What we are doing in a Good Way: a cultural competency framework

October 6, 2016 • 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. ET

Grandma Marilyn  Ann Batisse  Deb Chansonneuve  Melissa Gill  Tiffany Stow

This webinar is co-hosted by

District of Timiskaming
Social Services Administration Board

RECORDING NOTICE: This webinar is recorded and will be made available to the general public on the HC Link website.
Implementing the Indigenous Cultural-Linguistic Competency Framework: Living Indigenous Values

Deborah Chansonneuve
and
Arlene Hache
Miigwech, Marsee, Wacheeay, Merci, Thank You for Joining Us

Anish gaie tolamang waiwnit tci zhiikonang
Mi waa izhichigeyeg weweni
Kesé kon fè dbon

(What we are doing In A Good Way
In Ojibwa, Algonquin and Michif)
The Purpose of this Webinar

Is to share the story of our new Indigenous Framework developed by and for the people in the District of Timiskaming.

We hope it inspires you to reflect on changes you could make in your own work, organization or community in order to provide services In A Good Way to Indigenous children and families.
The new *Indigenous Cultural-Linguistic Framework* is an Indigenous-driven, family-oriented and community focused tool designed to:

1. improve intercultural relationships among service providers and
2. strengthen services for First Nations and Métis children and their families.
HC Link...

with community groups, organizations, and partnerships to help them build healthy, vibrant communities across Ontario.
We provide...

consulting services, webinars, workshops, resources and other learning opportunities in both English and French.
We support healthy kids....

HC Link is proud to be supporting the Healthy Kids Community Challenge, as a member of the Healthy Kids Resource Centres (HKRC).
We work with communities....

HC Link recognizes the expertise of the communities and groups we work with. It is our privilege to learn from each other- enriching the services we offer
Timiskaming Best Start logo
District of Timiskaming Social Services
Administration Board

Children’s Services Manager for the District of Timiskaming,
Dani-Grenier Ducharme, and
Best Start System Navigator for the Indigenous, Rural and Remote Profile,
Tiffany Stow
Best Start Community Quilt

Featuring the District of Timiskaming Children and Families Charter
Best Start created opportunities for intercultural learning...
...and many children enjoyed the teachings...
What We Did

- Engaged with the land and the people: attend Pow wows, visit sacred sites and services, met with local community leaders and Elders.
- 7-Member Team of local leaders, Elders, youth, family members.
- Conducted a Stakeholder Survey - 7 focus groups and 10 in-depth follow-up KI interviews.
- Over 75 participants - Elders and grandparents, families (including fathers), Aboriginal frontline service providers; non-Aboriginal service providers, managers/supervisors.
- Our draft report from the stakeholder survey was reviewed by an Elder and frontline worker to make sure we got it right.
- Deliverables: 3 written reports and recommendations and a digital story.
How the Method Reflects Indigenous Knowledge in Practice

- Respectful of local people, their protocols, language, and traditions.
- A strength-based approach.
- Inclusive of First Nations/Metis; gender balance, stage of lifecycle, roles (Elders, managers, frontline workers, families, youth).
- Research and knowledge sharing capacity – everyone brought their ‘gifts’ to the team – photography, art, note-taking, team discussions and decision-making.
- Created safe spaces for the stories to be told, Elders present.
- Ensured the informed consent of participants.
- Used a range of diverse methods for gathering information – a listening circle model as well as semi-structured interviews.
- Shared the outcomes in culturally important ways-digital story telling featuring local voices as ongoing resource.
Results & Recommendations

- Lack of culturally relevant resources for Indigenous children and their parents.
- Widespread racism and systemic discrimination.
- Lack of adequate cultural training and resources.
- Absence of Indigenous representation in decision-making, policy, planning and service delivery.
- Lack of accountability for implementing cultural competency policy and inclusion.
- Lack of adequate financial resources for improvements.
- The District also has many deeply committed and resourceful people who want to move forward.
Aboriginal Framework Plans

Elders and Grandparents in all Aboriginal programming for children
Aboriginal Framework Plans

Mandatory cultural competency training for educators and service providers
Aboriginal Framework Plans

Culture-based Outreach Plan to families with children from birth to age 12 years
Aboriginal Framework Plans

Aboriginal Employment Plan

- Accountability for Aboriginal Inclusion
- Promotion & Awareness of Services for Aboriginal Children
- Models of Governance & Management
- Access to Quality Culturally Safe Programs & Services
 Aboriginal Framework Plans

Aboriginal-Designated seats on Boards

- Accountability for Aboriginal Inclusion
- Aboriginal Models of Governance & Management
- Promotion & Awareness of Services for Aboriginal Children
- Access to Quality Culturally Safe Programs & Services
Aboriginal Framework Plans

Public education on local First Nations and Metis history and cultures
Aboriginal Framework Plans

Local Aboriginal leadership

Accountability for Aboriginal Inclusion

Aboriginal Models of Governance & Management

Promotion & Awareness of Services for Aboriginal Children

Access to Quality Culturally Safe Programs & Services
The Framework is a Tool

1. So improvements can be planned, strategic, coordinated and culture-based.
2. So activities can be monitored and assessed for their proven value to local Indigenous people.
3. So everyone is on the same page about the rationale, guiding principles and vision.
Why the Framework is Important

“Reconciliation is about changing the way we do business” Justice Murray Sinclair.

The ICLF provides tools that can help reconfigure and strengthen intercultural relationships.

The ICLF respects the human right of Indigenous children and families to quality services and equitable outcomes.
Inspiring Words from Our Elders

There are bumps along the way in everything and all you must remember is that everything can be straightened.

Local Elder, Mario Batisse
Visit Indigenous organizations and communities.
Get to know Indigenous people.
Involve Elders and Youth in events.
Create opportunities for open discussion
Show support for Indigenous communities.
Partnering and Mentorships

- Support Indigenous organizations
- Work toward developing equitable partnerships
- Invite Indigenous workers and Elders to be involved
- Provide opportunities within your organization
Flexibility

- Develop a work plan or a strategy but let it role out in its own way.
- Take the time that is needed for everyone to get on board and be on the same page.
- Put relationships first then focus on the tasks to be completed.
- Let Indigenous people lead in identifying what is right for them.
Patience

- Relationships or partnerships are not built in a day or even a month or a year.

- The Indigenous community has been separated to a great extent from the larger society and there is a lack of trust because of the process of colonization and systemic racism that still exists.
Indigenous community members need to be in spaces that are culturally safe - meaning they can be themselves and speak their truth without fear of being rejected or losing support. Hold programs and events in Indigenous spaces.

Use of Local Elders is important as a primary resource in providing all the necessary teachings and mentorship required to become culturally competent.
Learning from Experience: Two Stories of Significant Change

☒ The HealtheSteps Project: a partnership to promote Indigenous inclusion in a Diabetes prevention project for the District.

☒ Le Centre culturel ARTEM: a partnership to promote First Nations and Métis inclusion in social events sponsored by the francophone cultural centre for the general public.
Lessons Learned from Mini-Pilots: Stories of Significant Change

- Involvement of Elders and whole-family activities
- Budgets must reflect cultural practices: Elder & drumming honouraria, food, children’s crafts, on-the-land travel
- Eliminate colonial terminology and concepts
- Conflict resolving attitudes and behaviours
- Flexibility, perseverance, responsiveness
- Stay focused on the ICLF through the bumps
- Cultural respect: privilege local Indigenous Knowledge and respect Indigenous intellectual property rights, customs and protocols
- Process and Outcome is Self-Determination – support Indigenous decision-making and capacity building at all levels and in all activities: model the change
Benefits of Implementing the Indigenous Cultural-Linguistic Framework

- **Supportive, respectful, nourishing learning & service environments** for First Nations-Métis children & families.
- **Improved coordination** in the delivery of quality, culturally relevant services.
- **First Nations-Métis peoples engaged** in decision-making as respected citizens of the District.
- **The District is recognized** as a strong, diverse, vibrant and fair Northern community where all citizens are able to live, work and thrive.
How to Be an Ally of Indigenous Peoples

1. Educate yourself about post-colonial theory which situates human rights violations and inequality among the Indigenous population as an intentional outcome of colonization. Post-colonial practice means restoring the inherent rights of Indigenous Peoples and revitalizing Traditional Knowledge.

2. Educate yourself about the history of First Nations and Métis in the District of Timiskaming and seek opportunities to learn experientially about contemporary cultures by attending local events such as Pow wows, annual general meetings, National Aboriginal Day celebrations and Métis Harvest Festivals. Do not make First Nations and Métis colleagues responsible for your cultural education.

3. Understand that leadership on Indigenous issues needs to come from local First Nations and Métis people and affirm that these leaders are capable; refrain from asserting yourself at the forefront or speaking for Indigenous Peoples.

4. Seek out opportunities to listen to and learn from local First Nations and Métis Elders and community leaders about their experiences living in the District of Timiskaming including health and social services, education and employment.

5. If invited to participate in ceremony such as smudging, only do so if you are open to an authentic experience; you will not be judged if you decide to pass. Ceremonies are sacred and token participation in order to be accepted or as a way of having research/projects approved is not an appropriate way to build to trust.

6. Never appropriate Indigenous symbols or teachings in your own work without permission; many of these are sacred and carry complex meanings that you may not be aware of, therefore you may unintentionally use them inappropriately.

7. Psycho-educational learning can offer a glimpse into the complex histories, cultures and experiences of Indigenous Peoples, however Indigenous worldviews and ways of doing things differ greatly from other worldviews and it’s a process of lifelong learning.

8. Use your skills and the relative privilege of your position to encourage others to end prejudice, stereotypes and inequality; lead by example.

9. When asked to perform professional, paid tasks related to Indigenous issues, refer the work instead to Indigenous organizations and resource people and ensure they are paid, not expected to take on extra work as volunteers or in addition to their other duties.

10. Understand there are times when First Nations and Métis leaders and community members need separate space to explore issues without having to explain, justify, or be concerned with the impact of their perspectives/feelings on non-Indigenous people.

11. Don’t talk down to, or over, those who criticize Indigenous decolonization and self-determination efforts; just listen. People become sensitive to the issues at their own pace and may become allies themselves when they are ready.
Elder Protocol/ Etiquette

1. Requests for First Nation or Métis Elder guidance are accompanied by a gift of Tobacco as a sign of respect. Generally traditional tobacco is used but if this is not available commercial tobacco is also acceptable.
   - Traditional tobacco is available for purchase at Pow wows.
   - The amount of tobacco varies from the amount that would fit in the bowl of a pipe, to the amount in a package of tobacco, or to the size of a piece of traditionally dried and braided tobacco: if uncertain check with someone about local practices and Elder preferences.
   - The tobacco should be enclosed in a tie or wrap made of cotton in one of the Medicine Wheel colours or in a hide medicine pouch (pouches can be purchased at the Pow wow).
   - Tobacco is presented from the left hand of the giver to left hand of the receiver (closest to the heart, representing commitment).

2. Instead of Tobacco, an Inuit Elder/Traditional Teacher is provided with a small gift of appreciation.

3. State clearly the reason you are asking for the Elder’s participation, what their role will be and the amount of time in the schedule when you make the request so the Elder knows what is expected and can make an informed decision.

4. Elders and Traditional Teachers are also provided with honouraria; this acknowledges the value of their time and expertise as well as the costs they incur such as travel. Amount of honouraria is generally aligned with amount of time the Elder contributes to the event. Average Elder honouraria is $500.00 per full day.

5. Provide a host/escort at the door to welcome the Elder to your event and explain who will be attending, and take them to where they can set up, etc. and to introduce them to others; the host should also ensure refreshments and water is provided.

6. Provide a special, separate table at the front of the room for the Elder’s medicines, smudge bowl, Eagle Feather, or Quudlik.

7. Do not take photos or recordings of sacred ceremonies (smudging, opening/closing prayers or honour songs). Ask the Elder for guidance in advance if you are uncertain.

Note: For additional information about Elders please refer to Appendix A, the guidelines developed by a national organization representing and reflecting Inuit, Metis and First Nation cultures.

Deborah Chansonnewe March 2008

Respect is key
Partnerships are the key mechanism for building and sustaining capacity and a key strategy for implementing the Indigenous Framework.
Who is the Indigenous Framework and Implementation Guide For?

- Decision-makers
- Service providers
- Educators
- Planners (including school boards, municipal offices, and regional networks)
- Everyone
Creating Ethical Space for Partnerships

- **Gratitude** – identify and acknowledge strengths, capacities and contributions of all involved

- **Harmony** – pay attention to relationships, create safe ‘ethical space’ for new possibilities to emerge aligned with community needs and priorities

- **Interconnectedness** – everyone’s contribution is needed for whole-society and whole-systems change
QUESTIONS

FOUR MEDICINE

SEVEN DIRECTIONS

PIPE

THE SEVEN TEACHINGS

HONESTY  WISDOM
HUMILITY  LOVE
TRUTH    RESPECT
BRAVERY

WATER STRAWBERRY
What’s needed is communication with everyone so we’re all on the same page about moving forward in a spirit of celebration and reinforcing and supporting each other because the Framework is for everybody, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal.

Metis Elder Lilanne Ethier
Drumming with Grandma Marilyn Chevrier-Wills
We listen > Our services support your needs

HC Link recognizes the expertise of the communities and groups we work with. It is our privilege to learn from each other - enriching the services we offer.

Our customized services complement each other.

- Consulting Services
to meet your specific needs

- Learning Events
  webinars, conferences, gatherings

- Educational Resources
  on healthy communities

- Mutual Learning
  peer sharing, online discussions, listservs, blogs, Twitter and our online learning community

Our services are funded by the Government of Ontario and are provided free of charge where possible.
HC Link offers customized consulting services to community groups, organizations, and partnerships to support their work in building healthy communities. To meet your specific needs, our consultants can work with you by providing valuable resources, tools, problem-solving, advice and mentorship in a variety of areas.

Our consulting services are funded by the Government of Ontario and are provided **free of charge**, when possible.

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