Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag
Child & Family Services

POSITION TITLE:	ELDER/KNOWLEDGE KEEPER
DEPARTMENT:	CULTURAL SERVICES
REPORTS TO:	DIRECTOR OF CULTURAL & WELLBEING SERVICES
CLASSIFICATION:	THIS OPPORTUNITY MAY BE FILLED IN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING WAYS: • ONE (1) FULL-TIME POSITION (35 HOURS/WEEK); OR • TWO (2) PART-TIME POSITIONS (17.5 HOURS/WEEK EACH, WITH SCHEDULING FLEXIBILITY)
FULL SALARY RANGE:	$81,765.30 TO $112,941.57*
LOCATION:	*DURHAM HUB (OSHAWA), PETERBOROUGH, HIAWATHA FIRST NATION, ALDERVILLE FIRST NATION, SCUGOG FIRST NATION, SUTTON, ON *PREFERRED LOCATION
POSTING DATE:	SEPTEMBER 26, 2026
CLOSING DATE:	OPEN UNTIL FILLED

Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child & Family Services is a multi-service Indigenous wellbeing agency. We provide a stable foundation for children, youth, and families, through wraparound services that are culturally based, and family focused.

POSITION SUMMARY

The Elder/Knowledge Keeper, who is recognized and respected within their First Nation community, holds the trust, standing, lived experience, cultural knowledge, relationships, and spiritual accountability associated with this role. This position requires someone who is meaningfully called upon by community to provide guidance, mentorship, ceremony, healing support, teachings, and cultural direction. The Elder/Knowledge Keeper serves as a cultural bridge for the children, youth, families, caregivers, member communities, Board of Directors, staff, and external partners of the Agency. In collaboration with the Cultural Services team, this role provides traditional teachings, spiritual care, ceremony, cultural education, protocol guidance, and culturally safe support in a manner consistent with community expectations and local traditions.

The Elder/Knowledge Keeper maintains and strengthens their bundle through ongoing relationships with community, Elders, ceremony, traditional knowledge, and the application of Indigegogy in supporting the Agency, children, youth, families, and communities.

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RESPONSIBILITIES

Cultural Guidance & Mentorship:

- Provide spiritual, emotional, ceremonial, and cultural guidance as an established and recognized Elder.
- Offer mentorship, teachings, sharing circles, traditional ceremonies, healing practices, and culturally grounded support to Indigenous children, youth, families, caregivers, community members, staff, leadership, and the Board of Directors, in a manner consistent with community expectations, local protocols, and cultural accountability.

Community Advising:

- Advise Agency leadership, councils, committees, staff, and partner organizations on cultural matters from the perspective and responsibility of a recognized Elder, grounded in community relationship, cultural protocols, and traditional teachings.
- Provide Elder guidance on community initiatives, policies, programs, and service approaches to ensure cultural teachings, local practices, and Indigenous ways of knowing are respectfully considered.
- Help ensure Agency decisions, planning, and service delivery are informed by cultural teachings, traditional perspectives, community expectations, and the best interests of children, youth, families, and communities.
- Support reconciliation, relationship-building, and cultural restoration efforts by promoting respectful engagement with member First Nations, Indigenous communities, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, traditional helpers, and families.

Ceremonial and Protocol Leadership:

- Lead, advise on, and uphold appropriate cultural protocols for meetings, events, ceremonies, gatherings, and service-related supports, recognizing that protocols may differ among communities and must be approached with humility and respect.
- Conduct or support openings, closings, blessings, acknowledgements, ceremonies, and other cultural practices when requested and when appropriate within the Elder's bundle, teachings, community responsibilities, and cultural protocols.
- Ensure cultural practices are carried out respectfully, safely, and authentically, with attention to local traditions, consent, confidentiality, spiritual safety, and the role of other Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and traditional helpers.
- Educate staff, leadership, caregivers, partners, and others about cultural protocols, etiquette, ceremonial responsibilities, and respectful engagement with Elders, communities, and traditional helpers.

Cultural Safety & Education:

- Advise and educate staff, leadership, caregivers, and partners on traditional protocols, Indigenous histories, the impacts of colonization, cultural safety, and respectful ways of working with First Nation, Inuit, and Métis children, youth, families, and communities. Support the integration of Indigenous worldviews into

programming, policies, and practice while ensuring teachings are shared appropriately and within cultural protocols.
- Develop, review, and support culturally grounded resources, teachings, and practice supports for the Agency, ensuring they reflect appropriate protocols, local traditions, cultural accountability, and consultation with Elders, Knowledge Keepers, traditional helpers, and member communities where appropriate.

Community Liaison:
- Build, maintain, and care for respectful relationships with member First Nations, First Nation, Inuit, and Métis communities, Indigenous Child Wellbeing Agencies, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, traditional helpers, and community partners, acting as a respected cultural advisor and bridge while honouring community authority and protocols.
- Provide cultural education, training, and guidance to Agency partners on cultural practices, teachings, ceremonies, and protocols to support a consistent, respectful, and culturally appropriate helping process.
- Provide Elder guidance and cultural support at Agency meetings, gatherings, circles, and planning processes to help guide discussions, decisions, and relationships in a respectful and culturally grounded way.
- Establish and maintain appropriate linkages with community traditional helpers, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, ceremony helpers, and cultural supports, with respect for consent, confidentiality, community protocols, and the limits of the Elder/Knowledge Keeper's own bundle and responsibilities.

Crisis Support & Conflict Resolution:
- Offer culturally grounded guidance, traditional counselling approaches, life teachings, and support rooted in community values, including the Seven Grandfather Teachings, while maintaining strict confidentiality, compassion, cultural safety, and appropriate referral pathways when additional clinical, crisis, or specialized supports are required.
- Provide or support traditional healing, ceremony, and spiritual care for children, youth, families, staff, and communities in their healing journeys, where appropriate and within cultural protocols, community expectations, and the Elder's recognized role.
- Provide teachings and cultural supports that may include wellness teachings, sweat lodge ceremony, traditional plants and medicines, ceremonial protocols, creation/origin teachings, and other teachings or practices that are appropriate to the Elder's bundle, community recognition, and cultural responsibilities.

Relationship and Team Building:
- Work collaboratively and respectfully at all levels while maintaining the integrity, boundaries, and responsibilities of the Elder/Knowledge Keeper role.
- Demonstrate behaviours, actions and attitudes that are consistent with the Seven Grandfather Teachings and the agency vision, mission, and values.

- Provide opportunities for the enhancement and development of positive cultural identities of the children, families and communities served.
- Ensure open communication, consultation, and mutual respect with the Elder/Knowledge Keeper team, Cultural Services team, community Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and traditional helpers.
- Ensure effective and professional communications with all internal and external service providers.
- Exercise cultural humility and discernment when teachings, ceremonies, or protocols differ among communities, and seek appropriate consultation where needed.
- Share information according to privacy and/or confidentiality guidelines.

Administration and Reporting:

- Carry out administrative functions while ensuring compliance with Agency policies, procedures, applicable practices, confidentiality requirements, and respect for cultural information, sacred knowledge, and community protocols.
- Ensure confidentiality and safekeeping of all Agency documents and records.
- Provide accurate, up-to-date, and concise file summaries to administrative support for upload into the Agency database, while ensuring culturally sensitive or sacred information is documented only where appropriate and in accordance with confidentiality, consent, and Agency requirements.
- Work in compliance with the Occupational Health and Safety Act and any other relevant legislation.
- Prepare and submit attendance records and travel expense claims.
- Follow the Agency's human resources, finance and other policies and procedures in the performance of duties.

Other Duties:

- Perform other duties as assigned that are consistent with the recognized Elder/Knowledge Keeper role, cultural responsibilities, Agency mandate, and applicable community protocols.

REQUIREMENTS

Education and Experience Requirements:

- Must be an established and respected Elder within a recognized First Nation community, with demonstrated community recognition, trust, and standing as someone who carries the responsibilities, conduct, relationships, lived experience, and spiritual accountability associated with being an Elder.
- Recognition as an Elder must be grounded in community relationship and cultural accountability, including acknowledgement by community members, Elders, cultural leadership, and/or traditional helpers as a person called upon to provide cultural guidance, mentorship, ceremony, healing support, and protocol direction.
- Cultural knowledge, participation in ceremony, experience supporting teachings, or experience delivering cultural programming, on their own, are not sufficient to meet

this requirement; the candidate must be recognized in the cultural sense as an Elder by the community or communities to whom they are accountable.
- Demonstrated ability to carry themselves in a manner consistent with the expectations of an Elder, including humility, respect, confidentiality, sound judgment, relational accountability, and adherence to cultural protocols and teachings.
- Bachelor of Social Work or Indigenous Studies degree would be an asset.
- Three (3) years' experience in a social services organization developing and delivering cultural programs and services.
- Experience working with Indigenous people, organizations, and communities.
- Experience with all four stages of the life cycle within the medicine wheel.
- Experience working within Child Welfare and/or Indigenous Child-Wellbeing setting would be considered an asset.
- Understand and speak any traditional language is a definite asset.

Knowledge Requirements:
- Knowledge of Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child & Family Services programs and services and child welfare services issues at the First Nation and regional level.
- Engage as a healthy, respected, and accountable member of community with a strong demonstrated ability to work respectfully with stakeholders, children, youth, birth family members, caregivers, co-workers, community members, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, traditional helpers, and allies.
- Respect for, sensitivity towards as well as knowledge and understanding of Indigenous culture, traditions, and the Seven Grandfather Teachings.
- Knowledge of First Nations, Inuit and Métis service delivery, customs, and traditions in relation to child welfare.
- Knowledge of the Child, Youth and Family Services Act.
- A good working knowledge of community services within the Dnaagdawenmag Binnoojiiyag Child & Family Services catchment area and surrounding areas to assist in service provision.
- A solid understanding of and sensitivity to the experiences of First Nations and Indigenous peoples in Canada, and the impact of the legacy of Residential Schools and the Sixties Scoop upon them is essential.

Ability Requirements:
- Act as a role model in demonstrating the Seven Grandfather Teachings and the conduct expected of an Elder, alongside the Agency, staff, communities, and those we serve.
- Excellent interpersonal skills, oral and written communication skills.
- Conflict resolution and problem-solving skills.
- Computer skills with MS Office software.
- Ability to work both independently and within a team environment.
- Ability to support both traditional and contemporary healing practices.
- Display a positive and helpful attitude.

- Use good judgment in assessing difficult situations.
- Guide and support individuals in their desires and efforts to embrace cultural values and traditions.
- Work with confidential and sensitive information.

Mandatory Requirements:

- Provide an acceptable Canadian Police Information Centre Check (CPIC) and Vulnerable Sector Screening (VSS).
- Able to provide a safe vehicle for use on the job, an acceptable Driver's Abstract, evidence of a valid Ontario Driver's License and of Personal Liability & Property Damage insurance coverage for at least $2,000,000.00.
- Must be willing to work flexible hours including weekends, evenings and holidays as required.

WORKING CONDITIONS

- A working location will be provided with a potential to work from home on occasion, subject to agency needs and eligibility.
- Travel within the catchment area will be required.
- At our Agency, we actively encourage a healthy work life balance and aim to ensure working hours do not exceed 35 hours per week and/or do not need to be conducted during evenings and weekends. We recognize however, that the needs of the children, youth and families that we work alongside do require services outside of these hours. We have a flexible work policy where we aim to maintain an 8 hour schedule (inclusive of a 1 hr lunch), but there are occasions where such planning is not possible. In this role, you will need to have flexibility in your work schedule.

STARTING SALARY RANGE

- $81,765.30 - $100,148.27, depending on qualifications and experience.

*PLEASE NOTE: The full salary range is the total earning potential for this position. Increases are awarded based on your annual performance review.

TO APPLY

- Please email the following to careers@binnoojiiyag.ca
  - Application for Employment (available at www.binnoojiiyag.ca)
  - Please indicate preferred location in your application
  - Resume (include 3 supervisory work-related references)
- Incomplete Applications will not be considered.
- Only those selected will be contacted for an interview.
- As an Indigenous Child Well-Being Agency, we give priority to applicants who identify as First Nations, Inuit, Métis, and those with close affiliations.