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## What is Wise Women Gathering Place?

Wise Women Gathering Place is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, staffed by Native American midwives and educators. WWGP incorporated in 1998, however, we have been operating for decades as a home-based women's circle. Children in tow, Native women gathered in each other's homes discussing issues around childbirth, midwifery, breastfeeding, parenting, herbs and more. Today, WWGP provides a safe place for people to access resources and information about childbirth, alternative holistic health methods and other family life challenges. These resources allow people to research, monitor and manage their own lives. Informed choice is a cornerstone for WWGP in all aspects.

## Lunch, Love and Friends at the Open House

On Friday, June 5, 2009, the doors of the Wise Women Gathering Place Education Annex opened to the public for the first time. The annex, located next door to the WWGP office at 2486 Babcock Rd, will hold our classroom for ToP Trainings and Discovery Dating Teacher Trainings. In the future we hope to move our community resource library and other community use materials into the annex as well.

The Open House was attended by over 50 people, most who came to celebrate the retirement of Marlene Summers, our Cultural Elder. Marlene enjoyed visiting with old friends and new friends and family members. She

regrets missing Sen. Dave Hansen who stopped by to wish her well.

Attendees were treated to a fabulous Mexican and Peruvian meal prepared by Ana Ortega. Bonnie Stoneman made a cake for Marlene's retirement. Guests were also invited to take pictures or have their pictures taken and then use those photos to create a scrapbook page for Marlene right there at the Open House.

Everyone who came to the Open House was asked to sign in to enter our door prize drawing. The winners were Butch Summers, Becky Nutt, Sarah Phillips, Janet Hagen and Susan Torres.



*Retire from work but not from life.*  
 - M.K. Soni



*Photos from the June Open House at Wise Women Gathering Place. Marlene Summers was honored with a Pendleton blanket for her retirement. Bonnie Stoneman made the cake for our guests. Mexican and Peruvian food added a little spice to lunch. Guests and family attended.*

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## Wise Youth Group

The Wise Youth Group has had a busy June. At the Oneida Family Carnival and the Oneida Powwow, WYG displayed boards with messages of peace and invited the community to put their painted handprint on the display (see pictures below). During President Obama's visit to Southwest High School, several WYG members made posters supporting Peace, Respect and Belonging and held them up along the motorcade route for the president to see. The Wise Youth Group is also working with the On^yote aka Youth in a fundraiser. They are selling NEW Deals coupon books for \$35. If you would like to support Oneida Youth, you can purchase a book at the Wise Women Gathering Place office. WYG continues to meet at the Three Sisters building on W. Mason on Thursdays at 4pm. Feel free to drop in on a meeting and get involved. For more info, contact Isabell Parker at Oneida Housing Authority, 920-869-2227.



## Ask the Herb Lady BY JUDY VANDER BLOOMEN

**Are there any weeds out there that are herbs that can be used as herbal medicine? I have heard that dandelion is actually useful. What is it good for and what other weeds can be used for medicine? How do I process the herbs so they can be dried and made into tea?**

Yes, there are many edible and medicinal herbs that are classified as weeds. Some of our most valuable medicines are common plants we try to get rid of in order to have the perfect lawn or garden. Each herb needs to be gathered and dried when it is at its peak, and stored away from heat and light to maintain freshness.

Careful and quick drying at a low temperature (100 – 120 degrees) insures that the herb you have gathered will be potent and useful for as long as possible. You will need a space that is warm and well ventilated, with low humidity. An attic will work. Or try a gas range with the pilot light on. I have seen a greenhouse used as a solar dehydrator, or a solar dehydrator can be built or purchased. I use an electric food dehydrator,

especially when the weather is humid, because humidity produces a poor quality product. Spread the herbs on screens or cheesecloth. Roots should be cleaned, dried and sliced thin. Leaves, fruits and berries should be spread in a single layer. Make sure the herbs are thoroughly dry and be sure to store in airtight, dark containers, or keep them in a dark place. It is very important to label all stored herbs with the name and date. If stored well, most herbs will last for 1-3 years, depending upon the herb. Roots and berries will last twice as long. Here are a few of my favorite wild herbs that can be used as medicine:

**Burdock:** The first year it will be a small leafy plant that looks somewhat like small rhubarb. The second year it leaps up to 8-10 feet and produces those irritating seed burs that stick to everything. The best part of the plant is the root, which needs to be gathered at the end of the first year or beginning of the second year. Once it produces flowers or seed, the root will be woody and no longer useful. The seeds are strong medicine but difficult to harvest and clean. The leaves, seeds, or root can be made into tea, tincture or salve. The seeds are useful for lowering blood sugar, for colds, skin rashes and itching. The leaves can be used as a poultice for skin problems. The root is the main part used for reducing inflammation, stimulating immunity, reducing allergy, aiding digestion, and as a urinary tonic. In China and Japan burdock root is used as a vegetable and tastes somewhere between a potato and celery. The leaf and stem are somewhat bitter.

**Dandelion:** Dandelion is a common weed of lawns, fields and roadsides. Spring leaves can be used in salads before the plant flowers. After that, the leaves can be cooked as a spinach substitute. The dried roasted root has been used as a coffee substitute. Dandelion contains large amounts of vitamins and minerals. Dandelion leaf is diuretic and provides potassium

at the same time. The tea is therefore a very successful diuretic with no side effects. Dandelion root is known as a liver tonic which aids digestive sluggishness. It stimulates the flow of bile, so is used for gallbladder inflammation. It works well for skin diseases, eczema and rheumatism. Dandelion is a mild and safe herb that combines well with other herbal preparations for the liver and urinary tract.

**Mullein:** Mullein is a tall biennial plant growing in clearings, fields, pastures and gardens. The first year it has a small basal rosette. The second year one or more large flower spikes, 6-7 feet, appear, producing numerous small yellow flowers. These flowers, infused in olive oil, are considered one of the best remedies for ear infections. It works even better when combined with garlic oil. The leaf makes a great remedy for coughs and bronchitis. It can be used for gastrointestinal cramps and pain. The Indians smoked the dried leaves to relieve lung congestion. The fomentation of the leaves can be used for hemorrhoids, tumors, mumps and sore throat. When making tea from the flowers, be sure to strain out the fine hairs with a coffee filter.

**Stinging Nettle:** Stinging nettle is a perennial, growing up to 6 feet tall, found in moist swampy areas. Nettle strengthens and supports the whole body, and is used as a traditional spring tonic. The tea regulates menstrual flow and promotes milk flow in nursing mothers. It is also used for fevers and colds, and will expel worms. The root is used for hair loss and benign prostate enlargement. The seed is used as a thyroid and immune tonic. Fresh nettles taste better than fresh spinach! You have to eat them cooked though, as the bristly hairs will act like a hypodermic, injecting an irritant substance under the skin. Use gloves when picking, and do not eat the fresh plants uncooked! When making tea from the older plants, be sure to strain out the fine hairs with a coffee filter.

## The Legacy of the Boarding Schools

It's been said that in traditional Oneida culture, we look after our elders first, because they carry the knowledge of our culture and history, and our children second, because they will someday carry our history and culture. Similar ideas exist in almost all Native cultures across the Western Hemisphere. How then, did Native culture come to a point when it is felt that our parenting skills are lacking? Or that our families have to work harder at being actual families? Is this line of thinking too harsh for what the reality is?

Like many things these days, the answer is yes and no. Many of the elders in our and other Native communities were forced to attend an Indian boarding school. Some were sent out of state and across the country to schools like Hampton Institute in Virginia, Haskell School in Kansas and Flandreau School in South Dakota. Others were sent to schools in Wisconsin, including Tomah Indian School in Tomah, WI and Wittenberg School in Wittenberg, WI. Another group stayed close to home at the Oneida Indian Boarding School, which stood at the same spot as the Norbert Hill Center stands today.

But no matter where the schools were located or who was in charge of running the school (the federal government, churches and secular organizations all ran boarding schools), these schools existed for one main purpose: Assimilate the Indian into white society. Education was the least of the schools' worries.<sup>1</sup> The creation of the Indian boarding schools came at a time when the "Indian Wars" of the plains were beginning to wear on the American military. They decided to try a non-violent method of Manifest Destiny, Education.

In the 1886 report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs to the Secretary of the Interior, the predominant belief and justifications for the boarding schools is laid out. "Only by the

complete isolation of the Indian child from his savage antecedents can he be satisfactorily educated," the Report claimed. The Report went on to say that Native parents were ignorant and that there were no "elevating circumstances in the home to arouse the ambition of the children." The report also maintained that the Natives did not use or understand parental control.

*Rules for Indian schools*, written by the Commissioner of Indian schools in 1890, explicitly stated that the goal of the boarding schools was to prepare Native youth for assimilation into mainstream society. The *Rules* recommends the students receive eight years of education: two years of intense English Language and six years of academics, leaving the schools with a sixth grade education. Later, the schools added a kindergarten and one more additional year of school.

The students at the boarding schools were subjected to military-like training. The boys were typically taught agricultural and manual labor skills while the girls were taught domestic service skills. Because the students were coming right off the reservation, they had typically had no experience with this system of education. Most of the children, particularly the young children were severely traumatized by the boarding school system. Many never came to terms with what happened to them.

A study of the federal boarding schools in 1928, known as the Meriam Report, revealed a new attitude towards the purpose of the schools. This report said that the discipline practices were restrictive and that the punishments were given out due to "sheer ignorance." The schools curriculum was discredited as was the quality of care given to the students and the core idea behind the



education practices in the boarding schools. "Nearly every boarding school visited had disquieting illustrations of failure to understand the underlying principles of human behavior." The Meriam Report called for move away from assimilation as education and toward a child-centered approach to true education.

Unfortunately, this was easier said than done. A Congressional report from the 1960s found that many of the teachers and boarding school staff still saw their main role as one of civilizing the savage Indian rather than education. This led to a major emphasis on discipline and punishment in the schools and not education. Today, many former students of the boarding schools during these years worry that they may be continuing the tradition of harsh discipline with their own families because it was the only example of parenting they ever came in contact with.

Today's boarding schools use native culture in their curriculums. Only a handful of the federal boarding schools are left. And those that do exist are having their funding cut so much, some are wondering if they can remain open.

The legacy of the boarding schools on Native communities go beyond the monetary concern. Many tribes have parenting classes and programs. Tribal members are encouraged to learn how to become better parents and to realize that they are their child's first teachers. While the boarding schools, in less than 100 years successfully damaged the state of the Native family, the schools did not create irreparable destruction. Native tribes are seeking to bring their families back from the brink and to have the healthy, stable family structure they once had. **Watch for future articles on the legacy of the boarding schools in our newsletter.**



Top: Girls in a seamstress class at the Oneida Indian Boarding School. Above: WWGP's Discovery Parenting class, May 2009.

<sup>1</sup>Clark Historical Library. "Vocational Education." *Indian Treaties: Their Ongoing Importance to Michigan Residents*. Central Michigan University Website. <http://clarke.cmich.edu/indian/treatyeducation.htm#nas> Accessed online 6/15/2009.



**Discovery Dating Teacher Training**

Help give your students and clients the best set of skills for their relationships and for their life.

**Thursday-Friday  
August 20-21, 2009**

WWGP Education Annex  
2486 Babcock Rd  
Next door to our office

**\$375 per person  
Includes Student Kit**

**\$100 per person  
Refresher Fee**

Register online at:  
[Discoverydating.com](http://Discoverydating.com)

For more information call:  
920-490-0627

**Teen Pregnancy Prevention That Works!!**

WWGP was given information from an Indian Health Clinic, which tracked 157 C-BAC students in their community (age 13 – 19) who, as of June 2007, have 5 pregnancies reported and 136 Non C-BAC students (same age 13 – 19, same community) who, as of June 2007, have 32 pregnancies reported.



# Community Prevention Planning

Wise Women Gathering Place wants to create a Community-wide Violence Prevention Plan. This plan would incorporate perceived needs of the community members themselves. To this idea, this article presents a community prevention plan currently in use in the San Francisco area. While not all of the ideas may work for Oneida, it can provide a starting point for the creation of our own Violence Prevention Plan.

WWGP plans to use ToP Facilitation method of consensus building to create a community prevention plan. Look for our "sticky wall" at future WWGP events to put your ideas into our prevention plan.

*The following article was taken from the City of Oakland Dept of Human Services website.*

[www.oaklandhumanservices.org/initiatives/VPPSA/violenceprevention.htm](http://www.oaklandhumanservices.org/initiatives/VPPSA/violenceprevention.htm)

**City County  
Neighborhood  
Initiative**

**Program Description**

The Oakland City-County Violence Prevention Initiative is a partnership between the City of Oakland and Alameda County that seeks to create safe and resilient neighborhoods in Oakland. Launched in 2004, the Violence Prevention Initiative is currently being piloted in two Oakland neighborhoods, with plans to expand to a third neighborhood.

The Initiative uses a unique community-based approach to violence prevention that focuses not just on traditional approaches to crime reduction—such as law enforcement—but on improving a broad range of indicators that are directly correlated with high rates of violence in communities, such as the lack of economic

opportunity and constructive activities for youth, blight and physical deterioration, and the absence of strong networks among community residents.

Community Building Coordinators are working in each neighborhood to organize residents so that they become involved in developing their own violence prevention plans and acquire the leadership capacity to effectively advocate for and undertake community improvement projects.

In addition, the Community Building Coordinators link families to a range of supports and services—such as job training, after school activities for youth, and crisis response for families affected by violence—that will lead to family self-sufficiency and contribute to the overall well-being of the community.

## Influential Events

Women's Talking Circle  
Wise Women Gathering Place Office  
2482 Babcock Rd.  
Every other Tuesday 6-7pm

H.O.M.E Meetings  
Contact Stacy Vandenput for locations 920-468-0242  
[www.countrymidwife.com](http://www.countrymidwife.com)  
Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday, 1-3pm

Wise Youth Group  
Three Sisters , Green Bay  
2801 W. Mason St.  
Every Thursday, 4-5pm

Oneida Domestic Violence CCR Prevention Committee  
Oneida Police Dept, Oneida  
2783 Freedom Rd / Cty Rd E  
Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Wednesday of the Month, 10:30-11:30am

Top Training – Strategic Planning  
WWGP Education Annex,  
Green Bay  
2486 Babcock Rd.  
July 16-17, 2009 8-5pm

Tewa Women United Indigenous Women's Health Program  
Española, NM  
July 26-31, 2009

Discovery Dating Teacher Training  
WWGP Education Annex,  
Green Bay  
2486 Babcock Rd.  
August 20-21, 2009, 8-4pm

Rock'n'Rest Station  
ArtStreet  
Downtown Green Bay  
August 29-30, 2009, All Day

Top Training – Group Facilitation Methods  
WWGP Education Annex,  
Green Bay  
2486 Babcock Rd.  
October 15-16, 2009, 8-5pm

Hawaii Family Wellness Conference  
Hilo, HI  
May 2010

**"Love is my friend and my enemy. Don't fall for someone who doesn't believe in you or won't chase your dreams with you." Written in 2009 by Renee --- Missouri**

## Discovery Classes Create Happy Families

One of the final classes of the 2009 6<sup>th</sup> grade Discovery Classes at Oneida Nation Elementary School was spent on a consensus building activity. Unfortunately, we ran out of time to finish the final product, but the sixth-graders gave some valuable insight into what they believe a Happy Family is. Below are the students' ideas. Enjoy!

- Happy parents
- Mom & Dad: love, children, happiness
- Friendship
- Love
- Care
- Nice personality
- Open the door for you
- Sharing
- Laughter
- Playing
- Supporting
- Make each other laugh
- Celebrating
- Keeping in touch with family
- Close
- Speak minds
- Nice to each other
- Words
- Be there for each other
- Love to spend time
- Family fun night
- Movie night
- Have company
- Have fun
- Gathering
- Stories
- Go out to dinner
- Parties
- Talk to each other
- Play together
- Playing ball together
- Getting along
- Games
- Activities
- Cookouts
- Bowling
- Quality Time
- Entertainment
- Xbox 360 live
- Go bike riding with one another
- Like to go shopping
- Go to powwows together
- Going to WI Dells together
- Go on trips together
- Go places together
- Vacations
- Go to parties
- Go to sleepovers
- Go to friends' houses
- Park
- Go to the movies
- Six Flags
- Go to water parks
- Go to different states
- Go to Chuckie Cheese
- No drugs: deformed children, be stupid, you can die
- No abuse: children, pets, wives, adults, earth
- No groundings
- Kids don't kick & scream
- No tantrums
- No fights
- Never make each other cry
- No hitting
- No secrets
- No wishing the other was dead
- School: education, friends
- Going to school activity
- Help with Homework
- Working together
- Helping one another
- Money
- Furniture
- Money: to deed, need clothes
- House: Shelter, protection, place to live in
- Buying things
- TV
- Shelter
- Food
- Get stuff for each other
- Shopping
- Buy each other stuff, make each other stuff
- Food
- House
- Buy each other presents
- Give me money
- Go shopping
- Transportation
- Corvette '09
- Cool stuff

### Wise Women Gathering Place Wish List

If you have an item or service to donate, please contact our office at 920-490-0627. We can arrange drop-off or pick up of items. All donations are TAX-DEDUCTIBLE!

1 – Furniture: For our transitional housing for survivors of domestic abuse.

2 – Magazines and Craft items: For our programs

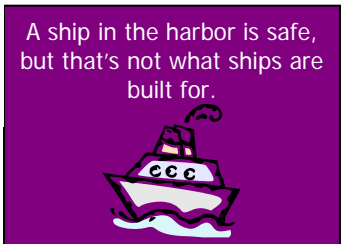
3 – Baby care items: For our Rock'n'Rest supplies and for the transitional housing.

4 – Snacks: For our Women's Talking Circle Group, Wise Youth and at other activities.

5- Volunteers! We are always looking for people to help us out on our various projects.

6- Mac Computers for graphic design work.

7- Financial donations are always welcome.



## Everyday Skills for Living from Search Institute

Try this children's game: With one hand, pat your stomach. With the other hand, rub your head. When you get that figured out, try to whistle. Now stop before anyone sees you!

It's relatively easy to think about what you need to do to play this game. But it's much harder to actually do it. The muscles just won't do what the mind wants them to do.

Social competencies are sort of like the muscles young people need to make good choices in life. One teen may want friends, but not have the skills to get to know others. Another may believe it's important to be peaceful and

nonviolent, but doesn't have the skills to react appropriately in the midst of conflict. A third teen may believe it's wrong to use drugs, but doesn't know how to say no to the friend who says, "Everybody's doing it."

Social competencies like the ones listed below are essential skills young people need for growing up healthy. Without these kinds of skills, they are not adequately equipped for life in a complex and challenging world.

Search Institute has identified 40 Developmental Assets as the building blocks that help young people grow up healthy, caring and responsible. The following

assets create social competencies for youth:

**Planning and decision making**  
Know how to plan ahead & make choices

**Interpersonal competence**  
Empathy, Sensitivity & friendship skills

**Cultural competence**  
Knowledge of & comfort with people of different backgrounds

**Resistance skills** Resist negative peer pressure & dangerous situations

**Peaceful conflict resolution**  
Resolve conflict nonviolently

What you can do to build these assets:

Talk with children about what they can do when they get into various situations where they face tough choices or where they feel uncomfortable. Role-play the kinds of skills they could use.

Involve children in family decisions and planning, showing them the skills you use. Give children opportunities to make decisions on their own.

Encourage children to build relationships with people from a wide range of races, ages, religions, sizes and abilities.

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discoverydating.com

**FIND US ON FACEBOOK!**

*Peace on Earth  
Begins at Birth!*

*We support  
Peace, Respect &  
Belonging*

## Wise Women Gathering Place Affiliations

- Sistersong Women of Color Collective
- American Indians Against Abuse
- Minority Health Disparities in Birth Outcomes
- Adolescent Parenting Coalition (APC)
- APC Adolescent Pregnancy Prevention Committee
- Governor’s Council on Domestic Violence Prevention
- Native American Suicide & Youth Leadership Conference
- DELTA Primary Prevention of Domestic Violence State Initiative
- Oneida Domestic Violence Community Coordinated Response Team
- Menominee AODA Cadre
- WI Coalition Against Domestic Violence

**WWGP Vision:** A vibrant community grounded in Peace, Respect & Belonging.

**WWGP Mission:** Our mission is to promote Peace, Respect & Belonging through skill-building, sharing of knowledge and caring support for our community.

## What We Stand For

- We believe that every person has the right to Peace, Respect and Belonging.
- We believe in informed choice of all the known risks and benefits, in all health related options.
- We believe that every woman is a midwife and every woman has the right to midwifery care during her childbearing time.
- We believe that good health is preserved by healthy relationship of family and community members.
- We believe that good health begins with successful breast-feeding.
- We believe that the safest and most appropriate care for normal birth is the least intervening care combined with skilled midwifery and watchful professional assistance when necessary.

**Wise Women Gathering Place**  
2482 Babcock Rd  
Green Bay, WI 54313

**Return Service Requested**

A Message for you  
from the Wise Women!

*Peace, Respect &  
Belonging  
for everyone*