



SKOOKUM HI-YU'KO-PET' (STRONG ENOUGH)

EMPOWERING FIRST NATIONS
THROUGH STRATEGIC INITIATIVES

A 2024/25 Evaluation of Cultural
Empowerment and Crisis Response
Efforts

Introduction



Nation-to-nation initiatives are essential in fostering connections and understanding among First Nations communities. These efforts promote cultural exchange, shared learning, and mutual support while addressing the toxic drug response and crisis collective challenges. By building robust support networks, First Nations can empower their communities, to respond to, build capacity within and hold up the work of communities for better health outcomes.

Executive Summary

In 2024, the program prioritized culturally appropriate initiatives that foster healing and empowerment across First Nations communities. A key highlight was a collaborative event with the Shishalh Nation to honor Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (MMIWG), which strengthened community solidarity.

The program emphasized capacity building, traditional healing practices, and innovative crisis response strategies, with significant milestones achieved in:

- 1. Program development and engagement through retreats and workshops.**
- 2. Leadership training and community-led project empowerment.**
- 3. Integration of cultural practices into mental health and wellness initiatives.**



Background of Skoo-Kum Hi-Yu'ko-pet'



Skoo-Kum Hi-Yu'ko-pet' is a pioneering, community-based program designed to provide harm reduction and substance use support through a peer-led model. The program is a collaboration among several sub-regional nations, fostering a supportive environment where individuals with lived and living experience (PWLLE) of substance use serve as peer leaders.

Program Structure



This initiative occurs within four of five sub-regional nations actively involved in the Skoo-Kum Hi-Yu'ko-pet' network. The program's emphasis on peer-to-peer support is central to its philosophy, enabling those who have firsthand experience with substance use to guide and assist others in similar situations. This approach not only empowers the peer leaders but also fosters trust and relatability within the community.

Participating Nations

The program currently supports the Tla'amin, Shishalh, Tsleil-Waututh Nation (TWN), and Squamish Nations. These communities benefit from the program's efforts to reduce harm and promote healthier lifestyles among their members. Furthermore, there is an open invitation extended to the Musqueam Nation community members to join and benefit from the program's resources and support networks.



Stakeholders

- Shishalh Nation
- Tsleil-Waututh Nation (TWN)
- Squamish Nation
- Tla'amin Nation
- First Nations Health Authority (FNHA)
- Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA)
- Local community members and leaders



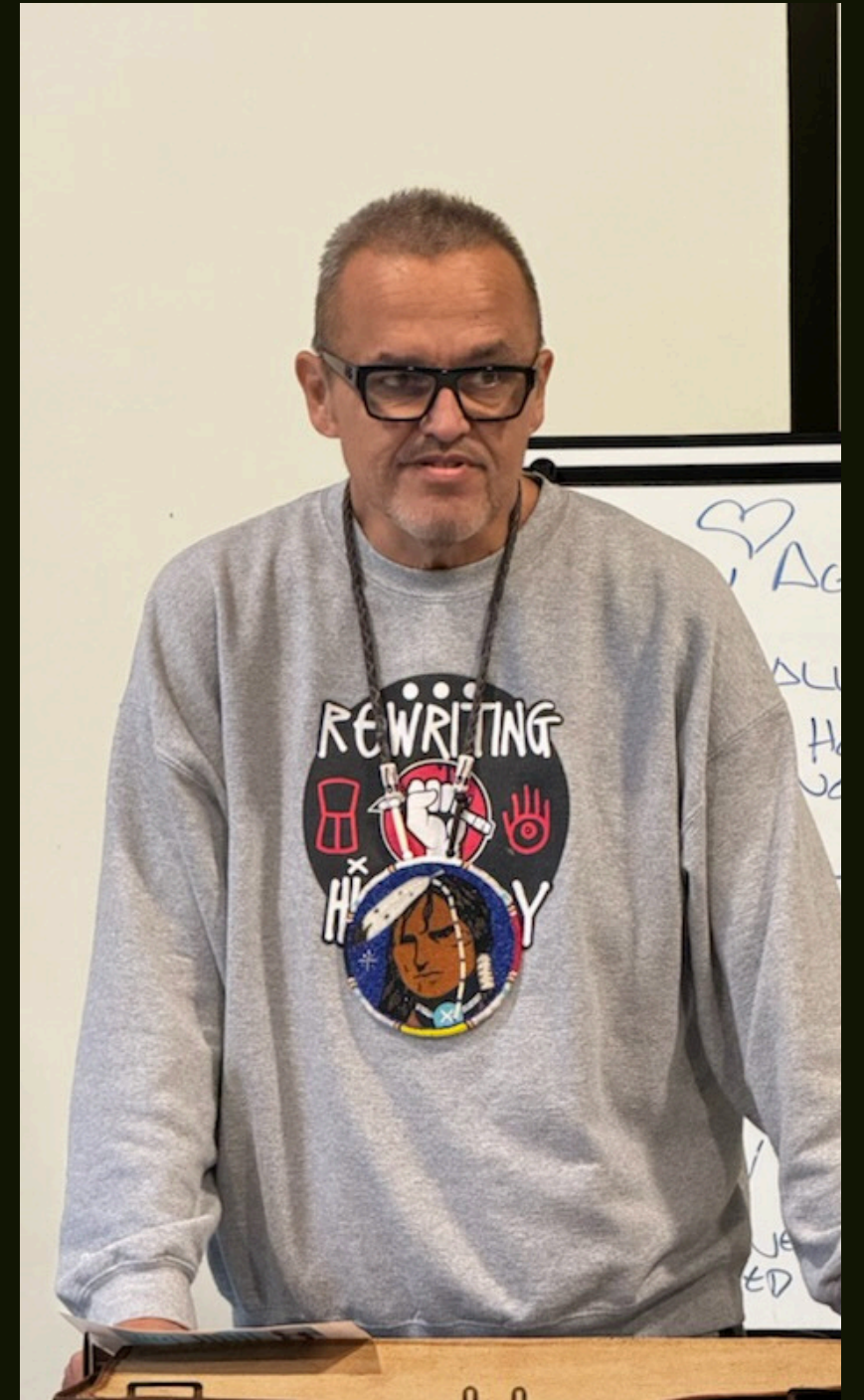


Key Metrics for Evaluation

- **Number of community events and workshops conducted**
- **Participation rates in leadership training and educational programs**
- **Community feedback and satisfaction levels**
- **Progress in crisis response planning and implementation**
- **Engagement in cultural initiatives**

Program Development and Community Engagement

Healing Indigenous Hearts Training
Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls
Peer Coordinators' Workday
Crisis Response Planning
Re-Energizing Wellness Training



Conclusion



This strategic evaluation underscores the success of initiatives aimed at creating culturally appropriate sacred spaces that support healing, cultural preservation, and community empowerment. By prioritizing leadership development, crisis response planning, and tailored educational programs, the initiative has strengthened First Nations communities and honoured rich cultural healing.