

# NWT HEALTHY COMMUNITIES Toolkit

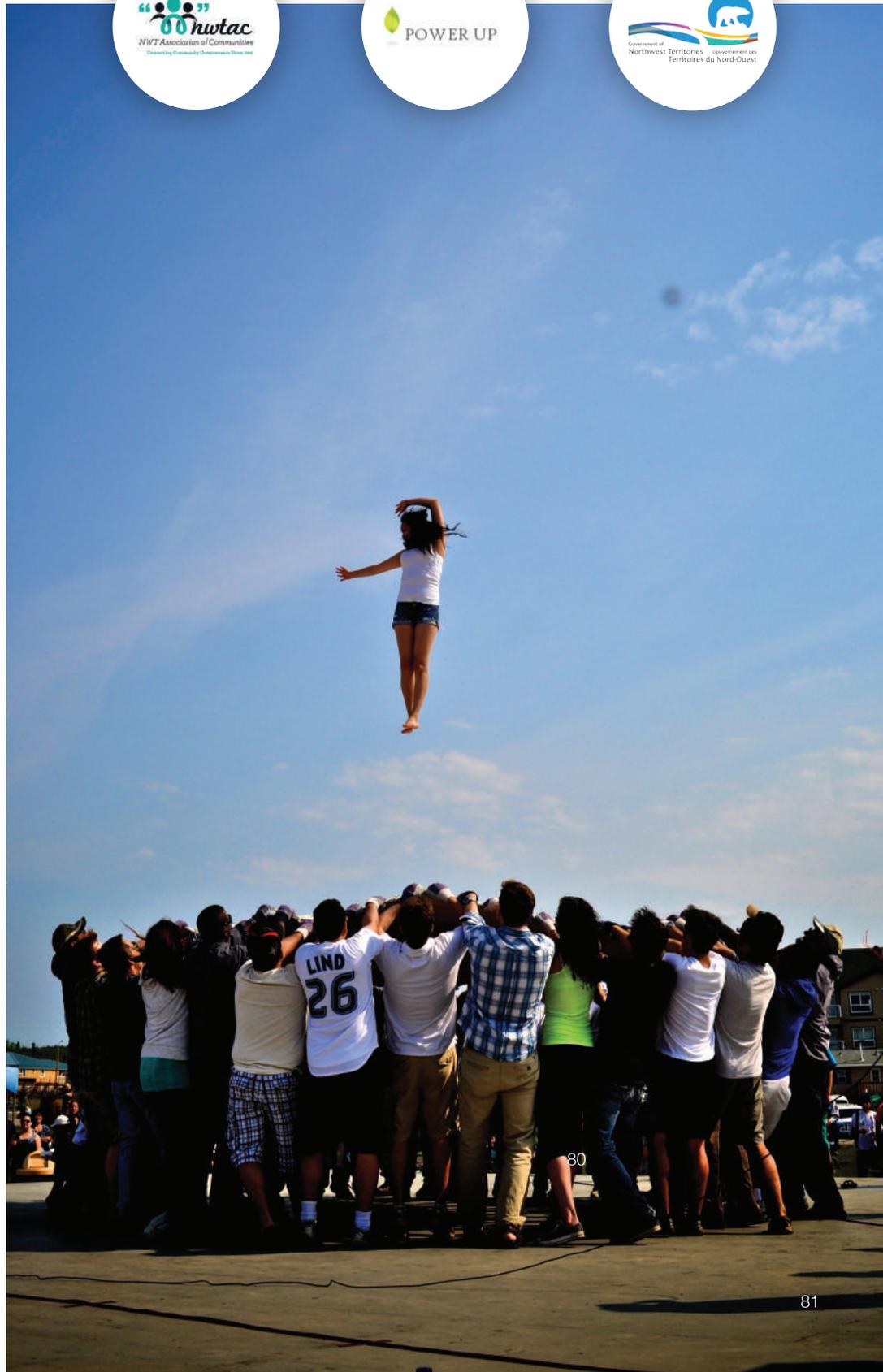
## Importance of Tradition

**Traditional Games help enhanced the connection of our culture throughout time.**

Not only by playing a significant role in encouraging young and old to sharpen their skills on the land and survival, but connecting young and old, showing respect for the land and animals in the making of the different tools used in the games. It is another conduit in the sharing of traditions and teachings.

The games strengthen the relationship we have with each other, the land and its wildlife, and our history as we move forward in a modern world. Building on the inner strength we all have, the games prepare fine motor skills and discipline to youth, as we grow the games takes a role of not only physical strength but mental strength. These are not just games, but a way of life connecting growth and responsibility into the lives of those of those who wish to be part of them.

# Culture & Community OF TRADITIONAL GAMES





# Blanket Toss (Nalukatuk)

## Benefits of Traditional Games:

Keeps the traditions of celebration, gathering and sharing alive. Source of pride and cultural reflection.

Develops strength, endurance, agility, survival, resistance to pain, patience and teamwork.

Practising the values customs of the past by coming together in a spirit of fun and friendly social exchange.

Provide many opportunities for leadership development and peer cooperation skills.

Wonderful elements of positive good mental health.

Promotes community relationships with youth, adults and elders in the community.

Lifelong activity that promotes lifelong physical activity.

Requires minimal equipment or facilities. Therefore not expensive like many other sports.

Reinforce the power of culture and the traditional ways that people are able to have fun on the land.

**The blanket toss originated with Inuit hunters because someone who was tossed into the air could spot caribou, whales, or other animals in the distance.**

Elders also speak of a time when the blanket toss was part of the ceremony to mark the close of a successful whaling season. Whaling captains were first to be tossed and while high in the air, they would throw gifts such as baleen and tobacco to the crowd.

**The blanket toss (Nalukatuk) is arguably the most widely recognized event in the Northern Games.** A large group of "pullers" gather around the edges of a blanket to stretch it out at waist height. After a participant climbs into the centre, the pullers rhythmically raise and lower the blanket.

## Recommendations for Communities

Work with local aboriginals organizations to organize the following:

- Host competitions
- Orientation programs for new members and visitors to your community
- Make it a part of the Youth Programming in your recreation department