

About CAAN Communities, Alliances, & Networks

In 1991, a panel of Indigenous people living with HIV spoke at the Health Canada National Conference and laid seeds for the creation of the Canadian Aboriginal Aids Network (CAAN). In 1994, the Indigenous ASOs partnered with the Canadian Aids Society (CAS) to undertake governance development and CAAN was eventually incorporated as a national, non-profit of Indigenous Aids service organization (ASO) in 1997.

Since then, CAAN has been providing a national forum for Indigenous Peoples to holistically address HIV/AIDS, HCV, STBBIs, TB, mental health, aging and related co-morbidity issues. We provide accurate and up to date resources on these issues in a culturally relevant manner. Our work is grounded in Indigenous-centered and trauma-informed research and policies, promoting a Social Determinants of Health Framework.

CAAN'S Response

CAAN has two streams (program and research) that helps address some of the disparities that Indigenous women living with HIV face. Indigenous women are at the core of communities -- women have always had the responsibility of taking care of their families and oftentimes leadership roles. Women need culturally responsive care and support and CAAN is perfectly positioned to offer these resources.



**Creating
Safer Spaces
for Indigenous
Women Living
with HIV.**

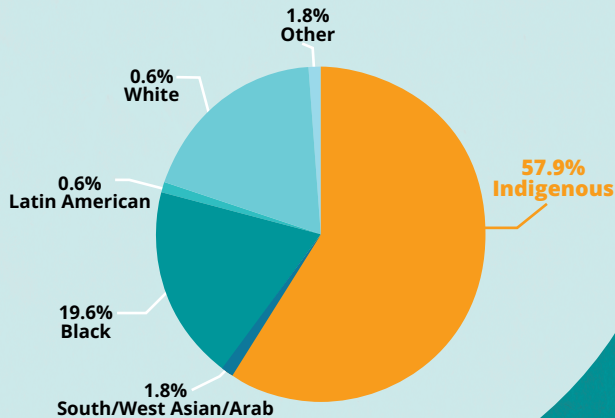


To Learn More

Visit our website www.caan.ca to access our information sheets that provide wise and promising practices recommendations to implement in your services.



Statistics on Indigenous Women Living with HIV



Indigenous women are disproportionately affected by HIV. They are ranked the highest amongst reported cases in comparison to non-Indigenous women. It is reported that the highest proportion of exposure was through heterosexual contact, followed by injection drug use.

Wise Prevention Practices & Indigenous Women

Prevention Education is Knowledge

HIV is a teacher. It's important to have open and non-judgmental discussions about sexuality, sexual health, sexual orientation, and addressing myths & misconceptions about HIV. This provides Indigenous women the opportunity to make healthy, informed decisions.

Culture Saves Lives

Indigenous culture and traditions are healing. It can provide a way to celebrate Indigenous roots and create a safer space for service users.

Make Your Organization Community a "Safer Space"

Indigenous AIDS Service Organizations (IASOs) should assess how they're addressing gender-specific needs & gender-based barriers to services. They must provide resources to fill service gaps.

Wise Practice Activities To Foster a Safe Space

- **Provide** basic education about HIV, HCV, and STBBIs.
- **Invite** Indigenous women living with HCV or other STBBIs to share their stories and answer questions.
- **Create** a policy statement and post it in a public place to show your commitment to creating a safer space.
- **Increase** partnerships with regional organizations and invite them to facilitate capacity building events.
- **Review** policies and procedures to ensure excellence in confidentiality practices.
- **Host** information sessions with women to identify what training they want.
- **Create** a prevention education committee to facilitate prevention education.
- **Partner** with CATIE to access treatment information for community members (www.catie.ca).
- **Create** an onsite resource forum of educational material.