

Pow Wow

What is a Pow Wow? • Explanation of Dance Categories • Pow Wow Demonstration • Singing • Drumming • Dance Group

Medicines

Explanation of Cleansing and Healing Medicines • Preparations for Medicine Picking • Gathering and Preparing Medicines

Crafts

Explanation of Beads • Dream Catchers • Pow Wow and Ceremonial Outfits

Outings

Petroforms • Teaching about the First Anishinabe • Clan Systems • All our Relations • Participation in a Traditional Pow Wow • Gathering Medicines • Attending Sundance Ceremony

Workshops

Substance Abuse • Sexual Abuse Cycle • Grief Group • Youth Gangs • Street Life • Colonialism and Intergenerational Trauma



About Knowles Centre Inc.

Knowles Centre is a community-based, non-profit social service agency for children, adolescents and young adults facing difficult times in their lives. It began as a home for boys in 1907, and today, provides group care treatment, treatment foster care, independent living, day treatment and sexual abuse treatment programs plus a range of support services to young people from Manitoba and other communities throughout Canada.

We offer a range of therapeutic and skills-based programs that help young people and their families to address past struggles, to develop healthier relationships and ways of life, and to reach their full potential in the future.

Knowles Centre is a registered, non-profit, charitable organization and is governed by an elected Board of Directors. Knowles Centre is accredited by the Council on Accreditation.

For more information on the Biimautaziiwin Cultural Program at Knowles Centre, contact us at:

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KNOWLES CENTRE INC.

Helping Individuals Find Their Path:
Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow



**Biimautaziiwin
Cultural Program**

Biimautaziiwin Cultural Program

Knowles Centre believes that First Nations youth and their families have an inherent right to learn and practice their culture and traditional, holistic healing methods. We support their quest to reach spiritual, physical, emotional and mental well being.

Biimautaziiwin assists First Nations clients to explore their culture and to develop and maintain self-esteem and self-identity over the duration of treatment and beyond. The program is delivered by the First Nations Cultural Coordinator at Knowles Centre in conjunction with elders, traditional healers and First Nations community members.

Vicki Whitehead Memorial Award

Many years ago, Vicki Whitehead, a First Nations woman, Youth Worker and Supervisor, introduced the concept of a specialized program to meet the needs of First Nations youth at Knowles Centre. Vicki believed that young people should explore their culture and she sought individuals to work culturally with our First Nations youth.

Vicki was a Women's Traditional Pow Wow Dancer and Pipe Carrier. Prior to the birth of the Biimautaziiwin Cultural Program, Vicki departed for the Spirit World. Before she left us, she passed tobacco to a Pipe Carrier to design and run the program.

In her memory, Knowles Centre presents the annual Vicki Whitehead Memorial Award to an individual in the Biimautaziiwin Cultural Program. Anonymously, program participants and their achievements are reviewed by an ad hoc committee consisting of a Knowles Centre representative, an elder and a community member. Following a pipe ceremony, the committee recommends the successful candidate.

The Vicki Whitehead Memorial Award is presented at Knowles Centre's Annual General Meeting.

Program Description

Biimautaziiwin, meaning "life" or "the way of life," began as a pilot project in 1997 to meet the individualized needs of First Nations youth. Today, the voluntary program continues to provide a healthy alternative to high-risk lifestyles by offering a safe, nurturing place where youth can explore teachings and activities on their journey to become part of the Sacred Circle of Life.

The program focuses on the Sacredness of Life and how this must be preserved. This has helped clients to decrease self-harming behaviours and encouraged them to seek positive support from within and outside the program and to develop healthy peer relationships.

Biimautaziiwin is presented through Teaching Circles, which are delivered at weekly circles and sweat lodge ceremonies according to clients' maturity levels rather than age. In the younger group, for example, teachings are delivered primarily through traditional story telling. The participants in the older groups attend traditional teaching circles that develop patience, tolerance and understanding.

The program has measured success in a number of ways: Clients are developing their self-identity and self-esteem through participation in various ceremonies and activities. As well, many clients have sought their spiritual name and some have become helpers in preparation to become Spiritual Leaders. Most importantly, many clients have displayed a noticeable change in their approach to life. Rather than running from challenges, they are embracing and celebrating their culture.

Curriculum

Who We Are

Exploration of nations and geographical areas of First Nations history from pre-European contact to urban life (includes understanding of Residential Schools)

Spirituality

Definitions • Story of Creation • Legends • Introduction to the Medicine Wheel • Who is Gitchee Manito

Healers

What are Healers and Medicine People? • What is a Helper? • What are Sacred Items? • White Buffalo Teaching • What are Spiritual Gifts? • How does Healing Happen?

Medicine Wheel

Values • Four Nations • Life Cycle • Doorway Keepers • Four Seasons • Four Worlds • Four Medicines

Ceremonies

Circles • Sunrise Ceremony • Full Moon Ceremony • Sweat Lodge • Naming Ceremony • Spiritual Adoption • Shake Tent Ceremony • Sundance Ceremony • Coming of Age Ceremony • Four Seasons Feasts • Sacred Songs

Gratitude

What is Gratitude? • What are Feasts? • Why do we Feast? • What are Giveaways? • What are Offerings?

Vision Quests

What is a Fast? • Why do we Fast? • How do we Prepare to Fast? • What happens during a Fast?