



Listening to One Another is a community-driven and culturally-adapted program for Indigenous families. The program originates out of a collaboration between First Nations communities in British Columbia, Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec and research teams based out of the University of Lincoln, Nebraska, the University of Manitoba and McGill University. By combining the social and cultural expertise of Aboriginal community members with the resources of the University-based teams, Listening to One Another (LTOA, for short) promotes positive mental health over the course of 14, two-and-a-half-hour sessions.

The Canadian Mental Health Association – NS Division developed a partnership for ongoing support and training from McGill University, despite the discontinuation of funding for the McGill based teams. CMHA NS would now like to pass along this knowledge to First Nation communities in Nova Scotia through training, support, and developing capacity within the communities to continue providing LTOA with their own customized programs.

The Listening to One Another program takes root in the principle that family wellbeing is a cornerstone for individual and community wellness. For that reason, each session includes activities for the family as a whole—like meals, discussions and games—as well as separate activities designed specifically for youth and adults.

Throughout these activities, families work their way through a range of themes, from community history and pride, to emotional regulation, bullying, problematic substance use, and more. Taken together, the sessions contribute to a comprehensive vision of positive mental health, meaning that wellbeing is maintained or achieved through a supportive, strength-based approach. Listening to One Another empowers youth and adults to become more resilient and self-confident, take pride in their identities, and develop effective help-seeking behaviours. In other words, LTOA is more than a band-aid program that reacts to crisis situations. Instead, it fosters wellbeing proactively to empower communities to become strong and healthy before mental health crises emerge.

If you are interested in becoming a partner and bringing the Listening to One Another program to your community, the first step is to get in touch with a program coordinator from one of our partnered Indigenous communities or with the CMHA NS CAST Program Lead. They will walk you through the first steps in implementing the program: setting up an advisory group to culturally adapt the sessions and securing funding for a successful delivery. From here, a partnership is born and the program begins to take root in your community. Next, our team will communicate with your advisory group to arrange training for local facilitators and elders. Following training, we support the recruitment and delivery of the program in your community or region.

The CAST program, and it's LTOA project, operate through funding from the Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness and does not profit financially from our partnerships with Indigenous communities. By becoming a partner your community takes ownership of the program, and along with other First Nations throughout Canada, contributes to the mental wellness of Indigenous individuals and families.

For additional information, or to become a partner community please contact:

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(WBG): Well-Being Goal / (ET): Elder's Teaching / (Act): Session Activities	
Week 1: Opening Feast	<p>Welcoming Feast Teachings and Values (WBG) Feel welcome, safe, and appreciated (ET) Important traditional teachings and values (Act) Our Family Values & Turtle Game/Values</p>
Week 2: Community History	<p>Family Everyone's Voice & Contribution (WBG) Feel safe to express ideas in a Family Talking Circle (ET) Examples: traditional ways of life; activities that were valued? (Act) Discuss: What makes you feel valued nowadays? (Act) Family Talking Circle; everyone's voice & Turtle Game/Moon Cycle</p>
Week 3: Family	<p>Practicing a Way of Life Life Stages & Ceremonies (WBG) Cultural perspectives: a good way of life; sense of continuity (ET) Naming ceremonies and other rites of passage (Act) Our role in celebrating our culture and language (Act) Tree of Life information session</p>
Week 4: A Good Way of Life	<p>Community History Resilience (WBG) Strengthening identity and cultural pride (ET) Resilience: First Nations' perspective and recalling people's stories (Act) Video and timeline discussion: before and after contact</p>
Week 5: Working Together	<p>Healthy Self & Health Relationships (WBG) Identify ways to balance mind, body, spirit, and emotions (ET) Examples of childrearing & everyone's role in caring for children (Act) Caring Agreement & things we do to show that we care</p>
Week 6: Living in Harmony	<p>Emotion Regulation Anger Management (WBG) Recognize anger and practice emotional regulation skills (ET) Story: character reacting to anger; then discussion. (Act) Temper Gauge, Anger producers/busters, video (child hammered nails)</p>
Week 7: Balance	<p>Problem Solving STEPS Model (WBG) Learn various problem-solving skills (ET) Examples: Learning from mistakes; discussion (Act) Problem solving STEPS, Solutions (game), Parenting approach</p>
Week 8: Problem Solving	<p>Giving Help – Seeking Help; All connected (WBG) Develop sense of inter-personal connectedness (ET) Elder modeling tobacco offering (Gratitude – asking for help) (Act) Puppet show, Communication skills, Family Agreement, Index Card</p>
Week 9: Making choices	<p>Making Choices Refusal Skills (WBG) Practice critical thinking & skills to handle negative peer pressure (ET) Elder: Inspire families to value their health and aspirations (Act) Fish & Canoe substance use game; practice ways to say: "No"</p>
Week 10: Communication	<p>Peer Communication Yes to Friendship /No to</p>



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	<p>Bullying (WBG) Learn skills to strengthen friendship and to respond to bullying (ET) Traditional conflict resolution (Act) Mystery shoes, tips to feel safe, videos (bullying-cyberbullying)</p>
<p>Week 11: Valuing differences</p>	<p>Valuing Differences Prevent discrimination (WBG) Appreciate diversity, self-esteem, skills to manage teasing (ET) Elder: Story or reflection on discrimination, then discussion (Act) Talking Circle, Hand activity, & Discrimination Response Plan</p>
<p>Week 12: Social Support</p>	<p>Social Support (WBG) Develop and maintain pro-active support network (ET) Support one another to overcome hardships (Act) Yarn Circle, Trust Walk, and review Tree of Life</p>
<p>Week 13: Empowerment</p>	<p>Empowerment People & communities (WBG) Inspire families to think of ideas for future generations (ET) Invite a local Leader or Hero to give an inspirational speech (Act) My Vision (hopes, dreams, goals), Strong Trees mural</p>
<p>Week 14: Celebration Feast</p>	<p>Celebration Feast (WBG) Honour participants & celebrate their achievements (ET) Conduct a Ceremony (Ex: Blanket ceremony); invite drummers, singers (Act) Show & Tell: Trees of Life Mural. Awards and Recognitions</p>