



TORONTO ABORIGINAL SUPPORT SERVICES COUNCIL

## Toronto Aboriginal Research Project (TARP) Report

### Law & Justice and Aboriginal People Research Summary

#### What is the Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council (TASSC)?

TASSC is a not-for-profit research and advocacy organization in the City of Toronto. TASSC is comprised of ten member organizations.

- ❖ 2-Spirited People of the 1<sup>st</sup> Nations
- ❖ Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto
- ❖ Aboriginal Legal Services of Toronto Clinic
- ❖ Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre
- ❖ Miziwe Biik Aboriginal Employment and Training
- ❖ Native Child and Family Services of Toronto
- ❖ Native Canadian Centre of Toronto
- ❖ NA-ME-RES (Native Men's Residence)
- ❖ Native Women's Resource Centre of Toronto
- ❖ Nishnawbe Homes

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

The TARP Report is the largest and most comprehensive study of Aboriginal people in Toronto ever conducted. 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 challenges facing Aboriginal people in the Greater Toronto Area.

*There are lots of programs available, but we just never went to them before. At first I went to programs because I had to, but now I like going there and I am getting to know more people at the different agencies and I am going to be getting my GED. (Law and Justice Focus Group)*

Aboriginal people involved in the justice system in Toronto tend to be those who are younger, experiencing poverty, have less education, and are experiencing a diversity of inter-related social problems including addictions, mental health challenges and social isolation.



[www.tassc.ca](http://www.tassc.ca)

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#### Key Issues Affecting Law & Justice and Aboriginal People

There have been significant advancements made in the support of Aboriginal people involved with the justice system in Toronto and in the creation of Aboriginal spaces of restorative justice where the community is empowered to determine the justice needs of its member. In supporting Aboriginal victims and offenders, Aboriginal law and justice programs are contributing to community development, healing, strong Aboriginal identities and cultural revitalization.

However, there continues to be challenges relating to police and security guard racial profiling of Aboriginal people, the undervaluing of Aboriginal victims and the overcharging of Aboriginal offenders.

#### TARP Report Recommendations for Law & Justice and Aboriginal People

- ❖ That education and awareness campaigns be initiated and include both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal community members, while focusing on police officers, security guards, lawyers, and judges.
- ❖ That government funding be allocated towards the expansion of Aboriginal, community-based law and justice services across the Greater Toronto Area and that further support be given to the development of services in the area Aboriginal youth and victims of crime.
- ❖ That government funding be allocated to the creation of an Aboriginal, community-based Duty Council to represent Aboriginal people at bail hearings and to work with existing court workers.
- ❖ To conduct an Aboriginal community-based review and evaluation of the Toronto Aboriginal Peacekeeping Unit.
- ❖ To start a halfway house in Toronto for Aboriginal men being released from prison to assist in their readjustment to society.



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