

Anishinabe Sacred Circle

Humility, Honesty, Courage, Truth, Love, Respect, Wisdom

The Bee Bundle and the Loon Bundle

First Nations, Métis and Inuit Women Support Project.

This project is open to women of all nations and all are welcome.

These projects are designed for women to promote a healthy lifestyle in a holistic manner through traditional teachings, ceremonies and cultural practice to include empowerment, self-esteem, good nutrition and other elements that could be identified throughout the process.

Identity is fundamental: knowing who you are is essential to understanding how to handle conflict in a healthy way. We aim to encourage women to take leadership and decision-making roles, to combat alcohol and drug use and its impact on parenting and family skills. The *Bee Bundle* will provide the appropriate tools to take charge of their lives and stay on the red path while the *Loon Bundle* will provide the tools to help participants find their purpose and set ACHIEVABLE goals.

The healthy living components of this program are leadership, self-esteem, community engagement, cultural teachings and practices, substance abuse and violence prevention, nutrition and healthy cooking, food security, parenting, health education and physical activity.

This project was very successful in 2019, with all women who participated regularly in the program either going back to school or returning to the workforce. The emotional, physical, spiritual and mental health of a family begins with the mother, if the mother is healthy, it is the whole family that will benefit.

Empowering women to build healthy communities

These activities guide participants towards understanding the meaning of the word *identity*, *self-esteem*, *dignity*, the thirteen teachings of the *Moon* and the teaching of the *medicine wheel/circle of life*.





Participants: This project is open to all women but the following groups will be prioritized; teachings will be adjusted as needed according to the group of participants:

1. Women with young children or children who are just starting school and who are ready to go back to school or return to the workforce.
2. Women who have struggled with drug or alcohol abuse and are now ready to return to school or work (these women have already participated in a detoxification program and are ready to move on)
3. Women who have been abused, have little or no education, have been trafficked, have struggled with life problems in general, are survivors or children of residential school survivors.
4. To women who simply want to rekindle their inner fire and include spirituality into their lives.

This project is a two-part project; we start with the *Bee Bundle* and continue with the *Loon Bundle*. (The *Bee Bundle Project* must have been completed to be eligible for the *Loon Bundle Project*)

Objective:

Our goal is to help women gain self-respect and learn to live their culture by introducing spirituality into their lives to help them cope with difficult situations.

-  Get to know each other, learn from each other, share their experiences and help them understand that they are not alone. This program is presented with simple lessons and concrete exercises giving powerful and lasting results.
-  Promote healthy lifestyle habits by focusing on physical development, healthy food choices and risk-free behaviours.
-  Bring elders, parents and youth together so that they can better understand and appreciate the richness of their roots.
-  Inspire women to build healthy communities.








Given the challenges faced by First Nations women, approaches were based on Anishanabe spirituality and values aimed at sustainable results. This does not limit these teachings to First Nations only, on the contrary it is designed and appropriate for women of all nations.

The completion of the project will be measured by the number of sessions and the number of participants in relation to the retention rate. This project also aims to create strong relationships/partnerships with community organizations with the same goal when working with women, including First Nations, Métis and Inuit women; to raise awareness among decision-makers about urban policies to ensure the inclusion and use of the strong potential workforce available.

Main activities

30 Weekly circles of 3 hours each, offering moments of exchange so that women can benefit from the experience of each without losing their values. The project will be implemented in Gatineau.

In order to engage in society with dignity and pride, women will receive traditional teachings on personal development, self-esteem and pride in identity, focusing on the following themes:

-  Know yourself and take good care of your body and environment in order to create a powerful connection with the community and the Earth.
-  The 4 directions of the medicine wheel, the 4 seasons and the 4 aspects of health (emotional, physical, spiritual and mental).
-  Ceremonies with the aim of encouraging values such as respect, courage, love, humility, honesty, truth and wisdom.
-  The sacred rituals of the Moon, Earth, Sun and others in order to maintain balance and enhance self-esteem.
-  The gathering and preparation of sacred plants.
-  The manufacture of drums in order to allow participants to regain their voice and self-esteem.
-  The sweat lodge, which has an effect on physical, emotional and spiritual problems. It fits well into a process of personal development.