



Toolkit Measuring Well-Being

Culturally-rooted well-being
assessment across the continuum of
child and family service agencies



ALIGN
Association of
Community Services

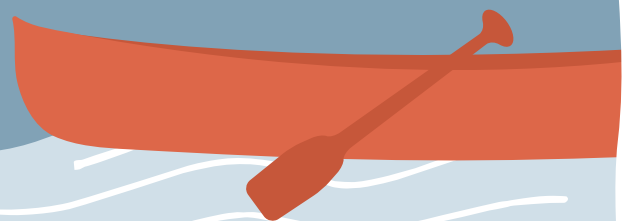


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Getting around the Toolkit.

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Introduction

Purpose

This toolkit is a resource for child and family service agencies to support assessment of well-being and the impact of their work with culturally diverse children, youth, and families. It offers a series of tools to implement *A Principle-Based and Culturally-Rooted Framework for Assessing Child and Youth Well-Being*. The framework provides a common language to define and assess well-being and a process to showcase impact individually and collectively. Agencies across Alberta do tremendous work to support the well-being of diverse children, youth, and families. Yet, until now, reporting varying funder-determined metrics has not supported understanding outcomes and impact collectively and over time. ALIGN Association of Community Services (ALIGN) has dedicated three years of work to change that. This toolkit is the result of this work.

This toolkit also supports creating ethical space in well-being assessments where the uniqueness and strengths of worldviews and cultures are respected. Work on this toolkit was guided by a group of Elders and Knowledge Keepers who helped us de-centre Western ways of conceptualizing and measuring well-being. It is based on many conversations with youth and families, frontline practitioners, Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers, agencies serving ethnocultural communities, and of sifting through research and emerging practices.

We understand the amount of work it takes to report on multiple frameworks. That's why this toolkit is designed in a way that allows agencies to use what they are already measuring and roll it up into high-level common domains of well-being. Agencies can take any part of the toolkit to guide reflection, adapt them to their context, and pilot and incorporate them at their own pace. Every agency, at any stage in integrating this framework in their practice, can participate in capturing their impact on well-being and join the collective story of the sector's work.

Over time, using this toolkit, child and family serving agencies will:

- build consistency in defining, assessing, and sharing impact on well-being
- centre assessment and evaluation on what is growing well-being
- assess well-being, practice, and impact in a culturally responsive way
- assess well-being of children and youth in the context of their relationships with caregivers and with the staff and agencies that support them
- enable ALIGN to collect, track over time, and share back aggregate data to showcase agencies' work, inform decisions, and improve practice
- foster community, relationship, and capacity building across agencies

Values & Acknowledgement

Alberta is the traditional and ancestral territory of many First Nations of Treaty 6, Treaty 7, Treaty 8, and Treaty 10 and the Métis Nation of Alberta Regions 1 to 6. This toolkit was developed on this land and reflects our understanding through listening, learning, sharing, and walking alongside in respect of Indigenous Nations' self-determination in creating and validating well-being. We are grateful for the wisdom shared with us and the guidance we received in this work. Métis/Cree Elder Kerrie Moore, MSW RSW, explained:

"We want to create a circle that Indigenous people lead and welcome people in. You must have the Indigenous people leading it, even when they are talking to other diverse groups. Because the Indigenous people are the ones that know how to create well-being and balance with Mother Earth here in this territory. And it would be nice to know how other people create wellness and relationship with the territory they come from."

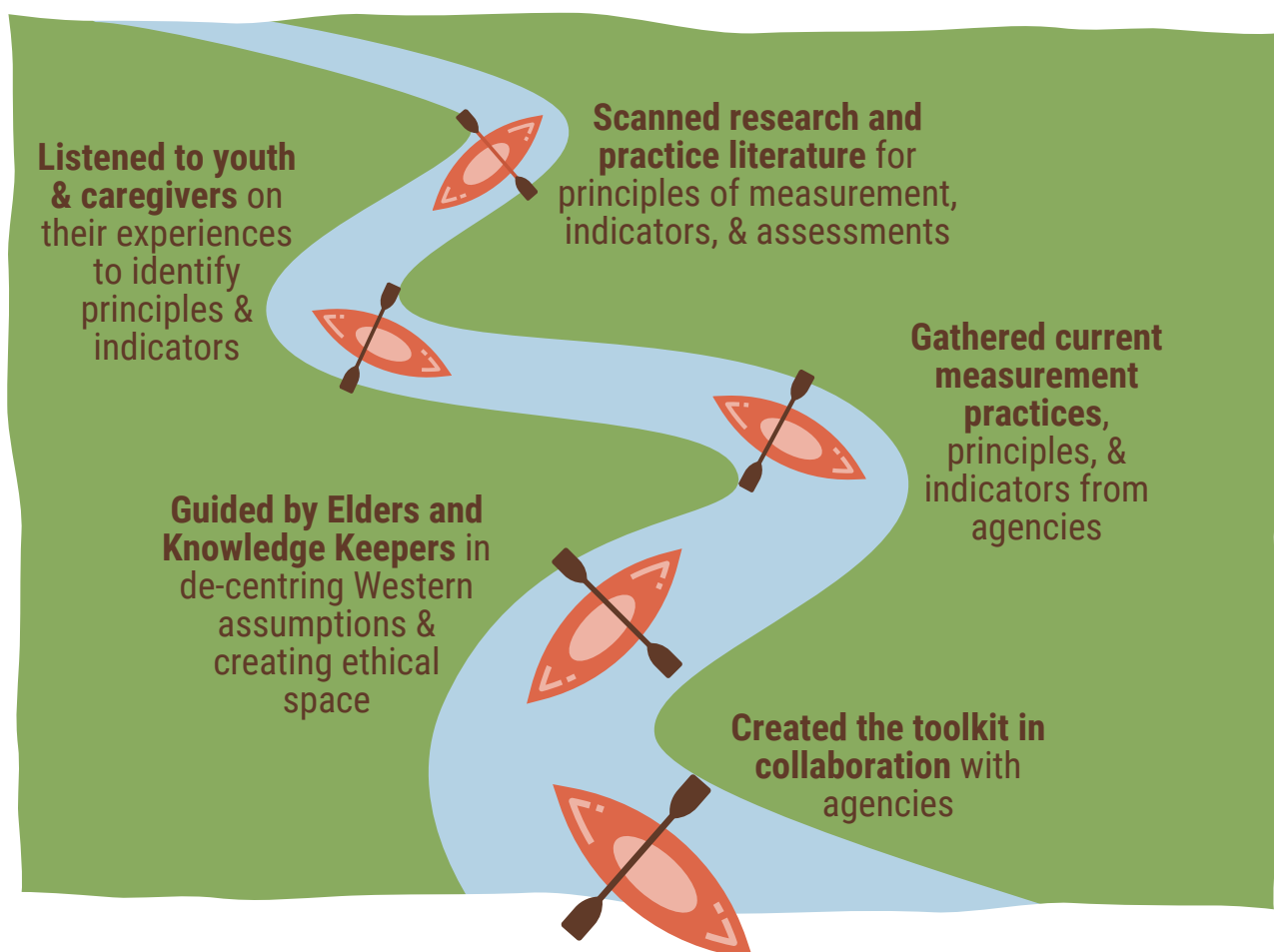
ALIGN Association of Community Services has a vision to bring diverse agencies together as one voice so that children, families, and communities can thrive. ALIGN partnered with PolicyWise for Children & Families for Children and Family Services to develop a principle-based and culturally-rooted framework for defining and measuring child well-being and a toolkit to support implementation. Our intentions were to create ethical space, honour Indigenous ways of being, knowing and validating, and to respect the diversity within our province. The concept of an Indigenous-led circle that invites in diverse groups with their unique ways of creating well-being into a relationship of mutual respect and accountability gave us direction in bringing the different perspectives together to create this toolkit.

We thank Elders Beverly Keeshig-Soonias (Pottawatomi), Phillip Campiou (Woodland Cree), and Kerrie Moore (Métis Cree). We thank Frank Shannon (Haida Nation), Cheryl Whiskeyjack (Anishinaabe), Kirby Redwood (Cree-Saulteaux), Adrian Goulet (Cree and Blackfoot), Sharon Goulet (Red River Métis), and Dr. Ralph Bodor who guided us with story, prayers, and their vast experience as Knowledge Keepers and practitioners. They reminded us of our common intention, helped us think of well-being as a practice, as being about the spirit and gift of each child, and as being about community and everyone part of the child's life.

We thank Yvonne Chiu and Hannah Goa from the Multicultural Health Brokers Co-op who have passionately contributed how diverse ethnocultural communities create well-being and what matters in assessing well-being for marginalized communities within the larger context of systems, history, and socio-political circumstances.

Importantly, we recognize and acknowledge the invaluable contributions of experience, wisdom, and time of youth and caregivers with lived experience accessing services, frontline agency staff, and agency leadership.

Our Approach



Guided by our vision

This toolkit is the result of many conversations, gatherings with Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers, with youth and family members with lived experience accessing services, with thought leaders in the field, and a scan of relevant academic and practice-based literature.

It began with a vision to measure well-being meaningfully and consistently across agencies serving diverse children and families. In 2022, we arrived at a holistic and intercultural definition consisting of seven domains of child and youth well-being across the continuum of child and family service agencies. Work in 2023 focused on how to measure these seven domains in a way that meaningfully reflects well-being for culturally diverse children and caregivers, and allows agencies working in different contexts to roll up their evaluation findings into common domains and contribute to a provincial story of impact that can be tracked over time.

Grounded in values

We looked at the development of the toolkit as ethical space that centres relationships, makes space for different worldviews and ways of knowing to interact in mutual respect, kindness, and understanding. Because of these values, we prioritized understanding how youth, caregivers, and frontline staff experience practice and evaluation, and what matters to them about how and what we measure. Our findings build a framework of principles that we applied to indicators, assessment tools, and the process to create a provincial story of impact.

Based on principles

Using the domains of well-being and the principles as filtering criteria, we compiled indicators from the research and practice literature. For example, to apply a relational and ecological lens, we provide example indicators in each domain for children and youth, for caregivers, and for staff and agencies. As another example, it was important to youth, practitioners, Elders, and researchers that we shift away from deficit to focus on what is growing well-being. As a result, the menu of indicators includes what is supporting well-being, rather than what is lacking. Or, to support de-colonizing practice, we prioritize storytelling in the process to share impact and include videos and audio clips throughout the toolkit.

Informed by lived experience

We found the literature was lacking indicators that were responsive to Indigenous ways of being and to diverse ethnocultural families' realities. There were also gaps in indicators that show how staff and agencies are supported and are intentional in their work. We filled those gaps with the input of the many agencies who participated in our engagement, agencies who serve families of diverse cultural backgrounds, youth and caregivers, and Indigenous practitioners and Elders.

Ethical space

Introduced by Willie Ermine, ethical space is about an interaction between thought worlds or worldviews. A space where the uniqueness of each lens is respected and the strengths of each are elevated. It acknowledges bias, injustice, and conflict but aims to centre shared values such as respect, trust, humility, and responsibility.



Youth reflections on experiences at Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative

Watch a video youth from the Multicultural Health Brokers Co-op speak about navigating between cultures and finding belonging with MCHB.

Wayfinding with Lobsticks

Throughout this toolkit you will see trees with branches missing in the middle. These are called lobsticks. We will use lobsticks as landmarks to talk about where we are at in our journey to support well-being. When we asked a group of Elders and Knowledge Keepers how agencies can share the impact of their work, Cheryl Whiskeyjack told this story:

Lobsticks as a wayfinding tool

"Lobsticks are something that Indigenous people used a long time ago as a wayfinding tool. Our highway back in the day was the river, we get in the river and travel from here to there. And so if you picture a really big lodgepole pine with only the last seven feet of it having foliage on it and the rest of it would be a long trunk. So think about this: you're on the river, you see a tree like that, you know, nature didn't make that tree, man made that tree. And the way that tree was made would tell the traveler this, or that, you know, this is where you are on the river. So they serve that purpose."

Lobstick caches to share abundance

"Every lobstick had a cache. A stone cache is like a locker made out of stones. And if Frank was going down the river that day, and he had an abundance of pemmican, more than enough to get him to where he was going, he would put a bunch of that pemmican in that cache. And when Phillip was coming down the river like a month later, and he was dying of starvation, because all these things happened to him, he could look in that cache and hopefully find something that would serve him. And so the cache would be a way of helping a fellow traveler with an abundance that you had of something."

"This story is a context setter for us to talk about us in this sector. What do we have an abundance of that we could share, not with a fellow traveler, but a fellow colleague in this sector that they could learn from or they could use in some way."



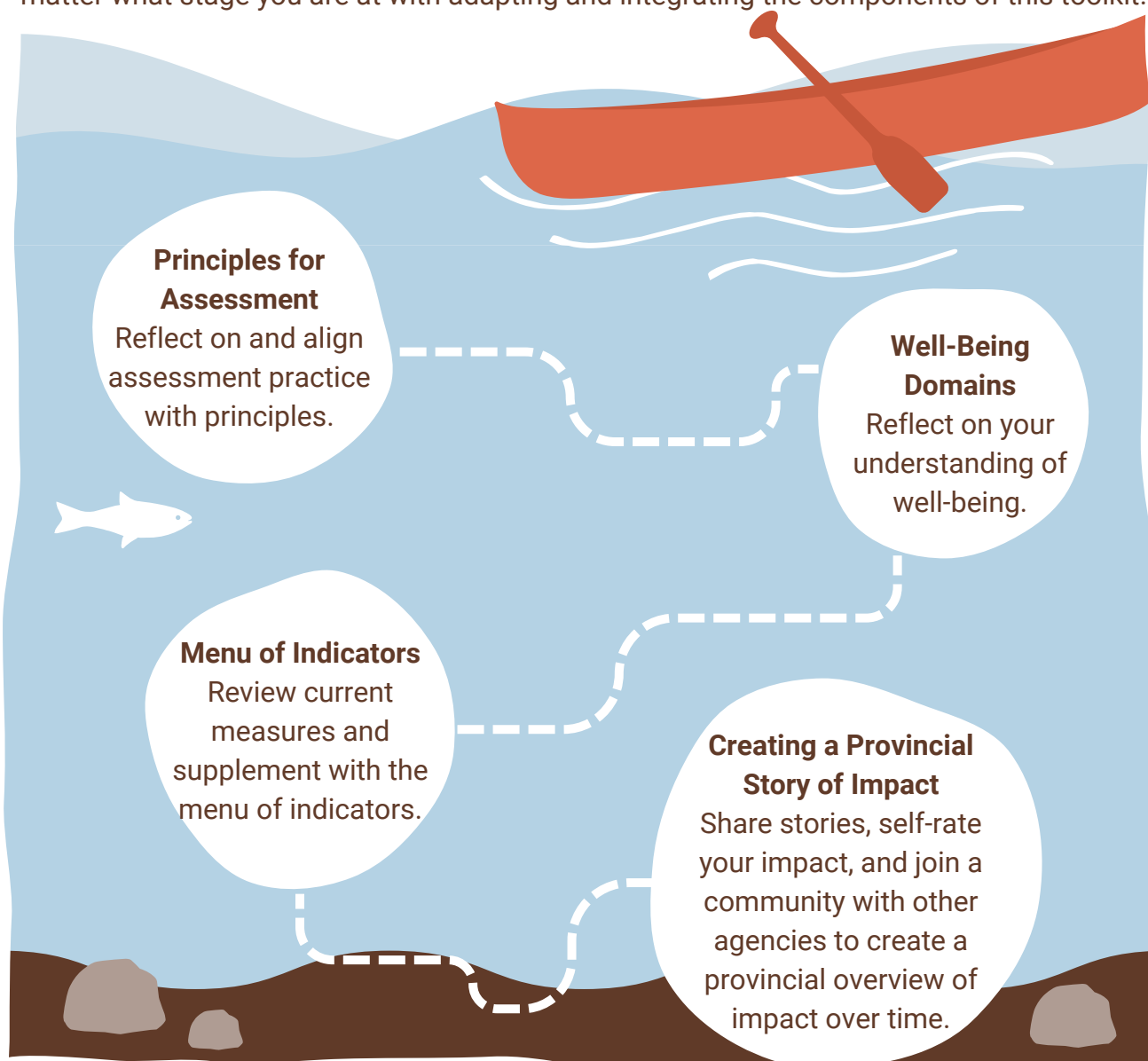
Listen to Cheryl Whiskeyjack share about lobsticks as wayfinding tools.

How to use this Toolkit

Agencies across Alberta are as diverse as the communities they serve. Some are large with a variety of programs and evaluation departments of their own. Some are small but mighty with one or two staff doing all the incredible work in supporting families and reporting their impact. Some are Indigenous-led and base their programs in a deep connection to the land, others are building bridges with ethnocultural communities.

Wherever you find yourself, you can use this toolkit to support how you measure child well-being. It is a tool for reflection, a resource for indicators and assessments across relationships that matter in a child's life, and a process to showcase your impact.

You can contribute to creating the provincial story of the sector's impact on well-being no matter what stage you are at with adapting and integrating the components of this toolkit.



Quick Start Guide

The toolkit is designed so you can choose your own journey and integrate components at your own pace. For example, you can start with one or two domains and work through a new domain each week. Here are some suggestions on how to get started with your team:

How does your work support the domains of well-being?


- How do your programs and services support each of them?
- How do they show up in the children and youth you serve?
- Which domains would you like to prioritize over the next year?
- What could be some concrete first steps to support this domain in your practice?

How does what you currently measure align with this toolkit?

- How is your approach similar? How is it different?
- Is there a domain you haven't measured before?
- Is there a principle for measurement you might want to work on?
- Do you use any of the assessments already? Reflect with your team what these assessments tell you about the domains.
- Where do you have gaps in assessing different aspects of each domain? With your team chose and adapt indicators from the menu in this toolkit to fill the gap.
- How are you currently gathering data? Reflect with your team on opportunities to get children, youth, and caregivers involved in sharing stories of impact.

How can your findings contribute to a larger story of impact?

- What do your findings tell you about your agency's impact on each well-being domain?
- Gather stories of significant change or impact from youth, families, and staff for each domain. Decide with your team which story best reflects your agency's efforts in each domain. [See Appendix](#) for how you can gather stories.
- What do your findings tell you about how children, youth, and caregivers are doing in each domain? Decide within your team how you will self-rate for each domain.
- Using all the findings and stories gathered, reflect with your team which story best reflects your agency's work in supporting well-being during the past year. This is the one story you will share at the winter count.



Principles for Assessment

Noticing Growth in Well-being

How do we know that wellness is growing for children, youth, families, and their communities?

Birds migrating along a well-defined path depend on a clear sense of direction. Similarly, principles give direction to our work and decision-making to ensure we are on a clear and purposeful route. Unlike rules or strategies, principles don't tell us *what* to do but rather inform *how* we are working. Focusing on the how of our work infuses reflection and intentionality into our actions and processes.

Agencies, Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers, thought leaders in the sector, and caregivers and youth described seven principles for assessing well-being in a meaningful way. These principles provided the criteria for selecting from the vast amount of indicators and assessments that are available and used in the sector.

We begin this section by sharing some of the teachings Elders and Knowledge Keepers offered during one of our virtual gathering. We recognize that these are parts of what was shared in circle and cannot represent the Elders' teachings. Our hope is to begin this section with an opportunity to reflect on and expand our thinking about measurement in the child welfare sector.

It's important to come from a place of strength, rather than a perspective of deficit.

The way the sun comes up in the morning sheds light on so much knowledge for us every day. And so, the way a question is asked will shed knowledge on what is part of our world. Then we don't have to talk about deficits or strengths because once the sun knows, we'll know which ones are making us feel courageous, or giving us the courage to be kind and to share, to be humble and not afraid of truth, and we'll take responsibility for our truth.

- Elder during virtual gathering

Wellness is relational. Community well-being shapes child and youth well-being, and vice versa.

If our communities and our families within those communities are doing well, you know, that's the soil that our children will grow up in. And it just optimizes those conditions for them to grow up in wellness as well.

- Cheryl Whiskeyjack, Knowledge Keeper and Practitioner

How do we know that the youth are moving towards wellness if we're not? Or how do we know if the youth are moving towards wellness, if we're not listening and present with that conversation? It's relational, it's wahkohtowin.

- Kirby Redwood, Knowledge Keeper and Practitioner

Wellness is revealed through people's language, in the stories they tell, the questions they ask, and the words they use.

It's the story about the individual, and the environment, and the family, that you hear within all of that, that really determines where is that person, where's that person come from and where are they going now? And I would hope that every time I see them, the story changes. I don't say, tell me how well you are, between one and five. I say, tell me where you're at today. Tell me your story.

- Kerrie Moore, Métis/Cree Elder

I'm always interested in their relationship, whether they use relationship words or just talking about things like they're dead. So, if the people asking the question say, 'well, I use the environment as a tool, a therapeutic tool,' that makes our Earth sound like she's dead. But if they ask about the individual or the family's relationship with Earth or those in the sky, then that sounds different than saying, 'I use it as a tool.' So I listen to wording like that.

- Beverly Keeshig-Soonias, Pottawatomi Elder

What I'm looking for in that story is the pride that the individual or the family are talking about. They may not say, I feel proud of who I am, but you can tell in the story and what they're telling you. And they're proud of being where they're at. And you can hear that in that story.

- Kerrie Moore, Métis/Cree Elder

Principles for Assessment



The bird's eye view of a tree shows the seven interconnected principles for measuring the seven domains of child and youth well-being. The outer circle represents an Indigenous-led process inclusive of the following voices: Indigenous Elders and practitioners, youth and family, researchers, and community practitioners.

"I see the white in the north, red in the east, yellow is south and green in the west. Those are my teachings, that is the way we hang our cloth, our offerings, when we enter into the sweat lodge."

- Kirby Redwood, Knowledge Keeper and practitioner

Principles for Assessment in Practice

Creating individualized indicators

Creating individualized indicators means “doing with” – it involves partnering with youth, family, caregivers, community to understand context and develop indicators that are meaningful to them. It means building trust relationships, being curious, and asking questions for deep understanding. It entails a non-judgemental approach that recognizes and respects diverse perspectives.

“[As a social worker], you have to know your kid in order to know if they're having a good day or like, see their strengths or whatever. It's very personable. And you can't do that if you're not actively in your kid's life.”

- Youth, on staff building relationships

Committing to action & accountability

Committing to action and accountability includes situating well-being assessment within the relationships between the agency and staff and youth, families, communities, as well as funders. It means to cultivate trust and hope by sharing back the assessment with full transparency and making decisions together about further actions, supports, and services. This includes using findings for strategic planning to continually improve equitable and culturally safe services.

“It doesn't matter where you are, or what service you're in, that [well-being] question needs to be embedded in it. And a goal needs to be put in and a measured goal. So that there's a short term goal and a long term goal, because it keeps everyone accountable. And when we go back to the table to talk about, you know, 'why are you overly emotional right now'? Well, let's go back to that question of, are we [caregiver and family] being supported? Are we getting services?”

- Caregiver, on accountability from service providers



Listen to Elder Beverly Keeshig-Soonias remind us about interdependence and well-being and what that means for how we show up in relationships.



click the play button to **listen to the audio clips**

Recognizing staff capacity & well-being

Recognizing staff capacity and well-being is a key aspect of measuring well-being. This means supporting staff wellness and capacity to nurture trusting relationships with youth and families in assessments. It also includes situating organizational values and leadership within evaluation to understand alignment with families' and communities' goals for well-being, and centering relationships as a goal of practice.

"Sometimes staff have a lot of stress. That can make it difficult to trust them. Trust is very important between staff and the individual seeking services."

- Youth, on the importance of supporting staff well-being

Centering interconnectedness & relationships

This principle means considering how relationships and connectedness shape identity and reality to understand impact and change in well-being. Centering the interconnectedness of roles, knowledge, and agency of caregivers, extended family, ancestors, natural environment, and community.

"So well-being, I personally don't think it can get asked enough. But it can't just be an ask. It has to be embedded, infused, it has to be part of, it can't just be 'I asked you a question' and tick the box. It's not genuine. It's not authentic. It has to be part of the programming and the family and moving forward."

- Caregiver, on considering caregiver and youth well-being throughout care

Leading with curiosity & recognizing strengths

This principle reminds us to use a trauma-informed approach that suspends judgement, reflects on individual gifts and growth, and provides courage and safety to share openly. It is rooted in the idea that "what you focus on expands".

"I've only felt supported in my program, in the Indigenous program. All of our talking is done in circles. And everyone speaks whatever they want. I mean, it is guided by an Elder. Elders are important. And there's no judgment. No judgment at all. And I've never had any issue in that setting."

- Youth, on safe and non-judgmental spaces

Committing to decolonizing practices

In measuring child and youth well-being de-colonizing practice includes recognizing where dominant culture and power relationships impact how we gather and interpret feedback. It means respecting Indigenous sovereignty over how well-being is defined, lived, and validated according to teachings. It means connecting individual stories to larger stories or colonization and marginalization for families from ethnocultural communities. This process requires self-reflection, attentiveness to power dynamics, and cultural humility. For example, this could mean inviting youth and community feedback on the cultural safety of services and assessment approaches. It also means taking a critical look at language used in evaluation and learning about meanings in Indigenous languages. Support staff in embracing culture as an ongoing practice and making meaning of what they learned guided by Elders. Seek guidance for how to practice with the land and language as a foundation.

"I shouldn't have to relive every bad thing that's ever happened for somebody to have sympathy to decide what my family needs, when we tell them what we need."

- Caregiver, on considering trauma




United Way's Perspective on Oral Reporting as a Funder. Watch a video from United Way Calgary and Area explain parallel ways of creating and validating knowledge.

Understanding change as ongoing & dynamic

This principle is about assessing child and youth well-being at several points over time to recognize impact and sustainable changes. It means recognizing that both youth and staff capacity for change is dynamic and that "good enough" vs optimal well-being need careful consideration for each individual person. Celebrate progress, small changes, and the ability to adapt.

"As we know, a lot of programs do end whether they should or not. And I think often at the end of those programs, there is uncertainty and there's nervousness. And maybe how you feel when that program ends can be very difficult, but I feel like if there were follow ups, whether that's six months, one year, three years down the road, did it work. Even though that moment when you actually leave program is really scary."

- Caregiver, on timing considerations for evaluation



Domains of Child and Youth Well- Being

Domains of Well-Being

“Asking the question ‘what is well-being’ is a very western question. How do we look for this wisdom in a non-western sort of context?”

- Ralph Bodor during a virtual gathering

The way we define and understand child and youth well-being matters. In the Indigenous universe, for example, well-being is a way of being and doing. It is an action intertwined with others, the land, animals, plants, and the cosmos – it is vast. As such, it is not a thing that can be easily summarized, defined, and measured. Well-being is about balance, happiness, joy, and moving forward in a good way learned through responsibility, reciprocity, language, and ceremony. It is about connection, belonging, and rootedness in community, land, and among other beings. According to Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers, well-being in an Indigenous universe is about moving from survival to where things can grow again for Indigenous children and their children’s children.

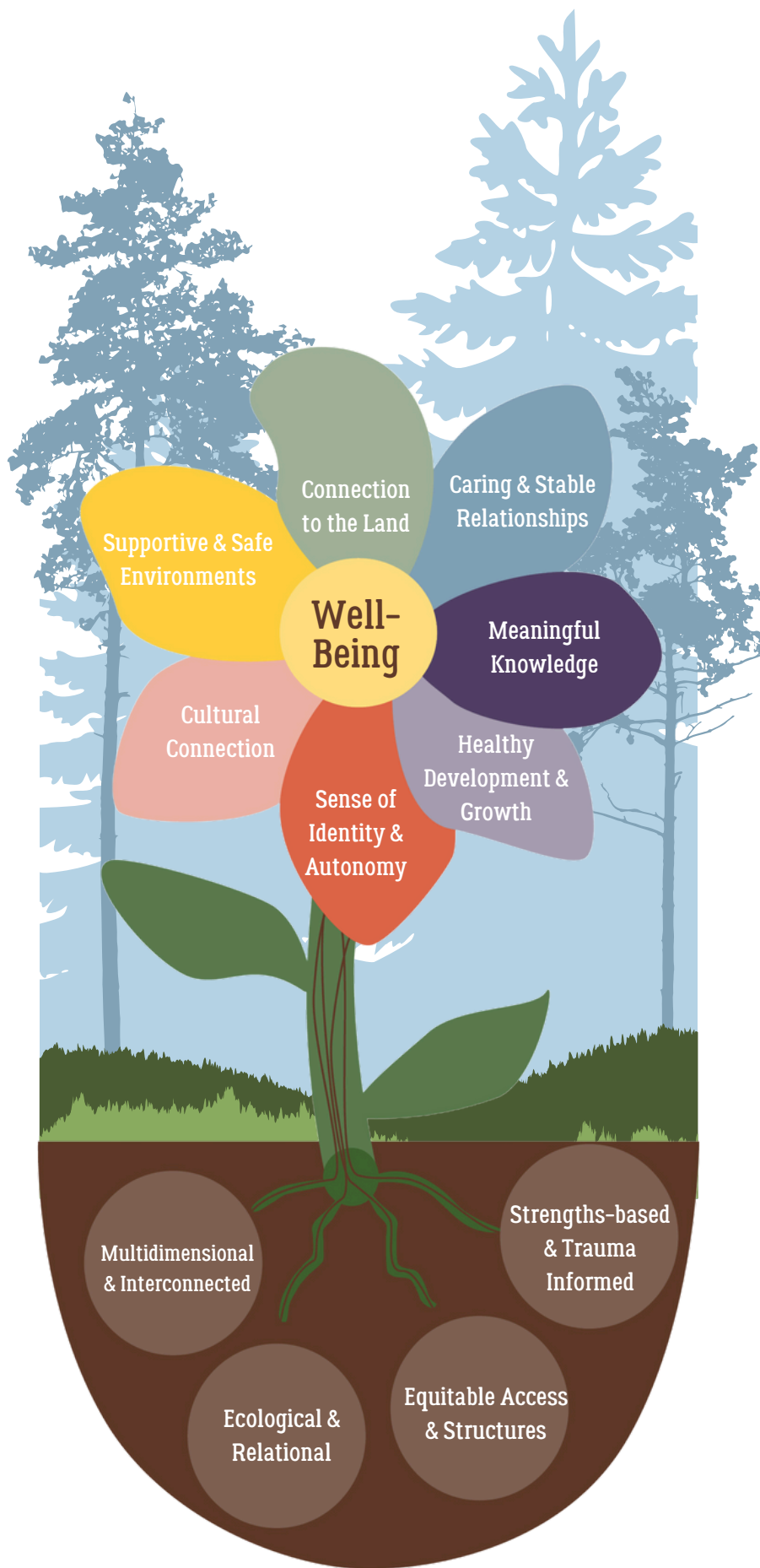
Government and non-governmental agencies exist in a universe parallel to the Indigenous one. They rely on a definition of well-being to direct services and programs for children, youth, and families. They also employ the definition in their assessments – to understand what is needed, what is working, and where there are opportunities for change. To ensure programs and services are equitable and culturally responsive, it is vital we define and understand child and youth well-being based on the perspectives and values of culturally diverse communities.

We identified seven domains of child and youth well-being. These domains are rooted in a perspective on well-being as multi-dimensional and interconnected, ecological and relational, strengths-based and trauma-informed, and embedded in equitable access and social structure.

We were particularly mindful of the dominance of the non-Indigenous ‘Western’ worldview within definitions of well-being that frequently shape the health, social, and child welfare sectors. As we heard during a virtual gathering:

“We think that if they have a nice warm bed to sleep in, in a nice house in a nice neighbourhood with nice parents, and they go to a nice school that they have everything they need. But if you take them away from their family, from their community, from their kin, there’s a big gap in their wellness later on, that’s going to impact them forever.”

- Cheryl Whiskeyjack, Knowledge Keeper and Practitioner



Model of child well-being with seven intersecting domains of well-being grounded in four foundational principles.

Definitions and Practice Examples

Connection to the Land

Connection to the land means cultivating relationships with the land, water, food sources, and the natural environment. For Indigenous communities, connection to the land and the opportunity to practice land-based activities are essential to identity. They also support living in a good way, which includes connecting with positive aspects of life and gratitude for the land. For children from immigrant, migrant, and refugee communities, connecting to the land builds a relationship and a sense of belonging to their new homeland. For all children and youth connection to land is vital for well-being and builds awareness about environmental health, which in turn is necessary for life and well-being.

In practice:

- Taking learning out on the land.
- Incorporating natural materials in activities, such as stone or wood.
- Exploring opportunities to plant and grow food.
- Going camping for youth to learn to be safe and comfortable in nature.
- practising land acknowledgement where appropriate.

Caring & Stable Relationships

Caring relationships describe supportive, meaningful, and reciprocal relationships between children and their natural supports like family members and teachers as well as formalized supports like caseworkers. Family composition, caregiving roles, and relationships with children are culturally-rooted and diverse across communities. Relationship stability is key for child and youth well-being. Children and youth need a consistent person who they can trust and on whom they can depend. Reciprocal relationships are ones where children also contribute. In this way they build healthy connections and self-esteem.

In practice:

- Educating about what healthy and safe relationships look like.
- Helping children and their caregivers identify and reach out to natural supports in their life, such as family, friends, or members of their cultural community.
- Being available for children and families to reach out even after completing the program.
- Having a consistent staff member as part of the child, youth, or family's care.
- Advocating for multigenerational living to support relationships between youth and Elders.

Meaningful Knowledge

Meaningful knowledge can include formal and informal education and learning opportunities that are culturally responsive and safe. It requires a flexible approach to knowledge development that accounts for a child's unique way of learning, their life circumstances, and their needs. It can include reflective learning where children can reflect on and learn from their actions. Meaningful knowledge includes the knowledge passed from family, role models, Elders, community teachings, ceremony and the land, and life skills. It supports identity formation, pride, sense of belonging, healing, and joy.

In practice:

- Flexible school and activity programming.
- 1:1 tailored programming to meet individual needs.
- Learning through storytelling and cultural teachings.
- Collaborative learning environments.
- Hosting environments, activities, or shared meals where knowledge can be passed from Elders and other cultural leaders.
- Active learning outside of the classroom, including activities on the land and in nature.

Healthy Development & Growth

Healthy development and growth encompass physical, emotional, cognitive, mental, and spiritual well-being at different ages and stages. For example, making friends, pursuing interests, getting enough sleep, learning, and regulating emotions. Children need to develop skills, play, explore interests and gifts, think critically, and be curious about the world. Healthy development is conceptualized in multiple, culturally specific ways. Indigenous perspectives highlighted a balance of physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional realms. Child and youth development and growth is frequently marked by rites of passage that include teachings to support and prepare children and youth for roles or stages in life.

In practice:

- “Building the rails” as opposed to “getting back on track” for children who may develop differently.
- Providing recreational activities for children and youth to attain social developmental milestones.
- Incorporating elements of play between caregivers and children and youth.
- Developing programs that are holistic, balanced, and support physical, social, emotional, spiritual, and cognitive health.

Sense of Identity & Autonomy

Identity describes a sense of self as well as how a person is perceived by others. It is multifaceted and fluid. Identity emerges and is dynamically shaped in relationship to others, the land, and community. Autonomy describes the ability to make choices toward self-determination and self-directed action. For children and youth, a strong identity and autonomy are reflected in confidence, belonging, and a sense of purpose. Pursuing interests and activities that bring joy can build identity among children and youth.

In practice:

- Being attentive to and nurturing a child's gift.
- Sharing stories about mistakes, learning, and moving forward.
- Supporting volunteer activities to help youth feel connected, link them to community and multiple generations, gain confidence, and experience appreciation.
- Having youth set their own goals and desired outcomes.
- Having children and youth bring their personal belongings from home to decorate their room.
- Hiring staff with a diversity of ethnocultural identities.
- Planning fun activities to gain confidence and experience joy without focusing on solving a problem.
- Strengthening bi-cultural identities in immigrant and newcomer children and youth to support family relationships, sense of belonging, identity, and well-being.

Supportive & Safe Environments

Supportive and safe environments describe children's social and physical circumstances. They include and go beyond basic needs to provide equitable access to material goods, activities, services, and education. Safe environments include protective factors such as well-resourced and skilled caregivers, service providers, and social supports. They are underpinned by principles of equity, respect, recognition, and empowerment. Accessible, universally available, and culturally responsive services, supports, and care providers are key to supportive and safe environments.

In practice:

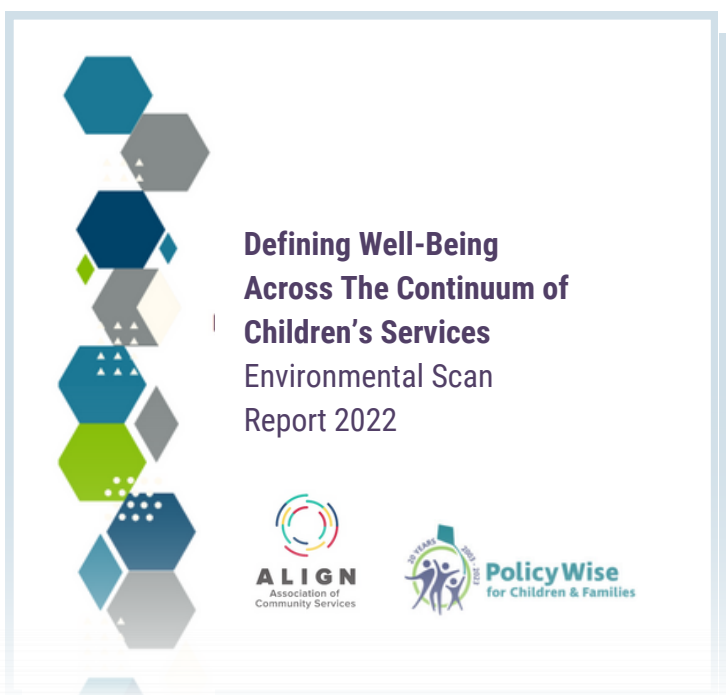
- Providing food, especially food that is comforting, culturally relevant, or healthy.
- Connecting families to resources for basic needs (e.g., safe housing).
- Providing access to activities relevant to the child or youth's interests.
- Replacing or repairing broken items in group homes to make it more welcoming.
- Listening to clients and providing a safe space to share their thoughts and experiences.
- Providing opportunities to visit a new environment before the child or youth is moved there.

Cultural Connection

Cultural connection describes a positive relationship to cultural identity. It includes access to cultural resources and community such as language, ceremonies, teachings, and relations. Supporting well-being in newcomer and immigrant children and youth includes fostering healthy bi-cultural identities and intercultural competency. A culturally safe environment is characterized by humility, curiosity, respect, and the recognition that children may have different relationships and experiences of their culture.

In practice:

- Having opportunities for youth to share their values, practices, and teachings.
- Training staff to be knowledgeable, respectful, and inquisitive about culture.
- Integrating family circles and community events into practice.
- Inviting Elders or community leaders for prayers and ceremonies.
- Creating safety and authenticity around exploring connection to Nations and communities.
- Reaching out to community leaders for advice. Using help of a cultural liaison worker, broker, Indigenous support person, and staff with different cultural backgrounds.
- Using storytelling and validation by Elders to inform practice.
- Showing respect through listening to families without notebook and computer. Ensuring everyone enters a home with the best intentions.



Want to learn more about the domains of well-being?

Read the full explanation in our Defining Well-Being environment scan report on [ALIGN's website](#).



Menu of Indicators



Introduction

Understanding Indicators

Imagine you're out in the forest, and you want to know if the environment is healthy and thriving. As you're walking along you may look at the lichen or moss, the colour of the trees, or the signs of animals and birds as clues as to how the forest is doing.

So, in the same way a woodpecker's presence can be a sign of a healthy forest ecosystem, an indicator can be something we look at to understand how well a process, program, or person is doing. It acts as a signal or marker to help us make judgments or decisions about what we're evaluating. When combined, a wide breadth of indicators provides a better idea of the ongoing progress towards larger goals or outcomes like well-being.

For the menu of indicators, we have compiled a variety of indicators across the seven domains of well-being that describe observations, changes, or impacts the child, youth, caregiver, or staff are able to report. The indicators are from commonly used assessments and real life examples provided by youth, Indigenous practitioners, Elders, and Knowledge Keepers, immigrant and refugee serving agencies, and other diverse agencies across Alberta.

What is an indicator?

Indicators are the markers that give you insight into whether or not you are achieving the expected results. For example, an indicator for whether youth are engaged in their community would be to count the number of times they attended events or how the youth describes their feelings and level of comfort with their community.

Using the indicator menu

For each of the seven domains of child and youth well-being, there are **goal statements** that describe goals or outcomes that together contribute to the ongoing process of growth in the larger domain of well-being. These goals are what agencies might want to achieve through their programs and supports.

For each goal, the menu lists **example indicators** that are concrete signs and markers of progress toward the goal. For example: a goal statement is *Children and youth cultivate their sense of place*, an example indicator, or marker that indicates progress towards this goal, is: *Child or youth spends time on Nation, settlement, or home community*.

Connection to Land

Well-being domain

Land-based Activities

Sense of Place

Connection to Land

Respect & Stewardship of Land

Well-being domain goals

Click on these buttons to jump to the page with this goal and associated indicators

Goal statement
Goals that are major aspects of that well-being domain

Indicators
Example markers or signs of progress towards the goal statement

Children & Youth	Caregivers	Agencies & Staff
Children and youth cultivate their sense of place		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child or youth engages in resource-based activities as a continued connection to ancestors and land. Child or youth spends time on Nation, settlement, or home community. Examples include powwows, family events, sundances, just being. Child or youth know where they are from. Child or youth feels comfortable in natural environment with basic outdoor or survival skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caregivers feel connected to the land. For example, immigrant and refugee caregivers feel welcomed on the land they live on, not just the country. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organizations have connections and receive information about events and activities that build a sense of place early enough for families and agencies to plan for it. Programs and staff model comfort with natural environment and basic survival skills.

Because children and youth experience well-being within relationships, the menu also includes indicators for caregivers and staff and agencies.

- **Caregivers includes:** parents, kin caregivers, foster parents, and agency staff who care for children and youth.
- **Agencies & staff includes:** frontline, administrative, and leadership staff from for-profit, non-profit, or public organizations, agencies and Indigenous Governing Bodies (IGBs) serving children, youth, and families. Staff well-being, confidence, and capacity is crucial to support child and youth well-being. In this column the tool includes indicators about how supported frontline staff are, about program and service design, as well as organizational culture, processes, and policies.

Each domain section also includes some high-level indicators that help contextualize child and youth well-being in the broader social, economic, and systemic conditions of their environments and communities. For a list of domain relevant and commonly used assessments and tools see [pages 56-57](#).



Miskanawah Elders and staff on understanding program impact on youth well-being. Watch a video to learn how Miskanawah assesses impact on youth's well-being.

Adapting Indicators for Your Context

The menu of indicators is designed to be adaptable to your agency's program, community, and priorities. The indicators provide examples that can be tailored to fit your program, the individual child or youth, or the group or family. They can serve as a guide for observation, be adapted as questions for interviews or surveys, or as a guide to interpreting stories or visual forms of feedback.

Indicators are formulated to capture a point in time for individual children, youth, caregivers, or staff. The indicators can be adapted for different purposes, including assessing impact at individual or program level. The following example demonstrates how to adapt indicators from this toolkit:

Child or youth feels comfortable in natural environment with basic outdoor or survival skills

To evaluate the impact of a program or service on an individual

To measure change, add "increased", "improved", or "strengthen" to each statement.

For example:

- Child or youth is approaching the person caring for them **more often**.
- Child or youth feels a **stronger** attachment towards their community or Nation.

Child or youth feels **increased** comfort in natural environment with basic outdoor or survival skills

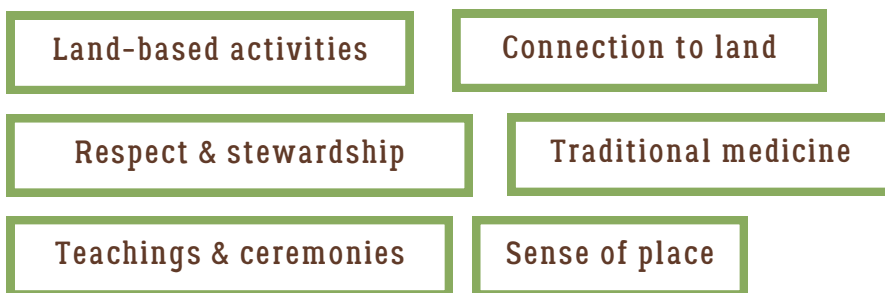
To measure program or organizational level outcomes

To assess to what degree a program achieved an outcome across all participating children, youth, or caregivers, add "percentage of" to the statement. For example:

- The indicator "Caregivers are engaged in the child's education and learning" can be adapted to "**Percentage** of children or youth reporting caregiver engagement in learning and education"
- The indicator "Child or youth achieves basic numeracy and literacy targets" can be adapted to "**Percentage** of children or youth achieving basic numeracy and literacy targets"

Percentage of children or youth who feel comfortable in natural environment with basic outdoor or survival skills

Connection to the Land



Connection to the land means cultivating relationships with the land, water, food sources, and the natural environment. For Indigenous communities, connection to the land and the opportunity to practice land-based activities are essential to identity. They also support living in a good way, which includes connecting with positive aspects of life and gratitude for the land. For children from immigrant, migrant, and refugee communities, connecting to the land builds a relationship and a sense of belonging to their new homeland. For all children and youth, connection to land is vital for well-being and builds awareness about environmental health, which in turn is necessary for life and well-being.

“Taking your shoes and socks off and reconnecting with the land. Feeling the land and the connection to mother earth – that’s healing.”

- Indigenous youth



Youth reflections on experiences at Miskanawah Moon Camp

Watch a video of youth from Miskanawah talking about their relationship with the land and how it impacts their well-being.

Context

Agencies work with children and families in diverse contexts, including urban, rural, Indigenous communities, under-served areas, and larger centres. Assessing well-being includes understanding this context and what is available. Example indicators for the broader context in this domain include availability of resource areas for harvest, and availability and accessibility of programs or initiatives in the community to learn about and visit the land.

[Jump to see relevant Assessments and Tools](#)

Connection to the Land

Children & Youth	Caregivers	Agencies & Staff
Children and youth participate in land-based activities		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth spends time on the land or in nature. Examples include hunting, gathering, gardening, playing. • Child or youth feels comfortable spending time away from technology. • Child or youth has the capacity to regularly visit green spaces of some kind. For example, child or youth is aware where to access green spaces and has the means to travel there alone or with support. • Child or youth is self-motivated to participate in land-based activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers have connections and means to spend time on the land or in nature with child or youth. • Caregivers learn about the history of this land. • Caregivers feel well-equipped and confident travelling on the land. • Caregivers participate in travel on land. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization connects staff, children, youth, and caregivers to the land. • Organization secures external resources to connect staff, children, youth, and caregivers to the land. • Organization practices connection to land in their programs. • Staff are offered learning opportunities on land, plants, animals, and waterways teachings. • Staff increase their understanding of land, plants, animals, and waterways teachings.
Children and youth build connection to their environment		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth feels a positive connection to the environment. • Child or youth discusses enhanced relationships as a result of being on land or in nature. • Child or youth views or speaks about land or earth as a living entity rather than a tool or inanimate object. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers model a positive relationship to the environment for the child or youth they care for. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff understand the importance and significance of land acknowledgments.
Children and youth show respect of, and stewardship for, land and living creatures		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth respects connections between humans, environment, and spirit world. For example, ensures cultural resources are properly maintained. • Child or youth learns about food sources and cultural significance of food. • Child or youth understands their personal impact on the environment. For example, participates in recycling, watering, planting, composting, picking up trash, or doesn't litter or vandalize. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers access or learn about community gardens, traditional medicines, and healthy food. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations have policies and practices that demonstrate respect of land and living creatures.

Connection to the Land

Children & Youth	Caregivers	Agencies & Staff
Children and youth learn about and use traditional medicines or healing practices		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth is connected to knowledge keepers willing to share knowledge. For example, through nurturing relationships to knowledge keepers, attending events, or visiting sacred or harvest sites. • Child or youth builds their knowledge of medicinal uses of plants for everyday natural remedies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers access learning opportunities for traditional medicines, healing practices, or harvesting practices. • Caregivers increased their knowledge about traditional medicines, healing practices, or harvesting practices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations provide physical space connecting to and learning about plant teachings. • Programs or services offer or connect to medicine picking activities and trainings on medicines and practices.
Children and youth are involved in land-based teachings and ceremonies		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth has the opportunity to participate in teachings and ceremonies on land. Examples include medicine picking, cultural camps and sweat lodges, going for walks, or tipi time cultural teachings. • Child or youth participates in teachings and ceremonies on land. Examples include medicine picking, cultural camps and sweat lodges, going for walks, or tipi time cultural teachings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers receive land-based teachings and ceremonies on the land such as Strawberry ceremony, Thunder ceremonies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are comfortable and knowledgeable in creating safe spaces for Indigenous youth. For example, staff feels comfortable smudging, or staff understand cultural practices for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff and youth. • Organization provides a welcoming environment for Elders, knowledge keepers, and Circle Keepers.
Children and youth cultivate their sense of place		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth engages in resource-based activities as a continued reminder and connection to ancestors and land. • Child or youth spends time in their Nation, settlement, or home community. Examples include powwows, family events, sun dances, or just being. • Child or youth knows where they are from. • Child or youth feels comfortable in natural environment with basic outdoor and survival skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers feel connected to the land. For example, immigrant and refugee caregivers feel welcomed on the land they live on, not just the country. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizations have connections and receive information about events and activities that build a sense of place early enough for families and agencies to plan for them. • Programs and staff model comfort with natural environment and basic survival skills.

Caring & Stable Relationships

Natural supports

Connection to community

Reciprocity

Healthy family dynamics

Stable & trusting relationships

Caring relationships describe supportive, meaningful, and reciprocal relationships between children and their natural supports like family members and teachers as well as formalized supports like caseworkers. Family composition, caregiving roles, and relationships with children are culturally-rooted and diverse across communities. Relationship stability is key for child and youth well-being. Children and youth need a consistent person who they can trust and on whom they can depend. Reciprocal relationships are ones where children also contribute. In this way they build healthy connections and self-esteem.

“Good well-being means there’s an Elder or an Auntie around.”
- Indigenous youth



Brokers reflections on an intercultural understanding of well-being

Watch a video of Multicultural Health Brokers Co-op staff speak about building confidence and adapting supports to shifting needs.

Context

Agencies work with children and families in diverse contexts, including urban, rural, Indigenous communities, under-served areas, and larger centres. Assessing well-being includes understanding this context and what is available. Example indicators for the broader context in this domain include the extent to which community members actively come together for community functions, support and help each other, or whether community provides spaces for gatherings.

[Jump to see relevant Assessments and Tools](#)

Caring & Stable Relationships

Children & Youth	Caregivers	Agencies & Staff
Children and youth establish and strengthen their connection to natural supports		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth receives support from kin, friends, and other natural supports. For example, informal social networks such as neighbours, coaches, or educators. • Child or youth reports ties to Elders in their community, or transgenerational kinship with ancestors and lands. • Child or youth has a support network with or without families. For example, sports, religious events, and clubs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers and families report connecting with other family members, their community, Elders, other natural supports for positive support and teachings. • Caregivers are able to build connections, including ties to Elders, with transgenerational kinship, or with culturally relevant supports. • Caregivers engage with long-term, holistic and cross-sectoral, family-centered supports. For example, peer support or parent support groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization trains and supports staff to promote and help children build natural supports. • Staff understand traditional kinship concepts and practices. For example, kinship mapping, traditional parenting practices, traditional knowledge of child and family teachings, extended family, and relational accountability. • Organization trains and supports staff to support child or youth and caregivers in increasing their network of natural supports.
Children and youth establish and strengthen their connection to community		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth has regular opportunities for relational connections to community. For example, regularly attending events or building relationships with community members. • Child or youth is with kin or Indigenous families within their community. • Child or youth reports sense of belonging to community. • Children and youth see their parents and caregivers as leaders and having something of value to offer. For example, cultural wealth, language, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers and families report feeling less isolated and feeling welcomed. • Caregivers share childcare and parenting with others in family and community. • Caregivers indicate that they feel connected within their, or their child's, community, have the confidence to engage and feel welcome. • Caregivers are able to speak their first language and to share their cultural wealth in "mainstream" spaces and systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are aware of and share information about community activities, events, or resources in a timely manner with children, youth, and caregivers. • Agencies have the ability to provide or refer to transportation those they serve to access community supports or activities. • Programs or services maintain or establish family connections. For example, re-unification, working to achieve permanency, sibling homes, family involved decision making. • Programs or services have representation from community and build sense of belonging. • Organization develops relationships with local cultural communities, to inform program development and support building natural, culturally relevant, connections. • Staff understand ceremony, for example in relation to grief and loss.

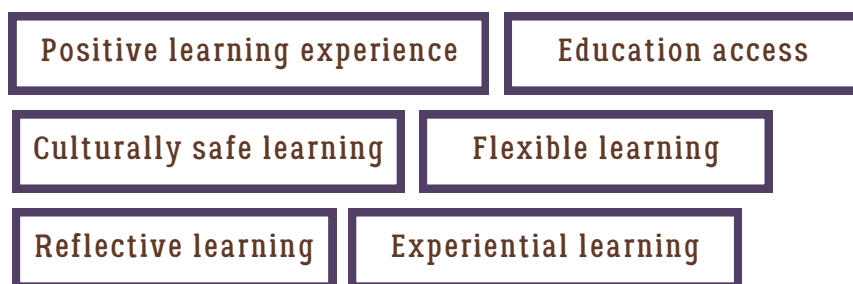
Caring & Stable Relationships

Children & Youth	Caregivers	Agencies & Staff
Children and youth have healthy family dynamics		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth regularly visits and engages with family. • Child or youth looks to their parents and grandparents for guidance and wisdom. • Child or youth engages in play regularly with family members. • Child or youth feels that they are heard, loved, and supported by at least one caregiver. • Child or youth is engaged with family in practising their culture. • Child or youth feels personal talents are recognized. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers positively engage with child or youth by meeting visitation recommendations or demonstrating positive parent-child relationships. • Caregivers report feeling confident and competent in their role in the family. For example, caregivers believe in their ability to help others, understands role in family and fulfils responsibility, has parental self-efficacy. • Caregivers participate in activities as a family. • Caregivers express and illustrate love and emotional warmth towards child. For example, caregivers demonstrate nurturing as caregiving practices such as serve-and-return. • Caregivers are confident in their role as transmitters of culture. • Caregivers' goals are acknowledged and built upon. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs encourage and facilitate regular visits with the child or youth family through including family in decision making, activities and providing transportation to visits. • Staff receive training that supports their ability to connect with children or youth or caregivers. For example, training for motivational interviewing or natural supports. • Programs or services include families in recreation activities. • Programs are set up to work for family schedules, not business hours, so parents don't have to compromise their jobs to attend during working hours. • Staff feel competent to support families even if they are not parents themselves. For example, organization designs physical spaces with families in mind; organization provides flexibility for staff and their efforts; or organizations allow sufficient time for meaningful relationship building. • Organization takes time to understand and reflect on how to decolonize work and organizational culture. • Organization regularly recognizes and celebrates staff. For example, by offering personal days, celebrating birthdays, shout-outs, and staff recognition.

Caring & Stable Relationships

Children & Youth	Caregivers	Agencies & Staff
Children and youth have stable and trusting relationships		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth is approaching the person caring for them. • Child or youth reports feeling hope and trust. • Child or youth has relationships free of judgment. • Child or youth is engaging positively with programs. • Child or youth is able to set boundaries, create safety plan for relationships, and advocate for themselves. • Child or youth understands what safe spaces, relationships and environments are. For example, can identify pink and red flags within relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers readily respond to child's emotional needs and is 'in tune' with child's needs or comfort level. • Caregivers are consistent and predictable in their interactions with the child or youth. • Caregivers are calm and consistent when dealing with child or youth's distress. • Caregivers understand or are trained in safe boundary setting and safety plans. • Caregivers understand how to build healthy relationships with the child or youth and with other caregivers. • Caregivers have access to holistic support and feel respected in their interactions with program staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs or services work to achieve permanency and reduce moves for children and youth. • Staff have trusting relationships with child or youth or caregivers. • Staff work closely with the caregivers to get to know a child, before trying to complete more personal face-to-faces. • Staff engage in anti racism and anti-oppression work to have better skill set to support diverse children. • Agency allows for time for relationships to be built and strengthened before goal focused work needs to begin. • Organization has built trust with child, youth, and caregiver. The organization is able to walk alongside the child, youth, and caregiver. • Staff are trained in trauma-informed practices and this is monitored and observed in practice.
Children and youth develop reciprocity in their relationships		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth volunteers in community or in program. • Child or youths seeks out positive relationships with themselves, other people, Elders, and ceremonies. • Child or youth demonstrates respect for self, others, and environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers are able to model reciprocity in relationships, through demonstrating respect and concern for others or volunteering. • Caregivers understand how to "share power" with their children as part of developmental relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are able to role model reciprocity with children or youth they support. • Agency relationships with Indigenous and other diverse families are respectful and reciprocal. Feedback from Indigenous partners is integrated into services.

Meaningful Knowledge



Meaningful knowledge can include formal and informal education and learning opportunities that are culturally responsive and safe. It requires a flexible approach to knowledge development that accounts for a child’s unique way of learning, their life circumstances, and their needs. It can include reflective learning where children can reflect on and learn from their actions. Meaningful knowledge includes the knowledge passed from family, role models, Elders, community teachings, ceremony and the land, and life skills. It supports identity formation, pride, sense of belonging, healing, and joy.

“Hands on learning resonates better with Indigenous people. Whereas instead of sitting there and listening for hours you don’t really retain that information, right? Whereas if you go and do it you do the teachings when you come talk but you can talk about it from experience, right? You can be like yeah, we did this, we did this, and like it sticks in your mind more.”

- Indigenous youth

Context

Agencies work with children and families in diverse contexts, including urban, rural, Indigenous communities, under-served areas, and larger centres. Assessing well-being includes understanding this context and what is available. Example indicators for the broader context in this domain include:

- Community offers initiatives that encourage learning.
- Community has access to education and early learning opportunities for children.
- Community maintains the knowledge, values, and beliefs important to them.
- Elders and Knowledge Keepers are valued and able to pass on their knowledge.

Jump to see relevant Assessments and Tools

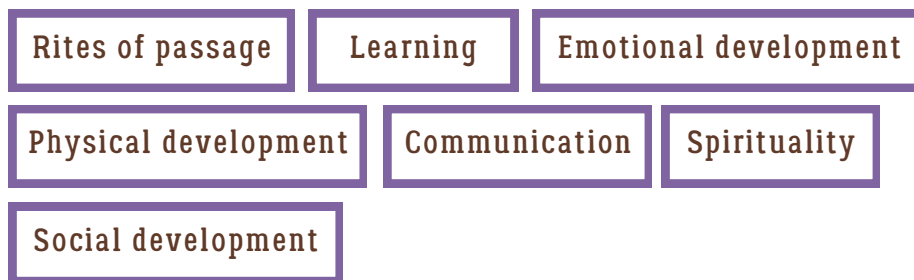
Meaningful Knowledge

Children & Youth	Caregivers	Agencies & Staff
Children and youth have a positive learning experience		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth has a positive attitude toward learning. • Child or youth expresses curiosity about learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers are engaged in the child's education and learning. • Caregivers model and support curiosity for learning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff feel confident and independent about supporting children and youth in their learning. • Agency's personnel policies for the program or service reflect prioritization of competent, knowledgeable staff. • Agency's personnel policies specify core competencies, required education or training.
Children and youth access formal education		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth has access to school education. • Child, aged 0-5, participates in early childhood education. • Child or youth's number of completed years of schooling. • Youth, aged 14-18, intends to pursue post-secondary education. • Child or youth achieves basic numeracy and literacy targets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers have awareness and understand how to navigate early childhood and school programs. • Caregivers have support in navigating early childhood and school programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff have regular check-ins about education access and participation. • Staff has enhanced training for navigating and supporting schooling.
Children and youth access culturally safe learning opportunities.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth learns about cultural ways of knowing and doing integrated in broader learning opportunities. • Child or youth learns from Elders or knowledge keepers about cultural ways of knowing and being. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers understand and respect value of culture; their own and others. • Caregivers have connections to Elders or language speakers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs and services are guided, designed, and delivered by Indigenous youth, Elders, families, and community members. • Agency has professional development activities that reflect both core trainings and specialized learnings as appropriate.
Children and youth access flexible learning support.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth accesses trauma informed educators or specialized programs that meet their needs. • Child or youth experiences success in school with support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers are able to advocate for child or youth to access specialized programs that meet their needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency's policies, procedures, processes, supports, environment, etc., reflect trauma informed care needs.

Meaningful Knowledge

Children & Youth	Caregivers	Agencies & Staff
Children and youth develop reflective learning		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth learns through experience, success, and mistakes. • Child or youth has relationships with caregivers or staff where reflection and growth from experience, success, and mistakes is fostered and supported. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers give space for storytelling and support reflection. • Caregiver models and supports reflection and learning from experience, success, and mistakes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency has processes and time for ongoing learning and reflective discussion. • Agency has specified professional development policy for programs.
Children and youth access experiential learning opportunities		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth participates in learning by doing in age-appropriate ways. For example, child or youth knows how to do laundry, budget, how to use public transit, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers support child or youth in learning by doing in age-appropriate ways. For example, showing them how to do laundry. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency provides informal learning opportunities. For example, group learning, job shadowing. • Staff access coaching and mentorship support.

Healthy Development & Growth



Healthy development and growth encompass physical, emotional, cognitive, mental, and spiritual well-being at different ages and stages. For example, making friends, pursuing interests, getting enough sleep, learning, and regulating emotions. Children need to develop skills, play, explore interests and gifts, think critically, and be curious about the world. Healthy development is conceptualized in multiple, culturally specific ways. Indigenous perspectives highlighted a balance of physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional realms. Child and youth development and growth is frequently marked by rites of passage that include teachings to support and prepare children and youth for roles or stages in life.

“If you have an Indigenous child, the ancestors are preparing that spirit for a human journey, then that spirit being sung into the world, and then the naming ceremony, the moss bag and the swing; then the walking out ceremony. I mean, all the ceremonies that are associated with those stages, that's going to guarantee you an amazing child.”

- Ralph Bodor, individual with specialized knowledge around Indigenous approaches and considerations towards well-being

Context

Agencies work with children and families in diverse contexts, including urban, rural, Indigenous communities, under-served areas, and larger centres. Assessing well-being includes understanding this context and what is available. Example indicators for the broader context in this domain include:

- The extent to which community celebrates rites of passages.
- Availability and accessibility of recreation spaces and recreational and educational programming.

[Jump to see relevant Assessments and Tools](#)

Healthy Development & Growth

Children & Youth	Caregivers	Agencies & Staff
Children and youth experience milestones and rites of passage		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth moves towards developmentally and culturally appropriate milestones or rites of passage. • Child or youth receives screening, follow-ups, or continued professional support to reaching milestones. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers access coaching or education regarding child or youth development. • Caregivers will advocate for additional supports when they feel the child is behind. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are trained in and use measures that reflect child or youth demographic and are culturally responsive. • Staff are able to apply developmental stages training with the children they work with. For example, can recognize and support individual needs.
Children and youth progress in their learning		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth engages in developmentally appropriate play time. For example, drawing circle, building tower with cubes, building bridge with cubes, walking outdoors, climbing outside. • Child or youth participates freely in developmental activities. • Child or youth seeks adventure in age-appropriate ways to grow and learn. • Child or youth learns useful skills for later life stages and has opportunities to demonstrate their independence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregiver engages with child in appropriate play routine and developmental activities. For example, caregiver reads, talks, sings, floor play with child or youth. • Caregivers participate in learning to support life skills. For example, budgeting or food preparation classes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization has processes in place to foster safe, trusting relationships and inclusive environments. • Staff maintain consistent use of tools yet utilize an individualized approach when determining what developmental activities are appropriate and what constitutes successful use. For example, including child or youth in the plan development process, letting the child determine what they wish to start working on, using storyboards or picture symbols to collaborate with child or caregiver.
Children and youth grow in their emotional development		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth likes caregiver to be within sight and hearing. • Child or youth demonstrates affection to family. • Child or youth regulates their moods and emotions. For example has a level of self-control for impulses or emotional outbursts, can work towards goals. • Child or youth is able to recognize, name, and express their feelings. • Child or youth reports a positive change in mental health. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers build relationship with child or youth with family engagement opportunities. • Caregivers access counselling or respite to remodel their own emotional regulation for the child or youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff lead parent education and training opportunities. • Program or service refers child or youth to specialized services to support their emotional and behavioral development. • Staff are trained to consistently implement trauma-informed assessment tools and approaches for child or youth emotional development.

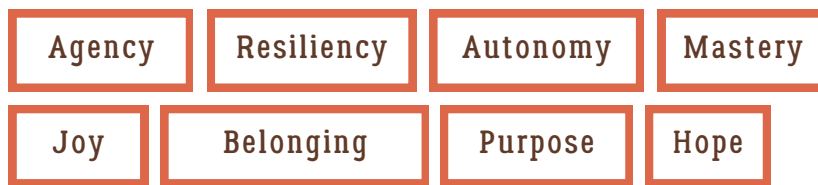
Healthy Development & Growth

Children & Youth	Caregivers	Agencies & Staff
Children and youth nurture their physical development		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth has age-appropriate nutritious diet. • Child or youth practices good dental and physical hygiene. • Child or youth's immunizations are up to date. • Child or youth living with disability or chronic illness experiences changes in health. For example, has changes in support or impact on their everyday life. • Child or youth reports engaging in regular physical activity. • Child or youth has structured and unstructured opportunities to play and to develop motor skills. • Child or youth reports healthy sleep habits. • Child or youth's level of understanding of safe sex practices and sexual health. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers have opportunities for life skills development towards food and healthy habits. • Caregivers have ability and confidence to book medical appointments and have them direct bill CFSA. • Caregiver takes child to medical appointments as needed. For example, pre-natal screenings, immunizations. • Caregiver responds appropriately to any symptoms of illness. • Caregivers access resources to facilitate child or youth physical and emotional needs. • Caregiver training on sleep hygiene. • Caregivers have the tools to have open, honest, and respectful conversations with youth about sexual health. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff access resources to facilitate child or youth physical needs. For example, community garden, programs on connection to land and learning about food, training on healthy habits and food. • Staff create safe and inclusive environments to discuss safe sex and sexual health.
Children and youth communicate confidently		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth has confident communication skills. • Child or youth has vocabulary to ask and say what they want. • Child or youth self-advocates for needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers give appropriate stimulation, such as praise or encouragement. • Caregivers integrate child or youth input into decisions and planning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs or services integrate child or youth or caregiver input into planning.
Children and youth grow spiritually		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth engages in cultural or spiritual activities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers have knowledge of and access culturally specific child development or parenting programs and services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff training on cultural activities opportunities for cultural connection, connection to land, ceremony, and culture camp activities.

Healthy Development & Growth

Children & Youth	Caregivers	Agencies & Staff
Children and youth grow and mature socially		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth is smiling, joking, inviting, or open. • Child or youth is taken out to visit family, friends, shops, local community, nursery, or playgroup. • Child or youth attends community events or gatherings. • Child or youth goes to an event with someone they know from community rather than with the social worker. • Child or youth is connected to social mentorship. • Child or youth is taking social cues and responding appropriately. • Child or youth effectively fulfills societal roles in school, home, community. • Child or youth has experienced rites of passage. • Child or youth made at least one new friend in the past year. • Youth is transitioned to adulthood with required supports and services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers have the means to take child or youth to events or gatherings. • Caregivers provide consistent social mentorship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff provides social mentorship in a trauma-informed and culturally responsive way.

Sense of Identity & Autonomy



Identity describes a sense of self as well as how a person is perceived by others. It is multifaceted and fluid. Identity emerges and is dynamically shaped in relationship to others, the land, and community. Autonomy describes the ability to make choices toward self-determination and self-directed action. For children and youth, a strong identity and autonomy are reflected in confidence, belonging, and a sense of purpose. Pursuing interests and activities that bring joy can build identity among children and youth.

“We asked [the youth], hey, we’ve got \$35,000, what do you guys want to do with this? Do you want a foosball table? Tell us what you want. And they said, We want a conference, and we want these keynote speakers to come and talk to us about matters that are important to us. That’s an example of youth moving towards wellness, right? Their voice, their requests, and their leadership, those are all indicators of how some of our youth are choosing to move towards wellness.”

- Kirby Redwood, Knowledge Keeper and practitioner



Listen to Elder Beverly Keeshig-Soonias speak about fostering a sense of identity within children and youth.

Context

Agencies work with children and families in diverse contexts, including urban, rural, Indigenous communities, under-served areas, and larger centres. Assessing well-being includes understanding this context and what is available. Example indicators for the broader context in this domain include:

- Community offers group activities for children, youth, and caregivers.
- Community members maintain connections to meaningful locations, and strongly connect with who they are in positive ways.
- Community ceremonies and cultural events are open to participation.
- Community develops and enacts their own healing, development, and restoration programs.

Jump to see relevant Assessments and Tools

Sense of Identity & Autonomy

Children & Youth	Caregivers	Agencies & Staff
Children and youth strengthen their sense of agency		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth holds positive beliefs about themselves, providing an internal guiding mechanism to steer and nurture people through challenges, and improving control over outcomes. • Child or youth is eager to participate in group activities and interact with peers. • Child or youth feels comfortable showing up as their authentic self to work, school, or other places. • Child or youth feels comfortable expressing their wants and needs and will speak up for themselves. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers hold positive beliefs about themselves and support child or youth's positive identity. For example, caregivers have sense of cultural wealth to transmit. • Caregivers support child or youth with opportunities to participate in group activities. • Caregivers create safe space for child or youth to express wants and needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency's accessibility planning includes attitudinal barriers. • Staff support child or youth with opportunities to participate in group activities. • Staff create space for children and youth to bring their personal belongings from home to decorate their room. • Staff create safe space for children and youth to express their wants and needs.
Children and youth have the resources to feel resilient during difficulties		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth's level of resilience is apparent. For example, child or youth feels they can succeed, is actively seeking to better their situation, feels able to self-advocate, is passionate, asks for help, or adapts to new environments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers have supports in place, such as access to respite care, and feel they can cope and model resiliency. • Caregivers provide space and opportunity for child to reflect and learn from challenges. • Caregivers assist child or youth in identifying natural supports to help with advocacy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are non-judgmental. • Staff support reflection by sharing stories and modeling reflecting on mistakes and moving forward. • Staff support children and youth in building connections that can be lifelong to support with all life areas.
Children and youth have a sense of autonomy		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth has their voice heard and feels included in decisions that affect them. For example, understands and participates in evaluation process. • Child or youth has the confidence and ability to make decisions and changes for self. For example, participates in ceremony and holds responsibility for both failures and successes from their decisions. • Child or youth has the ability to solve problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers involve child or youth in decisions that affect them. • Caregivers feel empowered to make decisions for themselves and their families, and understand their responsibility for their decisions. • Caregivers have problem-solving skills and model them for child or youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff involve child or youth in decisions that affect them. "Doing with, instead of to." • Staff work with caregivers and community to understand how to support and nurture healthy sense of identity and autonomy and align with participant needs. • Organization provides support in developing problem-solving skills.

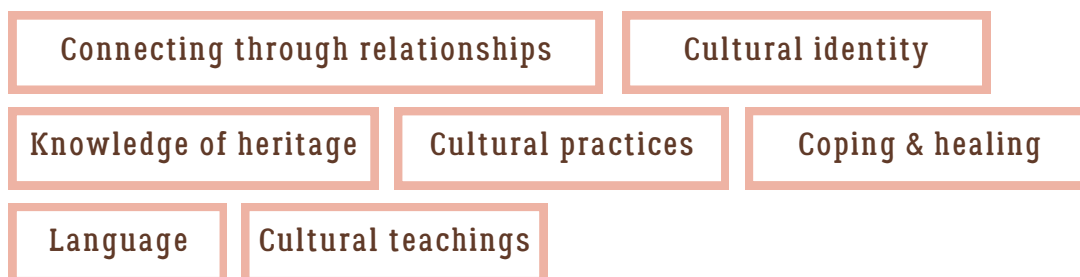
Sense of Identity & Autonomy

Children & Youth	Caregivers	Agencies & Staff
Children and youth have a sense of mastery		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth embraces change and willingly tries new things or accepts challenges. • Child or youth exhibits competence in various areas such as cognitive, physical, social, and spiritual. For example, having self-control, striving to achieve personal goals, rather than superiority. "I may not be perfect at everything, but I will always try to get better". • Child or youth has capacity for self-regulation, self-comfort. For example, child or youth is able to manage impulsivity, is taught healthy ways of intellectualizing emotions, has some emotional regulation tools such as breathing techniques, 5-4-3-2-1 method, or journaling. • Child or youth is able to navigate different environments and cultural contexts and worldviews. For example, youth feeling comfortable navigating different cultures at school and at home. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers provide opportunities to build competence in many areas. • Caregivers nurture growth mindset. • Caregivers have emotional literacy. • Caregivers are learning and modelling developmentally and culturally appropriate emotional regulation tools. For example, caregiver attends social emotional learning workshops. • Caregivers have capacity to navigate between two or more worldviews. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff support a growth mindset. • Organization is willing to try new practices. Innovative practices are embedded to meet unique child or youth needs. • Organization provides workshops and training in developmental relationships and social emotional learning for staff and caregivers.
Children and youth are involved in interests that bring joy		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth is engaged in activities that bring them joy, that they have an interest in, or that they are great at. For example, swimming or karate. • Child or youth demonstrates ambition. • Child or youth shares knowledge confidently with others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers provide opportunities for child or youth to pursue activities that bring joy • Caregivers are attentive to and nurture child's gift. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff support activities for fun without a problem-solving agenda. • Staff are attentive to and nurture child's gift. • Organizations provide opportunities for peer mentorship.

Sense of Identity & Autonomy

Children & Youth	Caregivers	Agencies & Staff
Children and youth cultivate a sense of belonging		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth is able to strongly connect with who they are as a community, Tribe, or Nation in positive ways. For example, access to language or takes language classes. • Child or youth knows where they come from and what their identity is. They know their birth family, or know of them, and family history. • Child or youth is supported in understanding their roots, knowing and owning the truth about their history. • Child or youth has sense of community, loving others, and being loved. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers are connected with natural supports from their country of origin where their sense of identity is nurtured. • Caregivers bridge between two cultures to support healthy bi-cultural identity development in children and youth. • Caregivers provide opportunities to connect to child or youth's roots. • Caregivers are able to identify and draw upon cultural wealth. • Caregivers' confidence as transmitters of culture is restored. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agency and staff learn to create ethical space. For example, translate English nouns to Indigenous verbs. • Programs reflect the demographics of the larger population. • Staff and organization have aligned vision. • Agency prioritizes diverse representation of staff and board to support community. • Agency engages those with lived experience in cultural minority communities to co-design programs and supports. • Staff and services are able to foster positive intergenerational relationships within families. • Staff have the ability to foster positive bi-cultural identities.
Children and youth have a sense of purpose		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth sets goals and has aspirations. • Child or youth has a sense of purpose and direction for their life. • Child or youth feels connected to someone or something about a passion or a group that motivates them to keep trying or working towards something. For example, child or youth volunteers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers have a sense of purpose and model concern for others. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff support with a client-led service plan with realistic and achievable goals that will build confidence and self efficacy. Short- and long-term goals incorporated in service delivery. • Agency provides increased meetings with caseworkers for post high school funding and training opportunities. • Agency supports and tracks activities to help youth feel connected and provide a sense of purpose, link them to community and multiple generations, gain confidence, and experience appreciation.
Children and youth have hope		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth sees a future for themselves. • Child or youth experiences a sense of happiness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers have hopes and aspirations for self and their children. 	

Cultural Connection



Cultural connection describes a positive relationship to cultural identity. It includes access to cultural resources and community such as language, ceremonies, teachings, and relations. Supporting well-being in newcomer and immigrant children and youth includes fostering healthy bi-cultural identities and intercultural competency. A culturally safe environment is characterized by humility, curiosity, respect, and the recognition that children may have different relationships and experiences of their culture.

“One of my little granddaughters said to me, kokum we can wear our skirts. And I said, Yes, you can. And I could see the pride in her. And she chose to wear her skirt the other day, to Pink Shirt Day, which was yesterday. And she told everyone, that this was why she was wearing that skirt, because she was proud of who she was. And she actually used the word. And that to me is wellness, not just now but through the generations, we start to see change, because of the pride that we have a right to. And because we're becoming more connected to who we are. We don't have to hide it.”

- Métis, Cree Elder Kerrie Moore MSW RSW

Context

Agencies work with children and families in diverse contexts, including urban, rural, Indigenous communities, under-served areas, and larger centres. Assessing well-being includes understanding this context and what is available. Example indicators include the extent to which:

- Community passes down knowledge from generation to generation.
- Community recognizes multi-cultural history. For example, through cultural awareness events that explore multiple cultures.
- Community honours its history of their land and ancestors.
- Community has speakers of traditional languages including rate of language speakers or frequency of language spoken.

[Jump to see relevant Assessments and Tools](#)

Cultural Connection

Children & Youth	Caregivers	Agencies & Staff
Children and youth connect to their culture through relationships		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth views caregivers as having something of value to pass on. For example, language or culture. • Child or youth understands value of culture, their own and others. • Child or youth has connections to a traditional person, Elder, or Clan Mother. • Child or youth feels a strong attachment towards their community or Nation. • Child or youth feels a strong connection to their ancestors. • Child or youth has someone they are close with attend cultural ceremonies. • Child or youth listens carefully if a traditional person, Elder, or Clan Mother spoke to them about their culture. • Child or youth has talked to other people in order to learn more about their culture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers share traditional or cultural stories with child or youth. • Caregivers understand value of culture, their own and others. • Caregivers transmit cultural knowledge. For example, shares traditional teachings, values, and language with their children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff understand and help share traditional parenting practices. For example, the moss bag, Naming Ceremony, Willow teachings, the swing, nurturing, attachment, and Circle teachings of balance, harmony, and inclusiveness; relationships, roles, and responsibilities. • Staff are able to recognize and reflect own cultural lens during cultural encounters. • Staff have ongoing relationships with different Elders and knowledge keepers from different Nations and Tribes. • Agency collaborates with Indigenous families to create services that are specific to community needs. • Staff understand and incorporate Indigenous worldviews, culture, tradition, values, ceremony, and language. For example, finding creative or external resources for children to connect. • Programs or services are provided by delegated Indigenous agencies where possible.
Children and youth feel pride in their cultural or bi-cultural identity		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth feels pride in cultural or bi-cultural identity. For example, child or youth expresses pride through stories, activities, etc. • Child or youth feels sense of belonging with their culture. • Child or youth knows that being a part of their culture means they sometimes have a different way of looking at the world. • Child or youth knows their cultural or spirit name. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers feel pride in cultural or bi-cultural identity. • Caregivers participate in Nation meetings and gatherings. • Caregivers feel confident in role as transmitter of culture. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization hires diverse staff and volunteers that reflect the population they serve. • Programs or services are designed for children and families to see themselves reflected. • Staff acknowledge their own biases related to culture. For example, they understand, and articulate underlying assumptions related to culture, legal context, and professional formation, fostering anti-racist and anti-oppressive organizational culture and practices.

Cultural Connection

Children & Youth	Caregivers	Agencies & Staff
Children and youth know about their heritage		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth understands heritage and can articulate it. • Child or youth feels connection to land. • Child or youth knows who parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents are. • Child or youth knows which community(ies) their ancestors originate from. • Child or youth participates in events or activities that will help them understand their background better. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers share knowledge and stories of their ancestors and heritage with child or youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff understand and support the importance of connections to Indigenous families, communities, and ancestors. For example, place Indigenous children in homes where at least one of the caregivers is Indigenous. • Staff understand the importance of our physical environment. For examples, what home means from an Indigenous worldview, tipi teachings, the physical state of my home, and housing. • Staff help process any impact of intergenerational trauma for the families they serve. For example, Elders, resources, and ceremonies. • Staff recognize the Indigenous perspective of community-based child rearing and understand the families' responsibilities to nurture the gifts children bring with them. • Organization has an advisory group to support understanding. For example, Indigenous Advisory Committee (IAC), equity and diversity committee.
Children and youth are involved in cultural practices		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth practices culture in everyday life. For example, eats traditional food or is familiar with using tobacco, sage, sweetgrass, or cedar. • Child or youth participates in cultural ceremony, or helps prepare for a cultural ceremony. For example, sweat lodge, Moon Ceremony, Sundance, Longhouse, Feast, or giveaway. • Child or youth has respect for themselves and their culture and understand their responsibilities to live a positive life. • Child or youth understands how to find positive cultural spaces, ceremonies, and Elders and use these experiences to keep them safe. • Child or youth plans on attending a cultural ceremony in the future. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers access culturally appropriate and knowledgeable resources such as Elders, speakers, or traditional people. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization incorporates traditional approaches into workplace culture, programs, and services. For example, traditional conflict resolution, child-rearing, gender roles, etc. • Staff understand and support the ceremonies and teachings that enhance the human journey. For example, the Clan and Society Teachings and Age and Stage Teachings.

Children & Youth	Caregivers	Agencies & Staff
Children and youth connect to culture for their coping and healing		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth looks to their culture for help when overwhelmed with emotions or making decisions. For example, child or youth using stories and remembering lessons learned when feeling stuck. • Child or youth looks to their culture when feeling spiritually disconnected. • Child or youth uses traditional healers and medicines. • Child or youth accesses cultural supports. For example, ceremony when experiencing illness. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers look to their culture for guidance on emotions, decisions. • Caregivers use and share traditional medicines and practices with their child or youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs and services use culturally appropriate approaches that incorporate best available therapies to help individuals, groups, and communities heal from emotional traumas such as grief, forgiveness, or addictions. For example, culturally appropriate programs to incorporate therapies that aren't based on prescription medication. • Staff understand and can rely on cultural teachings and practices to make choices if faced with a problem or feel troubled. For example, programs or services use some of the following to address family and parenting concerns: Sharing Circles, Teachings, Counselling through Elders, presenting protocol such as cloth or tobacco to an Elder in ceremony. • Staff understand the impacts of inter-generational trauma on survivors of Residential Schools, individuals, families, and communities and how it affects the families we serve. • Programs or services support personal health with cultural practices. For example, medicine picking, taking care of their body, Indigenous games. • Staff understand how participation in traditional ceremonies facilitates healing for the families we serve and can relate by being involved in traditional cultural social events and ceremonies. For example, Pow Wow, smudging, pipe ceremonies, sweat lodge ceremonies, and Inuit or Métis ceremonies.
Children and youth connect to their language		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth has knowledge of cultural language. • Child or youth feels comfortable using their language. • Child or youth feels it is important to know their cultural language. • Child or youth is learning their traditional language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers have access to language lessons with cultural understandings. • Caregivers share their traditional language with child or youth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs or services are able to make space for different culturally-rooted communication styles. • Staff understand the importance of Indigenous languages. For example, language classes, hearing or speaking with Elders or cultural people who speak their language or through storytelling or social interactions.

Cultural Connection

Children & Youth	Caregivers	Agencies & Staff
Children and youth receive cultural teachings		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth knows protocols and songs. • Child or youth understands the true teachings of their culture and the ceremonies they attend, and practices them in their cultural journey on a regular basis. • Child or youth understands Natural Law and how to use these teachings in their personal life, in their community, and in ceremony. • Child or youth believes things like animals and rocks have a spirit like people. • Child or youth spends time trying to find out more about belonging to their culture such as its history, traditions, and customs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers remodel teachings of their culture to their child or youth. For example, attending ceremonies, regular cultural practices, knowing customs or songs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff have been involved in traditional Indigenous teachings and ceremony led by an Indigenous mentor or teacher – or training. • Staff can connect with Indigenous teachings to assist the families they serve. For example, staff understand Turtle Lodge teachings or Willow Teachings.

Supportive & Safe Environments

Basic needs

Accessibility to services

Safety

Culturally safe environment

Stability & trust

Physical health

Respect & dignity

Supportive and safe environments describe children’s social and physical circumstances. They include and go beyond basic needs to provide equitable access to material goods, activities, services, and education. Safe environments include protective factors such as well-resourced and skilled caregivers, service providers, and social supports. They are underpinned by principles of equity, respect, recognition, and empowerment. Accessible, universally available, and culturally responsive services, supports, and care providers are key to supportive and safe environments.



Listen to Elder Beverly Keeshig-Soonias speak about the role supportive environments play in connecting historical culture with present day youth.

Context

Agencies work with children and families in diverse contexts, including urban, rural, Indigenous communities, under-served areas, and larger centres. Assessing well-being includes understanding this context and what is available. Example indicators include the extent to which:

- Community has homes that are safe and secure.
- Housing is affordable.
- Community has access to comprehensive and funded programs and services.
- Community has organizations that collaborate and connect for improved and comprehensive service delivery.
- Community offers and controls health services and social services.

Jump to see relevant Assessments and Tools

Supportive & Safe Environments

Children & Youth	Caregivers	Agencies & Staff
Children and youth have access to basic needs		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child or youth has access to basic needs. For example, housing security or has a safe place to stay, has sufficient food, has clean drinking water. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caregivers have suitable housing and surrounding environment. Caregivers are able to access financial support for or has livable income to pay for all or most necessities. For example, rent or mortgage, utilities or bills, groceries, childcare, medical expenses, household and personal hygiene, transportation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Program or services provide wrap around support to meet basic needs. For example, provides snacks or meals, supports housing. Staff connect caregivers with access to financial or other supports to cover necessities.
Children and youth access services, activities, education		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child or youth receives appropriate medical or psycho-social screenings and interventions. Child or youth has access to quality education. Child or youth knows and accesses resources when needed. For example, a school counselor, trusted adult, or peer support groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Caregivers request resources and have made connections to formal supports. For example, agencies, organizations, resource centres. Caregivers seek appropriate help and advice if experiencing difficulties managing child. Caregivers understand the mandate and role of formal systems, have reduced fear and mistrust, and are able to engage. Caregivers build relationships of trust with service providers (brokers) for social inclusion. Caregivers engage with programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization collaborates and connects with other organizations for improved and comprehensive service delivery for children, youth, and caregivers. Programs or services are flexible and adapt to shifting circumstances in communities. For example, ability to experiment, confidence to adapt, ability to learn. Organization provides help and advice, and support connection to and building trust with services and resources for caregivers. Organization builds trusting relationships with caregivers to increase support-seeking when needed. Staff support understanding of cultural minorities families in their interactions with formal systems to build intercultural capacity. Programs or services equip caregivers and families to find appropriate supports during a crisis even after their file is closed.

Supportive & Safe Environments

Children & Youth	Caregivers	Agencies & Staff
Children and youth are safe		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth feels environment is physically safe in home, care, school, and community. • Child or youth feels environment is emotionally safe. For example, minimal stress, conflict, hostility within family. • Child or youth understands how to identify risky or unsafe situations and who to go to for help. • Child or youth feels appreciated and supported within environment without frequent criticism or hostility. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers have taken appropriate home safety precautions. For example, safety gates, cupboard locks, medicine storage. • Caregivers provide child or youth feelings of safety by increasing protective factors, anticipating danger, appropriately supervises child or youth. • Caregivers have opportunities to rest and work towards a balanced lifestyle. • Caregivers use language and tone appropriately towards child or youth. For example, caregivers provide positive discipline without rejection. • Caregivers change risky or harmful behaviours. For example, substance misuse, family violence, or gambling. • Caregivers respect and provide boundaries and a controlled environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff are adequately trained in safety for the programs or services they run. • Programs or services foster a sense of belonging and safety. For example, broken items are replaced, children or youth can bring items from home, onboarding includes welcome kits, or program provides cultural foods. • Programs or services find lower incident rates. • Intercultural capacity improves accuracy of assessments of well-being vs risk. • Organization supports child, youth, families to identify and get help with risky or harmful behaviours or situations. • Staff establishes child or youth's safety when file is closed.
Children and youth are culturally safe in their environment		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth feels culturally safe in service or care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers report feeling programs are culturally safe. • Caregivers feel program or service is respecting their healing journeys. • Caregivers report changes in their spiritual, physical, emotional, and social healing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programs and services encourage newcomer and refugee families to access supports. • Staff take cultural safety training and regularly self reflect on their ability to recognize racism and white privilege and the ways they can address racism in their practice. • Staff self reflect on the ways their personal and professional values are consistent with and cultivate cultural safety. • Organization provides accessible safe spaces that are culturally attuned to support healing. • Staff honour grief and respond compassionately to cycles of trauma.

Supportive & Safe Environments

Children & Youth	Caregivers	Agencies & Staff
Children and youth have stability and trust in their caregiver relationships		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth has continuity and stability in care, has opportunity to build stable relationships with caregivers. • Child or youth's number of moves in care. • Child or youth's cumulative days in care until reunification, permanently placed with kin, adopted, emancipated, or placed in a permanent foster home. • Child or youth talks about program as home or returns to program on their own. • Child or youth chooses to share information with caregiver, staff, or other trusted adult. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers have positive interactions with child or youth including play, work, sharing, teaching. • Caregivers have the space to positively engage with each child and youth. • Caregivers create a good family routine creating structure, continuity, and stability. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization is well resourced and has skilled service providers. • Organization places child or youth with kin or Indigenous families within their community. • Organization works for child or youth to be reunified, permanently placed with kin, adopted, emancipated, or placed in a permanent foster home as soon as safely possible. • Program or service aims to minimize number of out of home placements. • Program or services' rate of successful family reunification, that is, no re-entry into care. • Organization provides spaces that are age appropriate and encourage family interaction. • Staff are supported to remain in positions. For example, steps are taken to prevent burnout.
Children and youth receive care for their physical health		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth is supported in seeking care. For example, for attending medical appointments or taking medication as prescribed. • Child or youth is supported in practising good personal hygiene. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregiver seeks appropriate care for child or youth illness or accidental injuries. • Caregiver supports child or youth in practising good personal hygiene. For example, helping brush teeth, reminding to shower. 	
Children and youth experience equity, respect, recognition, dignity in their environment		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child or youth feels their environment reinforces equity, respect, and dignity. • Child or youth expresses joy and laughter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Caregivers allow child or youth to make choices where appropriate. • Caregivers report feelings of empowerment and resilience. • Caregivers have a job or role that they and other community members' respect. • Caregivers model mutual appreciation, respect, cooperation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organization designs and delivers programs and services to fit the kids, instead of the kids fitting the service.

Assessments & Tools

There are a number of common and validated assessments that capture aspects of the seven domains and align with the principles for measurement. Your agency may already use a combination of assessments or have created your own tools tailored to specific programs or participants. Reflect on who or what your assessments focus on: what aspects of well-being do you already cover? What is missing?

To support your selection of assessments, we have created a table of commonly used assessments and tools and highlighted which domains of well-being they capture. All of the included assessments and tools are in alignment with our principles of assessment, such as being strengths-based, wholistic, and relational. For more information see the Assessment & Tools Descriptions table in the [Appendix](#).

Assessment & tool alignment with domains of well-being

Assessment or Tool	Connection to the Land	Caring & Stable Relationships	Meaningful Knowledge	Healthy Development & Growth	Sense of Identity & Autonomy	Cultural Connection	Supportive & Safe Environments
Ages & Stages							
Building the Sacred							
Casey Life Skills							
Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS)							
Child & Youth Resilience Measure & Adult Resilience Measure (CYRM, ARM)							
Cultural Connectedness Scale							
Eco-Maps							

Assessment & Tool	Connection to the Land	Caring & Stable Relationships	Meaningful Knowledge	Healthy Development & Growth	Sense of Identity & Autonomy	Cultural Connection	Supportive & Safe Environments
<u>Family Advocacy and Support Tool (FAST)</u>							
<u>The miyo resource kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwasowin</u>							
<u>Native Wellness Assessment</u>							
<u>Natural Supports Framework</u>							
<u>Nurturing Skills Competency Scale</u>							
<u>Parenting Interactions with Children: Checklist of Observations Linked to Outcomes (Piccolo)*</u>							
<u>Parental Stress Scale</u>							
<u>Protective Factors Survey, Second Edition (PFS-2)</u>							
<u>Signs of Safety</u>							
<u>Positive Parenting Program Triple P</u>							
<u>Well-Being Indicator Tool for Youth (WIT-Y)</u>							

*We were unable to access a Parenting Interactions with Children: Checklist of Observations Linked to Outcomes (PICCOLO) assessment during the development of this toolkit. However, due to a large number of agencies that reported using it, we have included an estimation of the assessments overlap with the domains of well-being.

Creating a Provincial Story of Impact



Introduction

How are agencies supporting child and youth well-being across Alberta? How is practice evolving and progressing over time? How is well-being growing for children and families across diverse programs and services? Your participation in creating a provincial story of impact will allow us to answer these questions.

This section guides you to share what you have learned through your agency's evaluation practices to contribute to a provincial overview of impact across child and family serving agencies. Creating a provincial story will help showcase the impact of your work, learn from each others' experiences, and enable sector-wide advocacy to strengthen the conditions in which you serve children and families. You can integrate any number of components of this toolkit and still participate in creating a provincial story of impact.



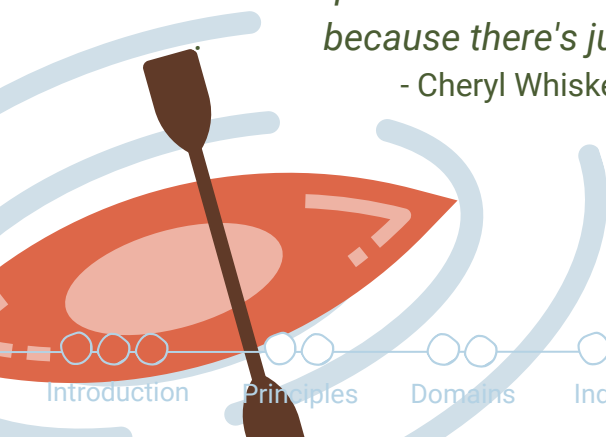
Listen to Elder Phillip Campiou speak about the importance of language, oral process, and sharing in circle.

Our process is rooted in the stories of the lobstersticks as wayfinding tools and of the winter count as a way to connect the past and the present, nurture a community of practice, and record significant change for agencies individually and collectively. In the following pages you will be guided through two activities:

1. Wayfinding with Lobsticks: Share your impact for each domain of well-being through stories and through self-rating child and youth outcomes, caregiver outcomes, and staff and agency practice.
2. Winter Count: Prepare to join a circle with other agencies to share the most impactful stories and together create a winter count that will record the provincial story.

"So I think the value of story is just like can't be understated here. And if you get people in a circle, we all care. And we're all going to want to support each other to get to that place of wellness, and share stories where we've had some success. Rally around people who are struggling to get to that place for whatever reason. And that's what I think the value of like having an oral process. The more I think about it, the bigger the circle, the better because there's just more opportunities to learn from one another."

- Cheryl Whiskeyjack, Knowledge Keeper and Practitioner



Sharing Your Impact

“And it's what I was taught that when the circle is formed, the spirit recognizes it, and comes forward. But the important part is that you can look in a circle in any direction, and you'll always have eye contact with someone. And then the most important part is that you can begin somewhere. But there's no end, you keep going around. And that's the beauty of circle, sharing, talking in circle.

And when it comes to communicating, even though we leave the circle, we take with us what we heard. And that's the beauty of life. And that's how we're able to move forward in a good way.”

- Elder Phillip Campiou

Wayfinding with Lobsticks

Sharing stories

Lobsticks help us find the way and assess where we are at. You will share your work and impact in each well-being domain by leaving a story of abundance at each lobstick and taking what other agencies left to fill your gaps.

Self-rating

As a parallel process of assessing impact in each domain that allows us to aggregate data and compare over time, agencies will self-rate outcomes for children, youth, caregivers, and efforts for staff and agencies using a short scale.

Winter Count

This collective, in-person sharing circle will bring the two parallel paths together. Agencies will come together in ceremony, create connection, share stories of most important impact, nurture relational accountability, and learn from each other. ALIGN may record the creation of the winter count in a video that will serve as the provincial story of agencies' impact recorded year after year.

Wayfinding with Lobsticks

Self-Assessment in Seven Well-Being Domains

When Indigenous folks were traveling, lobsticks were used for wayfinding and as a way to share excess resources. Lobsticks were lodgepole pines marked clearly with cut branches that indicate where you were, for example at the top of a river. They would also have a stone cache in which people could leave what they had an abundance of, for other travelers to find and use if they needed that help.

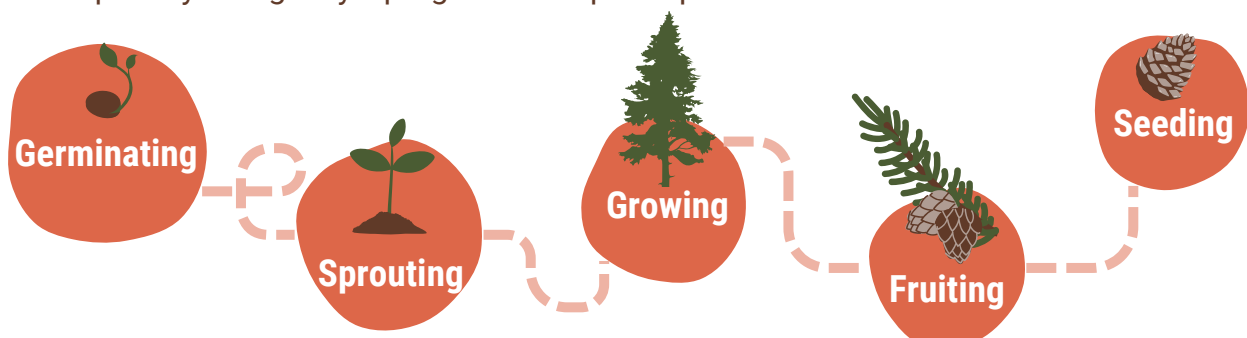
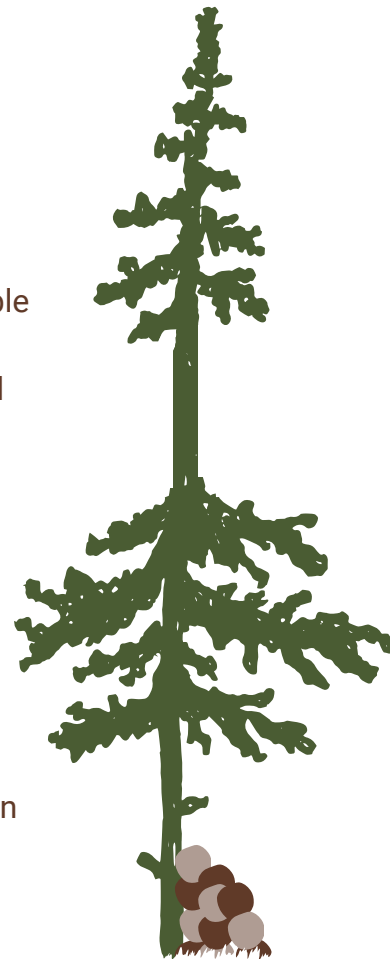
To connect your work more explicitly to the domains of child and youth well-being, you will be asked to share stories and self-rate using a scale.

Stories:

- Share a story for each domain that reflects a significant change, an important outcome for an individual, or significant impact of your agency's efforts. This story will serve as an example for others to learn from and find at the 'lobstick cache'.
- Describe what you would like to find in the 'caches': what you seek to learn from other agencies or what supports you would need with regards to each domain.

Self-rate:

- Self-rate where children, youth, caregivers, and your agency are at for each domain. Each domain will have three scales; two are measuring outcomes for children and caregivers, and one measuring the effort agencies and staff put into supporting each domain for children and families.
- The self-rating options for the three measures are organized by a tree's growth cycle to accommodate a wide range of experiences, actions, and observations unique to your agency's programs and participants.



Self-rating: staff & agency efforts

Rating Option	Staff and Agency
Preparing the Soil	Preparing the soil could include agencies' efforts of resourcing new supports, training, or partnerships. For example, obtaining funding for land-based programming, making connections with population-specific agencies, or fostering a shared understanding with the Board of Directors.
Planting seeds	Planting seeds describes agencies' efforts in increasing awareness, knowledge, confidence in their staff, planning concrete action, or experimenting with new ideas. For example, forming a working group on gathering stories and feedback from youth, deepening Indigenous cultural understanding with staff, or growing relationships with other agencies around supporting this domain.
Nurturing	Nurturing is about growing understanding, skills, and relationships more consistently and with greater scope. For example, expanding training and opportunities to more staff, piloting new supports in one program, getting feedback from service users and tweaking existing programs, or implementing supports for staff capacity and well-being.
Harvesting	Harvesting describes when agencies and staff are using their enhanced capacity, understanding, and connections to deepen their practice in supporting each well-being domain for children, youth, and caregivers. For example, staff debriefing and supporting each other to consistently prioritize relationship building with service users, agencies integrating child or youth voices into program planning, agencies having processes in place to ensure diverse representation within their teams.
Spreading Seeds	Spreading seeds describes when agencies are expanding supports for a domain to other programs and integrating them more frequently and more consistently across the agency. For example, land-based activities being integral to each program, designing each service or program with input from relevant cultural communities, or having good staff retention and staff feeling well-supported.

Self-rating: children & youth, & caregiver outcomes

Rating Options	Children and Youth Examples	Caregiver Examples
Germinating The seeds, gifts, strengths, and potential children and youth have even in crisis.	Children and youth are meeting others in a program, beginning to build a relationship, or recognizing a need.	Caregivers have just joined a program.
Sprouting Small shifts and growth.	Children and youth are willing to join an activity, or trust an adult with a conversation.	Caregivers knows where to reach out for support, or participate in their Nation's gatherings.
Growing Deepening understanding, positive behaviors and relationships that occur more often and consistently.	Children and youth are comfortable participating in ceremony, or are comfortable reaching out for support and know what is available to them.	Caregivers grow relationships with an Elder, access financial supports, or build trust with service providers.
Fruiting Experiencing positive change in the domain.	Children and youth have a trusting and stable relationship, value and enjoy their cultural wealth, or initiate participating in physical activity or activities on the land.	Caregivers have positive interactions with their children, feel confident as transmitters of culture, or are more confident in their culturally appropriate emotional regulation strategies.
Seeding Positive impact expanding to more areas of children and youth's lives.	Children and youth start to help at ceremonies, or volunteer and find ways to give back to community.	Caregivers model practising cultural teachings in their daily life for children and youth, have a sense of purpose and model concerns for others, or nurture a growth mindset within their families.

Example of Wayfinding with Lobsticks

Below is an example of what a completed Wayfinding with Lobsticks domain section could look like, including background information and explanations.

Background: We are a non-profit organization. We serve the lifespan, including children, youth, adults, and families. We provide programs for addiction and recovery, housing and shelter, family and caregiver support, and caregiving and transition support to children and youth.

Healthy Development & Growth

What do you have an abundance of? Share a story of change or impact in this domain.

One of our key strategies to support healthy development and growth is to engage our service participants in their service plan meetings. Participants make the agendas and take lead on creating their service plan in their words together with everyone present. Our hope is that they feel their voice is valued, that it supports reflection, and development and growth. Recently a participant became emotional during the meeting. Their caregiver tried to reassure them by saying that it's normal to feel nervous when speaking in front a group of people. But the participant stopped them and explained: "I'm emotional because I've never felt so important and heard in my life before." This made us realize how important this practice is to youth to support well-being and development.

What would you need more of? What would you need to better support this domain?

Our agency believes that children deserve to know who they belong to and where they are from, and we do this by implementing Family Finding practices. In our experience, this practice can be a challenge as there are systemic barriers which hinder progress. Many agencies across the province are engaging in this work and we need to learn from their experiences on how to invite stakeholders to the table. This could include learning new ways of prioritizing privacy, getting involved with band consultations, as well as community involvement. In doing this, we can incorporate new strategies to pursue lifelong connections as a form of healthy development in the face of systemic barriers.

Where are the children and youth at in this domain?

Sprouting ▼

Where are the caregivers at in this domain?

Germinating ▼

Where is your agency and staff at with supporting this domain for children, youth, and caregivers?

Nurturing ▼

The staff and agency effort are at the nurturing stage. For example, all staff, apart from relief staff, completed a new innovative foundational training and each program is exploring their own way of piloting ideas from this training. All staff experience a differing degree of comfortability in attending cultural activities and the agency would benefit in exploring ways to address this to increase involvement.

Children and youth are at a sprouting stage. For example, the majority of children are participating in some activities or conversations but still working towards feeling comfortable connecting with their culture.

Overall caregivers are at the germinating stage. For example, in some regions caregivers have a more natural connection to community to support healthy development in culturally-rooted ways, but a majority of caregivers need more support to make those connections.

Wayfinding with Lobsticks

Reflect on the findings of your assessments, evaluations, and validation across your agency's programs and services. Share a story that reflects significant change and rate outcomes and efforts in this domain below.

Connection to the Land

What do you have an abundance of? Share a story of change or impact in this domain.

What would you need more of? What would you need to better support this domain?

Where are the children and youth at in this domain?

Where are the caregivers at in this domain?

Where is your agency and staff at with supporting this domain for children, youth, and caregivers?



Caring & Supportive Relationships

What do you have an abundance of? Share a story of change or impact in this domain.

What would you need more of? What would you need to better support this domain?

Where are the children and youth at in this domain?

Where are the caregivers at in this domain?

Where is your agency and staff at with supporting this domain for children, youth, and caregivers?

Meaningful Knowledge

What do you have an abundance of? Share a story of change or impact in this domain.

What would you need more of? What would you need to better support this domain?

Where are the children and youth at in this domain?

Where are the caregivers at in this domain?

Where is your agency and staff at with supporting this domain for children, youth, and caregivers?

Healthy Development & Growth

What do you have an abundance of? Share a story of change or impact in this domain.

What would you need more of? What would you need to better support this domain?

Where are the children and youth at in this domain?

Where are the caregivers at in this domain?

Where is your agency and staff at with supporting this domain for children, youth, and caregivers?

Sense of Identity & Autonomy

What do you have an abundance of? Share a story of change or impact in this domain.

What would you need more of? What would you need to better support this domain?

Where are the children and youth at in this domain?

Where are the caregivers at in this domain?

Where is your agency and staff at with supporting this domain for children, youth, and caregivers?

Cultural Connection

What do you have an abundance of? Share a story of change or impact in this domain.

What would you need more of? What would you need to better support this domain?

Where are the children and youth at in this domain?

Where are the caregivers at in this domain?

Where is your agency and staff at with supporting this domain for children, youth, and caregivers?



Supportive & Safe Environments

What do you have an abundance of? Share a story of change or impact in this domain.

What would you need more of? What would you need to better support this domain?

Where are the children and youth at in this domain?

Where are the caregivers at in this domain?

Where is your agency and staff at with supporting this domain for children, youth, and caregivers?



Winter Count

Creating the Collective Story of Impact

The winter count is a practice memorializing the most significant event that happened in a given year, or thirteen moons, used by many Nations across the North American plains. Symbols representing this event are painted on a buffalo hide. It is a way to trace history, connect the past with the present day, and will be our process to create a collective provincial story of impact in the oral tradition of sharing knowledge.



United Way's Perspective on Oral Reporting as a Funder

Watch a video of United Way of Calgary and Area staff speak about embracing oral processes in reporting.

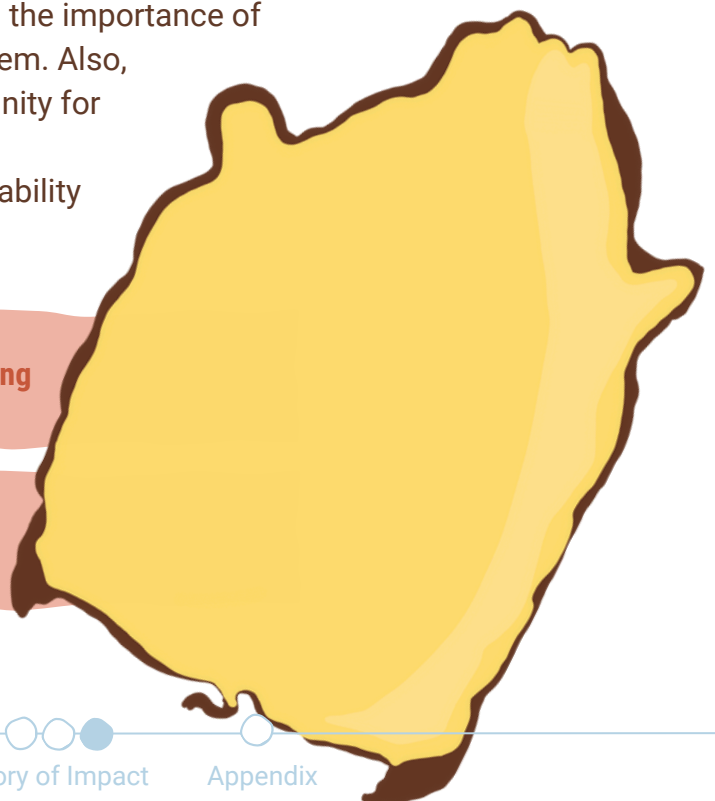
In fall ALIGN will host a gathering where an Elder will lead and guide agencies, youth, and funders through sharing in circle. Stories can be represented with simple symbols on a material representing a buffalo hide. Once everyone has shared their story of most significant impact in supporting child well-being, the Elder will summarize and validate the collective story of the agencies' work and impact. This collective, in-person sharing circle will bring the two parallel paths of storytelling and self-rating together. Agencies will come together in ceremony, create connection, share stories of most important impact, nurture relational accountability, and learn from each other.

Elders and Knowledge Keepers emphasized the importance of including youth and hearing directly from them. Also, inviting funders into this circle is an opportunity for them to hear the impact of their investment firsthand, and encourage relational accountability across everyone involved.



Listen to Cheryl Whiskeyjack speaking about practicing the winter count.

Listen to a youth worker speak to the importance of involving youth



Continuing Your Journey



Thank you for your commitment to growing well-being for children, youth, families, and staff. As the sector continues on this journey together, we hope this framework and toolkit will serve as a catalyst for meaningful conversations and connections among organizations and with the families they serve. We look forward to witnessing the positive impact of our shared journey.

Visit the [ALIGN Well-Being Initiative webpage](#) to access more interactive and downloadable resources, tools, and videos to help your agency. If you have any questions please see our Frequently Asked Questions or contact ALIGN directly at www.alignab.ca.

Explore the Well-Being Impact Portal

The [Well-Being Impact Portal](#) is the Well-being Toolkit's gateway for your agency's assessment into a provincial overview of impact. It is a free, secure online portal where you can access the toolkit's indicators and assessments in interactive ways, enter your **Impact Self-Reflections** to contribute to a provincial story of impact, and access aggregated data and stories from across the province with an **Impact Dashboard**.

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Well-Being Impact Portal. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Home, View Menu of Indicators, View Assessments & Tools, Login, and Sign Up. Below the navigation bar is a welcome message: "Welcome to the Well-being Impact Portal!". A paragraph explains that the portal is the Toolkit's gateway from individual impact reflections to a provincial overview. Below this, there are four main sections, each with a "Go To Page" button and an icon: 1. Menu of Indicators (bird icon), 2. Assessment & Tools (binoculars icon), 3. Impact Self-Reflections (tree icon), and 4. Impact Dashboard (canoe icon). Each section has a brief description of its function.

[Go to Well-Being Impact Portal](#)

Appendix



How to gather stories of significant change?

There are many different ways to gather stories of significant change. Here, we outline a few examples, and encourage you to use what is helpful and feasible in your practice.

Talking circles with youth and families

This involves bringing people together to share stories of the impact a program had on their lives. You can involve an Elder to have the sharing validated with smudging. Each person in the circle gets to share one by one. If the participants are comfortable with it, you can record the audio or video.



Listen to a youth worker speaking about the ways youth share their story.

Visual storytelling with children and youth

Instead of verbal stories, consider inviting children to draw about their dreams for the future, their family or home, or their feelings. Photovoice is a visual storytelling methodology well-suited to youth. Youth receive a camera or use their cellphones to take pictures that answer a question, for example, 'what does family mean to you?'. After the child or youth has drawn or taken their pictures, ask them to tell you about the pictures.

Reflective sessions with staff

Ask staff to gather together to share stories of impactful experiences with service users, whether as a success story or a learning opportunity. This could be incorporated into weekly team meetings.

Exit interviews

We heard that many agencies have participants fill out surveys at the end of a program or service. Consider also having an in-person discussion with the family or individual to hear their story of how the program was for them in their own words.



Listen to Elder Beverly Keeshig-Soonias speaking about sharing stories weekly in an agency's regular work schedule.

Assessment & Tool Descriptions

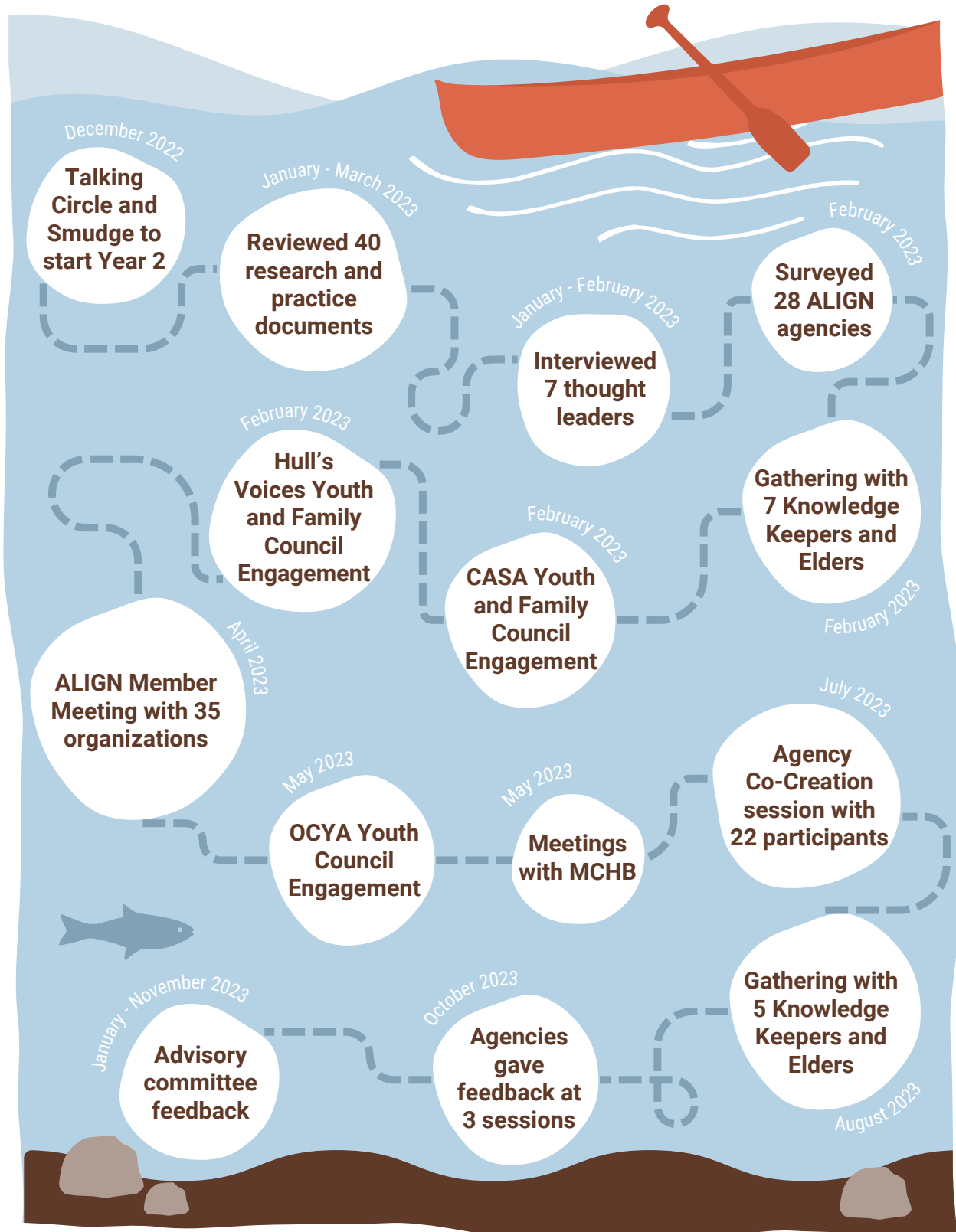
Description and cost to access assessments and tools for measuring well-being in children, youth, and caregivers.

Assessment	Access	Description
<u>Ages & Stages</u>	Onetime cost of \$295.	Ages & Stages Questionnaires®, Third Edition (ASQ®-3) is a developmental screening tool designed for use by early educators and health care professionals. It relies on parents as experts, is easy-to-use, family-friendly, and creates the snapshot needed to catch delays and celebrate milestones.
<u>Building the Sacred: An Indigenous Evaluation Framework for Programs Serving Native Survivors of Violence</u>	Free and available online.	This framework illustrates four places from which Indigenous evaluation is already taking place in violence prevention, response, and healing programs that have not yet been formally recognized in a culturally-rooted evaluation framework.
<u>Casey Life Skills</u>	Free and accessible online.	Casey Life Skills (CLS) is a set of free tools that assess the independent skills youth need to achieve their long-term goals. It aims to guide youth toward developing healthy, productive lives.
<u>Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS)</u>	Free and accessible online.	The CANS Comprehensive is a multi-purpose tool that gathers information on the child/youth's (ages 6-20) and parents/caregivers' needs and strengths to support decision making, including level of care and service planning, to facilitate quality improvement initiatives, and to allow for the monitoring of outcomes of services.
<u>Child & Youth Resilience Measure & Adult Resilience Measure (CYRM/ARM)</u>	Free and accessible online.	CYRM-R is a self-report measure of social-ecological resilience. Resilience is both the capacity of individuals to navigate their way to the psychological, social, cultural, and physical resources that sustain their well-being and their capacity to negotiate for these resources to be provided in culturally meaningful ways.
<u>Cultural Connectedness Scale</u>	Free and accessible online.	The Cultural Connectedness Scale measures how integrated children and youth are with their First Nation, Métis, or Inuit culture. The scale has three dimensions: identity, traditions, and spirituality.
<u>Eco-Maps</u>	Free and accessible online.	Eco-maps are a visual map of a family's connections to the external world. They provide a useful tool for assessment of family, social, and community relationships and highlight the quality of these connections.
<u>Family Advocacy and Support Tool (FAST)</u>	Free and accessible online.	The FAST is a family version of CANS that is designed to maximize communication about the needs and strengths of families. The FAST includes ratings of the Family Together, each Caregiver, and all children and youth. Interventions in the family system can be directed at that system or to address the individual needs of family members or dyadic relationships within the family.
<u>The miyo resource kâ-nâkatohkêhk miyo-ohpikinawâwaso win</u>	Free and accessible online.	The miyo resource discusses foundational beliefs and approaches of Indigenous peoples to promote well-being and resiliency and outlines an evaluative process that honours an Indigenous worldview. This resource supports provincial implementation of the Well-Being and Resiliency Framework by outlining an evaluative framework that recognizes culturally-based practice.

Assessment	Access	Description
<u>Native Wellness Assessment</u>	Free and accessible online.	The NWA™ tool is the first of its kind to measure how cultural interventions affect a person’s wellness from a whole person and strengths-based view. This tool is proving that culture is the key to restoring and maintaining wellness, which is something First Nations people have long known.
<u>Natural Supports Framework</u>	Free and accessible online.	Framework structured as a workbook with reflection questions and case studies to help organizations/staff think about the implications of the natural supports for their practice. High emphasis on relationships and fostering resiliency.
<u>Nurturing Skills Competency Scale</u>	Cost dependent of number of assessments.	The Nurturing Skills Competency Scale (NSCS) is a comprehensive criterion referenced measure designed to gather demographic data of the family, as well as knowledge and utilization of Nurturing Parenting practices.
<u>Parenting Interactions with Children: Checklist of Observations Linked to Outcomes (Piccolo)*</u>	Onetime cost of \$60 for assessment and guide.	PICCOLO is a checklist of observable developmentally supportive parenting behaviors in four domains (affection, responsiveness, encouragement, and teaching). It is a positive, practical, versatile, culturally sensitive, valid, and reliable tool for practitioners that shows what parents can do to support their children’s development.
<u>Parental Stress Scale</u>	Free and accessible online.	18-item questionnaire assessing parents’ feelings about their parenting role, exploring both positive aspects (e.g. emotional benefits, personal development) and negative aspects of parenthood (e.g. demands on resources, feelings of stress).
<u>Protective Factors Survey Second Edition (PFS-2)</u>	Free and accessible online.	The PFS-2 is an evaluation tool for use with caregivers receiving child maltreatment prevention services. Questions on family functioning & nurturing (caring relationships) and concrete supports (Supportive & Safe environments).
<u>Signs of Safety</u>	Free and available online.	A strengths-based, safety-organized approach to child protection case work. Revolves around a risk assessment and case planning format that integrates professional knowledge alongside local family and cultural knowledge and balances a rigorous exploration of danger/harm alongside indicators of strengths and safety.
<u>Positive Parenting Program Triple P</u>	Free and available online.	The Positive Parenting Program (Triple P) is a comprehensive system of parenting and family support for families with children. The program consists of five levels of intervention, which increases with intensity, and progressively narrows the reach at each increasing level.
<u>Well-Being Indicator Tool for Youth (WIT-Y)</u>	Free and accessible online.	The WIT-Y has been designed as an inventory for use as a ‘conversation starter’ with youth ages 15-21 about their overall well-being. It is a tool for youth’s self-assessment, meaning youth decide what level of well-being they have within each domain, as well as ways in which they might want to increase their level of well-being.

Engagement to create the framework and toolkit

The creation of this framework and toolkit was strongly guided by relationships, conversations, and the lived experience of our partners. Below is an illustration of the different engagements that shaped our journey.



Videos



Youth reflections on experiences at Miskanawah Moon Camp

Watch a video of youth from Miskanawah talk about building relationships with Elders and connecting with each other at Moon Camp.



Miskanawah Elders and staff on understanding program impact on youth well-being

Watch a video of Elders and staff from Miskanawah talk about intentions and teachings that ground their programming and their way of learning about their impact on youth well-being.



United Way's Perspective on Oral Reporting as a Funder

Watch a video of United Way of Calgary and Area staff speak about embracing oral processes in reporting.



Brokers reflections on an intercultural understanding of well-being

Watch a video of Multicultural Health Brokers Co-op staff speak about building confidence and adapting supports to shifting needs.



Youth reflections on experiences at Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative

Watch a video youth from the Multicultural Health Brokers Co-op speak about navigating between cultures and finding belonging with MCHB.

Literature

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