

Our Health Counts Toronto

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

Mental Health

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) details the goals and impacts of Canada's Indigenous policies over time. These included the elimination of traditional Indigenous governments and livelihood; disruption of our families and communities; and the planned expiry of treaty, half-breed script, and Inuit land claim obligations through processes of assimilation. While attempts at assimilation have not been successful, the implementation of these policies have negatively influenced structural determinants of health, such as housing, income, employment and land ties. They also undermined language, cultural expression, and family systems. The result is a continued negative impact on the health of Indigenous peoples – including mental and emotional health and wellbeing. An approach that addresses structural risks, social determinants, and the revitalization of balanced family and community relationships is essential to addressing mental illness for Indigenous peoples and moving towards thriving Indigenous populations in Canada.

Positive Mental Health

More than 2x lower than the general Canadian Population

31% of Indigenous adults in Toronto reported very good or excellent mental health compared to **72%** of the general Canadian population.¹

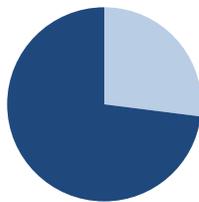
Most Indigenous adults in Toronto reported being happy, interested in life, having trusting relationships, being confident in expressing their ideas, and liking most of their personality everyday or almost everyday in the past month.



Over 7 in 10 are interested in life almost every day/every day.



Over 6 in 10 feel happy almost every day/every day.



3/4

are good at managing the responsibilities of their daily life and have experiences that challenge them to grow and become a better person almost every day/every day.

86%

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

73%

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

Almost 60%

are satisfied with their life and feel that they belong to a community almost every day/every day.



Over 2 in 3

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

Mental Health

Mental Health Diagnosis

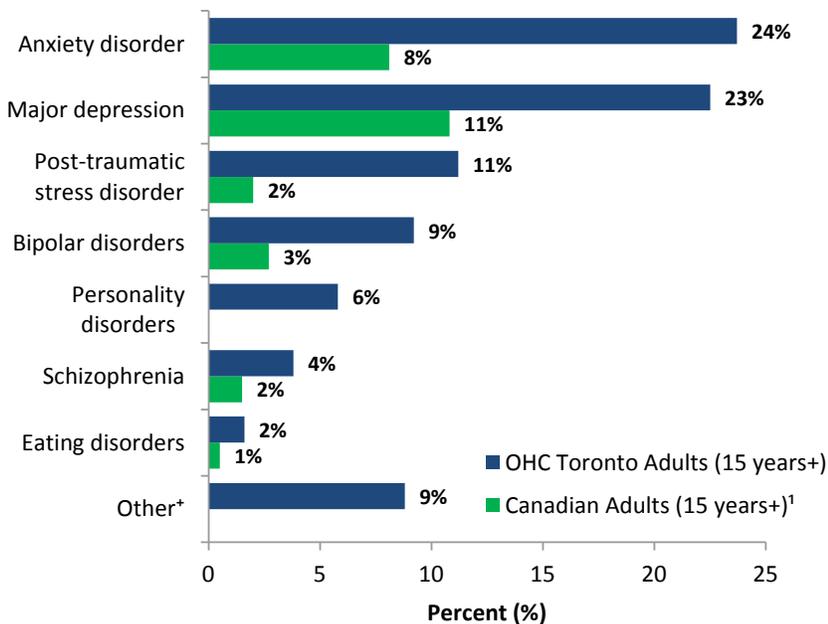
45% of Indigenous adults in Toronto have been told by a healthcare worker that they have a psychological and/or mental health disorder.

72% 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.

Rates of mental health diagnosis may be higher since access to health professionals is an issue.

Indigenous adults in Toronto have a **higher prevalence of mental health conditions** than the overall adult population, 15 years and older, in Ontario.

Prevalence of mental health conditions among Indigenous peoples in Toronto compared to the general Canadian population



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:

24% have an **anxiety disorder**

23% have **major depression**

11% have **post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)**

9% have a **bipolar disorder**

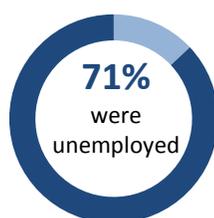
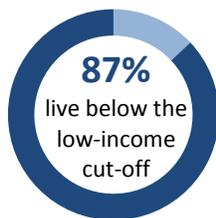
6% have a **personality disorder**

4% have **schizophrenia**

2% have an **eating disorder**

*Other includes: Minor depression, obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), post-partum depression, etc.

Of Indigenous adults who have been told that they have a psychological or mental health disorder...



Rates of poverty and unemployment are significantly higher for those who have a mental health disorder compared to those who do not.[‡]

Over 1 in 4

Indigenous adults have experienced discrimination from others because of an emotional or mental health problem.

58%

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.

Mental Health

Screening and Diagnosis for Depression and PTSD

OHC Toronto screening for Indigenous adults in Toronto demonstrated there is a large gap in the diagnosis and screening for depression and PTSD.

Depression

23% of Indigenous adults in Toronto have been told by a health care provider that they have major depression.

VS.

50% of Indigenous adults in Toronto screened to have a high likelihood of depression using the Kessler Scale.

5% of adults, 15 years and over, in Canada have had a major depressive episode in the past year.¹

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

11% of Indigenous adults in Toronto have been told by a health care provider that they have post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

VS.

31% of Indigenous adults in Toronto screened positive for PTSD.

2% of adults, 15 years and over, in Ontario have a current diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder.¹

Intentional Injury and Suicide

Half of Indigenous adults have had a close friend or family member die by suicide.

45% of Indigenous adults have harmed themselves on purpose.

Over 5 in 10 Indigenous adults have thought about dying by suicide

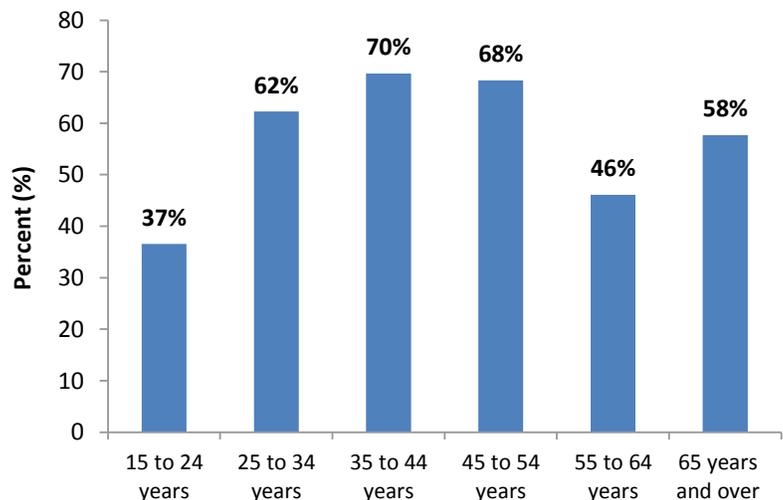
2.5x HIGHER than the general Ontario population

compared to **2 in 10** adults in Ontario.¹

36% of Indigenous adults have attempted to die by suicide.



Rates of having a family member or close friend die by suicide was high across all age groups, and especially between age 35 to 54.



Two-Spirit people more likely to harm themselves and consider suicide

Of Indigenous adults who identified as Two-Spirit:

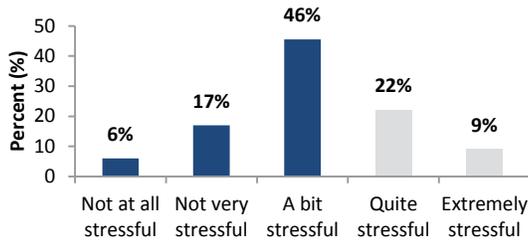
Over 3 in 5 have harmed themselves on purpose.

Over half have attempted to die by suicide.

Mental Health

Stress and Coping

69% of Indigenous adults found most days a bit, not very, or not at all stressful.



Major Stressors	
Financial Situation	64%
Own physical, emotional, or mental health	54%
Personal Relationships	48%
Time pressures/not enough time	37%
Caring for own children and/or others	29%
Other personal or family responsibilities	29%
Employment Status	29%
School	22%
Personal and family's safety	18%
Discrimination	16%

Almost **3/5** of Indigenous adults had good, very good, or excellent ability at handling stress.

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

65% participated in traditional Indigenous ceremony.

47% used traditional Indigenous medicines or practices to maintain their health and wellbeing.

80% had a strong sense of belonging to the Indigenous community.

96% felt good about their Indigenous heritage.

These rates are similar for those whose ability to handle stress was fair or poor indicating the need for more research on how traditional practices and identity are linked to stress management.

Access to Services

37% of Indigenous adults in Toronto thought there are inadequate mental health services available to Indigenous peoples.

41% of Indigenous adults thought there are inadequate services for suicide prevention available to Indigenous peoples.

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Mental Health Reference

Our Health Counts Toronto is an inclusive community-based health survey for Indigenous peoples of Toronto and is part of the largest Indigenous population health study in Canada. Participants were selected using respondent-driven sampling, a statistical method which uses social networks in the community to recruit Indigenous people living in the city.

Survey Question

RDS Prevalence Estimate
(95% Confidence Interval)

In general, would you say your mental health is...

Excellent	13.0% (7.6, 18.5)
Very good	18.3% (12.7, 23.9)
Good	39.8% (31.9, 47.8)
Fair	22.6% (16.4, 28.7)
Poor	6.3% (3.2, 9.3)

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

...interested in life

Every day/almost every day	74.5% (68.6, 80.4)
2-3 times a week or less	25.5% (19.6, 31.4)

...happy

Every day/almost every day	65.3% (57.9, 72.6)
2-3 times a week or less	34.7% (27.4, 42.1)

...good at managing the responsibilities of your daily life

Every day/almost every day	73.9% (68.1, 79.7)
2-3 times a week or less	26.1% (20.3, 31.9)

...that your life has a sense of direction and meaning to it

Every day/almost every day	72.6% (66.0, 79.1)
2-3 times a week or less	27.4% (20.9, 34.0)

...that you liked most parts of your personality

Every day/almost every day	86.4% (82.6, 90.1)
2-3 times a week or less	13.6% (9.9, 17.4)

...confident to think or express your own ideas and opinions

Every day/almost every day	72.8% (66.2, 79.4)
2-3 times a week or less	27.2% (20.7, 33.8)

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

Every day/almost every day	76.1% (69.9, 82.3)
2-3 times a week or less	23.9% (17.8, 30.1)

...that you had warm and trusting relationships with others

Every day/almost every day	68.8% (61.9, 75.8)
2-3 times a week or less	31.2% (24.3, 38.1)

...that you belonged to a community

Every day/almost every day	59.6% (51.9, 67.3)
2-3 times a week or less	40.4% (32.7, 48.1)

...satisfied with your life

Every day/almost every day	59.2% (51.5, 66.8)
2-3 times a week or less	40.8% (33.2, 48.5)

...that people are basically good

Every day/almost every day	68.5% (61.6, 75.4)
2-3 times a week or less	31.5% (24.6, 38.4)

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

Yes	44.8% (36.9, 52.7)
No	55.2% (47.3, 63.2)

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

Yes	54.6% (41.2, 68.0)
No	45.4% (32.0, 58.8)

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

Anxiety disorder	23.7% (16.8, 30.7)
Major depression	22.5% (15.5, 29.5)
Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)	11.2% (6.2, 16.2)
Bipolar disorders	9.2% (5.4, 13.0)
Schizophrenia	3.8% (0.0, 8.3)
Personality disorders	5.8% (0.9, 10.8)
Eating disorders	1.6% (0.4, 2.7)
Suicidal behaviour	3.5% (0.9, 6.1)
Other	8.8% (4.0, 13.7)

◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ ◆ 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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Survey Question

Survey Question		RDS Prevalence Estimate (95% Confidence Interval)
Have been told that you have a psychological/mental health disorder by LICO		
Below/at before-tax LICO	87.3% (81.9, 92.6)	
Above before-tax LICO	12.8% (7.4, 18.1)	
Have been told that you have a psychological/mental health disorder by employment status		
Unemployed	70.5% (59.4, 81.5)	
Employed or not in the labour force	29.5% (18.5, 40.6)	
Have you ever experienced discrimination from others because of an emotional or mental health problem?		
Yes	28.1% (20.9, 35.2)	
No	71.9% (64.8, 79.1)	
Did this prevent or delay you from getting the care or support you needed?		
Yes	58.5% (42.2, 74.7)	
No	41.5% (25.3, 57.8)	
Kessler Scale for Depression		
Low (10-15)	27.3% (21.9, 32.6)	
Moderate (16-21)	22.3% (16.3, 28.4)	
High (22-29)	30.6% (22.5, 38.7)	
Very high (30-50)	19.9% (13.7, 26.0)	
PTSD Screener		
No PTSD symptoms	35.5% (28.7, 42.4)	
1 or 2 PTSD symptoms	33.4% (25.2, 41.6)	
3 or more PTSD symptoms (Positive Screen)	31.1% (23.9, 38.3)	
Has a close friend or family member ever died by suicide?		
Yes	57.8% (50.2, 65.3)	
No	42.3% (34.8, 49.8)	
Have you ever harmed yourself on purpose?		
Yes	46.8% (39.0, 54.6)	
No	53.2% (45.4, 61.0)	
Have you ever thought about dying by suicide?		
Yes	54.5% (46.8, 62.2)	
No	45.5% (37.8, 53.2)	
Have you ever attempted to die by suicide?		
Yes	37.5% (29.7, 45.3)	
No	62.5% (54.7, 70.3)	
Age group by have had a close friend or family member ever die by suicide		
15 to 24 years		
Yes	36.5% (15.9, 57.2)*	
No	63.5% (42.8, 84.1)*	
25 to 34 years		
Yes	62.3% (51.0, 73.6)	
No	37.7% (26.5, 49.0)	
35 to 44 years		
Yes	69.7% (55.9, 83.5)	
No	30.3% (16.5, 44.1)	
45 to 54 years		
Yes	68.3% (56.4, 80.2)	
No	31.7% (19.9, 43.6)	
55 to 64 years		
Yes	46.1% (30.5, 61.7)	
No	53.9% (38.3, 69.5)	
65 years and over		
Yes	57.7% (35.5, 79.8)*	
No	42.3% (20.2, 64.5)*	
Of Indigenous adults who identified as Two-Spirit...		
Have harmed themselves on purpose	62.6% (49.3, 75.8)	
Have attempted suicide	58.1% (44.1, 72.1)	
Thinking about the amount of stress in your life, would you say that most days are...		
Not at all stressful	6.0% (3.3, 8.8)	
Not very stressful	17.1% (10.8, 23.5)	
A bit stressful	45.7% (37.9, 53.5)	
Quite a bit stressful	22.2% (15.5, 28.9)	
Extremely stressful	9.0% (5.2, 12.8)	

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



Well Living House
Indigenous Research, Scientific Integrity

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