



## B.C. First Nations Head Start Curriculum: Weaving

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Many First Nations use natural materials to create practical items for daily use. In coastal communities, some Nations use cedar bark to weave clothing and baskets. Although many items are made for specific useful purposes, they are also beautiful works of art. The following activity is a group project, which creates a lasting work of art, as well as a functional divider or wall covering for your program.

### **What you need**

- Large piece of plastic-covered chicken wire
- Wood dowelling or long sticks to anchor the chicken wire at the top and at the bottom
- Various materials to weave: fabric and paper torn into lengths, wool, old shoe laces, pieces of hide or fur, dried weeds, feathers

### **What to do**

Weave the wood dowelling or sticks through the top and bottom of the chicken wire to make a frame. Fold back and bind sharp ends of wire. Securely fasten the framework to the floor and ceiling or wall. If room is left on both sides of the weaving frame, children will be able to weave from both sides. Adults can lift children up to put items higher up on the frame.

Choose a convenient place in your centre to install the framework. This is a long-term, on-going project.

Bring in different examples of weaving to show the children. These could include baskets, fabric, a woven mat of construction paper, or a bird's nest.

Place baskets of weaving materials next to the wire frame. Children can work on the weaving as they choose. Even toddlers can participate, as they may enjoy removing and replacing items.

As different items are added, and children weave in a variety of ways, the chicken wire frame will become a colorful, textured fabric wall.

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Adapted from: *Child Care in Our Communities* (p. 22 - 23). Part of the *Our Children, Our Ways* series (ECE in First Nations and Inuit Communities).

The *Our Children, Our Ways* series can be purchased from Duvall House Publishing (Edmonton)  
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