



TORONTO ABORIGINAL SUPPORT SERVICES COUNCIL

Toronto Aboriginal Research Project (TARP) Report

Aboriginal Homelessness in Toronto

Research Summary

What is the Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council?

TASSC is a not-for-profit policy and research organization that addresses social determinants to improve and enhance the social, economic and cultural base of Aboriginal peoples in the City of Toronto.

TASSC is comprised of the following ten member organizations:

- ❖ 2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations
- ❖ Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto
- ❖ Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto Clinic
- ❖ Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment
- ❖ Native Canadian Centre of Toronto
- ❖ Native Child and Family Services of Toronto
- ❖ Na-Me-Res (Native Men's Residence)
- ❖ Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto
- ❖ Nishnawbe Homes
- ❖ Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre

What is the Toronto Aboriginal Research Project (TARP) Report?

The TARP Report is the largest and most comprehensive study of Aboriginal people ever conducted in the City of Toronto. With a sample of over 1,400 individuals, 14 topics studied and seven methodologies utilized, the TARP Report provides an important picture of the current situation, the aspirations and the challenges facing Aboriginal people.

Some people who come to Toronto carry shame because of their family and do not consider going for help because there is alcoholism or drug abuse within their family and they do not want to disclose to anyone new. They stay on the street and get worse. (Homelessness Focus Group)

Homelessness remains a significant issue in Toronto, and Aboriginal homelessness in particular involves unique aspects that require specific investigation and consideration. The majority of Aboriginal people who are homeless in Toronto are originally from outside the city. Particularly challenging issues facing Aboriginal homeless people include substance abuse, housing and employment. The issues of transportation and accessing services and social assistance were also commonly emphasized by participants in the TARP study. Discrimination and racism, and perceptions that homeless Aboriginal people are often seen as the least priority and looked at negatively were also reoccurring themes.

www.tassc.ca

16 Spadina Road, Toronto, ON M5R 2S7 ☎ 647.748.6100 ✉ info@tassc.ca



TORONTO ABORIGINAL SUPPORT SERVICES COUNCIL

Toronto Aboriginal Research Project (TARP) Report

Aboriginal Homelessness in Toronto

Research Summary

Key Issues Affecting Aboriginal Homelessness in Toronto

There are a number of issues that contribute to homelessness; addictions and substance use rank among the top reasons. Affordable housing, accessible transportation, racism and lateral violence are also factors.

Many Aboriginal people in Toronto have the necessary skills for employment but underlying issues around transportation and affordability of tools and work gear contribute to difficulties in sustainable employment. There is also a need for more training and education for Aboriginal people.

TARP Report Recommendations for Aboriginal Homelessness in Toronto

- ❖ That social service agencies review their policies and regulations regarding assistance for transportation to make it easier for clients to effectively access transportation services in Toronto.
- ❖ That Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal agencies, the private sector, labour unions and educational institutions work together to create employment incentives, upgrading, apprentice and special education and training

programs focusing specifically on the needs of Aboriginal homeless people in Toronto. In addition that mainstream shelters in the downtown core that support Aboriginal homelessness offer culturally-appropriate services and supports.

- ❖ That governments establish a transitional housing program geared to the needs of Aboriginal homeless people, including culturally-based services relating to addictions, counseling, cultural teachings, transportation assistance, employment preparation and life skills training.



www.tassc.ca

16 Spadina Road, Toronto, ON M5R 2S7 ☎ 647.748.6100 ✉ info@tassc.ca