

Issue 2 | Dec. 2025

**Special  
Christmas  
Edition**

# The Cedar Branch

## Güzhik Mitigoog



Designed by: Isaac Gosse

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from Council!**

**HEALTH CENTER &  
LAKEVIEW SCHOOL  
UPDATE!**





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# Message from the Enaagdenjged M'Chigeeng First Nation – Second Edition of The Cedar Branch

**Aanii, M'Chigeeng Community Members,**

We are pleased to share the second edition of The Cedar Branch newsletter, our ongoing effort to strengthen communication and provide meaningful updates on the work taking place across all Departments within the First Nation. As we continue to grow and enhance our services, open and transparent communication remains a priority for Administration.

This edition places a special focus on two key areas within our organization: Education and Health. Both departments play an essential role in supporting the well-being, learning, and long-term success of our community members. You will find updates on current initiatives, program developments, and ongoing work that reflects our commitment to providing high-quality services for all ages.

I would also like to acknowledge the continued dedication of our Operations Team, who work tirelessly to support and service the community each day. Their efforts ensure our infrastructure, facilities, and community services remain reliable and responsive to the needs of M'Chigeeng. As we continue into the winter season, let us walk together in the spirit of the Seven Grandfather Teachings:

Mnaadendimowin (Respect) Aakode'ewin (Bravery) Zaagidwin (Love) Gwekwaadziwin (Honesty) Debwewin (Truth) Dbaadendiziwin (Humility) Nbwaakaawin (Wisdom)

By embracing these teachings, we honor our traditions, care for one another, and support the well-being of our community. Miigwetch to all staff, departments, and contributors who have supported the development of this second edition. Your collaboration and commitment help ensure The Cedar Branch remains a valuable source of information, celebrating the strength, resilience, and culture of M'Chigeeng First Nation.

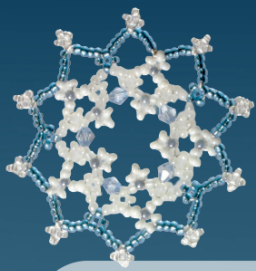
We also invite community members to share your stories, ideas, or feedback for future editions. Your input ensures the newsletter reflects the voice and priorities of our community. Please send your submissions to Isaac Goose, Communications Officer, at [isaacg@mchigeeng.ca](mailto:isaacg@mchigeeng.ca)

**Miigwetch,**

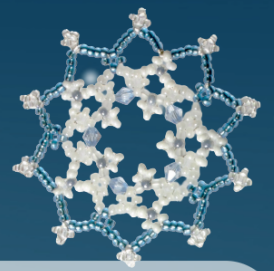
**Shannon Bebamash, Enaagdenjged**

**M'Chigeeng First Nation**





# Seasons Greetings from Council



During this sacred time of year, the M'Chigeeng First Nation Council offers heartfelt greetings to each of our members, both within the community and across Turtle Island. As we come together for the holiday season and honour the **Winter Solstice—Gichi-Biboon Giizhigan**, we recognize this time as one of renewal, ceremony, storytelling, and reconnecting with the teachings that sustain us.

The return of the light reminds us of our responsibilities to one another, to our ancestors, and to the generations yet to come. We give thanks—**Chi-Miigwetch**—to our Elders who carry our knowledge forward, to our knowledge-keepers and language speakers who strengthen **Anishinaabemowin**, and to our youth whose curiosity and determination will guide our Nation into the future.

We also honour our families, caregivers, community workers, volunteers, and leadership who have dedicated themselves to supporting M'Chigeeng throughout the year. Your efforts ensure that our community remains strong, safe, and connected. This is the spirit of **mino-bimaadiziwin**, where we all contribute to the well-being of one another.

As we welcome the coming year—**Oshki-Biboon**—we look forward to continued growth in community wellness, culture, language, education, economic development, and stewardship of our lands and waters. Together, we will continue to walk the path our ancestors set before us, with humility, gratitude, and determination.

We believe in the power of connection and community so we invite you to join us for Chief and council meetings, or check out the meeting minutes on our Members Only portal. And as the holidays approach, let's celebrate the spirit of giving and supporting those who need a helping hand whether that's volunteering, sharing resources, or just being kind.

May this season bring **zaagi'idiwin** (love), **debwewin** (truth), **dibaadendiziwin** (humility), and warmth to you and your families.

May the New Year bless M'Chigeeng with strength, unity, and prosperity.

**Boozhoo Oshki-Biboon — Happy New Year, and joyful celebrations to all our M'Chigeeng families. Chi-Miigwetch for all you do.**





# M'Chigeeng First Nation

## 15 YEARS OF ECONOMIC GROWTH

A Visual Story of Strength, Stability & Success

### 2010–2015 — Building the Vision Strategic Foundation

- Long Term Economic Priorities Established
- Business Exploration & Opportunity Mapping
- Early Strategic Planning for Nation-Owned ventures



### 2015–2020 — Developing the Plan Turning Vision into Action

- Business plans strengthened
- Operational models refined
- Prepared for long-term financial growth



### 2020–2025 — Results That Matter

Our Nation-owned businesses are now stable, thriving, and reinvesting in the community



#### M'CHIGEENG FRESHMART 2020–2025 Highlights

- Revenue doubled: \$2M  $\square$  \$4M
- \$600,000+ rent paid back to the Nation
- Current Ratio: 0.44 to 1.14  
(Significant improvement in financial stability)



#### HIAH CORP 2020–2025 Highlights

- Solar Power Networks generated \$1M+
- Equity increased by 28.6%
- Current Ratio: consistently above 1.0  
(Strong, reliable business operations)



#### MERE 2020–2025 Highlights

- Net Income: \$2.2M+
- Equity growth: +105%
- Current Ratio: 0.47  $\square$  0.79  
(Steady upward trajectory in overall strength)

#### WHAT IS THE CURRENT RATIO?

A measure of a business's ability to pay short-term obligations.

A ratio of 1.0 = strong financial health  
Formula:

Current Assets  $\div$  Current Liabilities

### THE BIG PICTURE

- Stronger local economy
- Increased revenue and equity
- Sustainable business operations
- More dollars returning to the community
- Long-term stability for future generations

**M'Chigeeng First Nation is rising — together, we are building long-term economic strength.**







# Lakeview School Update

Aanii, Baskwaabgoniis n'dnishnikaaz, M'kwa ndodem, Wiikwemkoong ndnoonjibaa. Aanii M'Chigeeng families and community members, my name is Roxxanne Corbiere (Mandamin). I am honoured to serve as Principal at Lakeview School. I first joined the Lakeview team in March 2025 as Vice Principal, stepped into the Acting Principal role in May, and now, with gratitude, have accepted the responsibility of Principal.

It brings me joy to work alongside our dedicated educators, support staff, and community partners here in M'Chigeeng. Most importantly, I am deeply committed to walking with our students as they grow into the future leaders of the community.

My journey in education has taken me from teaching at both the elementary and secondary levels in Wiikwemkoong to serving as Education Data Analyst with the Kinoomaadziwin Education Body/Anishinabek Education System. In that role, I gained valuable experience collaborating with the Ministry of Education's Data and Analytics Branch and Anishinaabe education departments across the province.

I am passionate about advancing Anishinaabe and Indigenous student success and wholistic wellbeing. I believe that strong outcomes for our learners are built on open communication and genuine partnerships with parents and caregivers—our doors will always remain open. I am committed to weaving Anishinaabemowin and Anishinaabe Aadizwin into the learning environment at Lakeview School.

Outside of school, you'll often find me on the golf course or enjoying the outdoors with my family. I also spend time at the hockey rink, both playing recreationally and volunteering as a coach for my children's teams. I am a lifelong learner, currently pursuing a Doctor of Education in Equity, Diversity, and Social Justice at Western University. Through this work, I hope to contribute to the systemic change needed to ensure that our peoples' voices, knowledge, and perspectives are heard, respected, and valued across the broader educational landscape.

I warmly invite families and community members to continue engaging in the exciting initiatives and events happening at Lakeview School.

Miigwetch for welcoming me to M'Chigeeng and for the privilege of working with the most important members of the community—our children, the future of our Nations.

Roxxanne Corbiere (Mandamin)  
Principal, Lakeview School





## VICE PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

AANII LAKEVIEW SCHOOL FAMILIES! MRS. DEANA DEBASSIGE-WOOD NDIZHINIKAAS, M'CHIGEENG NDOONJIBA, ANISHINAABE KWE NDAAW. I AM A PROUD WIFE, MOTHER, DAUGHTER, SISTER, AUNTIE, AND EDUCATOR. MY FAMILY, CAREER AND COMMUNITY IS WHAT FILLS MY HEART WITH JOY.

I BEGAN MY TEACHING CAREER IN 2011 AT THE WIIKWEMKOONG PONTIAC SCHOOL, WHERE I TAUGHT PHYSICAL EDUCATION FOR 10 YEARS. I'M GRATEFUL FOR THE EXPERIENCES, KNOWLEDGE, AND FRIENDSHIPS GAINED DURING MY TIME THERE. WHEN THE PHYSICAL EDUCATION POSITION OPENED AT LAKEVIEW SCHOOL IN SEPTEMBER 2022, I APPLIED WITHOUT HESITATION TO RETURN HOME AND TEACH IN MY COMMUNITY. IT WAS AN HONOUR TO BE WELCOMED HOME; DURING MY FIRST YEAR, I BUILT STRONG CONNECTIONS WITH STAFF, STUDENTS, AND FAMILIES. IT TRULY WARMS MY HEART TO BE GREETED BY OUR YOUTH AND COMMUNITY MEMBERS AT LOCAL EVENTS.

THIS SCHOOL YEAR, I STEPPED INTO THE ROLE OF VICE PRINCIPAL AT LAKEVIEW SCHOOL. I'M THRILLED FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY AND LOOK FORWARD TO AN ENGAGING AND MEANINGFUL YEAR AHEAD. I'M HONOURED TO BE PART OF A SCHOOL THAT VALUES THE CULTURES AND TRADITIONS OUR STUDENTS AND FAMILIES BRING. I BELIEVE STRONG, RESPECTFUL RELATIONSHIPS ARE ESSENTIAL FOR STUDENT SUCCESS, AND I AM COMMITTED TO SUPPORTING AN INCLUSIVE AND WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL.

TOGETHER WITH OUR DEDICATED STAFF, I'M EXCITED TO HELP FOSTER A SAFE, RESPECTFUL, AND ENGAGING SCHOOL WHERE EVERY STUDENT FEELS ACCEPTED AND EMPOWERED. REGULAR ATTENDANCE IS KEY TO STUDENT GROWTH, AND YOUR SUPPORT IN HELPING YOUR CHILD ATTEND CONSISTENTLY IS GREATLY APPRECIATED. I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING CLOSELY WITH FAMILIES TO ENSURE EVERY CHILD HAS ACCESS TO A RICH AND FULFILLING EDUCATION. MY DOOR IS ALWAYS OPEN, AND I WELCOME YOUR QUESTIONS, IDEAS, AND CONVERSATIONS AS WE WORK TOGETHER TO SUPPORT ALL STUDENTS ON THEIR LEARNING JOURNEY.

KIND REGARDS,  
DEANA DEBASSIGE-WOOD  
VICE PRINCIPAL  
LAKEVIEW SCHOOL







## ROOTS OF EMPATHY – GRADE 1

Lakeview School continues the Roots of Empathy Program with their Grade 1 class. Students welcome baby Mia, their “Tiny Teacher,” throughout the school year to explore emotions, empathy, and child development milestones.

## UCCMM U-TURN PROGRAM – GRADE 7/8

The Grade 7/8 class participates in the UCCMM U-Turn Program led by Janice Cada. Students take part in cultural teachings, relationship skills, conflict resolution, communication strategies, traditional knowledge, and activities connected to the Seven Grandfather Teachings.

Respect

Equality

Acceptance

Bravery

Friendship

Fun

Wisdom

Laughter

Truth

Honesty

Love

Humility

### UCCMM JUSTICE U-TURN PROGRAM

The U-Turn Program as a whole aims to

- Teach Conflict/Problem Solving Skills
- Increase self awareness through recognizing anger and stressors
- Help participants learn to take into consideration the effects of their actions
- Instill self worth and positive self image
- Teach skills for positive communication
- Be delivered in a culturally respectful manner

The U-Turn Program consists of 12 sessions, two per week designed specifically for Youth **ages 12-17**

Topics that may be covered but not limited to, are:

- Eagle Feather Teachings
- The Seven Grandfather Teachings
- Cultural Crafts with Teachings and Guest Speakers
- Values
- Communication and Healthy Boundaries
- Relationships
- Roles and Responsibilities of young Men and Women
- Character Education Through Games

Snacks and refreshments will be provided at each session.  
Opportunities to win prizes at the end of the program.  
Some prizes up for grabs are an **I-Pad, X-Box, PlayStation 5, \$100 gift card, \$50 gift card, Mini Camera with extra film**



## KNOWLEDGE KEEPER VISITS – CRAIG FOX

Knowledge Keeper Craig Fox visits twice weekly to provide traditional teachings, drumming, and cultural enrichment across multiple grades.

## MONTHLY TRADITIONAL TEACHINGS – SYLVIA & ROXANNE RECOLLET

Lakeview welcomes Sylvia and Roxanne Recollet once per month to deliver a yearly cycle of Anishinaabe teachings including:

- Medicine Wheel
- 8-Point Star (Self-Esteem)
- Stages of Life (Feather teaching)
- Vision Boards
- Spirit Journey
- Bear Feast
- Spring Solstice
- Sweetgrass Braiding
- Strawberry Teaching
- Cedar Wash (June)

These teachings support student wellness, culture, and identity.



Roxanne Recollet is an Anishinaabe kwe from the Bear Clan. Her Anishinaabe noozwin is Nung-gabwe-kwe (Star Beam Woman) "She who shines brightly like the star beams and brings hope". Knowing her Anishinaabe noozwin (name) and family clan defines her role as helper in the community.

Roxanne is a proud band member of the Wikwemikong First Nation. She is a Registered Social Services Worker and is member of the Ontario College of Social Workers and Social Service Workers.

Roxanne is a Master Trainer for Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST). She also provides Seeking Safety Training, and Peer Helper Training.

Roxanne is a Swiss Army Knife. Working in many different capacities has taught her to adapt to various situations, and to include culture in all aspects of her work and life.

Roxanne is currently working towards her Bachelor of Indigenous Social Work at Laurentian University. She's married 27 years to husband Ted and mother of teenager (Daimien)



**ZHAASH-KWAA NIMKII-KWE**  
Counselling and Contracting

**Sylvia Recollet**  
Registered Psychotherapist

### Professional Services

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training  
Mental Health First Aid Training  
One-on-one counselling  
Couples therapy  
Group facilitation



705-282-4723  
sylvia\_recollet@hotmail.com

## ELEPHANT THOUGHTS – CODING, ROBOTICS & A.I.

Students participated in hands-on STEM workshops exploring coding fundamentals, robotics components, and digital applications aligned with the Ontario curriculum.







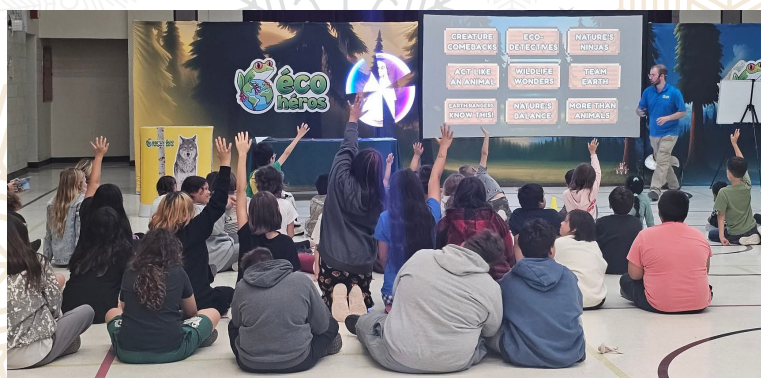
## SCIENCE NORTH WORKSHOPS

Science North visited Lakeview to provide engaging hands-on workshops in science, exploration, and coding.



## EARTH RANGERS PRESENTATION

Students enjoyed a high-energy, game-show-style science presentation featuring live animals, eco-decisions, environmental challenges, and sustainability learning.







## INSPIRING STEM LEARNING

Earth Rangers is a registered charity that's spent 20+ years bringing fun, curriculum-based science programs into schools – using kids' love of animals to spark environmental learning.

### THE EARTH RANGERS PROGRAM A FIELD TRIP – RIGHT IN YOUR SCHOOL!

Our team transforms your school gym into an immersive eco-experience. Expect a full multimedia set-up, professional A/V, lifelike animatronics, a quirky holographic game-master and two dynamic presenters.

#### 2025–2026 PRESENTATION THEME: THE EARTH RANGERS GAME SHOW

This year's show is styled like a fast-paced game show where students team up to answer questions, make eco-decisions, and tackle environmental challenges. With audience participation, storytelling, and loads of surprises, kids have a blast – while learning key science concepts.



#### WHAT STUDENTS LEARN

After the show, students will be able to:

- ◆ Explain key topics: conservation, endangered species, habitats, ecosystems, and adaptation.
- ◆ Identify human impacts like pollution and habitat loss.
- ◆ Understand how restoration, research, and everyday actions can help.

#### KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ **100% free to schools:** Funded by our donors.
- ◆ **Live animals in action:** demonstrating their amazing natural behaviours.
- ◆ **45-minutes in length:** We arrive an hour before and pack up right after.
- ◆ **Designed for grades 1-5:** Kindergarten welcome at your discretion.
- ◆ **STEM-aligned content:** Built to support science and environment curriculum.



#### KEEP THE LEARNING GOING!

**Earth Rangers Homeroom** Free educator hub featuring STEM-focused classroom activities

**Earth Rangers Clubs** Turnkey platform to help schools run a successful eco club

**The Earth Rangers App** Hands-on activities to protect wildlife at home

**The Earth Rangers Podcast** and **YouTube Channel** Engaging science content for kids

To learn more about Earth Rangers or book our program in your school  
contact Vaxzala Murugupillai [vmurugupillai@earthrangers.com](mailto:vmurugupillai@earthrangers.com) | 905.417.3447 x2253





### SALMON TOURS WITH MANITOULIN STREAMS

Students participated in Salmon Tours in Providence Bay guided by Environmental Technologist Liam Campbell, learning about:

- Local ecology
- Salmon migration
- Indigenous land-based knowledge
- Plant identification
- Stream health
- Invasive species awareness



### SPORTS — 3-PITCH TOURNAMENT

Lakeview hosted the Junior 3-Pitch Tournament. Both Junior and Senior teams finished in 4th place with outstanding teamwork and sportsmanship.





## SPORTS — CROSS COUNTRY SEASON

Lakeview students competed in major island-wide events, with several top-five finishes and a first-place victory by Bray Wassegijig.



## TRUTH & RECONCILIATION HONOUR WALK

Students and staff participated in a reflective and meaningful walk honouring Truth & Reconciliation.







## HOT LUNCH PROGRAM RETURNS

The Hot Lunch Program resumed on November 17, providing nutritious meals during afternoon nutrition breaks.



## LAKEVIEW SCHOOL

18 Lakeview Dr.

P.O. Box 296

M'CHIGEENG, ON

P0P 1G0

Tel.: (705) 377-4988 Fax: (705) 377-5080

November 13, 2025

Aanii Parents and Caregivers,

We are happy to announce that the Hot Lunch Program is returning to Lakeview School! Starting Monday, November 17, 2025, students will once again have the option to enjoy hot lunches during their afternoon nutrition break.

Hot Lunch nutrition break schedule:

- Primary Hot Lunch: 12:50–1:10 PM
- Junior/Intermediate Hot Lunch: 1:10–1:30 PM

Please remember that students will still need food/snacks for the morning nutrition break:

- Primary: 10:30–10:50 AM
- Junior/Intermediate: 10:50–11:10 AM

Important Reminders:

- Lakeview School is peanut-free. Please send school-safe snacks.
- Healthy snack choices and reusable, labeled water bottles are encouraged.
- Review the Hot Lunch Meal Plan Calendar regularly.
- If your child does not like a scheduled meal, please pack an alternative lunch that day.

Attached you will find the Meal Plan for next week. Updated calendars will also be sent home and posted on the Lakeview School Facebook page for your convenience.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the school.

Miigwetch,

Roxanne Corbiere (Mandamin)  
Principal, Lakeview School



## Lakeview School Joins in the Halloween Fun

Lakeview School students and staff got into the Halloween spirit this year with a fun-filled afternoon of community visits and celebrations. Dressed in their creative costumes, classes made their way through M'Chigeeng to share smiles, laughter, and a few spooky surprises.

Students stopped at the M'Chigeeng Band Office, where staff were ready with treats and warm greetings. The halls were filled with excitement as students proudly showed off their costumes and enjoyed the festive atmosphere created by the departments.

The Halloween route continued at the Ojibwe Cultural Foundation (OCF), where students were welcomed with the same enthusiasm. The visit gave learners a chance to connect with community partners in a fun, culturally grounded environment—mixing Halloween excitement with the familiarity of one of M'Chigeeng's most valued spaces.

These small community traditions continue to strengthen relationships, bring joy to students, and remind us all of the importance of coming together—especially during the holidays. Lakeview School extends a heartfelt miigwech to the Band Office, OCF, and everyone who helped make this Halloween a memorable one for our students.







# LAKEVIEW SCHOOL

## INTRODUCING OUR 2025-2026 EDUCATION STAFF

DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION: SANDY JACKO  
PRINCIPAL: ROXXANNE CORBIERE (MANDAMIN)  
VICE PRINCIPAL: DEANA DEBASSIGE-WOOD  
SECRETARY: JESSICA WILSON  
SPECIAL EDUCATION RESOURCE TEACHER: NICOLE FOX  
ANISHINAABE AADZIWIN TEACHER: MICHELLE TAUKEI  
PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHER: TIANA MILLS

FDK TEACHER: AMANDA FINCH  
GRADE 1 TEACHER: SHEILA ESHQUIB  
GRADE 1/2 TEACHER: KATELYN LEASK  
GRADE 3 TEACHER: FAWN BRIDGEMAN  
GRADE 4 TEACHER: ROBIN DEBASSIGE  
GRADE 5/6 TEACHER: ASHLEY DEBASSIGE  
GRADE 7/8 TEACHER: RAMONA ENSE  
PRIMARY EAGLES NEST TEACHER: EMILY HOLLAS  
J/JI EAGLES NEST TEACHER: LORRAINE CORBIERE-DEBASSIGE

### TEACHER ASSISTANTS

SONNY FRANKLIN  
TERRI LYNN LEIGHTON  
HUDSON HARE  
NOAH HARE  
FLORITA COPADA  
KAYLEE CORBIERE  
ABBIE HEINS

ANGELA MCGRAW  
DARRIN DEBASSIGE  
KAILA KEARNEY  
SASHA HARE  
ZOE ZOLDY  
RILEY STEAD



# LAKEVIEW SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR 2025 - 2026

	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F	M	T	W	T	F
AUG 2025																				
SEPT 2025	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
OCT 2025	SH																			
NOV 2025	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22
DEC 2025	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
JAN 2026																				
FEB 2026	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
MAR 2026	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21
APR 2026																				
MAY 2026																				
JUN 2026	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20

## Holidays

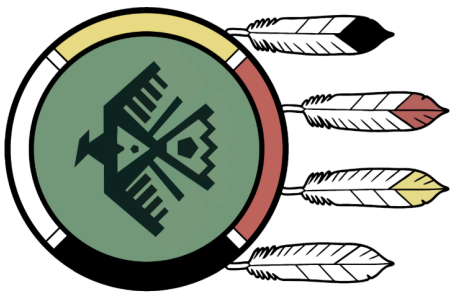
Labour Day - September 1  
First day of school for Students - September 2  
Truth and Reconciliation Day - September 30  
Thanksgiving Day - October 13  
Remembrance Day - November 11  
Christmas Break - December 22 - January 2  
Family Day - February 16  
March Break - March 16 to 20  
Good Friday - April 3  
Easter Monday - April 6  
Victoria Day - May 18  
Band Holiday - National Indigenous Day - June 22  
Last day of school for Students - June 26

## Professional Development Days

August 28, 2025  
August 29, 2025  
October 20, 2025  
November 28, 2025  
January 30, 2026  
February 27, 2026  
June 5, 2026  
June 29, 2026

## Daily Schedule:

8:30 - 8:50 am: Student Arrival/Breakfast  
8:45 am: Announcements  
8:50 - 10:30 am: Classroom Instruction  
10:30 - 10:50 am: FDK-Gr.3 Nutrition Break/Gr. 4-8 Recess  
10:50 - 11:10 am: Gr. 4-8 Nutrition Break/FDK-Gr3 Recess  
11:10 - 12:50pm: Classroom Instruction  
12:50 - 1:10pm: FDK-Gr.3 Nutrition Break/Gr. 4-8 Recess  
1:10 - 1:30pm: Gr. 4-8 Nutrition Break/FDK-Gr3 Recess  
1:30 - 3:10pm: Classroom Instruction  
3:10 pm : Dismissal







# Health & Wellness Update

## Director's Message Health & Wellness Quarterly Newsletter

Aanii Community Members,

As Director of Health and Wellness, I'm pleased to share an update on some of the positive changes happening within our Health & Wellness Department. Over the past several months, we have been growing our prevention teams and strengthening our programs. This growth is about more than adding staff – it is about bringing greater efficiency, coordination, and better service delivery for you and your family.

We continue to offer our core services, including nursing and home care, and we are grateful for the ongoing partnerships that allow other providers to use our Health Centre. These partnerships help make it easier for you to access primary health care close to home, reducing barriers and keeping care as local as possible.

The funding for our Health Centre has long focused on upstream prevention of illness. Moving forward, we want to take an even closer look at what is causing health and social disparities in our community and work together to address the root causes. I truly believe our health programs are heading in the right direction to meet the ever-changing and growing needs of our community. Our goal is to support you on your lifelong journey, ensuring that your physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual health needs are met along the way.

Under Health & Wellness, our programs include:

- Mental Health and Addictions, includes our counselors, wellness recovery program, and systems navigator.
- Health Centre services, including Medical Transportation, Home Care Nursing, and Community Health Nurses
- Family Resources, including Band Representative, Jordan's Principle, Post-Majority Support, and In-Home Support teams

Each of these areas will share more about their specific goals and activities in this newsletter and in future updates, so I won't go into detail here. Instead, I want to highlight that there are more exciting changes on the way as we continue to strengthen how we work together and how we serve you. Please take a look at our new and exciting positions that are available and if you or someone you know would like to apply please submit following instructions on the job posting.

Please remember: **you are in charge of your health, and there is support along the way.** Our teams are here to walk beside you, not just in times of crisis, but throughout your wellness journey.

Miigwech for your trust and for allowing us to be part of your path to wellness.

Respectfully,

Floyd Ense  
Director of Health & Wellness  
M'Chigeeng First Nation





## MHA Update

Hello/Aanii M'Chigeeng First Nation, At the time of writing this update, I (Katrina Wilhelm) have been in the role of Mental Health and Addictions Supervisor for less than two months. Since arriving at the end of September, I have observed the needs of the community, and I have seen how my small (yet mighty) team of two dedicated and competent individuals are going above and beyond to meet these needs. I have watched my team provide stability for clients while there has been turnover in staff, management, and programs. I see how this presence has built trust, and clients feel comfortable reaching out for support. Well done Brad and Brittney, and thank you for your dedication to the community of M'Chigeeng First Nation!

I have many ideas and visions for the future of the Mental Health and Addictions program. For now, I am focusing on continuing to learn from the community to further assess needs, and I am doing my best to stabilize the team by filling vacancies. We have two Mental Health and Addictions Child and Youth Counsellor positions available. If you are interested in joining our team, please see the M'Chigeeng website for more details.

My team has also been eager and willing to invest time in other projects, such as planning and hosting events for the National Addictions Awareness Week (NAAW). Planning for NAAW has been a collaborative endeavor. Working with other M'Chigeeng departments and external partners to plan events has provided me with the opportunity to build valuable relationships. I have seen how every single person who attended these planning meetings have a desire to support M'Chigeeng First Nation in any way they can.

The NAAW planning committee successfully hosted a conference on November 19, 2025, in Little Current. A variety of community partners from across Manitoulin, Espanola, and Sudbury attended the NAAW Conference. 21 booths filled the perimeter of the hall with 46 employees sharing their time, knowledge, and resources about various mental health and addictions services. The 40 conference attendees were able to build connections with these resources, and they were able to hear meaningful presentations. Angels of Hope started with an informative presentation about human trafficking. This was followed by two beautiful personal stories of hope and recovery from Sylvia Migwans and Norma Jean Dokum. Finally, our very own Brad Wilson ended with a presentation about addiction medicine and harm reduction, including a training on how to administer Naloxone, the life-saving opioid reversal nasal spray. We sent participants away with Naloxone in hopes to continue to reverse overdoses and save lives. This NAAW Conference was supported with

traditional knowledge, prayers, and healing medicines from Josh and Tina Eshkawkogan who cared for everyone's Spirits while engaging with heavy topics.

In my short time here in M'Chigeeng, I am reminded that "Alone We Can Do So Little. Together We Can Do So Much." I am grateful to learn from the wisdom of people who have suffered and overcome challenges before me. Thank you, Hellen Keller, for your journey and this quote. I look forward to connecting with those of you who have come before me here in M'Chigeeng. Your wisdom is something I hope to learn from as I build out my Mental Health and Addictions team. I look forward to meeting every one of you, in time.

Chi Miigwetch M'Chigeeng First Nation for welcoming me into your beautiful community.

Sincerely,  
Katrina Wilhelm  
Mental Health and Addictions Supervisor







## Youth Program Newsletter

### October Highlights

- M'Chigeeng 5k
- Youth Centre Drop-In
- Youth Centre Drop-In with Jasmine from Laurentian University
- PD Day Trip to Laurentian University- Campus Tour
- Volleyball Night
- Bracelet Making Workshop with Janice from UCMM Indigenous Youth Reintegration & Supportive Services Program
- Archery with Corey MacDonald- Land Based Lead Facilitator from Noojmowin Teg Health Centre
- Youth Engagement Session Part 2- Next Steps

**M'Chigeeng 5k 2nd Annual M'Chigeeng 5k** was held Sunday, October 12th, 2025. Conditions were excellent for a run, it was sunny yet cool. There were 23 runners in this event. The 5k started at 9am and the 1k kids run followed. Times were tracked this year. Runners that placed in the 5k received medals in their respective gender/age categories (example youth female, adult male, youth non-binary, etc.), and runners that participated in the 1k kids race received medals.

**Archery with Corey MacDonald-** Land Based Lead from Noojmowin Teg Health Centre Archery was held for 4 sessions from Wednesday, November 22, 2025 to Wednesday, November 12, 2025 at Lakeview School gym. Ages 8-14 shot between 5:00pm-6:00pm and ages 15+ shot between 6:00pm-7:00pm. 5 of the attending youth were first time archers, they learned how to shoot a bow, with their skills improving each session.



**Youth Centre Drop-In Night** with LU & PD Day Trip to Laurentian University- Campus Tour On Tuesday, October 14th, 2025, Jasmine Panacheese (Domestic Recruitment Coordinator - Indigenous Communities) provided a presentation about Laurentian University and ran activities at Youth Centre Drop In Night, connecting with M'Chigeeng youth and providing information about the programs and services Laurentian University offers.



The following week on Monday, October 20th, 2025, 4 M'Chigeeng youth had the opportunity to attend a Laurentian University Campus tour. They had multiple Laurentian University staff, students, and Indigenous Sharing and Learning Centre staff lead them through the campus tour.

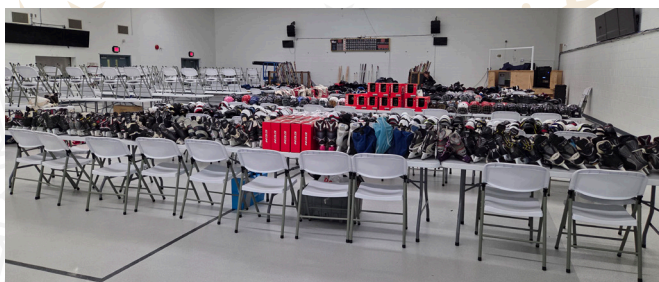
Laurentian University provided lunch at one of their newer campus restaurants. They got to see many of Laurentian Universities facilities.

#### November Highlights

- Hockey Equipment Giveaway
- Archery
- Basketball
- Public Skating
- Youth Centre Drop-In Night
- NAAW Bear Sobriety Walk
- Youth Engagement Session
- PD Day Trip to Ottawa for Oshawa Generals vs Ottawa 67's Game

#### **Hockey Equipment Giveaway 16th Annual Community Sports Equipment Giveaway!**

Youth and families were invited from (Aundeck Omni Kaning, M'Chigeeng, Shesheganandah, Sheshegwaning, Whitefish River, and Zhiibaahaasing), to the 16th Annual Community Sports Equipment Giveaway on Tuesday, November 4, 2025, from 3:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the M'Chigeeng Community Complex!



Thanks to generous donors in the Greater Toronto Area, we've gathered a great selection of lightly used sports gear — everything from skates and sticks to helmets and cleats — ready to help kids across the six UCCMM communities get in the game.

The drive is sponsored by Webb Pension and Benefits, the OPP Provincial Liaison Team, and the UCCM Police Service.

There were 104 participants accessing equipment total. Approximately 40 families.

#### **NAAW Bear Sobriety Walk**

M'Chigeeng Youth Program and Lakeview School hosted this event, along with our partners—the Community Connector Program and the Noojmowin Teg Health Centre FASD Program. Miigwetch for bringing our community together.

This walk is a symbol of sobriety, balance, and healthy living. Each step we take represents choosing wellness—mentally, physically, spiritually, and emotionally. When we support one another, when we uplift our youth, and when we create safe spaces, we help build a stronger, healthier M'Chigeeng for the next generations.

The walk happened 11:00am starting from Lakeview School to M'Chigeeng Youth Centre, with 4 classrooms participating. There were approximately 50 walkers. There was hot chocolate given out at the end of the walk.





### Youth Engagement Session 3- Parents/Guardians Encouraged to Attend.

Further discussion about youth programming and youth centre development. Involves pizza and sub dinner, a M'Chigeeng Youth Program presentation, Q&A, surveys, and drop in activities (arts/crafts, pool, ping pong, foosball, etc.). Participants that attend will have first invites for upcoming youth trips before released to public (if necessary). Your voice, your vision, youth-led planning.

#### Upcoming Programs

##### December

- Basketball
- Beading Workshop with Janice Cada from UCCMM Indigenous Reintegration & Supportive Services Program- December 4, 2025 5:00pm-9:00pm @M'Chigeeng Youth Centre
- Public Skating
- Youth Centre Drop-In Nights
- Family Christmas Pajama Party & Dance: December 11, 2025 from 4:30pm-9:00pm @M'Chigeeng Community Complex

#### Youth Ottawa Trip to Oshawa Generals vs Ottawa 67's Hockey Game Friday, November 28, 2025 (PD Day)- Saturday, November 29, 2025

Left in the morning, drove down with the new youth centre van and a health centre van.

12 M'Chigeeng youth took part on this trip. Was the first time for a few of the participants that they've been to Ottawa. Had a dinner at Mandarin before the game. The group made signs with bristle boards and markers to cheer on Kohyn Eshkawogan (17years old from M'Chigeeng, ON, currently 2nd defenceman in assists in the OHL).



Watched an exciting game of hockey between Oshawa Generals and Ottawa 67's.

- Oshawa scored 1 goal in the 1st period
- Ottawa scored 1 goal in the 2nd period
- Ottawa scores in the last 30 seconds of the 3rd period on a tip in.
- Ottawa 67's win 2-1

At the first intermission we met Kohyn's father, Kevin Eshkawogan (M'Chigeeng councillor).

At the second intermission Ottawa 67's staff took us to where the players leave the ice and the M'Chigeeng Youth Program got to bump the players fists on their way out to play the 3rd period.



After the game we meet in a lounge to meet **Kohyn Eshkawkogan** with other M'Chigeeng community members that also traveled to support the M'Chigeeng OHL defenceman. Kohyn had lots of healthy interaction with the youth and community, demonstrating the 7 grandfather teachings. We had an opportunity to meet Kohyn's mom, Melissa Biederman. Kevin gave the M'Chigeeng Youth Program signed OHL rookie cards of Kohyn.



The M'Chigeeng Youth Program got to meet Greg Jurchuk, a 67's fan known for carrying a large bell to hockey games. A group photo was taken with Kohyn, Kevin, Greg, councillor Jimmy Panamick (second from far right), M'Chigeeng Youth Program, and M'Chigeeng community members.



This incredible trip, culminating in an Ottawa 67's victory and the chance to meet a local role model, created lasting memories for all participants. The experience successfully fostered a sense of community pride and connection, while also providing valuable life lessons through sport.

The M'Chigeeng Youth Program extends a sincere thank you to all the M'Chigeeng staff, Ottawa 67's staff, Kohyn Eshkawkogan, Kohyn's parents (Kevin & Melissa), and community members who helped make this memorable and impactful trip possible. We look forward to more opportunities to support our local athletes and provide enriching experiences for our youth.

Staff Attendies on Ottawa trip:

Jenny Labranche, Partner in Parenting Program  
Kelly McIsaac, Community Connector Coordinator  
Margaret Eadie, Jordan's Principle Case Manager

Happy Holidays,  
Christian Kaiser-Fox  
Child & Youth Coordinator







## Post-Majority Support Services – Program Update

The Post-Majority Support Services (PMSS) program is a government claim-based initiative designed to support youth ages 12 to 26 who have had involvement with child services. Its purpose is to ensure that young people have the stability, resources, and opportunities they need as they transition into adulthood.

This support can include assistance with essential living expenses such as rent, utilities, food, and furniture, as well as educational tools (like laptops), social and emotional well-being, and activities that strengthen land-based, cultural, and community connections.

M'Chigeeng First Nation officially launched its Post-Majority Support Services program on October 1, 2025, following the transfer of files from Kina Gbezhgomi Child and Family Services. Since then, PMSS has been actively submitting claims to Indigenous Services Canada to help meet the needs of nine M'Chigeeng youth, ensuring they are supported in their daily living, personal interests, and long-term goals.

As the Supervisor working directly with these young people, it has been incredibly rewarding to witness their growth. Many have begun taking genuine pride in their lives and accomplishments — building confidence, exploring new interests, and discovering pathways they may not have previously imagined for themselves.

With their basic needs now securely supported, these youth finally have the space to focus on their dreams, curiosities, and personal goals. This is the heart of substantive equality: ensuring our youth not only survive, but are given the same opportunities to thrive, dream big, and pursue their full potential.

It has been a privilege to walk alongside them during this journey, and I look forward to continuing to support each of our community's youth as they transition into adulthood, build their futures, and strengthen their identities.

Miigwetch,  
Kelly Jackson  
Post-Majority Support Services Supervisor

## Sports & Recreation Support for M'Chigeeng Youth

M'Chigeeng Family Resources is excited to share that a Sports and Recreation Grant is now available to support children and youth ages 5–18 in staying active, engaged, and involved in the activities they love.

This funding can help cover a wide range of costs, including sports registration fees, gym memberships, and essential equipment for various recreational activities. The grant is available across both the 2025–2026 and 2026–2027 fiscal years, offering families extended flexibility and support.

Caregivers interested in applying can request the Sports and Recreation Application form by contacting Amber at [amberg@mchigeeng.ca](mailto:amberg@mchigeeng.ca).







Presented by:

## M'Chigeeng First Nation Family Resources and Partner in Parenting

At times all parents feel lost or without a clue about what our child might need from us. Imagine what it might feel like if you were able to make sense of what your child was really asking from you. The Circle of Security Parenting™ program is based on decades of research about how secure parent-child relationships can be supported and strengthened.

### Learning Objectives of the Program:

- *Understand your child's emotional world by learning to read the emotional needs*
- *Support your child's ability to successfully manage emotions*
- *Enhance the development of your child's self esteem*
- *Honor your innate wisdom and desire for your child to be secure*

Location: M'Chigeeng First Nation

Dates: New cohort beginning February, 2026

Cost: Free

**Who should attend:** Any caregiver is welcome to attend this program. The focus is on attachment and building strong connections within our relationships. We offer this program to all caregivers!

**How to register:** By email to [amberg@mchigeeng.ca](mailto:amberg@mchigeeng.ca) or by phone (text or call) 705-282-4751

You may also add your information to the waitlist provided and you will be contacted prior to the next group sessions.







## Community Health Nursing Update: Supporting Wellness Across All Ages

The Community Health Nurses at the M'Chigeeng Health Centre continue to expand programs and services that support the health and wellbeing of community members of all ages. From smoking cessation supports to immunization programs and child-focused services, our CHNs remain committed to helping families stay informed, protected, and empowered in their health journeys.

### **Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) Program**

For those looking to quit or reduce smoking, free Nicotine Replacement Therapy (NRT) is available through the Health Centre. Community members can book an appointment with one of our Community Health Nurses, Lee or Julie, to access supports such as:

- Nicotine patches
- Gum
- Lozenges
- Inhalers

In addition to NRT, one-on-one smoking cessation and reduction counselling is available to help individuals better understand their habits, set goals, and build a personalized plan for success. These supports are confidential and tailored to each person's needs.

### **6-Week Quit Smoking Program – Information Session**

If you're thinking about making quitting smoking your New Year's resolution, join us for an information session on:

- December 10, 2025
- 12pm–1pm
- MFN Health Centre Board Room

This session will provide:

- Guidance on what to expect in our upcoming six-week quit smoking program
- Helpful tools for quitting
- Space to share your ideas and shape the program
- **Lunch and a door prize draw**

This is a great first step for anyone wanting to explore their readiness to quit and access supportive community resources.

### **Youth Vaping Series – Coming in the New Year**

Recognizing the growing concerns around vaping among youth, the Community Health Nurses are partnering with the MFN Youth Program to deliver a special Youth Vaping Information Series in the new year.

These sessions will be created specifically for youth ages 10 and up and will focus on:

- The health effects of vaping
- Myths vs. facts
- How nicotine affects young bodies and minds
- How to make safe, informed decisions

More details will be shared soon—stay tuned!



### School-Based Immunization Program

The CHNs continue to support Lakeview School by offering **school-based immunizations** and reviewing all student records to ensure children and youth stay up to date. Families will be contacted if their child requires vaccines.

### Typical school-age immunizations include:

- **Ages 4–6:** MMRV, Tdap-IPV
- **Grade 7:** Hepatitis B, HPV-9, Meningococcal-ACYW
- **Age 14:** Tdap booster
- **Any missed childhood vaccines**

Under Ontario's **Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA)**, certain vaccines are required for school attendance. While some vaccines are optional, receiving them during eligibility under the province's publicly funded program is highly recommended, as there may be a cost later on.

If you're unsure whether your child is up to date, our Community Health Nurses are happy to help.

### Well-Baby & Well-Child Visits

Our Community Health Nurses continue to offer **Well-Baby and Well-Child (WBC)** visits at the Health Centre. These visits support families through early childhood milestones and include physical assessments, developmental check-ins, and vaccination updates.

We are excited to share that we now have a newly designed child-friendly room, complete with:

- **Astra**, our immunization helper
- A colourful **bandage binder** where kids can pick their favourite
- A **treasure chest** filled with toys and stickers

We collaborate closely with doctors, nurse practitioners, and pediatricians to ensure your child receives all recommended care within the community.



Additionally:

- Need a family doctor? We can help with rostering.
- Pregnant? **Prenatal classes and information** are available individually or in groups.

### Respiratory Virus Vaccine Season

As we move through respiratory illness season, you may be eligible for vaccines that help protect you and your family from serious illness:

- **COVID-19**
- **Influenza (Flu Shot)**
- **RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus)**

Book an appointment with a Community Health Nurse to determine your eligibility and receive your vaccines.





### Adult Vaccines

Adults—especially those **65 and older**—may also qualify for additional important vaccines, including:

- Pneumococcal-20
- Shingles (Herpes Zoster)

Don't forget:

**Tetanus boosters are recommended every 10 years.**

If you're unsure of your current vaccination status, our CHNs can review it with you and help keep your immunizations up to date.

### Our CHNs Are Here to Support You

Whether you're looking to quit smoking, protect your children with routine immunizations, learn more about vaping, or stay current with adult vaccines, the Community Health Nurses at the M'Chigeeng Health Centre are here to help.

For questions, bookings, or more information, please reach out anytime.

### Long Distance Medical Travel

First and foremost an application must be completed.

- Ideally you will need to be present to fill out the application, as there are questions that only you can answer ie: Status number, Date of Birth, Address, Telephone no., etc
- In support of the application you will must have documentation for your medical appointment.
- Your application is then sent to Non Insured Health Benefits, Thunder Bay Zone in Thunder Bay for Approval. Depending on the situation this may take some time for the approval.
- When the application is approved, then the administrative portion is initiated ie: payment to client for meals, mileage and sometimes accommodation (when the client has paid or their own room and the receipt is provided).
- You will be provided with a travel package with details of your appointment. The only requirement is that the "Appointment Slip" section 4 be signed or stamped by the doctor's office and returned to the Health Centre upon your return.

Facts to take into consideration:

- Are you driving yourself or do you have someone taking you (escort)
- Are you requesting a medical driver to take you. If so you must give the Health Centre at least 2 weeks notice.
- Please take into consideration that Communication is key as there is a process for any kind of medical transport.



## M'Chigeeng/Sudbury Christmas Shopping Trip

December 12th 2026



Departing the M'Chigeeng  
Complex @ 9:00AM  
Leaving Sudbury @ 4:00 PM

To Register and save your seat,  
Please Call the Ontario Works Program  
705-377-5362 Ext. 1222 / 1231



## M'Chigeeng Health Centre RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus) Vaccine Available

### Eligibility Criteria:

Infants born on or after April 1, 2025 and under 8 months of age up to the end of RSV season OR

Adults aged 60+ who have never received an RSV vaccine before  
(One-time vaccine — no boosters required)

To book an appointment, please call:  
705-377-5347 and ask to speak to Julie or Lee,  
Community Health Nurses

Protect our loved ones  
especially our youngest and our Elders.



## UCCMM Justice FASD Presents: Oranment Making Workshop

Join us in creating a beautiful beaded ornament for your Christmas Tree or come out to learn and share your knowledge about beading or FASD

This event is ideal for anyone wanting to enhance their knowledge of FASD or anyone who may be supporting an individual with FASD.

Saturday, December 6, 2025.  
10:00am - 4:00pm. M'Chigeeng  
Complex Center, Moon Room.  
Light Lunch & Snacks provided.

Registration max -  
Up to 15 Participants



Register with Zachary Corbiere  
UCCMM FASD Worker

E: fasd@uccmm.ca  
P: (705)-377-3009



## M'Chigeeng Health Centre COVID-19 Clinic

No Walk-Ins Accepted  
Appointments must  
be booked in advance.



To schedule your appointment, please  
call: 705-377-5347 and ask to speak to  
Julie or Lee, Community Health Nurses

Help keep our community safe —  
please plan ahead and book your time.











G I K K A H R C N B S N O W W  
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# AANII, BOOZHOO!

Centrally located on Manitoulin Island within the Great Lakes Region of Northern Ontario, Canada, the heart of the community is located within the bay surrounded by the North Channel of Lake Huron. The First Nation formerly known as West Bay, proudly changed the name of the community to M'Chigeeng (Pronounced Shi-geeng).

The second largest First Nation on Manitoulin Island was settled in the middle of the 19th century when many Anishinabek from the north shore area relocated. M'Chigeeng is now home to the Anishinabek of the Three Fires Confederacy: Odawa, Ojibway and the Pottawattomi Nations. The total Registered Population of M'Chigeeng First Nation is 2,543 – (Source: INAC)

## Our Vision Statement

“M'Chigeeng Anishinabek will be a vibrant, progressive, proud, united Ojibwe-speaking First Nation. Our people will be healthy, self-reliant, respectful of our obligations to Mother Earth, and culturally grounded, showing mutual respect and support for all people.”

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