

Tulita

Community Wellness Plan



BACKGROUND:

Tulita is a community of 566 residents which is situated on the east bank of the Great Bear River where it meets the Mackenzie River. The languages spoken are North Slavey and English. Tulita is accessible by air from Norman Wells year round and connected to the MacKenzie Highway system by ice road in the winter. Bulk supplies and food are barged in during the summer months.

Today's economy is based on hunting and trapping with oil exploration and tourism also being significant features. The sale of local arts and crafts is also key along with other local business.

Community Consultations:

The community residents attended the community consultation sessions to review and discuss the community wellness needs of the community. The focus of the discussions was to get answers from the community on the following questions:

1. Where are we now?
2. What do we have to work with?
3. Where do we want to be in the future?
4. How do we get there?

Community input and engagement in the development of the wellness programs is critical in addressing the health and social issues in the community. The development of the community wellness plans are an opportunity for the community to determine where they want their

community wellness program funds to be spent. A resident fluent in Slavey provided translation during the consultation sessions and this

The consultation sessions allowed the participants to have a “big picture” view of how community wellness is presently being delivered in Tulita. A cross section of participants in attendance reviewed the programs presently in place to meet the needs of community wellness. When reviewing the present program delivery the participants determined whether the present programs were effective in meeting the needs of all community residents in the areas of education and training, health and wellness, language and culture. The participants then focused on the major areas they saw as priority to implement a community wellness plan that would meet the needs of all community residents.

COMMUNITY OVERVIEW:

During the consultations sessions the participants determined the following:

WHERE ARE WE NOW?

The community of Tulita has been delivering wellness programs that focus on delivery of Community Mental Wellness.

WHAT DO WE HAVE TO WORK WITH?

- Tulita Wellness Agency established in the community with a focus on Community Mental Health;
- Experience in delivering community wellness programs to meet the needs of community residents;
- Established Community Counseling Program for Addiction;

- Traditional sewing programs have been delivered in Tulita;
- Elders are experienced in delivering cultural workshops to teach the youth traditional skills;
- Youth have participated in coaching sessions in hockey;
- Hand games training have been held to prepare the youth to participate in hand games tournaments;
- Youth Wellness programs have been implemented in Tulita to promote the youth to participate in healthy activities.
- There is a Youth Center established in the community of Tulita where youth specific programs can be delivered.
- There is genuine support to deliver community wellness programs in Tulita.

WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE IN THE FUTURE?

Chief and Council will be approached for support for implementation and delivery of all Wellness Programs.

Healthy Child and Youth Development:

- Engage our community youth to learn about our traditions and culture through the delivery of cultural activities. Materials will be provided for residents to attend classes :
- Continue support for early childhood programs and kindergarten programs;
- Increased stay-in school initiatives, career counseling and other additional support for students.
- Build a playground with safe equipment for our children to have a safe area to play and learn about sharing, healthy friendships and

developing confidence to participate in sports activities as a healthy activity;

Healthy Living and Disease Prevention Cluster:

- The Elders in our community enjoy participating in programs that promotes healthy lifestyles;
- Mothers are interested in learning how to provide their children with a healthy lifestyle;
- Increase access to nutritious foods and nutrition information for pregnant women, new mothers, children and families;
- All partners want to work in partnership to improve access to nutrition information, counseling and education for prenatal and postnatal women;
- Tulita's overall goal is to promote and improve healthy cooking skills for everyone in the community as a preventative measure against diabetes, obesity, heart attacks as well as improve the oral health of all our residents;
- Parents are interested in learning how to improve the oral health of infants and babies;
- Our community members want to participate in programs that promote and support smoke-free living and tobacco cessation;

- Tulita has a Recreation Coordinator who provides recreational programs for the youth;
- Tulita will work in partnership with other agencies to increase access to nutritious foods and nutrition information for pregnant women, new mothers, children and families;
- The community members support programs that will create cultural awareness and promote our heritage.

Mental Health and Disease Prevention Cluster:

- Tulita Wellness Agency is staffed with Community Health and Wellness Counselors who are trained to deliver counseling programs and provide facilitation sessions on bullying, communication and interpersonal relationships, grief and loss workshops when needed;
- Tulita Wellness Agency delivers a Mental Health and Addictions Counseling Service for all community residents;
- Tulita Wellness Agency works in partnership with other agencies who are responsible for health and wellness in the community such as the RCMP, Health and Social Services, Justice Committee, Regional Nutritionists, Recreation staff and the Tulita Band;
- Counseling is provided to Residential School Survivors; Education sessions are delivered to teach the youth about the impacts of drugs and alcohol ;

HOW DO WE GET THERE?

Healthy Child and Youth Cluster:

Early Childhood Development:

- Develop a culturally appropriate and relevant programming including Headstart program to operate out of the community Early Childhood Development program.
- Connect with the health center to encourage prenatal and postnatal women to come to healthy child and youth development programming in our community to get help for women in need;
- Plan and implement cooking classes for prenatal and postnatal women using traditional foods to create healthy meals for their families;
- Connect with the local Hunter and Trappers to get donations of traditional foods for the healthy child and youth development programming.
- Implement parenting classes to provide support to parents and children;
- Work in partnership with the NWT Literacy to access book bags for new parents to begin reading with their babies;

- Increase the physical activity of children and youth in our community by building a community playground where children and youth can learn how to play safe.
- Promote and support healthy child development through the provision of literacy programs for families, grandparents and children, delivery of oral health activities for moms and babies, cooking sessions for prenatal and postnatal women, implementation of activities that promote breastfeeding, provision of information and awareness for women of childbearing ages about the importance of healthy pregnancies, drinking and drug use.
- Improve oral health of infants and babies by providing the parents with hands on experience on how to care for the oral health of their infant, baby, toddler, child and youth.
- Provide healthy cooking circles to teach cooking, shopping and food budgeting skills, food vouchers and hampers to prenatal and postnatal women;
- Students will receive full support to attend career fairs put on by the School, Aurora College and Grant McEwans' "Dream Catcher Conference" opportunities to learn about the many careers and employment opportunities available;
- Children and youth at high risk for unhealthy lifestyles will receive support through programs focused on cooking healthy meals,

alcohol/drug awareness, counseling, mentoring; recreational programs, family events to promote socialization, parent/child relationships and culture camps;

- A program on healthy and nutritious meal preparation will be created and delivered for the youth;
- Parent/baby reading programs will be implemented to promote the importance to early reading to develop a solid base of literacy skills;
- Healthy child development will be promoted and supported by providing parents with hands on sessions on oral health for mother during and after pregnancy, oral health of babies, toddlers, children and youth;
- Tobacco education and support activities will be implemented for youth as a prevention measure and way of promoting to live a smoke free life.
- The Hamlet of Tulita will be approached to allocate space where a playground can be established for families and children to have a safe place to play. The parents, school and recreation staff will be invited to work in partnership to develop the playground layout which will be utilized by the volunteers who will install the playground equipment.

Support for Youth:

- Youth will be provided with opportunities to participate in college, university and other post-secondary education including course options;
- Career Counseling, tutoring, mentoring and the provision of a homework area will be provided to keep the youth interested in staying in school
- Painting and Photography classes will be offered to teach the youth new skill sets which they can eventually use to engage in future economic ventures;
- Cultural and traditional programs will be delivered to the youth to teach them about the culture and traditions of the North Slavey.

Healthy Living and Disease Prevention Cluster:

Walking Trail to 4 Mile Creek:

Establish a working group of volunteers to cut out and establish a walking trail to 4 Mile Creek and build picnic tables and other seating for our Elders to have a place to walk and spend time out of the land.

- Purchase all building materials to build the picnic tables and other seating needed for the outdoor space.

Elders Lunch Program:

- Implement a hot lunch program once a week for the elders.

- Connect with the local Hunters and Trappers to get country/traditional/local food for elders lunch program

Traditional Pursuits Program:

- A traditional pursuits program consisting of snowshoe making, fishing and traditional sewing, story- telling and dry meat making will be delivered for all residents to participate in activities where they can learn skills that will assist the residents to continue engaging in hunting and trapping activities for traditional foods as well as economic ventures to create an income for their families;

Mental Health and Addictions Clusters:

Tulita Wellness Agency will continue to provide mental health and addictions counseling and sessions on bullying, communication, interpersonal relationships, grief and loss workshops, residential school survivors, and other sessions needed to create a healthy community;

- Activities and awareness sessions on alcohol and drug use and the impacts on youth development will be delivered in our community;
- Tobacco education and support activities will be delivered for youth to learn how to live a smoke- free life;
- Activities on the importance of healthy pregnancies, drinking and drug use during and after pregnancy will be implemented for prenatal and postnatal women;

- Educational sessions on the impacts of alcohol and drugs on youth development will be delivered in our community in affiliation with the Justice Worker, RCMP, Community Health Representative, Elders and Nurse.

Conclusion:

The Tulita Dene Band is excited and eager to implement this new community wellness approach where we are provided with an opportunity to receive long term funding to assist us to meet our overall goal of community wellness.

We want to live in a community where everyone is engaging in positive activities that promote and support the mental health and well-being of our people. We our children and youth to engage in activities with their parents and elders where they will have opportunities to consume healthy foods, engage in physical activity to develop healthy bodies, participate in positive educational programs where they learn about our culture and traditions to become strong, confident contributing members of our society.