

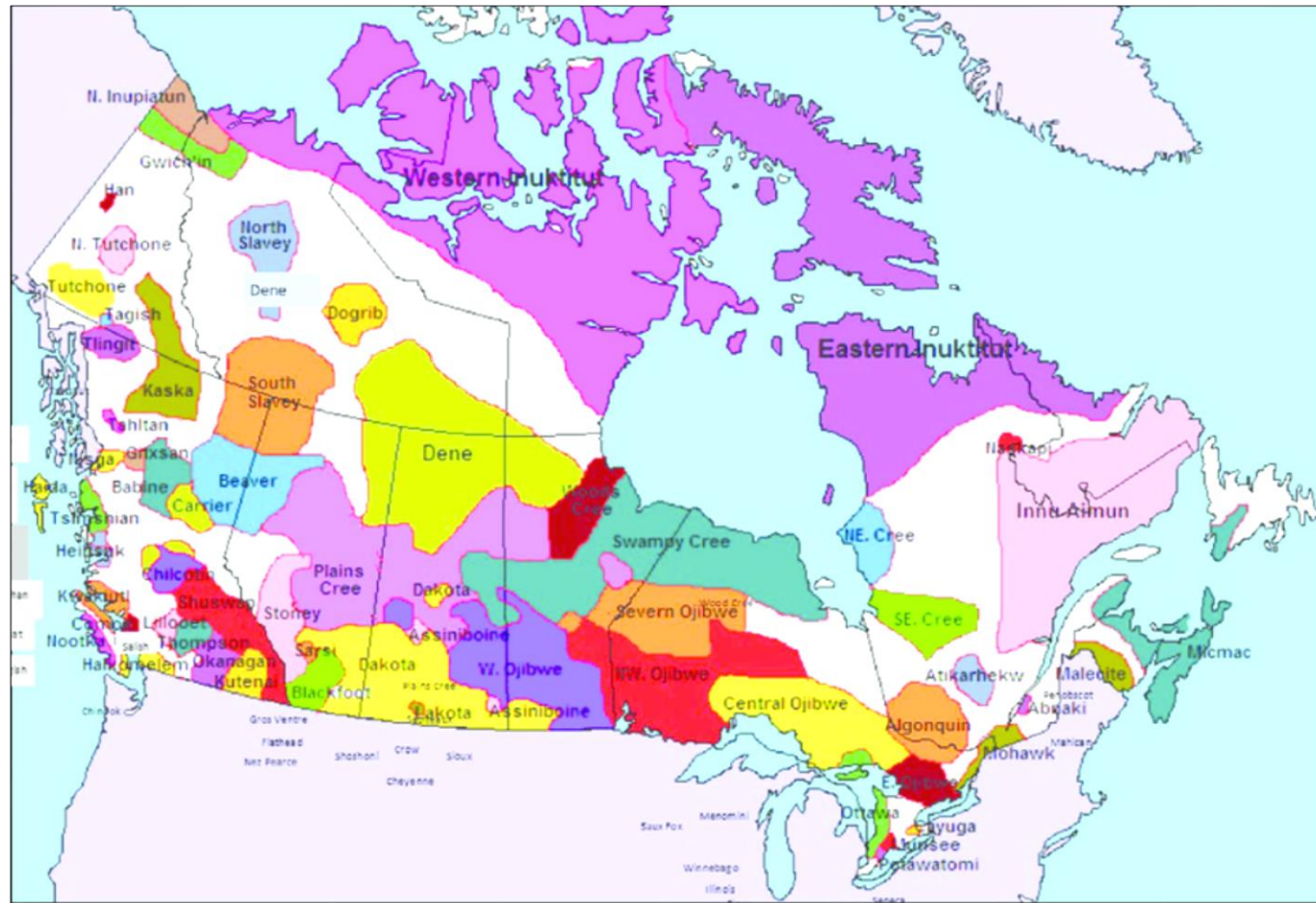
Supporting Indigenous Languages in an Early Book Gifting Program



- ❑ Read to Me is a hospital-based early literacy program.
- ❑ We provide **FREE** books and reading resources to the family of every baby born in Nova Scotia.
- ❑ The bag is delivered to parents at the hospital bedside within 24 hours of the birth of their baby.



Collectively, First Nations, Inuit and Métis constitute Canada's Indigenous Peoples

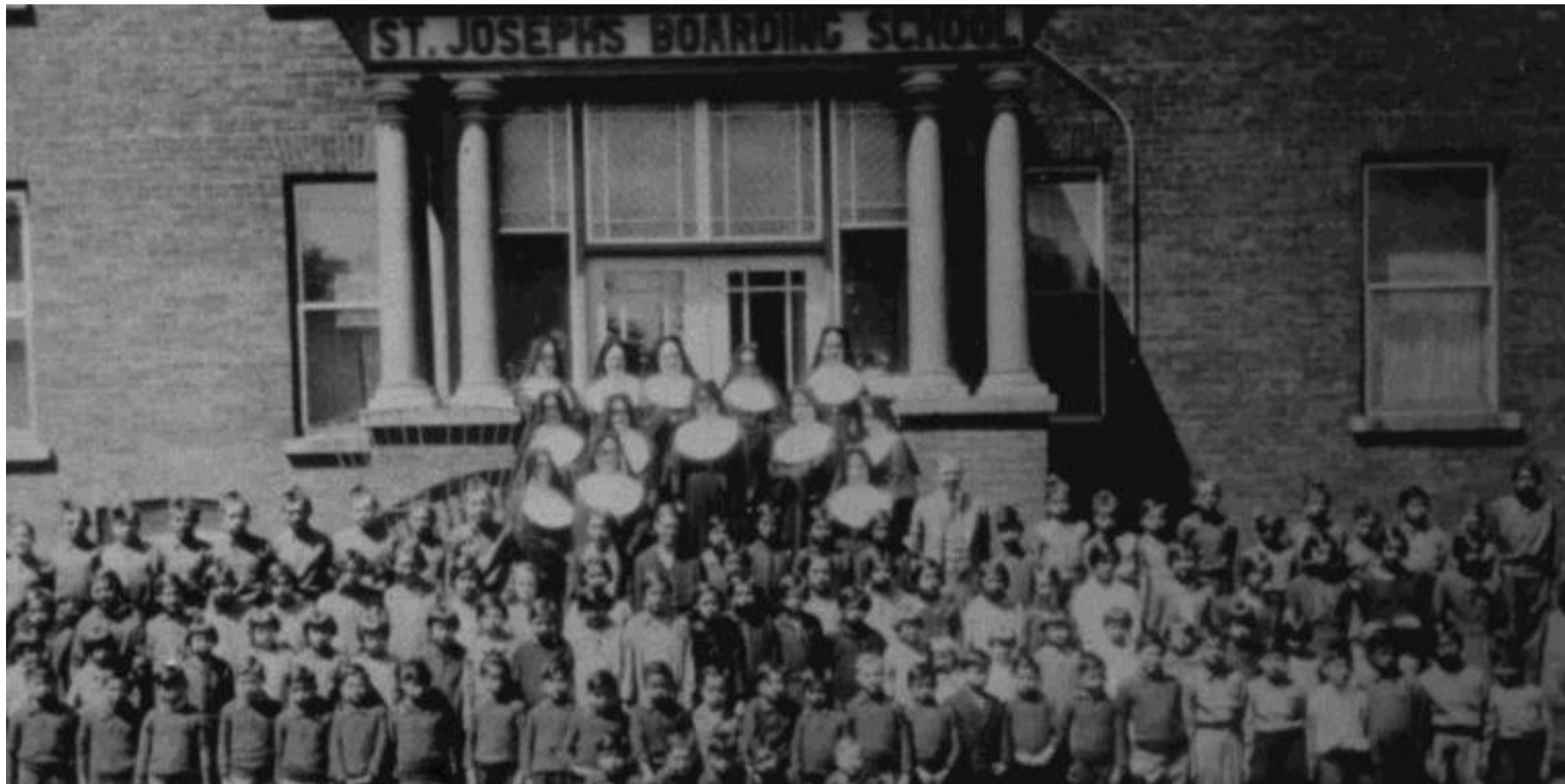


Canadian Demographic Information

- ❑ **CANADA - 36.5 million population**
1.5 million Aboriginal Canadians
- ❑ **NOVA SCOTIA - 950,000 population**
34,000 Mi'kmaq
Only 4,000 Mi'kmaq speakers (Statistics Canada 2016 Census)
- ❑ **Over 70 unique Indigenous languages** are spoken in Canada

Endangered and Vulnerable Indigenous Languages

Under UNESCO's endangered languages criteria, **more than two-thirds of the more than 70 Indigenous languages still spoken in Canada are endangered,** and the rest are vulnerable.



Indigenous languages began dying off during the period of the Residential School system in the 19th century.

The Canadian government had a policy of removing Aboriginal children from their families to be taught at church-run, government-funded Residential Schools.

For over a century over 150,000 Aboriginal children were removed from their families and sent to Residential Schools.



Indigenous children were punished for speaking their mother tongue.

As a result, generations of First Nation's children lost their language, culture and connections to home and family.

Indigenous Languages Act

In 2019, the Canadian Government tabled the **Indigenous Languages Act**, which seeks to **protect and revitalize** Indigenous languages in Canada



Read To Me!

Nova Scotia's Early Reading Promotion Program.



The Read to Me bag is delivered at 10 hospitals across Nova Scotia



Nova Scotia has 13 Mi'kmaq First Nations Communities

“The earliest introduction of our language to our children is the most precious gift we can give to them.

It is they who are the continuation of our culture and the carriers of Mi'kmaw after we are no longer.”

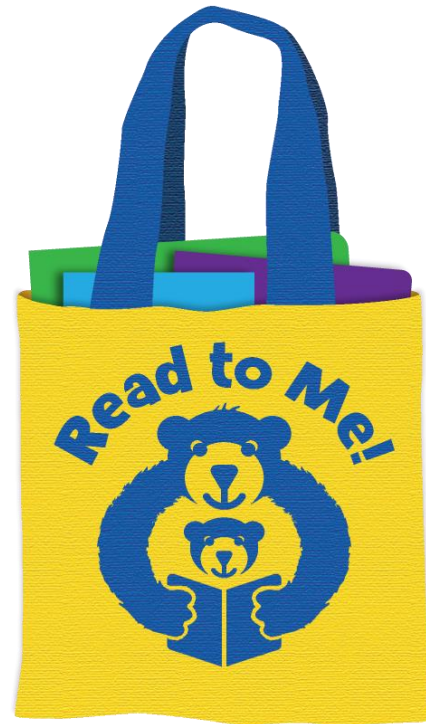
*-Dr. Bernie Francis, Mi'kmaq Elder
and Mi'kmaq linguist*



Read to Me gives Mi'kmaq families a free bag of Mi'kmaq baby books and reading resources at the hospital bedside, hours after the birth of their baby.



Resources in the Read to Me Mi'kmaq Bag



Mi'kmaq Music and Rhyme CD

Many new parents do not read or speak the Mi'kmaq language.

Elders encouraged Read to Me to include a CD of songs and rhymes so that parents and babies can hear the language spoken.



Etlatesinn

Kisi-kiwa'sk-wi'kik aq | Kisi-ntuatk Dr. Bernie Francis

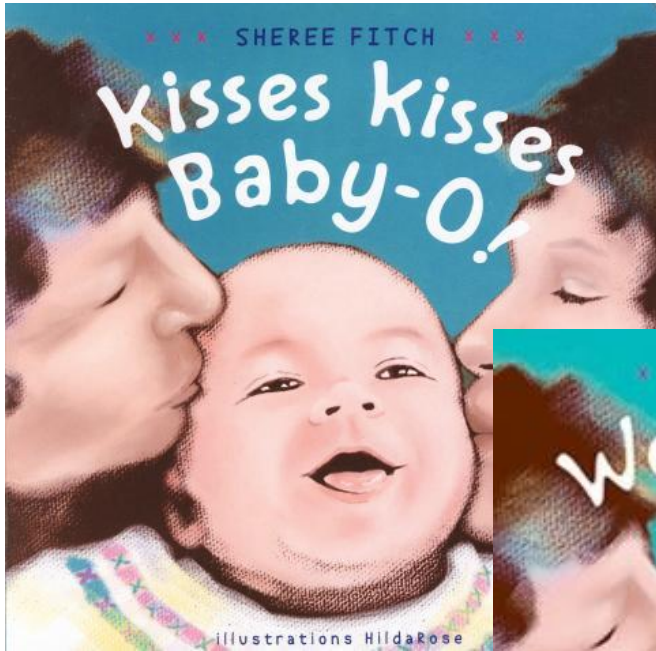
Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star

*Translated and Sung by
Dr. Bernie Francis*

Etlatesinn ki'l kloqoe'ji'
Kitu'-kjju'l ta'n wenin ki'l
Kesi amasek musikiskituk
Sike nike' kesasekewey kun'tew
Etlatesinn ki'l kloqoe'ji'
Kitu'-kjju'l ta'n wenin ki'l

*Twinkle, twinkle, little star,
How I wonder what you are
Up above the world so high,
Like a diamond in the sky
Twinkle, twinkle, little star
How I wonder what you are*



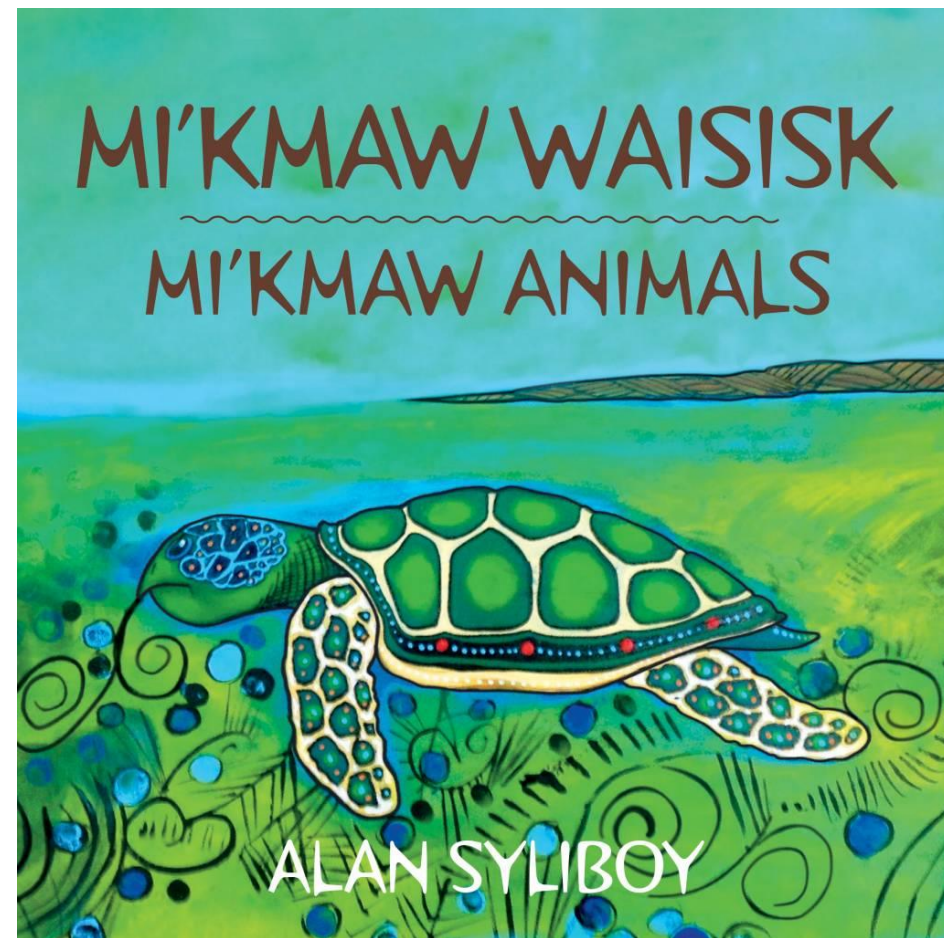


When we first created the Mi'kmaq bag there were no board books for babies in Mi'kmaq, so we worked with a local publisher to create a translation of an English book “Kisses Kisses Baby O” into Mi'kmaq

Shhhh
Jenita'mk nike'

Oti kesikawpaqatak
Je wela'ji'jit
Klapis ketuksia't
O' ketuksia't ta ha
Ula apje'juanu'ji'j



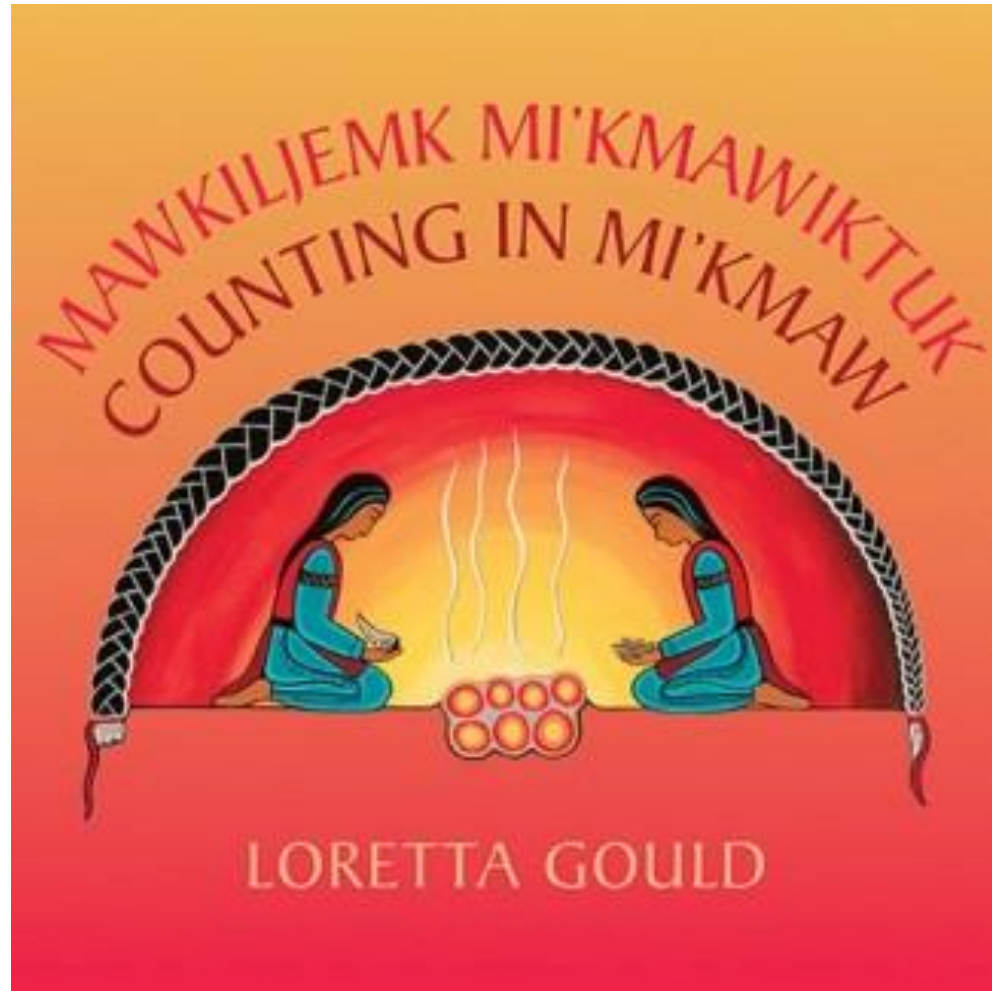


Since then, many beautiful Mi'kmaq books have been published. *Mi'kmaq Animals* is illustrated by renowned Mi'kmaq illustrator Alan Syliboy.



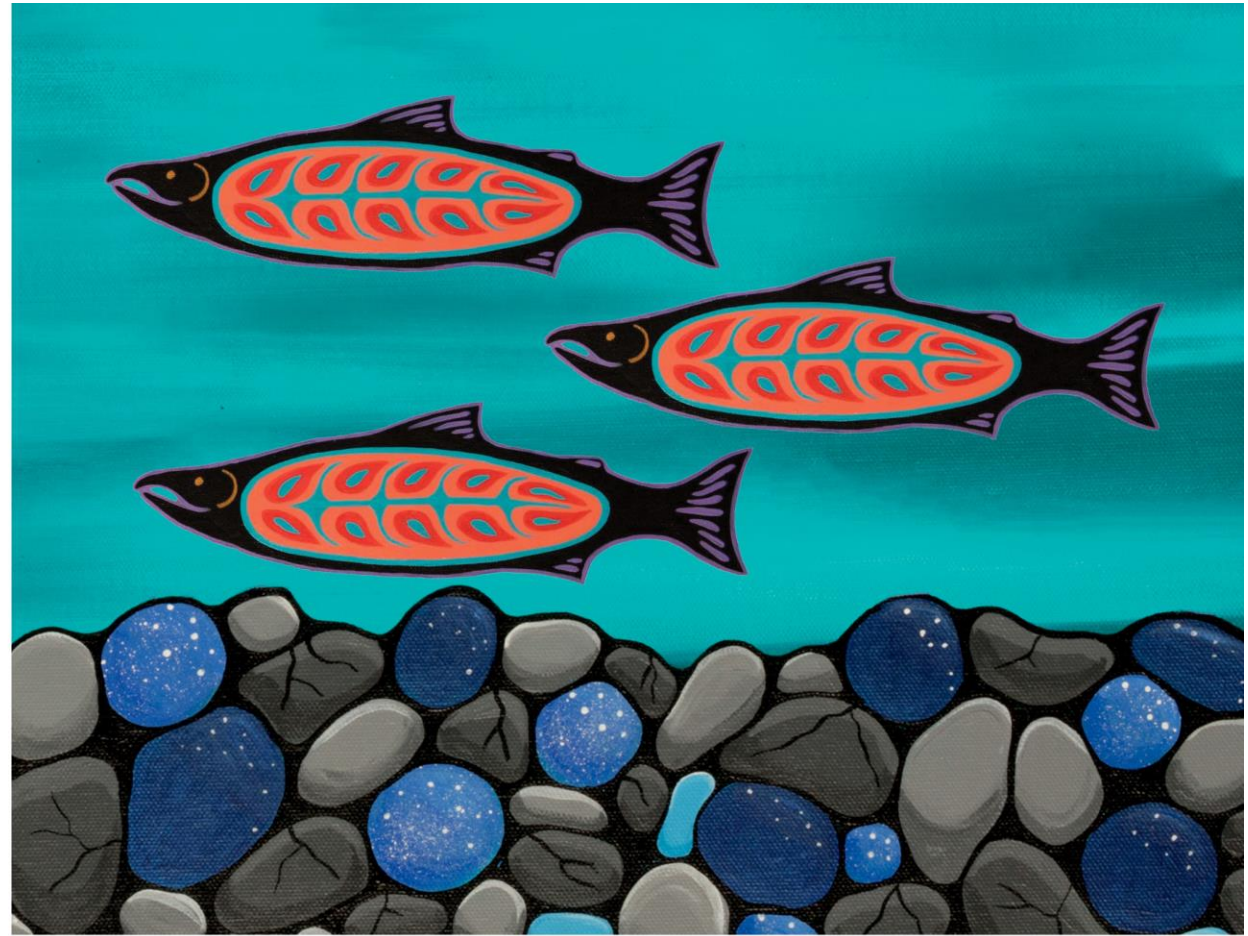
tesipow
(day-see-bow)

horse



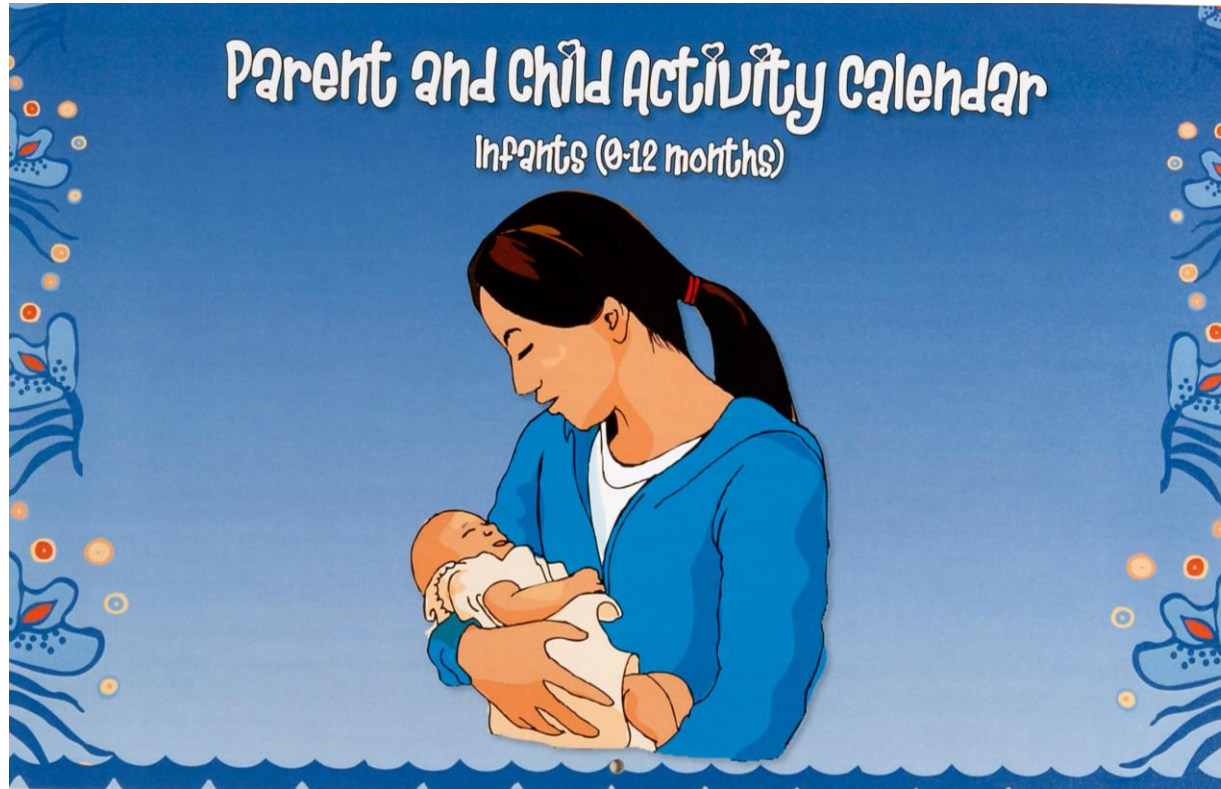
Mi'kmaq writer and artist Loretta Gould created
Counting in Mi'kmaq

3 Si'st
Three



Nme'jk pi'tawita'jik.
Fish swimming up the stream.

Culturally Reflective Activity Guide for Birth to 12 Months



As well as providing English parent resources, we also include this activity calendar created by and for First Nations families

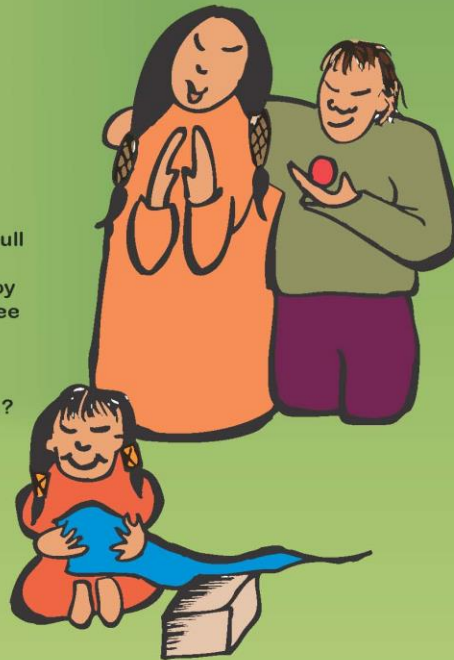
Around 6-7 months

Find the Toy

This game will help your baby begin to learn that objects do not disappear when they are out of sight.

Take out a special toy and show it to your baby. Using a blanket, partially cover the toy. Your baby will learn to pull at the part of the toy he sees. Clap with enthusiasm. Place a small toy in the palm of your hand and let him see it just for a moment.

Then close your hand and encourage him to find it by saying "Where is the...?"



Knee Rides

Babies like to be bounced. Knee rides are a good way to allow them to do so. Sit your baby on your lap, facing you. Hold him under his arms and move forward until you are sitting on the edge of your seat. Lift your heels so your baby gets a good (YET GENTLE) bounce, while you recite some traditional rhymes. Do not do this immediately after the child has eaten.



My First Traditional Ceremony

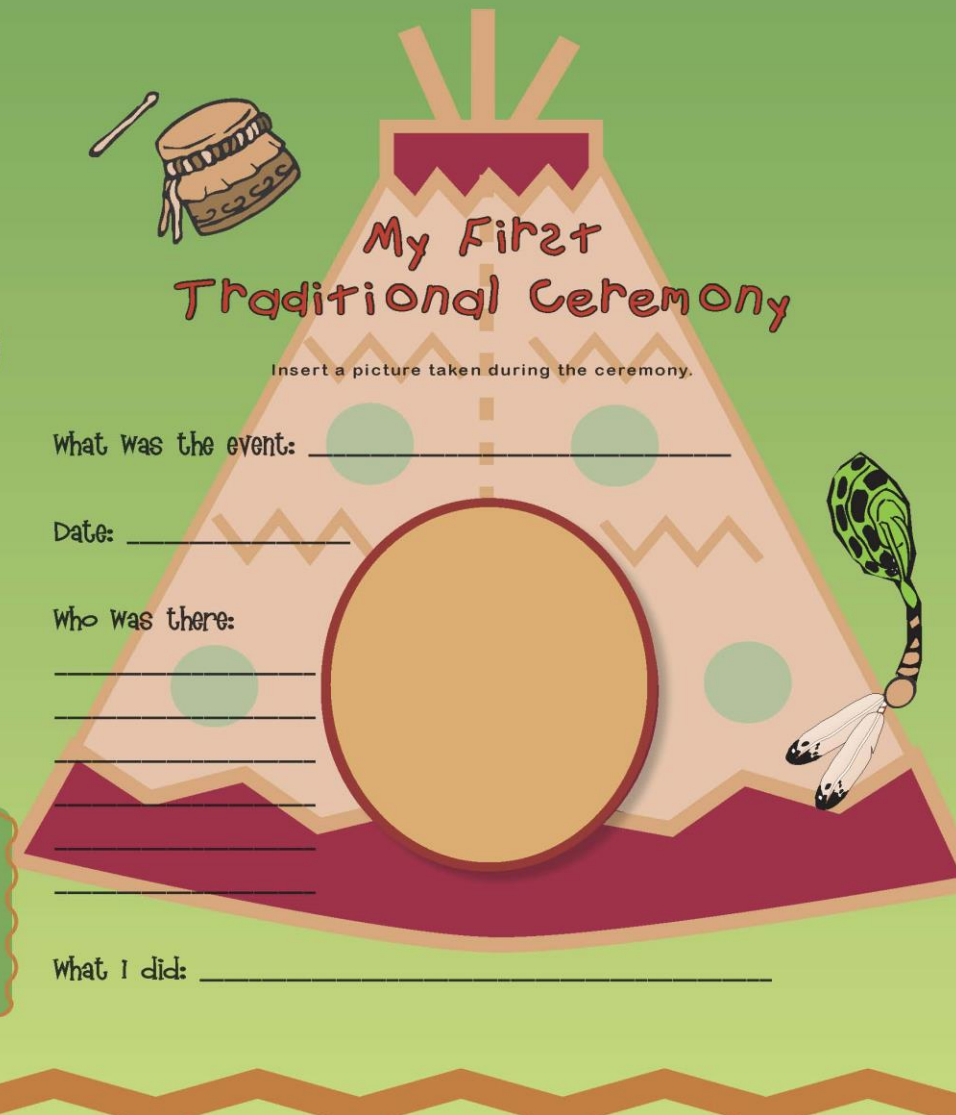
Insert a picture taken during the ceremony.

What was the event: _____

Date: _____

Who was there:

What I did: _____



The activity guide includes activities that celebrate First Nations culture – such as this page which gives parents a place to record their baby's first traditional ceremony

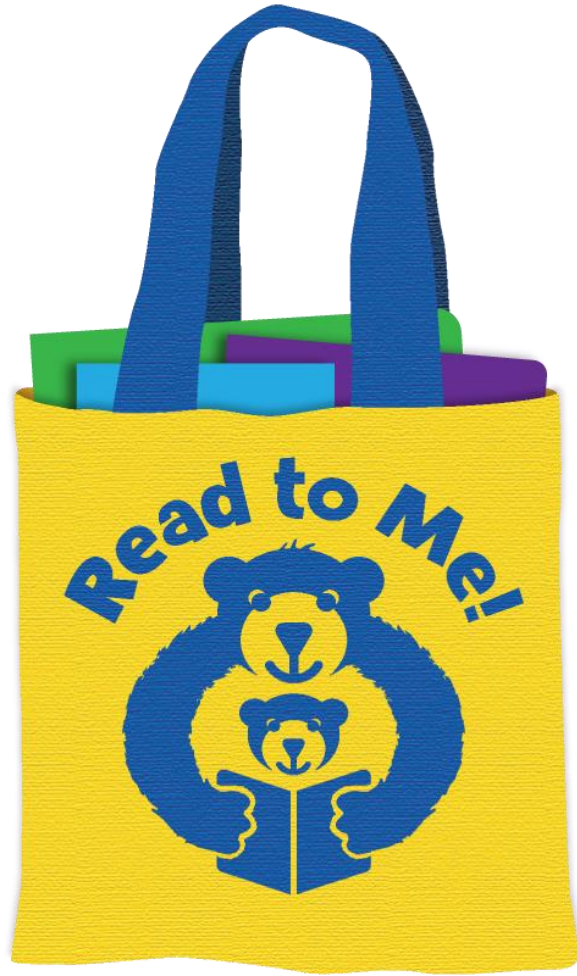


When Read to Me meets with families in the hospital, we let parents know that the bag is available in **English, French, Chinese, Arabic and Mi'kmaq.**

Families can then choose the bag in the language of their choice.

By providing books in the Mi'kmaq language, the Read to Me program is celebrating the culture and helping to revitalize the language for new generations of Mi'kmaq children





For more information about
the Read to Me Program
visit www.readtome.ca