Native softball team and made it to the championship game. They had won that championship game, reportedly while several hawks had been flying and perched all around the soccer field throughout the game. The Scarborough Centre is also often used for the community to come together to settle a matter that needs to be heard by the community as a whole.

Strong Community: The strong community base in the Scarborough Centre ripples into the larger surrounding Native community and provides a foundation that staff can utilize for outreach and awareness to the larger community to recruit more families into the Scarborough Centre. The Scarborough Centre also resonates well in the community since some of the workers are from the community (although there were not so many of these that confidentiality and trust were mentioned as an issue by any of the respondents). All parents and caregivers mentioned that they had well established relationships with the staff.

Continual Community Driving: Prior to the establishment of the Scarborough Centre a community-based assessment was conducted. Community members were interviewed individually and were involved in community meetings that sought to understand the needs and desires of the community. That process still resonates in the minds of the program participants as a just and fair process. It laid the foundation for a strong community involvement at the Centre and many respondents, both staff and parents, referred to this community-driven approach as the success of the Centre. Periodically, the Scarborough Centre seeks to start up new programs and services based on the ideas that the parents feel open and free to share in community forums. The invitation to these forums is open to the entire Aboriginal community. These undertakings seek to maximize current resources and draw on resources and the services of other service provider partners (see section on Integrated Services, below).

We ask them and have community forums and hold these forums to ask the people in the Aboriginal community: what it is they want; what they are getting; what can be put in place; and how we can provide it... or using our partnerships for what we cannot provide, we can refer them to outside supports, such as the east Scarborough Boys and Girls Clubs and Scarborough Storefront. (Scarborough Centre Staff Respondent)

Culturally Responsive Services

The Scarborough Centre was said to honour culture since it provided services from both a family perspective and a community focus. The individual is not divorced from these two realms. All services honoured and respected cultural values and ways of being and the program participants referred to this as a ‘non-judgmental’ approach. Language is taught in the program to children and classes are offered to the parents. The Scarborough Centre further upholds the seven grandfather teachings. The culture nights include crafts, drumming, regalia, feasting, full moon ceremonies and sweat lodges (in Glen Rouge). The services at this culture-based provider were regarded as a guardian and true teacher of the traditions. Parent/caregiver respondents noted that this was the only location in Scarborough that they could get services that preserved the culture and taught the traditions. These respondents expressed that they developed a desire to learn about Native traditions only when they came into contact with the Scarborough Centre. The service practice model of the Scarborough Centre is to support and develop action towards cultural attachment among the Native families as a means for rebuilding the community’s unique cultural teachings and knowledge.

In the children’s program, the staff members are called Auntie and Uncle by the children. The childcare program utilizes the cultural programming developed for Aboriginal Head Start and has also adopted a ‘child-directed play’ approach. Naming ceremonies are held for the children at the start of the school year. The children carry that spirit name with them and the staff honour their spirit names by using their spirit name when speaking to them, especially at smudge time or nap time. The staff also keeps track of the meaning of the names and guides the children on the roles and responsibilities those spirit names speak to. Elders were brought into the classroom with the children and with their help, the children made their own medicine bundles, drew Native art pictures, drummed and sang, listened to her storytelling, and counted and spoke in Ojibway.

Incorporate the culture into the program, you add it into your lessons plan -- you can use a medicine wheel approach to looking at the four primary colours. And on special occasions, like Valentine’s Day; you teach the teaching of love,

humility, and teaching the Ojibway names and meanings of colours.
(Scarborough Centre Staff Respondent)

One Stop Shop / Wrap Around Services

The Scarborough Centre tries very hard to meet as many of the needs of parents as possible in the one location; however they cannot offer all of the services that are needed. Services offered include intake workers, counselling, therapy, Elders, help for domestic violence victims, art therapy, community social hours, crafts, community liaison, youth workers, alternative high school program, language classes, early years programs, family “let’s get physical” activities, kids in the middle, parenting workshops, after school programs, girls group, warriors groups, culture nights, Centennial College child family foundations program, young teen group, youth drop-in, and traditional crafts.

The staff at the Scarborough Centre provided services in a seamless fashion when program participants needed to move on or access services from another Center worker. This chain of services and workers involved protection, intake and follow-up staff all working together as a team.

Other services providers are brought into the Scarborough Centre as much as possible, such as Royal Bank of Canada, Service Canada, Anishnawbe Health of Toronto, Aboriginal Peacekeeping Unit, Toronto Police 43 Division, Maplewood high school, Variety Village, and the Glen Rouge Campground. For example, the Glen Rouge Campground staff may come in to talk about safety and etiquette.

A lot of parents have case workers which is great to have the clinical part of it because they can get in touch with a lot of agencies that can help them. We have a newsletter and they might put Storefront or Boys and Girls Club events in it. Have a binder with listing of services in the community. Having computers that community members can come in and use and do things on their own-resume cover letter. (Scarborough Centre Staff Respondent)

No Wrong Door / Integrated Services

When program participants enter the building, there are a lot of posters on the walls of partnering service providers and a large binder is available in the waiting room that uses pictures as much as possible with brief and easy listings. A Judo class and Thunderbirds Dance Theatre is offered jointly through the Scarborough Centre staffing the activities and the Eastview School providing the venue. The school also allows the Center to use the gym for other activities for children and youth. The childcare services, for example, work with the school and the family to establish a strong communication system between the Scarborough Centre’s childcare staff and the school to give parents the confidence to better manage their child’s success in school. The Scarborough Centre walks the childcare children to the Head Start location or the Eastview School depending on the time of day and need for drop-offs at either of these institutions.

Other partnerships included the Scarborough Boys and Girls Club where the City of Toronto has hired a Resource Teacher. The Resource Teacher refers families to the Scarborough Centre that could benefit from access to other services. The Scarborough Centre worked to make room immediately for the family which may involve hiring staff to stay an extra hour a

week to work with the new family. Since the Boys and Girls Club share program participants they both work very well together to improve the experiences of their shared and separate participants.

East Scarborough Storefront was another program that the Scarborough Centre worked regularly with. Program participants said they were very familiar with the Storefront and would utilize their food bank services, the Roots of Scarborough East Community Garden, and the weekly Festival Market (providing fresh vegetation, often grown in the community garden). The market was known as a safe place for persons living in the local community to mingle and socialize. Both the Scarborough Centre and the Storefront share their facilities together. Activities at the Boys and Girls Club and the Storefront are always advertised in advance of the activity date in the Centre's newsletter.

Centennial College has partnered with the Scarborough Centre to offer a Community and Child Studies Foundations Program on the Scarborough Centres premises. Centennial College instructors come into the Centre to deliver a certificate program that works to assist program participants in developing a thorough understanding of the personal, academic, and professional requirements needed for taking diploma and advanced diploma programs. It works as a transitional program to help students' develop their skills for mainstream college programs.

The Scarborough Centre works to connect parents to the services that they need both within and outside of the Centre. The staff takes an approach to advise parents of their rights to services as this can be somewhat misunderstood, particularly for parents who are new to the city and recently moved from their home First Nation. Many First Nation communities do not have the infrastructure or the access to many of the services Torontonians take for granted. The job of the Centre staff is to educate the parents on their rights to a wide array of services, including advising on the basics, such as housing, social workers and benefits.

A lot of referrals are made for families with open child protection cases. We are very good at telling parents about the services that they are entitled to; which they would not have been able to take advantage of before [without our telling them about them]. We are good at connecting people with benefits, housing, social workers etc. Child protection works with other agencies, such as services for kids with disabilities; for example, recently a deaf child's worker came in to help show staff how her hearing aid works, etc.
(Scarborough Centre Staff Respondent)

Welcoming Environments and Cultural Inclusion of Canada's First Peoples

The Regent Park non-Native service providers had either no experience or very limited experience working with Indigenous families, and none had worked in an Aboriginal setting at all. Limited exposure included having observed an Aboriginal program, having an Aboriginal service provider use their agencies space, or having been provided a tour of an Aboriginal agency and having not really seen anything more than the building. One provider in the Regent Park area had an Aboriginal frontline worker on-staff. Another provider that provides service in various settings had attempted twice to make connections with Aboriginal service providers, including more recently participating in several discussions around outreach to the Aboriginal community; however none of these attempts had resulted in any concrete plans or actions. Instead, it was reported as being more a discussion focused on determining

appropriate services. A literacy provider had made several attempts to hold literacy sessions with Aboriginal parents and children by inviting local Native agencies to read during a story program for a “moms and tots” group. The only way this literacy service is reaching Aboriginal families at the moment is through the pamphlets she carries and delivers to all local Agencies including the Aboriginal ones. The only book she knows that is appropriate for all Aboriginal children is “In Mother’s Lap”. Two of the agencies mentioned having put up posters and displays for Aboriginal Day.

There are three reasons why an integration approach which is inclusive of Aboriginal service providers is proving to be difficult within the Regent Park area services. First, the Catholic-based services did not sit well with the Native parents living in the Regent Park area as there are a number of historical practices that involved the Church and the effects of these historical traumas are still present among many Native parents (e.g., residential school, sexual abuse of Altar boys, and Children’s Aid). Second, most of the Native service providers in Regent Park are not focused on the local area but target the entire city; therefore they did not see the benefit of integration within a jurisdiction that was not home to their target audience. Third, Native agencies reported that the majority of their program participants prefer not to have ties to outside agencies, fearing these could lead to outside agency’s providing very little in the way of solutions that work within an Aboriginal perspective for problem solving. They were afraid, for example, of mainstream service providers for fear they could take away their children.

Funding was seen as the greatest barrier, combined with limited resources and lack of visibility of Aboriginal clients. This means that program funds for decorations, art and resources are not spent on Aboriginal items in the non-Native agencies.

After visiting Native Child and Family Services of Toronto I became more aware of the unique needs of Aboriginal families/children. We could do more contact with NCFCS to exchange information about NCFCS activities and find out if our agency could contribute or share their resources. Then we could try to decorate our centre to truly welcome everybody. I noticed we don’t have any Aboriginal art and our agency hasn’t been as inclusive as they could be towards Aboriginal people. (Regent Park Non-Native Agency Staff Respondent)

While the non-Native agencies thought they could be doing more and some had attempted to do more, this was not translated into action to improve the knowledge and inclusion of Aboriginal content, or in creating a more welcoming environment. One non-Native service provider thought that the Toronto daycares’ principles embraced Aboriginal cultural beliefs; however these were beliefs represented by popular media, such as: share the Earth, nature, respect each other, and inclusivity; and not based on real knowledge of Indigenous culture. To be fair, it was explained that the comment on nature referred to having naturalized the décor and environment with softer colours, no loud music, more listening/observing time for children, and a garden outside for the children to care for. Also inclusivity was referred to as engaging family and community in the childcare setting. The sentiment shared by many of the non-Native services provider respondents was that more could and should be done to become more inclusive of Aboriginal peoples knowledge and histories.

Native Child and Family Services of Toronto is a very impressive agency – it’s a gem that not many people know about. The services are really good, but not many people know about it. People focus on the negative aspects of the culture

but there is a lot of beauty to learn about the culture. There needs to be more openness to let other people learn about the Aboriginal culture. (Regent Park Non-Native Agency Staff Respondent)

5.4 Service Provision Needs for Culturally-Based and Culturally-Responsive Programs and Services

One key service provision need is cultural responsiveness. There was no evidence of integration between the Native and non-Native services in Regent Park that would support cultural responsiveness in the non-Native agency. From the perspectives of Native parents living in Regent Park there are many wrong doors in Regent Park and that only the Native services met their needs and provided a place to feel safe and to take pride. A cornerstone for ensuring a successful integration system would be a true knowledge exchange between service providers beyond the verbal and focused on the experiential through a strategic job exchange program. However, no strategies such as job exchange or cultural exchange between the Native and non-Native agencies had been reported in Scarborough of Regent Park.

One non-Native service provider's thinking was aligned with a discussion that appeared earlier in this report, in that Native service providers have an inclusive services policy, and non-Native persons have accessed the services. This was true in the Scarborough Centre, where some of the daycare spaces and Centre services were being used by non-Natives. Likewise, at the Scarborough Centre the softball team they had formed also included non-Native players on their team. This non-Native service provider had believed that the inclusion of Aboriginal cultural beliefs and knowledge would actually be of benefit to all program participants.

I used to work with people with disabilities and found that most of what they said they needed. For example, the ramps had made things better for everyone [such as improving the accessibility not only for those disabled but also for older people and families with strollers. I question that if we started doing specific cultural things for Aboriginal people, if this may result in us being able to do a lot of good for a lot of different groups. I mean that what the Aboriginal children and families need may also be of benefit to other groups, when this is applied. (Regent Park Non-Native Agency Staff Respondent)

Another Regent Park service provider suggested liaising the Native agencies with the non-Native agencies may help smooth the waters and pave the way to a fruitful relationship. This was also suggested by Native service providers and non-Native services provider respondents as a function that would be well supported through a Coordinators position at the City of Toronto, to work with both types of agencies and begin to build a solid foundation on which to move forward.

Another suggestion was made from the respondent's own experience. The suggestion was to encourage and teach service providers to listen mindfully. Through a workshop at Native Child and Family Services of Toronto, one service provider was told that s/he was a good listener and this reaffirmed her/his personal confidence. This translated into a rationale that the agencies ecological approach of service provision (e.g., that systems interact and interface) would make it easier for him/her to provide services in a holistic manner and to treat every family no matter of background as a unit with strengths that can be built upon in a careful and gentle manner. According to the styles of the Scarborough Centre staff this was a strong start,

but more would be required to better reach a culturally-based and culturally-responsive programs and services.

Each child is unique and has their own learning styles and cultural traditions and beliefs, and even in Anishnawbe, there are differences, so the most important aspect is respect. Take into account the whole family and not just the individual we are working with. And our hours are not limited by 9-5, we have later services. The community is able to connect to us and get the supports they need when in crisis... Family doesn't mean mom dad and children, it is the family and in that family is the whole community. the Centre hears the community, not what it thinks it hears but gets the real input and how to best support them and we can hear them even if it is negative, and the steps and processes we need to take to help heal our own people and it works to reach out to work with other Aboriginal communities. (Scarborough Centre Staff Respondent)

Access to a culturally-responsive childcare center that provide all-day childcare was a dream for almost all of the parents. However, there is still much to be done to achieve that dream.

6. CULTURALLY-BASED OUTCOMES FOR FIRST NATION, INUIT AND MÉTIS CHILDREN AND FAMILIES

These outcomes emerged from the interviews and focus groups held with parents and caregivers affiliated with an Aboriginal service provider, as well as all the various type of service provider and civil personnel interviewed. Appendix D provides a statement of the outcomes in a table format while the text below provides the details in a narrative format.

6.1 Affirmation Within Self of One's Rights to Good and Whole Living and Internal Belief this is True for all Aboriginal People

Empowerment. If they are empowered, all the other things will come into play: [make your] voice [heard], advocate, find resources, and break the cycle. With ownership comes pride, and if tangible a dream. For one of the families, they came to me this week, there was nothing to do, and they said 'we want to keep doing it even if you are not here'. They can continue without me, and they want to do that and they may still need some support, but that is empowerment for them -- to feel they can do that on their own. (Scarborough Centre Staff Respondent)

Access to Motivated and Appropriate Staff to serve as Role Models

The Regent Park non-Native service providers chose their locations based on their desire to work in that neighbourhood, having previous experience in the same field, or as an exciting new project to undertake. These reasons differed considerably from the Centre staff's reasons which were more commonly about working in their own community, having completed a qualifying education program for the position, having completed on-the-job training as a community youth member, or wanting to work in a cultural environment that works to support the community.

I started at Grundy Lake as a camp counselor at 15 years of age. When I moved to the city I attended youth group at the NCFS agency downtown. I stayed in this community out here in various roles to stay connected. I started out here just after high school, as a youth worker trainee -- I was out here a couple of years. Then I was out of the community in school downtown and working at NCFS as a practicum; then I applied to transfer out here. (Scarborough Centre Staff Respondent)

The Scarborough centre is primarily staffed with Native employees who are dedicated to serving the community and enjoy the culturally responsive atmosphere and events. A few relocated near the Scarborough Centre, while others commuted to work, and a few others were living or had lived at Gabriel Dumont. Some of the staff trained under the Mothercraft ECE and ECA training courses and were very pleased they had earned a position at the Scarborough Centre. Two of the Mothercraft graduates at the Scarborough Centre were registered Early Childhood Educators. More than half of the staff interviewed had left a full-time position to work at the Scarborough Centre. Many staff felt that the Scarborough Centre had brought

them back to their cultural roots in a profound manner that enabled them to further their personal connections to their traditions and belief systems.

I wanted to work grassroots to empower the community and First Nations people. I wanted to work frontline to be able to support and give ownership to the community. I work to empower the community. I will work to bring into the program opportunities for employment and education. I teach the parents on what their rights are. I also work to support the families and advocate for them in the school system and in social services structure. (Scarborough Centre Staff Respondent)

The Centre personnel are always motivated to help and be helpful. Staff members do not work by the clock; “We don’t have any staff that say ‘my shift is over, good bye!’” As stated earlier, the staff take on an Auntie and Uncle role with the children and fulfill this role with compassion while managing the culturally related needs, such as taking on family duties such as using the child’s spirit name and moulding the child to reflect the spirit name. The children learn that the staff person is not just a teacher but develop a deeper, trusting relationship as though they were a real Aunt or Uncle.

As also stated earlier, the staff members take on as their job to inform program participants of their rights and about the wide variety of services that are available to them. They take the extra time needed to understand a family and its situation prior to making judgments or labeling the family or any of its members. This parent and staff relationship also has depth that is founded on a deep trust and faith that the staff person truly looks for the best interest of the family unit as a whole, not in a way that makes the parent feel incompetent, but towards creating a joint and mutual recognition of what needs to take place to address the root of the needs instead of just a surface or Band-Aid solution.

Access to a Culturally-based Community that Can Drive / Govern

The main goal of the Scarborough Centre is to work with all of the families as whole units and to let them know that the Scarborough Centre is their centre and that they have the ability to drive the centre’s programming. As a result of this approach taken by Scarborough Centre staff, the community grows into one unit and believes it can take care of itself. The parents take pride in the whole building and believe it is their safe haven. Many of the parents feel safer at the centre than in their own home. One parent stated that she could not even cook supper without needing to throw it many times into the garbage because of cockroaches getting into the food. This parent had no money to fumigate her home and would need to wait for Gabriel Dumont management to arrange and pay for the fumigating. In this case, the family was able to have a place where they felt safe at the centre and this provide them many opportunities to engage in more activities pother than crisis management in their home filled with cockroaches. Other aspects of safety are also present such as a commitment to confidentiality by staff and other program participants, and trust that their children are nearby and are not being labeled as slow learners or Attention deficit (ADHD). For the many Native people have lost their children due to situations where the staff was unable or unwilling to work with the parents to rectify a situation, any Non-Native organization was untrustworthy. The Scarborough Centre works very hard to earn the trust of program participants by focusing on first the safety of the family as a whole. The parents in return feel the safety not only for themselves, but also for their children. In order to demonstrate that the staff has the child’s safety at heart, the staff works to ensure the physical, emotional, cognitive, and spiritual needs

of the children are met. For example, managing a child's spirit name ensures that staff is taking care of the spiritual needs. Keeping the child free of diaper rash is an important physical health concerns for parents, that when met demonstrates safety.

Safety is seen as an important outcome by both staff and parents. One parent spoke about her daughter at another daycare where she walked in to find her child screaming and the staff wiping her child with a paper towel. She discovered her daughter had a red bum. She may not have caught this if she called before visiting the childcare centre as the staff had told her to do.

One of the Regent Park non-Native staff explained that for safety, it is critical to start small such as creating a welcoming environment before building a sound and strong relationship between staff and program participants. This is exactly in line with what the Scarborough Centre staff reported that they aspire towards by focusing on the mittens and the practical things that demonstrate without question the staff care and can keep the children safe. By building a relationship that values safety first, the parent can more likely have the desire to come back to the welcoming environment and it is only at this point that the agency can begin to break down social isolation.

Reaching a feeling of safety is a key outcome for many of the parents. This is also connected to pride. Both are foundational for the development of a sense of community. Access to staff that are motivated, appropriate and act as role models is also a precursor to developing community-driven programs and services and special events. The Scarborough Centre staff work to meet and build feelings of safety in the parents and acknowledge that pride can only be fully felt and understood once safety is reached. The Scarborough Centre utilizes a culturally restorative framework as a cornerstone to rebuild a sense of pride in the community by encouraging cultural attachment and interweaving cultural attachment strategies within all of the programs and services of the Centre. Culturally restorative practices require the parents to understand their unique cultural teachings and how this knowledge can create their own standards or practices within a community framework. By unique it is meant that there are many different ways of knowing and being among Aboriginal peoples. The following quote exemplifies the cultural understandings of a parent who believes feasting with the team, getting the community to support the team and providing spiritual guidance is part of being Aboriginal.

We have a children's softball team and this was started by a community member and then the whole community kept it going. The Centre provided some resources (sponsorship) to get the team started (uniforms, feasts to bless the game, etc.) and Eastview School provided grounds to play the game. Community families worked to make sure the kids had proper healthy snacks and water. Our team won every game and this was an important activity to bring the families together over all of last summer. We practiced and when we weren't practicing we were playing. We will be doing it again next summer and we are thinking about our own League. Most of the players on the team were Aboriginal but there were non-Aboriginal kids and this did not matter. Our final game, our Championship game, there were Hawks perched on the light posts and flying around the whole game. (Scarborough Centre Parent Respondent)

In creating a sense of community these softball teams are formed and parents undertake selling art or other products to earn funding to go out on dinners, family trips to Wonderland or Wild Water Kingdom tickets to name a few examples. As explained earlier the Centre holds regular community forums that seek input from parents and community members on their needs. When the community comes together at these forums ideas such as the softball team and other fundraising events are conceived and support is assembled at the forums to move these activities forward.

Parents are involved with their children as a family unit in many ways with the Centre, such as beading class, drumming group, language classes, and healing lodges. The parents and even the children and youth learn that there is hope for them in gaining employment at the Centre; that they too, with training and education could one day stay in the community and work within the Centre.

Children have the opportunity to participate in camps and now some of these same children work here in the camps as counsellors. It gives people like me [a young Aboriginal woman] an opportunity to work and it is really beneficial to me. (Scarborough Centre Staff Respondent)

Access to a Home-Base Service Provider that Provides Culturally-Based Access to Comprehensive Culturally-Responsive Services

The Scarborough Centre works really well as a community-based service provider since it provides childcare and through that, engages parents into other family-oriented activities. “We are always trying to emphasize putting children first to parents, and that’s how we get parents more involved.” (Scarborough Centre Staff Respondent). As mentioned earlier, when parents drop-off or pick-up their child staff have the opportunity to engage parents in conversation and begin to involve them in the Centre, usually starting out with the popular Culture Nights. “Especially, once the children are born the parents become hungry for the culture and so that is a big pull for them when they come into the Centre.” (Scarborough Centre Staff Respondent). “No matter how much or how little community members know coming in, we provide them with the culturally appropriate services that they deserve.” (Scarborough Centre Staff Respondent). The culture nights represent a very safe environment for bringing the community together and are well attended by both parents and staff. They are often used as a vehicle for family visits when children are apprehended. The arrangement for apprehended children to attend culture nights and the staff and parent sharing of a cultural celebration are two very powerful examples of how the Centre acts as a home base for culturally-based access to culturally responsive services. “The Centre works to restore culture back in a lot of families which is great because it has been lost for so long.” (Scarborough Centre Staff Respondent).

6.2 Confidence and Strength within the Family

Parenting with Soul and Living Simply

The Scarborough Centre’s primary purpose is to stop apprehension and to work on the prevention side by connecting with families and reaching out to the high risk families. Tracking the number of apprehensions reaffirms whether they are meeting their goals to build stronger families and a stronger community. Part of what is needed to improve parenting and family (partner) relations is belonging to a community and having access to peer support. A Regent Park non-Native services provider stated that they are careful to ensure that the group

work is inclusive of only a few who are in crisis while making space for those who are stagnate and those who are making progress in moving out of their crises.

Another important indicator for the Scarborough Centre is the early detection of special needs, such as FASD children and preventing the use of alcohol drugs during pregnancy. By focusing on the child and the child's special needs, the Centre is able to engage parents in conversations about coping skills and strategies without alarming parents or putting them into a defensive posture. These conversations centre around parenting and child development. Regent Park non-Native services providers also mentioned that early detection and intervention is a key outcome focus in the daycares, such as speech and language delays. One service provider explained that she focuses on supporting family life by discussing how best to maximize the support for family life as well as child development. While these discussions would invariably open opportunities to speak about housing, training, and employment these are not the focus. The focus is on providing the tools to parents that enable them to improve themselves, by focusing on the relevant conversations of parenting with soul and living in simplicity. These were values that were also prioritized at the Scarborough Centre. The traditional Anishnawbe teaching of parents as guardians who are charged with the responsibility to care for the child's spirit is reviewed with parents. This idea promotes simplicity in parenting and suggests ways to nurture the child's spirit, such as by digging in the dirt with them, simply standing by children as they play, or standing by them and holding their hand for support when you ask them to complete a chore (being present with their child). These strategies are relevant until they reach 8 years of age (Anishnawbe teachings focus on the stages of development at 7-year increments).

Security and Hope for the Future

Parents ask, not for a program, but for a lifestyle. Parents expressed that it is not that the Centre symbolizes a program that draws them there, but they come because the Centre brings together the community and is responsive to the community. At the centre, parents feel that they are at the right place – they are greeted as they enter the building by a familiar face, they feel relaxed, like they belong there and it is a positive place for their minds to rest. The ability to reach this level of security in one's self is carried with them in other places. For many it is a depth of security they have never felt before. This feeling of security is described as being synonymous with a hope for the future.

For some, there is validation of their cultural values and forming an attachment to their culture, sometimes for the first time ever in their life, and forming a new identity that is enriched by culture, pride, and security in one's ability to share these feelings and generate hope for a future with one's children. The parents expressed that this Native worldview revitalized and reconnected them to their culture and has greatly enriched their lives.

7. TORONTO'S PLANNED STRATEGIC OUTCOMES: HOW THEY WILL SUPPORT FIRST NATION, INUIT AND MÉTIS NEEDS AND HOW THEY COULD BE ADAPTED

The City of Toronto has, for the most part, aligned its strategic plan for children's services with the province's comprehensive plan of action, in order to improve the outcomes for children prenatal to 3.8 years. Goal 5.1 in the city's Transition to Early Learning - Goals, is "to support full implementation of the early learning system articulated in *With Our Best Future in Mind – Implementing Early Learning in Ontario*, a report to the Premier by the Special Advisor on Early Learning, Charles E. Pascal". Toronto's Vision for Children is stated as:

"Regardless of the socio-economic status of his/her family and community, every child has the right to childhood experiences which promote the chances of developing into a healthy, well-adjusted and productive adult" (City of Toronto Strategic Outcomes Framework, p. 3)

Arising from this principle for children's early learning in Toronto, the city developed a Child and Family Outcomes Framework that defined both universal goals and those that will be adapted for the unique needs of special populations. Aboriginal children and families are recognized in the Child Care Service Plan (p. 7) as a population with unique needs requiring a flexible and adapted approach. Without going through each of the goals, we discuss below the main areas where it seems likely that the planned strategic outcomes will support the unique Indigenous early childhood and family service needs discussed above and, based on both the literature review and the case study research completed for this project, how the strategic outcomes could be adapted to best meet these needs in Toronto.

7.1 How the Planned Strategic Outcomes will Support FNIM Children and Families

Overall, the Framework takes an "ecological" approach with the child and family at the centre. Such an approach resonates with an Indigenous approach and the views expressed by the Native residents interviewed. Pascal's recommendations about culturally specific child and family services include the statement that: "Services should be available to all families, regardless of where they live and must consider the needs of specific populations such as Aboriginal and Francophone communities" (Pascal 2011:7) and the city's Strategic Outcomes Framework also includes this goal. Highlights of the specific ways in which the Outcomes Framework will support FNIM children and families are presented below:

1. Including the child, the family and the community as outcome domains: aiming to achieve and measure outcomes for not only the child, but also the family and community (Framework, pp. 2-4) represents the Indigenous view of children and their situation in the world. For example, the Canadian Council on Learning, in its description of a holistic approach to measuring success for Aboriginal learners, includes the domain "World of People", which includes Self, Family, Elders, and Community. Among the community domain

outcomes are: cultural development, healthier communities, social inclusion and equity. These are all responsive to the unique needs of First Nations Inuit and Métis families in Toronto.

2. The service outcome domains include community and family engagement, equity and accessibility. As the discussion above makes clear, community and family engagement are critical elements in promoting better outcomes for Indigenous families.
3. The city indicates the intention (p. 4) to use child and family centres as a Strategy for achieving outcomes is aligned with what the literature tells us is effective for strengthening Indigenous families and communities, as discussed above, and is supported by the findings of our research.
4. The Framework acknowledges that, while focusing on universal outcomes, the intention is to develop outcomes that are tailored specifically to the communities in which they are located. This, combined with the diversity principle to “promote/fund cultural-based programs and services” (p. 10) represents what is promoted as a promising practice for Indigenous early childhood family service provision. For example, indicators for “cultural development” would need to be tailored for Indigenous families and based on their goals for this domain. This has been shown to be effective at the Scarborough centre.
5. The Framework acknowledges the lack of information about effective indicators for measuring outcomes. As we note above, there is still little research on effective indicators for Indigenous early learners (although the CCL document does begin to do this). As we discuss below, it would be supportive of Indigenous families in the city to engage them in developing such indicators, along with supporting further research in this area.
6. The Framework (p. 8) includes a recommendation to develop a community engagement strategy to ensure that the Framework is finalized with community input. As noted in the discussion above, respectful community engagement is an effective tool for ensuring that services meet Indigenous community needs and allow them to be community-driven. As the case study research shows, this has reportedly created positive outcomes at the Scarborough site.
7. The equity statement in the Framework includes the principle that strategic investments must be made for areas, groups and issues of greater need; this is based on research that shows that increases in child care facilities and spaces are not necessarily in the highest need neighbourhoods (Child Care Service Plan, p. 13-14). The Child Care Service Plan (p. iv) notes that one of the Goals (# 3.1) for improving access and equity in childcare services is to improve geographic equity at the ward level and that such targeted outreach would constitute an effective response to segments of the Indigenous population in Toronto who remain underserved.

7.2 Lessons Learned about How the Framework could be adapted to meet desired FNIM outcomes

Better population data by neighbourhood: As noted above, the city has indicated the need to improve geographic equity at the ward level. To make this effective for Indigenous families, better and more granular population data is needed to reflect actual population numbers and to identify neighbourhoods with high concentrations of Indigenous families for establishing any future centres targeted at meeting the needs of underserved populations.

Culturally-specific Outcomes: There will be shared outcome indicators for all child and family centres in the city, such as those for accountability, equity of access, timeliness, etc; but Pascal encourages flexibility on other child, family and community outcome indicators, depending on factors unique to the neighbourhood centre (Pascal 2011:9). To do so will require the development of Indigenous-specific indicators, based on research, which in turn will require the development of strategies for more effective data collection. Centres serving Indigenous children and families would be logical partners in such a strategy, but the activity would have to be adequately resourced both in human and financial capacity terms.

Community Engagement Strategies to Support Involvement: Pascal notes the importance of educating both parents and service providers of available services and knowing how to get more information about them. To encourage such awareness, the report recommends providing information in accessible formats and languages (Pascal 2011:1). Pascal's report also notes the importance of "trusting and respectful" relationships (Pascal 2011:3); as noted above, this is a critical component of FNIM engagement, given exposure to racism and expectations on the part of Indigenous peoples of negative perceptions by non-Aboriginals. Part of bringing families in to centres is to make the centres "easy to recognize" access points to a seamless system according to Pascal (2011:9). One way to do this for the Indigenous community in Toronto is through symbolic representations of Indigenous culture in any future centre design.

Cognizant of the unique needs of the FNIM population, Pascal's report promotes developing ways of "intentional support" (Pascal 2011:11) that will have a higher likelihood of reaching and "hooking" (Ball 2010) families into centre environments. While there is still insufficient data on the real nature of barriers to access, a recent review of Early Head Start, a longstanding federally-funded ECE program in the U.S., reported that one of the lessons learned from implementing a targeted, coordinated and integrated service such as this, was that families may need "intentional supports" in the form of follow-up to increase attendance, or transportation to reach services (Vogel 2010:1). The review notes that program attrition rates are high (49%); and that employing such extra measures might mitigate the situation (Vogel 2010:3).

System Co-ordinator Positions: A factor identified elsewhere as a vital key to success in integrated and seamless service delivery, is the professional role of coordinator (Pascal 2011:5, Barron 2009; SGS Planning 2007). The role of an overall coordinator/community organizer is critical if varied programs are going to collaborate in implementing a joint initiative. For most service agencies, the requirements of this role are beyond the skills and available time of most current employees.

An Educational Process to create awareness of FNIM needs: Pascal notes the importance of “shared understanding and shared practice” and the need for an “educational process” so that other services and service providers can gain a better understanding of FNIM needs (2011:12). To do so would be to build the appropriate human capacity necessary to effectively provide integrated child and family services in Toronto. This important insight goes beyond previous concepts of “culturally competent” to reach the concept of “culturally responsive”, which includes universal services becoming more effective and sensitive in serving Indigenous children and families (Pascal 2011:12). The case study research carried out for this project gives clear evidence that this is needed. Being culturally responsive also goes beyond a simple inclusion of cultural content in programs, to a state where service providers have an empathetic understanding of Indigenous history, culture and experience. Some of the ways this could be supported would be through incorporation of Indigenous-specific content in ECE training programs, having Elders teach in such programs or through student internships in Indigenous community agencies.

8. RECOMMENDATIONS

Following are the recommendations. The City of Toronto should:

1. Ensure the further development of Indigenous outcome indicators, engage Indigenous service providers in the finalization of such indicators, and support further research in this area.
2. Develop a community engagement strategy to ensure that the Framework is finalized with community input. The engagement strategy should be vetted by Aboriginal representatives to ensure its cultural appropriateness.
3. Improve access and equity in childcare services at the ward level and conduct targeted outreach to segments of the Indigenous population in Toronto who remain underserved.
4. Undertake to acquire more granular population data to reflect actual population numbers and to identify neighbourhoods with high concentrations of Indigenous families.
5. Undertake to acquire systemic data on barriers to access by Indigenous residents at universal centres.
6. Provide mainstream service providers with the opportunity to become culturally responsive to Indigenous children and families, and involve Indigenous organizations in developing such a strategy.
7. Explore the development of a child and family home visiting component to the Scarborough Centre to enhance early identification of problems and special needs, and provide the “intentional support” often needed by families with complex needs.

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Appendix B: Glossary of FNIM Terms

Aboriginal

Refers to the Native people in the widest sense of the word. The following definition is derived from that given in Section 35 of the Constitution Act of 1982, which states, "In this act, 'Aboriginal peoples of Canada' include the Indian, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada." Just as other nations, English, French, Italian are capitalized, so has Aboriginal been capitalized in this paper, out of respect to their identity as a distinct peoples. (Hedican, 1995: 5)

Anishnawbe

The Ojibway people, often classified as "Indians", make up a portion of these "Indians" and for the most part reside in Ontario, Canada. The largest First Nations population in Ontario are the Ojibway, composing 59% of the Ontario population (Statistics Canada, 1991).

Balance

A person achieves Balance when their four aspects of self-mind, body, emotion and spirit -- live in harmony with each other. Balance within nature is when the four elements are in harmony, the water, air, earth (soil), and fire. Balance in humankind is when the four races -- red, yellow, black, and white -- are in harmony with each other. There are many aspects that must be in balance -- without these balances, there can be no harmony on earth. There will be anger, disease, fighting, division, racism, the other "ism's", and any other negatively viewed phenomenon.

Ceremonies

This can include many happenings. Women, for women once a month, conduct a full-moon ceremony on the day of the full moon. Elements of the ceremony include a fire; strawberries, water, tobacco ties, the medicines and the women are dressed in skirts. Other types of ceremonies of this type are letting go ceremonies, healings, cedar baths, births, weddings, grievances, etc. The term *Ceremonies* can also refer to large seasonal gatherings. At these events everyone helps out to set up the camp and prepare the food for the feasts. There will be a sunrise ceremony every morning, teachings and other ceremonies go on during the day, and there will be singing and drumming in the evenings.

Culture

A behaviour learned by the individual not only to recognize certain phenomena, but also certain symbols of phenomena, and the logical relationships among them. In short the individual learns to think as his/her group defines thinking. (Slaughter-Defoe, 1990: 364).

Ethnicity

"A concept which refers to a shared culture and way of life, especially as reflected in language, folkways, religious and other institutional forms, material culture such as clothing and food, and cultural products such as music, literature, and art...Ethnicity is sociologically important because it is often a major source of social cohesion and social conflict. Nationalism, for example, often has a strong ethnic base, as does the oppression of minorities. Ethnicity is also an important basis for the formation of subcultures in complex societies." (Johnson: 1995).

Fasting

Fasting is a practice where a person spends anywhere from a day to four days in a lodge, built from red willow sticks and tarp material. While a person fasts they do not eat or drink anything. A person they asked to watch over them while they fast frequently visits them. They spend a lot of time praying and thinking. The purpose of the fast is to seek a vision.

Feasts

The feast offers food to the spirits in gratitude for whatever reasons the feast is being held for (e.g., a spirit name, in honour of a loved one who has passed on, etc.) asking the spirits to answer the prayers of the participants. The feast is held by smudging the food -- nobody is to eat the food, not even the cooks, prior to this ceremony. A prayer is spoken and then a helper prepares a plate of food and sets it aside, to later be buried for the spirits. It is said that the food, which the participants eat, is also for the spirits and that is why, a few hours after you had two plates full of food you are starving. Also, when a piece of food is dropped, it is said that the spirits must really be hungry and that piece of food is added to the plate of food to be buried. The Elders eat first, then the children, then the helpers, then the youth and adults.

First Nations

A term accepted by most of the people who were Native to Canada prior to colonization. This term is preferred over the term “Indian” and is usually, just as equally accepted as Aboriginal or Native.

Four Aspects of Self

These are the emotional, mental, physical, and spiritual aspects that make up a person. The four aspects work together to keep the person in balance. If one aspect of the person is not in balance with the other aspects, the person may not be well, or be in a position that is not healthy for them self. All aspects impact a person equally; so all aspects must be paid attention to.

Healings

Healers are recognized members of the community. Healings are performed with people who are ill, or not balanced. The healing is meant to balance a person’s emotional, spiritual, physical or mental selves. The medicines are used and a ceremony is performed with that person.

Identity

A set of internalized, shared understandings of what it means to be a member of a given group (White, 1988: 222).

Indian

“The term *Indian* was more widely used as a term in the past than it is today. This is partly a result of its pejorative connotation among some people, especially those who point out that it was associated with Columbus’s case of mistaken identity.” The Department of Indian Affairs uses the term in a legal manner to specify a particular group of Aboriginals who have special legal rights, as opposed to those Aboriginals who are non-status. (Hedican, 1995: 6)

Native

The term Native has been widely used, however Aboriginal as a general cover term usually supersedes it. The term Native however is still used by many of the organizations in Toronto, such as the Native Canadian Centre, or the Native Council on Justice (Hedican, 1995: 6).

Popcorn Elder

A person who rolls into town, saying he/she is Elder, when in fact nobody knows who he/she is. The people who did know them, from wherever they came did not regard them as an Elder. They just decide to “pop up” in your town and self-proclaim themselves as an Elder.

Powwows

“The powwow is a spiritual gathering of nations, while at the same time it serves to distinguish between the social and cultural differences that set Natives apart from other societies...The pow wow serves to bond tribes and bands of different linguistic and geographical locations, building a bridge between its participants. All Indians, whether they are of Ojibway, Iroquois or Sioux [or non-Native] descent, are welcomed to take part in the intertribal festivities.” (Pow Wow Time: 6).

Smudge

Smudging is a physical act that depicts spiritual cleansing. Smoke rising from the smudge bowl is used to symbolically clean the body. In a washing the face motion, smoke is swept over the eyes so they can only see good things, over the ears so they can hear only good things, over the mouth so you can only say good things, over the head so you can only think good thoughts, and over the rest of your body, ending with the sweeping motion over your heart, so you can only feel good things -- the love of all things. Sage, cedar, sweetgrass are the most commonly used smudging items. Some people mix in tobacco with their prayer or use all four together (Isabelle, Cultural Teacher at NCFS).

Solstices

Solstices are held at the beginning of the four seasons of the year -- fall, winter, spring and summer. These are celebrations which welcome each new season, there will be drumming, singing, dancing, a feast, and a give-away.

Status

A legal definition set by the Department of Indian Affairs to specify that a Native is an “Indian” based on whether they have at least one-quarter “Indian” blood (e.g., one of their grand-parents was a full-blood)

Sweats

Spiritual cleansings which are done with a group of people in a dome like tent, called a sweat lodge. This too can be a part of a person’s healing.

Appendix C:

Membership of the Aboriginal Advisory and Planning Committee

- Aboriginal Education Centre – TDSB
- Anduhyaun Council Fire
- Native Child and Family Services
- Native Women's Resource Centre
- Noojimawin Health Authority
- Ministry of Children and Youth Services
- Mothercraft
- Shelter and Housing
- Toronto Catholic District School Board
- Toronto Children's Services
- Toronto Coalition for Better Childcare
- Toronto District School Board

Appendix D: Culturally-Based Outcomes for First Nation, Inuit and Métis Children and Families

Primary Outcomes	Secondary Outcomes	Tertiary Outcomes
<p>Affirmation Within Self of One's Rights to Good and Whole Living and Internal Belief this is True for all Aboriginal People</p>	<p>Access to Motivated and Appropriate Staff to serve as Role Models</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents feel comfortable among their own people both in the program and with staff • Parents feel valued since staff make themselves available during crises and after hours • Children feel protected by staff who truly act as Aunts and Uncles • Parents feel their children are safe in the care of staff who want to be there to improve a community they are from and who treat their child as a niece or nephew • Parents feel empowered as a result of staff acting to inform them of their rights to access a wide variety of services • Parents feel their rights are protected since staff invest in the family unit as a whole and clearly communicate through their actions and they are work towards solutions that maintain the whole family as a one unit
	<p>Access to a Culturally-based Community that Can Drive / Govern</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents feel their opinions matter • Parents believe in themselves that they can make a difference • Parents feel safe at the program from stressors at home that otherwise consume them in their daily life when at home • Parents feel safe in sharing their deep personal information in that staff will not construe it nor utilize it to bring harm on to their families • Children feel connected to and hold an awareness about their spiritual, cognitive, emotional and physical selves

Primary Outcomes	Secondary Outcomes	Tertiary Outcomes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children hold a pride in themselves as Aboriginal persons • Children feel a pride in their cultural background and heritage • Parents feel pride in their own increased cultural awareness and knowledge about their heritage • Parents feel confidence that the staff have the interest of their child’s whole protection in spirit, mind, emotion, and body • Parents and children alike feel a strong sense of connection to community • Parents feel a sense of community that has roots in cultural traditional and ways of being and knowing • Parents participate in events and activities they have developed, supported and implemented that include both western and First Nation, Inuit and Métis ways of being and doing. • Parents have confidence in their future and their potential to improve their current socio- and economic status
	<p>Access to a Home-Base Service Provider that Provides Culturally-Based Access to Comprehensive Culturally-Responsive Services</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents perceive that the program has their best interests in mind and that it is dedicated to preserving and engaging them within their cultural traditions and values. • Parents feel staff treat them with dignity and respect, through the staffs’ ability to participate in community events and activities as a community member, where in that regard, they are both equal. • Parents feel respected and trusted and thereby feel trust and power in themselves as a parent as a result of staff making regular visitations arrangements when their child are apprehended

Primary Outcomes	Secondary Outcomes	Tertiary Outcomes
<p>Confidence and Strength within the Family</p>	<p>Parenting with Soul and Living Simply</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In an environment where there are about three times more children in custody than there were in Residential Schools, reductions in the number of apprehensions is regarded as the primary and most urgent outcome by parents and staff • Parents have peer support • Parents are connected to a strong Aboriginal community • Reduced incident of FASD • Parents have a strong willingness to support their children from the perspective of supporting the spirit first, then the mind, emotions and body. • Parents have a strong foundation in parenting with simplicity through being present with their children
	<p>Security and Hope for the Future</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents feel they have a place of safety where they can truly be themselves and rest their minds • Parents feel they have started to reach or have established a lifestyle that is respectful and inclusive of the community established through the program • Parents through a strong sense of safety have hope for the future • Parents through enrichment by culture, pride, and security in one's ability to share openly hold hope for a future with one's children

Appendix E: Research Tools

Scarborough Centre Staff Questions

1. [first] What brought you to XX? [next] Why did you decide to start working here? [next] What do you do here in your job?
2. In the past, before you started working at XX, what other Aboriginal setting have you worked within? How did these work to provide culturally relevant services?
3. What do you know about XX and how it came to be a service provider in this part of town?
4. What do you like about XX with regard to how it meets the needs of Aboriginal parents? And children? How does it honour or respect their cultural ways of knowing and being? In what ways does it fit with their worldviews?
5. What else should XX be doing in order to better meet their needs? How could it better honour or respect their cultural ways of knowing or being? How could its services better fit in with their worldviews?
6. When you think about how you might design a child and family program, or when you think about how you think it should run, how should the services work to meet one's cultural needs and worldviews?
7. How does this child and family centre currently operate to connect parents to other services and/or work with others to improve the services you are providing?
8. In what ways should a child and family program operate to connect parents to other services? (Should other service providers visit you at the child and family centre, should staff make phone calls and ensure you are connected to the right person when making a referral, etc.)
9. How do you think a child and family centre can work to connect parents to other services, all the while improving their feeling that their unique cultural needs and worldviews are addressed? Do you know if these integration efforts are important to parents?
10. What do you value about the ways in which XX is helping children? Parents? How is it helping family members? How is it helping the community? How else should XX be meeting the cultural desires of parents and children? What are the most important benefits children and families should get out of XX?
11. Do you have any other comments or questions?

Regent Park Service Provider Questions

Q1 What brought you to this agency? What is your job or role here?

Q2

Have you worked in Aboriginal settings before working here? What were the settings? Have you observed any programs that provide culturally relevant services to FN, Metis and Inuit families?

Q3

What do you know about your agency and how it came to be a service provider in this part of town?

Q4

What do you like about your agency in terms of how it meets the needs of Aboriginal parents and children?

How does it honour or respect their cultural ways of knowing and being?

In what ways does it fit with their worldviews?

Q5

What else should your agency be doing in order to better meet the needs of Aboriginal parents and children?

How could other services in this part of town work to better meet the cultural ways of knowing or being for First Nation, Inuit and/or Métis families?

How could other services better fit in with their worldviews?

Q6

When you think about designing or running a child and family program, how should the services work to be able to meet the cultural needs and worldviews of First Nation, Inuit and/or Métis children and families?

Q7

How does your agency currently operate to connect parents to other services or work with other agencies to improve the services you are providing?

Q8

In what ways could a child and family program better connect parents to other services? (ie staff make phones calls and ensure parents are connected to the right person when making a referral, etc.)

Q9

What unique First Nation, Inuit and/or Métis cultural needs and worldviews need to be addressed when you connect parents and children to other service providers?

Q10

What do you value about the ways in which your agency or other program areas are helping First Nation, Inuit and/or Métis:

- children
- parents
- family members
- the community

What else could they be doing to better respond to the cultural needs of Aboriginal parents and children?

What are the most important benefits that Aboriginal children and their families should get from your agency?

Q11

Do you have any other comments or questions?

Parent/Caregiver Questions

[Q1 (first) **What kinds of services do you attend in this area for your child (children) and yourself?** (next) **What agencies are these services offered at?** (next) **How did you learn about it those services?** (next) **Why did you decide to attend those agencies?**]

[Q2 **In the past, before you started to attend COUNCIL FIRE, what other programs have you and your family attended?**]

[Q3 **What do you know about the history of Native programming for families in this area?**]

[Q4 (first) **What do you like about COUNCIL FIRE with regard to how it meets your needs as an Aboriginal parent?** (next) **How does it meet the needs of your child(ren)?** (next) **How does it honour or respect your cultural ways of knowing and being?** (next) **In what ways does it fit with your worldviews?** (next) **Does it also fit the worldviews of your child(ren)?**]

[Q5 (first) **What else should NON-NATIVE SERVICES be doing in order to better meet your needs?** (next) **How could it better honour or respect your cultural ways of**

knowing or being? (next) What is it about COUNCIL FIRE that makes it cultural – how does it reflect a Native worldview?]

[Q6 Let's think about how to design a child and family program, or how a child and family program should run.

- **How should the services work to meet one's cultural needs and worldviews?**
- **What should it do to make sure your needs are met]**

[Q7 In what ways should a (child and family) program operate to connect you to other services?

- *(Should other service providers visit you at the child and family centre, should staff make phone calls and ensure you are connected to the right person when making a referral, etc.)]*

[Q8 How do you think a (child and family) centre can work to connect you to other services, all the while improving your feeling that your unique cultural needs and worldviews are addressed?

- **Is this important to you?]**

[Q9 What do you value about the ways in which COUNCIL FIRE is helping your child(ren)? How is it helping you?

- **How is it helping your family members?**
- **How is it helping your community?**
- **What are your cultural desires?**
- **What are the most important benefits you hope to get from this program?]**

[Q10 Do you have any other comments or questions

Partner / Ministry Questions

[Q1 What brought your current position? What do you do here in your job?]

[Q2 In the past, before you started working at your current position, what Aboriginal settings have you worked within? How have you observed any programs work to provide culturally relevant services to Aboriginal families?]

[Q3 What do you know about XX and how it came to be a service provider in this part of town?]

[Q4 What do you like about XX with regard to how it meets the needs of Aboriginal parents and children? How does it honour or respect their cultural ways of knowing and being? In what ways does it fit with their worldviews?]

[Q5 What else should XX be doing in order to better meet their needs? How could other services in this part of town work to better meet their cultural ways of knowing or being? How could other services better fit in with their worldviews?]

[Q6 When you think about how you might design a child and family program, or when you think about how you think it should run, how should the services work to meet one's cultural needs and worldviews?]

[Q7 How does your centre/service currently operate to connect parents to other services and/or work with others to improve the services you are providing?]

[Q8 In what ways should a child and family program operate to connect parents to other services? (Should other service providers visit you at the child and family centre, should staff make phone calls and ensure you are connected to the right person when making a referral, etc.)]

[Q9 How do you think a child and family centre can work to connect parents to other services, all the while improving their feeling that their unique cultural needs and worldviews are addressed? Do you know if these integration efforts are important to parents?]

[Q10 What do you value about the ways in which XX (or other area programs) is/are helping children? Parents? How is it (are they) helping family members? How is it (are they) helping the community? How else should XX be meeting the cultural desires of parents and children? What are the most important benefits children and families should get out of XX?]

[Q11 Do you have any other comments or questions?]