

TRADITIONAL TOBACCO USE IN INDIGENOUS CULTURE: CURRICULUM SUPPORT HEALTH RESOURCES FOR SCHOOLS 2024-2025

This document includes a list of resources available to educators about the role tobacco plays in many Indigenous cultures. Traditional tobacco is a sacred plant and has been used in Indigenous culture for many years and is different than commercial tobacco products, such as cigarettes. Commercial tobacco has been genetically modified, chemically processed and known to cause multiple health problems. It is important to honour the role traditional tobacco plays in many Indigenous cultures and support youth in the prevention of commercial tobacco and other nicotine product use.

Curriculum Support Resources

CANADA

Programs and Services for Indigenous Communities

- Programs and services that support mental health in Indigenous communities to help reduce and prevent alcohol, drug and other substance use. [Indigenous mental health \(Canada.ca\)](#) and [Substance use affecting First nations and Inuit](#)

ONTARIO

Traditional Use of Tobacco by Indigenous Persons

- Information related to the Smoke-free Ontario Act 2017 and use of traditional and commercial tobacco by Indigenous persons. [Smoke-Free Ontario Act, 2017 \(Ontario.ca\)](#)

Recommended Resources for First Nation, Inuit and Métis Peoples

- This program engages First Nation, Inuit and Métis communities to create health promotion strategies to decrease and prevent the misuse of tobacco and implement cancer prevention strategies. [CancerCareOntario.ca](#)

Tobacco-Wise – Indigenous Tobacco Program

- Spreading tobacco-wise messaging to First Nations, Inuit and Métis youth. Someone who is “tobacco-wise” is defined as someone who can differentiate between traditional and commercial tobacco. [TobaccoWise.CancerCareOntario.ca](#). Be Tobacco-Wise Brochures for [First Nations](#), [Inuit](#) and [Metis](#).

First Nations It’s Time Toolkit – CAMH

- A First Nations-specific version of *IT’S TIME - Indigenous Tools and Strategies on Tobacco: Interventions, Medicines and Education*, which provides community workers, community

YORK REGION PUBLIC HEALTH

1-877-464-9675
TTY 1-866-512-6228
york.ca/tobacco
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members, and others with culturally-relevant commercial tobacco cessation tools.

[CAMH - First Nations IT'S TIME Toolkit \(NicotineDependenceClinic.com\)](https://www.nicotinedependenceclinic.com/camh-first-nations-its-time-toolkit)

Talk Tobacco – Smokers Helpline

- Talk Tobacco provides **free and confidential** services offering culturally tailored support and information about quitting smoking or vaping designed with input and guidance from First Nation, Inuit, Métis and urban Indigenous leaders, partners, community members and health care providers. [Talk Tobacco: About Talk Tobacco \(smokershelpline.ca\)](https://smokershelpline.ca)

OTHER PROVINCIAL RESOURCES

First Nations Health Authority – British Columbia

- Resources, posters and videos discussing the difference between traditional and commercial tobacco. [Respecting Tobacco \(Fnha.ca\)](https://fnha.ca/respecting-tobacco) and [Youth Respecting Tobacco \(Fnha.ca\)](https://fnha.ca/youth-respecting-tobacco)

Keep Tobacco Sacred Collaboration – Alberta

- Created to improve the ability of Elders and Knowledge Keepers to develop programs that will support First Nations youth in learning about the cultural meaning and traditional use of tobacco. [Keep Tobacco Sacred Collaboration \(KeepTobaccoSacred.ca\)](https://keep-tobacco-sacred.ca)

Mi'Kmaq Spirit

- A website created by two members of the First Nations community to inform people about culture, history and spirituality of the Mi'kmaq people. Includes information about the Sacred Pipe and Pipe Ceremony. [Mi'kmaw Spirituality - The Sacred Pipe \(Muiniskw.org\)](https://muiniskw.org)

Traditional Tobacco Use – Middlesex-London Health Unit

- Middlesex-London Health Unit has provided a summary of traditional tobacco-use among Indigenous people in Canada. [Traditional Tobacco Use by Indigenous Persons \(HealthUnit.com\)](https://healthunit.com/traditional-tobacco-use-by-indigenous-persons)

UNITED STATES

Youth and Tobacco – Keep It Sacred: National Native Network

- Traditional teachings about the respectful, cultural use of tobacco which may help youth distinguish traditional tobacco from commercial tobacco use and avoid the misuse of tobacco. [Youth & Tobacco \(KeepItSacred.org\)](https://keepitsacred.org)

Sacred Tobacco Use in Ojibwe Communities

- A sacred relationship exists between tobacco and Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) ceremonial activities and beliefs. This ancient connection continues to play an important role in the Anishinaabe (Ojibwe) community. [Sacred tobacco use in Ojibwe communities \(Pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov\)](https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sacred-tobacco-use-in-ojibwe-communities)

Additional Resources – Videos

- [Traditional Tobacco Use - Alberta Health Services \(AlbertaHealthServices.ca\)](https://albertahealthservices.ca/traditional-tobacco-use)
- [Respecting Tobacco: Traditional vs. Commercial Use - First Nations Health Authority \(Fnha.com\)](https://fnha.com/respecting-tobacco-traditional-vs-commercial-use)
- [Tobacco is Medicine - First Nations Health Authority \(Fnha.com\)](https://fnha.com/tobacco-is-medicine)