



tions in the Matawa region. The funding will run over 18 months to 2024. It will allow for the enhancement of the current Harvesters Support Grant to include food transported into the community by developing partnerships for food distribution to the communities to build on food sovereignty and food security. This enhancement would help to restore the loss of knowledge, encourage more eating off the land and provide conservation awareness.

Some of the objectives of the expanded program include:

- harvesters preparation teaching lodges
- land-based activities in traditional territories
- community food storage facilities, freezers
- purchase of harvesting activity supplies (ammunition, fishing supplies)
- training costs for new harvesters (firearms course, watercraft safety)
- workshops: food dehydration, medicine harvesting and other food related training programs
- local gardens, greenhouses
- seeking cost-effective options to increase access to supplies and food in the communities
- potential of community food banks
- coordination of food supply shipments
- exploration of food distribution partnerships

## Awashishewiigihiwaywiin – Post Majority Care Services

Four Rivers – Garden Domes, Webinar Series, Environment Gathering 2022

## Matawa Health Co-operative – Update

Education – Post Secondary Application  
Dates, Rotary Club Bursary, ICSEI 2023  
Annual Gathering, Distance Education/  
Google Classroom, In and Around PASS  
Program,  
Safe Sobering Site – Harm Reduction,  
Canada's New Drinking Guidelines

Welcome New Staff and more....

# GATHERING OF RIVERS FOR COMMUNITY CARE



monthly

## 50/50

jackpot

ADMINISTERED BY MATAWA FIRST NATIONS MANAGEMENT

To see this month's jackpot  
and to purchase ticket  
packages by credit card

SCAN





On February 1, 2023 the Gathering of Rivers for Community Care (GRCC) Board of Directors were pleased to establish this public online lottery fundraiser (Lottery License #RAF1295296). Some things to know about it are:

- The winning amounts are based on the number and value of tickets purchased monthly
- Draws will take place on the 15th of each month (or on the Monday following, if the 15th lands on a Saturday or Sunday) for a 1 year period - the last draw will take place on January 15, 2024
- Tickets are sold to people who are 18 years or older and are residents of the province of Ontario - they are also open to Matawa Board of Directors and employees
- Tickets can be purchased by credit card at [www.rafflebox.ca/raffle/gatheringofriversforcommunitycare](http://www.rafflebox.ca/raffle/gatheringofriversforcommunitycare) or by EMT to [raffle@matawa.on.ca](mailto:raffle@matawa.on.ca) (contact information is required)
- Ticket Packages are as follows: D - 80 for \$50.00 C - 20 for \$20.00 | B - 5 for \$10.00 | A - 1 for \$5.00
- Ticket purchasers will be sent auto-generated tickets and will have access to an online dashboard through a company called Rafflebox where they can see how much the jackpot has progressed each month

It is hoped that this fundraiser will result in substantive sales each month so that both the GRCC and winner can mutually benefit. Winning proceeds will be used towards projects to improve the lives of our First Nations (and will be announced when determined). More information on the charity can be found here: [www.gatheringofrivers.com](http://www.gatheringofrivers.com).



save the date

# MATAWA 35TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

July 25, 26, 27, 2023  
Long Lake #58 First Nation

## Animals North Presents to Matawa Chiefs Council

On December 15, 2022, Nikki Burns, a representative of Animals North met with the Matawa Chiefs Council to begin discussions on animal control in the Matawa communities. The following is an article she submitted.

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Most of us are familiar with the expressions: “it takes a village to raise a child,” or “two heads are better than one.” The same can be said for any worthwhile project. The more people who collaborate and cooperate in a meaningful, positive way, the greater the chance of success.

Animals North is dedicated to the welfare of animals and residents of First Nation communities in the north. The group is made up of First Nation community and Tribal Council members as well as veterinarians, and animal welfare groups. Our goal is to work together to help alleviate the animal overpopulation and health and safety risks that they can present.

Stories of animal culls, dog aggression and animal bites, dogs and cats dying of hunger or disease are more and more common since Covid prevented animal welfare groups from visiting communities. And so, in September of 2022, Animals North was formed and invited stakeholders to participate in a Zoom meeting. The group has now grown from 20 or so to over 70 participants and has held 5 monthly zoom meetings. Its mantra is “we are all in this together.” From the James Bay Coast to the Manitoba border, communities are beginning to realize what is possible if we work together. Examples in point:

- Four animal rescue groups working together to share the cost of spay/neuter and vaccination clinics in Fort Albany and Attawapiskat;
- First Nation Bylaw and Animal Control Officers sharing their community struggles and successes;
- Funding organizations reaching out to help;
- A willingness to go beyond spay/neuter and vaccinations and look at what can be done in community to create a healthy and maintainable animal population. There is light at the end of the tunnel.

Recently, the Animals North Coordinator was invited to speak to the nine Chiefs of the Matawa First Nations. The response was very positive as she outlined the goals of the organization. As a result, three Matawa communities are in the midst of planning wellness clinics for their communities with member groups of Animals North. Animals have always featured as an important part of First Nation culture. ...as companions, protectors, hunters, and workers.

Prior to the advent of the snowmobile, many community members had sled dog teams. The teams delivered mail, food, wood, and anything else that needed to be moved. These teams were essential to the trapping and hunting done in the communities. But due to overpopulation, many dogs are hungry, sick and can potentially become aggressive and spread diseases. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), any disease or infection that is transmissible from animals to humans or from humans to animals is classified as a zoonosis. Among the human pathogens, about 61% are zoonotic in nature.

Animals North hopes to address many of the animal concerns in northern communities including lack of veterinary care, cost and lack of dog and cat food, potential BCRs or Bylaws that can help, infrastructure needs like animal shelters and animal control and bylaw officers. The sky may be the limit, but it must start one step at a time. Animals North invites community Chiefs and Councils and community members to reach out to work with us. Together we can make positive changes. We can be reached by email at: [animalsnorth2022@gmail.com](mailto:animalsnorth2022@gmail.com)

See pictures on next page >>>





## Matawa Education - Post Secondary Application Deadlines



Matawa Post-Secondary Program (MPSP) provides Post-Secondary assistance on behalf of the following First Nations: Aroland, Ginoogaming, Long Lake #58, Neskantaga and Webequie. The MPSP provides financial assistance to eligible students towards the cost of their post-secondary education.

ALL STUDENTS, continuing and new, are required to submit a new application **each term**, according to the following deadline dates:

- May 15th: Fall Term September to December
- May 15th: Fall & Winter Terms September to April
- November 1st: Winter Term January to April
- March 31st: Spring & Summer Terms May to August

**FOR APPLICATIONS** please contact the Matawa Post Secondary Office (807)-768-3300 / 1-888-283-9747 or by cell# 807-632-7192 / cell# 807-633-9586.

## MATAWA EDUCATION AND ROTARY CLUB BURSARY

Application deadline : May 1, 2023 by 4:30 pm EST

### CRITERIA:

- This Bursary Fund is for Matawa First Nations Community Members attending Elementary, Secondary, Post-secondary, Training, Apprenticeship, or Trades programs
- Applicants are to complete the application form and attach required documentation
- The goal of these awards is to promote excellence in literacy, leadership, personal achievements and applicants who demonstrate determination, commitment with education and career goals

### FOR MORE INFORMATION OR AN APPLICATION, CONTACT:

Matawa First Nations - Education Department  
200 Lillie Street North  
Thunder Bay, ON P7C 5Y2  
Tel: 807.768.3300 | Toll-Free: 1.888.283.9747



## New Garden Domes in 4 Matawa Communities!

Last fall, Four Rivers finished building four new garden domes in the Matawa member road-access communities. Aroland, Ginoogaming, Long Lake #58 and Constance Lake will all be able to try their hand at gardening soon. These 26 foot “igloo-shaped” domes can withstand our temperatures and weather, and are able to sustain winds up to 200 km/hr winds, or 9 feet of snow on top. Due to the design, which helps keep heat inside, the growing season can start in March and go up until November, extending growing time significantly. With assistance from a Healthy Communities Initiative grant, Four Rivers was able to purchase and built these beautiful new structures, and help these Matawa member communities improve their food sovereignty. Hopefully the skilled community gardeners will be able to pass on their knowledge to the youth, and grow some medicines or nutritious food... Happy planting!



Top photo: Ginoogaming FN; Bottom photo: Aroland FN



Top photo: Constance Lake FN; Bottom photo: Long Lake #58 FN





## International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement (ICSEI) 2023 Annual Gathering

On January 6, 2023, Matawa Education and Care Centre (MECC) staff kicked off the new year with an exciting opportunity to showcase the hard work and accomplishments achieved by some of their staff. Sharon Nate, Education Director; Angela Wapoose, Administrative Assistant; Nick Shaver, Vice-Principal; and Joe Willis, Curriculum Development Officer, traveled to Vina Del Mar, Chile to attend and lead a presentation at the International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement (ICSEI) 2023 annual gathering. This year's conference focused on "Global Perspectives, Collaboration and Local Solutions for Reimagining Schools." Amongst international educators and researchers from schools and universities around the world, MECC provided an empowering presentation in partnership with the Critical Thinking Consortium (TC2), a leading education organization in Canada that focuses on offering exemplary services and products that are innovative, inclusive, responsive, and provocative that lead to meaningful change. Our presentation focused on Redesigning Teaching and Learning Resources to Enhance Indigenous Students' Outcomes. Our collaborative approach to decolonizing education showcased a collaborative framework, learning materials, and project goals that was well received by all who attended our presentation. We are proud to be a part of the select few who were able to present their successes at this conference and put MECC on the map as a leader of designing and implementing Indigenous-centered curriculum for our students. The trip was an impactful experience as we not only presented our success, but also networked and learned about other initiatives around the world that are servicing vulnerable populations, amongst other successful strategies. We were fortunate to enjoy the immersive cultural experiences Chile provided and the future opportunities this project and conference will bring to MECC.



*Middle photo (L to R): Nick Shaver, Vice-Principal; Joe Willis, Curriculum Development Officer; Sharon Nate, Education Director; Angela Wapoose, Administrative Assistant*

# WELCOME TO DISTANCE EDUCATION

for remote, adaptive and online learners

Good day!

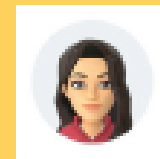
My name is Kaleigh, and I am the Distance Education Coordinator at MECC.

We are offering Google Meets for teachers and students daily. Scan the QR Code or join: <https://meet.google.com/GRG-RUCO-YMI>.



Coursework submission. There are many ways to submit your work:

1. Virtual Submission: Log in to your Google Classroom.
  - a. Website: <https://classroom.google.com/> & log in using your Matawa email.
  - i. Login: [firstname.lastname@matawaeducation.com](mailto:firstname.lastname@matawaeducation.com). Password: text 1(807)620-9131.
  - b. Join your Semester 2 Classes. Review the "Stream" tab and then click the "Classwork" Tab.
  - c. Select an assignment to complete (save to Google Drive). Submit using the "Turn In" button.
2. Paper Submission:
  - a. Snap a picture of your completed work and text it to: 1(807)620-9131
  - b. Fax it to: 1(807)768-3301
  - c. Email it to: [kcaputo@matawaeducation.ca](mailto:kcaputo@matawaeducation.ca).
  - d. Snail mail it to: MECC - 200 Lillie St N. or I can arrange pick up & delivery.



Let's connect! I AM HERE FOR YOU!

Kaleigh Caputo - Distance Education Coordinator  
MATAWA EDUCATION AND CARE CENTRE  
200 Lillie Street N. Thunder Bay, ON, P7C5Y2  
Call/Text/FaceTime: 807-620-9131  
Email: [kcaputo@matawaeducation.ca](mailto:kcaputo@matawaeducation.ca)



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BellTV Channel 962



Upcoming 2023 Shows:

- March 14 and 28
- April 11 and 25
- May 9 and 23
- June 6 and 20
- July 4 and 18

## SEMESTER 2 ANNOUNCEMENT: GOOGLE CLASSROOM - GOOGLE MEETS

For remote, adaptive, & online learners

**QR Code:**



JOIN DAILY GOOGLE MEETS,  
TO CHAT WITH YOUR  
TEACHERS AND PEERS, FROM  
YOUR PHONE OR LAPTOP:  
[HTTPS://MEET.GOOGLE.COM/  
GRG-RUCO-YMI](https://meet.google.com/GRG-RUCO-YMI)



For more information, speak with your  
classroom teacher or Kaleigh, the Distance Education Coordinator.  
Email: [kcaputo@matawaeducation.ca](mailto:kcaputo@matawaeducation.ca)







## **FOUR RIVERS WEBINAR SERIES**

### **NEW YEAR... NEW SERIES!**

Four Rivers has a fresh, 6-episode Webinar Series lined up for 2023!

#### **EPISODE 1:**

**MONITORING THE WATERS:  
STURGEON IN THE HOMELANDS**

#### **EPISODE 2:**

**MONITORING THE WATERS:  
BROOK LAMPREY**

#### **EPISODE 3:**

**CARING FOR THE LANDS:  
INDIGENOUS CULTURAL  
BURNING PRACTICES**

#### **EPISODE 4:**

**ENVIRONMENTAL CONVERSATIONS  
IN THE LANGUAGE**

#### **EPISODE 5:**

**MONITORING THE PLANTS:  
WILD RICE**

#### **EPISODE 6:**

**MONITORING THE HOMELANDS:  
DATA VISUALIZATION AND ACCESS**

FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK



FOR LIVE SCHEDULE UPDATES

All webinars will be presented via MS Teams, please inquire with Alex Horne for access:  
[ahorne@fourrivers.group](mailto:ahorne@fourrivers.group)

**ALL EPISODES WILL BE RECORDED AND AVAILABLE FOR DOWNLOAD FOLLOWING THE LIVE EVENT**

*Inquiries: [ahorne@fourrivers.group](mailto:ahorne@fourrivers.group)*

# Harm Reduction

By Sydney Ambury – After Hours Student Support Department, Social Work Placement Student

Harm reduction is a way to help people who use drugs or alcohol to be safer and healthier, without making them quit completely. It also includes encouraging safe sex and other education. Although harm reduction has a lot of evidence behind it, many people still believe that stopping the behaviour is the only solution. This can actually be harmful and dangerous as people will probably still act on these behaviours, without protecting themselves. This is why harm reduction is so important. When folks have non-judgmental access to services and supplies, they are less likely to get diseases or even die.

Harm reduction is about meeting people where they are at. This means recognizing that each person has different needs. For example, one person may be ready to talk about reducing their substance use, while another just needs access to safer injection or smoking supplies. Both people should be treated with respect and given the help they need.

One of the most well-known harm reduction practices is the distribution of safer injection, smoker, and snorting kits. This helps to stop the spread of diseases and keeps people safer. Other strategies include giving out condoms, offering drug substitution programs, giving out and teaching people how to use naloxone, and educating people on how to reduce risks while using drugs.

At Matawa, the Safe Sobering Site is an important part of harm reduction, offering a safe space for students to sober up with the help of trained staff. This helps to reduce the harm caused by being under the influence, such as alcohol poisoning, overdoses, and increased likelihood of accidental death. The Safe Sobering Site also gives out harm reduction supplies such as condoms and safer smoking/injection kits.

In conclusion, harm reduction is a necessary and successful approach to reducing the harm caused by substance use and sexual acts. These methods improve health, reduce healthcare costs, and save lives. It takes a compassionate and non-judgmental approach to recognize the complex nature of substance use and sexual behaviour and treat every person with respect.

National Harm Reduction Coalition. (2022, December 20). Harm Reduction Principles. <https://harmreduction.org/about-us/principles-of-harm-reduction/>

U.S. National Library of Medicine. (2008, January). Harm reduction: An approach to reducing risky health behaviours in adolescents. Paediatrics & Child Health. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2528824/>





## Canada's New Safe Drinking Guidelines

By Sydney Ambury – After Hours Student Support Department, Social Work Placement Student

The Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction (CCSA) recently released guidelines on the amount of alcohol that is safe. There has been a lot of buzz about these guidelines as they have introduced stricter limits. The overall message is that no amount of alcohol is safe. Your risk of cancer, various diseases, and harm to yourself or others increases with every single drink that you have.

Their current recommendation is that people should have no more than a total of two drinks per week. This is where there are no big risks of getting serious diseases. The risk increases for people who consume between 3 and 6 standard drinks per week and become increasingly high when consuming more than 7 standard drinks per week. Binge drinking (4+ drinks in one sitting) is especially dangerous. Also, people who are pregnant, those trying to conceive, and breastfeeding parents should not drink at all. According to the CCSA, one standard drink is a bottle of beer, a can of cider, a glass of wine, or one shot of spirit.

There are many ways that you can cut down on your drinking. First, set limits before you go out and stick to them. Next, choose drinks with a lower percentage of alcohol. For example, instead of choosing to take a shot, you could drink a beer. Thirdly, drink slowly. When drinking, take small sips throughout the night. Also, after each alcoholic drink you have, drink one non-alcohol drink. You may want to keep a pitcher of water with you so you can easily drink a glass of water before another drink. Lastly, consider not drinking at all. This can improve your health in many ways.

In the end, even in small amounts, alcohol is not good for your health. Drinking less is key to reducing health risks!

Source: Paradis, C., Butt, P., Shield, K., Poole, N., Wells, S., Naimi, T., Sherk, A., & the Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines Scientific Expert Panels. (2023). Canada's Guidance on Alcohol and Health: Final Report. Ottawa, Ont.: Canadian Centre on Substance Use and Addiction.



# Interested in joining an Advisory Council?

## MATAWA ADVISORY COUNCILS

Advisory Councils provide not only a platform but also a safe space to address issues at the community level.

The purpose of advisory councils is to provide information and recommendations to leadership and community partners. The goal is to always come to a collective agreement when it comes to prioritizing concerns.

The role of the Matawa Youth, Women and Elders Councils will be to provide a supportive environment that facilitates inclusion, empowers advocacy, and effectively address the best interests of its members needs and priorities.

Advisory council members will have the opportunity to bring these issues and resolutions to Matawa Chiefs along with advising them in their deliberations.

Advisory Council Coordinator will be visiting all Matawa communities in the coming months to help interested members establish councils. More information to follow.



## MATAWA CHIEFS COUNCIL

Matawa Chiefs Council services provides logistical, technical, policy and political advice to the Matawa First Nations Chiefs both individually and collectively. It also provides support to Program Managers within Matawa First Nations Management and liaises with external organizations to support the Matawa Chiefs Council and First Nations members.

For more information, please contact: Paul Capon, Matawa Chiefs Council Political Advisor at: 1-807-344-4575 or by email at: [pcapon@matawa.on.ca](mailto:pcapon@matawa.on.ca)



## In and Around the Matawa Education PASS Program





The Matawa Health Cooperative (MHC) is growing and now has 3 sites in Thunder Bay: Court St, Chapples and Dawson. We have Physicians, Nurses, Diabetes team, dietitians, Mental Health team, NP (Nurse Practitioner), EMR Privacy, Community Health Team, Health Promotion, Youth Workers, Health Transformation team and our ever busy and dedicated administrative and leadership teams.

In December, Turtle Concepts came to provide professional development for the entire staff. This was educational, eye-opening and an inspiring time for the staff.

The MHC has community health nurses in Aroland, Eabametoong and Ginoogaming, physicians and nurses travel to the member communities and when needed.

Nurse Nick is becoming a Wound Care specialist in foot care and is available for referrals. Nurse Chelsea is on maternity leave, we wish her well with her precious bundle. Dr Neckoway joined MHC as a locum and Nurse Lady is at the MECC for Matawa students.

Chapples has a walk in clinic every Tuesday and Friday from 1-4 pm, the Mental Health team and Youth Workers are travelling to Constance Lake for March break activities. MHC partners with artists, other health care professionals and organizations to provide quality care and health promotion for all members.

The Health Transformation team has been travelling to member communities for community engagement on Health Transformation and Nursing services.

The Good Food Box is distributed monthly in the city and in February a pilot project to distribute in Webequie. The youth enjoyed Hockey camps with Indigenous Hockey in Thunder Bay during Christmas break and a weekend in Constance Lake. There have been family activities taking place and workshops in the evenings.

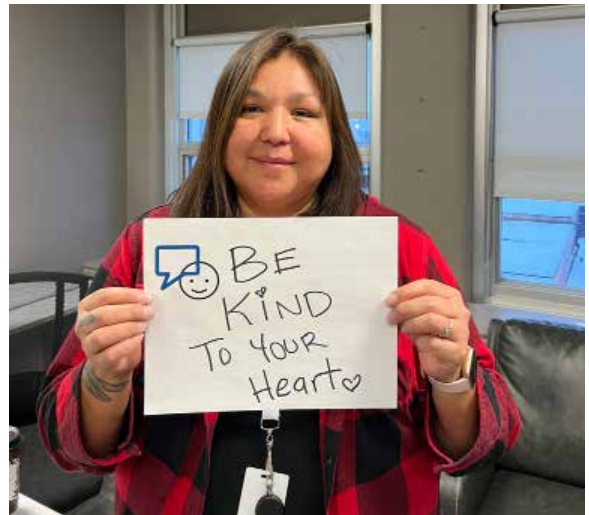
Foot care clinics have been taking place in all communities with attendance draws for participants. Hunter safety education and Zoom workshops were held for all members and grand prize draws for all participants included a chainsaw and generator.

We are working to include all Matawa members in our MHC Facebook challenges and that is where you can find most events, programs and activities posted. If you haven't already, please like and follow the MHC Facebook page.

The Screening Bus was parked outside for members to access screening and increase health supports. There is work in place to provide prostate cancer screening for the men of Matawa and paps for women who need them. The MHC staff are always learning and following up on the needs and supports for member communities.

The Matawa Health Cooperative is community driven and understands that there are unique needs in each of the First Nations.

You can contact the MHC by phone (807)346-2370 or, Confidential Fax: (807)346-2371, Toll Free: 1-833-625-3611, by email [mhc-reception@matawa.on.ca](mailto:mhc-reception@matawa.on.ca) or via MHC Facebook. Cheers to good health and happiness!









## Matawa Environment Gathering 2022



Over 40 delegates from the Matawa member First Nations attended the third annual Matawa Environment Gathering 2022 on December 5-7, hosted by Four Rivers, Matawa's Environmental Services Group, at the NorWester Hotel in Thunder Bay. Community lands & resource staff, environmental monitors & stewards, Elders, youth, and other interested members gathered for workshops to reflect on 10+ years of regional environmental programming and data collection, to share knowledge, build capacity, and participate in discussions on what's to come.

Four Rivers presented on multiple environmental monitoring programs which had been launched over the years and were excited to share their vision of turning 'data' into 'information', a vital step to informing community decision-making processes in future years. New platforms and data collection technologies were showcased, along with plans to arm community members with the power to gather data on the lands and waters, while pulling it all together in an understandable and accessible way. This information can contribute to future assessments throughout the homelands, as communities decide on their paths forward. Capacity building on Impact Assessment and Regional Assessment processes was also a focus of the event, with guest speakers joining from as far as Adams Lake, BC to share their experiences!

The Gathering was a huge success, and even included a turkey dinner/film screening, and an evening Christmas shopping shuttle. Thank you to all who participated, it was so great to see everyone again and we hope that you enjoyed our time together!



# Awashishewiigihiwaywiin Implements 'Next Steps' Program (as Part of Post-Majority Care Services)

## WHAT IS THE GOAL OF NEXT STEPS?

- to provide First Nations youth and young adults the same support and opportunities to thrive as any other youth or young adult in Canada
- to aid in supporting their distinct needs and self-identified goals as youth and young adults transition into adulthood
- to aid in making the transition for Matawa First Nations youth from in-care to living on their own



## WHY ARE WE IMPLEMENTING IT?

Current evidence and research suggest that to equitably support youth who will be leaving care, or young adults who have already left care, services need to be extended to at least 25 years of age and beyond, many recommend a readiness approach to services.

Youth in care and young adults formerly in care are a marginalized group with unique needs that require specific supports. First Nations youth aging out of care and young adults formerly in care may have higher needs due to the multigenerational trauma of residential schools and hardships arising from Canada's discrimination found by the Canada Human Rights Tribunal (CHRT).

## WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR POST-MAJORITY SUPPORT SERVICES?

First Nations youth and young adults that could access Post-Majority Support Services under the First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) Program are:

- Youth who are in FNCFS care approaching the age of 18. A youth is in FNCFS care when the care costs for the child or youth are funded by the FNCFS Program;
- Youth who were in FNCFS care and who exercised a voluntary care provision to leave care prior to the age of 18;
- Individuals who have reached the age of 18, who are under the age of 26 or the eligibility age for post-majority services specified in the applicable provincial legislation and who were in FNCFS care on the day they reached the age of majority;
- Individuals who have reached the age of 18, who are under the age of 26 or the eligibility age for post-majority services specified in the applicable province.

## HOW DO I REACH THE NEXT STEPS PROGRAM?

To schedule an intake please contact Michelle Levesque at (807)-698-7406 and for more information or any questions, please contact Youth Worker Ron Frost at (807)-630-0855.



# Matawa First Nations Management Welcomes New Staff

## Health Co-operative

### Adult Mental Health & Wellness Worker, John Dulude



John visits with Matawa communities to provide counselling services, group programs and referral services. John is a graduate of Confederation College in Indigenous Wellness and Addiction Prevention. John has worked front line for the past 20 years with various Indigenous organizations within the city of Thunder Bay and most recently as an Independent with Webequie First Nation. John is certified with the Indigenous Certification Board of Canada as a Level III Addiction Specialist. In 2020 he received the prestigious ICBOC Soaring Eagle Award for his many years of dedication to Mental Health and Wellness services. He has presented workshops for the National Native Drug and Alcohol Program (NNADAP) and for many communities throughout Northern Ontario. John is a community member of Manitou Rapids (Treaty 3) with lineage to Fort William (Robinson Superior Treaty 1850). His interests include playing musical instruments, fishing, seasonal outdoor recreation, and hockey.

## Health Co-operative

### Youth Recreation Worker, Dylan Jourdain-Spence



Hello, my name is Dylan Jourdain-Spence and I am from Fort William First Nation. I have recently joined Matawa Health Co-operative as a Youth Recreation Worker. I have a daughter who is 5 years old and I love her so much. I love my family, enjoy the outdoors, and I love sports. I enjoy working with youth from different communities and I'm looking forward to the new year. I'm excited to be a part of such an important organization and can't wait to start working with youth from around Ontario.

## KKETS

### Administrative Assistant/Receptionist, Jessica Sutherland



I was born and raised in Hearst, I speak both English and French. My community is Moose Cree First Nation - Moosonee. I graduated from Lakehead University in Business Administration. With KKETS I will be working as an Administrative Assistant and part time Receptionist. I also work as a server once or twice a week. I enjoy baking, podcasts, naps, pizza, pugs, and being active at the gym or getting outside. I am very social but also enjoy doing absolutely nothing and my guilty pleasure is reality tv. I look forward to working with everyone!

## Health Co-operative

### Youth Recreation Worker, Anna Johnson-Boissoneau



My name is Anna Johnson-Boissoneau, I am a member of Naicatchewenin First Nation, I was born and raised in Thunder Bay. I recently joined the Matawa Health Co-operative team as Recreation Youth Worker in hopes of bringing myself out of my shell and putting myself out there in the world. I've always considered myself to be a very kind and caring person but was never able to express the feeling of wanting to help people in a way I found to be fulfilling. Before I graduated from Westgate C.V.I in 2022 I began working as a line/prep cook at Boston Pizza in May of 2021. I enjoyed working with my hands and would consider myself to be a hands-on learner, often using "Trial and Error" to find what works best for me. I am excited to experience a change in work environment, and I look forward to seeing where working with Matawa will take me!

## Health Co-operative

### Youth Recreation Worker, Aaron Wesley-Chisel



Aaniin. My name is Aaron Wesley-Chisel, and my community is Lac Seul First Nation; however, I was born and raised in Thunder Bay. I participated in hockey, baseball, soccer, judo, and wrestling as an adolescent. I attended Lakehead University and obtained a bachelor's degree in Indigenous Learning. Also, during my tenure at Lakehead, I was fortunate enough to be a part of the Lakehead Thunderwolves hockey team. I took Carpentry for a year at Confederation college, which allowed me to build houses in Cat Lake. Additionally, I worked in Matawa communities, where I assisted in repairing waterlines and other vocational tasks. I am very grateful and excited to be a part of the Matawa Health Co-op team as the new recreation youth worker! I hope my skills and education will effectively serve the Matawa community members. I am also looking forward to working with and learning from everybody. Miigwetch.

## KKETS

### E-Learning Coordinator, Logan Bruyere



Boozhoo Aaniin Ndizhinikaz Logan Bruyere. I'm a person of Temagami First Nation, living in my home town of Thunder Bay, youngest of 4 siblings and happy dog owner. 2SLGBTQIA+ I also am a Capricorn Sun Cancer Moon Sagittarius Rising! I have Community work based in peer/mental health and addiction work. Looking forward to working with you wonderful people and your beautiful communities!

## **KKETS**

### **Executive Assistant, Ila Beaver**



Booshoo Wachiye, My name is Ila Beaver. I am from Nibinamik First Nation but currently living in Thunder Bay. I am delighted to be joining Kiikenomaga Kikenjigewen Employment Training Services as Executive Assistant. My recent position at Matawa First Nation Management as Mental Well-

ness Teams Lead working with families, communities in crisis and working with front line workers from the communities gave me insight to work with all Matawa communities and different business partners. Off work, I enjoy spending time with my family outdoors and cooking traditional food. I am looking forward working with the rest of the KKETS team as the new year begins.

## **KKETS**

### **Finance Officer, Shane Milanese**



Hello, my name is Shane Milanese. I am the new Finance Officer here at KKETS. I have worked in the accounting/finance field for approximately 10 years. I have obtained an Accounting and Finance Administration Diploma from Confederation College and a Bachelor of Administration in Business Degree from Lakehead University. I enjoy biking, hiking, swimming and going to the gym. I also enjoy playing guitar and listening to music. I also wanted to mention that I after working at KKETS for just over a week, I noticed that it is a very positive work environment. Everyone that I have met has been friendly and supportive.

## **Matawa Student Care Centre**

### **Student Safety Support Liaison, Melina Indian-Mandamin**



Boozhoo, my name is Melina Indian-Mandamin. I am from Treaty 3, Wabaseemoong Independent First Nations. I am the new Student Safety Support Liaison for the Matawa Student Care Centre. I am also currently in full-time studies with Lakehead University taking Indigenous

Learning program. I am married and a mother to 2 beautiful children. My spirit name is Morning Star and my clan is sturgeon. I look forward to meeting everyone!

## **Matawa First Nations Management**

### **IT Helpdesk Analyst, Chris Harrington**



Hello, my name is Chris Harrington. I have recently joined the Matawa IT Services team as one of the new IT Helpdesk Analysts. I have a Bachelor of Engineering from McMaster University, with a focus on Software Engineering. In addition, I have over five years experience in

IT infrastructure supporting large and small businesses. I am super excited to be joining Matawa as they roll out the new Rapid Lynx Broadband Project, which aims to connect Matawa communities with the latest Fiber technology. When not working or studying, you can find me exploring the outdoors either running, hiking, camping, fishing, or hunting. Then once tired my favorite things to do is curl up and watch a movie or play some games with friends and family. It will be a great honor to get to know you all and hope to support the Matawa team in anyway possible.

## **Awashishewiigihiwaywin (Social Services Framework)**

### **Program Support, Early Childhood Educator Nicole Gamble**



Hello, my name is Nicole Gamble. I have recently joined the Matawa Awashishewiigihiwaywin (Social Services Framework) team as the Program Support Early Childhood Educator. I am a graduate of the Early Childhood Education program at Confederation College and Circle of Security facilitator.

Before joining Matawa, I was co-running the Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre's Waabogonee EarlyON for the last 4 years. My passion is fostering secure attachments between children and their caregivers while creating a fun and welcoming environment. When not at work I can be found working with caregivers to properly install their car seats and hosting car seat clinics. I often travel to teach Passenger Safety Technician Instructor for the Child Passenger Safety Association of Canada, CPSAC. I look forward to providing a variety of programming for members and being a part of the team!

## Living with Us... Ma'iikan (Grey Wolf)



Ontario is home to 2 species of wolves, the Eastern Wolf (*Canis c.f. lycaon*) which is most commonly found in central Ontario eastward into Quebec, and the Grey Wolf (*Canis lupus*) which is most commonly found in Northern Ontario and the Matawa homelands. The Eastern Wolf, sometimes referred to as the “Algonquin Wolf”, can weigh between 20-30 kg (44-66 lbs) with reddish-brown fur. Sometimes called the “Timber Wolf”, the Grey Wolf is often larger than its Eastern cousin weighing between 14-70 kg (30-154 lbs), with fur most commonly ranging from grey to black (can also include brown and white). Grey Wolves hunt in packs for moose, deer, beaver, caribou and even elk and bison where available. Ma'iikan requires large, continuous habitat; young wolves may leave the pack and travel 80 to 800 km.



**Did You Know...** despite the physical and DNA differences both these species of wolves have some strikingly similar characteristics. They are social animals that typically live in packs which consists of groups of 6-10 related canines. They practice what's call cooperative breeding, where the alpha male and female (AKA the alpha pair) are the designated breeding couple; this practice ensures that the pack does not end up with too many litters of pups that may not survive when food/prey may become scarce. The pack also participates in cooperative hunting, together the group members pursue their chosen prey in single file and then spread out for the kill. These hunting skills and techniques are passed down from generation to generation. Four Rivers is currently working with several Matawa member First Nations on trail camera programs to gather information on our local wolf populations. If you come across a trail camera (gray box mounted on a tree) while out on the land, please leave it undisturbed and connect with your local Lands & Resource office or Four Rivers for more information! Sources:

- <https://wolvesontario.org/wolves-ontario/>
- <https://furmanagers.com/timber-wolf/>
- <https://www.britannica.com/animal/gray-wolf>



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