

SICC FNLKC Abstract

Workshop Title: Building Relationships, Engaging Indigenous Youth through Technology to Strengthen Cultural Language & Identity

Name of Presenters: Holly Toulejour

Holly Toulejour is a Dene speaking woman from La Loche. She is a high school social worker. Upon completion of a bachelor's degree in Indian Social work at the First Nations University of Canada, she returned to her community to use her knowledge and skills, and drawing from her experiences of growing up in Northern Saskatchewan to promote healing using strength based approaches. Holly is a mother of two children, Maddie and Kiedis. She is in her final year of the Masters in Northern Governance and Development Program at the University of Saskatchewan.

Abstract: "The medicine needed for a people can be found where the people reside, on the land and within the people." Dr. Martin Brokenleg made a powerful statement in his presentation during his visit to La Loche on approaches to healing. He validates the effectiveness of relying on what already exists in the community by drawing on cultural values, practices and traditions. The Social Work Program incorporates Indigenous healing methods combined with technology to engage youth by building relationships and a sense of identity as a protective factor, which ultimately decreases risk factors stacked against Indigenous youth today. The primary focus of the session is to identify the strengths and the change makers in each community as well as discover innovative ways to engage youth and promote the health determinants of Indigenous youth through examples of activities and tools used by the presenter. Too often front line workers focus on the problem without recognizing the strengths of individuals. Programs and approaches delivered through this Social Work Program are designed to be fun and cultural while building resiliency, relationships, strengthen identity, incorporating Elders teachings and protocols, through youth led initiatives which promotes healing because healing can take place in the classrooms as well.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this workshop, participants will:

- Overcome current inequities and related disharmony participants will review how traditional roles of youth
- Identify innovative ways to incorporate cultural healing practices combined with technological tools while encouraging culturally relevant programming that will appeal to children and youth
- Identify ways to encourage youth to learn and maintain their language through programs that are engaging, fun and educational
- Identify community strengths by recognizing people and practices that will promote language and Indigenous identity
- Hear about the Showcase Girls' Group, an afterschool program that empowers young women by teaching them traditional roles and life skills in a fun environment