

Our Health Counts Toronto

An inclusive community-driven health survey for Indigenous peoples in Toronto

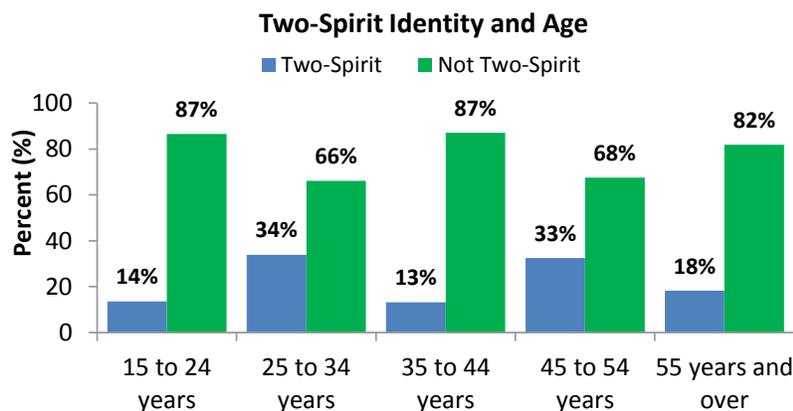
Two-Spirit Mental Health

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) details the goals of Canada’s Indigenous policies over time. These included the elimination of traditional Indigenous governments and livelihood and the planned expiry of treaty obligations through a process of assimilation. The implementation of these policies has influenced structural factors, such as inadequate housing, poverty, removal from traditional lands, destruction of culture and language, separation of families, restricted access to traditional medicine and limited access to supports, which continue to impact Indigenous peoples’ health and wellbeing. Colonization also brought different values and beliefs that impacted social structures and the way Indigenous peoples relate to each other. This has included shifting social norms, social constructs and structural risks for Two-Spirit and gender diverse populations. A focus on such structural risks, such as housing, poverty, and access to services can provide space to support Indigenous peoples’ health and wellbeing to thrive. Cultural revitalization and restoration can serve to ensure all members of Indigenous communities have a safe place.

“The term two-spirit . . . originated in Northern Algonquin dialect and gained first currency at the third annual spiritual gathering of gay and lesbian Native people that took place near Winnipeg in 1990. What we who chose this designation understood is that niizh manitoag (two-spirits) indicates the presence of both a feminine and a masculine spirit in one person.”¹

23% of Indigenous adults in Toronto identified as Two-Spirit.

Social Determinants of Health



83% of Two-Spirit Indigenous adults in Toronto live below the before-tax low income cut-off.

63% of Two-Spirit Indigenous adults were unemployed.

48% of Two-Spirit Indigenous adults have completed high school or post-secondary education.

33% of Two-Spirit Indigenous adults experienced homeless.

Resiliencies

Over **3/5** of Two-Spirit Indigenous adults in Toronto had good, very good, or excellent ability at handling stress.

Of Two-Spirit Indigenous adults who rated their ability to handle stress as good, very good, or excellent:

79% participated in traditional Indigenous ceremony.

57% used traditional Indigenous medicines or practices to maintain their health and wellbeing.

81% had a strong sense of belonging to the Indigenous community.

99% felt good about their Indigenous heritage.

Two-Spirit Mental Health

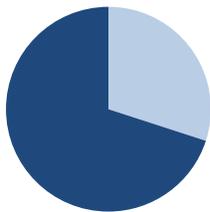
Positive Mental Health and Wellbeing

29% of Two-Spirit Indigenous adults in Toronto reported very good or excellent mental health. Similarly, **32%** of Indigenous adults who did not identify as Two-Spirit reported very good or excellent mental health.



Over 6 in 10

feel happy and are interested in life almost every day/every day.



Over 70%

are confident to think or express their own ideas and feel that their life has a sense or direction and meaning almost every day/every day.

85%

liked most parts of their personality almost every day/every day.

80%

have experiences that challenge them to grow and become a better person almost every day/every day.

65%

are good at managing the responsibilities of their daily life.



Over 6 in 10

feel that people are basically good and that they have warm and trusting relationships with others almost every day/every day.

54%

feel that they belong to a community almost every day/every day.

44%

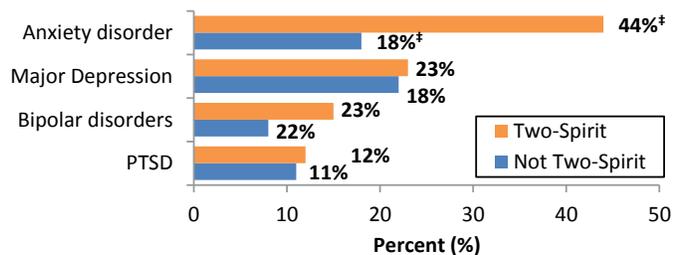
are satisfied with their life almost every day/every day.

Mental Health Diagnosis

62% of Two-Spirit Indigenous adults in Toronto have been told by a healthcare worker that they have a psychological and/or mental disorder.

58% of those who had a psychological and/or mental health diagnosis said that their condition(s) limited the amount or kinds of activities that they could do.

Two-Spirit Indigenous adults in Toronto have been told by a health care provider that they have one of the following at some point in their lives:



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Two-Spirit Indigenous adults in Toronto have experienced discrimination from others because of an emotional or mental health problem.

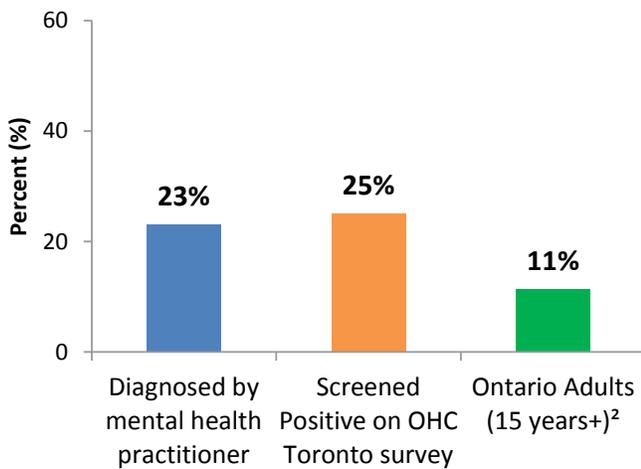
79% of those who faced discrimination because of their condition, reported that this prevented or delayed them from getting the care or support that they needed.

Screening and Diagnosis for Depression and PTSD

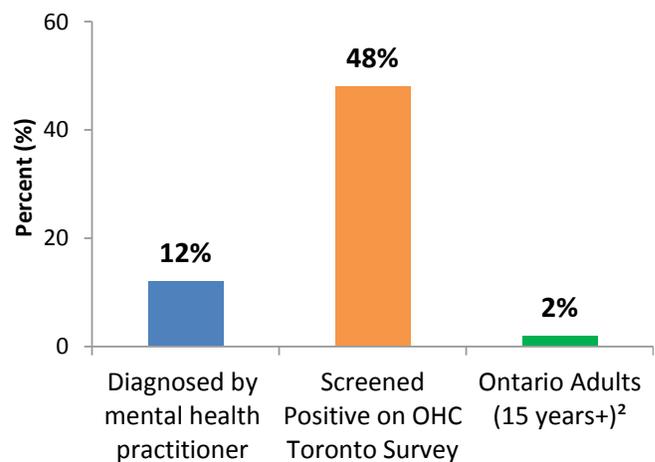


Two-Spirit Indigenous adults in Toronto experienced a large gap in the *diagnosis* by a mental health practitioner and *screening questions* in the survey for post traumatic stress disorder.

Depression



Post Traumatic Stress Disorder



Intentional Injury and Suicide

71% of Two-Spirit Indigenous adults have had a close friend or family member die by suicide. This is 1.3 times higher than those not identifying as Two-Spirit Indigenous adults (54%).[‡]

63% of Two-Spirit Indigenous adults have harmed themselves on purpose. This is 1.5 times higher than those not identifying as Two-Spirit Indigenous adults (42%).[‡]

Who has thought about dying by suicide?

7 in 10 Two-Spirit Indigenous adults.[‡]

5 in 10 non-Two-Spirit Indigenous adults.[‡]

Almost 6 in 10 Two-Spirit Indigenous adults have attempted to die by suicide. This is 2 times higher than those not identifying as Two-Spirit (3 in 10).[‡]

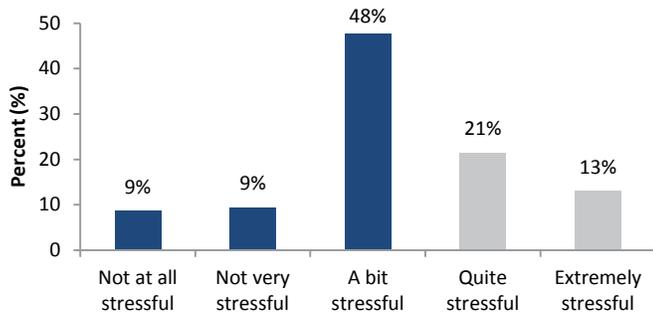


These rates are 2.5 to 3.5 times higher than the rate for adults in Ontario. (**2 in 10** adults in Ontario).²

Two-Spirit Mental Health

Stress and Coping

66% of Two-Spirit Indigenous adults found most days a bit stressful, not very stressful, or not at all stressful.



Two-Spirit Indigenous adults were more likely to experience stressful work situations (32%) compared to non Two-Spirit adults (27%).[‡]

Major Stressors	Two-Spirit	Not Two-Spirit
Financial Situation	72%	62%
Own physical, emotional, or mental health	63%	51%
Personal Relationships	42%	35%
Time pressures/not enough time	42%	35%
Employment Status	40%	25%
Other personal or family responsibilities	36%	27%
Caring for own children and/or others	25%	30%
Discrimination	23%	14%
Personal and family's safety	19%	18%

Racism and Discrimination

59% of Two-Spirit Indigenous adults have been treated poorly or unfairly because they are Indigenous.

42% of Two-Spirit Indigenous adults have been treated unfairly because of their gender compared to **22%** of adults who did not identify as Two-Spirit.[‡]

34% Two-Spirit Indigenous adults have been treated unfairly because of their sexual orientation compared to **2%** of adults who did not identify as Two-Spirit.[‡]

Access to Services

Two-Spirit Indigenous adults think there are inadequate services serving Indigenous people in Toronto to address:

- Services for suicide prevention (38%)
- Mental health services (34%)
- LGBTQQI community (30%)



Are you or someone you know in crisis?

Anishnawbe 24/7 Mental Health Crisis Management Service: 416-891-8606	Toronto Distress Centres: 416-408-HELP(4357)	Gerstein Crisis Centre: 416-929-5200	CAMH Emergency Department: 250 College Street	Call 911 or visit closest emergency department
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Definitions

Two-Spirit: Indigenous adults who identify as Two-Spirit to describe their identity and/or gender and/or sexual orientation; Indigenous adults: persons self-identifying as Indigenous such as First Nations, Métis, Inuit, or other Nation aged 15 years and older living or using services in the City of Toronto; Anxiety disorders: includes anxiety, panic attacks, obsessive-compulsive disorder, Bipolar disorders, or manic depression.
[‡] Denotes statistically significant difference p<0.05

Population based estimates were created using respondent driven sampling (see Methods and Design Factsheet for more details)

Sources

1. Anguksuar/Richard LaFortune, 1997; 2. Canadian Community Health Survey – Mental Health (CCHS-MH), 2012

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Two-Spirit Mental Health Reference

Survey Question

RDS Prevalence Estimate
(95% Confidence Interval)

Have you been treated poorly/unfairly because of your sexual orientation?

Yes	33.6% (20.4, 46.9)
No	66.4% (53.1, 79.6)

How would you rate your general health? (Two-Spirit)

Excellent or very good	29.3% (17.3, 41.4)
Good, fair or poor	70.7% (58.6, 82.7)

How would you rate your general health? (Not Two-Spirit)

Excellent or very good	31.9% (23.5, 40.4)
Good, fair or poor	68.1% (59.6, 76.5)

In the past month, how often did you feel... Happy?

Every day/almost every day	62.2% (47.9, 76.6)
2-3 times a week or less	37.8% (23.4, 52.1)

Interested in life?

Every day/almost every day	66.9% (53.1, 80.6)
2-3 times a week or less	33.1% (19.4, 46.9)

Satisfied with your life?

Every day/almost every day	43.8% (29.2, 58.3)
2-3 times a week or less	56.2% (41.7, 70.8)

That you belonged to a community?

Every day/almost every day	53.7% (38.5, 69.0)
2-3 times a week or less	46.3% (31.0, 61.5)

That people are basically good?

Every day/almost every day	63.0% (48.7, 77.4)
2-3 times a week or less	37.0% (22.6, 51.3)

That you liked most parts of your personality?

Every day/almost every day	84.6% (76.6, 92.7)
2-3 times a week or less	15.4% (7.3, 23.4)

Good at managing the responsibilities of your daily life?

Every day/almost every day	65.1% (51.3, 78.9)
2-3 times a week or less	34.9% (21.1, 48.7)

That you had warm and trusting relationships with others

Every day/almost every day	61.9% (47.8, 75.9)
2-3 times a week or less	38.1% (24.1, 52.2)

That you had experiences that challenge you to grow and become a better person?

Every day/almost every day	80.1% (70.3, 89.8)
2-3 times a week or less	19.9% (10.2, 29.7)

Confident to think or express your own ideas and opinions?

Every day/almost every day	72.4% (61.1, 83.8)
2-3 times a week or less	27.6% (16.2, 38.9)

That your life has a sense of direction or meaning to it?

Every day/almost every day	71.1% (59.2, 83.1)
2-3 times a week or less	28.9% (16.9, 40.8)

Have you ever been told by a healthcare worker that you have a psychological and/or mental health disorder(s)?

Yes	61.5% (48.0, 75.0)
No	38.5% (25.0, 52.0)

Has/have this/these condition(s) limited the amount or kinds of activities that you can do?

Yes	57.5% (34.0, 81.0)*
No	42.5% (19.0, 66.0)*

Have you been told you have any of the following psychological and/or mental health disorders...

Anxiety disorder (Two-Spirit)	43.5% (27.5, 59.5)*
Anxiety disorder (Not Two-Spirit)	18.0% (11.1, 24.9)*
Major depression (Two-Spirit)	23.1% (12.5, 33.8)
Major depression (Not Two-Spirit)	22.3% (13.8, 30.9)
Bipolar disorders (Two-Spirit)	14.5% (4.3, 24.8)
Bipolar disorders (Not Two-Spirit)	7.6% (3.8, 11.4)
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (Two-Spirit)	11.8% (4.5, 19.0)
Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (Not Two-Spirit)	11.0% (4.9, 17.2)

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ Our Health Counts: Community health assessment by the people, for the people ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆



For the full OHC Toronto report visit:
www.welllivinghouse.com

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Two-Spirit Mental Health Reference

Survey Question

RDS Prevalence Estimate
(95% Confidence Interval)

What are the sources of stress that you experience? (Two-Spirit)

Own physical, emotional, or mental health	63.3% (47.5, 79.1)
Financial situation	72.1% (61.0, 83.1)
Time pressures/not enough time	41.6% (27.8, 55.5)
Personal relationships	42.1% (28.0, 56.1)
Caring for your own children and/or others	25.0% (14.3, 35.7)
Other personal family responsibilities	35.6% (21.6, 49.7)
Own work situation	31.9% (15.2, 48.6) ±
Employment status	40.3% (24.2, 56.3)
Personal and family's safety	19.3% (8.7, 29.9)
Discrimination	23.2% (12.7, 33.7)

What are the sources of stress that you experience? (Not Two-Spirit)

Own physical, emotional, or mental health	51.0% (41.9, 60.1)
Financial situation	62.1% (53.0, 71.2)
Time pressures/not enough time	35.0% (26.4, 43.5)
Personal relationships	35.1% (27.0, 43.3)
Caring for your own children and/or others	29.6% (22.3, 37.2)
Other personal family responsibilities	26.5% (18.7, 34.2)
Own work situation	15.8% (11.1, 20.6) ±
Employment status	25.2% (18.7, 31.7)
Personal and family's safety	17.5% (10.9, 24.1)
Discrimination	13.8% (7.8, 19.8)

For those who rated their ability to handle stress good, very good, or excellent...

Participation in traditional Indigenous ceremony	78.6% (65.5, 71.7)
Used traditional Indigenous medicines or practices	56.6% (34.8, 78.4)
Had strong sense of belonging to the Indigenous community	81.3% (69.2, 93.4)
Felt good about their Indigenous heritage	99.3% (98.4, 100.0)

Do you think there are inadequate community resources serving Indigenous people in Toronto for:

Suicide prevention	37.7% (24.5, 50.9)
Mental health services	34.0% (21.7, 46.3)
The LGBTQQI Community	29.6% (18.0, 41.2)

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