

Métis Resilient Roots

A Truth and Reconciliation
Resource for Métis Children and Families



Early Years

Otipemisiwak Métis Government
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About This

Resource

As September 30 approaches and classrooms across Canada engage in important discussions around Truth and Reconciliation, we can make a plan to support the unique needs of Métis early learners.

Métis Resilient Roots – A Truth and Reconciliation Resource for Métis Children and Families was thoughtfully created by the Otipemisiwak Métis Government’s Children and Family Services Department. It is designed to support Métis children and their families through difficult conversations and emotions by providing insights, tools, and activities that will help foster a connection to Métis culture and community. Our hope is that this resource will help Métis children feel safe, proud, and empowered, and remind families that they are not alone in this journey.





What is the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation?


The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, held on September 30, is a special day in Canada to remember and honour Indigenous children who were sent to residential schools. These schools were not like regular schools — they tried to erase the languages, cultures, and traditions of Indigenous Peoples, including First Nations, Inuit, and Métis.

This day helps Canadians to think about and support the families and communities affected. It's also a time to learn about the importance of truth and healing, to respect Indigenous cultures, and to make sure something like this never happens again.

People wear orange shirts to show that every child matters and to stand in solidarity with Indigenous communities, remembering that all children deserve love, respect, and the chance to grow up proud of who they are.



Think about a reason you are proud to be you and write about or draw a picture of you being proud!



A Message for Caregivers

Métis children have unique needs.

As conversations about Truth and Reconciliation take place, the potential impacts of these discussions can be easily overlooked.

This can sometimes lead to feelings of isolation, invalidation, or pressure on a Métis child.

As caregivers of Métis children, we can protect and equip our children by providing them with tools that will help them feel safe, proud, and empowered.

Here are some ideas:


Foster cultural connections

- ❁ Share stories and traditions: Teach your child about their unique Métis culture, history, and traditions.
- ❁ Share songs and dances that reflect Métis heritage.
- ❁ Involve Métis community: Encourage interactions with Métis Elders and other Métis families so that cultural knowledge and wisdom is passed on.

Education and learning

- ❁ Provide culturally relevant books and resources that will help Métis children see themselves and their culture reflected.
- ❁ Advocate in schools: Work with your child's school to ensure that Métis culture and history are reflected in their education.

Positive identity-building

- ❁ Celebrate Métis identity by celebrating Métis events and participating in community events.
 - ❁ Encourage self-expression by supporting your child in expressing their Métis identity in ways that feel meaningful to them.
- 

Emotional and social supports

- ✿ Create a supportive environment by ensuring your child feels safe to ask questions and express their feelings about their Métis identity. Listen to your child's concerns, and provide reassurance.
- ✿ Foster friendships by helping your child connect with other Métis children and families so they have peers who share similar experiences and backgrounds.

Health and well-being

- ✿ Promote a balanced lifestyle that includes traditional Métis foods, physical activity, and time spent in nature — all important aspects of Métis culture!
- ✿ Ensure your child has access to health services that understand and respect Métis cultural practices and perspectives.

By building on these areas, as Métis caregivers we can help our children grow up with a strong, positive sense of who they are and where they come from.

Building resilience

- ✿ Teach resilience and coping strategies for dealing with challenges related to Métis identity such as encountering stereotypes or discrimination.
- ✿ Model resilience: Show your child how to be proud and resilient by modeling these behaviours in your own life.

Language and communication

- ✿ Expose your child to the Métis language of Michif! Even learning a few words or phrases can help strengthen their cultural connection.
- ✿ Encourage open conversations: Talk openly about Métis history and identity, including both the challenges and the strengths to help your child develop a balanced understanding.



Caregiver well-being

As caregivers of Métis children, it is important to remember that your well-being is just as vital as the well-being of the children you support. Navigating conversations about Truth and Reconciliation and Métis identity can bring up difficult emotions, including those related to your own experiences or the collective history of our people. It's okay to feel overwhelmed, and it's essential to take time for self-care.

Taking care of yourself is essential because you matter too. As a caregiver, your health, well-being, and cultural enrichment are valuable in their own right. By prioritizing your well-being, you are not only caring for yourself but also creating a stronger foundation for your child to feel safe, loved, and connected to their Métis heritage. When you nurture yourself, you model resilience, strength, and pride — both for yourself and for your child.

Here are a few ways to support yourself as you support your child:

- ✿ **Connect with community:** Engage with Métis Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and other caregivers who share similar experiences. These connections can offer comfort, guidance, and a sense of belonging.
- ✿ **Practice self-care:** Take moments to rest, reflect, and care for your own mental, emotional, and physical health. This could include engaging in Métis cultural practices, spending time in nature, or simply taking quiet moments to recharge.
- ✿ **Seek support when needed:** Remember, it's okay to ask for help. If you need someone to talk to or feel the need for additional support, refer to the support page at the end of this book. It provides a list of helpful resources and phone numbers that are available to you.

And remember, you are not alone. We are on this journey with you!



Building Resilience

Through Our Roots

Modern research shows what the Métis Nation has always known: being close to our culture, community, and land makes us strong and helps us face challenges.

When children know where they come from, they understand their inner strength and how to overcome problems. Just like how a tree's roots, trunk, and leaves work together to keep it strong, our connections to culture, community, and land help us stay strong too.





Decorate the green leaves with places in nature that make you feel connected to the land.

Decorate the orange leaves with Métis traditions, foods, music, or stories that make you proud of who you are.

Decorate the brown leaves with the names of people who support you, such as family members, friends, or Elders.

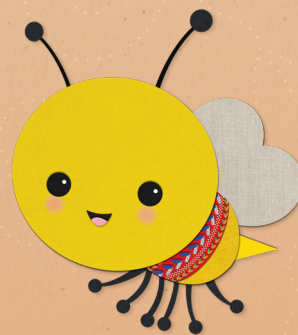
Thoughts and

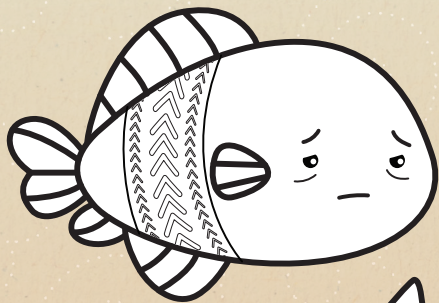
Feelings Check-In

It is normal to experience different thoughts and feelings, even uncomfortable ones, when learning about something sad that happened in the past.

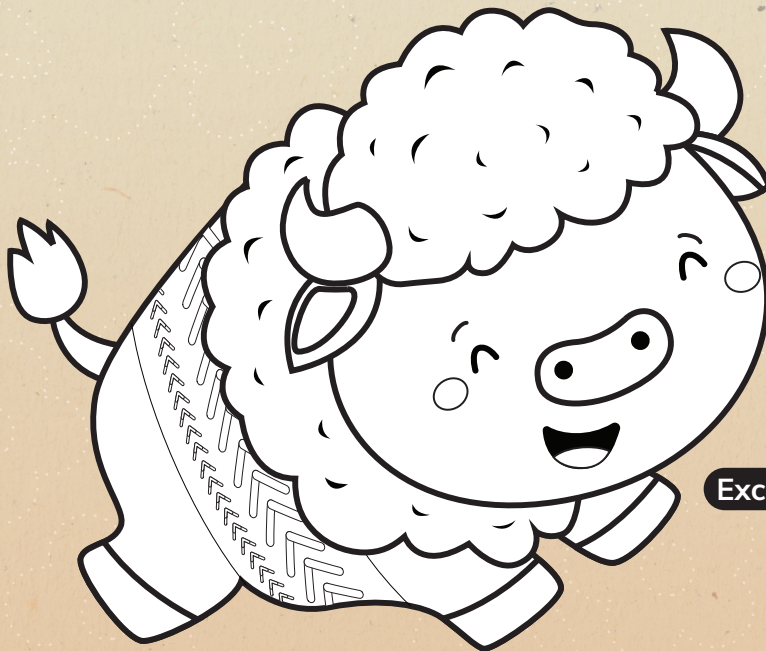
Feelings can sometimes be painful, but they are there to help us. Telling someone you love and trust about your feelings can help.

On the next page, our animal pals are showing how they are feeling. Choose the animal pal(s) that match how you are feeling right now and colour in that animal pal.





Tired

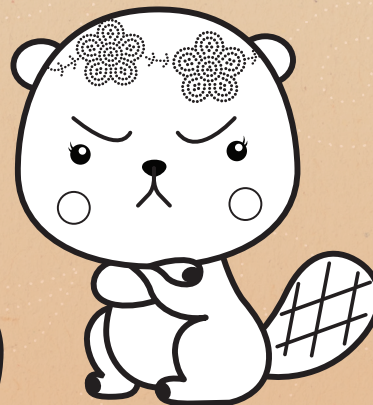


Excited

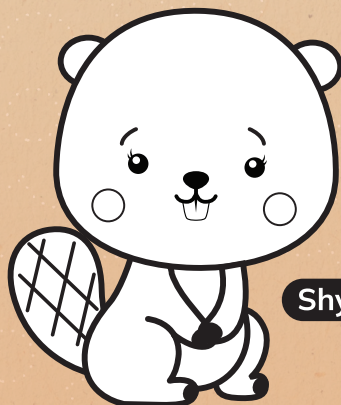


Scared

MY FEELINGS



Mad



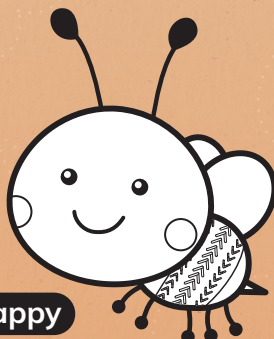
Shy



Silly



Worried



Happy



Sad

Mindful Moment

Being mindful helps us to notice and accept how we feel so that we can make choices about how we respond to our feelings.

When you feel yourself having big feelings, try one of the activities listed below to help you feel settled:

- ❁ Find a safe space.
- ❁ Do some art and doodling.
- ❁ Take deep breaths.
- ❁ Eat a snack.
- ❁ Drink water.
- ❁ Think of things you love, like your family, pets, and friends.
- ❁ Hug a stuffed animal.
- ❁ Listen to your favourite music.
- ❁ Move your body.
- ❁ Hug someone you love.
- ❁ Use a fidget toy
- ❁ Think of a happy place.
- ❁ Look at a book.

On the next page, circle some of your favourite ways to be mindful.



Mindful

Breathing

Mindful breathing is a simple but powerful way that we can focus our attention on our breathing to help calm our minds and bodies, helping us to feel more grounded and relaxed.

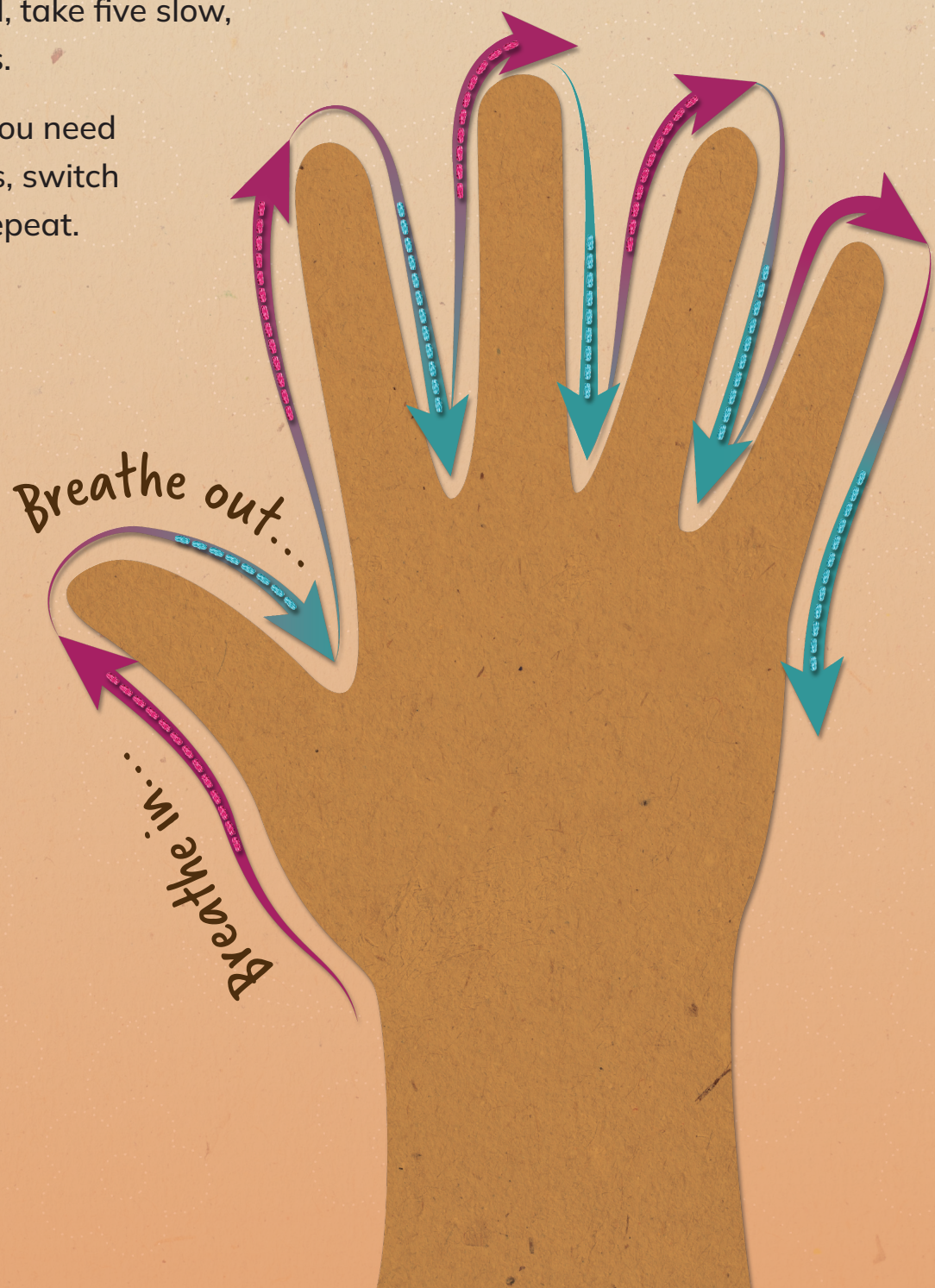
Benefits of mindful breathing:

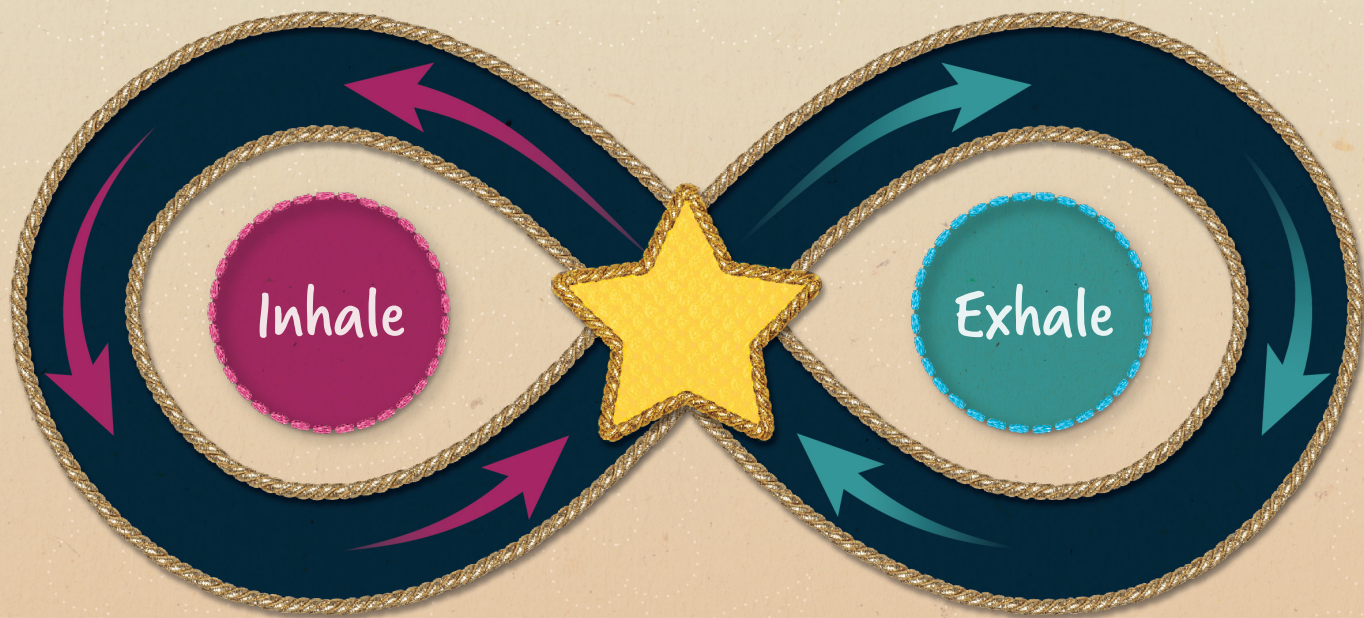
- ✿ Emotional regulation
- ✿ Focus and attention
- ✿ Stress reduction
- ✿ Self-awareness



Five-finger breathing

- ✿ Find a comfortable position.
- ✿ Hold one hand out. With your other hand, slowly trace each of your fingers. As you slowly go up each finger, breathe in deeply. As you go down each finger, breathe out deeply.
- ✿ Once you have finished all the fingers on your hand, take five slow, deep breaths.
- ✿ If you think you need more breaths, switch hands and repeat.





Infinity breathing

- ✿ Start with your index finger on the “begin here” star.
- ✿ Trace your index finger toward the left while slowly breathing in and following along the pink inhale arrows.
- ✿ After you land back on the “begin here” star, trace your finger toward the right while slowly breathing out and following along the blue exhale arrows.
- ✿ Repeat until you feel relaxed.



Relaxation

Bottle Craft

Sometimes being creative can help manage big feelings. With the help of an adult, make a Relaxation Bottle to get your creative juices flowing and help you feel more relaxed.

You will need:

A plastic jar or bottle

Clear glue or baby oil

Food colouring

Glitter, buttons, beads, or other bits you would like to go in your jar



What you do:

With a grown up, fill your jar 1/4 full of clear glue or baby oil. Add your food colouring. Fill the rest of the jar with warm water and mix well. Once all the glue is mixed in, add the glitter and any other bits you wanted. Glue the lid to the bottle and ensure it is screwed on tightly. Now shake your Relaxation Bottle, and feel your mind and body start to relax as you watch the glitter swirl and settle.



Create a

Feel Better Box!



Creating a Feel Better Box can help distract from negative thoughts and encourage positive, soothing ones instead.

Choose a box. Fill your box with items that make you smile and stimulate your five senses: sight, smell, taste, touch, and hearing.

Use the checklist on the following page as you think of ideas for your Feel Better Box, and draw your idea for each item on the checklist.

Keep your box somewhere safe, and take it out when you need a smile.



Something that makes you smile

Something that is soft

Something that is your
favourite colour

Something you are thankful for

Something that makes
you feel happy

Connection to

Métis Culture

Connecting to Métis culture can help remind you that even though the Métis people of the past had difficult times, knowing who they were helped them get through. Knowing who you are and that you are part of the Métis Nation can help remind you of your strength.

The following are some ideas to connect to your mighty Métis culture:



Learn or practice the Red River Jig.
youtu.be/WKlEt_ImSV8



Learn to finger-weave just as many Métis people have done for many generations.
youtu.be/SDUn1oYcEvw



Create a Métis floral design just like Métis people have done for hundreds of years using beads or embroidery. youtu.be/VbCw8Zz-pLI



Connection to Métis Culture Activity

Colour and design your own Métis sash.

The Métis sash is a symbol of the ingenuity and strength of the Métis people. Take a few minutes to tap into the strength and creativity of your ancestors by designing your own Métis sash. Choose colours that make you happy.

Connection to the Land

For Métis people, connecting to the land is really important because it gives us everything we need. When we care for the land, it helps us stay strong and happy.

Spending time in nature — like walking in a forest, sitting by a river, or relaxing on the grass — can make us feel better when we're sad. The land also holds special stories and traditions from our ancestors. By being outside, we can learn how they lived and understand more about who we are today.

Here are some fun ways to connect to the land:

- ❁ Go for a nature walk with a trusted adult. Explore forests, rivers, or fields. Listen to nature sounds, look for animal tracks, and learn about local plants.
- ❁ Learn how to gather things from the land responsibly. This means picking berries, hunting, or fishing in a way that takes care of the land, and only taking what you need, just like our ancestors did.

Connection to Land Activity

With a trusted adult, go on a nature scavenger hunt!
Check off the things you see from the list below:

A leaf

A pine cone

A stick

A squirrel

A flower

A bird

A pretty rock

Animal tracks

A Tree

Insects at work

A tree stump



Métis Berry Memory Game

The goal of the Métis Berry Memory Game is to find matching pairs of cards. This game will help improve your memory and concentration skills while you have fun!

All you need is scissors to cut out the berry cards on the next page. Once they are cut out, you can start playing with just yourself, with a friend, or with family!

How to play:

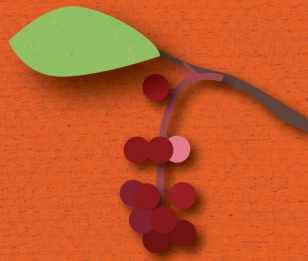
- ❁ **Shuffle the Cards:** Mix up the memory cards and place them face down on a flat surface, like a table or the floor.
- ❁ **Take turns:** Decide who will go first. Players take turns trying to find matching pairs of cards.
- ❁ **Turn over cards:** On your turn, pick two cards that are face down on the table or floor, and turn them face up for everyone to see.
- ❁ **Find a match:** If the two cards you picked have the same berry picture, it's a match! Great job! Keep the cards and set them aside for your points.
- ❁ **Tip:** Many of the berries look very similar. Pay attention to tiny details like leaf shapes and colours that are similar but different shades. Make sure the berry name on both the cards match!
- ❁ **No match? No worries:** If the two cards you picked don't match, simply turn them face down in the same spot. Remember where they are, as you'll get another chance to find a match later.
- ❁ **Pay attention:** Keep an eye on the cards that other players turn over. Remember their positions and the pictures on them to help you find matches later.
- ❁ **Take another turn:** It's now the next player's turn. Keep taking turns until all the matches have been found.
- ❁ **The winner:** The game ends when all the matches are found. Count how many pairs of cards you have. The player with the most pairs wins the game! Yay!



Blueberry



Rosehip



Chokecherry



Strawberry



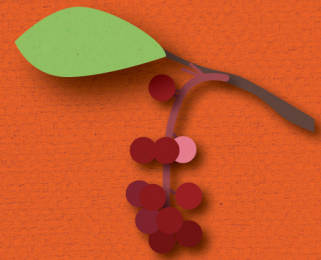
Rosehip



Blueberry



Strawberry



Chokecherry



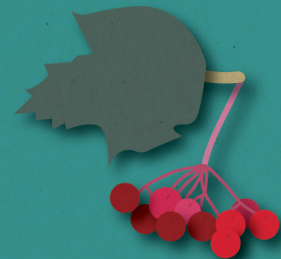
Saskatoon Berry



Bearberry



Juniper Berry



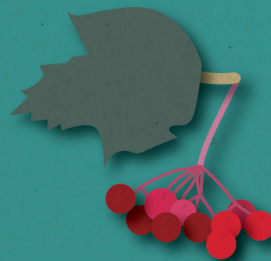
High Bush Cranberry



Bearberry



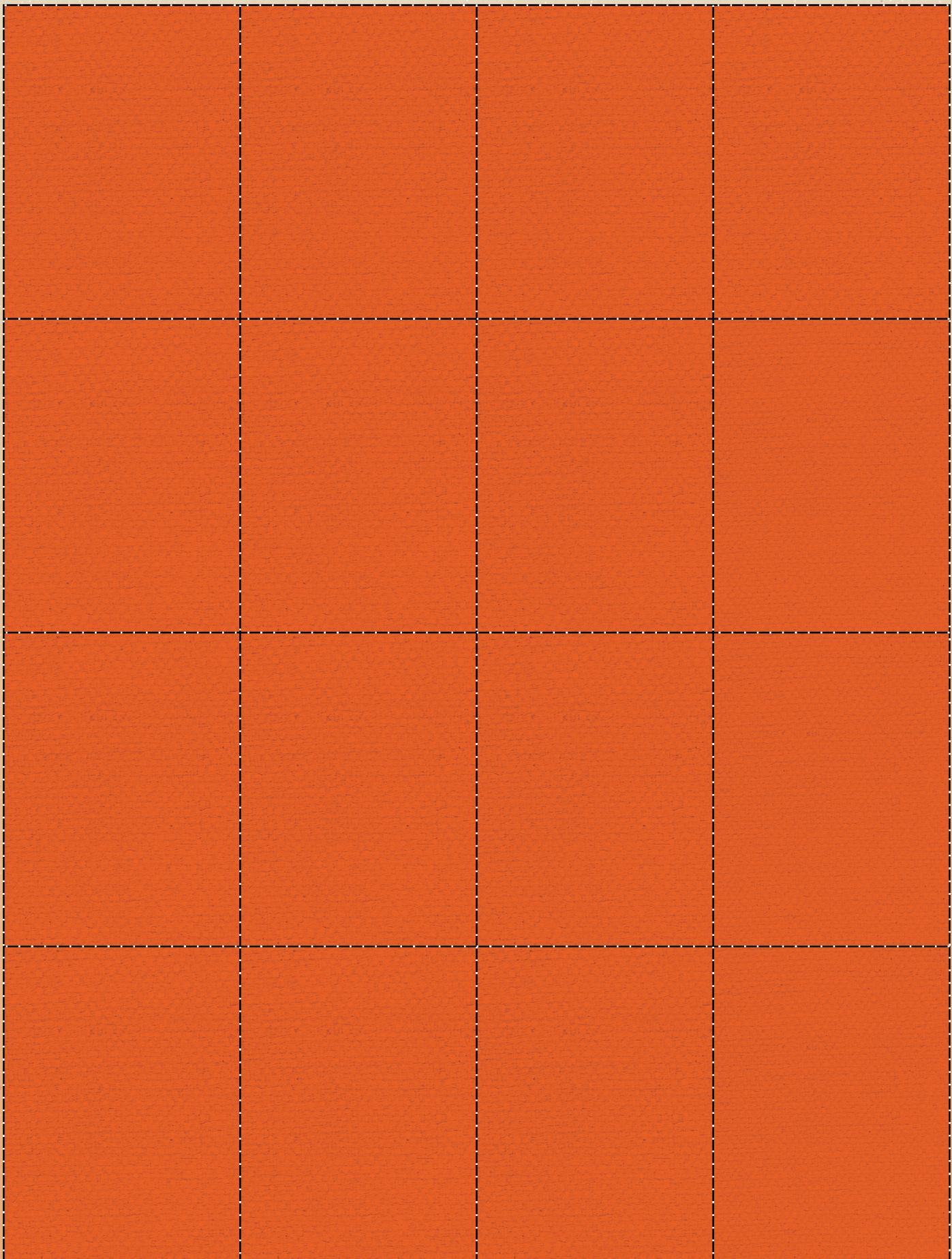
Saskatoon Berry



High Bush Cranberry



Juniper Berry





Connection to Métis Community

Connecting to Métis community is really important because it helps us to be strong and proud. Being part of the Métis community means that you belong. Your community knows what it is like to be Métis, and they accept you. Being part of a community means that you can learn from one another and that you are never alone.

Here are some ideas for connecting to community:

- ❁ Participate in community events.
- ❁ Stay connected to friends and family.
- ❁ Be kind to someone who might feel nervous about connecting.



My Helper Hexagon

It's important to know who you can turn to when you need help.

Think of three people you trust who you can go to when you need support or someone to talk to. Write their names in the hexagon below and keep them in mind for the next time you need a helping hand.

My Helper Hexagon

Generosity Bingo!

Here's how to play and spread generosity all around:

- ❁ **Get Your bingo card:** Each player gets a special bingo card. Print one card for each player.
- ❁ **Find your kindness buddies:** Grab your friends, family, or classmates to play together. The more, the merrier!
- ❁ **Ready, set, be kind!** Go out and do the kind things written in the squares in your bingo card. Remember, every act of kindness counts!
- ❁ **Mark the squares:** When you do a kind act, mark off the square on your bingo card. Woohoo! You're on your way to being a super-kind bingo champion!
- ❁ **Bingo!** Get five kindness squares in a row, either up, down, or diagonal, and shout "BINGO!"
- ❁ **Celebrate with hugs and smiles:** Spread even more kindness by giving hugs, high-fives, and big smiles to your fellow players!
- ❁ **Keep the kindness going:** The fun doesn't stop! Continue being generous and spreading kindness even after you get bingo!



Remember:

In Generosity Bingo, everyone's a winner because every act of kindness makes the world a brighter and happier place! And sometimes when you help someone, they might not say thank you, and that's okay. It doesn't mean your kindness doesn't matter.

Actually, it's like being a secret generous superhero! You're helping just because you want to be kind, not for any rewards or thanks.

B I N G O

Write a thank-you note to a person of your choosing.	Let someone go ahead of you in line.	Help your family clean up after dinner.	Help or do something kind for an elder.	Give someone a compliment.
Pick up litter.	Share a snack.	Let someone else go first.	Say something kind to yourself.	Donate an old toy, book, or game.
Make a homemade gift for someone.	Smile at someone.	 Add your own act of kindness here!	Tidy up without being asked.	Hold a door open for someone.
Invite someone new to play with you.	Ask someone if they need help.	Spend time with an elder.	Leave someone a kind note.	Call a friend or family member on the phone.
Tidy up a mess that isn't yours.	Tell your family members what you love about them.	Teach someone something you know how to do.	Write a thank-you note to a favourite teacher.	Give a handmade gift or homemade baked treats to an elder.

Supports

Everyone has their tough moments, and that is okay. If you feel like you need some extra support, the support list below may be able to help. Remember, you are cared for and you are not alone.

Kids Help Phone

The Kids Help Phone provides 24-hour confidential mental health support to youth.

- ☎ Call 1-800-668-6868
- ☎ Text 686868

Métis Wellness Program

- ☎ Call 1-877-7929-0261

Crisis Services Canada

- ☎ Call 1-833-456-4566
- ☎ Text 45645

Suicide Crisis Help Line

- ☎ Call 988

Health Link

- ☎ Call 811
- ☎ Call 911 if you are in immediate danger

AHS Mental Health Help Line

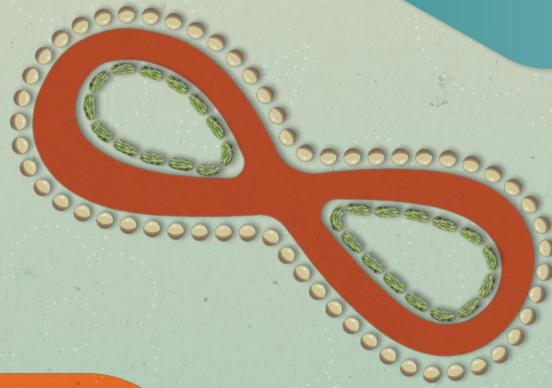
- ☎ Call 1-877-303-2642

(Indigenous) Hope for Wellness Helpline

- ☎ Call 1-855-242-3310

FASD Bridging Connections Program

- ☎ Email FASD@metis.org





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