

# **SUPPORTING WELLBEING PARTNERSHIP LETTER**

## **Introduction**

Supporting Wellbeing is an Indigenous-led non-profit based in Sòmba K'è (Yellowknife). We provide practical tools and resources for people who plan and deliver land-based programs, so they feel more prepared to respond to mental health challenges that may arise on the land.

We envision a future where Northern residents have access to land-based programs that are culturally affirming and trauma-informed—programs that strengthen Indigenous cultures, languages, and ways of life across the North.

The Supporting Wellbeing Training was developed by land-based leaders from across the Northwest Territories. Their lived experience and knowledge form the foundation of this curriculum. Our work is guided by a Steering Committee and Advisory Council with members from across the NWT.

## **Project Background**

Supporting Wellbeing was created in response to a need identified by communities. In 2018, land-based leaders gathered to talk about challenges they face while delivering on-the-land programs. While the land supports healing and wellbeing, many program leaders are working with people who carry the impacts of intergenerational trauma and who may experience emotional distress during programs. Leaders shared the need for training to better respond to these situations.

In 2020, a Steering Committee was formed to develop the training. In 2021, a pilot training was delivered in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region. In 2022, nine Northern facilitators were trained. Today, our goal is to deliver Supporting Wellbeing in every community and to have at least one facilitator in every region of the North.

## **Intention**

Land-based leaders across the North have shared a strong need for trauma-informed mental health training that is relevant to on-the-land work. Supporting Wellbeing provides culturally grounded tools to build confidence, strengthen helpers, and support community wellbeing.



The training aims to:

- Strengthen the capacity of land-based leaders
- Build confidence in responding to mental health challenges
- Normalize conversations about mental health and support  
Grow a network of helpers who can support one another

## About the Training

Supporting Wellbeing is a 27-hour training (not including breaks or land-based activities). It is designed for people who:

- Have experience delivering land-based programs, and
- Have little to no formal mental health training

## Training Modules

- Module 1: Creating Community on the Land (3.5 hours)
- Module 2: Setting Up Camp for Wellbeing (3.5 hours)
- Module 3: Intergenerational Trauma & Resiliency (6 hours)
- Module 4: Conflict Resolution & Communication Skills (5 hours)
- Module 5: Suicide Intervention & Life Promotion (5 hours)
- Module 6: Supporting Wellbeing When the Program Ends (4 hours)

## Learning Objectives by Module

By the end of the training, participants will have gained the following knowledge and skills:

### Module 1: Creating Community

- Define consent, boundaries, community values and norms in relation to yourself, others, and the Land.
- Discuss consent, boundaries, community values and norms through a shared community agreement.



- Facilitate a discussion or check-in circle.
- Foster respectful communication amongst staff and participants through modeling and scenarios.
- Identify respectful approaches to confidentiality, while understanding the limits of confidentiality, to keep the group safe through using shared community agreement.

## **Module 2: Setting Up Camp For Wellbeing**

- Critique their organizational processes and impacts through self-reflection and pre-screening methods.
- Facilitate the organization of a team of staff and participants with a table of essential standards.
- Describe the coordination of camp roles and what is essential through a checklist format.
- Balance a variety of needs for their camp setup through scenario work.
- Modify camp setup in a variety of ways to be trauma-informed and culturally respectful.

## **Module 3: Intergenerational Trauma & Resiliency**

- Discuss the basic history of colonization in Canada through examples of its continued impact on Indigenous individuals, families, and communities.
- Define trauma and intergenerational trauma through specific and applied examples.
- Identify the responses of people, families, and communities to the various effects of trauma.
- Recognize common responses to trauma as they relate to holistic health, behavior, and relationships through applications of the window of tolerance.
- Discuss the importance of self- and community care through a reflective journaling activity.
- Support people's trauma responses on the land in ways that honour the person's strengths for reduction or reparation of trauma-responses through role-play.



- Describe examples of Indigenous ways of caring for each other through relevant examples.

#### **Module 4: Conflict Resolution and Communication Skills**

- Define conflict and conflict resolution.
- Identify common roots of conflict and how it escalates through an analysis of various stories.
- Identify their preferred conflict style and recognizing other styles through a written self-assessment or game.
- Respond to group dynamics and differences of opinion through various active listening and engagement techniques.
- Demonstrate basic de-escalation and conflict management skills through a structured conflict resolution process and role-play.
- Identify key risk factors for safety planning on the land through the development of awareness skills.
- Develop a safety strategy on the land when key risk factors are presented.

#### **Module 5 Suicide Intervention & Life Promotion**

- Practice using people-first language when discussing suicide.
- Review high-risk factors and warning signs of a person experiencing suicidal thoughts through a matching activity, short case studies or by debunking myths.
- Communicate with a person at risk of suicide in a direct way by practicing how to ask the intent question.
- Develop strategies for responding to those considering suicide at the moment by practicing and identifying examples of empathy.
- Reflect on their own and other's emotional health and stress through the development of a safety plan.
- Demonstrate steps to suicide intervention through role-play and/or scenario work.
- Identify protective factors through reflective practice and artistic expression.



## Module 6: Supporting Wellbeing When The Program Ends

- Define aftercare, cultural aftercare, and self-care.
- List resources in their community and on the land (short term and long term) through brainstorming and group discussion.
- Describe the importance of self-care, self-assessment for prevention of burnout and compassion fatigue through case studies or stories.
- Use a self-care plan as a tool to support others to practice self-care after their programs.
- Apply strategies for self-care and after-care using scenarios.

## Our Learning Approach

Supporting Wellbeing uses a discussion-based, participant-centred learning approach. Learning happens through:

- Group discussion and shared experience
- Small group activities and scenarios
- Reflection and land-based learning

Participants learn from one another as much as from facilitators. Local knowledge and experience are honoured throughout the training.

## Assessment & Completion

There are no tests or exams. Learning is assessed through:

- Participation in discussions and activities
- Scenario-based learning
- Reflection activities

Participants who attend the full module and participate receive a certificate of completion.



## Typical Training Schedule

Trainings are usually delivered over 5 days, depending on community needs and land-based activities. Typically, the first two days look like:

### Day 1

Check-In  
Module 1  
Lunch  
Module 2  
Closing Circle

### Day 2

Check In  
Module 3  
Lunch  
Module 3 (continued)  
Land-based activity coordinated by the partner  
Closing Circle

## Group Size & Staffing

- 3–12 participants
- Two trained SWB facilitators
- One local emotional support person present at all times

## Benefits of Supporting Wellbeing

Supporting Wellbeing contributes to:

- More access to culturally affirming, trauma-informed land-based programs
- Stronger community wellbeing
- Increased connection to culture, language, and land
- Increased local capacity to support mental wellbeing
- Reduced stigma around mental health



## Invitation to Partner

Supporting Wellbeing welcomes partnerships with communities, regions, and organizations interested in hosting training.

Supporting Wellbeing Contributes:

- Funding for catering, venue, and land-based activities
- Two trained facilitators and travel costs (if required)
- Funding to hire a local emotional support person

Community Partner Responsibilities:

- Signed letter of partnership
- \$3,000–\$6,000 deposit (based on organization size)
- A designated community contact
- Hiring at least one local emotional support person
- Identifying venues or camp locations
- Identifying preferred dates
- Coordinating land-based activities and local knowledge holders
- Providing a local logistics coordinator

## Contact Information

If you are interested in hosting a Supporting Wellbeing training apply here:

<https://forms.gle/7PM9zt8HbaGGgc46>

If you would like to learn more, please contact:

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