



The 2011 Representative's Award of Excellence: Cultural Heritage and Diversity Aboriginal Infant Development Programs of B.C.

The Aboriginal Infant Development Programs of B.C. (AIDP) adapt popular mainstream programs to become more meaningful and culturally relevant for the children and families they serve. It takes the Nobody's Perfect Parenting Program or the Parent/Child Mother Goose program and incorporates their own language, pictures, songs, foods and storytelling to make it more culturally appropriate. They also translate nursery rhymes and poems into their traditional language.

The programs honour the teachings and traditions of their Elders and ancestors to develop, implement and provide services for Aboriginal children and families as the guiding principles of quality programs and services.

Urban AIDP work diligently at incorporating and respecting the language and culture of the traditional territory and nation that their programs work in as well as honour the culture of the families that they serve.

AIDP celebrates the families' cultural heritage and language by combining modern/contemporary academic education and research and compliments this by respecting the history, knowledge and resilience of the First Nations People of B.C. and more specifically the local nation or band. Many use Elders as the resource and knowledge keepers to continue to educate AIDP professionals with Aboriginal history and heritage especially regarding parenting. One AIDP refers to "Spe'qum" another refers to "Paq'mi Nuq'yuk". In both languages this means children should be regarded as flowers to blossom and need to be nurtured and cared for to become beautiful.

Over the last 19 years the Aboriginal Infant Development Program has been the catalyst for changing how services are provided for Aboriginal children. They have been advocates for ensuring that Aboriginal children have services that are holistic, that honour and respect their Indigenous ancestry and they have broken down jurisdictional boundaries and fostered new ways of working together for the betterment of the children.

The Aboriginal Infant Development Programs recognize that our Children are the greatest gifts that the Creator has given us and we must do all that we can to support them and their families so they can develop to their greatest potential.