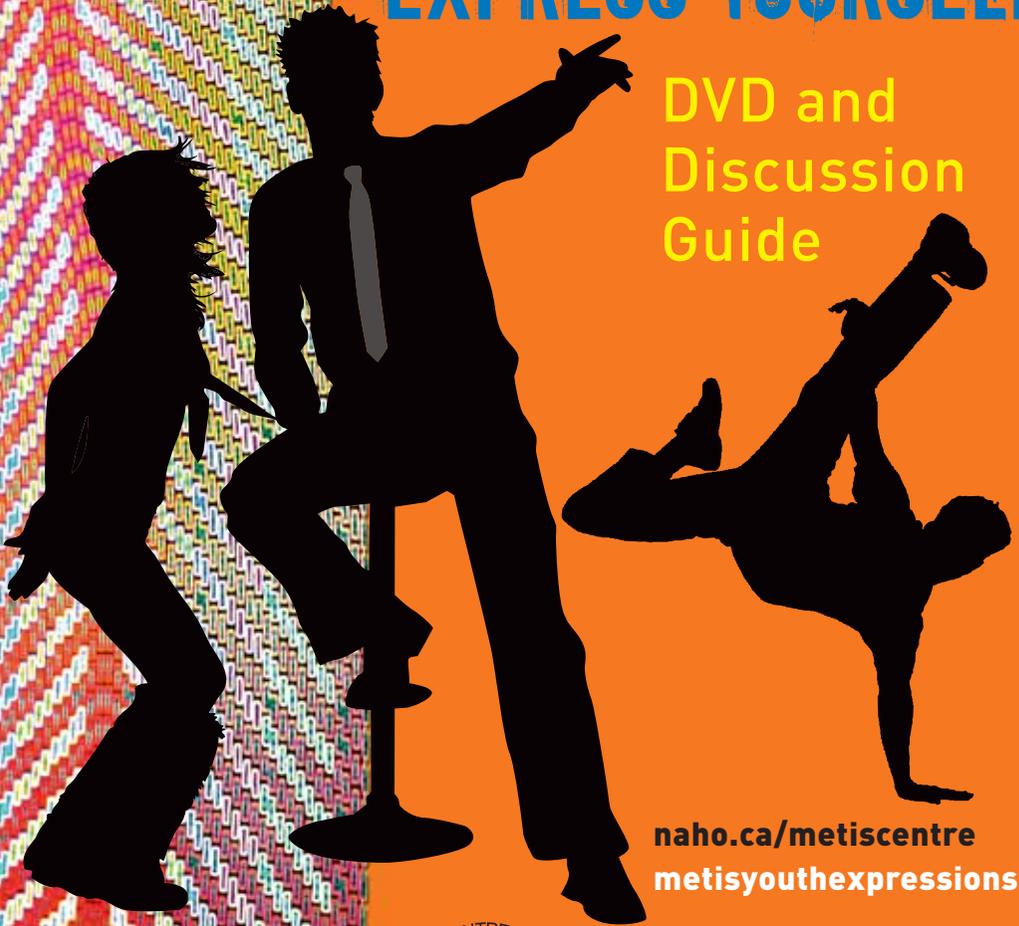


IS PAYYIN

MÉTIS YOUTH
EXPRESS YOURSELF!

DVD and
Discussion
Guide



naho.ca/metiscentre
metisyouthexpressions.ca



National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO)
Organisation nationale de la santé autochtone (ONSA)
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Under the *Canadian Constitution Act, 1982*, the term Aboriginal Peoples refers to First Nations, Inuit and Métis people living in Canada. However, common use of the term is not always inclusive of all three distinct peoples, and much of the available research only focuses on particular segments of the Aboriginal population. NAHO makes every effort to ensure the term is used appropriately.

Project Background

The Métis Centre of the National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO) has identified youth well-being as a priority, based on proceedings from our Nakoda Lodge Think Tank in 2007 and our Métis Child and Youth Health Think Tank in 2010.

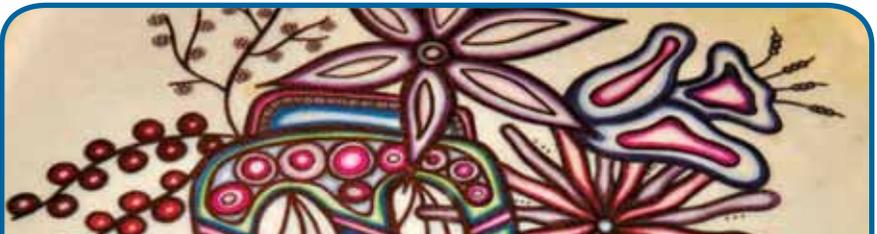
ISPAYIN — Métis Youth Express Yourself! is an extensive project, led by the Métis Centre of NAHO, to build awareness about Métis youth identity, health and well-being. What you are reading now is part of the *ISPAYIN* interactive package — a DVD compilation of youth recordings and submissions with associated narratives, and this accompanying Discussion Guide. This interactive package showcases Métis pride and can be used as a cultural competency tool within mainstream and Aboriginal organizations, in communities and schools across Canada, and elsewhere.

The *ISPAYIN* project sought out artistic submissions and sponsored regional gatherings of Métis youth across Canada in the summer of 2009. Youth were recorded singing, speaking, fiddling, jigging, rapping, and dancing at these events. They were also encouraged to submit videos or hard copies of artwork, music, stand-up comedy, poetry or other forms of artistic expression. The DVD is built around these expressions of Métis youth identity in a contemporary context. The images are paired with intergenerational narratives, representing a collective Métis past, present, and future.

The *ISPAYIN* project also aims to engage Métis youth. Select youth from various regions in Canada attended a two-day symposium in July 2009. They discussed effective methods for youth engagement around identity, culture, health and well-being using social media tools, and explored basic videography. A second symposium was held in March 2010 to train Métis youth as facilitators, encouraging them to take an active role in delivering workshops on identity, health and cultural competency using this interactive package. Through this project we hope to empower youth to engage and work with others to develop Métis-specific cultural competency.

The Métis Centre is also developing a youth website to offer information about health, well-being and culture, and a space for youth to blog, network, and engage each other. Watch for the website launch in 2010 at www.metisyouthexpressions.ca!

**We encourage you to engage a Métis youth to present (or co-present) this DVD. Contact your provincial Métis organization to identify Métis youth in your area (see the Links section).*



DID YOU KNOW? ISPAYIN

Ispayin is a Michif term that means ‘happening’. We used it for this project to articulate the focus of the project: ‘What’s happening’ with Métis youth today.

ARTWORK BY JAIME KOEBEL

Let's Get Started!

Information for the Facilitator

This Discussion Guide offers a number of different activities to be undertaken with groups of participants. Depending on your context and the amount of time available, you can choose one or more activities to suit your needs. The DVD segments can be viewed either individually or in combination, and workshop activities can be based either on individual segments or on the combined footage.

As a facilitator, your role is to determine what the focus of the session will be by selecting the parts of the DVD to show, providing background information from this booklet, and guiding participants in discussions and/or activities. The goal is to explore and build awareness about Métis youth identity.

PROMINENT MÉTIS LOUIS RIEL

Louis Riel was the leader of his people in their resistance against the Canadian government in the Northwest. He was born in the Red River Settlement in 1844 (now part of Manitoba).⁴



JORDAN FLEURY

Before the workshop

- Choose the DVD segments to show your participants (*Our Past, Our Present, Our Future, or Play All*).
- Photocopy (or print from the Métis Centre youth website) the Métis Fast Facts, Glossary, and Feedback Form pages from this Discussion Guide for participants (if possible). For direct access to these files, go to: www.metisyouthexpressions.ca
- Recommended materials:
 - Flipchart
 - Markers
 - Handouts from the Discussion Guide (or printouts from the website)

During the workshop

- Introduce yourself; welcome the group; have participants introduce themselves, if appropriate;
- Invite an Aboriginal Elder from the traditional territory where the workshop is being held and/or a Métis Elder to offer an opening prayer;
- Use the Background Information and the Let's Get Started! sections to introduce the *ISPAYIN — Métis Youth Express Yourself!* DVD and Discussion Guide;
- Describe the three Aboriginal groups recognized in Canada's Constitution: First Nations/Indian, Inuit and Métis (see the Glossary for definitions);
- Show the DVD segments you selected;
- Facilitate the activities from this Discussion Guide, or come up with your own;
- Fill out a Feedback Form and send it to us at the Métis Centre.

To order more (free) copies, please contact the Métis Centre at metiscentre@naho.ca, give us a call at 1-877-602-4445 x518 (toll free), or send us a note to: Métis Centre, National Aboriginal Health Organization, 220 Laurier Ave. West, Suite 1200, Ottawa, ON, K1P 5Z9.

Have fun!

Our Past

The first segment reflects the past by showing a Métis Elder sharing traditional knowledge of her culture and history with a Métis youth.

In the late 1700s our people came into being. The fur trade was going strong in the central and western parts of North America, and many European traders had relationships with Indian/First Nations women. They had children with mixed heritage, and as these children grew up, they started marrying each other, and developing a distinct Aboriginal culture — the culture of the Métis.

Over time, we developed our own communities along the fur trade route — around the Great Lakes, throughout the Prairie Provinces, and all the way up to the Mackenzie River in what they now call the Northwest Territories. We lived an interesting life. Whole families got together in spring and fall for buffalo hunts, and in the summer we gathered berries and farmed in small gardens. In the winter we focused on trapping furs, and all the family members had a role to play. Our people developed strong connections with each other through the fur trade network, through our group harvesting activities, through our family ties, and through our shared history and sense of identity.

Us Métis helped in expanding Canada toward the west. At the same time we've had to struggle throughout history to be recognized as a distinct Aboriginal group with the same rights as our First Nations and Inuit cousins. You've probably heard stories about the Red River Resistance and the Battle of Batoche. Those were two important events in our struggle, and we have made some gains since then. Our history is woven into the fabric of this country, like the threads in a Métis sash.

Today, there are Métis living throughout Canada, and we make up about a third of the entire Aboriginal population in the country. The government has recognized Métis as a distinct Aboriginal group, but we still have a ways to go before all of our rights are realized. Be proud of your Métis heritage. We are a strong and vibrant people, and we have great things to do in this world!



DID YOU KNOW? LOUIS RIEL DAY

On November 16th each year, the Métis Nation hosts commemorative ceremonies at locations throughout Ontario and western Canada to honor Louis Riel's contributions to the country and to his people, the Métis.

PHOTO CREDIT: INGRID MISNER, ARTISTIC IMPRESSIONS PHOTOGRAPHY

Our Present

The second segment represents the present, where a Métis youth shares knowledge with an Elder about what it is like to be Métis in contemporary times. This segment highlights the fact that even though Métis youth may not express themselves traditionally, it does not mean that they lack a Métis identity. Métis youth indicate a desire to use technology such as social networking sites and internet resources to learn and share historical and contemporary Métis knowledge.

I am a proud Métis and I am very fortunate to have grown up understanding the importance of what that means. I have grown up knowing what it is like to live on the land, but also knowing what it is like to live in an urban environment. My father and my grandfather have taught me how to hunt and fish, and when we celebrate my family gathers to feast and dance while I play the fiddle.

I have been very fortunate to understand what it is to be a traditional Métis, but many of my Métis friends have not been so lucky. Many of them come from families who have felt like they had to hide their Métis identities out of shame. Many grandparents were taught to feel this sense of shame when they attended residential school.

After a family has lost their knowledge, it is hard to recover, so many of us haven't had the chance to learn about our Métis identities. But this doesn't mean that we don't want to learn. It just means that we may not know where to go to get the right information.

We love technology, so using social media tools to help us access the Métis knowledge that we want is a great idea. But we should also remember that being Métis is not just about our history. Like all culture, Métis culture changes over time, so it is also important for us as youth to express what it means to be Métis in today's world. Even though many of us choose to express ourselves through activities like fiddling and jigging, a lot of us prefer more contemporary ways like hip hop, basketball or even ballet.

Our Future

The third segment focuses on the future of Métis people by portraying a Métis youth transferring knowledge to a Métis child. The script initially reflects how historical and contemporary challenges influence Métis identity. It finishes with this important message: Métis youth have a strong sense of cultural identity and pride in who they are, and Métis people make up a strong and resilient nation with a bright future.

As Métis we have fought many battles and have overcome many obstacles. For many Métis youth the aftermath of these obstacles still affects us today. We experience peer pressure like all youth, but we also often experience discrimination, and some of us still struggle with understanding who we are as members of the Métis Nation.

I am often told by older generations that as youth we are the leaders of tomorrow, but I think that many of us are the leaders of today. We lead within our families and our communities. We lead every day by setting a positive example for not only the next generation, but for today's generation and the generations that have come before us.

We are teachers, athletes, artists, and advocates. We are training to be doctors and lawyers and politicians. As long as we remain proud of who we are as Métis, we will continue to be resilient and we will continue to lead the way.

ACTIVITY 1

Discussion Questions

Approximate time: 20 minutes per question

Show one or more segments or the entire DVD to your workshop group; then use the below questions to help focus a discussion. You can also refer to the Did You Know? and Prominent Métis boxes, and the Glossary for more ideas. Select the discussion questions that suit your audience, and do a wrap-up at the end to identify the main messages from the discussion. We have included *prompts* to help you as facilitator to move the discussion forward. You can use a flipchart to keep track of participant ideas during the discussion, if you wish.

Discussion 1

Questions:

- What struck you most about the DVD?
- What do you know or what did you learn today about Métis identity and diversity?

Prompts:

These are some quotes from Métis youth about their identity in a contemporary context. Discuss how each of these fits in with the concepts explored in the DVD:

- “We are a bridge between two worlds.”
- “We have First Nation and European ancestry.”
- “We are resilient, strong, alive and vibrant.”
- “We are diverse but the same.”
- “We are traditional but contemporary.”
- “We are brown, we are red and we are white.”
- “We sing, we dance, we play guitar, we play fiddle; we are poets, songwriters and artists.”
- “We are caught in the middle, but also the bridge between two worlds.”

Discussion 2

While most Aboriginal health programs (and others) claim to be pan-Aboriginal (inclusive of all Aboriginal groups) in nature, they may not meet the needs of Métis. Métis youth often feel excluded from Aboriginal services due to a lack of knowledge and awareness of service providers about Métis culture, identity and history. There is a need to raise awareness and build capacity in the health sector to address these challenges.

- Think about whether you have experienced a situation where you felt that your values and beliefs were not respected. What does *cultural competency* mean to you in this context?

As a group, read the definition of *cultural competency* in the Glossary, and consider the following statements:

- *Cultural competency* is more than knowledge. It also includes how cultural skills are developed and practiced in everyday life.
- A culturally competent service provider should be knowledgeable of the differences among the three Aboriginal groups in Canada, and should be striving to understand Métis peoples’ diverse values, beliefs and traditions within both traditional and contemporary contexts. This knowledge should be incorporated into all aspects of programs or services (design, development and delivery).



DID YOU KNOW? MÉTIS SASH

The woven sash is perhaps the most widely recognized and best known symbol associated with the Métis culture. The sash was valued for its aesthetic presence, as well as its practicality and versatility. Often, a decorative beaded pipe bag was suspended from a Voyageur's sash. It was also used by Voyageurs to carry their belongings during their transportation duties, and it provided warmth in the colder seasons.¹⁸

Questions:

- With this in mind, what is the difference between *tolerance* versus *respect* and *acceptance* of other cultures and ways of being?
- The main goal of this *ISPAYIN* interactive package is to serve as a *cultural competency* tool. What are some ways that it could be used to build *cultural competency*?

Discussion 3

Métis often feel under-represented in the health service sector. It is common to find non-Aboriginal doctors, pharmacists, and other health professionals serving Aboriginal populations. These individuals may lack sensitivity to Métis cultural needs, values and beliefs.

Questions:

- With this in mind, what are some ways that we might encourage and train Métis to become involved in health careers?
- What do you think can be done to promote more Métis youth involvement in working towards healthier lifestyles and communities?
- How might the development of positive identity help empower Métis youth to advocate for their own health needs and take on leadership roles in their communities? What are some ways that we might be able to empower youth?

Wrap-up for the three discussion questions

From the discussions we had today, what are the three key messages relating to identity and health that were highlighted?

ACTIVITY 2

Breaking Down Stereotypes

Approximate time: 15 minutes

Refer to the Métis Fast Facts sheet, and provide it as a handout, if possible. The purpose of this exercise is to discuss the effects of stereotypes. Ask your group one or more of the following questions.

- What is a stereotype?
- Can stereotypes affect a person's health and well-being? Give an example.
- How might stereotyping impact Métis youth?
- Would being young make someone more vulnerable to believing in stereotypes?
- Do you think that a strong connection to culture, history and identity could protect youth against negative stereotyping?
- How important is community and family support for youth who are experiencing negative stereotyping?
- What are some ways to break down stereotypes?
- How might this DVD be used to teach youth about breaking down stereotypes?

PROMINENT MÉTIS GABRIEL DUMONT

was born in the Red River Settlement in 1837, and became an influential leader of the Métis people. At the age of 14 he was already active in the buffalo hunts and surpassing many men in marksmanship. He led the small Métis military forces during the Northwest Resistance of 1885.⁵

Prompts:

As a group, read the definition of *stereotype* from the Glossary. Discuss the following common stereotypes of Métis people:

1. All Métis people are of Cree and French ancestry; true or false?
False: The Métis Nation is made up of a diverse population with a common cultural identity. Métis people have different mixes of First Nation (Cree, Ojibway, Salteaux and others) and European (primarily French and Scottish) ancestry.
2. Métis people have status cards like First Nations people; true or false?
False: There are no 'status cards' for Métis; they are not registered under the *Indian Act*. There are a number of provincial Métis organizations that issue their own citizenship cards, although not all Métis choose to apply.
3. Métis people have free education and health care, and can hunt anywhere; true or false?
False: Métis are recognized in the Constitution of Canada as possessing Aboriginal rights. With the exception of some (limited) rights related to harvesting, other rights, such as the right to health, have not been clearly defined or even fully discussed. As a result, unlike other constitutionally recognized Aboriginal Peoples in Canada, Métis do not have access to federally funded non-insured health benefits or education benefits.

How might stereotypes like those described above affect a person's well-being and cultural identity?

ACTIVITY 3

Thought Exercise: Roots of a Tree Analogy¹

Approximate time: 10 minutes

This is a thought exercise that highlights the importance of Métis people staying connected to their culture and heritage (their roots). Read the following paragraph to your workshop participants and discuss the questions below:

Imagine you are growing a tree, beginning from a seedling. You have taken care of it for many months and it has now grown into a sapling. It has grown so much that it is now time to transfer it from its pot to your backyard. Imagine that before you plant it in the backyard, someone comes along and trims its roots.

PROMINENT MÉTIS TANTOO CARDINAL

Tantoo Cardinal is a Métis film and television actress born in Anzac, Fort McMurray, Alberta. She has brought complex representations of Native women to the movie screen.⁶

Questions:

- Do you think your plant can still grow and be healthy?
- How can this analogy be applied to Métis history?
- What are your 'roots'? Ask the group to brainstorm all the things that make up their identity.

Just like plants need their roots to grow, so do Métis youth. Being able to stay connected to your roots is important for positive self-identity and contributes to one's overall health. Positive self-identity is also a key determinant of Métis health.



DID YOU KNOW? MÉTIS FLAG

The Métis flag, which emerged in the early 1800s, symbolizes the creation of a new society with roots in both Aboriginal and European cultures and traditions. The infinity symbol also suggests that the Métis Nation will exist forever.¹⁷

PHOTO CREDIT: KEN FRAZER, FRAZER STUDIO

ACTIVITY 4

Shared Experience Scenarios¹

Approximate time: 15-20 minutes each

The purpose of this activity is to highlight the important role that positive self-identity plays in improving health and well-being, and to discuss ways that communities, educators, practitioners and others can work together to provide a supportive, culturally safe environment that enables Métis (and others) to succeed.

Select one or more of the following scenarios to work through with your participants. Read over the scenario with your participants and have them discuss the questions.

Note: With groups larger than six, you may want to break people into smaller groups. Also, if your group includes both adults and youth, it may be useful to mix them together.

Ask the group to reflect on the concept of *cultural identity* when reading the following scenarios.

Scenario 1: Social Exclusion¹

“But you don’t look Aboriginal”

Renee is a 15 year old blond haired, blue eyed, fair skinned Métis girl. She is proud of her Métis culture and heritage. Renee has decided to join the drumming class offered by her local Aboriginal community organization to celebrate her culture. When Renee walks up to the reception desk to register, she is greeted coldly, making her feel very uncomfortable. When Renee expresses her interest in registering for the Aboriginal drumming class, the woman smirks and tells Renee that it is only for Aboriginal people and that she is in the wrong place. Feeling uncomfortable and hurt by the woman’s reaction, Renee turns around and walks home.

Questions:

- How do you think this experience has made Renee feel?
- What are some things that could be done differently to avoid this situation?

Prompts:

- Métis people are diverse and do not all look a certain way. Reflect on Métis identity. How might cultural *identity* affect health and well-being?
- The following is a First Nation Elder’s reflection on the perceived advantage of being Métis: *“She can go places that we can’t go. She can speak in places that we can’t speak. People like her have been a part of our culture ever since time began. We have always had people like her do the work we can’t do.”*² This quote makes it clear that there is also a lack of understanding about Métis from some people in the First Nations community who may consider it an advantage to look more ‘white’. Métis can experience exclusion from both sides, either not being considered ‘white’ enough by non-Aboriginals, or not ‘Indian’ enough by First Nations. How might this exclusion cause conflict between Métis and non-Métis communities, and within Métis communities themselves?
- What does cultural *identity* mean to you?
- What are some things that can be done at your work/school or in your community to help Métis youth like Renee feel more included?



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Scenario 2: Feeling Alone¹

Mike is a 19 year old Métis who recently moved to Ottawa from his small community in northern Manitoba, and is still getting used to the urban environment. He has not been feeling well and decides to go to the local walk-in clinic. Upon entering, he immediately feels out of place as all the images on the posters and magazines are of non-Aboriginal people. Furthermore, the workers and other clients in the clinic are all non-Aboriginal. He does not see his own face reflected in this clinic. This really makes Mike miss his family and his community.

Questions:

Read the definition of *cultural competency* at the end of this guide, and discuss the following:

- What are some things that could be done to make Mike more comfortable in this situation?

Scenario 3: First Day at a New School¹

Rachel is a 10 year old Métis who just started at a new school. Recently, her family has moved out of their home community for her dad to work in the city. When Rachel

PROMINENT MÉTIS MARIA CAMPBELL

Maria Campbell is a Métis author, playwright, filmmaker, academic and Elder. She is best known for her memoir *Halfbreed* (1973), which relates her struggles as a Métis woman in Canadian society and traces her journey of self-discovery. In 2008 she was made an Officer of the Order of Canada.⁹

first walks into her class, the teacher kindly introduces her and tells the class that Rachel is Aboriginal. To honour her Aboriginal roots, the teacher organizes a special event to play pow-wow music and read Aboriginal stories. The teacher and students talk to Rachel about her Aboriginal heritage, yet at the end of the day she seems quiet and upset. The teacher is confused about why Rachel is reacting this way.

Questions:

- What might have gone wrong here?
- What could have been done to prevent Rachel from feeling this way?
- Read the definition of *diversity* in the Glossary. How does it relate to key ideas from this scenario?

Prompt:

People often think that being Métis is the same as being First Nations. Although there are similarities, these two groups have diverse cultures, histories and languages. Métis people are also extremely diverse within their own nation.

PROMINENT MÉTIS BRYAN TROTTIER

Bryan Trottier is a Métis from Val Marie, Saskatchewan who was inducted into the National Hockey League's Hall of Fame in 1997. He is noted as one of the greatest hockey players to come out of Saskatchewan. In 1998, he received an Aboriginal Achievement Award for Sports.⁷

Scenario 4: Proud of Who I Am¹

Matt is a 15 year old Métis who lives in a community within his ancestral lands. He advocates the importance of youth involvement in his community and has been seeking support to fund the building of a Métis youth centre. Matt knows this centre will be important for helping youth in his community lead healthier and happier lives. Matt tells people: 'I am a strong and proud Métis person. My pride makes me strong for my people. My grandmother has taught me these ways.'

This story shows that children who are taught to have a strong sense of cultural *identity* and pride want to share that pride with others in (and outside) their community.

Questions:

- Do you think valuing your own culture plays an important role in how you value yourself?
- If Matt gets the necessary funding and support to build a youth centre, how do you think this process will shape how youth in his community feel about themselves?

Scenario 5: Métis Health Impacts

The purpose of this activity is to allow your workshop group to become familiar with what *social determinants of health* are, and discuss why this is a useful approach for understanding Métis health.

Have participants think about where they live, work, study, and play, and the many different types of relationships they have in their lives.

Questions:

- What are some of the things in your social environment that affect your health and well-being? Remember that the concept of health and well-being does not refer only to your physical health, but also to your mental, emotional and spiritual health. This is a holistic approach to health (see *holistic* in the Glossary).
- Have you heard the term *social determinants of health*? What do you think it means?



CANDICE LYS

PROMINENT MÉTIS TODD DUCHARME

Todd Ducharme is a Canadian judge. In 2004, he was the first Métis appointed to the Ontario Superior Court of Justice.⁸

Now, go back to the first question and ask whether anyone has any new ideas about the types of things in their social environment that affect their health and well-being.

The following exchange³ may help illustrate the impact of the 'causes of causes'. Read the series of questions and responses with the group, or ask a participant to read it with you.

PROMINENT MÉTIS KIM ANDERSON

Kim Anderson is a Cree/Métis writer and educator. She makes her living doing social and health policy work through her consulting firm, The Write Circle. She has also published scholarly work, fiction and poetry.¹¹

Read the *social determinants of health* definition in the Glossary. *Social determinants of health* are often called 'the causes of the causes' — the context or situation behind the actual thing that affects one's health, either in a positive or negative way.

Question: Why is Jessica in the hospital?

Response: Because she fainted in her elementary school and the paramedics were called.

Question: But why did she faint?

Response: Because she was exhausted and hungry.

Question: But why was she exhausted?

Response: Because she has a two-hour bus ride to and from school.

Question: Why does she have such a long ride?

Response: Because she has to go to school in another province.

Question: But why does she go to school so far away?

Response: Because she lives in northern British Columbia and the school district closed the community's school.

Question: OK, but why is she so hungry?

Response: Because there is not enough food to eat in her home.

Question: Why isn't there enough food?

Response: Because her family does not have as much money as it needs.

Question: But why don't they have enough money?

Response: Because Jessica's father was just laid off and can't find another job.

Question: Why can't he find another job?

Response: Because there are not many jobs where they live. He will probably have to travel far from his family to provide for them.

Question: But then, why doesn't the whole family move somewhere else?

Response: Because they grew up there. Their community is there. It is their ancestral territory.

Question: But why can't they leave?

Response: Because they are afraid of losing their traditional way of life: hunting, trapping, gathering medicines and speaking their language.



Question: Oh! If they can hunt, why don't they have food to eat?

Response: Because there was a natural resource boom during the past decade, which meant Jessica's father found paid employment for a while, but it also meant the new roads and machinery changed the land. The developers had no respect for the Métis way of life and now the wildlife, the water and the plants are polluted.

Question: But why didn't Jessica's community stop the developers?

Response: Because they had no say in the matter. They had no control over their land.

Question: But if it's their land, why didn't they have a right to be consulted?

Response: Because Métis do not have the same rights and recognition as First Nations and Inuit.

Question: Why not?

Response: etc...

- What struck you about this story? Is it realistic? What are some of the challenges that Jessica and her family are facing that affect their health and well-being?
- Think about this family's desire to stay in their home community. What are some ways that people's identity and their attachment to place (e.g. an ancestral territory, a rural community, an urban neighbourhood, etc.) might affect their health and well-being?
- Think about the community members' inability to stop development on their ancestral lands. What are some ways that a lack of Métis rights impacts the well-being of Métis people?
- What are some things that might be done to improve this situation? What kind of support or services might Jessica's family need to improve their health and well-being?

PROMINENT MÉTIS THELMA CHALIFOUX

Honorable Senator Thelma Chalifoux is the first Métis woman to be appointed to the Senate of Canada, in 1997. Born in Calgary, Alberta in 1929, she was the first Aboriginal woman to broadcast on commercial radio with CKXL Radio Peace River. She was the first Métis woman ever appointed to the University of Alberta Senate.¹⁰

PROMINENT MÉTIS TRAVIS JONES

Travis Jones is an 18 year old Métis from Pouce Coupe, British Columbia. He competed in the 2010 Vancouver winter Olympics in the sport of curling. Jones is pleased to show the world that Aboriginal athletes are reaching the top in Canadian Sports.¹²

ACTIVITY 5

Personal Commitment: Making a Difference¹

Approximate time: 5-10 minutes

This activity encourages participants to take a proactive role in implementing the *cultural competency* skills developed through the use of this DVD and Discussion Guide (or elsewhere).

Ask the following of each participant:

What is something that you can do (or would like to do) differently in your life that reflects both your cultural awareness and competency, and some of the positive lessons from this DVD and the discussions we've had today?

Note: Encourage participants to take notes on these responses and include them in the Feedback Form.



PROMINENT MÉTIS CHANNING LAVALLÉ

Channing is a Social Work student at the University of Manitoba and a community-oriented volunteer. Her dream is to join the Children's Hospital Pediatric Oncology Department in Winnipeg, inspired by her sister's battle with cancer. Channing believes that 'Our Aboriginal youth must allow themselves to dream and set goals — commitment and perseverance are the skills that will help you achieve those dreams and goals.' She was selected as a NAHO National Aboriginal Role Model in 2008.¹⁴

Prompts:

Think about making a commitment to something that you can do in your workplace or community to make it more accessible or culturally relevant to Métis (or other) people's realities.

Note that even telling another organization about this DVD and Discussion Guide is an important step in improving *cultural competency* for Métis and others.

Wrap-up

Discuss any lessons learned from the DVD and Discussion Guide activities.

If time permits, view the DVD (or segments) a second time and see if your participants have any new insights.

There is a Feedback Form at the end of this guide. We would love to hear from you! The form can be filled out either by individual participants, as a group, or by the facilitator.



PHOTO CREDIT: SONIA WESCHE

Métis Fast Facts

- Section 35 of Canada's *Constitution Act, 1982* recognized three distinct Aboriginal Peoples: First Nations (Indians), Inuit and Métis.
- Being Métis is not simply a matter of having mixed European and First Nation heritage. Métis are a distinct people with a great deal of diversity in regards to culture, language, values, and beliefs, and these vary between communities and geographic regions.
- Approximately one-third of the Aboriginal population in Canada identifies as being Métis (~390,000 total).²¹
- Approximately forty-three per cent of the Métis population is under age 25.²¹
- A Métis approach to health is holistic. 'We see each other as being related to everything.' — Métis Elder Tom McCallum
- The *social determinants of health* perspective recognizes that health is influenced by the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age. *Identity* has been recognized as a social determinant of health.
- Exploring Métis identity from a youth perspective in a positive way will lead to better identifying and addressing the needs of Métis youth, resulting in improved health.
- Métis culture is not static; rather, it continually changes and evolves. It is important for Métis youth to express their identity within a contemporary context.



DID YOU KNOW? MÉTIS FIDDLE

The fiddle has figured prominently in the lifestyle of the Métis people for hundreds of years. The famous Red River Jig has become the centrepiece of Métis music, although it varies by region and performer. Since the European fiddle was very expensive in Canada's early development as a country, many craftsmen learned to make their own. Today, the fiddle is used in celebrations and fiddle and jigging contests, where the instrument symbolizes Métis nationhood and pride.¹⁹

PHOTO CREDIT: MÉTIS FIDDLER QUARTET PRODUCTIONS

Glossary

Cultural competency: Having the capacity, as an individual or an organization, to function effectively within a culturally-sensitive context, where the cultural beliefs, behaviours, and needs presented by consumers and their communities are respected and accepted. Health care providers who are culturally competent provide culturally safe care.²²

Culture and tradition: The foundation of both individual and collective identity. These are reflected in values, norms, traditions, places and symbols that influence how individuals that belong to a certain group (e.g. Métis) perceive, think, interact, behave and make judgments about the world around them.²³ For the Métis, culture is often intimately connected to the land and environment, and its suppression or erosion can negatively impact mental health and well-being. *Culture and tradition* are fluid concepts that may change over someone's lifespan, and they are highly personal. Métis culture is reflected in the questions, 'What does it mean to be Métis?' and 'How do you act out what it means to be Métis?'

Diversity: The state or quality of being different or varied. *Diversity* is emphasized by the various social, cultural and historical backgrounds of Aboriginal Peoples in Canada, and within the Métis Nation itself.

First Nations: Indians (commonly referred to as *First Nations*) are one of the three Aboriginal Peoples of Canada recognized under Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. Indians in Canada are often referred to as: Status Indians (registered under the Indian Act), non-Status Indians (not registered under the Indian Act) and Treaty Indians (A Status Indian who belongs to a First Nation that signed a treaty with the Crown). There are 615 *First Nation* communities in Canada, which represent more than 50 nations (or cultural groups) and languages. Of the more than one million people in Canada who self-identify as Aboriginal, approximately 53% are Status Indians and 11% are Non-Status Indians.²⁴

PROMINENT MÉTIS COLLIN BAIKIE

Collin is an entrepreneur, competitive athlete and ace mechanic who was selected as a NAHO National Aboriginal Role Model in 2009. At age 19, he owns a community service station in Labrador. He employs local youth, encouraging them to work hard and succeed. Collin says, "If there is something you want to accomplish, set your goal and don't let anything get in your way – hard work pays off!"¹³

Holistic: A *holistic* approach emphasizes the importance of a whole entity and highlights the relationships among all parts of an individual, community or system (rather than analyzing each part separately). Aboriginal perspectives on health generally incorporate physical, mental, emotional and spiritual elements; the medicine wheel is often used as a model for these teachings. Health and well-being includes that of the individual, family, community, neighbourhood, and nation, across many demographics: Elder, adult, youth, child and infant.

Identity: The distinct personality of an individual. Your history, culture, experiences and social networks contribute to who you are. Identity is what makes you you!

Inuit: *Inuit* are one of the three Aboriginal Peoples of Canada recognized under Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. Canada is home to over 50,000 *Inuit* who live primarily in 53 Arctic communities



DID YOU KNOW? MÉTIS JIGGING

The Red River Jig, the unique dance developed by the Métis people, combines the intricate footwork of Native dancing with the instruments and form of European music. Traditionally, dancing started early in the evening and could last until dawn. Witnesses were amazed by the energy and vitality spent on celebration, especially after the long, arduous work days necessary to keep Métis communities running. Today, the Métis people still enjoy jigging, and have local, provincial and national dance teams that attend conferences, exhibitions and powwows.²⁰

in four geographic regions: Nunatsiavut (Labrador); Nunavik (Quebec); Nunavut; and the Inuvialuit Settlement Region of the Northwest Territories.²⁵ Inuit make up approximately 4% of the total Aboriginal population.

Métis: *Métis* are one of the three Aboriginal Peoples of Canada recognized under Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*. The Métis National Council considers a person to be *Métis* if they 'self-identify as Métis, are of historic Métis Nation ancestry, are distinct from other Aboriginal Peoples, and are accepted by the Métis Nation'. The Historic Métis Nation homeland refers to the area of land in west central North America used and occupied as the traditional territory of the *Métis* (or Half-Breeds, as they were then known). A distinct *Métis* population initially emerged from the marriages of First Nations women (Cree, Ojibway, Salteaux and others) with French and Scottish Fur traders, and eventually Scandinavian, Irish, and English settlers as well. The *Métis* people acted as intermediaries between European and Indian cultures, often as guides and interpreters. They developed a unique language called Michif, which has three distinct variations. There are now approximately 390,000 *Métis* living in Canada, representing about one-third of the total Aboriginal population. Approximately two-thirds of *Métis* live in urban areas.²⁶

Racism and Social Exclusion: *Racism* is one type of oppression, which is based on a range of social characteristics. Social systems are often based on ideologies (world-views) about differences between groups, and these play out in attitudes, beliefs, behaviours, laws, norms and practices. Oppression is embedded in larger social systems, and it can be reproduced (or carried out) within these systems by people who may have no racist intentions. Such oppression can lead to social exclusion, a process where individuals and groups are detached from social networks and institutions, limiting their full participation in the society in which they live.

Resilience: The positive capacity of people (or communities) to cope with stress or crisis, and to bounce back after a disruption. *Resilience* relates to the ability to adapt to changes in the face of adversity.

Self-determination: The freedom of the people of a particular national grouping or territory to determine their own political status and how they will be governed, with limited external influence. *Self-determination* is a determinant of health that is common among the world's Indigenous Peoples, as is the impact of colonization. Both have had, and continue to have, significant effects on the health and well-being of Métis in Canada.

Spirituality: A sense of connectedness to something larger than oneself. *Spirituality* is a broader concept than religion, and it can be practiced in different ways, such as participating in traditional ceremonies or activities, attending church, talking with Elders, meditating, praying, etc. Research suggests that *spirituality* is linked to improved health outcomes. As Métis are highly diverse, and since *spirituality* is highly personal, this determinant of health is difficult to pinpoint.

Stereotype: A commonly shared belief or image about certain types of individuals or social groups, based on an oversimplified view of an observed or imagined trait, behavior, or appearance. *Stereotypes* reflect ideas that groups of people hold about others who are different from them.

Social Determinants of Health^{28, 29}: There are a range of factors that influence (or determine) health, and many complex interactions among these factors. The *social determinants of health* are the social and economic conditions that shape the health of individuals, communities, and jurisdictions as a whole. This approach to health focuses on the influence of the social environment, rather than health services or individual psychology or behaviour. These determinants play a primary role in influencing whether people stay healthy or become ill, and whether they possess the physical, social and personal resources to identify and achieve personal aspirations, satisfy needs and cope with the environment in which they live. They relate to the quantity, quality and diversity of resources available to members of a society.

- **Direct Determinants**³⁰: Factors that have a direct impact on people's physical, mental, emotional or spiritual health (e.g. housing and physical environment, food security, employment, income and working conditions).
- **System-level Determinants**³⁰: Community-level or larger-level systems that produce the Direct Determinants (e.g. health care services, community and economic development, cultural continuity).
- **Contextual Determinants**³⁰: Political, economic and social contexts that influence System-level and Direct Determinants (e.g. colonial history, racism and social exclusion/inclusion, self-determination).



Feedback Form

Facilitators and participants, please fill in this form and send us your feedback! We are also creating an online map showing the locations of *ISPAYIN* workshops, so please send us your location.

Facilitator name and contact information (to be added to our list of workshops for this project):

Name:

Address:

City:

Province:

Postal Code:

Telephone:

Email:

1. Where did you use this tool (name of community)?

2. In what context/organization (school, youth group, professional organization, etc.) did you use this tool? Who was the target audience?

3. Did you find this tool valuable? Would you use it again?

4. Other comments/feedback:

Thank you for sharing your ideas.

Please send feedback to: Métis Centre, National Aboriginal Health Organization, 220 Laurier Ave. West, Suite 1200, Ottawa, ON, K1P 5Z9, metiscentre@naho.ca.

Métis Youth Biographies



The following Métis youth contributed to the *ISPAYIN* project and were the first group to receive training to facilitate workshops using this DVD and Discussion Guide.

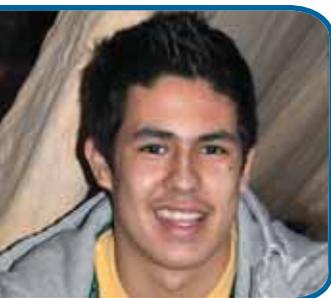


Conlin Delbaere-Sawchuk

I am a Métis musician who plays guitar and sings in the Métis Fiddler Quartet. At age eight I moved from Winnipeg to Toronto, where I grew up. At 22, I am in my final year of undergraduate studies in classical singing at the University of Ottawa. I am involved in many aspects of music making in a broad variety of styles — from singing opera, to playing jazz bass, to backing up fiddle music on the guitar, to writing and

recording my own music — and have begun turning my passion for music into a full-time career. I look forward to learning more about Métis culture, particularly the language and music. I endeavour to use this knowledge to guide me in my artistic and creative work, to pass on and educate others about Métis heritage in Canada.

"My people will sleep for one hundred years, but when they awake, it will be the artists who give them their spirit back." — Louis Riel



Ty Gardiner

Tansi! I am 19 years old and was born and raised in Île-à-la-Crosse, Saskatchewan. I am currently taking classes with the University of Saskatchewan in the Arts and Sciences department. I am also playing Junior B hockey in the Prairie Junior Hockey League. I enjoy many sports and travelling, and am very athletic and outgoing. I am very proud to be Métis and intend on staying connected with my roots. *Ekosi.*

Ginny Gonneau

I am a 25 year old who belongs to the Métis Nation of Ontario. I studied Women's Studies and History at Carleton University before pursuing work in BC. I recently moved back to Ontario and am working as a researcher and project coordinator for the BC Centre of Excellence for Women's Health. I have a passion for connecting Métis youth with opportunities to explore their culture and heritage, and to pursue their dreams and aspirations, whatever they may be. My most memorable experiences in exploring my own Métis identity include two Métis Youth Canoe Expeditions across Ontario, Manitoba and Saskatchewan in the summers of 2003 and 2005.

"I think this ISPAYIN tool has the ability to bring Métis youth and communities together to explore what it means to be Métis, and will increase youth's sense of belonging, pride and connection to their community."

Bonnie Lepine

I am 26 years old, born and raised in Victoria, BC. I have a Bachelors of Education from the University of Alberta, Campus St-Jean, and currently work as a teacher in Kelowna with the Francophone Education Authority of BC. I am also finishing a Post Graduate Diploma in Education at Simon Fraser University. As a bilingual young lady, I enjoy playing sports, coaching, hunting, visual arts and learning about health. My future goal is to become a counsellor. As an educator, I spend a great deal of time informing others about Aboriginal history, rights and the Métis Nation.

"Every person has a purpose, and it is by remaining honest, kind and connected to one's grassroots that true success arises."

Gunthar Lundie

I was born in Cranberry Portage, Manitoba, a small northern community. In 2006 I moved to Ottawa with my mother and brother while my mother studied for her Bachelor of Education Degree and later her Master's in Education. Currently I am in Grade 12 at Rideau High School, and I plan to pursue post-secondary education in either writing and journalism, or outdoor education and ecotourism.

"It's not the size of the dog in the fight; it's the size of the fight in the dog."



PHOTO CREDIT: TIM MATHESON





Dale McCreery

I was born and raised in northern BC in a town called Hazelton. After graduating from high school, I realized that it was easier to go to school than try and get a job logging, so I obtained an English degree and spent a couple of years teaching English abroad. My love of languages increased as a result, and I am currently working on a Master's degree in linguistics, focusing on learning and reviving

languages, specifically Cree and Michif. I like to talk, sing, play music, and climb trees — and I am learning how to tune cars.

"We are more than the sum of our parts — for example, being Métis is like being both pirate and ninja, except Métis trumps both."



Harley Richards

I am 21 years old, and am currently enrolled in adult-upgrading. My interests include guitar, basketball, my community and of course, my studies. I hope to take the course of the sciences after I obtain my diploma.

"When you are a leader be careful, because you can lead them either way."

— source unknown



Shawna Stevenson

I am a 20 year old Métis youth from a small community in Northern Manitoba called The Pas. I am currently working for the Norman-Regional Health Authority as a Health Care Aide, and am planning to pursue my degree in pharmacy, hopefully at the University of Winnipeg.

"Believe nothing of what you hear and only half of what you see." This quote reminds us that Métis are a diverse population, despite common perceptions. In the end we can always come together as a nation, as a community.

Métis Centre of NAHO: Who We Are

The Métis Centre is a Métis-controlled centre of the National Aboriginal Health Organization (NAHO). The Métis Centre develops and shares knowledge to support the health and well-being of Métis people. To achieve this vision, the Métis Centre undertakes quality collaborative research, fosters awareness and understanding of Métis identity, and communicates to achieve reciprocal learning.

Métis Centre Principles

- Believes in social determinants and a holistic approach to health and wellness;
- Respects the diversity of the Métis population;
- Respects Métis protocols and guidelines of ethical research;
- Respects and values Métis traditional, historical and contemporary knowledge;
- Respects the voice of all Métis people.

Métis Centre Values

- Collaborative relationships with all Métis people and other stakeholders;
- Supporting capacity enhancement with Métis people and other stakeholders;
- Accessible plain-language knowledge-based products;
- Innovative, community- and constituency-driven approaches.



DID YOU KNOW? MICHIF

Michif is the common term that Métis use to identify themselves. Michif is also the name that Métis give to their bilingual mixed languages (developing from two contributing languages), including Michif-Cree, Michif-French (or Métis French), and a separate hybrid of Cree and French (sometimes called Île-à-la-Crosse Michif).

Many Métis also/alternately speak other aboriginal languages such as Cree, Ojibway, and others, as well as English and/or French.^{15, 16}

PHOTO CREDIT: SASKATCHEWAN ARCHIVES BOARD, R-B291

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Links

Gabriel Dumont Institute

www.gdins.org

Honouring Life Network

www.honouringlife.ca

Louis Riel Institute

www.louisrielinstitute.com

Manitoba Métis Federation

www.mmf.mb.ca

Métis Harvester's Guide

www.metisnation.ca/rights/harvest_index.html

Métis Nation — Saskatchewan

www.mn-s.ca

Métis Nation Alberta

www.albertametis.com

Métis Nation British Columbia

www.mnbc.ca

Métis Nation of Ontario

www.metisnation.org

Métis National Council

www.metisnation.ca

Métis Settlements General Council

www.msgc.ca

National Aboriginal Health Organization

www.naho.ca

**National Aboriginal Health Organization
— Métis Centre**

www.naho.ca/metiscentre

Native Women's Association of Canada

www.nwac.ca

