

*Implementation of kâ-nâkatohkêhk  
miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin (Making  
oneself aware of good child  
growing/raising)*

*Application of the Indigenous  
Program Indicators*

---

IRM Research and Evaluation Inc.  
June 2021

## INTRODUCTION

The Government of Alberta and the Ministry of Children’s Services has committed to expanding their organizational understanding of Indigenous knowledge in order to continue forward with building their capacity to serve *iyiniw* (First People, People of the Land). To support service providers with developing their Indigenous practice, the Government of Alberta has partnered with IRM Research and Evaluation Inc. to develop and apply their understanding and involvement with *iyiniw* knowledge within service delivery. This manual provides background on the *kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin* (The *miyo* Resource), and how to use the *Indigenous Program Indicators* (IPI) evaluation tool.

***We suggest that an agency or program identify a specific team to thoroughly read through this document and direct the process of planning, leading the Indigenous Program Evaluation, and completing the final report***

### WELL-BEING AND RESILIENCY: THE *miyo* RESOURCE - *kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo ohpikinawâwasowin*

*kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin* is a resource that honours an Indigenous worldview and is intended to support the ongoing development of prevention and early intervention programming across the province of Alberta. *kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin* was created as a counterpart to the Government of Alberta’s *Well-Being and Resiliency: A Framework for Supporting Safe and Healthy Children* document, otherwise known as the Well-being and Resiliency Framework (WRB) (GOA, 2019). *kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin*, also referred to as The *miyo* Resource is meant to support Indigenous-serving and Indigenous-led organizations in the development and evaluation of culturally-based programming in alignment with the WRB outcomes.

*kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin* is based on Indigenous resiliency within mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical realms and encompasses Indigenous ceremony, teachings, and concepts that sustain healthy development.

***It is important to understand the difference between “what” is done and “how” something is done. - IPI***

The resource illustrates how Family Resource Networks and prevention and early intervention strategies can be inclusive of Indigenous worldviews and paralleled to Western concepts of resiliency and wellbeing. *kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin* provides a foundation for policymakers and service providers to begin accessing localized teachings and knowledge and, when done in partnership with local communities, the process becomes transferable across and between various *iyiniw* communities. *kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin* is founded on the principle that if programs embrace these teachings and core values, *iyiniw* diversity can be respected and upheld.

The recommendations outlined in *kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin* also suggest that government and their stakeholders use outcomes and performance measures that are inclusive of Indigenous worldviews. The *miyo* Resource includes an evaluation tool called the Indigenous Program Indicators to be applied to programs for this purpose. This process of evaluation recognizes culturally-based practices and provides an opportunity to report outcomes in a meaningful way. This manual has been created to support service providers to complete an Indigenous program evaluation.

## PURPOSE OF THIS MANUAL

1. Family Resource Networks and Early Intervention Programs in Alberta will use this manual to implement the teachings and tools of *kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin* and complete the Indigenous Program Indicator evaluation.
2. This manual will outline the 'doing' portion of *kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin* to compliment the 'knowing' of the resource itself.
3. This manual will outline how to use the Indigenous Program Indicators to accurately and appropriately assess the impact and value of culturally designed services provided by and for Indigenous client populations and their ability to serve indigenous peoples.
4. This process is an opportunity for programs to demonstrate how their supports and services are achieving program goals and objectives for the purposes of reporting.

## GOALS

1. To assist service providers to implement the *kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin* resource.
2. To guide and empower leaders who are responsible for planning and reporting to gather with their teams and use the *kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin* resource.
3. To be an accessible tool to support the implementation of the *Indigenous Program Indicators* in service delivery.
4. Provide real examples to which agencies can turn for guidance and understanding.
5. Illustrate an opportunity for service providers to reflect and report on all the relationship-based work being done in communities that may not be captured using Western methods of evaluation.

***"We can't solve the problems  
of today with the same  
thinking that created them..." -  
IPI***

## CONTEXT

Within the resource, there is considerable information to review before starting an Indigenous Program Evaluation. It is important to understand context before using the Indigenous Program Indicators as this information creates the foundation from which this process can be successful. An important part of this process is understanding why it is necessary in the first place and clearing up any confusion, worries or misunderstandings before you begin.

Included in this manual are brief descriptions of the core concepts, however all participants are encouraged to read through the original *kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin* document. A conversation regarding these core concepts should be covered with your participants prior to completing the evaluation. It is suggested that this review be done previous to the start of the evaluation.

---

## WHY ARE WE TALKING ABOUT RESEARCH?

Throughout *kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin* and this manual there are many references to academic research or, as we prefer to say, ‘wisdom-seeking’, so it is important to explain how these processes are related to service delivery and program evaluation. When using the *miyo* resource and completing the process explained in this manual, we are asking leaders and participants to become active researchers or wisdom-seekers within their program. What we are asking you to do is attempt to bring what is unknown (how the program is working from all perspectives) into the known (a group understanding of how things are working in a final report). We are asking you to do this by taking time to reflect on the past and share about the present which will then be used as knowledge to plan for the future.

A way to think about this process is to imagine your team has been asked to find out new and important information on behalf of your community (seeking wisdom). You are being asked to do this so your community can use that wisdom to make good decisions and make informed plans for the future. This manual asks leaders and participants to step into the role of researchers or wisdom-seekers who are acting on behalf of their present and future community as explained here by a *nêhiyaw* Knowledge Keeper:

*“...the way we understand what we do, it’s not research, it’s knowledge seeking or wisdom seeking and we use the nêhiyaw word, ...for a scout, somebody who goes out and looks for something or knowledge or wisdom or information..., that they can bring back to the community...and so if in a traditional sense or in the teaching sense of the word, it’s a scout who goes out to find a new place with food and resources and that the health of the community is connected to that wisdom, and so our job is we’re not researchers, we’re those scouts that go out and look for knowledge...or wisdom and bring it back to the community...it’s all in relationship to the community”*

---

## WHY ARE WE TALKING ABOUT LANGUAGE?

Alberta is home to many diverse Indigenous communities who have similar language-based concepts and teachings that differ from what is described in the resource or in this manual. *kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin* speaks mostly to *nêhiyaw* (Cree) ways of knowing and doing and uses *nêhiyaw* language specific terms and concepts. This is because the authors of the resource live, work, and are a part of *nêhiyaw* communities. The *nêhiyaw* examples are meant to provide an illustration of ways to incorporate the teachings, values, and beliefs of your community into this process.

While *kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin* does reference some Blackfoot teachings and Métis traditions, it is vital that program and agency staff seek out specific tribal and local knowledge parallels. Service-providers are encouraged to use this resource in ways that honour these equivalent or similar teachings in their specific community.

It is important to speak to the worldview and language used throughout the *miyo* resource, this manual and when speaking about Indigenous peoples. The teachings, stories, methodologies, values, and beliefs within Indigenous worldviews are specific to the tribe or community the knowledge belongs to – known as Tribal Epistemology. In its simplest form, tribal epistemology draws on the teachings of the lands in which the knowledge is located.

***Language creates reality and, while English is primarily a language of nouns, nehiyaw and many other Indigenous languages are primarily a language of verbs. It is almost impossible to translate an Indigenous verb into an English noun and still maintain the original meaning. - IPI***

---

## CONCEPTS OF INDIGENOUS PROGRAM EVALUATION

Any framework that guides program evaluation is informed by research methodologies as “evaluation is a form of research” (Johnston-Goodstar, 2012, p. 110). Program evaluation is commonly described as a process of identifying program goals and outcomes to then collect data in order to measure and evaluate program effectiveness or how effectively targeted outcomes were achieved (NCCAH, 2013). The use of quantitative or qualitative methodologies is, for the most part, standard to program evaluation – and the use of these research and program evaluation methods are typically deemed rigorous, reliable, and credible (Naquin, 2008; Saini, 2012).

It is important to acknowledge that terms such as “goals”, “outcomes”, “standards”, “evaluation”, and “measurement” are Western concepts that carry implied actions and consequences. These terms come from the development of “evidence-based practices” found in Western-based research which reinforce the belief that Western processes of research and evaluation are “true” and are the only pathways to “real” knowledge (Turner & Bodor, 2020). While Western forms of program evaluation may be deemed a “best practice”, these practices are not necessarily applicable to an Indigenous context.

Western evaluation frameworks are often applied onto Indigenous programs and services without considering if they are appropriate for assessing Indigenous knowledge (Naquin, 2008; Weaver, 2002). Johnston-Goodstar (2012) noted that this application of Western evaluation processes replicates colonization and is “designed to measure how accustomed or assimilated Indigenous tribes or programs are to Western practices” (p. 12). Indigenous programs and services typically must adhere to Western program evaluation standards since funding procedures require documentation that describes the achievement of “outcomes” (Turner & Bodor, 2020).

Western outcome and evaluation processes are inappropriate and inadequate for understanding the impact of Indigenous culturally-designed programs and services. The Western worldview understands and evaluates concepts of health and wellness in vastly different ways than the Indigenous worldview. Indigenous teachings on health and wellness entail spirituality, collective wellbeing, reciprocity, balance, and good relations (Makokis et al., 2016; Wilson, 2008). In the *nêhiyaw* worldview, health and wellness is understood as *miyo-pimatisiwin* or living the good life through seeking mental, emotional, spiritual, and physical balance.

In contrast, Western concepts of health and wellness are understood in terms of individual wellbeing and self-sufficiency—and these are the outcomes that are evaluated and measured in standard program evaluation (Turner & Bodor, 2020; Makokis et al., 2016). To counter this, Indigenous indicators of spirituality, balance, relationality, and collective wellbeing must inform Indigenous program evaluation (Chouinard & Bradley Cousins, 2007). If the purpose of program evaluation is to improve services based on the needs of participants, evaluations of culturally-designed programs for Indigenous communities must be completed within an Indigenous worldview (Chouinard & Bradley Cousins, 2007; NCCAH, 2013).

*Often, the focus of western evaluation is content (what has been done) and measurement (how many times), while Indigenous evaluation is focussed on process (how was it done) and meaning (what were the teachings and ceremony). – IRM Research and Evaluation Inc.*

In addition to the content (the “what”) of Indigenous evaluation frameworks, the process (the “how”) of Indigenous evaluation is tantamount. In response to the Western requirement of “evidence-based” practice, it is recognized that Indigenous evaluation frameworks are “practice-based”. Practice-based evidence is found within the extensive cultural teachings, ceremonies, and languages that guide the process of Indigenous program evaluation (Abe et al., 2018; Lafrance et al., 2012; Naquin, 2008). Practice-based evidence is a way to recognize meaning versus measurement which honours and better represents Indigenous knowledge and values.

Within an Indigenous evaluation framework, understanding is captured in terms of “meaning” as opposed to “measurement”. Indigenous culturally designed programs and services should not orient around achieving outcomes. To live in balance – *miyo-pimatisiwin* (living the good life) – is more than an outcome; it is a way of being and a

commitment to live and practice in accordance with *nêhiyaw* ceremony, teachings, and values.

The disconnect between Western and Indigenous worldviews has made it challenging for service providers to meet the outcome requirements of funders and, as a result, they have had to adapt their programming to fit Western models of evaluation to continue service year after year. Breaking from this cycle, *kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin* has provided a way for service providers to evaluate their work from an Indigenous perspective. These programs can now submit program funding reports that reflect their authentic and meaningful service provision.

---

## INDIGENOUS RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES (WISDOM-SEEKING)

Within western society, quantitative and qualitative research methodologies are widely accepted as the only two pathways of knowledge. This results in a narrow understanding of how humanity has come to know and understand. *kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin* is grounded in Indigenous Research Methodologies or, more accurately, Indigenous Wisdom-Seeking Practices (IWSP). IWSP are becoming increasingly recognized, and work has been done to strengthen and revitalize the cultural processes which Indigenous people use to seek and attain wisdom (Kovach, 2009; Makokis et al., 2020b; Strega & Brown, 2015; Smith, 2012; Wilson, 2008).

*kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin* seeks to honour knowledge from outside of the Western paradigm and broaden the understanding of IWSP and Indigenous worldviews, values and beliefs. An integral part of cultural identity for many Indigenous people is a distinct way of viewing and of “being” in the world. Methods of wisdom-seeking need to embody Indigenous cosmology, worldview, epistemology and ethical beliefs. An Indigenous paradigm needs to permeate all stages of seeking wisdom. Indigenous wisdom-seeking encompasses the process of deciding what kind of wisdom-seeking should take place, and how that search should be conducted, analyzed, and presented.

***“Ceremony, Circle Process, and Relational Accountability form the heart of a wisdom-seeking approach. They exist in harmony with the Natural Laws, Circle Teachings, and the Seven Teachings in the wisdom-seeking process.”- kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin***

---

## FOUNDATIONAL TEACHINGS AND CONCEPTS

The *nêhiyaw* way of knowing is anchored in teachings that include, among many, the *iyinito wîyasowewina* (Natural Laws), *tepahkop kimosominawak okiskinohamakewinawaw* (Seven Teachings), Turtle Lodge Teachings, and Circle Teachings. These teachings represent foundational beliefs and values that influence our day-to-day actions and relationships with all beings. There is information regarding specific teachings included in

***“Relationships don’t just shape Indigenous reality; they are our reality.”  
-Shawn Wilson, 2008***

this manual that should be reviewed, but these are only outlines, we encourage all practitioners to receive formal teachings from local Elders and Knowledge-Keepers.

These teachings can be described as “ways of being and becoming” that are vital to the *nêhiyaw* human journey. In the context of service-provision, these foundational concepts are essential to Indigenous prevention and early intervention programming, as committing to living and practicing these teachings is what creates a good, balanced life – *miyo pimatisiwin*.

## INDIGENOUS PROGRAM INDICATORS

The *Indigenous Program Indicators* counter the void in culturally-relevant indicators and processes to accurately assess the impact and value of culturally-designed services. The development of these indicators was necessary as Indigenous teachings and practices are often excluded from evaluation processes. Although there is a growing recognition for the value of culturally relevant services, evaluation processes typically do not capture the impact these services have on Indigenous families. The Indigenous Program Indicators are a means to demonstrate balance or *miyo-pimatisiwin* within a program or service through the Circle Teachings of the four realms (Mental, Emotional, Spiritual, and Physical). It is these realms that form the life framework for the *nêhiyaw* people.

***“It is imperative that history be acknowledged as the source of the negative circumstances that Indigenous families now find themselves in and it is necessary to create ways of understanding that have meaning and are value-based in an Indigenous worldview and the Indigenous Program Indicators do this”.***

***-Bodor, et al. (2018)***

The Indigenous Program Indicators are based on the teachings of *miyo-pimatisiwin* which occurs when a spirit on a human journey can maintain balance between the four interrelated realms of the physical, emotional, mental, and spiritual. The term “*nêhiyaw*” can be roughly translated to “four-bodied or four-dimensional people” – hence the appropriateness of using the four realms in exploring the understanding of health and well-being. In each of these realms, there are opportunities to learn experientially from the intentional sharing of *iyiniw* teachings and from one another’s stories. Ideally, we as individuals and as service providers all work towards living *miyo-pimatisiwin* with equilibrium occurring between the four realms. Challenges or problems in life or in a program are viewed to be the result of imbalance between these areas.

The IPI will help to accurately assess the impact and value of services by helping to identify strengths and gaps in current programming and assist in future planning to improve services. The IPI allow for programs to demonstrate how their supports and services are achieving program goals and objectives. The IPI are a means to demonstrate balance or imbalance in an organization by focusing on strengths and creating space for deep reflection. The process also allows for a program to provide a funder with qualitative evidence that describes meaning as a form of measurement.



By prioritizing meaning, the evaluation framework enhances the cultural credibility of community-based prevention and early intervention programs because of its embodiment of foundational Indigenous values regarding collective wellbeing, reciprocity, balance, and good relationships (Makokis et al., 2016; Wilson, 2008).

The Indigenous Program Indicators tool (Makokis et al., 2016; Turner & Bodor, 2020) is particularly critical as it offers a vehicle through which programs can be understood and held accountable to ways of knowing and enacting wellness that are congruent with Indigenous realities. This, in turn, facilitates the design of programs that are grounded in the Indigenous universe even when they must exist within — and often be held accountable to — the Western universe.

Through the Indigenous Program Indicators, programs possess the necessary language and Indigenous worldview concepts to meaningfully assess the culturally-restorative, healing-based, and ceremony-centred programming being offered. Stories of success (impact, value) are encouraged and included within the reporting outcomes. Stories are foundational to the Indigenous Program Indicators. They are a powerful way to provide rich descriptions of meaning and relationship.

## STORIES, STORY TELLING AND STORY LISTENING

The concepts of story-telling, story listening, and Circle Process provide insight into the distinct and sacred nature of Indigenous wisdom-seeking. Sharing your story and your perspective, in a setting that is non-judgmental, uninterrupted, and safe is the basis for letting go and receiving validation and support from those around you. There is a relational process to storytelling and, as suggested by Desmoulins (2006), when writing about Elder's stories, "stories do three things: orally convey cultural and personal experience through metaphorical language; set traditional practices known as traditional knowledge alongside narrative inquiry as complex understanding; and, opens up spaces of knowledge production within the academy of dialogue" (p. 122).

It is this last area that is our main focus. It is within the process of dialogue and storytelling (and story-listening) that we experience knowledge production. In every Circle, encouraging participants to feel supported to verbally share their stories, their understanding and their experiences of that which is in the centre of the circles allows the creation of a deep awareness of meaning and lived experience.

***Stories help us understand who we are and show us what legacies to transmit to future generations" (Schram, 1994, p. 105).***

The use of storytelling and listening as a conceptual framework towards reaching a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of the participants engages traditional knowledge-building approaches. The equality and empowerment of being listened to in such a setting as the Circle, gives voice to those who would not normally speak or

otherwise express their true feelings. Respect for each person in the circle and especially the storyteller is the basis of storytelling as a knowledge building tool for Indigenous research and evaluation.

Stories serve multiple purposes. Ribbins (2002) shares, “Grandparents also asserted that telling stories to their grandchildren was important. Stories act as mechanisms through which grandparents can teach succeeding generations how to live consistently with tribal values” (p. 66). This is echoed by Coulter, Michael and Poyner (2007), who quote Schram (1994): “a story is a beautiful means of teaching spirituality, values, history, traditions, and customs; a creative method of introducing characters and places; an imaginative way to instil hope and resourceful thinking. Stories help us understand who we are and show us what legacies to transmit to future generations” (p. 105).

Research as wisdom-seeking begins, occurs, and ends in ceremony. It is hoped that we can, from this ceremonial place of centeredness within the Circle, present our wisdom-seeking from a place of humility and with respect, honesty and determination.

## COMPLETING THE PROGRAM EVALUATION

By using the Indigenous Program Indicators to assess mental, emotional, physical, and spiritual wellbeing, service providers identify how they are working towards achieving balance within their organization. During this process, staff often realize what they do not know and identify areas where they can further their learning and growth. Additionally, this relational assessment highlights the balance and harmony teams can strive to create within themselves and exemplify in practice.

It is important to recognize that this process may be uncomfortable as it is not familiar and may reveal the need for significant changes in a practice or an organization. We are also asking participants to deeply reflect on their work and service to Indigenous peoples. This is also a slow process and we are not used to taking our time.

The IPI allows space for stories and we encourage people to tell their stories. This will convey meaning and communicate what is happening in the program. This is an opportunity to slow down and learn about your program and your participants.

***“When we are working with people involved in our wisdom-seeking and evaluation, we commit ourselves to living the practice of relationship accountability. We acknowledge that we will not work in isolation and that our approach is one that will be respectful of all our relations.” – Indigenous Program Indicators***

***“iyiniw knowledge is transmitted by knowing and doing – when staff live the teachings in their everyday interactions, they can move towards modelling miyo-pimatisiwin.”  
-Makokis et al., 2016***

## COMPLETING A PROGRAM EVALUATION USING THE IPI

### **Step 1: Choose the Team**

Identify a two-person team to lead and prepare your staff for using the *miyo* resource, this manual and, if possible, engage with a local knowledge keeper or Elder for support.

Identify individuals who will act as a note-takers and who will write the final report.

### **Step 2: Plan your IPI**

Choose your date and give participants advanced notice with instructions to prepare themselves. Consider your participants when choosing a time and location.

Prepare an agenda and provide instructions on how to show up to the day prepared to participate fully.

Offer protocol to a local Elder or Knowledge-keeper to support or attend your IPI. Create a safe place for providers to feel comfortable to participate in Circle Process.

Other considerations include: length of time (This will likely take a full day), comfortable chairs, space for chairs to be in a circle, refreshments, and taking appropriate breaks. It is ideal for your participants to share a meal together.

### **Step 3: Complete the IPI**

Practice ceremony with the Elder or Knowledge Keeper including a smudge and a prayer.

Explain the context of the day to participants and share the intention behind completing the IPI.

Gather your participants and, through the use of Circle Process, take time to discuss each of the four Realms. A script including a description, the three questions to be asked, and examples of what may fit in each realm have been provided in this manual in each realm below. Have someone take notes to inform the final report.

### **Step 4: Close the Circle**

Close your circle by checking-in with participants. Ask how people are feeling to gauge how the process went and allow people to share any last thoughts.

### **Step 5: Complete the Evaluation Report.**

Include stories, examples, and a description of your day. The information revealed at the close of your circle will also be important to reflect in the final report.

A blank example of a final report has been included in Appendix A and a completed example is in Appendix B.

## SHARING CIRCLE'S – PROCESSES, PROTOCOLS, AND PRINCIPLES

Participants are invited into Circle Ceremony. Team members will review the following teachings with participants prior to the beginning of the Circle. There are many types of Circles (Sharing, Reconciliation, Re-integration, Resolution, Honouring, Accountability, Educational, Teaching, etc.) however most Circles follow similar processes, protocols and guidelines.

### **Circle Process**

1. Circle Process is a ceremony, and begins in ceremony with, usually, a sage or sweetgrass smudge and a prayer by one of the participants.
2. One person, with Circle Process experience, can be asked to be the Circle Keeper (they may be offered a small amount of tobacco for this role). The responsibilities of the Circle Keeper include supporting Circle process and

***“Circle Process is both a process and a ceremony. That which we are exploring is placed in the center of the Circle and, as each person shares their perspective of that which is in the center, we all gain a better understanding that allows us to move forward in ceremony and Relational Accountability” - Personal Communication, R. Bodor***

protocol, facilitating the timing of the Circle, being aware of when a smudge may be required within the circle, and supporting the Elders in the Circle.

3. One person may begin the Circle, usually by providing a description of why the Circle is happening, reminding participants of Circle protocol, and the role of the Circle Keeper. After this is provided, the Circle can begin with the person to the left (Circles follow the path of the Sun) – or the Circle can begin with any volunteer and then proceed to the left from that person. The Circle leaders can begin by sharing each of the three questions listed in the framework below.

### Circle Protocols

4. The Laws of the Creator shall govern every person speaking:

*sakîhitowin* (Love): The first law is Love and Kindness. Love and kindness are represented by the sweetgrass braid. We know that even if sweetgrass is stepped on, ploughed, or burned, it will always grow back. Sweetgrass teaches us that love and kindness will always prevail.

*kweyeskatisowin* (Honesty): The second law is Honesty. Like children, if we give a tree sun and water, everything it needs to be healthy, it will grow strong, straight and beautiful. When we grow tall and straight, we never need to worry about being ashamed. We can stand tall and be honest and true with everyone around us.

*wîcihtowin* (Sharing): The third law is based on Sharing. We learn sharing from the buffalo who provides us with everything we need to be alive. Food, shelter, medicine, tools and clothing are all provided by the buffalo, it shares itself. It gives up its life for us so that we can live *miyo-pimâtisiwin* (the good life).

*sohkaeyitamowin* (Determination): The final law is Determination or Strength and Prayer which are represented by Grandfather Rock. At the time of creation, Grandfather Rock offered to be the part of ceremony that made sure we did things in the right way. If we made a mistake in ceremony, he would ensure that protocol was corrected in the spiritual world. That is why there is always a rock – a Grandfather – as part of every ceremony, to remind us that sometimes we can be forgetful but that he will always straighten our prayers for us.

5. Only one person may speak at a time, and only when it is their turn in the Circle. The rest of the participants listen closely to what is being said and do not interrupt. (Often, a Sharing Circle is better described as a “Listening Circle.”)
6. If desired, a person may pass when it is his/her time to speak.
7. Confidentiality is paramount in the Circle. On occasion, when Circle participants agree that information or decisions can be taken outside the Circle, there is then an agreement on what can be shared.

8. There can be more than one go-around in a Circle, until everyone feels they have been heard (could be at the end of the first go-around) or has nothing more to add (this may happen after a circle has gone around more than once).  
(Note: participants are free to pass during the first round (or any round) if they wish, however, this is not recommended unless there is shared reason for passing)

### **Circle Principles**

9. Participants have the Relational Accountability to speak from their heart - to speak not only from their heads and share content, but also from their hearts. Participants are expected to tell only their own story as honestly as they can in the moment.
10. Participants have the Relational Accountability to listen from the heart - to listen without judgment, with an open mind, and an openness to change. Consensus in the Circle does not require everyone to agree with the outcome of a Circle – it only requires everyone to agree, for now, to support the outcome. The success of the circle is determined by the quality of the listening.
11. Participants have the Relational Accountability to speak spontaneously - to wait until it is your turn to speak before you decide what you want to say. If we are thinking about what we are going to say ahead of time, it means we may not be fully listening to the person who is speaking.
12. Participants have the Relational Accountability to be as concise as possible. Everyone in the Circle needs to have the time to feel heard. On occasion, a Circle Keeper may need to softly remind a participant about “time” and “focus.”
13. Circle’s usually end with the Circle Keeper, after confirming that there is a sense of conclusion to the Circle, providing a brief and concise summary of the Circle.

A script has been provided below to help guide the circle portion of the IPI, which will follow context setting.

The use of Circle process is not limited just to the delivery of programs and services. Agencies supporting Indigenous children and families are encouraged to practice ceremony and Circle process as part of their planning and program development processes as well. Many rich and meaningful experiences and outcomes have been gleaned when agencies have gathered together in Circle process. It is important to close the Circle by asking participants how the day was and any other relevant questions.

## SCRIPT FOR INDIGENOUS PROGRAM INDICATOR CIRCLE PROCESS

### CIRCLE TEACHINGS (THE FOUR REALMS)

*The Indigenous Program Indicators (IPI), which form the foundation of the miyo evaluation framework, are based in the four realms of the Circle Teachings. Each realm is unique and carries specific teachings and yet is simultaneously connected to each other realm, creating the complex interplay of the elements of a balanced life.*

*All Indigenous teachings, including iyinito wîyasowewina (Natural Laws), tepahkop kimosominawak okiskinohamakewinawaw (Seven Teachings), and the Turtle Lodge Teachings, are embedded within the four realms. The Circle Teachings form a critical foundation for understanding Indigenous ways of knowing and implementing the IPI.*

*This section will provide details on how these teachings fit within each of the realms and can be applied to Family Resource Networks, and prevention and early intervention programming, planning, reporting, and evaluation.*

*Furthermore, teachings from within each community may work together in unique ways. Seeking the insight and relationship of members of the local community, including Elders, is a critical part of the process. This process aims to capture meaning – if a teaching has a significant meaning within any of the realms, it is vital to document that meaning as it was understood and practiced.*

### THE MENTAL REALM

*This section outlines the importance of understanding the teachings and relationships which form the foundation for healthy development in Indigenous communities and families. The ways in which we think about and define health and well-being impact the steps required to achieve it. Understanding Indigenous families means valuing the ways we relate to and understand ourselves, each other, and the world. Knowledge and understanding (mental capacities) in the Indigenous worldview are woven into the fabric of Indigenous language; truth is inherently connected to language. For this reason, language will be mentioned multiple times, highlighting the importance of honouring and using Indigenous language in Indigenous programming.*

#### **Questions to Ask the Circle:**

*What activities/learning/supports are we providing in our FRN or Early Intervention programming in this area?*

*What other areas are we planning to include in the future?*

*How do our activities have impact and how do we know this?*

*Examples of potential areas to include in report:*

- We understand traditional kinship concepts and practices. Some examples are kinship mapping (family history), traditional parenting practices, traditional

knowledge of child and family teachings, extended family and relational accountability.

- We have an understanding of the history of Indigenous people in the world and how the history may impact the families we serve. Some examples are: pre/post European contact, Residential Schools, the Sixties Scoop and local history.
- We can share, with the families we serve, traditional teachings when it comes to parenting. Some examples are: Circle teachings of balance, harmony and inclusiveness relationships, roles and responsibilities.
- We understand and can rely on cultural teachings and practices to make choices if we are faced with a problem or feel troubled.
- We understand the importance of Indigenous languages. Example: language classes, hearing or speaking with elders or cultural people who speak their language or through storytelling/social.

## THE EMOTIONAL REALM

*From an Indigenous perspective, emotional health is tied directly to relational well-being. Identity, balance, and healthy emotional development are dependent on maintaining or restoring right relationships - to self, to Creator, to kin, to Mother Earth. Supporting emotional health in Indigenous children and families means learning, understanding, supporting, and honouring connection and relationship as the keystones for the foundation of well-being.*

- Indigenous Teachings, Beliefs, and Values
- Impacts of Intergenerational Trauma
- Access to Trauma Supports and Resources
- Connection to Family, Community, and Ancestors
- Community Child Raising

### **Questions to Ask the Circle:**

*What activities/learning/supports are we providing in our FRN or Early Intervention programming in this area?*

*What areas are we planning to include in the future?*

*How do our activities have impact and how do we know this?*

*Examples of potential areas to include in report:*

- We have an understanding of traditional teachings (morals, values, caring for sacred items, sacred self-care, sacred teachings, relational accountability and creation stories)
- We have an understanding of the impacts of inter-generational trauma on residential school survivors, individuals, and the families and communities that we serve
- We have an understanding about the resources and supports available to process any impact of intergenerational trauma for the families we serve.
- We understand and support the importance of connections to Indigenous families, communities, and ancestors
- We understand the Indigenous perspective of community-based child raising and the community's responsibility to nurture the gifts children bring to them.



## THE SPIRITUAL REALM

*The vital role of ceremony for healing and spiritual development cannot be overstated. In an Indigenous worldview, ceremony is central to seeking guidance and support – all of the teachings are embedded in ceremony. For example, the ceremonial pipe embodies the Four Natural Laws and the elements associated with these teachings are intentionally invoked when participating in a Pipe Ceremony. Ceremony honours the importance of spirituality in the lives of Indigenous people and is a critical element for agencies to practice in planning and delivering services to our families.*

- Practicing Ceremony
- Connection to Indigenous Teachings
- Addressing Family and Parenting Concerns
- Indigenous Training

### **Questions to Ask Circle:**

*What activities/learning/supports are we providing in our FRN or Early Intervention programming in this area?*

*What areas are we planning to include in the future?*

*How do our activities have impact and how do we know this?*

*Examples of potential areas to include in report:*

- We understand how participation in traditional ceremonies facilitates healing for the families we serve and can relate by being involved in traditional cultural social events and ceremonies. Some examples are Pow Wow, Smudging, Pipe Ceremonies, Sweat Lodge ceremonies and Inuit or Métis ceremonies.
- We understand and use traditional Indigenous practices or approaches that have been taught or modeled to us in our practice. Some examples are: traditional conflict resolution, child-rearing, gender roles, etc.
- We feel we can connect with Indigenous teachings to assist us within our practice and the families we serve. Some examples are: Turtle Lodge Teachings, Willow Teachings.
- We use some of the following to address family and parenting concerns: Sharing Circles, Teachings, Counselling through Elders, presenting protocol (cloth, tobacco) to an Elder in Ceremony.
- We have been involved in traditional Indigenous teachings and ceremony led by an Indigenous mentor or teaching – or training

## THE PHYSICAL REALM

*The physical realm includes the health of the individual, family, community, and environment. Safe and healthy bodies and homes are foundational in Indigenous teachings about well-being and development. There are strong themes of journeying through life and the required provisions to make that journey safe, happy, and healthy.*

## Implementation of *of kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin*

- *Physical Health*
- *Physical Environment*
- *Indigenous Parenting*
- *Reciprocity and Relational Accountability*
- *Enhancing the Human Journey*

### **Questions to Ask Circle:**

*What activities/learning/supports are we providing in our FRN or Early Intervention programming in this area?*

*What areas are we planning to include in the future?*

*How do our activities have impact and how do we know this?*

*Examples of potential areas to include in report:*

- We understand the importance of personal health. Some examples are medicine picking, personal hygiene, Indigenous games.
- We understand the importance of our physical environment. Some examples are: what home means from an Indigenous worldview, tipi teachings, the physical state of my home, housing.
- We have an understanding of traditional parenting practices. Some examples are: the moss bag, naming ceremony, willow teachings the swing, nurturing and attachment.
- We try to live by reciprocity and relational accountability within our practice. Do we teach them to and use them? Examples, finances, hunting, rent, food.
- We understand and support the ceremonies and teachings that enhance the human journey. Some examples are the Clan and Society Teachings and Age and Stage Teachings.

## CONCLUSION

The Government of Alberta's continued commitment to Indigenous capacity building has already increased their organizations understanding and involvement with *iyiniw* practices. The willingness to receive *iyiniw* teachings and complete this evaluation further display the commitment to building their Indigenous capacity. The Government of Alberta is hoping to create a new path for service-delivery that can provide an example of ground-breaking work to provide services to Indigenous children, families, and communities. The authors of the resources and this manual have appreciated the opportunity to meet and create in Circle and in ceremony.

*ay – ay, ekosi maka, kinanâskomitinawa*

References

- Abe, J., Grills, C., Ghavami, N., Xiong, G., Davis, C. and Johnson, C. (2018). Making the invisible visible: Identifying and articulating culture in practice-based evidence. *Am J Community Psychol*, 62: 121-134. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ajcp.12266>
- Chouinard, J., & Bradley Cousins, J. (2007). Culturally competent evaluation for Aboriginal communities: A review of the empirical literature. *Journal of Multidisciplinary Evaluation*, 4(8), 40-57.
- Desmoulins, L., (2006). Storytelling: Exploring the intersections between Western and Anishinaabe Research Methodologies. *International Journal of the Diversity*, 5(3), 119-125.
- Government of Alberta (2019). Well-being and resiliency: A framework for supporting safe and healthy children and families. <https://open.alberta.ca/publications/9781460141939>.
- Johnston-Goodstar, K. (2012). Decolonizing evaluation: The necessity of evaluation advisory groups in indigenous evaluation. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 136, 109-117.
- Kovach, M. (2009). *Indigenous methodologies: Characteristics, conversations, and contexts*. University of Toronto Press.
- LaFrance, J., Nichols, R., Kirkhart, K., Rog, Debra J., Fitzpatrick, Jody L., & Conner, Ross F. (2012). Culture writes the script: On the centrality of context in indigenous evaluation. *New Directions for Evaluation*, 135, 59-74.
- Makokis, L., Bodor, R., Goulet, S., MacArthur, C., Barker, C., & Perrett, S. (2016). Indigenous program indicators. In R. C. Bodor (Ed.) *Indigenous Social Work Practice: Creating Good Relationships* (2nd ed.) (pp. 255-285). University nuhelot'ine thaiyots'î nistameyimâkanak Blue Quills.
- Makokis, L., Bodor, R., Tyler, S., McLellan, A., Veldhuisen, A., Kopp, K., McLeod, S. & Goulet, S. (2020). iyiniw tapwewin ekwa kiskeyihtamowin. In L. Makokis, R. Bodor, A. Calhoun, & S. Tyler. (Eds.). *opihkinawâsowin: Growing a child:*

Implementing Indigenous ways of knowing with Indigenous families. Fernwood Publishing.

National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health [NCCAHA]. (2013). Indigenous approaches to program evaluation. Prince George, BC: University of Northern British Columbia.

Naquin, V., Manson, S. M., Curie, C., Sommer, S., Daw, R., Maraku, C., Lallu, N., Meller, D., Willer, C., & Deaux, E. (2008). Indigenous evidence-based effective practice model: Indigenous leadership in action. *International Journal of Leadership in Public Services*, 4(1), 14-24.

Saini, M. (2012) A systematic review of Western and Aboriginal research designs: Assessing cross-validation to explore compatibility and convergence. National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health.

Smith, L. T. (2012). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples* (2nd ed.). Zed Books.

Strega, S. & Brown, L. (2015) *Research as resistance: Revisiting critical, Indigenous and anti-oppressive approaches*. Canadian Scholars.

Turner, C., & Bodor, R. 2020, (in-press). Indigenous program indicators. In R. Bodor, L. Makokis, A. Calhoun, & S. Tyler (Eds.) *miyo ohpikinawâsowin – Growing a nêhiyaw child: Implementing Indigenous ways of knowing with Indigenous families*. Halifax: NS: Fernwood Publishing.

Weaver, H. (2002). Perspectives on wellness: Journeys on the red road. *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*, 29(1), 5-15.

Wilson, S. (2008). *Research is Ceremony – Indigenous Research Methods*. Fernwood Press.

**APPENDIX A: INDIGENOUS PROGRAM INDICATORS PROGRAM EVALUATION**

**Early Intervention On-Reserve Grant:**

**Grant # & Program Name:**

**Schedule B-2: Program Activity Report Template**

*kâ-nâtatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin (Making oneself aware of good child growing /raising)*

**Quarterly and Year-End Reporting: Summary of Program Achievements**

**Interim/Final Program Report**

**Period of Time this Report Covers:**

**\_\_\_ April to June 2018** **\_\_\_ July to Sept. 2018**

**\_\_\_ Oct. to Dec. 2018** **\_\_\_ Jan. to Mar. 2019**

<b>Total numbers served within the reporting period</b>			
<b>Age 0-6</b>	<b>Age 7-18</b>	<b>Parents/Caregivers</b>	<b>Extended Family/Community members</b>

Implementation of *of kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin*

<p><b>MENTAL REALM</b></p>	<p>What activities/learning/supports are we providing in our Early Intervention Program in this area? What areas are we planning to include in the future? How do our activities have impact and how do we know this?</p>
<p>1. We understand traditional kinship concepts and practices. Some examples are: kinship mapping (family history) traditional parenting practices, traditional knowledge of child and family teachings, extended family and relational accountability.</p>	
<p>2. We have an understanding of the history of Indigenous people in the world and how the history may impact the families we serve. Some examples are: pre/post European contact, Residential Schools, the 60's Scoop and local history.</p>	
<p>3. We can help share with the families we serve from a traditional perspective when it comes to parenting. Some examples are: Circle teachings of balance, harmony, and inclusiveness; relationships, roles and responsibilities.</p>	
<p>4. We understand and can rely on cultural teachings and practices to make choices if we are faced with a problem or feel troubled.</p>	
<p>5. We understand the importance of Indigenous Languages. (Example: language classes, hearing or speaking with elders or cultural people who speak their language, or through storytelling/social.</p>	

Implementation of *of kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>EMOTIONAL REALM</b></p>	<p>What activities/learning/supports are we providing in our Early Intervention Program? What areas are we planning to include in the future? How do our activities have impact and how do we know this?</p>
<p>1. We understand traditional Indigenous teachings. Some examples are: morals and values, caring for sacred items, sacred self-care, sacred teachings, relational accountability and creation stories.</p>	
<p>2. We have an understanding of the impacts of intergenerational trauma on survivors of Residential Schools, individuals, families and communities, and how it affects the families we serve.</p>	
<p>3. We have an understanding about the resources and supports available to help process any impact of intergenerational trauma for the families we serve. Some examples are: Elders, agencies.</p>	
<p>4. We understand and support the importance of connections to Indigenous families, communities and ancestors.</p>	
<p>5. We understand the Indigenous perspective of community-based child rearing and understand the families' responsibilities to nurture the gifts children bring with them.</p>	



Implementation of *of kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin*

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SPIRITUAL REALM</b></p>	<p>What activities/learning/supports are we providing in our Early Intervention Program? What areas are we planning to include in the future? How do our activities have impact and how do we know this?</p>
<p>1. We understand how participation in traditional ceremonies facilitates healing for the families we serve and can relate by being involved in traditional cultural social events and ceremonies. Some examples are: Pow Wow, smudging, pipe ceremonies, sweat lodge ceremonies, and Inuit or Métis ceremonies.</p>	
<p>2. We understand and use traditional Indigenous practices or approaches that have been taught or modelled to us in our practice. Some examples are: traditional conflict resolution, child-rearing, gender roles, etc.</p>	
<p>3. We feel we can connect with Indigenous teachings to assist us within our practice and the families we serve. Some examples are: Turtle Lodge teachings, Willow Teachings.</p>	
<p>4. We use some of the following to address family and parenting concerns: Sharing Circles, Teachings, Counselling through Elders, presenting protocol (cloth, Tobacco) to an Elder in Ceremony.</p>	
<p>5. We have been involved in traditional Indigenous teachings and ceremony led by an Indigenous mentor or teacher – or training.</p>	

Implementation of *of kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin*

<b>PHYSICAL REALM</b>	<p>What activities/learning/supports are we providing in our Early Intervention Program? What areas are we planning to include in the future? How do our activities have impact and how do we know this?</p>
<p>1. We understand the importance of personal health. Some examples are medicine picking, personal hygiene, Indigenous games</p>	
<p>2. We understand the importance of our physical environment. Some examples are: what home means from an Indigenous worldview, tipi teachings, the physical state of my home, housing.</p>	
<p>3. We have an understanding of traditional parenting practices. Some examples are: the moss bag, Naming Ceremony, Willow teachings, the swing, nurturing and attachment</p>	
<p>4. We try to live by reciprocity and relational accountability within our practice? Do we teach them and use them?</p>	
<p>5. We understand and support the ceremonies and teachings that enhance the human journey. Some examples are the Clan and Society Teachings and Ages &amp; Stages</p>	

**\*Add any further information you may wish to share with respect to significant achievements, changes or challenges that have impacted your program over the reporting period:**

Implementation of *of kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin*

**First Nation/Agency Representative:**

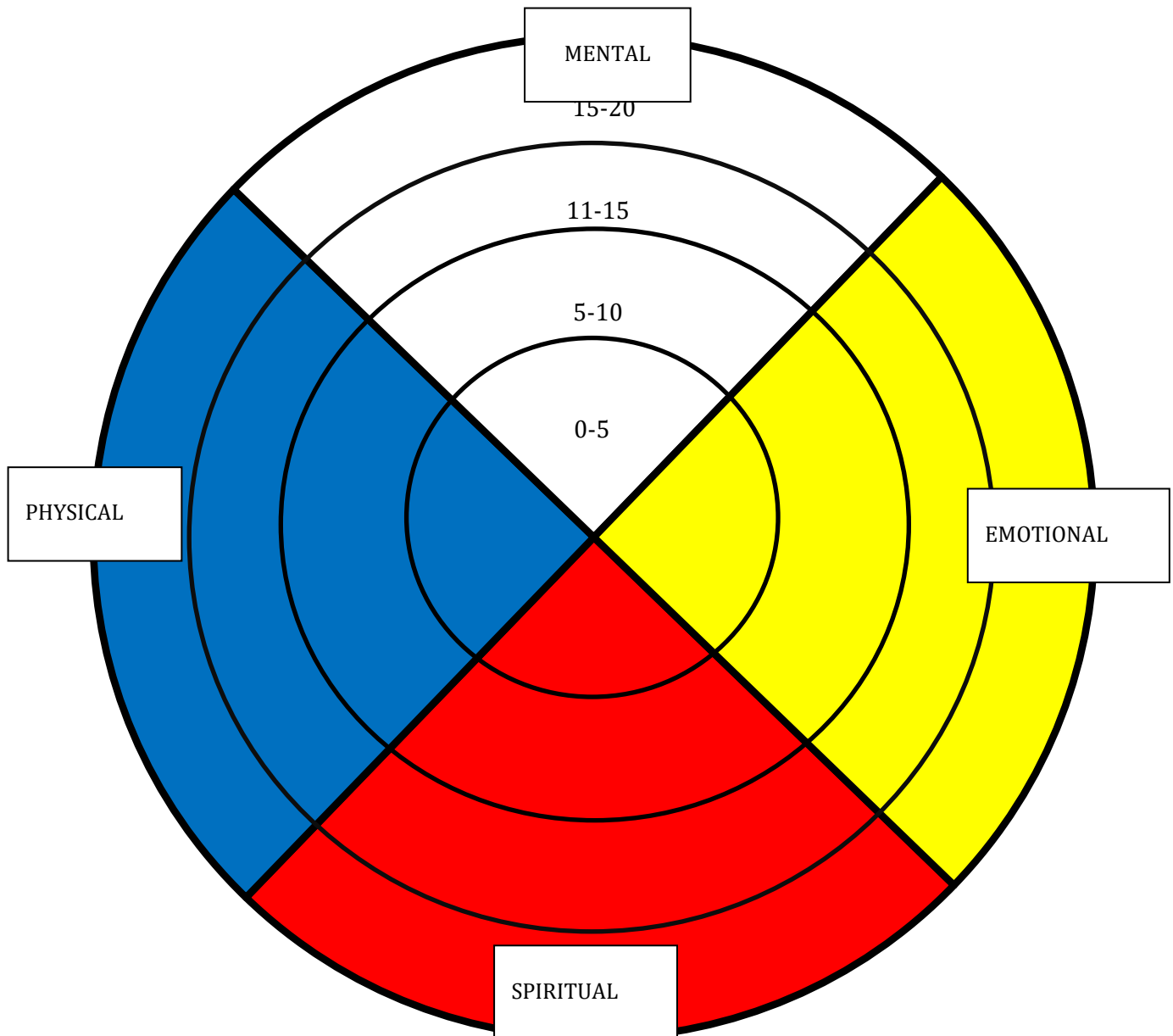
\_\_\_\_\_  
[WRITE NAME HERE]

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Signature**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Date**

## Implementation of *of kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin*

Under each dimension (Mental, Physical, Emotional, Spiritual) please indicate each score from the questions above. For example, if you scored a 1 on each question (Minimal Involvement or Understanding) under the Section "Mental Realm", that would be a total of 5. You would shade in the 5 in the quadrant under mental. If you scored 16-20 in all four realms, this demonstrates equilibrium occurring between the four human dimensions of emotional, physical, spiritual and mental well-being.



**APPENDIX B: INDIGENOUS PROGRAM INDICATORS IN PRACTICE - PRACTICAL EXAMPLES AND REPORTING EXPECTATIONS**

Included below is an example of what service providers may write and include in the Indigenous Program Indicators Final Report. One example has been provided for one of the indicators under each of the realms. When completing their report, service providers will more than likely be able to fill out more than one section – an example of one section is merely provided for the purposes of this manual. The full list of IPI per realm is included in Appendix A: Indigenous Program Indicators.

<p><b>MENTAL REALM</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What activities/learning/supports are we providing in our Early Intervention Program in this area?</li> <li>• What areas are we planning to include in the future?</li> <li>• How do our activities have impact and how do we know this?</li> </ul>
<p>5. We understand the importance of Indigenous Languages. (Example: language classes, hearing or speaking with elders or cultural people who speak their language, or through storytelling/social).</p>	<p>The early intervention program invites a nêhiyaw Elder to the program on a weekly-basis and during this time only the nêhiyaw language is spoken, providing children with an opportunity to be immersed in the language. Program staff guide children to understand that speaking the language is expected and encouraged during this time. Throughout the week, program staff apply the nêhiyaw language during various activities to promote language development and retention.</p> <p>Families have indicated to program staff that the language component of the program is highly valued by them, for example one parent shared that their child often comes home from the program excited to share/use some of the nêhiyaw words they have learnt.</p> <p>The early intervention program is working towards including more of the nêhiyaw language in our program. Our goal is to have an Elder available on a daily-basis so that children become more immersed in the language. We also are planning to purchase a variety of children’s books that are in the nêhiyaw language. In the winter, we are planning to invite the Elder to share nêhiyaw teaching stores with our children when it is the appropriate time to do so.</p>

Implementation of *of kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin*

<p><b>EMOTIONAL REALM</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What activities/learning/supports are we providing in our Early Intervention Program?</li> <li>• What areas are we planning to include in the future?</li> <li>• How do our activities have impact and how do we know this?</li> </ul>
<p>3. We have an understanding about the resources and supports available to help process any impact of intergenerational trauma for the families we serve. Some examples are: Elders, agencies.</p>	<p>The early intervention program has grown to understand the impacts of intergenerational trauma on our children, families, and the entire community. The program, itself, is viewed as a resource to help process these impacts. Our program staff, either Indigenous or non-Indigenous, are able to have conversations with our children about trauma and process them. Our program always has smudge available – in addition to starting our program every day with a smudge, prayer, and a song, and utilizing Circle Process, we smudge with our children and families throughout the day when needed.</p> <p>The program also values the importance of community resources. We maintain a relationship with other services in the community, such as the Elders, Health Centre, Child Intervention, and the in-school social worker. We take a collaborative, community-based approach, to work in partnership with these resources and ensure we are all working towards meeting the needs of our children and families. Our program is quite influential in the community, as often our program staff are who children and families first talk to when they would like information on accessing other resources and supports.</p> <p>To maintain the relationship and collaboration among our various community resources, our program is planning to co-host community health information session with the Health Services on a monthly basis. The upcoming sessions is tailored towards the relationship between trauma and addictions.</p>

Implementation of *of kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin*

<p><b>SPIRITUAL REALM</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What activities/learning/supports are we providing in our Early Intervention Program?</li> <li>• What areas are we planning to include in the future?</li> <li>• How do our activities have impact and how do we know this?</li> </ul>
<p>1. We understand how participation in traditional ceremonies facilitates healing for the families we serve and can relate by being involved in traditional cultural social events and ceremonies. Some examples are: Pow Wow, smudging, pipe ceremonies, sweat lodge ceremonies, and Inuit or Métis ceremonies.</p>	<p>The early intervention program hosts seasonal feasts that bring together many of the teachings on ceremony and the role of ceremony for healing. Our community feasts begin with a pipe ceremony, which is embedded with many teachings on the Natural Laws, Seven Sacred Teachings, and so forth. During the pipe ceremony, the boys in our program are oskâpewisak where they learn about their roles and responsibilities in ceremony through being guided by the Elders and ceremonial holders. They are also mentored by the men in ceremony who have been fulfilling the role of oskapewisak for quite some time. The girls fulfil various ceremonial roles as well, such as preparing the food for the feast. They have also learnt important ceremony teachings, such as teachings on iskwewak (women) and why it is important girls and women wear skirts in ceremony. The early intervention program supplies children and families with protocol (cloth and tobacco) at these feasts ensuring they have the opportunity to ask for prayers from the Elders, Creator, and ancestors.</p> <p>These feasts are crucial to ensuring the health of our families and communities. Some of our children and families do not have access to ceremony, so this provides them with a way to reconnect to culture in safe, welcoming, and mentoring way. Our families often express their gratitude for these feasts, and it is one of our activities that continues to have a consistently high number of children, families, and community members present.</p> <p>As our children and families are increasingly looking for more opportunities to participate in ceremony, our program is planning to host a teaching sweat lodge. Again, many of our children and families have not participated in ceremony, so we want to continue to provide that opportunity in a safe learning environment. Eventually, the goal of our program is to host monthly sweat lodges.</p>

Implementation of *of kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin*

<p><b>PHYSICAL REALM</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What activities/learning/supports are we providing in our Early Intervention Program?</li> <li>• What areas are we planning to include in the future?</li> <li>• How do our activities have impact and how do we know this?</li> </ul>
<p>1. We understand the importance of personal health. Some examples are medicine picking, personal hygiene, Indigenous games</p>	<p>The early intervention program continually provides opportunity for our children and families to connect with the land and do medicine-picking. Our program staff have received medicine picking teachings themselves, so they are able to explain to children the importance of honouring Mother Earth and offering tobacco as an important protocol teaching when medicine-picking. From our medicine-picking trips, our children have collected sage, sweet grass, and other medicines. While some of these medicines stay within the program to support our daily smudge and other ceremonies, we have also ensured that children and families are able to take these medicines home with them. As our children and families may new to ceremony, we also have had an Elder come and share smudge teachings.</p> <p>Afterwards, we gifted the children and families with smudge kits that included the instructions and medicines needed so they could begin to smudge at home. Within a few weeks, one of our families returned and requested more medicines as they have been smudging frequently at home. While we provided them with medicines, we also shared teachings on medicine-picking and encouraged them to do this as a family.</p> <p>Our early intervention program is inquiring about hosting seasonal culture camps for our children and families to continually ensure they have a connection to the land. We also are aware of culture camps that are provided by other Indigenous organizations and we are planning to host a field trip to support our children and families with participating in these land-based activities.</p>