

2013

Colville Lake Wellness Plan

Behdzi Ahda First Nation

3/31/2013

Introduction

The Behdzi Ahda First Nation is pleased to provide this document which reflects our priorities for health and wellness at this time.

The Community Wellness Planning Engagement Project presented an opportunity for our Council & staff to look at our current reality, to engage our residents and to plan for the future.

We want a vibrant community that is respected for their ability to have a “say” in matters pertaining to infrastructure; to attain a level of competency by developing facilities that will enhance growth and encourage our youth to acquire necessary skills to be the leaders in all areas of our community.

We recognize that we have to be involved to make a difference in our community and our own health and wellness.

We are pleased to share our priorities for future wellness programming in our community.



Process:

Along with many discussions over a period of months, we formally engaged our community on February 7, 2013 with the assistance of Elaine Sanchioni from the Sahtu Health and Social Services Authority.

Our residents were asked to think about the following:

- Where are we now?
- What do we have to work with?
- Where do we want to be in the future?
- How are we going to get there?

Over a period of time during staff meetings as well as the February 7 workshop a snap shot of the community was laid out using a SWOT analysis.

This is what the participants said were STRENGTHS:

- + We know where we want to go as community
- + Working together to accomplish goals
- + Sobriety is a priority
- + Caring Leadership
- + Organized administration by community members
- + Different Governmental organizations in one building
- + Good Communication, everyone knows what's going on
- + We have a clean pristine environment
- + We look after our community
- + Infrastructure – we have built almost everything we need
- + Network- we work good with other people
- + Living on and off the land – We can live both productively
- + Practice Traditional and Cultural Lifestyles –we make this a priority
- + We understand what Healthy Choices mean
- + We have children that are imaginative in there play
- + We get together for community events often etc. Feasts & hunts
- + We have a good understanding of where to get support.
- + We try to use our language
- + We have people that can write in both forms of the Aboriginal language
- + We share traditional knowledge to others
- + Dene Land we have a spiritual connection to the land
- + We have Pride and Loyalty with our community
- + We have optimism we are not afraid of change
- + We have energetic Volunteers
- + Once we have made a decision it happens quick
- + Low crime rate

This is what participants said where weaknesses:

- Language not everyone speaks Dene k'e
- Selfish attitude
- Spirituality is not practiced by everyone
- Lack of resource in people and technology
- Limited protection from fire and criminal activity
- No connection amongst people and families
- Family and community alienation
- Lack of life skill and teaching traditional ways
- Lack of knowledge on family history
- Negative family cycles
- Knowledge of traditional medicine is low
- Communication and relationship gap between youth and elders
- Physical activities
- Lack of positive socializing
- No acceptance to differences
- Negative activity acceptance etc. drug use, alcoholism and bootlegging

This is what participants said where opportunities:

- ± Growing Community
- ± More need of awareness
- ± More input need to be gathered from the community
- ± More gatherings
- ± Community Annual Spring and Fall hunts
- ± Land and waterways traditional knowledge and navigation
- ± Aboriginal place names and stories behind them
- ± Trapping, fishing and hunting
- ± Walking trails and portages for physical activity
- ± Campgrounds and beachfronts projects
- ± Gardening
- ± Community participation in schooling
- ± Oil and Gas Activity and spin-offs
- ± Exploration of mineral and petroleum industry
- ± Tourism
- ± Training and employment
- ± Elder involvement in school and daycare
- ± Economic Development
- ± BAFN Economic Development Corporation
- ± Land Claims and Self-Government
- ± Youth and Elders
- ± Climate Change

This is what the participants said were Threats:

- Ω Alcohol and Drugs
- Ω Addiction of all kinds
- Ω Violence and crime
- Ω Lateral violence
- Ω Bullying
- Ω Elder abuse
- Ω Lack of knowledge of Elders and Family History
- Ω Family Feuds
- Ω No direction in families
- Ω Not feeling welcome in the community
- Ω Technology i.e. internet, t.v. and video games
- Ω Gossip
- Ω Non- renewable resource activity
- Ω Climate change threats to the land, animals and environment
- Ω Education and knowledge
- Ω Not everyone participates in the Community Engagement
- Ω Entitlement some think they deserve more than others
- Ω Adolescent parents

This work laid the foundation for the next part of our discussions, which were, what are our priorities for making Colville Lake the healthiest community it can be?

Our Priorities are:

1. Strengthening culture and tradition
2. The Early Years
3. Healthy Eating
4. School Nutrition Program
5. Healthy living
6. Youth
7. Elders
8. Mental Wellness
9. Building economy on the communities strengths

Next Steps - how do we get there?

The next step was to talk about how we are going to work towards our priorities. We will develop a Wellness Work Plan that addresses our top priorities. The following are some of the ideas that we will move forward with:

Strengthening Culture and Traditional Knowledge

Every good path in life begins with a firm foundation and knowledge of ones roots towards this end it is a great importance to develop more projects to pass on language and oral history including the knowledge of spirituality related to the relationship with the land and all living things. This will include the following:

- Developing Language Nest program for daycare run by Elders with participants in the language
- More on the outdoor traditional and cultural land programs continually to keep youth interested and physically active
- Develop programs to pass on survival skills
- Pass on a sense of independence and a view of doing things for oneself
- Fall Barrenland Hunt



The Early Years

We need to have an Early Years Program and Day Care Centre. There is a lot of need for this and this age group is one of our top priority this can be tied to culture and tradition

Healthy Eating

We need to have nutrition workshop, especially for pregnant women. We will need assistance from SHSSA to coordinate having the nutritionist come to our community. We could have this in Youth

programs as well. We need to get the Elders involved in the teaching the use of traditional foods. We will need to find new venues to encourage the following:

- Harvesting in all seasons
- Barrenland Hunt
- Edible plants and roots
- Picking berries for physical activity
- Preparing wild food



School Nutrition Program

We will work with the School Principal to develop a school breakfast and snack program to ensure that the children are not trying to learn on an empty stomach.



Youth

We need to designate a space as a youth facility so the youth have a place for programs. We might talk to the school about this. Programming is important and we have to look into the possibility of having a fulltime recreation coordinator. We need to look into getting a new school – perhaps with attached gym and arena. Many areas of focus came forth on how to engage the youth and develop a healthy outlook and a will to have a good sense of being:

- Develop hunting and trapping skills
- Encourage fun activities
- More physical activity such as exercises
- Barrenland Hunt
- Celebrate achievements as a community
- Encourage healthy use of land use.
- Encourage competition with the surrounding community
- Encourage educational success
- Encourage language use in everyday life
- Workshops on;
 - Gun , water and boat safety
 - Healthy families
 - Life skills to young parents
 - Developing a healthy self-esteem
 - Talking in front of a crowd such as community meetings
 - Bullying



Elders

We need to plan for more elder involvement especially in on the land projects. They need to be teaching life skills such as trapping, hunting, language, traditional cooking and oral history. Elders need to feel belonging and importance as part of the community and family unit and so we will develop along these measures to enhance participation;

- Cultural and oral history teaching

- Language development
- Youth and Elder activity
- Encourage networking between elders in the surrounding communities
- Develop family history related to the clans, land names and background
- Elders in school with translation
- Barrenland Hunt
- Elders teaching surrounding leadership



Mental Wellness

We need to work with the Sahtu Health and Social Services Authority to find a way to have the Mental Health worker come to our community more often or be hired from the community. Also, we need to have activities that are healthy for everyone in our community.





Moving Forward

The Leadership and community will work on further development of a good Wellness Plan as all plans go constant monitoring of variables and minute adjustments will have to be made to this plan in future years for success.

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