

MAY 2023

CHOOSE LIFE NEWSLETTER



Nishnawbe
Aski Nation
ᐱᓄᓄᓄᓄᓄᓄ ᐱᓄᓄᓄᓄᓄᓄᓄ



Our team acknowledges that NAN communities have varying dialects, languages, and cultural teachings. Teachings vary from First Nation to First Nation and even from one geographic region to another. For more information, please consult with a Traditional Elder, Healer or Medicine Person. With respect to this, our newsletter will do our best to be inclusive to both Ojibwe, Ojicree, and Cree teachings that are shared. Please share any teachings that you are comfortable sharing and it will be included in our newsletter.

MAY: FLOWER MOON

OJIBWE: WAAWAASKONE GIIZIS

Flowering Moon is the time for healing and cleansing. During this moon, we begin again, acknowledging the time for replenishing our spirit. It is the time we feast our bundles and recharge, readying ourselves for the coming moons.



It is when we prepare our gardens for the planting of seeds, knowing what is to come. This moon is also known as Sucker Moon, Frog Moon, Budding Moon, Corn Planting Moon, Milk Moon, Mother's Moon, as well as many others.

MAY: BLOOMING MOON

WAABONII GIIZIS

The fifth moon of Creation is Flower Moon, where all plants display their Spirit sides for all the world to see. This life giving energy is one of the most powerful healing medicines on Mother Earth. During this moon we are encouraged to explore our spiritual essences.

THIRTEEN MOON TEACHINGS

The cycles of the moon determine our yearly calendar. The changes that come with each passing moon indicate the times for planting, harvesting, hunting and gathering. In the Anishnawbe calendar the names of each month includes the word 'moon' and reflects the close connection between the cycles of the moon and the plant and animal life on Turtle Island.

DO YOU HAVE A CULTURAL AND/OR LAND BASED COORDINATOR?

The Choose Life Cultural Coordinator is looking to connect with all of the Choose Life Cultural & Land-Based Coordinators. Please scan the QR code with your phone to fill out this form on their behalf or forward the newsletter to them. Or you can email kdrake@nan.ca to request a link to access the form.



SAGE TEACHINGS

Sage is used broadly for many purposes by both First Nations and Native Americans - and is described here in only the most general of terms. Similar to sweetgrass, it is used in many geographical locations in North America, whereas red cedar is primarily used in ceremonies on the northwest coast.

Sage, depending on the particular culture, can be used in medicine pouches, spread over the floor of a sweatlodge, wrapped around sacred implements, used for healing, used to make bad spirits sick, purify people and dwellings, healing and calming.

There are two types of sage, each with its own distinct qualities and uses. Smoke from white sage (*Artemisia californica*) is used for purification of mind, body and spirit and sacred articles in advance of prayers and ceremonies. White sage is burned for meditation, smudging and cleansing of spirit and dwelling. In some beliefs, white sage smoke is believed to provide a barrier that prevents negative spirits from entering the room in which the ceremony is being held.

Desert sage (*Salvia apiana*) has been revered by First Peoples for its medicinal attributes long before the study of microbiology entered the universe. The ancient belief in desert sage as a healing plant is "verified" by scientific analysis of its properties that show it contains certain polyphenals which are natural antioxidants that protect cells from toxins and organisms in the environment that cause infections; it is antifungal, antiseptic and an astringent. Interestingly, the Latin root of *Salvia* is *salvare*, which means to heal.



COMMUNITY PHOTOS OF LAC SEUL



Choose Life in Lac Seul brought out their youth for a 3 day hunting trip!



NAN Choose Life Staff collaborated with other NAN staff in response to a request for emergency support for Constance Lake FN. Miigwetch to everyone who stepped forward and supported the community!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

CHOOSE LIFE NETWORKING CALLS

Please join our team once a month on Microsoft Teams to stay connected with one another!

Dates: Every 2nd Wednesday of the month

May 10 | Jun 7 | Jul 12 | Aug 9
Sept 13 | Oct 11 | Nov 8 | Dec 13

Time: Log in @ 10:45AM EST
Starts @ 11:00AM EST

There will be **attendance prizes!**

TRAINING OPPORTUNITY

ASIST and Naloxone Training on May 16-18 2023.

All spots have been filled! Please watch for when our training opportunities are posted as spots for attendees are limited. Our Team is looking forward to seeing you there!

STAFF CONTACT UPDATE FORM

Has your team had any recent staff changes? Please let us know so we can update your contact information in our database. Scan the QR code to the right or contact Rauslyn Laviolette our Choose Life Officer and she will provide you with the link to complete the form.



RESOURCES

NAN HOPE
CALL 1-844-NAN-HOPE (626-4673) nanhope.ca

Hope for Wellness Help Line
CALL 1-855-242-3310
hopeforwellness.ca

Talk4Healing
CALL 1-855-554-HEAL (4325)
talk4healing.com

Please reach out if you need support!

Kids Help Phone
CALL 1-800-668-6868 Text
686868 kidshelpphone.ca

CMHA Crisis Response
thunderbay.cmha.ca
Call Thunder Bay: 807-346-8282

District / Toll-Free: 1-888-269-3100 Northwest Region:
1-866-888-8988

Crisis Services Canada
crisisservicescanada.ca
CALL 1-833-456-4566
TEXT 45645

REFERENCES

<https://mushkiki.com/our-programs/moontime-and-grandmother-moon/>
<https://www.onwa.ca/full-moon-ceremony>
<http://muskratmagazine.com/ojibwe-moons/>
<https://durhamcollege.ca/info-for/indigenous-students/information-and-resources/13-moons>
<https://www.ictinc.ca/blog/aboriginal-sacred-plants-sage>

NAN CHOOSE LIFE TEAM

NAN Social Development Director
Nichole Kinzel, nkinzel@nan.ca

NAN Choose Life Manager
Marla Murray, mmurray@nan.ca

NAN Choose Life Policy Analyst
Vacant, previously Jessica Gacsi

NAN Choose Life Community Advisor
Allan Turtle, aturtle@nan.ca

NAN Choose Life Data Officer
Shannon Furioso, sfurioso@nan.ca

NAN Choose Life Officer
Rauslyn Laviolette, rlaviolette@nan.ca

NAN Choose Life Training Coordinator
Shelly Fugere, sfugere@nan.ca

NAN Choose Life Coordinator
Bibianne Charles, bcharles@nan.ca

NAN Choose Life Cultural Coordinator
Kiaya Drake, kdrake@nan.ca

NAN Choose Life SW Student*
Tanya Forneri, tforneri@nan.ca

(* RECENT STAFF CHANGES)

NAN Choose Life welcomes new staff and wishes those who have left the Choose Life Team many thanks for their role in Choose Life and well wishes as they journey forward.

CULTURAL DATABASE

Please share any Cultural Resources that you would like to make accessible on the Cultural Database or if you know of anyone interested in sharing their cultural or land-based teachings/skills/gifts with Choose Life. Please fill out the Cultural Helper Form. It is accessible at: Choose Life - Nishnawbe Aski Nation (nan.ca). You can also scan our QR code. If you have any questions regarding the database or would like a link forwarded to you, please contact Kiaya Drake.



HOW CAN I CONTRIBUTE?

By emailing Kiaya Drake to share teachings, resource links, photos, activities and/or events which took place in your community that you wish to highlight and share with other Choose Life Teams throughout NAN. You can also nominate someone in our Honorable Mentions section. You can do this by scanning the QR code.

