Training in The Pas
LTOA team members headed up to The Pas to conduct a training session. (Bonus: Read a letter from Irene Linklater, a new LTOA facilitator in Pukatawagan, MB.)

Community of Practice
A conversation with Dr. Lucie Nadeau and Janique Johnson-Lafleur about creating a community of practice for frontline workers working in Inuit communities across Nunavik.

Chiefs of Ontario Health Forum
Read about Michelle Kehoe (LTOA National Coordinator) and Erin Aleck’s (LTOA Regional Coordinator and Facilitator) trip to Toronto to facilitate a workshop on LTOA.
A note on COVID-19...

In light of the current situation, we are ensuring that all measures to keep everyone safe and healthy are in place. As a team, we are now working remotely from home. Additionally, all community-based activities related to LTOA programming, including training and delivery have been postponed until further notice. We recognize the impact COVID-19 is having on communities, and are here to support the needs of our partners. We are working hard to see if aspects of our program can be moved to a web-platform for program adaptation and facilitator training. We continue to monitor the situation and will adjust measures as needed.

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to LTOA's National Coordinator, Michelle Kehoe, or message us on the LTOA Facebook group!

Please take care of yourselves, and we wish everyone wellness and safety during this difficult time.
Here are some links to keep you entertained, healthy and well!

**THINGS TO READ...**

A look at how Indigenous organizations are addressing COVID-19
https://aptnnews.ca/2020/03/06/a-look-at-how-indigenous-organizations-are-addressing-covid-19/

How to avoid bad habits during social distancing and isolation

Mathias Colomb First Nation Winter Games push COVID-19 aside to carry on in a different way

Stories of people and communities making a difference

**THINGS TO WATCH...**

National Film Board of Canada's Indigenous Collection
www.nfb.ca/indigenous-cinema/

There's Something in the Water
(Check it out on Netflix!)

**THINGS TO LEARN...**

Supporting Learning at Home from the Chiefs of Ontario
https://chiefsofontario.files.wordpress.com/2020/03/learning-at-home-educational-resources-list.pdf

Think Indigenous - Online Indigenous K-8 Education
https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/indigenous-online-school-lessons-1.5501050

**THINGS TO DO...**

Wabano's 7 Grandfather Teachings Yoga Series
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC1s5JLTsnmoQaivqoY4Xasg

Mental Health First Aid Self Care & Resilience Guide

Anishinaabe woodsman takes his outdoor survival skills online
https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous/anishinaabe-woodsman-online-outdoor-classes-1.5509934

Mental health practices for youth
Training in The Pas

Michelle Kehoe (LTOA National Coordinator) and Michaela Field (LTOA Research Assistant) headed up to The Pas to facilitate a LTOA training session.

In January 2020, LTOA team members Michelle and Michaela, flew to Winnipeg to begin their journey to The Pas. In collaboration with long standing partners of the LTOA program, Cree Nation Tribal Health, an exciting training opportunity was created, inviting community members from Wuskwi Sipihk First Nation, Pukatawagan First Nation, and Sapotaweyak Cree Nation to learn about LTOA.

Having arrived in The Pas a day in advance, Michaela and Michelle thoroughly enjoyed exploring the town, checking out local haunts like the famed eatery Miss The Pas, and even visiting the serene beauty that is Clearwater Lake. Facing the brutal -45 C weather was definitely challenging, but it was well worth the frostbitten toes to walk out onto the frozen lake and enjoy the stunning sunset. After heading back into town, Michelle noticed the bustle of cars and immediately deduced that there must be a local hockey game afoot. The two headed over to the arena and were able to catch the second period of the Opaskwayak Cree Nation Blizzards! It was an exciting game, or as Michelle called it - spicy!

Continued on next page...
To have enough time to review the LTOA program and all of its activities, the training was split into a two-day workshop. The training group included six incredible women, all of whom play important roles in their respective communities. Everyone brought their own expertise to the table, in working with youth and families. The diversity of the group led to informative and engaging discussions about program implementation.

It was amazing to hear about the programs and activities already ongoing in the communities, and how LTOA could be integrated. For example, Irene mentioned that in her community, Pukatawagan First Nation, children design and sew their own regalia, which they then showcase at an exciting fashion show in The Pas! Irene believed she could see the LTOA program merging with this annual event. The other attendees of the training session loved this idea and perhaps a collaboration among LTOA groups in the future may be possible! This was an amazing instance of the LTOA team working towards solidifying a community of practice, as the women were interested in coordinating LTOA events with each other.

A poignant moment of the training occurred towards the end of the two days when we all stood up to play the Yarn Game. The Yarn Game is an activity in the LTOA program that encourages youth and families to compliment each other as the yarn is passed across the circle. Since we were wrapping up the two days of training, we decided to focus our question for the game on what we learned during the training. Everyone shared how they were feeling and what they learned, creating a warm bond between all the women attending. We were even so fortunate to have Christina (Pukatawagan First Nation) sing us a beautiful honour song, which was deeply appreciated by all.

This two-day training in The Pas was an exciting and informative event, made all the better by those participating in the training. We really want to thank Garry Munroe, Rosie Leask, Irene Lord, and everyone at Cree Nation Tribal Health for creating this training opportunity. We also want to thank Christina, Irene, Frankie, Elvira, Luella and Carla for all their participation and insight, and look forward to hearing about the implementation of LTOA in these communities!
A letter from Irene Linklater

Meet Irene Linklater, an LTOA facilitator in Pukatawagan. Read on to see what she has to say about the LTOA program and the work she and her sister, Christina, are doing in their community.

Tansi,

My name is Irene Linklater and my Co-Facilitator is Christina Linklater, we are both from Pukatawagan, Manitoba. Pukatawagan is located North of The Pas, Manitoba, it is not accessible by road, only in the winter, however, we have the train runs faster than a speeding bullet...actually, you could outrun the train. We also have our own Airline, Missinippi Airways. We both work at Sakastew School, and have been working at the school over 20 years. Irene works as a guidance counsellor at the school and Christina is a high school teacher.

For a number of years we have had many volunteers that have been working with young women. We all deliver the “Girls Night Program,” where we work with the girls on how to get along with each other. We also do hair care, foot care, facials, lots of games as well as cooking, sewing, and sharing circles. We go camping and show the girls how to fix and smoke fish, smoke meat, and how to set a net, and lots of swimming. We also work with the students with modeling; we assist them while they work on their regalia, skirts, shirts, and whatever project they are working on.

After they are done with the sewing we open up with a fashion show, to showcase their work and talent, and even travel to different communities for modeling. We have different categories of models, the youngest model we had was only two months old and the other model we had was seven months old. The modeling is very effective. The students and families are so eager to participate. It brings out the best in all of the participants.

Irene Linklater
I just recently became involved in the LTOA program. As soon as we had the training, we were eager to start. The program is very easy to implement, because it gave us the opportunity to work at our own pace and we also have a chance to implement the cultural component.

With the program families will be able to learn how to make moccasins, regalia, baby bonnets, quilts, and moss bags. We will also be hosting a fashion show during LTOA, which will provide the participants an opportunity to showcase their work from start to finish. We do not have problems facilitating this program, because it easy to implement and we understand the components. We are very fortunate that we have community members that are very supportive, especially at the school and at the community level. If we do run into problems we have a community member that delivered this program, and we could always ask for her expertise. We could also implement the program with the help of the PAX Dreammakers, these young people are always willing to assist, this last year they have been involved with the programs in the community.
Just recently we had a fashion show during Cultural Week, most of the fashion wear took hours to make with both the students and families involved. This is what we will be working on during the LTOA program.

These are some of the pictures that we would like to share:

Thank you for sharing Irene!
Building a community of practice in Nunavik

A CONVERSATION WITH DR. LUCIE NADEAU
AND JANIQUE JOHNSON-LAFLEUR

Lucie and Janique are part of the team that helped create the Atautsikut Community of Practice (CIHR funded) for frontline workers across the 14 Inuit communities in Nunavik, QC. 'Atautsikut' is an Inuktitut term meaning togetherness, that was given to the group by Minnie Grey, Executive Director of the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services. Read on to learn about how they developed this amazing community of practice (CoP), and what we can learn from them as we build our own LTOA CoP.

Meet Dr. Lucie Nadeau...

Lucie Nadeau is the Nominated Principal Investigator on the Atautsikut project. She is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychiatry of McGill University, in the Division of Social and Transcultural Psychiatry and of Child Psychiatry. As a child psychiatrist, she works at the Montreal Children Hospital, and has been a child psychiatry consultant for Nunavik since 2008. It is through her experience of regularly visiting communities in Nunavik and working closely with front line workers that the idea emerged of a community of practice in youth mental health and wellness for these workers. Her main research field is youth mental health collaborative care in remote Indigenous communities, and in urban culturally and socioeconomically diverse milieu. She is involved in many community-based research projects, and also holds a certificate in Inuit language and culture. She continues to have the pleasure of learning Inuktitut, which is also a way to gain insight into culturally informed, safe and humble care.

...and Janique Johnson-Lafleur!

Janique Johnson-Lafleur is the coordinator of the Atautsikut project, known as "togetherness" in Inuktitut. Apart from being a research coordinator at the Sherpa research center, she is also a student in transcultural psychiatry with a background in anthropology. Janique’s doctoral project on intercultural training stems from her longstanding interest in the matters of culture, mental health, knowledge, and collaboration. Janique speaks French and English, and is currently trying to learn Inuktitut!

How do Lucie and Janique define a community of practice (CoP)?

"It is a group of people with a common professional practice or a shared interest who meet together regularly to share and learn from one another, and to support and inspire one another. It’s not just a training; it’s an exchange. You want to think of learning as relational and situational, not just as individual and cognitive processes. We also wish to combine different kinds of knowledge: Inuit and non-Inuit, theoretical and experiential, and so on."
How did the Atautsikut CoP develop?

The 3 main goals of the Atautsikut CoP is to foster **support**, **training**, and **collaboration** amongst frontline workers in the 14 Inuit communities of Nunavik, QC:

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<th>SUPPORT</th>
<th>TRAINING</th>
<th>COLLABORATION</th>
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<td>We saw a need to help support frontline workers in the North, which include both Inuit and non-Inuit professionals, counsellors, social workers, community workers, nurses and doctors.</td>
<td>Frontline workers in the 14 communities felt they needed more youth mental health training, which could be facilitated through this community of practice.</td>
<td>Good care for children and adolescents requires collaboration among workers, which is challenged by scarce resources and geographic distance between communities. The CoP helps foster intra-community collaboration.</td>
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The development of this CoP was a slow and careful process, supported by an advisory committee of researchers, and collaborators from diverse fields (medical, educational, wellness, and prevention), including Inuit and non-Inuit members. Each decision was taken together as an advisory group, and there continues to be an adaptation process as the CoP develops.

The project uses a participatory research model and alongside standard data collection, an Inuk artist, Mary Paningajak Alaku, is producing graphically-based data on the CoP process.

According to Lucie and Janique, it's all about taking small steps and taking into account the challenges of putting in place a CoP across 14 communities. There is no straightforward model, it's a process of trial and error.

How does the Atautsikut CoP work?

The activities for the CoP combine both in-person and online activities. They wanted to combine different modalities so people have different ways to be in touch with the CoP. The core aspect of the process is creating group meetings that are a combination of in-person and video chats. This would be a way for people in the same village to meet together, but also to connect with individuals from other communities.

The team in Montreal act as facilitators that connect the communities together, fostering intra- and inter-community collaboration and communication. Meetings are facilitated in person by two team members who travel to communicate as often as possible. At the end of the month, summaries of ideas that emerged during the discussions are anonymously written and posted to a website that they are currently building, so that people who missed the meeting can review what was shared. This website will also host a private forum for people to chat, and will serve as a general hub of information and connection, and to survey members on the topics to be addressed during meetings. This will also help people across the 14 communities to contact each other for future collaborations.
What happens during the CoP meetings?

As it is impossible for facilitators to travel to 14 communities each month, a lot of the CoP is maintained through the use of video chat. Each session lasts about 90 minutes, and addresses a topic of interest to members, related to their practice. The session contains a presentation of “bite-size information”, followed by a long discussion, which combines theoretical knowledge with experiential knowledge from the field. In this way, you get the ideal combination of research, best practice, and the reality of the field! They also try to leave an hour for the discussion period, allowing people to present their challenges and strategies, which helps everyone learn from each other and create a sense of collaboration. The topics for discussion are selected by the CoP members, and much as possible, and they integrate Inuit and non-Inuit knowledge.

Also, the CoP is a trilingual space, where everyone is invited to use the language that they are most comfortable with (Inuktitut, English and French).

A few challenges to keep in mind:

Who takes up space?
Due to the internalization of colonization, as well as the diversity in how people communicate across cultures, non-Indigenous people tend to speak more. It’s important to ensure everyone gets a chance to speak, while also not putting people on the spot. Before each meeting, facilitators remind everyone about respect and confidentiality, and work on ways to be inviting.

Building Trust
Conducting meetings that take place remotely can be difficult, as there are sensitive and emotional issues being brought up. That’s why it is important to establish a personal connection and trusting environment before using video chat.

Technology
Technological advances really help people connect, but there are still challenges in ensuring everyone has access and is comfortable with using different platforms. Facebook seems to be a popular platform amongst frontline workers and community members, so that is something the team is considering using.

A few photos from Nunavik

It was great to hear from Lucie and Janique, and to learn more about the Atautsikut Community of Practice. Thank you both for educating and inspiring us as we continue to develop the LTOA CoP!
14TH ANNUAL CHIEFS OF ONTARIO'S HEALTH FORUM

National Coordinator, Michelle and Regional Coordinator, Erin, presented the LTOA Program at the 14th Annual Chiefs of Ontario's (COO) Health Forum, which was held in Toronto, ON from February 26-27th.

The theme of this years’ Health Forum was “Advancing First Nation Best Practices: Stories of Resilience, Innovation and Success.” The LTOA Team was intrigued by the theme of the Health Forum and jumped at the opportunity to share the LTOA program.

Michelle and Erin presented a 90-minute workshop to approximately 30 participants at the event. The presentation took participants through the history and growth of the program, highlighted past and current partners, session content, and program sustainability.

During the presentation, participants in the workshop also built their own Tree of Life, to get a feel for the program and see one of the core features of LTOA in action!
Michelle and Erin were also able to attend other amazing workshops! One interesting workshop was presented by Diane Jacko and Serenity Sandford from the Mniido Mnising Mental Wellness Crisis Response Team, who shared their team’s best practices when responding to crises in community. They highlighted the preventative programs and activities they offer to mitigate crises. Our LTOA team also attended Marnie Anderson’s presentation on the Aboriginal Children’s Health & Well-being Measure (ACHWM), which is a self-reported tablet survey that gives children and youth the opportunity to share their perspective on their holistic health and wellness - including mental health.

Michelle and Erin gathered some fantastic resources, including an activity from Nokiiwin Tribal Council. The team from Nokiiwin Tribal Council gave participants of the workshop, “Shiny & Rough” activity cards. The activity is based off of sweetgrass, which has both a shiny and rough side. The idea behind this activity is that words, terms and characteristics, can be either “shiny” or “rough”, depending on your perspective. Participants who engage in this activity are encouraged to view, for example, “weird” in a more positive light, by seeing “weird” as “creative”. This activity teaches people to show off and be proud of their shiny side!

The LTOA Team was grateful for the opportunity to share the LTOA Program with others, and to also learn from so many people and programs from across Ontario. Michelle and Erin were even able to connect with Howard and Sheila Copenace! Howard was an LTOA Program Facilitator in Naotkamegwanning First Nation, while Sheila was the LTOA Regional Coordinator with the Kenora Chiefs Advisory. Both have been a long-time supporter of the LTOA Program, so it was great to catch up with Howard and Sheila!
During this difficult time of social distancing, we see this newsletter as a way to connect with all of you. We hope it has been both entertaining and informative.

We are always available to chat, so please reach out to the LTOA team at any time!

FACEBOOK
https://www.facebook.com/groups/ListeningToOneAnother/

TWITTER
@ToGrowStrong

WEBSITE
https://www.mcgill.ca/mhp/

Take care of yourselves.

- The LTOA Team