

HOUSING AND WELLNESS PROGRAM

# A Comprehensive Wellness Guide for **First Nations Youth**

## HOME MAINTENANCE



First Nations Housing  
Professionals Association

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



## 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.

# HOME MAINTENANCE

Learning about basic home maintenance is an important life skill. Understanding how to care for your home helps create a safe, healthy, and comfortable living environment.

Home maintenance skills can also help youth become more independent and confident while supporting their families and communities.

## Why Home Maintenance Matters

### Practical life skill

Learning basic home maintenance helps you develop useful skills such as performing simple repairs, keeping your home clean, and responding to minor problems before they become bigger issues.

### Cultural knowledge and connection

Many First Nations communities have strong connections to the land and traditional ways of building and caring for homes. Learning how to care for homes helps preserve these practices and respect the places where we live.

### Supporting your community

When youth learn how to care for their homes and shared spaces, they help support the well-being of their families and communities.

### Self-sufficiency

Home maintenance skills build independence and confidence. This is especially important in remote or rural communities where professional repair services may not always be available.

### Future opportunities

Learning these skills can also open doors to careers in areas such as construction, housing maintenance, renovation, or property management.

## Basic Maintenance Skills

Learning basic home maintenance skills helps you care for your living space and contribute to the well-being of your home and community. These skills can also prepare you for greater independence in the future.

Here are some ways youth can help maintain a home:

### Cleaning

Regular tasks such as sweeping, mopping, dusting, and vacuuming help keep your home clean and healthy.

### Basic repairs

Learning simple repairs such as fixing a leaky faucet, replacing light bulbs, repairing small holes in walls, or unclogging drains can prevent small problems from becoming larger ones.

### Energy efficiency

Simple habits such as turning off lights when not in use, sealing drafts around doors and windows, and using energy-efficient appliances can reduce energy use and save money.

### Outdoor maintenance

Helping with outdoor tasks such as mowing the lawn, raking leaves, gardening, watering plants, and removing debris helps keep outdoor spaces safe, clean, and well cared for.

### Painting

Painting can improve the appearance of a home. You can help prepare surfaces, choose colours, and assist with painting walls or ceilings.

### Safety checks

Regularly checking smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, fire extinguishers, and door or window locks helps keep homes safe.

### Emergency preparedness

Learning how to respond to emergencies such as learning basic first aid can help keep families safe.

# ENERGY EFFICIENCY

Energy efficiency means using less energy to do everyday tasks such as heating homes, lighting rooms, or using appliances. Using energy efficiently helps reduce energy costs and protect the environment by using fewer resources.

Understanding energy efficiency can help youth develop habits that support both their households and their communities.

## Why Energy Efficiency Matters

### Protecting the environment

Using less energy helps reduce pollution and conserve natural resources.

### Saving money

Energy-efficient habits can lower electricity and heating costs for households.

### Health and comfort

Well-insulated and properly ventilated homes are often more comfortable and healthier to live in.

### Community sustainability

When communities use energy efficiently, they become more resilient to rising energy costs and environmental challenges.

### Future opportunities

The growing focus on energy efficiency has created career opportunities in fields such as renewable energy, construction, and environmental management.

## Energy Efficiency Tips

Here are some simple ways to save energy at home:

- Turn off lights and electronics when they are not in use.
- Unplug chargers and devices when they are not being used.
- Use energy-efficient LED light bulbs.
- Seal gaps around windows and doors to prevent heat loss.
- Run full loads in the dishwasher and washing machine.
- Use cold water when possible for laundry.
- Open windows for natural ventilation instead of relying only on air conditioning.
- Lower the temperature setting on the water heater if appropriate.



# INDOOR AIR QUALITY

Indoor air quality refers to the condition of the air inside a home and how it affects the health and comfort of the people living there. Poor indoor air quality can be caused by dust, mould, smoke, chemicals, or poor ventilation.

Maintaining good indoor air quality helps create a healthier living environment and can reduce the risk of respiratory problems, allergies, and other health concerns.

## Common Sources of Poor Air Quality

Indoor air pollution can come from several sources, including:

- Dust and allergens such as pet dander, pollen, and dust mites.
- Mould and moisture, which can develop in damp areas like bathrooms or basements.
- Smoke, including tobacco smoke or smoke from cooking or burning materials.
- Household chemicals from cleaning products, paints, or air fresheners.
- Poor ventilation, which prevents fresh air from circulating through the home



## Tips for Improving Indoor Air Quality

### Keep your home clean

Regular cleaning, dusting, and vacuuming help reduce dust and allergens.

### Control moisture

Fix leaks and dry damp areas quickly to prevent mould growth.

### Improve ventilation

Open windows when possible or use ventilation fans to bring fresh air into the home.

### Avoid indoor smoking

Smoke indoors can significantly reduce air quality and affect everyone in the home.

### Use household products carefully

Follow instructions on cleaning products and avoid mixing chemicals.

### Check air filters

Replacing or cleaning furnace and ventilation filters helps improve airflow and air quality.

### Use exhaust fans when cooking or showering

This helps remove moisture, smoke, and odours from the home.



# WATER CONSERVATION

Water conservation means using water carefully and avoiding unnecessary waste. Conserving water helps protect this important resource and ensures that communities have access to clean water for the future.

By developing simple water-saving habits, youth can help reduce water use at home and support environmental sustainability.

## Tips for Conserving Water

### Turn off taps when not in use

Turn off the water while brushing your teeth, washing dishes, or doing other daily tasks.

### Fix leaks quickly

Leaky faucets, pipes, or toilets can waste large amounts of water over time.

### Use water-efficient fixtures

Low-flow showerheads and toilets help reduce the amount of water used in the home.

### Take Shorter Showers

Reducing shower time is one of the easiest ways to save water.

### Use full loads for laundry and dishwashing

Running washing machines or dishwashers only when full helps conserve both water and energy.

### Water plants wisely

Water gardens or plants during cooler parts of the day to reduce evaporation.

### Collect rainwater when possible

Rainwater can be used for watering gardens or outdoor plants.



## EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Emergency preparedness means planning ahead for unexpected events such as fires, severe weather, power outages, or natural disasters. Being prepared can help keep families safe and reduce panic during emergencies.

Youth can play an important role in helping their households prepare for emergencies by learning safety procedures and helping organize emergency supplies.

### Ways to Prepare for Emergencies

#### Know your evacuation plan

Make sure everyone in the household knows the safest ways to exit the home and where to meet outside in case of an emergency.

#### Learn basic safety skills

Knowing basic first aid, how to call emergency services, and how to respond to different emergencies can help keep people safe.

#### Keep emergency supplies ready

Emergency kits should be easy to access and stored in a safe location.

#### Stay informed

Pay attention to local emergency alerts and weather warnings so you can respond quickly when needed.

#### Practice emergency drills

Practicing fire drills or other emergency procedures helps ensure everyone knows what to do.

### Emergency Kit Essentials

An emergency kit may include items such as:

- Flashlights and extra batteries
- Bottled water and non-perishable food
- First aid supplies
- Blankets or warm clothing
- A battery-powered radio
- Important documents stored safely
- Phone chargers or portable power banks



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## HOME MAINTENANCE

### Caring for Your Home

Taking care of your home helps create a safe, healthy, and comfortable living environment.

By learning basic maintenance skills, conserving energy and water, and preparing for emergencies, youth can play an important role in supporting their households and communities.

Small actions taken today can help protect homes and contribute to stronger, healthier communities in the future.

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