THE PARENTING BUNDLE

An Indigenous Cultural Parenting Manual
for All Caregivers of Children

Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health, CANADA
April 1, 2017
Allison Fisher and Carlie Chase have no relevant financial relationships with the manufacturer(s) of commercial services discussed in this CME activity. Allison Fisher and Carlie Chase do not intend to discuss any unapproved/investigational uses of commercial products in this presentation.
OVERVIEW OF SESSION

CONTEXT

• Indigenous people in Canada
• About Wabano
  • What we do
  • The community we serve
• Brief overview of Residential School

THE MANUAL

• How it came to be
• What is a Bundle
• The Bundle items
• Program Impact
• Question
INDIGENOUS PEOPLE IN CANADA

Canada: second largest population in the world.

Ontario: largest population

54% live in cities
71% off-reserve

52% live in poverty

Of these, 68% are children
THE WABANO CENTRE

Reflecting the beauty of Indigenous people and cultures
WHAT WE DO

• Medical Care
• Housing support
• Homelessness outreach
• Mental wellness – trauma-informed care

Programs for all ages:
  o Culture
  o Health promotion
  o Youth
  o Seniors
  o Education

There are 43,000 Indigenous people in our region.

Wabano serves 25% of these: **14,000 people every year.**
KILLING THE INDIAN IN THE CHILD: 
THE LEGACY OF ABORIGINAL RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL ABUSE

- Until 1996, 139 residential schools operated in Canada
- Over 1/3 of Aboriginal children in Canada attended
- 42% of the children in Residential Schools died before the age of 16 (1907)
- This increased to 48% by 1947.

Thomas Moore, before & after enrolling in the Regina Indian Industrial School, Saskatchewan (Dept. Indian Affairs Annual Report 1897)
“The purpose of my writing has always been to tell a better story than is being told about us. To give that to the people and to the next generations.

The voices of the grandmothers and grandfathers compel me to speak of the worth of our people and the beauty all around us, to banish the profaning of ourselves and to ease the pain.”

-Jeanette Armstrong, Okanagan Elder
PARENTING BUNDLE MANUAL

Our culture is the wisdom we need to thrive
“Our traditional parenting practices were not gone... we just had to dig up what had gone underground.”

- Re-viewing Indigenous Parenting
CREATING THE MANUAL

We asked Elders:

“How did our people raise children before Residential Schools?”

The result:

- Parenting Bundle: A culturally-based parenting manual for all caregivers of Indigenous children

- The only parenting resource in Canada that references only Indigenous parenting resources and teachings
WHAT IS A BUNDLE?

Our Elders spoke to us about BUNDLES.
• Practical way to hold/carry sacred items.
• Items would be wrapped in material or hide
• Items were important for aspects of survival i.e.:
  • Seeds for food
  • Traditional medicines
  • knife
• Parenting Bundle is like a “medicine bundle” – a kit with all necessary and sacred items (both spiritual and physical), that can assist us in our life journeys.
THE 7 PARENTING BUNDLE ITEMS:

- **Deer**: The protective wrapping/teachings/tools
- **Tobacco**: Kinickinick
- **Stories**: (Creation Stories)
- **Songs**: Four songs (Lullabies, chants, rattles, drums)
- **Dances**: Four dances (Powwow, round dances, etc.)
- **Seeds**: Four foods (Corn, Beans, Squash, etc.)
- **Medicines**: Four medicines (Sweetgrass, Cedar, Sage, etc.)

**CREATOR**

“All life is sacred”
"I was told ever since I was a young girl, by my parents that when we hold our tobacco in hand, when we ask the Creator for what we need, all our intentions are answered. Not the way that we want them sometimes, but the way the Creator wants them."

- Lilian Pitawanakwat, Potawatomi Elder
2. STORIES

“Even hearing a story can be healing, so can telling our story. People need to tell their stories, to be acknowledged, to feel part of a human community.”

- Alexander Wolfe, Saulteaux Elder
3. SEEDS & NOURISHMENT

“We believe the foods we eat provide us with more than just nourishment, they affect us mentally, physically, emotionally, and spiritually.”

- Jan Kahehti:io Longboat, Mohawk Elder
“You do not disrespect any plants whether they are big or small because a small plant can be just as powerful as a large plant.”

- George McDermott, Metis Elder
“Your voice is one of your medicines.”

- Jan Kahehti:io Longboat, Mohawk Elder
“When you dance, the trees hear it, and they get stronger, and they get bigger.
When you dance, your gardens will hear it and they feel great and they are thankful because you are dancing for them.
And they grow.”

- Tom Porter, Mohawk Elder
7. DEER

“If a child gets out of hand, he would be sent to the other tent and to see the Elder who he would listen to. The Elder will tell him how to live his life in the future. There were people such as this who counselled the children but there was no judge, only good talk, advice, and the teachings. That’s how the Cree people lived as I grew up.”

- James Carpenter, Muskegowuk Cree
110 sessions, 220 parents

“I am much more confident as a parent, I don’t second guess myself anymore, I have more patience with my kids, I use these teachings and tools to help me parent my children”

- Parent in program
PARENTING MANUAL: BEST PRACTICES

In creation process:

• Start with a vision to tell a better story
• Listen to the Elders
• Use teachings that uplift and inspire
• Make it beautiful

In implementation:

• Use Elders to teach
• Balance activities & choice
• Be flexible
• Ensure basic elements of life are given
• Celebrate – from beginning to end
WE ARE READY...

To bring culture back,
To raise our children,
To be strong.

For more information:
Visit: Wabano.com
Contact: slajoie@wabano.com