



Podcast - Hearing the stories of our health: Perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis youth - Destiny Henry-Rinsma

Description

The NCCIH undertook a national digital storytelling project, *Hearing the stories of our health: Perspectives of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis youth* to better understand what health and well-being mean to Indigenous young people. Nine of the digital storytellers participated in this podcast series where they could further reflect on their lives, their communities, and what health really means to them in a world that often forgets to ask them.

Bios

Victoria Grisdale



I am Victoria Grisdale, I am an Anishinaabe woman from Brokenhead Ojibway Nation and Filipino. I am 24 and attending the University of Winnipeg studying Human Rights. I have been working and advocating for First Nations youth since I was 19 in multiple roles, from working in a youth shelter to working in youth housing in First Nations government. I am passionate about making real positive changes for First Nations youth and amplifying other youth voices on issues important to us.

Destiny Henry-Rinsma

My name is Destiny Henry-Rinsma. I am originally from Telegraph Creek but I was born and raised in Prince George (BC). I am sixteen years old. I am aiming and working towards becoming a doctor.



Transcript

-Music-

Victoria Grisdale: Welcome to *Hearing the stories of our health: Perspectives of First Nations, Métis and Inuit youth*, a podcast series produced by the National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health, in partnership with Birchbark Collaborative.

My name is Victoria Grisdale, and I am the host of this podcast. From May to July of 2025, 13 Indigenous youth came together in Winnipeg, Prince George, and Ottawa to develop digital stories on what health means to them.

This podcast isn't a polished studio production; it's real talk. It's about Indigenous youth reflecting on their lives, their communities, and what health really means to them in a world that often forgets to ask them.

In this episode, First Nations youth, Destiny Henry-Rinsma, spoke about her healing journey and the importance of mental health.

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Victoria Grisdale: So first, can you introduce yourself with your name, community, and age?

Destiny Henry-Rinsma: My name is Destiny Henry-Rinsma. I'm originally from Telegraph Creek, but I was born and raised in Prince George, and I'm 16 years old.

Victoria Grisdale: Do you have any future goals?

Destiny Henry-Rinsma: I want to become a doctor.

Victoria Grisdale: Okay.

Destiny Henry-Rinsma: I've always had the dream of becoming a doctor, but I never really thought that it was going to work out. So, when it finally came to me again, I'm like, "It's what I want to be," and I'm aiming and working towards becoming a doctor for my future career.

Victoria Grisdale: Okay. You feel called to some healing work?

Destiny Henry-Rinsma: Yes, it's either a doctor, a social worker, or a massage therapist. Yeah.



Victoria Grisdale: Those are great careers, and I think you would do wonderful in any one of them.

Destiny Henry-Rinsma: Thank you.

Victoria Grisdale: If you could describe what your digital story is about, what would you say?

Destiny Henry-Rinsma: I would say that my digital story is about my healing journey, and not just kind of the pain I went through, but how I overcome the pain and how I overcame it. And it talks a lot about what I was feeling and what kind of happened in my past. And then, it also talks about how I overcame it, like I said.

And it has all these – it has two quotes, and I really resonate with both of them. One is that the world can be brutal, but it's up to you if you just want to either survive it or truly live it. The second one is, it's not about creating yourself – I mean, it's not about finding yourself, it's about creating yourself. And I live by those two quotes because it really is very true. It's like, you can either just survive and just skate through life, or you can live and you can pursue stuff that you like, and find more interests and hobbies that you like to do.

I have a couple of culture pictures in the front of my digital story because as soon as I found my culture and found what I like, and started doing more cultural stuff, I started healing a lot of the trauma already without even trying. So, to me, culture is a really, really big thing because it helped me heal and helped me a lot on my healing journey. And when I go up North, I can feel a lot of the pain coming off.

Victoria Grisdale: I think that is wonderful. And yeah, culture is such a big part of health and healing, and helps your spiritual and your mental and physical health in that way, right?

What is important to you about health as an Indigenous youth, especially an Indigenous youth that wants to go into a medical career, potentially?

Destiny Henry-Rinsma: Well, a lot of people overlook Indigenous people and say that they won't be able to do it because of their past. And how everybody else treats them, is like, “They will just end up in jail, or they end up on the streets,” or anything like that. And, to me, it really, really hurts because a lot of people are bringing Indigenous people down. And as an Indigenous person, I would love to overcome that and prove them wrong. Because there's people out there that are Indigenous that really want something, and other people are saying something and it's kind of bringing them down, and it's making them think that they can't do it when they really can.

And a lot of it's in the mindset, too. Just because you're an Indigenous person doesn't mean you can't do something a non-Indigenous person can do. I mean, we've survived centuries on our own without



electricity or anything. And we learned how to hunt, fish, and all these other things to stay alive throughout the winter and through the summer. And we prepare food for the winter, and we make sure that we prepare food for our Elders too, who can't prepare food themselves for the winter. And as an Indigenous person, I think that a lot of stuff is aimed at us, which is not really good stuff; a lot of negative energy towards us. And then some people take that negative energy and they hold on to it, and they never let it go.

And then there's other Indigenous people who take it, kind of destroy it, and then let it go because they know that as an Indigenous person, they can overcome stuff. And we have a lot of trauma because of residential school, and it's going to take a long time for our generations. But working on it, and admitting to the residential stuff and how it hurt and actually healing it will help a lot more. And breaking the cycles would hopefully help non-Indigenous people see what's happening and how we can overcome stuff.

Victoria Grisdale: I think that's incredibly powerful, talking about the way in which colonization still impacts us today, especially when it comes to that mental aspect and feeling like we're stuck in a box, and have to be this or that when that's not the case. But our potential is limitless as Indigenous youth, right? And there's a million different directions that we can go and I think it's incredibly powerful to hear you talk about it.

Destiny Henry-Rinsma: Thank you.

Victoria Grisdale: So, my next question is: did the workshop impact the way that you think about health?

Destiny Henry-Rinsma: It helped me realize that my health matters and that I can still help people with their health, but putting them first before my health is not an option and never will be, and it never was. But when I was putting other people first in their health and taking the 'your health matters' or their health matters very, very seriously. And I took it upon myself, and I was such a big people pleaser, I try to make other people happy. I was changing every little detail about myself to make other people like me, to fit in, and to want to be cool and to have friends because I was Indigenous and I didn't know other Indigenous people. But a lot of times nobody wanted to be my friend because of my personality, or because of my background, or because where I come from, or because of the color of my skin.

And if you think about it, it's really disrespectful because the color of your skin doesn't change anything. It just shows a color that is your skin. It's like the color of your hair. It doesn't really change anything. The color of your eyes doesn't really change anything. It's kind of who you are. And I used to put a lot of people first because of that, and making this video made me realize that putting other



people, other people's health first, is not an option. And that's the only thing it helped me realize, other than I've went through a really, really, rough past, but then I've overcome it.

So, it helped me realize two things: that other people's health before yours is not a priority and not an option, and that I did go through hard times and that I did overcome it. And the next hard thing that comes, I will be able to overcome it. So, that's what my digital health story helped me out with.

Victoria Grisdale: Were there any specific skills that you learned in this workshop that you were excited and liked to learn?

Destiny Henry-Rinsma: To be honest, a bit of patience.

Victoria Grisdale: Yeah?

Destiny Henry-Rinsma: Even though I said that for one thing in the beginning, the tiniest thing can make me mad. Like if I drop a spoon and I have to wash it again, I can get really mad at that. I get pretty mad really easily. And a lot of the times I hit my own tablet because it's being slow, it's not doing what I want it to, or it's doing something else. And knowing that these weren't my tablets and I didn't have the money to pay for them, I had to calm down and breathe and be like, "I can't hit it, I can't throw it, I can't throw something, I can't hit anyone here or anything." And it helped me realize that just stepping aside to breathe and take a moment really helps me with that anger part. Because I haven't fully healed with it, because I left it behind.

So definitely, what I learned from this workshop was definitely patience.

Victoria Grisdale: I think that's a good skill to learn. I'm glad this was a nice place for you to practice and learn some different coping techniques when you're frustrated.

And if you did another digital story about health, would there be anything else you'd want to say? Any other untold stories?

Destiny Henry-Rinsma: No, not for me. The only thing I would add to this story would be my healing journey on self-harm because I used to self-harm a lot. I'm not going to say why; that's for a different time. I would definitely add that I used to self-harm, but now I am – I think it was a year and nine months clean from self-harming. So, I would definitely add that but I wouldn't change or add anything else.

Victoria Grisdale: Okay, that's incredible. And is there anything you'd like to share with other Indigenous youth who watch your video?



Destiny Henry-Rinsma: Just to know that they're not alone and that they – it's all about the mindset. People who say that they can't do it and people say that they can, both will have the same outcome; they will both be right. Because it's all about your mindset because if you say that you can do something, and you work for it and you don't just sit there and say like, “Oh, I'm going to do it tomorrow. I'll work for it tomorrow. I want to go and get a job tomorrow.” If you say you can and you believe it, and you work for it, you will be able to do anything you set your mind to. That saying is actually true. I never, ever thought that I'd be this far along with [being] clean from self-harm, but I put in the work, even though it was so hard, and I had the right mindset because I didn't like the way it looked – it made me look bad. It made me have scars and I didn't want any more scars than I already have.

But just to know that they're not alone, that mindset can really change everything. To work for what they want and not just to sit there and expect it to all be handed to them because they're Indigenous. And to prove anybody wrong who says that you can't do something that you really want to do. And to reach out when you need help because communication is a really big thing that I am still working on today.

Victoria Grisdale: That's a – communication is a great skill to have, and to also be willing to reach out to people when you need it.

And so, your story is about your healing journey. Did going through those things – how did going through those things and overcoming that impact the way that you view health today?

Destiny Henry-Rinsma: As soon as I started healing, I started going for more walks. I started to see physical health differently. And instead of physical health, just be working out. It can be either swimming, it can be going for walks, doing something fun that gets your breath going and your heart beating. For me, I love to walk. I absolutely love it, but because of where I live now, it's kind of hard to walk around.

But it's definitely helped me see a lot more in my physical health. Knowing that it's not just one thing and it can be a lot of more things. My spiritual health – I started connecting with my ancestors more. I started talking to my mom more, and I started to see the value in my emotional health and my mental health because a lot of it has to do with like that – your physical, your mental, your emotional, and your spiritual, those four are the biggest things. And as soon as I started my healing journey, I got a new point of view on all four of those health. And it's really changed how I see myself and how I see other people, and how I want to live them, and how I want every single one of those four that I just named in my life in a positive way.



Victoria Grisdale: That's amazing to hear. Thank you for sharing. I think that is all the questions I have for you then for today.

Thank you so much for joining me for this podcast today. It was lovely to speak with you. You are an incredibly bright young woman, and I cannot wait to see where the future takes you.

Destiny Henry-Rinsma: Thank you.

-Music-

Victoria Grisdale: To hear more podcasts in this series, head to the *Hearing the stories of our health: Perspectives of First Nations, Inuit and Métis youth* on the National Collaborating Centre for Indigenous Health website, nccih.ca. Music on this podcast by DJ Taj Rashid, is licensed and royalty free under Final Cut Pro software, used as part of this project. Finally, a special thanks to the TD Bank Group for generously supporting this project.

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