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April 26, 1972

We have asked you to join us tonight to explore the possibilities of collaborative work between members of the American Indian community and the Children's Museum.

The Children's Museum is custodian of an extensive, well-organized collection of North American Indian materials. Based on this asset and responsibility, our staff has for many years been actively involved in teaching about traditional American Indian cultures. At present we offer curriculum materials, traveling classroom exhibits, and participatory programs in the Museum's Visitor Center, courses for teachers, and an answering service for teachers and group leaders -- all relating to American Indian cultures. These programs and services reach a wide audience which includes not only teachers, educators, parents and children in Greater Boston, but also educators and museum professionals beyond New England. The demand for accurate information and materials on Indian cultures is growing.

However, in recent years we have become increasingly uncomfortable about our role as an institution controlled and staffed by members of the dominant culture dispensing information about, and owning the cultural assets of another people. Without the direct participation of Indians in decisions about what information is dispensed and how our collections are to be used, we feel the legitimacy of our educational and cultural work is seriously compromised. In spite of substantial pressure from the public for new Indian programs and materials, we are unwilling to proceed further until we can find ways of sharing responsibility for this work with members of the Indian community.

At the same time, we feel there may be Children's Museum resources that would be helpful to you in meeting the needs of your communities. If each of us has resources that would be useful in meeting the other's needs, an opportunity for shared, collaborative work exists.

We would like to use our meeting tonight to:

1. Become better informed about each other's needs, resources and motives.
2. Explore whether these present opportunities for one or more collaborative projects.
3. Find out whether any of us want to participate in such shared work.
4. Decide, if the climate seems right, on how to proceed further.

Michael Spock  
Director

Invited but not attending:

G.A

Chief Lorenzo Jeffers

sachem, Wampanoag

80yrs old  
no evening mtgs.

Princess Evening Star

Wampanoag

too busy

Shirley Belanger

Molecate

Artist + teacher  
Tribe, Inc.

No contact yet

Noqeeshtik Aquash

out of town

Ann Malone

out of town

Pat Landry

disconnected phone

Phil Young

disconnected phone

Chief Lightning Foot

my decision!

Daryl Nicolas

disconnected phone

meeting Participants

Wayne Newell M.Ed. Harvard Director, Bi-Cultural School  
Passamaquoddy Reservation

Frank James H.S. teacher President, F.E.I.L.  
Federated Eastern Indian League

Judy Mendes member,  
Boston Indian Council  
FEIL

Tall Oak Pharmacist, U.B.I. office holder F.E.I.L.  
member, A.I.M. (American Indian Movement)

Helen Attaquin Ph.D. candidate, B.U. officer holder, Descendants of the Wampanoags  
member, B.I.C.

George and Nevia Hopkins members, B.I.C.  
United American Indians  
New England Coastal Schaghticoke Indian Assoc.

Pete Soto Ph.D. candidate School of Ed. Harvard. President, B.I.C.  
member American Indian Program, Harvard

Ralph and Hazel Dona. Board members, Boston Indian Council

Mary Creighton member, funding committee, Boston Indian Council

Virginia Moran Board member, Boston Indian Council