WATER FIRST

INDIGENOUS SCHOOLS WATER PROGRAM

Considering the water crisis faced by many Indigenous communities, there is a profound underrepresentation of Indigenous voices in Canada's water governance.

This is coupled with a **lack of employment and education opportunities** for Indigenous youth. Together, it is clear that continuing to offer Indigenous students the most impassioned, empowering and exciting water science education learning opportunities possible is critical.

Water First is honoured to have engaged with schools in over **30 communities** in Ontario, Quebec, Labrador and Manitoba, so far.

Witnessing students' excitement and interest in the field of water science is inspiring.

Sparking a passion for environmental water stewardship

Water First delivers engaging, hands-on, STEM-based water science programs to schools in Indigenous communities. These programs create opportunities for students to strengthen their understanding and relationship with the environment, and to foster a love of water science.

During the programs, students spend time on the land and in the classroom exploring topics using water science tools and Water First learning resources. Water First regularly works alongside other local community land-based learning or outdoor cultural training programs. This strengthens the breadth of the programming and student connections with their lands.

WATCH THE VIDEO

Adaptive to community vision and goals

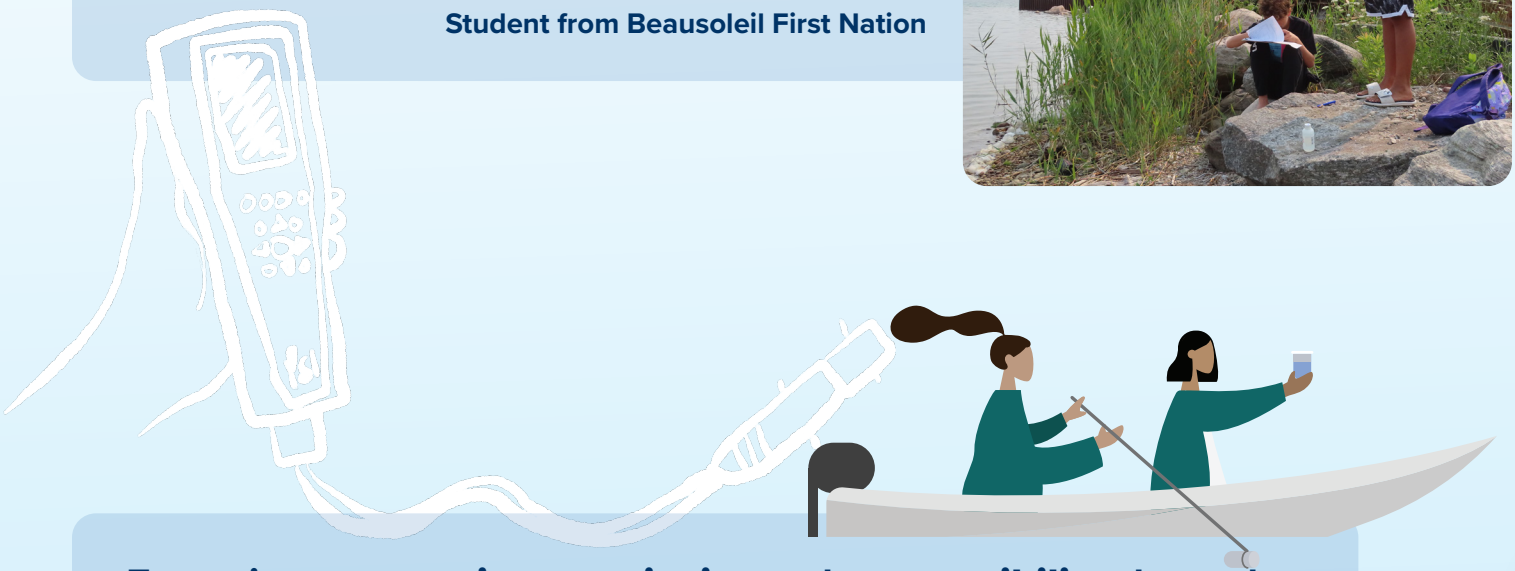
Water First engages with members of the community, school administration and staff. We link the school's curriculum and incorporate individual community values and goals into our programming.

Bright futures in water science

Our long-term vision is to provide opportunities for Indigenous school-aged students to see a future for themselves in the water sciences. Engaging with students in meaningful ways, year after year, to learn about water health provides continuity and a deeper connection for the students with their land and water.

"All the other programs I've been in, mostly it's sitting inside doing recording work... But with the program here, you get to go outside, do things actually yourself, hands on, and have all your friends around you."

Student from Beausoleil First Nation



Fostering connections, curiosity and responsibility through an exchange of knowledge

Creating a web of learning is valued at all levels of our program implementation. Students, instructors, teachers and community members exchange knowledge and learn from each other. This in turn fosters curiosity and connection between students, community, land and water.

Community members join in

Local community members are invited to join in and share cultural, social and environmental priorities relevant to the local understanding of water and its significance. Young Indigenous adults participating in Water First programs, like the Drinking Water Internship, connect with students to provide insight into exciting career paths that exist in the water science field.

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Nurturing interconnectivity

Where possible, students have the opportunity to visit local water bodies, speak with interns from other Water First programs, and tour local water and wastewater treatment plants. Through these experiences, they learn about the role they can play as students and as emerging scientists in protecting their water resources.

EXPLORE THE FULL INTERACTIVE MAP

This approach of adaptive, supportive and community-based science education strengthens connection within the community and to the land.

Working with Indigenous youth for the first time is exhilarating. Working with them multiple times is magic. Facilitating stronger connections to their water, land, and community sparks passion, breaks down barriers and illuminates future possibilities.

We have seen a significant growth in requests from Indigenous communities for school programming. Water First is scaling our program to meet the needs of Indigenous communities across Canada asking to partner with us.

It is because of donors that youth are already part of this magic.

Join in. Be part of this magic.
Donate today.

For more information, contact Ami Gopal, Director of Development at ami.gopal@waterfirst.ngo or 1-800-970-8467 ext. 106

WATER FIRST

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