

Toronto Public Health: Supporting 2SLGBTQ+ Mental Health & Well-being



➤ Toronto Public Health is committed to promoting mental health and wellbeing

Toronto Public Health (TPH) envisions a city where all people can be healthy and thrive

TPH Strategic Priorities (2024-2028)

1. Strengthen health protection, disease prevention, and emergency preparedness
2. Promote health and well-being across the lifespan
3. Promote the conditions to support positive mental health and reduce the harms of substance use
4. Advocate to advance health equity
5. Nurture a positive workplace culture

Our Health, Our City: Toronto's Mental health, Substance Use, Harm Reduction and Treatment Strategy

Strategic goal: Promote mental health and wellbeing across the lifespan



➤ How TPH Supports Mental Health in 2SLGBTQ+ Communities

Prevention & Promotion

- Promote well-being, reduce stigma, and deliver inclusive programs and services across the life course

Community Partnerships and Access

- Partner with community organizations to improve access to inclusive, identity affirming supports

Data and Evidence

- Use data to identify inequities and guide action

Policy and Systems Change

- Advance upstream solutions to social determinants



**All TPH services and programs are designed to be inclusive, accessible, and responsive to diverse communities including 2SLGBTQ+ populations*

➤ How This Looks in Practice: Examples



Inclusive services and programming

- [Sexual health clinics](#), [breast/chest feeding clinics](#)



School and youth mental health promotion

- [Healthy Schools Toolkit](#), [Healthy relationships plus program](#)



Community-based harm reduction

- Supporting [60+ agencies](#) in delivering harm reduction supplies and services across 100+ locations, including agencies serving 2SLGBTQ+ communities



Capacity building for service providers

- Training and supports to organizations serving 2SLGBTQ+ communities



➤ How This Looks in Practice: Outreach Examples

MPOX
Stigma & Discrimination

According to the [Ontario Human Rights Commission](#), serious concerns have been raised about stigma and discrimination experienced by members of the 2SLGBTQ+ (Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer) community related to the current MPOX (formerly known as monkeypox) outbreak. There have also been negative associations between the virus and people from certain countries or races.

Impacts of Stigma & Discrimination:

Stigma* and discrimination** make it more difficult to stop the spread of MPOX, and harms the people and communities that experience it. For example, due to stigma and discrimination people may:

- Delay or avoid medical care and testing if they have symptoms.
- Hesitate to get vaccinated.
- Feel uncomfortable sharing information that can help with contact tracing.
- Believe that they cannot get the virus because they are not part of a certain group.
- Struggle with stress, worry and social isolation, which can lead to both mental and physical health issues.
- Experience unfair treatment and violence.

Preventing Stigma & Discrimination:

1) Know the facts

- Stay up-to-date on MPOX using trusted information sources, such as the [Toronto Public Health website](#).
- Base key messages about MPOX on the latest information.
- Avoid sharing or repeating unconfirmed information and myths. Doing so can actually reinforce inaccurate messages.

→

[toronto.ca/MPOX](#) 

MPOX Stigma and Discrimination

- 2SLGBTQ+ communities experienced heightened stigma and discrimination during the 2022 MPOX outbreak
- Targeted anti-stigma communication and guidance
- Vaccination clinics to support safe, low-barrier access

2025 Pride Outreach

- Engaged 20,000+ at the *Pride Street Festival* and 1,500+ at *Family Pride*
- The Pride campaign reached 165,204 people, generated 1.9M impressions, and 7,623 engagements



➤ How This Looks in Practice: Indigenous and Two-Spirit Communities



- Co-developing an Indigenous Wellness Action Plan focused on mental health and substance use, guided by the Indigenous Wellness Committee
- Facilitating the Indigenous Harm Reduction Circle that aims to amplify the reach of Indigenous-led harm reduction services and knowledge sharing
- Partnering with [2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations](#) as an active member of both the Indigenous Wellness Committee and the Indigenous Harm Reduction Circle
- Advancing Indigenous Cultural Safety across TPH through the Indigenous Cultural Safety Action Plan to support culturally safer programs and services

➤ Discussion Questions

What findings from the Thrive Toronto Mental Health report card most stand out?

What are some opportunities for building stronger connections with Toronto Public Health programs and services?