

# Our Work with Indigenous Communities in Alberta

At Centre for Sexuality, partnering with Indigenous communities is a core organizational value.

We are invited to provide our Relationships and Sexual Health Education (RSE) program to students on nearby reserves. We have been providing our RSE program to students in Morley and Tsuu T'ina and at the Riel Institute for the past eight years, and have also held parent workshops at Tsuu T'ina.

Here are just a few more examples of our recent work with Indigenous communities:

- Each year at Camp fYrefly, our camp for LGBTQ2S+ youth, we work with Blackfoot Elders and Two-Spirit community leaders to provide mentorship and programming for Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBT+ youth. This has included an ongoing smudge space, a traditional knowledge workshop, a pipe ceremony, and a Metis herbal medicine walk. A highlight of camp for all campers in 2019 was the Indigenous panel session, followed by a round dance. We also have a Two-Spirit liaison volunteer who supports these connections and programs.
- When we hosted the annual Alberta GSA (Gay Straight Alliance) Conference in 2019, we included an Opening Prayer facilitated by a Knowledge Keeper as well as a Two-Spirit workshop. We also offered bursaries to two GSAs on reserves (Maskwacis and Fort McKay) to help them attend the conference.
- We partnered with the Calgary Homeless Foundation, Woods Homes, Two-Spirit Elders and Knowledge Keepers, as well as people with lived experiences of homelessness to support homelessness service providers to provide more inclusive services to LGBTQ2S+ and Indigenous youth. We trained more than 300 service providers, then invited a Two-Spirit Elder to host Talking Circles for reflection after the training. Based on this work, we are currently partnering with Indigenous leaders to plan a symposium on Two-Spirit and LGBTQ2S+ Indigenous identities.
- In 2019, we travelled to Little Red River Cree Nation to provide training and resources about LGBTQ2S+ identities to more than 60 community members, in partnership with the Mamawi Awasis Society. As part of these sessions, we also compiled a comprehensive resource list of Two-Spirit specific services in Alberta and online.
- Our staff continue to attend Indigenous events whenever possible to create relationships and build rapport. Examples include the Honoring Our Parents Conference at Tsuu T'ina Nation, the first all-Indigenous/Two-Spirit drag show during Calgary Pride, a Stoney Nakoda Naming Ceremony for a program participant, the Reconciliation Walk at Fort Calgary, and the Opening Ceremony for MRU Child and Youth LGBTQ2S+ Capstone Student Project and Two-Spirit Symposium.