

Restoring Indigenous miyo-mahcihoiyān (physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual well-being)

The purpose of this three year study is to develop, implement, and evaluate the effectiveness and relationship between the collaborative development of a community-based program and empowerment of the people from the Thunderchild First Nation.

This research project will be guided by the principles of Participatory Action Research (PAR) and transformative action research as described by Ramsden (2003), in collaboration with the Thunderchild First Nation and their community leaders (Chief and Council, Health Board, School Board, Health Director, and whomever the Chief and Council requests for me to consult). Stages of the Research Project:

1. Consult with the Thunderchild Leadership, collaboratively develop the Interview Guide, conduct the interviews with the youth and selected Elders, and data analysis;
2. Collaborative plan (community, community leaders, and researchers) to develop community-based plan constructed from the interviews conducted with the youth, Elders, community consultation, and my doctoral research (attached)
3. Implementation of the community-based plan
4. Evaluation of the community-based plan

Stage 1

- The Principal Investigator (PI) (Dr. Holly Graham) will meet with the community and/or leadership to develop an interview guide that will allow the youth and Elders to share their perspectives on what they need to be empowered. Prior to commencing the interviews, the PI will provide instruction (research project, purpose and objectives), supply the previously developed interview guide to facilitate the interview, and provide an opportunity to answer any questions the youth or Elders may have about the interview process.
- The sample population will have a maximum of 5 Elders and 5 youth.
- There will be a honorarium for the participants (\$100.00 - one hundred dollars). Recording devices will be provided to the interviewer (Research Assistant) to record the interview. The data analysis will adhere to Reissman's (2008) description of thematic narrative analysis.

Stage 2

- After data analysis has been completed, the findings from the interviews conducted with the youth, Elders, and my doctoral research will be discussed. The community will then determine the structure and priorities of their community-based action plan.
- The PI and the co-investigators will meet with the community leaders throughout these discussions to ensure this project is completely aligned with the community identified priorities.

Stage 3

- Once the community and researchers have reached consensus, the community-based plan will be implemented for one year. At this time I cannot provide definitive parameters of what this community-based plan will include.

- The community already has recorded the traditional teachings of several Elders that have passed away and have specifically requested that these recordings be transcribed and be a part of this research project.

Stage 4

- Evaluation of the community-based plan will be a joint endeavor between the community and the researchers. The community will define success and the parameters to measure and evaluate their community-based program.

The expertise and responsibilities of the academic research team are outlined below:

Dr. Holly Graham-Marrs (**Principal Investigator**) is an Assistant Professor in the College of Nursing at the University of Saskatchewan. Her research expertise is on Indigenous health, mental health and well-being, and narrative inquiry (research method). As the PI on this project, Dr. Graham-Marrs will be responsible for leading the study and guiding the community through the development, implementation, and evaluation of the community-based plan.

Dr. Vivian Ramsden (**Co-Investigator**) is an Associate Professor and director of research for the College of Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan. She has expertise in the areas of participatory research methods, participatory program development and evaluation, and interdisciplinary evaluation and research.

Dr. Peter Butt (**Co-Investigator**) is an Associate Professor in the College of Medicine at the University of Saskatchewan with expertise in mental health and addictions, with an emphasis on Indigenous health.

Charlotte Ross (**Community Research Assistant**) is fluent in the Cree language and has experience working with First Nation communities in Saskatchewan. Charlotte will conduct the interviews with the participants from the Thunderchild First Nation.

Dr. Holly Graham Doctoral Research Findings:

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTIONS OF MIYO-MAHCIHOY&N (WELL-BEING) FROM
A CONTEMPORARY NÉHIYAWAK (PLAINS CREE) PERSPECTIVE

Relationships

Met their emotional needs
Increased self-awareness
Provided opportunity for personal growth
Gave the néhiyawak hope

Spiritual beliefs and cultural practices

Spirituality and prayer
Ceremony

Tānisī wāpahtaman pimātisiwin (worldview)

Personal responsibility
néhiyawak attitude
wícihisowin (helping oneself)

\$hi kikwaya piko ka-ispayiki k#spin ka-noht%-miyo-mahcihoyn
(these are the things that need to happen if I want to be healthy).

*Included all three previously identified themes plus the following:

Employment;
Having a home;
Safe environment;
Being able to buy sufficient nutritious food;
Being able to manage their chronic conditions,
Exercising on a on a regular basis;
Abstain from drugs and alcohol; and,
Continuing their education