

# Learn With LOUIS



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## Métis Cultural Connections

OUR DISTINCT MÉTIS CULTURE DEFINES US AS ONE OF THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF BRITISH COLUMBIA. MAKE CONNECTIONS TO YOUR MÉTIS CULTURE, AND LEARN WHAT MAKES US UNIQUE.

**THE RED RIVER CART** — The Métis adapted European technology to design the Red River Cart, the perfect land transport vehicle for the plains. The Red River Cart was made entirely of wood and bound together with rawhide; it could easily be repaired with materials that were readily available from the surrounding natural environment. The wooden wheels were large with broad, dish-shaped rims that did not cut into the ground. Attached over the axle was a box which carried supplies, and the harness was made of buffalo hide. The Red River Cart could carry a load of up to 450 kilograms and was usually pulled by a team of oxen. Many carts would travel single file on well-established cart trails. The carts could be transformed to cross rivers by removing the wheels, attaching them under the box and wrapping the cart in waterproof buffalo hides to float the cart like a raft.

The Red River Cart was vital to the commerce of the Métis people and was used to transport trade goods, buffalo hides, meat and pemmican. They serviced Métis communities which were established along the main trade routes. The Métis created an extensive network of cart trails across western Canada many of which later became major highways. Today the Métis Red River Cart is a symbol of Métis culture and represents just one of the many unique innovations that Métis people have contributed to the development of Canada.

# Buffalo Bulletin

MÉTIS TRADITIONAL LIFE WAYS CONNECT US TO THE LAND AND OUR ANCESTORS, AND TRANSMITS KNOWLEDGE TO OUR CHILDREN. LEARN TO ACKNOWLEDGE, HARVEST, GATHER, AND SHARE NATURAL RESOURCES.

Métis families pass along their histories, memories, and genealogies through many mediums, but the most critical one is our Oral Tradition. Our Elders hold so much knowledge of our history as a people, but also hold stories about our homeland, our communities, legends, spirituality, creation and myths.

Stories passed down from our Elders are open for interpretation, and the same story told to one generation may have an entirely different meaning to the generation that comes after it. That is one reason why it is imperative for our culture to continue to respect and listen to our Elders wisdom – the stories hold multiple meanings!

Oftentimes our stories – like other Indigenous People – are told as “trickster” stories where the central character is a shapeshifting being that moves between the physical and spiritual realm, often taking human form or the form of an animal that is well-known to the community. A couple of examples are the *roogaroo* or *li Jiyaab*.

Our Oral Traditions were vital to our survival on the land as well. Elders would hold the knowledge of where food was located within the area our ancestors were living. Our Elders would pass along locations of where fresh berries were growing, where root vegetables were sprouting up, where it was best to catch fish and where we could find traditional medicine on the prairie or in the woods. Of course, Elders held vital knowledge of the bison as well, imparting wisdom and lore about the animal that fed and clothed our people for so many generations.

The telling of our intergenerational stories is sacred. There is a purpose to the telling of each story at a specific time, place, and season. When you listen to a story being told by an Elder, hold on to it, and be sure to ask permission before re-telling the story, it is disrespectful to re-tell it without permission.



## Louis' Kids Club

MÉTIS CHILDREN WILL LEARN ABOUT THEIR CULTURE AND THE WORLD AROUND THEM WITH A FUN ACTIVITY. FAMILIES WILL HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO CREATE, CONNECT AND SHARE TIME TOGETHER.

Weaving is an important part of Métis culture. The Métis Sash is woven from several colours that each represent a part of Métis culture and history. Prior to the use of yarn or wool, weaving was done with natural plant fibers. Weaving can be done using a variety of items you find around the house. You can weave grass, branches, ribbon, string, yarn, or even an old t-shirt. Weaving with different textures helps create a sensory experience.

Try and see how many items you can re-use and recycle around the house into your weaving project? Included below are three video links that show different ways to weave with your children at home the three types include: simple cardboard frame, medium stick frame and complex picture frame. Share your results with us, by emailing a picture to [metisearlyyears@mnbc.ca](mailto:metisearlyyears@mnbc.ca)

### VIDEOS TO CHECK OUT:

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i\\_nF XuUjB0cr](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i_nF XuUjB0cr)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QW2zwr6txdo>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YCK8ULKiTsA>

# Daily Physical Activity

CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WILL LEARN PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES FOR HEALTHY GROWTH AT EVERY AGE. THE ACTIVITIES WILL INCLUDE MÉTIS TRADITIONAL PRACTICES, OUTDOOR PLAY AND MUCH MORE.

Lifelong active habits are established in early childhood (although it is never too late to become active!) Métis children who live active lives are more likely to maintain a healthy weight, to do better in school, to make healthier choices as teenagers and to become healthier, more active adults with less likelihood of developing chronic diseases in later life.

A key factor in encouraging our children to be active is to keep active ourselves. Our children need to see us incorporating activity into our lifestyles in a natural and fun way. Active transportation is an easy way to integrate fitness into our everyday lives. To get where you need to go (school, the store, the bus stop), choose to walk, bike, skateboard, rollerblade, jog or even snowshoe! You could bike with an older child

skateboarding alongside you and a preschooler in a bicycle trailer, it doesn't have to be the same mode of transportation for everyone to have fun together! Even very young children will benefit from riding in a stroller with brief periods of toddling alongside as they learn that being active is a fun part of family togetherness.

A hike in the woods enjoying the beauty that autumn brings can be a wonderful way to spend quality active time together as a family while letting go of the stressors of the week and allowing nature to soothe your senses. Make it even more interesting by seeing how many plants you each can identify.

Enjoy quality family time through active togetherness.



## What's your name, where you from?

SHARE YOUR FAMILY'S CONNECTION AND JOURNEY WITH THE MÉTIS NATION COMMUNITY. TELL YOUR STORY AND HAVE YOUR FAMILY FEATURED IN THE NEXT EDITION OF *LEARN WITH LOUIS*. SUBMIT YOUR STORY TO: [MÉTISEARLYYEARS@MNBC.CA](mailto:MÉTISEARLYYEARS@MNBC.CA)

### THE BOUCHER FAMILY

We are a happy family of 4 unique individuals! 3 Métis and one Swede. My name is Lloyd Boucher, my wife Michaela, our twin 6-year-old girls Aela and Feena and our 11 chickens make up our happy family. We have a long, proud Métis history in our family, going all the way back to one of the original members of the many Métis families relocated from Drummond Island to the town of Penetanguishene in 1828 when the USA deemed the island was in their territory. Jean Baptiste Boucher and his family along with 75 other families were relocated and given land in the township of Tiny off Penetanguishene Bay.

The fur trade became my family's calling, which led to my ancestral routes spreading all the way to the northern Alberta Cree First Nations from Lesser Slave lake. The fur trade remained active in my family, even when I was a boy, I remember hunting wolves, fox and raccoon with my father, processing the fur, getting them ready for sale. Hunting, fishing, and harvesting from the land has always been my heritage, and we continue those traditions today! I lived in Penetanguishene until my mid 20's when I moved to the Lower Mainland B.C. seeking work. But even still, while living in North Delta I kept a family of chickens, who are providing me with eggs in return for food and shelter.

Small town living was always calling me home so when I was fortunate enough to meet a wonderful woman of like mind we were married and moved to a small town in interior B.C., where we set up our new homestead and started a family. It has been 7 years now since reconnecting with small town living and our Métis heritage. We are back to growing our own vegetables, hunting, fishing and gathering food. The greatest part of it all is teaching our children our heritage and traditions so they can one day pass it down to their children.

# The Learning Journey

THE WAYS THAT CHILDREN CAN LEARN INCLUDE: VISUAL, AUDITORY, EXPERIENTIAL, READING AND WRITING. WE INCLUDED SOME EXAMPLES OF HOW THESE DISTINCT LEARNING METHODS CAN BE USED DURING A TRIP TO THE GROCERY STORE. CHOOSE A RECIPE OUT OF THE MÉTIS COOKBOOK AND EXPERIENCE THESE LEARNING METHODS AS A FAMILY.

Puppets are an effective way of teaching children from birth through preschool and primary school age. They are engaging and fun for both teachers and learners and focus on play-based learning. Puppets can be used to develop oral language skills through storytelling and puppet plays. Literacy can be taught by incorporating puppets into emergent reading for beginners, as well as shared and independent reading. They support social and emotional learning by providing children with a way to express their feelings through the puppet. Puppets aid in developing essential life skills by focusing the child's attention and providing a role model.

Puppets are versatile. They can be hand puppets, stick puppets or fabric and paper finger puppets. Children can construct their own puppets and they can be adapted to the lesson you are teaching or the book you are reading. They also make a fun art project!

For further reading, follow the link to the © TEACH Magazine Reading and Literacy article, Puppets Talk, Children Listen by Christie Belfiore.

<https://teachmag.com/archives/5618>



**CREATE YOUR OWN UNIQUE PUPPETS!** Make finger puppets or stick puppets with whatever craft supplies you have available. Here are some suggested materials and YouTube videos for some ideas on how to construct your puppets.

**SUGGESTED MATERIALS:** paper, felt, fabric, markers, glue, tape, sticks, ribbon, beads, yarn.

How to Make Felt Finger Puppets – Lia Griffith Craftshop

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=58UvGkH8URY>

How to make Finger Puppets | Papercraft for kids – Learning Crave

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HXGtL2duhk>

All puppets were inspired by Métis Early Years Louis and Métis author Leah Dorion's books Métis Camp Circle: A Bison Culture Way of Life and The Giving Tree: A Retelling of a Traditional Métis Story.

# Michif with Maddy the Magpie

THE NATIONAL MÉTIS LANGUAGE IS MICHIF, A DISTINCT LANGUAGE DEVELOPED FROM FRENCH, CREE AND OTHER FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGES. HAVE FUN LEARNING MICHIF WITH MADDY THE MAGPIE.

Michif is the national Métis language. It is a unique language that developed in the Red River valley in the early 1800s and has features of French, Cree and other First Nations languages. Maddy the Magpie would like to share some words in Michif with you! To find out how to say Maddy's words go to [http://www.metismuseum.ca/michif\\_dictionary.php](http://www.metismuseum.ca/michif_dictionary.php) or download the App "Heritage Michif to Go" on iTunes or google play.

**Story:** aen nistwayr

**Puppet:** enn katayn avik lii kord

**Hike:** pamohtaywin

# The Canada Learning Bond

THE CANADA LEARNING BOND IS A FREE OPTION FOR MANY FAMILIES TO SAVE FOR THEIR CHILD'S POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION. LEARN ABOUT THE CLB AND OTHER WAYS TO SAVE FOR THE FUTURE.

**WHAT IS AN EDUCATION SAVINGS GRANT?** These are grants offered by the Canadian Government and are deposited into a Registered Education Savings Plan or RESP. An RESP is a way to help you invest in your child's future and save for post-secondary education. RESP's can be opened at a financial institution like banks. RESP's can also be opened with scholarship plan dealers which are set up differently and have different rules.

The financial institutions we have partnered up with offer no fees when opening up an RESP and applying for the Canada Learning Bond. This grant of up to \$2000 is free and should be offered at no cost. It is important to ask some of the questions below at your financial institution or RESP provider. If you are only applying for the Canada Learning Bond, the questions regarding payments would not apply. These are only if you decide to contribute now or in the future.

## QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN OPENING AN RESP

- Do I have to pay fees for opening an RESP?
- Do I have to make regular payments?
- What happens if I cannot make regular payments?
- What will happen if my child does not continue their education after high school?
- What happens if I close my RESP early?
- Can I transfer the RESP to another person, or to another RESP provider?

## FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:

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