



Our work begins in ceremony and going to the Elders in the territory we are guests on: being displaced from our own traditional territories is challenging for many 60s Scoop Survivors who have grown up in other Nations traditional lands and customs. We recognize that we need to honour those Nations and work together to build community and reclaim our identities as Indigenous people that we were deprived of most of our lives. Addressing loss of identity from forced colonial child welfare practices includes utilizing our ceremonies and Indigenous facilitators/knowledge holders to help us learn, unlearn, heal and reclaim our culture. For many 60's Scoop Survivors who have been indoctrinated into mainstream culture it may be their first time learning about Indigenous cultures, ceremonies, medicines and colonization, for many the gatherings are life changing.

Collen is co-founder and Executive Director of the National Indigenous Survivors of Child Welfare Network. A nehiyaw iskwew from Saddle Lake Cree Nation, she was adopted and raised in Sault Ste Marie, ON. She worked diligently on national and international levels to raise the issue of 60s Scoop and to create supports for survivors. She is author of "ohpikkiihaakan-phihmeh (raised somewhere else): A 60's Scoop Adoptee's Story". A recipient of a 2018 Ontario Premiers Award for Outstanding Community Works, she forges onward with Pe-kiwewin Project. Most importantly Collen is proud mother of four and grandmother, who spends all her free time with her grandchildren.