

Indigenous youth in central Alberta find their voices with debut single 'Moments'

New music therapy program empowers young artists to share their stories, break through isolation, and reconnect with their cultural identity

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Toronto, September 22, 2023 - The debut single 'Moments' by artist collective Nikamo ('Sing' in Cree) was released today on A4A Records, with global distribution through Warner Music Canada.

The song is the first to come out of the [Naskwahamâtowin project](#) - a collaboration between Kehewin Native Dance Theatre (KNDT) and non-profit Make Music Matter (MMM) to offer innovative mental health support for Indigenous youth. The project is supported by Bell and National Music Centre (NMC) in Calgary is also an official partner of the initiative.

'Moments' is a song about friendship and love. "It talks about the things that are saving their lives," explains Rosa John, artistic director at KNDT. Along with lead music producer Cindy Paul, she worked with local schools to create a safe space for the youth

to address the loss they have experienced in their lives and the challenges they face as survivors of intergenerational trauma.

The process of creating music through the therapy program has enabled them to face their fears. “At first, many of them were afraid of going up to the mic and by the end they were fighting to be the first in line,” says KNDT technical director Melvin John. “It was like a first spark of pride, affirming ‘I am here, standing here. I’m a student in this school. This is my voice.’”

“We are delighted to have provided support for KNDT’s music therapy program through the Bell Let’s Talk Diversity Fund,” said Mary Deacon, Chair of Bell Let’s Talk. “With this grant, KNDT is helping Indigenous youth, young adults, and Elders write, record, and perform original songs to help fight the stigma of mental illness and raise awareness for the need for increased mental health care. Bell Let’s Talk is committed to supporting organisations like KNDT that are taking meaningful action to help create positive change for people struggling with mental health issues.”

“Hearing ‘Moments’ is a powerful reminder of how music can be used to express difficult feelings and help young people feel more connected,” said Andrew Mosker, National Music Centre president and CEO. “We’re proud to support initiatives like this that are making an impact on people’s lives and offering a path to healing.”

[‘Moments’ by Nikamo is available now to stream and download on all major platforms.](#)

Nikamo’s debut EP, also entitled ‘Moments’, will feature five tracks and will be released October 20, 2023.

- Stream/download ‘Moments’: <https://lnk.to/Moments-Single>
- [‘Moments’ visualizer](#)
- [‘Moments’ single artwork](#)
- [‘Moments’ lyrics](#)
- [Nikamo artist avatar](#)
- [Photos](#) from the *Naskwahamâtowin* Healing in Harmony project

About Nikamo

Nikamo ('Sing' in Cree) is an artist collective featuring Indigenous youth from Kehewin Cree Nation, Goodfish Lake, Onion Lake, Cold Lake, and Saddle Lake in central Alberta, Canada. They were brought together through the *Naskwahamâtowin* Healing in Harmony project and have transformed into empowered and fearless artists. Inspired by their own stories, their families, and community Elders, Nikamo are helping to keep their Indigenous culture alive.

About Kehewin Native Dance Theatre

[Kehewin Native Dance Theatre](#) offers community workshops, training, educational resources, and performances that incorporate Indigenous theatre, dance, music, and storytelling. They have dazzled audiences across Canada and worldwide with performances by champion Pow Wow dancers, hoop dancers, breathtaking contemporary dancers, and renowned drummers, singers, and storytellers.

[Website](#) // [Facebook](#)

About Make Music Matter

Make Music Matter uses the creative process as a therapeutic tool to help heal trauma and empower marginalised voices. Its innovative Healing in Harmony music therapy program has helped transform the lives of over 12,000 individuals in eight countries worldwide. Songs created through the program are professionally produced and released globally, serving as advocacy tools to promote human rights and combat stigma. [Website](#) // [Instagram](#) // [Linked In](#) // [Facebook](#) // [Twitter](#)

About Bell Let's Talk

The Bell Let's Talk Diversity Fund provides grants for organisations working to reduce the stigma of mental illness and increase access to culturally informed mental health and well-being support for BIPOC communities. Since the launch in 2020, 39 organisations from across the country have received grants.

About National Music Centre | Centre National de Musique

The National Music Centre (NMC) is a national catalyst for discovery, innovation and renewal through music. In its new home at Studio Bell, NMC will preserve and celebrate Canada's music story and inspire a new generation of music lovers through

programming that includes on-site and outreach education programs, performances, artist incubation, and exhibitions.

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For further information and to arrange an interview, please contact:

Make Music Matter:

Rebecca Purver, Media and Communications Manager

rebecca@makemusicmatter.org // 514-578-2036

Kehewin Native Dance Theatre:

Rosa John, Artistic Director

rosajohn57@yahoo.com // 780-573-8584