

ALIGN Well-Being Toolkit Explainer

"When we're creating ethical space and acknowledging both worldviews, then we have the ability to create practice and understandings that are strongly aligned and represent the families that we serve." - Kirby Redwood, Miskanawah

The way we define and understand child and youth well-being matters. 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.

To do that, ALIGN Association of Community Services developed a principle-based and culturally rooted **Framework** and a practice-oriented **Toolkit** to support child and family service agencies and organizations to assess well-being and the impact of their work with culturally diverse children, youth, and families. The core components of this resource are the seven domains of well-being, the seven principles for assessment, a menu of indicators, and a process to share, track, and aggregate impact.

This resource was developed in collaboration with youth and families with lived experience, diverse agencies across Alberta, and Indigenous Elders and Knowledge Keepers. The toolkit is reflective of diverse ways of being and knowing and grounded in Indigenous perspectives as parallel approaches to validating practice. The toolkit is designed so agencies can incorporate and adapt toolkit components with their existing approach to measuring well-being at their own pace, as their capacity allows, and as they become relevant and helpful to their practice.

Well-Being Toolkit Components

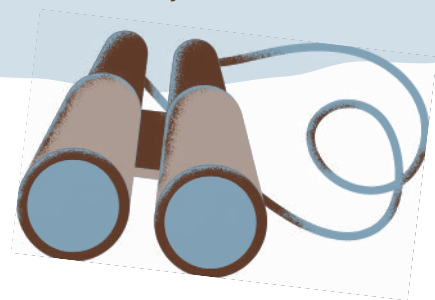
Domains of Well-Being

A wholistic and strengths-based definition of child and youth well-being grounded in the perspectives and values of culturally diverse communities and practitioners in Alberta. Each of the seven domains have several aspects that provide a more granular framework to understanding well-being. The domains align with other commonly used frameworks in the sector. The toolkit includes a full explanation of each of the domains alongside practice examples, quotes, videos, or audio clips that bring the domain to life.

Principles for Measuring Child & Youth Well-Being

Seven principles to guide meaningful assessment of well-being and impact that fosters relationship building, accountability, and practice improvement. The principles served as filtering criteria to select the indicators and assessment for the toolkit. The toolkit explains each principle with practice examples from youth and caregivers with lived experience.

The **principles** and **indicators** can complement and guide agencies' understanding of well-being on an individual or program level. The **Provincial Story of Impact** represents efforts and outcomes at an agency level and aggregates into a sector-level summary.



Menu of Indicators & Assessments

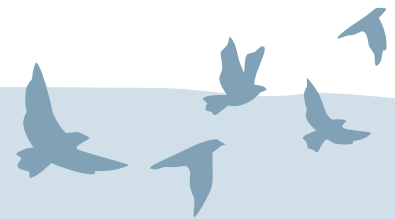
The menu of indicators includes 422 strengths-based and culturally responsive indicators. This provides agencies choices for each domain and aspect, providing sets of indicators for children and youth, caregivers, and staff and agencies. The toolkit includes examples for agencies to adapt indicators for different purposes such as program evaluations or individual level outcomes.

The toolkit also provides commonly used assessment tools for each of the seven domains and have been screened by the principles for measurement. This table allows agencies to utilize their current measurements to understand their impact in the seven domains.

Provincial Story of Impact

This process invites agencies to use what they have learned through their evaluation practice and reflect on well-being outcomes and impact in the seven domains for their agency as a whole. The process gives equal space to stories and self-ratings to meaningfully reflect impact, allow for aggregation, and for learning across the sector.

- **The Well-Being Impact Portal** is a free, secure online portal where you can access the toolkit's indicators and assessments in interactive ways, enter annual Impact Self-Reflections to contribute to a provincial story of impact.
- **The Impact Dashboard** gives access to aggregated data and stories from across the province. Agencies can see their own and the sector's impact for each of the well-being domains for children and youth, caregivers, and staff and agency over time.
- **The Winter Count** is an annual gathering where agencies come together in ceremony to share the most impactful stories of their work of growing well-being in the context of the events and challenges of the past year.



Well-Being Toolkit Pilot Group Experiences

"Because the toolkit has indicators for caregivers and staff, it can help us understand what staff wellness, training, and supervision has to do with the well-being of the children and youth we're caring for." - **Brittany Anderson, McMan**

"Gathering the stories and using those to see where we're at in different domains really brings that cross learning." - **Aaron Hachkowski, WJS**

"Even though we may be looking at it through an Indigenous lens, it lends itself to all cultures because if you go to the root of culture, storytelling is how our history and journey is shared." - **Barbara Moore Coffey, Rainbow Literacy**

"This toolkit will help situate MCHB within their unique parallel processes and how they can build allyship and support for alternative ways of being." - **Hannah Goa, Multicultural Health Brokers Co-op**

"We can use this toolkit and the indicators as a prevention and a promotion tool. As leaders, if we know that these indicators of well-being exist, we can implement them in our team meetings, monthly supervisions, and evaluations with staff." - **Jill Robinson, Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society**