

6/30/2022

# 2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations

Positive Living Program

Final Report

2021/ 2022



*2-Spirits*

## Positive Living Program

2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations is a community-led organization of the Two-Spirited People of the First Nations, Métis, Inuit, who are living with or at risk for HIV and related co-infections in Ontario. 2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations have envisioned seeing strong, healthy, and independent Two-Spirit communities where HIV is rare and Two-Spirit People live with pride in their Indigenous heritage. The term "Two-Spirit" is an English translation of the Anishinaabemowin word "niizh manidoowag," which refers to a "person who embodies both masculine and feminine spirits.

Two-Spirited People of the 1st Nations have been standing firm in response to the HIV pandemic since early 2000 by promoting HIV testing and supporting newly diagnosed community members to enrol in the treatment cascade. We are actively working on stigma reduction and social sensitization on HIV/AIDS and STBBI among the Two-Spirited and Queer and non-binary communities.

The positive Living program is a part of the 2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations Treatment as prevention (TasP), U=U strategy. Community members are encouraged to self-test their HIV status and enrol them to bring them into the treatment cascade if diagnosed positive and support them to retrain the treatment adherence by providing various supports needed in their daily life. Our objectives are to prevent new HIV infection and reduce the likelihood of HIV illness, transmission and death.

Positive Living program is HIV- Self Testing, Treatment, and Care & Support initiatives among the Urban 2-Spirited Aboriginal Communities in Ontario where comprehensive HIV related services are provided under the single roof. The Positive Living programs have five components that service the immediate needs of the Two-Spirited communities that include:

- a) Food for Positive Living- a weekly warm ingenious meal along with the recipe and educations brochure for the immunocompromised people,
- b) Technology of Positive Living – monthly telephone, internet, and phone and tablet support along with tech support on zoom,
- c) Transportation for Positive living – Uber, escorted ride along with the monthly TTC pass and Presto card to attend medical appointments, grocery and to attend ceremonies
- d) Cosy Bedbug-free Sleeping for Positive Living – provide a new mattress and bed along with heavy-duty cleaning support for the member who is affected by bedbugs,
- e) Elders Talking circle and Sweat lodge for Positive Living.

f) Warm Breakfast for Treatment Adherence

2-Spirited People and VIIV have been working closely to provide a better response to HIV/AIDS endemic since early 2018. The support of the VIIV is vital to curb the HIV epidemic among the 2-spirited and Urban Indigenous communities in Toronto.

In 2021/ 2021, 2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations conducted the following activities with the support of the VIIV jointly:

Name of the Activities	Descriptions (As of June 30, 2022)	# served
Talking Circle on HIV Self Testing	HIV Self Testing Campaign, HIV Testing Awareness Campaign, Volunteer Ambassadors Recognition, and A four-hour Talking Circle were conducted during World AIDS Day. A different indigenous band performed during the circle.	Total 12 circle were conducted where 170 community members participated
Knowledge Keeps engagement	Knowledge Keeper facilitates the Talking Cercle on Land-based teaching on HIV and Traditional Harm Reductions	18 times
Talking circle on Indigenous World View on HIV and STBBI among the Two-spirited Adolescent and Youths	Virtual talking circle among the Youths about HIV Self Testing, accessing safer sex, harm reduction and PrEP/PEP supplies.	39 community members attended the talking circle
HIV Pre-Test Counselling	A land-based comprehensive HIV Self Testing Counselling has been provided to those community members who expressed interest in HIV Self Testing and Testing Kits	90 members access Pre-Test Counselling
HIV Self Testing	# Members accessed the HIV Self Testing Kits from Geta kit and performed self-Test	48 people got tested, and the result reported
HIV Post-Test Counselling	Community members accessed post-Test counselling that included information on HIV Treatment cascade, Positive Living Program,	31 community members accessed post-test counselling

	information on Harm reduction education and supplies including safer sex, PrEP and PEP	
Transportation to Positive Living	Monthly TTC Pass, Presto card and Uber support to access HIV related serviced	157 time
Technology for Positive Living	Monthly Internet, phone bills along with phone and tablet support to link community members to community and access HIV related services	47 community members accessed the services
Access to Traditional Healing Sweat Lodges	Monthly Traditional healing and Sweat lodge services accessed by the community members	35 community members access the sweat lodge and healing support
Weekly Food for Positive Living- warm cooked indigenous food delivery for the members living with HIV,	Weekly Warm Indigenous meal prepared and delivered by the 2-Spirited team with recipe and education (how those meal support to the people with immunocompromised).	360 prepared Indigenous meal were delivered
Education, information and Communication	Printed resources on HIV Self Testing, Treatment & care support distributed that included - 2-Spirited Newsletters, information on Safer Sex, Medicine Pouch, Traditional and western Harm Reduction supplies PrEP, PEP and COVID -19 resources including 2-Spirited personalized Condom and lube were mailed through Canada Post.	1500 IEC materials and one-o-one education were provided.
HIV-ST and Education session during 2-Spirited Powwow, 2022	HIV -ST, education and awareness raising campaign were conducted during the 2-spirited pow wow	Around 1000 resource materials were distributed, 17 community members performed HIV-ST Around 1000 community members visited the HIV-ST booth

<p>HIV-ST and Education session during PRIDE 2022</p>	<p>HIV -ST, education and awareness raising campaign were conducted during PRIDE 2022</p>	<p>Around 1000 education resource materials were distributed, where around 3000 people visited 2-Spirited HIV-ST booth</p>
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**Lesson Learned**

Many of the Two-Spirited Urban indigenous communities live in extreme poverty and unemployment due to the systematic barriers, strong stigma, and discrimination. Lack of technological literacy, significant numbers of members, struggled to navigate services amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Positive Living and personally tailored program for individual community members affected by AIDS supported community largely to bring them in to the Harm reduction and HIV/AIDS education, prevention and treatment care and support program. Once the program was rolled out, significant community members reached out to the agency for the service. When those programs were initiated, the community service utilization rate increased by 400%. This project taught us that land-based teaching and need-based services increase the service utilization rate. As a result, HIV/AIDS and STBBI intervention rates have increased significantly within the two-spirited communities.

**Next Steep:**

Based on the community input and suggestions, we are going to expand Assisted HIV Self Testing campaign to other larger nine cities of the Ontario that includes Ottawa, Thunder Bay, Timmins, Sudbury, Kenora, London, Kingston and Sault Ste Marie. We anticipate that, 2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations land based, and culturally supported approach will help largely to bring closeted 2-Spirited and non-binary members into the testing and treatment cascade.

Some Resources that were used for the Campaign:



2-SPIRITED PEOPLE OF THE  
1ST NATIONS

# GetaKit by 2-Spirits

**We can deliver HIV Self-testing  
kits to your chosen address!**

**Available within the GTA.**

**For more information email  
Shiva at [educator@2spirits.org](mailto:educator@2spirits.org)  
or visit [getakit.ca/2spirits](http://getakit.ca/2spirits)**







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# WRAP THE RIBBON CONCERT

DECEMBER 1, 2021  
2:00-4:00PM  
VIA ZOOM

Virtual Performances by:



**THERA11N**



**NIMKISH**



**TONY ENOS**

**PARTICIPATE IN OUR HIV SELF- TESTING CAMPAIGN AND  
KNOW YOUR STATUS  
GLOBAL SOLIDARITY, SHARED RESPONSIBILITY**

JOIN US ON DECEMBER 1, 2021 AS  
WE CELEBRATE WORLD AIDS DAY