



Aboriginal Youth Council Terms of Reference

Background:

Aboriginal peoples (First Nations, Metis and Inuit) continue to make up an unequal amount of the new HIV /AIDS cases in Canada. Youth under the age of 30 account for than 20 % of these new infections.

With peer, or youth to youth, education seen as a viable and best approach to providing health information regarding HIV / AIDS prevention, and in recognition that the voices of youth must be heard on this important topic, the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN) will establish, develop and coordinate an National Aboriginal Youth Council.

It is hoped that the Aboriginal Youth Council will have the active participation of 10 to 12 Aboriginal Youth from communities across Canada.

Goals (Mandate) of the National Aboriginal Youth Council

- To support the updating of the Young Eagles Challenge materials.
- To assist CAAN and its partners in the development of a 5 year Strategic plan for youth and to establish strategic priorities in this plan with respect to combating HIV /AIDS in Aboriginal communities.
- To provide unique advice and perspective to the CAAN leadership and its partners.
- To become informed leaders in the battle to combat HIV / AIDS in Aboriginal Communities and through this example, to encourage and support others to be leaders in this challenge.

The Values and Principles of the National Aboriginal Youth Council

- We believe that youth have a voice and need to be heard.
- We believe that others have a voice, they need to be heard and that we can be a much stronger generation if we can find ways to work together.
- We treat each other with respect and we are responsible for how we work with each other and for how we treat others as members of the Youth Council.
- We are accountable to the values of the communities from which we come.
- We know that everyone who works with us is unique and brings something to the table. We look for the positive contributions of each member and accept this as a gift from the creator.
- We know we have important work to do, but we are also here to have fun.



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Resources and Budget

The Aboriginal Youth Council is funded through the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN).

The Aboriginal Youth Council is guided and coordinated through an Aboriginal Youth Coordinator position that is funded by Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network (CAAN).

The Aboriginal Youth Council expects to hold several face to face (in person) meetings and will also be supported through tele-conferencing and social networking (Facebook etc).

The Aboriginal Youth Council reports and is accountable to:

- The Youth Advisory Committee has a unique role in that it is a national cross-cultural organization. The youth members are accountable to each other and to the values of the communities from which they come.
- Youth Coordinator established by CAAN.
- CAAN and its partners

Governance and Decision Making:

Initial decisions regarding the selection of youth participants, the initial setup and development of the National Aboriginal Youth Council will be the responsibility of CAAN and its partners.

It is recognized that each youth, who will be joining the Council, is unique and will have different skills and experiences to contribute. In some cases facilitation and mentoring by more experienced members of CAAN and its partners will be helpful in balancing the contribution of the Youth Council members and ensuring that the perspectives of youth are heard.

However, the decisions of the Youth Council are those of the Youth Council and will be respected. Decisions will be based on consensus amongst the members.

This is a Draft Terms of Reference - it is hoped and expected that the persons who are chosen to be on Youth Council will refine this document and the activities of the Youth Council.



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Reporting on Activities of the Aboriginal Youth Council

- Minutes of all meeting and proceedings will be kept and reported to the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network. These will be available to the CAAN Leadership and other stakeholders, and if appropriate, published to the CAAN Website for the general public.
- These minutes will also be considered for the quarterly reports required by CAAN.
- The National Aboriginal Youth Council will seek to provide an update on activity for each CAAN newsletter and will report back to the Committee members' communities and others at least twice per year. (A format will be decided. It could be on the website or a printed copy)
- If possible, publications and updates will be translated into the indigenous language of the communities from which Aboriginal Youth Council members have been selected. This is to ensure our elders and others are informed of our activities and to honour our proud heritages.

Commitment of the Aboriginal Youth Council members

The National Aboriginal Youth Council members will be appointed for at least a year and longer if they desire to remain involved.

The Aboriginal Youth Council expects to hold several face to face (in person) meetings and will also be supported through tele-conferencing and social networking (Facebook etc).

For more information about CAAN and the Aboriginal Youth Council

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