

# Planning for the Holistic Model

## Contents

How to Use the Holistic Model	2
What Is the Holistic Model?	3
Implications for Program Design	5
What Does True Collaborative Program Design Look Like?	6
Additional Considerations	7
Conclusion	8



The **Holistic Model** was inspired by the medicine wheel and was adopted to reflect the different traditional teachings and interpretations from the many nations throughout Canada.

The Holistic Model was created by Indigenous sport leaders to support Indigenous sport participation and was shared through the Aboriginal Coaching Modules and then also adopted by the Indigenous Long-Term Participant Development Pathway. The medicine wheel is an important symbol in many Indigenous cultures (but not all) that shows the interdependence of all facets of life and is an important symbol of unity and equality. The medicine wheel also represents the ongoing and cyclical nature of change and transformation that is essential to all living creatures. One of the important principles in using the medicine wheel is that harmony and balance in all four directions is the goal of learning and change.

While the Holistic model does not explicitly exclude any group, it was not specifically designed with a focus on individuals with disabilities. However, its adaptable framework allows for modifications to meet diverse needs, including those of individuals with disabilities. By incorporating accessibility measures, adaptive programming, and equitable representation, the model can ensure inclusivity across all quadrants.

For instance, integrating para-sports alongside traditional activities and ensuring cultural and spiritual programming is accessible to all participants are ways to adapt the model for broader inclusivity. This adaptability aligns with the model's foundational principles of unity, equality, and the interdependence of all facets of life, as represented by the medicine wheel. By embracing these principles, the Holistic Model can be effectively utilized to create inclusive and supportive environments for all participants, regardless of their abilities.

The Holistic Model resonates with SOC's commitment to inclusion by addressing the multifaceted needs of participants and aligning with values of equity, respect, and collaboration. For instance, the integration of cultural teachings within sport echoes SOC's strategy to celebrate diversity and promote a sense of belonging. This alignment ensures that the SOC's programming not only supports the physical growth of athletes but also nurtures their mental, spiritual, and cultural well-being, creating a more inclusive and impactful approach to sport.

This model bridges Indigenous perspectives with broader sport frameworks, demonstrating how traditional teachings enhance holistic well-being while providing new perspectives for inclusive program design. Programs already incorporating cultural ceremonies, storytelling, and community partnerships can serve as examples of these interconnections.

## How to Use the Holistic Model



What does each of the 4 areas mean and how can they be **brought to life**?



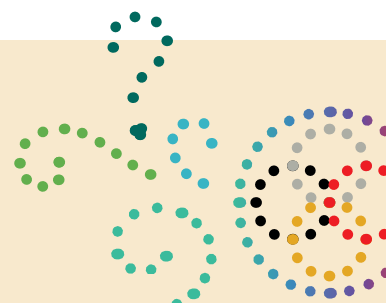
What does this mean for **programs**?



What does **true and collaborative program design** look like?

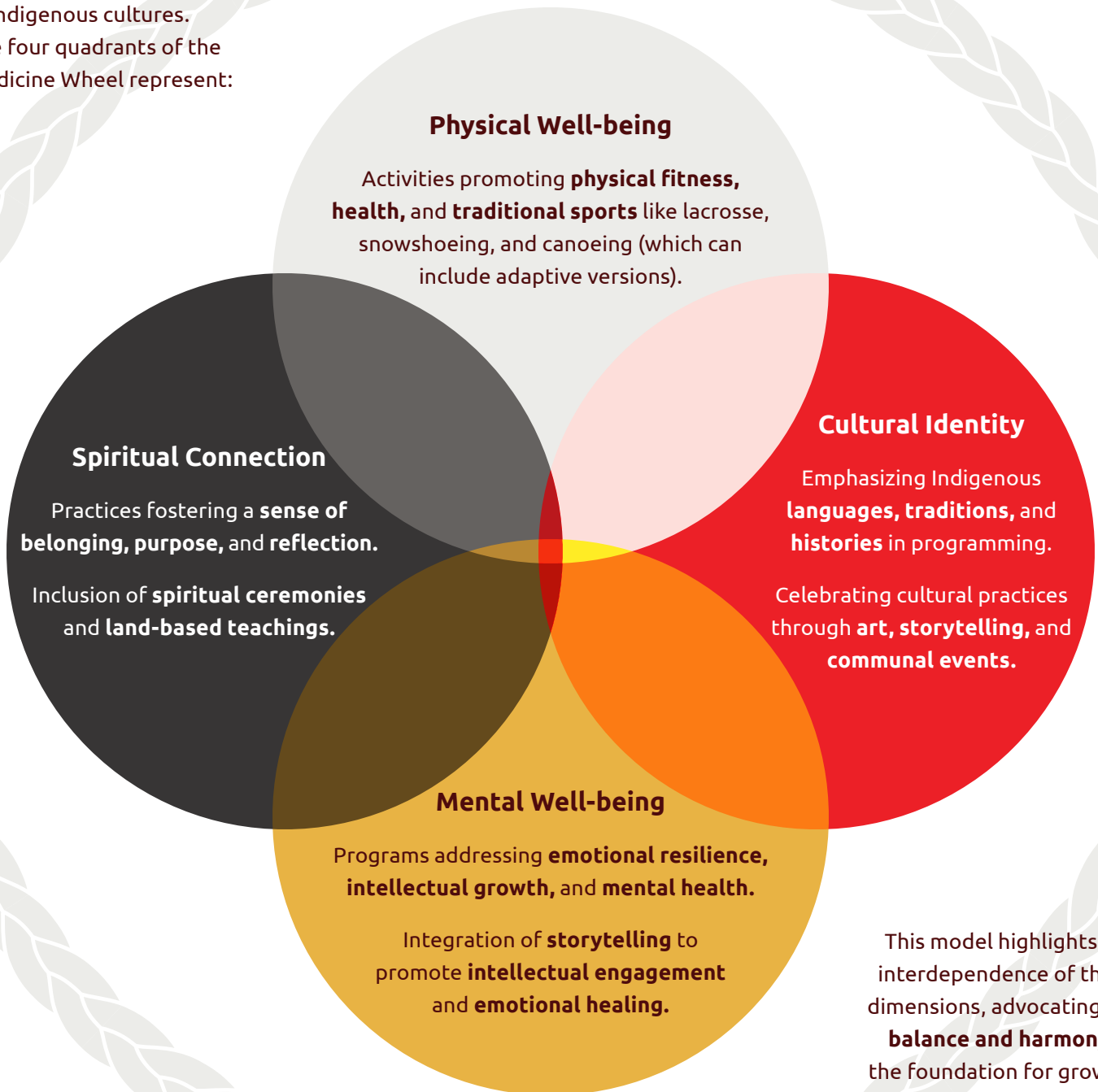


Should we **build out the 4 areas** and **identify opportunities** for SO athletes that are specific to their needs?



# What Is the Holistic Model?

The Holistic Model is based on the **Medicine Wheel**, a symbol of unity and equality in Indigenous cultures. The four quadrants of the Medicine Wheel represent:



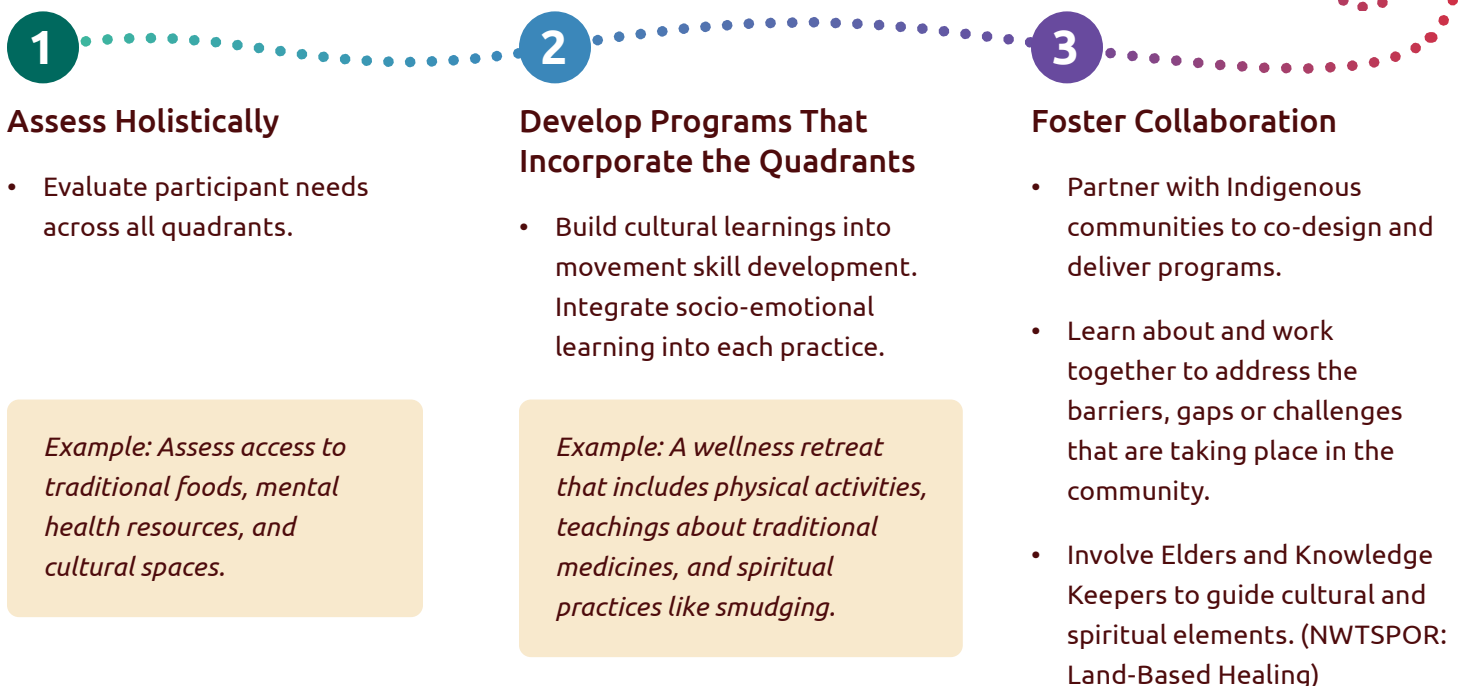
This model highlights the interdependence of these dimensions, advocating for **balance and harmony** as the foundation for growth.

([Sport for Life: Indigenous Long-Term Participant Pathway](#))

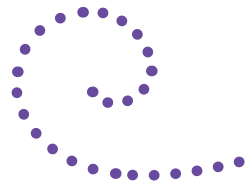
## Core Principles

- **Interconnectedness:** Each dimension of the model impacts and is influenced by the others. For example, cultural identity can enhance mental well-being, and spiritual practices can reinforce physical resilience. This principle recognizes that no single element exists in isolation.
- **Balance:** Striving for harmony across all facets of life is essential. The model promotes the idea that individuals thrive when they find equilibrium between their physical, mental, spiritual, and cultural dimensions.
- **Cyclical Nature:** Growth and change are ongoing processes. The cyclical nature of the holistic model symbolizes the continuous journey of self-improvement, learning, and adaptation over time.
- **Inclusion:** The model's framework is adaptable, ensuring all participants, including individuals with disabilities, can fully engage with and benefit from its principles. Accessibility and equitable representation are key components of this principle.
- **Community and Relationship Building:** The model emphasizes the importance of relationships and community. Collaborative approaches that involve Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and Indigenous communities ensure programs are culturally relevant and impactful.
- **Respect for Diversity:** The model recognizes that Indigenous teachings vary widely across nations. It respects these differences while finding common ground to build inclusive and adaptable programs.

## Practical Steps for Implementation



# Implications for Program Design



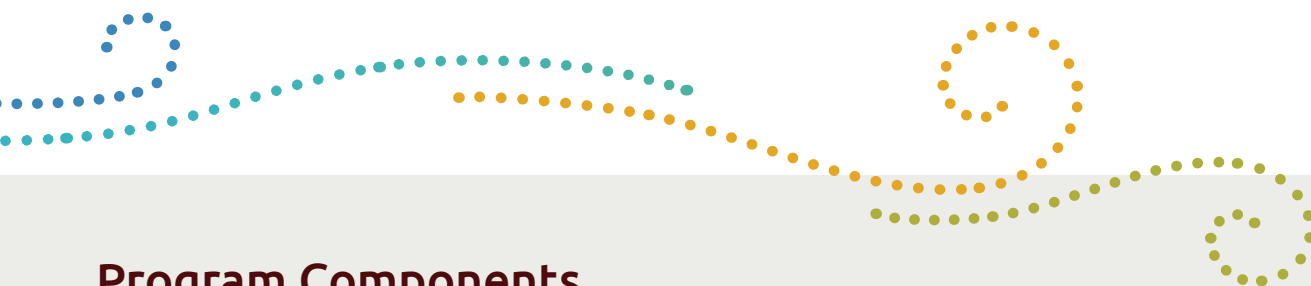
## Objectives



Promote holistic well-being through balanced programming.



Address barriers to participation and access for Indigenous communities.



## Program Components



### Physical Dimension

- Provide accessible sports facilities and inclusive physical activities.
- Incorporate traditional Indigenous sports into programming. ([Sport for Life: Indigenous Long-Term Participant Pathway](#))



### Mental Dimension

- Provide opportunities for training about emotional intelligence, stress management, and resilience.
- Use storytelling and traditional teachings to foster emotional growth. ([First Nations Health Authority](#))



### Cultural Dimension

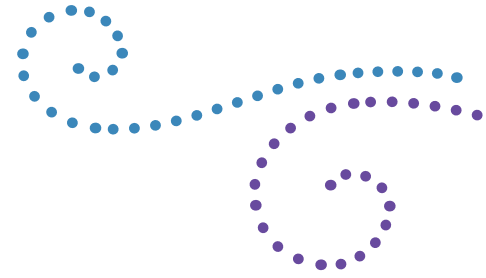
- Highlight Indigenous cultural identity through language revitalization programs, traditional art, and storytelling.



### Spiritual Dimension

- Include opportunities for participants to engage in spiritual practices such as ceremonies or land-based learning, and can support beliefs around the Creator or other religious-based practices.

# What Does True Collaborative Program Design Look Like?



## Principles of Collaboration

### Co-Creation

- Engage Indigenous communities early and meaningfully in program development.

*Example: Host consultation circles to gather input and guidance. ([Sport for Life: Indigenous Long-Term Participant Pathway](#))*

### Reciprocity

- Ensure programs provide mutual benefit and respect community priorities.

### Transparency

- Clearly define roles, goals, and expectations in partnerships.

## Implementation Steps

1

### Engage Community Leaders

- Partner with Elders and Knowledge Keepers to design culturally relevant programs.
- Connect with local organizations who are doing similar work to develop relationships and collaboration opportunities. Reach out to the PTASBs, Friendship Centres, or other community organizations. Attending community events and building relationships with community members is a helpful and supportive approach.

*Example: Co-design a youth sports initiative that integrates traditional teachings.*

- To learn more about engaging community leaders, see Hosting Recommendations and Elder Involvement resources.

2

### Provide opportunities to Empower Indigenous Leadership

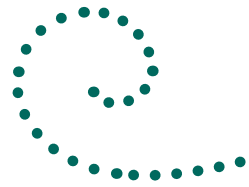
- Provide training and resources to support Indigenous facilitators and leaders.

3

### Allocate Resources Equitably

- Ensure funding supports cultural and spiritual components, along with program logistics.

# Additional Considerations



## Land-Based Learning

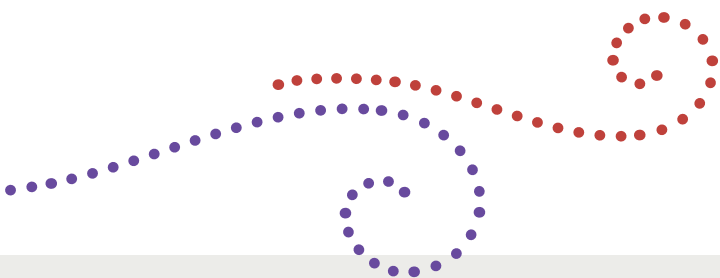
Programs should integrate teachings tied to the land, such as:

- Traditional ecological knowledge.
- Being out on the land and out of a classroom provides a rich learning experience and space to connect through mind and body to the land.
- Activities that connect participants to nature and their territories. (NWTSPOR: Land-Based Healing)

## Calls to Action

Tie programming to broader reconciliation efforts, such as the TRC Calls to Action and UNDRIP. These important guides give us starting places to understanding the historical truths and their ongoing impacts today.

- **TRC Call to Action #87–91:** Include Indigenous perspectives in sport and recreation. The 4 calls to action about sport and physical activity are important to action, and the entire 94 Calls to Action should be reviewed and additional calls planned for and actioned as opportunities arise. (Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action)
- **UNDRIP Article 25:** Support the strengthening of Indigenous spiritual and cultural relationships with their lands. ([UNDRIP Full Text](#))



## Example in Practice

### Youth Wellness Program



#### Physical

Weekly sessions on traditional sports like lacrosse.



#### Cultural

Language lessons and art projects tied to participants' heritage.



#### Mental

Storytelling workshops on resilience and confidence-building.



#### Spiritual

Guided ceremonies and teachings from Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and Indigenous Knowledge Advisors.





# Conclusion

The Holistic Model offers a transformative approach to program design, integrating physical, mental, spiritual, and cultural dimensions. By fostering collaboration with Indigenous communities and embedding these principles into every stage of program development, organizations can create meaningful, inclusive, and sustainable initiatives.

## Further Reading and References

1. **Sport for Life:** Contributions on holistic development, the Indigenous Long-Term Participant Development Pathway, and integration of sport principles. Website: <https://sportforlife.ca>
2. **First Nations Health Authority:** Perspectives on health and wellness, specifically regarding the cyclical nature of change and well-being. Website: <https://www.fnha.ca>
3. **NWTSPOR (Northwest Territories Sport):** Insights on land-based healing practices and their integration into wellness programs. Website: <https://nwtspora.ca>
4. **Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action:** Actionable steps related to Indigenous inclusion in sport and recreation. Website: <https://nctr.ca/records/reports/>
5. **UNDRIP (United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples):** Article 25, regarding the strengthening of Indigenous spiritual and cultural relationships with lands. Website: <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/>
6. **Inclusion Incorporated:** Additional insights and concluding notes. Website: <https://www.inclusionincorporated.com>