

Indigenous Nova Scotian Inclusion Guidelines

This checklist is for service providers (government, non-profit or corporate) who work with, for, and support people who are Indigenous living in Nova Scotia.

TERMINOLOGY

Indigenous: of or relating to the earliest known inhabitants of a place, especially a place that has been colonized by the now dominant group. (Merriam Webster, 2023)

2-Spirit: A person who identifies as having both a masculine and feminine spirit. The term is used by some Indigenous people to describe their sexual, gender and/ or spiritual identity. (LGBTQ Health, 2023)

Colonization: The act of taking control of an area or country that is not your own, especially using force, and sending people from your own country to live there. (Oxford Dictionary, 2023)

Truth and Reconciliation: Reconciliation is about establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. There must be an awareness of the past, acknowledgment of the harm, and atonement for the causes and action to change behavior. (Indigenous People's Atlas of Canada, 2023)

GENERAL

1. Recognize the ongoing impacts of colonization
2. Be intentional when working with individuals living with inter-generational trauma.
3. Be non-judgmental and respectful
4. Acknowledge that elders are the backbone of Indigenous communities
5. Apologize if you make a mistake

REPRESENTATION

Be intentional with including posters and artwork that represent Indigenous teachings and practice

- a. 7 Sacred Teachings & the Medicine Wheel
- b. Contract local Indigenous artists to promote their work
- c. Indigenous art as education pieces such as Kent Monkman's The Scream

Ensure that key pamphlets and program materials are translated into Mi'kmawisimk

- a. Hire Indigenous translators who know the language, understand it, and can appropriately use it

Have employees who have similar lived experiences as Indigenous participant

- a. People from Indigenous communities working with Indigenous participants
- b. Have Indigenous employees throughout all levels of the organization
- c. Have an elder on staff

Recognize and participate in Truth and Reconciliation Day (Sept 30)

- a. Use September 30th as an opportunity provide non-Indigenous staff with education on Residential Schools, and reflect on organizational commitment to Truth and Reconciliation
- b. If your organization remain open, allow Indigenous staff a day of rest on Sept 30

Be intentional with Land Acknowledgements to open meetings/presentations etc.

- a. Acknowledge the land using the Indigenous name, as opposed to the colonial name
- b. Connect the issues directly to the legacy of colonization

CULTURE

Education and training for all staff on Indigenous history and culture

- a. The 7 Sacred Teachings
- b. The Medicine Wheel
- c. The Blanket Exercise
- d. The Indian Act
- e. Residential Schools
- f. The Legacy of Colonization

Understanding and honoring the calls for action in critical national reports

- a. Truth and Reconciliation
- b. Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit People

Understand that all Indigenous communities are diverse and unique

- a. Not all Indigenous Reserves are the same
- b. Be mindful of different stereotypes about different communities
- c. Understand the different challenges for Indigenous participants when it comes to living on-reserve and off-reserve
- d. Be considerate of service pricing and poverty. - things are cheaper to access on Reserves

Have a warm and inviting space

- a. Nonclinical vibe
- b. Allow smudging in program and meeting spaces
- c. Incorporate posters and artwork that reflect Indigenous culture

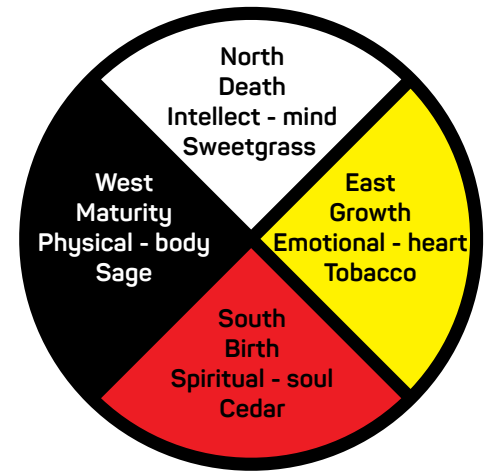
Do not use racial slurs and be cautious of biases and micro aggressions

- a. Do not use the words "Indian" or "Métis"

Acknowledge and be respectful to elders as they are the backbone of their communities.

Do not make assumptions about who someone is or where they are from

- a. Ask questions like "Where is your home community?" as not everyone is from a Reservation
- b. Ask what people's first language – do not assume it is English



PERSONAL

Include anti-racism training for all staff

- a. Check your biases and have employees do the same

Have employees who know the culture, understand and can respond appropriately when in uncomfortable situations

- a. Understand how Indigenous people speak, their tone and style of communication
- b. Do not judge people on their clothes, smell, facial expressions ("bitch face"), and humor.
- c. Lack of eye contact is not a sign of disrespect - continuous eye contact may not be expected or even accepted as a courtesy of conversation, especially with elders.

Consult with Indigenous people about who they nominate and who to trust.

Have resources close by for indigenous people and share them with them because sometimes they will not know.

Jane Paul Centre

Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre

NS Native Women's Association

Native Council of Nova Scotia

Eagles Nest