



The Indigenous in Canada

- Some Aboriginal communities experience higher rates of mental health crises and the highest suicide rates in the country.
- For example, Inuit are 6 to 11 times more likely to commit suicide than their Canadian counterparts.
- Aboriginal people are more likely to seek mental health help. In one study, Aboriginals were 17% more likely to seek help, as compared to other Canadians.
- Aboriginal people's view of mental health and emotional well-being is more holistic and is linked to being connected to community, land, culture, spirituality and ancestry, and having a sense of belonging.
- In addition to mental health challenges, many Aboriginal people live in poverty, with 40% of Aboriginal children living in poverty yet receiving significantly less resources.

When working with Aboriginal people, keep the following in mind:

- Effective treatment involves identifying the strengths of families and communities and developing programs that build on these strengths.
- Provide mental health services in culturally responsive ways using trauma-informed and trauma-specific treatment approaches.
- Family and community have a key role in helping individuals regain their sense of balance.
- Become culturally competent with an understanding of historical legacy and current challenges that impact mental health of some Aboriginal people.
- Keep in mind that Aboriginal peoples are not one uniformed group. Canada recognizes three groups of people: Aboriginal, Métis, and Inuit but they are all unique and may speak different languages.

