



IDENTIFICATION

Department	Position Title	
Tłıchǫ Community Services Agency	Indigenous Health and Wellness Elder	
Position Number	Community	Division/Region
94-15881	Whatì	Education, Tłıchǫ Region

PURPOSE OF THE POSITION

The Indigenous Health and Wellness Elder plays an integral role in supporting children and youth with complex mental health needs, and their families, to build community and identity in the school. The Indigenous Health and Wellness Elder is responsible for engaging with students to use traditional mental, social, cultural, and spiritual supports. The Indigenous Health and Wellness Elder is a member of the school staff and provides integrated mental health and behavioural programming in collaboration with school personnel and other health and social services professionals. The Indigenous Health and Wellness Elder provides a wide range of services with an emphasis on developing relationships with children, youth and their families. The Indigenous Health and Wellness Elder is based primarily in the school and works on a school year calendar, however in order to align with the needs of children and youth, other worksite locations may include on-the-land camps, student / family homes, or other appropriate community locations. As part of an interdisciplinary team approach, other services targeted to assist children and youth include: community development, consultation, coordination, education and integrated services management. Recognizing the importance of identify in supporting positive mental health in children and youth, the Indigenous Health and Wellness Elder will support culture and language programming in the school.

SCOPE

Located in Whatì and reporting to the school Principal, the position is part of a collaborative multi-disciplinary approach to the delivery of direct mental health and wellness services to support the needs of children, youth and their families. This position ensures that traditional

ways of knowing, being and doing are followed and are meeting the individual need of the child, youth and family. The Indigenous Health and Wellness Elder provides direct student care including listening and sharing of traditional knowledge, advises and collaboratively delivers language and cultural programming, and participate in school wide initiatives to create cultural safety. The Indigenous Health and Wellness Elder is part of a team that collaborates with other community services which could include school principals, teachers, regional coordinators, Child Youth Care Counsellors, social workers, nurses, physicians, Community Health Representatives, RCMP, probation, Victim Services, and local Indigenous and Non-Government Organizations to provide a comprehensive, person and family centered approach to care.

RESPONSIBILITIES

1. Provides a range of Indigenized health and wellness supports to all children and youth.

- Identifies and facilitates connections to community and regional resources that could meet identified needs.
- Participate with School Based Support Team to develop integrated care plan.
- Provides listening ear and offers traditional knowledge to students.
- Advises to ensure that family, cultural and spiritual practices are adhered to during therapeutic planning and while communicating feedback to children, youth and their families.
- May be consulted by other service providers and mental health experts to inform recommended approaches and interventions, including making referrals to the principal, CYCC, or social services when appropriate.
- Adheres to confidentiality/privacy, sharing of information, client record keeping practices and other areas of service provision and client care.

2. Provides advice and support to schools and other service providers who provide services to children and youth including educators, CYCCs, principals, and regional staff.

- Provide traditional knowledge expertise, support, professional learning opportunities and consultation to school staff to ensure adequate understanding and ability to respond to the needs of children and youth with social emotional and/or behavioural issues, including participation, when relevant, as a member of the school-based support team (i.e., contribute to the development of Student Support Plans, Individualized Education Plans, etc.), parent workshops, and/or interagency team meetings.
- Ensure a seamless and collaborative approach to service delivery in schools by maintaining a close, collaborative working relationship with school based staff including the principal and CYCC.
- Provide cultural and traditional expertise to community staff and agencies delivering services to children and youth.

- Function as a resource and source of community based information on best practices when working with children/youth in particular for those with social, emotional and/or behavior issues and their families.
 - Function as an advisor, where applicable, within the field of child youth mental health and serve as a resource to assist other service delivery partners in understanding integrated, trauma informed and culturally safe practices in the context of colonization and residential schools.
- 3. Provides leadership and expertise in the implementation of culture and language programming.**
- Remains up-to-date and follows school, community, regional, and territorial legislation, policies, initiatives, and resources.
 - Undertakes purposeful steps to cultivate collaborative working relationships in order to ensure optimal integrative and wrap around service potential. This may also include participating in on-the-land wellness initiatives.
 - Demonstrates integrity and respect to cultivate positive working relationships with community and regional partners.
 - Actively works to educate staff and students on the local culture, customs and practices and engages in community events and relationship building opportunities.
 - Maintains staff, child, youth, and family privacy and confidentiality.
 - Utilizes a strengths based approach that focuses and builds upon community and personal resiliency and strengths.
 - Provides leadership and advocacy with children/youth/families in working with other agencies and services.
- 4. Performs other duties as required to achieve Governmental, Departmental or Authority strategic goals and objectives.**

WORKING CONDITIONS

Physical Demands

Physical demands may include participating in youth recreational sports and on the land camps (hiking, walking, running, dancing).

Environmental Conditions

Services are provided primarily in school settings but may also occur in a variety of settings including public community locations and on the land. There will be requirements to attend meetings or sessions in locations that require walking or driving which may include cold or other inclement weather. In addition, the incumbent may be required to travel on small aircraft to outlying communities or to land based programs.

Sensory Demands

The Elder in School will spend approximately 50% of the day providing mental health and wellness support for students requiring the use of the combined senses. The Elder in School will spend approximately 25% of the day supporting Tłıchǵ language instruction. The incumbent will spend approximately 25% of the day on cultural based activities including working outside and in a variety of sitting, standing, kneeling, and moving activities.

Mental Demands

Staff who are in an environment where they may hear about child and youth mental health and wellness support have been known to experience vicarious trauma as a result of repeatedly hearing children and youths' traumatic stories (i.e., bullying, sexual abuse, physical and emotional abuse, neglect, multiple losses, family violence, parental addictions, etc.).

Providing these services in small communities presents unique challenges that can add additional stress. The incumbent may have to deal with friends, neighbours, relatives or social acquaintances who are receiving services as well as victims and perpetrators on a day to day basis outside of work (i.e., at community functions, grocery store, walking down the street, etc.).

In this profession, there is some level of uncertainty in knowing what to expect while at work. People in crisis are often unpredictable and can be abusive to those trying to help. As a result, there is legitimate concern about the risk of verbal and even physical assault. Students are unpredictable, including students with social, emotional, and behavioural needs.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Knowledge and experience in the delivery of child and youth health and wellness services including direct, front line service delivery through non-judgmental listening, and offering of traditional knowledge.
- Some knowledge and experience in working with children and youth.
- Understanding of how to work in an interdisciplinary manner to optimize wrap around service delivery.
- Commitment to professional development and increasing competencies.
- Awareness of Northwest Territories services and supports, as well as relevant legislation (Child and Family Services Act, Health Information Act, Mental Health Act, Education Act).
- Awareness of the impacts of colonization and residential schools and to reduce barriers for children youth and their families.
- Strong ability to provide advice to students, educators, principals, other school staff, regional staff, and CYCCs.
- Demonstrated knowledge of the signs of violence, abuse, mental illness and addictions
- Ability to reach sound decisions in times of crisis.
- Ability to work effectively in a cross cultural setting including with community members impacted by colonization and residential schools.
- Ability to work in teams, and mentor others.
- Ability to communicate clearly on traditional knowledge.
- Adherence to a professional code of ethics

- Ability to maintain the goodwill of clients, colleagues and co-workers is essential.
- Ability to operate word processing, internet, and electronic mail programs is an asset.

Typically, the above qualifications would be attained by:

- Experience working with children and youth,
- Strong recommendation from the community,
- Degree/diploma in counselling/education/social work or similar,
- Experience working in a school or counselling setting,
- Strong traditional knowledge,
- Bilingual language ability (Tłıchʔ and English)

ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS

Position Security (check one)

- ☐ No criminal records check required
- ☐ Position of Trust – criminal records check required
- ☒ Highly sensitive position – requires verification of identity and a criminal records check

French language (check one if applicable)

- ☐ French required (must identify required level below)
- Level required for this Designated Position is:
- ORAL EXPRESSION AND COMPREHENSION
- Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐
- READING COMPREHENSION:
- Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐
- WRITING SKILLS:
- Basic (B) ☐ Intermediate (I) ☐ Advanced (A) ☐
- ☐ French preferred

Indigenous language: Tłıchʔ

- ☒ Required
- ☐ Preferred