



ART START

CONVERSATION STARTER CARDS USING ART MODALITIES



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Expressive arts can be a useful way to create connection with families from diverse cultures. It can spark thoughtful discussion and can demonstrate different skills and strengths that individuals and families already possess. These cards are tools for family service providers to initiate conversation and discussion that will enhance and strengthen relationships with the families they serve.

Tips On Creating Safer Spaces



Acknowledge the contributions shared by families to the discussion, especially if they are different from your own perspectives or experience.



Remind participants that all perspectives and experiences are valid.



Indigenous artists were engaged in developing the images on some of the cards. Share the messages included in the cards to foster awareness & understanding of Indigenous perspectives.



Create time for reflection and emphasize the skills that participants have shared with the group.

Guidelines On How To Use The Cards

There are a variety of ways to use these cards. Each card belongs to an expressive art modality and a skill that relates to mental health and wellness. Each modality is introduced by an art card. Share the designs and the descriptions of these cards with participants. These cards can also be used as an additional tool to encourage discussion about the images.



Facilitators can select a modality to focus on, e.g., art & music and use the corresponding cards to facilitate discussion with families.



Facilitators can also focus on a skill, e.g., emotional & self-awareness and use the different expressive art modalities associated with the skill to initiate discussion.



LET'S START THE CONVERSATION!

About the Artists

 Babysnakes

Métis Artist & Facilitator |  babysnakeslu

This photo was taken at the Coquitlam River. The river has a meaningful connection to the artist being a place of peace.

 Christine M.

Indigenous Artist,
Facilitator & Keynote Speaker |  sneakynativeart

Food

The design shows salmon moving up the river to start the process of giving new life and important nutrition to the next generation. The Coquitlam River supports wildlife, plants and salmon year-round and has created a nourishing environment for them to grow. Salmon has such a deep tie to many cultures including how we eat them, gather them and celebrate with traditional dishes. We all have a connection to the land and to the food that comes from it. We need to remember that our actions affect the animals and plants in our community and of Turtle Island.



**Tell us about a dish/food that brings you
comfort when you're not feeling well.
Tell us about the last time you had that dish.**



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What recipe do you enjoy making for your family? Tell us about how you learned to make that dish and the last time you made it.



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Tell us about a time when you had a special meal with others. What made it special?






LET'S START THE CONVERSATION!

About the Artist

  Christine M.

Indigenous Artist,

Facilitator & Keynote Speaker |  sneakynativeart

Movement model Max is a young and upcoming Indigenous artist, who shares his happy light through movement of dance which is captured in this image.

Movement

The design is of an Eagle. Max is from the Eagle clan which is represented on all of his regalia. In Indigenous teachings, women (matriarch) are considered sacred because they are life givers. Values and traditions, including the connection to their clan animal, are passed down by mothers to the next generation. The graceful and intentional movement of an Eagle allows it to soar to incredible heights or to hunt for its prey in water and land. Max's connection to movement has a deep tie to his Indigenous culture.



When your child is feeling anxious or upset, what do you do to help them calm down?

When you're feeling upset or anxious, what movements or activities do you do to help yourself calm down?




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Tell us about a time when you learned a new activity / sport / skill. How did you feel before you started and afterwards? What made you try this new activity?




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A powwow is a celebration that brings the community together in Indigenous cultures, with dancing, singing and honoring traditions. What type of cultural celebrations do you and your family celebrate? How would you like to see these celebrations in the Tri-Cities?







LET'S START THE CONVERSATION!

About the Artists

 Merie Trapp
Métis Artist

This is her first drum and drumstick; both are made from Buffalo hide.

 Christine M.
Indigenous Artist,
Facilitator & Keynote Speaker |  [sneakynativeart](#)

Music & Art

The design shows deer antler rattles that are made with bear claws and a moose hoof hanging from the antler. They are arranged on top of red felt fabric and black bear hide. The wolf overlay was created by Christine M.

The Wolf is known for having family around them, working together to live and keep each other safe. This drum represents the heartbeat of the woman, Mother Earth. We are connected through culture. Every culture has music and traditions that we share through generations.



Share with us a song or music that lifts you up when you're feeling unmotivated. Tell us about a work of art that resonates with you and how that art makes you feel.





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About the Artists

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Métis Artist

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When you are feeling stressed, how do you use music or art to help you feel less stressed? How do you as a family use music or art to connect with each other?





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**What songs or music do you share with your child from your own childhood?
How do you think art plays a role in your child's development?**





LET'S START THE CONVERSATION!

About the Artists

 Liz Knox

Indigenous Artist & Author

Flower pounding or Tatakizome is an ancient Japanese technique of hammering plants to create patterns on fabric, transferring the natural dyes from flowers. Liz Knox uses flowers from her beautiful garden that also brings in some amazing wildlife, from bears, raccoons and deer to all sorts of birds.

 Christine M.

Indigenous Artist,
Facilitator & Keynote Speaker |  [sneakynativeart](#)

Nature & Outdoors

The design overlay is a Hummingbird. This is a reminder of a special moment when a hummingbird visited the flowers in Liz's peaceful garden. It was a beautiful moment of interaction between wildlife. In Indigenous teachings, the hummingbird has a connection to the community - whereby someone so tiny can make a massive impact on the lives around them.



**When you go out to play outside in nature,
how does your body feel?**



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Describe a time when you were uncertain about going outside to explore nature. What did you do to overcome that uncertainty?

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Tell us about an outdoor activity that you love doing with your family and why? Are there different activities that you enjoy doing in each of the four seasons?





LET'S START THE CONVERSATION!

Scents

Scents can bring up memories or feelings. Certain smells can help reduce stress and improve mood. Some scents can provide healing and can be powerful in reclaiming cultural traditions. Indigenous cultures burn different herbs, such as sage and sweetgrass as a traditional practice called “smudging” to cleanse the air and spirit.



**Share with us a scent that gives you
a feeling of contentment, peace, and safety.**

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Tell us about a time you walked into a place and were struck by a scent that brought fond memories. Did you pause and savor that moment and how it made you feel?

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**What is the scent you enjoy at home?
What do you feel when this scent
is present?**



LET'S START THE CONVERSATION!

Touch

Textures can evoke different feelings, such as comfort or stability. They can also help us ground ourselves to the present. Think of a smooth rock that fits into the palm of your hands — what feelings are evoked?



There are textures that give us calm or warmth like running water or a fuzzy blanket. What textures give you a sense of comfort?

LET'S START THE CONVERSATION!

Touch

Textures can evoke different feelings, such as comfort or stability. They can also help us ground ourselves to the present. Think of a smooth rock that fits into the palm of your hands — what feelings are evoked?



Remember something that gives you or your children comfort when they touch or hold. When you feel anxious, notice your hands and what you touch to ground you.

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What textures do you enjoy feeling in the community? Tell us if you have noticed textures that help calm your child(ren).



LET'S START THE CONVERSATION!

Favorite Imaginary Space

Safe and welcoming spaces can influence our moods, feelings and behaviours. Each of us has an idea of what a safe space feels like — it is a place where you can be your authentic self. The design on this card allows you to imagine what this space might be like for yourself.



Everyone has a perfect place in their imagination, such as the sea or forest. If you can imagine the most beautiful space in the world for you, what would it look like?

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Imagine your perfect space. Then ask yourself the following:

How does it smell?

How does it feel like?

What am I doing in that moment there?

How does that make me feel?

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Ask your family members to share their idea of their perfect space? Would you imagine visiting each other in your perfect places?