



# Research Panel: Aging out of Government Care

Janice Victor, Ph.D.

Faculty of Health Sciences

University of Lethbridge

October 12, 2023

## Past & current projects:

Recruiting Blackfoot Foster Families (2017)

Ai'aoksiikowaata (providing guidance to youth)

- Supported by Making the Shift: Youth Homelessness Social Innovation Lab, 2019-2024

Mapping the Landscape of Indigenous Child Welfare

- Supported by SSHRC, 2021-2023, and University of Lethbridge CREDO, 2021-2022



By Montana F.



University of  
Lethbridge



MAKING THE SHIFT<sup>INC</sup>



Social Sciences and Humanities  
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en  
sciences humaines du Canada

Canada

# Transitions from Child Welfare

## Developmental perspective

Successful transitions depend on having the psychological, social, & cultural resources needed for healthy development

## Child-centred approach

Listen to what young people say & do (Kinewesquo & Bonnah, 2015; Navia, Henderson, & First Charger, 2018)



By Faith M.

# Key Findings

Prioritizing & compensating kinship caregivers

Youth know what they need but can't easily self-advocate

System limits foster parents' ability to parent, impairs development & skill building

Misalignment in objectives: youth, care providers, social workers/system, researchers



By Curtis T.



By Letisha T.

# Transitioning to the Future

## Protecting children – Who defines “harm?”

- Redefining “best interests of the child” (National Inquiry on MMIWG, 2019)
- Aligning system & care objectives to redefined “best interests” for youth (Victor & McIntyre, in development)

## Monitoring & evaluation (TRC, 2015)

- Federal & provincial/territorial data collecting & sharing – investigations, removals, #s in care, & youth post-transition

# References

- Kinewesquo [Richardson, C.] & Bonnah, S. (2015). Taking children's resistance seriously: A response-based approach to children experiencing violence. In Sohki Aski Esquao (J. Carrière] & S. Strega (Eds.). *Walking this path together: Anti-racist and anti-oppressive child welfare practice* (2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.). Fernwood.
- National Inquiry into Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls (2019). *Reclaiming power and place*, (Vol. 1a & 1b). <https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/>
- Navia, D., Henderson, R. I., & First Charger, L. (2018). Uncovering colonial legacies: Voices of Indigenous youth on child welfare (dis)placements. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 49(2), 146-164.  
DOI:10.1111/aeq.12245
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) (2015). *Honouring the truth, reconciling for the future: Summary of the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*. Retrieved from <http://nctr.ca/reports.php>
- Victor, J. & McIntyre, D. (in development). Aging out narratives.