

Introduction: Indigenous Cultural Safety

Why Cultural Safety Matters to NatureKids BC

At NatureKids BC we embrace our values of **integrity, empowerment, collaboration, diversity and inclusion, good stewardship and community**. Learning about plants and taking steps to help the land is a wonderful way to see these values in action. And just like the plants around us, we continue to learn and grow, being mindful of the experiences of others around us and **ensuring that everyone feels safe and welcome**.

Indigenous Peoples and Plants

In BC and across the world, many Indigenous peoples have spiritual and cultural ties to plants that have helped them to maintain land-based wellness, create deep social ties to the land, and adapt to the impacts of colonization (*Johnny-Wadsworth, 2018*).

Indigenous peoples also hold complex knowledge and understandings about the land. This includes **stewardship and governance models, laws, and practices** that have evolved since time immemorial.

At NatureKids BC, we honour this knowledge through respectful and meaningful relationship building.

Cultural Safety Guidelines

As we build relationships with Indigenous peoples as an organization, we are being mindful of **cultural safety**.

If you work with Indigenous people(s) as part of your engagement with this toolkit, the next few pages are there to support you.

We understand that everyone comes to this work with different backgrounds, understandings, and relationships. Please engage with the guideline in a way that makes sense for you.

As always, reach out to the NatureKids BC team if you need support!

Introduction Sources

1 Johnny-Wadsworth, Arianna. (2018). Ancestral Knowledge and Northwest Native Plants: Traditional Plant Medicine Wild Crafting on Salish Territory. UBC. Presentation.





Indigenous Cultural Safety

Part 1: Key terms, definitions, and learning resources

*This guideline was created with the input and oversight of
Indigenous voices including:
Nipāwi Kakinoosit and Desiree Louis.*

Intentions

"The intention of this work is to begin a list of policies and resources for employees, contractors and/or volunteers to refer to when engaging with Indigenous knowledges, sciences, and/or earth based learning at NatureKids BC.

When at all possible, **Indigenous knowledge programming should be taught by Indigenous instructors and/or educators.** If not possible, the approach should be with a light touch and unassuming nature on behalf of the instructor and taught in a way that offers space for questions, error, and amendment when needed. It should not be assumed that anyone is an 'expert' after working with this resource. Instead, we encourage you to approach it from a place of curiosity and respect.

Indigenous instructors and/or educators are also not authorities on all knowledges, nor can it be assumed they have access to Traditional Ecological Knowledge" (Louis, 2022).

Terms and Definitions



What is Colonization in "Canada"?

Colonization has meant that "[f]or over 500 years... ongoing assimilation acts, policies, and laws have had very negative consequences for [Indigenous] communities. [For example], the Canadian Constitution and the Indian Act have both been utilized to separate [Indigenous peoples from their] land and place [them] on reserves, dismantle [their] governance structures, devalue [Indigenous] women by imposing patriarchal laws, and legally prohibit culture and spiritual practices...

Imposed laws continue to severely compromise the existence and strength of... traditional languages... [and empowers] a foreign justice system that keeps [Indigenous peoples] from their children, lands, and resources" (Gray, 2011).

What is Anti-racism?

"Anti-racism is the practice of identifying, challenging, preventing, eliminating and changing the values, structures, policies, programs, practices and behaviours that perpetuate racism. **It is more than just being "not racist"**" (Turpel-Lafond, 2021).

"Anti-racism **includes not playing games that mimic, mock, or assume indigenous cultural values.** For example, spirit animals, tribal association or classifications, pow wow and potlach reenactment, and the mythification of indigenous stories and/or knowledges" (Louis, 2022).





Indigenous Cultural Safety

Part 1: Key terms, definitions, and learning resources

What is Cultural Humility?

"Cultural humility is a process of self-reflection to understand personal and systemic biases and to develop and maintain respectful processes and relationships based on mutual trust. Cultural humility involves **humbly acknowledging oneself as a learner** when it comes to understanding another's experience" (*First Nations Health Authority, 2022*).

What is Cultural Safety?

"Cultural Safety is an outcome based on respectful engagement that recognizes and strives to address power imbalances... It results in an **environment free of racism and discrimination, where people feel safe...**" (*First Nations Health Authority, 2022*). This also includes taking a **trauma informed approach** to your work (see resources below).

Additional Learning Tools and Resources

Native Land Web App

Find out whose land you are on using this interactive map.

First Nations Health Authority: Cultural Safety and Humility (webpage)

Many of the resources listed here are specific to health care. However, their definitions, tools and resources are widely applicable.

Indigenous Tourism BC: 10 Considerations when Working with Indigenous Communities

This is a great complimentary resource to the steps provided in part two of this guideline.

Cultural Safety Education as the Blueprint for Reconciliation | Len Pierre | TEDxSFU

16:51 min video - Len Pierre, Coast Salish Cultural Safety Education

Connection - Culturally Safe Trauma Informed Practice | Dr. Jeffrey Schiffer | Province of BC

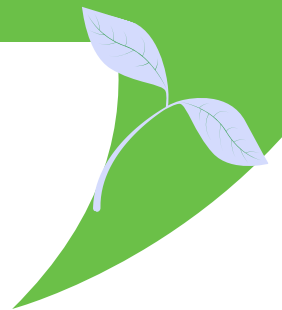
2.52 min video - Youtube - Dr. Jeffrey Schiffer - Métis and German Descent - Executive Director of Native Child and Family Services of Toronto.

"Let us find a way to belong to this time and place together. Our future, and the well-being of all our children, rests with the kind of relationships we build today."

—
Chief Robert Joseph

Gwawaenuk Elder &

Ambassador for Reconciliation Canada



Indigenous Cultural Safety

Part 2: Steps for creating new relationships

Note: Steps 1, 2, & 9 below can be used at any time, while the others are specific to engaging with an Indigenous partner for a particular event.



1. Find out who's land you are on

Indigenous peoples are the original and ongoing stewards and leaders of the land known as Turtle Island (North America). Many Indigenous communities with different cultural practices, laws, and governance models exist here. It is important to first find out who the Indigenous communities are in your region. If you're unsure, you can use [Nativeland.ca](https://www.nativeland.ca) to find out.

Keep in mind there might be multiple First Nations, Métis, and/or Inuit communities and individuals present in your area.



2. Set your goals and intentions

How you come across matters and the goals and intentions for your work will help to guide you. Ask yourself: what are the key elements of the project? How does this project relate to Indigenous peoples? What are my intentions for learning about and/or creating a new relationship with Indigenous peoples?



3. Find out local protocols

Once you know whose land you are on and what your intentions are, it is important to follow protocols when engaging with an Indigenous partner. In some communities, this could be for example, offering tobacco or another gift to demonstrate good intentions when you first meet. Local protocols might be difficult to find before you establish the relationship, so just do your best and always ensure that reciprocity is a part of your plan. When possible, honoraria should also be provided to Indigenous partners (see step 9).



4. Working with elders

"It is important to ensure processes, approaches, communication, and compensation are equitable and fair when working with elders. Traditional knowledge holders who are 55+ are culturally significant within communities and networks as sources of wisdom and guidance in many areas. Sometimes special provisions need to be taken when working or arranging work or inclusion with these individuals. This includes for example, meeting accessibility needs, being respectful of the way knowledge is shared, and using a trauma informed approach" (Louis, 2022).



5. Consider intersectionality

One single person can and does hold various 'intersections' or identities such as: gender orientation, race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, education, and work opportunities (Louis, 2022). These 'intersections' can also interact with each other and sometimes form 'cumulative prejudices' (multiple forms of prejudice imposed on a person in oppressive ways) (Crenshaw, 2016).



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Part 2: Steps for creating new relationships



6. Find out who to contact

Once you follow the steps above, you may already know who you wish to contact if you plan to form a new relationship. If not, take some time to reflect on this. Some suggestions include: a band office or a local Indigenous organization that is working on similar projects to the one you are planning.



7. NatureKids BC executives and/or management staff reaches out

In order to demonstrate respect, forge long term organizational relationships, and establish transparency and accountability, it is important that NatureKids BC executives and/or management staff be the ones to make first contact with an Indigenous community or organization. What does this look like? The exec or leadership team will email or phone to introduce NatureKids BC, establish a connection, and then pass the relationship off to the volunteer lead, contractor, or staff member who will carry the relationship forward.



8. Maintain the relationship

It is very important that consistent and reliable contact be made with all Indigenous partners. We understand that things happen, so if for any reason you are unable to respond or maintain an external relationship please ensure a member of NatureKids BC is aware and can carry that forward for you.



9. Create space and be reciprocal

If you are successful in creating a partnership with an Indigenous community and/or organization, ensure that you create meaningful space during your planning process for their engagement and leadership. During the event you also want to offer as much time and space as possible for Indigenous partner(s) to engage with participants.

Indigenous partners you work with should be compensated for their time. We recommend between \$150-200 for honoraria when possible.



10. Be straightforward and flexible

It is important to be straightforward with all partners you work with. Naming the goals you have in mind and your ideas for the project at the beginning of the relationship will help you establish trust. It is also important that you remain open to amending those plans with the input of your partner(s).

Sources (parts 1 and 2 - Indigenous Cultural Safety Guideline) in order of appearance

1. Louis, Desiree (2022). The University of British Columbia. Vancouver.
2. Gray, Lynda. (2011). First Nations 101: [tons of stuff you need to know about First Nations people]. Adaawx Pub. p.8
3. Turpel-Lafond, Mary Ellen. (2021). In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care. Camosun College. p.11.
4. First Nations Health Authority. (2022). Cultural Safety and Humility. Creating a Climate for Change: Cultural Safety and Humility in Health Services Delivery for First Nations and Aboriginal Peoples in British Columbia. pp.5,7.
5. Joseph, Robert. (n.d.). About Us: Who We Are. Reconciliation Canada.
6. Crenshaw, Kimberlé. (2016). TEDwomen. The Urgency of Intersectionality.



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Part 3: Creating an engagement plan

Fill out this template to the best of your ability using the guidelines above. Before making contact with anyone, please send your answers to a staff member at NatureKids BC.

Volunteer lead name:

Club location:

Event date (month/day/ year):

Goals and intentions:

Local Indigenous Nation(s) and/or communities:

Email and/or Phone # (e.g. band office):

Local Indigenous organization(s):

Email and/or Phone #:

Local protocols:

Questions for NatureKids BC Staff:
