

*Toolkit for Aboriginal  
families living off-reserve.*

# ***MIYKIWAN***

## ***USER GUIDE***



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP) would like to acknowledge the many contributors to the design and development of this Family Violence Prevention and Awareness Toolkit for Aboriginal families living off-Reserve. A special thank you to those individuals who shared their personal experiences of family violence and messages of hope. The CAP would also like to thank Elder Elize Hartley and Elder Gordon Williams for their guidance and assistance with this project.

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### **National Advisory Committee and Partners:**

- \* New Brunswick Aboriginal Peoples Council
- \* Ontario Coalition of Aboriginal People
- \* Qalipu Mi'kmaq First Nation Band
- \* Aboriginal Affairs Coalition of Saskatchewan Inc.
- \* NunatuKavut
- \* CAP National Youth Council
- \* Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women
- \* Canadian Centre for Child Protection
- \* Kids Help Phone

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## WHAT DOES “MIYKIWAN” MEAN?

MIYKIWAN is a Plains Cree word.

The Congress of Aboriginal Peoples would like to acknowledge the many voices, thoughts, and ideas that went into finding a name for this toolkit. The National Advisory Committee and Project Partners had a dialogue on concepts and how best to relay the intent of the toolkit so that it spoke to people in a good way.

The concepts discussed included acknowledging the need for change, healing, balance, and returning to home to yourself. Reminders of cultural resilience and healthy ways to live and that there is calm after the storm. Reminders that change can lead to better things and that we can “change this feeling under our feet” and find ourselves in the process. The discussion rolled into imagery and people spoke of roots, clean air, feathers, and honouring the Eagle.

In early March 2015 the National Advisory Committee and the Project Partners selected MIYKIWAN after discussing two proposed titles, namely: *Kinikiwan* and *Miykiwan*.

### ***Meaning of MIYKIWAN***

Submitted by Konota Crane

The toolkit title and discussions around how a word or phrase could be used that was easy but catchy was discussed . I had suggested a term used in Cree dialect called *Ki ni ki wan* which loosely means "coming home" or "home in a good/safe way". I have discussed with Cree speakers the toolkit and the name I suggested (being part of a committee).

After a lot of discussions another term was agreed and offered MIY KI WAN which is more closely tied into the thought of “centering oneself” (thru a change in ones-life by getting/using the information to lead a violence free life).

Miy Ki Wan is a Plains Cree word. the pronunciation would be spelled phonetically as *mew ga wan*.

Others that were discussed: Ne Pe Ki Wan and Ni We Peki Wan All variances on "coming home".

## WHAT IS THE MIYKIWAN TOOLKIT?

The MIYKIWAN toolkit was developed for Aboriginal families living off-reserve. It is a teaching tool designed to share knowledge and raise awareness about the impacts of family violence.

The MIYKIWAN Toolkit builds on the strengths and resilience of Aboriginal families and communities, promotes healthier living, and celebrates a vision of violence free Aboriginal homes and communities.

The MIYKIWAN toolkit builds awareness of the various types of violence that can be experienced in a family / domestic setting and provides preventive tips and relevant information to address and reduce reoccurrence.

### ***Inside the MIYKIWAN Toolkit:***

The MIYKIWAN Toolkit contains three books, eleven (11) Fact Sheets and several stand-alone documents.

#### **The Three MIYKIWAN Books:**

1. User Guide
2. Life Fact Book
3. Resource Book

#### **The Eleven MIYKIWAN Fact Sheets:**

1. Family Violence
2. Domestic Violence
3. Sexual Violence
4. Date Violence
5. Emotional Violence
6. Child Violence
7. Senior Violence
8. Violence Against Men
9. Violence Against Those With Disabilities
10. Issues Affecting Violence
11. How to Live to With/Exit Abuse

Stand-alone sheets include a personal safety plan work sheet, a toolkit evaluation form

## WHY DEVELOP THE MIYKIWAN TOOLKIT?

Aboriginal people of Canada have a long and tragic history of oppression and colonization. Colonial government policy, legislation, and practices were imposed upon the Aboriginal people with the intention to instill European practices and values. These assimilation policies work together to weaken the Aboriginal people and create a culture of racism and discrimination.

Colonization and the oppression of Aboriginal people in Canada has resulted in a legacy of loss, disruption of lifestyle, and the dismantling of families. Residential schools and the forced removal of children from their homes and communities has resulted in the breakdown of Aboriginal families and intergenerational trauma. This has tragic consequences because the family forms the core foundation for many Aboriginal people and communities.

Prior to contact, Aboriginal people had distinct societies with our own customs and laws to guide the people through life. Many developed highly complex societies with structured social, economic, and political organization. This can still be witnessed today; it is seen in the strong and resilient nature of Aboriginal people, the cultural and traditional knowledge, the wisdom, and ways of living.

The MIYKIWAN Toolkit was developed to provide Aboriginal families living off-reserve with a tool to address family violence. It is framed around the following primary goals:

- ⇒ Provide a foundation of knowledge on Aboriginal traditions and ceremony to support healing, personal growth, well-being, and life balance.
- ⇒ Increase family violence awareness and prevention for Aboriginal families so that they are informed and better able to respond to incidents of family violence.
- ⇒ Equip families with the information required to develop and implement a safety plan to reduce further incidents of family violence.
- ⇒ Prompt individuals to break the cycle of violence by taking action for self, family, and community.

## HOW CAN I USE THIS TOOLKIT?

The MIYKIWAN Toolkit was created for Aboriginal families living off-reserve. That said, it is a toolkit that can be used by all people regardless of race or residency. It is structured to prompt thought and guide decision making with the intent of addressing violence in the family.

Take your time reviewing this toolkit and observe your feelings and emotions. Acknowledge these responses. Process the information slowly and deliberately. Be good to yourself. You are not to blame for the violence committed against you or another member of your family.

Share this toolkit with a friend. Use it to begin the conversation of what family violence is and how to address it. Create your own safety plan. Use the toolkit as an educational tool to increase awareness and prevent family violence.

## HOW CAN MY FAMILY USE THIS TOOLKIT?

This toolkit can be used by all members of the family, including both the victim and perpetrator of violence in the home. Part of addressing a problem is understanding what it is and why it occurs; the other half is in applying that understanding and breaking the cycle of violence.

Families empowered with information can be instrumental in bringing attention to the issue of family violence. Encourage family members to become familiar with the toolkit and all its parts. Talk about the toolkit subject areas, use it to open the conversation and be prepared for an array of responses and potential disclosures. Seek help when needed.



## HOW TO ORGANIZE A TALK

Planning to organize a talk on the MIYKIWAN Toolkit helps toward creating awareness of the toolkit and the issue of family violence.

Whether have never given a talk before or whether you have given a hundred, knowing a few key things can help you.

- ⇒ Ground rules – What rules should participants follow in the meeting? How will people interact? How will you ensure that people respect each others ideas? How will questions be handled? Prepare some ground rules in advance, and propose and seek agreement to these at the start of the event.
- ⇒ Set the scene – This is where you tell them the objectives and agenda. Make sure that everyone understands their role, and what the group is seeking to achieve.
- ⇒ Get things flowing – Make sure that everyone introduces themselves and use appropriate icebreakers to get the meeting off to a positive start.
- ⇒ Keep up the energy – Make sure that people remain focused and interested.
- ⇒ Listen, engage and include – Is everyone engaged? If not, how can you bring them in? How can you get better participation?
- ⇒ Monitor checkpoints, and summarize – Keep in control of the agenda, tell people what they've achieved and what's next; Summarize often.
- ⇒ Intervene only if absolutely required.
- ⇒ Have supports available, this can include counsellors, Elders, and other health supports.
- ⇒ Use humor, have fun and make the event an enjoyable experience for everyone.



## FACILITATION TIPS

Facilitation is one of those fancy words that describes a way of doing things to achieve a desired result. More specifically, facilitation is the art of guiding but not leading, bringing learning but not lecturing, and engaging but not directing.

It sounds like a tall order, but these are things that we do naturally every day. These are skills that we have developed over our life time, and they only need to be brought forward.

From that point on, facilitating an event is a matter of basic planning. First you must understand the desired outcome, who your audience is, and the structure of the meeting or event.

Then your responsibility is to:

- ⇒ Design and plan the process, and select the tools that best help you move towards that outcome.
- ⇒ Guide and control the group to ensure that:
  - \* There is effective participation.
  - \* Participants achieve a mutual understanding.
  - \* Their contributions are considered and included in the ideas, solutions or decisions
  - \* Participants take shared responsibility for the outcome.
- ⇒ Ensure that outcomes, actions and questions are properly recorded. If there is follow up to do, follow through.

## ORGANIZERS CHECKLIST

Think about things you need and want:

- ⇒ Room, spacing and set up (table, chairs)
- ⇒ Equipment (laptop, projector), supplies (flip chart, markers)
- ⇒ Do you need to advertise? If so, where and how?
- ⇒ Emergency planning, for example, if you plan to “smudge” then know where the fire alarm system is
- ⇒ Do you plan to provide refreshments?
- ⇒ Check your speakers. What are their needs?





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