



## **THE FNEC RALLIES TO GET YOUNG PEOPLE MOVING DURING THE PANDEMIC**

**Wendake, June 7, 2021** – Dismayed at the cancellation of the 13th annual Inter-school Games in 2020, which would have brought together more than 900 young people from Québec's First Nations, the First Nations Education Council (FNEC) has found an alternative solution to get young people moving while respecting safety standards in the context of a pandemic.

It was in this proactive spirit that the Ancestors' Challenge was born, a mobile obstacle course providing students with a sporting competition right in their own communities, all while respecting the recommendations made by Public Health.

"I firmly believe that staying cognitively sharp and alert throughout the day requires students who are fit, healthy, and proud of their accomplishments. The FNEC is continuing to set up more initiatives to ensure that students continue learning throughout their lives," says Denis Gros-Louis, FNEC Director General.

The Ancestors' Challenge, developed in collaboration with David Gill, an athlete from the Pekuakamiulnu First Nation, provides students with an opportunity to conquer the hardships of their ancestors' way of life, all in their own school yard. Extra efforts were made to ensure that the course can be adapted so that all students can participate in the challenge, regardless of their athletic abilities.

"I feel privileged to collaborate with the FNEC on this project which I believe will promote academic and athletic achievement for many years to come," added David Gill, Innu and project designer.

The initiative kicked off at the Wahta' school in Wendake on May 17th, in the respect of the bubble-classes. The travelling event then made its way to Kanesatake, followed by Wemotaci, in dynamic style and a safe environment, to the great enjoyment of all.

The next stop on the Ancestors' Challenge tour will take place in Mashteuiatsh on June 8th and 10th. Please contact Ms. Eve Bastien for interview or filming requests at [media@cepn-fnec.com](mailto:media@cepn-fnec.com).

From June 14th to the 18th, Kahnawake will have its turn at the Ancestors' Challenge, which will go on to visit more than 15 other communities by the end of 2021. To find out more, visit <https://ancestorschallenge.com/>

This first edition has been made possible thanks to the commitment of school staff, the financial support of our main partners, including the First Nations of Québec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission, the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux du Québec and Indigenous Services Canada, and the generosity of our sponsors, which include RBA Financial Group, Référence Systèmes and Groupe RDL Québec Inc. We sincerely thank them for encouraging young First Nations athletes.

### **About the FNEC**

The FNEC is an organization that has been working for more than 35 years towards the recognition of the First Nations right to exercise full control over their education, equipped with the necessary resources that are designed and managed based on their values and cultures. For more information, visit its website at [www.cepn-fnec.com](http://www.cepn-fnec.com).