

Why do we need immersion?

The Wolastoqey language is the essence of the people, their worldview, and their homeland. Currently, there are no Wolastoqey immersion schools and the language is at risk of extinction. Almost all fluent Wolastoqey speakers are 65 years and older.

And because of the age of most fluent speakers, there is only a short window of time to involve them in the revitalization of the Wolastoqey language.

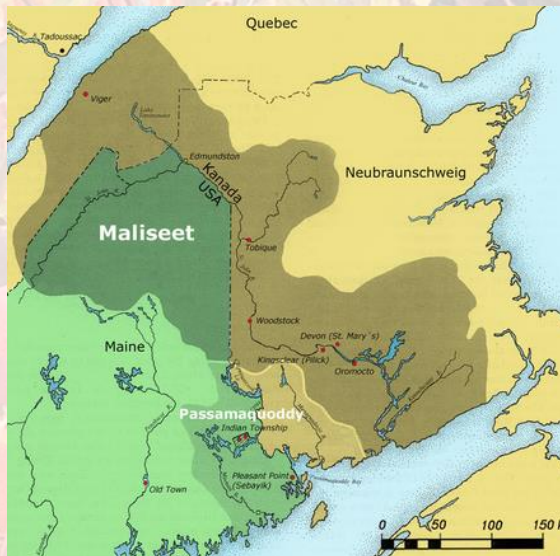
Can you revitalize a language through immersion?

Early childhood land-based immersion has been proven successful in Mi'kmaq, Mohawk, Hawaiian and other Indigenous nations.

The process of revitalization requires resources, such as curriculum development, teacher training, land, and shelter from the elements. With the help of your donation, we can move forward in starting an early childhood land-based Wolastoqey immersion school.

Overview of the Wolastoqey language

Wolastoqiyik – “The people of the beautiful river” (Wolastoq)



The Wolastoqiyik (Maliseet) are an Algonquian-speaking nation of the Wabanaki Confederacy. They are the Indigenous “people of the beautiful river” -- the Wolastoq (Saint John River) and its valley and all of its tributaries (the dark green and brown on the above map). Their territory extends across the current borders of New Brunswick, Québec, and Maine.

Wolastoqey population

The Wolastoqey nation is made up of 8 communities and has a total population of about 10,000 individuals.

Wolastoqey language

The Wolastoqey language is on the verge of extinction. There is fewer than 100 people, the vast majority aged 65 and older, who are fluent in the language. Despite enormous challenges, Wolastoqiyik people and allies are mobilizing to save this precious language.

UNESCO classified Wolastoqey as a severely endangered language

The language is spoken almost exclusively by grandparents and older generations; while the parent generation may still understand the language, they seldom speak it to their children.

What is required to revitalize a severely endangered language

In 2002-2003 UNESCO set up a framework of 9 language vitality factors that determine viability of a language. We at the Kehkimin land-based immersion school understand what it will require and are ready to help save this language.

About us

Kehkimin is a not-for-profit organization aiming to help revitalize the Wolastoqey (Maliseet) language through land-based immersion education.

The primary mission of Kehkimin is to sustain and strengthen the Wolastoqey language revitalization movement through immersive language and land-based education that are embedded in the life ways of Wolastoqiyik.

Kehkimin will help create new generations of fluent Wolastoqey speakers that will help to re-connect to the language and life ways of the Wolastoqiyik and will empower particularly Wolastoqiyik young people to carry the language and ways of life forward for future generations.

Kehkimin will begin to intake students in September 2022 in the Fredericton area with a first class of K4 students.

“Kehkimin” means “Teach me”

Can immersion deprive my child from learning English?

"Parents must not believe that immersion in the language will deprive their children of opportunities to advance academically, due to a lack of English. Studies have shown that bilingualism does not hinder, but enhances, a child's development."

(Marianne B. Ignace, *Handbook for Aboriginal Language Program*)

Help Kehkimin save our language

Please reach out to us if you have any questions or if you wish to donate to our not-for-profit land-based immersion school.

Donate at our **GOFUNDME**: Kehkimin Wolastoqey Language Immersion School

Email: Kehkiminlang@gmail.com

Web: Kehkimin.org

Kehkimin: Wolastoqey Land-Based Immersion Education

