



Niijaansinaanik

Child and Family Services

Alternative Care Newsletter



January 2021

Gehi-Mnidoo

Güzoonhs

Spirit Moon

WHAT'S INSIDE

Cultural Connections.....	2
On-Call Worker.....	2
Mental Health Tips.....	3
Family Literacy Day.....	3
Language Illustrations.....	4
Support for Learners	4
Contact Us.....	4



Cultural Connections

Winter Solstice

As we enter the final moon of the year, we reach that sacred time when we are closest to our Mishomis (the Sun) and begin our journey back around him. It is our most powerful time of ceremony and healing. Our Mother the Earth leans away as she gets closest to Mishomis giving us the Winter with shorter days and longer nights (spirit time). During the Summer Solstice, she leans toward him when she is further away to give us warmth along with longer days and shorter nights. The Winter Solstice is a time of healing and storytelling. The Creation Story and Nanabush stories are just a few of the medicine words shared at this time as we share space in our winter homes and lodges. Self-reflection is key for inner healing during this sacred time. Our self-reflection occurs alongside our Earth Mother, as she also heals and rests under a blanket of snow. Both Winter and Summer Solstice remind us of our connections and origins to the star world. We are Star People lowered to this place from that Great Mystery in the sky. Like the planets that dance around the cosmic sacred fire that is our Mishomis (the Sun), so do we as dance/move around our gatherings and sacred fires. We are a reflection of where we come from. This is who we are and how we remind ourselves of this. With the current situation of COVID-19, we must also think of doing this safely and healthily, respecting each other's space to protect ourselves and those around us to bring holistic healing to family and community.



All My Relations,
Perry McLeod Shabogesic

Happy New Year!

We are available during all statutory holiday office closures. Alternative Caregivers can reach our on-call worker 24/7, for inquiries or emergencies, at our toll-free number:



1-855-223-5558



The only thing necessary for tranquility in the world is that every child grows up happy.

Chief Dan George





MENTAL HEALTH TIPS

Mental Health During Holiday Season and COVID-19

Some may feel overwhelmed, stressed, or worried during the holidays. Uncomfortable or troublesome feelings of stress over the holidays may be increased this year, by the ever-changing global situation of COVID-19. If you are noticing yourself, or someone in need of mental health assistance over the holiday, reach out for help - right away.

Despite your best efforts, if you are feeling helpless, sad, angry, irritable, hopeless, anxious or afraid, or having issues carrying out normal responsibilities, please reach out for help right away.

REACH OUT

In the event of an injury, immediate danger or potentially life-threatening situation, call 9-1-1. [Resources for Kids - When to Call 911](#)

[Hope for Wellness Help Line](#) (1-855-242-3310) provides immediate mental health counseling and crisis intervention to all Indigenous people.

[Hope for Wellness Online Chat Counselling Service: https://www.hopeforwellness.ca/](https://www.hopeforwellness.ca/)
ALTERNATIVE CARE 24/7 EMERGENCY LINE 1-855-223-5558



GO OUTSIDE / EXERCISE

Dress warmly and take a short walk, or play in the snow for a reasonable amount of time. Going outside can boost your mood, just remember to continue practicing the public measures of social distancing and safely.



FIND TOPICS YOU'RE INTERESTED IN

Read, write, draw, paint, dance, make or listen to music, try a crafting project alone or with someone in person or online. Make a list of things you are grateful for and what you hope for in the future. Draw strength from Indigenous teachings and/or spiritual life.



MAINTAIN YOUR CONNECTIONS

Keep your connections strong with email, texts, phone FaceTime or web apps. Consider a quick text, email, or call to check on friends, family members, or neighbours - especially the elderly. There are ways to social distance and do something nice for those you care for. Keep in mind provincial precautions when doing so.



KNOW WHEN TO CONNECT AND UNPLUG

Set times that you should be focused on working and set times for rest. Look out a window and daydream, meditate or do some gentle stretches and breathing. Take a break or avoid news and/or social media, if you find it upsetting or worrying.



KEEP HEALTHY

Choose a well-balanced diet. Avoid loading up on junk food and refined sugar. Limit caffeine as it can aggravate stress and anxiety. Avoid tobacco, alcohol and drugs. Get enough sleep, and try to stick close to a typical schedule, even if you are staying at home. Declutter, reorganize, or rearrange your living spaces .

Family Literacy Day

January 27, 2021



Celebrate Family Literacy Day 2021 Virtually - ABC Honorary Chair Barbara Reid, will be hosting a virtual event on Wednesday, January 27, 2021, from 4:30-5:00 pm., doing a demonstration on how to use clay to create a picture. The event will end with a Q&A. This event is ideal for children in grades 1 to 6. To register, please click [here](#). Spaces are limited, so be sure to register as soon as possible to secure your spot.

Family Literacy Day started in 1999 and takes place annually on January 27th. Since the launch, Canadian schools, libraries, literacy organizations, and communities have taken part to raise awareness about the importance of reading and engaging in other literacy-related activities in a family setting. Taking time every day to read or do a learning activity with children is crucial to a child's development, improving a child's literacy skills, and can even help adults improve their skills as well. ABC Life Literacy Canada is a non-profit organization that aims to strengthen organizations that promote adult learning. As part of Family Literacy Day, they have [resources](#), [online events](#), [activity sheets](#), [posters](#), and [more](#), to further the theme for this year - Travel the World Together!

ABC Life Literacy Canada has many resources posted to its site, including: [winter-themed activities](#)

Holiday Projects

Wow! Look at these fantastic creations of Gingerbread houses from our Holiday projects!



Support for Learners

You can get financial support to help with additional costs during the 2020-2021 school year due to COVID-19. Eligible parents or guardians will receive a one-time payment of:

- \$200 for each child up to age 12
- \$250 for each child or youth up to age 21 with special needs. The deadline to apply is January 15, 2021. To learn about eligibility, the information you will need, and how to apply please visit:

www.ontario.ca/page/get-support-learners

Mnaadendan gibi-maadziwin

Respect your life

Mnaadenim kwiji-bimaadiz

Respect your fellow being

For up to date provincial health and safety guidelines for Ontario, please visit:

www.covid-19.ontario.ca



Dibaajimo -They tell a story



Bapiichii -They put on their moccasins or shoes

Miigwech to Joshua Mangeshig Pawis-Steckley for sharing his images with us. Pawis-Steckley is an Ojibwe woodland artist from Barrie, ON. He is a member of Wasauksing First Nation.

Contact us

We love to hear from you.

Your role as a caregiver is crucial in many aspects. Thank you for choosing to be a care provider and making a sincere difference in the lives of many. Thank you for believing in our Agency and helping keep Indigenous, Métis, and Inuit children in our/your communities. Together we can provide positive and healthy experiences for children and youth, who can grow up with true and strong connections.

Miigwech!



1-855-223-5558



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