

Honouring Life 2.0: **Life** **Promotion for Indigenous** **Youth**



Indigenous Wellness Core
Honouring Life 2.0: Life Promotion for Indigenous Youth



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Contact

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Introduction

Mental health and substance use are priority concerns affecting the wellbeing of Indigenous people. Gaps in available and accessible services, including culturally safe programming, has led to Indigenous communities calling for a coordinated and comprehensive wellness approach to mental health and addiction services that is strengths-based.

In 2018, Alberta Health committed Grant Funding to AHS to operate and coordinate the “Honouring Life: Indigenous Youth Suicide Prevention - Aboriginal Youth Communities and Empowerment Strategy”. Honouring Life is a key part of Alberta Health’s Provincial Action Plan for Youth Suicide Prevention (2019-2024). As of March 2022, Honouring Life has provided funding to 54 Indigenous communities, Métis Settlements and Indigenous-serving community organizations.

In Alberta, the suicide rate for First Nations youth is 3X higher than that of non-First Nations youth (2012)

The health of Indigenous peoples in Alberta is impacted by many factors that have resulted in poor health outcomes and lack of coordinated services.

Suicide rates in 2012, showed that First Nation people in Alberta are triple that of non-First Nation Albertans. The impact of Indian Residential Schools and years of historical trauma, racism, and colonization policies on Indigenous populations have exacerbated the effects of important determinants of health indicators (poverty levels, education rates, personal safety, and access to health services). These factors have contributed to inter-generational trauma, addictions, violence and mental health challenges, leading to elevated rates of suicide within Indigenous population compared to non-Indigenous populations. As a result of all of these factors, and at the recommendation of key foundational drivers such as the *Calls To Action from the Truth and Reconciliation*, it is recognized that an Indigenous centered suicide prevention strategy must be community led and built with a focus on community healing, reconciliation, self-determination, and a holistic model of health.

Starting in 2022, the Indigenous Wellness Core (IWC) at Alberta Health Services (AHS) will administer the *Honouring Life 2.0: Life Promotion for Indigenous Youth Program (Honouring Life 2.0)*.

Background

Mental health issues continue to be a priority concern for many Indigenous communities. Indigenous people in Canada have overall poorer mental health outcomes when compared to non-Indigenous Canadians, specifically related to anxiety, depression, and suicide.¹

Indigenous mental wellbeing is strengthened by culture, Indigenous language, Elders, families, and connection to spiritual ways, and is necessary for healthy individual, community and family life. This wellbeing is achieved through the achievement of whole health—physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, social, and economic wellbeing. As such, Indigenous communities and leadership have called for a shift in mental health and wellness responses that move away from a deficit-based focus to one that is strengths-based. Research has shown that deficit-based models of mental health, which emphasize deficiency and failure, can lead to greater harm. In contrast, strengths-based approaches focus on supporting people in their journey toward well-being by redressing the balance between needs and nurturing and promoting the strengths and protective factors of people and communities. Strength-based approaches are imperative to understanding and promoting health and wellness in Indigenous contexts. At the heart of Indigenous ways of knowing and being is acknowledgement of the interconnectedness of the spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical aspects of an individual with the community, culture, and the environment.

Goals and Objectives

Honouring Life 2.0 Vision

That Indigenous youth in Alberta experience life with hope, meaning, belonging and purpose. That Indigenous communities have the knowledge, vision and capacity to support joyful, vibrant and purposeful youth.

Honouring Life 2.0 Mission

By continuing to focus on and develop trusting, positive, and mutually-accountable relationships, *Honouring Life 2.0* will support community-developed and led life promotion initiatives through funding, capacity, and evaluation supports.

Honouring Life 2.0 Objectives

The general objectives of Honouring Life 2.0 include:

¹ Graham, S., Stelkia, K., Wieman, C., & Adams, E. (2021). Mental health interventions for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples in Canada: A systematic review. *The International Indigenous Policy Journal*, 12(2). <https://doi.org/10.18584/iipj.2021.12.2.10820>: pg. 2.

Indigenous Wellness Core

Honouring Life 2.0: Life Promotion for Indigenous Youth

1. Support emergency community crisis response (to respond to urgent youth suicide crisis) on an expedited timeline based on demonstrated urgent need.
2. Provide support for Indigenous communities/organizations to establish, deliver and evaluate life promotion and/or crisis response projects. These projects will:
 - Fit within a holistic continuum of care based on life promotion and community mental health priorities
 - Include the development of sustainable community capacity, where possible.
3. Support Indigenous-designed project evaluations
 - a. Support the research and evaluation capacity of funded Indigenous communities/organizations to measure and understand the impact of their life promotion projects with the support of the IWC's Innovation and Research Team;
 - b. Establish respectful and culturally meaningful ways to produce knowledge and report on the grant
4. Continue to support the ongoing Honouring Life Community of Practice (CoP)
 - a. The CoP will bring together funded communities/organizations as a source of shared learning and support.
 - b. Facilitate opportunities to share, identify, and address barriers and challenges across projects with AHS and HL Project Team
 - c. Participation in the CoP will be required

Honouring Life 2.0 Outcomes

Though each project will respond to the unique needs within each community and organization, anticipated outcomes will include:

- Development, support and strengthening of Indigenous-centered life promotion strategies both new and ongoing
- Coordination of a flexible approach that is responsive to the ongoing needs of communities/organizations
- Improved access, coordination, and integration of trauma informed and culturally safe mental health services
- Promotion of protective and resiliency factors in Indigenous communities (urban and rural)
- Identifying, developing and strengthening Indigenous-centered wellness strategies, emerging and ongoing, that meet the needs of communities and organizations
- Improved patient and family experiences specific to mental wellness and addiction services

- Improved patient and family experiences specific to crisis response and life promotion
- Improved health and well-being of Indigenous peoples' living in Alberta supported through population health initiatives

Guiding principles

Honouring Life 2.0 adopts a strength-based approach to better support Indigenous communities to design and deliver effective ways to address mental health/wellness and addiction issues affecting their communities. The theoretical foundation of *Honouring Life 2.0* is aligned with the National [First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework \(FNMWCF\)](#).

The model provides a framework for envisioning a comprehensive continuum to support for mental wellness with culture as the foundation- for individuals, families, and communities across the areas of health promotion, prevention, community development, and education, early identification and intervention, crisis response, coordination of care and care planning, detox, trauma-informed treatment, and support and aftercare. Life promotion is a fundamental part of addressing that continuum. It is important to note that life promotion projects are only one aspect of the FNMWCF model and funded communities/organizations are not expected to respond to every aspect of the Continuum. The strength of the model in this context is that it supports communities in planning and building these projects as one part of a much larger integrated system of wellness within their communities and across partnerships

Honouring Life 2.0 aligns with the AHS [Indigenous Health Commitments: A Roadmap to Wellness](#) noting that the way we work is as important as the outcomes of our work. As such, the Indigenous Health Commitments offer new ways of working with and for Indigenous peoples grounded in honesty and humility and based on:

- *Listening:* To the truths about our shared history, their effects, and how Indigenous people experience our healthcare system.
- *Understanding:* The current challenges in advancing Indigenous health and community-based solutions, and identifying how to move forward in partnership from a place of vulnerability
- *Acting:* Meaningfully to take action on Indigenous health through sustained and reciprocal relationships with Indigenous peoples, organizations and nations.
- *Being:* Demonstrating the culture shift within AHS and accountability to both AHS and Indigenous communities.

Honouring Life 2.0: Life Promotion for Indigenous Youth Program Details

Two Funding Streams

Honouring Life 2.0 includes two streams, the first, an urgent crisis response to address emergency needs and youth suicide crisis. The second stream will aim to support Indigenous community/organization-led design and implementation of life promotion projects and programming, that aim to support youth, families and communities in living lives full of hope, meaning, belonging, and purpose.

Stream 1: Urgent Suicide Crisis Response Funding

A comprehensive continuum of mental wellness services includes access to supports for crisis response. As a result, *Honouring Life 2.0* will include emergency funds set aside to support communities/organizations respond to urgent suicide or mental health crises. Despite their crisis orientation, *Honouring Life 2.0* envisions Stream 1 projects grounded in Indigenous knowledge, traditions, teachings, ceremonies, land, and languages, and the creation of conditions for mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing.

Some **examples** of uses for this funding stream include:

- Access to community-based and external supports to respond to urgent needs, assist with community stabilization, and where needed, transition clients to other services or aftercare
- Coordinated and timely follow up and debriefing at both an individual and community level
- Timely access to mental health and/or substance use crisis teams and/or grief and loss therapists
- Access to Elder support, Knowledge Keepers, or traditional healing practices

Stream 1: Funding Eligibility

Applicants must present:

- An urgent need identified by the community or organization
- A coordinated urgent suicide crisis response to support the continuum of care
- Confirmation that Indigenous Services Canada (if appropriate) has been informed and urgent mental health crisis response is forthcoming
- Applicants are to identify what types of crises support are required in the immediate term until other resources (ex: ISC –funded mental health crisis teams, AHS Access Mental Health assistance) are available to provide services.
- Coordination of connection to AHS AMH resources and other service providers offering (for example) outpatient counselling, and mental health services and support
- Alignment with *Honouring Life 2.0* Objectives and Outcomes

The eligibility for Stream 1 funding will be determined based on the demonstrated need and the capacity of the community to respond using existing resources.

Stream 2: Life Promotion Funding

The goal of the *Honouring Life 2.0* Life Promotion funding stream is to support Indigenous communities and organizations to build, administer, and evaluate projects that support youth, families and communities in living lives full of hope, meaning, belonging, and purpose. The life promotion funding stream will be focused on empowering Indigenous communities to define and manage their own services and needs, utilize their cultural knowledge, and build on their unique strengths. Based on the lessons from the previous Honouring Life grant, this stream will not have a hard maximum dollar amount. Attention will be paid to funding as many communities/organizations as possible, while ensuring projects align with the Stream 2 criteria.

Some [examples](#) of uses for this funding stream include:

Activity category	Description / examples
Workshops and conferences	Elder’s conferences, Youth forums, multi-day youth worker training, peer support training.
Training Opportunities	Development of life promotion training, attending suicide prevention/life promotion training opportunities (ex: (ASIST) Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training), Community Mental Health training opportunities
Outdoor camps	Family camps, youth camps, seasonal camps for land-based teaching (trapping/hunting, medicine picking, environmental monitoring, etc.)
Travel	Travelling to ceremony, to other First Nations in Western Canada.
Recurring youth events	Craft nights, school-based lunch programs, life skills or vocational training, youth-run groups or youth councils, weekly Grandmother or Elder teachings.
Gatherings	Celebrations of life, education awards, ceremonies, Round Dances.
Creative media projects	Cinematography training and film production, video logs, performance pieces, murals, 3D printing projects, social media programs, fashion shows.
Therapeutic work	Equine therapy, music therapy, relationship-building, peer-support development, fostering natural supportive groups following community crisis.
Service planning	Program evaluation and reporting, community surveys, outreach programs to promote community services, programs to build capacity in peer-to-peer support, meetings and logistical support between service areas. Community planning for development of mental health crisis teams/supports

- Exploring alternate service delivery models for Indigenous addiction and mental health service delivery
- Provision of culturally appropriate training for front line service providers (i.e., trauma informed care)
- Support for patient coordination pathways, which will include connection to Emergency Departments service agencies.

Stream 2: Funding Eligibility

Applicants must demonstrate:

- **Strategic Alignment:** The project's alignment with the outcomes and objectives of *Honouring Life 2.0*
- **Commitment to Results:** How the project demonstrates a clear outline of the rationale and project goals/objectives and appropriate targets for specific activities that will demonstrate measurable results to meet intended outcomes
- **Evaluation:** How the project provides clear method(s) to effectively measure and assess results
- **Sustainability:** How the project demonstrates the impacts of the project and how they will continue to operate and generate impact beyond the project
- **Financial and Administrative Capacity:** The project's capacity for successful implementation in accordance with the proposed budget. Feasibility of the project to be achieved within the funding term.

Budget

When preparing the budget, applicants should include eligible and not include ineligible expenditures.

Examples of eligible expenditures include:

- Salaries and wages for individuals whose duties are directly and primarily related to activities undertaken as part of the project as set out in the grant agreement;
- Staff recruitment and training;
- Travel costs for activities directly related to and necessary to carry out the activities under the Project;
- Evaluation costs;
- Supplies (e.g., project supplies, office equipment) directly related to the Project;
- Administration costs directly related to the project (e.g., office operations, accounting, legal fees, insurance) up to a maximum 10% of total budget or a maximum of \$20,000.00, whichever is less
- Honoraria and Protocol;
- Consulting or professional services directly related to project's outcomes.

Ineligible expenditures include, but are not limited to:

- ongoing operational costs beyond project parameters;
- major capital costs;
- purchase of capital assets;
- purchase of personal items or staff awards, recognition and gifts;
- debt reduction;
- monthly parking fees;
- costs of construction, renovation of laboratories, offices;
- insurance costs for equipment;
- cellular phones

Note: Expenses where a personal benefit could be derived, are ineligible.

Application Process

Applications will be reviewed based on the following considerations:

- the comprehensiveness of the Application including a description of the identified need and stated objectives to meet the need;
- ability to achieve the project objectives and outcomes;
- alignment with Honouring Life 2.0 objectives and outcomes;
- generating integrated or aligned services through building and strengthening relationships with community partners
- identification of community and systems level capacity gaps and strengths

Based on available funding and the number of applications received, not all applications may be funded or receive the full amount requested.

Stream 1: Urgent Suicide Crisis Response Application Process

The Urgent Suicide Crisis Response Funding is part of a comprehensive continuum of mental wellness. As a result, *Honouring Life 2.0* will hold emergency funds set aside to support communities/organizations to respond to urgent suicide crises.

The purpose of the Urgent Suicide Crisis Response Funding is to support community-led suicide response efforts. The one-time, short-term funding is available by application through the Honouring Life website. The *Honouring Life* Project Coordinators will be available to assist with completion of applications, ensuring all criteria are met and timely processing of the application are undertaken.

Urgent Suicide Crisis Response funding will be selected based on identified need and level of urgency. All applications received will be reviewed and determined by the Honouring Life 2.0 Program Leadership Team.

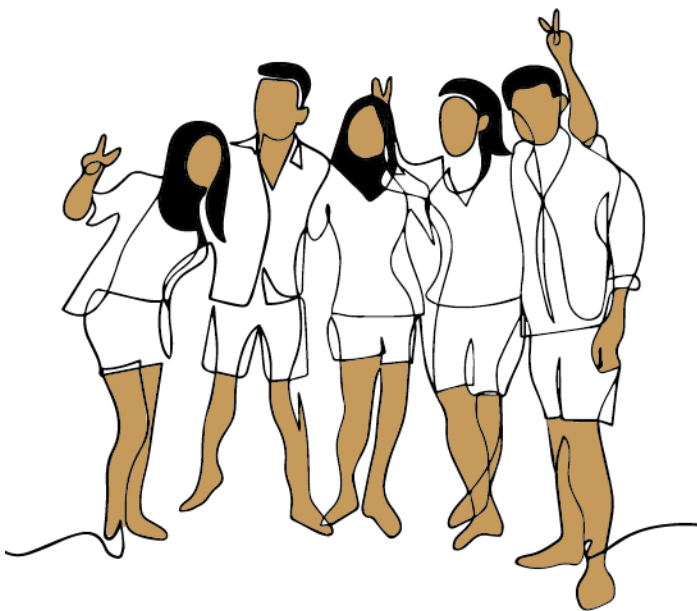
Stream 2: Life Promotion Funding Application Process

Applications will be made available on May 1, 2022 (tentative). Applications can be found on the Honouring Life website, and will be distributed to Honouring Life legacy grantees. The *Honouring Life 2.0* Project Coordinators will be available to assist applicants with completion of applications, ensuring all criteria are met. All applications received will be reviewed and determined by the Honouring Life 2.0 Program Leadership Team.

Projects within Stream 2: Life Promotion Funding will be selected based on project outcomes, sustainability of the projects and application of learnings across communities and organizations. There will be a rolling intake of applications, with closure of receipt of applications to be determined based on funding availability.

Questions or Inquiries

Questions or inquiries related to Honouring Life 2.0: Life Promotion for Indigenous Youth must be submitted via email to: Honouringlife@ahs.ca



Frequently Asked Questions

WHAT IS HONOURING LIFE?

Honouring Life is part of a larger Provincial Action Plan for Youth Suicide Prevention, and the intention is to increase resiliency and holistic wellness in First Nations, Métis, and Inuit youth.

Honouring Life has been blessed through ceremony and aligns with the vision of the Elders. *Honouring Life 2.0* adopts a strength-based approach to better support Indigenous communities to design and deliver effective ways to address mental health/wellness and addiction issues affecting their communities. The theoretical foundation of *Honouring Life 2.0* is aligned with the National [First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework \(FNMWCF\)](#).

The vision of Honouring Life is that Indigenous youth in Alberta experience life with hope, meaning, belonging and purpose. That Indigenous communities have the knowledge, vision and capacity to support joyful, vibrant and purposeful youth. Funding for Honouring Life is available through an application process

WHO IS ELIGIBLE FOR HONOURING LIFE FUNDING?

Honouring Life 2.0 will be open to applications from First Nations (on reserve), Métis Settlements, the Métis Nation of Alberta, and rural and urban organizations that primarily serve Indigenous populations.

Communities are encouraged to partner and work together to submit a joint proposal whenever possible.

HOW MUCH FUNDING IS AVAILABLE?

Based on the lessons from the previous Honouring Life grant, there will not be a hard maximum dollar amount. Funding amounts will vary by community and the activities planned.

Funding for the contract will be paid in installments. Disbursement of funds will be determined based on approved term of Honouring Life 2.0 programming and amount of funding requested.

Based on available funding and the number of applications received, not all applications may be funded or receive the full amount requested.

IS THIS FUNDING ON-GOING?

The Indigenous Wellness Core (IWC) will be administering ongoing funding for *Honouring Life 2.0*.

HOW DO I APPLY?

Interested applicants are asked to send inquires to honouringlife@ahs.ca. A member of the Honouring Life team will then contact the applicant.

Communities will work with a Coordinator from the Honouring Life team to complete the application. Completed Applications are to be submitted by email to: honouringlife@ahs.ca

Once the application is approved, it is forwarded to AHS Contracting, Procurement and Supply Management (CPSM) for final review and drafting of the contract documents. Once the contract documents are completed, they will be signed by AHS and then sent to the applicant for signing.

IS THERE A DEADLINE TO APPLY FOR FUNDING?

As there is limited funding available each year, closure of receipt of applications will be determined based on funding availability.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS:

In order to qualify for the Honouring Life 2.0 funding, the Applicants must meet the following criteria:

- Originate from a First Nation, Tribal Councils, First Nation organizations, Métis Settlements, MNA or Indigenous-serving organizations
- Provide an overview and/or current state of the community/organization, including challenges you face and priorities regarding youth suicide
- Indicate strengths, existing resources and partnerships, or collaborative opportunities in the community
- Engage Youth and Elders in the community, enhance capacity, and aim to develop sustainable life promotion programming that contributes to the well-being and resiliency of Indigenous youth and communities
- Describe including the purpose and outcomes, activities that are grounded in the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework model
- Provide a detailed budget for each activity
- Develop or follow a pre-existing community-driven evaluation plan for the funded activities
- Complete all reporting requirements as per contract agreement.

HONOURING LIFE 2.0 APPLICANTS MUST PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING IN THEIR FUNDING APPLICATION:

- Completed Honouring Life 2.0 funding application. **Note: All in-person gatherings need to adhere to current COVID public health guidelines A signed and dated Declaration – Appendix I**

- Proof of CURRENT organizational liability insurance for no less than \$2,000,000 (\$2 million) – Appendix II

EXAMPLES OF ACTIVITIES ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING:

- Participation in cultural activities/events that encourage Elder and youth engagement (e.g. activities with elders, feasts, etc.)
- Mentorship and peer support
- Training programs that build community capacity or individual skills
- Community Sessions that focus on identification of community strengths and areas for growth based on the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework Model
- Attending or hosting conferences and workshops (e.g. self-esteem building workshops)
- Cultural teaching and traditional land based programs, music programs, etc.
- Sports and recreation programs
- Use of technology to record histories and traditions for future generations
- Camps and youth retreats, youth nights

WHAT IS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR FUNDING?

- Honouring Life will not fund the following:
 - New Infrastructure & Renovation (i.e.: Constructing building space)
 - Honouring Life contracts being outsourced to third party companies or agencies to execute the approved programming. All programming must be delivered by your agency
 - Administrative costs in excess of 10% of your total allocated funding or \$20,000, whichever is less
 - Applications which do not align with the guiding principles of Honouring Life 2.0 and the First Nations Mental Wellness Continuum Framework model, as outlined in the Honouring Life 2.0 Program Guide.
 - See Page 10 of the Honouring Life 2.0 Program Guide

WHO CAN I CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION?

You can reach the Honouring Life team via email: honouringlife@ahs.ca

DISCLAIMER

AHS reserves the right to request additional information. AHS makes no representation on the number of grants that will be awarded and reserves the right not to award any grant/contract. AHS reserves the right to refuse funding. Each successful applicant will be required to enter into a contract with AHS. Incomplete submissions will not be accepted.