



NEWS RELEASE

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STOLEN GENERATIONS TO RESEARCH ABORIGINAL ADOPTIONS ACROSS CANADA

DECEMBER 4, 2002 – WINNIPEG – Stolen Generations, a local Aboriginal non-profit group, has begun a year-long project dealing with the adoption process affecting Aboriginal people across Canada. The project is being funded by the Aboriginal Healing Foundation and sponsored by the Ma Mawi WI Chi Itata Centre Inc.

The project will attempt to tackle one of the most significant issues arising in the aftermath of Residential schools, namely the policy and practice of the adoption of Aboriginal children outside their inherent cultural groups. It will also focus on the importance of sharing stories and experiences as part of the healing process.

“The healing for adoptees and all those affected has to begin immediately,” said Scott Stephens, Stolen Generations Project Coordinator. “Our project will contribute to the healing process for those adoptees that have faced the affects of these policies first-hand. We strongly believe in using the wisdom and strength of those who have experienced the adoption journey and use it to help rebuild links to an identity that is their birthright.”

“... We believe that it is imperative that Aboriginal peoples be afforded the resources and opportunities to have their voice heard and expressed on the subject of the intergenerational effects of removals of children from their ancestral homes, families and communities originating from the residential school experiences and the eventual removals of subsequent generations by child protection laws that followed. Stolen Generations proposes to give voice to those directly affected and who better to tell the stories, than those who have been directly affected themselves,” said Lizabeth Hall, United Native Nations Program Manager from Vancouver, B.C.

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The information gathered will be compiled into an easy-to-read, illustrated book of personal stories, poems and artwork of those who have gone through the adoption process. This *Book of Voices* will serve as a symbol to others, bringing recognition that they are not alone, and that they can heal and be whole again. The *Book of Voices* will be distributed free to individuals and organizations across Canada.

To assist in the collection of these stories and poems, Stolen Generations will set up a national website to serve as a forum for Aboriginal people to discuss and share personal situations with others who have been subjected to similar experiences. The website will also be a resource for obtaining information on the adoption process, organizations involved and other forms of support.

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