

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF BLACK ASH AND SPLINT BASKETRY TO THE AKWESASNE KANIENTEHAKA (MOHAWK)

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Black ash basketry is one of the many ways in which the Akwesasne Kanienkehaka identify with and express their rich heritage. The Kanienkehaka have faced multiple cultural and social challenges since their first contact with European society. These challenges have sometimes had negative social, psychological, lifestyle, and health consequences for the Kanienkehaka.

Black ash basketry directly connects the Kanienkehaka to their past and is linked to language and ceremonies.

For many, it expresses their cultural identity. Black ash basketry is considered a form of medicine, providing healing through the Kanienkehaka's expression of the natural world and of their cultural heritage.

Without black ash, the Kanienkehaka will lose a resource that defines their culture, provides a link to their heritage, and serves as an important medicine.