



**Big Brothers Big Sisters**  
of Saskatchewan

# Indigenous Toolkit for Mentors



SASKATCHEWAN  
INDIGENOUS  
**MENTORING**  
PARTNERSHIP

Connect ∞ Listen ∞ Learn ∞ Mentor



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# Foreword

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Saskatchewan wishes to disclaim that the understanding of reconciliation is only a snapshot of the current issues and strategies of reconciliation.

There are many years of history and events that have occurred to affect the Indigenous and non-Indigenous relationship. We encourage you to look deeper into the many areas we have highlighted, and the many that we have not, to gain a deeper understanding of today's landscape.

How to read citations: Ibid. (same source previously used.) Ibid. 22 (same source used but different page number).

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>Self-Assessment</b>	.....	<b>pg 1</b>
------------------------	-------	-------------

<b>Consideration 1: When you join BBBS</b>	.....	<b>pg 2</b>
--	-------	-------------

- 
- 1.1 What is Big Brothers Big Sisters Agency Definition of Reconciliation?
  - 1.2 What is the Role of Mentors in reconciliation?
  - 1.3 What is a Role for a Mentee in reconciliation?
  - 1.4 What are different understandings of reconciliation in the community?
  - 1.5 What is a visual for Reconciliation?

<b>Consideration 2: Before your Match</b>	.....	<b>pg 7</b>
---	-------	-------------

- 
- 2.1 What history should I know about Indigenous people to help me in my match?
  - 2.2 Understanding the Diversity of Indigenous people in Canada
  - 2.3 Understanding the Treaties of Saskatchewan

<b>Consideration 3: When you Meet your Match</b>	.....	<b>pg 14</b>
--	-------	--------------

- 
- 3.1 How do I create Safe Space for the Youth?
  - 3.2 Why is resiliency important in a match?
  - 3.3 Tips for Meeting Indigenous Families
  - 3.4 What words do I use with my youth?

<b>Consideration 4: During your Match</b>	.....	<b>pg 19</b>
---	-------	--------------

- 
- 4.1 Understanding and Integrating Culture into your Match
  - 4.2 Questions asked by Mentors

<b>Consideration 5: How can you engage with Reconciliation within your match throughout the year?</b>	.....	<b>pg 25</b>
---	-------	--------------

- 
- 5.1 Calendar of Important Dates for Aboriginal People in Saskatchewan
  - 5.2 Local events in your Community

## Self-Assessment

General Questions to ask yourself: Check the box that applies	Yes	No
Do you understand the generational impact of Residential Schools?		
Have you read the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls-to-Action?		
Do you understand the significance of strengthening the nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous Peoples?		
Do you react to stereotypical imagery and statements?		
Do you recognize and understand the impact of cultural appropriation?		
Do you know about the history, culture, worldviews, and challenges of the Indigenous Peoples of the area in which you live/work?		
Do you assume all Indigenous youth share a common culture?		
Do you understand the value of a diverse workforce that includes Indigenous people?		
Do you know the attitude of Big Brothers Big Sisters agency and staff towards Indigenous people and reconciliation?		
Do you understand the value of a buddy or mentoring program for Indigenous youth?		
Do you understand that Indigenous youth may be intimidated/shy so may not ask for assistance?		
Do you understand why there may be less eye contact when interacting with Indigenous youth/families?		

Adapted from: <https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/indigenous-cultural-competency-self-assessment-checklist>

# Consideration 1: When you join BBBS

*"Our future and the well-being of all our children rests with the kind of relationships we build today".<sup>1</sup>*

– Chief Dr. Robert Joseph

Note: Reconciliation is a multifaceted term, and each organization has a different definition of what reconciliation is. For the purposes of this toolkit, reconciliation will be focused through a BBBS SK perspective. Other visions of what reconciliation looks like to other organizations will be provided in hopes that it will provide the mentor and mentee with a better grasp on what reconciliation is.

## 1.1 What is Big Brothers Big Sisters Agency Definition of Reconciliation?

As an agency, we are on an evolving path of finding the commonalities between reconciliation and youth mentorship. Our intention is to create authentic and meaningful mentoring relationships that understand the history of Canada and create opportunities for growth between Indigenous and non-Indigenous mentors and mentees based on mutual understanding and respect. Our agency must be leaders in creating cross cultural understanding, opportunities, and events for our mentors and mentees to learn together. When we give opportunities for growth with our youth, we create a stronger community. Our responsibility to the Calls to Action is based on the following:

**Call to Action #7:** We call upon [Big Brothers Big Sisters of Saskatchewan] to develop alongside Aboriginal groups, a joint strategy to eliminate educational and employment gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

<sup>1</sup> "Chief Dr. Robert Joseph, O.B.C." Reconciliation Canada Chief Dr Robert Joseph OBC Comments. Accessed November 27, 2017. <http://reconciliationcanada.ca/about/team/chief-dr-robert-joseph/>.



**Call to Action #92:** We call upon [Big Brothers Big Sisters of Saskatchewan] to adopt the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, as a reconciliation framework and to apply its principles, norms, and standards, to corporate policy and core operational activities involving Indigenous peoples and their lands and resources.

## 1.2 What is the Role of Mentors in Reconciliation?

Mentorship is not about teaching or being the expert; instead it is about learning together with your mentees and going on a journey together. As a mentor you will discover healthy relationships which can be founded after you commit to being an ally and creating a safe space for the mentee to take part in discussion, confront challenging issues, and share things important to them.

## 1.3 What is a Role for a Mentee in Reconciliation?

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Saskatchewan youth have identified what they need and want in a reconciliation relationship and that is to:

- **LEARN** about Treaties, Indigenous Cultures, the history of Canada, and what Reconciliation looks like to my generation.
  - I can recognize that there is a legacy and there are policies that are a part of the story of Canada
  - I can include reconciliation in my own school work and ask questions to better understand and unpack what I have learned and can relearn
- **SHIFT** my own understanding of what reconciliation is and how I can be a part of it
  - I can use my voice to help others understand
  - I can encourage others to be curious in their own learning and understanding of Reconciliation
  - I can ask for reconciliation to be included in my own education
- **ADVOCATE** for Reconciliation
  - I can be a part of strengthening my community and ensuring everyone feels included
  - I can honour and respect relationships that I have with my peers
  - I can show trust and respect to Indigenous people in Canada
  - I can walk my own journey and share my voice and understanding of reconciliation

## 1.4 What are different understandings of Reconciliation in the community?

The City of Saskatoon views reconciliation as “exploring the past and choosing to build a better future. It’s understanding each other and building trust. It’s recognizing that We Are All Treaty People<sup>2</sup>. To further this goal The City of Saskatoon has collaborated with several vital groups and individuals to create the First Edition of *ayisīnowak: A Communications Guide*.

<sup>2</sup> City of Saskatoon, and Office of the Treaty Commissioner. “*ayisīnowak: A Communications Guide*.” Office of the Treaty Commissioner. May 2017. Accessed November 20, 2017. [http://www.otc.ca/public/uploads/resource\\_photo/ayisīnowak\\_a\\_communications\\_guide\\_web.pdf](http://www.otc.ca/public/uploads/resource_photo/ayisīnowak_a_communications_guide_web.pdf).

**The Office of the Treaty Commissioner (OTC)** has asked over a thousand Saskatchewan citizens what successful reconciliation will look and feel like in a generation.

- **A Shared Understanding of Our History:** We will have acknowledged, honoured, and healed from the truth and history of this land;
- **Authentic Relationships:** Strong relationships, partnerships and trust will exist among all people;
- **Strong Cultures, World Views and Interwoven Experiences:** Our cultures will be strong, world views respected and our social experiences will have been woven together;
- **Political, Economic and Social Systems that Represent and Benefit Us All.**

**Canadian Roots Exchange (CRE)** is a national organization that works to foster relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous youth. CRE,

“...views reconciliation as an ongoing process where youth are at the heart of redefining relationships between the peoples living on this land. We strive to create spaces where youth of diverse communities can form meaningful connections and engage in intergenerational dialogue. We believe that all youth have an integral role to play in understanding histories and current realities in the spirit of moving forward together”<sup>3</sup>.

**Reconciliation Canada** is an Indigenous-led organization that recognizes the following three concepts as building blocks to reconciliation:

- **Optimum Potential** is about creating value and purpose.<sup>4</sup> It is achieved by acknowledging and celebrating the unique aptitudes and capabilities of the individual.<sup>5</sup>
- **Shared Prosperity** is about inclusion and the ability to overcome economic inequality in Canada.<sup>6</sup> It requires moving from our current transactional economy towards a relational economy.<sup>7</sup>
- **Social and Systemic Change** requires both individual and societal shifts towards an increased knowledge of our shared Canadian history, legacy of colonialism and current realities.<sup>8</sup>

### Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was created as one part of the Indian Residential Settlement Agreement. Its purpose was to ensure that Survivors’ voices would be heard throughout Canada by creating opportunities for testimonials and events. After the commission was finalized, a published document was released in June 2015 which included 94 Calls to Action that represent the first step toward redressing the legacy of Indian Residential Schools. Many organizations, educational institutes, and individuals have committed to the Calls to Actions and making movement within reconciliation.

3 “Exchanges unite us.” Canadian Roots Exchange. Accessed November 27, 2017. <http://canadianroots.ca/>.

4 “National Reconciliation Gatherings.” Reconciliation Canada National Reconciliation Gatherings Comments. Accessed November 27, 2017. <http://reconciliationcanada.ca/programs-initiatives/national-reconciliation-gatherings/>.

5 Ibid.

6 Ibid.

7 Ibid.

8 Ibid.

## 1.5 What is a visual for Reconciliation?



### THE SYMBOL OF RECONCILIATION



**STAR/STAR BLANKET**  
Journey, Comfort

**FLOWER**  
New growth

**COLOURS**  
Four Directions  
Four Seasons

**INDIVIDUAL SHAPES**  
Gather and unify to  
create one shape



**THE SPACE IN BETWEEN**  
represents the “gap”  
that can be addressed  
through reconciliation



**BOOKS**  
Different ways of knowing  
Reference to Treaties

**ARROWS**  
Individual diverse groups



### THE CIRCLE

The Circle of Life

A meeting circle creating a  
safe place for dialogue

Seven Sacred Teachings:  
Love, Respect, Courage,  
Honesty, Wisdom,  
Humility, Truth

Introducing an eighth dot,  
a new Shared Fire:  
The Reconciliation Project

# Consideration 2: Before your Match

## 2.1 What history should I know about Indigenous people to help me in my match?

*"We have described for you a mountain. We have shown you the path to the top. We call upon you to do the climbing."<sup>9</sup>*

— Senator Murray Sinclair

The topics below are very simplified. Each has a comprehensive and important history, but the intent of the information as presented below is to provide a very brief introduction to the history while connecting it to current reality.



<sup>9</sup> <http://www.metronews.ca/news/canada/2015/06/02/words-of-truth-and-reconciliation.html>

**Doctrine of Discovery, 1493** was an official order issued by Pope Alexander VI in 1493, one year after Christopher Columbus' arrival to what is now known as North America.<sup>10</sup> This Doctrine made it so that all the lands "discovered" by Columbus would officially become Spanish colonies.<sup>11</sup>

- **What is its impact today?**

Although the Doctrine of Discovery applied directly to Spain, at its core this concept allowed for nations to claim land that was perceived as uninhabited by humans — humans being defined as "civilized people". This set the tone for policies in the Americas for the next 500 years.

- **What does this mean in our matches?**

This is important to understand in the way in which we talk about land and relationship to the land, as it's fundamental to understand that Indigenous people have always been on this land and that saying anything else can cause harm in the match relationship.

**British North America Act, 1867 (Later renamed The Constitution Act, 1867)**<sup>12</sup> is most well known as the piece of legislation that designated Canada a separate country from Britain. It is noteworthy in a discussion on reconciliation in that it describes the governance structure of Canada, including federal responsibilities.<sup>13</sup>

- **What is its impact today?**

With this designation came the transfer of responsibility as well. The BNA Act placed administrative responsibility of Indians (now First Nations) with the Canadian federal government. Through this, First Nations people still have many different avenues to access the same resources as people who are under provincial responsibility.

- **What does this mean in our matches?**

This is important to understand as status First Nation's people have a unique relationship with the federal government. This means that the way in which some First Nation's youth access healthcare and education is different as well as other aspects of their day to day lives.

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<sup>10</sup> Luk, Senwung. "Ditching the doctrine of discovery (and what that means for Canadian law)." OKT | Olthuis Kleer Townshend LLP. February 07, 2017. Accessed November 27, 2017. <http://www.oktlaw.com/ditching-doctrine-discovery-means-canadian-law/>.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> McConnell, W.H. "British North America Act." The Canadian Encyclopedia. Accessed November 27, 2017. <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/british-north-america-act/>.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

**The Numbered Treaties, (1871-1921)** were the building blocks of the expansion of what is now Canada. It is an agreement on how sovereign nations would live together for future generations. They were created between 1871 and 1921 with 11 Numbered Treaties being signed throughout present-day Ontario to Alberta.<sup>14</sup>

- **What is its impact today?**

Today there are many misunderstandings surrounding the Treaties and the many unfulfilled promises. First Nations people who signed believed they were committing to a sacred agreement to share the land with the newcomers--they did not agree to give up the land. The government, however, viewed the treaties as a legal document through which they had acquired land in order to open the west to settlers and create a nation from coast to coast. Many Canadians do not understand their relationship to Treaty and the benefits that exist for Settlers because of the Treaties.

- **What does this mean in our matches?**

Since 2007, treaties have been mandated in curriculum so youth may have a lot more information on this topic. If you feel comfortable, discuss this topic with your youth and listen and learn from your youth on this topic as it is very important to understand "We are all Treaty People" in Canada.

**Indian Act, 1876** outlines how the federal government, through the Department of Indian Affairs, would serve as the 'guardians' of First Nations people.<sup>15</sup> It was a consolidation of regulations pertaining to a wide range of topics that impacted First Nation people including governance, spirituality, culture, and education, and Indian status.<sup>16</sup>

- **What is its impact today?**

The Indian Act paved the way for assimilationist (the practice or policy of assimilating or encouraging the assimilation of people from all ethnic groups and cultures of origin) policies such as residential schools, the outlawing of spirituality and customs, and creating pass and permit systems. It is still in effect today. The effects of the Indian Act can be seen today with many aspects of the Indian Act still being addressed in court cases.

- **What does this mean in our matches?**

Most of the misconceptions about Indigenous people stem from the Indian Act administration of First Nations people. Education, healthcare, taxes, First Nation Bands, and taxation are all related to the Indian Act policies.

14 OTC website

15 Government of Canada; Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada. "A History of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada." Government of Canada; Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, September 02, 2011. Accessed November 27, 2017. <https://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1314977281262/1314977321448>.

16 Ibid.

**Residential Schools 1831-1996** As laid out in the Indian Act, the federal government was responsible for providing education to First Nation children.<sup>17</sup> However, the government at the time was also intent on assimilating these children by removing children from their families and communities, making them attend the schools where they were punished if they spoke their traditional language or practiced their cultures.<sup>18</sup>

- **What is its impact today?**

It is estimated that about 150,000 Aboriginal children attended residential schools, creating a legacy of oppression, trauma, and lost culture.<sup>19</sup> To ensure that survivors shared their stories and that their voices are heard, a Commission was created called the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).<sup>20</sup> The 94 Calls to Action that arose from the TRC have become a first step in the national healing process and movement towards reconciliation.<sup>21</sup>

- **What does this mean in our matches?**

The effects of inter-generational trauma are evident today, Canada as a whole is on a healing journey from the decades of abuse that took place at the schools. Many of the Indigenous youth in our program do not speak their language and are not connected to their culture or ceremonies. This is a result of the intergenerational effects of residential school.

**The Sixties Scoop/Millennial Scoop** is the coined term for a series of policies enacted by child welfare agencies that began in the late 1950s, which saw thousands of Indigenous children removed from their homes and families and placed in foster homes. More specifically in Saskatchewan, the Department of Social Services created a program called AIM (Adopt Indian and Métis)<sup>22</sup> with the goal of placing First Nations and Métis kids in white households. AIM often placed newspaper ads with the children's pictures and would sometimes adopt children out to families in the United States.

- **What is its impact today?**

There are lasting effects from these policies as many children lost their names, their languages, and a connection to their heritage. Currently, the provincial and federal governments are being held accountable through court cases on how to ensure that the child welfare systems are not discriminatory to Indigenous youth.

- **What does this mean in our matches?**

Like the Residential schools, the effects of inter-generational trauma are evident today, Canada as a whole is on a healing journey from this policy. Many of the Indigenous youth in our program do not speak their language and are not connected to their culture or ceremonies, which is a direct result of the policy known as the 60's scoop.

17 Miller, J.R. "Residential Schools." The Canadian Encyclopedia. Accessed November 27, 2017. <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/residential-schools/>.

18 Ibid

19 Ibid

20 Ibid

21 Ibid

22 <http://www.cbc.ca/cbcdocspov/features/the-sixties-scoop-explained>



## 2.2 Understanding the Diversity of First Nation people

There are 634 First Nations groups in Canada, speaking more than 50 distinct languages.<sup>23</sup> It is important to note that this does not include the Métis and Inuit peoples. This information is taken from the Treaty Essential Learnings produced by the Office of the Treaty Commissioner. Within Saskatchewan there are 6 First Nations groups/languages.

### Cree Worldview

**Spiritual Beliefs:** Everything is seen as being connected to the Creator and creation is the beginning point of all things.<sup>24</sup> The nations were given their spirituality and ways to pray from the Creator.<sup>25</sup> Respect, gentleness, kindness, honesty, fairness, and cleanliness are the guiding principles to a good life.<sup>26</sup>

**Name:** The proper term in the Plains Cree language is nēhiyawak.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>23</sup> Gadacz, René R. "First Nations." The Canadian Encyclopedia. July 2, 2006. Accessed December 18, 2017. <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/first-nations/>.

<sup>24</sup> *Treaty Essential Learnings: We Are All Treaty People*. Saskatoon: Office of the Treaty Commissioner, 2008., 44

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> [http://www.sicc.sk.ca/culture\\_plains-cree.html](http://www.sicc.sk.ca/culture_plains-cree.html)

## Dene Historical Worldview

**Spiritual Beliefs:** The Dene people were given the northern part of Canada by the Creator to protect.<sup>28</sup> Survival is considered one of the most important aspects of First Nations life, because they still respect and live off the land.<sup>29</sup> People must have respectful relationships with the Creator, each other, the land, animals, and the spirit world in order to survive.<sup>30</sup> All things are seen as being connected, and one element cannot survive without the other.<sup>31</sup> The land and water was provided by the Creator to use respectfully.

**Name:** The proper term for Dene people is Denesuline.<sup>32</sup>

## Saulteaux Historical Worldview

**Spiritual Beliefs:** All things are interrelated and dependent on one another for survival, and were created by the Creator, *Kitsi-manito* (Great Spirit).<sup>33</sup> The Saulteaux people believe that *Kitsi-manito* provides gifts and laws, which in turn allows them to live in peace and harmony with nature and the other tribes.<sup>34</sup>

**Name:** The proper term for Saulteaux is Nahkawē.

## Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota Historical Worldview

**Spiritual Beliefs:** *Wakan Tanka* (the Great Spirit) is the reason that all life begins and exists.<sup>35</sup> All things on earth are connected, because they share a common ancestor.<sup>36</sup> The foundation of a Dakota, Lakota, and Nakota worldview is *Mitakuye Oyasin* “we are all related” or “all of my relations”.<sup>37</sup> A goal for everyone is to be good relatives and look after earth and one another in order to maintain survival.<sup>38</sup>

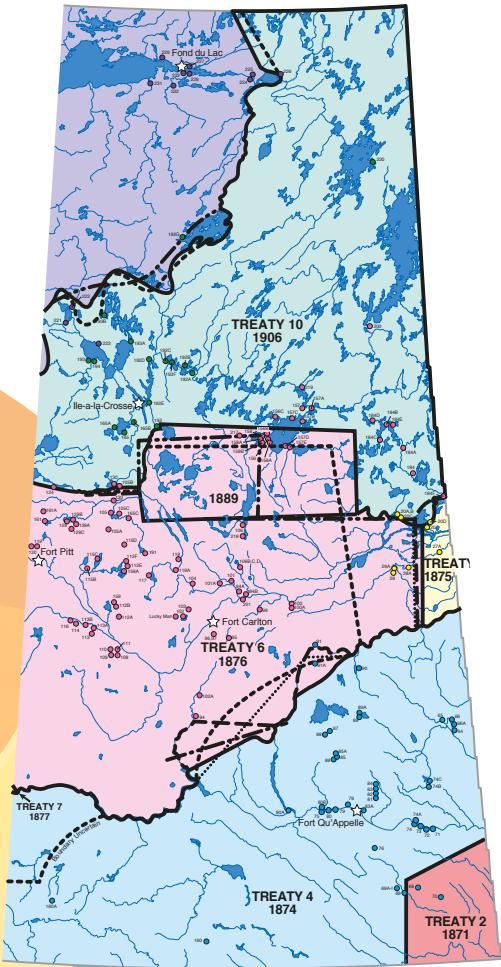
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28 Ibid.  
29 Ibid.  
30 Ibid.  
31 Ibid.  
32 <http://scaa.usask.ca/gallery/northern/content?pg=ex04-1>  
33 Ibid.  
34 Ibid.  
35 Ibid.  
36 Ibid.  
37 Ibid.  
38 Ibid.

The treaties in Saskatchewan are formal agreements between the First Nations and the Crown with their expectations and their obligations.<sup>39</sup> There are 6 treaty territories in Saskatchewan.

**Treaty 2 (1871):** Covers a small area of southeastern Saskatchewan, but is primarily in the province of Manitoba.

**Treaty 4 (1874):** Covers the southern portion present day Saskatchewan and initiated by First Nations people and Métis concerned the declining animal population.<sup>40</sup> The cities that are a part of Treaty 4 are Regina, Moose Jaw, Weyburn and Yorkton.



**Treaty 5 (1875, 1908):** The southern portion of treaty 5 was negotiated in 1875 and covers a small portion of western Saskatchewan.<sup>41</sup> The northern part of treaty 5 was negotiated in 1908.<sup>42</sup> This treaty was a result of the insistence that Aboriginal rights be recognized by the Canadian government.<sup>43</sup>

**Treaty 6 (1876):** Covers the central part of Saskatchewan.<sup>44</sup> Negotiations took place at a time of turmoil for the Plains Cree who were experiencing suffering from the decline of the Buffalo population.<sup>45</sup> The documents indicate that their concerns also included medical care and relief in times of need.<sup>46</sup> Some cities that are apart of Treaty 6 are Saskatoon, North Battleford, Prince Albert, La Ronge, and Lloydminster.

**Treaty 8 (1899):** Covers the northeastern corner of Saskatchewan and is the first northern treaty negotiated in Saskatchewan.<sup>47</sup>

**Treaty 10 (1906):** Covers the northern area of Saskatchewan.<sup>48</sup> The First Nations people in this area requested treaties due to the declining fur prices and game, but the federal government did not respond until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century because the land was deemed unsuitable for agriculture.<sup>49</sup>

39 "About the Treaties." Office of the Treaty Commissioner. Accessed December 22, 2017. [http://www.otc.ca/pages/about\\_the\\_treaties.html](http://www.otc.ca/pages/about_the_treaties.html).

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid.

43 Ibid.

44 Ibid.

45 Ibid.

46 Ibid.

47 Ibid.

48 Ibid.

49 Ibid.

# Consideration 3: When you Meet your Match

*"I think everyone needs a safe space. However, youth are still exploring and discovering their identities and beliefs.<sup>50</sup> It is vital for them to be able to do that in a space that encourages inclusiveness and no judgement".<sup>51</sup>*

– Kenny Starling, University of Saskatchewan Pride Centre Coordinator 2017-2018

## 3.1 How do I create Safe Space for the Youth?

A safe space for youth is an environment that allows them to go through whatever they may be experiencing. It is also a place that should be free from judgment and harassment.<sup>52</sup> When a safe space is held for youth, they can feel comfortable experiencing vulnerability and take chances. When youth are safe in their space, true sharing will occur as well as opportunities for mentors to learn with the youth about reconciliation and Indigenous culture. Some other elements to creating a safe space are:

- Approaching youth with respect and humility, knowing that you cannot and do not need to know everything.
- Avoid giving your opinion unless asked to on the circumstances.
- Allowing youth to go at their own pace.
- Understand that what youth are going through applies to them and not to you – don't take it personally.
- Allow youth to come to their own conclusions without trying to control the outcome.
- Allow youth to have their own experiences that are different from yours.

50 Starling, Kenny. "Safe Spaces." E-mail. December 12, 2017.

51 Ibid.

52 Ibid.

## How do I ensure I'm being a good Ally to Indigenous Youth?

Being an Indigenous youth ally is about listening with an open mind and heart, being willing to learn, and creating a welcoming space for all of this to happen. It is about committing to the journey of reconciliation with the youth and being willing to do the things we are asking of them along with them: to learn and listen about Canada's history and Aboriginal cultures, to be willing to examine our own ways of being and confront difficult feelings, and to take action to move forward together. There are 4 important themes on being an ally and mentoring Indigenous youth: build relationships, learn, acknowledgment of the land, and listen.

- 1. Build Healthy Relationships:** Healthy relationships are the core foundation of reconciliation. Trust and mutual understanding are the key elements of healthy relationships. We must share our experiences and accept others in order to form these connections. We must also look inward to our beliefs, prejudices, privileges, and biases, work to understand how these came to be and be willing to unlearn and relearn.
- 2. Learn:** Only by committing to learning about Indigenous histories and cultures can we begin to understand the harms done in the past and that continue today.
- 3. Acknowledgment of the Land:** We must commit to learning about the land, not just the importance of land in Aboriginal worldviews but to understand the histories of the physical space we live in.<sup>53</sup> We must commit to understanding that the land was taken and not shared like what was intended through Treaties with First Nation people.<sup>54</sup> It is important for you to know what traditional lands you are on. We will go into more detail on the Treaty territories of Saskatchewan in Consideration 4.
- 4. Listen:** Learning to truly listen is critical to relationship building.<sup>55</sup> To truly listen involves more than just listening with our ears, it also involves listening with an open mind and heart, and in the process putting aside your own opinions and the way you perceive the world to be.<sup>56</sup>

### 3.2 Why is resiliency important in a match?

Engaging in discussion about reconciliation is a challenge, and the youth in your match may not have the support at home or within their community. In addition to connecting them to resources, it is crucial that you continually encourage the development of resiliency.

Resiliency can be defined as the ability to adapt, overcome, and face difficult situations or topics. While we cannot change the world all at once, we can try to equip youth with the personal skills, spirit, and abilities to continue working towards reconciliation in their own lives.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid., 5

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

## **Resiliency means:**

- adjusting to setbacks
- the ability to cope with difficult situations
- having healthy relationships
- asking for help when necessary
- communicating while maintaining healthy boundaries
- problem solving
- thinking realistically

## **How do we nourish resiliency in youth?**

Although you may only spend a limited amount of time with the youth, you can encourage and nurture the development of personal resiliency by:

- holding space for dialogue and sharing
- developing genuine relationships in which both sides learn from each other
- assigning responsibilities
- maintaining calm in emotional situations
- facilitating inter-group dialogue
- taking an interest in the issues that affect youth
- sharing some of the things you struggle with and how you cope
- modeling that it is alright to be uncomfortable and to be unafraid of their feelings

## **Addressing Limitations**

While you are encouraged to take this journey with the youth, it is not your job to take on the role of counsellor. If you do not feel comfortable addressing an issue, or if you think an issue warrants the attention of BBBS or school staff, please feel empowered to reach out to them. It is a part of the mentorship journey to learn to connect with youth while remaining professional and maintaining healthy personal boundaries.

### 3.3 Tips for Meeting Indigenous Families

These tips are intended as guideline only. Not all Indigenous people will have the same teachings or worldviews, but it is beneficial to be aware of cultural differences relating to non-verbal communication practices, because cultural expectations can vary between mainstream culture and Indigenous cultures.<sup>57</sup> The following are examples of cultural differences in non-verbal communication between some mainstream cultures and some Indigenous cultures. For a lot of First Nations people, knowing where someone is from can help establish a connection or relationship to the person. They will feel a lot more comfortable around you if they can come up with a community, friend or family tie you two may share.

#### EXAMPLE 1: EYE CONTACT

**Mainstream Culture:** Eye contact when someone is speaking can be viewed as a sign of respect and displays interest, concern and honesty.<sup>58</sup>

**Indigenous Culture:** Lack of eye contact is sometimes considered a sign of respect as someone may lower their head to focus on what is being said.<sup>59</sup>

#### EXAMPLE 2: SPEAKING TONE

**Mainstream Culture:** A person may speak in a firm tone to display respect. The response may be brief and concise.<sup>60</sup>

**Indigenous Culture:** A person may speak slowly and in a softer tone. This displays a sign of respect, and the response may include a story that conveys values, perspective, and/or emotions.<sup>61</sup>

#### EXAMPLE 3: HAND SHAKES

**Mainstream Culture:** A firm handshake displays confidence, trust and respect.<sup>62</sup>

**Indigenous Culture:** A firm handshake is also important, but a gentle handshake is preferred, because too firm of a handshake may be considered rude.<sup>63</sup>

#### EXAMPLE 4: RESPONSIVENESS

**Mainstream Culture:** Conversation generally does not have a short pause between two speakers; when one person is finished speaking the other usually begins speaking.<sup>64</sup>

**Indigenous Culture:** There may be a longer pause between two people speaking.<sup>65</sup> This is because a person may need more time to think about the topic.<sup>66</sup>

57 City of Saskatoon, and Office of the Treaty Commissioner. "ayisīnowak, 30

58 Ibid.

59 Ibid.

60 Ibid.

61 Ibid.

62 Ibid., 31

63 Ibid.

64 Ibid.

65 Ibid.

66 Ibid.

### 3.4 What words do I use with my youth?

To take part in discussions about reconciliation, it is useful to be on the same page about certain terms. Many people are discouraged from taking part in discussion, because the terminology is intimidating, or they are afraid to say the wrong thing. This list of terms is here to minimize those concerns and hopefully encourage you to engage in dialogue, in turn encouraging mentees to open up as well.

**Aboriginal:** “Aboriginal Peoples” is a collective name for all of the original peoples of Canada and their descendants. Section 35 of the Constitution Act of 1982 specifies that the Aboriginal Peoples in Canada consist of three groups – Indian (First Nations), Inuit and Métis. It should not be used to describe only one or two of the groups.

**First Nations:** The term First Nations came into common usage in the early 1980s to replace the term band (ex. White Cap First Nation instead of White Cap Band) as well as the politically correct term for the original inhabitants on this land. Despite its widespread use, there is no legal definition for this term in Canada.

**Indian:** The term Indian collectively describes all the Indigenous People in Canada who are not Inuit or Métis. Indian Peoples are one of three peoples recognized as Aboriginal in the Constitution Act of 1982 along with Inuit and Métis. This word has become outdated and the more politically correct term is First Nation.

**Indigenous:** Indigenous is an all-encompassing international term that refers to the original inhabitants in all countries in the world. The term could mean First Peoples of Canada, Maori in New Zealand, Saami of Northern Europe, or Native Americans in the United States. There is no legal definition for Indigenous but usually recognizes that the peoples had a distinct social, economic, and political system before the arrival of a settler society, a strong link to the territory or land, a distinct language, culture, and beliefs that has been undermined by the settler society in the territory.

**Inuit:** Inuit are a circumpolar people, inhabiting regions in Russia, Alaska, Canada and Greenland. Inuit people live primarily in the Northwest Territories, Nunavut, and northern parts of Quebec and coastal Labrador.

**Métis:** The French term originally noted the mixed offspring of First Nation women and European men in the 18<sup>th</sup> century but now is a word that recognizes the distinct culture, traditions, language, way of life, and nationhood of the Métis people. The Métis Nation developed along the Red River in what is now Southern Manitoba in the 18<sup>th</sup> century and moved throughout Canada. They are recognized in the Canadian Constitution, section 35(1), and in the Manitoba Act as being distinct from Indian and Inuit.

# Consideration 4: During your Match

*"Being a good mentor is about getting out of your own way to learn who your mentee really is, and where they come from. Let them show you the person they need you to be and you'll learn a lot about yourself in the process"*<sup>67</sup>

– Shyan Jordison, BBBS Mentor

This section is intended to provide the reader with a basic level and general understanding of some of the Indigenous cultures and norms that are present in Saskatchewan. It is important to note the information provided in this section is presented from a pan-Aboriginal view; when attending a ceremony, it is good practice to ask the people hosting the ceremony for a more in-depth description on their protocols.

## 4.1 Understanding and Integrating Culture into your Match

### Why is Tobacco Important to First Nations People?

Tobacco has a variety of medicinal purposes and has been used in traditional ceremonies, rituals, and prayer for thousands of years.<sup>68</sup> It is sometimes stated that tobacco opens the doors of knowledge and that it creates a direct communication link between a person and the spiritual world.<sup>69</sup> Prior to European tobacco distribution, First Nations people had their own tobacco that was a mixture of red willow bark and *Kinnikinnick*.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Jordison, Shyan. "What Makes A Good Mentor?" E-mail. December 12, 2017.

<sup>68</sup> City of Saskatoon, and Office of the Treaty Commissioner. "ayisīnowak," 22

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 24

## **What is Smudging?**

To smudge is an act of purifying physical surroundings and the mind.<sup>71</sup> Smudging typically occurs when First Nations people gather for meetings, ceremonies, or personal prayer.<sup>72</sup> When smudging, sweet grass, sages, and cedars are generally used.<sup>73</sup> The sweet grass, sages, or cedars are then typically lit with matches or hot coals.<sup>74</sup> The people smudging then take the smoke by pushing or cupping the smoke towards them and placing it over the body.

## **What is a Powwow?**

Historically powwows were occasions where nations, families, and friends gathered to dance, share news, food, celebration, trade, and sometimes do a bit of matchmaking.<sup>75</sup> Today powwow has become an expression of First Nations identity across Turtle Island (North America).<sup>76</sup> Powwows are open to the public and can be used as an opportunity for people to learn and about and experience Indigenous culture.<sup>77</sup>

- The clothing worn by the dancers is referred to as regalia and should not be referred to as costumes.<sup>78</sup> Some of the regalia pieces are old, and some are considered sacred.<sup>79</sup> Regalia takes a long time to make, as such never touch a regalia piece without permission.<sup>80</sup>
- The drum is considered the heartbeat of the powwow, and some traditions dictate that it never be left unattended, or touching the ground.<sup>81</sup> Do not attempt to play or touch the drum without permission.<sup>82</sup>
- Photographs of the dancer should be avoided unless permission from the dancer is given; however it is generally acceptable to take pictures of the dances.<sup>83</sup>
- Always stand during the grand entry ceremony, which signifies the start of the powwow.
- It is always good practice to ask the people hosting the powwow for a more in depth description on the protocols, because protocols can differ from community to community.
- Participating with a mentee at a powwow would be appropriate for anyone without regalia in certain intertribal songs. The Emcee will announce when it is appropriate.

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71 Ibid., 26

72 Ibid.

73 Ibid.

74 Ibid.

75 Joseph, Bob. "Working Effectively with Indigenous Peoples®." The pow wow - First Nation pow wow protocol. June 18, 2013. Accessed December 18, 2017. <https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/the-pow-wow-protocol-for-first-nation-pow-wows>.

76 City of Saskatoon, and Office of the Treaty Commissioner. "ayisinowak, 28

77 Ibid.

78 Ibid.

79 Ibid.

80 Ibid.

81 Ibid.

82 Ibid.

83 Ibid.

84 Ibid.

## **What is a Round Dance?**

The Round Dance is a healing ceremony that became a social dance for Indigenous people and is held in the winter seasons. Round dance is a traditional First Nation's community celebration and is used for all kinds of different reasons, from honouring someone, or celebrating birthdays, anniversaries, weddings, graduations, memorials, etc. Protocols differ from culture to culture, but some general protocols would be

- Do not break the circle of dancers and go into the middle of the drum circle; wait till the song is over if you need to see the drummers in the middle.
- Some women only wear long skirts to a round dance and some wear pants. To figure out which is best for you, talk to the Elders in your community.
- There are a lot of people who are new to round dances, so listen to the MC for clues and tips on protocols. They will usually direct you on when to stand, be quiet, or when something significant is happening.

## **4.2 Questions asked by Mentors**

### **My Indigenous youth talks about his long hair and braiding it; what is the significance of it?**

Many Indigenous cultures have a strong significance to their hair, but the reason can be very personal or specific to a culture. Some cultures in Canada believe that their hair is connected to their spirituality, a connection to mother earth, and cultural or ethnic identity. The reasons can be diverse, but it is important as a mentor to recognize that your youth may have a different relationship with their hair, so they may keep any hair that falls out, not let you touch their hair, or spend a lot of time ensuring that it is well maintained. For more information in Saskatchewan, follow the hashtag #boyswithbraids, look for events that talk about this subject, or respectfully ask the parents the significance so that you can understand your youth better.

### **My youth says that they are from a reserve; is there any difference between a reserve and city?**

There are a few similarities and differences between reserves and cities. Both are a track of land set for the personal and economic growth of a group of people on that land, but how they are managed and how they came to be are very different. A reserve is a piece of land under the Indian Act and treaty agreements for the exclusive use of a First Nation band or tribe. The land specifically is Federal land and not Provincial property, unlike cities or towns in Saskatchewan.

Beside the logistics of the land, First Nation's people have different customs, traditions, and worldview that might be present on a reserve compared to a city. As a mentor be mindful of these differences and actively engage with your youth to learn the differences as a part of learning not judgement.

## **My youth talks about his identity as Two Spirit; what does that mean? What do I need to know?**

Traditionally each Indigenous group had their own word to describe a Two Spirit person in their community. Today much of the knowledge on their traditional names and roles has been lost or has gone underground due to colonial influence, so the word Two Spirit was proposed as a way of reclaiming their traditional acceptance of gender variant people. If your Indigenous youth says that they are Two Spirit, they are usually referring to non-heterosexual and/or non-cisgender Indigenous person. They are probably sharing this with you as a mentor to help you understand their identity, roles, and responsibility within their communities.

Thank the youth for sharing with you and please don't be invasive as some might not be ready to share more; also understand that they may not be 'out' to other people, so don't assume that it is ok to share this with others. To support a Two Spirit youth, take time to understand and listen to how they identify and reaffirm their identities in safe and caring spaces.

At times it may be difficult to understand that for many Two-Spirit people they experience multiple and overlapping forms of oppression and inequality, even from the very groups they identify with, such as the Indigenous community, the LGBTQ2S community, and the Trans community. But your support as a mentor can help alleviate feelings of isolation, anxiety, and depression for Two Spirit youth! For more information on this topic please visit [http://www.outsaskatoon.ca/two\\_spirit1](http://www.outsaskatoon.ca/two_spirit1)

## **My youth mentions that he is treaty and status, is there a difference?**

An Indigenous youth who says they are treaty is relating to a relationship that they have with the land and government. Treaties were signed across Canada about how Indigenous and non-Indigenous people would live on this land for the future generations. To have "Indian Status" is to fit into a federal category of responsibility for the Canadian government. In the Canadian Constitution it states that "Indians, and Lands reserved for the Indians" are under the jurisdiction of the federal government.

## **My youth's family asked me if I wanted to smudge with them or their youth; are there protocols that I need to know?**

This is a great opportunity and sharing moment with your youth and family! There is a diversity of ways in which people smudge. It's best to just tell them that you have never done it, and they will show you how they as a family, community, or tribe smudge. If you feel uncomfortable, let them know and chat beforehand- smudging is always optional based on person to person so don't feel bad if you don't feel comfortable. The family or youth is probably just wishing to show you a part of their cultural, and that's a great start to a mentorship relationship.

## **When my youth says that they are on Treaty territory, am I also on the same Treaty territory or is it different for settlers on this land?**

The numbers on the treaty represent the geographical location and the sequential order in which the treaties were signed with Treaty 1 being signed first and Treaty 11 being signed last. There are over 300 treaties in Canada, but there are only 11 numbered treaties. Many treaties spans between two provinces. It doesn't matter if you're Indigenous or non-Indigenous, 100% of Saskatchewan is covered in Treaties. For more information about which treaty you are on please visit [www.otc.ca](http://www.otc.ca). There is more treaty information in the following pages.

## **As a non-Indigenous person, can I say *tansi* or other Cree words to my youth or is that cultural appropriation?**

There is no right or wrong answers to what is cultural appropriation, as it depends on a lot of factors that you may not be aware of like historical understandings, cultural teachings, personal beliefs, and attitudes or emotions attached to the specific topic. As a part of reconciliation, there is a strong belief that language revitalization is needed, so giving youth the opportunity to be able to speak their language is a great mentorship value. If you are wanting to actively learn words or phrases in an Indigenous language then:

- *Spend time and energy* to ensure that you are using the correct term or pronunciation of the word as it is easy to look offensive if you don't use the word correctly. There are multiple online apps and dictionary that will be able to help you to sort this out.
- Make learning new *languages* a *fun activity* that you can do with your youth so that the youth is engaged in the process and understands that you are using it to find connections with your mentee and not as a form of cultural appropriation.
- Recognize that there are words or phrases that you *might not be able* to say as someone who is not from those specific language communities. Some words that are used are earned in Indigenous communities like familial connections, spiritual words, etc.
- *Understand* that speaking Indigenous languages has a strong history of harm and fear in the Indigenous community, as historically there were policies aimed at the language. It is something that you should think about and be mindful of when you start.

## **What is the best word to call myself to my youth – white? Caucasian? Settler?**

This is a very difficult question to answer as there is no universal term that suits all non-Indigenous people in Saskatchewan, but knowing a bit about the words may help you to find the word you relate to best.

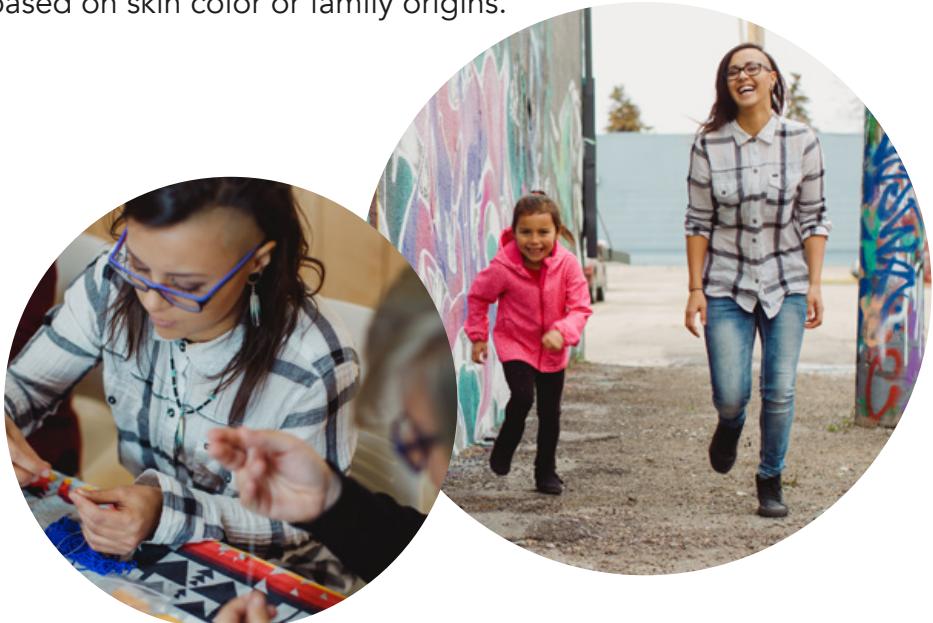
**Caucasian** has its roots from the people of the Caucasus Mountains<sup>85</sup>. In the 1500's a scientist created a scientific experiment with skulls of people and classified them into 5 categories<sup>86</sup>, one being the term Caucasian<sup>87</sup>. This word is commonly used in Canada and the United States as a blanket term for European-American.

**Settler** is a word that designates the relationship to the land in Saskatchewan. All of Saskatchewan is covered in treaties with First Nations people, which gave the future generations the ability to live, love, and grow on this land. Using the word settler can be seen as an acknowledgment of that nation to nation relationship that was solidified during treaty signing and ensuring that non-Indigenous ancestors and future generations can live on this land.

**Euro-Canadian.** This is a hybrid noting the relationship as both having ancestors in the continent of Europe and also being a citizen of Canada.

**White:** Is a term that doesn't have one universal understanding but has changed throughout centuries. There are references to it being used to distinguish between skin colours. It became more widely used in North America to distinguish between people who do not have African or Native American descent. It also has academic meaning related to acknowledgement of the power that the group holds historically and socially.

What you call yourselves depends on your perspective and identity but is your personal choice to make. Labels can be debilitating; whatever you chose to call yourself, make sure that you give the same opportunity to your youth to choose how they wish to be acknowledged and not assume based on skin color or family origins.



85 [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caucasian\\_race](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caucasian_race)

86 Ibid.

87 Ibid.

# Consideration 5: How can you engage with Reconciliation within your match throughout the year?

*"Getting out in your community together is essential to the introduction and integration of Reconciliation into both your life and your mentee's life. It gives you the opportunity to learn, and engage in discussion as you begin to explore your roles in Truth and Reconciliation."<sup>88</sup>*

Shyan Jordison, BBBS Mentor

This section is intended to provide the reader with a basic level and general understanding of holidays or important dates to celebrate within your match. There are many more events happening in your local community.



<sup>88</sup> Jordison, Shyan. "What Makes A Good Mentor?"

## 5.1 Calendar of Important Dates for Aboriginal People in Saskatchewan

### January Events

**Round dances:** During the cold months, especially in December and January, there are a lot of organizations that host round dances in gyms across the city and the province. Round dances are during the evening or on the weekends, free to attend, and how long you stay is dependent on the individual. Make sure to be on the lookout for these events!

### February Events

**Month-long Aboriginal Storytelling Month:** February of every year is designated as Saskatchewan Aboriginal Storytelling Month which is coordinated by the Library Services for Saskatchewan Aboriginal Peoples.<sup>89</sup> Story telling is a traditional method used to teach about ways of life, customs, ceremonies, cultural beliefs, relationships, and customs for First Nations people.<sup>90</sup>

**How to Engage:** If you are looking for events that month, there will be many organizations that have events. Saskatchewan Indigenous Cultural Centre<sup>91</sup> plays a large role in this month as well as the Sakewewak Artist Collective Inc.<sup>92</sup>

**Below are links to possible activities.**

<http://storyarts.org/lessonplans/index.html>

<http://firstnationspedagogy.ca/storytelling.html>

<https://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/stories/020020-4000-e.html>

### March Events

**March 8: International Women's Day:** "This is a time for Canadians to celebrate the progress that has been made toward equality for women and their full participation in all aspects of society."<sup>93</sup> It is also an opportunity to reflect on the barriers that remain and take action to overcome them.<sup>94</sup>

89 "Aboriginal Storytelling Month: 2017." L.S.S.A.P. May 02, 2017. Accessed December 19, 2017. [https://lssap.wordpress.com/aboriginal-storytelling-month-2017/?utm\\_source=E-Update%2BFebruary%2B1%2C%2B2017&utm\\_campaign=E-Update&utm\\_medium=email](https://lssap.wordpress.com/aboriginal-storytelling-month-2017/?utm_source=E-Update%2BFebruary%2B1%2C%2B2017&utm_campaign=E-Update&utm_medium=email).

90 Storytelling Overview from the First Nations Pedagogy Online Project. Accessed December 19, 2017. <http://firstnationspedagogy.ca/storytelling.html>.

91 "Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre." Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre. Accessed December 19, 2017. <http://www.sicc.sk.ca/>.

92 "Return of the Crow Hop Cafe." Sakewewak Artists Collective Inc. Accessed December 19, 2017. <http://www.sakewewak.ca/>.

93 Government of Canada, Status of Women Canada, Communications and Public Affairs Directorate. "Celebrate International Women's Day." Government of Canada, Status of Women Canada, Communications and Public Affairs Directorate. February 24, 2017. Accessed December 19, 2017. <http://www.swc-cfc.gc.ca/commemoration/iwd-jif/celebrate-celebrer-en.html>.

94 Ibid.

**How to Engage:** Join the conversation online by taking part in the #EqualityMatters social media campaign.<sup>95</sup> Tell the world why equality matters to you using the hashtag #EqualityMatters. Tag a woman or man who is helping to make gender equality a reality.<sup>96</sup> Tell others about the significance of this day by writing an article, letter to the editor or blog post, or by sharing your thoughts on social media.<sup>97</sup> Encourage young people to get involved in celebrating International Women's Day by watching a documentary, film or television program about a strong leader, going to a historical museum.

### **Notable Indigenous Women:**

- **Daphne Odjig:** This Indigenous painter and printmaker was known for her work which combined cultures that shaped her life, often combining Indigenous symbols and icons with European styles.<sup>98</sup> During the 1960s and 70s, her work assisted in sculpting Canadian history by bringing First Nations voices and political issues into the whole society.<sup>99</sup>
- **Senator Lillian Dyck:** This Indigenous politician is well known for advocating for employment equity and education for women, Chinese Canadians and Aboriginals.<sup>100</sup> In 2005 she became the first female First Nations senator and first Canadian born Chinese senator.<sup>101</sup>
- **Tantoo Cardinal:** This Métis actress is a member of the Order of Canada.<sup>102</sup> She has appeared in numerous plays, television programs, and films, including *Legends of the Fall*, *Dances with Wolves*, *Spirit of the Whale*, *Silent Tongue*, *Mother's & Daughter's* and *Smoke Signals*.<sup>103</sup> She learned to speak Lakota for her role in *Smoke Signals*.<sup>104</sup>

**March 21: International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination:** The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination is not a public holiday, but is observed annually on the 21<sup>st</sup> of March. On that day in 1960, police opened fire and killed 69 people at a peaceful demonstration in Sharpeville, South Africa, against the apartheid "pass laws". In 1966 the UN General Assembly proclaimed it as the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.<sup>105</sup>

**How to Engage:** Generally, there are very few events for this event in communities; if there are events, a great place to investigate would be the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission<sup>106</sup>, newcomer organizations, or Office of the Treaty Commissioner.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Nathoo, Zulekha. "Aboriginal painter and printmaker Daphne Odjig dead at 97." CBCnews. October 02, 2016. Accessed December 19, 2017. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/entertainment/daphne-odjig-dead-1.3788123>.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> "Resources." Senator Lillian Dyck | Indigenous Works. Accessed December 19, 2017. <https://indigenousworks.ca/en/resources/success-story/senator-lillian-dyck>.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> "Biography." IMDb. Accessed December 19, 2017. [http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0001987/bio?ref\\_=nm\\_ov\\_bio\\_sm](http://www.imdb.com/name/nm0001987/bio?ref_=nm_ov_bio_sm).

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> "Discrimination, racial, racism, xenophobia, prejudice, conflict, war, genocide, ethnic cleansing, crime against humanity, apartheid." United Nations. Accessed December 19, 2017. <http://www.un.org/en/events/racialsdiscriminationday/background.shtml>.

<sup>106</sup> "Human Rights in Saskatchewan." Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission. Accessed December 19, 2017. <http://saskatchewanhumanrights.ca/>.

BBBS activities: below are links to human rights centered activities  
<http://hrlibrary.umn.edu/edumat/activities.shtm>  
<https://humanrightswarrior.com/2011/12/07/10-things-to-do-with-your-kids-on-human-rights-day-dec-10th-2/>  
<http://www.youthforhumanrights.org/educators/educator-programs.html>

## April Events

**Month-long National Poetry month:** Established in Canada in 1998.<sup>107</sup> National Poetry Month brings together schools, publishers, booksellers, literary organizations, libraries, and poets from across the country to celebrate poetry and its vital place in Canada's culture.<sup>108</sup>

**How to Engage:** Bring your mentee to the library and read poetry by Indigenous poets. Check your local libraries during this month to see if there are any poetry events happening. Read your favorite poem by an Indigenous poet to your mentee.  
Notable Indigenous Poem Collections:

- **Passage:** "Traversing the Great Lakes, Gwen Benaway's collection Passage takes readers on the journey of her ancestors. At the same time, the Métis poet explores her passage from male to female."<sup>109</sup> Available in Saskatoon at the Frances Morrison Central Library.
- **Burning in This Midnight Dream:** "In her latest collection, Louise Bernice Halfe writes about a residential school and how its legacy kept her distanced from her own heritage. But she also chronicles her journey to reconnect with her family's Cree traditions."<sup>110</sup> Available in Saskatoon at the Frances Morrison Central Library and the J.S. Wood Branch.
- **Witness, I am:** "Gregory Scofield's collection of poetry Witness, I Am is divided into three different sections that explore identity, belonging, the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women and Scofield's own mixed ancestry."<sup>111</sup> Available in Saskatoon at the Frances Morrison Central Library.
- **Totem Poles and Railroads:** "The collection started from an observation that Indigenous issues were in the spotlight because of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's final report and calls to action."<sup>112</sup> Available in Saskatoon at the Frances Morrison Central Library.

<sup>107</sup> "National Poetry Month." League of Canadian Poets. Accessed December 19, 2017. <http://poets.ca/npm/>.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> News, CBC. "5 Indigenous poetry collections to read on World Poetry Day." CBCnews. March 24, 2017. Accessed December 19, 2017. <http://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/indigenous-collections-international-poetry-day-1.4034742>.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid.

## May Events

**Powwow Season:** This is generally the start of outdoor powwow season throughout the summer months and usually begins to get sparse in September. There are many different opportunities to attend a powwow in the different cities in Saskatchewan as well as First Nations. Powwows.com is a great resource to find a powwow near you. They also live stream powwows, so you can watch on any device. If you are feeling uncomfortable attending a powwow, this may be a great start to watch it live.

### How to Engage:

Attend a powwow across Saskatchewan

Watch a powwow on powwows.com, and you and your mentee try and find the different dancers and regalia. Make it a fun activity the both of you can do!

Watch powwow dancing at events and different organizations.

## June Events

**June 11- National Day of Healing and Reconciliation:** On June 11, 2008, Prime Minister Stephan Harper formally apologized in the House of Commons on behalf of all Canadians for the Indian residential school policy.<sup>113</sup> In his apology the Prime Minister recognized that the policy of assimilation was wrong, that there were profoundly negative consequences of the Indian residential school policy, and that the policy had a lasting and damaging effect on Aboriginal culture, heritage, and language.<sup>114</sup>

**How to Engage:** Although many people believe that Residential School is too heavy of a topic for children, there are many ways to engage in the conversation in an age appropriate manner.

- Go to the library and find an age appropriate book on residential schools and have a very general conversation on it. Depending on the age of the youth, there are many books that discuss residential schools but not the abuses that took place.
- Strike up a conversation about what the youth may know about residential schools and ask them to share with you their understanding.
- Watch an age appropriate YouTube video.
- Having a snack while engaging in conversations is always an asset.

<sup>113</sup> Treaty Essential Learnings: We Are All Treaty People., 25.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

**June 21- National Indigenous Peoples Day:** The Government of Canada designated June 21 National Indigenous Peoples Day, a celebration of Indigenous culture and heritage. This date was chosen because it corresponds to the summer solstice, the longest day of the year, and because for generations, many Indigenous groups have celebrated their culture and heritage at this time of year.<sup>115</sup>

**How to Engage:** There is a lot of activities throughout the day and the evening within your community that you can attend. There are usually posters and social media posts. Be sure to follow on Instagram and twitter, @CdnHeritage to see all the events across the province. Here is a list of activities you could do with your mentee.

- Engage in a Traditional activities (community feast, pow-wow, storytelling)
- Watch traditional dancers - First Nations, Inuit and Métis
- Play traditional or contemporary games (e.g. lacrosse)
- Read a quiz on Indigenous history/culture and research with your mentee the answers.
- Attend a workshop
- Learn about Indigenous heroes/heroines in Canada
- Bannock-baking contest

## July Events

**3<sup>rd</sup> week -Back to Batoche Days:** The four day Back to Batoche Days festival began in 1971 and occurs yearly every 3<sup>rd</sup> week of July.<sup>116</sup> The event is hosted by the Métis nation Saskatchewan.<sup>117</sup> The event is a celebration of Métis culture and also a tribute and respect for those who lost their lives in the 1885 North West Rebellion when the Métis fought to preserve their culture, and land.<sup>118</sup>

**How to Engage:** Celebrate Métis culture and traditions with your mentee. Batoche days host Métis activities such as jigging, fiddling, storytelling, singing, and cooking throughout the four day event.<sup>119</sup> They also have workshops, chuck wagon races, chariot races, and voyager games.<sup>120</sup> Artisans showcase their talent and Métis cuisine such as moose stew and fried bannock is served.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>115</sup> <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/celebrate-canada-days/aboriginal-day.html>

<sup>116</sup> "Back to Batoche 2015 – Celebrating Métis Culture and Heritage!" Metis National Council. July 19, 2015. Accessed December 22, 2017. <http://www.metisnation.ca/index.php/news/back-to-batoche-2015-%E2%80%93-celebrating-metis-culture-and-heritage>.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

## August Events

**August 9 - International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples:** On December 23, 1994 the United Nation General Assembly decided that the International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples be observed on the 9<sup>th</sup> of August every year, to promote and recognize the rights of the worlds Indigenous peoples.<sup>122</sup>

### How to Engage:

- Ask your mentee to share with you a part of their culture on this day and share a part of your culture as well.
- Discuss an Indigenous group not from Canada and do a little research at the library or on your computers about this group.
- Research an Indigenous meal and try and recreate it at your house.

**3<sup>rd</sup> week in August- Annual Folk Fest:** This annual festival showcases and educates the public about the different cultures within Saskatchewan.

**How to Engage:** Although there is a cost in attending, this is a really great way to engage in different cultures with your mentee. For more information please visit <https://www.saskatoonfolkfest.com/our-history/>

**August 23-First Signing of Treaty 6:** Treaty 6 was signed on August 23, 1876 at Fort Carlton. Fort Carlton was an important hub for the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) from 1810 - 1885. Located on the North Saskatchewan River and with easy access by land, this site was an ideal place to warehouse goods and gather provisions for other posts. An important negotiation site for Treaty Six in 1876.

**How to Engage:** Visit Fort Carleton Park, which has a reconstructed palisade, fur and provisions store, trade store, clerks quarters and tipi encampment. With your mentee you can see, touch and smell artifacts such as bison hides, beaver pelts and more. Interpretive staff are on hand to answer questions and lead activities. It is open May long weekend to Labour Day.

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<sup>122</sup> "International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples 2017 For Indigenous Peoples." United Nations. Accessed December 22, 2017. <https://www.un.org/development/desa indigenouspeoples/international-day-of-the-worlds-indigenous-peoples/idwip17.html>.

## September Events:

**September 15-First Signing of Treaty 4:** Treaty 4 was signed on September 15, 1874 at Fort Qu'Appelle. Treaty 4 was established between Queen Victoria and the Cree and Salteaux First Nations. Areas covered by Treaty 4 are the current southern Saskatchewan as well as small areas of today's western Manitoba and southeastern Alberta.

**How to Engage:** There are different powwows and celebration that are held annually to celebrate the signing of Treaty 4. Be sure to look online to see what is being hosted in your community.

**September 30- Orange Shirt Day:** The date was chosen because it is the time of year when Aboriginal children were taken from their homes and sent to residential school.<sup>123</sup> Orange Shirt Day grew out of Phyllis's story of having her orange shirt taken from her on her first day at missionary school,

"I went to the Mission for one year. I had just turned 6 years old. We never had very much money, and there was no welfare, but somehow my granny managed to buy me a new outfit to go to the Mission School in. I remember going to Robinson's store and picking out a shiny orange shirt. It had eyelets and lace, and I felt so pretty in that shirt and excited to be going to school! Of course, when I got to the Mission, they stripped me, and took away my clothes, including the orange shirt. I never saw it again, except on other kids. I didn't understand why they wouldn't give it back to me, it was mine! Since then the colour orange has always reminded me of that and how my feelings didn't matter, how no one cared and how I felt like I was worth nothing. I finally get it, that the feeling of worthlessness and insignificance, ingrained in me from my first day at the mission, affected the way I lived my life for many years...I want my orange shirt back!"<sup>124</sup>

**How to Engage:** This day is gaining in popularity within schools and organizations.

- Ask your mentee to wear an orange shirt and read over the quote by Phyllis
- Check Social Media for events within your community at <https://www.facebook.com/orangeshirtdayeverychildmatters>
- Learn with your youth at - Legacy of Hope <http://www.legacyofhope.ca/>  
Reconciliation of Canada <http://reconciliationcanada.ca/>

<sup>123</sup> "Orange Shirt Day: every child matters." Orange Shirt Day: every child matters. Accessed December 22, 2017. <http://www.orangeshirtday.org/>.  
<sup>124</sup> Phyllis (Jack). "PHYLLIS' STORY." Orange Shirt Day: every child matters. Accessed December 22, 2017. <http://www.orangeshirtday.org/phyllis-story.html>.

## October Events

**Second Monday in October-Thanksgiving:** Thanksgiving in Canada is celebrated on the second Monday of October each year, and it's an official statutory holiday in Saskatchewan. The original idea is to give thanks for the past harvest season, but for many Canadian families the tradition has changed over time and the focus is now to get together with family and eat a large turkey dinner. Indigenous peoples in Canada have a history of holding communal feasts in celebration of the fall harvest. The European settlers brought with them a similar tradition of harvest celebrations as well.

### How to Engage:

- Share a meal with your little and discuss what you are thankful with the season changing, what you hope for the winter season. Set some goals with your mentee.
- Take time to learn the Indigenous history of the harvest with your mentee. What did Indigenous people harvest in your location?

## November Events

**November 16- Louis Riel Day:** November 16 is a somber day for the Métis community, as on November 16, 1885, Louis Riel was executed in Regina by the Canadian government for treason. The Métis leader has been celebrated for heading a resistance movement against the federal government which fought to defend the rights of the Métis people in Western Canada.

### How to Engage:

Celebrate Métis culture and traditions with your mentee!

- There are multiple events in your community that celebrate this day; look on Facebook or search for events happening in your community.
- Learn to jig with online tutorials
- Read a story about a Métis leader in your community
- Try and cook a Métis inspired food with your youth, from bannock to Meatballs (Boulettes), rice pudding, and multiple varieties of soup.
- Visit the online Métis Museum - <http://www.metismuseum.ca/>

## December Events

**Round dances:** During the cold months, especially in December and January, there are a lot of organizations that host round dances in gyms across the city and the province. Round dances are during the evening or on the weekends, free to attend, and how long you stay is dependent on the individual. Make sure to be on the lookout for these events!

## Saskatoon Agency Specific Activities – Year Round Activities

### **Wanuskewin Heritage Park Authority:**

RR #4, Penner Road Saskatoon

**Phone:** (306) 931-6767

In 1983 Wanuskewin became a Provincial Heritage Park, and it was declared a national historic site in 1987 by Queen Elizabeth II.<sup>125</sup> At Wanuskewin you can go on a Nature walk featuring some Indigenous artifacts such as the medicine wheel, visit the galleries which show case indigenous artists' works, attend their seasonal programs and activities, and / or have lunch with your mentee.

### **Saskatchewan Indian Cultural Centre (SICC):**

305-2555 Grasswood Road East

**Phone:** (306) 244-6520

SICC has been operational since 1972, and its goal is to "provide a First Nations resource base for bands and school systems to draw upon so that First Nations children may accurately inherit the values and traditions of their heritage". SICC holds different ceremonial events, conferences, events that are open to the public. During the month of February, SIIC coordinates storytelling events with Saskatoon schools. It also has a resource library where you and your little can take out books and learn together about culture.

### **Gordon Tootoosis Nikaniwin Theatre (GTNT):**

914 20<sup>th</sup> St. West, Saskatoon

**Phone:** (306) 933-2262

Formerly the Saskatoon Native Theatre Company, it was renamed to honor Gordon Tootoosis, one of the founding members of the GTNT.<sup>126</sup> The GTNT produce and present innovative and cultural theatre experiences throughout the year. Please visit their website for current showings.

### **Saskatoon Indian Métis Friendship Centre (SIMFC):**

168 Wall St. (beside Big Brothers Big Sisters of Saskatoon)

**Phone:** (306) 244-0174

SIMFC's objectives are to provide a reception center for migrating Aboriginal people coming into the City of Saskatoon, provide information and referral services for Aboriginal people residing in the city, and to provide a place where cultural activities and identification can be carried on and maintained.<sup>127</sup> The SIMFC offers a variety of programs and services including powwow song and dance, volleyball, beading class, regalia, youth centre, intro Cree language classes and many more.

<sup>125</sup> "Our Story." Wanuskewin Heritage Park. Accessed January 5, 2018. <https://wanuskewin.com/our-story/>.

<sup>126</sup> "Welcome to the Gordon Tootoosis Nikaniwin Theatre." Gordon Tootoosis Nikaniwin Theatre. Accessed January 5, 2018. <http://www.gtnt.ca/>.

<sup>127</sup> "About Us." Saskatoon Indian & M. Accessed January 5, 2018. [http://www.simfc.ca/pages/about\\_us](http://www.simfc.ca/pages/about_us).

**White Buffalo Youth Lodge:**602 20<sup>th</sup> St. West**Phone:** (306) 653-7676

The White Buffalo Youth Lodge is dedicated to improving the quality of life and health for children, youth, young adults, and their families in the inner city through integrated holistic support services.<sup>128</sup> The White Buffalo Youth Lodge offers many free activities and services such as cooking and nutrition, competitive sports, smudging, feasts and round dances, movie night, art classes, tea time, and many more.<sup>129</sup>

**Gabriel Dumont Institute Museum**

917 – 22nd Street West

**Phone:** (306) 242-6070

The mission of the Gabriel Dumont Institute is to promote the renewal and development of Métis culture through research; materials development, collection, and distribution; and the design, development, and delivery of Métis-specific educational programs and services. Within GDI is a museum of artifacts from Batoche, recreation of a home, and beautiful artistic paintings of influential leaders in the Metis community.

**Western Development Museum**

2610 Lorne Avenue

**Phone:** (306) 931-1910

The Western Development Museum (WDM) tells the Saskatchewan story from the beginning of settlement to present day. Each location showcases a different story of Saskatchewan history - transportation in Moose Jaw, farm and rural life in North Battleford, 1910 Boomtown in Saskatoon, and the stories of immigrants to the province in Yorkton.

**Saskatoon Public Libraries**

Many libraries in Saskatoon have reconciliation themed books. Go to a library and check out one of their Indigenous-stickered items from any SPL branch.

128 "White Buffalo Youth Lodge." Saskatoon Tribal Council. November 22, 2017. Accessed January 5, 2018. <http://www.sktc.sk.ca/programs-services/family-community-services/community-supports/white-buffalo-youth-lodge/>.

129 Ibid.

## **Regina Agency Specific Activities – Year Round Activities**

### **Royal Saskatchewan Museum**

2445 Albert St.

**Phone:** (306) 787-2815

The Royal Saskatchewan Museum contains an understanding of Saskatchewan's natural history and Aboriginal cultures, past and present. Through all available media, especially exhibits and publications, in a culturally and scientifically sensitive manner, the museum is open for the purposes of education and enjoyment.

### **MacKenzie Art Gallery**

3475 Albert St.

**Phone:** (306) 584-4250

The MacKenzie Art Gallery is an interactive and creative space that provides free public tours for people of all ages. The MacKenzie's vault is home to its permanent collection of more than 4,500 works by internationally renowned artists. Spanning over 100,000 square feet, our multi-facility hosts an art conservation lab, the BMO Learning Centre, Enbridge Young Artists Studio, Taylor Automotive Engagement Space, Gallery Shop, and a Shumiatcher Theatre.

### **The Gathering Place**

4001 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave N.

**Phone:** (306) 522-7494

The Gathering Place is the physical space that holds the Regina Treaty/Status Indian Services Inc. Programing. They host multiple large scale events and weekly programing that is open to all people in the community. Check out the Facebook page for more information on their programming and events.

### **First Nation University**

1 First Nations Way

**Phone:** (306) 790-5950

The First Nations University of Canada (FNUniv) is a Canadian university in Saskatchewan with campus at the University of Regina. The building was designed by the architect Douglas Cardinal and hosts multiple events, programs, and initiatives throughout the year that is open to the public.

### **YWCA**

1940 McIntyre Street

**Phone:** (306) 525-2141

The YWCA Regina has been serving women and their families since 1910 with multiple programs, initiatives, and events throughout the year. Their mission is to support and empower women, children and youth so that they can reach their full potential. Check their Facebook and website to find out more information on events within Regina.

## Lloydminster Agency Specific Activities – Year Round Activities

### **Lloydminster Native Friendship Centre**

4602 49th Avenue

**Phone:** (306) 825-6558

The Lloydminster Native Friendship Centre is a non-profit, registered charity, which has been providing services to both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal people in Lloydminster since 1982. Our center provides services to residents from both provinces, within an approximate 100 km radius. Our mandate includes: the promotion of better understandings between the different cultures within our community; the development of wellness, education, cultural and social programs and activities for children and their families; and the promotion of well-being and enhancement of "quality of life" for all people within the community.

### **Lloydminster Cultural & Science Centre**

Highway 16 E & 45 Ave.

**Phone:** (780) 874-3720

The Lloydminster Cultural & Science Centre is a hub for art, culture, and history in the community. The Centre's permanent exhibits consist of the Imhoff Art Gallery, Fuchs Wildlife Exhibit, and the OTS Heavy Oil Science Centre. The Centre also hosts travelling exhibitions from all over the country as well as from local artists in its two travelling galleries. The LCSC offers specialized classes for all ages, education programs, and interpretive tours.

## Yorkton Agency Specific Activities – Year Round Activities

### **Yorkton Friendship Centre**

139 Dominion Avenue

**Phone:** (306) 782-2822

The Yorkton Friendship Centre mandate is to host culturally based Aboriginal programs and services to the Indigenous population in the community of Yorkton. The agency operates under a status-blind policy which means anyone, regardless of Aboriginal status, can make use of the services and programs.

### **Godfrey Dean Cultural Centre**

49 Smith Street East

**Phone:** (306) 786-2992

The Godfrey Dean Cultural Centre houses a wide variety of cultural and artistic venues. Visit the Godfrey Dean Art Gallery for changing exhibitions of contemporary art at Yorkton's regional public art gallery.

### **Western Development Museum**

Highway 16A West

1-306-783-8361

The Western Development Museum (WDM) tells the Saskatchewan story from the beginning of settlement to present day. Each location showcases a different story of Saskatchewan history - transportation in Moose Jaw, farm and rural life in North Battleford, 1910 Boomtown in Saskatoon, and the stories of immigrants to the province in Yorkton.

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