



Many Hands, One Dream: Principles for a new perspective on the health of First Nations, Inuit and Métis children and youth

A guide to making the most of this document

Many Hands, One Dream: Principles for a new perspective on the health of First Nations, Inuit and Métis children and youth is a document intended to support those who work with children, youth and families.

It is the result of discussion among more than 160 Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal health professionals, community leaders, teachers, social workers, parents and others who care about the health of Aboriginal children and youth, who gathered during a national summit held December 3-5, 2005 in Victoria, B.C.

The principles are intended to serve as a foundation for a new approach to Aboriginal child and youth health—one that has children, youth, families and communities at its core.

What can I do?

The principles can be applied to any type of work, whether in research or policy development, at the community level, or in work with individual children, youth and families. By reading and using this document, you are part of a movement for positive change for Aboriginal children and young people. Whether you have 15 minutes, 1 hour, an entire day, or even more time, you can help broaden this movement.

If you have 15 minutes

- **Post a link** to the document and the Many Hands, One Dream website—www.manyhandsonedream.ca—on your organization or community's website.
- **Tell your colleagues**, community or organization members, or networks about the Many Hands, One Dream movement through your newsletter or other communications vehicles.
- **Register your support** for the principles on the Many Hands, One Dream website.

If you have 1 hour (or more)

- **Organize a lunch-hour discussion** with your colleagues to talk about the document and how it applies to your work or community. Some questions to help stimulate the conversation:
 - Do the principles resonate for you? Why? Why not?
 - Can you think of examples where these principles are already at work?
 - Can you think of some examples of how these principles could be applied to benefit children and youth? What would need to happen? How might things change?



Choose 1 or 2 of the principles and discuss how they could be better integrated into your work with children and youth.

Can you think of others with whom to share the principles or the ideas behind the Many Hands, One Dream movement?

Can your organization (or community) formally support the principles, such as through a motion? What would that mean for you? Is there anything you would need to do differently?

How could these principles be used to help improve the health of all children and young people?

- **Write a letter and send a copy of the document** to someone who works with First Nations, Inuit and Métis children and youth, or who is in a position to influence public policy.
- **Refer to the principles in your discussions** with organizations, communities and governments about public policy affecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis children and youth.
- **Review the suggested strategies** on pages 11-12 and see whether any could apply in your organization or community. Can you think of others?
- **Involve others in ways that are meaningful to them**, including children, youth, elders and community leaders. For example, choose one of the principles and discuss it with a group of schoolchildren. Ask them to draw a picture of what it means to them.

Resources

Many Hands, One Dream website: www.manyhandsonedream.ca.

The site includes presentations that you can adapt, background on the movement, statistics about the health of First Nations, Inuit and Métis children and youth, as well as links to other resources.

Reconciliation in Child Welfare website: www.reconciliationmovement.org.

This site features *Reconciliation: Touchstones of Hope for Indigenous Children, Youth and Families*, which sets out a process and principles to guide improvements to Aboriginal child welfare in North America.

Share your stories

Since the summit, we've heard from many people who are helping to make a difference for children and youth. One community formed a youth council, which helped organize sports activities for the community's young people. Several physicians are helping to educate their colleagues about the health needs of Aboriginal children and youth, and many communities and organizations have expressed formal support for the Many Hands, One Dream movement.

If you have other suggestions on how to broaden the movement, how to use the principles or anything else that will contribute to improving the health of First Nations, Inuit and Métis children and youth, please let us know.

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