Ilagiinniq – Being Family

The Sixties Scoop and Inuit in Canada:

Research Report

December 2022

This report contains information that some readers may find difficult to hear. Please reach out for support if you are in distress.

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Awareness Video: Far From Home / ᐊᖏᑦᕿᒥᓐᓄᑦᑐᖅ

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Tungasuvvingat Inuit

A place where Inuit are welcome
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INTRODUCTION

The last three decades have exposed many of the immediate and long-term consequences of colonial practices and government policies on Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Perhaps the most tragic are those affecting children and youth. This report focuses on the "Sixties Scoop"— the dramatic increase in the apprehension of First Nations, Inuit and Métis children from the 1950s to the 1980s. High rates of Indigenous child apprehensions continue today – more than one-half (52.2%) of children under 14 in foster care are Indigenous, while they make up only 7.7% of Canadian children under 14 (Indigenous Services Canada, 2022).

The Inuit experience of the Sixties Scoop has received relatively little focus in the national dialogue to date. Further research and engagement with Inuit survivors and their families is required to understand their experiences, impacts, needs and priorities for justice and healing.

Tungasuvvingat Inuit (TI) – "a place where Inuit are welcome" – is an Inuit-specific, multi-sector hub for Inuit of all ages and a provincial service provider that offers social support, cultural activities, counselling and crisis intervention to meet the rapidly growing, complex and evolving needs of Inuit in Ontario. With funding from the Sixties Scoop Healing Foundation, TI conducted a project in 2022 to: 1) raise awareness of the Inuit experience of the Sixties Scoop and its impact, and 2) develop recommendations and an action plan for supporting and investing in the health, healing and wellness of the Inuit survivors of the Sixties Scoop and their families. We see this project as an initial step in a longer-term process.

The Sixties Scoop Context for Inuit

A history of family separations and relocations carries its own pain for Inuit. The extent and impacts of the residential and day schools on Inuit children, families and communities are the most well known, due largely to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada which investigated the legacy of residential schools for Indigenous Peoples. An Inuit Sub-Commission aided in the research and documentation of the Inuit experience of the schools (National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, 2022). Similar situations specific to Inuit are less well known.

From the 1940s to the 1960s, thousands of Inuit, including unaccompanied children, were transferred to southern hospitals and tuberculosis sanatoria for treatment, often for years at a time. Many never returned to their communities and many families were not informed of deaths or burial locations. Children in the south lost their language and some were never reunited with their families. Combined with a public apology and partnership with Inuit Land Claim Organizations, the federal government funded the Nanilavut Initiative to assist Inuit to locate burial sites and commemorate the deaths (CBC News, 2019).

In the 1950s 10 Inuit families were relocated from the communities of Inukjuak, Nunavik and Pond Inlet, Nunavut to Grise Fiord and Resolute Bay in the High Arctic. As acknowledged in the 2010 federal government apology, these families were separated from their extended families and faced extreme hardship in the Far North (Crown and Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, 2010). And in 1956 and 1959 respectively, everyone living in the traditional Inuit communities of Nutak and Hebron, Labrador were relocated to four more-southern communities for "administrative" reasons, disrupting kinship ties and the transfer of traditional community knowledge. That apology was issued in 2012 (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2012).

During the 1960s, seven Inuit children from Nunavut were sent to live with families in Ottawa and Nova Scotia in an "experiment" to see if they could be educated in southern schools and adapt culturally to a non-Inuit world. Their parents did not provide informed consent. In 2008, three of them filed a lawsuit against the federal government for damages resulting in their "forced removal and assimilation" that lasted six years and disrupted their family relationships, cultural knowledge and identity. The men were the subject of the documentary film "The Experimental Eskimo" in 2009 (Blackburn, 2017). The lawsuit has yet to be settled.

While this project provides some information on the nature and consequences of the Sixties Scoop for Inuit, much remains unknown. We don't know how many families and children were affected directly (virtually all extended families had children or youth taken into care during those decades). We don't know where all of them lived and whether they ever reunited with their Inuit families.

SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Information for the report was collected from public sources such as research literature, media reports and websites, calls and email correspondence with Inuit and non-Inuit who are knowledgeable about the issue, and the stories of Inuit survivors.

Literature Review and Environmental Scan

A search for and review of published literature was completed in March and April 2022 with additional material added when identified. Search terms included "Inuit" or "Indigenous" and "Sixties Scoop", "child welfare", "adopt", "foster", "apprehend" or "remove." Several research databases were accessed, and 12 specific Indigenous and child welfare journals and reports were consulted. This was supplemented with searches of 15 organization and news media websites. The review also looked at key reports such as those from the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP), the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) and the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (NIMMIWG).

We found very few written materials that specifically address the effects of the Sixties Scoop on Inuit. The academic writing is focused on First Nations children with some attention to Métis experiences. Several newspaper and magazine articles provide profiles of Inuit survivors and their experiences. Other documents address Indigenous Peoples in general and some of that material is included in this report when Inuit-specific information was not found.

Northern and Urban Contacts

To add to our knowledge, we corresponded or spoke with 30 individuals in the Inuit regions and in three urban Inuit communities to explore the issue of the Sixties Scoop among Inuit. We completed fifteen telephone or videoconference interviews, speaking with Inuit survivors/advocates from each of the land claim regions and the south, health and wellness service providers, and researchers. Interviewees were initially contacted by email to explain the project and provide contact information for counsellors and the project lead at TI. Interviewees provided verbal consent to the interview and survivors were provided the opportunity to review and approve the content on their experiences. See Appendix A for a list of interviewees and Appendix B for the interview guide. These discussions provided considerable information and knowledge based on lived experience.

HISTORY OF THE SIXTIES SCOOP

Residential Schools

The story of the Canadian Indigenous Sixties Scoop starts with the residential schools. Since the colonization of North America by Europeans, assimilation of Indigenous Peoples into Christian religions, western values and institutional structures has been ongoing.

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples final report, released in 1996, contains one of the first substantial discussions of assimilation policies and the development of the residential school system in Canada. The report identifies a three-part rationale for residential education of First Nations, Métis and Inuit children – a "justification for removing children from their communities and disrupting Aboriginal families… re-socializing children in the schools… and integrating graduates into the non-Aboriginal world" (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996, p. 313).

Settlers in Canada in the 1800s believed that Indigenous Peoples needed to evolve from being "barbarians" to being civilized in the ways of the Europeans as quickly as possible. Indigenous parents, having grown up in an Indigenous culture, would be more difficult to reform and would hold their children back from this transformation; therefore, they were considered unfit to parent.

While some residential schools were operating in the North in the early 1900s, they became more common starting in the 1950s when Inuit welfare became the responsibility of the Canadian government. Inuit families supported education for their children but not through residential schools as this would prevent them from spending many months of the year on the land (Peristerakis, 2014). Inuit residential and day schools with hostel accommodation seriously disrupted Inuit family ties and the passing down of knowledge. They created shame and trauma and contributed to many of the social and economic hardships faced today (King, 2006; Legacy of Hope Foundation, 2012; Qikiqtani Truth Commission, 2013). By 1964, over 75 percent of school-age Inuit children were attending school compared to 15 percent in 1955 (Legacy of Hope Foundation, 2012).

Residential schooling provided complete immersion in western Christian values and structures. According to RCAP, the three stages of separation, socialization and assimilation were always intended to permanently distance this new generation from the influence of their families and communities. The residential school mandate was extended through placements of Indigenous children in non-Indigenous foster and adoptive families following the winding down of the residential schools (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996).

Native Americans experienced a similar process of removal.

> From the beginning of the colonial period, Native American children were particularly vulnerable to removal by colonizers. Captured children might be sold into slavery, forced to become religious novitiates, made to perform labour, or adopted as family members by Euro-Americans; although some undoubtedly did well under their new circumstances, many suffered. In some senses, the 19th-century practice of forcing children to attend boarding school was a continuation of these earlier practices.
>
> Pauls, 2001, n.p.

Similarly, Indigenous Peoples in New Zealand (Savage et al., 2021) and Australia (Commonwealth of Australia, 1997) experienced the removal of their children as a result of colonial polices.

As residential schools began to be closed down in Canada in the 1950s and 1960s (due to the costs and rising opposition from Indigenous Peoples and the public) in favour of day schools and integrated provincial and territorial education, a new role emerged for the schools that remained open – providing residences for "orphans and children from disrupted homes [deemed to be at-risk] … because of alcoholism in the home, lack of supervision, serious immaturity" among parents (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996, p. 324) and neglect measured by non-Indigenous parenting norms. During this era, government social services workers believed they needed to "rescue" Indigenous children who they thought could easily take on a new heritage and culture (Alston-O'Connor, 2010).

The residential schools already had had a severe impact on Indigenous parenting and family structures and combined with poverty and the effects of trauma on family members, provided the rationale for apprehending thousands of First Nations, Métis and Inuit children between the 1950s and 1980s that continues in the present day.

By 1953, Indigenous children taken from their homes due to a charge of neglect or thought to be living in conditions "considered unfit for schoolchildren" accounted for 40% of Canadian residential school students (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015b). This rose to an estimated 75% by 1966. Inuit-specific statistics are not available.

The schools

> … failed to provide their students with the appropriate level of personal and emotional care children need during their childhood and adolescence. This failure applied to all students but was of particular significance in the case of the growing number of social-welfare placements in the schools.
>
> Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015b, p. 69

Some children stayed in the schools year-round because their homes were seen by child welfare authorities as unsafe or too far away as was the case for many Inuit children. And rather than honouring Indigenous child raising values and providing adequate income and other supports to families in need, as the schools continued to close, these children were relocated to foster homes, placed for adoption or sent to correctional facilities.

Children Who Were Taken Away

What has come to be referred to as the Sixties Scoop was in part a transferring of children from one form of institution, the residential school, to another, the child-welfare agency (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015b).

A project on Inuit child welfare led by a national Inuit Reference Group at Inuit Tuttarvingat – National Aboriginal Health Organization emphasized that a long history of colonization, residential schools, discrimination and racism feeds poverty, social inequality, poor housing, mental health issues, addictions and violence which in turn leads to higher rates of Inuit children, youth and families being in the child welfare system. However, child protection has been crisis-oriented and outside of the control

of Inuit communities and governments, rather than providing effective culture-based support to families for prevention and early intervention (Rae, 2011).

No Indigenous Peoples in Canada had self-government in the 1940s, and in 1951 provincial and territorial governments gained authority over Indigenous child welfare. However, they were ill-prepared and unwilling to commit the resources needed to support families in need.

> Tauni Sheldon is Inuk, whose origins are in Nunavik, Northern Québec. Her family comes from Inukjuak on the Hudson Bay as well as Quaqtaq on the Ungava Bay just below Baffin Island. She and her family currently live in the rural Guelph area west of Toronto. Tauni is a Sixties Scoop baby, having been apprehended by CAS the day that she was born. She and her son, Aalpi have made connections with their biological family and have travelled back to their homelands of Nunavik. Tauni now works as a Case Manager & Cultural Advisor for the Kamatsiarniq Program at Tungasuvvingat Inuit and was a pilot for Air Inuit Ltd. Aalpi shares his Inuit culture in the classroom setting and he continues to learn his culture and language (Email communication August 8, 2022).

Between 1965 and 1984, it is estimated that Canadian child protection workers removed more than 20,000 Indigenous children from their families and that nearly one in three Indigenous children in Canada was separated from their birth families during the Sixties Scoop (Sinclair, 2007). It is unknown how many Inuit children were removed. However, a recent national survey indicated how prevalent child removals have been for Inuit. The study found that Inuit are 14.6 times more likely than non-Indigenous people to ever have been under the legal responsibility of the government during their childhood (19 percent of Inuit compared to 1.3 percent respectively). Inuit were twice as likely to have been in care at some point compared to Indigenous people overall (one in five Inuit versus one in 10 Indigenous people (Perreault, 2022).

We know that families in all Inuit regions have been affected by child removals, and many Inuit today are survivors of the scoop or have parents and grandparents who were adopted or fostered outside of their communities. In the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, with an Inuit population of around 3,000, the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation has assisted over two hundred survivors in their applications to the Sixties Scoop Settlement Agreement (Deborah Gordon-Ruben Interview May 26, 2022).

> Rob Lackie was adopted at the age of four by a non-Indigenous Ontario family. His birth family is from Nunatsiavut and his parents lived in Happy Valley-Goose Bay at the time. He didn't know he was Inuk until he was around 13 and asked his mom why he looked so different from his blond brother and sister. He grew up without his culture and identity. At the time adoption records were sealed and record keeping was spotty; even once he was able to get access to the file it was difficult to locate his mother who had moved to Ontario and married (Urban Inuit Knowledge Centre, 2020).

Of those adopted out, 70 to 90 percent of Indigenous children were sent to non-Indigenous families (Vowel, 2016). The Sixties Scoop Network reports that almost all of these children were placed with white, middleclass families and were effectively stripped of their cultural identities. While most children were transracially adopted within Canada, others were sent to the United States and overseas (some were "sold" to private American adoption agencies – Canadian child welfare services received between $5,000 and $10,000 per child (McKenzie et al., 2016, p. 7).

From conversations with Inuit survivors and advocates, we know that some Inuit were adopted in the United States, but most remained in Canada but often sent thousands of kilometres from their home communities in the North to southern locations.

> Nina Segalowitz was born in Fort Smith, Northwest Territories with Inuit and First Nations ancestry. Her parents took her to the hospital as an infant when she was sick. They were asked to fill out and sign hospital admission forms even though they were barely literate. Nina was kept overnight and when her mother came to get her the next day, she was gone. She was adopted by a Jewish family in Montreal and immersed in the Jewish culture. Her adoptive parents were very supportive and appalled when they realized she had been stolen from her family. Through her involvement in the Southern Quebec Inuit Association and her profile as a performer, she has supported many other survivors and advocates for their needs (Interview June 2, 2022; CBC News, 2016).

Those who weren't adopted or whose adoptions broke down often lived in a series of foster homes. Some of the children were treated like slave labour and/or experienced physical, sexual or emotional abuse (Robillard, n. d.).

> Selina Legge is Inuk from Nunatsiavut. She was scooped from her family and ancestral lands in 1964 at the age of one. Her mother refused to sign adoption papers, so Selina was made a ward of the state and placed in foster care with her brother in a non-Indigenous family in Ontario. During her 13 years in foster care, she experienced continual abuse and neglect and lived in constant fear. She was called a "dirty little Eskimo." After a severe beating at age 14 she escaped and refused to go back to that home, so she was placed with another family until she was 16 and "aged out" of care (Interview June 14, 2022; Sixties Scoop Healing Foundation, 2021b).

> Pauletta Tremblett and her five siblings were taken into care in the 1970s and 1980s, but none were placed for adoption because Pauletta's mother would not consent. The children were separated and placed in foster care. Pauletta went to her first foster home at six months of age, followed by five others in different communities in Labrador. Only one family was Indigenous. She suffered from abuse and neglect in the families as well as discrimination and racism in the mostly white communities.

> *"No-one stood up for kids in those days – they looked the other way to 'preserve the family'"* (Interview June 22, 2022).

By the teen years, a crucial time for formation of identity, there were many adoption breakdowns (Fast et al., 2019). A study of transracial adoption in the late 1970s found that by age 15, as high as 50% of the Indigenous adoptions had deteriorated (Bagley, 1993, Sinclair, 2007, cited in Fast et al., 2019).

> An inadequate amount of time was spent on screening those adoptive and foster homes. Subsequently, many adopted and fostered children of the Sixties Scoop have reported experiences of physical and sexual abuse, racism, neglect and many other identity and familial struggles that resulted from the substandard practices… experiences [of racism] are often compounded by the fact that the non-Indigenous family is unable to fully understand the impact of racism, having never experienced it.
>
> Peristerakis, 2014, p. 52

Inuit family structures and child raising practices have not been understood or valued by child protection authorities.

> *"Sixties Scoop survivors are angered by being scooped from their families. Inuit have a long tradition of being adopted by other family members. For children to not have the option to be raised by family members and for aunts and uncles not even being asked to care for the children is traumatizing. This is still going on today."*
>
> Nina Segalowitz Interview June 2, 2022

Children taken into care and their adoptive or foster parents in the 1950s to 1980s received little or no support from child welfare authorities and Indigenous parents and children had few to no connections to cultural support, treatment, or healing.

Outcomes of the Scoop

Child welfare systems diminish Indigenous cultures and values in favour of non-Indigenous models of parenting and can be viewed as "racist and demonstrating a lack of respect for cultural rights", according to the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019a, p. 25) The Commission's final report notes that too often Indigenous Peoples see their experiences in various systems, including child welfare, as a result of their personal failings, rather than a reflection of how institutions contribute to colonial violence.

Indigenous resistance to out-of-community adoption increased over the 1970s, and in 1982, out-of-province and out-of-country adoptions were ended, and the "best interests of the child" was redefined to include maintaining the child's familial, cultural, social and religious heritage (Peristerakis, 2014). As we know, this did little to stem the tide of Indigenous child apprehensions or ensure they remained connected to their families of origin and Inuit culture and language. By 2002 an estimated 22,500 Canadian Indigenous children were in the foster-care system – more than the number of children adopted during the Sixties Scoop and more than were in residential schools at their height of enrollment (Vowel, 2016).

Sarah Fraser, who has worked with Inuit to document the effects of child removal from their families and communities highlights the harm done when children and youth grow up outside their culture:

> *"… culture is not something that is added onto one's life, it is an integral part of everyday living. It is who you are connected to and where you are connected to. Without these connections one loses the essential ingredients to wellness… This rupture is not only experienced by individuals but by communities and by generations, and therefore ruptures the very fabric of nations"* (Email communication August 8, 2022).

Many Inuit parents did not provide what is now known as "free, prior and informed" consent to the state apprehension of their children, including legal adoption. In some cases, authorities did not even inform parents that their children weren't coming back or where they had been taken. Language barriers and lack of understanding of western systems and parental rights also led to a lack of consent.

> Rob Lackie's birth mother hadn't provided consent to his adoption and had no idea where Rob was. In those years, adoption records were sealed, and record keeping was spotty; even once he was able to get access to the file it was difficult to locate his mother who had

> moved to Ontario and married. He finally met his mother in 2006 and it was very emotional for both of them. A daughter also was adopted out to a family in Boston and another son wasn't adopted and "fell through the cracks" and died before Rob could meet him (Urban Inuit Knowledge Centre, 2020).

Contrary to Inuit custom, family members often were not considered in providing care.

> Selina Legge learned later in life that her aunt Mary Adams [who went on to become an Inuk Elder and served on the Newfoundland and Labrador Human Rights Commission] would have taken in her and her brother when they were removed from their parents but wasn't allowed to. "I lost my family, my language and my culture… I didn't grow up on my traditional lands." But like her grandmother who also had a hard life, she always "kept going" (Interview June 14, 2022; Sixties Scoop Healing Foundation, 2021b).

Some interviewees identified that Inuit who have been raised outside their communities are afraid to look for their Inuit families, afraid they might be judged for not speaking Inuktut or eating country food. However, interviewees for this report said they were warmly welcomed when they met family and community members and visited their communities.

> Pauletta Tremblett remembers the intense feelings of belonging and love she experienced when she connected with Inuit who said, "I knew your brother" and 40 years after she was removed from her community to hear "welcome home." Pauletta is an advocate for Sixties Scoop survivors and has supported many friends and acquaintances to talk about their experiences, trace their history and apply for compensation. She believes that Inuit need to tell their stories and their distinct experiences need to be recognized (Interview June 22, 2022).

Impacts of the Inuit Sixties Scoop

Similar to residential schools, child welfare apprehensions have a major impact not only on the child/youth, their parents and extended family members, but intergenerationally to survivors' children and grandchildren and collectively to Inuit overall.

Survivors and their Children and Grandchildren

Long-term Emotional, Mental, Emotional and Spiritual Impacts

Sixties Scoop survivors and counsellors/advocates in Inuit communities identified many long-term consequences of child removal from their families and communities. The Sixties Scoop Network of survivors tell us that the majority of those removed from their families and cultures developed emotional problems later in life and had difficulty developing a strong sense of identity in either the Euro-Canadian or their Indigenous cultures (Robillard, n. d.).

> Perhaps most damaging of all, they were removed from their culture, with the accompanying loss of identity.
>
> Johnston, 2016, n. p.

> Pauletta Tremblett knows that her years in foster care have had a lifelong impact. As an adult, she felt the loneliness, the disconnect, the ongoing search for love and a lack of trust

in others. She has strong body memories of the abuse and the absence of caring. She spent a large part of her childhood without connection to her culture and her people's land. Her maternal grandparents and her mother are fluent in Inuktut – the generations after that have lost the language (Interview June 22, 2022).

Mental and emotional impacts on survivors resulting from childhood removals from family include abandonment issues, difficulties in relationships, anxiety, depression and violence (as a victim or aggressor) (Nina Segalowitz Interview June 2, 2022; MacLellen, 2016). Recent research (Heidinger, 2022) showed that Inuit women are almost three times more likely than non-Indigenous women to have ever been under the "legal responsibility of the government" (taken into care) and this increased their likelihood of experiencing violent victimization in their lifetime.

"Survivors need to do a lot of grief work. There is sadness and suicide. There needs to be more open dialogue in the communities to normalize this issue. Similar to when residential school experiences started to be talked about. Communities need to talk about all their losses."

Nina Segalowitz, Interview June 2, 2022

Impacts can be broad and intergenerational. Jennifer Switzer, a child welfare advocate at Tungasuvvingat Inuit, says she has worked with sixties scoop survivors, often as parents or grandparents involved with child protection. Her clients may carry a lot of shame and often feel inferior/powerless in front of social workers and judges. Their current involvement with the child welfare system can trigger traumatic memories of removal from their families and they respond in ways that officials see as being unfit to parent rather than a trauma response. For example, court documents will state "parent did not ask or inquire as to how their child is doing" which workers see as uncaring rather than a parent who is embarrassed or ashamed to ask a stranger about their child. If they show anger when their child is being apprehended it is used to demonstrate aggression rather than the devastation they feel or memories they have when a child is taken by strangers (Interview June 1, 2022).

Other long-term effects of children adopted out during the Sixties Scoop include significant levels of stress and trauma, childhood adversity both before and after adoption, racism, shame and identity confusion and/or spiritual, emotional, physical and sexual abuse (Bombay et al., 2020).

Selina Legge aged out of care with no support services and the feeling that she "belonged to no-one." She spent many hard years in Toronto and had a daughter that she had to place for adoption because she couldn't care for her. It was difficult to find her birth family because her birth date and name were changed on her birth certificate, but she was eventually successful in reuniting with them. Later, she moved back to Newfoundland and Labrador and lives there now (Interview June 14, 2022).

Researchers have identified that the loss of a parent by separation is more detrimental to the mental health of adolescents than the loss of a parent by death and may be the most stressful event that can be experienced by children, with the second most stressful any experience that is denigrating, shaming and embarrassing to children (Canetti et al., 2000, Yamamoto et al., 1996, cited in Morris, 2007). Several authors point to the importance of "identity coherence" (Boldo, 2016) through re-connection with Indigenous identity as youth and adults, which plays an important role in healing for children who have felt the "traumatic impact of forced separation" (Fast et al., 2014; Sinclair, 2007).

> When Pauletta Tremblett's oldest brother died in care at the age of 13, her mother fought to get her children back and four of five of them returned, including Pauletta. While she had no conscious memory of her mother because she was a baby when she was removed, she instantly recognized her mother's voice and felt like she had "come home" when they were reunited. Her mother continued to struggle with substance use and while the homelife was difficult, Pauletta at least felt like she was with family (Interview June 22, 2022).

According to the final report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019a), in many of the truths shared by witnesses, the normalization of violence could be traced back through family lines to trauma experienced in residential and day schools, to the Sixties Scoop and to other forms of colonial violence.

Ottawa-based lawyer Evatt Merchant, who was class counsel for the Sixties Scoop Class Action, believes that distance presented numerous challenges for Inuit survivors of the Sixties Scoop. Not only were many scooped while they were away from home and vulnerable, but most were adopted out far from their homelands—in southern Canada or in other countries. "I think that there's an added barrier and feeling of separation… It's also a long way in terms of spirituality and the way that people live is different in the North from the rest of the country" (Rogers, 2020, n. p.).

> *"Something unique to Northern and Inuit children is that they were sent far from home. So, when they are ready to reconnect with their birth families and communities travel is really expensive. An air ticket could be $4,000. Sixties Scoop survivors should have access to travel money."*
>
> Nina Segalowitz, Interview June 2, 2022

Similarities and Differences with Residential Schools

While there are many similarities in the experiences in residential school and the Sixties Scoop, there also are differences.

> Residential schools [usually] incarcerated children for ten months of the year, but at least the children stayed in an Aboriginal peer group: they always knew their First Nation of origin and who their parents were, and they knew that eventually they would be going home. In the foster and adoptive care system, Aboriginal children typically vanished with scarcely a trace, the vast majority of them placed until they were adults in non-Aboriginal homes where their cultural identity, their legal Indian status, their knowledge of their own First Nations and even their birth names were erased, often forever.
>
> Fournier & Grey, 1997, cited in Tait et al., 2013, p. 48

There was often no warning or preparation that a child would be removed from the family and for many of the children, they were permanently in care. Among Inuit, apprehending children from hospital, at birth or later, seems to have been common.

> Imagine becoming ill and going to the hospital as a young child, and then simply never being returned to your family, to your home...never having the chance to see your parents, your grandparents or siblings again, just because somebody decided that you would do better in a home with strangers?
>
> Morris, 2007, p. 135

Another difference is the age at which children were separated from parents. Children taken into care between birth and the age of four had little or no experience of Inuit family life, culture or language, whereas residential school students spent important early developmental years, and in some cases summers, in their family, extended family and culture. Early separation from family is known to contribute to self harm, and a famous study in First Nations communities (Chandler et al., 2003) demonstrated that cultural continuity is a strong protective factor against suicide. In Australia, a study that was part of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody, found that 43 of the 99 people whose deaths were investigated had been separated from their families as children. The Commission identified child removal as a significant contributor to inmate deaths (Commonwealth of Australia, 1991 cited in Blignault et al., 2014).

Trauma and Loss of Kinship Ties

Inuit families and Elders appearing at the National Inquiry in Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls spoke of the destruction of ilagiinniq (being family) and tursurautiniq (kinships ties) through child welfare apprehensions that damage the health, safety and well-being of all Inuit. Witnesses often referred to residential schools, the Sixties Scoop and child apprehension in the present-day child welfare system as contributing to cultural loss and trauma that extends across generations. Other effects of the Sixties Scoop include the interruption of the teaching of Indigenous languages from mothers, displacement from traditional lands and "entire bodies of knowledge not being transmitted" (National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, 2019b, p. 108).

Similar to the effects of the Inuit residential and day schools though, there is intergenerational trauma passed on to future generations. Sixties Scoop survivors may resort to alcohol and drug use, develop addictions, have difficulties maintaining healthy relationships and parenting their children. Several interviewees mentioned the shame that Inuit survivors have of being removed from their parents, thinking that they are somehow to blame, or their parents (and even all Inuit) aren't able to raise children.

Adoption failures and foster care placements, especially as children reached adolescence, also resulted in feelings of alienation, anxiety and culture shock (Alston-O'Connor, 2010). This led to an even greater sense of abandonment and dislocation. Other evidence indicates a link between being a child and youth in care (fostered or adopted) and being involved in the child welfare system themselves as parents. While many Sixties Scoop survivors are on a path to healing, others have not come to terms with their experiences in care and may not even connect those experiences with challenges they face as adults.

In a present-day research study, Inuit youth from Nunavik in residential care outside of their communities identified the importance of family in their lives. Participating in face-to-face interviews with Inuit cultural educators and producing videos on their thoughts and experiences, a major theme was family – family history, family relationships and spending time with family.

> By far, the most difficult part of being at the residence was being away from family. Many youths felt guilt, sadness, or desperation at being far from family members. Family members were mentioned as important resources in difficult times... Specific family members were also identified as role models, people to look up to when trying to take a positive path. Some of the most important family members included aunts, uncles and especially grandparents.
>
> Fraser et al., 2015, p. 43

Both the Inuit youth and the cultural educators in the study also spoke of the importance of culture as a safe space to explore feelings, share experiences and provide a sense of belonging. “Speaking one’s language and taking part in cultural activities allow for a certain healing process to take place” (Fraser et al, 2015, p. 45). The lead author of the study, Sarah Fraser, says that

> there is an assumption that the impacts of difficult family and community life is much worse that placements. I think it depends on the family situation, but there is rarely a second thought as to whether the placement can be harmful, not just at the moment that the child is placed but when they grow up.
>
> Email communication June 6, 2022

The Child Welfare League of Canada, in a position paper on ensuring that First Nations, Inuit and Métis children and families live in safety, dignity and respect, concludes that

> The trauma associated with residential schools, the Sixties Scoop and the ongoing removal of First Nations, Inuit and Métis children has cascaded through generations; this experience of emotional neglect and abuse has devastating effects on children and families. Unless we take action now, another generation of children will grow up disconnected from their family, their kin, their community, their language and culture.
>
> Child Welfare League of Canada, 2019, p. 5

Economic and Financial Losses

The Sixties Scoop Class Action Lawsuit identified these economic and financial consequences resulting from the Indigenous Sixties Scoop:

- loss of opportunity to exercise Indigenous rights
- loss of ability to obtain proper education or employment
- loss of opportunity to benefit from unclaimed estates to which they were entitled
- loss of income, loss of competitive advantage in the employment field, loss of income earning potential and loss of income earning capacity
- the cost of required psychological, psychiatric, and medical treatment, including but not limited to the cost of counselling, rehabilitation, therapy, mediation, and hospitalization (Attorney General for Canada, 2017).

Parents and Families

Indigenous adult survivors of residential schools and the Sixties Scoop have shared their experiences; however, less is known about the deep impacts for parents and families of losing a child or children to those systems. Inuit contacts for this report spoke of the profound sense of loss, anger and shame many parents and other family members feel when a child is taken away.

> Pauletta Tremblett says that her story is as much about her grandmother and mother as it is hers. Their traumas go back through colonization and Pauletta recognizes these events having a direct bearing on her experiences as a Sixties Scoop survivor.
>
> Nunatsiavut Inuit suffered through the post-war Spanish flu, relocation and dog slaughters that destroyed the ability to hunt and made Inuit dependent on western supplies. Her mother was born in Hebron, northern Labrador, in 1948. Pauletta and three siblings grew

> up in the community until 1957 when everyone who lived there was relocated to more-southern communities where they were outsiders and faced discrimination and racism. Pauletta's mother also attended two different residential schools in Labrador.
>
> At 21, Pauletta's mother married a serviceman at the American base in Happy Valley-Goose Bay and had six children. Her life unraveled when they separated. All six children were taken into care. Mostly the children were separated from each other and have never been able to form strong bonds with each other.
>
> *"Each child has a different story of hurt and anger"* (Interview June 22, 2022).

Given the value placed on children and family in Inuit society, disruptions to kinship practices have had far-reaching effects. Being able to pass down culture, language, Inuit Societal Values and Inuit Qauijimajatuqangit (Inuit knowledge) is an important role for immediate and extended family members and other adults in the community.

> A value often mentioned by Inuit is that of being ilagiit, being part of the family whose meaning includes that of extended family. This Inuit concept is what many say sets us apart from non-Inuit, because the Inuit family is special. As one grows up in the Inuit family, a sense of belonging is achieved while we learn how we should call each of our relatives through tursurautiniq (kinship terms).
>
> Makivik Corporation et al., 2014, p. 49

Traditionally, families who were facing challenges and unable to care for a child or children were supported by others in the community. Custom adoption was an open process where parents, other relatives and the children still had a relationship. Birth mothers and fathers often were involved in the child's life and watched them grow up. For Inuit, both the residential schools and out-of-community adoption resulted in disruptions in these cultural parenting practices and kinship ties in Inuit communities (Rae, 2011).

The removal of a child from a family and community has a direct impact on parents, grandparents, siblings and others in the kinship circle. Multiple family disruptions negatively affect Inuit society. According to a broad consultation with Inuit in Nunavik in 2014 (the Parnasimautik consultation)

> Adoption has been practiced for centuries by Inuit and continues today in the customary manner. Children have a particularly important place in Inuit society. [Inuit adoption] emphasizes that the best interest of a child is indivisible from his role within his family, bringing wholeness and fullness to the family. Inuit elders do not consider a family to be complete without the presence of a child.
>
> Makivik Corporation et al., 2014, p. 50

There also is evidence that the trauma associated with residential school removals affected Indigenous parents in the Sixties Scoop era. Bombay et al. (2020) found that First Nations and Métis who had a parent or grandparent who attended residential school were more likely to have spent time in foster and group homes, to have grown up in a household where someone used alcohol or drugs, had a mental illness or suicide attempt, had spent time in prison and had lower levels of household stability. Once more research is completed, we are likely to find similar inter-generational effects between Sixties Scoop survivors, their parenting challenges and their involvement with the child welfare system.

In describing the Nunavik child welfare system, an interviewee for the Inuit Health Survey said

> *Its broken. Since they were starting, when social services and youth protection were starting, they just broke relations and families. It hurts me. They say they try to help but they are breaking the community.*
>
> Fletcher et al., 2021, p. 42

According to interviewees, the Sixties Scoop is still not openly talked about in Inuit communities even though most families have been affected. Some parents, survivors and their children have made the connection between difficulties they are facing in their lives and family trauma, but many haven't. Regions and communities have different experiences of Inuit self-identifying as survivors or seeking healing services, for example, urban organizations in Winnipeg, Ottawa and Montreal haven't seen many survivors coming forward as yet. Staff at the Manitoba Inuit Association believes there are many survivors in urban areas because so many were fostered and adopted in the south. The Association is undertaking community outreach and awareness raising on the issue, hoping to provide more support to those affected.

Cultural Genocide

Starting in the 1980s, researchers began describing Indigenous child apprehensions as a form of genocide (Kimmelman, 1985, McKenzie and Hudson, 1985, cited in Sinclair, 2007).

> Cultural genocide is the destruction of those structures and practices that allow the group to continue as a group. States that engage in cultural genocide set out to destroy the political and social institutions of the targeted group. Land is seized, and populations are forcibly transferred, and their movement is restricted. Languages are banned. Spiritual leaders are persecuted, spiritual practices are forbidden, and objects of spiritual value are confiscated and destroyed. And, most significantly to the issue at hand, families are disrupted to prevent the transmission of cultural values and identity from one generation to the next.
>
> Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015b, p. 1

While the specific focus of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada was to address the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Indigenous–non-Indigenous reconciliation, the TRC calls the Sixties Scoop an important part of Canada's legislative "cultural genocide" against Indigenous peoples. Adoptions of Indigenous children into "white" families in Canada, the US and other countries also has been described as a form of ethic cleansing (Sinclair, 2007).

In speaking about the proposed Indigenous Child Welfare legislation introduced by the federal government, Natan Obed, President of Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, said that the legislation represented a step toward changing colonial structures "that have left Inuit feeling that they have no rights. A lot of Inuit children grow up without connections to their communities, their culture and their language or society" (George, 2018, n. p.).

> *"We are attempting to deconstruct that oppressive system and replace it with what we heard from Inuit, from communities for a long, long time: 'Believe in us, believe in our culture, listen to us about what we want for our children and how to care for our children."*
>
> Natan Obed, quoted in George, 2018, n. p.

GOVERNMENT AND INDIGENOUS RESPONSES TO THE SIXTIES SCOOP

International Approaches

Australia and New Zealand have adopted different processes to investigate Indigenous child removals but with similar results to Canada.

Australia launched its National Inquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families in 1995 and published the report *Bringing Them Home* two years later. The Inquiry investigated the past and present practices of forced removal of Indigenous children from their families – known as the Stolen Generations – and placement in missions, institutions and non-Indigenous foster and adoptive families (essentially looking at the impact of residential schooling and child welfare apprehensions at the same time).

Fifty-four recommendations supported healing and reconciliation (Commonwealth of Australia, 1997). Similar to Canada's TRC, many recommendations have yet to be implemented and disproportionate Indigenous apprehensions continue. A 20-year anniversary review of progress identifies four key priorities: 1) analysis of the services needs of Stolen Generations members, 2) a national scheme for reparations (equal access to financial compensation and culturally appropriate healing), 3) compulsory training around Stolen Generations' trauma for service providers, and 4) a comprehensive study of intergenerational trauma and how to effectively address it (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation, 2017).

More recently in 2018, New Zealand created a population-wide Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-Based Institutions, primarily experiences between 1950 and 1999 and extending to the present for its recommendations. The Commission is to report on population-wide abuses in foster care/adoption, residential and psychiatric care, and was tasked to also look specifically at the over-representation of Māori in the system that had never been documented.

An independent research process was developed and led to the report *Hāhā-uri, hāhā-tea Māori Involvement in State Care 1950–1999* (Savage et al., 2021). The report addresses many of the same situations and harms as those in Canada resulting from colonization, differential treatment and structural and societal racism, using a Māori research approach. The Commission's interim report in 2020 affirmed that most of those who were abused in care were from Māori and Pacific Islander families, disabled people, and women and girls. A second interim report in 2021 documented institutional resistance to allegations of abuse and lack of redress for survivors. It included 95 recommendations for change (Abuse in Care Royal Commission of Inquiry, 2022). A final report is expected in June 2023.

Canadian Inquiries and Calls to Action

Canadian attention to the Indigenous Sixties Scoop began in the 1980s with a report from the Canadian Council on Social Development and the 1983 book *Native Children and the Child Welfare System* (Johnston, 2016). This led to the development of more First Nations and Métis-led Child and Family Services. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples raised the issue in 1996 but it wasn't until the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2007 to 2015) on the residential schools that the

extent and consequences of the First Nations, Inuit and Métis child removals was more thoroughly documented.

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) was the first national inquiry into the realities of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples. Its report in 1996 called on Canadians to

> reflect on how we moved [Indigenous Peoples] from place to place to make way for 'progress,' 'development' and 'settlement' and how we took their children from them and tried to make them over in our image.
>
> Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996, p. 16

The RCAP report contains a chapter on residential schools, condemning them as assimilative, marginalizing and paternalistic while also failing to provide adequate care and a quality education for Indigenous children. The Commission called for a full public inquiry into the schools. Recommendations related to child welfare focused on governments acknowledging Indigenous child welfare as a core area of self-government and reaching agreements to transfer that authority, providing block (less restrictive) funding to deliver child welfare services, and in urban areas, Indigenous agencies receiving comparable funding to non-Indigenous agencies (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996).

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) was established in 2007 as a result of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, a multi-party agreement to compensate former students, provide healing services and document the effects of the schools. The specific focus of the TRC was to redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Indigenous–non-Indigenous reconciliation. The Commissioners held hearings in all parts of Canada and heard from more than 6,000 witnesses. It identifies that the Sixties Scoop was a transfer of Indigenous children from the institution of the residential schools to that of child welfare – foster care and adoption outside of the children's family and community – without any steps to preserve their culture and identity.

Child Welfare is the first theme named in the TRC's 94 Calls to Action. Calls to action included the following (bracketed comments indicate that these calls could be extended to the Sixties Scoop):

- requiring that all child-welfare decision makers consider the impact of the residential school experience [and the Sixties Scoop] on children and their caregivers;
- requiring all child-welfare agencies and courts to take the residential school [and the Sixties Scoop] legacy into account in their decision making; and
- the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate parenting programs for Aboriginal families [taking into account the effects of the residential schools and the Sixties Scoop] (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015a).

Some of the outcomes of the TRC are *Bill C-92, An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Children, Youth and Families* that came into effect on Jan. 1, 2020, a national apology, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, establishment of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and the planned National Council for Reconciliation, and the Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program (National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation, 2022).

National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls

The National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (NIMMIWG) began its work in 2016 with a mandate to report on systemic causes of "all forms of violence" and institutional policies and practices to respond to violence toward Indigenous women and girls. The Commissionaires considered child welfare to be within their mandate and identified the Sixties Scoop as a form of assimilation and cultural genocide.

Inuit-specific calls to justice include recognizing the importance of distinctions-based actions, recognizing and reflecting distinct Inuit needs and governance structures, and Inuit self-determination. Inuit knowledge must be accessible to all Inuit, shared by Inuit. The Inquiry called for effective, culturally appropriate and accessible health and wellness services; accessible and holistic community wellness, health and mental health services; and trauma and addictions treatment and healing options in each Inuit community. It proposed an Inuit Healing and Wellness Fund, access to Inuit-specific parenting and caregiving teachings and services and ongoing support for the work of the Nanilavut project set up to serve Inuit families as they search for graves of missing loved ones. A National Action Plan has yet to be implemented.

Legal Actions and Settlements

Sixties Scoop Class Action Lawsuit

Both individual and class action lawsuits have been brought to the courts on harms suffered in the Sixties Scoop. An Inuk woman won one of the early legal claims.

> In 2007 at the age of 44, Selina Legge hired a lawyer and took the federal government to court for the abuses she suffered as a child in foster care. It took seven years to reach a settlement out of court – four years before the Sixties Scoop Class Action Settlement was reached. The trauma of reliving the abuse during that time led to four years in an intensive healing program at Anishnawbe Health Toronto. Selina went on to co-found the Toronto Inuit Association, was involved in a number of national Indigenous initiatives and currently is Secretary-Treasurer of the Sixties Scoop Healing Foundation (Interview June 14, 2022).

In 2009, Marcia Brown Martel and Robert Commanda, First Nations Sixties Scoop survivors, launched a class action lawsuit in an Ontario Court against the Attorney General for Canada. After dismissing a federal government appeal against the lawsuit, for the first time a Canadian court certified an action based on the loss of Indigenous cultural identity. The case alleged that as a result of federal government actions, Indigenous children in Ontario "were deprived of their culture, customs, traditions, language and spirituality. This led them to experience loss of self-esteem, identity crises and trauma in trying to re-claim their lost culture and traditions" (Brown v. Attorney General of Canada, 2014, p. 2). The Court certified the class action to go ahead in December 2014.

Sixties Scoop Settlement Agreement

In August 2017, the Government of Canada and representatives of the plaintiffs signed an Agreement-in-Principle aimed at resolving Sixties Scoop litigation. The agreement-in-principle includes Status Indians and Inuit (Attorney General for Canada, 2017). A final agreement was signed on November 30, 2017. In August 2018, the federal court and the Ontario Superior Court approved the terms of the settlement agreement which provides $500 to $750 million in compensation to Status Indians and Inuit

who were adopted by non-Indigenous families, became Crown wards or who were placed in permanent care settings during the Sixties Scoop (Class Action Sixties Scoop Settlement, 2022).

"Indian" and "Inuit" persons who were removed from their homes between January 1, 1951 and December 31, 1991 and placed in the care of non-Indigenous foster or adoptive parents were eligible for a payment. Originally the child needed to have been a permanent ward of a province or territory, but this was later amended. According to journalist Sarah Rogers, of 34,768 Sixties Scoop survivor applicants to the settlement, only 774 were Inuit (Rogers, 2020).

> Minnie Grey is from Nunavik and while she was growing up, there were no high schools in the region. Inuit youth were mostly sent to vocational school in Churchill and lived in a residence. Minnie's mother refused to send her to Churchill and wanted to keep her at home. A government official convinced her to send her daughter to Ottawa for high school and she agreed. Minnie stayed with different white families, "strangers", for each of the four years, going home for the summers. She was cut off from her Inuit culture and language for much of her youth, her prime developmental years. She applied to the Sixties Scoop Settlement and was told she didn't qualify but she appealed a few times and finally got an award. Minnie urged a friend who also went to school in Ottawa to apply but it was too late, applications had closed (Interview June 8, 2022).

There is some concern that awareness about the settlement among Inuit was low and that there are many survivors who did not apply for compensation or were rejected. Inuit have had difficulties in finding documentation to support their Sixties Scoop claim, especially with pandemic closures and delays (Rogers, 2020).

> *"There is so much paperwork in accessing your child welfare files, applying for compensation, etc."* Pauletta Tremblett knows people who were told by the province that they couldn't get copies of their files because the files were "too long" and only got access after a lawyer wrote a letter. "*Many Inuit don't understand government systems and need help"* (Interview June 22, 2022).

Sixties Scoop Healing Foundation

The Sixties Scoop Settlement Agreement also provided funding for the creation of a healing foundation whose purpose is to "enable change and reconciliation, and, in particular, access to healing/wellness, commemoration and education activities for communities and individuals" with initial funding of $50 million. In November 2020, the Sixties Scoop Healing Foundation announced its permanent board of directors. The inaugural 10-person board includes two Inuit survivors: Selina Legge and Pauletta Tremblett (their stories are included in this report). Project funding from the Foundation supports community healing and reconciliation initiatives (Sixties Scoop Healing Foundation, 2021a).

Inuit Class Action Lawsuit in Quebec

In February 2022, two Inuit women from Nunavik filed a class action suit against the Canadian and Quebec governments based on "the long-standing discriminatory treatment of Inuit children, youth and families living in Nunavik." The suit, supported by Makivik Corporation, the Nunavik Land Claim Organization, alleges that the governments have failed to honour the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement to provide adequate health and social services to Nunavimmiut. The case seeks to represent all Inuit children in Nunavik who have been in the child welfare system from 1975 to the present, those

who needed an essential service but faced a denial, delay or gap in services, and the parents or caregiving grandparents of the children (Nunatsiaq News, 2022).

> The Inuit in Nunavik have lived for decades neglected by the federal and Quebec governments. These Indigenous people have been forced off their traditional land and had their traditional ways of life disrupted by governments that coveted their natural resources but treated them as second or third-class citizens. A succession of government policies has forced these Inuit to endure continuous crisis: land grabs, neglect, disease, starvation, Indian Residential Schools and Federal Day Schools, amongst others.
>
> Tookalook & Jones v. Attorney General for Quebec, 2022, p. 2

Class Action on Apprehension of Indigenous Children Living Off-Reserve, 1992-2019

Another lawsuit on behalf of Indigenous children taken into care between January 1, 1992 and December 31, 2019 (the Millennial Scoop) was filed in the Federal Court of Canada in 2020 and certified as a class action on June 17, 2022. The lawsuit applies to First Nations living off-reserve, Inuit and Métis children and youth who were "placed in the care of individuals who were not part of the Indigenous community, group or people" to which they belonged, or the parent or grandparent of the child. The class action maintains that these children deserve compensation for the loss of their original identity – including their Indigenous language, heritage, spirituality and traditions, and for suffering psychological, emotional and spiritual harm. The parents and grandparents of these children lost the ability to pass their culture and Indigenous identity on to their children (Murphy Battista LLP, 2022, n. p.).

HEALING AND RECONCILIATION

> *"Inuit have a right to tell their stories. It can be part of their healing journey."*
>
> Selina Legge, Interview June 14, 2022

The Road Ahead

The road to recognition, healing and reconciliation for Inuit and the Sixties Scoop is just beginning. It will require further research, investigation and the stories of parents, family members, survivors and their descendants. Inuit are at the beginning of fully understanding the impacts of family separations and relocations and the needs for multi-generational healing for individuals, families and communities. Interviewees for this report and leaders in the Sixties Scoop Network stressed how important it is for Indigenous and Inuit survivors to lead the way.

> Indigenous survivors of residential schools, day schools, the 60s Scoop and Millennium Scoop must be part of the national narrative on reconciliation and justice. We deserve to be acknowledged, heard and have our stories and teachings valued. There needs to be more education and awareness about destructive child welfare policies and the relationship to appropriation of Indigenous lands, resources and wealth for the Federal, Provincial, Territorial and Municipal governments.
>
> Cardinal & Kicknosway, 2022, n. p.

Rob Lackie would like to see the network of survivors grow and for them to get more support.

> *As time goes by, this help will be needed more and more* [due to the continuing effects of the child welfare system] … *We need to find government support for this to happen.*
>
> Urban Inuit Knowledge Centre, 2020

The Sixties Scoop Legacy of Canada group, including former Senator Murray Sinclair, chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, has called for a full inquiry into the Indigenous Sixties Scoop to determine the actions and policies of governments that led to the apprehensions as well as the true number of children taken.

> The children who were removed need to know they are not alone, but they also need to know that there were reasons for what happened that were not of their parents' making.
>
> Murray Sinclair, quoted in CBC News, August 2, 2021

Interviewees for the report made these suggestions for Sixties Scoop healing and reconciliation:

- recognition of the Inuit experience of the Sixties Scoop, distinct from First Nations and Métis
- being able to speak freely about their experiences and know that it wasn't their fault
- realizing they are not alone
- group or individual mental health supports geared to their needs
- funds to return to their ancestral lands and meet family members
- access to on the land programs, face-to-face or virtual counselling, healing through ceremonies, songs, etc.
- support services delivered by Inuit and peer support from other survivors
- parent education programs and non-crisis support
- advocacy for families facing child apprehensions today
- healing and Elder-facilitated programs in prisons
- compensation accompanied by mental health support.

Regarding awareness raising and training, interviewees provided these ideas:

- recording oral accounts and documenting those in audio-visual or print formats
- greater awareness among Inuit of the effects of the Sixties Scoop through outreach, radio, social media and film
- more Canadian public and government awareness of the Inuit Sixties Scoop
- training and resources to increase knowledge of the Sixties Scoop and link to current child welfare needs/practices
- experiential or "heart-based" training for trauma, addictions and anti-violence treatment providers
- training for health, social and justice system personnel to better recognize the impacts of the Sixties Scoop on their clients and how to address them.

Some of the recommended measures that would support Sixties Scoop survivors who are parents involved with child welfare identified in the reports *Inuit Child Welfare and Family Support: Policies, Programs and Strategies* (Rae, 2011) and *Promising Child Welfare Practices for Inuit Children, Youth and Families* (Ottawa Inuit Children's Centre, 2018) include:

- additional financial supports to alleviate poverty
- supports for special needs children

- Inuit trauma-informed counselling
- Inuit-specific addictions programs
- Inuit-led family service hubs
- mandatory cultural safety training for educators and service providers
- early interventions for family violence
- staffed family homes for treatment of the whole family
- respite care for children and temporary safe homes for youth
- intensive in-home crisis response.

A review of Indigenous healing programs prepared for the Australia Healing Foundation concluded that effective programs focus on overall wellbeing of the community rather than the individual, draw heavily on Indigenous culture including values, concepts, healing practices and what it means to live a good life. They also are driven by local leadership, include an understanding of colonization and intergenerational trauma and grief, build capacity through knowledge and skills and are proactive rather than reactive (McKendrick et al., 2014). The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Foundation has a number of resources on healing for the Stolen Generations (The Healing Foundation, 2022; Blignault et al., 2014) that may be of use in developing Inuit healing programs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This initial exploration of the impacts of the Sixties Scoop on Inuit is seen as a starting point for further action in raising awareness and investing in the health, healing and wellness of the survivors and their families.

Recommendations for short-term, medium-term and longer-term action are guided by these principles:

- Initiatives are Inuit-led with direct and ongoing involvement of survivors and family members.
- Survivors and family members are supported and cared for and remain in control of their information when sharing their experiences.
- There is respect for the diversity of experiences of Inuit parents and families who lost children, the children who were removed, and their children and grandchildren.
- Initiatives recognise the roots of colonization, assimilation and cultural genocide in the child welfare system that continue to this day.
- Support and healing are grounded in Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (Inuit knowledge) and focused on family and community rather than only on individuals.

Short-Term Recommendations (1-2 Years)

1. **Inuit Sixties Scoop survivors and family members** to continue to tell their stories, advocate for their needs and develop mutual support networks.

2. **Inuit organizations and survivors** to raise awareness about the Inuit Sixties Scoop among Inuit and with governments.

3. **National and regional Inuit organizations** to work together to engage Inuit more widely and further identify the diverse needs of those affected by the Sixties Scoop, and develop responses to meet

those needs (for example, a national inquiry, national recognition, advocacy, legal actions, gatherings, healing programs, resources).

4. **Inuit organizations and researchers** to collaborate on Inuit-specific studies that provide more in-depth knowledge of the Inuit Sixties Scoop (for example, parent, sibling, other family members' stories, regional and national child welfare history, numbers affected, short- and longer-term impacts).

5. **Governments** to co-develop with Inuit initiatives that redress harms to multiple generations of Inuit through child removals, relocations and lost family-community connections, culture and identity.

6. **The Sixties Scoop Healing Foundation and other funders** to develop a widely publicized, Inuit-specific funding stream to support Inuit family and community healing initiatives and education on past and present effects on Inuit of child removals.

Medium-term Recommendations (3-4 years)

7. **Inuit Sixties Scoop survivors and family members** to continue to advocate for themselves and others, provide leadership and oversight for developing programs and services, and share their wisdom with Inuit and service providers involved in the present-day child welfare system.

8. **Inuit organizations and survivors** to raise awareness about the Inuit Sixties Scoop at national and regional meetings, conferences and through mainstream and social media.

9. **Inuit Land Claim Organizations** to implement action plans that address priorities of survivors, parents and other family members for healing, support and reconciliation, wherever they live in Canada.

10. **Inuit organizations and researchers** to continue to collaborate on Inuit-specific studies and documentation of Inuit healing models and approaches.

11. **Social services, child protection, health and justice organizations, and educators** to contract with Inuit organizations to deliver training programs and develop resources on the Inuit Sixties Scoop.

12. **Federal, provincial and territorial governments,** in line with the TRC recommendations, to issue formal apologies for the Indigenous Sixties Scoop and Millennia Scoop and take proactive measures to ensure present-day discriminatory child removals are ended.

13. **Governments** to remove barriers to accessing child welfare files and adoption records, and provide a structure and funding to help survivors locate and meet family members and visit ancestral lands.

14. **Governments and foundations** to provide flexible core funding that expands the Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Programs and community healing to include Inuit impacted by the Sixties Scoop.

Longer-term Recommendations (5 plus years)

15. **Inuit Sixties Scoop survivors and family members** to assess national, regional and local progress in meeting their distinct needs, documenting the Inuit Sixties Scoop and sharing promising practices in healing approaches and programs.

16. **Inuit organizations and survivors** to continue to raise awareness about the Inuit Sixties Scoop and the 94 Calls to Action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

17. **Inuit Land Claim Organizations** to report on actions that address priorities of impacted families and individuals, identify gaps and re-commit to healing, support and reconciliation.

18. **Inuit organizations and researchers** to continue to collaborate on Inuit-specific studies, program evaluation and promising practices.

19. **Social services, child protection, health and justice organizations, and educators to continue to** work with Inuit to ensure that service providers/staff/students have the knowledge and skills they need to address the Inuit Sixties Scoop.

20. **Governments** to work across jurisdictions and with Inuit authorities to ensure Sixties Scoop survivors and their families can find missing relatives and trace deceased family members, possibly through an Inuit-owned national database, and have funds to commemorate losses.

21. **Governments and foundations** to provide long-term funding for an independent Indigenous organization modelled on the Aboriginal Healing Foundation that can support needed trauma recovery, mental health, addictions and anti-violence programs in Inuit communities.

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APPENDIX A – LIST OF INTERVIEWEES AND CONTACTS

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APPENDIX B – INTERVIEW GUIDE

Preamble

Thank you for taking the time to speak with me today. As I mentioned in the email, I would like to talk with you about the Inuit Sixties Scoop, that is, the removal of Inuit children from their parents and placing them for adoption or in foster care with non-Inuit families between the 1950s and the 1980s.

The aims of the Tungasuvvingat Inuit project are to raise awareness of the Inuit experience of the Sixties Scoop and recommend ways to support and invest in the health, healing and wellness of the survivors and their families.

Consent

Your responses will be included in a written report for the project. Your comments can either remain anonymous or we can identify any direct quotes with your name. The report for the project can either list your name or not.

You are free to share as much as you are comfortable with and to end the interview at any time. If you find the discussion distressing, Julia or Rosanna can provide support, their contact information is in the email.

If you would like more information about the project or have concerns, you can get in touch with Faiza Ahmad at TI. Her contact information is in the email.

Are you in agreement to go ahead with the interview? _____

Would you like any quotes we use to be identified with your name? _____

Can we include your name and position in the final report? _____

Interview Questions

1. Can you tell me what you know about Inuit affected by the Sixties Scoop? How common was it to remove Inuit children from their families and what was the process?

   a. Have you had any clients or program participants who were affected by the Inuit Sixties Scoop? [For counsellors and services providers] AND/OR

   b. Do you know of any Inuit children, youth or families directly affected by the Inuit Sixties Scoop? [For community leaders, advocates and researchers]

   c. If yes, what were some of the effects and outcomes of their adoption or foster care experiences?

   d. Do you know about their experience in applying for compensation from the Sixties Scoop Settlement?

2. Do you know of any research or written documents that address the Inuit Sixties Scoop?

3. What do you think are the similarities and differences between the effects of the residential schools on Inuit and the Inuit Sixties Scoop?

4. What do you think survivors of the Inuit Sixties Scoop (parents, children and the families they have) need to heal from their experiences? [Prompt if needed: Counselling? Healing circles? Recognition of their experiences? Support in reuniting with their birth families and communities? Commemoration events? Apologies from governments and child welfare organizations?]

5. What is the best way to raise awareness of the Inuit Sixties Scoop among Inuit and Canadians in general?

6. What needs to be done to prevent the harms created by the child welfare system now and in the future?

7. Do you have any other comments or suggestions?

Thank you very much for your time