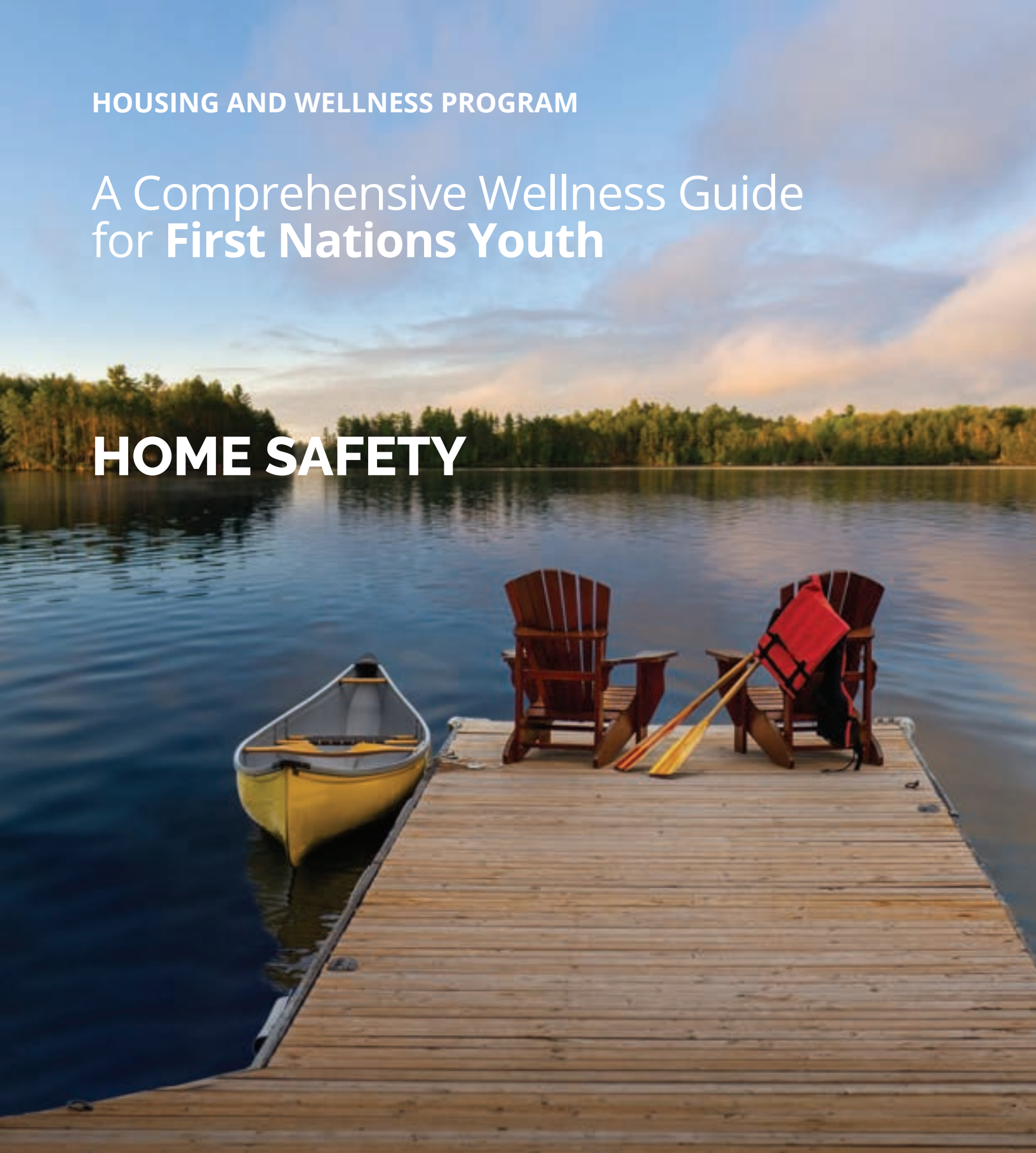


HOUSING AND WELLNESS PROGRAM

A Comprehensive Wellness Guide for First Nations Youth

HOME SAFETY



First Nations Housing
Professionals Association

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

A close-up photograph of a duck's head, showing its textured brown and black feathers. A small blue arrow points to the duck's eye. The background is blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting.

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 SAFETY

Home safety means recognizing potential hazards in your home and taking steps to prevent accidents, injuries, and emergencies. Learning about home safety helps you protect yourself, your family members, and your home.

Understanding home safety can help you:

Prevent accidents

Many injuries happen in the home. Learning to recognize hazards can help reduce risks such as falls, burns, cuts, and poisoning

Prepare for emergencies

Knowing how to respond during emergencies such as fires or medical situations can help keep everyone safe.

Build independence and responsibility

Knowing how to respond during emergencies such as fires or medical situations can help keep everyone safe.

Protect your home and belongings

Taking simple safety precautions can help prevent damage caused by accidents or emergencies.



FIRE SAFETY

Fire safety involves understanding common fire hazards and knowing how to prevent and respond to fires. Learning these skills can help protect your home, your family, and your community.

Fires can start quickly, but many home fires are preventable when people understand common risks and take simple safety precautions:

Common Fire Hazards in the Home

Cooking

Unattended cooking is one of the leading causes of house fires. Grease, overheated oil, and flammable items left near the stove can easily catch fire.

Electrical equipment

Overloaded outlets, damaged cords, or malfunctioning appliances can create serious fire hazards.

Heating equipment

Space heaters, fireplaces, and furnaces can cause fires if flammable objects are placed too close to them.

Candles

Leaving candles unattended or placing them near flammable materials such as curtains or paper can start fires.

Flammable liquids

Products like gasoline, paint thinner, and solvents should always be stored safely away from heat sources.

Dryer lint

Lint buildup in dryer vents can ignite and cause fires if dryers are not cleaned regularly.

Grilling and outdoor fires

Grills should always be used at a safe distance from buildings, decks, and overhanging branches.



Fire Prevention Tips

Never play with matches or lighters

Matches and lighters should only be used by adults and must be kept away from children.

Be careful with candles

Never leave candles unattended and keep them away from materials that could catch fire.

Use electrical devices safely

Avoid overloading outlets and report damaged cords or appliances to an adult.

Practice safe cooking habits

Never leave cooking unattended and keep flammable items away from the stove.

Know your escape plan

Make sure you know your household's fire escape routes and practice fire drills regularly.

Stay low in smoke

If a fire produces smoke, stay close to the ground where the air is clearer.

Stop, drop, and roll

If your clothes catch fire, stop immediately, drop to the ground, and roll to put out the flames.

Report fire hazards

Tell an adult if you notice blocked exits, overloaded outlets, or other fire risk



FIRE EVACUATION PLANS

Having a fire evacuation plan helps everyone leave the home quickly and safely during a fire. Planning ahead can reduce panic and confusion and help ensure that everyone knows what to do in an emergency.

Every household should have a clear escape plan that all family members understand and practice.

How to Create a Fire Evacuation Plan

1. Draw a floor plan of your home

Identify all rooms and possible exits, including doors and windows.

2. Identify two escape routes from each room

Have a primary route and a secondary route in case the first path is blocked by smoke or fire.

3. Install and maintain smoke alarms

Smoke alarms should be installed on every level of the home and near sleeping areas. Test them regularly to make sure they work.

4. Choose a safe meeting place outside

Select a meeting spot outside the home where everyone will gather after evacuating.

5. Practice fire drills

Practice your fire escape plan regularly so everyone knows how to exit the home safely.

6. Include everyone in the plan

Make sure younger children, elders, and pets are considered when creating the evacuation plan.



ELECTRICAL SAFETY

Electricity powers many devices we use every day, but it can also be dangerous if not used properly. Understanding basic electrical safety helps prevent shocks, burns, and fires.

Learning how to use electrical devices responsibly helps protect you, your home, and the people around you.

Electrical Safety Tips

Check cords and plugs

Inspect cords and plugs before using electrical devices. If you notice frayed wires, cracks, or exposed metal, stop using the device and tell an adult.

Avoid overloading outlets

Plugging too many devices into one outlet can cause overheating and increase the risk of fire.

Use extension cords properly

Only use extension cords for their intended purpose and avoid running them under rugs or furniture where they can become damaged.

Keep water away from electricity

Never use electrical devices near water or with wet hands.

Unplug devices when not in use

Unplug items like chargers or hair tools when they are not being used to reduce the risk of electrical hazards.

Report unusual problems

If you notice sparks, burning smells, buzzing sounds, or outlets that feel hot, report the issue immediately.

Stay away from power lines

Never climb trees near power lines or fly drones, kites, or balloons near them.

Be cautious around downed power lines

If you see a downed power line, stay far away and notify emergency services or an adult.



MOULD

Mould is a type of fungus that grows in damp or humid environments. It spreads through tiny spores that travel through the air and can grow on many surfaces inside the home. Mould commonly appears in areas where moisture is present, such as bathrooms, kitchens, basements, or places affected by leaks or flooding.

If mould grows indoors, it can damage building materials and may affect health, especially for people with allergies, asthma, or other respiratory conditions.

Health Effects of Mould

Exposure to mould may cause:

- sneezing or runny nose
- itchy eyes or skin irritation
- coughing or difficulty breathing
- worsening asthma symptoms

People with weakened immune systems or respiratory conditions may be more sensitive to mold exposure.

Mould Prevention Tips

Control moisture

Fix leaks and wipe up spills quickly to prevent moisture buildup.

Improve ventilation

Use exhaust fans when cooking or showering and open windows when possible to reduce humidity.

Keep surfaces clean and dry

Regularly clean areas where moisture collects, such as bathrooms, sinks, and countertops.

Promote air circulation

Avoid placing furniture tightly against walls so air can circulate.

Reduce humidity levels

If humidity is high, consider using a dehumidifier to keep moisture levels under control.

Check your home regularly

Look for signs of water damage or mould growth and report concerns to a responsible adult.

HOUSEHOLD CHEMICAL SAFETY

Many everyday products in the home contain chemicals. These include items such as cleaning products, bleach, drain cleaners, nail polish remover, antifreeze, and paint products.

While these products can be useful, they can also be harmful if they are not handled or stored properly. Understanding how to use and store household chemicals safely helps prevent injuries, poisoning, and accidents in the home.

Why Chemical Safety Matters

Protecting health

Some household chemicals can cause burns, breathing problems, or poisoning if they are misused or inhaled.

Preventing accidents

Chemicals left within reach of children or pets can lead to accidental exposure or injury.

Avoiding dangerous reactions

Mixing certain chemicals can create harmful gases. For example, mixing bleach with ammonia can produce toxic fumes.

Protecting the environment

Improper disposal of chemicals can pollute water, soil, and the surrounding environment.

Reducing fire risks

Some household chemicals are flammable and must be stored carefully to avoid fire hazards.



Household Chemical Safety Tips

Read labels carefully

Always follow the instructions and warnings on chemical products before using them.

Use chemicals in well-ventilated areas

Open windows or use fans to improve airflow when using strong cleaning products.

Store chemicals safely

Keep chemicals in their original containers and store them out of reach of children and pets

Never mix unknown chemicals

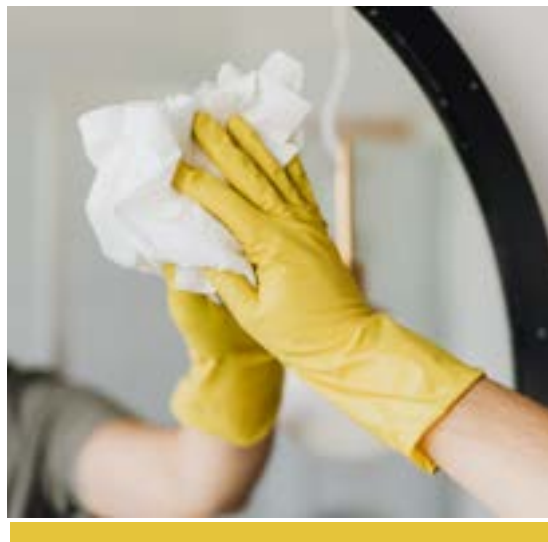
Mixing chemicals can create dangerous reactions or toxic gases.

Wear protective equipment when needed

Gloves or eye protection may be necessary when handling certain products.

Dispose of chemicals properly

Follow local guidelines for disposing of hazardous household waste.



WHMIS

WHMIS stands for the **Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System**. It is a safety system used in Canada to help people understand how to handle hazardous materials safely. WHMIS provides important safety information through labels, safety data sheets, and training, helping people recognize potential hazards and use products safely.

Although WHMIS is mainly used in workplaces, its safety principles can also help people understand how to safely handle products at home. For example, many household products such as cleaners, paints, and solvents contain warning labels that explain how to use, store, and dispose of them safely.

Learning to read and understand these labels can help prevent accidents and injuries.

Key Components of WHMIS

Labels

Hazardous products must include labels that show warning symbols and provide instructions for safe use.

Safety Data Sheets (SDS)

Safety Data Sheets provide detailed information about hazardous materials, including their risks, safe handling procedures, and emergency response steps.

Education and Training

Workers receive training to understand WHMIS labels and safety information so they can handle hazardous materials safely.



Flame over circle
(oxidizing hazards)



Flame
(fire hazards)



Gas cylinder
(gases under pressure)



Exploding bomb
(explosive or reactivity hazards)



Environment
(may cause damage to the aquatic environment)



Corrosion
(corrosive damage to metals, as well as skin, eyes)



Skull and crossbones
(can cause death or toxicity with short exposure to small amounts)



Health hazard
(may cause or suspected of causing serious health effects)



Exclamation mark
(may cause less serious health effects or damage the ozone layer)



Biohazardous Infectious Materials
(organisms or toxins that can cause diseases in people or animals)

Kitchen Safety

The kitchen is one of the busiest areas in the home and can also be one of the most dangerous if safety precautions are not followed. Burns, cuts, and fires are some of the most common kitchen injuries.

Learning safe kitchen habits can help prevent accidents and keep everyone safe while cooking.

Kitchen Safety Tips

Stay focused while cooking

Always pay attention when cooking and avoid leaving the stove unattended.

Keep flammable items away from heat

Items such as dish towels, paper towels, and packaging should be kept away from the stove or oven.

Use appliances properly

Follow instructions when using kitchen appliances such as microwaves, toasters, and air fryers. Ask for help if you are unsure how to use them safely.

Handle hot items carefully

Use oven mitts or potholders when handling hot pots, pans, or baking trays to prevent burns.

Turn pot handles inward

Turn handles toward the back of the stove so they are less likely to be bumped or knocked over.

Use knives safely

Always cut on a cutting board and handle knives carefully. Keep knives out of reach of younger siblings.

Clean spills immediately

Wipe up spills quickly to prevent slips and falls.

Know how to respond to grease fires

Never pour water on a grease fire. Turn off the heat if possible and cover the pan with a lid to smother the flames.

FIRST AID

First aid is the immediate care given to someone who is injured or suddenly becomes ill before professional medical help arrives. Knowing basic first aid can help prevent injuries from becoming more serious and may even save lives.

Learning first aid skills helps you respond calmly and effectively during emergencies and support the safety of your families and communities.

Common First Aid Situations

Cuts and scrapes

Clean the wound with clean water and apply a bandage to protect it from infection.

Burns

Cool minor burns with cool running water for several minutes. Do not apply ice directly to burns.

Sprains and strains

Rest the injured area, apply ice, and elevate the limb if possible to reduce swelling. A good acronym to remember is **R.I.C.E.:** Rest, Ice, Compression, and Elevations.

Choking

If someone is choking and cannot breathe, call for help immediately and seek assistance from someone trained in first aid.

Nosebleeds

Have the person sit upright and lean slightly forward while gently pinching the nose.

Allergic reactions

Some people may have severe allergic reactions to foods, medications, or insect stings. Call emergency services if someone has difficulty breathing or severe swelling.

When to call for help

Call emergency services immediately if someone is unconscious, having difficulty breathing, experiencing severe bleeding, or showing signs of a serious medical emergency.





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Creating a Safer Home

Understanding home safety helps prevent accidents and protect the people who live in your home.

By learning about fire safety, electrical safety, household hazards, and first aid, youth can help create safer living environments for their families and communities.

Being aware of potential risks and taking simple precautions can make a big difference in keeping homes safe.

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