

First Nations  
Children and Youth

# FORUM

Château Frontenac, Québec  
February, 19-20-21, 2008



## Final Report

June 2008



FIRST NATIONS OF QUEBEC AND LABRADOR  
HEALTH AND SOCIAL SERVICES COMMISSION

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# Review of the event

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## Words from the Executive Director

On behalf of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission, I would first and foremost like to thank all those who participated in this first edition of the First Nations Child and Youth Forum who made this event a success.

More than 250 participants stemming from multiple backgrounds were brought together to reflect and focus on the important challenges that the “First Nations children and youth” are confronted with. In addition to fostering discussions between a wide range of individuals who came from the communities (leaders, directors, interveners, etc.), we had the opportunity to share our realities with our Quebec citizen peers who came for personal reasons or as representatives of external organisations.

Returning to our children the conditions that ensure their development and guarantee their future – this was our motivation! We discussed painful realities of colonisation, uprooting, misery and poverty. We spoke of identity, pride, self-esteem, tradition, language and culture. We remembered our past, we discussed our present day realities and we dreamed of our future. We experienced memorable days, united for a same purpose, propelled by the same desire to make profound changes.

What I will certainly retain first and foremost from the forum is the need expressed by all of the participants to discuss and work in solidarity and in a collaborative fashion.

As can be observed when reading this report, the challenges are great and we must act in a diligent manner. Many solutions are targeted and numerous actions are possible both locally and regionally. From our perspective, the results of this forum are precious since they will guide us in our strategic choices and in the development of our work plan for the next three years. In the 2007-2017 First Nations of Quebec Health and Social Services Blueprint, *Accelerating Change... Closing the Gaps*, the children were identified as being a priority issue. This forum on children and youth constitutes a first step in this direction. Henceforth, it will be the driving force behind all our actions!

In closing, I would like to thank the Regional Chief, Mr. Ghislain Picard, and the Chiefs who were present during the event for their support and I would like to underline the excellent collaboration of the Assembly of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Secretariat as well as the partner Commissions and organisations, particularly the First Nations Education Council. I would also like to underline the remarkable work of the speakers who came to share their knowledge and vision. I would also like to express my gratitude to our funding partners: Health Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and the *Ministère de la santé et des services sociaux du Québec*.

Finally, I would like to take advantage of this opportunity to pay my respects to all of the staff members of the FNQLHSSC, who worked in a remarkable and sustained manner, day after day, and without whom this forum could not have taken place.

Thanks to all!

Guyline Gill

Executive Director

# *Our objectives*

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## *The context of the Child and Youth Forum*

The First Nations Child and Youth Forum was part of the 2007-2017 First Nations of Quebec Health and Social Services Blueprint – Closing the Gaps... Accelerating Change which underlines the importance to act with respect to children and youth. This event was an opportunity for the concerned organisations and interveners to gather around speakers and workshops that focus on children and youth, which not only allowed to make an observation of the situation, but also to reflect together on the changes to be made and how to make them.

## *The objectives of the Children and Youth Forum*

The primary objective of the First Nations Child and Youth Forum was to foster the healthy development of children. The specific objectives, as described in the supporting document, are summarised as follows:

- Provide information on the challenges related to the situation of the First Nations children;
- Mobilise all the participants towards a vision of the future;
- Identify and increase awareness of the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities of First Nations;
- Understand the need for a multidisciplinary approach and strategic planning;
- Provide adequate tools for the communities and organisations;
- Foster networking and discussions.

# Summary of the presentations

Tuesday, February 19, 2008: From yesterday to today

## *We were children*

This first section of the forum had the objective to remind people that children have always held a privileged place within the First Nations societies and that our cultures include all the elements that are favourable to their harmonious development. We also addressed the relationship that developed with the first settlers, the resulting cultural shock as well as the impacts on the following generations.

We must learn lessons from the past and modify the relationships that exist between us and the dominating culture in such a way as to enable us to conserve and value our identity reference points that are essential to the well-being of our children, while adapting ourselves to the realities of our current era.

## Welcoming words

Ghislain Picard, Chief, AFNQL  
Anne St-Onge, President, FNQLHSSC  
Guylaine Gill, Executive Director, FNQLHSSC

Mr. Picard underlined that this Forum is a first concrete action, particularly because the situation of the youth is unsatisfactory and that we must ask ourselves questions regarding the future of our children in the years to come. We must maintain our focus on our future and the future of our children. This reflection on our past leads us to learn lessons from the past and consider modifying the relationships that exist between the dominating culture and that of First Nations, in such a way as to enable the latter to conserve and value the identity reference points that are essential to the well-being of our children, while also adapting their culture to the inherent realities of the modern day.

In the same direction, Ms. Anne St-Onge underlined that the desire for change must stem from the heart of the community and that it is necessary for our actions to transmit this will to our children. Ms. Guylaine Gill, who presented the First Nations Health Circle, detailed the holistic vision of health, as was also mentioned by Dr. Stanley Vollant at the end of the day on Tuesday. She also insisted, as did many other speakers, on the fact that the children occupied, and still hold, a very special place in Aboriginal culture. She defended the idea that children are a gift from the spirits and that it is necessary to take good care of them, for if we do not, they return to the spirit world. This is also what Dr. Vollant tells us in the words of an Elder who told him: "Since they took the tenderness from our lives, we have become sicker." Since the children are the tenderness in our lives, it is imperative to protect them and their families.

## Reminiscence: return to the roots

The great Alexandre MacKenzie demonstrated the importance of a return to the roots – to the harmonious integration into the environment and tradition. His message, as for many others, was that the child is at the centre of life in the home and the community. Children develop in a healthy manner if they are emancipated and free within a healthy family and community that has a profound respect for others in the environment.

## Culture shock

Serge Bouchard, Ph. D., anthropologist

Mr. Bouchard entitled his presentation "Reparation of the world" and proposed that children are the reparation of the worlds, but also added that children are also the scandal of the world when they are subjected to maltreatment, famine, war, poverty, etc.

It is through a review of 400 years of history that he addresses us and provides us with a lecture on what we are – for we are what others make of us. We are always living under the watch of others, and it is this watch that dictates what we are.

He borrowed the words of the observers who arrived in the New World who noticed that the American Indian societies loved their children profoundly; that they were at the centre of life – simply because children are a matter of life or death for a civilisation, for a culture.

And how is a culture destroyed? It is by taking its children, for they are the vessel that can be moulded for their benefit or for the benefit of others. They are like plaster in the hands of a sculptor. This is precisely what occurred with the Indian Residential Schools, stated Serge Bouchard. He called this situation "De-Indianisation" – a strange word that is just as surprising as the word "resilience", which he used to describe the incredible strength deployed by individuals to survive over the centuries. If First Nations were unable to fully develop, they did however have the capacity to resist.

In reference to the title of his presentation, he said that when cultures meet, positive or negative things occur. However, for the well-being of the children, as well as adults, four cultural conditions are necessary:

- We must know who we are;
- It is necessary to have the strength to accomplish things – physical and mental health;
- It is necessary to appreciate and have the curiosity to know others;
- Tools and education are required.

Mr. Bouchard, like many others such as Mr. Pierre LePage, insisted on the fact that knowing who we are is writing your history. But also, it is necessary to relate our history to our children so that they are proud and know other heroes other than those found on television or in video games. Children must be given what they need in order to live in this world: pride, love, luck and joy.

Mr. Bouchard ended his presentation by stating that for their part, the children must understand that their parents survived a nightmare and that everything must be done. They must be provided with the hope that the world of tomorrow will not be the same as it was for their parents.

## Between Two Ages

For several years, we have been participating in a slow improvement in our relationships with Quebec society. However, numerous institutional, cultural and social obstacles endure and have a negative impact on the well-being of our children. The objective of this section is to report on the situation of our children and youth while presenting the main observations and identifying the difficulties and obstacles that must be overcome in order to improve their well-being and, especially, to ensure that the situation does not deteriorate.

We have seen that ignorance and prejudices also manifest through institutional relationships and foster tacit discrimination towards our peoples. Taking down the institutional obstacles that are presented by society will become one of the challenges to be met for the future of our children. This challenge will not only be present in terms of education and youth protection, but also regarding the preventive and curative approach in terms of health, which must be undertaken through a holistic approach that integrates the physical, mental, spiritual and social dimensions of each individual.

### Relations between First Nations and the Québécois: constraints and obstacles

Pierre Lepage, Commission des droits de la personne

Like Mr. Serge Bouchard, who unveiled the lives of several little known American Indian heroes, Mr. Pierre Lepage first of all reflected on an invisible part of First Nations history - the history of the cooperative relationships between First Nations and the White people. It is a remarkable history that was erased, forgotten and replaced by the recent history of confrontational events. He specified that this recent period is characterised by a process that is twofold.

First and foremost, it is a period that is characterised by the criminalisation of Aboriginal activities. He illustrated his point by referring to the salmon fishing war. Even if afterwards the governments were able to reach agreements with the First Nations, the fact remains that the harm was done, because all the accusing actions and talk of First Nations crime were carried out under the watchful eyes of the children. The children were the daily witnesses of the repression and police operations, but also of the testimonies and reports broadcasted by radio and television. Secondly, Mr. Pierre Lepage addressed the Oka crisis, which portrayed negative images of privileged individuals who have special rights.

He explained that from the onset of the British Conquest (1760) the Indians were vanishing from the school textbooks, only to reappear during the Oka crisis. Once again, the issue of self-knowledge and knowing who we are was discussed. The absence of knowledge, or simply misunderstanding, as was taught in the school textbooks right up until the 1980s were filled by these negative images of people who have special privileges or even people who were beyond the law – such as criminals.

The work in terms of rebuilding forgotten or lost identities and the healing of the resulting injuries, according to Mr. Lepage, must happen through awareness programs for the new Aboriginal realities in order to create another vision – another self-image. He ended his presentation with the following sentence to reflect on: "We do not have to feel guilty about mistakes – we only have to make sure that we do not repeat them. People need to have alternatives."

## Situation status – facts and statistical data

The presentations that followed focused on the current situation and the undeniable connection that exists between the socio-economic conditions and the health of communities. *Dr. Alain Poirier, National Director of the Santé publique du Québec and Assistant Deputy Minister at the Ministère de la santé et des services sociaux du Québec* presented the results of a recent study of the Quebec government on the socio-economic determinants that affect the health of children. *As for the Executive Director of the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission, Ms. Guylaine Gill, and the Social Services Coordinator, Mr. Richard Gray*, they outlined the portrait of the situation of the First Nations children who live in Quebec. Finally, *Dr. Stanley Vollant, Director of the Aboriginal program at the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Ottawa*, presented the reality from different angles while providing specificities on the health of children. He insisted on the harms that are affecting them as well as on the urgency to take action.

In turn, they each came to present the status of the situation, which highlighted the enormous gaps that still persist today between the situation for the Quebec children in general and those of the First Nations. As was underlined by Ms. Gill, we are always perplexed when faced with statistics that paint a difficult situation. How far must we go? Must we take the risk of discouraging people by disclosing everything? It is important to acknowledge that it takes a lot of determination and conviction to speak of these things, even if they are sometimes dramatic, frightening or discouraging.

It is not important to indicate all of the statistics that were presented during this afternoon<sup>1</sup>. Let us simply underline that the presentations converge and underline:

- Rates of chronic diseases: Type II diabetes, obesity, arthritis, heart disease;
- Rates of psychological distress and mental problems: suicide;
- Service access difficulties;
- Less availability in terms of prevention services: dental, vision, etc.

But also:

- Low birth weight, infant mortality;
- High rate of reports and intervention by the youth protection: violence, abuse and neglect and placements outside of the community;
- Physical injuries among the youth;
- Behavioural problems and anti-social behaviour among the youth;
- Addictions to drugs and other substances among the youth.

As for the socio-economic data, all the speakers underlined that poverty is a determining factor. The level of income is lower than the average of the Quebecois or Canadian population. This is dramatic for the youth, for childhood is a period during which a persistent state of poverty has dire consequences all throughout their lives. Among other things, this impact is measured in terms of a lower life expectancy, but also physical, psychological, spiritual and social well-being.

The socio-economic data of First Nations indicates that they are subject to a lower quality level in terms of life conditions than the general population, to school failure and drop-outs, but also poor lifestyles (nutrition, smoking, etc.). The homes are overcrowded and in poor condition because of chronic governmental

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<sup>1</sup> The presentations can be viewed on the Commission's website located at: [www.cssspnql.com](http://www.cssspnql.com)

underfunding, while the social and economic context that is prevalent in the families and communities is most often characterized by poverty, unemployment and idleness.

All agree that there is a need to act without delay, since the status quo means an accelerated deterioration of the First Nations' situation – a demographic bomb, or, in the words of Dr. Vollant: “considering the demographic growth, the worst in terms of health is yet to come” – since the birth rate is higher than that of the Quebec average and the average age of the population is younger.

So what must be done? We must go beyond what already exists, reduce poverty, offer the same services to all the populations of Quebec, says Dr. Poirier. For their part, Ms. Gill and Mr. Gray affirm that it is necessary to consider all the problems as inter-connected and to ensure that actions are taken while considering the realities that are specific to First Nations. It is important not to work only on a single problem and, if necessary, break away from the formulas that propose these ways of operating. It is important to take into account the historical and contextual elements. We must react and retake control, but also work together in the same direction.

Wednesday, February 20, 2008: Our Children, Our Future

## *The changes to be made*

Our children are living in difficult conditions. The homes are overcrowded and in poor condition because of chronic governmental underfunding, while the social and economic context that is prevalent in our families and communities is often characterized by poverty, unemployment and idleness. We have seen that faced with the structural obstacles that are before us, it becomes essential to develop innovative strategies that are likely to compensate for the harmful effects on the well-being of our youth. These strategies require community-based mobilisation, multisectorial approaches and the establishment of partnerships between the concerned authorities and interveners who work both inside and outside of the communities.

### Opening words

Chief Steeve Mathias, Winneway - Long Point First Nation

Chief Mathias started by expressing his frustration and sadness upon listening to the statistical data, as well as the historical portrait that was painted by the presenters. He reaffirmed that our youth is our treasure and expressed the desire to achieve a social development that considers the needs of the communities and the youth. He believed that it is necessary to change our relationships with both the provincial and federal governments.

### Acting on the future of the children

Gilles Lamoureux, Youth Intervention Lecturer, Université du Québec à Chicoutimi

At the beginning of his presentation, Mr. Lamoureux said that the children are a mirror and our future. Children are precious and they are our natural wealth. It is the children who bring us together. Mr. Lamoureux defended the idea that children are not responsible for the difficult situation and the current problems and yet they feel the consequences and therefore suffer without comprehending the causes.

Among the approaches that allow improving the well-being of the children, Mr. Lamoureux believes that it is necessary to develop a common understanding of the situation and place the emphasis on relationships between people. The youth are experiencing a crisis situation in which they do not know who they are or where they are going. Time is speeding up for them, a generational clash and a mutation of families and relationships between the generations. If it is hard to be a parent, it is also hard to be a child when they witness the suffering of adults on a daily basis. It is difficult to be a child who carries the burden of the adults and is thus deprived from childhood and its innocence.

And yet, the traditional values of First Nations can be a barrier against the values of the western world: harmony with nature, freedom, clan, family, mutual aid, spirituality, balance and adaptability can prevent individualism, selfishness, appearance and competition. Mr. Lamoureux beseeched us to pay close attention to the youth, since everything takes place between the ages of 0 to 6 years. He described the stages of development for children as well as the consecutive needs for his/her development and well-being. In his opinion, it is the family that has the primary responsibility to provide for the child's needs, consolidate values, provide the child with tools in order to face the all of life's challenges and the existential questions. Consequently, it is necessary to support and help the parents in performing their role.

Children need to receive unconditional love. They need to be respected as complete human beings, to be accepted even if they are not perfect, to be understood and listened to. But they also must understand that they live in a complex world that, sometimes, is even too much for adults.

As an intervener, he took from his own practical experience the importance to develop relationships of trust with the children and adolescents, which is a measuring stick in terms of healthy relationships. It is important to trust children and obtain their involvement in the solution finding process.

He said that children need to dream. But what do First Nations children dream about? They dream about feeling secure, for they share our own insecurities. And, just like us, they dream about having access to quality services – services that are appropriate for their needs and those of their families.

Mr. Lamoureux provided a possible solution in terms of actions: for the well-being of the children, it is necessary to work together through an innovative approach and a proximity practice. We must confront our fears, our prejudices and our principles. We must also start with the whole person rather than with the symptoms. It is important not to judge the person based on behaviours, but rather see the human-being behind those behaviours. It is important to have a holistic vision and tell the children that they are not to blame for what is taking place in their community.

### The conditions for success

**Cindy Blackstock, Executive Director, First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada**

Ms. Blackstock started by stating that the solutions to the problems that First Nations are experiencing can be found in the wisdom of our ancestors and not in the principles of child protection that the western system proposes. This system enters the picture when the family is no longer able to ensure the safety and well-being of the children. Thus, the children are removed and placed outside of their environment, outside of the communities, outside of the cultural group. Ms. Blackstock stated that it is in the First Nations communities that the placement rate is highest and estimated that 40% of children will experience a placement period over the course of their lives.

She maintained that the cause of these high rates of placement is not to be found among the children, but is rather caused by structurally-related issues – with poverty first and foremost among them. In fact, the children are placed because the parents are poor, live in insanitary conditions, overcrowded homes along with a high rate of unemployment. These children, as is the case for their parents, do not have access to the services and resources that would enable them to improve their life conditions.

Ms. Blackstock observed that there exists a two-pronged system: one for the non-Aboriginals and the other for the First Nations. It is the latter that is underfunded, underequipped and deliberately cast-off by the different levels of government. In order to remedy this situation, she proposed to act in accordance with five principles:

- Self-determination;
- Focus on culture and language;
- The holistic approach;
- Actions that target the structural causes of the problems;
- The fight against discrimination and the search for equality fostering respect and harmony.

Ms. Blackstock insisted on the fact that it is important to start dreaming again for yourself, your children, the community and to find the tools and resources to achieve those dreams, reconcile with the past and heal your wounds – and then move forward. She emphasized the fact that talking alone is insufficient. Actions are necessary and concrete actions must be demanded from the government, such as Jordan's Principle<sup>2</sup>, which stipulates that the government that is contacted first must prioritise funding services for people who are experiencing problems without delay and then solve jurisdictional problems afterwards.

## Conjugating education, health and social services

Lise Bastien, Director, First Nations Education Council

Ms. Bastien also addressed the theme of underfunding of services that puts us in a position of constant failure. She stated that it is imperative to put pressure on the governments at the national and international levels so that our rights and needs are recognized. But it will also be necessary to convince the Canadian and Quebecois populations, as well as our communities, of the need to mobilize ourselves in order to fulfill our needs.

In order to reach our objectives, it is therefore important that people communicate with each other within our communities, because everyone has the development of children and their well-being at heart. It is by communicating that we will be able to more effectively integrate the services, since often the services that are provided have different approaches. This situation destabilises both the children and the parents alike. The integrated approach is a guarantee of an improved well-being for the children. However, it is vital to overcome certain obstacles:

- Various policies according to the different levels of government;
- The absence of community-based structuring policies;
- The lack of resources;
- The burden of habits and the fear of change;
- Human factors, conflicts, prejudices and egos.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://www.fncfcs.com/more/jordansPrinciple\\_f.php](http://www.fncfcs.com/more/jordansPrinciple_f.php)

Ms. Bastien stated that in order to overcome these obstacles, it is necessary to make important changes in our way of being, doing and thinking. In a concrete manner, this means:

- An obligation to work together;
- An obligation to obtain results;
- The development of a cooperation protocol;
- Setting aside of interpersonal conflicts and focus our objectives on what is best for the children.

## Community Mobilisation

Roch Riendeau, First-Line Services Coordinator, Kitcisakik First Nation  
Marvin Penosway, Youth Centre Coordinator, Kitcisakik First Nation

Mr. Riendeau and Mr. Penosway discussed their experience in terms of mobilisation in the community of Kitcisakik in the Abitibi region. It is a good illustration of the recommendations that Ms. Bastien made during her presentation. Beyond the projects carried out in this environment, this presentation demonstrated that individuals are able to take responsibilities that go beyond the immediate skills that we attribute to them. Getting involved in a project allows for learning responsibility and to surpass one's limits. Individuals need to surpass their limits and it is important to provide them with the opportunity and means to show what they are able to accomplish. They need to share the impacts of their actions, successes and projects with others.

Mr. Riendeau and Mr. Penosway stated that it is imperative to get people involved in the identification, comprehension and search for solutions to their problems. People must be reached out to and it is important to be present among the population, lend a hand and reach out to people wherever they may be. It is a matter of focusing on positive actions and mobilizing people into concrete projects. It is therefore necessary to provide a sense of responsibility to the players by allowing them to roll up their sleeves and get to work, and thus learning to work together while using the strengths of the environment.

## *Solutions within our Reach*

As First Nations, we have always had a holistic vision of health which leads us to consider, both in the research process for the causes of diseases as well as the remedies to be administered, the physical, mental, spiritual and social dimensions of an individual. For a long time, this vision did not correspond to that of society in general which tended to address health problems and social issues in accordance with a sectorised and compartmentalised approach that correspond to scientific disciplines and various specialties. However, generally speaking, we are now seeing the gradual development of multidisciplinary approaches that allow for focusing on various facets of a given problem in a simultaneous fashion in order to better address it as a whole, which supports us in our affirmation of our vision of health, our knowledge and the imperative changes that must be made.

Through workshops that foster a multidisciplinary approach between partners, not only did they reflect on the stages and conditions of change, but also finding concrete and durable solutions as well as identifying the priority actions in order to improve the future perspectives for our children.

## Multidisciplinarity and Global Approach

Gilbert Gagnon, Organisational Development Advisory, FDO Axion

All throughout the Forum, the interveners raised the need for working together. Mr. Gagnon therefore proposed a definition for the term multidisciplinarity: an approach that consists of pooling visions, expertises and resources in order to establish the reality and identify possible solutions. It is by working together that it is possible to establish a reality in a satisfying manner. For if the problems are multiple – so are the solutions. In his opinion, there are many ways to identify the solution: a multi-sectored approach, interdisciplinarity, transdisciplinarity, holistic approach and systemic approach. It is thus important to change our practice, since a linear or compartmentalized approach does not give the best results.

On the other hand, it is important to be aware that a holistic approach is not easy, for it demands effort to correct bad habits. Furthermore, we cannot apply all our efforts into a single way of doing things. Mr. Gagnon offered a reminder that the holistic approach is not the universal solution and sometimes certain tasks are more effectively accomplished through a linear approach. Therefore, he suggested five dimensions that must be considered:

- Mobilising around a common objective;
- Structuring data collection;
- Setting one's personal and professional ego aside and having a certain humility;
- Being committed to personally being part of the solution and not only the problem;
- The holistic approach is a matter of mobilisation and solidarity.

## Simultaneous Workshops: Priority Solutions and Actions

At the end of the day, the Forum participants participated in workshops on four themes: school drop-outs, obesity among children, child placements and the suicide rate among the youth. The participants identified the specific causes for each of the problems and proposed concrete solutions to the difficulties experienced in the communities.

For each theme, the participants found the causes and solutions in accordance with various perspectives: social, health, education, spiritual and political. Nonetheless, in all cases, whether discussing the causes or possible solutions, four dimensions were addressed: the individual and his/her personal history, the family and its internal and external dynamics, the community and its relations with the First Nations individuals and families as well as the community players and institutions. In annexe, you will find summaries of the workshops.

Thursday, February 21, 2008: Becoming What We Are

## *Becoming What We Are: Finding Our Way*

We have a strong identity upon which we want to focus our relationships with our children and youth. This identity is the basis for the personal development of the members of our communities that will enable us to be fulfilled and express ourselves integrally, thereby bringing us to actively participate in community life and getting genuinely involved in the social and economic aspects of life, but also in society as a whole – while providing our unique and invaluable contribution.

This Forum concluded with a panel of experts who shared their perspectives on the place that is currently being provided to the children and youth. They also offered their views on the future perspectives and the conditions to achieve a genuine improvement of the situation in accordance with their respective fields of expertise and competency.

As we were able to observe over the course of the previous days, we possess all the necessary requirements to ensure the healthy development and well-being of our children. It is particularly by relying on the sources of our identity, in order to find the values that ensure personal and social harmony, that we will be able to ensure that our children have the foundations necessary to allow them to express who they are both individually and collectively.

### Opening Words

Chief Raphaël Picard, Betsiamites First Nation

Chief Picard addressed the demographic explosion that has presented a significant challenge for the First Nations. These challenges are, among other things, to find the competent people who are dedicated to the education of the children, professionals, and assistants. Another challenge is to include single-parent families in community life. There is also the challenge of social cohesion and its effects on children, as well as the need to act in such a way as to avoid the intergenerational transmission of negligence.

The identity of the child and youth is moulded from cultural images that are inherited from the past, but also from significant means imported by media and technologies. However for First Nations, culture and language are the basis for identity. Thus, Chief Picard urged to teach the traditional concepts and practices that historically governed the lives of First Nations. In order to do this, it is necessary to have a global educational approach that provides pride and dignity.

Finally, Chief Picard encouraged people to give themselves the means to practice sovereignty over our territory. In his opinion, sovereignty means setting ourselves apart from the laws that are imposed by others. At the same time, it is necessary to celebrate the resilience of the First Nations people.

### Identity, Personal Development and Social Participation

Jacob Flores, Clinical Consultant in Psychology

For Mr. Flores, dignity is what we do – it is what defines us. How do we find our dignity and the feeling of dignity? Undertaking a process alone is possible, yet exhausting. Mr. Flores insisted on the fact that it is important to undertake this process together. However, to take this voyage, we must travel beyond our own limits. And because the voyage is a long one, it is important to do it in the company of the people who have left traces; the traces of our past and our parents that are a part of us.

Today, children are forcing us to redefine our lives and keep our promises. It is not what we say, but what we do that defines us. If you promise something to your child, that you will do something with him/her, you must do it because you are defined, in his eyes and in the eyes of the community, by what you will do and what you will not do. What do children remember? They remember us because we are the traces that life records in their memories. They do not remember what we said, but rather our acts as well as our unfulfilled promises.

What about relationships with others? Mr. Flores stated that they must be marked with respect and awareness for their needs. Yet, these relationships must also be marked with humility by knowing that we cannot accomplish anything on an individual basis and that we need to work with others. It is therefore important to understand that humility is not a weakness. We must remain patient and take the necessary time - and not rush things. A hurried spirit cannot feel any emotions and therefore cannot listen to others. We must value gradual progress, since it allows for contact with others. It is possible to be responsible, energetic, productive and effective while taking your time. We have been the victims of those who are single-minded while only listening to their own voices and force us to live in accordance with precepts that are not our own.

Mr. Flores went even further, by saying that the traditional lifestyle of First Nations is the solution to the world's problems. It is important to heal the wounds and not look for escape by way of alcohol and drugs. Everything that we need to know can be found right before our eyes. He/she who knows how to observe and listen, knows the truth. But it is vital to take our time and be indulgent with respect to others and ourselves. Progress must advance gradually; each step must be considered and taken in such a way as to not leave anyone behind. Hold out your hand, because one day you will need the hand of others.

## Panel

David McLaren, Health Director, Eagle Village First Nation

Anne St-Onge, Health and Social Services Director, Betsiamites First Nation

Katy Black, Early Childhood Services, Manawan First Nation

John Martin, Political Advisor, AFNQL

Daniel Nolett, Director General, Odanak Band Council

The issue of leadership was a concern on behalf of the panellists, who considered that the involvement of leaders is essential for community action – an involvement that must take the form of increased presence in the activities. The Chiefs and other leaders should therefore be visible, according to the panellists.

The parents, youth and interveners must develop strong and solid connections that allow establishing a climate of trust. They must share the information and cooperate to find realistic and applicable solutions. But it is always necessary to respect and benefit from the experience of the parents. There is also a need for good communications – communication directly with the parents – not only through indirect measures such as by telephone or in writing.

We must focus on the needs of people and be consistent in this practice. In a concrete manner, it is necessary to be able to step back, go back to the field, carry out a follow-up process and add it to the planning of a project. It is essential to have clear, realistic and measurable objectives. We must ensure the engagement of people in the projects and periodically renew the commitment of all the partners.

## Summary and Conclusion

Germain Dulac, Ph. D.

Dr. Germain Dulac, Sociologist, provided a brief reminder of the main themes addressed over the course of the three days. He insisted on five main ideas:

### A global, integrated and holistic approach

There is a connection in the way of thinking among the people who presented during the Forum - even though they did not always use the same words to describe a given reality. It is undeniable that the participants agreed upon the idea of a global and holistic vision.

### Harmonious integration of tradition

We must transmit our genuine history to the children so that they can be proud and learn about other heroes besides those found on the television or in videogames. They give our children what they need in order to live in this world: pride.

### Integration and determined confrontation of the First Nations realities

Faced with numbers that paint a difficult situation for First Nations, there is a need for a high level of determination and conviction in order to address the realities and change them, even if they are sometimes dramatic, often frightening and even discouraging.

### Poverty is a major determinant

All of the presenters underlined that poverty is a determining factor for the well-being of the children. Children are precious – they are our wealth. It is the children who unite us. The children are not responsible for the difficult situation and the problems, but they feel the impacts and suffer without understanding the sources.

### Acting together collaboratively

The elements upon which we must place an emphasis are: self-determination, focus on culture and language, holistic approach, actions that target the structural causes of problems, fight against discrimination and the search for equality that fosters respect and autonomy. We must consider all the problems as being interrelated and ensure that we act while considering the realities that are specific to First Nations. It is imperative to pressure the national and international governments to recognize our rights and our needs. However, we must also convince the non-Aboriginal populations, as well as our communities, of the need to mobilize.

## Conclusion

The participants left the First Nations Children and Youth Forum proud and aware that our traditional values can be a barrier against the values of the contemporary western world. Harmony with nature, freedom, clan, family, mutual aid, spirituality, balance and adaptability can prevent individualism, selfishness, appearances and the competition that undermine the life of the youth. The participants will take from this Forum the fact that they hold these lives in their hands, as well as the means and the strength to make great things of these lives and provide for a bright future.

# After the Forum

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After the Forum, several actions that foster the healthy development of children were set forth.

## Assembly of Chiefs of First Nations of Quebec and Labrador

First of all, during the week following the holding of the Forum, the Chiefs gathered in assembly and underlined the FNQLHSSC's initiative in terms of the organisation of this Forum that was a uniting and mobilising initiative. Furthermore, they decreed the year 2008 as a year where priorities were to be focused on our children and our youth.

## First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission

For the development of our three-year strategic plan that follows up on the 2007-2017 First Nations of Quebec Health and Social Services Blueprint, we will carry out the analysis of all of the recommendations that were made during the workshops that were held in the framework of this Forum. These recommendations will allow us to ensure improved support to the communities as well as cohesion in our actions.

Also, we will focus on ensuring support for parenting skills over the course of the next year. With that in mind, all of the sectors of the FNQLHSSC will work in collaboration on the development of tools in order to more effectively support the First Nations interveners and families.

## Foundation

A foundation will be established with various partners in order to fight poverty among First Nations. This foundation will be able to fund projects that have the objective of improving the conditions of life and the health of First Nations families and children.

## First Nations Head Start (FNHS)

Since this year the First Nations Head Start (FNHS) program will be celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the FNQLHSSC will assist Health Canada – Regional Office in the organisation of an event that will bring together the interveners and educators who work in the FNHS sites and with the families with children between the ages of 0 to 6 years. This will be an excellent opportunity to focus on the issue of the future of our children.

## Special Needs

Following the submission of a report entitled "Regional Report of the Situation of the Clientele between the Ages of 0 to 6 years among the First Nations of Quebec", the FNQLHSSC will develop an action plan for the children who have special needs.

## Traditional Adoption

Finally, a regional working group on traditional adoption was created in order to proceed with the analysis of traditional adoption practices within the Aboriginal communities in Quebec. The final report will address the conditions, effects and means that can be implemented in the eventuality that the provincial government recognizes traditional adoption practices in these environments.

# Annexe 1 -

## Workshop Summary Tables

### Workshops on School Drop-out

<u>SCHOOL DROP-OUT</u> SOCIAL perspective	
Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Peer pressure Leaving the community to continue studies Adaptation problems Inferiority complex Prejudices Racism Isolation Education level of the parents Violence at school Child neglect Behavioural approach to the detriment of the individual Family context Suppression Bullying at school Parental addictions Parental model not always present Indian Residential Schools Preschool-elementary school symptoms Extra-curricular quality Responsibility of teachers Questioning Motivation Power/Adapting Language - making efforts Repercussions at various levels Higher learning not valued Pregnancies Poverty	Colleges in the communities Promote/give value Educate the population regarding FN realities Provide social support to the student off-reserve Parental support (mechanisms to foster parental involvement in the school environment) Involvement of parents in the school Follow-up of the child's progress Listening to the children Early prevention Discussing racism and its impacts Educating the parents on the school's role Have good models Eliminating stereotypes Discuss the FN with the other populations of Quebec and Canada Develop our own history books Balance between the family and the community
<u>SCHOOL DROP-OUT</u> HEALTH perspective	
Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Children with special needs Desperate youth (mental health) Lack of hope or dreams Teen pregnancy Addictions Diseases and health of families Obesity Drugs Nutrition Problems (vision, hearing...) Limitations Physical and psychological trauma ADHD/CT Handicaps Primary need unfulfilled Mental health depression Diagnosing of problems Non-diagnosed FAS Taking charge of the elderly by the children	Adequate professional/material resources Prevention of diseases and health problems Adapted intervention plans Individual follow-up of the students/educators Less malnutrition in the schools Discussing family problems Teaching the traditional system Social habitat Having ownership of homes

<u>SCHOOL DROP-OUT</u> ECONOMIC perspective	
Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Lack of funding – student allocations Hiring of specialised personnel Indexation for isolation regions Confining to the reserve, lack of resources in the community Overcrowding Lack of employment (unemployment) Grim future perspectives Lack of information regarding the workforce Not enough support for individuals (employability) \$ for resources Inadequate management of \$ Adaptation to the urban setting Poverty	Access to housing Long-term employment Descent salaries Identify the problems caused by overcrowding Provide orientation to the students Develop a spirit of entrepreneurship and support dreams Networking Work - study ATE Stages of observation Promotion of promising employment in the region Preparing the changing of the guard Mentorship + \$ financial assistance for the students Mobilising the community elites
<u>SCHOOL DROP-OUT</u> Perspective SCOLAIRE	
Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Poor involvement on behalf of teachers (i.e. Ends at 3 pm) Education program is not adapted Cultural conflict Racism among non-Aboriginal teachers in the community No extracurricular in the community Learning of the native language Academic impact during the transition to the Quebec environment Access to schools Child does not adapt to the school environment Interest profile Language at school	Early Childhood prevention Quebec establishments must adapt their system to the realities of FN Implementation of educational resources School assistance system (homework help) Parental responsibility Adaptation des programmes aux PN (subjects) Make school enjoyable Life environment Activities Support system between parents and students Hiring of qualified FN teachers
<u>SCHOOL DROP-OUT</u> SPIRITUAL perspective	
Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Loss of identity - uprooting Values and traditions Loss of points of reference in the urban setting Cultural conflict – cultural shock Nomadic life – sedentary life, different culture Sedentarisation Lifestyle changes Spiritual search Educational values Hunter vs. student roles Beliefs Family Social problems Violence Negligence Language	Recover identity Educational model Spiritual awareness among the parents (for transmission to the youth) Mobilisation Transmission of values between generations Respect for the child's choices Help the children to know themselves better Model – change of values Education
<u>SCHOOL DROP-OUT</u> POLITICAL perspective	
Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Forces program – obligation to implement Inadequate selection process when hiring employees – employment equity Electoral promises Youth – argumentation cushion Spiritual distress Self-esteem Disparagement of spirituality No action plan Lack of information Lack of direction and empowerment	Structuring of data collection Implementation of an appropriate action plan

<u>SCHOOL DROP-OUT</u> OTHER perspective - education	
Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Education quality (school system, irresponsibility) Different life setting - environment	Participation, involvement of all of the school staff members Adapting of the programs and educational calendar in accordance with cultures and values.
<u>SCHOOL DROP-OUT</u> OTHER perspective – parental involvement	
Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Parental absence Lack of support Lack of education prevents helping with homework Indian residential schools	
<u>SCHOOL DROP-OUT</u> OTHER perspective	
Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Lack of funding to cover the costs in isolated region + cost of living	
Lack of resources available for children with special needs Specific personnel to assist with the child's development	Negotiation office – future of our FN Advisory committee
Lack of discipline at home – impact in the school environment Lack of housing (several in the same home)	Common project Follow-up is important Relations
Inadequate quality of life in the families Presence of alcohol, drugs Family violence Negligence	Resource person in charge of ensuring coordination
Poor of teachers poor – impact on their intervention	

## Workshops on Childhood Obesity

<u>Childhood obesity</u> SOCIAL perspective	
Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Self-esteem issues Family violence Misinformation on behalf of the parents who trivialise overweight babies Lack of activity due to technological progress Lifestyle changes (car...) Nutritional mode Publicity (influence) Poor example in terms of lack of activity Sedentarity Lack of time Parents are not at home Lack of parental and educational models Fast food restaurants Lack of human resources Poor self-image Less games and activities Parental negligence Fast food + less time Geographic situation	Improvement of community meals (collective kitchen) Social influence Organisation and investment in sports More involvement on behalf of parents Community-level awareness 5/30 Challenge Health walks Quit smoking challenge Sports infrastructures, rink, baseball field etc. Healthy snacks in schools Breakfast club Making children more responsible Fostering volunteer work among the youth Diminishment of the stigmatisation of obese individuals Health marathon for 6-12 age group i.e.: climbing, health meals Parental education – cooking classes Long-term project – Skating as a family Food banks Group activities: walking club

<u>Childhood obesity</u> HEALTH perspective	
Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Genetic predisposition Malnutrition Lack of knowledge Physical inactivity Actual perceptions of obesity standards Medication consumption – overmedication Alcohol consumption Mental health (emotional eating) Solitude Being overweight Social cause	Diabetes screening Psychotherapist services Providing information on healthy nutrition Banning of malnutrition Gyms Monetary incentive for physical activity i.e.: The Biggest Loser Weight loss follow-up Consequences related to malnutrition Prevention messages focuses on healthy foods
<u>Childhood obesity</u> ECONOMIC perspective	
Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
High unemployment rate Abuse of Bingo game Limited budget to buy healthy foods Lack of infrastructures (Supermarket, etc.) and human resources Lack of access to leisure activities Poverty among the parents High costs of food for the isolated communities (transportation by way of boat or train) Too easy to obtain junk food Access to healthy foods Lack of access to resources	Budgets to implement community gardens and infrastructures Taking of measures to improve incomes Food banks Collective kitchens Measures to improve income Development of the leisure sector: facilitation and infrastructures
<u>Childhood obesity</u> EDUCATIONAL perspective	
Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Malnutrition at the cafeteria Lack of extracurricular activities Absence of parents to feed the children Parents do not teach the children how to cook Rewards or comfort in the form of food among the children Illiteracy Lack of education and nutrition on nutritional value Not enough planning of physical activities Wrong message relayed/received regarding nutrition Parental negligence Lack of parental involvement (cooking) Lack of cooking skills New ingredients: Beef, chicken, etc.	Provide courses on healthy lifestyles and cooking Lifestyle awareness Ban vending machines in schools Change school menus Healthy snacks Re-education in general Re-education of the parents – cooking classes Increase physical activity hours Sport-study programs Teaching of causes and solutions in the schools Review the school curriculum Intergenerational kitchens
<u>Childhood obesity</u> SPIRITUAL perspective	
Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
No spiritual side to eating an animal Before freezers, people used to share Eating for emotional reasons: mental blocks, past injuries Reconciliation is difficult	More cultural activities – the rituals Focusing on spirituality Placing an emphasis on cultural food Sweat lodge Reconciling with self Heritage to be forgotten Health circle
<u>Childhood obesity</u> POLITICAL perspective	
Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Mismanagement of political priorities Poor self-image Food priorities of establishments Limitation of fishing and hunting rights	Establish policies to foster well-being in the communities by the Chiefs Policy to ban vending machines Holistic health and social services policy Retaking of control by the communities

Not enough involvement in the organisation, planning and structuring Unfinished projects	Band council involvement Budgets to perform awareness and promotion of physical activities Planning by involving the youth Affirmation of independence
<u>Childhood obesity</u> OTHER perspective	
<b>Causes for the problem</b>	<b>Possible solutions</b>
Lack of self-control	
Which possible action seems to you to be the most promising for the future of the First Nations children?	Cooperation problem
What are the elements that are essential and/or that foster its implementation: To achieve the objective in a concrete manner?	Target the results Obligation to obtain results To meet at least once per month
What are the main obstacles that we will have to deal with during its implementation?	Individual work Resistance to change Sustained motivation Political indifference
What solutions do you propose in order to deal with these obstacles?	Having good models (i.e. : Community Chief) Work with leadership Experiment with different perspectives Learn from successful and unsuccessful experiences

## Workshops on Child Placement

<u>Child placement</u> SOCIAL perspective	
<b>Causes for the problem</b>	<b>Possible solutions</b>
Lack of housing Personal pain Promiscuity Alcoholism Violence Removal Parental skills Lack of accountability Change of values: role Family explosion Economic poverty Consumption Lack of resources Law too strict (normalisation) Culture (way of doing things) Loss of identity Daily habits Negligence Housing deficiency Lack of First Nations resources Rareness in terms of positive models Poverty Parents not held accountable (disengagement) Court and family division Youth of parents Indian residential schools Absence of first-line services (other than protection) Support among the families Conjugal violence Drugs and alcohol, gambling, etc. (addictions)	Right to receive information Prevention Support Education (communities + systems) Follow-up Implementation of a program that allows for a return to the roots (fishing, forest) Affirmation of social values and responsibilities Working upstream Social Services Forum Making parents more responsible Mobilisation Common dream and vision Include those who are part of the problem Alternative to the DPJ (first-line, sharing of information between the court, family council) Parenting skills Family-based activities Importance of FN identity

<u>Child placement</u> Health perspective	
Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Salubrity Lack of cleanliness Parents physically ill Mental health - depression FAS impacts Negligence – primary care Early problems not being screened Access to services Absence of specialised services and resources Lack of support (diversity of activities) Overcrowding Promiscuity Lack of mutual aid Ignorance of abilities Little prevention Curative vs. prevention Consumption (pregnancy and after) Nutrition (junk food) Lack of health resources (physician, medical follow-up) Proximity of resources Physical insecurity Housing (mould, insalubrity) Special needs Absence of diagnosis Holding of FN and other files Malnutrition Isolation Parental negligence Poverty	Social meetings Eliminating myths No more trivialisation Birth planning Sex education Agreement between First Nations / system External and internal liaison Access to services Food security Education Postnatal and perinatal follow-up Adequate housing Retreat centre in a natural environment Addressing gambling as a public health problem + money Awareness + information on different themes Development of resources on the territory
<u>Child placement</u> ECONOMIC perspective	
Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Absence of durable strategies Management problems Poverty Lack of employment Change in the economic, family and individual situation Lack of development opportunities Recession Quick access to money = role problem Ephemeral happiness vs. money Lack of communication between sectors Silo Economic development (SME) Prioritising the right areas Exhaustion Inappropriate economic model Excessive consumption – impulsive Indebtedness Gaps in income within the community Low income Employment, isolation Bingo Funding methods (discrimination) Ownership rights \$ guardianship Source of income (social assistance) Crime (organised crime) Lack of resources Gambling Poorly distributed allocations High cost of merchandise Money management Debts (Hydro – Bell) Very complex administrative process	Improve foster families Support for foster families Flexibility in family criteria Involvement of youth + listening Adequate and effective police Professional training for managers - leaders Entrepreneurism Funds for employment Medium and long-term vision Change of mentality + that the mandate Autonomy Community mutual aid Healthy, accessible and cheaper food

<u>Child placement</u> EDUCATIONAL perspective	
Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Malnutrition Uprooting Absenteeism Incompatibility of values teachers vs. school Lack of support parent vs. school Violence at school Lack of resources vs. screening + resources for school problems Homework supervision issues Under funding of specialised education Ratios are inapplicable Adaptation vs. lack of knowledge of the system Lack of experience Separation/divorce Law of silence Burnout Social pressure Balance Too much expectation for the children Cultural shock School drop-out Low level Judging others Education for adults Not enough models Language problems Racism Education is not valued enough Poorly disseminated education program Lack of parental support Training + insufficient personalised resources Academic delay	Creation of a sharing circle in a traditional setting Create opportunities for discussions between partners Fostering responsibility (i.e.: mediation) Bridge between ECC - school Build schools Immersion Early screening Non-Aboriginal/First Nations exchanges Adapted professional training Educational advisor Cooperation (school, health and social services) History courses on FN FN educational program FN governing body Sports – leisure – reading club
<u>Child placement</u> SPIRITUAL perspective	
Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Shock: traditional vs. modern Gap in spiritual values = emptiness No meaning to life Addictions Discouragement related to the burden Lack of training Materialism Death/suicide Worries vs. resources Tearing between traditional and actual values Loss of values Intergenerational transmission of negative information Spiritual ignorance Intolerance Loss of contact with nature Loss of land Role of church (Abuse of power, assimilation) Lack of resources (priest) New technology	Changing of bingos Increase in human resources Remuneration equal with the networks Infrastructure (arena/gym) Supervision + training of the interveners Development of caregivers Courses, training Information on spiritual culture Fostering intergenerational exchanges Involvement of the Elders Traditional and intergenerational activities Teaching of the native language Encouraging traditional foods Adjusting cultural interventions
<u>Child placement</u> POLITICAL perspective	
Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Lack of resources to keep the children Complexity in expectations between institutions (federal, provincial, FN) Role of the band council	Elders committee (justice committee) Artistic development Involvement of the Elders

Band council conflict New disposition of Act 125 Reserve status Access to the services (little or none – DPJ process) Band council guardianship Compartmentalized work: community – nation Services funding policy and the Indian Act Rules of the game regarding expectations Transition towards autonomy	School-home linkages Service plan Evaluation of the things that are working well Defend the interests of the youth Involvement of the youth at the political level Youth committee Will Be authoritative with respect to crime Trust Flexibility Transparency Involvement of the council Fighting nonchalance Development of eligibility criteria Reflection on Indian law – reserve and other
<u>Child placement</u> OTHER perspective	
Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Compartmentalisation imposed by programs Confidentiality Confusion of the roles = redefinition Common: structured like the government	Focus on the client Develop a new way of administrating Express our needs to the government Value nonconformist creativity Community advisor Global approach policy Continuity Stability Time reorganisation Making parents more responsible

## *Workshops on the Suicide Rate among the Youth*

<u>Suicide rate among the youth</u> SOCIAL perspective	
Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Mental health Addictions - prison Addictions (drugs, alcohol, etc.) Various abuse Self-esteem Heritage Negligence/abandonment Social failure Gossip Attachment Belonging Violence Isolation Identity (crisis) Conjugal problems Rupture Money Parent-child (lack of love — lack of communication) Adolescent crisis Loss of autonomy Single-parent family Lack of hope Taboo, silence Social turmoil Lack of solutions (depending on the case) Trivialisation Too timid to communicate Social exclusion Distress on behalf of the youth	Early stimulation courses Health social services, economic, political, parents-children Call to the population Radio, pamphlet, etc. Maternal health More prevention Social activities Training for natural caregivers Create and strengthen multisectoral teams Reinforce cultural identity – transmission of traditional knowledge Mobilise the youth – youth committee or council Have clinical tools i.e. sexual abuse in the native language Parental support – workshops for parents Hotline for the children More equipment and infrastructure Budget for youth centre Providing models for the youth Show testimonies + success models Give youth the mission to define that it is to be an Aboriginal person today Youth and parent mobilisation program and give them direction Mentorship program for youth - sponsorship Parents – youth Elders - youth Mutual aid group Belief in the abilities of the youth

Imitation of others Mourning process Feeling of abandonment Incest Conflict between traditional and modern values Suicide pacts	
<b><u>Suicide rate among the youth</u></b> HEALTH perspective	
<b>Causes for the problem</b>	<b>Possible solutions</b>
Mental health (anxiety) Sedentary STBI Addictions Obesity- hyperthyroid Chronic diseases Body image	Having the professional resources (psychologist) Promote physical activity Physical conditioning program Encourage consultation (health examination) + information on medication Provide training to teachers regarding FASD Sentry program Training on suicidal thoughts and signs Adventure in the forest - therapeutic Improved support for people who suffer from MS 24 hotline in the community
<b><u>Suicide rate among the youth</u></b> ECONOMIC perspective	
<b>Causes for the problem</b>	<b>Possible solutions</b>
Poverty Lack of employment Lack of money for education Isolation Program is not adapted to our current realities Prejudices Territory Gambling Lack of resources Social assistance	+ employment + training in the communities + housing Inter-community training Make an inventory of the best practices from all perspectives + funding Involve the youth in all of the developmental stages of a project that is intended for them Bring FN and non-Aboriginal closer together See problems as an addiction (drugs and alcohol, gambling, food) Reduce bingo Partnership with the council in order to train the youth Youth Services Corporation
<b><u>Suicide rate among the youth</u></b> EDUCATIONAL perspective	
<b>Causes for the problem</b>	<b>Possible solutions</b>
School failure and drop-outs Bullying Discouragement Discrimination Gangs Programs that are not adapted Learning problems/attention deficit Lack of specialised resources Parental support Lack of accountability Involvement FAS-FASD Abuse (sexual, verbal, intimidation) Lack of funding for prevention No training for professionals Too much performance pressure Lack of parental support to help the children Language Lack of tools and equipment Underestimation of the suicide phenomenon by the youth Trivialisation – lack of understanding by the parents	School vs. community, parents, etc. + educational readjustment Have success models Have speakers for the graduates Promotion Have an improved vision of the future + parental involvement in school Involve the Elders Parenting skills Preservation of the language Talking about suicide Prevention/creativity (art therapy) Return of legends and philosophical stories (writing) <i>Les enfants endeuillés par le suicide</i> (free translation: children in mourning because of suicide) program Adapted program in the schools Family model – rural Suicide prevention program in schools (prevention by peers) School intervention protocol (post-traumatic)

*Suicide rate among the youth*  
SPIRITUAL perspective

Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Giving value to suicide No society project More dreams Survival mode Generational gap Spiritual void Confusion in beliefs Disappearance of spiritual rites and ceremonies No spiritual model Too much religion in the communities Loss of traditional values Victims of Indian residential schools Sects	Allow for choice of religion Obtain the authorisation of the Band Council for sects and other religions Foster or create Elders councils Have and bring back rites of passage Have a FN program

*Suicide rate among the youth*  
POLITICAL perspective

Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Problems with laws and regulations Decisions Favouritism Revenge Interference Lack of budget Political choices Political power Grey area Fraud Lack of involvement on behalf of leaders Pressure from others – political allegiances Political conflict Promises not held by politicians Lack of funding Not being valued enough Political complexity destroys local initiative Lack of prevention because of: Time Money Support	+ political involvement Speaking without taboos – local radio Policy that fosters listening to the community More room for our youth Adaptation of our services Support from the band council Adequate funding (governments) First-line services Consultation commission on social reality Service on the territory (foster family)

*Suicide rate among the youth*  
OTHER perspective

Causes for the problem	Possible solutions
Negative messages that stem from the community, society Feeling on incompetence Profound pain among the youth	Multisectorial approach Forums (local or nation) Election lobby pressure Development of an intervention protocol in crisis situations Multidisciplinary table for children 0 to 18 years of age Return pride - identity Networking

*Suicide rate among the youth*  
MULTIDISCIPLINARY WORK

Creation of a committee-suicide Reach out to the key interveners in the community + natural caregivers Protocol known by all the interveners + training for all people who are in contact with someone who has suicidal thoughts Recognition for natural caregivers (make room for them) Communication between organisations and communities Macro management is easier – micromanagement is more difficult to maintain a connection and get organised Commitment from interveners Make a pact for life by FN
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## Annexe 2 List of speakers

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Annexe 3:

## Presentations of the Speakers

Enclosed, you will find a CD-ROM that contains all of the presentations that were provided during this Forum. These presentations can also be consulted on our website located at [www.csspnql.com](http://www.csspnql.com)