

Le Villazh Maachi Kashkihtow

The Village of Learning

FOR EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE PROFESSIONALS

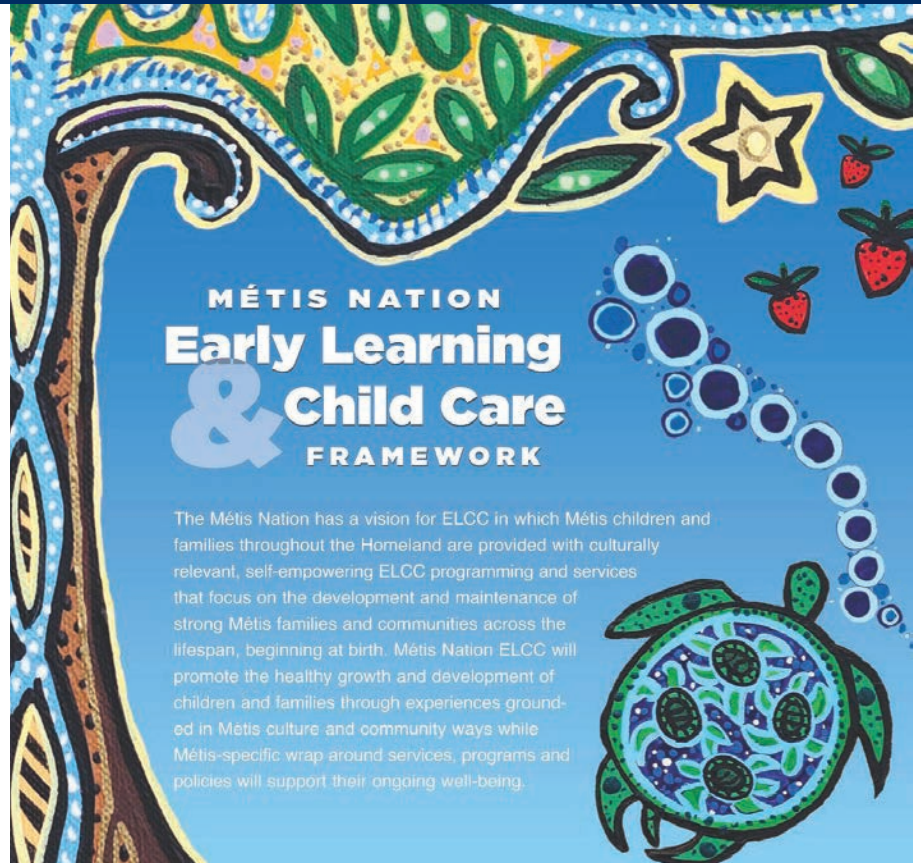
Welcome to the Fall 2024 edition
of *Le Villazh Maachi Kashkihtow*,
The Village of Learning





Highlights *in this issue*

- 2 | **Métis Early Learning and Child Care Framework**
- 3 | **Métis Core Values**
- 4 | **Opportunities for Learning and Investigation**
- 4 | **Connecting to the Land**
- 5 | **Michif Language**
- 6 | **Métis Early Years:**
 - **Inspiration from the Early Learning Professionals**
 - **Métis ECE Recruitment & Retention Team**
 - **Métis Child Care Project**
- 7 | **Métis Nation B.C. Programs and Services**
- 7 | **Métis Nation Early Learning & Child Care**
- 8 | **Resources**
- 8 | **Contact Information**



Métis Nation Early Learning and Child Care Framework

In this Fall's edition of the Le Villazh, we are focusing on Goal #6 of the Métis Early Learning and Child Care Framework: Promoting, whenever possible, the employment of Métis Nation individuals as early childhood providers.

Métis Nation British Columbia's (MNBC), Ministry of Education, has a vision of an inclusive and culturally distinct Métis workforce comprised of Métis Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Professionals, acknowledging ELCC as a viable, sustainable, and valued career. We are guided to do this work by our Métis Core Values and the Métis Nation Early Learning and Child Care Framework. The core values and frameworks will be implemented in the new Métis-specific child care centres that are being constructed across British Columbia. MNBC has embarked on 11 child care projects in BC to meet the needs of our children and families by accessing ChildCare BC New Spaces Fund, Provincial Distinction Based Space Creation Funding, and Employment and Social Development Canada (ESDC) Infrastructure Funding.

With our Métis Early Childhood Education Recruitment and Retention team actively working across the province to recruit and retain Métis ELCC professionals we hope to build a strong workforce of Métis early years professionals.

For more information on the Métis ELCC Framework please visit <https://www.mnbc.ca/sites/default/files/2023-04/M%C3%A9tis%20Early%20Learning%20Framework.pdf>. 🌸

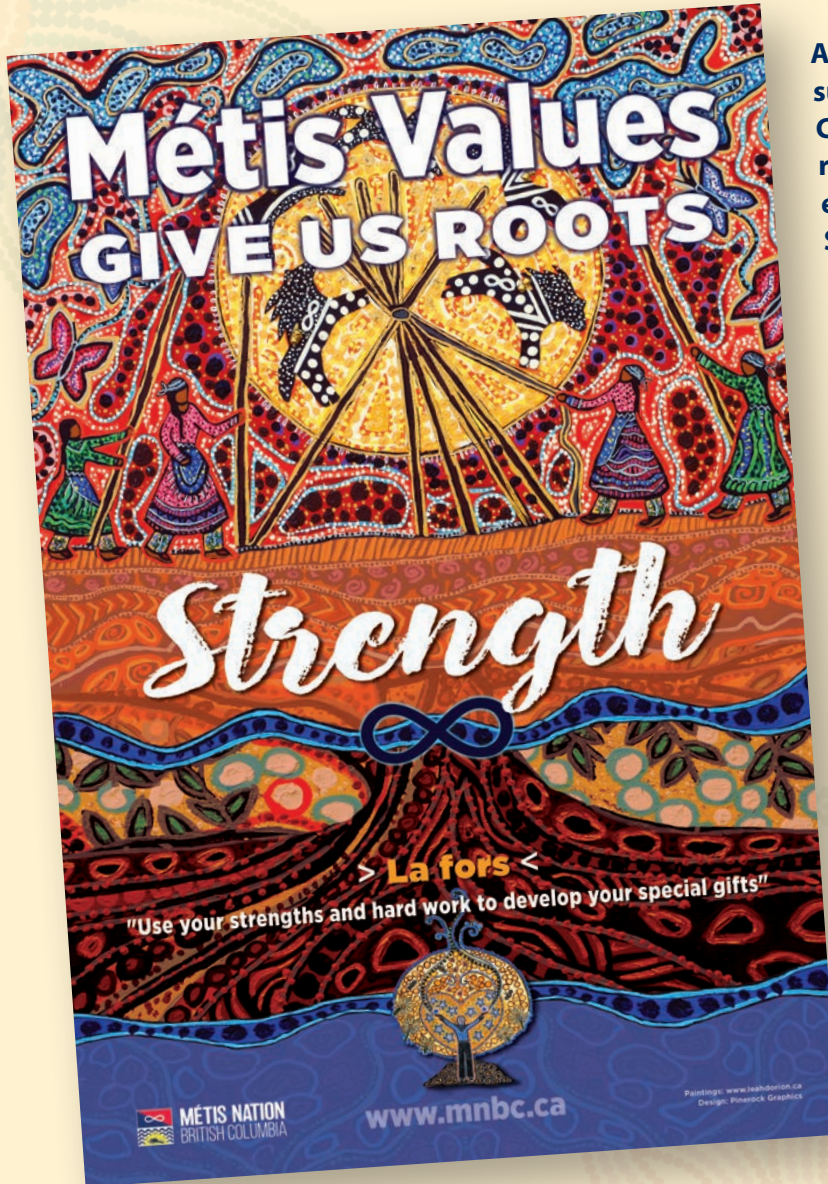


Métis Core Values

STRENGTH (*La fors*)

"We learned to be self-sufficient as Métis people. The Cree word 'otipemisiwak' means 'we are our own bosses.' We don't depend on others. We try to be successful and self-sufficient. Those, I think, are the big Métis teachings: to be self-sufficient and to prepare for whatever the challenge is going to be."

– Métis Auntie Stella Johnson

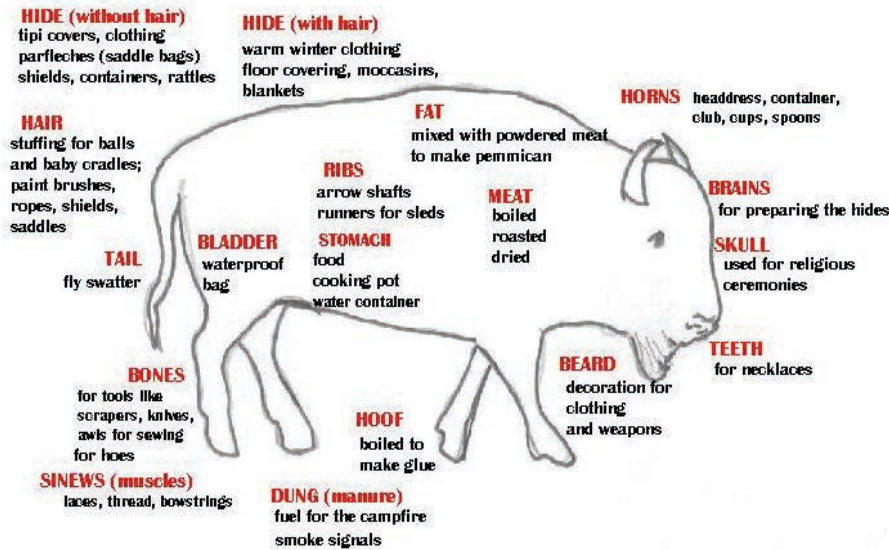


As Elder Stella shares, learning to be self-sufficient is heavily fostered by the Métis Core Value of Strength — the strength and resilience of the Métis people. While in your early learning setting, we can encourage Strength by:

- Creating opportunities for children to discover, develop, and share their strengths and interests.
- Sharing your special gifts. If singing, art, or even how fast you type is your strength, display this to the children.
- Recognizing that every child is unique and creating an open learning environment with a variety of opportunities for self-discovery. 🌸

Opportunities For Learning and Investigation

The buffalo often represents the strength and resilience of the Métis people and culture. The buffalo hunt brought communities of people together and helped sustain their way of life. “Louis” the buffalo is named after Métis leader and founder of Manitoba, Louis Riel. Louis the buffalo can be used in many ways with the children you are working with, both inside and outside of the learning environment.



Sourced: [PLAINS FIRST NATIONS - the bison \(buffalo\) - hunting methods, uses of the bison \(saskschoolsinfo.com\)](https://saskschoolsinfo.com)

Buffalo Activities

Create a space to ask questions about the buffalo and share about the importance of buffalo to Métis people.

- Help children visualize the buffalo by using tape to mark on the floor how big a buffalo is.
- Pretend to walk like a buffalo with the children.
- Leave out maps that show buffalo habitats.
- Take Louis outdoors and let the children interact with him in the natural environment.
- Create a Louis the Buffalo “buddy” system. Give the children each a turn taking Louis home to share with their families and care for it. Provide an opportunity for children to share what they did with Louis.
- Share stories and songs about buffalo that have Michif words with English translation

buffalo = lii bufloo

For older children: Organize a trading post game where children can pretend to trade pemmican for goods such as buttons, coins, beads, beans, cloth, blankets, fur, and wood. Let the children decide the value of each item and negotiate a fair trade. 🌸

Connecting to the Land

INTRODUCING SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES

Guiding our children to build relationships with the land and our traditional plants and medicines, fosters a sense of knowing that land is sacred and that we, as Métis people, have a responsibility to protect and care for the land. By demonstrating to children that the land has knowledge, we are strengthening community connections as we collectively work towards preserving our sacred land teachings. When children can see themselves reflected in their community and their contributions to the world, this begins to foster a positive self-identity.

The phrase “take only what we need from the land” is often mentioned, but how do we instill this idea in young children? It’s so important to teach children that when harvesting plants, we need to ensure that

we always leave some for our other living creatures and we also need to conserve our water sources.

Discuss with the children that we only pick berries from the middle of the plant so that the birds can eat the top berries, and the bears can eat the bottom ones. This will provide an opportunity to discuss how else we can ensure our animal friends can have enough food along with us humans.

When watering plants discuss how much water plants need, why they need water,



and the importance of saving some water for the plants tomorrow.

There are so many ideas for guiding our children about sustainable practices. We would love to hear how YOU are integrating this important lesson into your programs 🌸.

Michif Language On The Go!

The **Michif languages** are historically linked to Métis communities across the Métis homeland. The three Michif languages, commonly referred to as Southern Michif, Northern Michif, and French Michif, and are made up of elements from both First Nations languages and European languages – predominantly Cree and French.

Southern Michif uses mostly Plains-Cree verbs and French nouns, but also borrows nouns from English, Saulteaux, and Cree [1]. Southern Michif is most associated with communities in southern Saskatchewan and North Dakota [2]. Southern Michif may also be referred to as Heritage Michif, Mixed Michif, or Turtle Mountain Chippewa Cree. [Language \(ameliadouglassinstitute.ca\)](http://www.ameliadouglassinstitute.ca)

Try out these simple phrases in Southern Michif and challenge the children to try and use them

throughout the day! To find out how to say these phrases go to <https://www.Métismuseum.ca/michif-dictionary.php> or download the App “Heritage Michif to Go” on iTunes or google play.

| ENGLISH PHRASE | SOUTHERN MICHIF | PRONOUNCIATION |
|----------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
| Good Morning | Boon Matayn | <i>Boh mat-teh</i> |
| Hello | Taanishi | <i>Tawn-sheh</i> |
| Thank you | Maarsii | <i>Maar-see</i> |
| See You Later | Kawaapamitin | <i>Ka-waa-pa-mittin</i> |



Translations by “Heritage Michif To GO” App

[Michif To Go \(Métismuseum.ca\)](http://www.Métismuseum.ca)

Michif Language Videos

The Ministry of Education partnered with Métis Educator and Michif language teacher Samson LaMontagne to create a series of fun and educational videos that can be used by families and educators across the province. This video series includes stories, Michif language lessons and Michif songs and games. Watch Samson’s video that introduces how he is inspired to learn about his culture, language and who he is as a Métis person. Watch for more Michif Language videos coming soon. 🌸



A Michif Learning Journey with Métis Educator, Samson LaMontagne

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bhAXAaTiQvs>

Métis Early Years: Inspiration from the Early Learning Professionals

Strong Start Facilitator for SD 70 in Port Alberni was inspired to create an interactive play space for the children in her program. They combined MNBC Métis Cultural Resource Kit play materials to extend play experiences. They were inspired after attending the Aansaamb aen Kiskayhtaamaahk training workshop on June 12, 2024.

This is a great example of how you can integrate Métis Culture into your Early Learning Environments while providing the children invitations to play.

If you are interested in learning more about the Aansaamb aen kiskayhtaamaahk - Learning Together workshops please email Métisearlyyears@mNBC.ca.



Fun Fact with Louis the Buffalo Did you know?

Métis peoples are best known for their fiddle music. The fiddles were expensive to purchase during the fur trade, so they were handmade from local wood like maple and birch. ❁

National Indigenous People’s Day – Cranbrook, B.C.



In honour of National Indigenous Peoples Day; June 20, 2024, in Cranbrook, B.C. we came together to celebrate and honor Indigenous cultures for a day filled with sharing, caring, and community engagement. The event, held in Cranbrook, featured a barbecue and tents from various organizations supporting Indigenous culture. Each tent offered a variety of activities for attendees to participate in.

Rocky Mountain Métis Association had the privilege of honouring a group of Métis teens and children at the event who were sashed, highlighting a hockey player from Team BC who shared what his culture means to him. ❁

Ministry of Education Child Care Projects

Exciting things are happening around the province; particularly in Terrace, Fort St. John, Mission, Port Alberni, Vernon, Kamloops, Surrey, Cambell River, Saanich, and Kelowna. MNBC's Ministry of Education. Child Care Project team has been working hard securing suitable locations to create new, culturally relevant, Métis child care spaces. In partnership with Mission Public Schools and the Fraser Valley Métis Association, the community of Mission child care building scheduled to be completed late fall 2024. It is on the school grounds at West Heights Elementary School.

Additionally, in partnership with Métis Community Services Society BC an Out of School Care child care program is opening this fall. In addition to these two projects coming to completion, we will be hosting two groundbreaking events for our Terrace and Fort St John projects. Our intentions are to host groundbreaking events and extend the invitation to our local First Nation partners, chartered communities, and service providers. This will allow us to start the construction in a good way and celebrate the start of these two child care builds. 🌸



Métis Nation Early Learning & Child Care

JUNE 8TH PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY

On June 8, 2024, twenty-one Early Learning and Child Care professionals from Vernon and the North Okanagan Region participated in a professional development day led by MNBC's ECE Recruitment and Retention team with Ministry of Education staff and gifted dancer, motivational speaker, and facilitator, Madelaine McCallum.

The morning consisted of staff presenting session one of the Aansaamb aen Kiskayhtaamuk, (Learning Together Workshop Series). This workshop is intended to support early learning and child care professionals to integrate Métis content in early years programming. The three-session workshop provides additional opportunities to support incorporating Métis-specific teachings within early learning programming and promoting learning environments in which Métis culture is recognized and celebrated.

This workshop was followed by Madelaine McCallum's "As I Am Is Enough" keynote. Madelaine shared a crucial lesson, "As I Am Is Enough" — an inspirational, vulnerable, and empowering keynote. Madelaine helped participants discover the importance of finding self-worth and acceptance. Named "Strong Earth Women," Madelaine connects the importance of traditional and cultural teachings with the power of identity. Early learning and child care professionals took away from this engaging presentation a renewed sense of energy and commitment to promote Métis culture within their early learning programs. 🌸



Métis ECE Recruitment & Retention

MNBC's Métis Early Childhood Education Recruitment & Retention team (ECE R&R) values the work being done by our early learning professionals. To show our appreciation, MNBC has created a Métis ECE supplement. This is designed to support our certified Métis ECEs and ECEAs who are working in licensed child care programs with a financial supplement. Applications for the Supplement are open from September 4 – October 30 2024, payments will be issued to successful applicants in November.

ECE R&R is supporting educators with professional development opportunities

across the province. This fall, ECE R&R is offering professional development in Terrace and Cranbrook. During these training opportunities educators will learn valuable ways to incorporate Métis culture into their child care programs through Métis ways of knowing and being. Educators will receive guidance from Elders and have opportunity to network with other early learning professionals.

For more information about current initiatives ECE R&R has available, contact Métiscesupports@mnbc.ca 🌸

Métis Early Years Conference

October 4-5, 2024

MNBC Ministry of Education held their annual Métis Early Years Conference in Kelowna B.C. on October 4 and 5 at the Delta Grand. With 250 participants immersed in Métis culture; culture reflected throughout keynotes, breakout sessions, and in stories and conversations from our Ki-tay-ah-yahk “old people,” (Heritage Michif, translation provided by Elder Norman Fleury). Métis language speakers, dancers, actors, authors, and artists contributing to the success of this event.

The attendees had the opportunity to connect with the Ki-tay-ah-yahk to ask questions about culture and their experiences of their childhood in their Métis families and communities. A highlight of the conference was an evening Kitchen Party where participants gathered with great food, music and to learn some new jigging steps. One participant shared that they loved “mingling with other attendees in a casual setting! Was so nice to network and meet a few new people,

or some I had only met through email and zoom.” Another participant shared how they “appreciated this year; the interconnection between culture and the work I do and feel like I bring it. The speakers, the environment this year sang Métis loud and proud. When asked if this training provided the competencies to provide an enhanced sense of cultural belonging and connectedness for Métis families and children, over 90% stated YES! ❁



Métis Elders or Ki-tay-ah-yahk, “old people,” who shared stories and knowledge with conference participants.



Michif language speaker, Samson LaMontagne and Minister of Education, Debrah Fisher.



Métis dancer and speaker, Madeline McCallum and 2024 Métis Early Years Conference participants.



Resources

Métis Nation BC YouTube Link to subscribe:
<https://www.youtube.com/@Métisnationbritishcolumbia>

Métis Connection to the Land Video:
[Home - Métis in BC \(mnbc.ca\)](https://www.mnbc.ca/home-metis-in-bc)

Amelia Douglas Institute:
<https://ameliadouglasinstitute.ca/michif-language>

Gabriel Dumont Institute:
[Gabriel Dumont Institute \(gdins.org\)](https://www.gdins.org)

Child Care BC Bulletin:
[ChildCareBC Bulletin - Province of British Columbia \(gov.bc.ca\)](https://www.childcarebc.ca/bulletin)

National Indigenous Day:
[National Indigenous Peoples Day \(rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca\)](https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca)

Contact Information

For more information about Métis programs and services, contact us at metisearlyyears@mnbc.ca.

Our Métis Child Care Navigators

The MNBC Child Care Navigator team supports early learning and child care programs, Early Childhood Educators, families, and communities throughout BC. Through the Métis Child Care Benefit Program, families can access additional funding to bridge the connection to the Affordable Child Care Benefit. The Child Care Navigator team also provides cultural learning and connections to Early Learning and Child Care Professionals. More information on the Métis Child Care Benefit Program can be found at this link: <https://www.mnbc.ca/work-programs/programs-services/metis-child-care-benefit-program>.



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