



Aionkwatakari:teke

(A-YOU-GWA-DA-GA-RI-DE-GEH)

"For Us To Be Healthy"

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Aionkwatakari:teke

Aionkwatakari:teke is a newsletter published six times a year by Communications Services of Kahnawake Shaktiia'takehnhas Community Services (KSCS). Our purpose is to provide information on health and wellness issues that affect Kahnawa'kehró:nón. All community members are welcomed & encouraged to submit articles provided that they are comprehensive to the general public, informative & educational. Slandorous material will not be accepted. **Views expressed in the articles may not necessarily reflect those of KSCS.** We reserve the right to edit all articles. All questions concerning this newsletter should be directed to:

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This newsletter is intended to complement, not replace the advice of your health care provider. Before starting any new health regimen, please see your doctor.



Editor's Notebook

A lot has happened since the New Year: Egypt (spurred by a similar uprising in Tunisia) showed the world just how powerful people committed to bringing about democratic change can be (and also reminds me of the quote on the back page). That movement further spawned the ongoing (at least at the time of publication) protests for Libyan President Moammar Gadhafi to relinquish power.

There was the flooding in Australia, the earthquake in New Zealand and the series of catastrophic events that (at the time of publication) were still unfolding on the islands of Japan.

It makes one wonder how much Mother Earth can take and is this Her in reaction to all that has been done to Her? After all, she has been strip-mined, deforested, drilled, probed, nuclear waste has been buried in her (along with all the regular garbage we humans provide), her power has been harnessed with hydro dams and she's been pretty much polluted every where you can think of. So, maybe this is Mother Earth reacting to all this. Maybe Mother Earth is showing us that while we humans can exploit her...we can never control her. It's just sad that so many innocent people have to pay the price. It may feel as if all of those events are far away and of no concern to us. But while we are divided along geographical, religious, race, gender, and even class lines...we are all human beings and belong to the human race.

I guess that's why I've been thinking of the plea and warning made by Hopi Elder representatives to the United Nations in 1992. There's no room to include it here, but if you want to see some powerful and heartfelt words, Google the Hopi message to the UN.

You might be asking, what does this have to do with health and wellness? Well...a lot. To live through changes and upheaval like what the people in Egypt, New Zealand, and Japan are going through right now means living with uncertainty. Events like these can bring about feelings of depression, anxiety, and fear. And even events that seem far away can affect our own anxieties about our daily lives. If you are feeling any of these emotions, you can call KSCS and get assistance. The Hopi Elder's message, like the message of many traditional Aboriginal peoples around the world, is about living in balance with nature and returning to our ways. That is something within our power to do now.

Sken:nén
Marie David

Cover photography and concept by Doug Lahache.
Cover design by Marie David.





ROTISKEN'RAKÉHTE

BE THE CHANGE - LEAD THE WAY

by CHAD DIABO WITH PERMISSION OF ORIGINAL AUTHOR TEYOWISONTE THOMAS DEER

Part 2 of 6

This is part two of a six part series. These articles are written to teach our boys and men what it means to be Rotisken'ra-kéhte.

Outsiders call us Warriors, but there's more to being a Rotisken'ra-kéhte than just being a defender of the nation. Our men need to be more than they are or—to borrow a term from the U.S. Marines—our men need to be all that they can be.

As in the previous article, one literal translation of Rotisken'ra-kéhte comes from the root word *óhstien*, (meaning bones) and refers to those who are *carrying the bones*. It suggests that it is the responsibility of the Nation's men to carry the legacy of their ancestors and ensure the survival of our Kanien'kehá:ka way of life.

This sounds like a lot for men to have to carry: the legacy, the culture, and the language of our Kanien'kehá:ka ancestors. It is a lot...but if it was easy, then the Creator would have given this to the white men, or the Chinese men, or another Aboriginal nation.

The Creator chose us. In today's modern world, we, above all others, were chosen to do this. Our

Kanien'kehá:ka way of life is what makes us who we are. As a Rotisken'ra-kéhte a lot is expected of us. This is a good thing; it offers us a challenge to test our mettle. It's through setting high expectations that we can excel and push ourselves to be the best.

Being the toughest and strongest is only a start. We need to be the best for ourselves and for our continued survival. Future generations of Kahnawakeró:non are relying on us to be the cutting edge of our people.

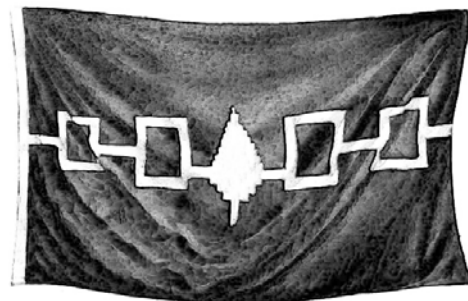
We cannot rely on the 21st century way of life for our survival. We can rely on what the Creator has given us; our original teachings, the Kaianere'kó:wa, and our Kanien'kehá:ka language.

If the modern society were to fail, we know we could survive, live off the land and live well. The Creator has given us our body so that we are able to move about. He gave us life, He gave us the power to think, He gave us sight, and He gave us hearing. He also gave us love and compassion. The people on earth are made like the Creator himself. Many nations have forgotten these original teachings. Have we?

One of the roles you play as a father is to teach your sons and daughters what it means to be Kanien'kehá:ka. More so, it's up to fathers to teach their sons what it means to be Rotisken'ra-kéhte. You can teach your daughters too. Teach them what they can expect from having a Rotisken'ra-kéhte as a boyfriend and husband.

Fathers can start by believing and practicing what it means to be a better person. Start each morning by telling yourself "I can only perfect myself with each new day! I can't be better than someone else *but* I can become a better me today than I was yesterday!"

Believing in yourself will go a long way in teaching your children what it means to be Rotisken'ra-kéhte.





Onkwata'karitáhtshera

submitted by ONKWATA'KARITÁHTSHERA SUBCOMMITTEE

Onkwata'karitáhtshera acknowledges that traditional medicine is vibrant and alive amongst Kahnawa'keró:non.

Onkwata'karitáhtshera also acknowledges that although these are our ways, Kahnawa'keró:non often do not share their practices, for whatever reasons, with their health practitioners. In some instances, this can be detrimental.

As this community's one health agency, we encourage Kahnawa'keró:non to speak openly with their health professionals concerning their traditional medicine practices. We also expect health professionals to reciprocate in a sensitive and respectful manner.

We also make a commitment to further develop a relationship based on education, mutual respect and understanding." (Reprinted from Aionkwatakariteke April 2007, Vol. 12, No. 2).

The Onkwata'karitáhtshera subcommittee for *Traditional Approaches to Health* has been working diligently on its mandate to explore traditional medicine practices in Kahnawake.

The group is comprised of Kahnawake Shakotia'takehnhas Community Services (KSCS) and the Kateri Memorial Hospital Centre (KMHC).

The subcommittee has been working on the development of traditional approaches to health since 1998. Over a period of time Onkwata'karitáhtshera's participants have travelled to Akwesasne to visit their *Traditional Medicine and Alternative Healing* service (Ononkwa'on:we, located at Kanonkwatsheri:io) as a best practices model.



Elder Tom Porter and Hazel Mayo at an event sponsored by Onkwata'karitáhtshera. Photo by Tyson Phillips.

A framework was developed by the subcommittee to incorporate traditional healing within existing health care services for Kahnawa'keró:non at the Kateri Memorial Hospital Centre and working through partnerships of KSCS and KMHC.

The overall intent is to revitalize existing traditional medicine through mentorship programs using recognized Haudenosaunee Confederacy healers. Kahnawake traditional elder consultants were successfully recruited to advise the subcommittee on how to ensure that the basic roles of conduct under the Haudenosaunee code of behavior for traditional medicine healers be followed.

There has been community support over the years through Tewatohnhi'saktha's summer student project for research on existing cultural health approaches, criteria, operational procedures and funding.

Aboriginal Diabetes Initiative funding has been covering the project proposal submission costs for the present project called *Weaving Science and Tradition*. There has been ongoing networking with

Ononkwa'on:we Original Medicine Program of Akwesasne, to mentor KMHC and KSCS employees and community members in traditional medicine.

In 2009, Tewatohnhi'saktha contributed through its summer student program by supporting activities of the subcommittee and assisting and

participating in cultural services to the community and training.

Recently, the subcommittee held a traditional community gathering on March 31, 2011 with presentations to the community by KMHC and KSCS Staff and by traditional community Elders.

The subcommittee is proud of what has been accomplished within traditional approaches. This work could not have been done without the support of Onkwata'karitáhtshera, KSCS, KMHC, and the community.



The Cradle of Life

by TYSON PHILLIPS, COMMUNICATIONS

According to the dictionary, *cradle* refers to a place where something begins or is nurtured while a *board* is a piece of sawn lumber. Rakwirenhta Diabo, a Shakotisnien:nens worker at the Family and Wellness Center, has been making traditional cradleboards for the past 17 years. “The first cradleboard I made was for my nephew. Two of my sisters married Algonquin men who made cradleboards and birch bark canoes, which at that time rekindled my interest,” said Rakwirenhta.

The making of a cradleboard takes time and a lot of care. There are protocols to follow. Rakwirenhta remembers what he was taught. “For trees, an individual had to know and understand the use and purpose of individual trees. I learned of trees and the uses of its wood from my grandfather and many other older men who made sleighs, chairs, benches, etc.” When Rakwirenhta cuts the wood, he offers tobacco to the tree and explains why he’s cutting down the tree. “I also do not leave part of the tree in the woods, I take and use all of it.”

Rakwirenhta makes the board and the women who requested the cradleboard do the finishing touches of artwork. “I was approached by a few Haudenosaunee women who asked for and instructed me [on how] to build a cradleboard for a new mother to be. I learned from them collectively the importance among these women to prepare when one of their own is becoming a mother. It’s a

very sacred and special time. I’m instructed on what parts to put together and the women involved will finish the art, sewing and any other things they deem important.” Rakwirenhta stressed that no negative energy should be around the cradleboard when it’s being created since that will be what the baby lies on during their first few months of life. “You must be in a good mind while preparing all this for the new baby. Don’t work on the board when drinking alcohol, or when you’re angry, sad, or frustrated. If you do these things, it will soak and contaminate the board, and the baby will feel that negative energy. It’s important for the baby to feel the love and care that went into making the cradleboard.”

A cradleboard is part of living history. “When the baby grows up, he or she will learn how the cradleboard came to be and will probably use the cradleboard for their children.” The cradleboard is most often given at a baby shower. “I have not seen an actual presentation of a finished board to the mother to be. I hear it’s quite a meaningful happy time by all who participated,” Rakwirenhta says. “[When I make a cradleboard it] makes me feel good to know that I will be part of the baby’s history and our traditions will be passed down to future generations.”



The Resource Center

by ANDREA BRISEBOIS, RESOURCE CENTER

The First Nations Health and Social Services Resource Center is a regionally funded program by Health Canada that provides information and material to anyone who works in the Native public services, education, social, and health care systems in Quebec.

It is also open to students if they need information for school projects. The goal is to provide support material to the community caregivers promoting the health and well-being of Native families.

Documentation pamphlets are available free of charge in both English and French. The Center also houses a large lending library of DVD titles that are available for individuals and services to borrow.

Topics include:

- Alcohol/Drugs
- FASD
- Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACOA)

- Mental Health/Suicide
- AIDS/STIs
- Peer Pressure
- Parenting/Child Development
- Native Culture
- Diabetes
- Bullying
- Residential School
- Healthy Sexuality
- Prescription Drug Abuse
- Geriatrics Health

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Skén:nen A'onsonton

To Become Peaceful Again

by KAHIENES SKY

Conflict is a part of our every day lives; we experience it within our families, within our work environment, within our educational/school environment and within our community.

Unfortunately, many of us do not have the skills or knowledge that

would enable us to deal with conflict effectively—that is to say that we do not know how to resolve our conflicts in a way that will help us to take care of ourselves and the other persons welfare.

Whatever is the reason for a conflict between people—whether you are a victim or the person who has offended another—conflict still causes us much personal pain and suffering often leaving a person to feel helpless, angry, sad and isolated when there has been no resolution to the conflict.

The *Skén:nen A'onsonton Project* (To become peaceful again) continues its service to the community of Kahnawake through



- Raising community awareness towards the benefits of *restorative practices* in helping to resolve conflict issues for all Kahnawa'kehró:non.

- Holding alternative dispute resolution forums for youth, adults and families.

- Actively engaging the community to participate in interactive workshops on alternative dispute resolution processes.

Restorative Practices can also include mediation services, which is an alternative to mainstream legal court processes. These services allow everyone to expand their op-

tions and enhance their approaches to resolving conflicts in a healthy and helpful way.

The benefits to utilizing *Restorative Practices* for conflict issues include:

- Strengthening our relationships with one another and within our community when everyone has an opportunity to deal with conflict in ways that allow us to feel safe.
- Promoting healing and balance.
- Ensuring accountability for our actions.

This year, the *Skén:nen A'onsonton Project* is pleased to welcome to our small team Kahienes Sky on a student internship initiative with Concordia University. We are also very excited to welcome Peter Taylor and Keith Gordon and are welcoming back an original member of the project, Dale Dione.

For more information on the project please contact Project Coordinator Jo-Ann Stacey at 450-638-9052.

You can also consult the MCK website at www.kahnawake.com : under *Looking for an Alternative: Skén:nen A'onsonton Restorative Practices, Part 1, 2, and 3.*

Kahienes Sky is working with the Skén:nen A'onsonton Project through the Concordia Student Internship program.

Reduce, Reuse, & Recycle

by MARIE DAVID

Earth Day 2011 is on April 22nd. There are things we can do to reduce our impact on the environment, including recycling our old household items. So, the next time you do your spring cleaning, why not consider donating to a needy organization instead? Below are a few ideas.

- **BOOKS:** Donate them to *Tota's Tickle Trunk* here in town or check with the *Native Women's Shelter* and *Projets Autochtones du Québec* to see if they need them.
- **SMALL APPLIANCES, ELECTRONICS AND BUILDING MATERIALS:** Most thrift stores accept small appliances including *Tota's Tickle Trunk* or, out of town, the *Salvation Army*. *Habitat for Humanity* also accepts appliances, furniture, and building materials. *Habitat for Humanity* has a recycling center on Notre Dame West in Montreal that also sells building materials at almost 50 per cent off the retail price. http://www.habitatmontreal.qc.ca/magasin/index_en.htm
- **LARGE APPLIANCES AND ELECTRONICS:** Older electronics use more electricity than newer EnergyStar rated electronics. You should also be aware of the environmental waste they leave behind when getting rid of them. You can get a \$30 rebate from *Hydro Quebec* if you recycle your old refrigerator or freezer. Check this website to find out more: <http://www.recycle-frigo.com/en/index.html>. If you're getting rid of an old TV or computer, don't just throw it in the trash. Most e-waste contain contaminants such as

lead, mercury, and other contaminants. Contact your local environment office or check out the website *Earth 911* for recycling depots for certain electronics (such as computers, TV's, or even paint). Check with local schools and shelters to see if they will accept your



Don't just take your old computer to the curb. Photo by youngthousands, flickr.

- old computer before taking it to a recycling depot.
- **CELL PHONES:** Used or old cell phones can be dropped off at most cell phone providers. You can also donate them to a local shelter. Even if the phones are deactivated they can still be used to call 911.
- **CLOTHES:** Many organizations will accept clean, gently used clothes. In Kahnawake, you can take them to *Tota's Tickle Trunk*. You can also give them to the *Native Women's Shelter*, to the *Projets Autochtones du Québec*, or to the *Salvation Army*.
- **EYEGLASSES:** *The Lion's Club of Canada* and *Third World Eye Care Society of Canada* accept donations of used eyeglasses and distribute them to people in need.

- **TOYS:** donate them to a local school or daycare, or to *Tota's Tickle Trunk* or *Salvation Army*.

Where to Donate

TOTA'S TICKLE TRUNK, run by Gladys and Sonny-Joe Cross, is located across from Dustin's Convenience in the center of Kahnawake. They are open in the mornings from 9:30 A.M.–12:30 P.M. For more information, call 450-638-9849. They accept toys, small electronics, clothes, bedding, and books. They don't accept furniture.

PROJETS AUTOCHTONES DU QUÉBEC runs a shelter for Aboriginal homeless people in Montreal. They are located at: 90 rue De La Gauchetière, Montréal, Québec, H2X 1P5. For more information, call 514-879-3310. Besides clothing, they also accept donations of blankets, books, VHS tapes, and games. Donations of canned foods are always appreciated.

NATIVE WOMEN'S SHELTER OF MONTREAL. They accept donations of clothes, bedding, toys, and money (they can offer a tax receipt.) Their address is confidential but you can contact them at 514-933-4688 and they will send a van for pick-up.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY'S ReSTORE. 4399 Notre-Dame St. W., Montreal Tel: 514 907-8991 or email: restore@habitatmontreal.qc.ca

Source: <http://www.ecoactionteams.ca/pub/blog/?p=1187>



Basement Flooding

by NICOLAS G. RAYMOND, ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER

With the spring season here homeowners should take precautions regarding flooding of their basements. Basement flooding is now recognized as a potentially serious problem and is associated with increasing respiratory problems including asthma.

Homeowners may face long term damage to the building and equipment not covered by insurance, rising insurance rates or their minimum deductibles because of the high number of claims, and decreased property value due to the risk of flooding.

These problems can originate in individual dwellings or to problems related with the municipal sewer systems that serve the community.

Many measures may be taken to help prevent flooding. Potential basement flooding problems are best diagnosed by working your way down from the eaves troughs and downspouts, to the lot and foundation drainage, and then to the plumbing system—both inside your home and beyond—to its connection to the municipal sewer system.

Flooding occurs mostly during periods of heavy rainfall or when snow melts rapidly during spring thaw. Some culprits include leaks or cracks in basement walls, poor lot drainage, failure of weeping tiles, and overflowing eaves troughs or leaking/plugged downspouts.

Flooding may also occur because of a blocked connection between the house and the main sewer in the street, a backup of wastewater in the sewer system, or a failure of a sump pump.

Following a flood immediate action is crucial to restore the house to good order as soon as possible. The



Basement flooding. Photo by Marvin Nauman/FEMA.

house and furnishing are less likely to grow mold when they are dried within 48 hours.

- Before you begin your cleanup, avoid electrical shock by wearing rubber boots and shutting the power off.
- Keep extension cords out of the water.
- Record the water damage with photos and videos if possible.
- Remove water with pumps or pails, then with a wet/dry shop vacuum.
- Contaminated materials, such as particle board furniture, mattresses, box springs, carpets, stuffed toys, pillows, paper and books, must be discarded to reduce moisture and humidity.
- Ensure a good ventilation; open all windows and doors in the basement for good air circulation.

- Increase the room temperature to aid in drying out the basement, use fans and dehumidifiers, open closet doors, and remove drawers.

- Discard insulation materials, remove water trapped in the walls; wallboards that have been soaked by floodwater present

a permanent health hazard, therefore, throw out flooded wallboard.

- Plaster will survive a flood better than wallboard. It should not have to be replaced but it will take a long time to dry.
- Walls, floors, closets, shelves, contents, and any other flooded parts of the house should be thoroughly washed and disinfected once it is dry.

Finally, contact the insurance company to verify and claim what is financially covered by them.

Nicolas G. Raymond works with Environmental Health Services.

Turbidity: What Is It?

by NICOLAS G. RAYMOND, ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH OFFICER

Turbidity is a measure of the degree to which the water loses its transparency due to the presence of suspended particulates. In fact, the more total suspended solids in the water, the murkier it seems and the higher the turbidity. Turbidity is considered a good measure of the quality of water.

There are various parameters influencing the cloudiness of the water. Some of these are *phytoplankton*¹ (sediments from erosion, resuspended sediments from the bottom frequently stirred up by bottom feeders like carp), waste discharge, algae growth, and urban runoff. Suspended matter in the water causes turbidity. Examples of this suspended matter include silt, clay and organic matter.

There is a health limit of 1.0 nephelometric² turbidity units (NTU) set for turbidity. This limit is set due to the fact that high levels of turbidity can protect bacteria and viruses from disinfection (chlorine or ultraviolet lights) processes commonly used by water treatment facilities. Suspended solids act as a shield for bacteria and viruses. There is also an aesthetic limit of 5 NTU for turbidity. Water with levels above this aesthetic limit may have a cloudy or muddy appearance that is unacceptable to the consumer.

In drinking water, the higher the turbidity level, the higher the risk that people may develop gastrointestinal diseases. People more at risk are immune-compromised people, because micro-organisms like viruses



Testing for turbidity ensures clean drinking water.

or bacteria can be attached to suspended solids.

In water bodies such as lakes and rivers, high levels of turbidity inhibit the light reaching lower depths, which can stop the growth of aquatic plants and affect species such as fish and shellfish that feed on them. The

oxygen dissolved is also at lower levels, affecting the fish gills ability to absorb it. Newly hatched larvae can suffer as particles of silt, clay, and other organic materials settle to the bottom, suffocating the eggs. These settlements also fill in spaces between rocks often used by aquatic organisms as habitat.

Fine particulate material can clog or damage sensitive gill structures, decrease their resistance to disease, prevent proper egg and larval development, and potentially interfere with particle feeding activities.

Turbidity is analyzed on a regular basis. In fact, an environmental health technician measures it once a month during their routine sampling. Environmental Health Services can also provide the services to residents who want to their water sampled for it. Residents, especially those who have a well, should call for microbiological analysis though not necessarily for turbidity. With spring approaching, levels of turbidity may be a little higher than usual but it is rare that levels are above the standards.

¹ Microscopic organism that live in watery environments.

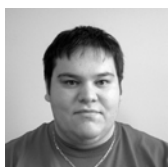
² An instrument used for measuring the size and concentration of particles in liquid or gas.



Continued from page 5

There is a large collection of films on Native traditional culture and ceremonies. Titles include: *Native American Medicine*, *Spirit of the Mask*, *The Medicine Wheel*, *Spirit Doctors*, *The Red Road to Sobriety* and several titles on residential schools.

For descriptions and a full listing of the films, log on to the website www.fnhssrc.ca. The Resource Center is located beside the Independent Living Center and is open from 8:00 A.M.–4:00 P.M. Monday to Friday. If you need more information, call 450-638-3199 or email them at info@fnhssrc.ca.



Safe Grad 2011

by MERRICK DIABO, PREVENTION

In our lives there are many marker points that determine our rites of passage. When we're newborns, our firsts are always exciting. From our first smile, rolling over, to crawling, standing and eventually walking.

In comparison, we enter high school much like a newborn and expect our firsts to be just as exciting. We expect to get picked on by the seniors, possibly have our first kiss, our first boyfriend or girlfriend, and eventually—if we tough things out—we'll make it through grade 11.

Making it to grade 11 often gives way to other openings, most notably graduation. When we make it to graduation we generally think of caps, gowns, tuxedos, dresses, limousines, and dancing.

Grad Night Dangers

However there are dangers that even the safest student may come into contact with. Among the dangers students face are alcohol poisoning, date rape, sexually transmitted infections, and drinking and driving. All of them can also be your firsts. All of them can be potentially fatal.

Within Kahnawake, we have all become aware of graduation nights becoming disastrous and even deadly. With that being said, each year before graduation, KSCS conducts an awareness campaign called Safe Grad. This campaign is meant to educate

students as well as the community on the dangers that can happen in and around grad time. We deliver a comprehensive persuasive information session by means of having first hand accounts of graduation night's gone awry as well as hard hitting visuals within a structured presentation.

The Safe Grad presentation not only touches on the immediate and obvious dangers on graduation night, it also observes the roles and responsibilities of the parents hosting parties, liabilities in regards to hotel room rental and a contract of responsibility and trust.

The Contract

The contract is an agreement between a trusted adult and the graduate whom he or she will contact in the event there are complications regarding overall safety. The adult in turn will pick up the graduate without question. However, the contract also stipulates that both the adult and the graduate agree to have the opportunity to discuss the night in question in a calm and respectful manner.

In addition to the contract, both the Kahnawake Peacekeepers and the Kahnawake Fire Brigade have been collaborating with the Safe Grad team to ensure that students have a lasting impression of the realities of gradu-

ation casualties so that they make the best decision possible in order to make their evening memorable.

The Safe Grad team would like to encourage all Kahnawa'kehró:non to help your children, your graduates, have an exciting, unforgettable and safe evening. Don't let your firsts be your last!

For further information on the Safe Grad Campaign please contact coordinator Merrick Diabo at 450-635-8089.



Sunblock Safety

by MARIE DAVID

The warmer months mean more time outdoors and exposure to harmful UVA and UVB rays (UVA rays cause immediate tanning, premature aging, wrinkling, and immunosuppression. UVB rays cause delayed tanning and sunburn).

A study by the U.S. based Environmental Working Group (EWG) gives only a passing grade to eight per cent of the 500-plus sunscreens in their database. The reason? “A surge in exaggerated SPF claims above 50 and new disclosures about potentially hazardous ingredients, in particular recently developed government data linking the common sunscreen ingredient vitamin A to accelerated development of skin tumors and lesions.” (EWG).

In addition, four of the chemicals found in most sunscreens—parabens, cinnamate, benzophenone and camphor derivatives—are “thought to be the culprits killing coral reefs around the world.” (The David Suzuki Foundation). These chemicals are estrogenic because they mimic the hormone estrogen and have been linked to breast tumours.

Most commercial sunscreens include chemicals such as the vitamin A compound *retinyl palmitate*, which is found in 41 per cent of sunscreens* and is photocarcinogenic, mean-

ing it's degraded when exposed to sunlight and forms free radicals that damage DNA.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is investigating whether the chemical actually accelerates skin damage.

Use of *retinyl palmitate* is restricted in cosmetics sold in Canada; however, sunblocks are not considered cosmetics; therefore, their ingredients, including vitamin A, don't fall under Health Canada's Cosmetics Hot List of banned or restricted ingredients.

The EWG has also flagged *oxybenzone*, a hormone disrupter that is found in 60 per cent of the sunscreens in the EWG's database and in many sunscreens in Canada.

Sunblocks offering SPFs of 50 or more are a problem. Studies show that people tend to A) not use enough sunscreen on their skin and B) stay in the sun longer when they believe they have boosted protection because of the false sense of security they get by applying the sunscreen.

The EWG and the Canadian Dermatological Association (CDA) say the best protection against harmful UVA/UVB rays is to wear hats, clothing, and shades (sunglasses and shaded areas) and avoid the midday sun. The CDA has a list of sunblock

lotions that meet their requirements e.g. offering a broad spectrum of protection.

Ironically, the sun is an important source of vitamin D that strengthens bones and the body's immune system. To add to the confusion, experts disagree on exactly how much sun people should be getting or, in the absence of direct sunlight, how much supplements they should be taking. We need the sun. We just need to exercise caution when enjoying it.

You can search the EWG's database for the least harmful sunscreens and cross-reference them with the CDA's recognized sunscreens. Check them out at www.ewg.org and <http://www.dermatology.ca/sunscreens/>. You might also want to take a look at the EWG's sunblock Hall of Shame.

* based on the EWG's findings in the U.S.

Source:

<http://www.davidsuzuki.org/what-you-can-do/eat-for-a-healthy-planet/choose-a-sunscreen-that-is-better-for-you-and-the-earth/index.php>
<http://www.canada.com/health/Studies+heat+debate+over+sunscreens/3090665/story.html>



Further Reading

Check out these books at the Skawen-niio Tsi Iewennahnotahkhwa Library in Kahnawake. For more information, call 450-633-1016.

- *The Iroquois Book of Rites* by Horatio Hale
- *The Iroquois Book of Midwinter* by Elizabeth Tooker
- *Will the Circle Be Unbroken? Aboriginal Communities Restorative Justice and the Challenges of Conflict and Change* by Jane Dickson-Gilmore and Carole Laprarie
- *Restore, Recycle, Repurpose* by Randy Florke
- *Justice in Aboriginal Communities: Sentencing Alternatives* by Ross Gordon Green

The Back Page...

"A small body of determined spirits, fired by an unquenchable faith in their mission, can alter the course of history."

Mohandes Ghandi



Haudenosaunee Cycle of Ceremonies

submitted by LORETTA LEBORGNE, PREVENTION

The Mohawk Nation at Kahnawà:ke follow a spiritual calendar as defined by the natural world.

The Haudenosaunee are traditionally a farming people. Subsistence was heavily based on the growth of corn, beans and squash, the Three Sisters of Haudenosaunee legend. Hunting, fishing, trapping, and gathering on a seasonal basis, complemented the agricultural base.

The Kanien'kehá:ka were extremely wealthy in the feasts within their traditional territory. The Mohawk Nation at Kahnawà:ke, as Haudenosaunee people, follow a familiar cycle of ceremonies that define the spiritual foundation of our people. Haudenosaunee spirituality dwells on our duty and responsibility to be thankful to the natural world that provides for our health and wellbeing.

The Haudenosaunee spiritual calendar is cyclical and starts over each year with the Midwinter Festival.

- Sha'tekohshérhon
(Midwinter Festival)
- Ahakishestata
(Opening of the Trees)
- Ohkhí:we (Feast for the Dead)
- Wáhta (Maple Festival)
- Ratiwé:ras (Thunder Dance)
- Ká:nen & Onónhkwa
(Seed & Medicine Festival)



- Ken'niiohontésha
(Strawberry Festival)
- Skanekwenhtará:ne
(Raspberry Festival)
- Orhóntseri (Green Bean Festival)
- Okahseró:ta (Green Corn Festival)
- Kaienthókwen (Harvest Festival)
- Atierakhonsera'kó:wa
(End of Season Feast)

At certain festivals, there are four sacred ceremonies—Kaié:ri Niiorí:wake—that are conducted. They are:

- Ostowa'kó:wa
(the Great Feather Dance)
- Atón:wa
(Men's Personal Thanksgiving)
- Kanehó:ron (the Drum dance)
- Kaientowá:nen (the Bowl Game)

Source: Kahnawake Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitíóhkwa Language and Cultural Center. Illustration by John K. Fadden.

April is...

- Daffodil Month: Cancer Awareness
- 10-18 Natl. Organ & Tissue Donor Awareness Week
- 23-30 Natl. Immunization Awareness Week
- 1 April Fool's Day
- 7 World Health Day
- 22 Earth Day
- 22 Good Friday
- 24 Easter

May is....

- Celiac Awareness Month
- 1-7 Food Allergy Awareness Month
- 1-7 Foot Health Awareness Month
- 1-7 Nat. Summer Safety Week
- 1-7 Natl. Mental Health Week
- 12 Canada Health Day
- 23 Victoria Day/Planting Day
- 31 World No-Tobacco Day

Do you have questions or suggestions? Is there a topic you would like to see covered in a future issue of the newsletter? Contact us and let us know.

Aionkwatakari:teke

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