



SUICIDE PREVENTION TOOLBOX

INDIGENOUS
MEN

INDIGENOUS MEN

There are different Indigenous communities in Quebec and Canada: each community has its own specific characteristics, and each individual has a unique relationship with their community and traditions. This diversity means that there is no single solution or standard model of intervention.

Indigenous men in Montreal may have a number of risk factors that could lead them to engage in suicidal behavior. These include a broken connection with their community and culture, as well as historical violence that affects them and can exacerbate their distress.





BE VIGILANT

What are the signs of suicidal distress? What are the risk factors to watch out for?

RISK FACTORS RELATED TO HISTORICAL TRAUMA

- Intergenerational experiences of violence and assimilation policies (boarding schools, forced displacement, loss of culture and language, killing of dogs for the Inuit)
- Removal from the community or territory (identity tensions)
- Impact of placement in foster care by the Youth Protection Services (increased risk of major depression, breakdown of family and cultural ties)
- Judicialization and incarceration leading to social and cultural isolation, difficulties in adapting, and exacerbating feelings of exclusion
- Difficulty in building trust (mistrust of social workers)
- Stigmatization and impact of colonial policies

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND INDIVIDUAL RISK FACTORS

- Untreated psychological disorders (anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress)
- Childhood violence (sexual abuse, neglect, domestic violence)
- Addictions (alcohol, drugs, medication) used to numb emotional pain

RISK FACTORS RELATED TO LIVING CONDITIONS AND PRECARIOUSNESS

- Difficulties accessing housing, employment, or basic resources, which can trigger stress and insecurity
- Financial instability that can exacerbate the loss of control over their lives and their choices
- Forced geographical separation (lack of space in housing, leaving home to receive care, study or work) that can lead to isolation or the breakdown of community ties
- Presence of firearms in the environment (often linked to hunting practices) which increases the risk in times of distress

SIGNES DE DÉTRESSE

- Substance abuse (use of drugs or alcohol as a means of alleviating suffering)
- Aggressive or self-destructive behavior (possible reactions to unexpressed distress)
- Emotional isolation (difficulty or refusal to talk about emotions due to pressure to be strong, to remain silent, or to bear sole responsibility for the family or community)
- Social isolation (stopping going to places you usually go to)
- Discontinuation of ongoing treatment, increased consumption

RECOGNIZING EVENTS THAT MAKE SOMEONE VULNERABLE

- Separation or distancing from one's community
- Breakup, relationship breakdown
- Experiences of stigmatization and racism



ELEMENTS TO EXPLORE

1. Recognize signs of distress
2. Act quickly
3. Create a safety net
4. Equip loved ones
5. Design a plan based on individual needs

EMPATHY AND ACTIVE LISTENING TO FUEL HOPE

What are the best practices for reaching out to indigenous men to listen to them and encourage them to seek help?

TO LISTEN AND ENCOURAGE EXPRESSION:

- Normalize asking for help
- Support the person's autonomy and dignity
- A genuine understanding of Indigenous realities, rooted in history
- Respect the diverse visions of different Indigenous communities on life and healing (including non-Western approaches to suicide prevention)
- Promote an intercultural and trauma-informed approach
- Be aware of your privileges and your position as an immigrant caregiver
- Respect traditional approaches (healers, elders, ceremonies, sharing circles) and make them accessible
- Recognize diversity within Indigenous communities (do not homogenize individuals' needs and expectations)



SUPPORT

What are the best practices for inviting them to use resources?



TAKE INTO ACCOUNT LEGITIMATE MISTRUST OF WESTERN SERVICES (COLONIZATION, RACISM)



ADAPT THE INTERVENTION (SAFE SPACES, LESS FORMAL SETTINGS, NON-JUDGMENTAL ENVIRONMENT)



SUPPORT SELF-DETERMINATION (ENCOURAGE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN THEIR HEALING JOURNEY)



USE TRANSLATORS OR CULTURAL MEDIATORS TO PROMOTE UNDERSTANDING AND STRENGTHEN TRUST



COLLABORATE WITH INDIGENOUS ORGANIZATIONS OR TEAMS COMPOSED OF INDIGENOUS PROFESSIONALS (STAY UP TO DATE ON BEST PRACTICES FOR INTERVENTION, REFER TO THESE ORGANIZATIONS AS NEEDED)



OFFER A HOLISTIC APPROACH (TAKE INTO ACCOUNT CONNECTION TO NATURE, SPIRITUALITY, AND TRADITIONS)



OFFER A VARIETY OF INTERVENTION METHODS (FLEXIBLE SCHEDULES, HOME SERVICES, PEER SUPPORT)





PROTECT YOURSELF

What protective factors can be put in place to reduce risky behaviors? What would an action plan or safety plan for an Indigenous man look like?

1. Reinforce the protective factors identified by the person (check connections with family and friends and strengthen ties with the community)
2. Reduce or eliminate the risk factors identified by the individual
3. Promote ties to the community, culture, and local areas
4. Provide access to appropriate, culturally safe, and respectful care
5. Recognize the trauma caused by colonization
6. Support in resolving pain and trauma experienced
7. Enable access to traditional healing and resilience practices
8. Recognize the uniqueness of each person: every Indigenous man has a different relationship with his community and traditions

Some questions about the accessibility of my services to Indigenous men?

- Do I reach out to these people outside the organization? Do I travel? Do I go to meet them?
- Do I facilitate communication? Do I provide access to translators?
- Is the place where services are provided perceived as welcoming or intimidating? Does it reflect Indigenous cultural symbols or references?
- Do I include enough input and participation from Indigenous people in the life of the organization?



Usefull ressources

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CPSM Centre de prévention
du suicide de Montréal

 **McGill**

Douglas
CENTRE DE RECHERCHE
RESEARCH CENTRE


Regroupement des Organismes
pour Hommes de l'île de Montréal

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