

HOUSING AND WELLNESS PROGRAM

A Comprehensive Wellness Guide for First Nations Youth

BULLYING



First Nations Housing
Professionals Association

L'Association des professionnels de
l'habitation des Premières Nations

A close-up photograph of a moose's head, showing its large, velvet-covered antlers and its eye. The moose is looking slightly to the left. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green, suggesting a natural outdoor setting. A blue rectangular box with a yellow gradient at the bottom is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing text.

Youth

Youth play an important role in shaping the strength and future of their communities. Supporting the wellness of youth living on-reserve helps build vibrant, healthy communities where young people can grow and thrive.

This wellness guide is designed to support First Nations youth by providing information, tools, and strategies that promote physical, mental, and emotional well-being.

By supporting youth wellness, communities can create environments that encourage resilience, positive development, and strong connections between generations.

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Acknowledgement

The **First Nations Housing Professionals Association (FNHPA)** is delighted to introduce the Housing and Wellness Program, aimed at offering crucial information and guidance to First Nations individuals residing on-reserve or engaged in housing-related roles. This initiative delivers educational programs, tools, and resources tailored for First Nations housing staff, residents, and youth. Through the implementation of this program, our aim is to address housing, health, and safety concerns holistically.



BULLYING

Bullying is behaviour intended to harm, intimidate, or control another person. It is usually repeated over time and often involves an imbalance of power, where the person bullying may feel stronger, more influential, or socially dominant than the person being targeted.

Bullying can occur in many environments, including schools, communities, workplaces, and online spaces.

Common Forms of Bullying

Physical

Physical bullying involves direct harm to a person or their belongings. Examples include hitting, kicking, pushing, or damaging someone's property.

Verbal

Verbal bullying uses language to hurt or intimidate someone. This may include insults, name-calling, teasing, spreading rumours, or making threats.

Social

Social bullying (sometimes called relational bullying) involves damaging someone's reputation or relationships. This may include excluding someone from a group, spreading gossip, or manipulating social situations to isolate someone.

Cyberbullying

Cyberbullying occurs through digital platforms such as social media, messaging apps, gaming platforms, or email. It may involve sending harmful messages, sharing embarrassing content, or publicly humiliating someone online.

Bullying is not limited to physical behaviour. Verbal, social, and online bullying can be just as harmful and can have lasting effects on a person's mental and emotional well-being.



IMPACT ON WELL-BEING

Bullying can have serious effects on a person's emotional, mental, and physical well-being. These effects may continue long after the bullying stops.

Emotional impact

People who experience bullying may feel sadness, fear, anger, shame, or anxiety. Over time, this can affect confidence and self-esteem.

Mental health challenges

Bullying is linked to mental health concerns such as depression, anxiety, chronic stress, and trauma-related symptoms. These challenges can affect how someone thinks, feels, and manages daily life.

Social isolation

Someone who is being bullied may withdraw from friends, activities, or social situations. This can lead to loneliness and difficulty trusting others.

Academic or work challenges

Bullying can affect concentration, motivation, and attendance. As a result, students may struggle in school, or individuals may experience challenges at work.

Physical health effects

Ongoing stress from bullying can affect physical health. Some people may experience headaches, sleep problems, fatigue, or other stress-related symptoms.

Long-term effects

The impact of bullying can continue into adulthood. People who were bullied may experience ongoing self-esteem challenges or difficulty trusting others.

Risk of self-harm or suicide

In severe cases, bullying can lead to feelings of hopelessness or thoughts of self-harm. Anyone experiencing these feelings should reach out to a trusted adult, counsellor, or support service for help.

Addressing Bullying

Experiencing bullying can be difficult and stressful, but there are steps you can take to protect yourself and find support. If you or someone you know is experiencing bullying, consider the following actions:

Stay safe

If a situation feels unsafe, remove yourself if possible and go somewhere you feel secure. Your safety and well-being should always come first.

Talk to someone you trust

You don't have to deal with bullying alone. Consider speaking with a trusted adult, family member, friend, teacher, counsellor, elder, or community leader. Talking about what's happening can help you receive guidance and support.

Keep a record

If the bullying continues, it can be helpful to document what is happening. Record dates, locations, messages, or screenshots if the bullying occurs online.

Report the bullying

If bullying happens at school, report it to a teacher, school counsellor, or administrator. Many schools and communities have policies and supports in place to address bullying.

Seek additional support

Sometimes bullying can have a strong emotional impact. Speaking with a counsellor, therapist, or mental health worker can help you process your experiences and develop coping strategies.

Take care of yourself

Focus on activities that support your well-being, such as spending time with supportive people, participating in activities you enjoy, or practicing stress-management strategies. Everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect. Bullying is never acceptable, and support is available to help address it.

DISCRIMINATION

Discrimination and bullying can sometimes overlap, but they are not the same. Discrimination occurs when someone is treated unfairly because of personal characteristics such as race, gender, religion, disability, sexual orientation, or cultural identity.

Discrimination can happen in many settings, including schools, workplaces, housing, and public services. In some cases, discrimination may also take the form of bullying if the behaviour is repeated and involves a power imbalance.

Understanding discrimination can help individuals recognize unfair treatment and support others who may be experiencing it.

Examples of Discrimination

Direct discrimination

This occurs when someone is treated unfairly because of who they are. For example, excluding someone from an opportunity or activity because of their race, gender, or cultural background.

Indirect discrimination

This occurs when a rule or policy appears fair but negatively affects certain groups of people. For example, a policy that unintentionally excludes people because of cultural or religious practices.

Harassment

Harassment involves behaviour that creates an intimidating, hostile, or disrespectful environment. This can include offensive jokes, comments, or repeated behaviour targeting someone's identity.

Victimization

Victimization occurs when someone is treated unfairly because they reported discrimination or supported someone else who did.



Conflict Resolution Techniques

Conflicts can happen in friendships, school environments, online spaces, or within communities. Learning how to address conflict respectfully can help people communicate better, solve problems, and build stronger relationships.

Here are some strategies that can help resolve conflicts in a healthy and constructive way.

Listen actively

Take time to listen to the other person's perspective without interrupting. Showing that you are willing to listen can help reduce tension and encourage open conversation.

Communicate respectfully

Share your thoughts and feelings honestly while remaining respectful. Using "I" statements, such as "I felt hurt when...", can help express concerns without blaming the other person.'

Understand different perspectives

Everyone has different experiences and viewpoints. Taking the time to understand another person's perspective can help create empathy and reduce misunderstandings.

Focus on solutions

Instead of focusing only on the problem, work together to find solutions that respect everyone involved.

Manage emotions

Conflicts can bring up strong emotions. Taking a moment to pause, breathe, and calm down can help prevent the situation from escalating.

Ask for support if needed

If a conflict becomes difficult to resolve, it can help to involve a trusted adult, counsellor, elder, teacher, or community leader who can help guide the conversation.

CYBER SAFETY

Online spaces are a major part of daily life for many young people. While the internet can help people connect, learn, and share ideas, it can also create opportunities for cyberbullying, harassment, or scams.

Practicing safe and respectful online behaviour can help protect your personal information and reduce the risk of online harm.

Tips for Staying Safe Online

Protect your personal information

Avoid sharing personal details such as your address, phone number, school information, or passwords online.

Use privacy settings

Review the privacy settings on social media platforms and apps. Limiting who can see your posts and personal information can help protect your online presence.

Think before you post

Before sharing something online, consider how it might affect others and how it could be interpreted. Once something is posted online, it can be difficult to remove completely.

Be cautious about who you connect with

Only accept friend or follow requests from people you know and trust. Be cautious when interacting with unfamiliar accounts.

Block and report harmful behaviour

If someone is sending harmful messages or engaging in cyberbullying, use the platform's tools to block and report the behaviour.

Ask for support when needed

If you experience cyberbullying or feel uncomfortable about something online, talk to a trusted adult, teacher, counsellor, elder, or community member for support.



Building Self-Esteem

Developing confidence and a strong sense of self can help young people navigate challenges such as bullying, discrimination, and peer pressure. Building self-esteem takes time, but there are steps you can take to strengthen your confidence and well-being.

Practice self-care

Taking care of your physical and mental health is an important part of building confidence. Activities such as exercise, spending time outdoors, getting enough sleep, and practicing relaxation techniques can support overall well-being.

Set realistic goals

Setting achievable goals can help build confidence over time. Breaking larger goals into smaller steps and recognizing progress along the way can help reinforce a sense of accomplishment.

Recognize your strengths

Everyone has unique talents, skills, and qualities. Taking time to recognize your strengths and celebrate your achievements can help build a positive sense of self.

Connect with your culture

Learning about your culture, language, traditions, and community can help build confidence and a strong sense of identity. For many First Nations youth, spending time with elders, participating in cultural activities, and learning traditional teachings can strengthen pride and belonging.

Learn and grow

Trying new activities, learning new skills, or exploring personal interests can help build confidence and expand your abilities.

Surround yourself with supportive people

Spending time with friends, family members, mentors, or community members who encourage and respect you can have a positive impact on your confidence and well-being.

Practice gratitude and positive thinking

Focusing on the positive aspects of your life and acknowledging what you are grateful for can help strengthen resilience and self-confidence.



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Moving Forward

Bullying and discrimination can have a serious impact on individuals and communities, but everyone has a role to play in creating safe and respectful environments.

By supporting one another, speaking up when something is wrong, and building confidence and respect within our communities, youth can help create positive change.

Every person deserves to feel safe, valued, and respected. Working together, we can build stronger and healthier communities for everyone.

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