

WFWP Canada: Grandparents, Unique Contributors to Building a Better Future

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On January 31, 2022, Global Women Peace Network (GWPN) Canada held the fourth webinar under the theme Faith and Families exploring family relationships in different cultures. The topic this time was "The Grandparents' Contribution to the Well-being and the Stability of the Family." Our speakers were grandparents from different faiths and cultural backgrounds. Twenty-five participated in the bilingual event which was facilitated by an interpretation team.



Denise Anne Boissoneau

Our first speaker, Denise Anne Boissoneau is a citizen of the Anishinaabe Nation, Ojibway. She studied Euro-Canadian laws and Indigenous legal traditions and worked with The Council of Elders and The Correctional Service of Canada. Denise Anne has a strong commitment to unity and global peace through the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#) national awareness conversations and has been leading several [KAIROS Blanket Exercises](#) as well as public and ecumenical-faith meetings.

Her discourse revealed much about the thought and culture of her Indigenous heritage. Due to the history of residential schools followed by the "60's scoop" the indigenous population were alienated from their families and culture. Today, the younger generation is encouraged to reconnect with their language and culture as a means to re-establish their sense of identity and

belonging, reclaiming their heritage .

The next speaker, [Alfredine Linda Plourde](#) is French Acadian and proud of it. When she became aware of the many problematic attitudes in the child care system and family court, she felt called to become an activist to raise public attention to these little known facts. She founded [Protecting Canadian Children](#) in 2007, published two books reporting her findings and traveled extensively through Canada and the USA to meet other parents and victims. She has received multiple awards and recognition including the Sovereign's Medal for Volunteers and continues her activities and campaign to bring needed changes to our society.



Alfredine Linda Plourde

She shared some of the many lessons learned along the way. First of all, grandparents are the best listeners and mentors. They provide support and "a warm blanket of love" when parents aren't available. Studies show that the presence of grandparents in a child's life is a mental health booster and that grandparents who are involved with their grandchildren live longer. Grandparents can teach about family history and lessons learned from the past. She also pointed to a new phenomena: young people teaching their grandparents about new technologies, computers, tablets, etc.

The next speakers were Marc and Isabelle Laurin. They are parents of six children, and have four grandchildren with the fifth on the way. Blessed by Rev. Moon and his wife in 1982, they have dedicated themselves to the promotion of stable and harmonious families as a pillar for a stable and harmonious society and world, a world of peace. They have been involved in parents' committees, have always been committed citizens in their communities, and founded the organization Families on the

Move. Today, they are particularly dedicated to the "On va s'aimer encore" (we will keep loving each

other) committee whose objective is to promote and enhance the stability of our society by reaching elected officials and policy-makers to advocate for the need to prevent family breakdown and address the many social ills resulting from our current societal trends.

They drew from their family experiences and conversations with their grandchildren, alternating between each others' comments. Marc spoke about a realization his grandchild had, suddenly asking "grandpa, who is your dad?" Isabelle brought out the mutually beneficial aspect of parents having someone to rely on when they desperately need some relief and time to reconnect. She greatly enjoys spending time with her grandchildren and creating a special bond in doing so. She also underscored the necessity to respect the parents' rules and preferences, without fail!



Marc and Isabelle Laurin