

# The Children Are Taken

At the core of the Sixties Scoop was the belief that Indigenous children were better off with white families. Governments, social workers, health professionals, the clergy and the RCMP were all part of a system designed to separate Indigenous children from their parents. The Adopt Indian and Métis program, known as AIM, was a prime example of this. Indigenous children were sent out of province and out of country. But there was resistance. By the early 1970s, Métis activists like Phyllis Trotchie, Nora Thibodeau and Vicki Racette were writing articles, organizing and raising awareness about the removal of children from their communities. They fought to establish their own recognized child welfare system that would not be so quick to remove Indigenous children from the home.



## AIM program

The Adopt Indian and Métis program, later called AIM, was launched in 1967. Otto Driedger, seen here in 1969, was the director of child welfare at the Saskatchewan Department of Social Welfare. He was one of the architects of the AIM program. Through this program, Saskatchewan's Department of Social Welfare sought non-Indigenous families in the province to encourage them to adopt Indigenous children. They advertised Indigenous children through multiple media — on television, in the newspaper and on the radio.



## Some parents resisted

Child apprehensions were not necessarily a simple matter. When Indigenous parents resisted, they were threatened with arrest. Some parents disappeared into “the bush” to hide their children when Indian Agents, the RCMP or social workers came around, but this was not always possible. Parents fought the system, but success was very hard to come by.





## GWEN

Gwen is a beautiful little girl with a deceptively sad looking appearance, now 2½ years old. While she is wary of strangers she does like lots of love and cuddling. She is independent and can readily amuse herself. Gwen works off lots of energy riding her tricycle. She gets along well with playmates.

While Gwen enjoys general good health, her left foot is affected by cerebral palsy which causes her to walk with a slight limp and to wear a leg brace below the knee. This condition will not deteriorate. When she is 4 years old she will have a "tendon transfer" operation which will strengthen her foot. She will then continue to wear the brace until she is about 13 years of age at which time she will have a second operation to perform bone surgery on her heel. After that, it is expected that she will be able to go brace free.

Parents wishing to discuss the adoption of Gwen may contact:

## Aim Centre

2340 Albert Street Room 210, 1030 Idylwyld Dr. N.  
 REGINA, Saskatchewan SASKATOON, Saskatchewan  
 S4P 2V7 S7L 4J7  
 Phone: 523-6681 Phone: 653-2056

### AIM ads

AIM ads like these were placed in newspapers. The ads had more in common with pet adoptions than with children. Indigenous children taken into foster care were undergoing some of the most challenging experiences of their life. Yet the descriptions in the ads do not reflect any respect for the child, their challenges or their privacy.



Watch the video at  
<https://tinyurl.com/CBC-News-on-AIM-1968>

## PETER



Peter will be three years old in July. Earlier health complications cleared after a milk allergy was identified when Peter was one year old. A special diet featuring cheese, tomatoes and meat has permitted him to thrive.

Peter is alert and quick to learn. An aggressive, energetic boy, he loves to run and play with other children. Trucks and building blocks are some of Peter's favorite amusements. Peter is friendly and fond of attention.

For further information on the adoption of Peter, contact:

## Aim Centre

2340 Albert Street Room 210, 1030 Idylwyld Dr. N.  
 REGINA, Saskatchewan SASKATOON, Saskatchewan  
 S4P 2V7 S7L 4J7  
 Phone: 523-6681 Phone: 653-2056

Aim is a Program of the Saskatchewan Department of Social Services

## Brian



At birth, Brian weighed 7 lbs. 9 oz. Now in his third month of life, Brian is doing well. He is an active, squirming baby. We are certain Brian will soon have his permanent family. Parents interested in adopting may contact:

## Aim Centre

2340 Albert Street Room 210, 1030 Idylwyld Dr. N.  
 REGINA, Saskatchewan SASKATOON, Saskatchewan  
 S4P 2V7 S7L 4J7  
 Phone: 523-6681 Phone: 653-2056

## JUDY



Judy was taken into care directly from the hospital where she was born eight months ago. She has been with the same foster family ever since. Judy's height, weight and development are just right for her age. She is healthy and ready for her permanent adoption home. Contact:

## Aim Centre

2340 Albert Street Room 210, 1030 Idylwyld Dr. N.  
 REGINA, Saskatchewan SASKATOON, Saskatchewan  
 S4P 2V7 S7L 4J7  
 Phone: 523-6681 Phone: 653-2056

A Program of the Department of Social Services