



Canada Learning Bond  
Research Report

What is the Canada Learning Bond?

Details:

We wanted to learn more about the Canada Learning Bond, and we knew that our most effective learning style is through group interaction. Our presentation about the Canada learning bond was presented by Danielle Lefthand whom had researched information regarding what the CLB has to offer and why they benefit low income families interested in post-secondary education. October 24 was the date we hosted the CLB workshop, approximately 6 people had attended the workshop. The workshop started from 12:30 pm and continued until 3:30pm and was held at the Council Chambers located within the Stoney Nakoda Band Office at Morley, Alberta. We chose the Council chambers because of its activity with its community. A local business, Gail's Delightful Creations also provided lunch to members who attended the workshop, and as a means to attract people to stay and learn.

Findings:

As a participant, I learned that the Canada Learning Bond is a good opportunity for parents with children who think they may want them to go to college or university, but there are some barriers that you might face in getting one, and some reasons people might choose not to get one too.

Here are some specific things we learned about the uptake for the Canada Learning Bond in Morley, based on the facilitators research, conversations between her and the participants:

- Some parents are resistant to post-secondary education

Some parents recognize that in order to attain post-secondary education, their child will have to leave Morley. They have fears about the world outside of the reserve related to violence, drugs and alcohol, cultural loss, and racism. They cannot identify benefits of living off reserve, or benefits of post-secondary education. In Morley, employment is not related to education, rather it's determined by kinship.

- Some parents are resistant to education in general

Some Parents Still has a strong connection within traditional Nakoda values; they believe living with these values is far more important for their child than pursuing a higher education. They haven't had the greatest relationships with the education systems locally; there is antagonism between the school Boards (which are run by non-Indigenous people, and which the community has no input in) and the community. These negative relationships don't help parents envision postsecondary for their children.

- Some parents face logistical barriers to getting a CLB

The CLB requires some things like proper ID, a SIN number, and access to a bank. A big majority of the community is dependent on low-income support and most rely on rides from family members, this makes it harder to get all these things. For example, a young parent will rely on their parents for transportation. Many people's main focus is survival, they don't have means to get access to these things, until they desperately need them. In Morley a lot of parents are really young, and don't have a full education themselves, they rely on their parents for help to understand the works, and with things like getting ID. Even housing is a barrier, because there is not enough housing in Morley, people drift and don't have safe places to keep important documents. Things get lost easily in this way.

- Some parents just don't know about it

No one who came to the workshop knew about the CLB. When we had conversations with other people around the community about what we learned after the workshop, none of them knew about it either. In general, it is hard to get information around our community, as there are few reliable sources that everyone has access too and trusts. Misinformation gets spread easily.

- Some parents might have trouble understanding the current information sources about CLB

It had not occurred to the workshop participants that there might be funding sources like the CLB, and they were not told about it by anyone else before. If people were looking for information about the CLB, they might not know where to look. Most people access the internet through phones, and they don't have access to computers, which is an easier way for them to read websites. Some people don't have internet because they can't afford the monthly bills, they are not used to expenses like internet because in Morley people don't have to pay rent or utilities.

- Some parents don't have good relationships with banks or credit unions

There are no banks on any of the Nakoda reserves, so having access to one depends on having a working car (with driver's license, insurance, and registration, which many members don't have). As many people live below the poverty line in Morley and depend on social assistance

and other low income supports, banks don't show much interest in their business. Banking is a concept that has been introduced to our community within the last (approximately) 100 years, and many Nakoda seem to use banks differently than non-Indigenous people. Many members don't bother with bank accounts, since banks hold checks, generate fees that pile up, and have costs associated with all transactions. Many people prefer to cash their cheques at other locations where there is immediate pay, and all costs are up front. Some members start bank accounts and are forced to abandon them if they don't have regular income because they can't pay the fees.



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What is Nakoda Art?

Details:

The Nakoda AV Club is interested to learn more about what an art practice that specifically, Nakoda culture might look like. We knew that our most effective learning style is through group interaction, so we hosted a workshop to enhance our abilities. The workshop took place on the 12 & 13 of November. We booked presentations by Rolland Rollingmud, Tasina Pope, Teresa Snow and Bradley Twoyoungmen, who were chosen for their knowledge about Nakoda culture and community, and their active participation in the arts 12 people attended on the first day of the workshop, when Rolland and Tasina presented. For the second day we had Teresa and Bradley present, and 8 people attended. One both days, other people from the community stopped in to listen as they could. Each facilitator had a morning or afternoon presentation, with questions and conversation after. We were able to verify some of the information from the earlier presentations by asking latter presenters about it.

Both workshops started at 9:30am and ended at 3:30 pm to fit the time of the buildings business hours. Our workshop was hosted at the Council Chambers inside the Band Office. The Council Chambers was accessible for Band Members to utilize, as it is central, has access to public bathrooms, and has enough space for attendees. It is also a main gathering space where community members are active. For both days of the workshop lunch was served and provided to us by a local catering business called Gail Delightful Creations, serving lunch brought a sense of home and was a way everyone connected informally, by telling stories while enjoying a hot meal with each other.

## Findings:

### Rolland Rollingmud

Artistic Practice: Realism, painting & drawing

Rolland is a well-regarded Nakoda artist who mostly paints beings in their relations. Sometimes he paints people and other beings today; sometimes he paints about the past. He told us that his practice was built through mentorship, and that he really pays attention to the business and community opportunities in art.

### Tasina Pope

Artistic Practice: surrealism, abstraction, painting, sculpture, jewelry, community building

Tasina is a determined person with strong values and a lot to share, her presentation was exuberant, and she was very energizing. She shared that her arts practice is deeply connected to healing. She also spoke a lot about kinship and that designs are family clan owned and told us about the protocol for getting designs and patterns.

### Theresa Snow

Artistic Practice: beadwork & regalia making, design, work with beads and hides

Theresa had a strong understanding about traditional history, sharing her stories gave the group great inspiration and a better understanding on how to create traditional crafts the right way. She shared a lot about materials, as well as her design knowledge.

### Bradley Twoyoungmen

Artistic Practice:

Bradley told us about his post-secondary experience: he tried ACAD, but he felt that it didn't fit his interest and he struggled to live off reserve. He shared that postsecondary wasn't productive to his arts practice or professional outlook. Bradley does a lot of design work for the nation, and he shared a lot with us about how he finds inspiration. His work isn't what he calls "traditional" it's modern, but he puts his tradition into his modern works.

Here's what we learned about Nakoda Arts:

- Copyright is different

In Nakoda culture design and color ownership is held and passed on under different conditions than in western culture. We were encouraged to bring our designs to Elders to ensure we weren't infringing on others design rights. However, not every Elder knows about who owns what design, this suggests that an arts practice happens in communication/relation with many Elders. This is an expensive undertaking (in time and exchange currency) and this impacts the artist.

- It's always about story

The main aspect of Nakoda art is that it is a style of storytelling, and this is an ancient tradition from deep in our cultural past. All the artist presenters talk about this. A Nakoda arts practice tells a story, that could be a persona story or something much bigger. Many people know, or have access to tell, stories of certain things, and these will come up over and over in that person's art practice.

- It can take place in any medium

Some people assume that Indigenous art has to look a certain way, but any type of art could be Nakoda if it comes from a Nakoda person. We will always weave what it means to be Nakoda into our practice no matter what our medium. Humans have always traveled and exchanged ideas, and so some of our new styles are informed by our connections (for example, our treaties with neighbors) and our history (for example colonization), our work reflects our world. Dressmaking, beading, music, painting, illustration, anything can be Nakoda art.

- It has a color pallet that is commonly understood, artists also choose color for personal meaning

We learned that there are four main colors in the Nakoda pallet, blue, white, red, and yellow; we noted that these are like the primary colors, but with white too.

Important colors for your work could be given to you in dreams or ceremonies, then you'll know those are important for you to use in your work. Some artists mix color traditions from western culture, such as birthstones, and symbolism, with color traditions from Nakoda that they learned from Elders. Colors might also match your personality, Rolland says he likes vivid colors because that's how he feels.

- There are some important symbols

Historically, since we used porcupine needles, our art used a lot of geometric patterns. We also have certain symbols that have special meaning. For example, the turtle is a woman's animal, hoof prints represent horses and travel, and stars have important meanings and representations. Triangles are important as well, because they represent the mountains which have always been our homes. Common symbols for Nakoda people are the eagle, bear, mountain goat, and bison. But many symbols are family owned.

- It's not gendered (anyone can bead, or make regalia)

For Nakoda, there was no gender binary, there were a bunch of genders, or differences in people. Colonization brought the gender binary to the Nakoda people, and some people believe in it today, but some don't. In the past people could do different things, as long as they had the training and the skill, and so it didn't matter what type (gender) of person you were, just that you were trained. Today still, many people who are men bead, and anyone can make regalia. The things you're allowed to do are more about your training than your personal traits.