

Ermineskin Newsletter March 5, 2025 Neyâskweyâhk Acimowin Niskipîsim Niyânan σ^ρλィ σっしっ

Indigenious Wellbeing Conference 2025

From February 24th to 26th, the Alexis Sioux Nation hosted the Indigenous Well-Being Conference. This gathering is more than just an event; it represents a significant step forward for our communities. The theme for this year's conference was "Empowering Care Networks for Community Healing and Resilience." This theme reflects our shared commitment to strengthening our people and securing our future.

The conference was dedicated to sharing knowledge, building connections, and exploring solutions that enhance well— www being. It was tailored for caregivers, community leaders, counselors, and mental health professionals. The event featured notable speakers such as Chief Arvol Looking Horse, Ted Nolan, and Michelle Thrush, among many others!

The well-being of Indigenous peoples is crucial for both their communities and society. Indigenous cultures, languages, and traditions are vital to our identity, and supporting these communities helps preserve these practices for future generations. Cultural well-being enhances community identity and fosters understanding. Additionally, it is key to societal healing and reconciliation in areas affected by colonization and mistreatment, as it helps build respectful and equitable relationships. Promoting Indigenous well-being is not just an ethical responsibility; it also benefits society economically, culturally, and environmentally, contributing to a more just and inclusive world.



Chief Arvol Looking Horse explains how the changing world significantly affects Indigenous well-being, impacting health, culture, and socio-economic conditions. Many Indigenous communities rely on their lands for cultural practices, hunting, fishing, and agriculture. Climate change is making these lands increasingly uninhabitable, threatening cultural knowledge and practices.

He also notes that modernization and globalization further weaken traditional languages and beliefs. As younger generations migrate to urban areas for education or job opportunities, they risk losing their connection to their cultural roots. While digital tools can assist in preserving culture, they may also diminish the crucial face-to-face knowledge transfer needed to sustain Indigenous languages and traditions.

Despite facing numerous challenges, many communities are demonstrating resilience and actively working to reclaim their rights, revitalize their cultures, and adapt to a changing world. They employ various strategies, including:

Cultural Revitalization: Efforts to teach younger generations about their languages, practices, and values.

Self-Determination: Advocating for greater autonomy and decision-making power over their lands and governance.

Comprehensive Health Models: Integrating traditional healing practices with modern healthcare to address both mental and physical well-being.

Chief Avrol emphasizes that, as we adapt to the changing world, it is important to use both our traditional knowledge and modern tools to protect our communities, culture, and ways of life. Empowering Indigenous voices and respecting our rights are essential for enhancing our well-being in this evolving environment.

Dr. Anita Lafferty delivered an insightful keynote speech on the significance of ancestral wisdom, land, and healing. She emphasized how, as Indigenous people, our mind, body, and spirit have always been connected to the land. We have long recognized the land as a source of healing, not only for our bodies but also for our minds, spirits, and communities. This relationship with the land is deeply spiritual and cultural, intricately linked to our sense of identity.

Dr. Lafferty emphasizes that when Mother Earth is unwell, our people suffer as well. These lands are essential for our ceremonies, prayers, and traditional practices that restore balance, bring clarity, and connect us with our ancestors and the Creator. Our elders often teach younger generations about the land through storytelling,

guiding them on how to live in harmony with nature. The knowledge shared includes the medicinal uses of plants, the significance of certain animals, and ways to care for the environment. These teachings not only strengthen our cultural identity but also provide mental and emotional support for individuals facing life's challenges. The mistreatment of our land is deeply intertwined with our well-being. If Mother Earth is sick, so are we. The land will always nurture us, so we must nurture it in return.

As I reflect on the conference and the inspiring keynote speakers who graced the stage, I am reminded of the wealth of our culture. Each voice shared stories that will echo through time, highlighting the profound ways our ancestors healed long before us. These traditional practices remain the foundation of our well-being, guiding us on a journey toward healing.

Our traditions and the understanding of our elders, who serve as keepers of knowledge, are fundamental to our lives. They illustrate our paths, reminding us of the interconnectedness we share in our healing journeys. As Indigenous people, we have faced tremendous pain, trauma, and challenges; yet it is surely these experiences that have constructed our strength and resilience. Our cultural expressions—ceremonies that hold many values, the rich sounds of our language, the graceful movements of our dance, and the heartfelt melodies of our singing—are not just acts of art; they are vital components of who we are. Together, they empower us to embrace our identity and nurture our well-being, ensuring that our spirits rise even higher as we look toward a brighter future for our communities, families and ourselves.

Thank you to Alexis Sioux Nation, the organizers, all the amazing keynote speakers, sponsors, and staff for hosting an incredible conference.

Adalene Littlechild Embodies Traditions with First Hunt Success

At just 10 years old, Adalene Littlechild has proudly carried on the Ermineskin Cree Nation's hunting legacy. Granddaughter to Marvin Littlechild and a descendant of Victor Littlechild, Adalene stepped into her heritage on Saturday the 22nd by making her first kill.

While exercising her treaty rights, Adalene not only learned the traditional ways of hunting but also contributed to the community by helping a local rancher protect his hay bales from wildlife. Indigenous treaty rights to hunt are legal rights derived from historical treaties between Indigenous peoples and colonial or national governments. These treaty rights establish agreements concerning land use, hunting, fishing, and other resources, granting access to and management of traditional lands and natural resources. This practice reflects our commitment to the reciprocal relationship with nature and our responsibility to manage the land sustainably.

After the hunt, Adalene gracefully upheld our traditions by sharing the freshly gathered meat with the grandmothers who had lovingly offered prayers during her birth. We should always strive to show respect and express our gratitude for the elders in our community, recognizing the knowledge and experiences they share with us.

We hope Adalene's story inspires the

young women of Ermineskin to embrace their treaty rights to hunt and to celebrate our rich traditions, which have been passed down through generations and will flourish for centuries to come.

We will soon gather to celebrate Adalene's first kill feast. Details about the traditional feast will be announced shortly, emphasizing this important right of passage and her heartfelt commitment to the well-being of our community. Join us in congratulating Adalene as she embraces the values passed down through generations of the Ermineskin Cree.

For details on the feast please contact: **Josh Littlechild 780-360-4309**



Raising Awareness!

Maskwacis Health Services recently hosted a two-day information session to raise awareness about human trafficking, exploitation, and child trafficking. The event featured various guest speakers with diverse expertise in these challenging topics, including the executive director of the Center to Empower Survivors of Exploitation and Trafficking (CEASE), RCMP officers, and nurses specializing in cases of sexual abuse. Attendees learned about critical topics such as recognizing signs and symptoms of abuse, reporting procedures, and ways to support individuals affected by sexual assault.

The sessions included an in-depth exploration of human trafficking, focusing on the current laws and policies aimed at combating exploitation and child trafficking. Attendees gained valuable insights into the difficulties of the issue, including the recruitment tactics used by traffickers and the chal-

lenges survivors face as they rebuild their lives. Throughout the event, community members were encouraged to ask questions, share their experiences, and learn about local resources available to support both victims



and those working to prevent further exploitation.

The atmosphere was filled with compassion, education, and empowerment. Participants left with a better understanding of how they can make a difference in their community. We would like to thank MHS for organizing this event to raise awareness about these important issues that are often difficult to discuss.

Article written by: Isaac Ginter

A Fresh Start

A new chapter begins for the Nayoskan Rehabilitation Center with the granting of our license! We want to thank everyone who celebrated this momentous occasion with us. This achievement would not have been possible without the incredible support of Randy Littlechild, whose contributions have been invaluable. We also want to recognize the vision and hard work of Peyasu Wuttunee in establishing Nayoskan, as well as the dedication of Gilda Soosay, our Nayoskan manager, in creating a true home for those we serve. We are filled with hope as we embark on this journey to help our community heal and find sobriety in Maskwacis.

If you or someone you know is struggling and seeking treatment, please don't hesitate to contact us. We are here to support you.



Maskwacis Counselling and Support Services:

(780) 585-2268 mcss@mymhs.ca

Article/Photo's provided by: MHS Facebook Page





March is the best time to start again, because if the spring can do it, why can't you?

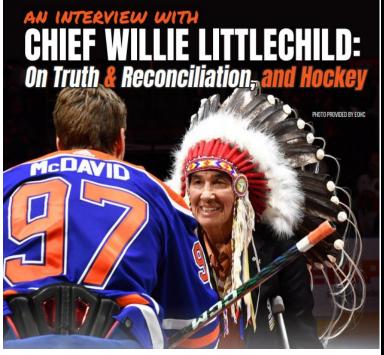


EDMONTON HOCKEY MAGAZINE

In last year's Stanley Cup Final, 16.3 million people watched Game 7 between the Edmonton Oilers and Florida Panthers, and this same number of people saw Chief Willie Littlechild do the Land Acknowledgement announcement before the game. This is the same announcement the Chief has provided to Oilers fans (and Oil Kings fans) since the beginning of the 2021-2022 season, a mainstay at all home games.

"Danse. Hello to all people of Turtle Island. As chief, I welcome you here to Treaty 6 territory. This land has been the traditional homeland for the Metis people of Alberta, the Inuit and ancestral territory of the Cree, Dene, Blackfoot, Saulteaux and Nakoda people since time immemorial. The recognition of our history on this land is an act of reconciliation and we honour those who walk with us. Thank you. Kinanaskomitin."

How did this come about, and who exactly is Chief Williie Littlechild? The Chief (who insisted I call him Willie) took the time to meet with me before Christmas to chat about his early upbringing, his time spent in Residential Schools, and his ascent to greater things. Littlechild was raised by his grandparents on the Ermineskin reserve, Maskwacis (formerly known as Hobbema), and was forced away from his home at the age of six, spending the next 14 years of his life in residential schools. Sports played a key role in Littlechild's escape and development, as he experienced "spiritual and cultural separation," and credits his introduction and involvement in sports as his "vehicle for survival." Grounded by his grandparents' teachings, Littlechild chose to focus on positive experiences, and sports played a key role. Littlechild became a multiple sport athlete, thriving at hockey, baseball, swimming at the University level, and earned his Bachelor of Physical Education degree in 1967. Thereafter, Littlechild got his law degree, and years later, earned the distinguished Queen's Council and Indigenous Peoples' Counsel, the highest honours of the legal profession.



Littlechild was also the first treaty Indian Member of Parliament, representing the riding of Wetaskiwin from 1998 – 2003. Littlechild is currently a commissioner for the Truth and Reconcilation Commission of Canada, and sits on numerous boards, including the Edmonton Oilers Community Foundation, where he sits as an Honourary Member. His many awards and achievements include one of the 2000 Outstanding Intellectuals of the 21st Century (2004), the Distinguished Service Award from the Canadian Association of Former Parliamentarians (2006), an Honourary Doctor of Laws degree from the University of Alberta (2007), Lawyer of the Year (Aboriginal Law), Diamond Jubilee Medal (2012), and was inducted as a companion of the Order of Canada in 1999. (His Order of Canada pin he proudly wore on his lapel when we met for this interview.) Littlechild was also the founder of the North American and World Indigenous Nations (WIN) Games, inducted into nine sports halls of fame, awarded the Hockey Alberta Centennial Medal, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Medal for Peace and the CSHF Order of Sport, sits on the International Olympic Committee (IOC), holds seven honorary degrees (law), and was selected as a torch bearer and ambassador for the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver.

INTERVIEW CHIEF LITTLECHILD

With how you grew up, where did you get your strength and inspiration? I can only say that I was firmly grounded in Cree traditional teachings by my grandparents. My grandfather, Chief Dan Minde couldn't read or write English, so it was totally Cree, but my grandmother had grade nine, and at that time, it was like University. She gave me the importance of education, formal education, where my grandpa was more traditional in his teachings. So formal education and traditional education together, and based on those two sets of teachings, and using a lot of prayer and exercise, that's what helped."

When you went to school, what was your access to physical education? There was none. There was no Phys Ed, as a class. There was recess time, but there were no facilities, so I once wrote down how many games we created as students in the school, and came up with 33 different games because of a lack of physical education, class time, and a lack of proper facilities.

What NHL team did you cheer for growing up? It's really funny you ask that, because I followed the "Big Six" as a teenager, and I heard about this George Armstrong who played for the Leafs, and they called him Chief. I remember picking up the 'Star Weekly', and I would clip out all the star players and make a scrapbook of all the players. And because of my Indigenous heritage, George Armstrong, Jim Nielsen, and Freddy

Sasakamoose, who was the first Indigenous NHL player, who later on, after hockey, became a Chief for his own community, and did so much for young people.

Who were your role models? I had these guys (Armstrong, Nielsen, Saskamoose) as role models, but before that, my older brother, who went to college before me. He was a really good hockey player, and a really good baseball player. He introduced me to the baseball league, and I played 3 years in the Alberta Major League. Back then, we were named after professional teams. I played for the Cardinals, and they had the Tigers, Giants and Angels at the time.

You earned a Masters Degree in Physical Education, and thereafter, you were the first Status Indian from Alberta to earn a law degree. Did you realize that you were a trailblazer at the time? No not really - the reason I went into Phys Ed, was because I thought I was going to be a Phys Ed teacher, because I loved sports. So if I was going to teach Phys Ed, I better be able to play some of the sports. I played football, I played hockey, I was on the swim team and diving team, and after, I managed the football and basketball teams. If you're going to preach something, you better be able to practice it, was my philosophy. And then I went to do my Masters Degree, and I just afterwards, started coaching Junior Hockey. Three years later, the NHL phoned, looking to recruit candidates for their management school. They said, 'we've

been experiencing when we hire good former players, they're not necessarily good managers, so we're going to put a management school on, and we would like you to attend,' and I said sure. So twenty of us were selected across North America, and only two of us were non lawyers. So I thought if I wanted to stay in hockey, I guess I have to go to law school (laughs), and not knowing the challenge of getting accepted, I applied to three different law schools, and I got accepted in all three, which was unknown.

Where did you study law? I went to Albuquerque University in New Mexico, but with my scholarship, I would have to study an extra year of law, and I didn't want to do that, because it would have been American law, not Canadian law...





So I phoned the U of A, and asked if I could transfer here. I was interviewed by the Dean, and he said, 'Littlechild, you're Indian eh.' and I said 'yes, I'm Cree,' and he said 'your degree is Phys Ed, so you're a jock also eh,' and I answered, 'yes (pause) sir.' And he said 'you better be damn good, because you have two strikes against you – we've never had an Indian, and we've never had an athlete in law school.' So the challenge was on.

How has sport played a role in your work with the Truth & Reconciliation Commission, and the impact sport makes? When I finished the journey with the Truth & Reconciliation Commission, after listening to so many, thousands of stories, I tried to track what were the positive threads in this whole negative experience for most of us. Maybe it was bias, but sports saved my life, having gone through all of the abuse. I was a member of Parliament when Nelson Mandela came for a visit, just after he got out of prison. He used rugby to promote reconciliation in Africa, and I kinda followed him in terms of his career, what he did after, to rebuild his country. To listen to him speak in the House of Commons, it impacted me to look at the role of sport in boarding schools, in residential schools, and the role of sport to promote or advance reconciliation. In making public statements, I would state, first of all, that sports saved my life, and secondly, I was encouraged to use sport, the power of sport, in particular hockey, to advance reconciliation.

How did the Land acknowledgement announcement come about with the Edmonton Oilers? Years ago, I was asked to sit on the board for the Oilers Community Foundation. One day Tim Shipton from the Oilers phoned me, and said, 'we would like you to do the land acknowledgement at Oilers games,' and I said 'sure, I would be happy to,' and here it was for the Oilers. Shipton, who is Executive Vice President with OEG Sports & Entertain-

ment (OEGSE) was effusive in his praise of Littlechild, and why he was chosen to do the Land Acknowledgement. "Chief Wilton Littlechild is not only a longstanding partner, friend and fan—and honourary member of the Edmonton Oilers Community Foundation Board of Directors - he is one of the great human rights leaders of our time, an accomplished lawyer, respected politician and exceptional athlete. Chief has worked tirelessly to promote human rights in Canada and internationally with the United Nations, and we are honoured and fortunate to call him a friend and colleague." I wanted to put a little more Cree into it, but decided just the front end and back end would be good. We are in Treaty Six territory, and really to me, the hockey capital is Edmonton, what I've experienced here, and at the Board with the Oilers. So it was a bit of both, the opportunity to present it came from the Oilers, and I wanted to do it, to acknowledge our territory, mainly to advance reconciliation, again through the power of hockey. So It was a great blessing to get called up. I was told last year, that 8 1/2 million people were watching the Stanley Cup Finals in Canada. I got texts from Scandinavia, and other parts of the world, people telling me they saw the Land Acknowledgement before the games.

Wrapping up, what advice would you like to offer?

"Stay positive and never be afraid to challenge yourself. Remember that winners don't quit and quitters don't win. Having a spiritual base along with the cultural, physical, and mental elements are very important to us all; stay focused and realize your goals."

> ARTICLE BY: ROB SUGGIT-EDMONTON HOCKEY MAGAZINE

FULL ARTICLE AVALIABLE: https://hockeymagazine.net/edmonton.html

OB OPPORTUNITIES/COMMUNITY EVENTS





NEYASKWEYAHK GROUP OF COMPANIES INC. EMPPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

KITCHEN PREP / COOK

PEMICISO CAFÉ & BISTRO

SUMMARY.

A prep cook or food preparation worker is hired to prepare the ingredients for addition to recipes by other cooks or chefs. It is an entry level commercial kitchen position and requires little to no experience or training, each of which is gained on the job. What is required is top notch listening skills, the ability to follow directions independently and the willingness to work as part of a larger team. In general, the duties of prep cooks are routine and repetitive; they often require attention to detail, nonetheless, considering most duties are performed with hot or sharp objects.

DUTIES & RESPONSIBILITIES:

- Peel / cut vegetables and fruits.
- · Measure and way ingredients.
- Trim / carve meat
- · Prepare and bake daily desserts and Bannock.
- Monitor oven and stove temperatures.
- · Clean kitchen including utensils and pots and pans
- Clean the dining area and take out garbage and or recycling.
- Prepare cooking station for cook and clean kitchen.
 Assist chef (Manager) when required.
- · Handling cash when required.

- · Must have a Food Safety Certificate
- Attention to detail in tasks is critical.
 Abstain from Drugs & Alcohol (during working hours).
- Must be willing to sign an Honesty Declaration
- · Must be willing to sign an Oath of Confidentiality
- Must have own transportation.
- · Ability to work flexible schedule
- · Excellent Interpersonal and Communication Skills

IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR: Pemiciso Cafe Manager

Deadline: March 12, 2025

To apply, applicants must submit:

- Cover Letter . Resume
- Certification
- · Criminal Record Check

Jewel Smallboy, HR Manager

Neyaskweyahk Group of Companies Inc. P.O. Box 1320 Maskwacis, AB T0C 1N0 Email: jewel@ngcinc.ca or submit in person at the NGCI Innovation & Professional

ALL INCOMPLETE APPLICATIONS WILL BE SCREENED OUT





CPNP March 2025 Coupon dates

March 5th, 2025 March 19th, 2025

Please note:

Coupon pick up is only available on designated pick-up dates. Thank you

Ermineskin Cree Nation

Native Provincials & Treaty Hockey

Sponsorship 2025

Pick Up Forms at:

-ECN ADMIN Office

8:30AM - 4:30PM

Please provide Rosters and Coach contact

FOR MORE INFO PLEASE CONTACT EUGENE COYOTE 780-585-3741





Negaskweighk Human Services

Tax Filing Assistance for clients

Neyaskweyahk Human Services will be having walk-in appointments with Andrea Dion for tax filing assistance

PLEASE NOTE:

Future Dates to be announced for next filing dates

March 4th March 5th March 6th 9:00am - 4:00pm

For more information: (780) 585-3835



ORTHOTICS CLINIC

MARCH. 07, 2025 9:00AM-3:30PM

Reason to visit the orthotics clinic:

Sore Knee

Lower Back Pain

Hip, Ankle or Heel Pain Muscle Cramps/Tightness







(780)585-2266



PO AF I AYA, PL.

KKI Handgame Teaching

Come out and learn how to play handgames we are offering FOUR (4) EVENING classes. **Classes will be held at the KKI Prevention Building



Open to all ECN children/youth and residents Ages (12-17) *must be accompanied by an adult

HANDGAME TEACHING HIGHLIGHTS

- · Introduction to handgames
- · Introduction to singing
- Handgame tips

LOCATION:

KKI PREVENTION BUILDING

DATE(S):

MARCH 4TH, 11TH, 18TH & 25TH, 2025

TIME: 5PM-8PM

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO REGISTER CONTACT ANDREA @ (780) 585-3721 OR EMAIL ANDREA M@KKAMIK COM

MEN'S COPING

STRESS AND **FATHERHOOD:** COPING STRATEGIES FOR MEN

Rattle making with Leo V. Bruno **Ermineskin Elders Centre** 10:00 am - 3:00 pm

> Please call MCSS to register 780-585-2268

MARCH 5TH & 18TH 2025



Nevaskwevahk Human Services

ERMINESKIN NHS ISSUANCE FOR **APRIL 2025**

MARCH 2611, 202 10:00 AM =4:00 P

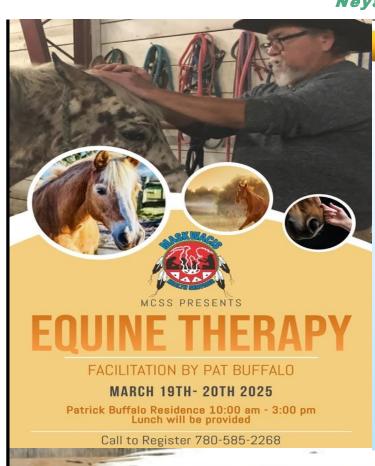


Please ensure your utility bills are upto-date, and that your 30-day bank statements have been submitted.

> Issuance will be one day only Personal pickup only No Mailouts

Thank you for your cooperation

NEYASKWEYAHK HUMAN SERVICES: (780)585-3835



Maskwacis Health services

PIGEON LAKE

LABORATORY TESTING MARCH 11, 2025 10 AM TO 2:30 PM

Our Services Include:

- Lab collection / ECG for any requisition from any medical
- Walk-in STI testing
 Testing for Syphilis, Hep C and HIV on site
- Information on STI testing and follow-up care
- Walk-ins welcome



