A Generative Curriculum Model of Child and Youth Care Training Through First Nations-University Partnerships

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Abstract

This article describes the goals, professional orientation, pedagogical principles, and practical outcomes of First Nations initiated partnerships to co-deliver an innovative, university-accredited training initiative in child and youth care. The unique combination of perspective and approach that distinguishes the profession of child and youth care is illustrated with reference to community participants experiences of training in this field. The evolution of a Generative Curriculum Model for co-constructing training concepts and skills through a socially inclusive, bicultural process is highlighted. A brief look at findings from evaluation of these training initiatives is provided. This article conveys a sense of the enhanced social cohesion, cultural revitalization, and demonstrated commitment to children and youth in the participating communities that community members have reported as a result of their initiation and involvement in the child and youth care training partnerships.

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Introduction

This article describes an initiative involving 55 First Nations communities in Canada to strengthen their capacities to meet the developmental needs of children and families. Working through their respective tribal or band councils, these communities initiated partnerships with the School of Child and Youth Care at the University of Victoria in order to co-deliver university-accredited, career-laddered, community-based training that has enabled them to introduce and operate new programs for children and families. Emphasizing the retention and reinforcement of cultural values and traditional languages, these partnerships have demonstrated the use of a Generative Curriculum Model in which indigenous knowledge and practices figure centrally. Elders and other respected community members participate with students, instructors, and a university-based team to co-construct a curriculum in child and youth development and care leading to a university diploma in the professional discipline of Child and Youth Care and, where applicable, provincial certification in Early Childhood Education , Caring for Infants and Toddlers , and Caring for Children with Special Needs.

The First Nations community goals, professional orientation, pedagogical principles, and practical outcomes of this innovative training initiative are described in turn in this article. The unique combination of perspective and approach that distinguishes the profession of child and youth care is illustrated with reference to community participants experiences of training in this field. The evolution of a Generative Curriculum Model for co-constructing training concepts and skills through a socially inclusive, bicultural process is highlighted. The article concludes with a brief look at findings from evaluation of these training initiatives. This article conveys a sense of the enhanced social cohesion, cultural revitalization, and demonstrated commitment to children and youth in the participating communities that community members have reported as a result of their initiation and involvement in the child and youth care training partnerships.

Background

There have been eight programs of child and youth care training delivered through partnerships with a team in the School of Child and Youth Care at the University of Victoria, involving the cooperation of fifty-five First Nations communities in Saskatchewan and British Columbia. The participating communities have all been located on reserves. They have ranged from 90 to 1700 people and have been located in rural areas, with one exception: Cowichan Tribes has been the largest community partner to date, with a population of 3456 people located in a small urban setting. Five of the eight partnerships have involved groupings of several neighbouring communities represented by an administrative council or steering committee that initiated and coordinated the partnership with the University of Victoria. Four of these groupings combined people with different First Nations cultures and languages. Thus, there were partnerings at the community level embedded within the broader community-institution partnerships.

Institutional partners have included the School of Child and Youth Care at the University of Victoria in every partnership, and local university-colleges and indigenous post-secondary institutions in three partnerships, including Malaspina University College, located on the reserve

lands of the Cowichan Tribes, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, and Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies.

Child and youth care training as an approach to community development

Most First Nations in Canada are actively moving towards a vision of economic development, positive community health, and social development that includes a substantial measure of control through their own agency and actions. The First Nations that have initiated partnerships to co-deliver child and youth care training have prioritized the goal of strengthening capacity among community members to mount and operate accessible, safe, and culturally consistent care for children and youth in their communities as part of larger human resource development agendas. *We realized that if we wanted to develop economically, we first had to develop our human resources, because development must come from the inside, not the outside* (Vern Bachiu, Programs and Policy Director, Meadow Lake Tribal Council).

Many First Nations in Canada have linked improvement of developmental conditions for children to the reconstruction of their cultural identity, revitalization of intergenerational transmission of culture and traditional language, and reproduction of culturally distinctive values and practices in programs for children and youth. *Our recommendations emphasize the importance of protecting children through culturally appropriate services, by attending to maternal and child health, by providing appropriate early childhood education, and by making high quality child care available, all with the objective of complementing the family s role in nurturing young children* (Canadian Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Vol. 5, Ch. 1, s4.1.) Like many indigenous people around the globe, the First Nations involved in the partnership programs were seeking to strengthen capacity among community members to plan, operate, and monitor programs for children and youth that were consistent with their cultural values and that enhanced positive cultural and community identity. *The First Nations of the Meadow Lake Tribal Council believe that a child care program developed, administered and operated by their own people is a vital component to their vision of sustainable growth and development. It impacts every sector of their long-term plans as they prepare to enter the twenty-first century. It will be children who inherit the struggle to retain and enhance the people s culture, language and history, who continue the quest for economic progress for a better quality of life, and who move forward with a strengthened resolve to plan their own destiny* (Meadow Lake Tribal Council Vision Statement, 1989).

In many First Natons, generations of people do not know their own culture of origin or their traditional language, and their identities as members of a cultural community have been fragmented. Reams of poignant testimony have been collected in many different venues across Canada describing the suffering of First Nations parents, children and communities as a result of a century of enforced residential schooling (Barman, 1996; Barry, 1995; Kirkness, 1992; Ng, 2000; Timpson, 1993), child welfare practices (Fournier & Grey, 1997), Children s Aid Societies (Hudson & McKenzie, 1981; Johnston, 1983), the Indian Act (Assembly of First Nations, 1994) the complicity of the social work profession (Hardina, 1994), and other helping services

deemed by government and non-government organizations, at the time, to be in the best interests of Canada s Aboriginal people (Assembly of First Nations, 1994).

Although the long era of enforced residential schooling for Aboriginal children in Canada is now over, its negative impacts on self-concept, parenting, social cohesion, and the intergenerational transmission of traditional language and culture remain (Barman, 1996; Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1993). Many investigators have documented the links between these long-term psychosocial challenges and various expressions of psychological disturbance, including post-traumatic stress disorder, depression, and suicidality (Birrer, Robinson, Shyarnbhai, & Leber, 1993; Ing, 2000; Lederman, 1999). Representatives of the First Nations that have initiated training in early childhood education have anticipated, quite accurately, that involvement in the program would be part of a healing journey for the participating communities as a whole. *We never got any teachings when we were young, because we were raised in residential school. The Elders gave us their teaching, and their words helped us to become better parents. I learned from the Elders in this program how to raise my daughter and how to forgive* (Sandra George, Program Graduate, Cowichan Tribes).

Goals for child and youth care initiatives Representatives of First Nations communities that initiated training partnerships shared common goals for supporting community members to obtain relevant training in child and youth care, as follows:

1. To provide out-of-home care for children that would enable parents to pursue education, training, and employment.
2. To create child and youth care programs on reserves that would provide job opportunities for community members.
3. To provide developmentally stimulating, culturally reinforcing programs of care for the youngest generation in order to secure the well-being of the community s future parents, cultural leaders, and work force.
4. To include culture and traditional language in child care programs in order to sustain cultural knowledge, identity, and traditional language in the youngest generation.
5. To involve Elders in child care training in order to preserve their memories, wisdom, and cultural skills for generations to come.
6. To provide university-accredited training in child and youth care as a re-entry opportunity for community members that would be a foundation for a variety of career development pursuits.

Exploring a distinctive approach to training

A history of disappointments with education and training All of the First Nations that have initiated child and youth care training partnerships have made many previous attempts to build capacity among community members through education and training. Like the experiences of many Aboriginal people, they had found neither cultural relevance in mainstream, pre-conceived training curriculum nor cultural safety on mainstream campuses. Although the number of First Nations students enrolled at Canadian universities has increased significantly over the

past two decades, student retention and completion rates remain low. Until recently, First Nations people in Canada have been up to seven times less likely to graduate from university as are members of the general population (Armstrong, Kennedy, & Oberle, 1990). In particular, most First Nations people in rural areas, especially those on reserves, have not benefited from mainstream post-secondary education.

Community development programs imported from white middle class urban centres, even when these have been made geographically accessible through community-based delivery, usually have been found to be equally unsatisfactory, because they lack resonance and applicability to the culture, rural circumstances, often challenging socio-economic conditions, and unique goals and resources of First Nations communities. First Nations representatives who have sought the partnership program have often expressed their perception that mainstream institutions that deliver canned post-secondary curricula, whether delivered in the community or on urban campuses, are a continuation of the cultural imperialism, suppression of indigenous culture, and assimilation of Aboriginal peoples by white society that began with the residential schools. Programs offering pan-Aboriginal curriculum content in an effort to be culturally sensitive have been regarded as flawed by the First Nations partners, because they fail to appreciate the heterogeneity of some 620 different First Nations in Canada, each with their own particular history, language, culture, and social organization.

Assumptions of the Generative Curriculum Model The Generative Curriculum Model that has guided all of the partnership programs is predicated on the assumption that there are different but equitable sources of knowledge and ways of knowing (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999). Throughout the curriculum in the First Nations Partnership Programs, a central place is afforded to indigenous knowledge that each participating community holds as valued and relevant. Local knowledge and practices are considered alongside samplings of mainstream theory, research, and practice provided by a university-based team. The Generative Curriculum Model is based on the assertion that a useful purpose of education and training is to provide facilitated opportunities for communities of learners to explore varying local and imported perspectives and approaches, and to debate, evaluate, select, reconstruct, or combine these in order to further goals identified by the community.

Child and youth care training as a distinctive approach to practice

Why have the partnering communities chosen to invest in training in child and youth care, rather than in another human service professional field, such as social work, community health, recreation, or education? There are several answers to this quesiton. First, each partnering First Nation has had its own history of experience with various human services as well as its own profile of human resource strengths and goals, and these contributed to the decision of these particular communities to choose to participate in child and youth care training. In addition, the choice of child and youth care can be understood with reference to the priority placed on supporting the development of very young children among the partner communities, taken together with an understanding of the scope and orientation of the child and youth care field that distinguishs it from allied fields, particularly social work.

The Generative Curriculum Model evolved in 1989 when the Meadow Lake Tribal Council in Saskachewan sought culturally grounded training to strengthen the capacities of Cree and Dene community members to support the optimal development of infants and young children (Pence & McCallum, 1994). Thus, they sought a suitable program of training in Early Childhood Education (ECE). The professional discipline of Child and Youth Care has a broad scope and focuses on children from conception through late adolescence, within the ecological context of their families and communities (International Child and Youth Care Education Consortium, 1992). In some, though not all, universities and colleges where professional schools of Child and Youth Care exist, ECE is incorporated as part of this professional school. No ECE program existed in the School of Child and Youth Care at the University of Victoria when the Meadow Lake Tribal Council first initiated contact. However, Alan Pence - a faculty member at the school - agreed to partner with the Meadow Lake Tribal Council in order to create a uniquely tailored ECE program within the broader context of the School of Child and Youth Care. This had the advantage that, over time, the program could expand to incorporate some training in caring for school-aged children and adolescence, while retaining an emphasis on caring for infants and preschool children.

Focus on Early Childhood Education All of the First Nations that have participated in partnership programs to date have similarly sought training that particularly prepares community members to address the needs of very young children (0 to 6 years). They have emphasized prevention and early intervention strategies to ensure optimal developmental outcomes before problems develop. Steps taken in these communities have been aimed at promoting healthy, safe, and socially supported pregnancies, parenting, nutrition, stimulation, and environments for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers. Most of the partnering communities have aimed for and successfully achieved the creation of licensed child care facilities, supervised and staffed by their own trained community members.

What are the distinctive features of child and youth care training and practice? Child and youth care training incorporates some of the assumptions, concepts, and skills found in allied human service fields, notably those that have a strong emphasis on prevention and early intervention activities. Rather than being primarily clinic-based, professional training in these fields aims to prepare students to work with people in their natural settings in the community (Ferguson, Pence, & Denholm, 1993; Rose, 1991). Key features that tend to distinguish training and practice in child and youth care from other closely related fields have been articulated by Anglin (1999), a leader in the development of child and youth care as a profession. Although practitioners within human service fields vary in their approaches and there is a risk of over-simplifying the differences between fields, there are some distinctive tendencies that characterize the field of child and youth care. These are listed and illustrated here with reference to commentaries of First Nations graduates of the community-based partnership programs in child and youth care.

1. Child and youth care is based primarily on a developmental perspective, focusing on the conditions and processes that are likely to lead to optimal developmental outcomes

I share what I learn in this program with my daughter so that she can understand that her son has his own way of thinking and his own ways of trying to communicate - that children go through all kinds of stages when what they need is different. This is something I didn t know when I raised her. Now she and I are learning how to really play with my grandson so that he enjoys and learns and is challenged but not frustrated. Now we understand why he has a whole room full of toys he never plays with! (Anne Roberts, Tl azt en Nation)

2. Child and youth care is holistic in scope, focusing on understanding, appreciating, and supporting all aspects of a child s experiences and growth

Everything fell into place because of the training I had. I feel like the whole world opened up to me. And you can see that in what all the members of our class are doing now. One is working at women s transition home, one is working with youth in the area of restorative justice, one is a family counsellor, one works in program administration at the Tribal Council, and here I am being director of this daycare (Margaret Lambert, Program Graduate, Flying Dust First Nation).

3. Child and youth care is goal or solution-oriented, directly focusing more on ways to build on existing strengths and resources than on ways to minimize risks and treat problems

There is so much in our culture that is good and that leads to goodness, if only we pass this on to our children. We haven t been doing enough of that, and this program opens up a new road for us to go down with our children, so that they will know who they are and the strength of the culture they are born into that s their birth right (Lawrence Trottier, Intergenerational Facilitator, Onion Lake First Nation).

4. Child and youth care training, practice, and research is grounded in direct interactions with children and their families, although advocacy and action at the level of administration, policy making, legal proceedings, and other indirect action may be engaged in to promote developmental supports for children and youth

Being with children is the heart of this program and this profession, to me. Children are pure energy. It s like they are new people, new spirits. If we can help them become the whole people that they are, and help them find their place in our world, then they ll teach this to their children, and their children will teach the next generation, and circle of caring just goes on from there (Lois Andrews, Program Graduate, Mount Currie First Nation).

5. Child and youth care is about the expression of personal caring in the development of relationships with children, their caregivers, and communities, and as such involves enhanced self-awareness and readiness for accountable interpersonal interactions

I love to work with children. It is healing for me to be with them, and to be guided by my elders in how to care for children. The elders have taught me to be patient with children, and I m a better parent and I m better at caring for myself because of what they have taught me (Lorna Bruyere, Program Graduate, Mount Currie First Nation).

The Generative Curriculum Model as a distinctive approach to child and youth care training

The Generative Curriculum Model is an approach to strengthening capacities to achieve community-identified goals, using a bicultural, co-constructive teaching and learning process. This educational approach complements the professional orientation of child and youth care. The model grew out of the first partnership program involving the Meadow Lake Tribal Council and Alan Pence at the University of Victoria (Pence & McCallum, 1994). It is as much a paradigm as a model, in that: (a) it is founded on a particular set of post-modernist, anti-colonialist assumptions (Dahlberg, Moss, & Pence, 1999) and (b) it articulates a set of principles for guiding thought and action which, when enacted in concert, yield a distinctive valuation of ways of knowing and a distinctive set of relationships among knowers and known individuals. Details of the nature and delivery of training using the Generative Curriculum Model are described elsewhere (Pence, 1999; Pence & Ball, 1999). For the present puproses, the principles of the Generative Curriculum Model are described, along with commentaries by First Nations community partners who have lived the model.

1. Support community goals and initiative in a community-based setting

Being responsive to First Nations communities means more than letting community members voice their concerns or preferences, more than acknowledging diversity, and more than arranging a welcoming environment on mainstream campuses to accommodate native students who are able to leave their communities to attend them. The experiences of the partnership programs have underscored the need to open up the foundations of how human service training programs are conceived and delivered, and how communities can play leading roles in capacity-building initiatives. Institutional partners and community leaders themselves must be scrupulous about not being pre-emptive and not overwhelming the community with imported goods and services from outside their own context that are out of step with their own internal rhythm and pace.

It s important to be community-paced as well as community-based. And we learned this in this program. As administrators of the Tribal Council, we could not risk getting out too far in front of the communities. They had to come to the place of knowing that this is what they wanted and this is how they planned to get there. Only then could we initiate contact with the university and expect a partnership to succeed (Marie McCallum, Administrator, Meadow Lake Tribal Council).

2. Draw upon community and individual strengths

Many First Nations are well acquainted with deficit-oriented approaches to human services, such as child protection, speech and language pathology, addictions treatment, and family counselling. These interventions aim to fill gaps, treat pathology and addictions, correct criminally deviant behaviours, repair damaged individuals or families, restore functionality to dysfunctional social structures, or rectify perceived power inequities.

While recognizing a role for these strategies, the communities that have initiated child and youth care partnerships have been seeking training that celebrates positive cultural values, ideas, and practices. They have argued that their traditional cultures and many of their community members have inherent and latent strengths which are often overlooked or untapped when the collective gaze is directed primarily towards individual suffering, social disorder, and cultural loss.

We see on the news all these stories of disasters and problems, suicides and gas sniffing among our youth, financial mismanagement, alcoholism and violence in our communities. You start to think: Isn t there anything good about our communities? But we know that there is a lot of wisdom from experience and a lot of love in First Nations. We need programs that bring out the love and build on the strengths of our people. We are survivors! It can weigh you down to always be looking at the negatives and trying to solve crises. Building on strengths gives us energy and hope and a positive sense of ourselves (Mary Desjarlais, Elder, Flying Dust First Nation).

Using the Generative Curriculum Model, the community of learners in a training partnership program uncovers, illuminates, reinforces, and elaborates cultural attributes by involving a wide range of community members and including indigenous knowledge in the curriculum. As a result, many community members have undergone their own personal recovery of positive cultural identity.

We grew in terms of our home, in terms of being First Nations and looking at how and what s happening in child care delivery. We became more aware of what we did in the past and take some pride in that. Everybody walks a lot taller because of this program. The partnership was a true partnership (Brian Opekikew, Administrator, Meadow Lake Tribal Council).

Students in the training program have constructed curricula for child and youth programs that transmit and reinforce positive cultural identity in the youngest generation.

*Our culture and our language was brought into the training program through the Elders, who participated regularly. Many of the students didn t know much about the history of our communities or about our traditions, and they learned a lot from the Elders about that. They became more aware of our Lil wat language too. Because of this Generative Curriculum Model, our values and our culture and our language will be built right into the daycare so that the children will learn it (*Christine Leo, Employment and Training Director, Mount Currie First Nation).

3. Promote respect all ways (pluricultural inputs)

When the Meadow Lake Tribal Council initiated contact with the University of Victoria, they sought a program that would enable members of the nine constituent Cree and Dene communities to walk in both worlds - to work on or off-reserve, and in native or non-native settings. In the child and youth care training program, students complete five practicum courses, including some supervised training experiences in First Nations programs on reserves and some training in non-native programs.

As a result of the initiative and directives of the community partners, the Generative Curriculum Model evolved in the context of bringing together the worlds of university-accredited knowledge and indigenous knowledge about promoting positive developmental outcomes. Both the knowledge held in the community and knowledge held in the university inform the training program, bringing multiple perspectives into the elaboration of child and youth care models that fit the needs and goals of the First Nations communities. Consistent with the post-modernist stance of the training initiatives, an all ways respectful stance means that no one individual or group asserts authority over others with regards to having a more legitimate claim on the Truth. Instructors agree not to replicate the expert-driven framework of most mainstream education and training programs, and not to preordain exactly where the journey of generating curriculum will lead. *We can consider what mainstream theories say, and if we choose to believe them and use them in our work, that doesn t make us less Indian. And if we choose to asset the importance of our cultural traditions and ways of raising children, that doesn t make us wrong. This program recognizes and encourages this give and take, pick and choose. It doesn t cage us and expect us to act like Europeans — to act as if we re assimilated* (Judy Maas, Grand Chief, Treaty 8 Tribal Association).

This all ways respectful principle of the Generative Curriculum Model has captured the bridging dimensions of social inclusion and social cohesion. In practice, the socio-political distance between partnering institutions and First Nations communities has been greatly reduced. Close working relationships between a member of the community-based program delivery team and the university-based program delivery team have formed an essential backbone of each partnership. Accountability in the partnerships is as much about the process of engagement as it is about the content and outcomes of the training curriculum. The curriculum develops and builds over the life of the training program with all participants, including students, instructors, Elders, community members, and the university-based liaison team as contributors and learners.

I hope people at the university are learning as much from us as we re learning from them. It s important for university lecturers and theorists to listen and learn what they don t know about what being Indian means — in this case, what being Indian means for parents and children growing up in our communities (Diane Bigfoot, Education Director, Treaty 8 Tribal Association).

4. Engage in co-construction of a bicultural curriculum, in which Elders and other community resource people figure prominently

The Generative Curriculum Model involves an open curriculum that sits in the space between two cultures — the culture of the partnering university and its Euro-Western based theory, research, and practice, and the culture or cultures of the partnering First Nations communities. The University of Victoria brings to the training program a sampling of concepts and practices from a largely middle-class, white American context in which mainstream theory and research have been elaborated. The First Nations community contributes core content to the curriculum of every course, largely through the teachings of elders, who play an active role as part of the teaching and learning community that embodies the program. Elders speak to various topics pertaining to the development, care, problems, and needs of children and youth, both historically and currently in their community. A member of Mount Currie First Nation who also served as an instructor in the child and youth care program there commented: *We don t have all the answers. In a generative program, we can enjoy learning about what research on child development has shown and what methods seem to be helpful in certain situations. And we can delve further into our own history and traditions and see how these can help us with our children* (Felicity Nelson, Education Administrator, Mount Currie First Nation).

In a generative approach, the co-construction of curriculum through community participation is an iterative process. In no two partnership programs has the curriculum been the same. Each partnership program has yielded a unique, community-specific curriculum that has been conceived through interactions among community members about their own culture and about the ideas presented in the university-based course materials. Many participants in the partnership programs have observed that the process of constructing the curriculum has had more impact and value for the community and for the university-based team than the finished curriculum product. As one community-based instructor remarked: *It was a lived curriculum.* Nonetheless, in most partnering First Nations communities, cultural knowledge that has been reconstructed and elaborated through the participatory curriculum development process has been preserved through journals, books, and audio and video-tapes. These materials have been kept within the communities, and have not been circulated within the university or within other First Nations communities.

5. Focus on the child within a broad ecological perspective

This principle differs from the tendency in social work training and practice to emphasize more macro-system interventions aimed at redressing power imbalances and other social inequities. The field of Child and Youth Care grew out of a recognition that, while protecting and promoting the well-being of children and youth requires fairness and equality at the level of governance, policy, and administrative accountability, there is also a need for individuals and groups to be skilled in working directly with individual children and caregivers as they go about their daily lives. Reflecting this professional focus, students in the training partnerships have studied and developed community-appropriate ways of promoting optimal developmental

outcomes through caring relationships, programs, and collaborative actions among those who are directly involved in children s daily lives such as family members, teachers, recreation leaders, and counsellors.

As a result of the participatory approach at all stages of the planning process, the partnership programs have been effective not only in training individuals to work directly with children and their caregivers, but in eliciting broad community participation in child and youth initiatives. These partnerships have shown that when the community is allowed entry into the education process and invited to play meaningful roles, the impacts of the training do not end inside the classroom. Rather, community members carry the training program with them into the broad ecology of children s lives.

6. Provide education and career laddering for students, such that credit for this coursework will be fully applicable to future study and practice

First Nations are all too familiar with dead end training programs, which are typically short term, skill-based programs that do not lead to transferable academic credits or recognized credentials. At the request of the Meadow Lake Tribal Council and subsequent First Nations partners, the training program in child and youth care is career laddered. Students can step off the program of study after one year, with a certificate in Early Childhood Education, or after two years, with a diploma in Child and Youth Care. In Canada, these credentials enable graduates to pursue employment in a range of human service fields including: child care, learning assistance, supportive care for special needs, respite, recreation, and health services coordination. If they choose, graduates can step on the career ladder again, continuing third and fourth-year studies, either through distance education or on-campus courses, leading to a degree in Child and Youth Care.

A distinctive record of success

An evaluation of the partnerships, involving interviews and questionnaires with 240 individuals directly involved in the programs, has provided clear evidence of several distinctive outcomes to date (Ball, 2000).

Educational and vocational success. Academic completion rates have been more than double the national average among Aboriginal students. Across the seven completed partnership programs to date, 77.3% of students have completed the full two years of university course work leading to a Diploma in Child and Youth Care from the University of Victoria. In contrast to the brain drain that many rural and on-reserve communities have experienced, 95% of program graduates have remained in their own communities to work after program completion. Among these, 65% have introduced new programs for children, youth, and families; 13% have joined the staff of existing services; and 11% have continued on the education career ladder, achieving or working towards a university degree. Community-based services initiated or staffed by program graduates include:

- out-of-home, centre-based child care centres
- in-home family daycares
- Aboriginal Head Start
- infant development programs
- home-school liaison programs
- parent support programs
- individualized supported child care for special needs
- language enhancement programs
- youth services
- school-based teacher assistance/learning support
- after-school care programs
- children s programs in women s safe houses

Generative capacity . The term generative capacity building captures the way that participants have experienced the program as a socially inclusive process that has led to reverberating ripple effects, including the creation of:

- new interpersonal relationships
- new ways of relating between cultural communities and mainstream institutions
- new ways of teaching and learning
- new knowledge
- new or hybrid models for supporting the well-being of children and families.

Community mobilization. Community impetus and organization to improve conditions for children and families have been important dimensions of program effectiveness identified by participants. Similarly, program graduates view success not only in terms of their academic achievements, but also in terms of their emerging roles as community advocates and respected resources for family members and friends. Community administrators have reported that the approach of First Nations Partnership Programs supported self-determination in their communities and the quest for renewed capacity at the community level to provide quality child care and development programs that embody First Nations cultural traditions, values and practices.

Social inclusion. Social inclusion describes the links that were strengthened between individuals and groups, including groups external to the community. As an outcome, social inclusion refers to recognition and participation of community members and of university partners in each other s venues and in the society at large. Creating professional networks and building upon mutual learning relationships were seen by evaluation participants as an important part of capacity building. The impact of the training partnerships upon social inclusion has been vividly illustrated when program graduates have taken active roles in regional and provincial conferences on Early Childhood Education, Aboriginal Child Care, and Child and Youth Mental Health. Graduates have spoken out on issues of funding for child care and training, licensing and monitoring of child and youth care facilities, child protection and risk assessment models and practices. Graduates have presented formally on a range of ideas for responding to cultural

diversity in child and youth care programs and they have showcased their own innovative programs in order to illustrate the generative process at work.

The central message of participants is that the true indicators of the success of their innovative program efforts are the many ways that their communities have renewed commitment to sustaining and transmitting cultural values, enhanced social cohesion, and increased capacity to understand and respond to the needs of children and youth. Consistent with the general trend in the child and youth care profession, one key has been to embed child and youth care training within the broad social ecologies of the participating communities. Another key is the Generative Curriculum Model, which opens up the foundations of what counts as valued knowledge and as best practice to make way for renewed and strengthened capacity among emerging service leaders to generate new and syncretic ways to meet their community s goals for child and youth well-being.

I believe that if I had taken these 17 students and offered the program off reserve, we would have had a success rate of 20 or 25 per cent. So what is the difference? Is it because we offered it here? That s one reason. But I think it is mainly due to the generative curriculum. What that implies to me is more than just a book curriculum, much more than academia. I think it is a total involvement of the community in ways such as bringing in Elders, making the community part of this. The way is was offered was unique.

(Jenny Whitstone, Post-secondary Coordinator, Onion Lake First Nation)

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