From Dreams to Reality at Lil’wat Nation

Mount Currie, B.C.
140 km NW of Vancouver, near Whistler
Intersectoral coordination of child & family services: Documentation & evaluation of Community-fitting, promising practices

Coming together to promote children’s optimal development
Mother-tongue based bi/multilingual Early Childhood Care & Development

1. Longitudinal research on policies & programs to promote development of mother-tongue proficiency

2. Home-based early language stimulation

3. Language ‘nests’, ECCD and primary school programs in mother tongue with gradual introduction of dominant language as a subject of study
“Do it in a good way”
Community-based research in rural and remote communities

Jessica Ball
Early Childhood Development Intercultural Partnerships
University of Victoria
www.ecdip.org
Father Involvement
Knowledge Mobilization

Increasing: Visibility  Research  Program outreach

Fatherhood: Indigenous Men's Journeys presents six First Nations fathers in Canada telling what it has been like for them to become fathers and to grow into fatherhood. Most have overcome huge social obstacles and personal challenges. These men hope that other fathers will be encouraged by their stories – their sense of being on a journey and not needing to know everything about fatherhood before getting involved in caring for their children. Their message is one of hope: “You can do it!” The fathers also hope that their stories will inspire practitioners to find new ways to include fathers in child care decisions, programs, and family services.

The DVD speaks in a personal way to fathers as well as to boys and men considering becoming fathers. Presented as six interview segments (about 6 minutes each) with a screening guide to facilitate discussion, the DVD is also an effective tool for professional development workshops and courses in family health, social services, law, early childhood education and youth care.

To order:
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DVD © MMVII Asterisk Productions Ltd
Booklet © MMVII Jessica Ball

www.ecdip.org
‘Hard core’ poor fathers’ involvement, Bangladesh
Garment factory based breast-feeding programs in Bangladesh
Research on research ethics in two SSHRC-funded 5 year projects involving CU Partnerships


with Pauline Janyst
Successful CU engagements depend on relationships of familiarity and trust.
Ethics

Embodiments of trust
Community Mandate: “Do it in a good way”

- Do your best
- Honesty, authenticity, sincerity
- Mean well
- Speak well
- Act well
- Follow cultural protocols
- Know where your needs leave off and the community begins
- Do it for the benefit of the others in addition to yourself
3 assets that enabled successful projects

1. Community-based team members
2. Memoranda of Understanding
3. Community-responsive methodologies
1. Community-based team members

Indigenous team members
Community-based collaborators
Indigenous project coordinator & non-Indigenous co-principal Investigator

- Reciprocal Community-based & University team training
- Indigenous research ethics
- Indigenous knowledge informing data collection procedures
- Community guidance in all phases
2. Memoranda of Understanding

Detailing project scope, possible activities & procedures, expectations, roles, dissemination
Customized for each community-university partnership within the project
“A mast to cling to in stormy weather.”
Memoranda of agreement
A tool for good process and protection for all parties to a project
Who will do what, why, when, how, and with which resources

6 degrees of mutual interdependence

**Purpose:** perspectives on why the project is being done.

**Plan:** approach, research sites, project phases, timelines

**People:** differentiated roles, distributed division of labour

**Procedures:** methods, activities, analysis of data

**Products:** outputs, outcomes, consequences

**Possession:** of data, responsibility, outputs, dissemination

Collective, periodic reviews of the Memoranda of Agreement reinforces understandings and supports revisions as needed.
3. Community responsive methodologies

Narrative, group forums, structured interviews, questionnaires, community asset mapping, document review, video
Indigenous partners on thin ice…

Indigenous research ethics are contested.
Indigenous research engagements are fragile
Indigenous research team members work in contexts of vulnerability

community: whose side are they on?
university: labyrinthine policies & procedures
Academics partners on thin ice

Accountability to funders: the MID-TERM REVIEW
Time
Money
Quantity of outputs
Control
Who knows what?

About the ethics, concerns about research, cultural protocols, needs & goals of community partners in a project?

Many universities lack Indigenous research protocols
Many academic investigators lack knowledge
Few graduate students receive education about Indigenous research ethics
5 lessons learned

1. Assess the learning readiness & resources of the team
2. Foreground the indeterminacy of research outcomes
3. Protect Community knowledge (& funding allocation) through an MOA
4. Consider alternative structures for networked projects
5. Have a clear structure and communication of expectations
1. Assess the learning readiness and resources of the collaborative research community

- Time
- Geographic Location
- Previous knowledge of Indigenous research
- Inclination to re-think ideas about ethics, epistemology, dissemination

What are the opportunities to develop relationships of familiarity and trust among members within the larger collaborative team?

The larger the number of players, the less likely this will be possible.

Do key people in the collaborative study understand cultural protocols and issues of cultural safety?
2. Foreground the indeterminacy of project outcomes

*Wait without hope for hope would be for the wrong thing…* T.S. Eliot

Even with an MOU, research goals are not a contract to deliver a pre-determined product.
Who understands that?
  Does the community?
  Does the academic partner?
  Does the funder?

Who can tolerate this level of indeterminacy?
✓ whether there will be data
✓ whether data will be sharable with the collaborative team
✓ whether knowledge created can be disseminated, and by whom, and in what format?
3. Protect community knowledge and resources through an MOA

Negotiated engagements

vs

Altruistic & informal agreements

MOA: the syllabus for research goals, objectives, activities, expectations, & performance, including financial & in-kind contributions
4. Consider alternative structures for collaborative projects

- Structure projects based on a realistic assessment of project goals & the resources required to develop relationships of familiarity and trust

Success!

Fathers Involvement Research Alliance CURA (www.fira.ca)

- 7 population specific CBR project components
- Independent, no expectations for integration, visiting
- Clear expectations for data sharing
- Some all-project activities
5. Clear structure & communication of expectations

Ambiguity and change tends to create a sense of unsafety. “Emergent” or “evolving” project designs are not usually conducive to work with populations that are already in living with high levels of vulnerability.

Knowing what has been agreed to and following clear protocols formalized in an MOA creates trust and a basis for accountability.
“Do it in a good way”

Strong relationships of trust, nurtured within structures characterized by clear communication of expectations and mutual learning, are the backbone for ongoing negotiation of ethical practice in partnership research.

For more exploration, visit www.ecdip.org/ethics/