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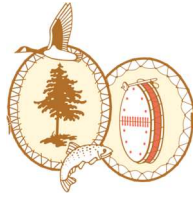
NEW COMMUNITY MIYUPIMAATISIUN COMMITTEE PARTNERSHIP: TO SUPPORT GRASSROOTS ISSUES

Chisasibi, September 21, 2023 - The Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay (CBHSSJB), Cree Nation Government (CNG), Cree School Board (CSB) and the nine Cree First Nations sign an historic partnership agreement to support Community Miyupimaatisiun Committees in Chisasibi on Thursday September 21, 2023. The agreement will foster the collaboration and partnership between local and regional entities, aligning community and regional priorities to support miyupimaatisiun: the physical, spiritual, mental and emotional health and wellbeing of the people of Eeyou Istchee.

The significant changes in Eeyou Eenuo lifestyles experienced in the past five decades have caused the culture to shift into uncharted territory. The many layers of intergenerational trauma the population have experienced since contact has to be considered and addressed. These are the foundational impacts that today find expression in the high rates of addictions, abuse of all forms, and social issues. To claim the Cree Nation as a healthy one and to shift its reality, holistic approaches that address the Cree determinants of health have to be developed. To achieve Miyupimaatisiun, work must be achieved in solidarity with all organizations and levels of government, regional and local.

The Social Solidarity agreement provides us the first step into this journey. It will be followed by a consensus-making process in which we will determine the parameters of our Shared Responsibilities that will guide the full implementation and operations of all Miyupimaatisiun Committees in Eeyou Istchee. Our main goal is not just to establish a new level of partnership between Eeyou Regional entities and communities, but to become a Trauma Informed Nation and Society that will ensure a healthy future for ourselves, our families and our Nation. The CBHSSJB is fully committed to this important initiative, said Bertie Wapachee, chairperson of the CBHSSJB.

Community Miyupimaatisiun Committees, created and made operational in each Cree community over the past few years, are composed of local leaders and community members, including representatives of the signing entities who act as liaisons with those entities. The committees are mandated to work with their community to identify up to three grassroots-level health and social priorities and to propose approaches and mechanisms for dealing with these issues. The partnership formalized through the agreement will see local and regional entities communicating and collaborating with one another through holistic processes and pathways.



We as a Nation have the capacity to address any needs if we unlock the collaboration as a key tool. We are inter-connected, but we know every community also has diverse needs, and it will take the commitment of all entities and organizations to address and work together in implementing solutions. The Miyupimaatisiun Committees are critical to finding successful solutions that are Cree-driven. I look forward to seeing their mandate begin. Everyone will have a role to play in developing a healthy Cree Nation, said Mandy Gull-Masty, Grand Chief/Chairperson, CNG and Grand Council of Crees (Eeyou Istchee).

Community priorities could range from adolescent mental health to Cree customary adoption to support for individuals with diabetes or other chronic conditions. For the CBHSSJB, the Community Miyupimaatisiun Committees will be instrumental for ensuring local priorities are integrated into its next strategic regional plan, currently being developed.

Education is an important social determinant of health and an important aspect in achieving Miyupimaatisiun. The effects of the pandemic, compounded with the issues we face in our communities as a result of intergenerational traumas, necessitate a focus on physical, emotional, spiritual, and mental well-being in our schools. Enacting a trauma-informed approach to education means that we empower our future by honoring identity, culture, language, and history, and also focus on mental health and well-being of the young people that we serve. The Miyupimaatisiun Committee model will bring to life our intent to realize our Shared Responsibility through intensive and targeted partnerships as we value needs and vision at the local level. The time for meaningful action through effective collaboration is now, said Dr. Sarah Pash, Chairperson of the CSB.

The signing, by the Grand Chief of the CNG, the Chairs of the CBHSSJB and CSB, and the nine Chiefs of the Cree First Nations of Eeyou Istchee, builds on a February gathering of Community Miyupimaatisiun Committees that worked to finalize the terms of this partnership and takes place in what has been designated the Year of Social Solidarity for the Cree Nation.

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