



Caring for Indigenous Children and Youth

In-Service eLearning

Audience- New and Experienced Caregivers

This training was originally designed for those considering becoming a caregiver. While some of the reflection exercises may not apply to experienced caregivers, the information within this training is applicable and beneficial to all caregivers.

Course Description

This important session provides an introduction to the historical and current experiences of Indigenous communities, families, children and youth to better understand the needs of Indigenous children in-care. Participants are introduced to important Legislation including: Child, Youth, and Family Enhancement Act and An Act Respecting First Nations, Metis Children, Youth and Families.

Participants will begin to learn about Indigenous worldviews and the impact of colonial history and historical trauma on these worldviews. Participants will learn about trauma-informed caregiving and be introduced to practical strategies for use when caring for children with trauma-histories.

Meaningful cultural connections are explored as a crucial means to promote healing, resilience, and identity. Potential caregivers are encouraged to reflect on how they can best support these meaningful cultural connections and whether they are prepared to do this for the children and youth who may come into their care.

*Please note this course is considered an equivalency to the 'Colonization, Historic Trauma and Healing' course

Competency Based Caregiving

This session is designed to support caregivers to meet the required competencies of caregiving as follows:

- To support children and families who have experienced trauma, loss, and grief.
- To promote the development of a child or youth in your care.
- To build relationships with the child's family.
- To maintain the child's culture.
- To collaborate with the care team to ensure successful transitions.
- To work in collaboration with Children and Family Services.
- To respond to the unique demands and challenges of caregiving.

Guided Discussion Questions

1. As part of this eLearning, you were asked to reflect on your own worldview and to compare your worldview with that of the common elements of many Indigenous worldviews. In what ways is your world view similar to and different from an Indigenous worldview?
2. If you have noticed many differences, how will you support the child or youth in your home, to develop and grow their Indigenous worldview. What do you already do to support connectedness to their community?
3. Throughout the eLearning, you were asked to think about the misconceptions made about Indigenous people in Canada. Without knowing you or your history, has anyone ever made incorrect assumptions about you? If so, how did that make you feel? How does this change your perspective and how you will support children, youth and their families?

Key Considerations

In Alberta, the majority of children and youth in care are Indigenous; this means that, as a caregiver, you will more than likely be caring for an Indigenous child or youth.

To better understand the needs of Indigenous children and youth in care, caregivers must be familiar with the history, experience, and culture of Indigenous people in Canada (and specifically, Alberta).

Federal and Provincial legislation (laws) authorize and guide Children's Services to provide services to meet the unique needs of Indigenous children and youth who are in care, including expectations of those caring for Indigenous children and youth.

Session Design

This self-directed eLearning is divided into 13 sections which may be completed at your own pace. It will take approximately 3 hours in total to complete this eLearning. The sections in this eLearning are as follows:

1. About this Session
2. Indigenous Worldviews
3. The History and Experiences of Indigenous Peoples in Canada
4. Historical Trauma
5. Healing, Resilience, and Reconciliation
6. Collaboration to Support Life-Long Connection
7. Trauma-Informed Care
8. Incorporating Indigenous Culture into Caregiving
9. What is Expected from Caregivers
10. Final Thoughts
11. Next Steps
12. Additional Resources
13. Thank You!

It is important to note that this training was developed with the important engagement of Indigenous language speakers and Elders. Additionally, this session was developed in partnership with internal and external subject matter experts including: Workforce Development, Caregiver Supports, Indigenous Partnerships and Strategic Services, Practice Supports Unit, and Adoption Services. Expert insight and information on trauma-informed caregiving was provided by Jennifer Kuntz, MSW, RSW, Project Facilitator: Trauma and Resilience Initiative, Alberta Health Services.