

# Introduction

On November 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup>, 2007, 33 participants representing First Nations, Métis, Inuit communities and the not-for-profit sector, came together for the Caring Across the Boundaries Workshops (CAB). The aim was to build relationships and understanding as a starting place for collaboration.

Detailed notes were taken by participants and facilitators documenting small and large group discussions. We have included these notes, unchanged, in this package. After the workshop, CAB organizing committee members reviewed workshop notes and reflected on our own collaborative process with the intent to pull out key themes and essential features of collaboration. These reflections and interpretations are also included in this package.

The information presented in this “Toolkit” outlines community needs as well as positive actions that could be taken by CAB participants, funders, government, program developers, and anyone who cares about improving our communities. We hope these Toolkits will be used to guide participants through the collaborations started at the CAB workshop.

In this Toolkit you will find workshop notes from:

- First Nations Participants’ Small Group Work: What are our strengths, needs and interests, requests, offerings and commitments
- Not-for-profit Participants’ Small Group Work: What are our strengths, needs and interests, requests, offerings and commitments
- First Nations Participants’ Small Group Discussion: What are our Roles in the Community
- Butch Dick’s presentation: Sharing his experience collaborating with the Greater Victoria School Board
- Presentation and Discussion of First Nations and Not-for-profit Participants’ Toolkits
- Essential Features of Collaboration Discussion
- Next Steps and Participant Action Commitments

We hope you find this Toolkit informative and helpful as you continue caring across the boundaries.

Sincerely,

Kerra Downey, Victoria Native Friendship Centre,  
Lisa George, Surrounded by Cedar Child and Family Services,  
Chelsea Peddle, Lisa Tait and Serena Vaillancourt, Volunteer Victoria  
and Jason Cole, the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Victoria

# What is Caring Across the Boundaries?

## **First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada**

The mission of the FNCFCS is “building helping communities”. They conduct research projects, maintain a FN child welfare data base, hold conferences and workshops, highlight best practices in FN child and family services, and act as an information resource to the community.

One of the ongoing projects promoted by FNCFCS is the **Caring Across the Boundaries** project. This is an interactive workshop that facilitates collaboration between First Nations child and family services agencies and the not-for-profit/voluntary sector. The program was developed based on research which found that First Nations children and youth on reserve have almost no access to the broad range of prevention and quality of life services provided by the non-profit/voluntary sector (FNCFCS, 2003).

A key finding of the research was that both First Nations child and family service providers and not-for-profit/voluntary sector agencies want to ensure First Nations children and youth are able to access culturally appropriate voluntary sector supports. Identified barriers to collaboration expressed by voluntary sector and First Nations agencies include:

- Lack of time
- Lack of networking opportunities
- Hesitancy to initiate contact
- Lack of funds
- Lack of knowledge, information and understanding about each other

## **What does CAB offer?**

CAB provides a process for participants to make new connections and create joint visions of future collaboration. During the Caring Across the Boundaries workshop, participants work together to identify strategies to overcome barriers to collaboration. The curriculum is designed to help First Nations and the not-for-profit/voluntary sector learn more about each other in a safe, supportive environment and begin breaking down barriers to collaboration. Education about colonization, opportunities for reflection, and special networking activities made Victoria's CAB a unique experience.