

# WORKING TOGETHER WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLE

By Megan Stock & Chrystal Plante

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- We would like to acknowledge Treaty 6 territory; the ancestral and traditional territory of the Cree, Dene, Blackfoot, Saulteaux, Nakota Sioux, as well as the Métis.
- We acknowledge the many First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples whose footsteps have marked these lands for generations.
- We are grateful for the traditional Knowledge Keepers and Elders who are still with us today and those who have gone before us.
- Our recognition of this land is an act of reconciliation and an expression of our gratitude to those whose territory we reside on or are visiting.



## INTRODUCTIONS & BACKGROUND:

Megan Stock,  
Speech-Language Pathologist/  
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## OBJECTIVES

- How to Talk About Indigenous People
- Factors that Contribute to Successful & Positive Relationships with Indigenous People
- Cultural Understanding & Building Knowledge of Real World Conditions
- Considerations When Working with Students, Families, & Schools in First Nations Communities
- Jordan's Principle
- Insights into Indigenous Ways of Knowing & Being
- Professional Development Opportunities & Education Resources
- Indigenous Healthcare Resources

## HOW TO TALK ABOUT INDIGENOUS PEOPLE:



- Terminology
- Groups
- Be as specific as possible

## CANADA'S INDIGENOUS POPULATION:

- 3 groups of Indigenous people in Canada:
  - First Nations
  - Métis
  - Inuit
- Indigenous population in Canada is approximately: 2,070,000
- More than **600** First Nations/Bands in Canada and **3,100** Reserves
- 53 languages & over 200 dialects which compose the 11 North American Indigenous linguistic groups



## ALBERTA FIRST NATIONS

- Approximately 45 First Nations in three Treaty areas (Treaty 6, 7, & 8)
- 140 reserves, covering approximately 812,771 hectares of reserve land
- Most commonly spoken First Nations languages in Alberta are: **Cree, Blackfoot, Dene, Sarcee, and Stoney (Nakoda Sioux)**



## STRATEGIES TO BUILD SUCCESSFUL & POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS:

- Understand historical context
- Build cultural knowledge
- Recognize real world conditions
- Learn the core values of Indigenous people which include (among others):
  - Trust
  - Family/Relationships
  - Spirituality
  - Nature, and
  - Elders
- Ask the adults and Elders how one can demonstrate respect & honour their cultural practices
- Participate in their cultural/traditional activities



## BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING & REAL WORLD CONDITIONS

### Community Knowledge : Fox Lake

- Majority of Little Red Cree Nation live in Fox Lake = 2,800
- The rest of the population live in either John D'or Prairie or Garden River; Total population = 4,368
- Access - remote fly in community, ice road or barge
- Economy
- Water
- Nearest pharmacy
- Nursing Station - Health Canada



## CONSIDERATIONS WHEN WORKING WITH STUDENTS, FAMILIES, & SCHOOLS IN FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES

1. Be a collaborative partner
2. Make sure those you engage with understand who you are and what you do
3. Ensure you have informed consent
4. Ensure the person, family, or facility (school or program) have the proper resources
5. Have a key contact in the community to facilitate follow up
6. When possible, incorporate their values/traditions in your intervention/programming

## FORMALIZED ASSESSMENTS & REPORTING

- Standardized assessments - often not sensitive to Indigenous populations cultural, communication, and language socialization practices
- SLPs should take the time to observe the communication patterns of community members
- Be sensitive about the language we use
- Be descriptive in our reporting
- Write reports in straight forward, functional language

## Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology Services for First Nations Position Statement

S-LPs, audiologists and communication health assistants can contribute to the process of reconciliation by:

- respecting First Nations' autonomy
- recognizing the cultural, linguistic and geographical diversity of First Nations
- undertaking cultural humility and cultural safety training
- developing services specifically designed to meet the needs of First Nations
- seeking guidance regarding culturally safe practice



Speech-Language &  
Audiology Canada  
Communicating care

[https://www.sac-oac.ca/sites/default/files/resources/sac\\_first\\_nations\\_position\\_statement\\_en.pdf](https://www.sac-oac.ca/sites/default/files/resources/sac_first_nations_position_statement_en.pdf)

## JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE



- Developed to ensure equitable access for First Nations children to all essential services in the areas of education, social development, and health without delay/denial/disruptions.
- Applies to all First Nations children on or off reserve

## JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE IMPLEMENTATION IN ALBERTA

- November 2018 - Alberta signed Jordan's Principle Agreement with the Federal Government
- Maskwacis Health Services, Siksika Nation, Kye Tak Kee Now Tribal Council and Bigstone Health Commission joined forces and created the **First Nations Health Consortium**
- Work together to coordinate services in Alberta
- Over the past two years there has been a significant increase in access to services
- For information call: **1-844-558-8748**

<https://www.abfnhc.com>



## INSIGHTS INTO INDIGENOUS WAYS OF KNOWING AND BEING

- The Importance of Elders
- The 7 Sacred Teachings
- Medicine Teachings



## ELDERS

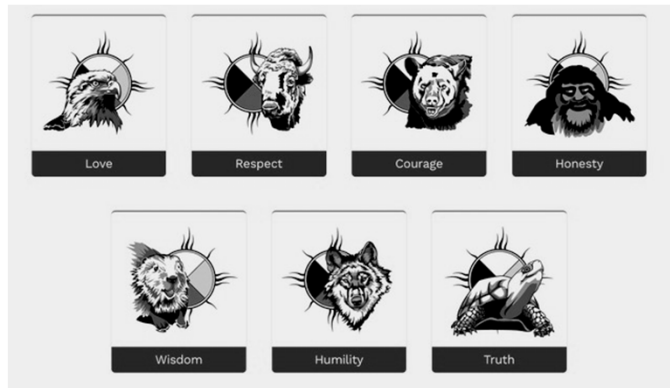
- Elders play a very important role in First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Communities in the retention and the renewal of their culture
- Elders pass on knowledge of traditional concepts & beliefs, spirituality, ceremonies, and other practices
- They provide advice & guidance to members of their community





## 7 SACRED UNIVERSAL TEACHINGS

- LOVE
- RESPECT
- COURAGE
- HONESTY
- WISDOM
- HUMILITY
- TRUTH



## MEDICINES

There are 4 plants that are considered sacred to First Nations, Inuit, & Métis people:

- Sage
- Sweetgrass
- Tobacco
- Fungus



These plants are used in prayer, smudging, or purifying ceremonies. Different Indigenous cultures may use them in slightly different ways.

Tobacco is often used to give thanks.

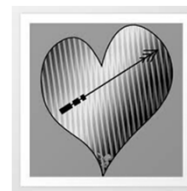
## SMUDGING

- Smudging is a powerful spiritual cleansing technique to drive away negative energy & to restore balance to an individual, group, a space, or all three
- Smudging is used daily in many reserve schools, first thing in the morning to ask the Creator for a good day



## SUMMARY - **FIRST STEPS** TO BUILDING SUCCESSFUL & POSITIVE WORKING RELATIONSHIPS IN FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES

- ☐ Build **KNOWLEDGE & UNDERSTANDING**
- ☐ Build **TRUSTING RELATIONSHIPS**
- ☐ Seek out **ELDER SUPPORT** if possible
- ☐ Always consider **CULTURAL DIVERSITY**
- ☐ Be a **COLLABORATIVE** partner
- ☐ Have **FLEXIBILITY** in your plans



## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES & EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES

1. INDIGENOUS CANADA - U OF A ONLINE COURSE  
<https://www.coursera.org/learn/indigenous-canada/home/welcome>
2. AFN IT'S OUR TIME TOOLKIT  
<https://education.afn.ca/afntoolkit/>
3. APTN - FIRST CONTACT SHOW  
<https://www.aptn.ca/firstcontact/>
4. INDIGENOUS AWARENESS CANADA  
<https://indigenousawarenesscanada.com>
5. THE BLANKET EXERCISE  
<https://www.kairosblanketexercise.org>

## INDIGENOUS HEALTHCARE RESOURCES

1. Socially Responsive Approaches to Children's  
Rehabilitation with Indigenous Communities,  
Families, and Children  
<https://www.ccsa-nccah.ca/docs/health/RPT-Child-Rehab-Gerlach-EN-Web.pdf>
2. Non-Insured Health Benefits (First Nation & Inuit)  
[NIHB]  
<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/hc-sc/documents/services/publications/health-system-services/update-drug-benefit-list-winter-2017.pdf>
3. Jordan's Principle  
[https://www.canada.ca/en/indigenous-services-canada/services/jordans-principle.html?utm\\_campaign=not-applicable&utm\\_medium=vanity-url&utm\\_source=canada-ca\\_jordans-principle](https://www.canada.ca/en/indigenous-services-canada/services/jordans-principle.html?utm_campaign=not-applicable&utm_medium=vanity-url&utm_source=canada-ca_jordans-principle)



**AY AY!** (Thank you in Cree!)

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