

ABORIGINAL MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS

Where to go when you're looking for help

Mental health and wellness services for First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities* are available both through specialized Aboriginal services and mainstream services offering care to Aboriginal peoples living in urban and rural areas, as well as in First Nations communities.

Health, healing and wellness for Aboriginals is about balancing oneself in four areas: emotion, mind, body and spirit or soul. This balance contributes to achieving harmony with family, nature, spirituality and community. Traditional healing incorporates various practices, such as healing ceremonies with dances, songs, prayers and natural medicines; talking circles; sweat lodges; and other higher-level medicine society healing ceremonies conducted by authentic and highly trained medicine society leaders, traditional healers and Elders or knowledge keepers. This holistic approach is in contrast to more mainstream treatment models that tend to focus more on the individual than the community, and on the physical body and medication rather than the whole human being.

Two excellent Health Canada programs enable registered private practitioners to provide free counselling services. These are the:

- Non-Insured Health Benefits[NIHB] program, which provides crisis counselling for people with a Status Card and no work health benefits. They offer 15 one-hour sessions over 20 weeks. For a list of service providers in Ontario, call 1-800-881-3921.
- Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program, which provides residential schools-related counselling for former students and for their family members (no Status Card required) for up to 22 hours to be used within 12 months. For a list of service providers in Ontario, call 1-888-301-6426.

For a comprehensive directory of Aboriginal mental health services, view the [Za-geh-do-win Information Clearinghouse's](http://www.za-geh-do-win.com/PDF/The%20Key.pdf) The Key: Aboriginal Mental Health Services/Support Directory at www.za-geh-do-win.com/PDF/The%20Key.pdf. A more up-to-date version can also be ordered for free by calling their Clearinghouse at 1 800 669-2538. It is available both in print and as a PDF.

*Please note that, in the listings below, we use the term Aboriginal or Indigenous, according to the terminology used by the particular organization, to refer to First Nation, Metis and Inuit communities.

If any of this information is incorrect or outdated, or if there are additional organizations or programs that would be helpful to include, please e-mail the information to us at access.resources@camh.ca.

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Provincial Services

In Ontario, culturally appropriate health and social services for Aboriginal peoples are available through, or co-ordinated by, local service providers:

Aboriginal Health Access Centres (AHAC) include services on- and off-reserve, in rural and northern communities as well as in cities. AHACs have primary health care services with doctors and nurse practitioners and, in some cases, mental health services and traditional healing services with traditional healers. To make an appointment with an AHAC, go to the Association of Ontario Health Centres website (www.aohc.org), click on “Find a Centre” and then type in the city and postal code where you live. Then under “Type,” click on “Aboriginal Health Access Centre.”

Community Health Centres (CHC) offer services both to Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities. The CHCs in Toronto (Anishnawbe Health Toronto), Timmins (Misiway Milopemahtesewin) and Midland (CHIGAMIK) offer specific programs for Indigenous peoples.

Indigenous Friendship Centres are “community hubs” where Indigenous people in both towns and cities can access culturally-based programs and services. These programs extend from health to family support, employment, healing and wellness. View the Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres’ website (www.ofifc.org), click on “Friendship Centres” and then “Programs and Services” for more information.

Métis Nation of Ontario Healing and Wellness Branch facilitates and coordinates activities to address the holistic needs of the Métis Nation in Ontario.

Tungasuvvingat Inuit is a provincial service provider for the Inuit in Ontario that includes social support, cultural activities, counselling and crisis intervention. View <http://tungasuvvingatinuit.ca> to learn more about the programs they provide. Two Ottawa-based Inuit services are the Ottawa Inuit Children’s Centre (www.ottawainuitchildrens.com/) and the Akausivik Inuit Family Health Team (AIFHT) (www.aifht.ca), which offers free primary care to Inuit people.

The following is a listing of services in Toronto.

General Services

Métis Nation of Toronto

75 Sherbourne St., Ste. 311, Toronto, ON

www.metisnation.org

416 977-9881, 1 800 263-4889

Services offered: Problem gambling prevention program; pre- and postnatal programs that include nutrition information, home visiting, emergency clothing and supplies and outreach; support services and job support centre

Referral: Call for an appointment

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Native Canadian Centre of Toronto

16 Spadina Rd., Toronto, ON

www.ncct.on.ca/programs

416 964-9087

Services offered: Outreach to Indigenous seniors and people with disabilities in the GTA; cultural and recreational services; food services (community lunch Monday to Friday); harm reduction services for youth that include transitional housing, a drop-in, case management and counselling; cultural programming such as language classes, drumming and crafts

Eligibility: First Nations people

Languages: English, Cree, Ojibway

Fees: Annual membership fee

Peel Aboriginal Network

208 Britannia Rd. E., Unit 1, Mississauga, ON

www.peelaboriginalnetwork.com

905 712-4726

Services offered: Cultural programming such as regalia making and drumming, monthly appointments with an Elder, food bank five days per week, housing, employment and legal support

Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre

439 Dundas St. E., Toronto, ON

www.councilfire.ca

416 360-4350 (ext. 245 for food bank)

infocoordinator@councilfire.ca

Services offered: Aboriginal healing and wellness program; meal program (lunch seven days a week and supper Monday to Thursday); a food bank every other Thursday; counselling; referrals; self-help groups; gathering place (drop-in social programs and events); cultural programs; Elder visits; parenting group; prenatal nutrition and a community kitchen; individual support for youth

Eligibility: Aboriginal people living in Toronto

Child and Family Services

Native Child and Family Services of Toronto

30 College St., Toronto, ON

www.nativechild.org

416 969-8510, 647 258-0336

info@nativechild.org

Services offered: Partner assault response (PAR) program for people court-ordered to attend for domestic violence charges; violence against women (VAW) programs; sexual violence response team (SVRT); child protection counselling services; children's mental health programs; Strengthening Families, a prevention program for families with children aged seven to 11; addiction and mental health case management; Choosing Our Path youth group (for ages 16 to 24) that uses cultural-based approaches to reduce harm and encourage safety;

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Aboriginal Ontario Early Years Centre; weekly evening of cultural teachings; visiting Elders; cultural summer camps for youth, children and families; Grandmother of the Agency to support clients and staff members; peer support, trauma counselling; parenting circles; community kitchen; clothing bank; drop-in programs for youth 16 to 24 years (outreach, counselling, transitional housing, substance abuse prevention); youth housing

Eligibility: Aboriginal people; children in need of protection under the Child and Family Services Act

Languages: English, Ojibway, interpreters for other Indigenous languages

Women's Centres

Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto

191 Gerrard St. E., Toronto, ON

www.nwrct.ca

416 963-9963

Services offered: Resources and support to urban Indigenous women and their families: a food bank (Fridays from 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.), meals (Monday to Friday from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.), Seeking Safety for Indigenous Women (12-week program for Indigenous women coping with trauma and/or substance use problems), Aboriginal Healthy Babies Healthy Children program, housing workshops, drumming circles, youth programs, sexual violence response team offering peer support and trauma counselling

Eligibility: Aboriginal women and their children in the GTA

Referral: Self-referral

Community Health Centres

Anishnawbe Health Toronto

179 Gerrard St. E., Toronto, ON (mental health services)

225 Queen St. E., Toronto, ON (medical unit)

22 Vaughan Rd., Toronto, ON (addiction services)

www.aht.ca

416 360-0486

Services offered: Traditional and Western healing approaches with culture-based traditional health care provided by traditional healers, Elders and medicine people; substance abuse assessments; psychiatric consultation; support and counselling groups; individual and family counselling; traditional ceremonies; holistic care plans; art therapy; nutrition counselling and recreation; youth walk-in mental health program; support programs for clients who are homeless; physical health care; specialized care for fetal alcohol spectrum disorder; anonymous HIV testing; traditional cultural programs for children and youth in care or child protection services; sweat lodge and other ceremonies

Eligibility: Aboriginal ancestry

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Mental Health and Addiction Services

CAMH Aboriginal Services

60 White Squirrel Way, 2nd floor, Toronto, ON

www.camh.ca

416 535-8501 (Access CAMH, the centralized intake service)

Services offered: Aboriginal social workers, outpatient therapeutic and psychoeducational groups with an occupational therapist and Traditional Healer, individual counselling, cultural programming and ceremonies, outpatient services, support to Aboriginal people accessing CAMH inpatient services

Eligibility: People 18 years and older with a desire to access an Aboriginal service

Referral: Self-referral

Mount Sinai, Community Mental Health Program

260 Spadina Ave., Ste. 204, Toronto, ON

www.mountsinai.on.ca/care/psych/patient-programs

416 586-9900

Services offered: Assertive community treatment team (ACTT), which is a culturally sensitive mental health outreach service; Mental Health Court Support program (MHCS), which provides services and support to people in conflict with the criminal justice system because of mental illness

Eligibility: People with severe and persistent mental health problems with a focus on Southeast Asian, Tamil, Aboriginal and Black communities

Referral: Made directly through https://hub.roxysoftware.com/referralForm_0.php

Native Horizons Treatment Centre

130 New Credit Rd., Hagersville, ON

www.nhtc.ca

905 768-5144, 1 877 330-8467

Services offered: Six-week co-ed residential treatment program addressing addictions, traumas and related problems (without any medical supports); youth day camps for ages 12 to 17; outreach programs on the Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation community; culture-based programming and sweat lodge

Eligibility: First Nations people, residential program applicants must have not used alcohol or other drugs for at least 15 days and have been out of custody for at least 30 days

Referral: Referral package available online

Toronto East Health Network Aboriginal Healing Program

2 College St., Rm. 106, Toronto, ON

www.tegh.on.ca

416 923-0800

Services offered: Aboriginal healing services that address trauma, mental well-being, addictions, anger release, domestic violence and more (services offered during the day as well as two evening circles per week)

Eligibility: Children and adults who are Métis, Inuit and First Nations

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HIV/AIDS Services

Ontario Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Strategy

7 Heyden St., Ste. 201, Toronto, ON

www.oahas.org

416 944-9481

Services offered: Outreach; education; long-term care support groups; treatment, support and counselling initiatives with a harm reduction approach

Eligibility: Aboriginal people living with HIV/AIDS

2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations

145 Front St. E., Ste. 105, Toronto, ON

www.2spirits.com

416 944-9300

Services offered: Support, referrals, advocacy; HIV/AIDS education and prevention including distribution of condoms, lubricant and Aboriginal resource material; needle exchange; same-sex domestic violence information and referrals; social events; free Internet access

Eligibility: Two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, intersex or transgender people who are Aboriginal including those living with HIV/AIDS

Referrals: Call for appointment or visit website for application form

Languages: English, interpreters for Ojibway

Legal Services

Aboriginal Legal Services

211 Yonge St., Ste. 500, Toronto ON

www.aboriginallegal.ca

416 408-3967; 416 408-4041 (community legal clinic)

Services offered: Community legal clinic (intake Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.); a court worker program to support Aboriginal people appearing in court in finding lawyers and contacting family members; a community council program, which is a criminal diversion program for adult and youth Aboriginal offenders; Gladue (Aboriginal persons) courts; a Giiwedini Anang Council, which provides alternative Aboriginal dispute resolution for families involved in the child welfare system; family counselling from community Elders and members

Eligibility: Aboriginal people (status or non-status), Métis and Inuit

Languages: English, translation and interpretation may be arranged for First Nations languages

Employment and Training Services

Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training

167 Gerrard St. E., Toronto, ON

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www.miziwebiik.com

416 591-2310, 1 877 980-6961

Services offered: Employment training and work opportunities through workshops, information sessions, job fairs and job postings

Eligibility: Aboriginal people in the Greater Toronto Area

Referral: Self-referral

Prison Services

John Howard Society of Toronto

1669 Eglinton Ave. W., York, ON

www.johnhoward.on.ca

416 925-4386

Services offered: Institutional visiting services and Aboriginal in-reach services, such as pre-release information, support, relapse prevention counselling and traditional circles

Eligibility: Men incarcerated at the Metro East Detention Centre

Referral: Put in a request to the Native inmate liaison officer through a correctional officer

Shelters/Housing

Aboriginal Housing Support Centre

Scarborough East: 20 Sewells Rd., Toronto, ON

Scarborough West: 3087 Danforth Ave., Toronto, ON

www.aboriginalhsc.org

416 281-2057 (Scarborough East), 416 260-6011 (Scarborough West)

Services offered: Assistance applying for social housing, help resolving landlord/tenant disputes, counselling, workshops and support groups

Eligibility: Priority given to Aboriginal people with low or moderate incomes who are at risk of losing their housing

Referral: Call or drop in

Anduhyun Inc.

1296 Weston Rd., Toronto, ON (head office)

www.anduhyun.org

416 920-1492 (ext. 221 for crisis/shelter intake), 416 243-7669 (ext. 226 for transitional house)

Services offered: Anduhyun emergency shelter for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women fleeing violence with or without children; Nekenan second stage housing, which is a transitional housing service that provides safe, affordable and temporary housing for Indigenous women with or without children; culturally specific programming and workshops

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Gabriel Dumont Non Profit Homes (Metro Toronto) Inc.

4201 Kingston Rd., Toronto, ON

jmacgabriel@gmail.com

416 286-5277

Services offered: 87-unit subsidized apartments and townhouses in East Toronto

Eligibility: Aboriginal people, non-Aboriginal people are subject to market rent

Referral: Call for an application

Na-Me-Res (Native Men's Residence)

14 Vaughan Rd., Toronto, ON

26 Vaughan Rd, Toronto, ON

www.nameres.org

416 651-6750 (transitional housing), 416 653-4794 (outreach services), 416 652-0334 (emergency shelter)

Services offered: Outreach services; 69-bed men's emergency shelter and 25-bed transitional housing; programs to help clients access services as they transition to a home; an Aboriginal Elder Outreach Project, in which an Elder provides teachings and ceremonies; Ngim Kowa Njichaag: Reclaiming My Spirit for clients to connect or reconnect with their culture; Mino Kaanjigoowin: Changing My Direction in Life, a program to help clients with mental health or addiction problems

Eligibility: Aboriginal men 16 years and older

Referral: Call, e-mail or visit website for information

Languages: English, Cree, Ojibway

Nishnawbe Homes

244 Church St., Toronto, ON

nishnawbehomes@rogers.com

416 975-5451

Services offered: Affordable housing in the Greater Toronto Area and Brampton for Aboriginal people who are under-housed and homeless

Eligibility: Aboriginal people

Referral: Walk-in

Languages: English

Wigwamen Inc.

23 Lesmill Rd., Unit 106, Toronto, ON (head office)

www.wigwamen.com

Services offered: Affordable and transitional housing for Aboriginal individuals and families in Toronto, Scarborough and Ottawa; independent living facility for Aboriginal seniors 59 years and older in Toronto

Eligibility: Permanent legal residents of Canada who are at least 16 years old

Referral: Application form and guide available on the website

Note: Waiting list