



For Immediate Release

August 5, 2016

Free museum programs about traditional Indigenous medicine for ages 6-12

(KINGSTON, ON) – This August, the Museum of Health Care is offering families a hands-on introduction to traditional medicine of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe. On Saturday, August 6th and Saturday, August 13th, children ages 6-12 and accompanying adults are invited to participate in a free workshop which will include an exploration of holistic health, the Medicine Wheel, and the Four Sacred Medicines. Each session will also feature a guest speaker. Pre-registration is required as spaces are limited.

In response to popular demand and in recognition of the impact of Indigenous knowledge on historic and contemporary medicine, this free workshop explores the diversity of First Nations cultures, understandings of health, and local history. “We approached the development of this program with the desire to learn from local knowledge keepers and to raise awareness about traditional medicine significant to the Kingston area,” says Program Director Jenny Stepa. “Traditional medicine is practiced by many today. One recent example was the July opening of the Indigenous all nations healing room at the Kingston General Hospital.”

“Local Medicine People, Elders, and other community members have provided guidance and support during the creation of this program,” says Public Programs Coordinator Shaelagh Cull. “One of the really unique aspects of the workshops this summer is the guest speakers from the community,” she adds.

“As a summer student, developing this program was a great learning experience for me and I’m looking forward to sharing what we’ve learned,” says Public Programs Assistant Anne Dilworth. “Families will have the chance to discuss sweetgrass, cedar, tobacco, and sage plants, which were kindly provided by Queen’s University’s Aboriginal Teacher Education Program from their Sacred Medicine Garden.”

The free workshops are part of a larger project funded by the Community Foundation for Kingston & Area, the Michelle Skolnick Smart & Caring Fund, the Gordon F. Tompkins Funeral Home Children's Endowment Fund and the Smart & Caring Community Fund to develop an education program for grade 5 students. “We are fine-tuning the activities at these summer pilot programs and will launch the education program this September,” says Stepa. “It will be available for group bookings year-round and we hope it will serve as a useful introduction to an immense topic. It has been a journey for us to gain more understanding about traditional medicine and it won’t end with the program’s launch.”

To attend a free summer family program session, call 613-548-2419, email info@museumofhealthcare.ca, or register online at www.museumofhealthcare.ca.

Location: Museum of Health Care, Ann Baillie Building National Historic Site, 32 George Street, Kingston, ON

Dates & Times: Saturday, August 6 OR Saturday, August 13 from 10 am to noon.

Cost: Free

For more information, contact: Jenny Stepa
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