

Inventory of Aboriginal Services, Issues and Initiatives in Vancouver

Research

Relevant Details

- There continues to be a lack of credible research on urban Aboriginal people, and the little that has been released is usually a footnote gleaned out of a larger project. There have been no meaningful reports published that adequately represent the realities of urban Aboriginal people in British Columbia, particularly in Vancouver.
- There continues to be a struggle between not wanting non-Aboriginal people to conduct research on Aboriginal people, with the reality that there are few Aboriginal researchers and little funding being awarded to Aboriginal researchers. Central to all of these discussions is that Aboriginal people must lead, conduct, and actively participate in any research that is related to them and their realities.

Who's Involved?

Centre for Native Policy & Research (207 West Hastings Street)

- A non-partisan, social justice, progressive Aboriginal think tank focused on the social, economic, and environmental policy and research concerns of Aboriginal people.
- Acts as a bridge that encourages collaborative solutions by bringing people together beyond politics to promote participatory research and policy alternatives.
- In 2005 released *An Urban Aboriginal Life: The 2005 Indicators Report on the Quality of Life of Aboriginal People in the Greater Vancouver*.

Institute for Aboriginal Health (2194 Health Sciences Mall, UBC)

- Purpose is to increase community-based research capacity within BC Aboriginal communities and in partnership with Canadian and international Indigenous peoples.
- Projects are collaboratively designed, developed, and implemented.

Aboriginal Women's Health and Healing Research Group (2194 Health Sciences Mall, UBC)

- A national network of Aboriginal women health researchers based out of UBC.
- Mission is to create a supportive community for Aboriginal women engaged in health and healing research and policy advice; support community based health and healing research done by and with Aboriginal women; identify and address gaps and weaknesses in Aboriginal women's health and healing research; and foster critical, contextual and Aboriginal approaches to health and healing research initiatives.

Union of BC Indian Chiefs (342 Water Street)

- In addition to political advocacy, they are dedicated to information-sharing as well as to the fostering of fundamental and necessary research skills for Indian people in the province.
- Provides research skills training to BC's Aboriginal communities, through conferences and workshops. Has produced a number of research/legal publications.
- Has a specialized research collection focusing on First Nations and BC lands issues.

Xwi7Xwa Library, First Nations House of Learning at UBC (1985 West Mall, UBC)

- In house and online resources related to Aboriginal issues.
- Links to theses and dissertations.

BC Aboriginal Capacity and Developmental Research Environments (UBC)

- Aboriginal Student Health Research Capacity Building Awards help to build research capacity within Aboriginal communities through scholarships/ fellowships.

McReary Research Society (3552 East Hastings Street)

- Has completed a number of studies on Aboriginal youth issues, usually with an active Steering Committee comprised of members of the Aboriginal communities and often as a follow up to larger studies.

Simon Fraser University - Certificate in First Nations Studies Research

- This program provides a unique opportunity to explore the history and prehistory, culture, language and contemporary situation of Canadian Native peoples, and to acquire basic research skills in Native issues.

Individual Organizations

- Many Aboriginal organizations have conducted their own research to identify the challenges, needs, and strengths of Aboriginal communities. Much of this research would not be considered rigorous academic research, but is useful for their purposes, for funders, and to those who are interested in identifying what is happening at the grass roots level.

Partnerships

- None

Committees

- None

Trends

- Aboriginal people are beginning to take the lead on research that is conducted regarding Aboriginal people. In the past they have often been invited to sit on the Advisory Committees, but not to do the research itself.
- More Aboriginal people are becoming trained in research methods as the benefits of conducting research are now becoming clearer.

Gaps

- There are not enough funds to conduct even a small portion of the research that needs to be conducted on urban Aboriginal issues. Vancouver has a very diverse range of urban Aboriginal communities, with diverse needs, histories, cultures, and aspirations, so it will be a challenge to prioritize research projects that benefits as many of this diverse population as possible.
- There are very few Aboriginal clinical researchers, and the ones that are active in this area are often not available to lead such initiatives. But, as the benefits are now becoming clearer, more Aboriginal people are becoming trained in research methods.