

# Wahkotowin

Utilizing Indigenous practice,  
framework, culture and art in  
relational practice

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Mackenzie Kamamak Brown

“



We must learn from our past seven generations, our ancestors, to guide our decisions today so that we can help the next seven generations after us flourish, our future generations.

Seven Generations Teaching

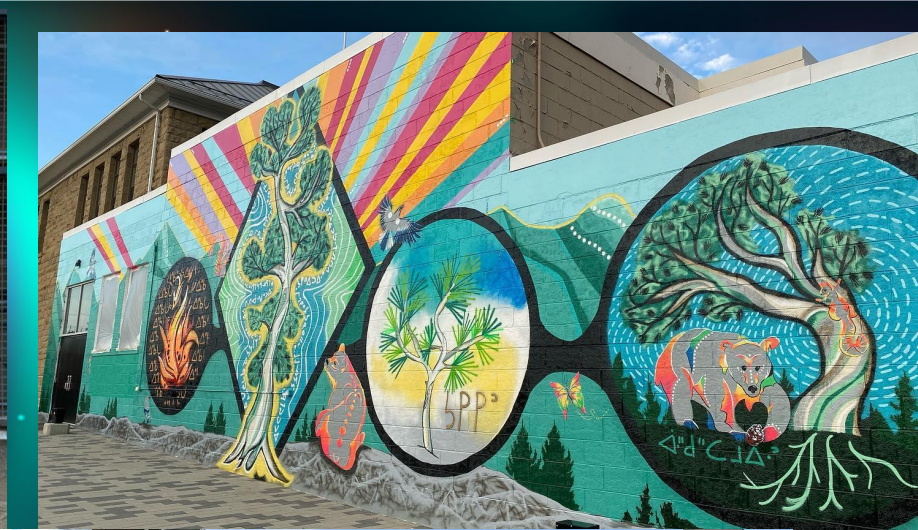
”

# Kamamak ᑕᓄᓐᓂᓐ Nisihkason

- Drummer/Singer
- Story Keeper and Teller
- Advocate
- Artisan/Artist
- Educator
- Daughter











# Residential School and 60's scoop

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- Loss of culture and identity













# The importance of Cultural Identity

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# PARALLELING AND UNDERSTANDING WORLDVIEWS IN A SAFE SPACE

## **WESTERN WORLDVIEW**

INDIVIDUALISM  
PATRIARCHAL  
ISOLATION  
SEE LAND AS RESOURCE  
WRITTEN SYSTEM

## **SAFE SPACE**

RESPECT  
RESPONSIBILITY  
RECIPROCITY  
RELATIONSHIP

## **INDIGENOUS WORLDVIEW**

COLLECTIVISM  
MATRIARCHAL  
RELATEDNESS  
SEE LAND AS RELATIVE  
ORAL SYSTEM











# TE WHARE TAPA WHĀ

Maori Health Model | Hauora Maori



Taha Tinana

Taha Wairua

Taha Whānau

Taha Hinengaro

# Taha hinengaro (mental health)



The capacity to communicate, to think and to feel mind and body are inseparable. Thoughts, feelings and emotions are integral components of the body and soul. This is about how we see ourselves in this universe, our interaction with that which is uniquely Māori and the perception that others have of us.

# Taha wairua (spiritual health)



The capacity for faith and wider communication. Health is related to unseen and unspoken energies.

The spiritual essence of a person is their life force. This determines us as individuals and as a collective, who and what we are, where we have come from and where we are going.

A traditional Māori analysis of physical manifestations of illness will focus on the wairua or spirit, to determine whether damage here could be a contributing factor.

# Taha whānau (family health)



The capacity to belong, to care and to share where individuals are part of wider social systems. Whānau provides us with the strength to be who we are. This is the link to our ancestors, our ties with the past, the present and the future.

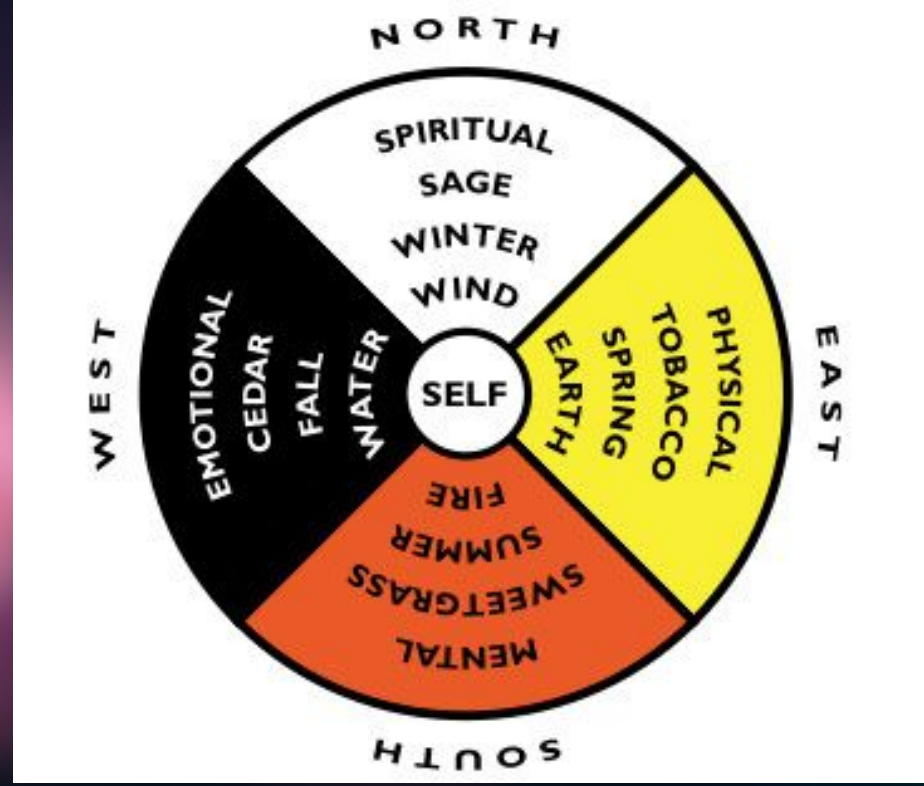
Understanding the importance of whānau and how whānau (family) can contribute to illness and assist in curing illness is fundamental to understanding Māori health issues.

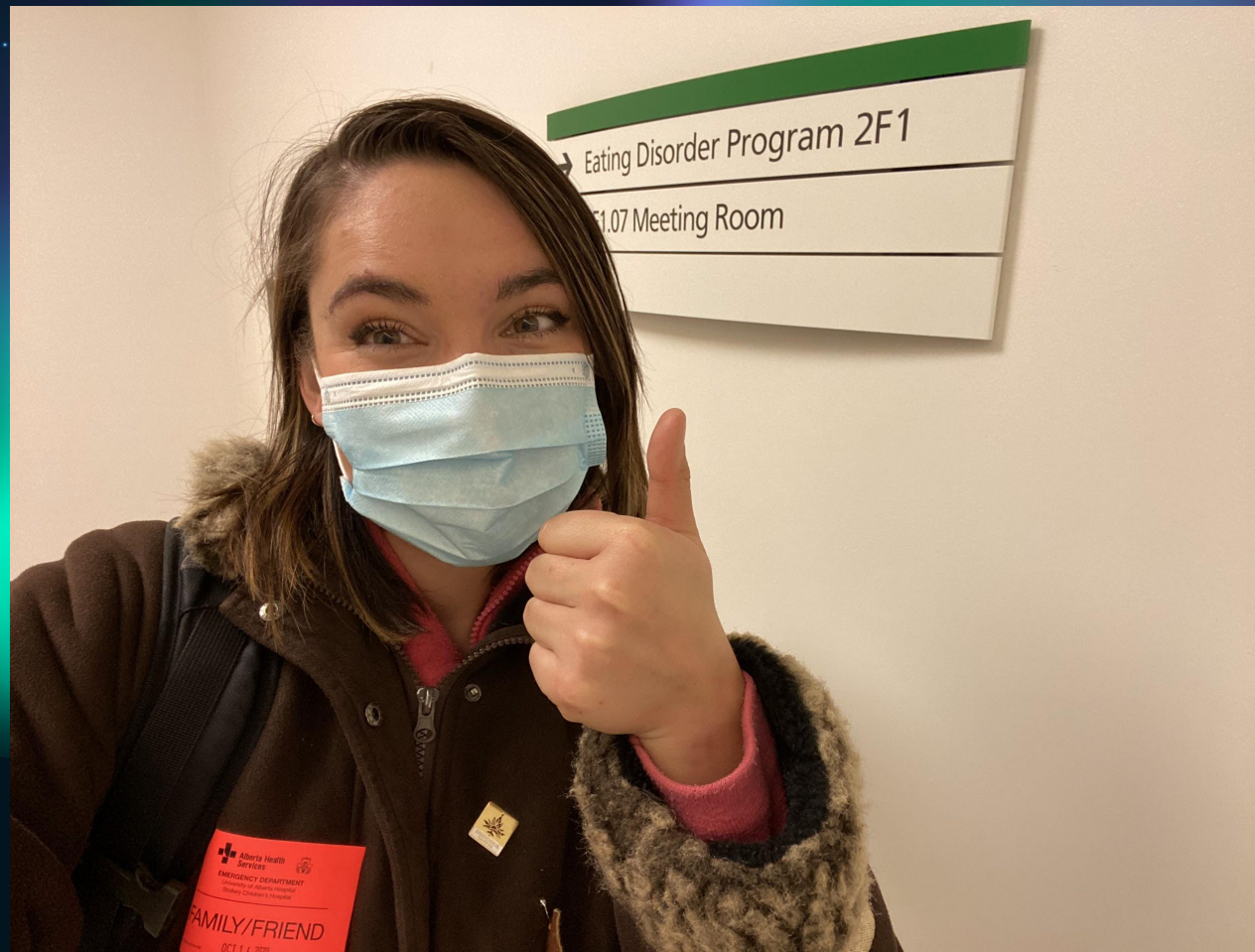
# Taha tinana (physical health)



The capacity for physical growth and development. Good physical health is required for optimal development. Our physical 'being' supports our essence and shelters us from the external environment. For Māori the physical dimension is just one aspect of health and well-being and cannot be separated from the aspect of mind, spirit and family.









## Spiritual

- Smudging
- Drumming
- Singing
- Playing music
- Beading and doing art
- Doing ceremony (attending sweat)

## Emotional

- Talking to friends and family
- Watching a sad movie and crying (we need to do this sometimes)
- Watching a hilarious youtube video for a good laugh (LAUGHING IS IMPORTANT) (ps. My favorite videos are Jimmy Fallon "Tweets" and dogs eating peanut butter)
- Meditation
- Letting a friend know that I am thinking of them
- Asking for support



## Physical

- Yoga
- Going for a walk
- Showering and taking care of personal hygiene
- Honouring my hunger cues (eating what I want when I feel hungry)
- Having a dance off (sometimes you just need to put on some great music and dance guys- seriously it makes you feel instantly better!)

## Mental

- Talking to friends/family
- Skyping my psychologist
- Writing in my journal;- 3 things I am grateful for, 3 things I am worried about and 3 things I can control
- Meditation
- Yoga
- Getting fresh air
- Painting
- Beading

**Colonization  
is not a legacy  
of the past**



**TABLE 4: CHILD INTERVENTION CASELOAD: INDIGENOUS/NON-INDIGENOUS**

Monthly Average	Mar 2021	2019/20	2020/21	% Change from 2019/20
Indigenous	6,905	6,832	6,829	<1%
Non-Indigenous	3,675	4,230	3,794	-10%
<b>Total Child Intervention</b>	<b>10,580</b>	<b>11,062</b>	<b>10,623</b>	<b>-4%</b>
% of Indigenous children in child intervention	65%	62%	64%	+2%

In March 2021, **65% of children and youth** receiving child intervention services were Indigenous. There has been a **2% increase** in the proportion of Indigenous children and youth receiving intervention services from Q4 2019/20 (April – March) to Q4 2020/21 (April – March).

**TABLE 5: INDIGENOUS CHILDREN IN CARE**

Monthly Average	Mar 2021	2019/20	2020/21	% Change from 2019/20
Indigenous	5,874	5,534	5,800	+5%
Non-Indigenous	2,386	2,503	2,404	-4%
<b>Total In Care</b>	<b>8,260</b>	<b>8,037</b>	<b>8,204</b>	<b>+2%</b>
% of Children In Care who are Indigenous	71%	69%	71%	+2%

In March 2021, **71% of children and youth** receiving services in care were Indigenous. The proportion of Indigenous children in care **increased by 2%** from Q4 2019/20 (April – March) to Q4 2020/21 (April – March).

Indigenous children make up approximately **10%** of the child population (ages 0-17) in Alberta.\*

4 in 5 people who died last year (2021) while  
receiving child welfare in Alberta were Indigenous  
49 children, youth, young adults died in 2021-22 —  
39 of whom were Indigenous in Alberta



# Truth and Reconciliation Commission



**EVERY  
CHILD  
MATTERS**

# **1. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial and Aboriginal governments to commit to reducing the number of Aboriginal children in care by:**

- I. Monitoring and assessing neglect investigations
- ii. Providing adequate resources to enable Aboriginal communities and child-welfare organizations to keep Aboriginal families together where it is safe to do so, and keep children in culturally appropriate environments, regardless of where they reside
- iii. Ensuring that social workers and others who conduct child-welfare investigations are properly educated and trained about the history and impacts of residential schools
- iv. Ensuring that social workers and others who conduct child welfare investigations are properly educated and trained about the potential for Aboriginal communities and families to provide more appropriate solutions to family healing
- V. Requiring that all child-welfare decision makers consider the impact of the residential school experience on children and their caregivers.



**2. We call upon the federal government in collaboration with the provinces and territories, to prepare and publish annual reports on the number of Aboriginal children (First Nations, Metis and INnuit) who are in care, compared with non-Aboriginal children, as well as the reasons for apprehension, the total spending on preventative and care services by child welfare agencies, and the effectiveness of various interventions**

Significant changes to Social  
Work program at UofM  
Aboriginal Justice Inquiry- Child  
Welfare Initiative Manitoba  
Indigenous social work program,  
First Nations University of  
Canada  
Aboriginal Social Worker Training  
Program Curriculum- First  
Nations Child and Family Caring  
Society  
BC- Aboriginal Policy and  
Practice Framework for early  
child learning





The background of the slide features a vibrant display of the Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights) in shades of green and blue, set against a dark night sky filled with stars. A dark silhouette of a mountain range is visible along the bottom edge.

Bill C-92, jurisdiction over child welfare  
back to First Nations Communities

“



**If your ancestors benefitted from Settler-Colonialism, it is now your responsibility to use your privilege to make this system less violent for those it continues to oppress.**

**Dylan Miner  
Wiisaakodewiniini  
Métis scholar & artist**

”







# Small World



Currently educational programs that prepare leaders in the field of CYC are not required to include Indigenous perspectives or Indigenous studies courses

Educate yourself- on Indigenous family systems, well being frameworks, culture

Understanding the parallels between the current CYC system and the residential schools. Denial is the heartbeat of racism

Change how we view parents and families

Utilize Language in programming

Utilizing Indigenous arts, crafts and programming



Story telling

Returning to the land- access to the land

Cycles of life and land

Building supports for mental, spiritual, physical and emotional well being

Fostering the importance of elders for youth







# Big World



## **Self-actualization**

desire to become the most that one can be

## **Esteem**

respect, self-esteem, status, recognition, strength, freedom

## **Love and belonging**

friendship, intimacy, family, sense of connection

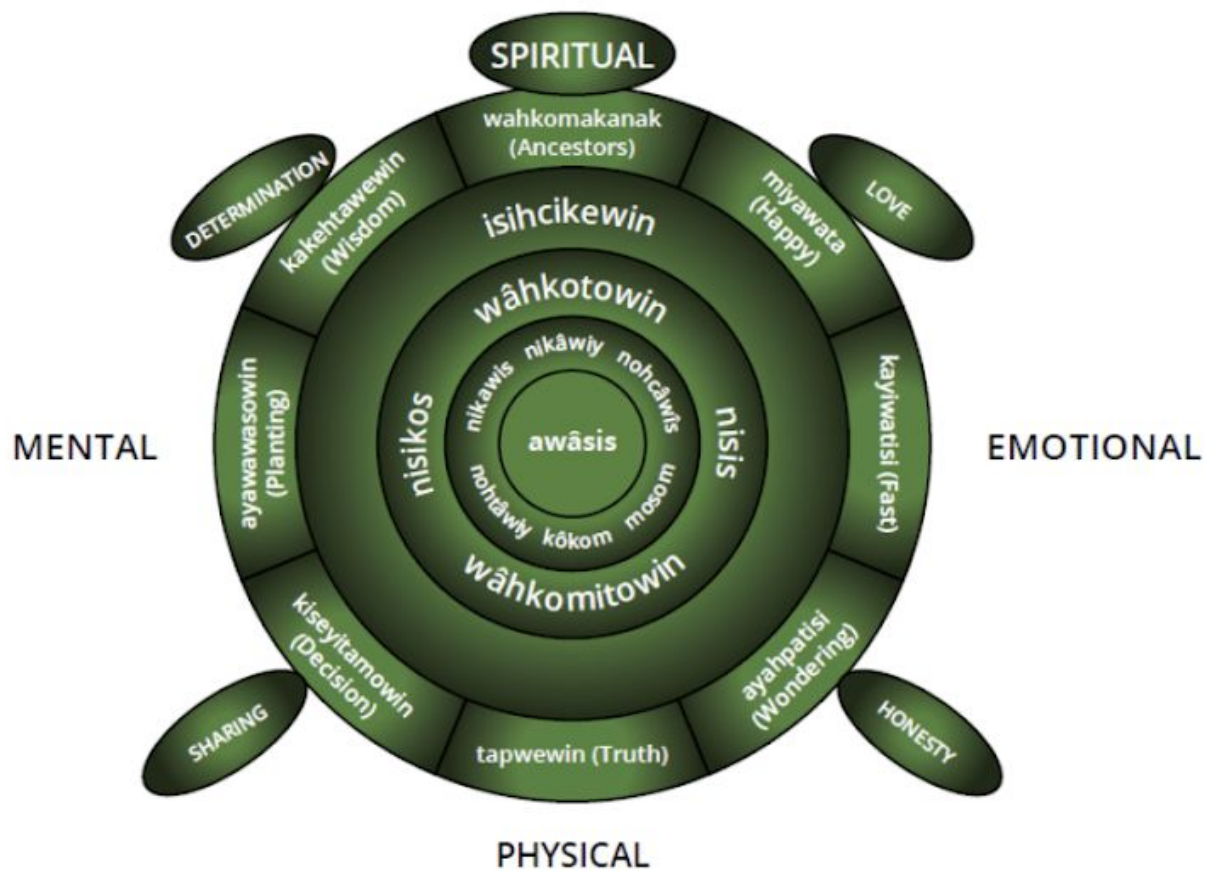
## **Safety needs**

personal security, employment, resources, health, property

## **Physiological needs**

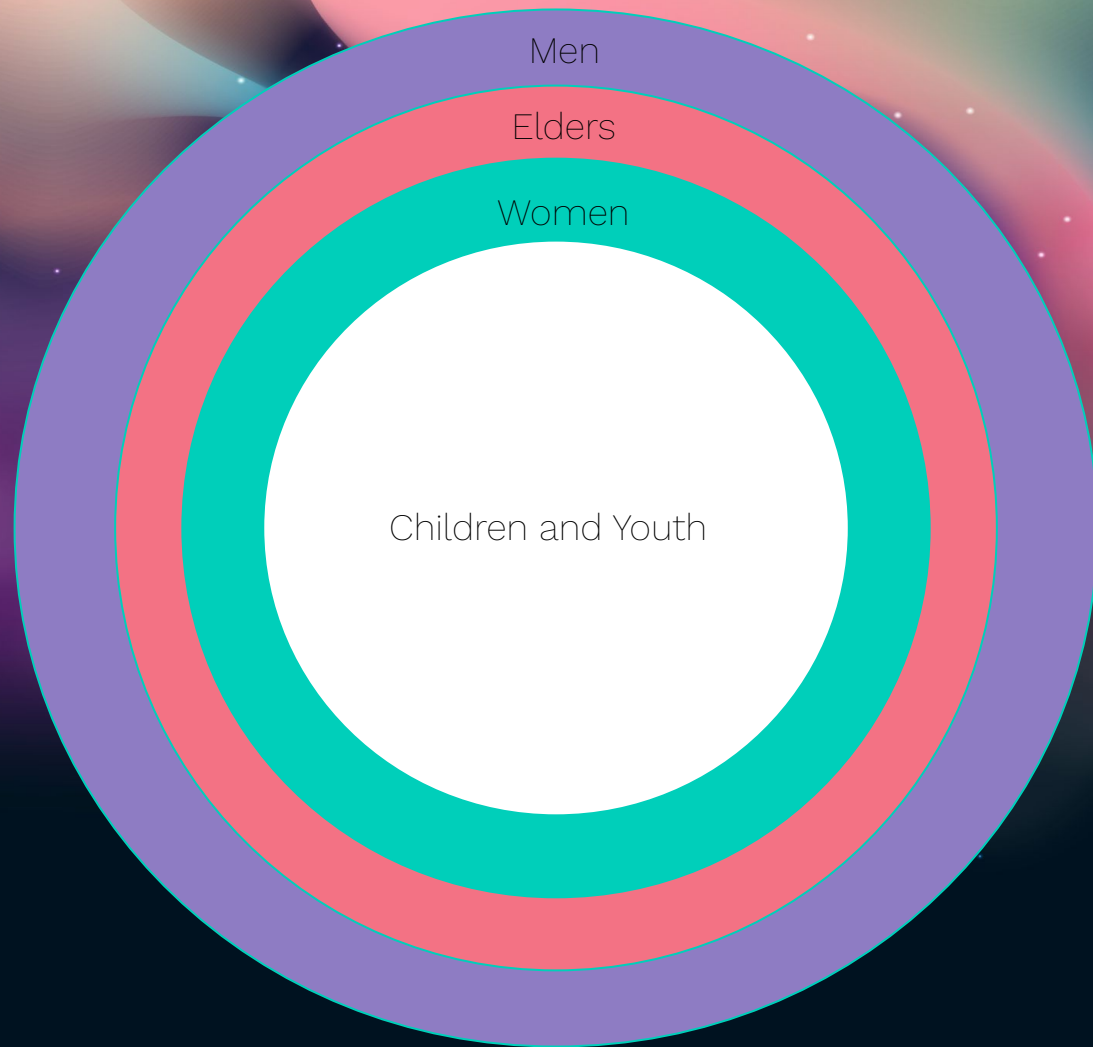
air, water, food, shelter, sleep, clothing, reproduction

# The Turtle Lodge Relationship Mapping Image



Note. © IRM Research and Evaluation Inc. (Image Only)





Children and Youth

Women

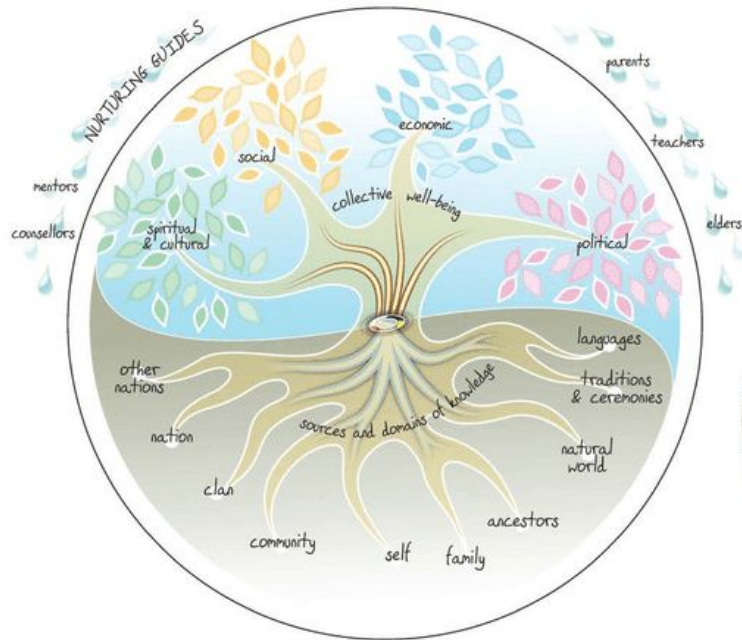
Elders

Men



## First Nations Holistic Lifelong Learning Model

Living DRAFT  
 Last Updated: June 6, 2007



Lobby for Indigenous frameworks to be implemented on a provincial level

Advocate for Indigenous Cultural Awareness and anti-racism training to be mandatory to work in the field

Advocate for Indigenous employment- and set up support systems to help those employees succeed

Entire curriculums and CYC courses rooted in Indigenous ways of knowing, doing and being

Advocate for change at a government level

Advocate for the implementation of the TRC





7 Sacred Teachings installation. 2022



Love

Humility

Courage

Respect

Truth

Bravery

Honesty



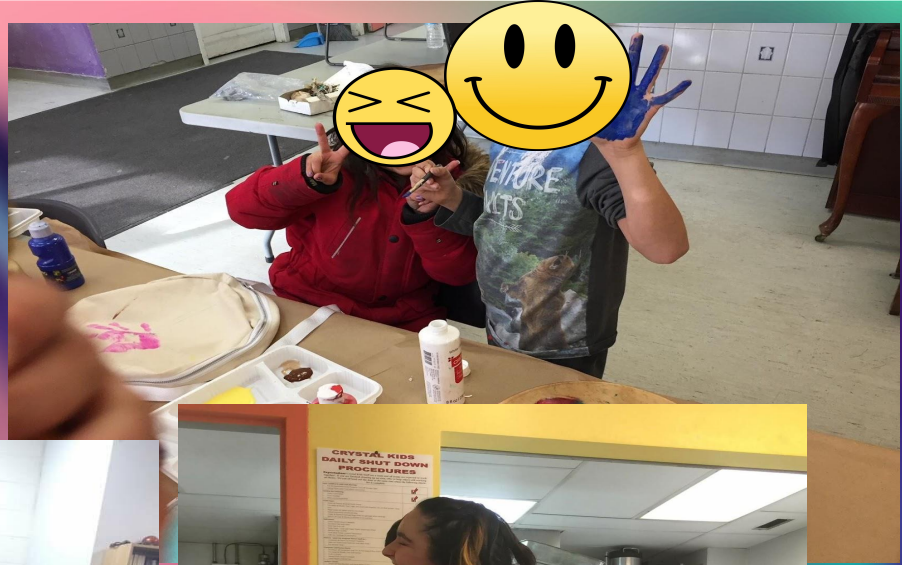
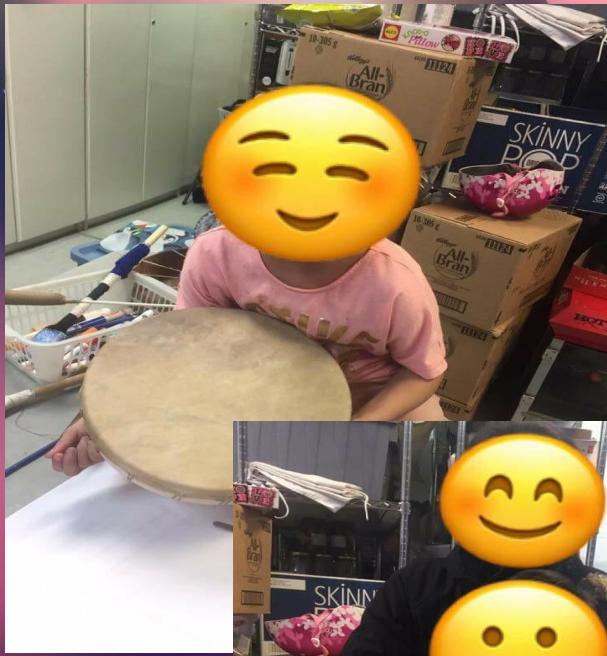






















# Allyship

Wahkotowin- To be a good relative



## Ally ship

- *we are not acting out of guilt, but rather out of responsibility*
  - we actively acknowledge our privilege and power and openly discuss them
  - we listen more and speak less
  - we do our work with integrity and direct communication
  - we do not expect to be educated by others
  - we build our capacity to receive criticism,
-

- we embrace the emotions that come out of the process of allyship, understanding that we will feel uncomfortable, challenged, and hurt
- our needs are secondary to the people we seek to work with
- we do not expect awards or special recognition for confronting issues that people have to live with every day and redirect attention to the groups we are supporting, and the issues they face
- we are here to support and make use of our privilege and power for the people we seek to work with
- we turn the spotlight we are given away from ourselves and towards the voices of those who are continuously marginalized, silenced, and ignored; we give credit where credit is due
- we use opportunities to engage people with whom we share identity and privilege in conversations about oppression experienced by those we seek to work with

“

My people will sleep for one hundred years, but  
when they awake, it will be the artists who give  
them their spirits back.

Louis Riel

”



# Resources

- TD's Report on Debunking Myths of Canada's Indigenous Population
- Government of Alberta's Aboriginal Peoples of Alberta
- Government of Canada's Report on First Nations in Canada: <http://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca>

Education is our Buffalo: A Teachers' Resource for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Education in Alberta, The Alberta Teachers' Association (revised and reprinted 2016-12)

Elder Protocol Stepping Stones, The Alberta Teachers' Association 2017

Elder Protocol Handbook, Queens University

Elder Protocol and Guidelines Council of Aboriginal Initiatives 2012, University of Alberta

Canadian Association of University Teachers: Guide to Acknowledging First Peoples and Traditional Territory

Alberta Teachers Association: Resources Collection

Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, First Nations in Alberta:  
[www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca](http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca)

# Games to play in your classroom/Childcare space

[https://cdn.we.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/INDIGENOUS\\_Guide\\_20161018\\_FINAL\\_V4\\_Nov\\_15\\_WEB.pdf](https://cdn.we.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/INDIGENOUS_Guide_20161018_FINAL_V4_Nov_15_WEB.pdf)

<https://www.nscrd.com/uploads/document/files/indigenous-games-for-children-en.pdf>

<https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/the-role-of-indigenous-games-in-culture>

[https://www.spiritsd.ca/learningresources/FNM%20Resources/Traditional%20Aboriginal%20Sports%20Games,%20Done%20June%202014%20\(2\).pdf](https://www.spiritsd.ca/learningresources/FNM%20Resources/Traditional%20Aboriginal%20Sports%20Games,%20Done%20June%202014%20(2).pdf)

[https://www.speaonline.ca/uploads/3/8/2/9/38299825/indigenous\\_games\\_handout\\_by\\_cole\\_wilson.pdf](https://www.speaonline.ca/uploads/3/8/2/9/38299825/indigenous_games_handout_by_cole_wilson.pdf)

<http://www.learnalberta.ca/content/aswt/>





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