

RESTORING
INDIGENOUS
SPIRITUALITY
IN THE ENVIRONMENT
(RISE)

CLIMATE CHANGE TOOLKIT
FOR INDIGENOUS YOUTH

FACILITATORS GUIDE



Native Women's
Association of Canada

L'Association des
femmes autochtones
du Canada



Youth
Advocacy and
Development Unit

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This toolkit is the result of the hard work and passion of the Indigenous youth that attended the first RISE Gathering in February 2018 in Ottawa, Ontario. Your drive and determination to protect the land and waters is inspiring. When youth speak up and lead the change amazing things can happen.



DISCLAIMER

This Guide is intended to assist youth in planning, delivering, and assessing community sessions on biodiversity, wildlife, and habitat issues. The Guide, in conjunction with the toolkit, provides direction on how to identify and obtain information on an issue. It provides additional sources on possible funding opportunities and how to mobilize youth within your communities. The Guide and Toolkit are meant to provide Indigenous youth with ways to organize their communities to become informed on environmental issues and take action to protect it.

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This project was undertaken with the financial support of:
Ce projet a été réalisé avec l'appui financier de :



Environment and
Climate Change Canada

Environnement et
Changement climatique Canada

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS RISE?

Incorporating traditional practice, Restoring Indigenous Spirituality in the Environment (RISE) aims to enhance Two Spirit youth and young Indigenous women's understanding and engagement on biodiversity, wildlife, and habitat within Canada and their communities.

We envision an increased capacity for Two Spirit youth and young Indigenous women within community engagement and the development and implementation of programs and policies related to biodiversity, wildlife, and conservation.

This Guide hopes to bring together Elders and youth that will create positive impacts within communities and mobilize our youth to become land and water protectors.



GOALS OF THIS GUIDE:



To provide Indigenous youth with the tools to mobilize and engage peers within their communities to become involved in conserving and protecting biodiversity, wildlife, and habitat and,



To provide a guide in planning, delivering, and facilitating RISE engagement events within their communities. This guide was created to be adaptable to any community's specific need.

WHAT IS BIODIVERSITY?

Biodiversity is the variety of genes, species, and ecosystems and the ecological processes that allow them to evolve and adapt to a changing world. Biodiversity conversation connects to many things such as:



Clean air, clean water and fertile soil;



Climate regulation and control of floods and other natural hazards;



Protection from pest and disease outbreaks;



Food security; and,



Ecological and economic resilience.

*Taken from Canada's Biodiversity Outcomes Framework and 2020 Goals & Targets

THE YOUTH DEFINED IT AS:

NWAC hosted a national RISE Gathering in February 2018 and asked the youth what biodiversity means to them.

- ◆ Our siblings
- ◆ All our relations
- ◆ Our home, our mother, our future
- ◆ Everything holds a spirit, everything is alive
- ◆ Reconnection to traditional practices of respecting and honouring the lives of animals
- ◆ Recognizing that there is no word for biodiversity in Indigenous languages and that we must break it down to its simplest form
- ◆ Ecosystems and its sustainability
- ◆ Wildlife is food
- ◆ Reciprocity and respect

How do youth in your community define biodiversity?

BACKGROUND INFORMATION



WHAT IS FACILITATION?

A facilitated session is an organized meeting in which the facilitator guides the participants through a workshop, event, etc.

A facilitated session creates opportunity for people to have open dialogue and share their experiences within a safe and positive environment.

WHAT IS A FACILITATOR?

- 🍃 A facilitator plans, guides, and manages a group event to ensure that the groups objectives are met and that there is full participation from everyone involved
- 🍃 A facilitator is someone who helps a group of people understand their common objectives and helps the group achieve those objectives
- 🍃 The facilitator should be knowledgeable on the subject that they are facilitating

Your key responsibility as a facilitator is to create this group process and an environment in which it can flourish and so help the group reach a successful decision, solution or conclusion.

WHAT DOES A FACILITATOR DO?

If you are looking to engage youth within your community on discussions about conserving biodiversity, wildlife and habitat this can be done through organizing community events, initiatives, and workshops. Through organizing and getting youth together to discuss current issues, you can identify what resources are needed to address the issues you have outlined.

TIP:

Facilitation can take a lot out of you mentally, and sometimes it will be difficult to contribute to content while facilitating. It's important to have supports while doing this work, like an Elder or a community member that has the skills to help you navigate the conservation and ensure all participants leave your event in a good way.

MOBILIZING IN YOUR COMMUNITY



Identify community members who are active in protecting the land and sharing traditional knowledge on combatting climate change. This can be Elders, Knowledge Keepers, youth, teachers, educators, youth centre workers, etc.



Prior to your event host a pre-meeting with youth and Elders within your community to identify what your event should focus on. After this, create the agenda for your community event. What will your event consist of? (this can include ceremonies, sharing circles, medicine picking, etc.)



Draft your work plan and designate tasks, roles, and responsibilities to stay organized and on track – this will include a budget breakdown.



Choose a venue (location) in your community to host your event, this includes on the land activities.



Create a media campaign to promote and invite youth from your community to attend your event. This can be done through social media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter), posters, pamphlets, e-mail invite, etc.



Consistently review your work plan and maintain contact with the other youth, Elders and community members involved in the organizing of the event.



Host your event!

GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR DELIVERING EVENTS/WORKSHOPS

GUIDING PRINCIPLES



SAFE SPACE – create a safe and open environment for where participants can feel comfortable sharing ideas.



AWARENESS – watch carefully for strain, fatigue, lack of engagement or participants who may be triggered* by the content.



GUIDE – know the steps of the workshops and activities you have planned from the beginning to end and guide the participants through them.



MOTIVATE – start a conversation, establish momentum, and keep the group going. This can be done through icebreakers, energizers and other activities – *we've included some examples in this guide.*



PEACEKEEPER - in the event that there is conflict, yourself, the Elder or other assistance at your event can step in to help get it back to a positive space.



QUESTION - ask open-ended questions to get the group talking, compare comments and find similarities amongst the participants to help manage the discussions.

EXAMPLES:

🌿 How do you feel about the current state of our land and water?

🌿 What do you need to become more involved in combatting climate change within our community?

🌿 How can we work together to make positive change in our community?

🌿 What resources need to be created to have more youth involved in our community?

If you don't stay on track with the agenda, feel uncomfortable or worried tell your supports (Elders, helpers, community members) and they can step in and assist you. In the end have fun, good dialogue and let the event flow naturally.

SELF CARE

Self-care is very important in balancing our physical, emotional, mental and spiritual needs. Facilitating can be stressful and you may feel drained from organizing, planning and facilitating an event. Holistic self-care will help you in managing your emotions and encourage you to make healthy, positive choices that will reduce stress.



Group discussion questions to ask participants:

- 💧 Why is self-care important?
- 💧 What kinds of things do you do for your own self-care?
- 💧 What are some of the challenges you may experience in achieving self-care?
- 💧 What are some solutions that may help you overcome those challenges?

Examples of self-care:

- 💧 **Physical:** nutrition, exercise yoga, sleep and stretching
- 💧 **Emotional:** mindfulness, laughing, crying, friends and family
- 💧 **Mental:** journaling, music, volunteering and video games
- 💧 **Spiritual:** ceremony, meditation, nature and speaking to Elders/ Traditional Knowledge Keepers

Available apps to help practice mindfulness:

- 💧 Stop, Breathe and Think:
- 💧 Headspace
- 💧 Calm

Please note that this activity provides only a glimpse of what self-care is, and the information provided does not replace the opinions of health care professions.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES



CONFIDENTIALITY – it is very important that what you or the other participants hear are not shared to individuals outside the event. This is very important in creating a space where participants will feel comfortable sharing their stories and experiences.



INCLUSION AND INSPIRATION – give everyone equal opportunity to speak and be heard, this can be done through sharing circles, break-out groups or asking the participants open-ended* questions. Remember: if someone does not want to speak or share they do not have to, respect must be given to all participants.



LISTENING – listen to what is being said and make sure you repeat it back to the participants to ensure they heard what was said. Manage the time each participant takes to ensure that everyone has equal opportunity to speak.



TRUST AND SAFETY – creating a safe and trusting environment amongst the youth will allow for them to feel comfortable sharing their stories, identify and solve problems, as well as work together in a meaningful way.



IMPORTANCE OF LIVED EXPERIENCES – all input is valuable, especially when participants are sharing their stories and lived experiences.



This can be done by setting ground rules at the beginning of the event. Ask the youth what they need to feel safe and trusting in order to feel comfortable participating in the activities. Create a list and put it somewhere that is always visible.



WORK PLAN

A work plan is a list of tasks and goals that need to be completed and outlines the steps that needs to be taken to accomplish each of them Your work plan will help keep you organized and keep track of completed tasks, roles and responsibilities.



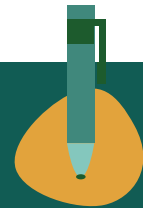
Example:

TASK	DETAILS	TIMELINE	RESPONSIBILITY
Create a budget for food	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create budget for breakfast/lunch for 10 people • Plan meals/assign who will cook the meals • Ask participants if they have any allergies or diet restrictions 	One week prior to event	Insert name of person who will be responsible for organizing this task

Below are other tasks that you can include within your work plan:

- 💧 Identify the purpose/goal of your event
- 💧 Agenda (including your icebreakers, activities, etc.)
- 💧 Invite participants (including Elders and community members that can help you)
- 💧 Promotion of your event (social media, posters, website, etc.)
- 💧 Confirm location
- 💧 Materials you will need
- 💧 SWAG (gifts) for participants

*Complete and confirm dates and times for your event with your local community centre, Elders, participants and presenters (if there will be any)



Write a brief outline of roles and responsibilities so all individuals involved in the planning and organizing of the event are on the same track, i.e. identify your facilitator(s), organizer(s), Elder(s), presenter(s), community service providers, caterer, etc.

EVALUATION – it is important to have an evaluation, so you can collect feedback on your event and see what participants enjoyed or areas, what they learned and areas of improvement.
(See evaluation form attached)

"INSERT NAME OF EVENT" START TIME: 9:00 END TIME: 5:00	
9:00 – 9:30	Traditional opening with Elder/Knowledge Keeper
9:30 – 9:45	Icebreakers
9:45 – 10:45	Workshop/Activity
10:45 – 11:00	Break
11:00 – 12:00	Workshop/Activity
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch
1:00 – 2:00	Sharing Circle
2:00 – 3:30	Community Clean up
3:30 – 3:45	Break
3:45 – 4:30	Debrief/Check-in
4:30 – 5:00	Traditional closing with Elder/Knowledge Keeper

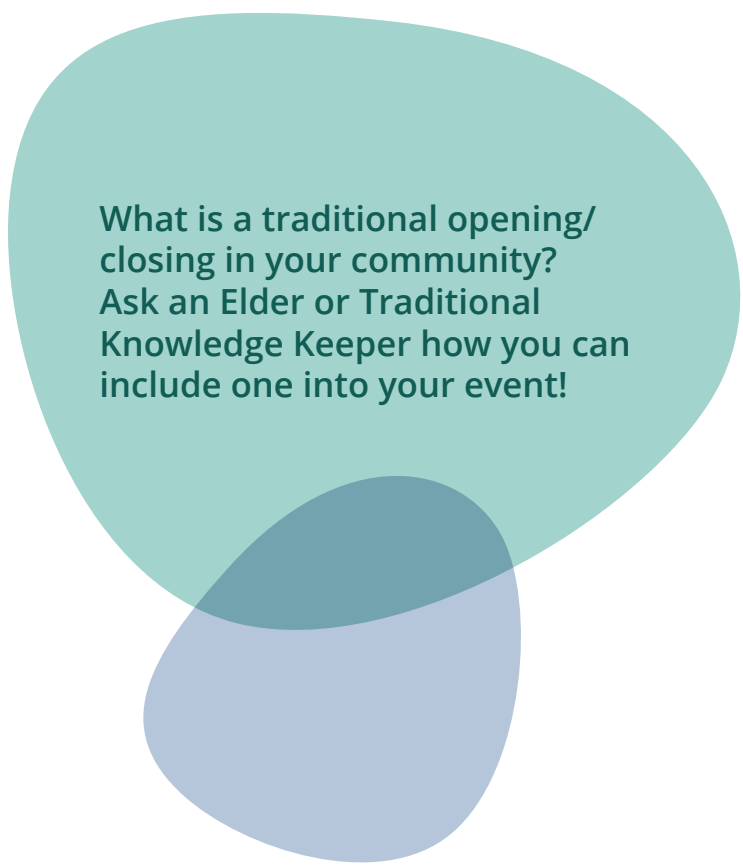
When designing an agenda keep in mind the:

PURPOSE: Why are you gathering together?

PRODUCT: What is the end goal of your event?
 What would you like participants to leave knowing?

PARTICIPANTS: Who needs to be included within your event?

PROCESS: What steps need to be done to plan and organize your event? (work plan)



CHECK-IN QUESTIONS:

Whenever youth gather together it's good practice to include a check in during your event. It allows youth to express how they are feeling and encourages people to open up and trust one another while actively listening.

Example of check-in questions:

- 🍃 How are you feeling?
- 🍃 What was your favourite part of the event?
- 🍃 What self-care activity will you do when you go home?

SAMPLE BUDGET FOR YOUR EVENT:

TOTAL EXPENSES FOR ONE-DAY EVENT (10-15 PARTICIPANTS)	
Room	\$500.00
Catering/Food	\$250.00
Printing (handouts)	\$150.00
Door Prizes	\$300.00
Facilitators Fees	\$700.00
Elders Honorariums (x2)	\$500.00
Supplies	\$300.00
TOTAL	\$2,700.00



EXAMPLE OF PROMOTIONAL POSTER:



RISE EVENT MAP



RESPECTING TRADITIONAL PROTOCOLS

“A traditional Elder is someone who follows the teachings of our ancestors. It is said that Traditional Elders walk and talk the good way of life. Traditional Elders teach and share the wisdom they have gained of the culture, history and the language. The sharing of their wisdom is healing. An Elder does not have to be senior but could be someone younger who has many teachings and who has earned the respect of their community by contributing to its spiritual development.”

– *Anishnawbe Health Toronto*

Asking Elders and Knowledge Keepers for Help

When you go to an Elder or Knowledge Keeper you must be respectful of their time and space, there are certain protocols that differ for each Indigenous community.

How do I find an Elder or Knowledge Keeper?

“As our awareness and knowledge of our traditions and culture increases, so does our honour and respect for these ways. This has not always been the case in our communities. There are those who present themselves as Elders, Medicine People or Knowledge Keepers and have not earned the title and may use teachings or medicines in a way that may harm or hurt be hurtful. It is important for young people to be aware of this and to exercise caution when seeking help, teachings or advice. Please consult with people you trust within your community to get referrals to respected Elders, Medicine People or Knowledge Keepers.”

– *Anishnawbe Health Toronto*

What’s the protocol for an Elder or Knowledge Keeper in your community?

- ☛ Side topics and discussions that arise can be put on a flip chart or the “parking lot” to be discussed later on
- ☛ When discussing problems within your community also try to and create solutions or initiatives that can be done
- ☛ Have icebreakers or energizers to build comfort amongst the participants and increase energy levels
- ☛ Listen attentively when someone is talking or sharing, repeat what you have heard to the group to ensure everyone is on the same page
- ☛ Remain neutral and non-judgemental
- ☛ Respect if there are participants that do not want to participate

If you do not have a contact in your community to access a referral, please contact one of the organizations below:

- 💧 Native Women’s Association of Canada: Telephone **1-(613)-722-3033**, www.nwac.ca
- 💧 Assembly of First Nations: Telephone **1-(613)-241-6789**, www.afn.ca
- 💧 Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami: Telephone **1-(613)-238-8181**, www.itk.ca
- 💧 Congress of Aboriginal Peoples: Telephone **1-(613)-747-6022**, www.abo-people.org
- 💧 Métis National Council: Telephone **1-(613)-232-3216**, www.metisnation.ca
- 💧 National Association of Friendship Centres: Telephone **1-(613)-563-4844**, www.nafc.ca

RESOURCES

POSSIBLE RISE EVENTS

Local Community Gathering

- 💧 Gather local youth from your community and host an event to discuss problems and solutions to environmental concerns in your community. Invite Elders, youth, and community members to develop resources to combat climate change and conserve the biodiversity, wildlife, and habitat within your community using traditional knowledge and practices. Your event can include workshops, sharing circles (see below), etc.
- 💧 Launch a campaign promoting awareness on a certain issue within your community. Mobilize youth within your community to become involved and develop solutions to solving it!
- 💧 Land camp/land-based activities with Elders, Traditional Knowledge Keepers and community members to learn traditional practices and ceremonies.
- 💧 Organize a community garbage clean up
- 💧 Organize a community Water Walk. A Water Walk is a community initiative to bless the water and honour its spirit while walking around the body of water of your choice. Mobilize youth in your community to start a campaign to raise awareness on the water issues in your region and develop solutions for change.



ICEBREAKERS



Candy Questions

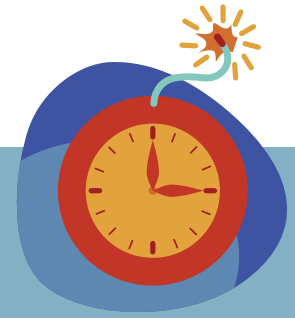
Participants will choose 4 candies (skittles, smarties, etc.), each flavour/ colour is associated with a different question. Participants will not know the questions prior to choosing a candy. In a circle each participant will answer their 4 questions.

Create your own questions and match them with the candies!



Destination Charades

Everyone thinks of a city or country that they have been to or want to visit. They then choose three clues to describe the place and act those clues out using charades. The person to guess the city or country gets a prize!



Time Bomb

A game that helps people learn each other's name in an easy and fun way. Grab a ball of your choice and get into a circle, everyone will take a turn saying their own name out loud. After this is done throw the ball to someone in the group and say their name. You have 2-seconds to call the name of someone else and throw the ball to them. If you cannot remember their name you are out of the game. The round ends when the only people left know everyone in the group.

ENERGIZERS

Countdown

Participants have to count from 1 to 20. There is only one rule: there is no order to counting. Individual participants have to yell the consecutive number whenever they want. When two people yell a number at the same time, you have to start counting from 1 again.

Find your relations!

1. Count the number of participants (even number is required)
2. Divide the number for participants by two and decide how many different types of animals will be assigned (20 participants will have 10 different animals)
3. For each animal, write its name on two sticky notes
4. Hand out a sticky note to each participant asking them to not show it to anyone
5. Participants will then cover their eyes and move around their room while making their animal sound trying to find their pair
6. First pair to find one another wins!

OPTIONAL ACTIVITY:

Sharing Circle

A sharing circle is a ceremony that is traditionally facilitated by an Elder or Knowledge Keeper trained in creating safe spaces and navigating difficult conversations for participants. The Sharing Circle allows for individuals to express themselves in a group setting, this can be done to debrief and connect with youth in your community, at the beginning or end of your event, or to check in on participants throughout the day. Sometimes participants will not say anything and may not feel comfortable sharing, that is okay, that does not mean they are not learning or being impacted by what is being shared. Sharing Circles are a great time for personal reflection.

An item is selected to use in the Sharing Circle to indicate who's turn it is in the circle to speak. This item helps maintain a safe space for people to share.

1	Ask all participants to gather in a circle and have your item that will be passed around.
2	Ask all participants to not use any cellphones during the Sharing Circle as it is disrespectful to participants sharing.
3	Open the Sharing Circle with Ground Rules: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is said in the circle stays in the circle• The person holding the item has the right to speak and no one else should speak until they've passed it on to the next participant• Do not cut off people while they are speaking• Add additional ground rules that fit with protocols from your community, the Elder or Knowledge Keeper facilitating the Circle may have some to add.
4	The Elder or Knowledge Keeper will facilitate the Sharing Circle and ensures it remains a safe and comfortable space for all participants



What gets passed around the Circle can be a talking stick, rock, feather or any item that may be of cultural significance to your community. What item would you use for a Sharing Circle in your community?





If you would like to obtain a copy of the Toolkit or have any questions, please contact:

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