

# Our Health Counts Thunder Bay

An inclusive community-driven health survey for Indigenous peoples in Thunder Bay

## Discrimination

Experiences of discrimination and race-based violence are key determinants of health and well-being for Indigenous people.<sup>1</sup> Experiences of discrimination in Indigenous communities are under-studied and often under-reported.<sup>2</sup> The information presented may under-estimate the true level of racism and violence experienced by Indigenous adults in Thunder Bay.

### Experiences of Racism

**66%** of Indigenous adults in Thunder Bay, 15 years and older, reported experiencing racism. This is consistent with the findings of Our Health Counts Toronto<sup>3</sup>, London<sup>4</sup>, and Hamilton<sup>5</sup>, where over half of Indigenous adults reported experiencing racism.

**71%** of Indigenous adults in Thunder Bay that reported experiencing racism, experienced it over the past year.

**91%** of Indigenous adults in Thunder Bay believe racism towards Indigenous people is an issue in Thunder Bay.

#### Racism in Health Care

**1 in 3** adults in Thunder Bay reported that they were treated unfairly by health care professionals because of their Indigenous identity.

**66%** of Indigenous adults who reported experiencing racism from health care professionals said it prevented, stopped or delayed them from returning to health services.

For more information on racism in health care, see the Access to Health Care Services Factsheet.

#### Impact on Wellbeing & Self-Esteem

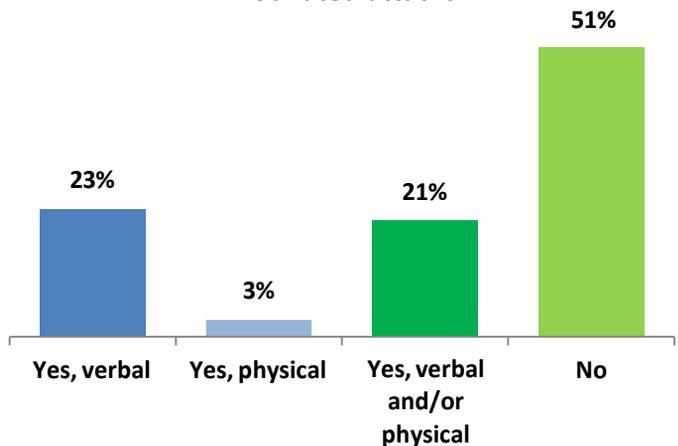
**36%** of Indigenous adults in Thunder Bay who reported experiencing racism said it affected their overall health/wellbeing.

### Ethnically/Racially Motivated Attacks

**46%** of Indigenous adults in Thunder Bay reported experiencing ethnically or racially motivated physical and/or verbal attacks in their lifetime.

**34%** of Indigenous adults in Thunder Bay reported experiencing ethnically or racially motivated verbal and/or physical attacks in the past 12 months.

Lifetime prevalence of ethnically or racially motivated attacks



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### Experiences Of Discrimination

**32%** of Indigenous adults in Thunder Bay reported experiencing discrimination because of their gender.

**9%** of Indigenous adults reported experiencing discrimination because of their sexual orientation.

**26%** of Indigenous adults believe homophobia is a problem in the Thunder Bay Indigenous community.

### Policy Implications

**TRC Call to Action<sup>6</sup> 23:** We call upon all levels of government to provide cultural safety training for all healthcare professionals.

**TRC Call to Action 24:** We call upon medical and nursing schools in Canada to require all students to take a course dealing with Indigenous health issues, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the UNDRIP, Treaties and Indigenous rights, Indigenous law, and Crown-relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights and anti-racism.

**TRC Call to Action 57:** We call upon federal, provincial, territorial, and municipal governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Indigenous Peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Indigenous rights, Indigenous law, and Indigenous–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism. **MMIWG**

**Report Calls to Justice<sup>7</sup> 7.6:** We call upon institutions and health service providers to ensure that all persons involved in the provision of health services to Indigenous Peoples receive ongoing training, education, and awareness in areas including the history of colonialism in the oppression of FNIM peoples, anti-bias and anti-racism, local language and culture, and local health and healing practices.

**MMIWG Report Calls to Justice 9.2:** We call upon all actors in the justice system, including police services, to build respectful working relationships with Indigenous Peoples by knowing, understanding, and respecting the people they are serving. This should include reviewing and revising all policies, practices, and procedures to ensure service delivery that is culturally appropriate and reflects no bias or racism toward Indigenous Peoples, including victims and survivors of violence.

**Additional Recommendations:** City of Thunder Bay, provincial and federal policy makers work in partnership with urban Indigenous Peoples and organizations to:

- Provide education and training, including anti-racism and cultural safety training across a range of disciplines, including people working in education/schools, health and social services, police and justice systems
- Provide Indigenous culture-based programming that build sense of pride in identity and self-esteem
- Provide funding to schools, colleges and universities to develop courses on the history of Indigenous Peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Indigenous rights, Indigenous law, and Indigenous–Crown relations. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism

#### Definitions

Indigenous adults: persons 15 years or older self-identifying as Indigenous, such as First Nations, Métis, Inuit or other Indigenous nations, living or using  
Ethnically or racially motivated attacks: verbal or physical abuse to your person or property services in the City of Thunder Bay.

#### Sources

1. Veenstra (2009); 2. Allan & Smylie (2015); 3. Our Health Counts Toronto (2018); 4. Our Health Counts London (2016); 5. Smylie et al. (2011); 6. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015); 7. MMIWG Calls to Justice (2019).

#### Citation

Brar, R., Muir, N. M., McConkey, S., Martin, E., Bean, J., Gomez, C. Hardy, M., & Smylie, J. (2020). Our Health Counts Thunder Bay: Discrimination [Fact sheet].

Population based estimates created using respondent-driven sampling



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## Discrimination Reference

Our Health Counts Thunder Bay is an inclusive community-based health survey for Indigenous peoples of Thunder Bay 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)
<b>Have you ever been treated poorly or unfairly because you are Indigenous?</b>	
Yes	65.90% (59.40, 72.40)
No	31.60% (25.20, 38.10)
<b>If you have been treated poorly or unfairly because you are Indigenous, has this occurred in the past year?</b>	
Yes	71.30% (65.00, 77.70)
No	27.80% (21.40, 34.10)
<b>Do you think racism towards Indigenous people is a problem in Thunder Bay?</b>	
Yes	91.40% (87.50, 95.20)
No	6.80% (4.00, 9.50)
<b>Have you ever been treated unfairly by a health care professional because you are Indigenous?</b>	
Yes	39.30% (33.00, 45.60)
No	56.00% (49.60, 62.50)
<b>In the past 5 years, did this stop/prevent/delay you from returning to health services?</b>	
Yes	65.50% (55.80, 75.30)
No	34.10% (24.40, 43.80)



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Survey Question	RDS Prevalence Estimate (95% Confidence Interval)
<b>Do you believe that your overall health and wellbeing have been affected by racism?</b>	
Yes	36.10% (29.80, 42.50)
No	62.10% (55.80, 68.50)
<b>Have you been the victim of an ethnically or racially motivated attack in your lifetime?</b>	
No	51.10% (44.60, 57.50)
Yes, verbal	22.60% (17.20, 28.00)
Yes, physical	3.00% (0.90, 5.10)
Yes, verbal and/or physical	20.50% (15.40, 25.60)
<b>Have you been the victim of an ethnically or racially motivated attack in the past 12 months?</b>	
No	65.40% (59.20, 71.60)
Yes, verbal	20.80% (15.30, 26.40)
Yes, physical	1.50% (0.30, 3.40)
Yes, verbal and/or physical	11.80% (8.10, 15.60)
<b>Have you ever been treated unfairly because of your gender?</b>	
Yes	32.40% (26.30, 38.60)
No	64.50% (58.30, 70.80)
<b>Have you ever been treated unfairly because of your sexual orientation?</b>	
Yes	9.00% (4.70, 13.30)
No	89.80% (85.30, 94.30)
<b>Do you think that homophobia is a problem in the Toronto Indigenous community?</b>	
Yes	25.70% (20.00, 31.40)
No	49.50% (43.00, 56.00)
Chose not to answer	0.00% (0.20, 0.30)



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