



lotóhrha / December 2019

Ratiwennenhá:wi

Kanehsatà:ke's Kanien'kéha Adult Immersion Program

"Canada's Aboriginal languages are among the most endangered in the world"

UNESCO, 1996, Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger of Disappearing, Ed.
Stephen A. Wurm, Paris, UNESCO, p. 23.

Kanehsatà:ke has the oldest Kanien'kéha spoken language but it is at a critical stage with less than 60 fluent speakers, a few speakers under 40 years old and only **5** Kanien'kéha teachers. In 2015, a community assessment was conducted for the Kanehsatà:ke Education Center that showed our community and schools needed a "succession plan," meaning Kanehsatà:ke urgently needs young adults to become fluent and be the next generation of teachers, translators, curriculum developers. Consequently, MLCA goes after funding, year after year, to offer a multi-year adult language immersion program. Kanehsatà:ke Education Center has been a strong supporter of **Ratiwennenhá:wi**, our immersion program now in its 4th year.

Kontinónhstats- Mohawk Language Custodian Association (MLCA) is a successful, ethical, and responsible Not-for-profit organization mandated to preserve, promote and revitalize our Kanien'kéha language that is embedded in our culture, history and legends. MLCA coordinates all language activities from the early planning stages to the program and learner evaluations.

Our experienced and dedicated Kanien'kéha teachers are hired for their specialized skills they have acquired from teaching in Language Nests, Immersion, and Adult Immersion in Quebec and Ontario. We began with 7 dedicated students who were immersed in the language, culture and history for 2 years. In 2019, our 4th year, we now have 10 students and graduated our first fluent speaker, who has found employment in Kanehsatà:ke - **using Kanien'kéha**.

Major expenses for our multi-year Immersion program include teacher salaries, stipends for the students and dedicated support staff for teachers and language programs. While some people balk at students receiving stipends to learn their language, other people are paid to learn French and English— **we have proven that learning and using our language can lead to meaningful employment opportunities and the protection of Kanien'kehá:ka identity and culture.**

Niawenhkó:wa

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