



Bad River Health and Wellness Center

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Miikanens Niizh

October 15, 2026

Boozhoo relatives, families, and community members,

It is with warmth and gratitude that we welcome you to learn more about Miikanens Niizh, a culturally grounded Community Partnership Diversion Youth Justice program for youth ages 12–17. This work is rooted in the strengths of the Bad River community and in our shared commitment to walking alongside young people and families with care, respect, and understanding.

Miikanens Niizh is being developed to support youth who may be experiencing mental health needs, substance-use needs, or co-occurring needs. Through diversion and wraparound services, the program seeks to connect youth and families with support before justice-system involvement whenever possible. Youth and family voice will guide this work, including the supports chosen, the goals identified, and the relationships built along the way.

The foundation of Miikanens Niizh is Ojibwemowin, Anishinaabe values, and cultural teachings that affirm each young person's dignity, identity, and belonging. The program is intended to offer trauma-responsive and culturally and linguistically appropriate support, recognizing that healing grows through trusted relationships, family connection, cultural knowledge, and community-based care. We will approach each conversation with care for confidentiality and respect for the experiences, strengths, and choices of youth and families.



Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians

At the Bad River Health & Wellness Center, planned and expanding activities include an afterschool program starting October 26, 2026 Monday, Wednesday, and Friday and on several weekends.

We invite collaboration from youth and families, schools, youth programs, youth justice partners, mental health and substance-use providers, cultural leaders, tribal leadership and all other community partners who share a commitment to youth wellness. Each partner brings knowledge and strengths that can help create more connected, respectful, and responsive pathways for young people.

As Miikanens Niizh develops, the program is building shared referral, screening, assessment, and intervention processes, along with partnership pathways that support timely and coordinated care. A target milestone for this development is December 31, 2026. This is a target for continued progress, not a completed requirement, and the process will remain grounded in transparency, collaboration, and community voice.

Miigwetch for the care you already provide to the youth and families of Bad River. We welcome your questions, ideas, cultural guidance, and partnership as this work grows. Together, we can strengthen belonging, honor youth and family voice, and support community-based healing in ways that reflect Bad River's values and wisdom.

With respect,

Deb Tutor

Bad River Health Assistant Director