

UCN embedding Indigenous culture into early childhood training program ^[1]

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Source: Winnipeg Sun

Format: Article

Publication Date: 8 Feb 2023

AVAILABILITY

Access online ^[2]

Excerpts

The head of an Early Childhood Education (ECE) program in northern Manitoba says it is crucial that those who want to work with young children in the north understand how important it is to embed Indigenous culture and traditions into their childcare spaces and into the work they do with children.

“We always want to make sure that Indigenous children feel at home in our childcare centres and our nurseries and daycares,” Laura Ayers said.

Ayers is the ECE Program Coordinator at University College of the North (UCN) a northern Manitoba post-secondary institution that has main campuses in Thompson and in The Pas, and that services a large area of northern Manitoba with smaller learning centres based in several northern, remote and Indigenous communities.

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Ayers said that with UCN being located in northern Manitoba and servicing an area where there is a large population of Indigenous people, their ECE program has for years put an emphasis on learning “within the context of northern Manitoba and in particular within Indigenous communities.”

“I can’t stress how important it is that we make sure that in nurseries and daycares, educators are not only aware of Indigenous culture, but that they are embedding that culture into everyday activities and learning,” Ayers said.

The ECE program at UCN, according to Ayers, teaches aspiring early childhood educators to bring those cultures and traditions to children in ways including bringing Indigenous Elders into childcare centres to speak to children.

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Region: Manitoba ^[3]

Tags: Indigenous ^[4]

Aboriginal (indigenous) ^[5]

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