



Sambaa K'e Community Wellness Plan

Prepared by the community of Sambaa K'e and Northern ICE NWT

Developed between July 11-17 and October 19-21
November 1st, 2011 Update

Workshop Highlights

Sambaa K'e Leaders ultimate goal is to **create a comfortable life for community members.**

Priority subjects identified:

- Healing from Residential School Impacts
- Willingness of members to engage community life
- Communications
- Nutrition
- Protection of the land and waters

On-the-land workshops and community gatherings are essential to the healing and development of a healthy community.

SKDB Mission Statement

The Sambaa K'e Dene Band will become a self-sufficient and self-governing nation of people on its traditional land within the DehCho Territory. Its strength will come from the land, the traditions of the elders, and the education and skills of its community members.

In plain language this means to:

- Do it the way Sambaa K'e wants it done
- Gain ever stronger feelings of independence and interdependence
- Make ecologically friendly changes
- Live a sustainable life style

Goal 1 Respect and Protect Smbaa K'e Traditional Lands and Waters, keeping in mind the many generations to come.

- 1. Learn as much as possible about Smbaa K'e traditional use of the lands and waters, the potential threats brought by local, regional, national and worldwide industrial development and about proactive protective actions.**
 - a. Learn where I come from, recognize my roots and ancestral values.
 - b. Love and respect myself to respect the land and waters.
 - c. Learn our history and share with others.
- 2. Recognize and honour sacred sites.**
- 3. Keep Smbaa K'e environment clean, healthy, and prevent it's damage.**
- 4. Be aware of the individual, family and community footprint, and work towards reducing it.**
- 5. Follow Dene Environmental Laws in daily life and in all decision making, including those of outsiders who want to use the land and waters.**
 - a. Learn bush roles to understand leadership.
 - b. Change the focus of discussions from money to the ancestral values that kept us healthy.
 - c. Develop a program to teach how to follow Dene Environmental Laws in decision making.
- 6. Manage resource development.**
 - a. Ensure land resources coordinator's position is filled.
 - b. Complete and promote understanding of resources, identify ways to eliminate information gaps and develop a traditional knowledge database.
 - c. Improve waste management systems.
 - i. Sewage lagoon/dump.
 - ii. household materials (e.g. composting).
 - d. Develop and implement guidelines to ensure ecologically friendly projects.
 - e. Ensure projects are developed and implemented in an ecologically friendly manner.

Goal 2 Maintain and Use Traditional Knowledge and Skills.

1. Teach and encourage language use.

- a. Encourage participation in the Elder's circle.
- b. Augment the number of hours the language is taught in school.
- c. Request and encourage the use of mother tongues in homes.
- d. Create more opportunities to expose youth to the language and help them develop a Dene frame of mind.
 - i. "Slavey Day" once a week.
 - ii. Adult classes.

2. Teach and live the Dene Way of Life.

- a. Establish an Elder's circle that meets 2-3 times/week to:
 - i. Teach traditional life and cultural skills.
 - ii. Teach traditional parenting skills.
 - iii. Teach the value of language.
 - iv. Teach Slavey and Syllabics, encourage their use.
 - v. Encourage individuals to overcome the root problems preventing them to gain, use and transfer traditional knowledge.
 - vi. Support and encourage sharing of traditional knowledge, particularly TK that is not well known.
- b. Establish a wood working shop to:
 - i. Teach canoe, toboggan and snowshoe making.
 - ii. Hold periodic men's sharing circles.
- c. Organize community feasts, feeding the fire ceremonies, and drum and tea dances regularly.
 - i. Celebrate accomplishments.
 - ii. Recognize on the land skills (once a year).
- d. Develop and implement strategies to better follow Dene Laws.

Goal 3 Promote and Support Healthy and Strongly Committed Families.

1. Support and encourage healing.

- a. Establish a sharing circle with Elders to guide people needing direction.
- b. Develop and implement an annual healing strategy that:
 - i. Prioritizes healing from residential school impacts and other pressing issues, with on the land activities.
 1. Truth and reconciliation week.
 2. Session with Bishop Murray and nuns.
 3. Grieving the lost ones.
 4. Private and group counselling sessions.
 5. Suicide and sexual abuse healing and prevention workshops.
 6. Personal emotional and behavioural wellness strategy workshops.
 7. Lateral violence sessions.
 8. Alternative medicine healing week.
 9. Communication skills/healthy relationship workshops.
 - ii. Builds the desire to live differently and live wellness.
 - iii. Builds healthy love with values in individuals, families and community.
 - iv. Helps members identify and analyze personal dynamics and builds courage to get the tools they need to make the changes needed for their family and the community.
 - v. Empowers leaders and front-line workers who deal with crises.
 - vi. Helps young members live and believe in the Dene culture.

- j. Support family members in developing healthy habits.
- k. Teach children to seek their own answers and use their creativity to solve problems.
- l. Teach self-respect including healthy sexual behaviours.
- m. Develop and teach leadership skills. Learn and teach planning ahead.
- n. Encourage children's schooling.
- o. Recognize and celebrate skills/accomplishments in the home.
- p. Recognize and take responsibility for the troubles that are in your life.
- q. Attend workshop and information sessions that will support positive changes.
- r. Work towards becoming a role model as an individual and as a family.

4. Commit to material and financial wellness.

- a. Be clear about the needs and wants of the family.
- b. Plan to achieve and maintain material/financial health.
- c. Take responsibility for personal/family finances.
- d. Develop life habits that feel free and are respectful of others.
- e. Be creative, initiate projects that generate income.

5. Reduce alcohol and drug abuse, and other addictions.

- a. Support Alcoholic Anonymous meetings.
- b. Develop an on-the-land recovery program (and give priority to 20-40 years old).
- c. Provide support to change challenging behaviours (e.g. dry-drunk).
- d. Post signs to share the community's position with visitors.
- e. Limit access to money when required.
- f. Work with the liquor store, airline companies, and RCMP to restrict availability of drugs and alcohol.
- g. Work with the RCMP to address bootlegging, selling of drugs and initiate community policing.

- h. Develop agriculture.
 - i. Improve garden performances.
 - ii. Establish a chicken farm (40+ chickens).
 - iii. Develop and implement a strategy that establishes and maintains a sustainable agricultural program.

7. Strengthen personal community commitment.

- a. Accept that personal contributions to the community are important.
- b. Explore the meaning of commitment and community wellness.
- c. Commit to the actualization of the community wellness plan.
- d. Understand Samba K'e mission statement and current direction.
- e. Attend community meetings to stay informed of issues, particularly issues affecting families and traditional territory.
- f. Get involved in the development of Samba K'e, encourage and support leaders, be grateful for the work they do.
- g. Walk my talk; mind my own business; and become self-governed.
- h. Take action on things that don't encourage change. Be aware that complaining does not change anything.
- i. Discuss subjects that make individuals, family and community members grow in positive ways.
- j. Visit instead of phoning or e-mailing.
- k. Volunteer at the school to share your skills and teach children.

- b. Continually investigate and establish ways to address issues of attendance at meetings and most appropriate ways to communicate with members.
- c. Facilitate a workshop with elders and young adults to improve communications between generations, and plan community development considering the needs and thoughts of both groups.
- d. Provide training to members, including information sessions and mock trials on board and government structures, and communication skills.
- e. Clarify and educate people on channels of communication and their importance.
- f. Reinstate the mail run.
- g. Develop a community radio.

3. Encourage members to be proud of their community.

- a. Create a welcoming environment for those who visit.
 - i. Maintain annual community clean-up initiative.
- b. Establish a protocol to welcome and inform visitors and visiting family members about Samba K'e Way of Life. Develop implementation strategies to make it a reality (welcome committee, post signs, ...).
- c. Support individuals that initiate community wellness projects.
- d. Encourage initiatives that brings pride to the community.
 - i. Produce a film: Life in Samba K'e throughout the four seasons.
 - ii. Work towards documenting Samba K'e process of change and share regionally, nationally and internationally as opportunity arise.

4. Strengthen the engagement of leaders and councils in promoting the culture.

- a. Research and implement strategies that encourage the use of mother tongues in homes, at work and in the community.
- b. Recognize on-the-land-skills and celebrate cultural achievements yearly.

Goal 4 Establish a constructive community dynamic.

1. Establish reliable cooperation between Chief, Band Council members, Development Corporation leaders, and community members.

- a. Develop a comprehensive orientation program and provide leadership training for new leaders/council members (especially by previous chief).
 - i. Decide direction based on the vision of the ancestors of each family living in Samba K'e.
- b. As a leader and/or council member commit to healing and constructive cooperation.
- c. Establish and respect the Dene code of conduct.
- d. Explore ways and work to create better team spirit within families in the community and at work; develop the systems and tools needed.
- e. Develop a network of volunteers to help those who may need.
- f. Respect spending agreed upon. Spend on beneficial assets.
- g. Be transparent.
- h. Stand-up against various kinds of abuse, confront and intervene appropriately so that youth learn to recognize unacceptable behaviours.
- i. Give responsibility to whom it belongs. Avoid protecting those who do wrong.

2. Develop and implement healthy and efficient communication strategies.

- a. Hold monthly gatherings (with fire feeding ceremonies and sharing circle).
 - i. Learn to enjoy ourselves again like our ancestors used to.
 - ii. Inform and gain direction about ongoing issues and challenges the community is facing.
 - iii. Decide how we want the community to operate.
 - iv. Resolve conflicts.
 - v. Find ways to better work together.

6. Promote and encourage physical health.

- a. Promote preventative medical exams.
- b. Encourage personal health strategies.
- c. Develop new and maintain existing awareness programs in the school and community (on alcohol and drugs, diabetes, tobacco use, sexual abuse, etc...).
- d. Promote nutritional awareness.
 - i. Visit homes to assess cupboards.
 - ii. Inform people how to make better choices.
 - iii. Develop personal/family food habit change plans.
 - iv. Develop programs that deliver information on:
 - 1) aged/ fresh meat;
 - 2) nutritive values and impacts of refined flour, sugars such as Gatorade and other energy drinks, salts;
 - 3) the best types of sugars, fats, salts;
 - 4) quality of food (calories per day;
 - 5) timing of meals;
 - 6) how to read labels and nutritional information (Northern Health Guide);
 - and 7) strategies to reduces bacon and other fatty foods, sugars, other sugary juices.
- e. Provide healthy food in the store.
 - i. Inventory store foods for nutritional values.
 - ii. Assess impacts of store foods on community members.
 - iii. Identify better food choices.
 - iv. Agree on food that will be sold over the next three years to move towards a change in food habits.
- f. Maintain regular recreation programming in Slavey.
- g. Support small budget projects that promote physical health and build on community resources.
 - i. Fitness center.
 - ii. Multi-court (tennis, badminton, basketball, mini-putt).
 - iii. Hockey ring.

- vii. Encourages and develops motivation, team spirit, participation and commitment to community life, and sharing.
- viii. Ensures an appropriate approach is used. Theoretical psychological concepts are not well understood and tend to create confusion.
- ix. Ensures that those who visit correctional centers do not come back worse than they were.

2. Develop healthy communication skills.

- a. Gain courage, learn to voice opinions (what you think does make a difference).
- b. Recognize and avoid gossiping.
- c. Learn to talk positively and be constructive at all times.
- d. Learn to trust and build healthy relationships.
- e. Learn to ask questions to the person who can best inform about the facts.
- f. Respect established communication channels; and talk to the right person.

3. Develop strong Dene parenting skills.

- a. Keep personal and family balanced at all times.
- b. Understand and share the family and community vision of your parents and ancestors.
- c. Create sacred spaces in the home and on the land, and use them regularly as safe places to share openly.
- d. Teach and live all the skills and positive ways of life that are known.
- e. Live the culture fully and speak our mother tongue at home and in the community.
- f. Learn and teach about the value of the free things in life that lead to happiness.
- g. Discuss abuse openly and make a plan to prevent it in the home.
- h. Learn to listen and face life situations with courage. Recognize denial in yourself.
- i. Minimize the time spent with technology, maximise the time spent on the land.

- e. Develop leadership programs for youth and adults that:
 - i. Changes the current path youth are on.
 - ii. Compares traditional and modern ways (e.g. role and responsibilities of a leader).
- f. Support and encourage Dene recreational activities.
 - i. Give priority to learning Dene games (porcupine bladder ball, beaver thighbone strength test, Indian ball game, guzo, hand games, Dene baseball, etc...).
 - ii. Encourage the teaching and learning of dances and songs.
 - iii. Maintain existing hunting, trapping, and fishing programs.
 - iv. Maintain the summer canoe expedition for youth.
 - v. Create events to encourage hiking, snowshoeing, skiing, berry picking, jam making, cooking, snaring, preparation of furs, sewing, etc...
 - vi. Continue yearly moose hide tanning programs.
 - vii. Build a traditional game court.
- g. Develop and implement strategies to include more culture in the school curriculum.
 - i. Ensure Samba K'e history is taught.
 - ii. Ensure Elders share their knowledge at school.
- h. Develop a program for visitors to ensure they come with an open heart and mind to learn on our territory.
 - i. Add a visitors protocol to the website.
 - ii. Develop cross-cultural teaching tools.

Goal 5 Promote and Support Education and Training.

1. Promote the importance of education and training.

- a. Support parents to encourage schooling.
- b. Encourage youth and adults to attain further education.
- c. Work towards the development of a High School.

2. Strengthen the school program.

- a. Revisit current school model/curriculum to address current issues and improve education.
- b. Support teachers to integrate more cultural activities into the curriculum.
- c. Integrate more wellness activities into the curriculum.
- d. Teach youth to improve their communication skills.
- e. Ensure more sports are included in the curriculum. Hire a gym teacher.
- f. Develop a network of volunteers.

3. Strengthen adult training.

- a. Establish an adult education program that utilises community resources.
- b. Develop on the job training programs.
- c. Encourage members to attend upgrading programs, trade training, college and university.
- d. Deliver workshop to explore attitudes and barriers to learning, to encourage team spirit.
- e. Encourage trades that the community needs (doctor, lawyer, pilot, manager, nurse, cops).
- f. Deliver training programs:
 - i. Basic computer skills.
 - ii. Project planning and coordination.
 - iii. Business management.
 - iv. Bookkeeping.
 - v. Budgeting.
- g. Develop a Career Day initiative.
- h. Guide members to ways they can reach their dreams.

Goal 6 Develop a sustainable community economy.

- 1. Establish a model of project development that supports and sustains the Dene Way of Life, creates tangible results, and brings pride to the people.**
 - a. Keep a clear understanding of the needs of individuals, families and communities at all times.
 - b. Explore and implement strategies that integrate culture with economics.
 - i. Teach to plan ahead of time.
 - ii. Consider weather dependence.
 - iii. Use alternative methods of payment.
 - c. Develop working and community environments that promote and encourage leadership, collaboration, creative problem solving, sense of responsibility, feelings of helpfulness and of being needed, and develop the full potential of community members.
 - d. Find balance between work, family and personal time.
 - e. Ensure the transfer of skills from those who visit.
 - f. Use technology (such as camera) to document, verify and substantiate the importance of projects for the community.
 - g. Support community members to become responsible of their material and financial stability; and provide workshops as needed.
 - h. Learn to value, recognize and celebrate skills and accomplishments, even those that seem insignificant.
 - i. Attain and maintain community material and financial wellness so members become comfortable.
 - j. Assess issues that prevent creative project development and find solutions/alternatives to nourish creative urges.
- 2. Develop sustainable businesses that create tangible results.**
 - a. Develop sustainable and experiential tourism to strengthen the Dene Way of Life and allow Mola/ non-Dene to learn about the Dene Way of Life from Sambaa K'e community members.

- c. Strengthen Dene Laws in daily community living and on the land.
- d. Develop a strategy with parents to address issues related to abusive use of technology.

5. Strengthen the engagement of Chief, Council members and frontline workers in ensuring the development and safety of community members and families.

- a. Implement the wellness plan.
- b. Establish a social coordinator position that will:
 - i. Develop a justice committee that builds on community resources to resolve conflicts.
 - ii. Ensure cross-cultural education of visitors.
 - iii. Ensure proper communication of ideas of outsiders with community members; and provide services to assist outsiders with the translation of concepts and meaning of words.
 - iv. Develop community intervention to solve long-term problems between families.
- c. Ensure the recreational coordinator speaks Slavey, enforces discipline and implements wellness activities with children/youth.
- d. Implement a “no technology” rule at the recreation center and at other community activities.
- e. Develop programs to support people who are making changes in their lives (e.g. those that stop smoking.)
- f. Plan job sharing such that members can work towards their dream job.
- g. Initiate pre- and post-natal health program.
- h. Provide life management sessions (e.g. needs vs wants, planning skills).
- i. Support creative, healthy initiatives that can be carried out with minimum expense and resources.
- j. Recognize possible contributions of all community members to plan the development of the community.
- k. Establish an after school program for youth.
 - i. Consider hiring a female and male recreation coordinator to suit the various needs.
- l. Encourage role models.