



Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council

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Historic Grant to help Indigenous communities create a path to Better Health

Nuu-chah-nulth Territories – The Nuuchahnulth Tribal Council (NTC) as part of a group of Indigenous leaders in partnership with university-based health researchers from Simon Fraser University's Faculty of Health Sciences and University of Alberta are excited to announce they have just received a \$16 million Canadian Institutes of Health Research grant to carry out a long-term study on improving health and wellness for Indigenous children.

President Judith Sayers stated that "This historic opportunity represents one of the first times that the Institute has recognized Indigenous community leadership in a large research award and we welcome this announcement as a big step forward in health for our children."

The project is led by Lynnette Lucas, NTC Director of Health principal investigator and adjunct professor in the Faculty of Health Sciences at Simon Fraser University, says that "Elders and other knowledge holders are guiding every step. Most stories about Indigenous people tend to focus on stereotypes and deficits. Our intent is to explore the *root causes* of health disparities giving emphasis to Indigenous ways of knowing."

Lea Bill, Executive Director of the Alberta First Nations Information Governance Centre, is Co-Principal Investigator. Other Indigenous leaders beyond the 14 Nuuchahnulth Nations, are the Cree Nations of Maskwacis, Alberta, and the Cree and Dene Nations of the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo, Alberta. The group represents 23 First Nations in all.

Top priorities will be to examine the leading causes of cardiovascular and mental health problems, in Indigenous contexts. The research will not only examine the efficacy of existing programs in reducing risk, but also determine the impact of biological and social mechanisms as they affect children and their families. There will be a cross sectional study of families and also a study of child development.

One of the objectives will be to generate new approaches aimed at restoring traditional family systems by creating supportive environments and reducing negative exposures during early development, starting before conception.

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About Nuuchahnulth Tribal Council

The Nuuchahnulth Tribal Council (NTC) provides programs and services to over 10,000 registered members. The role of the NTC is to represent 14 First Nations in three regions stretching 300 kilometers of the Pacific Coast of Vancouver Island from Brooks Peninsula in the north to Point-no-Point in the south. The NTC represents Ahousaht, Ditidaht, Ehattesaht/Chinehkint, Hesquiaht, Hupacasath, Huu-ay- aht, Kyuquot/Checklesah, Mowachaht /Muchalaht, Nuchatlaht, Tla-o-qui-aht, Toquaht, Tseshaht, Uchucklesaht and Ucluelet First Nations and provides a variety of programs and services to them.

For more information, please visit www.nuuchahnulth.org.