The Indigenous Wellness Program at the First Nations Health Authority uses a 'sexual wellbeing model' to build and strengthen conversations around traditional knowledge and ways of being in regards to healthy sexuality. It is a strengths-based model, which acknowledges healthy sexuality as an important aspect of overall holistic health and wellness.
### Protecting Communities
- Cooperation and respect are essential to protecting our communities for future generations.
- Knowing how to protect your community means knowing how to protect yourself from communicable diseases, including sexually transmitted infections.
  - This looks like learning more about STIs/STBBIs, how they are transmitted, and knowing where you can access testing or treatments.
  - Protecting your body ultimately means protecting your partner(s), your family and your community.

### Healthy Relationships
- Kindness and balance are fundamental teachings for living life in a good way with our partner(s), friends and our families.
- In addition to having healthy relationships with the people in our lives, it is also important that we have a healthy relationship with ourselves.
  - Developing and maintaining healthy relationships means learning about consent, boundaries, conflict resolution, self-care and balance.

### Identity
- Love and patience are at the heart of knowing oneself. Colonization has impacted our identities as Indigenous people, socially, culturally and sexually.
  - Loving ourselves and having patience while exploring our identities is important to maintaining wellness.
  - This means learning more about traditional and contemporary perspectives on gender identity and expression, and finding what works for us.

### Adulthood/Rites of Passage
- Traditionally and historically, sexuality was not perceived as shameful as it sometimes is today, and healthy sexuality was seen as a holistic part of health.
- Learning about our bodies was part of our teachings, and many Nations celebrate (and continue to celebrate) 'rites of passage' ceremonies.
  - This served as a way to honour the transition from adolescence to adulthood and independence and all of the responsibilities that accompany this transition.
  - Many of our communities practised, and are starting to practise again, a puberty rites ceremony.

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**Working with the Sexual Wellbeing Model: Learning Components**

**Protecting Communities**
- STBBIs (Sexually transmitted blood-borne infections such as HIV and HCV)
- STIs (Sexually Transmitted Infections)
- Safer Sex: communication, condoms, and consent
- Community resources for STI testing, access to condoms and contraceptives, good resources, and safe people to ask questions of

**Healthy Relationships**
- Decision-making and consent
- Boundaries, communication and knowing yourself
- Lateral kindness vs. lateral violence
- Self-care

**Identity**
- Gender Identity
- Gender expression
- Non-judgmental
- Inclusion and celebrating differences

**Adulthood/Rites of Passage**
- Creating an environment to learn about healthy sexuality
- Stigma and judgment around sexual health a colonial concept
- Sexual health tied to mental, spiritual, emotional and physical health
- Responsibility of relationships