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Foreword

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Respect and Equity Through Reconciliation : special Edition by Children and Youth

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Foreword

November 20, 2014 marks the 25th anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), which is a binding international treaty on the rights of children. The UNCRC outlines that children have rights to basic needs, such as safety, shelter, education, health and proper nutrition as well as other rights like the right to be heard and participate in matters affecting them. Canada ratified the UNCRC in December of 1991 thereby committing itself to upholding the rights of all children in Canada.

This special edition children's volume of the *First Peoples Child & Family Review* is published in honour of the 20th anniversary of the UNCRC and people of all ages working to ensure the rights of every child in Canada is respected. The First Nations Child & Family Caring Society is proud to showcase contributions by children and young people on equity and reconciliation.

Each submission was peer reviewed by another young person, meaning that children and youth have read all of the submissions to ensure publications are respectful and convey messages of fairness, togetherness, respect and love. Thank you to Pierre Elliot Trudeau Elementary School (PETES) for your thoughtful reviews including: PETES Grade 4 and 5 split class, the Shannen's Dream Club, and the First Nations Youth Activism Group.

We are honoured and thankful to have special guest editors who share their powerful perspectives on reconciliation and equity. Chief Dr. Robert Joseph is a Hereditary Chief of the Gwawaenuk First Nation. In 2014, he testified at the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal for the case on First Nation child welfare (fnwitness.ca). Chief Joseph has given us permission to reproduce portions of his powerful testimony for his editorial, "The New Way Forward." Following Chief Joseph, Bethany Rhead, 2014 winner of the Peter Henderson Bryce award, provides insight into the importance of equality for all children in *Stop the Hurting: Education and Health Care for All*. The Shannen's Dream Club at PETES was also a recipient of the 2014 Peter Henderson Bryce award for courageous advocacy to benefit Aboriginal children and co-authored *Children Have Power* with the First Nations Youth Activism Group and teacher/mentor Lisa Howell. Their editorial contribution shares messages of equity and love for First Nations children and all children.

The journal structure follows the Touchstones of Hope reconciliation process of truth telling, acknowledging, restoring and relating. Each publication illustrates one or more of the process of reconciliation, either by talking about the inequities in child welfare, education and health for First Nations children and young people, recognizing the importance of equity, respect and reconciliation, showing how we can work together or providing recommendations for moving forward on a new path.

Thank you to all of the young people who sent us submissions for the journal. While we were not able to accept them all, we recognize and greatly appreciate all of the hard work that went into each and every submission. We encourage all of you to keep on doing the amazing things you are doing to make this country one that uplifts both First Nations and non-Aboriginal young people and their families by honouring the rights in the UNCRC and the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

We look forward to the future with hope for a brighter, better Canada for all.

Best wishes,

Editorial Board
First Peoples Child & Family Review

First Nations Child & Family Caring Society of Canada