

# Learn with Louis

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## Métis Cultural Connections

OUR MÉTIS CULTURE DEFINES US AS ONE OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF BRITISH COLUMBIA. MAKE CONNECTIONS TO YOUR MÉTIS CULTURE AND LEARN WHAT MAKES US UNIQUE.



**A Winter Adventure Story written by Métis Family Connections Navigator, Kim Hodgson**

**M**y winter story event took place many years ago, on a remote northern trapline when my son was six months old. It was a beautiful sunny day and I decided to head out on my trapline trail to check the traps. I packed up the gear and strapped my sleeping son, bundled up in his parka and blankets onto the dog sled. There had been a moose near the cabin, so I harnessed the older of the two dogs, thinking he would be easier to manage in case we saw the moose.

We were on our way down the trail when suddenly the dogs started barking and before I could grab hold of the sled, they took off running with my son on the sled. The more I called for them to stop the faster they went, I ran after them, but felt like I was getting nowhere. As they went out of sight and around the corner my heart sank. When I reached



the end of the lake there was still no sign of them, and I thought oh no what have I done? I followed the trail along the creek and just before the pond there they were! The sled had become tangled in a bush and could not be pulled loose. The dogs were resting happily, and my son, still strapped on the sled was just waking up with a smile on his face.

I was so relieved and as I pulled the sled back to the cabin, I promised my son I would never do anything like that again! I have had many adventures and misadventures, and I always enjoy sharing my stories with family and friends. We are our stories; they are part of our Métis culture. Share the gift of stories with your children and encourage them to tell their stories. ❁



# Buffalo Bulletin

MÉTIS TRADITIONAL LIFE WAYS CONNECT US TO THE LAND AND OUR ANCESTORS AND TRANSMITS KNOWLEDGE TO OUR CHILDREN. LEARN TO ACKNOWLEDGE, HARVEST, GATHER, AND SHARE NATURAL RESOURCES.



In the winter months, the Métis people's connection to the land takes on a special warmth and resilience. As the snow covers Mother Earth, the Métis carry forward their ancestral bond with the land, viewing the winter landscape not as a challenge but as a familiar friend. Winter becomes a time for sharing stories and traditions and participating in cultural practices that connect us to our ancestors. The Métis have always worked in harmony with nature and navigated the winter terrain with deep knowledge and understanding of where to find precious resources in order to survive the long and harsh winters. Nowadays, we don't need to necessarily hunt and forage for our food, but the land can still be a place of exploration and adventure, offering opportunities for cultural practices and connections to our past. How can you and your family have a little winter fun while practicing the traditions of your ancestors? How about a winter scavenger

hunt? Engaging in a scavenger hunt during winter allows families to get out on the land and appreciate the changing seasons. ❄️

**Are you ready to be nature detectives? Follow these steps for an awesome winter adventure:**

- **Bundle Up:** Put on your coziest winter clothes to keep you warm—hats, scarves, and mittens!
- **Gather Your Team:** Grab your friends, family, or even your favourite toys. The more, the merrier!
- **Get the List:** Here's a special list of things to find in our winter wonderland. Can you spot them all?
  - A pinecone
  - Three different-shaped rocks
  - A small branch with no leaves
  - A twig that looks like the letter 'Y'
  - A piece of evergreen (like holly or pine)
  - Find natural items that represent each of the following shapes: circle, triangle, and rectangle
  - Find something in nature that is each of the following colours: white, brown, green, and red



## Remember

- Stay warm and dress appropriately for the weather.
- Take pictures along the way to capture the memories.
- Have a small prize or treat for each participant at the end of the scavenger hunt.
- Have fun!

# Louis' Kids Club

## Winter Storytelling Fun: Create Your Own Métis Adventures!

Hey little storytellers! Winter is here, and it's the perfect time to cozy up with your family for some Métis magic by the fire. Imagine this: a warm blanket, a crackling fire, and stories that make the snow outside feel extra special.

Now, let's add a sprinkle of creativity to the mix! How about making your very own winter story? Get out of those old magazines or newspapers and start cutting out pictures that catch your eye. Maybe you'll find a snowy landscape or a picture of an animal that looks like a Métis hero!

Once you have your pictures, let your imagination take the lead. What if the rabbit in the picture had a magical adventure in the snow? Or perhaps the snowy landscape hides a secret passage to a land of winter wonders!

Now, gather around with your family and take turns using your pictures to create a brand-new Métis story. Who are the characters? What kind of adventures will they have in the winter wonderland you've created?



As you share your stories and the joy of creating something special together. Your winter tales are as unique as snowflakes. Maybe your story will inspire others to add their own twists and turns.

So, grab those scissors, let your imagination soar, and create Métis adventures that sparkle like snow in the moonlight. Winter storytelling isn't just about speaking; it's about listening and spending quality time with your family and loved ones. Get ready to share laughter, imagination, and the joy of making memories around the winter fire. ❄️

## Did you know?

Storytelling is an integral part of Métis culture. Storytelling is a way to transfer knowledge, entertain family and friends, record historical events, and transmit core values and beliefs.



# Louis' Journey in...



FOLLOW ALONG AS LOUIS TRAVELS. FULL OF CURIOSITY AND A LOVE OF LEARNING, LOUIS WILL BRING JOY AND LAUGHTER TO CHILDREN AND ADULTS ALIKE. SHARE WITH US YOUR LOUIS' JOURNEY BY SUBMITTING PHOTOS AND A BRIEF DESCRIPTION TO [METISEARLYYEARS@MNBC.CA](mailto:METISEARLYYEARS@MNBC.CA).

I was excited to visit the ocean at Victoria's Inner Harbour on November 3-4, 2023. I attended the Métis Early Years Conference put on by Métis Nation British Columbia's (MNBC) Ministry of Education. This Li Bufloo (Buffalo) was thrilled to see some of my friends and lii koozinn's, which means cousins in Southern/Heritage Michif.



Melissa McClurg from the Songhees Nation performed a blanketing ceremony. We learned about the territory we were on and respectfully acknowledged the Lekwungen people on whose traditional territory we gathered, and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSANEC peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day.



## Did you know?

A blanketing ceremony shows our respect for those who have made an important contribution to our community in some way. The respected guest is draped with special blankets in front of witnesses, and it is theirs to keep.



Over the two days, I met so many people. Our Elders made me laugh and shared traditional ways of knowing and being. I was humbled to meet, Métis artist Leah Dorion. I've read all her books. I joined her art workshop, and she even signed my book for me, Métis Christmas Mittens! Check out all of Leah Dorion's amazing books [here](#). They are perfect for story time!



I really enjoyed practicing my jigging too. The Joyful Jiggers, Abigail Porttris and Piper Bresser were there. Fiddlers Calvin Cairns and Ry Moran played for them. WOW, it was so much fun! I wish I could keep up with the fast fiddle music. My favourite song to jig to is "The Red River Jig" Do you know how to jig?



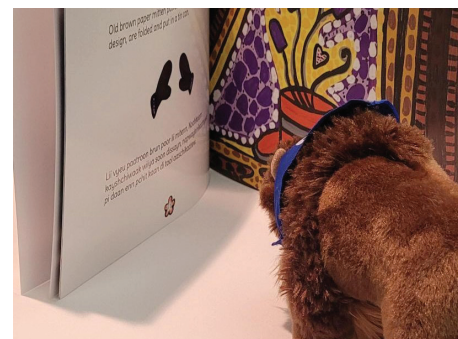
You should try it, it's so much fun! Jumping over the sashes looked hard but I want to try that dance too. They even had a jig off, and more prizes were won! Do you want to learn how to jig, check out this video of my friend Madeline McCallum where she teaches us how to jig! Watch it [here](#).



We also learned a lot from Elder Bruce Dumont, Elder Norman Fleury, Elder Stella Erasmus Johnson, and Elder Jo-Ina Young. They taught us about the Michif language, the importance of animals, the land, and traditional ways of practicing our culture, like medicine bags and how important the buffalo are to the Métis people. They are good at telling stories and making jokes! I sure learned a lot and had fun with my Métis friends and family.

It's hard for a Buffalo to jig but I promised my ma taant (my aunt) Stella that I would try next time. *Maarsii* (thank you) for listening friends!

Miina kaawaapamitin (see you later). ❀



All translations in this issue of Learn with Louis are in Southern/Heritage Michif and were translated by Elder Norman Fleury.



# What is your name? Where are you from?

## Métis Bev

**M**y name is Beverly Lambert, some may know me as Métis Bev! I was raised in a small Métis community called Butter Town/Rocky Lane in Fort Vermilion, Alberta. My dad and mom raised a family of 20 with lots of love, laughter, and good family values. There was always music and dancing in this house with plenty of competitors.

I moved to BC in 1977 and resided in Dawson Creek, Tumbler Ridge, Chetwynd, and Prince George. Now I currently live in Surrey, BC. To me culture has no borders, so my Métis trail goes where I am needed to inspire our people.



When I lived in Prince George BC, in 1996, I attended a dance and gave a demonstration of "The Red River Jig". The local Métis asked for my assistance in teaching the Red River Jig to the community and my journey started from that day on.



I volunteered many hours and nights to different organizations in BC. I have instructed cultural classes in many school districts across Canada, Métis Family Services, youth camps, Women & Elders Healing Conferences, Provincial Federal Government, Olympic Pavilion, and Aboriginal Achievements Awards. Every year I trained a dance troupe to perform for special community events or Aboriginal Day celebrations. Currently, I have over 30 years of experience promoting culture through music and dance for all ages. Métis Bev Empowerment Lesson plans are successful because they incorporate mind, body and spirit and all mental wellness concepts, emotional, physical and spiritual. All programs include storytelling, how can culture inspire you, what gifts have your ancestors left you, what are your educational options from your ancestors, why is school cool, how culture can boost your self-esteem, and how to empower yourself daily.

I am so grateful to all the community who support my teaching to help our children to be proud of themselves!

I am proud to be Métis! I feel an obligation to empower all Nations to be proud of themselves by guiding them to embrace their traditional ways.

Knowledge is key to our children's happiness and educational future. In order to ensure the survival of our culture we must encourage the whole community to participate again. No fear of being judged anymore and let's promote a healthy lifestyle using our mind, body, and spirit.



Photo: Dion Burry Photography

I am a Kohkum who was raised with good ole rabbit stew and bannock. Music and dancing have always been part of my life but fiddling and jigging are in my soul. I have developed my own unique style of teaching with plenty of humour and fun for all ages.

"Doing the Métis jig is like dreaming with your feet." 🌸

SHARE YOUR FAMILY'S CONNECTION AND JOURNEY WITH THE MÉTIS NATION COMMUNITY. TELL YOUR STORY AND HAVE YOUR FAMILY FEATURED IN THE NEXT EDITION OF *LEARN WITH LOUIS*. SUBMIT YOUR STORY TO: [MÉTISEARLYYEARS@MNBC.CA](mailto:MÉTISEARLYYEARS@MNBC.CA)



# Caring for our Children

## ENJOYING THE WINTER SEASON WITH OUR CHILDREN

Winter presents an opportunity to make the season enjoyable. As the days become short and the cold weather is upon us, a little planning helps to prepare children and families for winter activities.



A few suggestions may be:

### Outdoor activities

- If you have snow outside, bundle up and head outside to make a snowman. You can add a Métis sash for a scarf and send us a picture with your snowman. How else could you use your sash this winter?
- Take Louis the Buffalo on an outdoor adventure to look for a place to toboggan.
- Take some spare tools from the kitchen and have fun mixing snow, mud, berries, and evergreen pine needles.



- Go on a walking adventure or snowshoe to see what animal prints you can find.

### Indoor activities

- Gather your blankets and pillows and make a cozy fort. How can you decorate your fort?
- Put on your favourite fiddle music and have fun practicing traditional Métis jigging. Gather spoons from your kitchen and create music.

[Red River Jig Madelaine McCallum - YouTube](#)

- Make some bannock with your *noohkoom* (grandmother) or *mooshoom* (grandfather).
- Cozy up and read with your family. This is an opportunity to share some family stories and have some laughs 🌸

# Service Provider Highlight

## ISLAND MÉTIS FAMILY & COMMUNITY SERVICES SOCIETY, VICTORIA, BC

Island Métis Family & Community Services Society has been dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for the Métis community living on Vancouver Island since 1996. They provide integrated and holistic programs and services that culturally and spiritually strengthen Métis children and families.



The Early Years team is dedicated to child and family health and wellness. Their Early Childhood Development, Métis Infant Development and Métis Supported Child Development teams provide services for Métis children under the age of eight and their families. Island Métis provides a weekly drop-in playgroup, monthly family dinners, and programming at their child care centre. The teams provide resources, conduct assessments, and offer support to families focused on the developmental outcomes of their children.

Island Métis Child Care Centre is a no-cost licensed Aboriginal Head Start program for children aged 12 months to six years of age. Children are cared



for by licensed Early Childhood Educators in a culturally enriched environment that supports wellness and lifelong learning. All nutritional needs for the children are met at the centre.

All the early years programs are inclusive and enriched with teachings from our community.

[Island Métis Family and Community Services Society \(metis.ca\)](#) 🌸



# Michif with Maddy the Magpie

THE NATIONAL MÉTIS LANGUAGE IS MICHIF, A DISTINCT LANGUAGE DEVELOPED FROM FRENCH, CREE AND OTHER FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGES. HAVE FUN LEARNING MICHIF WITH MADDY THE MAGPIE.

Michif is the national Métis language. It is a unique language that developed in the Red River in the early 1800s and has features of French, Cree and other First Nations languages.

The words shared by Maddy the Magpie listed below are from the Gabriel Dumont Institute The [Virtual Museum of Métis History and Culture \(metismuseum.ca\)](http://www.metismuseum.ca/) The dialect shared is Southern/Heritage Michif which was originally translated by Elder Norman Fleury.

To find out how to say Maddy's words go to [http://www.metismuseum.ca/michif\\_dictionary.php](http://www.metismuseum.ca/michif_dictionary.php) or download the App "Heritage Michif to Go" on iTunes or google play. ❄️

MICHIF	ENGLISH
l'ivayr	winter ❄️
la niizh	snow
toot l'hivayr niipow	hibernation
ita ka poonamihk	fireplace ❄️





# Upcoming Family Gatherings

We are excited to be joining many of you at family gatherings with our Chartered Communities. To find out more about what is happening in your community, please contact your local Chartered Community. Registration for upcoming family gatherings may be required. To attend please reach out directly to the Chartered Community.

## Salmon Arm Métis Association

Date: January 13, 2024

Time: 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Location: Mayfair Farms, Vernon

The event will be teaching parents and children the use of microgreens as well as making bannock. Participants will receive a tray of sprouts to take home and can have bannock for lunch.

## Alberni-Clayoquot Métis Society

Date: January 27, 2024

Time: 1 p.m. - 4 p.m.

Location: Eighth Avenue Learning Centre, Port Alberni

Métis Society is hosting a family gathering that will feature activities for the kids (slime table and colouring sheets), jigging, family photos, door prizes, catered food and balloon animal person.

Membership of the Chartered Community is not a requirement for attending the event.

## Mid Island Métis Association

Date: February 17, 2024

Time: 11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

Location: Cavalotti Lodge - 2060 East Wellington Rd., Nanaimo, BC, Canada, British Columbia

Mid Island Métis Association is hosting a family gathering that will feature catered dinner, children's activities and fiddle music. ❁



**Past Events** Check out the snapshots below of the exciting events that took place over the last few months in Chartered Communities across BC!





# Where's Louis? Find Louis the Buffalo

