

Parents as Partners Conference

Workshop Session: A2, B2, C2

Room: 200B

Honouring the Sacred Lodge Within: Holism through an Indigenous Lens Aboriginal Community Advisory Committee (ACAC)

This session is dedicated to enhancing participants' knowledge in Indigenous Ways of Knowing/Being specifically related to the self. In today's society, adolescents/youth struggle with self-identity. Indigenous perspectives in today's context are an infusion of both traditional and contemporary philosophies that are guided by the Medicine Wheel Modality. The Life Cycle Teachings provides insight to the significances of Self-Identity. Through this insight, practical approaches can be applied in the classroom to empower our youth. Participants will learn indigenous perspectives to holism guided by the Medicine Wheel Modality. Participants will learn the significance of the "Sacred Lodge Within" while applying simple self-balancing tools. Participants will engage in a group dialogue on acceptable/best practices to incorporating Indigenous learning perspectives and activities in the classroom.

EJ Kwandibens

Member of the Loon Clan

EJ Kwandibens is a member of the Loon Clan and is of Ojibway descent originating from Whitesand First Nation community located 20+ hours north of Toronto. Currently he resides in Toronto. He is a northern style traditional and grass dancer for approximately 35 years. He has designed and constructed Aboriginal traditional apparel for approximately 30+ years as a self-taught Artist mentored by his mother Elsie Kwandibens and other northern woodland Ojibway elders. EJ Kwandibens has travelled across North America learning and attending traditional ceremonies since he was eight years old. His traditional Elders and mentors have provided him a strong foundation of his knowledge which has been influential in his personal and professional life. EJ Kwandibens is an Aboriginal 2 Spirited single parent who raised his 18 year old daughter. He has attained 25+ years of social work experience working in all streams which include education, child welfare, social services, mental health, corrections and the judicial system. EJ also held the position of Board Chair for the 2 Spirits organization in Toronto for five years. He has coordinated small to large productions including the 2 Spirits Pride Toronto float for 5 years to coordinating and choreography for World Pride 2014 opening ceremonies. As an Indigenous cultural educator for 10+ years, he has provided educational presentations to many TDSB schools and organizations throughout the GTA and the Province of Ontario. EJ currently works as a Culture & Traditions Instructor for Eastview Public School in Scarborough.