

Stories from Piloting the Well-being Toolkit

# Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society: Growing Organizational Well-being



*This month we feature Jill Robinson's experience of piloting the toolkit with managers. Jill is a Senior Manager at Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society and she used components of the toolkit to better understand how to promote staff well-being.*

## How did you get started with using the ALIGN Well-being Toolkit?

During the pandemic we were experiencing high turnover and staff burnout, so we realized that we needed to look at how to support our team members' well-being. In the fall we did a talent map survey with our staff and one of the major themes that popped up was about well-being and work life balance. So we began thinking about how we can do supervision in a different way that really captures well-being. We brought up the **Well-Being Toolkit** in a manager meeting and team meetings and people we were really receptive to it, especially the **menu of indicators**.

We're adding the Medicine Wheel into our supervision forms and will hopefully expand into the **seven domains of well-being**. So now in supervision check-ins, we're actually checking in on the four domains of the Medicine Wheel and thinking of how we can find those indicators of well-being in and outside of work. The focus is going to be on staff well-being in hope that it trickles down to them role modeling well-being to their families.

**"As leaders, if we know that these indicators of well-being exist then we can implement them in our team meetings, monthly supervisions, and in our probationary or annual evaluations with our staff."**



## How does the ALIGN Well-being toolkit fit with what you are doing at Bent Arrow?

The toolkit ties in very closely with the work we're doing with the Medicine Wheel and the seven grandfather teachings. The seven grandfather teachings give our leaders and staff a way to look at how we're serving our staff and participants, serving ourselves and taking care of one another.

Our practice is ceremony model also fits together closely with the toolkit. One of the

things I always say is that this work is universal. Although, it's Indigenous worldview, it is grounded in very universal concepts. Even though a lot of our staff aren't Indigenous, they're able to incorporate those very universal concepts into their practice. And our practice model also speaks to not just outwardly practicing that way, but also practicing that way with yourself.

## What did you learn from the first couple months of this experience?

We talked a lot in our group about how we can use this tool and the **indicators** as a prevention and a promotion tool. As leaders, if we know that these indicators of well-being exist then we can implement them in our team meetings, monthly supervisions, and in our probationary or annual evaluations with our staff. We have a tool where we use the Tipi teachings with our families so we may change up the form or the language, maybe

we can incorporate some of this into that. Even as we're talking this whole morning in the pilot group, I was thinking about how we could use the toolkit with a very small foster home program. I think the caregiver focus is something that's missed a lot, so hopefully we can start using this tool with them to focus on their well-being in the future as well.



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Learn more  
about the Well-  
Being Toolkit

Access the toolkit and its resources, videos, and Well-being Impact Portal at [www.alignab.ca/well-being](http://www.alignab.ca/well-being)

## Menu of Indicators

# Connection to the Land

Land-based activities

Connection to land

Respect & stewardship

Traditional medicine

Teachings & ceremonies

Sense of place

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.

[Download the full resource here](#)