

NATIVE WOMENS RESOURCE CENTRE OF TORONTO INC.

245 Gerrard St., East, Lower Level, Toronto, Ontario M5A 2G1

WOMEN Spirit



VOL. 1 NO. 7

NOVEMBER 1987

Bill C-31 Update

More government action needed

Bill C-31, an amendment to the Indian Act, was passed in June, 1985. This meant that for the first time in Canadian history, Native people (especially women) and their children who had lost their status could be reinstated. The government set up a five year program to handle the change and to date, 8,500 of 30,000 applicants have been approved.

Gordon Peters, Ontario regional chief of the Assembly of First Nations says Ottawa, in their prediction of

30,000 greatly underestimated the number of women who would apply and actually be reinstated. Peters expects more than 100,000 Indians to return to reserves across Canada as they become comfortable with the idea, or when they retire or get older.

There is currently a large gap between money promised by the government for the transition and money actually spent to date. So far Ottawa has spent five million dollars in Ontario, three million of which has gone to

post-secondary education. The other two million has gone to the bands.

Joe Miskokomon, president of the Union of Ontario Indians which represents 27,000 Indians on forty-two reserves in the Great Lakes area, states that this money "does not begin to help provide the infrastructure that will be required — the schools, the transportation, the housing."

Miskokomon states that bands are turning women away and vows that none of the reinstated Indians will return to reserves "until there is a legitimate form of negotiation" on the impact the move will have on bands already short of housing and other amenities.

The seriousness of the situation and the implications have created tension between the long-time residents and the newcomers.

**Welcome to our new newsletter format.
We hope you enjoy it. Any comments on it
would be appreciated.**

**Meegwetch,
Editor**

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Native Women's Resource Centre.

Funding for this newsletter was donated by the Ontario Women's Directorate.

NEXT ISSUE: How Bill C-31 effects the lives of three women.

50 cents a copy

Ad space available
\$20.00 for 3½" × 5"
\$50.00 for ½ page

Native Women's Resource Centre

Logo T-Shirts

On sale NOW — get yours while they last!

T-shirts	\$ 9.00
Sweat-Shirts	\$14.00
Hooded-Shirts	\$20.00

N.W.R.C. Update . . .

We would like to share some of our achievements.

We presently have four staff members through a Canada Employment and Immigration Commission Grant under Job Strategies/Job Development. The positions filled through this grant were Project Manager, Family Worker, Community Worker and Secretary/Bookkeeper. These are held by Maddy Howe, Reva Jewell, Sheila Sorell and Carol Howe respectively.

We have been doing more counselling, networking, advocacy, crisis work, family work, public information and education support work for Women in institutions, housing, child welfare and referrals. If there are volunteers out there who would like to help, they would be welcomed. In the last two months we have acquired the help of 7 more hard-working volunteers. Many thanks are given to them.

We also obtained funding through the Ontario Womens Directorate to put together a pamphlet on Wife Assault. This pamphlet is now available to any who desire it.

The literacy program is an overwhelming success. As a result of its progress, funding for the program has been extended another year.

In addition to the above we currently have Women's Support Groups. Every Tuesday afternoon we have a "Mom's Group". The purpose is to help each other grow, using our own resources. Some of the things that happen are: arts and crafts, films, rummage sales and social times. Time: Tuesdays — 1:00-3:00 p.m.

Every Tuesday early evening we have a "Children's Traditional Dance Class." All native children are welcome to come. They learn different steps and history of the dances; taught by native professional woman instructor Christine Migwans. Time: Tuesdays 4:00-6:00 p.m.

Every Thursday we have a native women's "A.A. Group". This is a closed discussion group except the last week of the month which is an open speaker meeting. All women are welcome. Time 12:00-1:30 p.m. Note: Please call ahead in case of a time change.

We have been doing Workshops/Seminars. All year some of the areas we have been covering are Counselling skills, aspects of Native traditions, legal implications involving child welfare issues, community networking just to name a few. At present we are doing a six session weekly course on assertiveness training. Most of these workshops are open, and some are no charge. If you're interested please call and we will let you know what's coming up.

We feel the work we do is crucial in the development of our people. We are glad you took the time to read this statement. The support we have received from other agencies has been great. We hope to continue our work as a center committed to assisting Native Women.

Meegwetch, For Your Support
N.W.R.C. of T. Inc.

"There are no easy solutions to violence against women and family, but we can begin talking about the problem, understanding ourselves and building respect that will endure and be passed on to our children."

From Native Women's Circle — A Right to Freedom and Respect, Violence against Women.

Now Available: A Guide For Native Women (what you need to know about family violence) at the NWRC (update to follow on recommendations) from Na-me-res on "What are the men doing about family violence?" from Alex Jamieson.

Change of address:

Association for Native Development in the Performing and Visual Arts
11 St. Joseph St.
Suite 204
Telephone: 972-0871

Letters

Questions on Being a Foster Parent.

Dear White Dove:

I am a full-time student, and a single parent of a 3 year old boy. I have been considering taking in a foster child. I would like more information however. Some of the questions i have in mind are; what are the prerequisites? Can I have a foster child if I am on welfare or family benefits? If so, would it affect those payments? If I wanted to go out in the evening would a babysitter be provided or the money to have one? Who takes care of any medical or dental implications? How often would the child meet his or her parents? What in general is required of me as a foster parent? The last question is one of daycare. My son is with a subsidized home daycare provider. Would it be possible to get a foster child into the same home are area, and who would finance his daycare expenses?

M.A.M.

Dear M.A.M.:

Taking in a foster child is accepting responsibility, but the concept of fostering children in our Native Society is one that fol-

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lows the Tradition of giving and sharing, supporting and loving unconditionally. It should be taken on as a labour of love. The basis for our existence has been set on this principle. Some of the other prerequisites for fostering include: non-drinkers, loving and patient, extra room, understanding of children, commitment and an interview process. The main thought to keep in mind, is to provide a home that you would want for your own child. Yes, you can and are eligible to be a foster parent if you are on social assistance. It will not affect any payments you already receive. Child care allowance will be in addition to your cheque. At the moment we do not know of babysitting funds. We could recommend a sitter to you. Medical and dental care is included through child care allowance. Parental visits will be an agreement between foster parents, parents and family worker. A foster child can attend a daycare. If the child is status, there is no cost. If the child is not status, the cost will be arranged by the family worker through social services. If the waiting list of your child's daycare is not too long, then you could try to have the foster child attend there also.

If you are serious about being a foster parent, and feel that you could provide a stable home for such a child please phone or drop into the Native Women's Resource Centre or the Native Family and Child Services to discuss this further.

Yours in Friendship,
White Dove

.....
I thought I had a lot to give
My one and only dream:
Was Motherhood and Wifery
To serve my children and
serve my Master (husband)
in every way I can.
Little did I know how small
and confining my world had
become.

I had buried myself in a
hole of self-righteousness and
self-defeat.

My world consisted of degradation
by being blessedly non-existent.
When I emerged from Motherhood
and wifery as a deserted "being".

Eva Britt

NOTICE

Need Housing?

Nishawbe Homes is presently accepting applications for people in need of housing.

- For singles
- Small families

REQUIREMENTS:

- Be of Native ancestry
- In dire need of housing
- Must be 16 years of age and over
- Presently residing in unsuitable/inadequate housing situation

If you require any additional information please contact: Jackie or Pam at 923-5068.

Native Community Crisis Team

The Crisis Intervention Unit is an emergency psychiatric unit established by Toronto East General's Department of Psychiatry in 1972. The unit provides a 24 hour, 7 day a week service to psychiatric and crisis patients. Immediate psychiatric consultation is provided by professional mental health workers from various disciplines; psychology, social work, psychiatry and medicine.

The Native Community Crisis Team is an outreach program of the Crisis Intervention Unit, providing a mental health service for all classifications of the North American Indian; status, non-status, Metis, Inuit, as well as their spouses and adopted children.

The program's initial proposal was submitted by Dr. Diane Syer-Solursch, a noted suicidologist, whose concerns were the alarming number of attempts and completed suicides of the Native North Americans. It was Dr. Syer-Solursch's belief that because of the difference in the bio, psycho, social, and spiritual make-up of Native people that they would be better served by trained Native people. After the proposal was granted funding in 1982, by the Ministry of Health — Adult Community Mental Health Programs, two Native Counsellors, on part-time Native Psychologist as well as a consultant psychiatrist and program director were employed.

The Native Community Crisis Team is centrally located within the urban Native Community, at Spadina and Bloor. Appointments may be made by formal or informal referrals. It is preferred that a scheduled appointment is booked, but the program will accommodate as soon as possible, or refer to the appropriate agency or institution.

The Native Community Crisis Team is set-up to provide a comprehensive assessment service to Native people experiencing a psychosocial crisis and provision of individual case consultations to involved hospital and community practitioners. In addition to these provisions the program maintains a referral network of community resources both Native and non-Native and a statistical base regarding the client population in order to facilitate effective program planning and identification of its needs. Due to the change in our statistical base, revisions have been instituted, these changes include the expansion of our liaison/information services.

The clients are expected to work towards mutually agreed upon therapeutic goals. Incorporated in these goals is the acquisition of new problem-solving and decision-making skills, as well as learning and utilizing both Native and Non-Native community resources.

Lubicon

There is a community of Indians in Northern Alberta which until eight to ten years ago was self-sufficient in a trading, hunting and trapping economy. There were no families on welfare, and there were no cases of tuberculosis. They lived in more or less traditional ways.

Between 1979 and 1982, eleven oil companies came to the north, cutting trails, drilling and blasting, setting up trailer parks full of mobile homes and heavy equipment. Rising world oil prices had suddenly made the northern oil desirable to access and extract, with little regard for the environmental impact. More than 400 wells were drilled and the landscape is covered with company roads, high pressure pipelines and flammable storage areas.

The Indians have become alienated

from the land and their lifestyle. Now, most live in a camp called Little Buffalo which is a rural slum. In 1979 the hunters shot 200 buffalo from the immediate woods which were shared among the families. This declined to 27 in 1983, to 3 in 1984 and 1 so far in 1987. Now the families buy a little bacon, weiners or bologna once in a while when they can afford it.

Graham Clarkson is the medical officer of health in the area. He has discovered an outbreak of tuberculosis, in Little Buffalo which he compares to that in the slums of Glasgow, Scotland in the 1940's. Clarkson attributes the outbreak to extreme poor health and states the whole community is about 20% underweight. Malnutrition was unheard of when the Indians ate their traditional diet of buffalo and berries. It

provided a balance of protein, iron, calcium and vitamins. Overcrowding is also a contributing factor in tuberculosis. With as many as four people sharing a bedroom, when one person gets the disease and coughs, it is spread easily.

Edward Lubicon is 74 years old and speaks Cree. He remembers when the first Indian agent came in 1939 and counted the number of Indians. At that time the band was promised a reserve. Some members of the community were away and were left off the list but it was left open so they could be included later. The agent promised nails, boards and other building materials and returned to Ottawa.

Now, almost 50 years later, the Lubicons still do not have their reserve and have been engaged in negotiations with both provincial and the federal governments for a fair settlement. Their chief is Bernard Ominiak who is fairly young, well educated and articulate in English. The federal government appointed former Conservative justice minister, Davey Fulton to assess the band size. He reported that there are approximately 400 members and according to the rule of 1 square mile per family of five, they are entitled to about 90 square miles. Fulton feels the Lubicon are in a unique position and entitled to a generous settlement. His recommendations have been ignored by the federal government and the provincial government is pressuring Ottawa to make the land allotment as small as possible. The province wants to only give them the 25.4 square miles promised in 1939. They also do not wish the Indians to have subterranean mineral rights.

Since 1984, Ominiak and the band have sought and gained support for

Book Reviews

By CONNIE WRIGHT

Eber, Dorothy
Peter Pitseolak's escape from death
Illus. by Peter Pitseolak
McClelland and Stewart 1977
Softcover — \$5.95
023 045 137 178 200

Peter Pitseolak's escape from death is a curious children's book. It contains a strange mixture of social conventions, both Eskimo and non-native and it is written by a man whose native tongue is not English. While Pitseolak does not write specifically for children, his straightforward, direct style vividly portrays the harrowing adventure of being lost at sea and the agony of coping with the fear of death and danger.

In reading this book, one should keep in mind that the Eskimo is undergoing severe cultural changes. Because of this, the mixture of social conventions which emerge in this short story have great value in themselves. For example, when Pitseolak and Ashevak have been blown far out to sea, they both pray, but the question remains to whom? Pitseolak receives his answer in a dream which somewhat resembles the traditional vision quest and is flooded with strange creatures and demons. Curiously, he is saved by an English-speaking bird. One wonders whether

this detail was added merely to interest a Southern audience or whether this is the result of a very mixed cultural imagination.

The illustrations in the book are by Pitseolak himself. Some are simple, representational drawings and others are highly stylized forms of birds and animals. In the drawings, one notices dramatic changes in perspective. Even within the same picture, objects may be presented either as uni-dimensional or as objects set in three dimensional space. The fact there is so much flux and change must reveal the ambivalence of the artist's state of mind. The drawings corroborate what one has already discovered from the story that the Eskimo is in a state of acculturation. This makes the book fascinating reading but perhaps on another level, makes it rather difficult to enjoy.

STRANGERS

We walk together like strangers and never hold hands.
We look at each other like strangers and never smile.
We talk to each other like strangers and never say anything good about each other.
We are like two people from another world.

Written by
Dolores Pitawanakwat.

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The Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto is offering a Literacy Program which is available to any adult of Native descent, male or female. We are currently recruiting Native tutors who are sensitive to the issues affecting our target group. If you can share a minimum of two hours a week with someone, enabling him or her to participate more fully in society, please contact Priscilla Hewitt at 963-9963. Our tutor training sessions include:

- a) causes and effects of illiteracy;**
- b) cultural awareness; and,**
- c) teaching techniques.**

Be There When I Need Someone

Someone help me please,
 Someone be there for me
 To lean on and help to
 get through this day
 Only be there when I need you
 Someone be there, please
 Help me, for I am weak
 Only now I need someone to
 hold me, . . . hold my hand.
 Take away the pain in my heart
 Take away the pain in my soul
 Soul is weak, spirit is weak
 Smile is not real, only a fool
 can see that this is not for real.

Lubicon

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their plight in the international realm. They walked out of negotiations this past July as the province was bargaining in bad faith.

The oil companies in their infinite wisdom and generosity are presenting an exhibit of indigenous people's art and artifacts as part of the Calgary winter olympic activities. They wish to make it appear that their style of development is supportive and sensitive to the traditional native culture!

The Lubicons are boycotting the olympics and have support from more than 26 museums internationally who have refused to send exhibits to the show because the Canadian government has consistently dealt with the Lubicon people unfairly and in contravention of their native and constitutional rights.

If you are interested in showing support to the Lubicons and wish to help organize a protest when the olympic torch comes through Toronto, please call us. If we have a good response we will have a meeting and organize an action. Please write to the following encouraging a just settlement:

The Honourable Bill McKnight
 Federal Minister of Indian & Northern Affairs
 Room 401, Confederation Building,
 House of Commons,
 Ottawa K1A 0A6

The Honourable Neil Crawford,
 Minister Responsible for Native Programs
 Legislative Building,
 Edmonton, Alberta
 T5K 2B6

VOLUNTEERS

Anduhyaun is looking for volunteers who are willing to provide child care relief for mothers at Anduhyaun in the evening or on the weekend.

Duties and responsibilities would consist of providing basic child care such as supervising the children, playing with the children, changing diapers, feeding, preparing the children for bed, and disciplining the children. Mothers will provide you with basic care instructions and would be responsible for preparing their children's bottles for you, putting out the appropriate clothing and diapers, and instructing you as to their children's routines and habits.

If you are interested in volunteering your time to provide this service please call Wendy Paterson or Asinka Elliott at 920-1492 to arrange for an appointment.

***Please Note: as it is volunteer, there will be no remuneration for services rendered.**

Are You?

Afraid of your partner?
 Frightened for your children?
 In need of friendship and support?
 Feeling alone? Confused? Helpless?

You are not the only one.
 There are many women just like yourself.

You are not to blame. Your partner has to take full responsibility for any action or violent reaction. No one person has the right to abuse you, degrade you, beat you, make you feel like you're small, a nobody . . .

For support, help, information,
 Just someone to talk to,

Call us at 963-9963

or
 HELPLINE — 863-0511

Help for ourselves

Based on the twelve steps of Alcoholics Anonymous and especially prepared for Native Americans by the Umatilla Tribal Alcohol Program.

We admitted we were powerless over alcohol — that we had lost control of our lives.

We came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could help us regain control.

We made a decision to ask for help from a higher power and others who understand.

We stopped and thought about our strengths and our weaknesses and thought about ourselves.

We admitted to the Great Spirit, to ourselves and to another person the things we thought were wrong about ourselves.

We are ready, with the help of the Great Spirit, to change.

We humbly ask a higher power and our friends to help us change.

We made a list of people who were hurt by our drinking and want to make up for these hurts.

We are making up to those people whenever we can, except when to do so would hurt them more.

We continue to think about our strengths and weaknesses and when we are wrong we say so.

We pray and think about ourselves, praying only for strength to do what is right.

We try to help other alcoholics and to practice these principles in everything we do.



ARTIST: SAM WILSON

Council Fire Announcements:

Fireside AA open meetings will be held Thursdays at 7:00.

Al-anon meetings will be held Tuesdays at 7:00.

Children's dance classes will be held Mondays from 4:00 to 6:00.

When Things Goes Wrong

Things are not the way they seem.
When you smile people think
that things are just fine,
But underneath you are all in a turmoil
You pretend that things are fine.
People say, How can you be so cool, they
don't know that all you can do is
look and act like nothing is wrong
and all you want to do is scream your head off
and just crawl into a hole and

Health Study

Women needed to be interviewed for a Health Study survey.

- You must be a Native woman.
- Have children under 2 years old.
- Children must have been born in Toronto
- There is a \$10.00 honorarium after interview is completed.

Contact Reva Jewell or Carol Howe at 963-9963.

Raffle tickets from our Oct. 29th open house are still available!!!
First prize: a painting titled "The beaver" by native artist Ril Gaiashk
Second prize: authentic handthrown Iroquois pottery by Darlene L. Smith
Third prize: Snow mask

Cost: \$1.00 each or 3 for \$2.00.

Draw will be November 20, 1987

All proceeds go toward the Christmas Program
 Contact the NWRC at 963-9963

St. Vincent de Paul Parish
535-7646

Native Peoples' Parish
537-0926

263 Roncesvalles Ave.
Toronto, Ontario
M6R 2L9

MINISTRY TEAM:

Jack Davis, O.M.I.
Jim Froh, O.M.I.
Madeline Blundon
Kim Kenney, S.J.
Wylie Stonefish — Part Time

SUNDAY LITURGY:

5:00 p.m. Saturday
9:00 a.m. & 10:30 a.m. Sunday
10:00 a.m. Wigwamen Terrace
(near Native Centre)
12:30 p.m. St. Vincent de Paul

Phone Numbers to know

- Assaulted Women's Helpline 863-0511
(24 hour crisis line)
- Women's Phonenumber 598-3714
(Monday and Wednesday evenings 7-9 pm)
- Toronto Rape Crisis Centre
(24 hour emergency) 597-8808
(Business line) 597-1171
- Native Women's Resource Centre 963-9963
- Anduhyuan
(Hostel for Native women and children 920-1492
- Wanepuhnud
(Native women's training program) 461-3230
- Native Canadian Friendship Centre 964-9087
- Lesbian Phonenumber 533-6120
(Tuesday and Thursday evenings)

ANISHNAWBE HEALTH PRESENTS:

An AIDS Forum, The First of Four Seminars.
Moderator: Herb Nabigon (vice president of Anishnawbe Health)
Speakers: Diana Baxter (AIDS prevention co-ordinator for the Toronto Public Health Department)
 Debbie Pegahmagabow (Native Community Crisis Team)
 Someone from ACT (AIDS Committee of Toronto)
Place: Na-me-res **Date:** Thursday, Nov. 26 **Time:** 1:00 to 4:00
 14 Vaughan Rd.
 Toronto, Ont.

The forum is free but you are requested to call 652-0334 to register. The second forum will be held in January or February on Hypertension and Heart Disease. Other topics include aging, smoking and women's health issues.

**We Need You!
 Help!**

We are looking for people of Native ancestry who are interested in becoming foster parents for displaced children. Call Reva at the NWRC.

We, at the Native Women's Resource Centre need volunteers in every area. We are appealing to the Native Community for any time or commitment that can be given.

Thank you Eva, Irene, Stella and all the other people who have graciously given their time and energy.

Alcoholics Anonymous

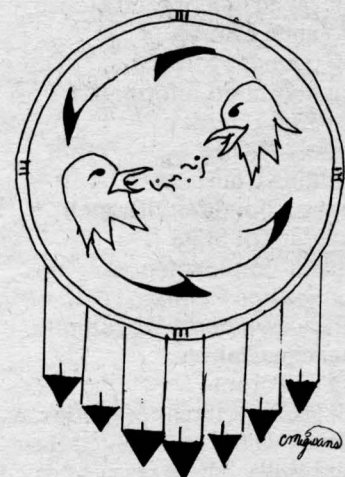
If you want to stop drinking that is your business. If you want to stay stopped that is our business. Please call Alcoholics Anonymous at (416) 487-5591.

Please note that there are three Native groups in Toronto that meet. They are located at:

All Nations
 1330 King St. W.
 Wednesdays at 8:00 pm

Council Fire
 411 Parliament St.
 Thursdays at 7:00 pm

Birds of a Feather
 16 Spadina Rd.
 Sundays at 11:00 am



Counselling and Support Services

All activities, counselling support services and self-help groups are initiated and run by and for Native women.

We have established a mutually supportive working relationship with other organizations, services and groups that may be of service to Native women. The Native Womens Resource Centre is based on our belief in the traditional teachings of the elders.

We believe these teachings are essential to the continued survival of indigenous people.

We also believe in the ability of Native women to initiate, manage and provide our own service.

We now believe all Native women have unique qualities and knowledge to share with others based on individual experiences.

We try to provide a supportive atmosphere based on mutual respect for staff, clientele and friends of the Centre.)

A group of Native women began meeting in 1984 to discuss the best method of meeting the crucial need for specific support services for Native women in Toronto. In October 1985, the Native Womens Resource Centre was opened.

We do not specialize in any 'one'

To those who have supported us in our struggles:

- Anduhvaun
- Wanepuhnud
- Council Fire
- Na Me Res
- Nishnawbe Health
- Native Children & Family Services
- Central Neighborhood House
- All Saints Church
- '416' Dundas Street
- Neighborhood Information Post
- East End Literacy
- Nellie's Hostel
- Scadding Court
- Native Community Branch
- Secretary of State
- Canada Employment & Immigration Centre
- Ontario Women's Directorate
- Anglican Church
- City of Toronto

And all the individuals & groups, & companies who have donated their time and skills. These people provided us with professional acumen and finances. It is all sincerely appreciated.

area but rather believe in a wholistic approach to the provision of support services for Native women.

For assistance, support, concrete

help... contact your secretary to set up an appointment with one of our staff.

NOTE: Native women & groups in regional areas are welcome to contact us.

It seems strange that there are so many men that write and paint in the Native community that are rather prominent. We know that there are as many women out here that are just as capable, but possibly shy. Well, Womenspirit is giving you the opportunity to express yourself in whatever medium you desire. Send us a piece of poetry, artwork or short story or anything else and see it printed and enjoyed by others. We are part of a network, Native women reaching out and taking in what ever you would like to give.

NATIVE DANCING

at the

NATIVE WOMEN'S RESOURCE CENTRE OF TORONTO INC.

245 Gerrard St., East, Lower Level, Toronto, Ontario M5A 2G1

**ph. (416)963-9963
963-9348**

Tuesday November 3, 1987

Tuesday November 10, 1987

Tuesday November 17, 1987

Tuesday November 24, 1987

Tuesday December 1, 1987

Tuesday December 8, 1987

*** All classes run from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. ***
EVERYONE WELCOME!!!

Some topics include:

- Traditional Dress & Design — Contemporary and Traditional Dances
- Social Dances such as the Rabbit Dance, Round Dance etc.

For more information call Christine at the above number.

To all interested members of our Native community

At the end of each month, we will be producing a newsletter out of the N.W.R.C. We are asking Native Women to submit articles on their talents; poetry, short stories, or artwork. We feel that the Native Women's role must be recognized, as it is a vital necessity to the continued survival of Native families and children. It is so important at this time that Native Women stand together and work as a collective.

The Resource Centre is thriving and growing with great plans for the future. Everyone is invited down to visit and share with us. This Center belongs to the Native Community and your input is extremely important. Ideas are welcomed. The space is here to be used and we hope to use it as a powerful communications vehicle. Don't be shy. Your words, your stories, your poems, and your news items should be shared by all. Submissions must be in by the last week of each month. The ideas expressed are not necessarily those of the Native Women's Resource Center. Submissions excluding Poetry cannot be Anonymous.