

## **CONTACT INFORMATION**

### **& SITE LOCATIONS**

#### **Carol Buswa, Director of Services**

Tel: (807) 474 4379 Fax: (807) 622 1096

Toll Free: 1 800 465 5581

Email: [cbuswa@nanlegal.on.ca](mailto:cbuswa@nanlegal.on.ca)

#### **Zelda Watt, Assistant/Coordinator**

Tel: (807) 474 4376 Fax: (807) 622 1096

Toll Free: 1 800 465 5581

Email: [zwatt@nanlegal.on.ca](mailto:zwatt@nanlegal.on.ca)

#### **Thunder Bay & Area**

Tel: (807) 474 4375/4378 Fax: (807) 622 1096

Toll Free: 1 800 465 5581

#### **Sioux Lookout & Area**

Tel: 1 800 465 5581 Fax: (807) 622 1096

#### **Timmins & Area**

Tel: (705) 268 1105 Fax: (705) 268 5682

Toll Free: 1 877 268 0335

#### **James Bay & Area**

Tel: (705) 336 0714

Fax: (807) 622 1096



#### **Servicing Thunder Bay & Surround First Nations**

Aroland, Constance Lake, Eabametoong, Ginoogaming, Hornepayne, Long Lake #58, Marten Falls, Neskantaga, Nibinamik, Webequie, and Thunder Bay

#### **Servicing Sioux Lookout & Surrounding First Nations**

Bearskin Lake, Cat Lake, Deer Lake, Fort Severn, Kasabonika Lake, Keewaywin, Kingfisher Lake, Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug, Lac Seul, MacDowell Lake, Mishkeegogamang, Muskrat Dam, North Caribou Lake, North Spirit Lake, Pikangikum, Poplar Hill, Sachigo Lake, Sandy Lake, Slate Falls, Wapekeka, Wapekapewin, Wunnumin Lake and Sioux Lookout

#### **Servicing Timmins & Surrounding First Nations**

Beaverhouse, Brunswick House, Chapleau Cree, Chapleau Ojibway, Flying Post, Matachewan, Mattagami, Missanabic Cree, Taykwa Tagamou Nation, Wahgoshig, and Timmins

#### **Servicing James Bay & Surrounding First Nations**

Attawapiskat, Fort Albany, Kashechewan, MoCreebec Council of the Cree Nation, Moose Cree, Moose Factory, Weenusk, and Moosonee

## **Testimonials from Talking Together Circle Participants:**

“There is a feeling of safety in the circle, a place where we can share and be heard. After the circle, there is a positive feeling in the room.”

“Circle was helpful in returning the client’s children to her care and planning for success.”

“The format for this Talking Together circle was perfectly suited for this situation.”

“Circle strengthens the family unit. It helps break the cycle of family dysfunction and brings the family together.”

“The circle was great. Atmosphere was non-judgmental. Everyone was able to share openly and suggest solutions. No improvement needed. Thank you.”

# **TALKING TOGETHER PROGRAM**



## **NISHNAWBE-ASKI LEGAL SERVICES CORPORATION**

#### **Main Office**

Unit 100—1805 Arthur Street East

Thunder Bay, ON P7E 2R6

Tel: (807) 622 1413

Toll Free: 1 (800) 465 5581

Fax: (807) 622 1096

[www.nanlegal.on.ca](http://www.nanlegal.on.ca)

#### **Head Office:**

109 Mission Road

Fort William First Nation, ON P7J 1K7

## What is 'Talking Together'?

Talking Together is an innovative method of dispute resolution based on traditional circles held in First Nations and used since time immemorial to restore harmony between family members.

By bringing people together in a non-judgmental way, a plan will emerge which has the support of the community. This provides an alternative to the Court process (that frequently results in children being removed from their home community) and returns control to First Nations concerning the planning and protection of their children.

## Program Advantages

Talking Together recognizes the capacity of kin network to protect Aboriginal children and emphasizes the importance of cultural continuity in placements.

The process is a less intrusive method of dealing with family problems and protection issues, alleviating the need for the often costly and adversarial Family Law Court system.

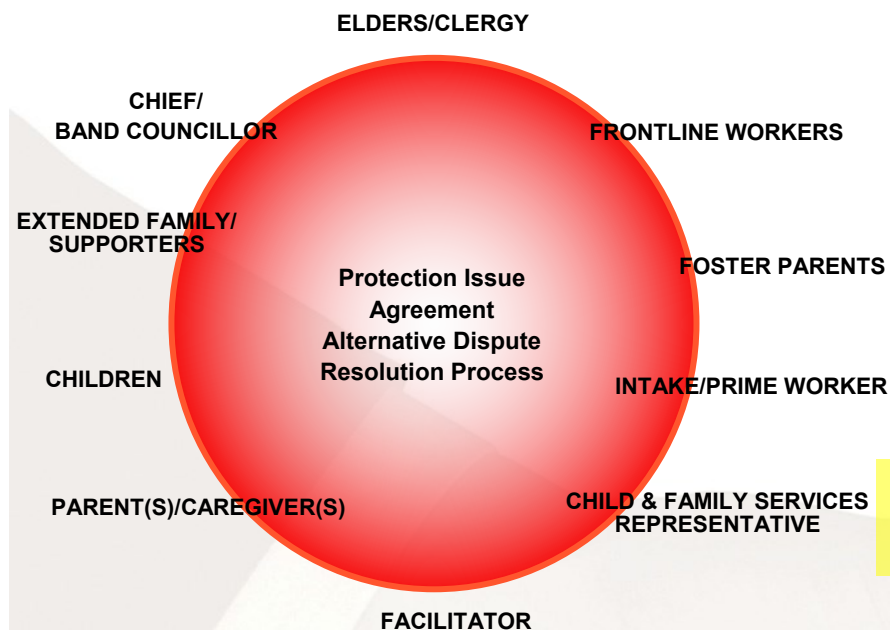
The participants and community work as a group to resolve issues toward healing.

The process looks at who has been affected and how they have been affected by the problems the family is experiencing; thus, provides an opportunity for participants to work together to repair the harm.



**"There is no doubt that the services offered by this program are of great assistance to everyone involved, particularly the children." - Bernard R. Gosselin, Barister and Solicitor**

# Talking Together Circle



## Alternative Dispute Resolution - Aboriginal Approach (Bill 210)

From the *Child & Family Services Act*, R.S.O 1990, CHAPTER C.11

### Resolution of issues by prescribed method of alternative dispute resolution

**20.2 (1)** If a child is or may be in need of protection under this Act, a society *shall* consider whether a prescribed method of alternative dispute resolution could assist in resolving any issue related to the child or a plan for the child's care. 2006, c. 5, s. 5.

### Where child is Indian or native person

(2) If the issue referred to in subsection (1) relates to a child who is an Indian or native person, the society *shall* consult with the child's band or native community to determine whether an alternative dispute resolution process established by that band or native community or another prescribed process will assist in resolving the issue. 2006, c. 5, s. 5.

### Children's Lawyer

(3) If a society or a person, including a child, who is receiving child welfare services proposes that a prescribed method of alternative dispute resolution be undertaken to assist in resolving an issue relating to a child or a plan for the child's care, the Children's Lawyer may provide legal representation to the child if in the opinion of the Children's Lawyer **such legal representation is appropriate.** 2006, c. 5, s. 5.

### Notice to band, native community

(4) If a society makes or receives a proposal that a prescribed method of alternative dispute resolution be undertaken under subsection (3) in a matter involving a child who is an Indian or native person, the society *shall* give the child's band or native community notice of the proposal. 2006, c. 5, s. 5.

(*SHALL* = indicates that something will or ought to happen in the future)

## The Circle Process

The Talking Together Circle is composed of family members, front line workers, agency representatives, community Elders and community representatives. The Circle looks at who has been affected and how they have been affected by the problems the family is experiencing.

Secondly, the Circle asks the participants, "What can be done?" If an agreement is reached it will be used as a basis for the Plan of Care and can be filed with the Court.

**"This program empowers families that are in crisis because it allows them to have a say in what the final solution will be."**

- Celina Reitberger, B.A., B.Ed., LL.B.

**KNOW YOUR RIGHTS:  
Aboriginal Child Protection Alternative  
Dispute Resolution is a RIGHT!**

