

Caregiver Training Curriculum – Aboriginal Perspectives



Pre-service Training Learning Outcomes

1. Provide prospective caregivers with an orientation to the foster care system (in care) in British Columbia;
2. Help participants decide if they are ready and willing to become caregivers at this point in their lives; and
3. Ensure basic readiness to receive first foster child/youth placement into their home.

Caring for Aboriginal Children

Knowledge & Requirements	Learning Objectives
<p>In this module learners explore the importance of understanding and integrating the child’s Aboriginal culture in ways that promote and enhance the well-being of Aboriginal Children in care and their families. Learners will become familiar with the diversity of Aboriginal cultures and Aboriginal peoples within their own region; as well they will learn how to access local Aboriginal resources.</p> <p>Why dedicate so much training towards Aboriginal children, their families, communities and Nations?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to the high percentages of Aboriginal children in care, and subsequently in the correctional system, we need to ensure there is a general level of understanding in order to properly support Aboriginal families to regain care of their children. By doing this we will encourage the community and Nation re-embrace their traditional values and beliefs so as to provide the best, most balanced level of care possible for this generations and others to come. • As shared in the ‘Learning & Teaching Accurate History’ section, we recognize our role in the disruption of the Aboriginal familial way of life with imposed Euro-centric values and beliefs over several generations. It is our responsibility to work towards reconciliation of these injustices in a prompt and respectful manner. • The <i>Aboriginal Policy & Practice Framework</i> is an overarching framework intended to improve outcomes for Aboriginal children, youth, families and communities through restorative policies and practices. This framework is to be applied to policy and practice involving Aboriginal children, youth and families on and off reserve regardless if they are being served by a Delegated Aboriginal Agency or the Ministry of Children and Family Development <p>Accurate History & Introduction to the Complexities of its Impacts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The importance of teaching a child/youth to understand the history of their specific Indigenous community in an age appropriate way • The impacts of historical events which influence the current realities facing Aboriginal people due to colonization, residential schools, the <i>Indian Act</i>, the 60’s scoop, current child welfare practices, etc. 	<p>Learners can:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand the need for restorative policies and practices which will support, encourage and honour Aboriginal peoples own cultural systems of caring and resiliency, as identified in the <i>Aboriginal Policy & Practice Framework</i>. 2. Identify a number of historical factors that contribute to the discrimination and oppression that Aboriginal people face in British Columbia generally (i.e.: Indian Act, Colonial practices, land issues, voting issues, residential schools, Indian hospitals, medical/dental experiments, etc.) 3. Understand of the inter-generational impacts of oppressive actions such as colonization, residential schools, the <i>Indian Act</i> and the Sixties Scoop, and current child welfare practices, etc. 4. Describe the current realities facing Aboriginal people as a result of traumas experienced through these oppressive actions. Understand the inter-generational impact of trauma experienced by Aboriginal peoples (i.e.: genetic memory of one generation being passed on to another generation). 5. Are aware of the relationship between Aboriginal language and identity and that there is no singular Aboriginal identity or culture. 6. Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of cultural teachings and ceremonies for the health of all Aboriginal children, families and communities, especially for those temporarily or permanently separated from their families.

<p>Understanding the Complexity of traditional territories of BC's Aboriginal communities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding the complexity of traditional territories of BC's Aboriginal communities. <p>Aboriginal Languages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding that there are 50 distinct language groups of BC's Indigenous communities, and the importance of language to culture and identity of Aboriginal peoples. <p>Culture is a Way of Life, Not an Event</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Culture meets the spiritual, mental, physical and emotional needs of an Indigenous child and should be a priority for the overall well-being of the child, family, community and Nation Importance of ensuring an Aboriginal child in care has natural and continual access to their specific cultural way of life while in care. <p>How to Support an Aboriginal child that has cultural connection to an Aboriginal Community outside of British Columbia</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding the unique needs of Aboriginal children that are culturally connected outside of British Columbia and how to facilitate connection with their home communities. Understanding the protocols that apply to Aboriginal children and families that reside in British Columbia but have a cultural connection to an out-of-province Aboriginal community. Respecting the protocols of the local community while still encouraging exploration into home community's culture, language and resources. <p>Metis Cultural Practices & Teachings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The history of Metis culture. Parental advocacy and support regarding identity struggles and micro-aggressions (skin tone/non-status/, etc.). <p>Communal Family Systems</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of communal family systems and the interests of family in comparison to the interests of the larger Indigenous community that the child belongs to. Differences between traditional communal parenting versus nuclear family system parenting. Importance of developing a relationship with birth family and community. <p>What is Expected of Caregivers Looking After Aboriginal Children</p> <p>Supporting Cultural Self-Esteem and Identity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize that an Aboriginal child's self-esteem, pride, identity and overall health are reinforced with their accessibility to cultural knowledge and experience through continued connection to their culture, community & family. Reinforce positive cultural ideas in the home with culturally appropriate books, language cards, and encouraging the speaking and learning of Aboriginal languages. How to adequately support an Aboriginal child in care that experiences racism. <p>How to work effectively for an aboriginal child in your home:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize that it is vital to an Aboriginal child's wellbeing that foster care providers work respectfully and cooperatively with the Aboriginal family, community and Nation. Fulfilling responsibilities to the Aboriginal child, family and communities as outlined in the child's cultural plans. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Recognize the similarities between their own culture and Aboriginal cultures to aid in understanding the uniqueness of Aboriginal cultures as it relates to their identity and sovereignty. Describe the benefits of supporting an Aboriginal child to maintain and/or develop their cultural knowledge and lifestyle. Describe the importance of supporting an Aboriginal child in care to work through racism, so as to maintain or increase pride and self-esteem in their cultural way of being. Demonstrate a beginning understanding of the differences between Aboriginal history and Metis history and be able to identify potential struggles of a Metis child in care. Speak generally to the differences between an Aboriginal communal family approaches to parenting versus a nuclear family system approach. Generally describe the importance of Nation level interest and involvement in an Aboriginal child's care plan and overall wellbeing. Describe ways to maintain and enhance family, community and cultural identity while caring for an Aboriginal child. Describe various Indigenous foods and how these foods are important to an local Indigenous child. Describe way to facilitate open, honest and respectful communication between social worker, child, family, community and Nation in order to meet an Aboriginal child's cultural needs. Understand the need to work towards reconciliation based on the Truth & Reconciliations Reports' recommendations. Describe what 'Inclusive Care Practices' are and how they are important to an Aboriginal child in care, as well as for their family, community and Nation. Have a general understanding of what cultural protocols are and why it is important to be aware of protocols while caring for an Aboriginal child.
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding the diversity of Aboriginal cultures by accessing information through local Aboriginal community about their distinct culture. • Understand the importance of clear, open and respectful communication between all parties working to support an Aboriginal child, family, community & Nation. <p>Moving Towards Truth & Reconciliation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning fostering practices that support recommendations made in the Truth & Reconciliation Report (TRC recommendations i.e.: Touchstones). Outline how to foster and/or work towards reconciliation as a foster parent. <p><u>Inclusive Care Practices Of Teachings & Expectations</u></p> <p>Cultural Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize that the diversity of Indigenous cultures and that child, family and caregiver participation in activities that are specific to the child’s traditional territory, or the territory they are residing in, is vital for holistic wellbeing of the child. <p>Cultural Agility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist the child in care to have a strong self-awareness so they can manage well in mainstream society and not lose sight of their own Indigenous cultural identity. • Ensure an understanding exists of local cultural protocols and how they apply to local Aboriginal people as well as other Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal visitors to the local Nations. <p>Respectful Communication</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring open, honest and courteous communication between Aboriginal communities, social workers, birth family, foster family and child in care. <p>Culturally Respectful Behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With the help of Aboriginal community supports (i.e.: elders, etc.) learn about and engage in cultural activities with children in care. • Be open to learning cultural protocols, family systems, etc. • Encourage and support birth families and children in developing cultural awareness. • Understand the negative impacts of being disrespectful of a child’s family, community and culture. • Creating cultural safety (i.e. creating an environment so that an Aboriginal child will not be shamed for cultural practices (i.e. – Are there Aboriginal language, culture and art books and/or other items in the home?). 	<p>19. Describe why their participation and engagement with the child’s culture and community is essential for the overall well-being of the child, family and Nation.</p> <p>20. Describe why it is important that there are sections of the Child, Family and Community Service Act (CFCS Act) that refer to Aboriginal children and communities.</p>
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