

Mohawk Council of Akwesasne:
Community Training Needs Survey

Conducted in 2025

January 2026



Purpose:

- ▶ The purpose of conducting the community **training needs** survey was to acquire information to develop programs, training and educational opportunities aligning with the voice of the community. Key objectives include:
 - ▶ *Determine skill gaps and learning interests within the community.*
 - ▶ *Utilize information to prioritize training topics.*
 - ▶ *Tailor programs to community: understanding the demographics, interests and challenges of the community allows programs to address needs.*
 - ▶ *Promote engagement: aiming to foster a sense of ownership and increase participation in future events.*

Collection of Data

- ▶ The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne collected data through the following methods:
 - ▶ *Online survey via Microsoft Forms —posted on social media*
 - ▶ *In-person survey opportunities in the community*
 - ▶ *Paper survey forms mailed to community members*
- ▶ Total responses received were: **316**
- ▶ Responses were collected from the end of July 2025 through the end of August 2025.

The following sections provide a detailed analysis of the survey and outline the community's recommendations.





Demographics

Age Groups:

Under 18:	6
18-24:	13
25-34:	68
35-44:	89
45-54:	72
55-64:	50
65 and older:	18

Employment Status:

Student:	32
Unemployed:	20
Self-employed:	38
Employed part-time:	19
Employed full-time:	212
Retired:	14

The majority of survey participants were between the **ages of 25 and 54**, indicating a strong engagement from working-age adults. Employment status was primarily **full-time**, followed by **self-employed** individuals and **students**, suggesting a diverse mix of professional backgrounds.

Training:

▶ Training Delivery:

In-Person:	196
Online (live):	77
Online (self-paced):	90
Hybrid (mix of in-person & online):	126

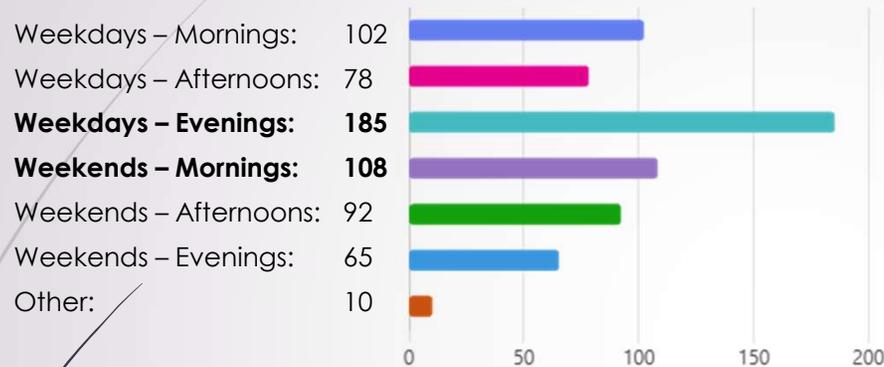
▶ Travel for In-person Training:

Less than 10 minutes:	30
10-20 minutes:	81
20-30 minutes:	138
30+ minutes:	137
Preferred virtual sessions:	55

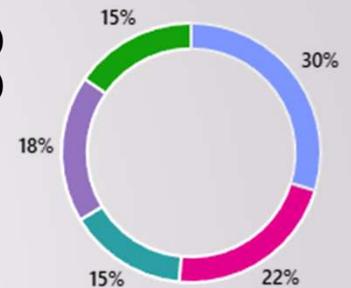
Survey results indicated a strong preference for **in-person training**, with nearly half of respondents selecting the option, while hybrid delivery is also highly valued for its flexibility. **Online self-paced learning** remains relevant for those seeking convenience.

Additionally, most respondents are willing to travel **20 minutes or more** for in-person sessions, with a significant portion comfortable traveling 30+ minutes, suggesting feasibility with centralized training locations. However, offering hybrid and online options will help accommodate participants with longer commutes or scheduling constraints.

Participant Preferences:



MCA Facilities:	60 (30%)
Akwesasne Mohawk Casino:	44 (22%)
Hotels (ie. Best Western, etc.):	30 (15%)
Outdoor Venues:	37 (18%)
Other:	31 (15%)



Days of the Week:

Weekday evenings dominate as the most convenient slot, with 185 respondents (28.9%) selecting this option.

Mornings overall rank second, totaling 210 responses (32.8%), split between weekdays (102) and weekends (108).

Afternoons are less favored, accounting for 170 (26.6%), and "other" times were negligible (10 responses; 1.6%).

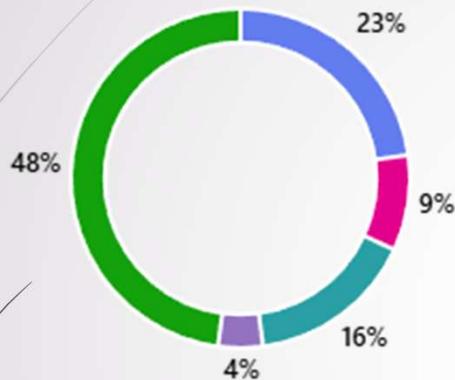
To maximize participation, **prioritize weekday evening sessions** as the primary offering. Supplement with weekend morning cohorts for flexibility and consider afternoon slots for specialized or make-up sessions. Weekend evenings should be served for niche events. Hybrid or recorded options can further enhance accessibility for those unable to attend during peak times.

Preferred Location Type or Venue:

While most participants do not have strong venue preferences, those who do favor MCA facilities for accessibility and familiarity. The Akwesasne Mohawk Casino and outdoor spaces also rank highly, suggesting interest in both formal and culturally connected environments. Hotels and other venues were less common but still notable.

Default to **MCA offices/buildings** for conveniences and alignment with majority expectations. Maintain flexibility for alternative spaces to accommodate diverse needs and preferences.

Barriers & Supports to Training Access:



Childcare:	80 (23%)
Transportation:	32 (9%)
Access to a computer or internet:	56 (16%)
Accessibility accommodations:	15 (4%)
None of the above:	168 (48%)

While most participants do not require additional support, a significant portion need **assistance with childcare and digital access**, which are critical for equitable participation.

Transportation and accessibility accommodations, though less common, remain important for inclusivity.

- ▶ Incorporate childcare options for sessions targeting parents.
- ▶ Ensure reliable internet access and devices for hybrid or online training.
- ▶ Provide transportation support for in-person events and accommodations for participants in accessibility needs.

Reaching Our Community: Preferred Communication Methods

Social media is the most effective outreach tool, but multi-channel strategies – including word of mouth, print materials, and direct email communication – are essential for reaching diverse audiences.

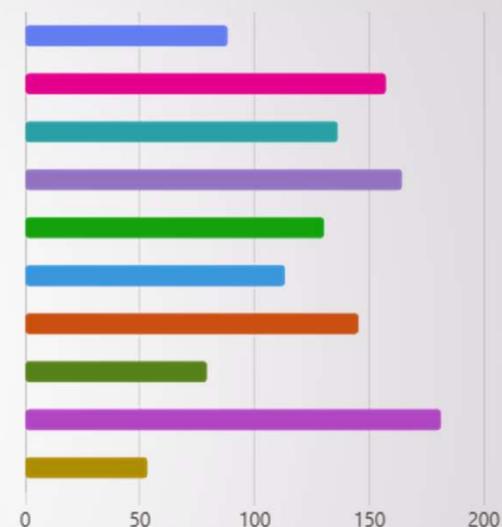
Traditional and digital methods compliment each other to maximize engagement.

- ▶ **Continue prioritizing social media** campaigns but **strengthen email lists** and **newsletter distribution** for consistent updates.
- ▶ **Maintain physical posters/flyers** for visibility in community spaces.
- ▶ **Leverage word-of-mouth networks** by encouraging participants and community leaders to share information.



Training Interests:

Job skills (e.g., resume writing, interview prep)	88
Technology (e.g., computer basics, coding, digital tools)	157
Business & Entrepreneurship	136
Health & Wellness	164
Financial Literacy	130
Arts & Creativity	113
Language and Learning	145
Parenting & Family Support	79
Indigenous Culture & Knowledge (e.g., language Revitalization, traditional crafts...)	181
Other	53



Training interests are predominantly centered on **Indigenous culture and knowledge**, selected by 181 respondents, making it the most requested subject. Other high-demand topics include **Health & Wellness**, **Technology**, and **Language & Learning**, reflecting a strong emphasis on cultural preservation alongside personal development and digital skills.

Additional areas of interest – such as Business & Entrepreneurship, Financial Literacy and Arts & Creativity – suggest a desire for economic empowerment and creative expression.

Lower but notable interest in Job Skills and Parenting & Family Support indicates opportunities for targeted programs addressing workforce readiness and family well-being.



Training Interests continued:

Respondents who selected *Indigenous Culture & Knowledge* and/or *Other Specific Topics or Skills* were invited to provide examples of specific topics or practices they would like to see included in future offerings.

Language & Revitalization:
66 responses (19.6%)

Traditional Crafts (overall):
62 responses (18.4%)

Traditional Medicines & Healing:
51 responses (15.1%)

Ceremonies & Protocols:
43 responses (12.8%)

Storytelling & History:
33 responses (9.8%)

Food, Cooking & Preservation:
30 responses (8.9%)

Land-Based Learning & Harvesting:
22 responses (6.5%)

Business & Entrepreneurship & Management:
20 responses (5.9%)

Technology & Digital Skills:
18 responses (5.3%)

Health & Wellness/Mental Health:
16 responses (4.7%)

Financial Literacy/Investing/Taxes:
15 responses (4.5%)

Traditional Songs & Dances:
13 responses (3.9%)

Arts & Creativity:
12 responses (3.6%)

Trades & Job Skills:
10 responses (3.0%)

Other/Unspecified:
64 responses (19%)

Details of responses can be found in Appendix 1.

Voices from the Community — Feedback on MCA Trainings/Events:

Respondents who previously attended events or trainings were invited to share feedback. The following section outlines the recommendations for improving future sessions.

1. Communication & Outreach:

- ▶ Clear communication & reminders (text/email).
- ▶ Advertise beyond Facebook; create dedicated email lists.
- ▶ Ample notification for planning.
- ▶ Better awareness and promotion of events.

2. Scheduling & Accessibility:

- ▶ Offer sessions outside 9-5 (evenings/weekends).
- ▶ Virtual/hybrid options for those far away.
- ▶ Consistency in scheduling (e.g. recurring sessions).
- ▶ Avoid conflicts with work hours.

3. Instruction Quality:

- ▶ Knowledgeable, patient trainers.
- ▶ More than one instructor for diverse perspectives.
- ▶ Compassionate teaching, especially for cultural topics.
- ▶ Smaller class sizes for personalized attention.

4. Teaching Style:

- ▶ Hands-on learning preferred over lecture-based.
- ▶ Interactive session with activities and Q&A.
- ▶ Visual examples and practical demonstrations.
- ▶ Avoid overly westernized teaching methods.

5. Cultural & Traditional Content:

- ▶ More traditional crafts and cultural teachings.
- ▶ Respect for cultural protocols (e.g., organizers not taking classes).
- ▶ Sensitivity for participants unfamiliar with traditions.

6. Logistics & Supports:

- ▶ Child-friendly sessions or childcare options.
- ▶ Transportation assistance.
- ▶ Food/snacks provided (especially for evening sessions).
- ▶ Incentives for participation (e.g., gas money, meals).

Voices from the Community — Feedback on MCA Trainings/Events:

7. **Class Structure & Availability:**
 - ▶ Expand beyond one small class; offer multiple sessions.
 - ▶ Lottery or waitlist system for oversubscribed classes.
 - ▶ Longer classes for deeper learning.
8. **Technology & Resources:**
 - ▶ Access to computers and in-person assistance.
 - ▶ Hybrid sessions (Zoom & in-person).
 - ▶ Digital handouts for post-session review.
9. **Safety & Specialized Topics:**
 - ▶ CPR & fire safety for community (not just for staff).
 - ▶ Trauma-informed training with clear breakdowns.
 - ▶ Mental health awareness and sensitivity.
10. **Feedback & Evaluation:**
 - ▶ Need for evaluations after sessions.
 - ▶ Opportunity for follow-up and continued learning.



Participants value hands-on, culturally relevant training, offered at flexible times with clear communication and supportive logistics (childcare options/ child friendly events, food, transportation).

There is a strong demand for interactive teaching styles, knowledgeable instructors, and expanded access through hybrid formats and recurring sessions.



Community Recommendations for Future Trainings:

Accessibility & Scheduling:

- ▶ Strong demand for evening and weekend sessions to accommodate working individuals.
- ▶ Requests for multiple sessions of popular classes and advance notice (more than one week) or planning.
- ▶ Suggestions for alternate locations across districts and offer hybrid options (online/in-person) for off-reserve members.

Communication & Promotion:

- ▶ Improve community outreach through social media, email lists, and timely advertising.
- ▶ Record sessions for on-demand access and use diverse platforms (e.g., Facebook, TikTok) to reach all demographics.
- ▶ Ensure MCA newsletter are current and proactive for upcoming events.

Cultural & Language Revitalization:

- ▶ High interested in Mohawk Language programs, including beginner classes and immersive hubs.
- ▶ Request for traditional teachings, storytelling, and cultural craft workshops (basket making, ribbon skirts, pottery).

Child & Family Inclusion:

- ▶ Desire for child-friendly programs, family sessions and activities to promote cultural continuity.
- ▶ Suggestions for childcare support during adult learning sessions.

Specialized Training Needs:

- ▶ Health and wellness programs, including fitness, nutrition and mental health awareness.
- ▶ Safety certifications (CPR, first aid, naloxone, boating safety) and trauma-informed care.
- ▶ Trades and vocational skills (carpentry, electrical, appliance repair) and employment readiness programs.
- ▶ Support for special needs education and inclusive youth workshops.

Incentives & Supports:

- ▶ Requests for food/snacks, transportation assistance, and occasional incentives to boost participation.
- ▶ Suggestions for recorded session and flexible formats for those with work and family obligations.



Final Insights & Implications:

Survey findings highlight a strong demand for **accessible, culturally relevant, and practical** training opportunities. Respondents expressed clear preferences for **in-person sessions**, supported by hybrid options, and identified top areas of interest such as **Indigenous culture and knowledge, language revitalization, health and wellness, and technology skills**. Flexible scheduling is essential, with **weekday evenings** and **weekend mornings** emerging as the most convenient times. While nearly half of participants require no additional support, significant needs include childcare, digital access, and transportation assistance.

Promotion strategies rely heavily on social media, but respondents emphasized the importance of **multi-channel outreach**, including email, newsletters, posters, and word of mouth. Feedback on past trainings underscores the value of hands-on learning, culturally sensitive instruction, and expanded access through recurring sessions and recorded content.

Appendix 1: Examples of Indigenous Culture & Knowledge and Other Specific Topics or Skills for learning opportunities.

Language & Revitalization- 66 responses (19.6%):

Mohawk/ Kaniehkaha:ka language classes; greetings/phrases; kid-friendly language; intensive programs focus on phrases and break down on how to read a word to gain meaning of the word.

Traditional Crafts (overall) – 62 responses (18.4%)

Beading; basketry; moccasins/regalia; ribbon skirts/shirts; leatherwork/ quillwork, pottery/clay/ corn husk dolls; sewing/ textiles; tanning hides; woodworking/carpentry; wampum & artifacts

Traditional Medicines & Healing- 51 responses (15.1%)

Medicine identification and picking; preparation (salves/tinctures/teas); herbal healing; plant knowledge; nature-based healing.

Ceremonies & Protocols- 43 responses (12.8%)

Long-house etiquette- roles & responsibilities. Classes that will help those that do not attend to learn and feel more comfortable. Ceremony teachings- what ceremonies there are, when they take place and how they are done.

Storytelling & History- 33 responses (9.8%)

Traditional legends- Great Law of Peace, Creation Story, Peacemaker's Journey, Code of Handsome Lake and other traditional stories.

Food, Cooking & Preservation- 30 responses (8.9%)

Traditional cooking; canning/pressure canning; freeze-drying; food sovereignty; family-friendly cooking classes; gardening for food; traditional hunting- survival skills.

Land-Based Learning & Harvesting- 22 responses (6.5%)

Hunting/trapping/fishing; land-based cultural activities; medicine walks; natural resource use; year-round gardening.

Business & Entrepreneurship & Management- 20 responses (5.9%)

Business/entrepreneurship; office/management; proposal & grant writing; professionalism/customer service.

Technology & Digital Skills- 18 responses (5.3%)

Computer skills; Excel/Office/Teams/Google; Canva; **AI/Microsoft Copilot**; coding; graphic design; social media for business.

Health & Wellness/ Mental Health – 16 responses (4.7%)

Stress management; trauma-informed supports; nutrition; ADHD supports; family wellness. Nature based healing and supports for mental/ emotional health. Empowerment speech skills and defensive skills- learning to defend yourself until help arrives.

How to recognize health alerts- high cortisol, high blood pressure, heart attack signs. What questions to ask your doctor and supports for understanding outcomes- how to proceed next.

Lateral violence resolution.

Financial Literacy/ Investing/ Taxes- 15 responses (4.5%)

Budgeting, credit, investing & taxes, accounting skills, admin skills and basic computer work for businesses. Financial literacy for families- teaching youth the value of money and how to invest in their future.

Traditional Songs & Dances- 13 responses (3.9%)

Breakdown of social songs- what they mean and how to sing them. Traditional dance classes, including those done at the longhouse.

Arts & Creativity- 12 responses (3.6%)

Line dancing, craft nights, art therapy, music for all- learning instruments, reading music and session to learn, creating and illustrating books,

Trades & Job Skills- 10 responses (3.0%)

Building furniture, woodworking, home maintenance, electrical, carpentry 101, car mechanics- basics to know to maintain your vehicle. Focusing on youth training courses to drive interest in trades.

Other/ Unspecified- 64 responses (19%)

Traditional parenting skills- incorporating traditional skills.

Special Needs supports for families in community- sessions to assist parents and grandparents. Autism/ Behavior science- proper one on one aide training for children and in school mandatory training.

Doula/midwife training, youth-focused life skills, music.

Cultural Roundtable discussions: Having more than one presenter to share knowledge and have healthy debates on different teachings.

Incorporating traditional knowledge into the modern world.

Celebrating indigenous heroes- highlighting stories and celebrating individuals in the community.

Legal considerations and how to protect yourself against crime.

Adult learning leagues in sports: soccer, hockey, volleyball & lacrosse.

BLS/ CPR courses for the community.

Retirement planning and establishing a will.

Sign language.

Drivers' education for youth.

Customizing shirts and hats. Sewing clothing and stitching.

Effective and positive management courses.

Professionalism in the workplace.

Notary skills, court reporting and other skills for jobs in the area.

Shorthand skills and note taking.

Supervisory skills, leadership and self-advocacy.

Grant writing.

Life coach, self motivation, and manifestation of a greater goal.