



# Aionkwatakari:teke

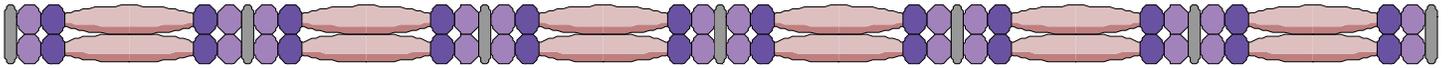
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"For us to be healthy"

Vol. 22, No. 3

Kahnawake's Only Health and Wellness Newsletter

Onerahtókha/April 2017



*April*  
..... is .....  
**Cultural  
Awareness  
Month**

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**Aionkwatakari:teke**

Aionkwatakari:teke is a newsletter published six times a year by Communications Services of Kahnawà:ke Shakotiiá'takehnhas Community Services (KSCS). Our purpose is to provide information on health and wellness issues that affect Kahnawà'kehró:non. All community members are welcomed and encouraged to submit articles provided that they are comprehensive to the general public, informative and educational. Slanderous material will not be accepted. Views expressed in the articles may not necessarily reflect those of KSCS. We reserve the right to edit all articles. All questions concerning this newsletter should be directed to:

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This newsletter is intended to complement, not replace, the advice of your health care provider. Before starting any new health regimen, please see your doctor.

**Editor's Notebook**

She:kon and welcome to the April/May issue of Aionkwatakari:teke. I'm writing this as the first day of spring has come and gone yet it still feels like Old Man Winter is outwearing his welcome. I am confident; however, that by the time this issue hits the racks, more spring-like weather will be the norm.

Onerahtókha/April is Cultural Awareness Month in Kahnawà:ke and you will find an article about this initiative highlighting some of this year's events on page eight. There's also an article about the upcoming Kahnawà:ke showing of the Walking with Our Sisters travelling exhibit that raises awareness about the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls issue in Canada.

You'll also find articles on a Kanien'kehaka immersion day camp that is gaining in popularity as well as stories about families learning Kanien'kehaka social songs, a look back at the tech-free challenge that was held in November, a profile of local artist Martin Loft, and an article on the multi-generational effects of the residential school experience that people are still feeling today. All in all, this issue is jam-packed with lots of great articles that we hope you enjoy. Please recycle this issue once you are done with it.

*Sken:nen,  
Marie*



Cover photo: Tyson Phillips. Cover design: Marie David.

# Aóskon Onkwehonwehnéha

## Mohawk Immersion Summer Camp

BY RO'NIKONHKÁTSTE NORTON, AÓSKON ONKWEHONWEHNÉHA

**A**ÓSKON ONKWEHONWEHNÉHA is a grassroots project, funded by the people of the Longhouse, and supported by the Delaronde girls\* through monetary donation. It set out to provide a language-immersed summer day camp, focusing mainly on culturally relevant, hands-on activities, while allowing time for the children to have fun and enjoy their summer.

The project offers an opportunity for children to not only retain the language that they acquire during the school year, but to expand their vocabulary beyond the classroom. This continued usage and expansion of vocabulary is crucial for the development of a proficient speaker.

Oftentimes, children who attend an immersion school are left without continued opportunities for regular language usage over the summer. This can result in loss of language retention. Also, within the school setting, the language usage is typically exclusive to the classroom vocabulary. While most children that enroll in Aóskon Onkwehonwehnéha are coming from immersion schools, enrollment is open to all community children.

Activity highlights include bike riding throughout town, paddling at the Onake Canoe Club, cooking traditional meals at the cookhouse at the 207 Longhouse, and learning survival skills such as fire making.

Traditional crafts are also taught, such as medicine bag making and

using the sumac tree to make a necklace imitating wampum beads. We've gone on several medicine walks in town and Tioweró:ton, and the children engage in the process of medicine making e.g., plantain salve.

We've taken several field trips, showing the children that language doesn't only have to be used in a serious "learning environment", but is used in everyday life as well, especially while having fun! Field trips include visits to the Old Port in Montreal, Tioweró:ton, Granby Zoo, SkyTag, and the Bromont water park.

Based on parent feedback and through our own observations, we feel that the project is successful in achieving the goals it set out to accomplish. We've witnessed the growth and development of each child's understanding and usage of Onkwehonwehnéha throughout the summer. It truly is a rewarding experience and we can't help but feel a sense of accomplishment while witnessing this.

We look forward to another summer filled with activities, learning, and fun! The camp runs in two sessions. The projected dates of the first session will be from July 3 to July 14, 2017. The second session will tentatively run from July 17 to July 28, 2017.

Each session can accommodate 15 children from ages 6-12 years old. The three facilitators are Ro'nikonhkátste Norton, Ateweniióstha Jacobs, and Tehokwirathe Cross. Registration will be held in May (spaces fill quickly) and

will be posted on our Facebook page: Aóskon Onkwehonwehnéha. The cost for each session is \$200.

### Contact information:

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aoskon.onkwehonwehneha@gmail.com

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Aóskon Onkwehonwehnéha

\* The donors wished to remain anonymous.

*Illustration by Kahonionhses Fadden and Six Nations Indian Museum. Used by permission.*



# Following Your Passion

## Profile: Martin Loft

BY MARIE DAVID, COMMUNICATIONS

**U**NTIL FAIRLY RECENTLY, local artist Martin Akwiranoron Loft was a mainstay at the Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitíohkwa Language and Cultural Center (KORLCC), where he's worked since 1988. Martin says he was proud to be a part of KORLCC as they made strides in bringing "culture and language to the forefront of Kahnawà:ke consciousness." But his passion for making art led him to leave KOR in 2014.

During his time at KORLCC, Martin participated in organizing the community's first pow wow, the Kanien'kè:ha Language Day radio show, the Tetewatieronnon Kanien'kè:ha variety show, and Cultural Awareness Month. He also helped bring to the community Indigenous speakers and the First Peoples' Film Festival and Conferences. He helped organize art exhibits and with the production of the Rosetta Stone CD-ROM.

Martin's creativity may have come from his parents, Mitchel Loft and Pauline McComber. Martin's father liked to draw, paint, and make candles and glass etchings. His mother loved to sing Kanien'keha hymns and was even offered a spot at a New York performing arts school.

It was during his time at Dawson College that Martin's passion for art solidified. He excelled in photography, which at the time was 35MM film, and darkroom techniques. He worked on the student paper, *The Plant*, as principle photographer and photo

editor and he got a taste for exhibiting and publishing his work. He graduated from Dawson in 1981 with a degree in Cinema and Communications.

He went on to study Film Studies and Photography at Concordia University. It was during his second year at Concordia when he attended a photography exhibit at the OVO Gallery in Montreal and learned about an international Indigenous photography conference that was being held in Hamilton, Ontario. He joined the board of the Native Indian Inuit Photography Association (NIIPA) and "helped curate the first national Indigenous photography exhibition to travel across Canada."

The association with NIIPA led to exhibitions in galleries and shows "both national and international," Martin said. According to Martin, his first break "came in 1985 when Princeton University Library bought five prints for their collection. This was as a result of a ground breaking exhibition called the *Photograph and The American Indian* which was later published as a coffee table book."

It's an artist's dream to be able to work full time as an artist but Martin was lucky enough to get to work at KORLCC, where exhibits and artist's talks would help fuel his creative passion.

Creating art and learning new techniques has never been far from Martin's heart even while still at KORLCC. He continued to take classes in digital graphics, photography, and print making techniques to name a few. With every

new class or technique he learned...he wanted to learn more. His passion was stoked. He decided to leave KORLCC to devote himself to art full time.

Martin enrolled in a professional program in Digital Graphics and Print Technology. Besides learning design software Photoshop and Illustrator, Martin gained hands-on experience in "offset lithography using Heildburg SM, Orybi offset presses and screen printing technology."

After completing the program, Martin took "a six week internship at the ArtBeat Studio, one of the most highly regarded fine art print studios in Canada. The owner is Robert Bellemare, a master printmaker who has produced artworks for many of the top artists in Canada and the USA." The two are collaborating on a fundraising initiative for the First Peoples' Festival.

Though missed at KORLCC, Martin doesn't regret leaving to spend more time creating. He's been involved in volunteering to create graphics and screen printing T-shirts for the Montreal Pow Wow and Round Dance. He's also offered screen printing workshops to the "First Nations Regional Adult Education Center and the Ratihente High School in Kanehsatake."

As for the future, Martin says "Ideally, I would like to open a community printmaking studio where artists could produce artwork, offer training, and help foster micro screen printing businesses."



# Walking With Our Sisters

## The Exhibit Comes to Kahnawà:ke

BY LISA PHILLIPS, KANIEN'KEHÁ:KA ONKWAWÉN:NA RAOTITIÓHKWA LANGUAGE & LEARNING CENTER

“**W**ALKING WITH Our Sisters is a travelling art installation of 1,808 pairs of moccasin vamps created and donated by hundreds of caring and concerned individuals to draw attention to the over 1,181 Indigenous women and girls in Canada that have been reported missing or murdered in the last 20 years. An additional 117 children's vamps were added to honour and commemorate the lives of children who never returned home from Residential Schools.” (Source: *Walking With Our Sisters, Information Guide for Host Communities and Venues*).

Walking with Our Sisters is a collection of moccasin vamps, and the unfinished moccasins represent the unfinished lives of the women and girls who were murdered or are still missing. Many Kahnawá'kehrónon women beaded and contributed vamps to the collection.

The primary goal of Walking with Our Sisters is to honour the lives of the missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls and to affirm that every life matters. The exhibition shows that the murdered and missing are worthy of respect and dignity and also recognizes and honours the lives of those children who died at Residential Schools.

The second goal is to acknowledge the on-going grieving process the family and friends of those missing

are going through. The third goal is to raise public awareness and to use it as an opportunity for sharing different teachings and protocols.

The Walking With Our Sisters installation will be coming to Kahnawà:ke and will be open to the public from July 5 – July 12, 2017. As of the time of this article, the tentative location for the installation is the Kahnawà:ke Survival School.

Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa Language and Cultural Center (KORLCC) is the host organization. Letters of invitation were sent out within the community and a planning meeting took place in early March, with weekly meetings planned until the installation is dismantled. A committee of Kahnawá'kehrónon will oversee the project through from beginning to end.

Walking with Our Sisters has a core group of volunteers called the National Collective, who will work with the host territory from the planning stages until the installation is taken down and sent to the next location.

There is a basic design that is carried to each location, but each location has input into some elements of the design, and both groups will work together to honour the host territory while maintaining the original intent and design of the installation.

The project follows four basic principles and everything will flow from these principles;

- **Humility** (All who attend are equal and all are welcome).
- **Protocol** (Traditional protocols must be followed throughout the project from start to finish).
- **Love** (Kindness, gentleness, patience and love).
- **Volunteerism** (We are all volunteers).

Volunteers are vital to the success of bringing Walking With Our Sisters to our community. This project is inspirational and joyful on many levels but is also extremely hard and emotional as well, and is a huge undertaking to host within our community.

Should you have an interest in being part of the planning committee or wish to volunteer your time, or simply have questions about Walking With Our Sisters, please contact Lisa Phillips or Reaghan Tarbell at KORLCC at 450-638-0080.

*Moccasin photo by Tyson Phillips.*





# Safe Grad 2017

## Key Points to Discuss with Your Graduate

BY JESSICA OESTERREICH, PREVENTION

**G**RAD NIGHT IS A RITE OF passage your teenager has been looking forward to for the last five years. It's a night that symbolizes their first steps into independence and adulthood. However, exercising their independence means being confronted with making decisions about activities and experiences that may have long reaching consequences.

As a parent, it's only natural to want to protect your child from making a bad decision. The grad night dilemma for parents comes down to giving your graduate the freedom to have a memorable night, while at the same time keeping them safe. Here are three key points about grad night safety to discuss with your graduate.

### 1: You're there for them no matter what

Before getting into the nitty-gritty of grad night activities (clubs, alcohol, drugs, sex) start off by letting your teen know that if, for any reason, they need you to go get, them you will.

Reinforce that no matter what situation they may find themselves in — even if they are intoxicated, somewhere they shouldn't be, or it's the middle of the night — they can call you and you will go get them.

They need to know that their safety is your first concern. Remember to let them know that if they do call you, you will respond without a lecture or judgement. The more comfortable your graduate is

calling you, the less likely they will be to accept a ride home from someone under the influence of substances.

### 2: Start the conversation about sexuality and substance use

A discussion about sexuality at this time won't involve the birds and the bees or the exact mechanics of how babies are made. Think more along the lines of safety and consent.

Let your graduate know that although they may trust the people they are with, alcohol and substance use may cause their friends to behave in unexpected ways. Make them aware that if they are made to feel uncomfortable or unsafe in any way, they can leave that situation at any point. They always have the right to say *no* to anything they don't want to do.

In terms of substance use make sure you cover some safety basics.

- Let them know that not using substances is their safest choice.
- If they do choose to drink alcohol, there is a limit to what their body can safely handle. There is a definite risk of alcohol poisoning.
- They should eat regularly and drink plenty of water.
- That mixing alcohol with other substances can have serious health consequences.
- They should never leave their drink unattended to avoid

someone tampering with it — and never accept a drink that they didn't see the bartender make.

When it comes to the choices your teen will have to make about sexuality and substance use, avoid talking about it in black and white terms. Using black and white logic doesn't teach them to think critically, which is an important skill in adulthood. It also implies to your teen that you may not be willing to accept their decisions or mistakes, which will diminish their trust that you will be there to help them when they need it.

### 3: Help them to create a safety plan

When it comes right down to it, YOU are their safety plan. Take this opportunity to remind them that you will be there no matter what.

Other things to consider include;

- Know what friends they are spending grad night with. Talk to your teen about the importance of staying in a group. Make sure that they have everybody's cellphone number so they can find each other. Consider giving your number to their friends.
- What is the groups plan for the night? Where are they going? At what times? How can they meet up if they get separated?
- Agree on regular check-in times when they will call you to confirm that they are okay.

- Agree on a curfew time.
- Where will your graduate spend the night? Are they coming home? Will they call a taxi? Will they call you? Will they need a hotel room? Whose credit card will be used to secure it?

Another option is planning a dry grad party for your teen. This is a great opportunity to show your grad how proud their family is of their accomplishments. It may be an event that you can coordinate with like-minded parents to increase the number of your teen's friends attending. Although your child and their friends may not spend the whole night at this party, the longer they are with you, the less time they will be exposed to dangerous situations and the less time they will have to drink.

The most important thing to remember is keeping the lines of communication open between you and your teen.

### Start the conversation

If you can, start having these conversations in the years leading up to grad night so that your teen knows these topics are important to you. Even if they don't participate much in the discussion, guide them through the safety basics. This can reassure your teen that their safety is what is the most important to you.

# Tips for a Summer Job Search

BY MARIE DAVID, COMMUNICATIONS

**K**AHNAWÀ:KE STUDENTS ARE LUCKY TO HAVE THE EDUCATION Center, Tewatohnni'saktha, and the First Nations Adult Education Center to turn to for counselling and advice on where and when to apply for summer jobs. They can help you with everything from choosing where you want to work, to interview techniques, to resume writing. If you're going to school outside the community, you should see the school counsellor.

If it's your first summer job, you may be content with working at the local fast food restaurant or with cutting grass. Hey, there's nothing wrong with that. It's extra pocket money and it's still valuable work experience.

But if you're in CEGEP or university, you may want to be more deliberate in choosing where you work. You may want to align your summer work experience with your educational goals. Not only will this put you in a situation where you can gain work experience in the sector where you hope to build your career, it can also help you decide if this is the career for you. Getting a summer job in your chosen field can build a network of contacts, which may lead to other opportunities down the road.

## Here are a few tips to help your summer job search:

- Define your goals. Do you want work experience in your chosen field or are you saving money for your education?
- Don't overlook lower wages if the work experience is worthwhile.
- Address the application to the right person. If needed, call the company/organization and ask who to address it to.
- Don't wait to apply. You may be in the middle of term papers and exams but getting your resume in order should be done when you're not rushed to apply.
- Identify companies you want to work for and create a Twitter list of their HR accounts. Often, they will post job ops through social media.
- Clean up your online profiles. Adjust your privacy settings and un-tag yourself from embarrassing photos before a potential employer searches for you.

Source: Dehass, John. *10 Summer Job Search Tips for Students: It's January. You better start looking now!* MacLeans. 9 Jan 2012. Web. 9 Mar 2017.

Hoffman, Victoria. *Five Tips for Students Hunting for a Summer Job.* Globe and Mail. Web. 9 Mar 2017.



# Cultural Awareness Month

BY LISA PHILLIPS, KANIEŃ'KEHÁ:KA ONKWAWÉN:NA RAOTITÍÓHKWA LANGUAGE & CULTURAL CENTER

**T**HE KANIEŃ'KEHÁ:KA Onkwawén:na Raotitíóhkwa Language and Cultural Center (KORLCC) is pleased to announce that it will be holding its sixth annual Tsi Niionkwarihò:ten Niwenhni'tò:ten Cultural Awareness Month, this coming Onerahtókha/ April 2017.

Throughout the month of Onerahtókha/April, a number of educational and recreational activities will take place in conjunction with other community organizations, spotlighting different areas of our rich culture and history.

Through these activities, the objective of this undertaking is to provide all community members with opportunities to build and strengthen their cultural knowledge and to celebrate their distinct identity as Kanien'kehá:ka people.

The past five years has been a huge success and the program over those years has included many activities such as offering workshops and hosting speakers series sponsored by KORLCC and community organizations such as Kahnawà:ke Schools Diabetes Prevention Project, the Kahnawà:ke Youth Center, Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke, Step by Step Child and Family Center, Kahnawà:ke Survival School, the Kahnawà:ke Library, Kateri School, Kahnawà:ke Shakotíia'takehnhas Community Services, Kateri Memorial Hospital, the Eastern Door and K103.

Some of the past popular events have included Traditional Wear

(Ribbon Shirt) Day, an all Kanien'kéha front page of the Eastern Door, a speaker series and a Mini Traditional Sing hosted by the Kahnawà:ke Survival School in collaboration with all of our community schools.

This article had to be ready in March but as of press time, the events planned for this year include:

- April 3: Kid Day at KORLCC from 9:00 A.M.–3:00 P.M.. Storytelling and games for children of all ages, please contact 450-638-0880 to reserve a time slot.
- April 5: Rock Your Mocs Day (community wide event).
- April 8 and 9: Wáhta Festival hosted by Kahnawà:ke Welcome Center, location to be announced.
- April 10: Great Law Working Group with Richard Mitchell on the formation of the group and roles and responsibilities.
- April 12: Curriculum sale at KORLCC.
- April 13: "You Are Creation" talk by Beverly Cooke and Louise McDonald.
- April 19: Wahta Radio Show will be aired live on K103 and with the participation of elders and schools, Ratiwennahní:rats students and community members. Everyone is encouraged to come to KORLCC's library to watch and participate in the live broadcast.

- April 27 from 9:00 A.M.–3:00 P.M.: Outdoor crafts demonstration includes booths and demonstrations of canoe making, arrow making, survival skills, etc. This was such a popular event last year that we had to hold it again this year!

- April 28: Mini Sing all day at the Kahnawà:ke Survival School. Call 450-632-8831 for information/
- Traditional Clothing Day held each Friday of the month. Everyone is encouraged to wear their traditional clothing whether it's a ribbon shirt or a whole outfit.
- The Kahnawà:ke Youth Center (KYC) will be hosting a basket making course for youth and adults, smoke dance and traditional social dance classes, and many more after school programs. Please check the KYC's Facebook, website and calendars for their month-long schedule.

All of the above activities are confirmed events. KORLCC, community organizations, and other groups have been meeting to plan their events. For more up-to-date information, please contact Lisa Kawennanó:ron Phillips at 450-638-0880.



# Ground Zero

## Indian Residential Schools Direct Impact on Indigenous Culture

BY MERRICK DIABO, PREVENTION

**S**INCE THE INCEPTION OF THE federally funded Canadian Indian Residential Schools in the 1870s, there has been a resonance of trauma that has affected several generations.

This trauma can be felt at any given moment in just about every single household in our small community. It can be felt during the morning when we head to work or school, when we have a meal with our family and even when we are about to go to bed. That trauma is the cultural genocide that was deliberately enacted upon all Indigenous, Metis and Inuit people.

To clarify, there was a time when we, as a people, had a genuine understanding of many things. Mainly we understood that the very facet of our existence relied on the fact that we had a place in Creation and that without the rising sun we would not have warmth and the drive to start our day.

We also understood that without the moon and stars, we would be lost in our directions, north, south, east, and west, or have a difficult time to determine when certain ceremonies should be conducted. We had an understanding of many things that make our existence a coexistence.

We were always aware of giving thanks for such things in our world. However, with the implementation of the residential schools and later the Indian Day School initiatives that had a direct mission to kill the Indian and save the man, our language and culture was on ground zero for an assimilation program.

This assimilation program consisted of very simple procedures:

- Remove children from their community.
- Remove existing clothing from them, and institute federally sanctioned uniforms.
- Do not permit the child to speak their mother tongue.
- Do not permit the child to practice their ceremony.
- Instill Western ideologies and education.

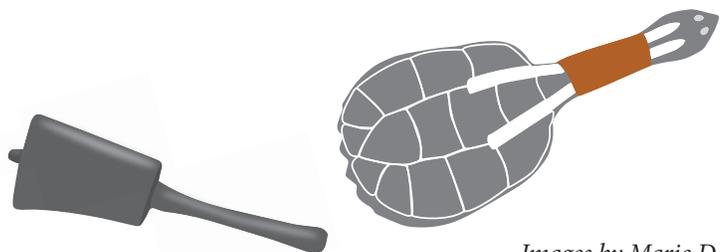
With these five procedures put into place, the Canadian federal government had a proverbial noose around the neck of our culture. Language and ceremonies were practiced in secret,

while other customs and religions were quickly adopted.

Despite the impact of the assimilation process, our people continue to practice ceremonies.

In the face of our language being endangered, we continue to strive to become fluent Kanien'keháka speakers. We can still wake up in the morning and give thanks that we are able to breathe another day and lay our eyes on our loved ones while acknowledging the sun, the moon and the stars, the water we drink and bathe in, the food that we eat and all the elements that continue to do their job.

We cannot deny that Residential Schools had an impact on our culture. But our people are resilient. Let us continue to be so.



Images by Marie David



# Sleep Apnea

BY LESLIE WALKER RICE, BScN, KMHC COMMUNITY HEALTH UNIT

**A**RE YOU WAKING UP FEELING TIRED OR unrested? Do you wake yourself up snorting or choking? Have you ever found yourself nodding off in the middle of the day? Sleep

Apnea is a condition where you stop breathing for short periods while you sleep. Your partner may report feeling the need to shake you awake, or suffer disrupted sleep themselves because they find themselves listening to make sure you resume breathing. The main symptoms of sleep apnea are loud snoring, tiredness upon awakening, and daytime sluggishness or sleepiness.

Obstructive sleep apnea occurs when your throat narrows or closes due to anatomic changes in the airway, part of the throat and tongue drop back into the air passage during the relaxation of sleep. Both men and women may be affected however it is more common in men, and strongly associated in those who are overweight. Other risk factors may include smoking, nasal congestion, and family history.

It is important to see a health care professional for an assessment of your symptoms as there can be significant side effects from sleep apnea. Individuals suffering from sleep apnea are at increased risk for car or work related accidents. They are more likely to have hypertension, heart rate irregularities, suffer heart attacks or stroke. Having an assessment and getting treated can reduce the risk of some of these problems. The Epworth Sleepiness Scale (1) can be performed to measure your daytime sleepiness. There is also a diagnostic test to determine if you suffer from sleep apnea, and the severity or frequency of events-this test can be done from the home, using a machine to record breathing and heart rate.

However there are some things which can be done to reduce the risk, or frequency of sleep apnea episodes until assessment and treatment can be organized:

- Avoid sleeping on your back. This position enables the tongue to relax down against the back of your throat.
- Eliminate or reduce alcohol consumption.

- Lose weight. Reduce the fleshiness of the facial structures.
- Stop smoking. Make sure that the air you breathe is fresh and free of toxins.

The most effective treatment for sleep apnea is a machine that keeps your air passage open while you sleep, known as a CPAP(Continuous Positive Airway Pressure) machine and a face mask or mouth appliance worn while you sleep. These devices are individually fitted by providers who specialize in treatment of sleep apnea. Most health care centers can provide information as to what services are available locally to assess and treat sleep apnea. If you are suffering from snoring, daytime sleepiness; please remember to discuss your concerns with your' health care provider at the next opportunity.

Source:

Johns, Murray W. "A New Method for Measuring Daytime Sleepiness: The Epworth Sleepiness Scale." *American Sleep Disorders Association and Sleep Research Society*, 1991, pp. 540-545.

Strohl, Kingman P. . "Overview of Obstructive Sleep Apnea in Adults." *Up To Date*, 24 June 2016, [www.uptodate.com/contents/sleep-apnea-in-adults-beyond-the-basics](http://www.uptodate.com/contents/sleep-apnea-in-adults-beyond-the-basics).

Mehra, Reena. "Obstructive Sleep Apnea and Cardiovascular Disease." *Up To Date*, 9 Dec. 2016, [www.uptodate.com/contents/obstructive-sleep-apnea-and-cardiovascular-disease](http://www.uptodate.com/contents/obstructive-sleep-apnea-and-cardiovascular-disease).



# 24-Hour Tech Free Challenge

BY CHRISTINE TAYLOR, PREVENTION

**T**HERE ARE MANY GOOD things that come from technology; the social aspect, the vast array of health and social apps, and the amount of information that is available at your fingertips. Increasingly we are relying on the Internet and cellphone communication, though not necessarily bad, there are some negatives to technology.

- **Spend less time in face-to-face communication.** This opens the door to miscommunication because about 40 per cent of effective communication is nonverbal. Holding a hand, patting a shoulder, smiling and eye contact cannot always be virtually replicated. We cannot control how someone receives the communication because aspects like humour and sarcasm do not translate well through text.
- **Connected to work, school 24/7.** There can be increased stress and our rest times can be limited because we are, or feel the need to be, connected to work all the time. This causes stress, fatigue, depression, anxiety and more.
- **Phones in bed.** Sleep can be interrupted due to Facebook, Twitter or text notifications etc. Not getting enough quality rest is detrimental to your overall health, especially for youth who need more sleep at this time in their lives. Constantly being available and not unplugging can cause

undue stress. In the past a person could go home to be unavailable. In the case of bullying, a child was able to feel safe at home, but today through phones and the Internet, they are more accessible.

- **Social etiquette and interpersonal skills.** Learning how to form and maintain friendships and other relationships, conversations, interpersonal skills, and even letter writing are affected. How often have you seen a couple or an entire family with their head down engaged with their smartphone or tablet instead of engaging with who they are with?
- **Information overload.** Adolescents can feel the pressure of constantly being bombarded by information (sometimes false) about the world but also about what others are doing. Fear of missing out (FOMO) can make them feel inadequate.
- **Experiences are more public.** Things like bullying, grief, loss, health concerns etc...in the past were shared with few or a limited amount of people. Now, many personal thoughts and experiences are widely shared and commented on, sometimes without your knowledge or consent.

As part of the Spirit of Wellness in November, KSCS and Kahnawà:ke Suicide Prevention ran a 24-Hour Tech Free Family Challenge. Participants were challenged to refrain

from using modern technology, in particular cellphones (texting, social media, and internet) for a 24-hour period. The point of the challenge was generate an understanding on how people use technology and to bring about an understanding on how technology is affecting our relationships. Here are the winners:

## Weekend Getaway package:

- Tammy Harris-Dearhouse and Tom Dearhouse

## Assorted board games winners and SOW T-shirts:

- Laurie and Adrianna Montour
- Kahente Leborgne
- Rotehrhata:se Lahache
- Thonwatenniehton McComber
- Kara Diabo
- Shatekenhatie Bush
- Wishe Junior Bush
- Raienteres Bush
- Winnie Taylor, Ainsley, Marley, Addison and Lance Goodleaf

Participants were excited about the contest and liked the idea of going tech free for a period of time. They admitted experiencing challenges and realized how much they depend on technology. Participants felt it was an effective tool for evaluating their tech use and for possibly making some changes in their lives.

## The Back Page....

*"A Nation's culture resides in the hearts and in the soul of its people."*

*~ Mohandas Gandhi, 1869 – 1948*



### Family Social Singing

BY LEO PARENT, PREVENTION

**F**AMILY SOCIAL SINGING night was an activity held to encourage families in Kahnawà:ke to come together and learn our social songs. It began as an initiative from the Mohawk Trail Longhouse and grew into much, much more.

This activity took place Tuesday evenings from 5:30 PM–8:30 PM from early December until the end of February. The women who were attending the event decided to coordinate a potluck supper for the families to enjoy before we began each session. It made sense, since the timing of the activity was during the supper hour and having a meal would help people who were coming from work or school. As an added bonus: it was another way for everyone who participated to socialize with one another.

On average there were five family units who attended in the beginning. This number quickly grew as we had the honour of hosting children, moms, dads, aunts, uncles, foster parents and grandmothers.

We began on a very basic level. The verses were written out phonetically to help everyone learn better. We learned two verses at a time, and would focus just on those verses. Together we learned the round dance, duck dance, alligator dance, and a few old-moccasin verses.

It was amazing watching people of all ages, who never sang traditional songs or held a water drum, learn the songs and gain confidence in themselves. There were children and families singing our songs together and participating in a healthy activity for themselves. The experience was, for me, priceless!

We were able to secure monies through the Maternal Child Health funding from KSCS that helped provide light snacks and juices for our activity. Niawen'ko:wa to KSCS for providing the opportunity for us to purchase each family unit a water drum, two rattles and social song CD's to take home and keep. It is our goal to promote a safe and sober activity that encompasses Tsi Niionkwariho:ten (our way of life)

Fifty-eight people came through the Mohawk Trail Longhouse doors to enjoy this activity. We will be running this activity again come June 2017. Feel free to come and join us. There is no one person better than the next, we are all equal.

On another note, I am pleased to announce that Merrick Diabo and I are working on our young men's group, Roti'nikonhro:ten (their minds mature) and upcoming programming that will be incorporating much of the Ohero:kon (under the husk) rites of passage ceremony.

#### Onerahtókha / April

- Kahnawà:ke Culture Awareness Month
- Daffodil Days Cancer Awareness
- 7 World Health Day
- 14 Good Friday (KSCS closed)
- 16 Easter Monday (KSCS closed)
- 22 Earth Day

#### Onerahtohkó:wa / May

- Food Allergy Awareness Month
- Foot Health Month
- 7 Natl. Child & Youth Mental Health Day
- 14 Mother's Day
- 17 Intl. Day Against Homophobia
- 22 Planting Day (KSCS closed)

Do you have questions or suggestions? Is there a topic you would like to see covered in a future issue of the newsletter? Contact us and let us know.

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