

Community-Based Indigenous Food Programs

Breakfast Club of Canada (BCC)



Started in 1994 and operates in 1,809 schools across Canada, providing a healthy breakfast for students in K-12. Encourages healthy eating and helps children improve focus in classroom.

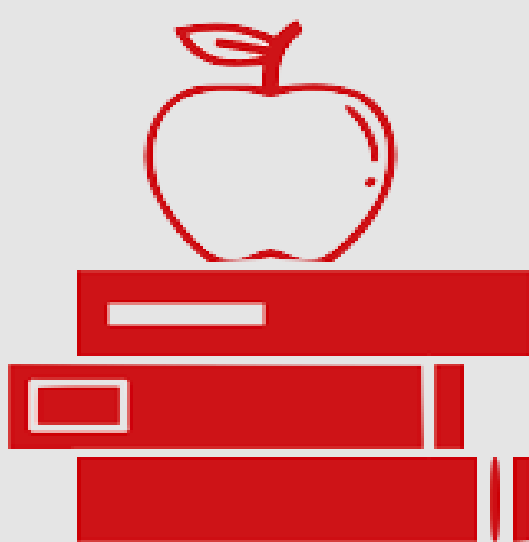

"1 in 4 Canadian kids go to school on an empty stomach" (1)

"Nurture potential and grow healthy students, giving an equal chance of success to all kids, one breakfast at a time!" (1)



The Issue
"1 in 2 Indigenous children, roughly double the average of other Canadian kids, may be at risk of going to school with an empty stomach." (2)

For this reason a more equitable food system in Canada needs to be established to find better approaches towards Indigenous food sovereignty.



Our Objective
Increase the prevalence of Indigenous foods in BCC nutrition programs offered in schools.

Create an ethical and informed procedure to work alongside local Indigenous communities while incorporating traditional foods into breakfast programs.

Key Concepts



Indigenous Food Sovereignty: Specific policy approach to addressing underlying issues impacting Indigenous peoples such as community mobilization and the maintenance of multi-millennial cultural harvesting strategies. Practices provide a basis for forming and influencing "policy driven by practice" (3)



Community Food Security: A situation where all community residents obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes self-reliance and social justice. (4)



Successful Community Project : Long-standing culturally-appropriate, community-based projects with ethical and inclusive approaches to working with Indigenous communities.



What we did
Created a guideline as an institutional tool applicable to breakfast programs.



Collected information on appropriate practices and successful examples of Indigenous knowledge integration within western programming.

Implications of Our Project

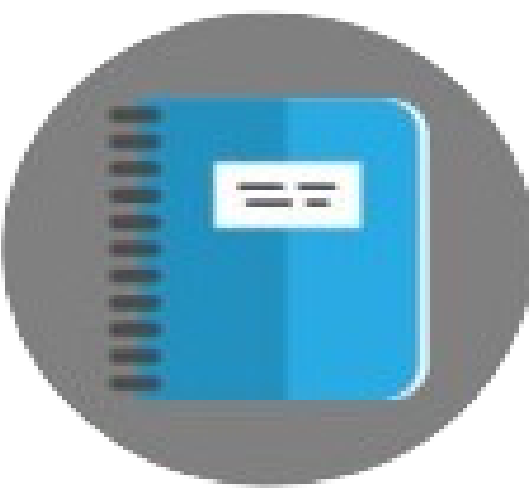
Providing examples of successful community projects to address cultural-competency. These will aid in developing Indigenous food programs in partnership with communities.

Access to culturally significant foods, an integral part of continuing Indigenous traditions and allowing cultural practices to thrive.



Successful Program Examples

Charles Sinclair Outdoor Education Program (MB): Being held in a band-operated school allows the program to deliver educational outdoor experiences from a First Nations perspective (5).



Northlands Community Freezer Program (AB): Supporting a variety of initiatives that increase the community's access to traditional foods (5).



Take Home Message

The examples of existing successful programs demonstrate that the integration of Indigenous foods into food projects in collaboration with Indigenous communities is achievable.

Partner with Indigenous communities and local knowledge keepers to achieve the goal of Indigenousizing food programs.



(1) Breakfast Club of Canada. (2019). Breakfast Club of Canada-Home. Retrieved from <https://www.breakfastclubcanada.org/>
(2) Green, M. (2018, June 22). One in two Indigenous children in danger of going to school hungry. Retrieved November 2019, from <https://www.thestar.com/vancouver/2018/06/21/one-in-two-indigenous-children-in-danger-of-going-to-school-hungry.html>
(3) Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty. (2010, February 11). Indigenous Food Systems Network. Retrieved from <https://www.indigenousfoodsystems.org/food-sovereignty>
(4) Hamm, M. and Bellows, A. (2003). Community Food Security and Nutrition Educators. Journal of Nutrition and Behaviour. Volume 35, Issue 1, Pages 37--43.
(5) Food Matters Manitoba. (2013). Manitoba Traditional Foods Initiative Planning and Resource Development Project A Traditional Foods Resource for Northern and First Nation Communities. Retrieved from https://foodmattersmanitoba.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/OFOHOC_Trad-Foods_report-2013_online.pdf.