



# 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

Onerahtókha/Apri 2015



This issue's profile

**RICHARD NOLAN**



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## Aionkwatakari:teke

Aionkwatakari:teke is a newsletter published six times a year by Communications Services of Kahnawake Shakotia'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 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

Welcome to spring-ish. At least, I hope by the time this newsletter makes it to publication, we will be seeing more spring-like weather. It's official: this past February has gone down as the coldest on record in Quebec since 1889, shattering the previous record set in 1979. We're not going to dwell on that because I'm sure, pretty soon, we'll be complaining about how hot it is.

This issue's focus is on traditional wellness and that includes articles on the language committee here at KSCS, an article on smudging, and a profile of local basket weaver and teacher, Richard Nolan. We also have an article from KORLCC highlighting their month long cultural awareness activities and a very useful article on how technology should be used during times of emergency. In honour of Earth Day 2015, we asked staff for their tips on what they do to lead a more earth friendly life; their responses are included in this issue.

Rounding out the issue is an announcement about the Regional Health Survey that Kahnawake is participating in. We have the third part of the series the Suicide Chronicles and, in time for the warmer weather, a handy sunscreen guide. All in all, we hope you enjoy this issue. When you're done with it, please recycle it.

*Sken:nen,*

*Marie*

**Kanien'kéha Owèn:na**

Iowehrenhátié	It is thundering
Iowistanawenhátié	It is melting
Kakwitè:ne	Spring
Tekatsi:tses	Tulips

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

*Photo on page 7 from Pixabay.*



# Survey Says

BY MARIE DAVID, COMMUNICATIONS

On February 24, 2015 Onkwata'karitáhtshera, Kahnawake's One Health and Social Services Agency, announced that Kahnawake would be participating in a First Nations regional health survey.

The survey's aim is to "attain an accurate depiction of the [sic] Kahnawake's health condition and determining factors," and to "support Kahnawake's decision makers in tailoring programs and decisions on the community needs."

The survey will be funded by the First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission (FNQLHSSC) and will run through to March 2016.

Ten surveyors will be tasked with the responsibility of gathering the information and will have undergone three days of training by the time this newsletter is released.

The survey is part of an endeavor by the FNQLHSSC to gather the information to provide a broader picture of the health needs and priorities for Indigenous communities in Quebec.

According to the FNQLHSSC, the results from the health survey "are used in particular in decision-making processes, at local, regional and national levels."

While the health survey will provide Onkwata'karitáhtshera with some valuable health information, the agency wants to assure Kahnawakeh'ro:non that

the community will retain ownership of the data it collects, including the analysis of the "communities' health condition and determining factors."

Derek Montour is the vice-chair of the agency. He said the survey will provide an accurate health picture of the community and will be helpful in knowing where the health concerns are. As he pointed out, there is a difference in *believing* diabetes is a health concern for the community and *knowing* that it is or in knowing how much of a concern it should be when determining where to focus resources or programming.

The survey itself will be in electronic form and will take about 1.5 hours to complete.

In order to provide an accurate health picture of the community, the survey sample size needs to be no less than 616 community members.

If you need more information about the survey, you can contact the Regional Health Survey coordinator, Blair Armstrong, at 450-632-6880.

*Source: "First Nations Regional Health Survey." First Nations of Québec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission. n.d. Web. 26 Feb. 2015.*

*"Kahnawake Participates in the First Nations Regional Health Survey." Press Release. Onkwata'karitáhtshera. 24 Feb. 2015.*

## Tsi Nitiohtón:ne Ne Onkwawén:na Committee

BY MARY MCCOMBER & BEATRICE TAYLOR,  
PREVENTION

Wá'tkwanonhwerá:ton  
sewakwé:kon. Aiá:wen's  
skén:nen akénhake tánon'  
aiesewakatarí:teke. Tewakatahontsó:ni  
enkwhró:ri ne nahó:ten aionkwatiere  
ne Shakotiiá'takéhnhas ionkwa'iotens.  
Ionkwá:ien ne onkwawén:ra tánon'  
tsi Nitiohtón:ne ne Onkwawén:na  
Otióhkwa konwá:iats.

Greetings to everyone, we hope you have peace and your families are well. We would like to tell you what we are doing at Kahnawà:ke Shakotiiá'takéhnhas Community Services (KSCS). We have a group called Tsi Nitiohtón:ne ne Onkwawén:na, "The Group Who Keeps the Language Living" or the KSCS Language Committee.

The goal of the Tsi Nitiohtón:ne ne Onkwawén:na Committee is to develop and implement innovative and creative methods and initiatives to encourage the learning and use of Kanien'kéha throughout KSCS. We are striving to encourage the use of the language and raising awareness of tsi niionkwarihò:ten (our ways).

We do this by encouraging staff to participate in language sessions, as well as by providing mini-information sessions during lunches or at break times.

Continued on page 6

# Suicide Chronicles: You Will Never, Ever See Your Parents Again

## Part 3 of 5

BY CHELSEY LUGER & GYASI ROSS, REPRINTED AND EDITED WITH PERMISSION FROM INDIAN COUNTRY TODAY

### DEFENSE WINS CHAMPIONSHIPS

Stay in the game long enough and anything can happen. It's something that I have to remind myself of — "You're a dad. Don't get in a fight; people like to shoot guns nowadays instead of fighting. Wear your seatbelt; Indigenous people always seem to die in car accidents. Don't eat that donut — way too many who look *just* like you died of complications related to diet or alcohol or diabetes."

Stay in the game. Be there for your son or daughter, your grandchildren. You might make history — you have a chance to be special, to educate, to assist, to serve. Just stay in the game.

That's what our ancestors did. That's what treaties were all about. Hell, that's what reservations are about — that's why reservations, as imperfect as they are, are so incredibly important for Indigenous people and will always be ground zero for Indigenous people. Our ancestors saw our people dying off, in front of their eyes. They witnessed the eradication of our food sources. By the year 1900, there were only 250,000 Indigenous people in the United States. Our ancestors had NO reason to think that we would be around in a hundred years.

### WE WERE DYING OFF IN FRONT OF OUR EYES

In their wisdom and hope and faith, our ancestors knew that IF we could stick around long enough, we would be able to rebuild and regroup and once again

develop into strong and striving nations. We just had to survive. "We'll preserve a small place for us," our ancestors thought, "and establish some assurance from this greedy foreign government — education, some food, some land. Not as much as we rightfully or justifiably SHOULD have — definitely not ideal — but we're going to stay in the game."

### IT'S IN OUR DNA. THAT'S WHAT WE DO. STAY IN THE GAME. SURVIVE. DEFENSE WINS CHAMPIONSHIPS.

When I read about young Indigenous kids killing themselves, I think "We're not playing defense." I was told a story about a 13-year-old Indigenous girl who hung herself — she was part of an incomprehensibly horrible suicide epidemic; a wave of kids who killed themselves on a particular reservation. In reflection of this tragedy, I had a couple of thoughts:

1. I think of my 12-year-old niece right now, or any of my MANY nieces and nephews at that vulnerable age, thinking that things are *that* bad. Perhaps she feels hopeless — a bad day in school, or a bad couple of days... what if no one trained her to know that this "hopeless" time will quickly pass? What if no one took the time to train her to know that these moments are fleeting and that 12-year-olds (and indeed teenagers) have under-developed frontal cortexes? Put simply, the part of the brain

that understands consequences for actions and regulates emotion (limbic brain) just doesn't work right. That's fact, not opinion.

MAYBE...those teenagers who commit suicide don't *really* realize what "forever" means because of that? The emotion of the moment — without proper training — can very easily overpower the teenage brain.

MAYBE that's why we need to have VERY, VERY intentional conversations with our Indigenous youth about suicide and death at *very* young ages to explain, "No baby, suicide is forever. This ain't a video game. There ain't no coming back." We gotta be really clear.

2. The second thought I have is about the alarming rate these beautiful, promising Indigenous kids are killing themselves (there's a whole bunch — American Indian and Alaska Native youth aged 15 – 24 years old are committing suicide at a rate more than three times the national average) *We're simply not keeping these kids in the game long enough to help Indigenous people as a whole.* Put simply: we NEED these kids around because they are going to be the ones that

bring us back to a place of health, balance and values.

These Indigenous kids who kill themselves might have been the ones who cured cancer or AIDS using a knowledge of traditional herbs and plants...if they just lived through adulthood. They might have been the next *Shoni Schimmel* or *Ruben Littlehead* or *Wab Kinew* — someone SO important to the self-esteem of our people that we simply cannot do without them. Those kids might have been the next *Sam McCracken*, the Indigenous man who created a VERY human and loving business, N7, within a large, capitalistic structure, whose single OCCUPATION is to make our communities healthier and give back 100 per cent of monies generated from it to Indigenous communities. Those kids could have been the next *Jodi Gillette*, who works within a very large structure (the US government) and makes sure that there is always a strong Indigenous voice that has Indian Country on its mind.

They coulda been that. If only they stayed in the game long enough to fulfill their promise.

Those precious young teenagers — who don't have the capability to understand the severity of what they're doing — might have been the next *Don Burnstick* or *Ryan McMabon* or *J.R. Redwater* who heal our people through laughter; the next “uncle” *Billy Frank, Jr.*, to whom we ALL owe a debt

of gratitude. The next *Winona LaDuke* or *Wilma Mankiller*; women ALWAYS lead within our communities and families. When one kills oneself, that's a great leader that we simply won't have. They might be the next *Jim Thorpe* or *Billy Mills* or *Hank Adams* or *Crazy Horse*—any one of our leaders who helped take Indigenous people to a better place.

We need those leaders. Desperately. Our communities have grown, our numbers have recovered, and yes, we have begun to bounce back from that period of near decimation in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, we are still small enough that each and every individual in our communities has the potential to promote massive change; to transform our tribes; to make noticeable and widespread contributions.

We are still small enough that each individual makes a difference.

When these kids die, it robs the rest of the world of the great leadership that could have been. We have to make sure our kids know and fully understand the consequences of their actions. It's not condescending to assume they don't understand what they're doing. We CANNOT over-explain this. We have to be sure that they realize: “This is NOT playtime — suicide is forever. You will NEVER, ever see your grandma again. You will NEVER play with your little brother again. And no, you will NEVER, EVER get a chance to hug your parents again. Everybody will miss you. We will be sad that you're gone. And if you do this to yourself, your classmates will be more likely to do it too. You will save your life and the lives of others by saving yourself.”

That's why talking about suicide — openly, obnoxiously, non-judgmentally — is so absolutely necessary.

We'll never know the healers and leaders who have killed themselves. We'll also never know if it could have been prevented if they knew the consequences for their actions.

Talking about suicide isn't the ultimate answer. Not at all. But it's a step — a small, defensive step. But defense wins championships. We need to do what we can to keep these beautiful Indigenous kids around because they *are* our secret to winning.

*ABOUT THE AUTHORS: Chelsey Luger is from the Turtle Mountain Chippewa Tribe & Standing Rock Lakota Nation in North Dakota and focuses on spreading ideas for Native health and wellness. Follow her on Instagram at [chelswhoelse](#) or Twitter [@CPLuger](#). Gyasi Ross is from both the Blackfeet and Suquamish Reservations and is a concerned dad, uncle and big brother who understands the need for awkward conversations [Cut Bank Creek Press](#), Twitter: [@BigIndianGyasi](#).*

*You can find the original article and the rest of the series on the [Indian Country Today](#) website and using the author's names as the search term.*



## Smudging

BY LEO RAI'A'TAHEN:TE PARENT, PREVENTION

Smudging for ceremonial purposes has been taking place amongst Onkwehonwe people since time began. Smudging may consist of burning herbal medicine such as sweetgrass, which brings positive energy, sage or cedar which moves negative energies away.

There are other medicines used for different reasons, but these are the most commonly used medicines for smudging.

In general, smudging can be used in daily life for practical purposes: to restore physical, mental and emotional balance; to shield against negative energies; to cleanse yourself, your space; or items you may feel that need to be cleansed.

Smudging on a daily basis can be very helpful in maintaining balance and a peaceful state of being. It is good to smudge when you've been around people who are depressed, fearful, angry or generally emotionally unbalanced and/or before meditating to create a calm state of being; when you're feeling blue or depressed; or when you've been under a lot of stress.

Smudging is easy. If you're using a smudge stick, light the smudge stick. Hold the stick in the flame until there is a lot of smoke. Using a feather, a feather fan, or your hand, gently

fan the smoke onto your body; starting at the top of the body and moving downward.

Smudging can be done to purify and cleanse your home as well. Having a clear mind and asking the Creator and your guides to help you, you can move any negative energy from your home.

You don't always need to burn herbal medicines to smudge. Put the medicine water in a glass spray bottle and use the mist from the spray to cleanse yourself and/or your area. People who suffer from an allergy to smoke may find this method medically safer for them should they choose to cleanse themselves.

Personally, I feel that smudging is an excellent way to clear your mind and center one's self. I try to smudge myself and my work area and home regularly. Sharing traditional knowledge with our children is also good for them to feel comfortable with our way of life.

If you would like more information, please do not hesitate to contact Leo Parent at the Family and Wellness Center at 450-638-0408.

## Language Committee Continued from page 3

Committee members are Bea Skawennetsi Taylor (chairperson), Patsy Watseni:saks Bordeau, Doug Tawensete Lahache, Mary Kawennarò:roks McComber, Allyson Karakwontha Phillips, Marlene Kohwenni Zachary, Patricia Waienhawi Zachary, and Karen Tekonwatonti Zachary (recorder).

In 2008, KSCS began networking with the MCK Tsi Niionkwarihò:ten Tsitewahára'n Center and was invited to send two employees to attend their language training program, which took place from September to June. The language training program was to take place over the course of five years.

This networking continues today, with two new KSCS staff participating each year. To date, four KSCS staff have graduated from the five-year program and Mary McComber has gone on to graduate from the Ratiwennahní:rats program in 2012.

Since 2012, the committee has also been involved with supporting the Kanien'keháka Onkwawén:na Raotitíóhkwa Language and Cultural Center's Cultural Awareness Month campaign. KSCS encourages staff to participate in Cultural Awareness Month, by promoting language sessions, both in house and within the community. We have also created displays and exhibited the crafts, artwork, and pictures created by staff.

Culture and language is important to our shared identity, and a strong factor in our resiliency as a people. Awareness of culture and language can have an impact on our self-esteem. For this reason — and many others — the committee continues to strive, to support, and to learn with our organization and community.



# Planting, Singing, & Relaxing

## A Season of Well Being

BY TERRY KARIWAIEHNHE MCCOMBER, PREVENTION

While I was away from work a few summers ago, I spent a lot of time in my gardens. My daily ritual began with a visit to my tobacco patch to give thanks to the Creator.

My tobacco was started in the house in early April with seeds germinating, then sprouting in front of my window. I saw changes in my seedlings and I felt such a wonderful sense of hope that this was going to be the best summer for tobacco.

I rotated the plants every few days in hopes that their growth would be straight and not leaning too much to one side in their attempt to face the sun.

I sang to them. I didn't know our traditional planting songs so I would sing whatever felt good to me that day. I would usually sing Neil Young tunes because Neil always makes me feel good.

My plants — not just my tobacco but my tomatoes, corn, squash, cucumbers, pumpkins and the variety of annual and perennial flowers — appeared to be growing along with my sense of tranquility as I sang “Heart of Gold,” “Like a Hurricane,” “Four Strong Winds.” Not only that; I was relaxed.

Hope, as described by doctor J.F. Miller “is an anticipation of a future which is good and which is based upon mutuality, a sense of personal competence, coping ability, psychological well-being, purpose and meaning in life, as well as a sense of ‘the possible.’”

I was reaping the benefits of all of these wonderful things; I was more relaxed and less stressed because I was watching my garden grow. Some days, I would be so engrossed in my

gardening and singing, that I would lose track of time and before I knew it, the sun was beginning to set.

Gardening became my therapy. Each day I felt more and more fulfilled. I had such a connection with my plants; my nights were no longer sleepless.

My tobacco plants grew as tall as my waist with leaves the size of dinner plates, my tomatoes were growing and ripening quickly, so my neighbours and family benefited too. My pole beans were filling in the teepee I had fashioned for them to grow on. And for the first time, I actually had corn growing! I enjoyed watching the tassels and young silk sway with the breeze.

I continued to sing. I continued to hope. I continued to give thanks. I was at peace and my hope for a bountiful garden was now a reality.

Here we are, another planting season fast approaching. By the time this article is published, my seeds will already have been in the window and I will already have been singing to them, thanking the Creator for them and hoping for a good crop.

Although I won't have the luxury of being in my garden all day this summer, I know that returning home from work each day will be a gift. Happy Planting Day on May 18<sup>th</sup>!

*Source: Miller, Judith Fitzgerald. (1992) Coping with Chronic Illness: Overcoming Powerlessness (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). Philadelphia, PA: F. A. Davis.*





## Profile: Richard Nolan

### Traditional Basket Weaver

BY TYSON PHILLIPS, COMMUNICATIONS

Richard Ateronianente Nolan has made a name for himself in making traditional baskets. One might think Richard has been doing this since he was a youth, but he only started his craft about eight years ago.

“My girlfriend was in the Kanien’kéha Ratiwennahní:rats language program at the Cultural Center. The class was taught how to make a corn wash basket. She then taught me what to do as she began making a basket at home,” explained Richard.

The basket remained unfinished for a few months until Richard decided to complete the basket himself and he’s never stopped making baskets. “I went through a lot of trial and error. I would make some good baskets, while others did not turn out. When the basket looked ugly, I’d see the beauty in it, so I kept working on it until it became beautiful,” he said. “I must have made over 100 baskets until I got it right,” he laughed.

Richard now teaches basket making and he’s given demonstrations to

people ranging in

age from

young

school

children

to

elders.

For

instance,

he’s

taught

children at

Kateri School in the after school program, usually in the fall or winter.

When Rakwiren:tha Diabo, the program facilitator of the traditional youth group, Where the Creek Runs Clearer at KSCS’ Family and Wellness Center, approached him to teach youth involved in that program, he took a different approach.

“I didn’t bring the ready made materials like I do with other classes; these teens started from scratch,” he explained. “They started by pounding a log, making the splints, etc. Rakwiren:tha wanted them to learn from the very first steps. It took them a year to complete a basket.”

Over the years, Richard has taught at the the Kanien’keháka Onkwawén:na Raotitíóhkwa Language and Cultural Center as part of their language program as well as at the Kahnawake library and at KSCS. “I’ve also travelled to Tom Porter’s Kanatsiohareke Mohawk community in Fonda, New York to teach.”

His baskets have sold at many pow wows and in other Mohawk communities. In addition, he’s donated a basket to the Seneca-Iroquois National Museum located in Salamanca, New York.

Richard joined Facebook two years ago and has experienced an increase in sales after posting his work on his Facebook page.

Richard doesn’t adhere to a strict timetable when working on baskets. For one thing, he has to travel to Maniwaki to get the wood since the ash tree is not available in Kahnawake.

“The logs have to be pounded and made into splints and then the splints

have to dry. Drying time is faster in summertime under the hot sun, a little longer in winter months,” he explained. “Then I start to create and work on the basket and it’s not a rushed process. It can be a week to two weeks to finish a basket.”

Richard, a 20-year army veteran, is enjoying this time in his life making baskets. “It’s a pleasure to teach all ages basket making and [to see] the happiness in their face when they’ve completed making their own basket. I feel good knowing I taught them how to make a traditional basket.”



Richard Nolan with one of his baskets in his workshop. Photos by Tyson Phillips.



# Earth Day Tips

In honour of Earth Day, we asked staff members what they do to be more earth friendly. Here are some of their responses.

*From Jean O'Connor:*

- I don't buy bottled water. I use a home water filtration instead.
- I use my dryer sparingly and use a clothes rack to dry clothes.
- I avoid purchasing items from the grocery store that have a lot of packaging and only buy canned goods when absolutely necessary.
- I garden and freeze my own produce.

*From Christine Loft:*

- We make the effort to buy environmentally friendly cleaning products such as dish/laundry soap, all purpose cleaner spray, kids shampoo/wash and even hand soap. I will pay a bit more to get the gentler/biodegradable products, but I've noticed that many of these items are becoming reasonably priced and there are new ones out there. There are great options in bulk at places like Costco. I've even encouraged other family members to try these products because they work just as well (even if they don't have that same 'signature scent' as the famous brands).

*From Beatrice Taylor:*

- When I steam or boil my veggies, I save the water, and use it to water my plants.

- I save my egg shells, wash them out, let them dry, and crush them up so I can use with my plants in the garden. It stops slugs from getting on your plants and is also a natural deterrent for ants. They wash away but you can always reapply. Plus, when you transplant tomato seedlings into your garden, you put a ¼ cup in the hole, mix in, and it helps your plant from getting root rot. I've been saving all winter and I have a full litre. I never stop saving my shells.
- I also save shrimp tails....let them dry out, and crush them. I just started this year. I don't have much but instead of throwing it out, I think it'll make good compost.

*From Winnifred Taylor*

- I hang laundry in the basement during winter and outside in the summer; I try to not use the dryer that often
- I try to buy food in the least amount of packaging i.e. buy yogurt in large container versus mini plastic containers.
- I always carry my own fold away bag in my purse and always use my own bags for the supermarket
- I'm mindful of the produce I buy and where it comes from, I try to purchase more local products
- I compost and recycle

*From Marie David*

- I'm notorious for turning off the lights in unoccupied rooms.
- In the summer, I hang my laundry outside to dry. In the winter, I hang it in the basement. I've only used my dryer once last year.
- I've switched most of my light bulbs to the longer lasting LED or CFL light bulbs.
- I grow some of my own vegetables and herbs and support local farmers by buying locally and organic as much as I can. I freeze or can most of my fruits and veggies.
- I support local beef and poultry producers who don't use hormones or antibiotics to produce their meat.
- I'm hoping to plant milkweed this summer to encourage the honey bee population.
- I unplug appliances when they aren't in use because they are still energy hogs even when turned off.
- I compost and recycle.
- I plan on buying a rainbarrel to collect rainwater from my gutters to help water my garden.

What about you? Do you have environmental tips? If so, send them to [kscs@kscskahnawake.ca](mailto:kscs@kscskahnawake.ca) and we'll publish them in an upcoming newsletter.

# Cultural Awareness Month

BY LISA KAWENNANÓ:RON PHILLIPS, KANIEŃKEHÁ:KA ONKWAWÉN:NA RAOTITÍOHKWA LANGUAGE & CULTURAL CENTER (KORLCC)

The Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitíohkwa Language and Cultural Center (KORLCC) is pleased to announce the fourth annual Tsi Niionkwarihò:ten Niwenhni'tò:ten Cultural Awareness Month, taking place Onerahtókha/April 2015.

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

The objective of cultural awareness month is to provide community members with opportunities to build and strengthen their cultural knowledge and celebrate our distinct identity as Kanien'kehá:ka people.

The past three years were a huge success. The format included many activities, workshops, and a speaker's series hosted and sponsored by KORLCC and community organizations such as KSDPP, the Kahnawake Youth Center (KYC), MCK, Step by Step Child and Family Center, Kahnawake Survival School, the Kahnawake Library, Kateri School, Karonhianonhnha School, the Kahnawake Youth Forum, Turtle Bay Elders Lodge, the Eastern Door and K103.

Events included traditional wear (ribbon shirt) day, an all Kanien'kéha front page of the Eastern Door, a speaker series and a mini sing hosted by

Kahnawake Survival School in collaboration with community schools.

Some of the events include

**April 1, 2015 9:00 A.M. –3:00 P.M. Kid Day at KORLCC** storytelling and games for children of all ages, please contact 450-638-0880 to reserve a time slot.

**April 1, 2015 5:00–7:00 P.M. Adult Book Club** hosted by Daniel J. Rowe, every Wednesday at the Kahnawake Library. Call 450-633-1016 to register. Book is "The Back of the Turtle" by Thomas King.

**Beginning April 7, 2015** Lori Beauchamp will teach a **ribbon shirt making** class for a total of four classes. Registration begins on April 1<sup>st</sup> at 450-638-0880.

**Saturday, April 18, 2015** the KYC is once again hosting its popular "**The Amazing Race**" featuring

cultural knowledge, community historical knowledge and physical skills as part of the competition. The KYC will also be holding traditional singing for boys and for girls in preparation for the mini-sing at Kahnawake Survival School, as well as a beading project and basket-making. Please call 450-632-6601 for more information.

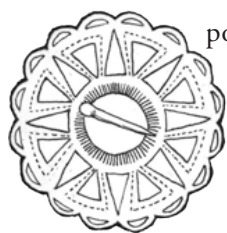
**April 29, 2015 Wahta Radio Show** will air live on K103 and with the participation of elders and schools, Ratiwennahní:rats students and community members. Everyone is encouraged to listen and come by KORLCC's library to watch and participate in the live broadcast.

**April 30, 2015 9:00 A.M.–3:00 P.M. outdoor crafts demonstration** includes demonstrations of canoe making, arrow making, survival skills, etc. This was a popular and well attended event last year.

**Each Friday of the month will be Ribbon Shirt Day.**

The events above are confirmed activities. For more up-to-date information, please contact Lisa Kawennanó:ron Phillips at 450-638-0880.

*Illustration by John Kahonionbes Fadden and the Six Nations Indian Museum. Used by permission.*



# Five Things to Look for in a Sunscreen

BY MARIE DAVID, COMMUNICATIONS

What's the most effective sun protection you could have? Covering up is the best protection. Wearing a wide-brimmed hat and tightly woven, loose fitting shirts and pants are the best protection your skin could have. Barring that, sunscreen is a must if you plan to worship the sun.

But according to the *Environmental Working Group* (EWG) and the *David Suzuki Foundation*, most commercially available sunscreens can actually do more harm than good both to your skin (harmful chemicals) and to the environment (by washing off your skin and going down the drain, hence, into the environment and into the water table and soil).

According to the Foundation, there should be five criteria for choosing a safe sunscreen, they are:

1. It has a good rating from the EWG. The EWG has done a great job of researching, documenting, and compiling a database of safe (and unsafe) sunscreens. While EWG is US based, many of the products are available in Canada or can be ordered online and sent here.
2. It provides broad UVA/UVB protection. That should be a given, right? But SPF measures only for UVA and most skin cancers are exposed to both. A broad spectrum sunscreen will protect against both.
3. It should not contain dangerous ingredients. Topping that list is

oxybenzone, a hormone disrupter that can trigger allergic reactions. It's commonly used to stabilize avobenzone, a UVA blocker. Another one to avoid: retinyl palmitate, a form of vitamin A and has been linked to skin lesions and tumours on sun-exposed skin. There are actually more dangerous chemicals to avoid in health and grooming aids, and the Foundation has a downloadable guide on their site called the Dirty Dozen.

4. It's a cream or lotion. The Foundation and the EWG recommend lotions over sprays. Nanoparticles like zinc oxide and titanium dioxide are common in mineral-based sunscreens. They don't get absorbed into the skin but can be inhaled though sprays and enter the blood stream through the lungs.
5. It has an SPF of 30, although anything higher than SPF 15 will do fine. What's important is that it offers broad spectrum UVA/UVB protection. The Foundation believes that an SPF that's higher than 30 is just marketing and lulls people into a false sense of security, believing they have the protection when they don't. People are also more apt to *not reapply* the sunscreen as often as they should when using a sunscreen

with a higher SPF. Here's a TIP from Environmental Defence: apply sunscreen 15 minutes before going out and reapply every two hours, more often if sweating or after swimming.

The EWG has been active in lobbying the US to set stricter labelling and health guidelines for many cosmetic, sunscreen, and household cleaning products. The David Suzuki Foundation and *Environmental Defence* are active doing the same thing here in Canada. Environmental Defence has a handy downloadable sunscreen guide on their website too!

*Source: "How to Choose a Safe Sunscreen." David Suzuki Foundation. n.d. Web. 2 Feb. 2015.*

*"EWG's 2014 Guide to Sunscreens." Environmental Working Group. n.d. Web. 2 Feb 2015.*

*"The Environmental Defence Guide to Sunscreens." Environmental Defence. n.d. Web. 2 Feb. 2015.*

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*When all the trees have been cut down, when all the animals have been hunted,  
when all the waters are polluted, when all the air is unsafe to breathe,  
only then will you discover you cannot eat money.*

~ Cree prophecy

# Technology Use During Disasters

BY ARNOLD LAZARE, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SAFETY, EMERGENCY PLANNING & PREPAREDNESS

**W**e rely on technology more and more to keep in touch with our family, friends, and colleagues with a click of a button. But what happens in the event of a major emergency? Suddenly these tools can become vital in helping you and your family to get in touch and stay informed. Here are tips on using technology in an emergency:

- If possible, use non-voice channels like text messaging, email or social media. They use less bandwidth than voice communications and may work even when phone service doesn't.
- If you must use a phone, keep your conversation brief and convey only vital information to emergency personnel and/or family. This will also conserve your phone's battery.
- Unable to complete a call? Wait 10 seconds before redialing to help reduce network congestion. Note, cordless phones rely on electricity and will not work during a power outage. If you have a landline, keep at least one corded phone in your home.
- Keep extra batteries or a charger for your mobile device in your emergency kit. Consider getting a solar-powered, crank, or vehicle phone charger. If you don't have a cell phone, keep a prepaid phone card in your emergency kit.
- Keep your contacts up to date on your phone, email and other channels. This will make it easier to reach important contacts, such as friends, family, neighbours, child's school, or insurance agent.
- If you have a smartphone, save your safe meeting location(s) on its mapping application.
- Conserve your smartphone's battery by reducing the screen's brightness, placing your phone in airplane mode, and closing apps you are not using. You never know how long a power outage will last!
- Remember, in an emergency or to save a life, call the Peacekeepers 450-632-6505 for help. During emergencies do NOT call them to find out what is happening. Tune in to local media instead...you may unwittingly deny emergency service to someone who may need it.

For more information you can contact the Emergency Preparedness Program at 450-632-0635 or check out the website at [kahnawake.com/org/cpu/beprepared](http://kahnawake.com/org/cpu/beprepared)

## Onerahtókha/April

- Daffodil Days (Cancer Awareness) Month
- April 26– Natl. Immunization Awareness Week
- May 2 World Autism Awareness Day
- 3 Good Friday (KSCS closed)**
- 6 Easter Monday (KSCS closed)**
- 7 World Health Day
- 22 Earth Day

## Onerahtohkó:wa/May

- Food Allergy Awareness Month
- Foot Health Awareness Month
- Vision Health Month
- 4–8 Emergency Preparedness Week
- 4–10 Mental Health Week
- 4 Melanoma Monday
- 5 World Asthma Day
- 10 Mother's Day
- 17 Intl. Day Against Homophobia
- 18 Planting Day (KSCS closed)**
- 31 World No Tobacco 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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