



Tajikeimik excerpt from the  
Early Years Annual Report 2022



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# TAJIKEIMIK

Since 2021, Tajikeimik and MFI have been working together to support Mi'kmaw families in Nova Scotia. This collaboration has been made possible with the support of the David and Faye Sobey Foundation. Tajikeimik will implement Early Years programming through culturally-adapted training and resources, the development of which is underway, and a variety of activities including home visiting and group gatherings.

## CO-CREATING PROGRAMMING



**Natasha Stevens** and her child in Paqtnekek Mi'kmaw Nation, Nova Scotia.

**Olivia Isaac** and **Jeremiah Johnson** with their children in Potlotek First Nation, Nova Scotia.





The mood board that was part of the illustration process for Tajikeimik's Early Years Toolbox.

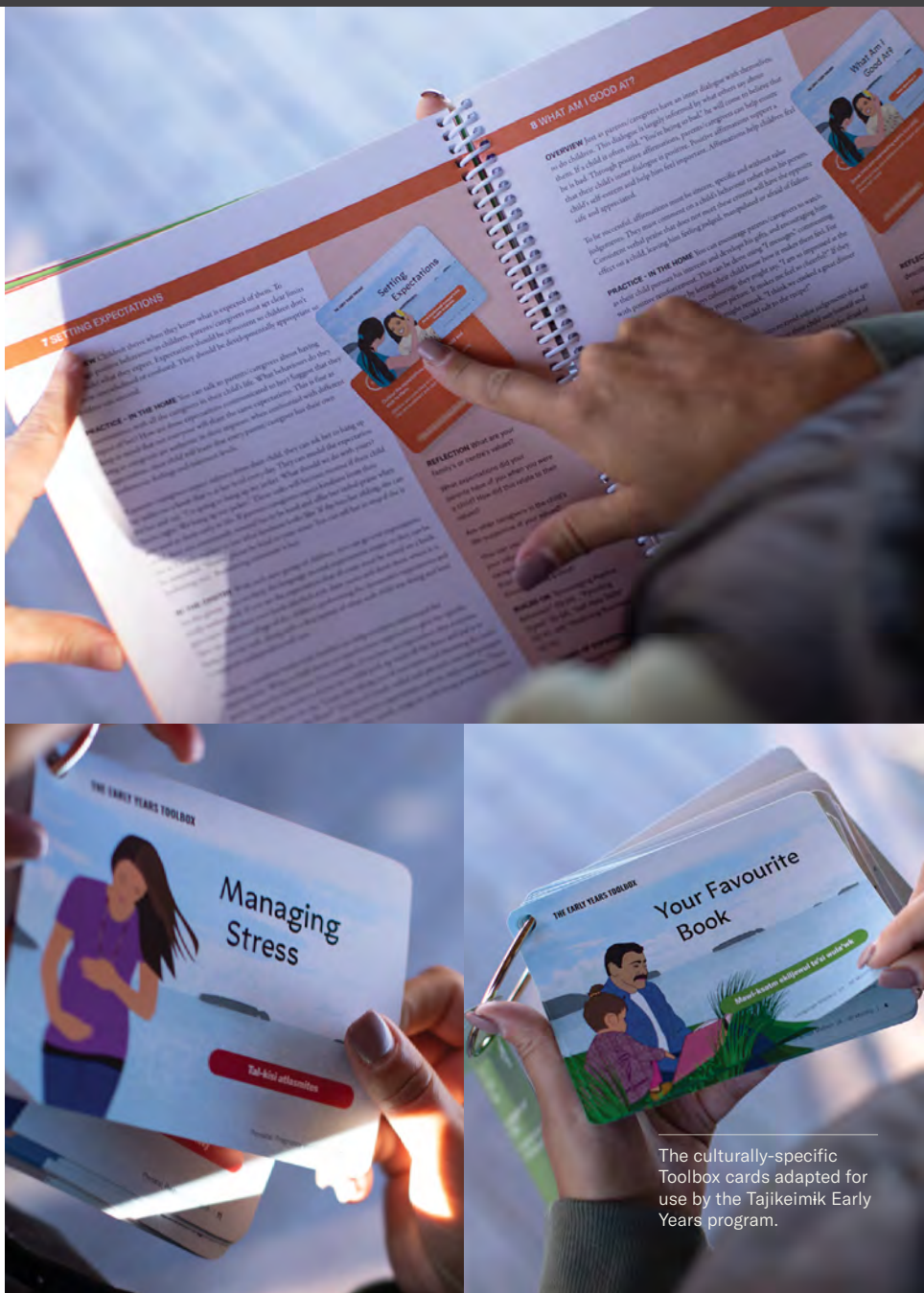
This year, Tajikeimik and MFI have been working together to develop an Early Years program specific to the Mi'kmaw context of Nova Scotia. This included the hiring of Maryi Joe Francis as the Program Development Manager. In this role, Maryi brings her years of experience working with children in her community as she helps to shape the structure of programming and collaborates in the co-creation of resources and training materials.

The adaptation of Early Years materials for Tajikeimik's context began with a review of the Early Years Toolbox. In an effort led by Maryi, the content of the Toolbox cards was reviewed for cultural and contextual relevance and then updated or removed accordingly. In partnership with a local translator, key

phrases on the cards were translated into the Mi'kmaw language.

The process of adapting the visual content of the Toolbox cards began simultaneously. This started with Tajikeimik's staff sharing representative photos of their organization and community. From these photos, MFI's Graphic Designer created a "mood board" and began to formulate a colour pallet suitable to Tajikeimik's context.

Building off these foundations, the illustration process began, with consistent input from Tajikeimik's staff. The illustrations continued to be developed and revised until the cards were felt to accurately represent and celebrate the community that Tajikeimik serves.



The culturally-specific Toolbox cards adapted for use by the Tajikeimik Early Years program.



Heather Lewis in Eskasoni First Nation, Nova Scotia.

Most recently, the adaptation process has included the capturing of videography and photography on location in Nova Scotia. Elders, Knowledge Keepers, Tajikeimik staff and early learning professionals were interviewed in order to create the videos that will shape Tajikeimik's culturally-specific version of the Understanding the Early Years course. Photos captured will be used in training and promotional materials for the program.

Looking ahead, Visitors will be hired and begin their training in the new year, with program launch sites in four nations (Eskasoni, Membertou, Potlotek and Paqtnekek) and in partnership with the Mi'kmaq Child Development Centre at the Halifax Friendship Centre.

