



# Aionkwatakari:teke

(A-YOU-GWA-DA-GA-RI-DE-GEH)

"For Us To Be Healthy"

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Kahnawake's Only Health and Wellness Newsletter

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## Speaking Out

An interview with  
Heidi Diabo



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## Aionkwatakari:teke

Aionkwatakari:teke is a newsletter published six times a year by Communications Services of Kahnawake Shakotiaa'takehnhas Community Services (KSCS). Our purpose is to provide information on health and wellness issues that affect Kahnawa'kehró:non. All community members are welcomed & encouraged to submit articles provided that they are comprehensive to the general public, informative & 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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Heidi Diabo

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

Welcome to the last edition of Aionkwatakari:teke for 2009. Our cover story is on Heidi Diabo, who lost her husband and is now making the courageous stand to speak out against drunk driving in the community. We're also excited to have articles from different sectors of the community, including KSDPP, the Kahnawake Environment Office and Lisa Peterson from the KHMC. There's tons more within these pages and we hope you enjoy reading them.

We hope you enjoy this issue and we wish you a happy and safe holiday season and see you again next year!

Sken:nen,  
Marie David

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Tel-Aide: 514-935-1101  
Tele-Jeunes: 1-800-262-2266  
Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868  
Alcoholics Anonymous (AA):  
514-376-9230  
Al-Anon/Alateen: 514-866-9803  
Cocaine Anonymous:  
514-527-9999  
Gay Line: 1-888-505-1010  
Suicide Prevention Hotline:  
514-723-4000 or 1-866-277-3553  
Info Santé: 450-699-3333  
Sexual Assault Center: 514-934-4504





## Living With a Colicky Baby

by MARY MONTOUR GILBERT, FAMILY AND WELLNESS CENTER

**C**oping with a colicky baby can be incredibly tiring on parents, not to mention the difficulty of remaining patient and calm to comfort their upset baby.

Parents may have tried consulting with a doctor and been given sound advice to helping the little one. Parents can find more advice from trusted sites on the Internet on:

- slower or more frequent feedings.
- carrying baby in different positions such as the football hold.
- the colic dance. The colic dance is movement with the baby nestled in mom or dad's groove between chin and chest, while swaying back and forth, up and down, side-to-side, forward and backward, essentially a movement baby was used to while in the womb.

Colic is pain in the abdomen that upsets the whole baby. Exercises, such as baby bends; pumping baby's bent legs to his/her face as in a bicycle-like motion, tummy rolls (a play technique used in the Family and Wellness Center's Parent-Infant Interactive Workshop); or using a large beach ball or physio ball, drape baby's tummy down over the large beach ball and gently roll in a circular motion, with a securing hand on baby's back and sides. An old fashioned remedy is using a warm water bottle tucked in a rolled up

cloth and placed under baby's tummy while rubbing his back. Even a warm relaxing bath for both mom and baby can be helpful for both!

### Tips for parents

Besides comforting the baby, it's important to comfort yourself. First, realize it's not your fault. It may seem that no matter what you've tried, relief can't be found. Colicky cries can tear at your heart and push anger buttons. If you feel this happening, share the job with dad or call someone else to help you. If this is impossible, put baby safely down and walk out of the room until your feelings settle.

The baby is not crying to hurt you or to push your buttons. Your job is to create a supportive environment that lessens your baby's need to cry. Offering a set of caring and relaxing arms is as much as you can do. If you begin feeling resentment, it's time to change. Keep trying a parenting style that meets you and your baby's needs. This may mean leaving the dishes in the sink, leaving the laundry in the hamper and even asking for help. This will help your energy level for baby's cries. Or, help can be a pair of substitute arms giving mom and/or dad a chance to step out of the house and take a break.

Plan ahead. Mornings are usually an easier time for baby. So planning your time to rest or get things done can prepare yourself for the evening toll.



Dr. Sears.com has this advice "There is life after colic. The time spent in loving, caring arms is a very short period in the total life of your child, but the memories of love and availability last a lifetime."

Source and for more information:  
[www.askdrsears.com](http://www.askdrsears.com)

# Keeping Fit in the Winter

by GERALDINE SKY & ALEX M. MCCOMBER, KSDPP

**M**any people have a tendency to stay indoors during the winter months. If we do have to go someplace, it's likely we'll jump in our car. Less physical activity means we're not burning off the food we eat. This increases the likelihood of weight gain that over time can lead to health problems. Here is some information and suggestions about integrating physical activity into your daily life.

There are two types of physical activity: aerobic and anaerobic.

**Aerobic activity** is a steady exercise over a period of time that causes your body to use more oxygen. It is moving your body to increase your heart rate and to get oxygen moving throughout your system. Walking, biking, running, skating, hiking, dancing, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing are types of aerobic activity.

**Anaerobic activity** is a short burst of energy that works one part of the body at a time, building and strengthening muscles. The most common example is weight lifting; but carrying laundry, groceries, firewood, or lifting items and isometric exercises (push-ups, crunches) are other examples.

There are many benefits to physical activity. Aerobic exercise lowers the risk of diabetes, cancer and stroke; lowers blood pressure, cholesterol, body fat and stress; it boosts our immune system, increases metabolism (the rate that we burn energy); and improves circulation, balance and physical appearance. Anaerobic activity strengthens muscles, bones, ligaments and tendons and improves muscle tone, endurance, strength, confidence and self-esteem.

We may know about these benefits but still find it difficult to be active during the winter. Here are some tips to consider.

- Set a personal goal. Whether it's to do an activity every day for twenty minutes and gradually increase your time to an hour a day, or it's to lose a realistic amount of weight over a reasonable time period. It's important to set targets for yourself.
- Set up a schedule and do your best to stick with it. If you miss an activity, get back to it as soon as possible. Long-term habits are developed through practice and repetition.
- If you have a bad day and fall off your routine, don't consider yourself a failure. Think of it in terms of backsliding and return to your regular schedule.
- Find an exercise buddy; a partner, a family member, a friend or work mate—there is strength in numbers.
- Start your activity with realistic time frames and efforts; you are not going to be successful if you plan to start running five miles a day in one hour. Start with small steps and build over time.
- Do a variety of activities. This is good for your muscles and can reduce boredom. Do what you enjoy.
- Remember to stretch, especially after an activity. It is important for your muscles to return to their natural state, not to be injured and to keep your system in good working order.

- Drink lots of water and eat balanced meals and healthy snacks.
- Have fun! Be patient and celebrate your successes.

We often think that physical activity is expensive. It can be when you consider shoes, clothing, equipment, and gym memberships. If you are looking for a really low-cost activity—nothing beats outdoor walking or jogging. Consider joining a gym. On those cold or snowy days, consider walking indoors at the Kahnawake Sports Complex. The best deal you can get on a gym membership is at the Kahnawake Youth Center. Their renovated gym has great cardio and weight equipment. Youth Center membership is \$50 a year for adults, plus \$10 a month for use of the gym.

For those who prefer to work out at home, there are many workout DVDs you can buy or rent. Wear the proper clothing, especially good shoes. It's important that shoes fit well and are comfortable. You don't have to dress like a fashion model to get a good workout.

Winter weather, cold temperatures, no places to go and nothing to wear are poor excuses for not doing physical activity. It's vital to be active year round to get fit and stay fit. Your body will be happy and so will your family and friends. Just do it.

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*Geraldine Sky & Alex M. McComber are with the Kahnawake Schools Diabetes Prevention Project*

# Winter Composting

by ALANA KANE, ENVIRONMENT OFFICE

**R**eady or not, here it comes. Whether you are the biggest cold weather and snowflake enthusiast or more of a hibernator, winter is fast approaching. Even though your gardening tools might be stored away you can still plan ahead for next year's crop of deliciously red tomatoes by trying something new this season: winter composting!

Many of us already compost during the spring and summer months but as soon as the first hint of chilly weather creeps up we retreat into our homes and desert our backyard compost bin. Did you know you can compost all winter long? Here's how.

## Business as usual

An easy way to keep up your composting habits all year long is to move your bin/pile closer to your home for the winter. That way, all you really need to do is clear a short path to your bin and keep throwing your kitchen scraps into it as usual.

Now, obviously, the pile will not decompose as quickly as in the summer but the pile will still heat up quite a bit and if you can keep stirring your pile, you should be able to compost all winter without your bin overflowing.

## Wiggle, wiggle

My second suggestion will be a wee bit unusual for some (ok, who am I kidding? It will be down right gross to most) but hear me out. Let's talk **vermicomposting!**



*Red wigglers digesting compost. Photo by comroques, flickr*

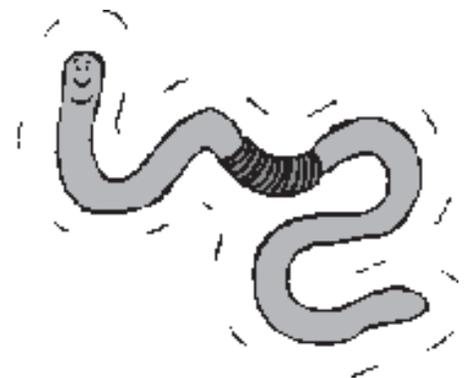
I do suggest you sign up for a vermicomposting workshop before trying this or at least get yourself some step by step instructions online or at your friendly Environment Protection Office but, basically, here is the low-down on the red wiggler chow-down.

All you need is a plastic container with a lid, a mesh or screen, shredded or mulched newspaper and a kind of worm commonly know as a red wiggler. You need to drill holes in the bottom of your container and cover them with the mesh to prevent the worms from escaping (I know, I know, but please keep reading). You then

create bedding for your new pets by filling the bin with about a foot of shredded newspaper (it needs to be about as damp as a wrung-out sponge). Place your Red Wigglers on top of the moistened bedding. Keep the lid off and after a few minutes the worms should all disappear into their new home. Replace the lid and feed the worms regularly. Your worms will eat most kitchen waste.

Your valuable little worms will live quietly in their dark box. It is unlikely that you will have too much waste to compost as red wiggler worms will eat one half their own weight in kitchen scraps and bedding each day. Even a small bin of red wiggler worms will yield pounds of rich sweet-smelling compost.

I realize that worms in the basement might not be everyone's cup of tea but be honest: it makes some pretty interesting food for thought, right?



**Happy Composting!**

*Alana Kane is with the Kahnawake Environment Office.*



## Taken Away Too Soon

### An Interview with Heidi Diabo

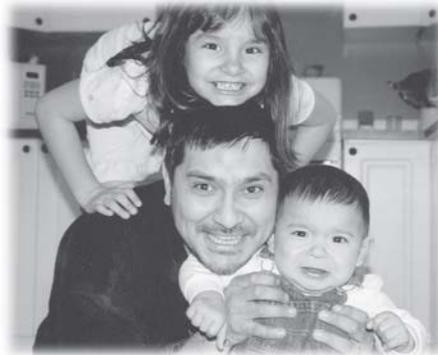
by TYSON PHILLIPS, COMMUNICATIONS CORRESPONDENT

**H**eidi Diabo never thought it could happen to her family. Just over two years ago her husband Gerry Condo was killed in a drinking and driving accident. She had not even been married for a year when it happened. “His death destroyed my life and the lives of my children,” Heidi says, and her family is still grieving. “The pain will never go away. What hurts the most is that Gerry’s death could have been avoided.” He was only thirty-four years old.

Heidi was 19 years old when she met Gerry, a Mi’kmaq from Gaspe, at a bar in Chateauguay. Even though Heidi didn’t drink, she was hanging out with her friends at the bar. “He was impressed that I could be out having fun without consuming alcohol. Gerry told me that night that he would marry me someday, and I told him he was crazy. We were friends for four years, dated for a while, and eventually married.” Heidi had two children with Gerry, a daughter who is now ten, and a son, who is four years old.

At the time of Gerry’s death however, he and Heidi were separated due to his drinking problems. “For years I tried to help him get sober. Since he was from another reserve, he wanted friends in the worst way. He wanted acceptance.” Heidi would often go to the bar where Gerry was and tell him that his kids wanted to see him. It worked, for a time, and he would leave the bar. “On the day of the

accident, I called him at lunch. We were supposed to have supper together. We finished speaking and I just had a feeling that I needed to call him back. I called to tell him ‘I love you’; the last words I ever said to Gerry.”



*Gerry Condo and his two children. Photo by Heidi Diabo.*

By suppertime, Heidi did not hear from Gerry. She went out looking for him and found the car that would later be involved in the accident that took her husband’s life behind the Moose Lodge. “I decided not to call him, let him learn his lesson,” she says. Instead, she took her children to eat supper in Chateauguay. “I live with regret each day that I did not call him.” As Heidi left Chateauguay, she knew something was wrong. “I felt like something had left me, an emptiness that I couldn’t explain. It could have been his presence. When I got back to town, I found out that he was killed in a car accident.”

For the first three months after Gerry’s death, Heidi was unable to cope. “I was in a state of shock; I could not stop crying, I wasn’t able to get out of bed, I stopped eating and had insomnia. My mother had to live with me those first three months, as I was unable to do anything. His death

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**“The pain never goes away, it will be with me and my children for the rest of our lives.”**

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ruined everything of who I was.” She was prescribed sleeping pills to help her sleep and said that if she didn’t have them she would have cried 24 hours a day. “I’m a very private person and after Gerry died it felt like everyone was staring at me. When people did talk to me they did not know what to say or they would tell me that the pain would go away in a year. The pain never goes away, it will be with me and my children for the rest of our lives.”



*Heidi Diabo: Photo by Tyson Phillips*

Heidi's daughter became withdrawn from the world and could not acknowledge the death of her father. "All she did was cry and did not want to play with her classmates. She had to be assigned a shadow at the school and had a hall pass where she could leave the classroom anytime she wanted. The other children did not understand and would call her dumb. She gained thirty pounds and stopped talking; she was like a two year old."

Even now, Heidi admits, her daughter's situation is no better. "She is still very withdrawn. [She] has no friends and is struggling with school. I bought her a puppy and that has helped her open up just a bit." Heidi's son was twenty months old when the accident happened, so she had to explain to him why his father was no longer around. "He would tell his friends at the daycare that his father was killed in an accident. We talk about Gerry, and my son will draw pictures for him and we'll bring it to his grave. To this day, my daughter refuses to see her father's grave."

Heidi's emotions went from shock, to sadness, to anger. "At one point, I thought I was bipolar. I thought of suicide and giving my children to another family, as I could not properly care for them, or [that] it

should have been me that was killed in the accident and they would have been better off with their father. When I think of that now, it scares me." Heidi stopped drinking when she was 17 and after the accident the temptation to drink was there. "The easy way out to suppress your

**"I don't want my husband's death to be forgotten. If I could change one person's mind to not drive while drinking, I'd feel good. "**

feelings is to drink or take drugs. But I was thinking of my children, I did not want to give up custody and they needed a mother. I knew I had to seek help."

Noreen

Montour, a clinical support coordinator at KSCS was working with Heidi before the accident. "We already had a working relationship, so I decided to seek help with Noreen. I also went to the KSCS Healing Lodge for therapy. There were many times I did not want to go to therapy, but I forced myself to get the help. The therapy made me realize that I am strong enough to get through this, and I had to do it for my son and daughter." Heidi read many books on grieving and found out that there are many other people who have lost loved ones due to drinking and driving accidents.

Heidi now wants to get the message out that drinking and driving ruins lives, and the pain of losing someone will never go away.



Heidi Diabo. Photo by Tyson Phillips

"Gerry's death could have been prevented if the driver wasn't drunk. My life will never be the same. People tell me that I am young and should start to date. I will probably never date another man, as I am terrified that I will go through this all over again. People still drink and drive in Kahnawake and it disgusts me. I'm afraid to go out for a walk with my children, as I fear we will be killed by a drunken driver."

"I don't want my husband's death to be forgotten. If I could change one person's mind to not drive while drinking, I'd feel good. When will these drivers realize not to drink alcohol while driving? If the person can live one day in my shoes, they will realize the pain it has caused me and my family. Stiffer penalties should apply to people who drink and drive. For me and my children, I'm living a life sentence because my husband is never coming home."

# Suicide Prevention: Limiting Opportunity

by BRIAN WILLIAMS, PROMOTION & EDUCATION

The World Health Organization (WHO) says the reduction of access to the means of suicide is an essential strategic component of its plans for global suicide prevention. What this means is limiting both the access that people with suicidal thoughts have to lethal means and lowering the lethality of certain methods of suicide.

Such strategies include detoxification of domestic gas and car exhausts (*Domestic gas in the United States contained carbon monoxide in the early part of this century... which was reduced gradually during the 1940s and 1950s as gas companies switched to natural gas*), safety measures on high buildings and bridges, limiting quantities of over-the-counter medicines and prescription quantities of particularly toxic drugs and limiting access to pesticides.

On a community level, one successful strategy has been the increased promotion of gun safety. Encouraging safe storage practices, such as placing unloaded firearms and ammunition into different locked containers has had a reduction in gun related deaths without a noticeable increase in other methods.

It's assumed that a suicidal person, if denied one method, will simply adopt another means of taking their life. However, very little evidence exists to support that theory. For example, in Toronto, the Prince Edward Viaduct was once a well-known suicide destination. At one point it was the second most fatal standing structure in the world behind

the Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco. A suicide barrier was built on the bridge in 2003. Since then, there have been no reported deaths at the bridge and studies have shown that most jumpers are acting impulsively and won't seek out an alternative means to end their life, such as other bridges or other structures. A similar barrier was added to the Jacques Cartier Bridge in Montreal in 2004 with similar results, the site of approximately 10 deaths per year before the barrier was put in place

Suicidal people do not truly wish to die and may struggle for years with their feelings and pain before making their first attempt. Whether they're suffering from a psychological disorder or under the influence of intoxicants like alcohol or drugs, a suicidal person may rethink their plans if access to the means to commit suicide are restricted or difficult to obtain.

Two old sayings come into affect here, "Out of sight, out of mind" and "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure." It's easier and simpler to limit the methods a suicidal person has to ending their life than stopping the act itself.

Our community needs to adopt more strategies like those studied by the WHO that can help lower the effectiveness of some methods of suicide that are found within

Kahnawake, and also strategies that limit the opportunity some methods provide. Some useful strategies are: a continued emphasis on substance use/abuse education, targeting family issues, greater resources towards mental



Jacques Cartier Bridge in Montreal.  
Photo by nessguide, flickr.

health literacy, increase gun safety awareness, and promoting understanding of suicide risk-factors and warning signs. By finding different ways in which to limit the opportunity and reasons a person has to seek out suicide as an answer to their problem, the greater chance we have of decreasing the risk of it occurring.

Sources: <http://tiny.cc/eoIDS>

A policy framework for the promotion of mental health and the prevention of mental disorders by Eva Jané-Llopis and Peter Anderson.

<http://tiny.cc/qC7yo>

The Effects of Detoxification of Domestic Gas on Suicide in the United States by David Lester, PhD.

<http://tiny.cc/l7o2B>

A Veil of Deterrence for a Bridge With a Dark Side by Clifford Krauss.

<http://tiny.cc/ZEiuK>

10 Suicide Bridges People Are Most Likely to Jump Off.

# Cycle of Ceremonies

by LISA PETERSON & CALVIN JACOBS, KMHC

**H**audenosaunee people follow a cycle of ceremonies that define the spiritual foundation for our people. During the cycle of ceremonies, the Haudenosaunee give thanks to the natural world that provides for our health and well-being. The spiritual calendar is cyclical and starts over each year with the *Midwinter Festival* (Sha'tekohshérhon) and ends with the *End of Season Ceremony* (Atierakhonsera'kó:wa).

With the changing of the color of leaves, we know that the planting season has ended and we begin to prepare for the colder winter months.

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**It is said that this ceremony brings the people closer to the Creator and also reminds them of their purpose in this life.**

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This is when the people of the Longhouse celebrate the *Big Corn Festival*. This is the time when the Haudenosaunee celebrate and give thanks for their good fortune. In some Longhouses they call this ceremony the *Harvest Festival*. It is said that this ceremony brings the people closer to the Creator and also reminds them



Photo by: Cory Cousins

of their purpose in this life. It also reminds the people to be grateful for all the things that the Creator put on the earth.

When the corn has been picked, braided and hung to dry, the people prepare for the *Big Corn Ceremony* (Kakowa:nen Onwatekhwaro:roke). This is the time of the four sacred ceremonies. *The Great Feather Dance, The Drum Dance, The Atonwa and the Bowl Game.*

After the *Big Corn Ceremony* has been put through and completed, (about one month later), when the corn is hard (cured) and ready to be ground up to make corn bread, the people know that it is time to put through the *End of Season Ceremony* (Ionkwatkahnoho:kten).

This ceremony reminds us of the cycle that has just passed and of the time when we must prepare for the next. The ceremony is opened with word of thanks to the Creator. There are different dances that are put through in honor of the three

sisters: corn, beans and squash. The men sing a woman's dance in honor of all women. The final dance is the *Great Feather dance, also known as the Creator's song.*

The main speaker will address the people at this time and he will make an end of season speech to remind the people of what went on throughout the year. (Who won the bowl games, who passed away, how the gardens grew, etc.)

The main speaker will then release the hunters to gather the meat for the *Midwinter ceremony*. The people are also reminded to prepare their ceremonial clothing and bowl game gift for the upcoming *Midwinter festival*.

The *End of Season Ceremony* is a reminder to the people that one cycle will be coming to an end and another will be beginning.




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Lisa Peterson is the communications office with the Kateri Memorial Hospital Centre



## Have Yourself a Merry Stress Free Christmas

by *CHRISSEY TAYLOR, PROMOTION & EDUCATION*

**I**t's easier said than done. There are many causes for stress that seem to recur throughout the year:

- Absence of a beloved person
- Family tensions
- Financial difficulties
- Physical tiredness
- Loneliness
- Seasonal depression

These challenges can be handled with time but at Christmas they just seem to *pile up*. Pressure to have the picture perfect holiday can become too much. We can alleviate some of this pressure with planning and prevention.

**Prioritize:** Decide what activities you want to take part in and decline those that are not important to your well-being. For example, if you're stressed about cooking, purchase ready-made items from the store or order from someone who makes them.

**Change your expectations about family gatherings:** Not everyone will get along; limiting the time you spend with family or close friends will make the time you spend with them special.

**Organize and plan:** Prepare realistic to-do lists. For example, organize what gifts, decorations and food you need to buy and the location of the stores. Do the tasks that are most important and if you're not perfect, so be it.

**Be realistic:** Know your limits and accept that you can't meet expectations brought on by the season. Do not compare your celebrations to over-idealized expectations.

**Enjoy the Holidays:** Don't just concentrate on Christmas or New Years. Enjoy the entire holiday.

**Think Positive:** Focus on all the good things that have happened over the year and not on what you don't have or haven't accomplished.

**Don't overdo it:** Enjoy yourself but be mindful of the consequences of overeating, over drinking, and over spending.

**Watch your spending:** If you can't afford it, don't buy it. Friends and families will understand and appreciate homemade gifts. Or gift your time, like free babysitting or a coupon for a backrub.

**Take care of yourself:** Take time out to care for yourself and do something that nurtures your spirit.

**Avoid tension:** Family gatherings can be a source of stress. Try to avoid the tension by asking yourself and others to put differences aside for the holidays and seek a more appropriate time to resolve them.

**You are not alone:** At this time of year it might seem that everyone has a family and loved ones. Not everyone does. Loss caused by separation or death can make this a much harder season to cope. Grief is an important emotion to feel, and allowing it to happen can help you overcome it. Reconnect with friends and family or volunteer your time. It's a good time to re-



establish friendships/relationships or make new friends and will make you feel much better.

**Ask for help:** If you feel that you cannot cope, ask for help from a professional. There are any number of help lines (consult the 'blue' pages in directory or the inside cover of this newsletter) and health professionals in and around our community. Shakotiiia'takehnhas is available as well. Call 450-632-6880. Friends and family can be helpful if you find that it gets to be too much.

# Preparing for Emergencies

by MARIE DAVID

**M**any people in and around Kahnawake cringe whenever we get freezing rain in the winter. That's because on January 5, 1998, plummeting temperatures turned the rain that had fallen during the night into a thick crust of ice. On that day, it was too early to tell exactly how the day and the coming weeks would unfold, but many were unprepared for what was to come.

A state of emergency would soon unfold in eastern Ontario, southern Quebec, and parts of New England. The ice storm lasted from January 5 to January 10 but because the ice had toppled Hydro pylons, thousands of people shivered in the cold or stayed in shelters in the hardest hit areas for several more weeks. Many suffered from hypothermia and carbon monoxide poisoning as they struggled to stay warm with no electricity.

Hopefully, we won't see something like that again anytime soon but if we do, it's always a good idea to be prepared. Here is a list of items (for home and car) to have on hand for when the unexpected happens.

## Basic home emergency kit

- Water: 2 litres of water per person per day, preferably in small plastic bottles to make it easier to carry in case of evacuation. You may also want to have an additional 2 litres of water per person per day on hand for cleaning and cooking.
- Food that won't spoil e.g.: canned or dry foods, energy bars. Remember to replace the food and water once a year.

- Manual can opener
- Flashlight and batteries
- Battery powered or wind-up radio. Remember to pack extra batteries.
- First-aid kit



- Special needs items: prescription medications, infant formula, diapers, wet wipes, and equipment for people with disabilities.
- Extra keys for your car or house.
- Cash in smaller bills and coins for a payphone. Travellers' cheques are also useful.
- Emergency plan: include a copy in your kit along with copies of personal documents such as passports and birth certificates.

Other items to have on hand:

- Change of clothing and shoes
- Toilet paper, toiletries

- Sleeping bag or blanket
- A whistle (in case you need to get attention)
- Garbage bags
- Safety gloves
- Other personal supplies

## The car emergency kit

- Food that won't spoil, such as energy bars.
- Water in plastic bottles that won't break if frozen. Replace every six months.
- Blanket
- Extra clothing and shoes
- First-aid kit with seatbelt cutter
- Small shovel, scraper, and snowbrush
- Candle, in a deep can and matches
- Wind-up flashlight
- Whistle (in case you need to attract attention)
- Roadmaps
- Copy of emergency plan and personal documents

It's also a good idea to have:

- Sand, salt, or non-clumping cat litter
- Antifreeze / windshield washer fluid
- Tow rope, jumper cable, emergency flares, and fire extinguisher

Source and to get more information or to download copies of the emergency lists, visit [www.getprepared.ca](http://www.getprepared.ca)

## The Back Page...

"Lose your temper and you lose a friend; lie and you lose yourself."

Hopi saying

## Things to do With Your Kids During the Holidays

by STEPHANIE HORNE, PREVENTION WORKER

**T**he holidays are a wonderful time for family fun and special activities. However, sometimes families are going through some rough times...financial hardships, single parenting, divorce and separation, addictions, loss of job or serious illness in the family. All too often, these factors can have a major impact on what should be the *most wonderful time of the year!*

The Family and Wellness Center aspires to give some ideas to bring families together and build on healthy family traditions.

**Plan for some down time** during the hectic holiday season; stay home and watch a favorite family DVD—one that is appropriate for all family

members. Have the younger children make pretend movie tickets and sell popcorn and drinks. The cost: a hug and/or a compliment.

**Play some board games.** Not only are board games great for enhancing academic learning, they are a fun way for family and friends to get together and talk. Also, the younger cousins could be paired up with the older cousins on teams. This is a great way to break the age gaps and bring families closer.

**Take a trip** to the discount store and purchase some art supplies—make a family masterpiece or create an art museum and have guests over to view the displayed art. Why not try to make your creations from recycled materials? Going green is all the rage!

**Get out and play.** Remember sliding on cardboard boxes! Go for a nature walk in the woods and either take pictures or draw what you find. Find the Kanien'kehá:ka meaning for the natural wonders. Stay active – it nurtures our spirits and our bodies!

Most of all, create special time for each one of your children. Let them know



that they are loved and important. Do not use the holidays to bring up custody issues. Do not put the kids in the middle—remember that they want to spend time with all the people who love them!

### Divorce and Separation: The Holidays

Children feel less stress if they know what is planned for them during this time. It is best if they can share the special day with both parents as equally as possible. Talk and plan ahead if a stepchild of the blended family will be present.

There is nothing worse than everyone else getting presents and the stepchild is not considered ahead of time. Communicate and talk about how much each parent will contribute to the gifts for their children. This is not the time to showcase or compete for their child's love by giving more than the other parent. Love in families should be unconditional and not bought!

#### December is...

- 1 World AIDS Day
- 3 Intl. Day of Disabled Persons
- 6 Natl. Day of Remembrance on Violence Against Women in Canada
- 10 Intl. Human Rights Day
- 25 Christmas Day

#### January is...

- 1 New Year's Day

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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