



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

FACT SHEET

Sexual Wellbeing Learning Model



The Indigenous Wellness Program at the First Nations Health Authority uses a 'sexual wellbeing model' to build and strengthen conversations around traditional knowledge and ways of being in regards to healthy sexuality. It is a strengths-based model, which acknowledges healthy sexuality as an important aspect of overall holistic health and wellness.

For more information, visit: www.fnha.ca/sexualwellbeing

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THE MODEL IS BASED ON FOUR INDIGENOUS VALUES THAT ALIGN WITH SEXUAL HEALTH AND HEALTHY SEXUALITY:

1

PROTECTING COMMUNITIES

Cooperation and respect are essential to protecting our communities for future generations. Knowing how to protect your community means knowing how to protect yourself from communicable diseases, including sexually transmitted infections.

- This looks like learning more about STIs/STBBIs, how they are transmitted, and knowing where you can access testing or treatments.
- Protecting your body ultimately means protecting your partner(s), your family and your community.

2

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

Kindness and balance are fundamental teachings for living life in a good way with our partner(s), friends and our families. In addition to having healthy relationships with the people in our lives, it is also important that we have a healthy relationship with ourselves.

- Developing and maintaining healthy relationships means learning about consent, boundaries, conflict resolution, self-care and balance.

3

IDENTITY

Love and patience are at the heart of knowing oneself. Colonization has impacted our identities as Indigenous people, socially, culturally and sexually. Loving ourselves and having patience while exploring our identities is important to maintaining wellness.

- This means learning more about traditional and contemporary perspectives on gender identity and expression, and finding what works for us.

4

ADULTHOOD AND RITES OF PASSAGE

Traditionally and historically, sexuality was not perceived as shameful as it sometimes is today, and healthy sexuality was seen as a holistic part of health. Learning about our bodies was part of our teachings, and many Nations celebrate (and continue to celebrate) 'rites of passage' ceremonies. This served as a way to honour the transition from adolescence to adulthood and independence and all of the responsibilities that accompany this transition.

- Many of our communities practised, and are starting to practise again, a puberty rites ceremony.

WORKING WITH THE SEXUAL WELLBEING MODEL: LEARNING COMPONENTS

PROTECTING COMMUNITIES

- STBBIs (Sexually transmitted blood-borne infections such as HIV and HCV)
- STIs (Sexually Transmitted Infections)
- Safer Sex: communication, condoms, and consent
- Community resources for STI testing, access to condoms and contraceptives, good resources, and safe people to ask questions of

HEALTHY RELATIONSHIPS

- Decision-making and consent
- Boundaries, communication and knowing yourself
- Lateral kindness vs. lateral violence
- Self-care

IDENTITY

- Gender Identity
- Gender expression
- Non-judgmental
- Inclusion and celebrating differences

ADULTHOOD/RITES OF PASSAGE

- Creating an environment to learn about healthy sexuality
- Stigma and judgment around sexual health a colonial concept
- Sexual health tied to mental, spiritual, emotional and physical health
- Responsibility of relationships