

Be Happy, Be Healthy

A Guide for Healthy Living
During the COVID-19 Pandemic



Nishnawbe
Aski Nation
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www.nancovid19.ca

Message from the Nishnawbe Aski Nation Executive Council

Booshoo! Wacheya!

We know how challenging these past few months have been for all of us, but trust that you are all slowly adjusting to the new reality we find ourselves in. This pandemic has been difficult on our families as we continue to navigate these uncertain times, but we have also witnessed amazing strength and resilience, in all our communities across NAN territory by ensuring the safety of all our families, both on and off reserve. Many of you have countless responsibilities, and as you continue to balance the daily demands, the importance of our own self-care is often forgotten. By practicing self-care, it can help to alleviate stress and anxiety that has been caused by the pandemic while supporting your own overall health and well-being.

Our mental, physical, and spiritual wellness is paramount during these uncertain times and none of us are immune from stress and worry. It is not uncommon having feelings of despair and doubt, along with the sometimes-overwhelming individual effects that this pandemic has posed. It is important to protect yourselves, by seeking help if you need it. We encourage any of you who may need extra assistance during this time to reach out and pursue support.

As we begin to think about easing restrictions in our remote communities and urban centres, we urge you to continue to protect yourself and your families in the weeks to come. We are certainly not yet in a place that we can go back to the way things were before. Please continue to take care of your own health, as well as your family by following the public health practices including frequent hand washing and social distancing. It is important that our families remain safe and that we continue to take all precautionary measures.

Stay safe and continue to watch over your families and loved ones.

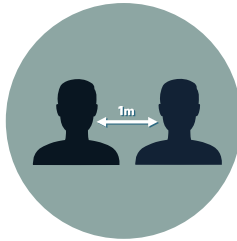
Miigwetch,

Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler
Deputy Grand Chief Derek Fox
Deputy Grand Chief Jason Smallboy
Deputy Grand Chief Walter Naveau



Protect Yourself, Your Family and Community

- Avoid touching your face.
- Wash your hands.
- Respect social distancing measures put in place by your band and council.
- Wear a mask when leaving the house.
- Limit the number of visitors you have in your home.
- Self-isolate in your home if you have any symptoms.



How to properly wash your hands:



1 Wet Your Hands



2 Apply Soap



3 Wash Your Hands For 20 Seconds



4 Rinse



5 Dry with a Clean Towel



6 Use the Paper Towel to Turn Off the Tap

NAN COVID-19 Task Team guidelines for being on the land during the pandemic

The people of NAN have a special relationship with the land. It is the source of our spiritual, mental and physical well-being. The NAN COVID-19 Task Team encourages the people of NAN to be on the land during the pandemic. They have developed the following guidelines to help NAN members hunt, gather, fish, and harvest in a safe way.

Planning for Being on the Land

- If you are feeling sick, stay home.
- If you have been asked to self-isolate, don't go.
- Plan to go out as a family or household, instead of in a large group.
- Tell someone where you are going, who is going with you, and when you're coming back, in case medical care is needed.
- Make sure that you have an evacuation plan, in case somebody gets sick.
- Pick a location that would be easy to evacuate from, if needed.

While on the Land

- Cover your cough.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Bring hand sanitizer and keep your hands clean.
- Look out for the symptoms of COVID-19:
 - Fever
 - Cough
 - Difficulty breathing
- If anyone starts showing symptoms of COVID-19, seek medical care immediately.

Mental Health Support

NAN First Nations are taking extraordinary measures to keep safe, and many community members are experiencing heightened feelings of isolation and uncertainty. This has understandably resulted in increased levels of anxiety and depression.

The NAN Hope Mental Health Crisis Line was developed to help anyone struggling to cope with stress and anxiety during the pandemic.

**If you need help, please call or text
1-844-NAN-HOPE (626-4673) or visit nanhope.ca**

Contacting NAN Hope will provide access to the Virtual Rapid Access Centre that offers 3 services:

- 24/7 toll-free rapid access to confidential crisis services.
- Connection to ongoing mental health and addictions support services in home communities and existing regional supports through trained Navigators.
- Rapid Access to clinical and mental health counselling.

Help is available. You are not alone.

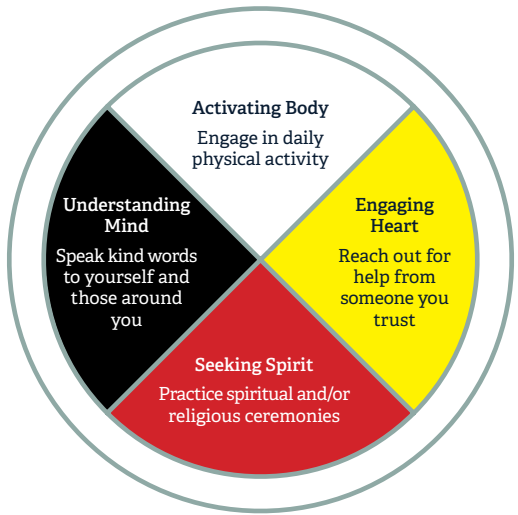
There are many resources available to help you with health and wellness concerns during this pandemic including counselling, addiction services and mental health supports.

To find services available in your area, please contact your community health professionals, local Health Authorities, Tribal Councils or NAN Hope.



Wellness & Self-care

During this time, not only should we be focusing on our physical health, but we should also ensure we are making our mental health a priority. There are many ways to form healthy habits that are beneficial for both physical and mental health.



Spend some time reflecting on how you can implement self-care and improve wellness.

Self-care Activity: Artistic Journaling

Drawing or colouring to express your thoughts and feelings is a great form of self-care. A few minutes a day of mindful art journaling can go a long way to improve mood, lower anxiety and create a feeling of accomplishment.

Supplies:

- A pen, pencil, markers, crayons etc.
- Piece of paper, notebook etc.

How to art journal:

- Find a comfortable place to sit, even places with a few distractions that you can manage.
- Draw something that reflects your current feelings, life situation, hopes or dreams.
- If you do not know what to draw, just start scribbling.

You do not have to be an artist. This is a time to express yourself freely, without judgment.

It is your choice if you want to share what is in your journal or not. There may be pieces you would like to share with others, and some you may want to keep to yourself.

Caring for Children

As we face change and uncertainty surrounding the pandemic, it is normal that your child may be experiencing anxiety. Children might be worried about themselves, their friends and loved ones becoming ill from COVID-19. Parents play an important role in ensuring that children understand the current situation in a way that minimizes anxiety and fear. It is important to ensure that your child is comforted.

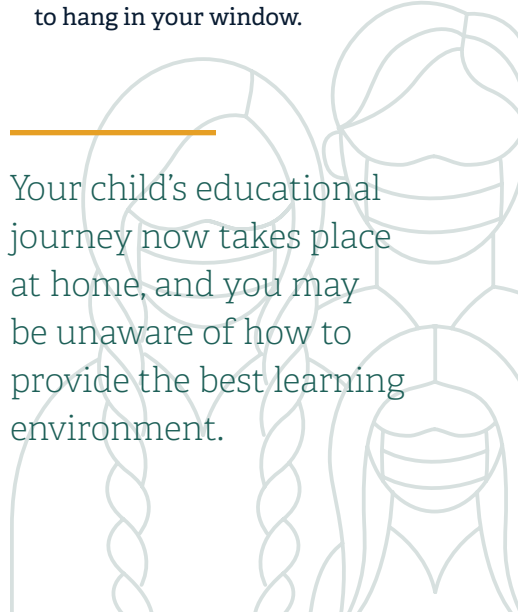
Some ways to do this are:

- Listen to them when they express their emotions.
- Work with them to establish routines in the home.
- Educate yourself and answer any questions children may have to the best of your ability.
- Correct any misinformation and limit news exposure, where applicable.
- Focus on things that you and your child can control.
- Take time to validate their concerns with your words and attention.
- Review good hygiene practices.

Your child may miss spending time with their friends and family members whom they are used to seeing as a part of their daily routine. There are many activities that you can do with your child to overcome boredom while spending large amounts of time at home:

- Get moving! Work on creating a dance to your child's favourite song or see who can do the most jumping jacks in a minute.
- Start singing! Your child's language development will improve by singing songs.
- Storytelling! Tell your child a story from your childhood or ask them to tell you a story.
- Try creating! Draw pictures of the activities your family will enjoy when social distancing is over or create positive messages to hang in your window.

Your child's educational journey now takes place at home, and you may be unaware of how to provide the best learning environment.



Helping Students While Learning at Home

Here are some ideas for helping your child learn while at home:

- Dedicate a workspace for them.
- Establish a daily routine to create stability and set expectations.
- Create a schedule that meets the needs of your family (it does not have to match the in-school times).
- Ensure your child has a say in the schedule and routine to empower them to stay motivated.
- Allow for independent play and time outside.

Your child does not have to be focused on schoolwork for six hours a day, or have every minute of their day planned.

As you adjust to your larger role in your child's school life, it is important to remember to continue to practice patience and self-care. Here are some things to keep in mind:

- It is important to give yourself a break.
- If something is not working or you have a bad day, do not be afraid to take a break or shift to a new activity.
- Be patient and take time for yourself.
- Remember you do not have to do this alone.
- If you are having a hard time, reach out to your child's teacher or a friend.



Helpful Resources

Health:

- Contact your local Nursing Station if you have any health concerns. Telehealth Ontario: 1-866-797-0000

Wellness Support:

- Hope for Wellness Help Line: 1-855-242-3310
- Hope for Wellness is available to all Indigenous peoples across Canada who need immediate crisis intervention. Support is available in English, French, Cree and Ojibway.

Nishnawbe Aski Nation COVID-19 Task Team:

- For updated information please visit the NAN COVID-19 website (www.nancovid19.ca).
- If you have any questions or need assistance regarding the pandemic, you can contact NAN at emergency@nan.ca.

To contact the NAN COVID-19 Task Team:
Please send all inquiries regarding COVID-19 to
emergency@nan.ca



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