



TORONTO ABORIGINAL SUPPORT SERVICES COUNCIL

## Toronto Aboriginal Research Project (TARP) Report

### Introduction to the Toronto Aboriginal Research Project Report *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 1<sup>st</sup> 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.

#### About the Toronto Aboriginal Population

Toronto currently has the largest Aboriginal population of any city in Ontario. Still, social and economic challenges make it difficult to establish a viable Aboriginal community in the city. At the same time, a diversity of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations are in place to assist Aboriginal people experiencing problems. In addition, there now exists a large Toronto Aboriginal middle class who are economically successful and living stable lifestyles.

The 2006 Census counted 31,910 people who identified as Aboriginal in the GTA, a 33% increase from the 2001 Census, and 69,820 individuals in the GTA who had Aboriginal ancestry, an increase of 31% since 2001.



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### Introduction to the Toronto Aboriginal Research Project Report

#### Who Commissioned the TARP Report?

The TARP Report was commissioned by the Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (TASSC) and overseen by the TARP Research Steering Committee.

The TARP Report is distinctive in that its approach to research is community-based. That is, the research was overseen from start to finish by representatives of the Toronto Aboriginal community.

Funding for the TARP Report was provided by the Ontario Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs, the Urban Aboriginal Strategy of the Office of the Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians and the City of Toronto Homelessness Partnership Initiative.

#### Users Guide

The TARP Report is organized around the specific topics researched as set out by the TARP Steering Committee. Each topic forms a chapter. It is hoped that the Report will be useful to many stakeholders including policy makers, agencies and their officials who administer policies or programs and, perhaps most importantly, the beneficiaries of the programs.

#### History of Research on Aboriginal People in Toronto

While there has been little in-depth research on Aboriginal people in Toronto, there has been a number of studies carried out over the years. It is important to have an understanding of the findings from these studies in order to comprehend the current situation of Aboriginal people in Toronto.

#### *Timeline of Research on Aboriginal People in Toronto*

- 1970** - 1<sup>st</sup> major study of Aboriginal people in Toronto, E. Nagler
- 1981** - Indians in the City Project, D. McCaskill
- 1981** - Native People in Urban Settings, F. Maidman
- 1993** The Emergence of Aboriginal Institutions in Metropolitan Toronto, Obonsawin-Irwin Consulting Inc.
- 1996** - Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
- 1999** Taking Responsibility for Homelessness, Mayor's Homelessness Action Task Force
- 2002** In the Spirit of Unity, D. Richardson, D. Dimaline, C. & F. Blondin
- 2003** Moving Toward Unity, D. Anderson
- 2004** All Voices Heard, M. Finn and Associates
- 2004** "Real" Indians and Others, B. Lawrence
- 2006** Struggling for Success, Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto
- 2006** First Steps Toward the Development of Community-driven Research Strategies and Priorities for Indigenous Knowledge in Toronto, J. Carter & D. McGregor
- 2008** The Values Carry On, J-P. Restoule
- 2008** Dealing Effectively with Aboriginal Homelessness in Toronto, J Ward Associates
- 2008** Greater Toronto Area Aboriginal Housing Consultation, Nishnawbe Homes, Miziwe Biik and Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre
- 2009** Street Youth in Toronto, Canada A. Linton, M. Singh, D. Turbow and T. Legg
- 2010** Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study: Main Report Environics Institute.
- 2010** Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study: Toronto Report Environics Institute
- 2011** Little Voices Child and Family Centres, Native Child and Family Services of Toronto
- 2011** The TARP Report, D. McCaskill, K. FitzMaurice, J. Cidro, commissioned by TASSC