3RD ANNUAL

Nimbaabaa

MY FATHER'S GATHERING

November 17 - 19, 2026
Delta Hotel, Thunder Bay, ON



EVENT PROGRAM

Alvin Fiddler

GRAND CHIEF



Good morning, everyone.

On behalf of Nishnawbe Aski Nation, I would like to welcome all of you to the 3rd Annual Nimbaabaa – My Father's Gathering 2026.

First, I want to acknowledge and thank Elder Victor Chapais for opening our gathering with prayer. I also want to welcome our leadership, Elders, presenters, facilitators, and all the men who have taken the time to be here with us over the next three days.

The purpose of this gathering is to bring men together to share knowledge, learn from one another, reconnect with our traditional roles, and create space for healing.

As Indigenous men, fathers, grandfathers, sons, uncles, and brothers, we all carry important responsibilities within our families and communities. Many of our traditional roles and teachings have been affected by colonization, intergenerational trauma, and experiences that have changed how we see ourselves and our responsibilities.

Over these three days, we will have an opportunity to reflect on these experiences and begin strengthening our connections to who we are and where we come from.

We will explore the impacts of colonization on men's traditional roles, take part in hands-on cultural learning through birchbark bowl making, and have important conversations about anger, healing, fatherhood, and the value of being present in our families and communities.

We will also have opportunities to connect, share stories, participate in activities, and learn from one another.

I encourage everyone to come into this gathering with an open mind and an open heart. Take the time to listen, share your experiences, ask questions, and support one another. There is no expectation that we all have the same experiences or that we have everything figured out. We are here to learn together.

Most importantly, let us remember that healing is not something we do alone. It starts with ourselves, but it can strengthen our families, our children, and future generations.

Thank you for being here, for making this gathering a priority, and for being part of this important work. I wish everyone a meaningful, safe, and positive three days together.

Miigwetch,

Grand Chief Alvin Fidler

Bobby Narcisse

DEPUTY GRAND CHIEF

Please enjoy a welcome address video from Deputy Grand Chief Bobby Narcisse. To view the video, please click on the image or link below.



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Day 1: November 17, 2026

8:00 am	**Registration Open**	
9:00 am	Opening Prayer	Elder Victor Chapais
9:15 am	Opening Address	Deputy Grand Chief Bobby Narcisse
9:30 am	Icebreakers	NAN Team - Ann Magiskan
10:15 pm	**Break**	
10:30 pm	Colonization's Deconstruction of Men's Roles	Nishnawbe Aski Nation Men's Healing Initiative - Clarence Fisher
12:00 pm	**Lunch**	
1:00 pm	Men's Traditional Role's Birchbark Bowl Making	Kelvin Redsky
2:15 pm	**Break**	
2:30 pm	Men's Traditional Role's Birchbark Bowl Making	Kelvin Redsky
4:00 pm	**Day 1 Adjournment**	

Day 2: November 18, 2026

8:00 am	**Breakfast**	
9:00 am	Understanding the Roots of Anger for Men	Wayne Rabbitskin
10:15 pm	**Break**	
10:30 pm	Understanding the Roots of Anger for Men (Cont'd)	Wayne Rabbitskin
12:00 pm	**Lunch**	
1:00 pm	Debriefing	Wayne Rabbitskin
2:15 pm	**Break**	
2:30 pm	Sportsman Simulation Activities Games and Prizes	NAN Staff Brian Edwards
4:00 pm	**Day 2 Adjournment**	

Day 2: November 19, 2026

8:00 am	**Breakfast**	
9:00 am	Dad Central: Men's Value Reset	Drew Soleyn
10:15 am	**Break**	
10:30 am	Dad Central: Fatherhood Discussion	Drew Soleyn
12:00 pm	**Lunch**	
1:00 pm	Fatherhood Techniques	Drew Soleyn
2:15 pm	**Break**	
2:45 pm	Men's Advocacy & Advisory Council for Healing Discussion and Group Exercise	Nishnawbe Aski Nation Men's Healing Initiative Clarence Fisher
4:00 pm	Community Call to Action Address	Oshkaatisak Youth Council Braeden Cawley & Allen Okeese Elder Victor Chapais
4:30 pm	Nishnawbe Aski Nation Executive Address & Closing Remarks	Nishnawbe Aski Nation Grand Chief Alvin Fiddler
5:00 pm	**Nimbaabaa 2026 Adjournment**	



Day 1 - November 17

Clarence Fisher



Clarence Fisher, Men's Healing Initiative, Nishnawbe Aski Nation

Clarence Fisher is an Anishinaabe man from Long Lake #58 First Nation, with ancestral roots in Netmizaaggamig Nishnaabeg (Pic Mobert) and Biigtigong Nishnaabeg (Pic River). He serves as the Program Manager for the Men's Healing Initiative (MHI) at Nishnawbe Aski Nation, where he leads initiatives that support the healing, advocacy, and restoration of First Nations men, their families, and their communities across NAN territory.

Drawing from both professional and lived experience, Clarence has dedicated his work to supporting survivors of childhood sexual abuse, advancing culturally grounded healing, and restoring the traditional roles of Indigenous men as fathers, husbands, protectors, and community leaders. He has played a leading role in the development of the Debwe Boonendamowin (Speaking the Truth) Apology Project and the Men's Advocacy and Advisory Council for Healing (MAACH), helping to build survivor-led approaches to healing, advocacy, and systems change.

A proud father, husband, grandfather, and community advocate, Clarence believes that strengthening men strengthens families, and that healthy families are the foundation of healthy Nations. Through gatherings such as Nimbaabaa: My Father's Gathering, he is committed to reclaiming the teachings, responsibilities, and relationships that have sustained Anishinaabe families and communities for generations.

Session Overview

Colonization's Deconstruction of Men's Roles

This session explores how colonization disrupted First Nations men's roles, responsibilities, and relationships within families and communities. Participants will reflect on the continuing effects of these disruptions and consider how healing, reconnection, and renewed responsibility can support family and community wellbeing.

Men's Advocacy and Advisory Council for Healing: Discussion and Group Exercise

Learn about the Men's Advocacy and Advisory Council for Healing (MAACH) and its development as a survivor-led approach to healing, peer support, and advocacy. Through discussion and a group exercise, participants will consider how men can support one another and contribute to healing within their communities.

Ann Magiskan

Training Coordinator, Family Well-Being Program — Nishnawbe Aski Nation

Ann Magiskan serves as the Training Coordinator for the Family Well-Being Program at Nishnawbe Aski Nation, where she coordinates the planning and delivery of training opportunities, gatherings, and initiatives that strengthen families and support community wellness throughout NAN territory.

Drawing on her experience as both an Inmate Liaison and Aboriginal Liaison, Ann has dedicated her career to building trust, fostering meaningful relationships, and promoting culturally grounded approaches to healing and reconciliation. She is passionate about creating safe, welcoming spaces where individuals and families can connect, learn, and grow together.

Through her work, Ann is committed to supporting the restoration of healthy families, strengthening community relationships, and advancing the well-being of First Nations across Nishnawbe Aski Nation. She is honoured to contribute to Nimbaabaa 2026, celebrating the vital role of fathers, families, and communities in nurturing future generations.

Session Overview

Icebreakers

Begin the gathering with activities that help participants get acquainted and feel more comfortable together. This opening session creates opportunities for connection and sets a welcoming tone for three days of learning, sharing, and reflection.

Kelvin Redsky

My name is Kelvin Redsky, I am Anishinaabe from Shoal Lake #40 First Nation, living in Thunder Bay, ON. I speak the Ojibway language and follow the teachings and culture of my people from the Anishinaabe Nation of Treaty #3.

My spirit names our Neeshoogaboytoong (Two spirits in one person) and Wabskaymiiagun (White Wolf), I am from the Atik (Caribou) Dootam (clan).



I grew up in my First Nation and moved to Thunder Bay as an adult with my wife and family. I have four adult children and two grandchildren. My wife of almost 30 years comes from Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek (Rocky Bay) First Nation and assists me to help others. We moved to Thunder Bay for school
and decided to stay as our children grew up in the city and developed ties. We visit our Frist Nations regularly as it is important for our children and grandchildren to stay connected to the land, their family, their culture, and their teachings.

We decided a long time ago to break the cycle of colonization, by CHOOSING to live a sober life, learning the ceremonies and traditional teachings of the Anishinaabe. We want our children, and grandchildren to know who they are as Anishinaabe and continue to pass that on for generations to come. We want them to know that being Anishinaabe is their way, and to be proud of who they are!

I am providing a bio that describes me as an Anishinaabe and the work that I do as a Knowledge Keeper, and Healer. I am also a full-time business owner with my family Mishkogeeshik Art & Supply, we travel to many pow wows, craft sales, and communities to market our crafts, materials, and workshops. I do have College and University education and many work experiences as that is relevant in today's world. However, my work to help people heal traditionally involves skills that areonly learned through ceremonies, Traditional Teachers, Elders, and the Creator, in comparison I have a spiritual degree working towards my masters.

It is truly an honor to have been invited to be with all of you and hope I will be able to help you in some way.

Session Overview

Men's Traditional Roles and Birchbark Bowl Making

Join Anishinaabe Knowledge Keeper Kelvin Redsky for birchbark bowl making alongside teachings about men's traditional roles and responsibilities. Through hands-on learning, participants will have an opportunity to connect with cultural knowledge and reflect on carrying teachings forward within their families and communities.

Day 2 - November 18

Wayne Rabbitskin



Wayne Rabbitskin is an Eeyou from the Cree Nation of Chisasibi (Great River) in Eeyou Istchee, Northern Quebec. With more than 13 years dedicated to Indigenous men's healing and wellness, he has become a respected facilitator, mentor, and advocate for culturally grounded, trauma-informed approaches to healing. His personal journey of over 17 years of sobriety continues to inspire his commitment to helping First Nations men reconnect with their identity, culture, and purpose.

Wayne is certified in Indigenous Wisdom in Trauma Recovery, accredited by the Indigenous Certification Board of Canada, and is a Certified Conflict
Resolution Practitioner through the Canadian Institute for Conflict Resolution. He is also certified in Focusing-Oriented Therapy and Complex Trauma. His work combines professional training with lived experience, Indigenous knowledge, and land-based healing practices.

He has facilitated land-based healing retreats and workshops for First Nations men across Quebec, focusing on trauma, grief, addiction recovery, healthy Indigenous masculinities, and cultural reclamation. Wayne is also actively involved in the creation and establishment of the Quebec Native Men's Association, an initiative dedicated to strengthening supports and advocacy for First Nations men and boys. Through his work, Wayne remains committed to restoring hope, strengthening communities, and supporting healing for future generations.

Session Overview

Understanding the Roots of Anger for Men

Explore the experiences and emotions that can lie beneath anger, including trauma, grief, and disconnection. Drawing on Indigenous knowledge, professional training, and lived experience, Wayne Rabbitskin invites men to deepen their understanding of anger and consider healthier ways of responding to themselves and others.

Debriefing and Reflection

An opportunity to pause and reflect following the morning's sessions on anger. Participants are invited to share what stood out, ask questions, and consider how the learning connects with their own lives. Participants may contribute at their own comfort level or simply listen.

Laura Baxter



Laura is a member of Marten Falls First Nation who resides in Thunder Bay. She is a proud mother of three adult children. Laura holds a Diploma in Paramedics, a Geography Degree and an Indigenous Education Degree. She has a passion for learning and hopes to help all First Nation children succeed in a long life of learning.

In the Early Years Department of Nishnawbe Aski Nation, she provides support in education and training, and is developing a college level, land-based curriculum for Indigenous Early Learning and Child Care. She also works with other NAN departments to help support Indigenous men in NAN territory with the annual Nimbaabaa: My Father's Gathering.

Brian Edwards

Sportsman Simulation Activities, Games and Prizes

Join Brian and the rest of the NAN staff and connect with fellow participants through sportsman simulation activities, games, and friendly competition. This afternoon offers time for recreation, laughter, and building relationships, with opportunities to participate and win prizes.



Day 3 - November 19

Drew Soleyn



Director, Dad Central Ontario | Founder, Connected Dads

Drew Soleyn is a fatherhood leader, coach, and speaker dedicated to helping fathers grow from overwhelm to confidence, connection, and leadership in their families. As Director of Dad Central Ontario and founder of Connected Dads, Drew has helped impact over 600,000 fathers since 2020 through programs, partnerships, and digital outreach in collaboration with organizations such as Dove Men+Care.

Blending lived experience, leadership training, and evidence-based practice, Drew equips professionals and fathers with practical tools to strengthen relationships and improve outcomes for children and families. He holds a Master's Degree in Administration, is an Associate Certified Coach (ICF), and a Maxwell Leadership Certified Coach, Speaker, and Trainer.

Drew is also the co-host of Dad Central: A Parenting Podcast to Reduce Stress & Build Confidence in Fatherhood. His work is rooted in the belief that when fathers heal and grow, children thrive - and communities are strengthened for generations.

Session Overview

Dad Central — Men's Value Reset. Drew Soleyn

An invitation for men to reflect on the experiences and messages that have shaped their sense of worth. This session explores how identity and beliefs impact our daily decisions. Through "The Law of the Mirror", participants will leave with a different perspective on their true value.

Dad Central — Fatherhood Discussion. Drew Soleyn

A facilitated conversation about the experiences, challenges, and strengths of fatherhood. Participants will reflect on the relationships with their own father, their children, learn from one another, and consider how fathers can strengthen connection and contribute to their children's wellbeing.

Dad Central - Fatherhood Techniques. Drew Soleyn

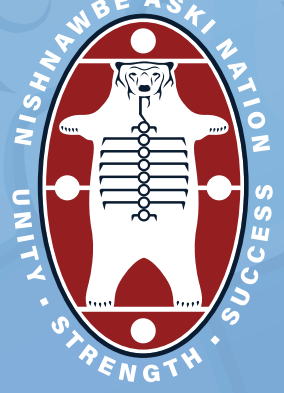
Building on the morning's reflection and discussion, this session focuses on practical approaches to fatherhood. Participants will explore ways to strengthen communication, build connection with their children, and respond to everyday parenting challenges with greater confidence and intention.

Oshkaatisak Youth Council representatives and Elder Victor Chapais

Community Call to Action

Hear perspectives from youth and an Elder on men's responsibilities to children, families, and communities. This closing call to action invites participants to reflect on what they will carry home from Nimbaabaa and identify meaningful steps they can take to support the next generation.

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