Right To Play

In Canada, the organization Right To Play partners with various Indigenous communities to bring sport and play to kids who don't have easy access to team sports or after-school activities. *Chickadee* talked to two Community Mentors, Krista and Josiah, to learn more about the programs they run.



Josiah Penner is a Community Mentor based at the Youth & Family Wellness Camp through a partnership with Kenora Chiefs Advisory in Northwest Angle #33 First Nation and Naotkamegwanning First Nation in Ontario.



Krista Sockabasin is a Community Mentor at the Tobique Youth Center in Neqotkuk First Nation in New Brunswick.

Chickadee: What does it mean to you to be a Community Mentor?

Krista: Being a Community Mentor is being there for the youth, meeting them where they are at.

Josiah: I get to be a role model and show people that learning and healthy living can be fun.

Chickadee: What are popular activities at your centres?

Krista: Sports, making slime, and rollerblading! We have open gyms and sport nights.

Josiah: Soccer and baseball in the summer. Hockey in the winter. And we teach youth about healthy eating and then cook together.



Krista plays basketball with the kids and teens at the Tobique Youth Center.



Josiah organizes a a soccer clinic for Naotkamegwanning First Nation youth.

RIGHT TO PLAY
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Chickadee: What do the kids say about the programs?

Krista: They say they like learning new things and how kindness matters. We also open a space for youth to host a program. One of our seven-year-olds hosted a stress-ball craft program for everyone.

Josiah: The kids say my program has helped them learn new sports and games and gives them something to do after school.

Chickadee: What advice do you have for kids who feel nervous about trying a new sport or activity?

Krista: My advice is either dive right in or take baby steps, like entering a pool—either way is fine! Find what is comfortable for you.

Josiah: I always encourage them not to be afraid of making mistakes or not being good at it. Failure is often how we learn and is just a part of life.

PHOTOS: RIGHT TO PLAY