

## Bringing Tradition Home – Aboriginal Parenting in Today's World

In addition, this program is supplemented by audio visual materials (DVDs), handouts, group exercises, take home reflections, stories/ teachings and knowledge sharing by an Elder. Each “gathering” is approximately 3 hours, which includes instruction time and also allows time for breaks and snacks. Group size for this program ranges from 8 to 16 (adult - caregiver or parent) participants.



Scw'exmx Community Health  
Services Society

As with all SCHSS programs, this program can be delivered in the evenings, or during the day. It is delivered once per week. It is available on a rotating schedule with our other programs.

There is a 9 week commitment required for participating in this program.

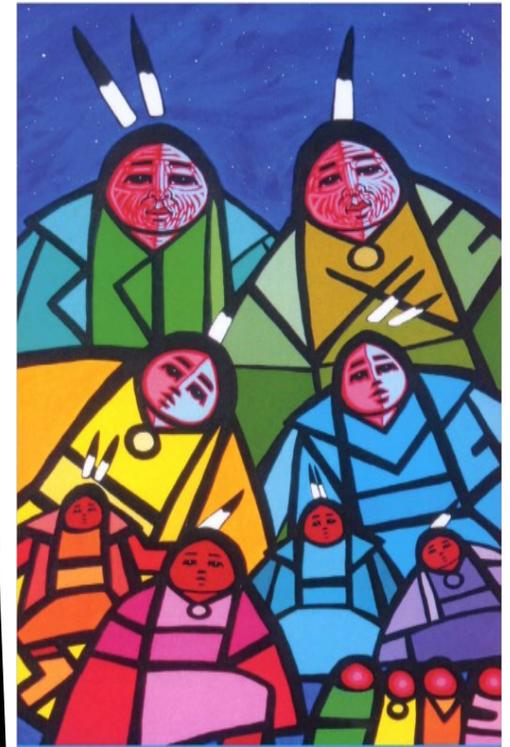
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Scw'exmx Community Health  
Services Society

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Parenting Program

## ► Introduction

The aim of Bringing Tradition Home is to present traditional values and cultural practices to help parents, grandparents and other family caregivers to raise healthy children in today's urban Canadian context. We believe that healthy children with involved parents lead to healthy communities. While there are many differences among Nations, there are some universal values, beliefs and practices that the program builds upon, such as story-telling, the spiritual connection to child-rearing, and the involvement of the extended family.

The concept of living in two worlds is a thread that runs throughout the program as this is the reality of Aboriginal parents who live in an urban area. Their challenge is to balance two different world views:

- An Aboriginal world view that stresses reverence for the spiritual, physical, emotional and mental connections with ancestors, future generations, nature and the interconnectedness of all things
- A Western view that emphasizes individuality, reliance on experts, a future orientation and the nuclear family

It is important to note that there is no “right way” to look at the world and the goal of this program is not to value one view over another. Both are real and therefore need to be acknowledged and recognized for the benefits inherent in each.

This program was developed by the BC Aboriginal Child Care Society. It is 9 sessions long and includes two videos: “*Messages from the Heart – Caring for Our Children*” and “*With Dad – Strengthening the Circle of Care.*” Both these videos were made by the National Collaborating Centre for Aboriginal Health.

## Overview of Session/ Gathering

This program has been developed based on the traditional values from the Seven Sacred Teachings of the Ojibwa and the work of Brendtro, L.K., Brokenleg, M., & and Van Bockern, S. (1990). *Reclaiming Youth at Risk: Our hope for the future. Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service.*

Each of the nine gatherings focuses on a value and related parenting issues:

### **Respect**

We consider the importance of Aboriginal values as a basis for parenting. We practice respect for each other (developing a group agreement) and for our children, as we look, listen, and learn from them.

### **Belonging**

We explore the concept of “All My Relations,” and examine how our children experience belonging when they are connected to their culture through tradition, Elder teachings and voices of Aboriginal parents.

### **Love**

We examine attachment and bonding, gender and social roles, parenting styles, and keeping children safe physically, emotionally, spiritually and mentally.

### **Honouring**

We examine the stages of child development including how their brains develop. We explore ways of communicating effectively with our children.

### **Humility**

We explore the traditional ways that children learn to self-regulate, and the importance of play.

## Overview of Session/ Gathering Continued

### **Courage**

We examine the impact of colonialism on parenting skills among Aboriginal people, and the importance of caring for ourselves.

### **Wisdom**

We analyze the role of resiliency in the health of our people, communities, and our children, and explore the role of parents in advocating for the rights of their children.

### **Generosity**

We learn about nutrition and traditional foods, and plan our final graduation feast.

### **Celebration**

We share a feast and celebrate who we are and what we have accomplished.

## Learning Outcomes for the Program

Through the 9 sessions (consisting of gatherings and video and discussion groups) it is expected that all participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate increased knowledge of traditional Aboriginal parenting practices
- Demonstrate awareness of healthy child development stages
- Use positive parenting practices confidently
- Experience a stronger connection to their culture and heritage
- Parent in ways that support the well-being of their children and their families
- Build positive relationships with other people in the community

