

Alternative Care

Perserving a connection to family, culture and community.



Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag
Child & Family Services



On behalf of all of us at Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child & Family Services, we extend our most sincere gratitude for your interest in the Alternative Care program. While we strongly believe in keeping families together, there are times when children and youth need additional love, care and support from community members just like you.



About our Agency

“Our duty as Indigenous people is to take care of those who need to be taken care of.” - An Alternative Caregiver

Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child & Family Services is a multi-service Indigenous Well-Being Agency.

We provide a stable foundation for children, youth and families, through wraparound services that are culturally-based and family-focused. We seek to support our families in the way they deserve, with care and authenticity, and by recognizing and respecting spirit.

We form a wholistic, inclusive and nonjudgmental circle of care. We seek to honour and support those we serve, with a constant commitment to growing our base of knowledge and expertise.

We are an agency that delivers culturally-intelligent services to First Nation, Inuit and Métis peoples, on and off territory, within our service area. With our dedicated staff, we work with children, youth and families as early as possible to help them navigate various obstacles and access services.

Our Name

Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag is an Ojibway phrase that means to look after and to always keep children at the centre of our thoughts.

Pronunciation

(Nog-dah-wen-mawg) (Bin-oooh-zhee-yug)

Our Values

The philosophy and approach of Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child & Family Services is first and foremost, based upon the principles contained within the Seven Grandfather Teachings of our people:



- Wisdom “Nbwaakaawin”
- Love “Zaagidiwin”
- Respect “Mnaadendamowin”
- Bravery “Aakdehewin”
- Honesty “Gwekwaadziwin”
- Humility “Dbadendizwin”
- Truth “Debwewin”

Building on these seven teachings, we also value:

Inclusivity “Naasop” – We encourage and foster an atmosphere that brings together all who have an interest to participate and bring support for children and families in need. We include all perspectives and faiths, both traditional and mainstream understandings that our people may be a part of, and recognize that it is from the things that individuals value that they draw their strength and internal power from.

Wholistic “Chi Kinagedgo Bimaadzwin” – (Mind, Body, Emotions and Spirit) We believe that all aspects of life must be taken into account in arriving at good decisions with children and families.

Our Wholistic Approach

We believe that all aspects of life must be taken into account in arriving at good decisions with children, youth and families. In our work, we will demonstrate respect for children, youth, families, communities, staff, Alternative Care Providers, Elders, traditions and culture.

We strive to place the needs of children, youth, families and communities at the centre of our service and decision making.

We will listen and we will respond to what our children, youth, families and communities need. We will accept our responsibility to help empower the communities we serve.

We will support and meet their needs in ways that will facilitate the growth and development of children, youth, families and communities.

Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag will be truthful in our interactions with children, youth, families and communities. We recognize that each child, youth, family, First Nation, Inuit and Métis community is unique and our Service Model respects those differences.

Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child & Family Services recognizes Cultural Services are an integral component of individual, family, and community healing and should be accessible to every Indigenous child, youth and family requesting services.

This brings up to our Circle of Care which is a visual representation of Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child & Family Services. This Circle shows who we are, without hierarchy, and how we work together to serve those in the inner most circles, children, youth and families. Our values can be found on either side of the Circle, they serve as a reminder to keep them at the forefront of our minds.

The Circle of Care graphic can be found on the following page.

Our Member First Nations

Our Regional Protocol is an agreement between eight (8) member First Nations, five (5) mainstream Children’s Aid Societies (CAS) within our service area and our Agency. The protocol serves to protect the best interests of First Nations children, youth and families. This protocol applies whenever any of the CASs is involved with any of the members of the eight (8) First Nations, regardless of whether the First Nation is in the jurisdiction of the involved CAS. A full copy of the Regional Protocol is available on our website at binnoojiiyag.ca



Circle of Care





About Alternative Care

“We had so much love to give!” - An Alternative Caregiver

The Alternative Care Program provides family-based care for children and youth in need of additional care and out-of-home placement. The Alternative Care Program is a continuum of services, including: customary care, kin service (out of care), kin in care, community care homes, and in-home support.

We acknowledge that it is the First Nation, Inuit and Métis (FNIM) and family's right and responsibility to plan for their children and youth.

Customary Care Homes

are a form of out-of-home placement that promotes the preservation of family unity and builds upon the vision of a shared community responsibility of caring for and raising healthy children.

Kinship Service Homes

are those family or community members who are caring for a child/youth who may or may not be in the legal care of Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child & Family Services.

Community Care Homes

are a form of out-of-home placement for children and youth who are in the legal care of Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child & Family Services. Community Caregivers open their homes to provide temporary care for First Nations, Inuit and Métis children and youth.

Who are Alternative Caregivers?

Alternative Caregivers is a broad term used to describe individuals who open their homes to care for children and youth through: customary care, kinship service, kin in care and community care.

How We Work Together

It is critical for children/youth to maintain their relationships with their biological parents and families. A circle of care includes all parties working together, collaboratively. **It is an expectation that Alternative Caregivers foster and develop strong relationships with parents, family and their community.**



Preserving Indigenous Identity

Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child & Family Services believes it is critical for children/youth to maintain their relationships with their parents/guardians. A circle of care includes all parties working together, collaboratively. It is an expectation Alternative Caregivers foster and develop strong relationships with parents/guardians and their community.

Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child & Family Services is determined to establish and preserve the identity of children/youth in or out of care or under a Customary Care Agreement by:

- Exploring a child/youth's cultural connection, heritage, traditions, community or tribal history and descent;
- Developing a cultural plan to promote the child/youth's Indigenous identity;
- Making applications to pursue membership or entitlements;
- Working with Resource Persons identified by the child/youth or family.
- Honouring and following the placement priorities for children/youth in care.

It is essential to work in collaboration with the FNIM communities in establishing and preserving an Indigenous child/youth's identity and connection to the culture, land, and heritage.

We will work proactively, in partnership with service providers, extended family, Resource Person(s) and Elders. This includes decisions and actions for planning living situations, arranging social and recreational activities for the child, and developing a culturally appropriate cultural plan. It also includes finding ways to help the child explore and understand the history, geography, language, customs, and spiritual beliefs of their community, and to develop lifelong relationships with people in that community.

Rights of Indigenous Children and Youth

1. The right to identity to know who they are within the context of their family, heritage and culture.
2. The right to know, learn and speak their language.
3. The right to traditional and contemporary healing that reinforce their identity and cultural pride.
4. The right to a good life.
5. The right to land or access to land.
6. The right to a lifestyle that offers opportunity for good health, prosperity and happiness.
7. The right to education that includes opportunities to learn experientially from their people as well as learning from books and formal institutions.
8. The right to their spiritual name, as applicable.
9. The right to know and be a member of their clan, as applicable. Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag is committed to ensuring the rights of Indigenous children and youth are upheld.
10. The right to know where the child belongs and to which community.
11. The right to protection both inside and outside the family.
12. The right to live a life full of purpose.
13. The right to know and be a part of their family.

The Alternative Care Training Program

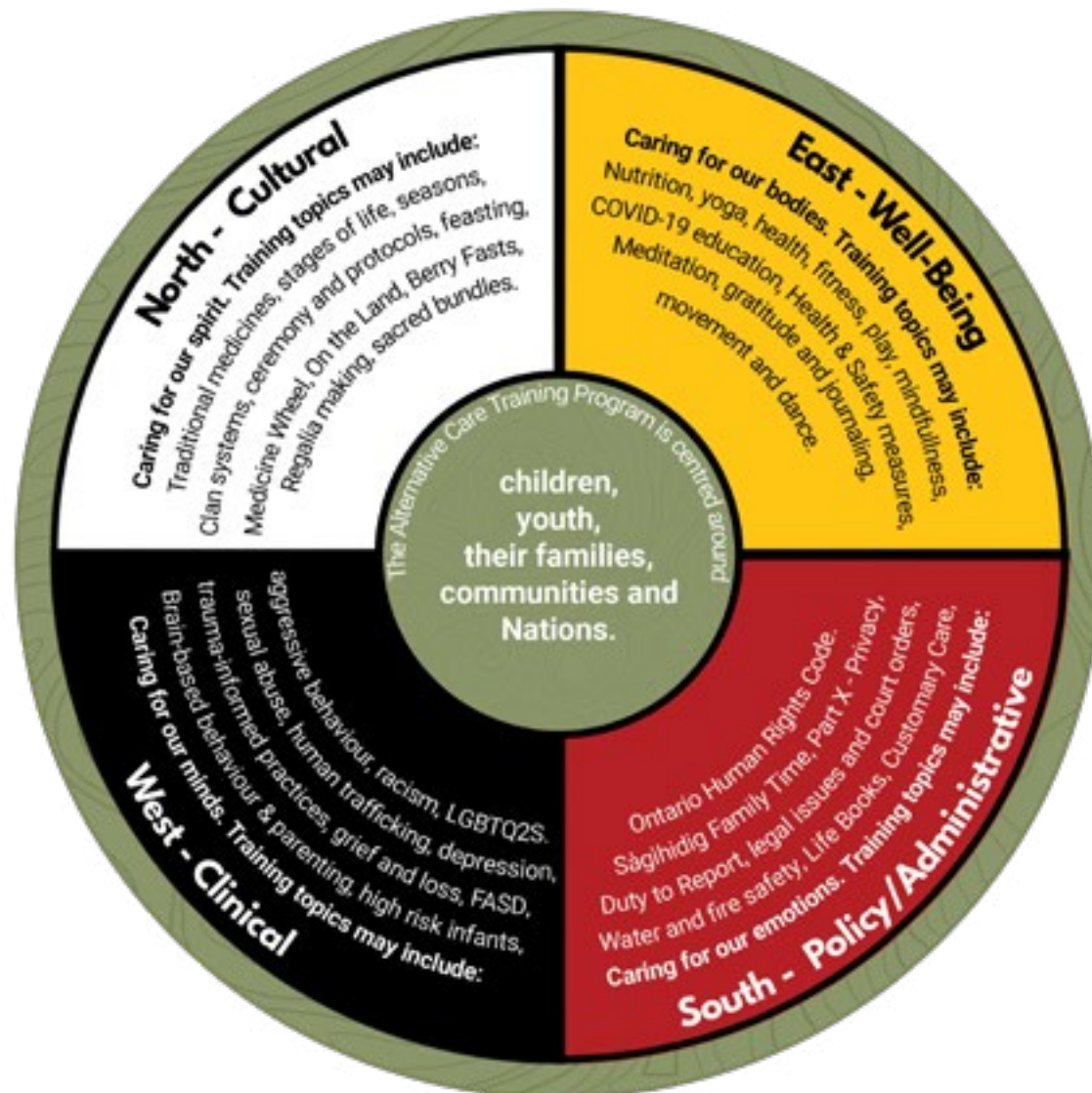


How to Become a Caregiver

Join our Circle of Care supporting Indigenous children, youth and their families, communities and Nations.

If you have any additional questions or if you are interested in becoming caregiver, please contact our Alternative Care Team by phone at 1 844 523 2237, then press 2.

The Team will start an inquiry and within 3 days an Alternative Care Worker will be in touch to complete a pre-screen interview with you and answer any additional questions you may have.



The wheel above is a visual representation of the Alternative Care Training Program. We strive to provide a variety of training opportunities drawing upon each of the four quadrants - Well-Being, Policy/Administrative, Clinical and Cultural. However, it should be noted that culture is integrated throughout all that we do as an Agency, it is who we are.

Alternative Caregivers are expected to complete 25 hours (total) of training each year. While that may seem like a lot, you may find yourself looking to do more than 25 hours. We offer a fun, engaging, interactive and safe space for you to learn, grow and connect to become the best possible alternative caregivers for First Nations, Inuit and Métis children and youth!

Available Support

Alternative Caregivers become a part of our Circle of Care, as such the following support will be available:

- A dedicated Alternative Care Worker
- Daily per diem
- Ongoing Training and Support
- Cultural Resource Advisors
- Monthly Peer Support Groups
- Monthly Alternative Care Business Meetings
- Annual Alternative Care Recognition Event

Application Process

The application process includes the following: (these pertain to all members of the household)

- Home Safety Checklist (a physical walk through of your home)
- Police Checks (+18)
- Child Welfare Checks (+18)
- Medical Records
- Interviews
- References
 - x5 for a couple (2 references must be family members)
 - x3 for a single applicant



These two feathers symbolize our commitment to achieve gender and sexual equity at all levels of our organization.



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Work with us. Volunteer with us. Become an Alternative Caregiver.

binnoojiiyag.ca

Follow us @binnoojiiyag

