



## *Information Guide*

# about

2-Spirited People of the 1<sup>st</sup> Nations (2 Spirits) is a non profit social service organization whose membership consists of Aboriginal 2-Spirit (commonly known as Aboriginal lesbian, intersexed, gay, bisexual and transgendered) people in North America. Due to the AIDS epidemic, the organization was prompted to have health, counseling and advocacy expertise. 2 Spirit's programs and services include HIV/AIDS education, harm reduction education, health promotion, support and counseling for two spirit people and other Aboriginal persons living with and affected by HIV/AIDS.

*"We are the only Aboriginal non-profit organization in Canada that offers these services and support to Two Spirit People and to all Aboriginal people living with and/or affected by HIV/AIDS"*

## Location

2-Spirited People of the 1<sup>st</sup> Nations  
43 Elm St., 2nd Floor  
Toronto, ON  
M5G 1H1

Phone: (416) 944-9300  
Fax: (416) 944-8381

## Hours of Operation

Monday - Thursday  
9:00 - 12:00 (by appointment only)  
1:00 - 5:00  
Thursday evenings  
6:00 - 9:00 (dinner and movie)  
Friday  
9:00 - 2:30 pm (by appointment only)

## Community Dinner

Thursdays 6:00 to 9:00 pm  
Movies, Games, Internet Cafe  
Please RSVP to reception @ ext 100

## For more info

General Email Enquiries  
info@2spirits.com

## vision

To create a place where Aboriginal Two Spirit people can grow and learn together as a community, fostering a positive self-sufficient image, honouring our past and building a future. Together we can work toward bridging the gap between the Two Spirit, lesbian, intersexed, transgendered, bisexual and gay community and our Aboriginal identity.

## goals

To provide a place where Aboriginal Two Spirit, lesbian, intersexed, transgendered, bisexual and gay people can meet.

To reclaim and honour the sacred role of Two Spirit people.

To promote all aspects of a healthy individual and community.

To educate people about the traditional role of Two Spirit people and promote tolerance and understanding of diversity within the community.

To foster a positive image of Two Spirit people, especially through traditional teachings.

To promote positive relations between Two Spirit, lesbian, intersexed, transgendered, bisexual and gay community and all the communities we work with.

To improve the quality of life of Aboriginal persons living with and affected by HIV/AIDS.



# history

In our culture, before the Europeans came to North America, "2-Spirit" referred to an ancient teaching. Our Elders tell us of people who were gifted among all beings because they carried two spirits: that of male and female. It is told that women engaged in tribal warfare and married other women as there were men who married other men. These individuals were looked upon as a third gender in many cases and in almost all cultures they were honoured and revered.

2-Spirit people were often the visionaries, the healers and the medicine people...respected as fundamental components of our ancient culture and societies. This is our guiding force as well as our source of strength. This is the heart of 2-Spirited People of the 1<sup>st</sup> Nations.

*"Our Elders tell us of people who were gifted among all beings because they carried two spirits: that of male and female."*

At our 1992 Annual General Meeting, we adopted the name 2-Spirited People of the 1<sup>st</sup> Nations to honour our ancestral past and reclaim our Aboriginal identity. As our 2-Spirited community is unique, so are our issues and our organization. We are members of a group of people whose way of life has been drastically altered by historical circumstance.

Since European colonization, the existence of the Two Spirit community has been systematically denied and culturally alienated from the Aboriginal identity. 2 Spirit members bear witness to this activity in the form of racism, sexism and homophobia in the courts, the streets, the education system, the media and in other lesbian and gay organizations within the dominant Canadian society.



## services

For the first time in Canada, Aboriginal people who identified themselves as lesbian, gay or 2-Spirit came together for the sole purpose of meeting other people in the community who were like themselves. The meeting took place at 519 Church Street, Community Centre on Sunday, January 22, 1989. It was quite a surprise when approximately 80 people turned up for this initial meeting which indicated to the organizers what a great need there was for such an organization as the 2-Spirited People of the 1<sup>st</sup> Nations.

A diverse range of 1<sup>st</sup> Nations, Metis and Inuit people attended, representing some sixteen nations: Ojibwey, Six Nations Confederacy, Iroquois, Cree, Salish, Dene, Micmac, Blackfoot, Blood, Delaware, Inuit, and others. For some of the attendees it was the first time that they had actually interacted with other Native people as they had been adopted by white families and had been raised in a non-native setting. It was an emotional and exciting event.

Since this initial gathering, 2 Spirits has grown in membership and in scope. In response to the AIDS crisis, 2 Spirits has taken an active role in the education and prevention strategies within the Aboriginal communities. We feel that 2 Spirits has been at the forefront of raising the awareness, within the Aboriginal communities throughout Canada, of the impact that HIV and AIDS has on our people.

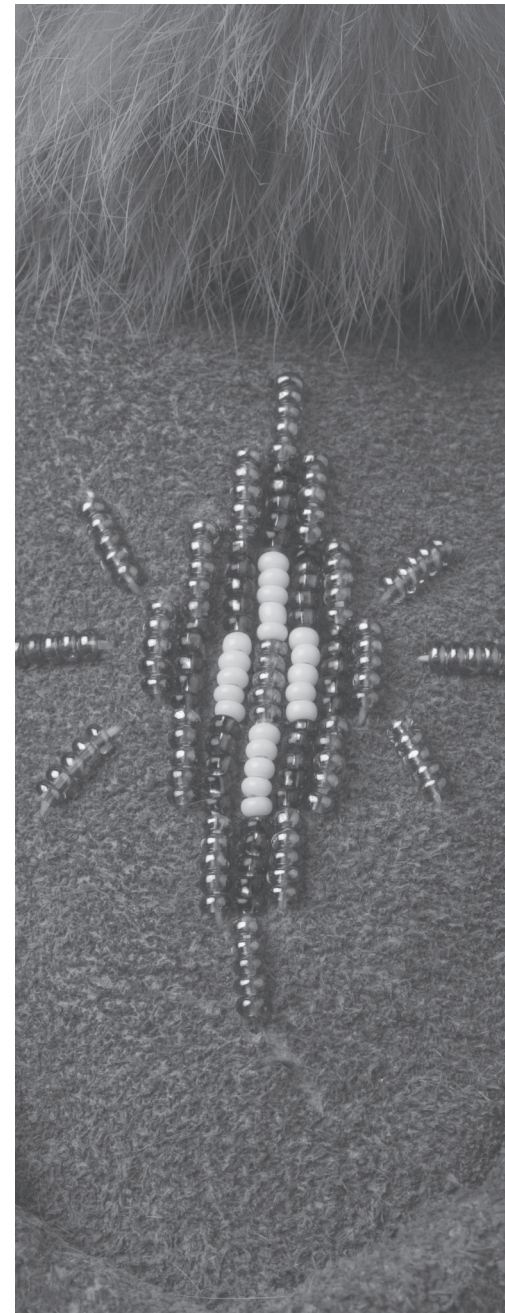
### **2-Spirited Peoples of the 1<sup>st</sup> Nations provides many services to our community including:**

- Social, cultural and recreational activities (traditional sweats, drum making, celebration of life ceremonies, Two-Spirit Women's Full Moon ceremony, medicine picking, weekly Thursday dinner and movie night)
- Outreach and Education
- Volunteer & Development Services (Community events and Volunteer Programs)
- Long-Term Care Program (Buddy Program, Palliative Care & Long-Term Care)
- Counselling (pre & post HIV test, individuals, family, friends and partners, domestic violence, crisis intervention, healthy sexuality, work issues)
- Client support programs
- Advocacy
- Aboriginal people with HIV/AIDS (APHA) fund
- Quarterly newsletters - Gaasiiganish & The Sacred Fire
- Weekly Thursday dinner and movie night
- Harm reduction tools and materials
- HIV/AIDS education
- Outreach and prevention programs
- Foodbank services for community dinner



# funders & supporters

AIDSWalk Community Partners Fund  
AIDS Community Action Program  
Canadian Institute for Health Research  
Canadian HIV/AIDS Legal Network  
Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network  
Canadian Rainbow Health Coalition  
Cactus Design Workshop  
Casey House  
Fife House  
1<sup>st</sup> Nations Inuit Health Branch  
Food For All Street Kids  
Human Resources Development Canada  
Health Canada  
McMaster University, Department of Health Sciences  
Metis & Inuit HIV/AIDS Project funding  
Non-Reserve First Nations  
Ontario Ministry of Health AIDS Bureau  
Ontario Ministry of Health Long Term Care  
Ontario Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Strategy  
Ontario Ministry of the Attorney General  
Prisoner AIDS Support Action Network  
Public Health Agency of Canada  
Rogers Video  
Toronto Aboriginal Action Network  
Toronto AIDS Network  
Toronto Public Health  
University of Toronto, Department of Health Sciences  
Voices of Positive Women  
Wellesley Central Health Corporation



# membership application

All information is strictly confidential—our membership list is not shared with anyone.  
Please check one membership category only.



Name: .....

Address: .....

Do you wish to receive mail? Yes / No

Telephone: .....

Email: .....

Do you want to be added to the 2 Spirit Email Contact List? Yes / No

Date of Birth .....

Month Day Year

Tribal/Native Affiliation .....

## ADMINISTRATION USE ONLY

DATE: MEMB. APPROVED .....

DATE: MEMB. CARD MAILED .....

## Membership includes:

- Quarterly Newsletter
- Invite to Social, pot Luck & Feasts
- 10% off Merchandise

## Full Memberships

(are available to people who are Native and 2-Spirited (gay/lesbian, intersexed, bi-sexual, transgendered):

Regular	\$10.00	_____
Student and/or unemployed and/or on disability or receiving social assistance	\$5.00	_____
U.S. residents	\$20.00	_____
International residents	\$35.00	_____

## Associate Memberships

are available to people who are not native and/or not 2-Spirited:

Regular	\$10.00	_____
Student and/or unemployed and/or on disability or receiving social assistance	\$5.00	_____
U.S. residents	\$20.00	_____
International residents	\$35.00	_____

## Organization Memberships

organizations in Canada	\$25.00	_____
organizations in the USA	\$35.00	_____
organizations overseas	\$45.00	_____

YES! I WILL SUPPORT 2-SPIRITS AND WOULD LIKE TO DONATE \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\* Please make cheques payable to: 2-Spirited People of the 1<sup>st</sup> Nations (all donations will receive a tax deductible receipt)

**MEMBERSHIP POLICY:** Full membership is open to any Aboriginal person who define themselves as lesbian, gay, intersexed, bisexual or transgendered. Associate membership is open to any individual who wishes to support TPFN and its objectives. All members receive regular updates and The Sacred Fire newsletter. ONLY FULL MEMBERS MAY VOTE AT THE TPFN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.