

## Msit Mijua'ji'jk Wellness Refresher Gathering: A Look Back

by Alexa Sylliboy

From March 18-20, our Msit Mijua'ji'jk team brought together Home Visitors and Program Supervisors from across communities for a Refresher Gathering focused on connection, culture, and continued learning.

The gathering created space for those involved in the program to step away from their day-to-day roles, come together, and spend time reflecting, sharing experiences, and strengthening the work they do with families.

Msit Mijua'ji'jk, meaning "All the Children," supports families during the early years by walking alongside caregivers and offering support that reflects community, culture, and lived experience. The program works in partnership with communities, supporting local home visiting programs and the people who deliver that care every day. That sense of partnership and shared responsibility was felt throughout the gathering.



Tara Burke, Georgina Doucette, Bobbi-Jo Bernard, Jody Maloney, Jessica Rose, Alisha Julien-Reid (guest speaker), Eliza Marshall, Kalolin Johnson, Angela Lafford, Maryi Joe-Francis, Aselis Palliser-Nicholas, Natasha Paul, Natalie McEwan, Rose LaPorte, Adrianna Bonnell

Over the three days, sessions focused on key areas of the program, including revisiting the program's vision, safe sleep practices, postpartum and breastfeeding supports with Alisha

Julien-Reid, and strengthening documentation, communication, and relationship-building with families. Just as important, it created space for

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Rose LaPorte, Membertou



Natasha Paul, Membertou; Jody Maloney, Sipekine'katik; Eliza Marshall, Potlotek



Aselis Palliser-Nicholas, MNFC, Natasha Paul, Membertou



Kalolin Johnson, Eskasoni; Natalie McEwan, Membertou

## Wellness Refresher Gathering... continued

people to share what they're seeing in their own communities and learn from one another.

"For me, the Wellness Refresher training was a reminder that we are never alone in this work," says Kalolin Johnson, Home Visitor for Eskasoni.

"It gave us the chance to support one another, share experiences, and learn from different perspectives across our communities. It also reinforced for me that this role truly gives me purpose."

A big part of the gathering was simply creating space to connect. Through group activities, open discussions, and shared stories, there was a strong sense of community built across the group. Learning from lived experiences and hearing different perspectives helped strengthen that connection, with plenty of moments of laughter along the way. It was a reminder that this work is not done alone, but alongside one another.

Time was also set aside for reflection, both as a team and individually. Through vision board activities and wellness sessions, participants had the opportunity to reconnect with their purpose, recognize their strengths, and think about the impact they bring to families each day.



Georgina Doucette, Eskasoni; Jessica Rose, MNFC; Rose LaPorte, Membertou

"The Msit Mijua'ji'jk program is so much more than a program - it's connection, trust, culture, family, and community," says Adrianna Bonnell, Msit Mijua'ji'jk Mi'kmaw Cultural Outreach Coordinator.

"Watching our Home Visitors walk alongside families with compassion and genuine care is a reminder of why this work matters so deeply. When families feel supported, communities grow stronger, and that impact carries forward for future generations."

At the heart of it all is a shared understanding that this work is about meeting families where they're at, with respect, care, and connection. When we take the time to come together, support one another, and continue learning, it strengthens the support that families receive in community.

Msit Mijua'ji'jk services are offered in partnership with communities, in Membertou, Eskasoni, Potlotek,



Natalie McEwan; Membertou; Georgina Doucette, Eskasoni

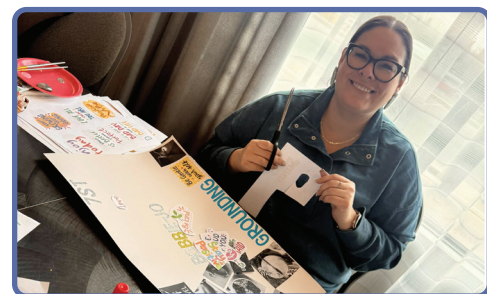
Paqtnkek, Sipekne'katik, and the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre in Kijipuktuk (Halifax).



Bobbi-Jo Bernard, Sipekine'katik; Tara Burke, Eskasoni; Aselis Palliser-Nicholas, MNFC



Alisha Julien-Reid sharing Mi'kmaw midwifery teachings on ceremony, breastfeeding support and postpartum support



Bobbi-Jo Bernard, Sipekine'katik

### About Us

Tajikeimik is the new and developing health and wellness organization that is leading health transformation on behalf of Mi'kmaw communities in Nova Scotia. In collaboration with Chiefs, Grand Council, and Health Directors, Tajikeimik will build on and evolve the health and wellness services and programs used by Mi'kmaw people in Nova Scotia; improve health service delivery; and strengthen coordination with Federal and Provincial health system partners - with the goal of improving overall health for Mi'kmaw and communities.

Elukuti'kw wjit naji-wlo'tinenew utanminal. (We are working toward better health for all in our communities.)

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