

MAREAS

Comprehensive Therapeutic Services for Children & Families



Ashley Pitawanakwat, SSW **Specialize Support Worker**

Ashley is completing her studies in the Social Service Worker Program and an Alumni Student of the Be World Ready Program at Niagara College. Ashley earned Academic Honour Roll distinction and is a dedicated volunteer as Student Representative of the Curriculum, Program Advisory Committee within the School of Community Services Department, along with the "Seeds for Community" Program within the Indigenous Lounge Department at Niagara College.

Ashley is the recipient of the Niagara Regional Chair Award and Inspires Strong Women's Award for academic achievements and community engagement. As part of an International Field Study to increase awareness of cultural diversity, Ashley travelled to

Guatemala to learn about their country's approach and delivery of a variety of community services.

Ashley is a proud Haudenosaunee person who belongs to the Wolf Clan of the Cayuga Nation. Ashley strongly values and upholds many of her cultural traditions and ceremonies she learned from living on her home reservation Six Nations of the Grand River along with her extensive time spent with the Ojibway people Wikwemikong. Ashley accredits much of my own strength and healing to the valuable teachings that have been handed down through the generations from my ancestors.

Ashley utilizes her personal learned experiences of generational trauma stemming from Canada's Residential School Era in her work. Overcoming a great deal of internal and external systemic issues and barriers, Ashley inspires others that it is possible to change the cycle and create a better future for the next generation. Story sharing and active listening are strategies Ashley strongly believes is vital part of the healing journey for Indigenous People. Ashley focus' her work with clients from the Medicine Wheel Teachings which focuses on self-care and strengthens their awareness of themselves. Her goal is to empower the client to maintain Physical, Emotional, Mental, and Spiritual wellness through exploring each of these aspects.

Ashley continues to be an active member of her community and has volunteered her time with the following programs and organizations:

- Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre (FENFC) for the past 3+ years.
- FENFC's Indigenous Homeward Bound Program
- Peer Mentor for Indigenous women who are pursuing a post-secondary education and future career
- Fort Erie Minor Lacrosse Association as a Team Manager and Trainer for the Novice Division.
- Transportation Driver for Cambrian College -transported adult students from remote parts of Manitoulin Island.

Ashley's focus on professional development continues with training in the following areas:

- Kids Help Phone Crisis Responder Training
- Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training
- CPI Non- Violent Crisis Intervention Training
- Trust Based Relational Intervention Certification (TBRI)
- Ukwe Restorative Justice Program
- First Aid/ CPR Level "C" Certification

"Be the person you needed when you were younger". -Ayesha Siddiq