

A black and white portrait of a young man with a serious expression, looking slightly upwards. He is wearing a dark baseball cap and a dark t-shirt. His neck and jawline are heavily tattooed with various designs, including a large triangle with a circle inside, a skull, and other abstract patterns. He is wearing a small hoop earring in his left ear and a thick chain necklace with a large cross pendant. The background is dark and out of focus.

Zine & HEARD

Amplifying Voices of Youth From Care

JULY 2025
ISSUE #30

PHOTO BY
CHRISTIAN 'ARI

We respectfully acknowledge that we reside on Treaty 6 Territory; traditional lands of many First Nations & Metis people & we are committed to learning the true history of Canada & the true meaning of truth & reconciliation.

WHO

Youth from care speaking out & making a difference.

WHAT

A zine to amplify our voices & raise awareness.

WHEN

We publish around the 15th of every month.

WHERE

We are based in Edmonton but are for youth from care everywhere.

WHY

Because we can. Our voices have been silent for too long.



THE STRONGEST HEARTS HAVE THE MOST SCARS

*Thank you for
all your support!*

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WHO'S INSIDE

AC

ALL STARS ZINE PROJECT

CALLMECONZZ999

CREATING HOPE SOCIETY

CS

INNER CITY HIGH SCHOOL

JF

KENNEDY ALEXIS

LOCAL 124 SATE SHOP

OCYA YOUTH DAY

OSYS

RIDE TO RECONCILIATION

WE OUT HERE

VULTURE SOUNDZ

YOUTH IN CARE CHRONICLES

YOU ARE NOT FORGOTTEN

**If Maya Angelou died when
she was 20, she would
have died a prostitute
and a single mom.**

**If Malcolm X had died when
he was 20, he would have
died as Detroit Red;
a thief, a woman beater
and a drug addict.**

**People's mistakes
often lead to their
great destiny.**

We all have a story to tell.

You are not your mistakes

Author Unknown

Heart of a Wildflower

I feel like a wildflower.
Every day.
Every hour.
I've wasted away
just hoping I'll be OK.

All the time
I have the heart of a wildflower.
I always felt alone with my own struggles
and somehow
I'm still growing
and hoping
for a new home to fit in.

AC

June 2025
All Starz Zine Project

AUGUST 12 20
25



YOUTH DAY

Keynote **Piyêsiw Crane** / Performance by
Notorious Cree / Host **TJ Thompson** / Youth
Vendors / Food / **Prizes** / Booths / **360°**
Photobooth / **Speakers** / Performances /
11:00 am - 3:00 pm / NorQuest College




**youth
day**

youthday.ca

YOUTH DAY

AUGUST 12, 2025



The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate Is excited to host an event in celebration of International Youth Day on Tuesday, August 12. The event is open to youth ages 14 to 24 and will take place at NorQuest College from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Admission is free.

This year's theme, Advocacy Through Storytelling, highlights how personal stories can inspire change, express identity, and build understanding. When young people share their lived experiences, they create space for connection, visibility, and action.

Experience the day with:

- Performances by Notorious Cree, a dancer and educator sharing culture and history through traditional hoop and powwow dance.
- A keynote speech by Piyêsiw Crane, a queer, disabled Indigenous mother and advocate who draws on her lived experience.
- A vibrant youth-led marketplace where young entrepreneurs showcase their creative businesses.
- Tasty snacks including bannock sandwiches from Kim's Creations, popcorn, and cotton candy.
- Hourly prize draws with gift cards and other exciting giveaways.
- Creative activities like an interactive life-sized poetry cut-out station.
- Xperience360 photobooth, capturing slow-motion 360 degree videos.

To help you get here, we've partnered with ETS to provide free transit passes. Passes are available at several local partner agencies throughout Edmonton. Please email amplify@ocya.alberta.ca for details on where to pick up a free pass.

Join us for a day of powerful speakers, creative performances, interactive booths, prizes, and more. Whether through poetry, art, conversation, or performance, find your own way to share what matters to you.

youthday.ca

Yessir, yessir, eight bags full.

Alberta having an eight billion dollar surplus kinda reminds me of that old nursery rhyme: Baa Baa Black Sheep, have you any wool? Yessir, yessir, eight bags full. One for the master, seven for the dame and none for the little kid who lives in the lane (also known as the alley but that doesn't rhyme).

8 billion dollar surplus but they are collecting the \$200 per month Federal Disability Benefit from Albertans with disabilities instead of allowing them to keep it AND removing \$200 from their rent subsidy if they receive one.

8 billion dollar surplus but they cancelled funding for three disability advocacy groups: the Self Advocacy Federation in Edmonton, the Disability Action Hall in Calgary, and the Southern Alberta Individualized Planning Association (SAIPA) in Lethbridge.

8 billion dollar surplus but they want to stop reporting on the deaths of youth in care over the age of 18 to save money? They want to refer to these young people's lives as "Red Tape" under Bill 38.

8 billion dollar surplus but they will not raise the age of youth in care to receive financial supports and lower the staggering stats that plague them including being 5 times more likely to die before the age of 25 and 193 times more likely to become unhoused than their peers?

8 billion dollar surplus but they are ending the Alberta Child and Youth Support Caregiver Program, which provided financial and medical assistance to adult caregivers of children whose parents or guardians were unable to care for them?

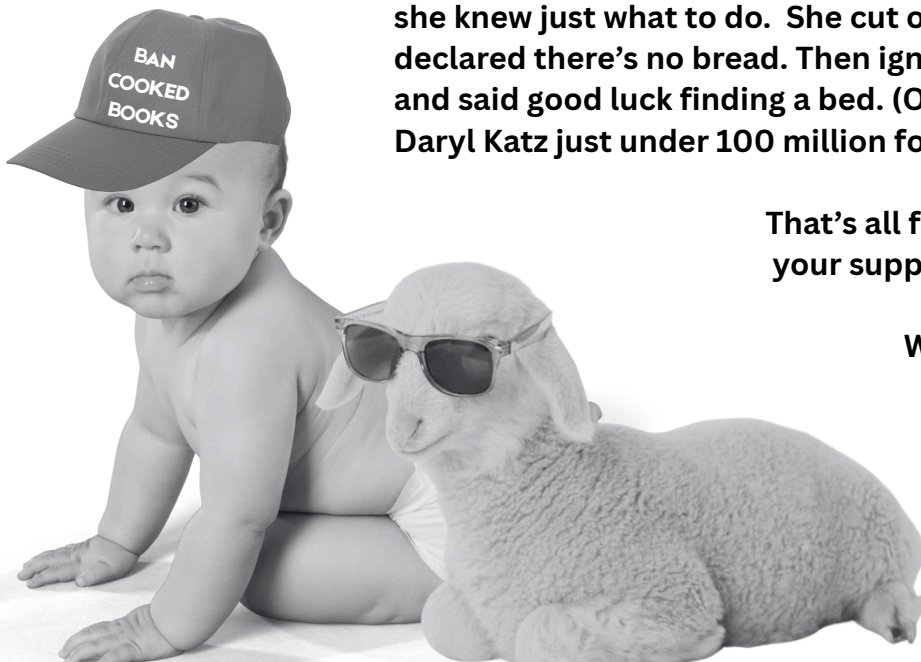
8 billion dollar surplus but education, health care, and services for the unhoused in Alberta continue to be sheared like a black sheep?

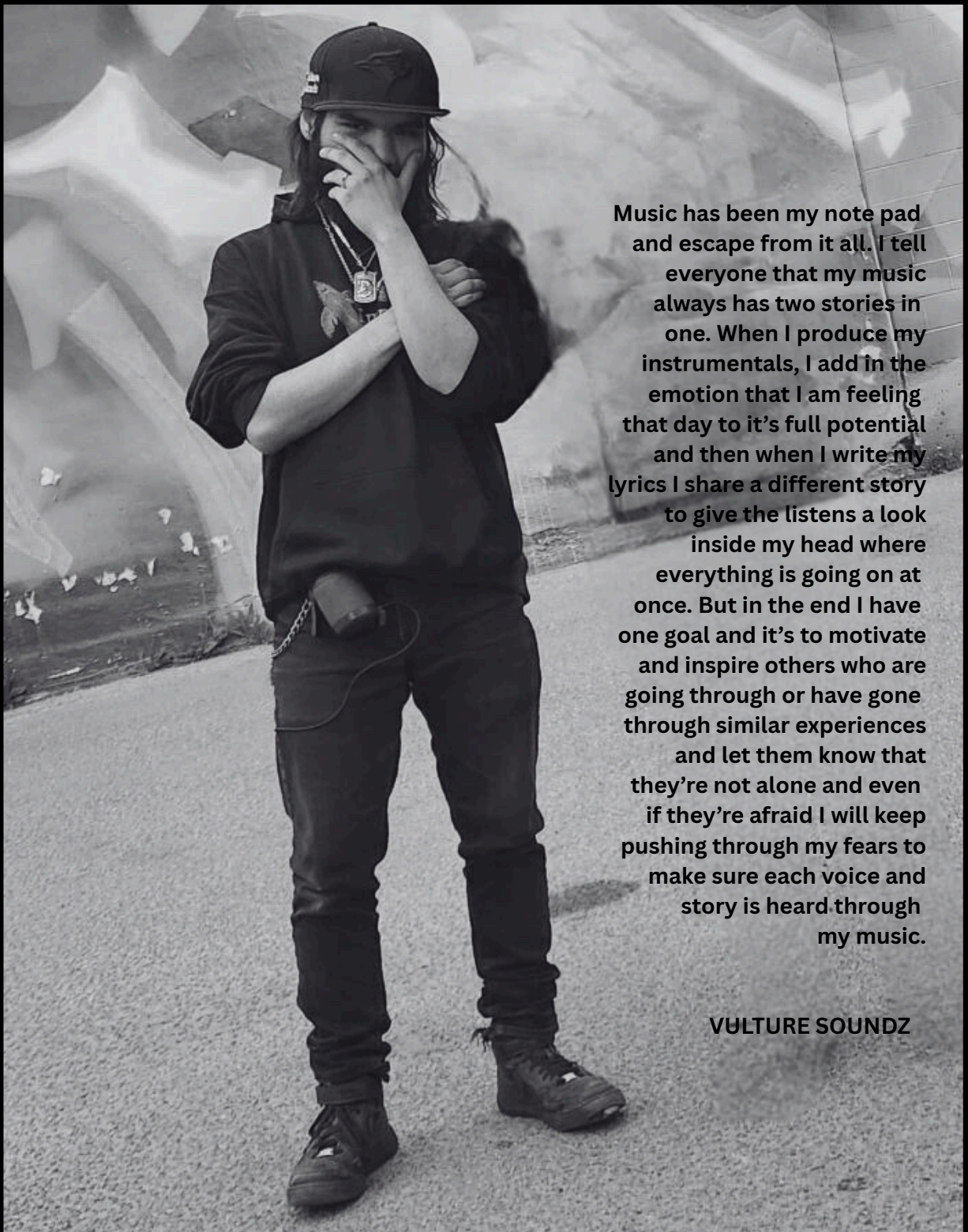
Sooooooo many questions about that kid in the alley and the dame mismanaging all the wool. Just wanted to highlight some of the ones that hurt youth from care and other vulnerable Albertans.

The other nursery rhyme that comes to mind is the one about the old woman who lived in a shoe and had so many children she knew just what to do. She cut off their funding and declared there's no bread. Then ignored them all soundly and said good luck finding a bed. (Oh, and then gave billionaire Daryl Katz just under 100 million for his new venture.)

That's all for now. Thanks again for all your support. Be kind to each other.

With love, Penny Frazier, Editor





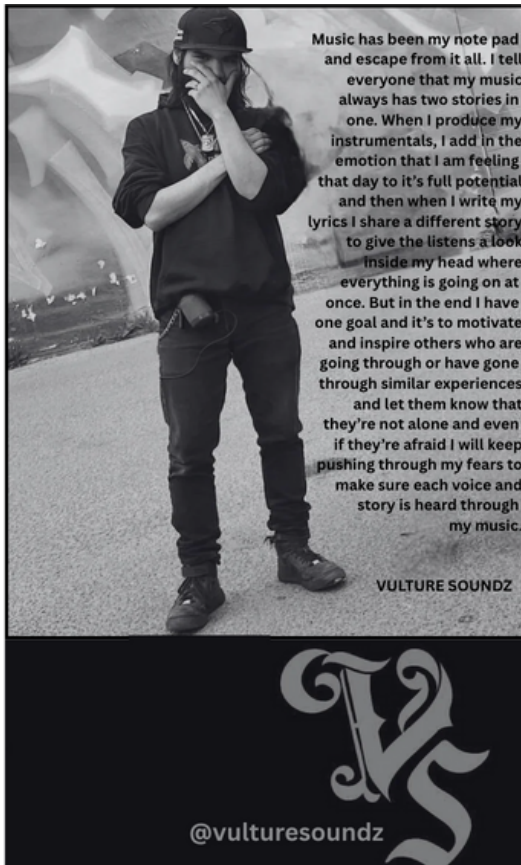
Music has been my note pad
and escape from it all. I tell
everyone that my music
always has two stories in
one. When I produce my
instrumentals, I add in the
emotion that I am feeling
that day to it's full potential
and then when I write my
lyrics I share a different story
to give the listens a look
inside my head where
everything is going on at
once. But in the end I have
one goal and it's to motivate
and inspire others who are
going through or have gone
through similar experiences
and let them know that
they're not alone and even
if they're afraid I will keep
pushing through my fears to
make sure each voice and
story is heard through
my music.

VULTURE SOUNDZ

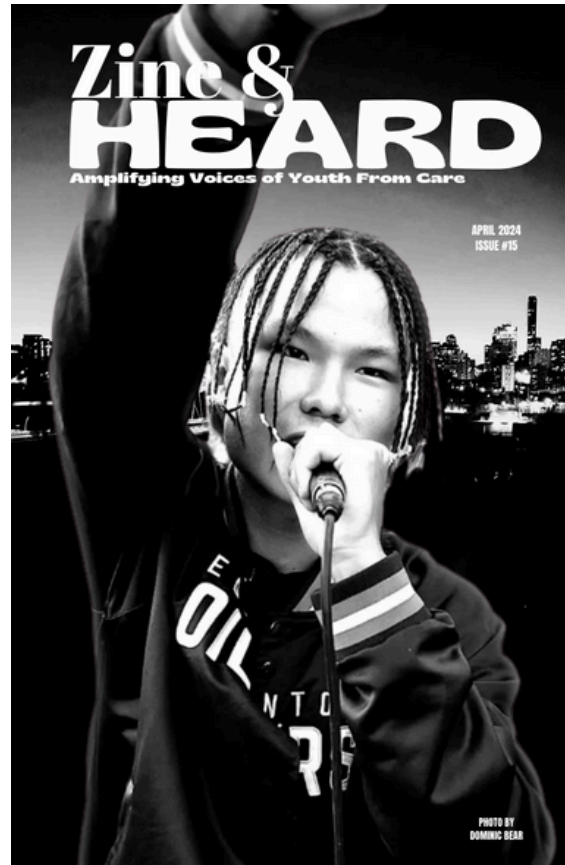
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THIS GUY & THIS GUY



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@callmeconzz999

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TO A FAN WHO CAN'T AFFORD ONE. IT'S A WIN WIN.

**THANKS FOR MAKING
DREAMS BECOME REALITIES**

FOR YOUNG ARTISTS



A BOY NAMED MOCCA

A Story by Kennedy Alexis

Mocca was a young Indigenous boy with a deep yearning for change. He felt that his name didn't quite suit him, it reminded him of the coffee drink, but he couldn't find the right one to replace it. One day, he decided to take a nature walk, hoping that the serenity of the forest would inspire him.

As he walked along the familiar path, Mocca encountered his three closest friends, Randy, Elliot and Pearl on the path. They appeared to be heading back home from berry picking. He shared his dilemma with them, seeking their advice.

Randy suggested, "How about Lakayle? It sounds like 'lake', and you live near the lake. It's perfect for you!"

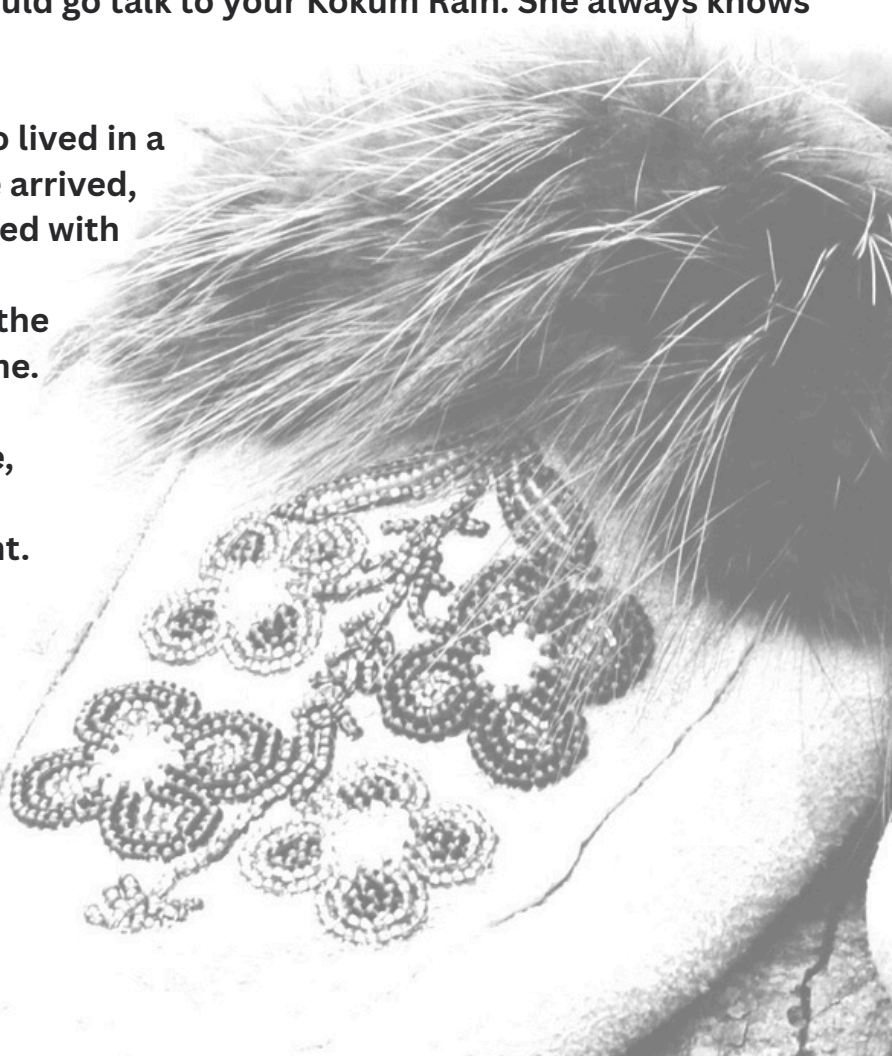
Elliot proposed a different idea. "Why don't you write random names in the ground and toss a stone with your eye closed? Whatever name the stone lands on will be your new name."

The third friend Pearl insisted, "You should go talk to your Kokum Rain. She always knows what to do in these situations."

Mocca decided to visit Kokum Rain, who lived in a cozy house deep in the woods. When he arrived, he knocked on the door and she answered with a gentle smile. She welcomed him in and Mocca sat in the easy chair next to the fireplace, feeling the warmth of her home.

"Kokum Rain, I want to change my name, but I can't find one that suits me," Mocca began explaining his predicament.

Kokum Rain listened attentively, then began to share a story. "Do you know why you were named Mocca?" she asked.



"Your late Kokum Willow was a skilled craftsperson. She was renowned for her crafts, ribbon skirts, regalia, mukluks and of course moccasins. Your mother was her youngest daughter and they dreamed of starting a business to share their art and crafts with the world. When you were born, Kokum Willow gifted you the cutest moccasins ever made. That is how you got your name." Mocca was in awe as he listened to the story of his name's origin. Kokum Rain continued, "Why would you want to change your name that carries such a special legacy? Your name honors your family's traditions and culture. It reminds you of where you come from and who you are."

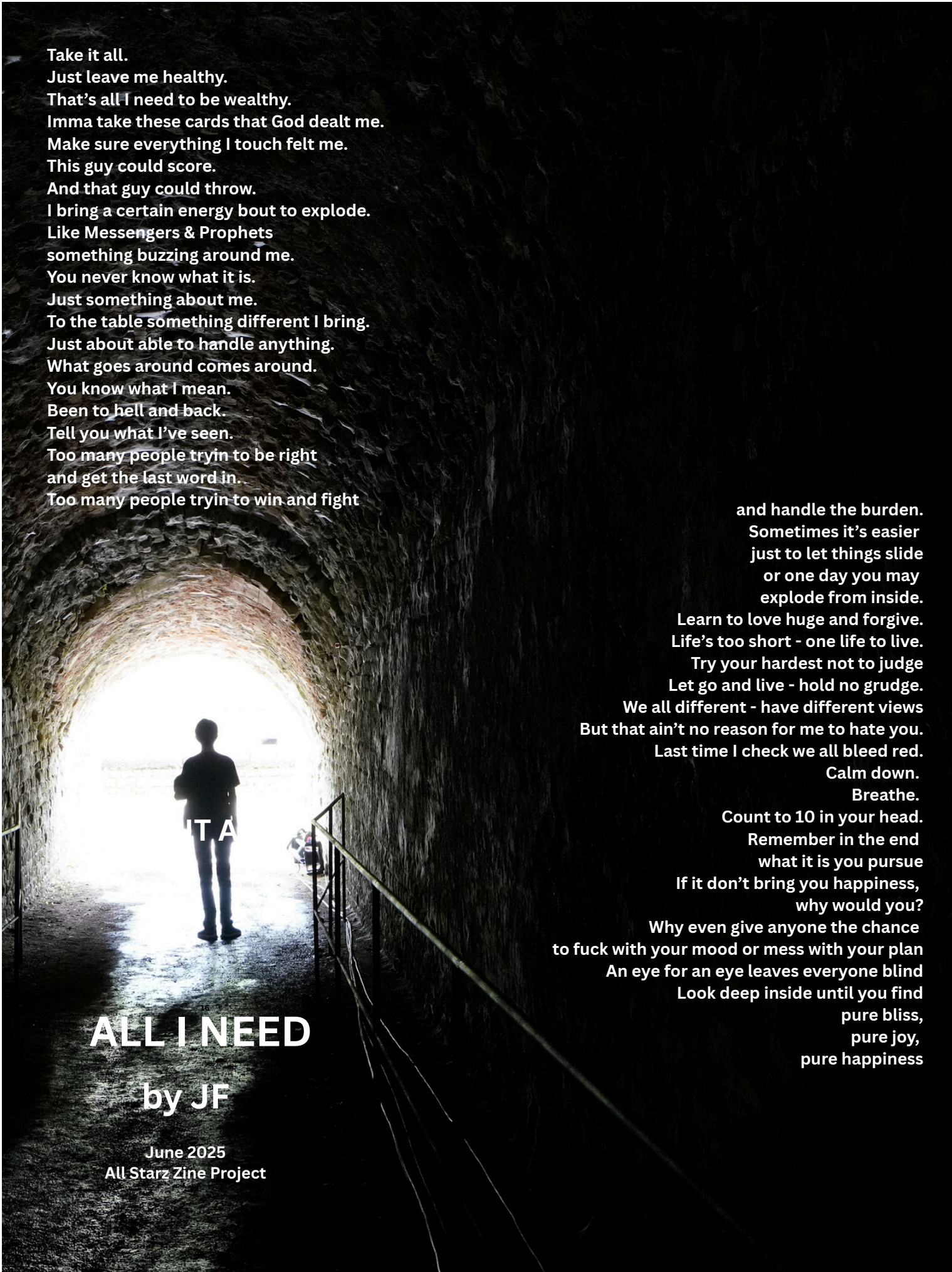
Mocca thought deeply about her words. He realized that his name was more than just a word. It was a link to his heritage and his family's dreams.

"I understand now, Kokum Rain. I don't want to pretend to be someone I'm not. I'll keep my name and honor my mama and Kokum Willow."

Kokum Rain smiled warmly. "That's the spirit Mocca. Be proud of who you are and where you come from. You don't want to disrespect your mama like that, she might pinch you! Aha!"

Mocca hugged Kokum Rain tightly, feeling a new found sense of pride. As he headed back home, he was proud to be Mocca, embracing the name that connected him to his family and culture.

Kennedy Alexis



Take it all.
Just leave me healthy.
That's all I need to be wealthy.
Imma take these cards that God dealt me.
Make sure everything I touch felt me.
This guy could score.
And that guy could throw.
I bring a certain energy bout to explode.
Like Messengers & Prophets
something buzzing around me.
You never know what it is.
Just something about me.
To the table something different I bring.
Just about able to handle anything.
What goes around comes around.
You know what I mean.
Been to hell and back.
Tell you what I've seen.
Too many people tryin to be right
and get the last word in.
Too many people tryin to win and fight

and handle the burden.
Sometimes it's easier
just to let things slide
or one day you may
explode from inside.
Learn to love huge and forgive.
Life's too short - one life to live.
Try your hardest not to judge
Let go and live - hold no grudge.
We all different - have different views
But that ain't no reason for me to hate you.
Last time I check we all bleed red.
Calm down.
Breathe.
Count to 10 in your head.
Remember in the end
what it is you pursue
If it don't bring you happiness,
why would you?
Why even give anyone the chance
to fuck with your mood or mess with your plan
An eye for an eye leaves everyone blind
Look deep inside until you find
pure bliss,
pure joy,
pure happiness

ALL I NEED

by JF

June 2025
All Starz Zine Project

COVER STORY

CALVIN LYNCH

ARTIST. FATHER. FRIEND. SURVIVOR.

FORMER YOUTH IN CARE.

I've been to hell and back. And the fact that I'm still standing here not addicted to drugs, not doing anything overly criminal, trying to do a good job raising my kids is pretty crazy because I didn't even think I was going to make it to 25, let alone almost 30.



ON ALL PLATFORMS



In my music, I want to showcase my pain. I want to showcase my talent. I want to showcase the raw truth of what we have dealt with. Like, you never know, you might have to wake up and go sell some drugs because you don't have a mom or a dad or auntie or uncle or anybody looking after you, or even older brothers or sisters. You have to make ends meet because you're a native kid growing up in the hood. Nobody's going to hire you for a job, you know what I mean? Nobody's just gonna hire you, and basically, it's hard out there being a foster kid that has been living on their own since age 16 and so you eventually end up going to a lot of things that turn you into, I guess you can say a gangster or a thug or somebody who's just not used to living in a normal society. And I don't know, gangster rap kind of saved me because I could say the stuff that I've been through without saying too much and feel like I'm accomplished.

I always wanted to be a musician like the musicians my dad always played. I was always singing with a little guitar. It was always, always about music. And then at five or six years old, I heard rap. I think it was Biggie Smalls or something in the back of a school bus. And that changed my life. I realized I always had the rhythm. I just didn't know what it was. I was able to get into my music at iHuman with Enoch. If it weren't for Enoch, honestly, that music program wouldn't have been anything. Enoch ran that. If it weren't for him, a lot of our careers wouldn't have been able to get started. He loved music that much that he was willing to sit there for hours, for years, with each of us, and always low key. Just helping us with making and producing beats, making vocalizations, learning how to record.

My secondary person was Karan Singh aka Corvid Lorax from Inner City High School. He was a teacher there for a bit. He's from back in the day, in the early 2000s - made it to MTV. He's like a triple OG, but yeah, he helped us a lot with recording. If you can find even one good person to guide you, that's all it takes sometimes. It's vital for youth to have access to a place like iHuman or somewhere they can pursue arts and music because if you don't have places like that all you have are the streets. And that's why you see all these kids ODing on the street. Real talk. They need a place to get lost, you know, cared for, a little bit of clothing, a little bit of food, some music, you know, some friends. A little bit of care. Like real care. It goes a long way.



“It’s vital for youth to have access to a place like iHuman or somewhere they can pursue arts and music because if you don't have places like that all you have are the streets. And that's why you see all these kids ODing on the street. Real talk. They need a place to get lost, you know, cared for, a little bit of clothing, a little bit of food, some music, you know, some friends. A little bit of care. Like real care.”



When I came up from iHuman we used to do so many block shows and there would be live shows everywhere. We really lived that classic hip hop life. Like, I wasn't always gangster rap, there were times where I was into conscious rap. I used to be part of Collective Conscience. I wasn't a main character. I like to compare my experience to like how Ice Cube do in NWA. I eventually branched off on my own and started getting more noise, more and more clout, more whatever because I was doing what I wanted to do, not what everybody else wanted to do. I dropped my music video of Fuck What You Think (or FWYT) and I got like 13,000 to 15,000 views organically, and that was 2014, 2015. So, you have a lot of followers, get a lot of love. Everything that I did, I didn't really have any help. Everything was like my money, my funding. I pay people to do it for me. I built relationships with NBF (Nothing But Fire Entertainment) and I have been with them for almost 10 years now. That says a lot. We have our own studio and I wouldn't be who I am without my producer, Christian Ari, or videographer Andrew “Top Dog” Smith. I feel like they deserve their flowers. They realized my independence as an artist.



Gangster rap is like a dying thing, now. People don't really put the heart into it like they used to. They're just kind of saying what everyone else is saying, you know? I just hope to get somewhere with it because I put my heart and soul into it. I might not be talking about the most, you know, appropriate things, but it's fun. People enjoy it. It's entertainment, right? I got a lot of support. It's just not in the right places. Like the people at home going through it or are going through the same things, support me and I support them back. I have diehard fans. Not like just people who are like, oh, hey, there's that guy. They'll literally go out of their way to come say hi to me, get an autograph or get a picture and it's like I'm a big hood star, I guess. A lot of my friends that I grew up with have OD'd or they're in jail for life for murder or their disabilities got them to the point where they're homeless in the street and I'm driving Mercedes and a Harley. I got two houses and I was a foster kid til I was 16. I've been through a lot of drugs, a lot of depression, a lot of abusive relationships. I've been through a lot of stuff where I was in the wrong, other people were in the wrong. I've been to hell and back. And the fact that I'm still standing here not addicted to drugs, not doing anything overly criminal, trying to do a good job raising my kids is pretty crazy because I didn't even think I was going to make it to 25, let alone almost 30.

I've seen my cousin kill himself in my house. I've seen murders. I've seen a lot of addiction. I lost a lot of friends. I lost a couple people in my houses and I've been through a lot of trauma that I haven't really talked about. Crazy stuff that you can't even talk about. Every night I wake up fighting. Every night. I wake out of my sleep fighting for my life. I feel like I've been through a war or something. Maybe I have. Before I was six, I was in nine different homes. I was sexually abused, physically abused, emotionally abused. So much abuse. I haven't been through any counselling to really talk about that, you know, because I don't want to. I don't want to see or remember that shit. You know what I mean? Sometimes I know they look at me like he's a big fucking guy and he's tattooed and scary, but at the time of abuse I was a little kid. You don't understand what's going on. It's just like, you know, it's like a whole thing. It took a whole lot of strength to start talking about it two or three years it two or three years ago. I finally just made the decision of like, hey, you know what? I'm a survivor.



“I lost a lot of friends. I lost a couple people in my houses and I’ve been through a lot of trauma that I haven't really talked about. Crazy stuff that you can't even talk about. Every night I wake up fighting. Every night. I wake out of my sleep fighting for my life. I feel like I've been through a war or something. Maybe I have.”



Two of those homes that I was in when I was young were shut down. Then they moved me to a farm that put us to work from age 6 to 14. That was a very bad place. All that stuff sticks with you and it impacts me in everything. In relationships, in the way I think, in the way I move, you know, I'm very secluded, very isolated sometimes. I don't want to be around people a lot, even though I do. I'm very confused sometimes when it comes like that, you know, because there's a lot of emotions that I haven't dealt with, a lot of past trauma, I haven't dealt with. And a lot of people think I'm crazy sometimes, you know, because they don't understand the pain that I've been through. They'll see it in my eyes and they'll be, yo, you look scary, you know, and I don't even mean to be like that. It's just sometimes, my brain is like a big storm of hell. On the outside, I'm trying to not let it seep out, because everybody will feel it.



**“Like, my energy is not human when I’m on stage.
When I'm in my zone, it's not human -
it's like God sent. And so, I just pray
that I get somewhere with it,
you know?”**



So when I think about everything, I reflect, you know, maybe I should get to this music journey. What else do I have to show for it? I couldn't go through all that hell not to. Because I'm praying to God every day for this music stuff to work and I feel like it's not working as much as I thought it would. I need more support in areas where people can actually get me somewhere and every time I do get support like that, they want to make me rap about something that isn't me. I need somebody to accept my authenticity. It's like when I step on stage, people will say that I take the whole show. It's not even my show and I'll just take it all over. Like, my energy is not human when I’m on stage. When I'm in my zone, it's not human - it's like God sent. And so, I just pray that I get somewhere with it, you know? I guess it's hard for people to see that, because they see a big criminal. They see big tattoos. They see how many federal cases. They don't see that I'm that guy people call when shit goes down. I'll come help you. I'm not the type of guy that is going to rob you. I'm the type of guy that will protect you from the wrong. But, a lot of people don't see that, right? Gangster rap has brought me a lot of conflict. A lot of people who are in power and who have funding, and who have power to get you somewhere - they don't. It's because they're not used to that lifestyle. We're not overglorifying. Well, maybe sometimes we are, but that's what we live. And I'm not trying to be traditional in my music. I don't want to use my tradition and culture as something that will potentially save me from what I once was just to be in the public eye. I don't want to make money off that.

We know the tradition and culture stuff is good because we've seen good things happen to these people. For sure. We want to be part of it too.

But you've got to be an authentic person. I've learned to be authentic and real, no matter what. I just know I got a lot of stuff that I'm still working on. I want to get some more done. It feels different to know I made it to 30.

I'm dealing with a lot. But I'm getting there. It's just one day at a time, you know? I'm grateful for it. It's hard, it's different, but I'm grateful.



"Gangster rap has its own unique value and should be appreciated just like any other music. It's important to recognize that gangster rappers often come from challenging backgrounds and use their music as a way to express their struggles and experiences. It's not just about criminalization, but about shedding light on social issues and advocating for change. These artists deserve support and understanding for their artistry and the messages they convey. Music is a powerful medium that can bring people together and foster empathy, regardless of the genre. So, let's keep appreciating all forms of music and the diverse stories they tell."



Some days are very hard. Some days they are very emotional and they roller coaster. My ego is fighting with my heart. It's almost like feeling bipolar sometimes. It makes it tough to make relationships work. If who you're with doesn't come from the same place as you it can be hard to understand each other. I often feel like I'm by myself and it's hard when I come from foster care to like not getting any help. I'm not on social assistance and I don't have family to be like, hey, can I borrow \$1,000 or you know, I don't have anything like that. Sometimes I got to go to work, go get it, or sometimes work's not working. I got to go do something I don't want to do because I got kids and they need to eat and so it's hard. We're not completely secure financially. So I'm paying for two houses and paying my bills and making my payments. My hustle is unmatched. I will grind till I am tired and grumpy and I stink. I will go to the point where it's like, hey, you need a shower. But I'm happy when everyone is eating good. When everyone's happy, you know?

So people say - look at you. I'm still here, raising my kids proper, doing my thing, breaking the cycle but sometimes it's hard not to be a criminal, you know?

I'm born into the cycle and it's hard because when I want to become a good dude, I'm not making enough money. When I got to do what's right, I'm just not making enough. When what I'm doing is wrong, I'm making an absurd amount of money but my wife is like, you got to stop. I had a legit business but about two years ago, my cousin sold to an undercover cop under the premises of my store and got us both charged and everything that I worked for got ripped from me. I'd just beat three federal cases - one of those cases being an organized crime charge. So, I wasn't there during the transaction and they found nothing on me but the cops still charged me. Somebody posted a TikTok video that made me look very bad on the Powwow trail. I threatened them with defamation and they took it down, but there were like 20,000 views to make it look like I got raided. So, last year I beat the charge. This year I'm taking time to collect myself, be a good dad, get my money and my affairs in order. Next year, I want to hit the trail again. I want to have a big stack of apology letters and give one to each Powwow Committee at every reservation. I'm going to give them that and I would like to ask to do a ceremony. I might even start drumming or dancing because I didn't realize how much the power of circle was saving me.

I'm in a weird stage in my life at the moment. I just finished dealing with all my cases. I have two daughters and my son just turned one. My wife and I just moved into a house. I don't know what I'm doing with the music. I don't feel the same ambition as I want to, but it's because life's kicking my ass, you know? But I go back to music and all these issues go away. When I go back to gangster rap, a lot of people are scared to put a guy like me on, because a lot of people assume that, oh, like if I pay this guy and he doesn't show, I'm not going to be able to do anything. That's what they think and that's fair. It's their fear but a lot of these people don't want to sit down, like have a coffee before. Nobody ever wants to just meet up. Nobody does that. They just go straight up in business, and be like, hey, I would like to do this, this, this. There's no personal business relationships anymore. It's strictly business and if you're not doing the business they want, they don't want anything to do with you. Or maybe they think that us rappers are just broke jokes, losers, junkie people, you know. So, the only way you're making noise right now is what you're online.

All I know is that everything that I did, I didn't really have any help. I have five going on six albums. You don't really see a lot of people dropping them. You see people dropping singles and videos. I also drop singles on top of my albums which is good. I have music videos and I've got to keep on enticing. You know, keep it alive. Nobody else paid for that. I paid for that. People don't understand it takes like a 1 or 2 grand for a video. It takes, like 300 to 400 dollars a session for just a couple songs.



**All I know is that everything that I did,
I didn't really have any help.
I have five going on six albums.**





“You asked me why I’m so honest and it’s because I have to be. Rolling and growing up, people would hurt me if I wasn't honest. At a young age, I was surrounded by a lot of real people, like people who would've done like 10 - 20 years in the pen. You can't sit around there and make white lies. You can't squeeze around the bush. You got to be straight up honest. I learned my lessons the hard way. And it's like, why are you going to lie to the people that help you the most? Because when you're in the street, you only got who you got. Why most of us end up in the street is because we don't have family. We don't have anywhere to go. So we go check it out. We see people who are going through the same stuff as us. We try to befriend them. That's how it works. We're all the same, you know? So keep it real with your kin.”



To other foster kids out there, I want to say don't leave the system. Don't act like it's against you. Use the system. Use the system to benefit you. Use that money. Use that money til they're 22. Save that money. Don't stop. Use that free education. Get it all. Become somebody. Don't let the turmoil of pain and suffering confuse your future. Because it's like we come from nothing. We have nobody. So for you to think like that, will make you a nobody. And you'll just become a statistic. Become educated, become somebody that you want to know, that you will look up to, you know? Maybe instead of being a gangster, become a doctor, become a lawyer. Yeah, I suggest you become a lawyer. Become a lawyer, because you'll be making more money because all the drug dealers and criminals will be paying you. Instead of you making crime, you're making legit money. Just become somebody. Don't be like everyone else doing drugs, or thinking being drunk is cool, because it's not. You know, you're already set back 10 steps before anybody. So, you've got a lot of work to do. Stay focussed. Stay focussed. All you can stay and pray.

If you want to pursue a career in music, I say do it. Do it, and don't ever do yourself. A lot of people have the talent, but they don't have the kahunas to get out there. And I'm telling you, every person I've seen that had talent, I told them: Get out there. And the people that did listen, they're doing something. They're doing what they love. Just don't be scared.

Calvin Lynch

Don't leave the system. Don't act like it's against you. Use the system. Use the system to benefit you. Use that money. Use that money till you turn 22. Save that money. Don't stop. Use that free education. Get it all. Become somebody. Don't let the turmoil of pain and suffering confuse your future. Because we come from nothing. We have nobody. So for you to like think like that, will make you a nobody. And you'll just become a statistic. Become educated, become somebody that you want to know, that you will look up to, you know? Maybe, you know, instead of being a gangster, become a doctor, become a lawyer. You know, I suggest you become a lawyer. Become a lawyer, because you'll be making more money because all the drug dealers and criminals will be paying you. Instead of you making crime, you're making legit money from being a lawyer, and all the criminals will come to you. Just become somebody. Become somebody, don't be like everyone else doing drugs and thinking being drunk is cool, because it's not.

Yeah, you know, you're already set back 10 steps before anybody. So, you've got a lot of work to do or there's nothing to celebrate. Stay focussed. Stay focussed. Just stay and pray.

If you want to pursue music, I say do it. Do it, and don't ever do yourself. A lot of people have the talent, but they don't have the kahunas to get out there. And I'm telling you, every person I've seen that had talent, I tell them: Get out there. And the people that did listen, they're doing something. Yeah. They're doing what they love. Just don't be scared.

PHOTO BY
CHRISTIAN ARI



What can make a difference in someone's life?

For me personally, music can make a difference in someone's life. Music is the key to my heart. When I'm stressed or frustrated, when I write raps, I'm able to express my feelings and it helps me get out of my mind because I'm not in that dark place.

I'm slowly becoming a rapper and it's making a huge difference in my life because I'm slowly walking to the other road. The road that I'm on, is not the road that you guys want to take. The road that I'm walking only gets crazy, dangerous. And if you make a wrong move on this road, you're in a box or you're in a cage. These are facts. So you see what I mean? This music that I'm making is helping me change my ways of life.

The music that I listen to motivates me, but by making my own songs, I get stronger. I'll recommend that if you're into making music but you're shy to make it and sing, just do it, who cares what people think of you? I was in this situation of being shy and thinking about other people judging me for who I am but I began to realize a huge difference in my life by having this opportunity to make my raps.

Being around music can help bring people together. When you rap or sing with someone, you don't know, it brings you together. You have more of a bond with that person. So you see what I mean? Music. Has made a big difference in my life by helping me bond with people. When I write raps, I think of it as a journal but I also think of it as therapy because it helps me deal with my anger.

Music and writing will always be my go-to when I'm feeling stressed. I'll give you guys a couple of lines I wrote and rap songs I made and I'll explain what each bar means. Here's the first bar.

"I was hanging with killers. They made me sell Skittles."
What I mean by this is, I was hanging with the wrong crowd when I was young and they took me in and I started flipping/selling different colors of Fentanyl. If you know Skittle packs, you know there's a lot of different colors. Yeah, that's all I'm going to say about that.

Music is a good example of expressing your feelings.

C.S.
All Starz Zine Project



Head Over To A Different Kind of High School

SEE THE SCHOOL & MEET STAFF AT OUR *FREE DROP-IN SUMMER PROGRAM*, JULY AND AUGUST.

DROP IN
for FREE Summer Activities
July 8 to August 15.
Tues to Fridays.

REGISTER
for fall classes
August 27
at school.



**Inner City High School
& Youth Engagement Program**

**Tel. (780) 424-9425
www.innercity.ca**



Inner City High School



Flexible Classes + Supports

Have you heard of Inner City High School? It's an independent accredited senior high school in central Edmonton.

For over 30 years, they've offered academic and arts based classes for students aged 15 to 19.

The school helps Edmonton's marginalized **Indigenous and other urban youth** earn a high school diploma.

14

Inner City offers flexible but structured learning environments with small class sizes. Students receive individual and small group supports to address their unique needs and to help bridge gaps in their education.

All students have direct access to Youth Engagement staff who can help solve legal, medical and housing issues.

There's also free breakfasts, free hot lunches and snacks provided all school year.

Inner City's graduates are equipped to attend Alberta's colleges and universities or move into the world of work.

Interested in learning more? In July and August you can **drop-in** to attend summer activities Tuesday to Friday to see if the school is a fit. Learn more on their website, social media or call **(780) 424-9425**.



RIDE TO RECONCILIATION



SUPPORTING



SATURDAY, AUGUST 23, 2025

RIDE

REGISTRATION: 8AM - 10AM

KICKSTANDS UP: 10:30AM

FEE: \$50 (BREAKFAST INCLUDED)

INDIGENOUS MARKET

REGISTER: BLACKJACKSROADHOUSE.COM

TIME: 10AM - 4PM

STALL: \$50 (10X10) / \$75 (10X20)



KIDS CORNER

PRIZING

50/50



\$500 CASH PRIZE DAY OF RIDE
TO ONE REGISTERED RIDER
DONATED BY LO-COST AUTOMATIC
TRANSMISSIONS

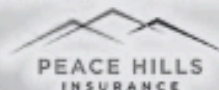


MOTORCYCLE RAFFLE WITH CUSTOM PAINT JOB
DONATED BY LOCO GRINGO CUSTOM DESIGNS
\$50/TICKET DRAW HLD WHEN ALL 500 TICKETS SOLD

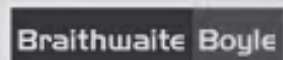
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2110 SPARROW DRIVE NISKU, AB

**Nobody can walk
a mile in your shoes
but they can respect
your journey.**



**Please contact us to submit your stories, art, music,
poetry, thoughts. A few words can inspire many.**

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Facebook: [penny.frazier.75](https://www.facebook.com/penny.frazier.75)
Text: 780-221-6124

Thank you.



DISABILITY

PRIDE MONTH

— JULY —
2025

In 2019, the AB Government lowered the age of youth in care to receive financial support from age 24 to age 22. This was a decision made that went against all research and advice from experts in the field. They said not that many youth still needed supports past the age of 22 but they never said how many still did. (Apx. 500 youth leave care in Alberta every year.) They even had a lengthy court battle with a 21-year-old single mother who challenged this decision. In 2021 the age was lowered. They did it to save \$14 million.

The Office of the Child and Youth Advocate

Investigative Reviews

Between October 1, 2024, and March 31, 2025, we completed and publicly released **25** investigative reviews for 22 young people who passed away and 3 who were seriously injured.

Within the OCYA's reviews, areas of concern are highlighted to help strengthen supports across the province.

Key areas of concern identified across many of these reviews included:

1

Supports for young people transitioning to adulthood

2

Opioid and substance use

Now, as the numbers of youth in care who pass away continues to be alarming, the Alberta government wants to significantly limit the investigative reviews that the Child & Youth Advocate is allowed to do as outlined in “Red Tape Reduction” Bill 38.

Currently, the deaths of all children and youth who die in government care or received intervention services within the two years before their death are investigated. For children under the age of 18, this will not change, but for youth ages 18 and 19, investigations will only be performed at the discretion of the Child and Youth Advocate. For those aged 20 - 22 there will be none. As indicated by the most recent review, 16 of the 25 deaths and serious injuries that were investigated were youth over the age of 18.

It looks and feels like “Truth Reduction”. A numbers game to improve their record. This action is dehumanizing. These young lives matter. They deserve to be counted and honoured. We need to know what happened to them. The Alberta Government referring to them as nothing more than “Red Tape” is contemptuous and cruel.

RAISE THE AGE.
LOWER THE STATS

1

Transitioning to Adulthood

All young people transitioning to adulthood deserve the same level of care as their peers.

12 of the 25 reviews involved young people 18 years old or older, many of whom faced challenges including trauma, addiction, and limited support networks.

2

Substance use

Young people need clear, timely access to youth-specific mental health and addiction services that are easy to navigate.

Substance use, especially opioids, was a leading factor in 12 of the 25 deaths reviewed.

RAISE THE AGE.
LOWER THE STATS

MANY THANKS TO TIM AT LOCAL 124 SKATE SHOP!



**AND MANY THANKS TO SHELDON THE GREAT
FOR PUTTING THESE TOGETHER!**

**We did a skate drive and Edmontonians answered the
call donating decks, trucks, wheels and even cold hard
cash! The result? 16 full decks delivered
with love to the youth at OSYS!**

~~ THIS IS WHAT COMMUNITY LOOKS LIKE ~~

“We here at Local 124 were elated when given the opportunity to provide skateboards for the youth at OSYS. Skateboarding has been so much for us over the decades - doing it for a fun excuse to travel, exciting way to explore cities and an amazing way to meet friends!”

Sheldon - LOCAL 124

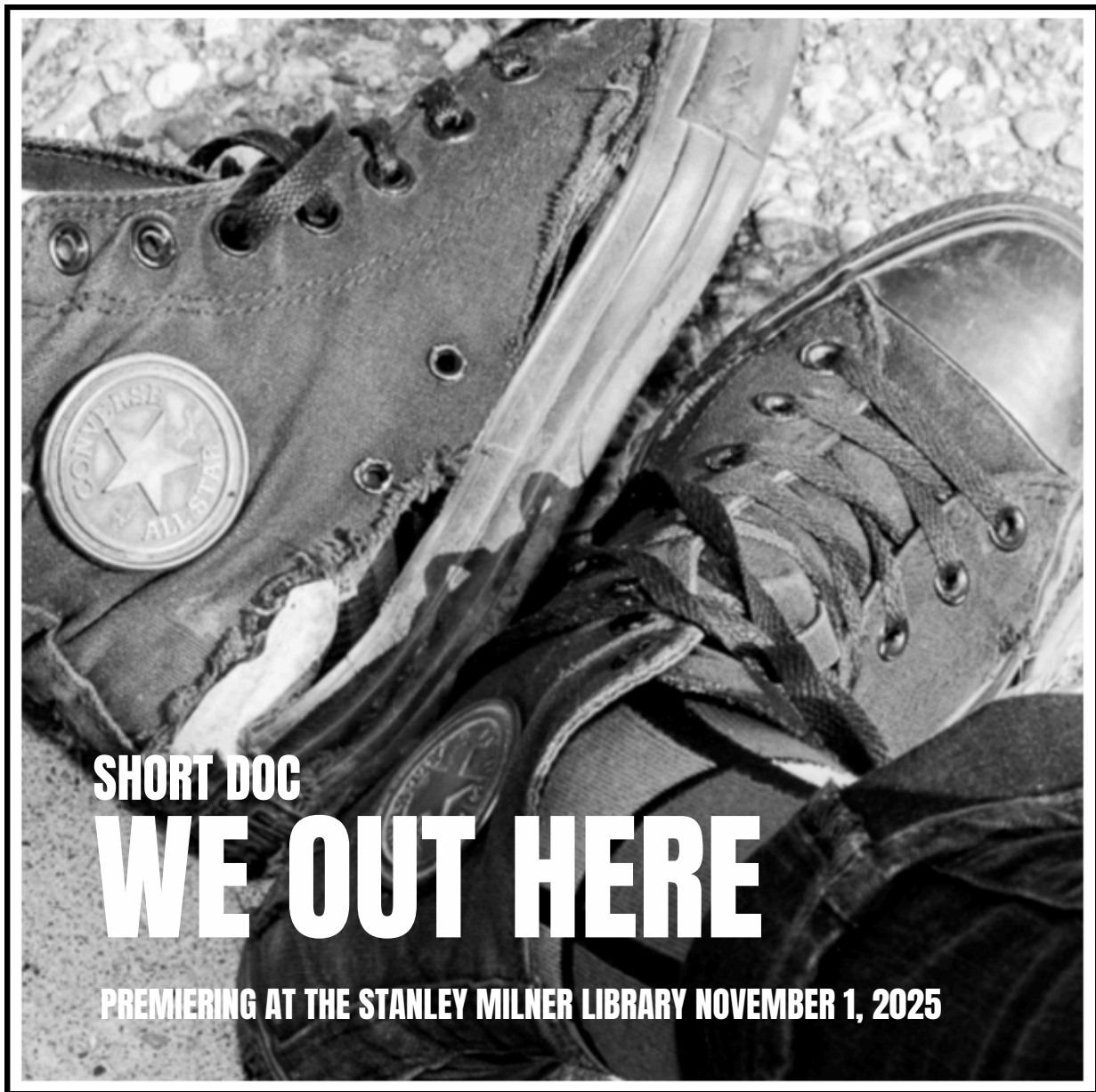


“With just a board, kids get freedom, independence and a way to get around. No matter what they’ve got, skateboarding gives them a focus, purpose - and a whole community ready to back them”



**Sherry Vanstone
OSYS**

**STAY TUNED FOR SKATE DRIVE
2026!**



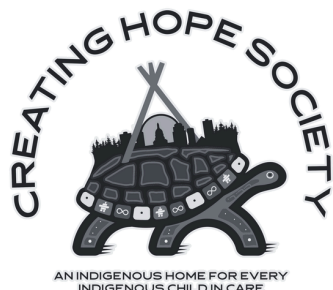
SHORT DOC

WE OUT HERE

PREMIERING AT THE STANLEY MILNER LIBRARY NOVEMBER 1, 2025

During the months of July & August 2025, we will be mentoring and working with marginalized youth in the City of Edmonton to create a short documentary regarding the harsh realities they face on a daily basis with a specific focus on the challenges they experience pursuing music on a serious note. The documentary will include interviews, clips of live performances and also commentary from established hip-hop artists with lived experience.

This project provides music education to youth in the justice system & storytelling through documentary filmmaking.



BILL 38

“They want to silence us.”

Former youth in care, Name Withheld

“Just another way to make us disappear.”

Former youth in care, Name Withheld

**“I’ve been surrounded all my life by people in care,
and the amount of them who died around
the age of 20-26 is shocking.”**

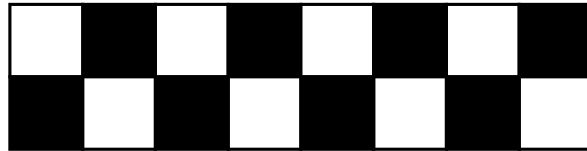
Brendan, former youth in care



The bill is the province’s ninth Red Tape Reduction Bill and according to Minister Dave Nally, “It is perhaps one of the best.”

DEAD KIDS ARE NOT RED TAPE

RAISE THE AGE. LOWER THE STATS.



DIAL 9-8-8 SUICIDE CRISIS LINE 24/7

INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS CRISIS LINE

24- HOUR 1-866-925-4419

YOUTH EMERGENCY SHELTER (Y.E.S.S.)

780-468-7070 24/7 24 HOURS

ACCESS 24/7 - 24 HOUR

Crisis and Intake Services - 780-424-2424

KIDS HELP PHONE - 24 HOUR

Call 1-800-668-6868 Facebook Messenger

Text CONNECT to 686868

NACIS CRISIS LINE - 24 HOUR

780-422-2001

NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION SERVICES

1-888-456-4566 24 HOUR

CMHA DISTRESS LINE - 24 HOUR

780-482-4357 (HELP)

KICKSTAND CONNECT

mykickstand.ca/online-care#resources

OFFICE OF THE YOUTH & CHILD ADVOCATE

**If you have questions about your rights as a young person,
need legal help, or need to speak out, we're here for you.**

Talk to Us: Toll-free: (800) 661-3446

Monday - Friday 8:15 AM - 4:30 PM

NORTHERN ALBERTA Call: (780) 422-6056

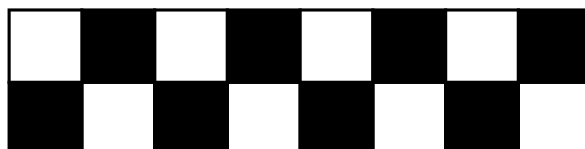
SOUTHERN ALBERTA Call: (403) 297-8435

ACCESS OPEN MINDS

**ACCESS Open Minds Edmonton is a walk-in service for individuals
16-25 years old. Young people and their families can walk-in during
open clinic hours and will be seen on a first come first serve basis.**

MONDAY – FRIDAY 12:00-5:00PM 780-887-9781

NEED TO CONNECT? DIAL 211 24 HOURS





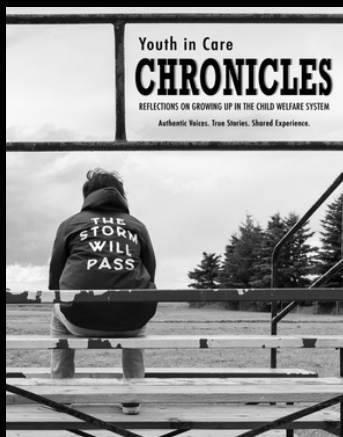
Many thanks to the Friends of Zine & HEARD

OFFICE OF THE CHILD & YOUTH ADVOCATE
CHIMO YOUTH RETREAT CENTRE
NANDA & COMPANY AMANDA QUILL
ANNE STEVENSON - WARD O-DAY'MIN COUNCILLOR
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CLINT FRAZIER CADENCE LEADERSHIP & COMMUNICATION INC.
HIGHER KNOWLEDGE aka BRYANT DORAND
TOMMY TWO DOGS JAN MASLYK ANONYMOUS X 7
CHEYANNE CARLSON-WHITE LYLE BELL MARLEY-JAY
LOCAL 124 SKATEBOARDS & LONGBOARDS JOEL PIPPUS
DIANA BATTEN, MLA. BUD FRASIER & THE ELECTRIC RAZORS
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Please contact editor@zineandheard.ca or visit www.zineandheard.ca/support for more information & thank you so much. We appreciate it.



18 former youth in care from
Alberta tell their stories in
YOUTH IN CARE CHRONICLES:
Reflections on Growing Up in the
Child Welfare System

Available at
Amazon
&
Audreys

All proceeds go to fund
projects for youth in care.

SAMUEL BIRD



**MISSING
FROM
EDMONTON**

**PLEASE SHARE
SOCIAL MEDIA
POSTS**

**YOU ARE NOT
FORGOTTEN**

For Immediate Release: 11-Jul-2025 @ 8:41 AM

MRU #: MP25R028

The Edmonton Police Service (EPS) is seeking the public's assistance in locating a missing 14-year-old male.

Samuel Bird, 14, was seen on the evening of June 1, 2025, leaving his residence to visit a friend in the Canora neighbourhood in west Edmonton. He was later reported to be seen leaving the friend's residence on foot, but never returned home. He has not been seen by friends or family since.

The EPS Missing Persons Unit has actively investigated several reports of sightings of Samuel since his disappearance, but these have not been confirmed.

Samuel is described as a 14-year-old male who is 5'8" with a slim build. He has brown hair and brown eyes. He is known to frequent West Edmonton Mall and is familiar with both west and south Edmonton.

The length of Samuel's disappearance is out of character, and he has no phone or access to money. As such, police and family are concerned for his wellbeing. Anyone with information about Samuel Bird's whereabouts is asked to contact the EPS at 780-423-4567 or #377 from a mobile phone. Anonymous information can also be submitted to Crime Stoppers at 1-800-222-8477 or online at www.p3tips.com/250.

We hope Samuel is reunited with family & friends soon.



*You
are
not
forgotten.*

**A very high percentage of missing & murdered Indigenous
women & girls, men & boys & Two-Spirit persons
spent time in the child welfare system.**

GOVERNMENT CUTS



NOW OPEN!

We're CHEAP! We're FAST!!

NO CONSULTATIONS NECESSARY!!

 ***WE JUST CUT!*** 

***WE
SPECIALIZE
IN CUTS
FOR KIDS
AND
PEOPLE
WITH
DISABILITIES
ACROSS
ALBERTA!***

