


# Le Villazh Maachi Kashkihtow

## *The Village of Learning*



**Welcome to the fourth edition of  
*Le Villazh Maachi Kashkihtow,*  
*The Village of Learning***

Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC)  
Ministry of Education aims to bring culturally  
relevant information and highlights to  
inform your practice of cultural inclusion,  
emphasizing the Métis way in each edition.





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## Métis Nation Early Learning and Child Care Framework

The Métis Nation Early Learning Framework identifies a vision for early learning and child care in which Métis children and families throughout the Homeland are provided with culturally relevant, self-empowering early learning and child care programming and services that focus on the development and maintenance of strong Métis families and communities across the lifespan, beginning at birth.

Principle 7 of the framework outlines, supporting ELCC providers, from inside or outside the Métis Nation, to be trained and educated in Early Childhood Education and the cultural ways of the Métis Nation, thereby enhancing their competency in working with Métis Nation children and their families.

The Ministry of Education Early Childhood Education Recruitment and Retention initiatives are ensuring that individuals are being trained and educated in Early Childhood Education (ECE) through initiatives that promote their growth as professionals. This ultimately supports our Métis children and families. Some of these initiatives include the Métis ECE Supplement where certified Métis early years educators working within licensed child care programs can access a \$1,000 supplement for Métis Early Childhood Educators and \$500 for Métis Early Childhood Assistants. Our Métis Early Childhood Education Community of Practice provides a





space for early learning professionals to gather virtually on a quarterly basis to connect with one another, building capacity in retaining valuable early childhood education staff. More information about these important initiatives and others from our Métis Early Childhood Education Recruitment and Retention programs are found within this newsletter. Through these initiatives, citizens of Métis Nation BC can obtain meaningful careers that will help to fill the need of ECEs within the province of British Columbia. MNBC hopes to enhance the quality of child care by improving training and development

opportunities, as well as addressing long-standing issues around wages and recruitment in the sector.

Métis early learning professional, Cherie Jacobsen, working at Kiki Awasis Learning Centre in Prince George, BC has said, *"If we are the mirrors of our children, they see what we do and what we reflect. We want to support and help them discover their own identities."* Cherie's words tie back to Principle 7 in the Métis Early Learning Framework as professionally trained ECE's will have the competency and confidence in teaching our children the cultural ways. 🌸



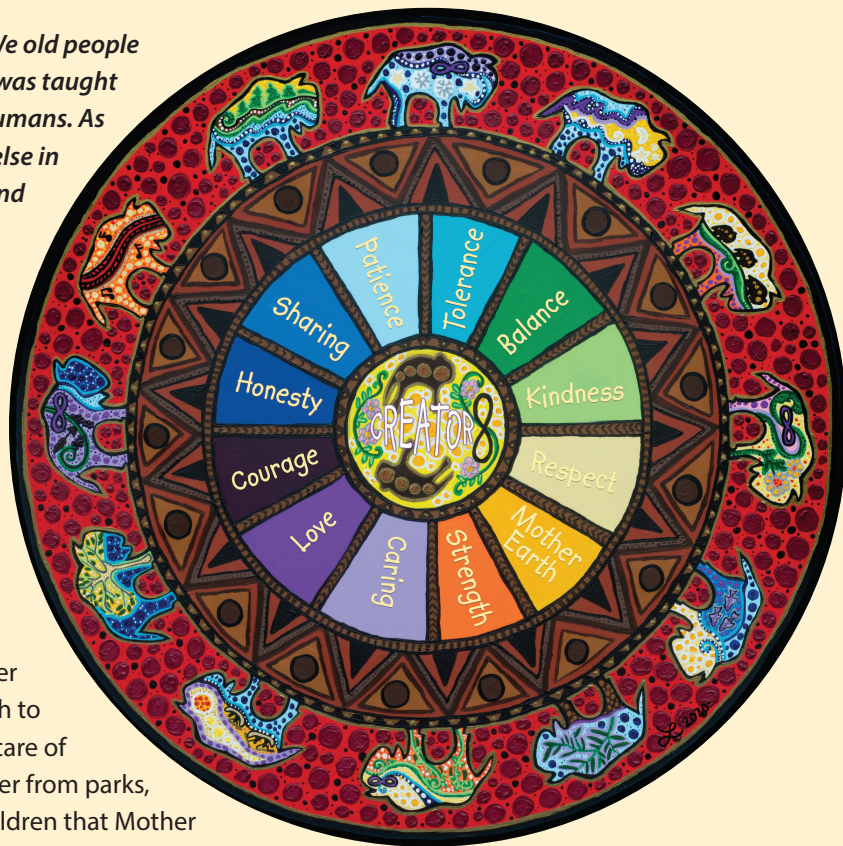
## Métis Core Values

### MOTHER EARTH

*"Grandma, why do you call them relatives with roots?" "We old people believe that we are all related to everything in creation. I was taught that the plants and the animals were all created before humans. As such, we humans are the most dependent on everything else in creation. We need to show respect to our older brothers and sisters who were created before us,"* Grandma explained

- Leah Marie Dorion, *Relatives with Roots*

As Leah Marie Dorion shares in her children's book, *Relatives with Roots: A Story About Métis Womens Connection to the Land*, it is important for one to honour the land and be sharing the important teaching of Mother Earth with the children in our care. Taking care of Mother Earth, is a big responsibility but can be done in beautiful ways. An example of how this can be done is by giving thanks to the land as we walk upon her as she harvests summer fruit such as berries, rose hips, and sage (harvests will differ depending on where you live). Another example is perhaps using materials from our Mother Earth to co-create our work (see invitation to play below). Taking care of Mother Earth can also look like cleaning up unwanted litter from parks, roadways, and sidewalks. Educators can emphasize to children that Mother Earth needs to be cared for in a respectful way, like recycling and composting to ensure that the beauty of Mother Earth and its continual revitalization will be here for generations in the future. 🌸





# Invitation to Play: Mother Earth

Educators can encourage nature based loose part creations. Loose parts play is a form of open-ended play where children can create and explore with a range of different objects and parts. Materials can be moved, carried, combined, redesigned, lined up, taken apart and put back together in multiple ways. Using outdoor environments, children and educators can gather materials such as pinecones, rocks, sticks/twigs, flowers, grass blades, and more to create artwork and manipulate or explore natural resources. Investigating materials already found on the ground will be important in this practice. An example is not picking flowers from their stems, but rather those already fallen to the ground. This collaboration can be done outdoors, or educators and children can bring the loose parts inside and have children make their creations at tables or on the ground in the classroom.

Amanda Rossiter, Métis Pedagogist shares examples from her experiences working with Vancouver Island University students and their connections to Mother Earth.

*"While walking through the forest in Nanaimo, students from Vancouver Island University were asked to explore and select a plant that resonated with them personally. They were then tasked with creating a story centered around their chosen plant for a later date. In my role as the Métis Pedagogist, I accompanied the students during their expedition, actively engaging in listening, observing, and participating in collaborative conversations. Throughout this investigation work, we discussed our observations and even questioned the task itself, contemplating the possibility of using a rock instead of a plant. My intention was to encourage the students to think critically and challenge the established norms, prompting them to explore unconventional ideas. While we gathered near the lake at the end of this inquiry, we talked about what resonated, what tensions we felt and what sparked a light in our thinking. This allowed for an opportunity to talk about Métis culture as well, when one of the students began to tell us why she picked moss for her inquiry."*



*"Métis traditionally used moss bags that would hold freshly gathered sphagnum moss, which was moisture wicking and held medicinal properties that made it an ideal diaper."*

Why not create works of art in public spaces for all to enjoy? Send us your photos to [metisearlyyears@mnb.ca](mailto:metisearlyyears@mnb.ca) 🌸

## Métis Foraging Practices

Kim Hodgson, MNBC's Ministry of Education Family Connections Navigator, regularly harvests seasonal growths for medicinal purposes. As said by Kim, "Regularly, I try to harvest spruce tips, sage, rose petals, rose hips, berries such as saskatoons, raspberries, strawberries, [and] blueberries. Occasionally I harvest, birch bark, cedar, willow, juniper, and Labrador tea."

Are there medicines or seasonal growths local to the land you live on that you can harvest?

Kim has shared a recipe for jam using harvested saskatoon berries. See the recipe below:

### Saskatoon Berry Jam

#### INGREDIENTS:

4 cups saskatoons - 1 L  
3 cups sugar- 750 mL  
¼ cup water- 50 mL  
1 Tbsp lemon juice- 15 mL

#### INSTRUCTIONS :

- Put the saskatoons in a large heavy pot and crush, you can leave some of the berries whole.
- Heat the berries on medium until juice is seeping from them.
- Add the sugar and water to the berries and bring to a boil stirring constantly. Once it is boiling add the lemon juice and cook stirring often until thick, about 15 minutes.
- Pour the jam into hot sterilized jars, wipe the jar rims clean. Seal and process in a boiling water bath for 10 minutes. It makes about 3 cups (750 mL). Great on fresh bannock!



## Michif Language On The Go!

Michif is upheld as the national Métis language. It is a unique language that developed in the Red River valley in the early 1800s. Michif is a mixed language that contains Plains Cree verbs and French nouns and noun structure, as well as some vocabulary and structures from Saulteaux and English.

### There are three types of Michif:

- Métis French (also called Michif-French)
- Métis Cree (also called Northern Michif or Île-à-la-Crosse Michif)
- Southern Michif (also called Turtle Mountain Michif, Chippewa-Cree, or Heritage Michif)

One helpful tool is the Michif to Go App. This App provides accessible learning. The App translates words and phrases into Michif, allowing you to hear the words and phrases. What better way to learn the language than having it on the

go? This makes it easy to incorporate language into your daily practice with children, making cultural inclusion accessible. For more information visit [https://www.metismuseum.ca/michif\\_dictionary.php](https://www.metismuseum.ca/michif_dictionary.php) or <https://www.learnmichif.com/> to learn more.

Heritage  
Michif  
To Go

TRANSLATIONS BY  
"HERITAGE MICHIF  
TO GO" APP

ENGLISH	MICHIF
Sun	li salay
Beach	araa dloo
Camping	aen kapayshihk
Fishing	kwashkwaypichikayhk
Fruit	lii frwii
Picnic	aen picnic
Ice Cream	l'ice cream
Lake	aen laak
Canoe	aen kanoo
Midsummer day	la journii milijeu d'itii



# Meet the Educators Sharing Métis Culture

## HIGHLIGHTING MÉTIS CULTURE IN THE CLASSROOM

### Meet Kari-Anne

Kari-Anne Barr lives in the beautiful traditional territory of Esquimalt Nation in Esquimalt, BC. She has been working in the Early Learning and Child Care field for over 30 years. Kari-Anne's family lives on the traditional lands of the Métis, on Winnipeg Lake. Her father is a traditional Métis hunter and trapper, her sister lives on Fisher River Cree Nation and works as the Indigenous education liaison for Winnipeg University, and her brother is the president of Tipi Insurance in Winnipeg. Kari-Anne is the only one in her family who does not currently reside in the Métis homelands.



Kari-Anne has created a culturally safe space, in partnership with many early year's agencies, that works to support and uplift the Métis and Indigenous community. Each day, Métis culture and language are incorporated into her programming. Marlee Paterson, a language knowledge keeper, comes into the program every Tuesday for Tea and Michif. During Marlee's visit, the children form a welcome circle together and learn from the book Auntie Marlee has created for the centre. Each day, the children also sing their gratitude and give thanks to the creator before meals. Meals are also eaten on placemats that have been decorated with Michif vocabulary!

When visiting the centre, one will see that Kari-Anne also hosts beading workshops, has medicines for smudging, and has a variety of art in the space that reflect Indigenous creativity through natural materials. The centre has furnishings, books, and photos that share cultural stories and ways of knowing. The Métis core values are at the heart of the Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) working in this program. Métis elders within the community help to enhance

teachings and events that happen within the centre. Cultural events include food gardens, winter solstice, graduation sashing, cedar ceremonies, kindergarten readiness events, National Indigenous Peoples' Day and more!

The environment created within Kari-Anne's program has supported families to work with the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD) and has created stability for families at risk of going into MCFD care. Providing children with routine and a nutritious diet has helped to heal and strengthen relationships with children and parents.

Quoted from a parent, "Even though I had a lap in my sobriety and my child was in the care of another family, you fought for my child to

remain at the centre and to stay with the amazing educators and I knew my child was loved and cared for eight hours of the day and they had consistency, and their needs were met. I got better and felt supported, and I have my child back with me I have tears of joy."

Another family shared, "I can't thank you enough for having our two boys at the centre it has enabled my family to continue to go to work and school it has connected us to culture when our family is so far away. We have so much gratitude for all."

With many successes, this centre also faces the ECE shortage and has had its challenges finding qualified ECE staff with experience. Without the ECE wage enhancement, it has been challenging to be competitive and to retain staff. With the cost of living going up, the Indigenous families attending this centre have also found that transportation to and from has become more strenuous. The centre and families welcome any funding to help support food and transportation costs.

Thank you, Kari-Anne, for sharing! ✨

# From the Hearts and Minds of our Métis Pedagogists

*"Adults and children who access a positive personal and cultural identity value their own stories and those of others. Cultural identity allows us to connect with our roots, understand our heritage, and celebrate the diversity that exists in the world. Actively contributing to our well-being and that of our family, community, and society." –*

(page 84, *British Columbia's Early Learning Framework*).

*"...it is important to understand the Métis people as a Nation, connected by a shared lineage, culture and governance system."*

(pg. 20 *Kaa-wiichitoyaahk: We Take Care of Each Other*)

We can help children learn a strong sense of who they are and a deep appreciation for the world around them by connecting them to Mother Earth. 🌸



**You could be highlighted in a future newsletter!**

Tell us about yourself—email [metisearlyyears@mnbc.ca](mailto:metisearlyyears@mnbc.ca)



# Métis Nation B.C. Programs and Services

## Good Beginnings – Growing Our Children

Are you currently providing care for children or interested in providing family child care in your home, as a Registered License Not Required child care provider? The Good Beginnings course is beneficial to the Métis community in the retention and recruitment of Métis early learning and child care professionals, as well as aids in supporting Métis families with the creation of culturally inclusive child care programming. The next cohort will be offered in September 2023. The course runs twice a week for six weeks, for a total of twelve sessions. For further information, please contact [metisearlyyears@mnbc.ca](mailto:metisearlyyears@mnbc.ca) or visit our website [Education: Early Learning | K-12 | MNBC](#)

## Paid ECEBC Membership for Métis Early Childhood Educators

In partnership with Early Childhood Educators of British Columbia (ECEBC), MNBC is pleased to offer Métis Early Childhood Educators and Métis ECE students a paid professional membership to ECEBC. The Early Childhood Educators of British Columbia (ECEBC) membership aims to educate and advance the rights and needs of early childhood educators, children and families in BC. If you are a registered MNBC citizen, you qualify for this initiative. This includes the application fee to join or renew membership. For more information, please visit our website [Education: Early Learning | K-12 | MNBC](#). To apply please email the Métis ECE Recruitment & Retention team at [ecesupports@mnbc.ca](mailto:ecesupports@mnbc.ca)



## Kwantlen Polytechnic University (KPU)

Offering the three-year Early Childhood Care and Education Diploma program fully funded for Métis citizens. In-person daytime and evening classes on the Surrey KPU campus as well as some online synchronous and asynchronous course offerings. For more information visit our website [Education: Early Learning | K-12 | MNBC](#)

## Early Childhood Education with Métis Early Childhood Educators

The Métis Early Childhood Recruitment and Retention team connected with three Métis Early Childhood Educators to develop a video sharing their beautiful stories and showcasing what it means to be working in this important field. Early Childhood Educators are the foundation in delivery of quality care. It is even more evident that our Métis educators need to see themselves represented in our early learning programs that our Métis children and families attend. ECEs are needed to run our child care spaces! Therefore, we are highlighting three amazing Métis educators in the field that provide culturally safe and relevant child care spaces. Maarsii Cherie, Ashley, and Kari-Anne for all you do! Please enjoy this link to learn more. [Early Childhood Education with Métis Educators](#)

## MNBC Early Childhood Educator Supplement

Are you a Métis citizen and an early childhood educator? MNBC values the work that is being done by our early learning professionals. To show our appreciation and acknowledge the value of caring for our children, MNBC has created a Métis ECE Supplement. This is designed to support our licensed Métis ECEs and ECEAs who are working in licensed child care programs across the province with a financial supplement. Applications for the ECE Supplement opened on July 4, 2023. For more information, please contact [ecesupports@mnbc.ca](mailto:ecesupports@mnbc.ca) or visit our website [Education: Early Learning | K-12 | MNBC](#) ✿





# Métis Early Years “Aansaambaenkiskayhtaamuk - Learning Together” (Cultural Resource Development Project Kit)

The Métis Early Years Cultural Resource Development Project was created to develop Métis cultural resources for the early years and implement them in British Columbia. This professional learning guide and related resource



kit will support educators, families, and communities to explore Métis culture and identity with children from birth to eight years. The activities in

‘Aansaambaenkiskayhtaamuk - Learning Together’ (Southern/Heritage Michif, translated by Norman Fleury) aligns with Métis values, B.C.’s Early Learning Framework, B.C.’s K–12 curriculum, and the Government of Canada’s Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care Framework.

The full resource kit, professional learning guide, and individual items will be hand delivered and mailed to Child Care Resource and Referral centres, Strong Starts and Aboriginal Head Starts across the province this



summer. Additionally, the full kit will soon be available for purchase through MNBC’s online store – The Trading Post. An accompanying workshop will be available Fall 2023. This workshop will further support early learning and child care professionals to incorporate these Métis specific teachings into programming. For more information, please email [metisearlyyears@mnb.ca](mailto:metisearlyyears@mnb.ca).

Please note that Child Care Resource and Referral centres have a lending library for educators and families to borrow resources. The Cultural Resource Development Project kit can be accessed and borrowed from the lending library

at your local centre. In addition to accessing these Métis cultural kits, Child Care Resource and Referral centres throughout the province offer support to early learning professionals to access professional development and assist individuals in becoming Registered – License – Not Required care providers. Families can also access centres for support completing Affordable Child Care Benefit Applications. Your local Child Care Resource and Referral can be found here <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/family-social-supports/caring-for-young-children/how-to-access-child-care/child-care-resource-referral-centre> 🌸

## Métis Nation Early Learning & Child Care Appreciation Gathering

On May 31, 2023, MNBC Ministry of Education hosted a virtual appreciation evening to celebrate, honour, and recognize early learning and child care professionals for their hard work and commitment to providing children and their families with cultural learning opportunities.

The evening was filled with laughter, good energy, Métis knowledge sharing and even jigging, led by entertainer Métis Bev. In attendance was the Honorable Grace Lore, Minister of State for Child Care, as well as MNBC Minister Debra Fisher, Minister of Children and Families and Minister of Education, who expressed immense appreciation for early learning and child care professionals and the incredible work they are doing in their communities.

MNBC welcomed 48 early learning and child care professionals virtually to honour the 14 nominees from across the province, who were nominated for their commitment to delivering learning environments where Métis culture is recognized and celebrated. Additionally, two early learning and child care professionals were chosen as this year’s award recipients for the Métis Early Learning and Child Care Professional Award and the Métis Culture Incorporated into their Learning Environment Award. Breanna Beattie received the Métis Early Learning and Child Care Professional Award and Floarea Stanila received the Métis Culture Incorporated into their Learning Environment Award. 🌸



# ChildCareBC Bulletin

## Provincial Child Care Council - Province of British Columbia

MNBC Ministry of Education Director Early Years, Danielle Sayers-Jimeno is a newly appointed member of the Provincial Child Care Council. Members of the Provincial Child Care Council are appointed by the Minister of State for Child Care. They provide advice on the policies and programs that affect the affordability, quality, stability, and accessibility of child care. The council provides a diverse range of perspectives, including child care providers, school districts, child care advocacy groups, early childhood educators, early care and learning academics, labour unions, business, local government, and post-secondary education. Moving forward this new Métis perspective will be valuable in building relationships through the Provincial Child Care Council and ultimately the Métis children and families we support. 🌸

## ChildCareBC Awards of Excellence

We are thrilled to share that MNBC Ministry of Education Executive Director, Sharlene Wedel was the 2023 recipient of a Regional Award of Excellence for the Fraser Region. *"The ChildCareBC Awards of Excellence honour the outstanding achievements of individuals, organizations, school districts and local governments who help families and communities thrive by providing or supporting the delivery of child care."* - Minister of State for Child Care, Grace Lore. Congratulations Sharlene and maarsii for the incredible work you do, especially in the creation of Métis specific child care spaces in our communities. 🌸



## First Annual Surrey Métis Early Years Conference

Métis Nation British Columbia's (MNBC), Ministry of Education recently held their first annual Métis Early Years Conference's. The conference's brought together early learning professionals from across the province to celebrate cultural learning opportunities with a focus on self-compassion & language revitalization. Hosting conferences in Surrey, BC on February



24-25, 2023, and Prince George, BC on March 3-4, 2023, MNBC brought together over 147 early childhood educators from across British Columbia. Also in attendance were governing members from Métis Nation Alberta, Saskatchewan & Ontario. The conference's provided an opportunity for connection, networking, entertainment, and Michif language

revitalization through amazing keynote speakers; Elder Norman Fleury and Madelaine McCallum. Learning was enhanced with participants receiving a copy of MNBC's cultural wellness resource, "Kaa-wiichitoyahk: We Take Care of Each Other". Integrating Métis culture and language into child care programs promote a sense of belonging, awareness, empowerment, and inclusion for Métis children and families. Stay tuned for information regarding the next Early Years conference! 🌸

## Métis Early Childhood Education Community of Practice

The Métis Early Childhood Education Community of Practice establishes a culturally safe environment in which Métis Early Childhood Educators, early childhood education assistants, registered license-not-required child care providers and Métis service providers can participate in a learning community which will nurture educators and improve retention of staff in the early childhood workforce. With the guidance of a Métis Elder, this Community of Practice is a welcoming, safe space for educators learning and working with Métis children and families across British Columbia. It is a space to support one another, collaborate, connect, ask questions, and share knowledge & resources that will serve our communities in a good way. For more information on the Métis Community of Practice and other ECE initiatives, please contact the ECE Recruitment and Retention Specialists at [ecesupports@mnbc.ca](mailto:ecesupports@mnbc.ca) 🌸

## Resources

- Métis Nation BC Ministry of Education  
<https://www.mnbc.ca/education>
- Heritage Michif To Go app  
<https://www.metismuseum.ca/michif-app/>
- Relatives with Roots by Leah Marie Dorion  
<https://metistradingpost.shop/collections/books-resources/products/relatives-with-roots>
- Early Childhood Education with Métis Educators  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yU9RXBLOZpQ>



**MÉTIS NATION**  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

## Contact Information

### OUR MÉTIS CHILD CARE NAVIGATION AND SUPPORT COORDINATORS

The Métis Child Care Navigation and Support Team supports early learning and child care programs, Early Childhood Educators, families and communities throughout BC. Through the Métis Child Care Benefit Program, families can access additional funding to bridge the connection to the Affordable Child Care Benefit. The Child Care Coordinator team also provides cultural learning and connections to Early Childhood Educators and Early Years Providers.

For more information, contact us at [metisearlyyears@mnbc.ca](mailto:metisearlyyears@mnbc.ca).