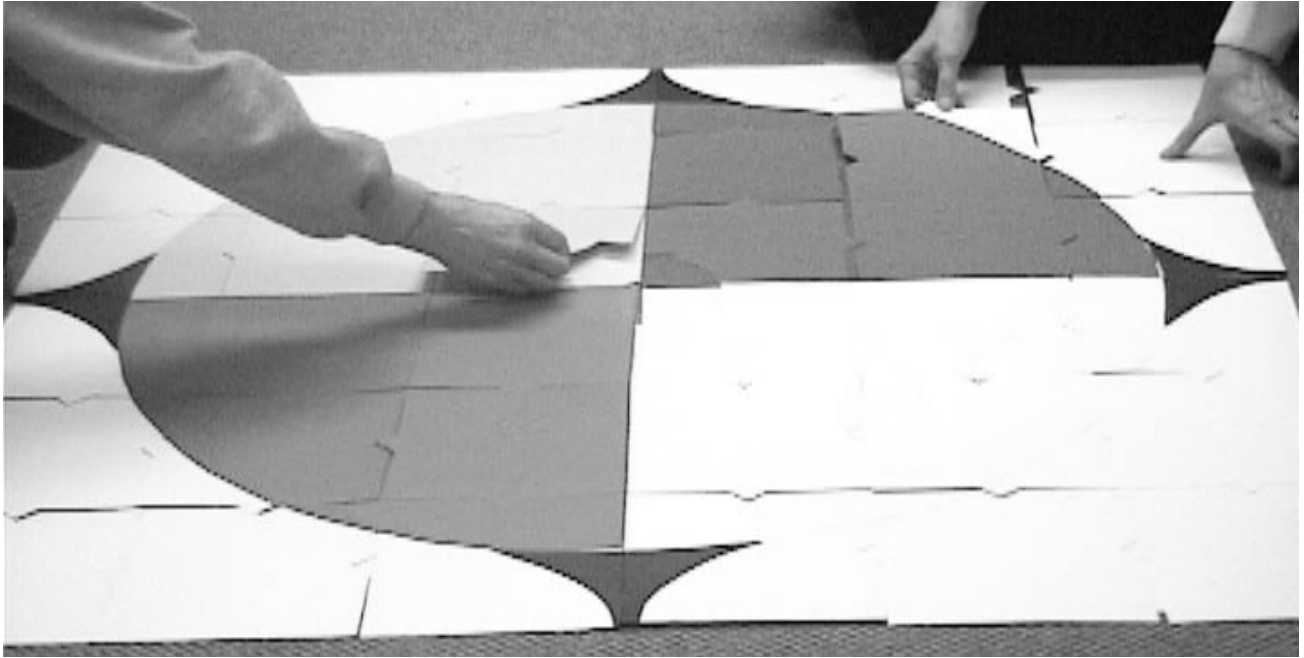


## On Occupational Health and Safety



# THE SPIRIT TOOLKIT

## *Aboriginal Workers Education and Outreach Project*

**T**he Aboriginal Workers Education and Outreach Project is a new service provided by the MFL Occupational Health Centre (MFLOHC).

Funded by the Workers Compensation Board, this project equates the sacred teachings and workers rights within Sharing Circles. We believe this way will better equip Aboriginal workers to deal with their Workplace Health

and Safety issues.

This issue of the MFLOHC newsletter focuses on the work of this project.

### **Spirit Toolkit**

During the past six months, the project coordinator, Val Vint, has focussed on refining and expanding resources for the Spirit Toolkit. The tools for the Spirit Toolkit have been developed with a focus on accessibility and

versatility. These tools also need to appeal to diverse audiences. All tools can be reproduced at minimal or no expense to the individual, organization or group.

The Spirit Toolkit remains a work in progress. Ideas continue to come together and find shape in many ways. Many items have already been created, adapted or purchased for the toolkit to be used by the

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# THE SPIRIT TOOLKIT

## Continued from page 1

sacred teachers within sharing circles during the project.

The Spirit Toolkit now contains the following resources.

- A logo has been designed to visually equate the seven traditional Aboriginal teachings with the three legislated rights of workers. This prototype is currently being professionally enhanced and typeset. When finalized this logo will be incorporated into the business cards and letterhead for the project.
- An Updated Fact Sheet *Ningwanuk Mesbquajese - Wings of Change* was updated in July 2005.
- Laminated Life Map Worksheet is a simple tool that depicts the effects of working conditions on workers as well as their coworkers, family and community.
- A Facilitator's Guide for the project continues to be a work in progress for a one-day workshop. The suggested outline for workshops continues to be refined after each Sharing Circle. The workshop is loosely borrowed from the Anokiiwin manual *Seeing the Big Picture Connecting Health and Safety Activities with the Environment*. The Anokiiwin model has been adapted so that it can be used within the oral tradition of sharing circles.
- Seven Teachings posters have been purchased to be used at the Sharing Circles, community gatherings and displays.
- A Medicine Wheel Puzzle was created and presented at an Advisory Group meeting. Four teams of two persons each assemble a quadrant of the puzzle. Our work does not exclude other groups. The puzzle expresses the need for everyone to be involved in health and safety as we are working within the Aboriginal community. This tool lends itself as a meaningful closing activity.
- *Indian Act Medicine Wheel Knowledge Game* idea was gifted by Marjorie Beaucage. A model was created of this game. Now we have five replicas using materials common in the home or inexpensive to purchase. This tool may be used in several ways. It can be presented as a workshop to be held in seven rounds or it can be a permanent installation in a classroom, a boardroom or at a gathering place so that participants can come intermittently to the game. This game has been designed to help participants learn about events that have contributed to historical misunderstandings and sorrows for many Aboriginal people. Naming and better understanding these past injustices is intended to contribute to the healing between

**THIS GAME HAS BEEN DESIGNED TO HELP PARTICIPANTS LEARN ABOUT EVENTS THAT HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO HISTORICAL MISUNDERSTANDINGS AND SORROWS FOR MANY ABORIGINAL PEOPLE.**

cultures.

- *Sacred Learning* as well as *Sacred Children - Sacred Teachers* are books recently written by Anita Keith. These two books should provide a valuable foundation about discovery learning for sharing circle guides. Discovery learning is in keeping with traditional Aboriginal ways of sharing collective knowledge. These two books are intended to help the group facilitators become familiar with effective ways, especially storytelling, to engage Aboriginal workers to talk about and deal with their workplace issues. In addition, Anita Keith has recently joined the Advisory group and will be available for additional educator tips, as needed, when the group facilitators receive their training.

## Videos

- *Respectful Workplace*: Racial Harassment segment of this video produced by the Manitoba Human Rights Commission was already owned by the MFLOHC. This video is useful to promote meaningful dialogue when workers from diverse cultural backgrounds come together to learn about Aboriginal traditions and values.
- *Honouring Our Gift of Life*: Alberta Cancer Board
- *The Power of One Storytelling* CD is a teaching tool for the project Sharing Circle guides. Elder Flora Zaharia is a storyteller on the CD and is one of our storytelling teachers for future sharing circle guides.

# NINGWANUK MESHQUAJESE WINGS OF CHANGE

The Aboriginal Workers Education and Outreach Project received its name in a Naming Ceremony on January 12, 2005. The name and the logo speak to teamwork. The Geese Teachings are implied in the name and logo.

The Teachings of the Geese are about teamwork and looking out for our coworkers. We can do this by becoming involved in Workplace Health and Safety Committees and/or by speaking up or putting our beliefs in action.

When we, or others identify workplace hazards the next step is to take action. If it is an oil or coffee spill, we can show our conviction to workplace health and safety by cleaning it up.

If the problem is, for example, a live electrical wire, make sure the area is secured and call or have someone call an electrician; do not attempt to rectify a hazardous situation unless you are qualified to do the work.

Working together, sharing our tasks, encouraging each other to work safely and to be actively involved in workplace safety, sharing leadership responsibilities and looking out for the safety of all is the focus of the Aboriginal Workers Education and Outreach Project.

**Uplifting one, uplifts all.**

The Spirit Tool Kit created as a part of the MFLOHC's Aboriginal Workers Education and Outreach Project has been gaining attention across Canada. This past spring articles about it appeared in three different Aboriginal newspapers, the Saskatchewan Sage, the Alberta Sweetgrass, and the Ontario Birchbark.

The articles by journalist Cheryl Petten outlined the Tool Kit and the work done by the MFLOHC's Aboriginal project coordinator.

## COUNT ME IN!

I will assist the Occupational Health Centre to continue to publish the Focus newsletter and purchase up-to-date information for the library in the following manner:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Prov. \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ a direct donation today of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ a payroll deduction sent directly to the MFL Occupational Health Centre

Please return this form to:  
MFL Occupational Health Centre  
102-275 Broadway  
Winnipeg, Manitoba  
R3C 4M6

**OHC**  
MFL Occupational  
Health Centre

# WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY FALL 2005 PUBLIC PRESENTATIONS

You are invited to the MFL Occupational Health Centre public presentations at 275 Broadway.

Topics relating to occupational and environmental health will be presented by invited guests and staff of the Centre.

The presentations are from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.

Phone: 949-0811 • Fax: 956-0848 • email: phebert@mflohc.mb.ca

October 18	Pictorial Presentation, Making Health and Safety Signs Work for All	Doug May Advanced Manufacturing Coordinator, Canadian Manufacturers and Exporters
November 1	Fire Safety	Al Roschuk Safety Officer Manitoba Safety Council
November 8	Indoor Air Quality	Tom Berthin Operations Manager Pinchin Environmental
November 15	Introduction to Reasonable Accommodation and the Human Rights Code	Beatrice Watson Outreach Liaison Officer Manitoba Human Rights Commission

*The MFL Occupational Health Centre was established in 1982 by the Manitoba Federation of Labour to help Manitoba workers deal with job-related health issues and to assist those in many sectors of our society who strive for safer work environments. The Centre is a non-profit, charitable community health centre funded by the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority and is a member of the Manitoba Association of Community Health and the Association of Occupational and Environmental Clinics.*

*The MFL Occupational Health Centre has a wide range of health, information, and workplace services available to all workers in Manitoba to assist in determining if a health problem is work-related and how to prevent or reduce the risk of hazardous workplace exposures. The Centre is open Monday to Fridays, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.*

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