

# COMMUNITY BULLETIN

JANUARY 2023 | VOLUME 6

Ohserá:se and Happy New Year akwekon! Wishing everyone a healthy, happy, and abundant New Year!

This month we wanted to share some information on Customary Care Agreements. A Customary Care Agreement allows Indigenous children to stay connected to their culture and their community. It is desired that Customary Care Agreements be reached before any court applications are required. The program individualizes each Agreement, encompassing traditional practices and/or healthy child-rearing and care. All members of the family, extended family, relatives and community are involved in

caring for children whose families experience difficulties. Respecting that each community has their own values, beliefs, and ways of doing things, the agency has developed protocols with each First Nation that outlines the specific steps necessary when proceeding with a Customary Care Agreement.

This model of Customary Care will be implemented only if the child/youth is deemed in need of protection as identified through a Child Welfare Agency, the courts and the respective First Nation Community, declaring that child and youth be cared for under a Customary Care Agreement, through Band Council Resolution (MCR).

Customary Care is recognized under Part IV of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act, 2017. The First Nation, or Inuit community has the legal right to declare that a First Nations, Inuit or Metis child is being cared for under Customary Care, a society or entity may grant a subsidy to the person caring for the child. (Part IV, Section 71 of CYFSA).

The Rights of Mohawk children and youth are inherent and forever in all our customary care practices.

If you or your family would like to know more about Customary Care, please call ACFS at 613-575-5020.

## THIS MONTH'S SUCCESS STORIES

This past December, the staff at Akwesasne Child and Family Services were busy planning, updating and gaining new skills to bring back to the community.

A few of the agency's notable achievements include:

- *The 28 Lacrosse 2nd Annual Christmas Camp, co-hosted with Marcey Thompson & Keisha Mitchell.*
- *Stephanie Pierce recently attended First Nations Health Managers Association Conference in Victoria, BC.*
- *Belinda White recently attended an Administrative Assistant conference/training in Banff, AB.*

- *Mandie Diabo and Eugene Andy Bouchier recently attended a two-day HR orientation.*
- *Congratulations to Mandie Diabo and Raven Oakes for successfully completing the Pathway to Authorization series training.*
- *Keisha Mitchell & Tekaronhiakwas McDonald attended the Mending Broken Hearts training in Colorado Springs, CO.*
- *In collaboration with CSP, ACFS recently completed a two-day Systems Thinking training.*
- *Congratulations to Mandie Diabo for winning the rock papers scissors tournament at the ACFS Christmas party.*

- *Welcome back Krysten Delormier! The Intake and Assessment team is happy to have you back!*
- *ACFS would like to welcome Steven Alexander who will be joining our team as the new On-Going Services Supervisor.*
- *We would like to welcome Lacey Pierce who has re-joined our team as a Family Support Worker.*
- *Lastly, we wanted to send the warmest farewell wishes to Ahwennaseh Mitchell, as he ventures on with AMPS. Nia:wen for your work with ACFS and your community dedication!*

## RESOURCES

The effect of winter is different for everyone, some love it and some can't wait to get through it. If you feel like you are experiencing the "winter blues" here are some things you can do to help: Get some sunlight, make time for social interactions, get moving and talk to someone about what you are feeling.

We would also like to extend our deepest condolences to all in our community affected by grief during this time.

Listed are some free and confidential resources that could be of value for someone in need.

**MCA WHOLISTIC HEALTH &  
WELLNESS PROGRAM**  
613-575-2341 ext. 3100

**TEENLINE**  
1-800-852-8336  
Text: TEEN to 839863

**GOOD2TALK**  
1-866-627-3342

**NATIONAL SUICIDE  
PREVENTION SUPPORT LINE**  
1-800-456-4566  
Text: 45645

**TELEHEALTH ONTARIO**  
1-866-797-0000

**FIRST NATIONS & INUIT HOPE  
FOR WELLNESS HELP LINE**  
1-800-242-3310

**SUPPORT SERVICES FOR MALE  
SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL ABUSE**  
1-866-887-0015

**NATIONAL RESIDENTIAL  
SCHOOL CRISIS LINE**  
1-866-925-4419

**KIDS HELP PHONE**  
1-800-668-6868

## KANIEN'KEHA LESSONS: THANKSGIVING ADDRESS

**OHÉNTON KARIWATÉKWEN: WORDS BEFORE ALL  
ELSE** (fourth and fifth verse)

*Akwe:kon enska entitewahwehnon:ni ne  
onkwa'nikon:ra tanon teiethinonhwera:ton ne  
kahi'shon:ah tanon ne kwah tkonwakowa:nen  
ken'niiohontehsha. Ne:e kanenhri:ne's ne  
kahi'shon:ah...eh kati'niiohtonhak ne  
onkwa'nikon:ra.*

We bring our minds together as one and give thanks for fruits and especially strawberry, the head of the berry family...now our minds are one.

*Akwe:kon enska entitewahwehnon:ni ne  
onkwa'nikon:ra tanon teiethinonhwera:ton ne  
ohonte'shon:ah. Okia'ke kakhwa tsi tewatsta  
tanon okia'ke ne ononhkwa'shon:ah...eh  
kati'niiohtonhak ne onkwa'nikon:ra.*

We bring our minds together as one and give thanks for the grasses. Some we use as food and some as medicine...now our minds are one.

For more teachings, please visit  
<https://akwesasne.travel/our-stories/thanksgiving-address/>.

---

*Onkiehtineh Onkwaksatah  
"We Will Protect Our Children"*



\*\*\*Check our Facebook page for more information,  
events and updates\*\*\*

---