

Learn more

These resources are intended to support your ongoing development as an OJEN volunteer. In each section, we suggest that you start with the materials listed under **read first**. If you would like to learn more about a topic, you can continue to explore resources under **watch or listen** and **keep learning**.

If there are other materials you would recommend or new topics you would like to suggest, please email us at info@ojen.ca.

How to do good legal workshops with youth in community

Best practices for public legal education workshops for youth



Read first

1. [Guidelines for better legal workshops](#) (OJEN, 2022)

OJEN's guidelines offer tips and best practices for legal professionals who are facilitating legal workshops in the community.



Watch or listen

2. [Guidelines for better legal workshops: Best practices for effective PLE presentations](#)

(OJEN video, 2021)

- [Summary](#)
- [Slides](#)

Learn more about OJEN's guidelines for better legal workshops. This webinar offers practical advice, teaching strategies, and useful resources.

3. [Working with vulnerable youth in OJEN programs](#) (OJEN video, 2018)

Watch this training video to learn more about OJEN's approach to working with youth living in vulnerable environments.

4. [This is where we live: Justice and community – A youth perspective](#) (OJEN video, 2014)

Hear directly from youth in several GTA neighbourhoods. This video highlights youth's views on how the justice system impacts their lives and their communities.

5. [The person beyond the file: Lessons from young people on working with youth in the criminal justice and child welfare system](#) (OJEN video, 2016)

This 11-video module depicts the lived experiences of young people who have grown up involved with the child protection and youth criminal justice systems.

6. [Legal information for everyone \(LIFE\) – A PLE toolbox - Speaking to youth](#)

(Law Society of Ontario, Community Legal Education Ontario, OJEN video, 2014)

This module includes a video and complementary materials (checklists, handouts, information sheets) to assist with speaking to youth.

7. [Legal information for everyone \(LIFE\) – A PLE toolbox - Speaking to newcomers](#) (Law Society of Ontario, Community Legal Education Ontario, OJEN video, 2014)
This module includes a video and complementary materials to assist with speaking to newcomer audiences.

Keep learning

8. [Re-Envisioning Public Legal Education and Information \(PLEI\)](#) (West Coast LEAF, 2021)
 - [Executive summary](#)

This report provides insight on critical, decolonizing, feminist, and trauma-informed PLE. Key learnings on guiding principles, purposes, impacts, limitations, potential harms, and best practices.
9. [A practical guide to public legal education](#) (AdviceNow, UK)
This guide provides guidance and materials for anyone planning to develop public legal education.

Making referrals for legal services

Free and low-cost resources for legal information and advice

Read first

1. [Making referrals for legal services](#) (Community Legal Education Ontario, 2019)
Some tips to consider when making referrals to legal services.
2. [Justice for Children and Youth](#) (JFCY)
JFCY is a legal aid clinic that provides legal services for young people under 18 and homeless youth under 25 in Ontario. Call: 416-920-1633 or 1-866-999-5329.
3. [Law Society referral service](#)
This online service gives you the name of a lawyer who can give you a free consultation for up to 30 minutes.
4. [Steps to Justice](#) (Community Legal Education Ontario)
This website provides step-by-step information about legal problems.
5. [Legal Aid Ontario](#) (LAO)
[LAO services](#) (LAO covers: criminal, family law, domestic violence, refugee, immigration services, and mental health)
[Find a lawyer](#) - Use the online directory or call 416-979-1446 or toll-free 1-800-668-8258.

6. [JusticeNet](#)

A not-for-profit service helping people whose income is too high to access legal aid and too low to afford standard legal fees.

7. [Pro Bono Ontario](#)

Contact Pro Bono Ontario's free legal advice hotline for 30 minutes of free advice or assistance at 1-855-255-7256 (civil law - no family law or criminal law).

Watch or listen

8. [Understanding the Legal Aid System in Ontario](#) (OJEN video, 2021)

Learn how the Legal Aid system works from a panel of lawyers.

Keep learning

You may also refer youth to a number of speciality clinics or services here in Ontario:

9. [Aboriginal Legal Services](#)

Aboriginal Legal Services (ALS) is an Indigenous legal services centre that provides free legal assistance to low income Indigenous people living in the City of Toronto. ALS is involved in law reform, community organizing, public legal education, and test case litigation.

10. [Arch Disability Law](#)

ARCH is a specialty legal clinic that practices exclusively in disability rights law and provides a range of legal services directly to persons with disabilities.

11. [Black Legal Action Centre \(BLAC\)](#)

BLAC is an independent not-for-profit community legal clinic that combats individual and systemic anti-Black racism by conducting research, engaging in structural transformation, and providing legal services to members of Ontario's Black communities.

12. [Human Rights Legal Support Centre](#)

The Human Rights Legal Support Centre (HRLSC) offers human rights legal services to individuals throughout Ontario who have experienced discrimination.

Plain Language

Learn more about speaking to youth in clear and everyday language

Read first

1. [Plain language in spoken communication](#) (Plainlanguage.gov)

Plain language is as important in spoken communication as it is in writing. Follow these guidelines when speaking to a group.

Watch or listen

2. [Clear language and design helps everyone: A skills-building webinar](#)

(Community Legal Education Ontario video, 2021)

This video includes examples, tips, and resources to help communicate legal information that is clear, accurate, and useful.

Keep learning

3. [Five steps to plain language](#) (Centre for Plain Language)

A five-step checklist that will guide you through the plain language process and help you develop content.

4. [Checklist for plain language](#) (Plainlanguage.gov)

This checklist will help you see if your document meets plain language standards.

Teaching/Learning

Develop your facilitator skills by knowing more about teaching and learning styles and the importance of relationship-building

Read first

1. [Everyday law: Preparing for legal issues in your life](#) (OJEN, 2009)

Key cases and classroom activities designed to introduce legal concepts to young people.

2. [An educator's guide to teaching styles and learning styles](#) (University of San Diego)

Learn how learning styles affect teaching styles and vice versa, including individual learning styles, theory of multiple intelligences, teacher centred vs. student centred, and five approaches to education.

3. [Teaching strategies for the 8 different learning styles](#) (Virtual Speech, 2018)

This article discusses teaching methods for the eight different learning styles, as well as conflicting evidence that suggests that teaching through learning styles may not be as effective as once believed.

Watch or listen

4. [Teaching methods for inspiring students of the future](#) (Joe Ruhl video, 2015)

Watch this video on why choice, collaboration, critical thinking, and creativity – should be present in all classrooms.

5. [Every kid needs a champion](#) (Rita Pierson, video)

Rita Pierson, a teacher for 40 years, gives a rousing call to educators to believe in their students and connect with them on a real, human, and personal level.



Keep learning

6. [4 phases of inquiry-based learning](#) (Teach Thought)

Inquiry-based learning is an instructional model that centres learning on solving a particular problem or answering a central question. It emphasizes the student's role in the learning process.

7. [Transformational relationships for youth success](#) (Ctr. for the Study of Social Policy, 2017)

Report on key findings of a qualitative research study with youth, workers and organizational leaders in the United States and United Kingdom. It highlights key features of transformational relationships with youth – listening, persistence over time, being “real”, challenging the youth and its challenges.

Understanding trauma, learning and the brain

Learn more about how trauma affects the brain and how to develop a safe learning environment



Read first

1. [Trauma and violence informed teaching – why it is critically important and how we do it](#)

(Physical and Health Education Canada)

This article provides a brief overview of the experiences of trauma on an individual and systemic level, points to four ways to work in a trauma-and-violence-informed way, and provides other resources.

2. [This is a student's brain on trauma](#) (Resilient Educator)

Tips for teachers and classroom resources.



Watch or listen

3. [Learning brain and survival brain: How experience shapes behaviour](#)

(WA Centre for Rural Health video, 2021)

This animated video discusses the impacts of childhood trauma on the learning brain and the survival brain.

4. [Wired for danger: The effects of childhood trauma on the brain](#)

(BrainFacts.org video, 2020)

Childhood trauma damages emotional health but also physically affects the brain. Trauma rewires several parts of the brain, altering their activity and influence over the body.

5. [Trauma-Informed Facilitation webinar](#) (BCcampus video, 2022)

In this video, you will learn about what trauma is, the impact it can have, and practical tools, tips, and strategies for trauma-informed facilitation.

6. [Compassionate learning communities: Supporting a trauma-informed practice](#)

(Province of BC video, 2019)

The lens of trauma-informed practice is relevant to all helping practitioners as it focuses on safety, stabilisation, and reconnection.

- [Understanding Good Practice in Responding to Trauma in the Classroom: Part 1](#)
- [Understanding Good Practice in Responding to Trauma in the Classroom: Part 2](#)



Keep learning

7. [Manitoba Trauma-Information and Education Centre](#)

Resources on what is trauma, trauma and Indigenous peoples, and training opportunities on trauma-informed relationships.

In-person facilitation

Explore tips and techniques for in-person facilitation



Read first

1. Facilitation Skills

General facilitation skill development

- [Tips on facilitating effective group discussions](#) (Brown University)
- [Guidelines and tips for facilitation](#) (OpenText BC)
- [Facilitating effective discussions](#) (University of Waterloo)
- [Developing facilitation skills](#) (Community Toolbox, University of Kansas)
- [Guidelines for discussing difficult or high-stakes topics](#) (University of Michigan)

2. Icebreaker Examples

Set the tone with the right icebreaker

- [13 fail-safe icebreakers](#)
- [Icebreaker questions](#)
- [Name aerobics](#)
- [String game](#)
- [Two truths and a lie](#)
- [Four corners game](#)

3. CLEO lesson plans (Community Legal Education Ontario)

Take a look at these lesson plans, curricula and other resources for trainers and educators as examples to create your own.

- [ESL activity kits](#)
- [Legal life skills curriculum](#)

- [Legal rights literacy kits](#)
- [Rights Bites podcasts and lesson plans](#) (Workplace resources for Newcomers)

Watch or listen

4. [YOUTRAIN video project](#)

Fresh videos for non-formal education. Here are a few highlights from their 20+ videos

- [2 name games: Name and movement, princesses and dragons](#)
- [Facilitating group debate: Where do you stand?](#)
- [How to facilitate training closure? Yarn toss method](#)
- [Facilitating group discussion: Silent floor method](#)

Keep learning

5. [Reading Recommendations](#)

Teaching to Transgress by bell hooks

Teaching community by bell hooks

Pedagogy of the Oppressed by Paulo Freire

The Myth of Normal: Trauma, Illness and Healing in a Toxic Culture by Gabor Maté

Pathways to inclusive learning environments

Everyone has a shared responsibility for cultural safety and anti-oppression in OJEN programs

Read first

1. [Safe and inclusive school resources](#) (Ontario Education Services Corporation)
Resources about Indigenous communities, bullying, ethnicity/ancestry, faith, language, physical and intellectual disabilities, race, socio-economic status, support for young people and sexual orientation and gender identity.

Watch or listen

2. [What is intersectionality?](#) (Kimberlé Crenshaw video, 2017)
Kimberlé Crenshaw, civil rights advocate, and professor at UCLA School of Law and Columbia Law School, talks about intersectional theory, the study of how overlapping or intersecting social identities—and particularly minority identities—relate to systems and structures of discrimination.
3. [Range of gender identities](#) (Amaze Org video, 2019)
Watch this video to learn more about a person's gender identity and gender expression.

4. [What's up with the singular "they"?](#) (Savvy Ally Action video)
Savvy Ally Action's 3-minute video, "What's Up with Singular 'They'?" shares five reasons why you should embrace the singular "they".
5. [Top 5 mistakes when working with a person with disabilities](#) (Skill Booster video, 2015)
Watch these top 5 mistakes for working with persons with disabilities.
6. [Power, privilege and oppression](#) (University of Denver video, 2018)
Watch this digital animation as it guides you to further understanding about power, privilege oppression, and working towards social change.

Keep learning

7. [What is intersectionality?](#) (Peter Hopkins video, 2018)
A quick overview of intersectionality, its history, and its contemporary application.
8. [A forum on Black youth and the justice system](#) (Black Legal Action Centre video, 2021)
Learn about the rights of Black youth in the justice system in Ontario, what to do to get assistance, and where to go for advice.

Engaging with Indigenous youth in community

Key areas to build your commitment to learning and understanding.

To action your commitment to learn as much as you share as an OJEN volunteer, consider how you can learn more and take action towards reconciliation. Even if Indigenous youth may not be physically present in your workshops, we are always in relationship with Indigenous communities and the land which we inhabit daily. For thousands of years to today, Indigenous communities have stewarded and protected these lands, and worked in friendship with newcomers.

Key starting points are:

- [Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Final Report](#) (National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation)
- [Reclaiming power and place: The final report of the National Inquiry Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#)

Canada's history of systemic racism and settler colonialism have resulted in the attempted elimination of Indigenous communities and continued harm. We all have a responsibility to commit to furthering our understanding and good relationships built on respect for Indigenous communities and cultures. Our responsibility extends to sharing our learnings with our own communities and youth. Many young people are well aware of Canada's history and realities, thanks to the advancement of education curriculum, the internet, and social media.

Indigenous communities are *diverse* with distinct histories, experiences, teachings, and ceremony. Many have maintained their ceremony and are (re)claiming their languages, cultures, and Indigenous pride. Much of what you need to learn will not come from books, "how-to" guides, or videos. It will

come by offering proper protocol to Elders and Knowledge Keepers in your communities and listening.

Colonial histories and historic, intergenerational trauma are alive and omnipresent in our lives. They may inevitably come into your workshop especially when talking about the law 'on the books' and 'on the street'. Therefore, this section provides curated Indigenous-made resources as a starting point to guide you in your own personal learning journey.


Look for the  to get details on why we think a specific resource is important.



Read first

1. [Cultural safety](#) (Jessica Ball, University of Victoria)


Cultural safety is an outcome. Regardless of how culturally sensitive, attuned or informed we think we are; the concept of cultural safety asks: How safe did the service recipient experience an encounter in terms of being respected and assisted in having their cultural location, values, and preferences taken into account?

 Special attention needs to be paid to the environment itself to ensure it is safe for Indigenous people to participate and that their experience will be valued and heard.

2. [Land acknowledgements: From recitation, to real](#) (Raven Trust)

Land acknowledgment, like decolonization itself, is an ongoing process. These 5 steps to developing your own heartfelt, authentic Territorial acknowledgement are meant to help you develop your own way grounded in reflection and relationship.


- [‘I regret it’: Hayden King on writing Ryerson University’s territorial acknowledgment](#) (CBC, 2019)

 As land acknowledgments are more common, they have also become more rehearsed rather than meaningful and actionable reflections. These resources give you some insight into why it is important and how you can create your own meaningful and informed land acknowledgement.

3. [Indigenous Peoples terminology and guidelines for usage](#)

(Indigenous Corporate Training, 2016)

This article, and the accompanying video, offers n guidelines for the usage of terms for Indigenous Peoples, which have evolved over time and are continuing to evolve.

 It is important to know which terms are appropriate and inappropriate to use when talking about and with Indigenous people.

4. [Communicating effectively with Indigenous clients](#) (Aboriginal Legal Services, 2017)

A report on issues raised by Indigenous clients and an introduction to how linguistic prejudice can disadvantage clients.

❓ Key information about Indigenous client's experiences with lawyers and the justice system to help you understand potential issues you may be asked about during workshops. As well as, key differences in communication (language, eye contact, how much information is shared) and how to listen.

👁️ Watch or listen

5. [Home Fire: Ending the cycle of family violence](#) (Native Counselling Services of Alberta video, 2015)

Home Fire explores family violence and restorative justice from an Indigenous perspective. Featuring commentary from Elders, community leaders, and members of the western justice system, Home Fire examines the colonization of Canada, historic trauma, the western justice system, and grassroots healing programs in Indigenous communities.

❓ An essential video to start understanding the impacts of colonialism, the Indian Act and residential schools in Canada.

6. [Understanding Aboriginal Identity](#) (BearPaw Media and Education, Native Counselling Services of Alberta video, 2015)

Understanding Aboriginal Identity explores the complex issue of self-identification for Indigenous people. It remains inextricably linked with past government legislation and the continued stereotyping of Indigenous people in the media and Canadian history. From a Métis farm in rural Alberta, to the offices of Canada's leading scholars, this documentary examines the factors that shape who we are.

❓ This video is complimentary to Home Fire as it expands on the lived experience and complexity of self-identification and belonging as Indigenous people.

7. [Indigenous cultural safety collaborative learning series](#) (National Indigenous Cultural Safety Learning Series)

This webinar series provides an opportunity to share knowledge, experiences, and perspectives in support of collective efforts to strengthen Indigenous cultural safety across sectors. Currently there are 17 webinars hosted online.

- [Racism and privilege in the everyday](#)
- [Racism, reconciliation and Indigenous cultural safety](#)
- [Cultural safety in the classroom: Addressing anti-Indigenous racism in education](#)
- [Racism hurts: Exploring the health impacts of anti-Indigenous racism](#)

❓ These resources provide key insights into the experiences of racism and privilege and what you can do to help increase cultural safety during your workshops.

Keep learning

8. [Indigenous Canada \(Free online course\)](#) (Faculty of Native Studies, University of Alberta)
Indigenous Canada is a 12-lesson Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) that explores the different histories and contemporary perspectives of Indigenous peoples living in Canada. From an Indigenous perspective, it explores complex experiences Indigenous peoples face today from a historical and critical perspective highlighting national and local Indigenous-settler relations.

🔗 This course is a great starting point for anyone who wants to learn more about history and contemporary realities from Indigenous perspectives.

9. [Cultural safety education as a blueprint for reconciliation](#) (Len Pierre video, 2022)
Len Pierre, Coast Salish, invites his audience on a learning journey of Indigenous cultural safety education and training. He touches on the history of Canadian and Indigenous relations, its power imbalances in society, and how Indigenous and non-Indigenous people alike can move together towards reconciliation.

🔗 A great Ted Talk that touches on the impacts of cultural safety education and why it is so important.

10. [Reconciliation through education - Teaching resources](#) (National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation)
The teaching resource collection within the archives at the NCTR is composed of over 300 unique English language and 100 French-language resources related to residential schools and other topics.

🔗 Provides opportunities for you to learn more and also consider how you can talk about Canada's history of colonialism with various age groups.

11. [Journey Home](#) (Native Counselling Services of Alberta video, 2019)
Journey Home explores healing Indigenous children in the Canadian child welfare system. This documentary provides an Indigenous community perspective on inter-generational trauma and its impacts on children and youth in government care.

🔗 As an OJEN volunteer, you may get questions about the overrepresentation of Indigenous children in care. This video can help provide context, as well as, the importance of cultural connections for Indigenous children.

12. [\(Re\)claiming Indian Status](#) (BearPaw Media and Education, Native Counselling Services of Alberta video, 2020)
This documentary explores the stories of Indigenous women and families reclaiming their Indian Status through their fight for the elimination of sex-discrimination in the Indian Act. This video also includes Status eligibility information and recommendations for finding family records.

- [\(Re\)claiming Indian Status Booklet](#) (BearPaw Media and Education, Native Counselling Services of Alberta) (2021)

❓ As an OJEN volunteer, you may also get questions about eligibility and how to apply for Indian Status. This documentary and booklet provide key information, and the steps in the application process.

13. [Through the Storm: Finding Support for Families of Missing and Murdered Indigenous People](#) (BearPaw Media and Education, Native Counselling Services of Alberta video, 2022)

❓ *Through the Storm* provides insight into what families can do to find support when a loved one goes missing or is murdered. This video is important because many families have been impacted by traumatic and ambiguous loss.

14. Reading recommendations

- [White Benevolence](#) (Amanda Gebhard)
- [Braiding Sweetgrass](#) (Robin Wall Kimmerer)
- [Indigenous Healing](#) (Rupert Ross)
- [Returning to the Teachings: Exploring Aboriginal Justice](#) (Rupert Ross)
- [Strong Helpers' Teachings: The Value of Indigenous Knowledges in the Help Professions](#) (Cyndy Baskin)

Additional resources - Legal Information and advice resources

15. [Gladue Reports in Ontario](#) (Aboriginal Legal Services)

16. [Public Legal Education](#) (Nishnawbe-Aski Legal Services)

Know your rights cards on carding by police, being stopped by police, Gladue, child welfare, victim witness, hunting, trapping and fishing

17. [GTA Indigenous organizations](#) (Aboriginal Legal Services)

❓ When in the community, you may get questions about Gladue Reports and additional resources. Be sure to always have and leave resources where possible.