



Newsletter brought to you  
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416-864-6060 ext. 77387

# Our Health Counts Toronto Newsletter

Reminder:  
Reference Group  
Meeting June 23  
at 12 noon!

## In this Newsletter:

### June 2015 Our Health Counts Toronto Quarterly

This newsletter features the artist behind the OHC Toronto branding, our field team, a look at how our RDS methods are going, and a timeline to show what has happened and what is coming next!

### Behind the artwork of OHC: "Time to Grow Your Garden"

*"This is a painting of a walk through an urban garden with my newborn daughter Jordan. Here my curiosity about our culture begins to grow. I had to learn how to grow a garden for both of us. It took years to find my way. I'm a sixties scoop survivor. Jordan was the first face that looked like mine, my first reunion with the sacred medicine. The strawberries in this painting represent my connection with Jordan. Strawberries are a woman's medicine and the first medicine to come in the spring. Strawberry is the first word I learned in my language, the literal translation is little heart. Jordan is my first connection to our Dene culture, to our medicine. She is the first and most powerful medicine in my life. Jordan is my heart. - Everything I paint is for her. The paintings are a garden that I create for her, for my grandchildren. All of my paintings show Indigenous women with auburn hair. They have auburn hair because my daughter has auburn hair. I want her to see herself as an Indigenous woman and a carrier of our knowledge and sacred medicines. - Jordan is 23 now. She is growing a beautiful garden of her own. Jordan is a filmmaker. She uses the tradition of image-based storytelling to figure out and assert who she is. Jordan continues the practice of disseminating knowledge through the generations. I am so proud of her."*

## The Artist of OHC Toronto

Lisa Boivin is a member of the Deninu K'ue First Nation in Northwest Territories. She is an interdisciplinary artist and a bioethics specialist at the University of Toronto. Lisa uses painting, poetry and image-based storytelling to bridge gaps between bioethics and aspects of Indigenous cultures and worldviews. Lisa believes painting the legacy of colonialism encourages healing for Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. She reflects upon her personal experience of cultural displacement by confronting the Indian Residential School System, and the Sixties Scoop of which she is a survivor. Lisa tells the story of intergenerational trauma as she paints her path of healing through cultural reclamation.

St. Michael's Hospital and the University of Toronto

QUESTIONS?  
Call 416-806-1346 or  
email: ohctoronto@smh.ca

## Our Health Counts Toronto

An urban Aboriginal survey created for us, by us. Receive a coupon and exercise your right to be counted.

Are you Aboriginal or have Aboriginal Ancestry? Live, work, or receive services in Toronto?

THREE EASY STEPS:  
1. Receive a Coupon  
2. Come and share your story  
3. Make sure your health counts.

MANY RIVERS TO CARRY US FORWARD



For each *Our Health Counts Toronto* newsletter, we will feature a question and answer section from either a co-investigator or a reference group member that is a part of the project.

*Questions and Answers with Co-Investigator...*

# Dr. Michelle Firestone

Dr. Firestone is a Research Scientist at the Well Living House. Her research is grounded in Aboriginal community-based participatory research, with a focus on mental health and substance use. She also has extensive experience in Respondent Driven Sampling (RDS).

## Respondent Driven Sampling

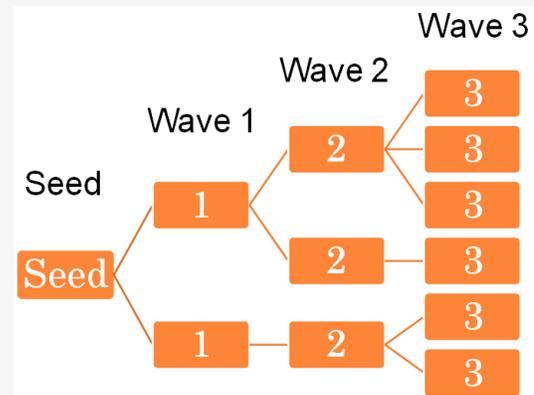
### WHAT?

*"Respondent Driven Sampling (RDS) is a chain-referral technique that is an efficient way of sampling hard to reach populations. RDS is founded on peer recruitment within social networks. So, if everyone knows at least one other person in the population, then everyone can be reached through their social network. RDS allows us to generate a sample that better reflects the actual population and can even do a better job than the Census, particularly among Aboriginal people living in cities."*

### HOW?

#### Steps to RDS Sampling

1. Start with a set of 10-15 people called "seeds"
2. Interview the seeds
3. Give the seeds coupons to recruit their friends
4. Interview their friends
5. Give their friends coupons to recruit their friends
6. Repeat until you have as many participants as you want



### WHY?

*"There is evidence that links the success of RDS to the strength of social networks and relationships, so we can draw on existing kinship systems known to be present in Indigenous communities and build on existing community knowledge. RDS also facilitates local Aboriginal community leadership. RDS supports active participation of Indigenous communities in developing, gathering, sharing and applying their own health information and health data to drive policy change and action."*

*In Canada, Aboriginal people are often left out, hidden or under-represented in many health information systems. The OHC Toronto project will provide much needed information about the health of First Nations, Inuit and Métis people living in the city."*



*"Congratulations to the community and the entire research team! In all my experience in study design and recruitment, this is the fastest RDS recruitment I have ever seen!"*

Michael Rotondi, Assistant Professor of Biostatistics and Quantitative Methods at York University

# Meet the Our Health Counts Toronto Field Team

Below are brief biographies from the Our Health Counts Toronto field team! The team was hired at the beginning of March and went through an intensive 2-week OHC Toronto training with Research Manager, Conrad Prince. We launched the interview sites at the beginning of April! The Interviewers and site coordinators have done an incredible job to date, with already reaching 10% of our goal!



## **Krystine Abel**

Aanii! My name is Krystine Abel and I am an Anishinaabe-kwe born and raised in Toronto and a member of M'Chigeng First Nation. I am currently completing my Masters of Education in Adult Education and Community Development at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, and am in the Collaborative Program in Aboriginal Health. Throughout my undergrad I worked on a number of urban Aboriginal health research projects, mainly looking at chronic health and diabetes in the Toronto Aboriginal community. I am grateful for the opportunity to be an interviewer with the Our Health Counts project and connect with community members to collectively uncover some of our unmet health needs. I look forward to reading the final report and seeing how the report will be a catalyst for change in our health status moving forward.

## **Melanie Reid**

Melanie has a wide variety of interests and talents and her career choices reflect that; everything from work with the Ontario government as a counsellor, operating her own personal chef business, as a teacher of Indigenous Community Health approaches, and as a music booking agent. She holds Bachelor degrees in Psychology and Social Work, and recently went back to school to earn her degree as a registered holistic nutritionist (RHN) which allows her to combine her passion for living a healthy balanced life and helping others do the same. A Mohawk, Turtle Clan, whose family is from Tyendinaga on the Bay of Quinte, Melanie is very excited to be working as a survey interviewer with Well Living House on the "Our Health Counts" research project, sure to be instrumental in affecting positive change amongst Toronto's aboriginal community for many years to come.



## **Nicole Wemigwans**

Mskwaa Mikinaake Kwe, Red Turtle Woman; Mukwa Dodem, Bear Clan; Genaabajing Donjaba, Serpent River First Nation. I'm currently completing my Masters of Social Work Aboriginal Field of Study from Wilfrid Laurier University . I'm completing my placement at the Well Living House from January to August 2015. My research interests include: Indigenous education at a secondary level, specifically all-Indigenous schools and the impacts on health and well-being; and the impacts of intergenerational knowledge transfer from Elders to youth and the impacts on health. I look forward to conducting the interviews with community members and anticipate the dissemination of the data and the knowledge translation back to the community.



## Genevieve Blais

shekoli Genevieve ni?: yukyats. Hi, my name is Genevieve. I am from Oneida, Nation of the Thames and am of the Turtle Clan. I recently graduated from the University of Toronto with a degree in biochemistry. I'm currently working at the Well Living House and also work as Oshkabeewis at Anishnawbe Health Toronto on my time off. As a First Nations woman interested in Aboriginal Health, this is deeply meaningful to me. I look forward to interviewing members of the community here in Toronto and gathering a comprehensive, purposeful health database.



## Jaymie Sampa

Jaymie joins the team as a recent graduate from the Masters of Public Health program at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health. Passionate about health equity and with a love of frontline work, she is thrilled to be site coordinating and conducting interviews for the Our Health Counts Toronto project! With a diverse range of interests, and a background in Kinesiology and Physical Education Jay absolutely loves to play...anything! You can catch her on the beach playing vball, zipping around town on her bike, sculling away in the pool or jumping into a pick up game of ...you name it - though admittedly not always with the strongest of skills ;). She's an experienced performance artist appearing on stages across the city as a musical theatre performer, singing with bands, dancing with troupes or lending her voice to fundraisers and community events. "I'm so excited about this project! Seeing it gain some serious momentum since we started in the field has been absolutely incredible! It's really special to see all the dedicated work and planning that everyone has contributed thus far manifest in such a cool tangible way of literally waves upon waves of people coming in!"



## Cora-Lee Simon nitishinihkaas

Thessalon First Nation nitoonci. Mahkwa dodem.

My name is Cora-Lee Simon, I am from Thessalon First Nations and I am Bear clan. I have lived in Toronto for many years and have worked for the many Indigenous organizations within the city. I am currently finishing my undergraduate program at the University of Toronto in the Aboriginal Studies Program. Then I will be continuing my studies in September 2015 working towards a Masters degree in Adult Education and Community Development. Going to Post Secondary has really enriched my life and changed my way of learning and living. I have enjoyed going to school these past three years and I hope that by me going back to school, it will influence my children with pursuing a higher education. Throughout the many years of working I have volunteered at a social service organization and was very glad that I had because I felt that I was able to give back to the Aboriginal community in the Toronto area. I feel that volunteerism has had a profound impact towards making a better life for myself, for my children and especially for the community at large.



## Rebecca Schreck

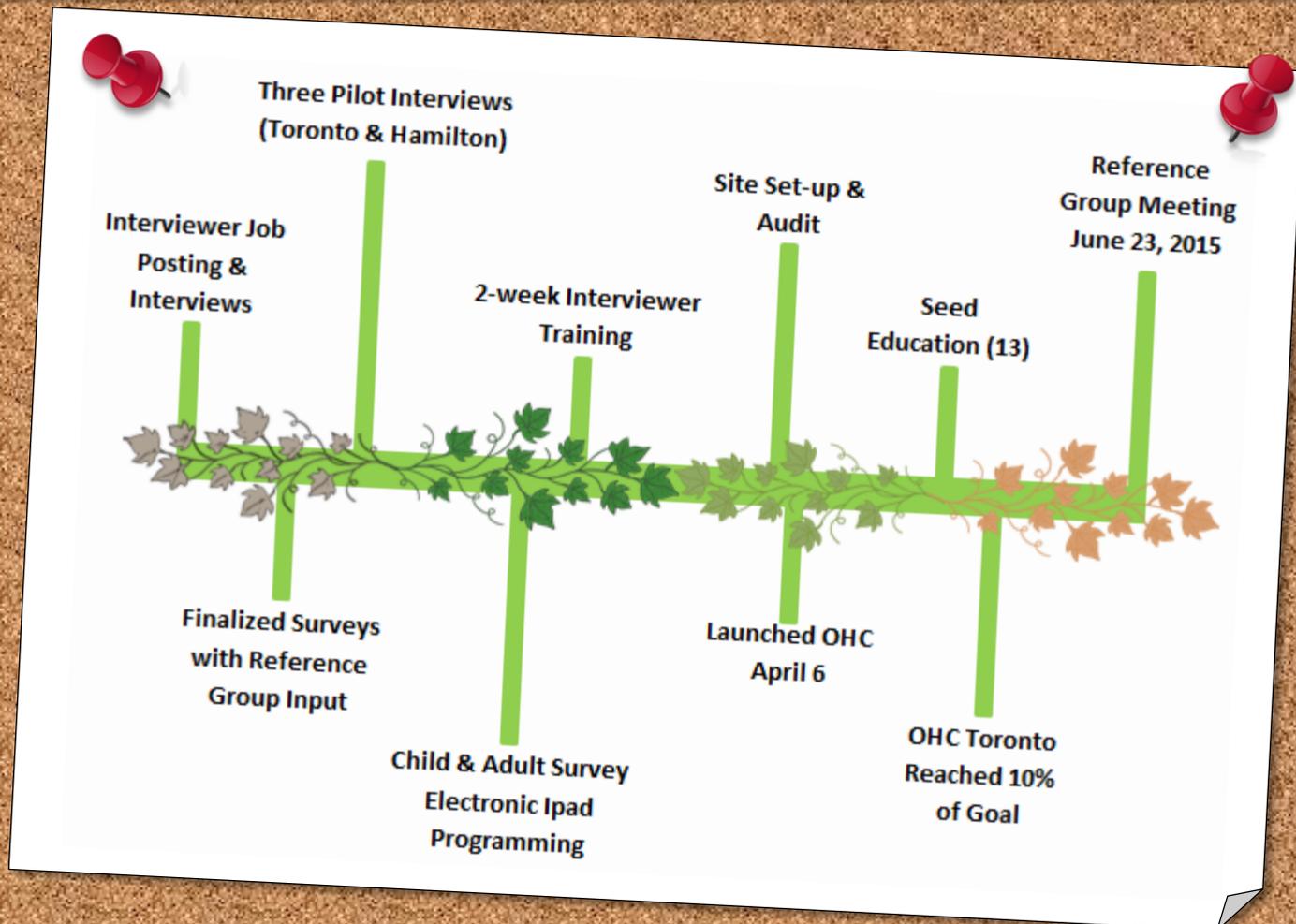
My name is Rebecca Schreck. My ancestry is Dene and German and I am a member of Lutsel K'e First Nation in the Northwest Territories. I was born and raised in Toronto and study Acupuncture & Herbal Medicine at Eight Branches Academy of Eastern Medicine. My love for this medicine is founded in it's framework of whole-person care. Upon completion of my program, I plan to open a community-focused acupuncture clinic, built upon the notion of providing accessible and effective care to folks from all walks of life. The realm of policy work seems a bit daunting at this time, but I hope to work behind the scenes in enabling acupuncture's accessibility within Canada. I'm truly excited to be a part of Our Health Counts Toronto, and can't wait to see the changes that it informs within and for our community.



# What's been done and what's happening next?

## Timeline

The next reference group meeting will be held on June 23, 2015 at 12:00pm at the Toronto Birth Centre. Further details regarding the location and time of the meeting will be sent closer to the date.



## OHC Survey Sites



### Reminder of the OHC Sites and Times:

**Mondays:** Queen West, 10:00am-5:00pm  
**Wednesdays:** SGMT, 3:00pm-8:00pm  
**Thursdays:** SGMT, 10:00am-5:00pm  
**Fridays:** Queen West, 10:00am-5:00pm  
**Saturdays:** Native Centre, 10:00am-4:00pm

Scroll down below on the next page to see what the OHC Toronto coupons look like!

# Keep an eye out for the OHC Toronto Coupons



MANY RIVERS TO CARRY US FORWARD

## Someone you know has completed the **Our Health Counts Toronto** survey

If you are Aboriginal or have Aboriginal ancestry and live, work or access services in Toronto; you are eligible to complete a survey.

Take this coupon to one of the locations on the back or call **416-806-1346** or email at [ohctoronto@smh.ca](mailto:ohctoronto@smh.ca)

EARN UP TO **\$50**

### Our Health Counts survey locations:



**Queen West Health Centre**  
168 Bathurst St, Toronto  
Mondays and Friday:  
10:00am – 5:00pm



**Seventh Generation Midwives Toronto**  
525 Dundas St. E., Toronto  
Wednesdays: 3pm – 8pm  
Thursdays: 10am – 5pm



**Native Canadian Centre**  
16 Spadina Rd., Toronto  
Saturdays: 10 am – 3:30 pm



Well Living House



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TTC TOKENS AVAILABLE UPON REQUEST AND TAXI SERVICES AND HOME VISITS AVAILABLE FOR SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES.  
PLEASE CALL 416-806-1346 TO INQUIRE.

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This is the number we track to see where the coupons are going!