

Voices OF HOPE

Canada

In the Diocese of Edmonton, the Rev. Lori Calkins works with Indigenous Birth of Alberta to support Indigenous people who need to access healthcare. Herself Métis, Calkins empowers Indigenous families to reclaim Indigenous knowledge, ceremony and tradition.

Many clients come to Indigenous Birth of Alberta when they are pregnant or have young children. Calkins describes her role like that of an auntie or kokhum, someone who can give you guidance to help you 'walk in a good way.' She works in the gap that exists between what is provided by the healthcare system or child and family services, and the natural supports that families have in the community. Indigenous Birth Alberta serves Treaty 6, 7 and 8 territories. "Our goal is always to find people in those communities who are doing that work or wanting to do it, and support them, and then that can be brought back to life in those communities."

Calkins sees the work of supporting Indigenous childbirth as part of reconciliation. "All of those harms that were done by the churches and the government, as part of the colonial experience in this country, all of those disruptions to our kinship systems, this work directly addresses those things, right from the very beginning."




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