

# SUPPORTING TWO SPIRITED PEOPLES

## DISCUSSION PAPER

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NATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION OF  
FRIENDSHIP  
CENTRES



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## PROJECT RATIONALE

Resolution 07-02: **Supporting Two Spirited Peoples** mandated the National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC) to examine issues related to programs and services for Two Spirited Peoples. Specifically, the resolution noted that:

- There are a number of Two Spirited people (gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and intersex) who have no voice in communities where Friendship Centres exist;
- There are an extremely limited number of organizations/agencies in Canada aimed specifically at addressing Two Spirited needs and issues;
- Two Spirited people experience and are at a higher risk for suicide, addictions and mental health issues;
- Two Spirited peoples within some First Peoples' cultures had places of honour and responsibility that is not necessarily reflected in modern society.

In response to this resolution, the NAFC commissioned a discussion paper to review Two Spirited program and service delivery approaches and considerations for development and implementation in Friendship Centres and other service delivery organizations. To accomplish this task, a number of research steps were identified, including a literature review of Two Spirited programs and services and an environmental scan of best and better practices. The following report examines some of these programs, both Aboriginal-specific and general, Aboriginal-focused and otherwise, and offers a summary of overall conclusions that have been reported by researchers and other experts in this field.

## PROJECT APPROACH

In the spring of 2008, the National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC) initiated a research project focussed on Two Spirited people that would examine the general programming needs of Two Spirit/GLBT people and how Friendship Centres could be positioned to respond to these needs. It was determined that the best manner in which to access the required information would be through the conduct of a literature review and an environmental scan, and the completion of one-on-one telephone interviews with a small number of key informants. It was anticipated that these combined processes would capture information related to the following issues:

- i. the historical role of Two Spirited people in First Nation culture;
- ii. program development issues that must be considered in providing programs/services to Two Spirit/GLBT people;
- iii. program implementation issues that must be considered in providing programs/services to Two Spirit/GLBT people; and
- iv. any other considerations uncovered through the research and interview processes.

The following limitations to the research are noted:

- 1 there is little research specific to Two Spirit/GLBT people, their health and social circumstances or program needs;
- 2 some findings had to be extrapolated from research available specific to heterosexual Aboriginal people or non-Aboriginal gays, lesbians and bisexuals; and
- 3 interviews were conducted with both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal respondents some of whom expressed little information about Two Spirit/GLBT peoples, their issues, program development and implementation.

This discussion paper provides an outline of the research findings, including fundamental elements of Two Spirit programming and promising practices in cultivating a Two Spirit friendly organization.

In reading the discussion paper, it should be noted that not all Aboriginal people identify themselves as Two Spirit. To reflect this, the term Two Spirit/GLBT will be used throughout the document to describe Two Spirit, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transsexual people of Aboriginal ancestry.

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS

Two Spirited people once formed an important, esteemed group within Aboriginal society. Unfortunately, colonization and Christianity has had a detrimental impact on their status, transforming them from honoured contributors to community life to outcasts. This loss of status is clearly reflected in the scarcity of information that exists about not only their historic role but also their current social circumstances. While there is some data geared towards mainstream Gays, Lesbians, Bisexuals and Transsexuals (GLBT) peoples, there is significantly less information, either as formal research or as on-line information about Two Spirited programs and services. Nonetheless, what does exist indicates that Two Spirit/GLBT peoples suffer from high levels of substance abuse, violence, tobacco addiction, depression and suicidality. Given these circumstances, Two Spirit/GLBT people have a great need for responsive programs and services. Typically, they must navigate mainstream programs that are blind to their distinctive socio-cultural reality and lack the cultural byways and spiritual direction that Two Spirit/GLBT people long for.

Many Two Spirit/GLBT people place high priority on traditional teachings and the integral role that Two Spirit/GLBT people played in the majority of Aboriginal societies. This former knowledge, however, is not well reflected in modern Aboriginal communities, either on or off-reserve. Nor is it well understood or integrated in the programs and services that are available to support the general Aboriginal population. In fact, Two Spirit/GLBT people experience some level of trepidation in accessing Aboriginal services as Two Spirit/GLBT people, often preferring invisibility. Like mainstream GLBT peoples, they acknowledge not only the ongoing heterosexism and homophobia that underlay Aboriginal program delivery, but they also fear the rejection they may experience if their Two Spiritedness becomes common knowledge in the Aboriginal community. This situation poses a fair challenge for organizations seeking to better respond to the needs of Two Spirit/GLBT people. Fortunately, the research offers some guidance in framing program and service approaches in this regard. These include:

1. Undertaking proactive strategies to transform Aboriginal organizations into welcoming and friendly environments for Two Spirit/GLBT people. Such strategies should incorporate:
  - Leadership-led change, including an organizational assessment, that demonstrates substantive commitment to welcoming and serving Two Spirit/GLBT people;

- Redeveloping organizational Mission Statements and Policies and Procedures, Non-Discrimination policies, program materials and forms to reflect the acceptance, inclusion and celebration of Two Spirit/edness as a natural part of organizational activities;
  - Board, staff and volunteer training that sensitizes them to Two Spirit issues;
  - Board, staff and volunteer training in the psychosocial aspects of being Two Spirit/GLBT and how to respond appropriately to these issues;
  - Culturally based community workshops on Two Spirit/GLBT issues and realities;
  - Hiring Two Spirit/GLBT people to enhance organizational competency and inclusiveness.
2. Establishing safe places for Two Spirit/GLBT people to socialize and engage in cultural activities both as a distinctive group and within the broader Aboriginal community.
  3. Creating and implementing programs and services, including outreach, that are responsive to and inclusive of the specific mental and emotional health needs of Two Spirit/GLBT peoples. Programs should tackle:
    - Youth networking and counselling;
    - Suicide prevention;
    - Alcohol and substance abuse and addiction;
    - Domestic violence;
    - Family counseling and parenting advice;
    - Providing traditional teachings about Two Spirit/edness, cultural activities and access to Elders that are knowledgeable about the role of Two Spirit/GLBT peoples.
  4. Working with the Two Spirit/GLBT community in repositioning organizational approaches to Two Spirit/GLBT programs.

*These findings and recommendations are described in more detail in the discussion paper.*

# SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

## 1. *Historical Status of Two Spirited people*

The term *Two Spirited* is a relatively modern expression, coined in 1990 at a Winnipeg conference of Aboriginal gay and lesbian people.<sup>1</sup> Two Spirited people, however, are not a new social phenomenon. For centuries, they have formed an important and, often respected, part of many Aboriginal cultures across North America. Unfortunately, the positive status of Two Spirited people has not withstood the colonial era when Christian religions forced a negative alteration in the attitudes directed at Two Spirited peoples within Aboriginal communities. From a position of respect and acceptance, Two Spirited people have fallen to the status of pariah, rejected by their communities and by mainstream society. An examination of their evolution from esteemed member to reviled outcast provides an important context to the current needs of Two Spirit/GLBT peoples within urban centres.

Of the 240 Aboriginal languages spoken in North America, at least 168 have historically included terms to describe Two Spirited people. In addition, studies have uncovered at least 200 Aboriginal expressions traditionally used to describe 'non-men' and 'non-women'.<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, however, these terms were not necessarily synonymous with sexual orientation or identity. Instead, they tended to reflect individual social positioning and roles<sup>3</sup> within the context of broader community processes. Nonetheless, in exploring Aboriginal terminology related to Two Spirited peoples, researchers have reported that certain fundamental beliefs supported such language. For Aboriginal people, gender did not typically parallel the strict binary gender categories of western societies, but, rather, was characterized as a fluid continuum: men and women, not-men or a biological woman who takes on various masculine roles, not-women or a biological man who takes on feminine roles, lesbians and gay men<sup>4</sup>. In fact, Aboriginal cultures

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- 1 Meyer-Cook, Fiona & Labelle, Diane. "Namaji: Two-Spirit Organizing in Montreal, Canada". *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services*. Vol. 16(1). 2004
  - 2 Shari Brotman, Bill Ryan, Yves Jalbert, Bill Rowe. "Reclaiming Space – Regaining Health: The Health Care Experiences of Two-Spirit People in Canada". *Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services*. Vol. 14(1). 2002
  - 3 Meyer-Cook & Labelle
  - 4 Brotman, et.al.

were frequently characterized by an acknowledgement of variety in gender and sexual identity. This reality was further accompanied by respect for individuals who expressed a Two Spirit identity.

Unlike western cultures that have consistently and stridently enforced binary sexual identity and roles, Aboriginal cultures tended to absorb and celebrate what was regarded as a natural and universal phenomenon, integrating sexual diversity within their cultures and ensuring their ongoing productivity and value. In many Aboriginal spiritual traditions, a cross-road is regarded as a sacred place at which the Great Spirit is most accessible. Two Spirit peoples personified this cross-road, possessing a unique vision that combined a range of genders and roles<sup>5</sup>. Aboriginal cultures acknowledged this reality by normalizing and honouring Two Spirited peoples and their perceived contributions to their societies. For example, the integration of Two Spirited peoples within Aboriginal communities was supported by a variety of rituals designed not merely to identify these attributes in an individual but also to foster and celebrate them. Many cultures practiced specific ceremonies to help them categorize a child as Two Spirited, including vision quests, ceremonial dances and “Basket and Bow” tests, in which a child was given a choice between either item, the selection of which would determine his/her status as Two Spirited or not.<sup>6</sup> Further, the majority of Aboriginal cultures held Two Spirit people in high regard, according them positions of prestige and power within their communities<sup>7</sup> and regarding them as essential elements to the proper functioning of their societies. For various tribes, including the Zuni and Navajo in the United States, Two Spirited peoples featured in creation stories that highlighted their inventiveness and mediation skills. For the Plains tribes, including the Cree, Cheyenne, Dakota and Arapaho, Two Spirited people were believed to possess supernatural powers that made them particularly effective as shamans, seers, prophets and mediators. They served important functions in naming ceremonies, Sun Dance ceremonies and other spiritual practices.<sup>8</sup> For nomadic tribes, they often acted as ambassadors to other tribes that were encountered during the course of tribal journeys. They were sent ahead of the main group to negotiate the protocols for meetings and ensure overall accord between the tribal groups.<sup>9</sup>

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5 Dooley, John. “Two Spirits Rising”. *The Portland Mercury*. June 2001

6 Dooley.

7 Brotman, et.al.

8 Lovejoy, Bess. “Two Spirit Peoples”. *The Peak*. Vol 101(5). February 1999.

9 Dooley

Although prior to colonization, North American Aboriginal cultures were generally very inclusive of a range of sexual and gender orientations, the arrival of European religions and cultures gradually altered and obliterated these notions of acceptance and respect. Targeted as particularly horrifying and abnormal, Two Spirited people and the beliefs that valued them were immediately attacked by zealous missionaries. At the time, Christian morality depended on clear binary constructs that did not allow for grey areas. These included such ideas as good over evil, man over woman, gender conformity over variable genders. The latter, identified as heterosexism, assumes that heterosexuality is inherently correct and appropriate and must prevail over any other types of sexual expression or identity. In an effort to assert the superiority of heterosexual approaches over any other, campaigns of exclusion, violence and murder directed at Two Spirited people were promoted and carried out by the colonizers. Indigenous men accused of sodomy were torn apart by dogs and individuals who engaged in activities not sanctioned as gender appropriate were massacred.<sup>10</sup> The residential school system offered another more sustained effort to clarify male and female roles and eradicate gender and sexual diversity.

Rigidly heterosexist in nature, residential schools cultivated the understanding that girls and boys conform to a strict gender binary: girls were to learn domestic skills and were expected to secure their economic survival through heterosexual marriage; boys were to be taught subsistence farming after which they could build a small house on land chosen for them by the church and then marry a woman. Practices such as cross dressing or transgender living were not merely condemned, they were criminalized.<sup>11</sup> Coupled with disease and cultural genocide, these campaigns were so effective that in many Aboriginal societies, any knowledge of Two Spiritedness and its function within Aboriginal cultures has been virtually eradicated<sup>12</sup>. In fact, the majority of Aboriginal communities have now fully assimilated these destructive attitudes and, like the colonizing nations, support the abolition of gender and sexual fluidity within their nations<sup>13</sup>.

Despite the consistent and brutal efforts to erase the understanding and practice of various Aboriginal traditions, including those belonging to Two Spirited people, the last few decades have witnessed a revitalization of Aboriginal cultural activities that have also been accompanied by a re-emergence of Two

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10 Meyer-Cook & Labelle

11 Meyer-Cook & Labelle

12 Dooley

13 Dooley

Spiritedness. More than anything, this cultural renewal is testament to the resilience of Aboriginal beliefs and systems and, given the particularly vicious methods employed to destroy them, to the fortitude of Two Spirited peoples.

Nonetheless, despite their reemergence, in many respects Two Spirited people, once esteemed for special gifts bestowed by the Creator are now forced to reside on the margins of both Aboriginal and mainstream society.

## **2. *Current Status of Two Spirited People***

Two Spirit/GLBT peoples contend with a broad range of challenges that are both different from and the same as the experiences of heterosexual Aboriginal people and those of mainstream gays and lesbians. Thanks to a long-standing imposed practices of homophobia and heterosexism, Two Spirit/GLBT people no longer enjoy the respect and status once considered their due by most Aboriginal societies, nor is their situation much better either on reserve or in mainstream Canada. In both settings, they must deal with the rejection and homophobia of their families, friends and communities. At the same time, like heterosexual Aboriginal people residing in urban areas, they must contend with systemic and overt racism expressed by the dominant society, including mainstream gays and lesbians:

[Two Spirit/GLBT people] "... are of two worlds, the world of the differently gendered and the world of being native. In essence, they are subject to multiple oppressions. As part of a minority based on gender or sexuality differences, they are shunned by both the dominant external culture, as well as among their own communities. As people of native heritage, they are oppressed and influenced by the surrounding dominant culture."<sup>14</sup>

Two Spirit/GLBT People are generally not a feature of policy and social sciences research and activities. In fact, very little research has been undertaken specific to the physical and mental health issues of Aboriginal Two Spirit/GLBT peoples<sup>15</sup>. This shortage of information demands that an understanding of their circumstances be teased from other available research and literature. Like many other Aboriginal people, they struggle with high levels of mental and physical health disorders, addictions, violence, poverty and multi-generational trauma.

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14 Meyer-Cook & Labelle

15 Brotman, et.al.

In some respects, however, their experiences are even more traumatic. For example, heterosexual Aboriginal people do not struggle to integrate their sexual/gender identity with their cultural identity. They are not frequently compelled to choose between their Aboriginal and their sexual/gender orientation in a manner that cannot satisfy their need to belong. By claiming an alternative sexual/gender identity within an Aboriginal community, both on and off reserve, Two Spirit/GLBT people frequently place themselves in direct conflict with their communities. In particular, disclosure and confidentiality are reported as prominent concerns for on reserve Two Spirit/GLBT people, where 'coming out' can pose a danger not only to the individual but to their families.<sup>16</sup> Their Two Spiritedness is not welcomed or encouraged, forcing them to seek alternative, outside sources of support<sup>17</sup> often in larger urban centres. Even in this, they are thwarted. Given the absence of urban Aboriginal organizations geared specifically to their needs and interests, there is difficulty in connecting with other Two Spirit/GLBT peoples. In situations where an Aboriginal organization agrees to host Two Spirit/GLBT programming, they fear the repercussions of disclosure within the broader urban Aboriginal community.<sup>18</sup> At the same time, if they look for support within mainstream gay and lesbian organizations, they are frequently faced with individuals who, at best, have little or no knowledge of Two Spirited people and, at worst, exhibit their own racial prejudices.<sup>19</sup> By choosing a mainstream gay/lesbian identity, Two Spirited people lose not only an important cultural identity but also the communal safety from and resistance to racism and colonialism.<sup>20</sup>

Although heterosexual Aboriginal people must contend with racism and mainstream gays and lesbians must handle homophobia, Two Spirit/GLBT people face the combined challenge of belonging to both a sexual/gender minority and a racial minority. In this regard, they are likely to experience higher levels of victimization and violence. One study bears this out, noting that violence in the form of assault and assault with a weapon directed at Two Spirit/GLBT people is double to that experienced by mainstream GLBT peoples.<sup>21</sup> It is surmised that

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16 Meyer-Cook & Labelle

17 Leland, John. "A Spirit of Belonging". The New York Times. May 6<sup>th</sup>, 2007.

18 Meyer-Cook & Labelle

19 Brotman, et.al.

20 Brotman, et.al.

21 Walters, Karina L. Simoni. Jane M. Horwath, Pamela F. "Sexual Orientation Bias Experiences and Service Needs of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Two-Spirit American Indians." Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services. Vol. 13(1/2). 2001.

their race as much as their sexual orientation is a critical factor in such high levels of violence.

Without specific and wide-ranging research on the Two Spirit/GLBT experience, conclusions about their specific situation must be extrapolated from studies investigating the experiences of mainstream gays and lesbians. One research project conducted to examine the responsiveness of programs and services identified a broad range of issues that confront gays, lesbians and bisexuals in Canada. Alcohol and substance abuse and addictions occur more frequently amongst this societal group and are linked to homophobia, depression and coming out. Similarly, gays, lesbians and bisexuals are at a higher risk to engage in unsafe sexual behaviour, smoking, suicidal ideation and, specific to lesbians, suffer from domestic violence. As parents, gays and lesbians are virtually invisible and when they do seek services, they are typically met with discriminatory attitudes. Although there is a considerable emphasis on sexual health related to HIV/AIDS, research indicates that most problems - socially, physically and emotionally - encountered by gays, lesbians and bisexuals relate more to confusion about coming out and gender identity and to the actual coming out process.<sup>22</sup> Homosexual youth are as invisible to the health and social research agenda as gay and lesbian parents. What is known, however, is that similarly to their older counterparts, they have higher levels of emotional, social and physical health problems than their heterosexual peers and many of these problems are related to homophobia, self-acceptance and the coming out process. Suicide is a significant problem particularly during the coming out period when young gays and lesbians are struggling with the stigma of their sexual orientation. This is further compounded by their general feelings of physical and emotional danger vis-à-vis their peers, families and social services. Gays, lesbians and bisexuals who reside in rural areas face distinctive problems that mirror the experiences of Aboriginal Two Spirit/GLBT peoples residing on-reserve. Typically, they suffer from social isolation and frequently choose invisibility in order to cope with a hostile, homophobic environment. For rural gays and lesbians, the pervasiveness of community ties outweighs any concepts of a gay community which are typically non-existent, anyways.<sup>23</sup>

To some degree, these findings have been reinforced by the few small studies focused on Two Spirit/GLBT peoples. As reported earlier, pervasive societal homophobia has a seriously detrimental impact on the mental and physical

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22 Brotman, Shari. Ryan, Bill. Access to Care: Exploring the Health and Well-Being of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Two-Spirit People In Canada. [www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hcs-sss/pubs/acces](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hcs-sss/pubs/acces)

23 Brotman & Ryan

health of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and transsexual people. It has a similar and, possibly, more adverse effect on Two Spirit/GLBT people. Like their mainstream homosexual counterparts, Two Spirit/GLBT youth and adults are subject to homophobic remarks, threats and violence from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal society. Similarly, many make unhealthy lifestyle choices in an effort to relieve their stress. Such choices include tobacco, alcohol and drug use and sexually risky behaviour, amongst other things. One Two Spirit study noted particular problems with domestic violence and binge drinking as a not atypical response to homophobic and racist trauma<sup>24</sup>. Most troubling are increased levels of both depression and suicidality: "suicide is a very real and very prevalent problem within both Native American and queer communities. Couple the two together and it's amazing any native American queers survive their adolescence"<sup>25</sup>. Sadly, unlike their mainstream counterparts, Two Spirit/GLBT people rarely have access to the social networks and organizations that have been established for gays and lesbians. In leaving behind First Nation communities to seek acceptance in a perceived more tolerant urban centre, Two Spirit/GLBT people find themselves stigmatized and rejected based on their Aboriginal identity: "... he said at gay clubs he always felt he had the wrong hair or clothes, and felt pressure not to come off as "too Indian."<sup>26</sup> Further, Aboriginal organizations in urban centres do little to offset these feelings of isolation: few, if any, offer services specific to Two Spirit/GLBT needs and their social separation persists as a result of either their sexual or their racial identity:

With few Two Spirit people knowing where and how to gain access to "Two Spirit-friendly" Elders, role models, healthy lifestyle alternatives and inclusive cultural spaces, many "fall through the cracks" and end on city streets, living in poverty with poorer health and with greater risk of becoming lost and in pain.<sup>27</sup>

One study that surveyed Two Spirit/GLBT people regarding their service needs reported that the most prevalent program/service issues included: culturally-based, Two Spirit-specific programs that demonstrate confidentiality and sensitivity in addition to knowledge of Two Spirit/GLBT issues and physical accessibility of services.<sup>28</sup>

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24 Walters, et.al.

25 Brotman & Ryan

26 Leland

27 Meyer-Cook and Labelle

28 Walters, et.al.

The findings uncovered by the research offers some important insights on the types of programs and services that might be of particular assistance to Two Spirit/GLBT peoples. Specifically, these programs should typify at least some of the promising practice characteristics consistently raised in the literature. The following section will summarize priority programs and services best suited to the needs of Two Spirit/GLBT people.

### **3. *Program and Service Needs***

While some of the research conducted on Two Spirit/GLBT programming focused primarily on health services, the context for Friendship Centres and other social service organizations remains basically the same. For example, like health agencies, most social service organizations have limited knowledge about the specific issues surrounding the experience of being gay, lesbian, bisexual or two spirited. They may confuse sexual orientation for sexual behaviour; they may have negative attitudes towards gays, lesbians, bisexuals and two spirited peoples; they may use applications and screening devices that are inherently heterosexist; and, they may have little knowledge about the psychosocial aspects of being gay, lesbian, bisexual or two spirited.<sup>29</sup> Such biases and inexperience do not position these organizations to favourably respond to the urgent needs of gays, lesbians, bisexuals and two spirited people. At the same time, they do not create an environment in which gays, lesbians, bisexuals and two spirited people will actively seek service.

In looking for programs and services to address their myriad concerns, Two Spirit/GLBT peoples are looking, as a priority, for acceptance as both Two Spirit/GLBT and Aboriginal. Given the discrimination they confront daily in both the Aboriginal and mainstream communities, they are in desperate need of a safe haven in which they can express all facets of themselves without fear of ridicule or harm. To this end, ensuring the physical, emotional and spiritual safety of Two Spirit/GLBT people must form an essential underpinning of programs and services. To accomplish this, service providers (and society, in general) must be better educated. Brotman and Ryan recommend, in their research, that broadly

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29 Brotman & Ryan

based education programs be integrated into all health and social service education and that such training be undertaken with health and social service professional associations<sup>30</sup>. Similar efforts must be conducted in the Aboriginal community. Walters et. al. comment that Aboriginal organizations need to organize culturally relevant, community-based discussions and staff training about sex, sexuality, gender identity and Two Spiritedness. Such events should involve Elders and traditional leaders possessing knowledge of the historic role of Two Spirited peoples in Aboriginal society. Discussion must incorporate details about Two Spirited trauma within homophobic mainstream and Aboriginal communities for, as noted by the authors, the greater the contact and dialogue between Two Spirit/GLBT and heterosexual Aboriginal people, the less Aboriginal service providers and community members evince heterosexist beliefs and attitudes and the more they express greater acceptance and understanding of Two Spirit/GLBT issues and experiences.<sup>31</sup> Increased knowledge and acceptance must be combined with greater efforts at outreach focused primarily at Two Spirit/GLBT peoples. Together, these initiatives will foster confidence within the two spirit community while at the same time creating a foundation upon which to integrate programs and services for this group.<sup>32</sup>

The literature review and environmental scan undertaken as part of this study offers important information relative to the traditional status of Two Spirit/GLBT peoples, their current situation and the programs and services that might offer most benefit in facilitating improvements to their health and social status on and off reserve. Building on this information, the next section provides some broad guidelines that organizations might explore in creating and implementing strategies to better respond to the needs of Two Spirit/GLBT peoples

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30 Ibid.

31 Walters et.al.

32 Brotman & Ryan

#### **4. Empowering Friendship Centres and Staff to Respond to the Needs and Issues of Two Spirit/GLBT People**

The literature and current practices available on health and social service needs for Two Spirited/GLBT people points to several critical features that facilitate success in developing safe and positive space. Based on this information, there are a number of steps a Friendship Centre can take to make themselves inclusive and welcoming to Two Spirit/GLBT people. These include:

- i. Awareness and Education
- ii. Conducting an Organizational Assessment
- iii. Developing a Non-Discrimination Policy
- iv. Reviewing Policies and Practices
- v. Reviewing Information Materials and Forms
- vi. Creating a Welcoming Environment
- vii. Conducting Outreach to the Two Spirit/GLBT Community
- viii. Providing Programs and Services for Two Spirit/GLBT People

*Each of these elements will be discussed in more detail on the following pages.*


##### **I. AWARENESS AND EDUCATION**

*"We live in a society in which there is an extensive and predominately negative vocabulary used commonly to describe LGTB communities. For many people within mainstream society, the only information they have about LGTB people is based on myths and stereotypes, through jokes, hearsay, and the media. Because sexual orientation and gender identity are largely invisible characteristics, many have little real knowledge of who the average LGTB person is and therefore are willing to accept these myths and stereotypes"* <sup>33</sup>

Awareness and education are important first steps. Homophobia exists in our communities and many people are not aware of the traditional role that Two Spirited people played in our communities and the important role that they could fulfill today. Nor are they aware of the impact that homophobia has played in the health and well-being of Two Spirit/GLBT people.

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<sup>33</sup> Toppings, Peter. Removing Barriers and Building Access: A Resource Manual on Providing Culturally Relevant Services to LGTB Victims of Violence. The Centre. Vancouver, 2004



In delivering awareness and education sessions it is important to provide the sessions not only to Friendship Centre staff, but also to Board members, volunteers and the community. As staff and volunteers are the usual contact points for all clients, including Two Spirit/GLBT clients, they play a key role in providing safe and respectful environments. Board training is important because awareness and support at the board level will help steer the direction for the organization and provide movement on the issue.

In order to ensure Two Spirit/GLBT people feel safe and welcomed the community must also be made aware. Community education can take place through formal training processes but it may also have to take place in informal ways – through dialogue and discussion. This is where having a champion or champions is important. Community members may challenge the direction a Friendship Centre is taking or may question activities that are taking place. It is easier to meet and respond to these challenges or concerns when staff and Board are educated, aware and supportive of Two Spirit/GLBT people.

The education/awareness process must be an on-going process over a number of years. It must consist of training, dialogue and a safe environment where people can discuss and express themselves. In most cases, awareness training cannot be a one-time event. Some people may be very resistant because of religious or other beliefs and one training session will not make them come around to a different point of view.

Ultimately, though, organizational and community awareness must be pursued in order to achieve the goal of having an inclusive community. Everyone can understand the importance of community that recognizes the importance of respect for all human beings, the importance of being safe in the community, and of being valued.

### ***Awareness and Education Resources:***

The literature available on awareness and education outlines a number of critical subject matters required in a training process. These include:

- Sexual orientation and gender identity
- Terms and definitions
- Stereotypes and myths
- Heterosexism and heterosexual privilege
- GLBT-phobia (homophobia/bi-phobia/trans-phobia)
- History, culture, symbols
- Human rights issues

### ***Workshop Facilitators and Resource People***

There is limited information available on potential resource people who deliver Two Spirit/GLBT information and awareness sessions. Some Aboriginal HIV/AIDS organizations do provide awareness training as part of their outreach services but will have to be contacted directly to make that determination. If they do not provide that service, they may be able to identify other Aboriginal or GLBT organizations that do. Otherwise, Friendship Centres may want to contact local, regional or provincial GLBT organizations to determine whether awareness training is a service that they provide.

The Rainbow Resource Centre in Winnipeg does provide a Train the Trainers program for their *Breaking Barriers* workshop. Although their service area is Manitoba and north-western Ontario, they will consider delivering their workshop in other parts of the country as long as their workshop fee, travel and accommodations are covered. The Train the Trainers program can be delivered in one day but the recommended time frame is two to three days.

If Friendship Centres are unable to find resource people in their area to deliver awareness sessions or if they decide that they want to deliver their own sessions, there are materials available. A number of training/resource manuals have been identified, however as none of these manuals have been tested by the NAFC and Friendship Centres they are being presented as promising practices only. As potential tools, three things should be noted: many of the resource manuals have been developed for health organizations and may require some alteration to make them

applicable to Friendship Centres; there is very little information contained within the manuals on Two Spirit issues; and, a number of the resource manuals utilize material from other sources which results in repetition of information.

Finally, one key best practice that was consistently mentioned is the importance of utilizing facilitators that are Two Spirited/GLBT. It was felt that GLBT/Two Spirited facilitators have the knowledge and life experience that will provide an important perspective to the training process. If this not possible, it is suggested that a facilitator be found who is an ally or gay-positive. An ally is someone who is an advocate for the LGTB/Two Spirit community<sup>34</sup>.

The following comprises a list and brief descriptions of Training Manuals that might inform a Friendship Centre process. Only one of these, the last, is Aboriginal specific:

*Positive Space Training Manual: Information and Resources for LGBT People and their Allies*<sup>35</sup> Positive Space is defined as an office, home, business or organization that is accepting, welcoming and safe for GLBT / Two Spirited people. The Positive Space Training Manual was designed specifically for rural communities in recognition that GLBT /Two Spirited people experience different challenges than their counterparts in cities and therefore require allies and advocates. The workshops provide information for people who want to become GLBT/Two Spirit allies. The manual provides background information on gender identity and sexual orientation; the impact of oppression; and how to be an ally. It also includes a detailed workshop facilitator's manual. There is limited information on Two Spirit/GLBT people and the resource list of websites is Nova Scotia specific.

*A Positive Space is a Healthy Space: Making Your Community Health Centre, Public Health Unit or Community Agency Inclusive to Those of All Sexual Orientations and Gender Identities*<sup>36</sup> Although much of the material has been accessed from other existing training manuals and adapted for use

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34 (See Appendix 1- *Two-Spirited Programming and Services – Summary of Literature Reviewed* for additional information on the training manuals/toolkits)

35 Available at: <http://www.stfx.ca/campus/stu-serv/equity/Training%20Manual.htm>

36 Available at: <http://www.opha.on.ca/resources/SexualHealthPaper-Jun06.pdf>

for health care organizations, it is a detailed and informative resource document that will assist in the delivery of GLBT /Two Spirit Awareness workshops. As a trainer's resource manual it provides background information on sexual orientation/gender identity, creating positive space, eighteen workshop exercises and participant handouts.

*Rainbow Health Educational Toolkit*<sup>37</sup> The toolkit was developed in Ontario to assist healthcare and social service providers to address GLBT health and well being. As the toolkit was developed primarily for health care providers, much of the material has a health focus. The toolkit contains curriculum and instructions for five workshops: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity; Unlearning Homo/Bi/Transphobia; Trans Issues in Health; Intersections of Oppression; and How to be an Ally. The toolkit also contains three additional sections: Additional Tools for Individual and Organizational Change; Facilitator Resources; and Web Resources. This toolkit contains workshops and materials that have been used in other training resource manuals.

*LGTB Health Matters: An Education and Training Resource for Health and Social Service Sectors*<sup>38</sup> The document was developed as an information source for health and social service educators at the college/university level or within professional settings. All of the material provided is focused to educating the health care provider to assist them in better responding to the health needs of LGTB clients. The information is presented in four modules and includes information about LGTB populations, heterosexism and phobia; determinants of health for this population; adapting programs to ensure accessibility and sensitivity to LGTB population; and performing as an advocate for LGTB populations. Although not designed as a facilitator's manual, the document is a useful resource of information not available elsewhere. For example, it contains a breakdown of the impacts of homophobia on the health and well-being of LGTB people throughout every stage of their life as well as an examination of WHO and Health Canada's determinants of health for the LGTB population. It also contains some information on the multi-oppressions experienced by Two Spirit/GLBT people and health concerns and service delivery issues specific to Two Spirit/GLBT people.

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37 Available at: <http://rainbowhealth.ca/english/educational.html>

38 Available at: [http://www.lgtbcentrevancouver.com/pdf\\_s/theManual\\_vFinal.pdf](http://www.lgtbcentrevancouver.com/pdf_s/theManual_vFinal.pdf)

*We are Part of a Tradition: A Guide on Two-Spirited People for First Nation Communities*<sup>39</sup> was developed in 1998 by 2-Spirited People of the First Nations. Although it does not provide detailed curriculum on GLBT issues as is available in the other manuals, it does provide resource material and historical information on Two Spirited people. This material would be useful as an adjunct to the material available in the mainstream training manuals.

A couple of program specific manuals also exist, titles and descriptions of which are noted below:

*Toolkit for Educators and Providers Working With GLBTTQ Parents and their Children: Creating GLBTTQ-Friendly Learning Spaces For Children 0–6; Toolkit for GLBTTQ Parents and Guardians; and Resource Kit for Parents, Educators and Service Providers Working With GLBTTQ Parents and their Children*<sup>40</sup> Developed in Ottawa; both toolkits provide information and resources to help parents and educators create safe and inclusive learning environments for children. Section 1 introduces GLBT issues; section 2 outlines a variety of children-related issues such as child development and children's rights; and section 3 provides information on creating inclusive space. The Resource Kit was developed as an accompaniment to the Parent and Educator Toolkits and provides detailed sources and websites for the various issues and topics that were raised in the toolkits. The annotated bibliography identifies books for all age groups as well as GLBT parenting and family theory. Web Resources and websites are also categorized.

These documents contain minimal information on Two Spirit/GLBT people, but are available in English and French.

*Removing Barriers and Building Access: A Resource Manual on Providing Culturally Relevant Services to LGTB Victims of Violence*<sup>41</sup> Produced by The Centre in Vancouver, the information manual was developed for victim service workers and organizations that provide support to victims. The manual provides information on GLBT identity, history and culture as well

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39 Available at: <http://2spirits.com/>

40 All three documents are available at: <http://www.around-therainbow.com/?unique=208>

41 Only available in hardcopy- must be ordered from The Centre in Vancouver. Website: <http://www.lgtbcentrevancouver.com/>

as guidelines and suggestions on dealing with victims of GLBT violence and victims of GLBT relationship violence. The manual is only available in hardcopy and must be ordered from the organization. Once again, there is limited information on Two Spirit/GLBT people and as it is a BC developed manual, the appendix contains only BC based community resources.

## **II. CONDUCTING AN ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT**

A number of best practices highlight the importance of conducting organizational self assessment. Although self assessment should be viewed as one component in the larger process of organizational development, research has shown that the process is an effective way for organizations to measure inclusiveness.<sup>42</sup> Self assessment will provide a Friendship Centre with the opportunity to analyze their organization to determine what they are doing right and the areas that require improvement in order to offer safe, welcoming and appropriate services to Two Spirit/GLBT people. The purpose of an assessment process is to review the organization - not the staff. By examining among other factors such as, governance, administration, policies, practices and environment, a Friendship Centre will be able to determine what barriers may exist. Once that has been determined a Friendship Centre can develop an action plan to address these barriers.

Research has identified some sample tools that may assist Friendship Centres in conducting organizational assessment. It should be noted that some of the tools are health specific and so may require some modification to make them relevant to Friendship Centres.

*The Halifax Rainbow Health Project Inclusion Program Assessment Tool*<sup>43</sup> Although the project premise is that external assessment facilitators conduct the organizational assessment, the manual does include a twenty-five question self-assessment tool which is described as an informal tool to help an organization assess how GLBT access and quality of care is provided. The assessment questions are divided into six areas:

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42 Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centres of Ottawa/ Pink Triangle Services of Ottawa/ United Way Ottawa. GLBT Cultural Competence Self-Assessment. March 2005

43 Available at: <http://rainbowhealth.ca/english/educational.html>

environment; intake and assessment; services; client's rights; policies; and staff. Some of the questions are health service specific, so adaptation may be necessary.

*GLBT Cultural Competence Self-Assessment*<sup>44</sup> According to the literature, "cultural competence is a framework for working in cross-cultural situations."<sup>45</sup> The Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centres of Ottawa used this framework to create an assessment tool which would examine diversity through a lens of sexual orientation and gender identity.<sup>46</sup> The tool allows organizations to assess their strengths and identify their needs related to GLBT cultural competence. There are nine indicator categories: Governance; Administration; Personnel Policies and Practices; Communication; Community Relations and Health Promotion; Service Planning; Service Delivery; Physical Environment; and Organizational Culture. Within each of the indicator categories are 95 statements that can be answered yes, no, or in progress. The document also provides general information on how to conduct a self-assessment, a glossary of terms as well as an example of an action plan worksheet.

*Workplace Assessment Tool and Personal Assessment Tool – A Positive Space is a Healthy Space*<sup>47</sup> As part of its trainer's manual, the Ontario Public Health Association has included a Workplace Assessment Tool and a Personal Assessment Tool. The personal assessment tool was developed by the organization and contains 30 statements intended to assess an individual's GLBT inclusivity. The workplace assessment tool is a modified version of the GLBT Cultural Competence Self-Assessment Tool. It has the same nine indicator categories as the GLBT Cultural Competence Tool, but has only 75 statements – there are no statements on volunteers or service planning. The manual also includes sample policies and procedures which provide examples of some of the language that could be included in personnel policies.

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44 Available from: Centretown Community Health Centre, [egibbs@centretownchc.org](mailto:egibbs@centretownchc.org) or [dmunro@centretownchc.org](mailto:dmunro@centretownchc.org)

45 Ontario Public Health Association. A Positive Space is a Healthy Space : Making Your Community Health Centre, Public Health Unit or Community Agency Inclusive to Those of All Sexual Orientations and Gender identities. <http://www.opha.on.ca/resources/SexualHealthPaper-Jun06.pdf>

46 Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centres of Ottawa et.al.

47 Available at: <http://www.opha.on.ca/resources/SexualHealthPaper-Jun06.pdf>

### III. **DEVELOPING A NON-DISCRIMINATION POLICY**

One important element of a welcoming and inclusive organization is a non-discrimination policy. However it is not enough just to have a policy. A successful policy must be enforceable - it should outline the consequences of violating the policy and how complaints will be dealt with. This would ensure that the policy is taken seriously.<sup>48</sup> If clients, staff, volunteers, board members and community members are aware that a Friendship Centre has a non-discrimination policy that is being implemented and monitored and a complaint process that is effective and confidential it will assist in making the Centre a safe place for all of the community, including Two Spirit/GLBT people.

*2-Spirited People of the 1<sup>st</sup> Nations' non discrimination policy* is available for use by any organization. The policy is as follows: *We affirm that all people are placed upon the earth by the Creator for a specific purpose and all are equal. Therefore, it is the policy of 2-Spirited People of the 1<sup>st</sup> Nations that every person has the right to freedom from discrimination on the basis of race, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, age, citizenship, creed, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability or HIV status. Furthermore, it is the responsibility of the Board members, staff, volunteers and members to take a proactive stance in regards to this policy. Discrimination and harassment will include not only overt action but also spoken and written comments, unwelcome remarks, joking and innuendo, or taunting remarks about a person's race, ancestry, place of origin, ethnic origin, age, citizenship, creed, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, family status, disability or HIV status. It also includes displaying offensive, racist sexist or derogatory pictures or material.*

*Developing a Policy of Non-Discrimination: Including Aboriginal People Living with HIV/AIDS*<sup>49</sup> This instructional manual was developed by the Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network to assist Aboriginal communities and organizations to develop a "policy of inclusiveness" for Aboriginal people living with HIV/AIDS (APHAs). The organization prefers to use the term policy of inclusiveness as opposed to non-discrimination policy. The manual includes definitions; a twelve point checklist for developing a policy and thirteen sample policy statements. The focus of the manual

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48 Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network. *Developing a Policy of Non-Discrimination: Including Aboriginal People Living with HIV/AIDS*. March 2005

49 Available at: <http://caan.ca/english/publications.htm>

is to develop an inclusiveness policy for APHAs; therefore it will require modification. However it is a good source of general information and portions of the manual, for example the checklist for developing policy and the sample policy statements could be adapted for use in developing a policy of inclusiveness for Two Spirit/GLBT people.

#### **IV. *REVIEWING POLICIES AND PRACTICES***

When working towards creating a Friendship Centre that is inclusive it is crucial to examine existing policies and practices to ensure that they do not create additional barriers. Current literature and research provide advice on some of the areas that should be reviewed. In undertaking this process, one suggestion that was consistently presented was the importance of including the views of Two Spirit/GLBT people. This can be done by inviting Two Spirit/GLBT people to sit on the Board and advisory committees or by consulting with the Two Spirit/GLBT / GLBT community to get their input regarding policies/practices that are inclusive and respectful. Other suggestions include:

##### ***Review of Mission Statement***

If a Friendship Centre has a mission statement it is important to examine it and if necessary revise it so that it reflects a clear commitment to Two Spirited people. This commitment is shown by including recognition of sexual orientation and gender identity, such as in the following sample mission statement: "Our organization welcomes and values all people regardless of race, colour, religion, place of origin, income level, marital status, family status, age, disability, sexual orientation and gender identity"<sup>50</sup>

##### ***Review and Update Personnel Policies and Practices***

To ensure equitable treatment of Two Spirit/GLBT staff, personnel policies should be reviewed to ensure that all employees are subject to the same terms and conditions of employment including benefits and compensation. This includes family, medical and bereavement leave; health, life, and disability insurance; and pension benefits. Written policies should explicitly state that the Friendship Centre does not discriminate on

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50 Toppings

the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. Policies that give rights and benefits to a married partner should also state that they are also available to same-sex partners.

### ***Recruitment Process for Staff and Volunteers***

Research on promising practices has highlighted the importance of having Two Spirit/GLBT staff and volunteers in order to make a Friendship Centre more inclusive. Two Spirit/GLBT staff and volunteers also provide role models not only for the Two Spirit/GLBT community but also for the community at large. Some suggested recruitment strategies include advertising the positions widely: in GLBT media, through GLBT information networks such as websites and at GLBT and GLBT friendly organizations. It is also important to state clearly in advertisements that the Friendship Centre does not discriminate on the grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity. When conducting interviews for staff positions and volunteers it is suggested that one factor for selection should be a positive attitude towards Two Spirited/GLBT people as well as knowledge of issues faced by this segment of the population.

#### ***v. REVIEWING INFORMATION MATERIALS AND FORMS***

Promotional materials for a Friendship Centre's services and programs, pamphlets and intake and information forms are often the first communication tools that are accessed by individuals. It is these documents that provide a sign about an organization's attitude towards diversity.<sup>51</sup> Therefore it is important to review this information to ensure that inclusive language is being used and that the information does not assume heterosexuality. Some examples of inclusive language include:

- using the term partner instead of husband/wife
- Using the term relationship status instead of marital status and listing options such as common-law and other
- Recognizing diverse family structures; instead of the terms mother/father, use parent/guardian; recognize that there may be more than two parents

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51 Ibid.

- On information forms instead of using male or female give optional choices for gender identity for the client and their partner
- Allow clients the option to identify their sexual orientation: i.e. heterosexual, Two Spirited, lesbian/gay, bisexual, other

However it is also important to have systems in place that ensure confidentiality, especially when requesting individuals to disclose information on gender identity and sexual orientation. This information should only be used to the extent necessary to provide appropriate service. This will ensure that Two Spirit/GLBT people feel safe in providing the information. As well, forms should include an explanation on how confidentiality will be protected and who has access to the information.

#### **VI. *CREATING A WELCOMING ENVIRONMENT***

According to existing research and promising practices it is important for Two Spirited /GLBT people to see indications that an organization is welcoming to them. When coming to an organization for the first time, many Two Spirited /GLBT people will review the situation to assess how safe it is to “come out” and whether they will receive the assistance they require. This assessment is based on visual clues and indicators that the organization is welcoming and respectful.<sup>52</sup>

It does not have to be difficult to create a welcoming environment. Even before a Two Spirited/GLBT person comes through the door, a Friendship Centre can identify itself as being welcoming. If a Friendship Centre has a website or a newsletter it can emphasize its commitment to inclusiveness. The website and/or newsletter can also be used to feature articles and information about Two Spirit/GLBT issues. Displaying the rainbow flag – a universal symbol of pride within the GLBT community - on the website, in the newsletter, in promotional materials and at the Friendship Centre will also signify that the organization is Two Spirit/GLBT friendly. Within the Friendship Centre posters showing same sex couples, pamphlets containing Two Spirit information, and if available, Two Spirit/GLBT newspapers and magazines will all indicate recognition of the community.

However, what is equally or possibly more important is to create a general atmosphere of respect.<sup>53</sup> All staff and volunteers must have the knowledge and skills to use appropriate language when dealing with all community members. This will assist in creating respect and assist in ensuring the safety and inclusion of Two Spirit/GLBT people. Prominently displaying the Centre's non-discrimination policy as well as the complaint procedure will also signal that anti-homophobic remarks and behaviour will not be tolerated. And finally, having Board members, staff and volunteers who are Two Spirit/GLBT will also assist in making a Friendship Centre a welcoming place.

#### **VII. CONDUCTING OUTREACH TO THE TWO SPIRIT/GLBT COMMUNITY**

Based on reported best practices, conducting outreach to the Two Spirit/GLBT community goes hand in hand with creating a welcoming environment.<sup>54</sup> If there are Two Spirit /GLBT groups in the community/region, making contact with these groups and joining any existing networks would be an important first step. This would help to increase the knowledge level and strengthen the services the Friendship Centre provides. Inviting representatives from organizations to speak to staff and the community about issues would also increase the knowledge level.

If there are no Two Spirit /GLBT groups in the area, consider making contact with organizations that are Two Spirit /GLBT friendly such as HIV/AIDS service organizations. Alternatively, consider partnering with other community agencies who may be interested in reaching out to the Two Spirit /GLBT community to discuss working together.

It is important that a Friendship Centre not begin publicly identifying as affirmative until it can ensure that the organization, board members, staff and volunteers have the knowledge, policies and communication strategies that are supportive of the Two Spirit /GLBT community. However, once a Friendship Centre has developed itself as a Two Spirit affirmative organization, it can undertake additional outreach activities. Some suggestions include:

- Consult with members of the Two Spirit/GLBT community on needs and issues;

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53 Toppings

54 Ibid.

- Advertise or write articles about the Friendship Centre and its programs and services in local GLBT newsletters;
- Provide Friendship Centre program and service posters and pamphlets to GLBT agencies and groups and have these groups provide their information material to the Friendship Centre;
- Speak to Two Spirit/GLBT groups about programs and services;
- Develop a Two Spirit specific information pamphlet for distribution;
- Include Two Spirit/GLBT groups and agencies on the Friendship Centre website, either as a link or as a resource and ask these agencies to do the same;
- Have the Friendship Centre listed in GLBT directories that identify organizations that provide support to the Two Spirit community;
- Invite Two Spirit/GLBT individuals and groups to Friendship Centre functions and events;
- Participate in Pride day events;
- Participate in the International Day Against Homophobia on May 17.<sup>55</sup>

#### **VIII. PROVIDING PROGRAMS AND SERVICES FOR TWO SPIRIT/GLBT PEOPLE**

As important as are the underpinnings for creating inclusive space, it is also essential that attention be given to identifying and creating the programs that will be of greatest service to Two Spirit/GLBT people. The research provides some direction in identifying these programs. As a first step, physical spaces must be available to Two Spirit/GLBT people in which they can comfortably meet, network, receive teachings, participate in social/cultural events or undergo counseling. For Two Spirit/GLBT youth, access to such places is critical. Along with youth specific counseling, a safe meeting place enables Two Spirit/GLBT youth to meet and receive support in an environment that reinforces their sexual identity and positive self affirmation.<sup>56</sup> Given the potential danger associated with disclosing as Two Spirit/GLBT, a safe meeting place may mean, for some, a location not clearly connected to the host organization: "A lot of people don't go to the friendship centre because they're afraid of it getting back to their home. Having a Two Spirit drop-in centre in another location from the friendship centre would be good..."<sup>57</sup>

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55 Information on this event is available at <http://www.homophobiaday.org>

56 Brotman et.al.

57 Meyer-Cook & Labelle

Along with Two Spirit/GLBT youth, Two Spirit/GLBT adults in urban centres need safe places to meet and network. Similarly, they require programs that address mental and emotional health, with particular emphasis on those programs that tackle suicidality and suicide prevention. Although trauma around coming out might feature as one aspect of counseling programs for Two Spirit/GLBT adults, they also require services that respond to alcohol and substance abuse and addiction, domestic violence and family issues such as parental/sibling rejection and parenting advice<sup>58</sup>.

For all age levels, however, culture is seen as the essential element that binds their gender/sexual persona with their racial identity and encloses them within the historic sacred circle.

For many Two Spirit/GLBT people, their cultural identity is as integral to their individuality as their sexual identity. In fact, for many, the former may outbalance the latter: "The two-spirited way is that you're a Native American first, and that's your culture, but there's also this gayness. But it's integrated with your culture. It's something you don't leave to become."<sup>59</sup> In this regard, the programs and services that Two Spirited people seek are those that allow them to express all parts of themselves. They seek access to Elders and Medicine People who can guide and support them with teachings<sup>60</sup>. They also wish to engage in cultural practices that reflect their unique characteristics. For example, Two Spirit/GLBT males might wish to participate in traditionally female activities such as beading or dancing with the women at pow-wows while Two Spirit/GLBT females may wish to perform in drum groups. Further, they wish to restore to themselves the understanding and practice of some of the ceremonial roles they played within the Aboriginal community, historically.<sup>61</sup>

Research has identified only some of the programming activities that can be undertaken. By reaching out to the Two Spirit community and working together, a Friendship Centre will be able to identify other potential program and service needs. Working together will also identify additional practices that will assist in creating a welcoming, safe and inclusive space for Two Spirit/GLBT people. It should be remembered that one of the

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58 Walters, et.al.

59 Alpert, Emily. "Rainbow and Red" InTheFray. Issue 78. December 2004.

60 Ibid

61 VanWanselee, Kevin. "A Life of Two Spirits". The Advocate. November 15, 2005

barriers to creating inclusive space occurs when an organization feels that it is already inclusive 'enough'. In many ways inclusion is a process not a destination. It will require ongoing evaluation of all possible kinds of diversity.<sup>62</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Two Spirited people are in urgent need of recognition and assistance. In many respects, they serve as a microcosm of the damage done to Aboriginal communities as a consequence of colonialism and Christianity. Like many Aboriginal communities invisible to mainstream society, Two Spirited people exist on the periphery of Aboriginal society, continually struggling to find acceptance and respect for the many gifts and insights they have to offer. The valuable roles that they played historically must be reasserted to allow them to take their rightful place in Aboriginal communities, whether on or off reserve. The challenge will be for Aboriginal organizations to respond in an innovative and appropriate manner.

Friendship Centres have an opportunity to provide much needed leadership on this issue, as they have done on other concerns. Leadership, however, will demand a multi-faceted strategy that cultivates Two Spirited inclusivity and sensitivity within all organizational processes. It will require a commitment of many players and will target a range of inter-related activities. Organizational reviews will have to be conducted and their findings implemented. This may mean new policies and programs that integrate non-discrimination issues and other Two Spirit friendly language, community consciousness-raising on Two Spirit/GLBT realities, staff training, program and service integration and better outreach. The implementation of these kinds of actions will help Aboriginal communities to reclaim yet another portion of their traditions while at the same time re-engaging the crucial services of Two Spirited people in healthy urban Aboriginal communities. By facilitating a positive change in attitude towards this discarded part of our culture and rejecting the negative assumptions imposed by foreign colonizers, Aboriginal people recover our own self-respect.

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62 Around the Rainbow – Family Services a la famille Ottawa. Toolkit for Educators and Service Providers Working With GLBTTQ Parents and their Children: Creating GLBTT-friendly learning spaces for children 0-6. <http://www.around-therainbow.com/index.php?unique=276>



# TWO SPIRITED PROGRAMMING AND SERVICES

## SUMMARY OF LITERATURE REVIEWED

TITLE	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STRENGTHS/ RELEVANCE	WEAKNESSES/ GAPS
A Life of Two Spirits	Kevin VanWansele, The Advocate.com, November 15, 2005	Article provides a personal overview of one individual's experience with discovering his two-spiritedness.	Provides context to the research process.	No detail about process beyond attendance at two spirited pow-wows and talking circles.
A Positive Space is a Healthy Space : Making Your Community Health Centre, Public Health Unit or Community Agency Inclusive to Those of All Sexual Orientations and Gender Identities	Ontario Public Health Association. Available at: <a href="http://www.opha.on.ca/resources/SexualHealthPaper-Jun06.pdf">http://www.opha.on.ca/resources/SexualHealthPaper-Jun06.pdf</a>	Developed as a trainer's manual, it provides background information on sexual orientation/ gender identity, creating positive space, a personal and workplace assessment tool, a number of workshop exercises and additional resources. The Workplace Assessment Tool is a modified version of the GLBT Cultural Competence Self-Assessment Tool.	Although much of the material has been accessed from existing training modules and adapted to be used by health care organizations, it is a well-detailed and informative resource document for someone who is contemplating delivering workshops. The Workplace Assessment Tool and the Personal Assessment Tool may have some applicability to Friendship Centres. Contains 18 workshop exercises under the headings of Raising Awareness, Education and Building Skills.	Focus is GLBT – there is no specific information on Two Spirited people. Some of the workshop examples /case studies are health specific. Some of the material and especially the legislation section is Ontario-specific.
A Spirit of Belonging	John Leland, New York Times, October 8, 2006	Article describes the experiences of some two spirit men in learning to embrace their gender identity as part of a cultural construct.	Reference to the importance of culture to two-spiritedness emphasizes the need to ensure that programs integrate these aspects.	Very little detail regarding some of the organizations that are mentioned and how they operate programs and services.

TITLE	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STRENGTHS/ RELEVANCE	WEAKNESSES/ GAPS
<p>Access to Care: Exploring the Health and Well-Being of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Two-Spirit People In Canada</p>	<p>Shari Brotman, Bill Ryan, Health Canada. Available at: <a href="http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hcs-sss/pubs/acces">www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hcs-sss/pubs/acces</a></p>	<p>Report offers the results of a literature review on GLBTQ and two spirit people with respect to health care access.</p>	<p>Report notes that one of the most reported issues from two-spirited peoples was their need to safely access cultural events/ spaces and healthy community spaces. Report also notes that addictions issues can be a result of homophobia and depression about sexual identity and that counseling programs need to integrate these concerns. Smaller urban communities may need to grapple with chosen invisibility of two spirited people, who fear rejection from the community. The report details service suggestions and ways to integrate two spirited needs in an overall program framework.</p>	<p>The report is a summary of a larger, unavailable document. Some detail is, therefore, missing. Additional information might be helpful.</p>
<p>Adapting Health and Social Services to Homosexuals</p>	<p>Ministere de la Santé et des Service Sociaux</p>	<p>Report discusses the historical context of homosexual discrimination and Quebec's attempts to better respond to these health and social needs, including specific program interventions.</p>	<p>Report notes the importance of responding to the diversity of homosexual experience, including youth, women, men, parents, seniors and disabled. It lists the main issues confronting homosexuals as suicidality, addictions, violence, psychological distress and STDs. It lists principles for addressing program development that might be a basis for a Friendship Centre response.</p>	<p>There is no specific information about two spirited people. Discussion takes place solely from a mainstream homosexual standpoint completely omitting any cultural context.</p>

TITLE	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STRENGTHS/ RELEVANCE	WEAKNESSES/ GAPS
Addressing Homophobia in Relation to HIV/AIDS in Aboriginal Communities: Final Report of the Environmental Scan 2004-05	Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network. Available at: <a href="http://caan.ca/english/publications.htm">http://caan.ca/english/publications.htm</a>	The final report is a summary of an environmental scan which used two surveys - one for two-spirit people and another for organizations serving Aboriginal people - to get a sense of current policies that address homophobia and to provide recommendations for future directions for policy development. 86 individuals were surveyed as well as 24 Aboriginal Service organizations.	Provides some general statistics on the types of services used by 2-spirited people. Both the individuals and the organizations that were surveyed provide some recommendations on improving service delivery for 2-spirited people. A literature review on programs that deal with homophobia provides some general information on potential models that could be used in Aboriginal organizations/communities.	The majority of the individual respondents were male. Although the survey was sent to a variety of Aboriginal service organizations, 20 of the 24 organizations that completed the survey were HIV/AIDS service organizations. Both of these factors may impact on the types of recommendations that were put forward.
Building Community for Toronto's Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual and Transgender Youth	Bev Lepischak, Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services Vol. 16(3/4), 2004	The article describes the development of Supporting Our Youth (SOY) which is considered an innovative community based program for youth between the ages of 15 to 24. SOY provides arts, cultural, recreational, employment training and mentoring largely through an active volunteer program.	Provides a Canadian specific gay/lesbian historical perspective and general information on the needs of glbt youth. Outlines in general terms how SOY, as a model can be transferred to other marginalized communities; with recognition that no model can be exactly replicated.	Mostly an information piece, Although the article mentions that it works with youth of colour and minority youth, there is no mention of 2-spirited youth or 2-spirited programming.

TITLE	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STRENGTHS/ RELEVANCE	WEAKNESSES/ GAPS
Caregiving Experiences among American Indian Two-spirit Men and Women: Contemporary and Historical Roles	Teresa Evans-Campbell; Karen I. Fredriksen-Goldsen; Karina L. Walters; Antony Stately	The article discusses the experience of two-spirit Aboriginal people in providing care-giving to Elders, children and family and the types of support that are needed for individuals performing in this capacity.	Limited relevance - does provide insight into the support two-spirit people provide to two-spirit caregivers and notes the importance of culturally-based support services; the establishment of awareness programs within existing support structures were noted as critical but these were mostly related to cultural differences in care-giving (ie: caring for parents and children rather than Elders) rather than specific to the needs of two-spirit people.	The article sheds little light on the distinct needs of two-spirit caregivers vis-à-vis their role as temporary and long-term caregivers for Elders, family members or children.
Critical Issues in Practice with Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Two-Spirit People: Educational Module for Professionals in the Fields of Health and Allied Health	Shari Brotman; Bill Ryan McGill School of Social Work ; 2001 Available at: <a href="http://rainbowhealth.ca/documents/english/critical_issues.pdf">http://rainbowhealth.ca/documents/english/critical_issues.pdf</a>	The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Two-Spirit (GLBT-S) module is designed for health care providers interested in improving their practice. It consists of a series of 5 3-hour sessions combining lectures and group activities and covers a number of issues relevant to glbt-s communities.	Provides a good overview of issues and concepts to assist in the understanding of glbt-s people as well as the current health issues facing glbt-s people. Contains a paragraph on defining the term two-spirit as well as some information under the section: Diversity Within GLBT-S Communities. Provides sample case studies as well as some role playing exercises. The section on Adapting Practice may provide information that could be useful to FCs.	Focus is on health, health care and health professionals – most case studies are health care related. Limited information on 2spirit people. Although the document is fairly detailed it is more of a syllabus than a curriculum; therefore it may require a knowledgeable facilitator/teacher to deliver it.

TITLE	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STRENGTHS/ RELEVANCE	WEAKNESSES/ GAPS
Developing a Policy of Non-Discrimination: Including Aboriginal People Living with HIV/AIDS	Canadian Aboriginal AIDS Network, March 2005. Available at: <a href="http://caan.ca/english/publications.htm">http://caan.ca/english/publications.htm</a>	An instructional manual to assist Aboriginal communities and organizations in developing a "policy of inclusiveness" for Aboriginal people living with HIV/AIDS (APHAs). Manual includes definitions; a 12 point checklist for developing a policy; 13 sample policy statements; and 9 workshop exercises to help get people thinking about different aspects of HIV/AIDS discrimination.	As an aboriginal specific document, the manual is a good source of general information. Portions of the manual i.e. the checklist for developing policy and the sample policy statements might be adaptable for use in developing a policy of inclusiveness for 2-spirited people.	Focus of manual is to develop an inclusiveness policy for APHAs – it will require adaptation in order to make it relevant to the current requirements of the NAFC and FCs.

TITLE	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STRENGTHS/ RELEVANCE	WEAKNESSES/ GAPS
GLBT Cultural Competence Self-Assessment	Coalition of Community Health and Resource Centres of Ottawa/ Pink Triangle Services of Ottawa/ United Way Ottawa. Revised March 2005	The tool was designed for Community Health and Resource Centres to take a comprehensive look from an organizational standpoint of the behaviours, attitudes, policies and practices within their organizations. The tool is designed to allow organizations to assess their strengths and identify their needs related to GLBT cultural competence. There are nine indicator categories: Governance, Administration, Personnel Policies and Practices, Communication, Community Relations and Health Promotion, Service Planning, Service Delivery, Physical Environment, and Organizational Culture.	A very detailed assessment tool that may be of use to Friendship Centres in assessing their organization. Within each of the nine indicator categories are 90 statements that can be answered yes, no or in progress. Document also provides general information on how to conduct a self-assessment, a glossary of terms as well as an example of an action plan worksheet.	The length and detail of the self-assessment tool may be intimidating. Authors recognize that self-assessment is only one component of a larger process of organizational development, including ongoing training for staff, board, volunteers.

TITLE	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STRENGTHS/ RELEVANCE	WEAKNESSES/ GAPS
Gay Native Americans Rediscover Two-Spirit Identity	Shadi Rahimi, Pacific News Service, March 17, 2005	Articles discusses some of the experiences of two spirited people, particularly youth, in responding to their identify issues.	Reference is made to a Bay Area American Indian Two Spirits youth circle that provides tribal mentors and group activities. This may be of some assistance in contemplating a Friendship Centre approach.	Little detail is provided regarding the programs.
Gay Navajo Tribe Member Provides Services For Gay Tribe Members	The Advocate, August 14, 2001	Article describes some of the activities undertaken by the Navajo to re-integrate two spirited people into the community.	Some of the activities may have a bearing on Friendship Centre programs particularly the educational program to integrate two spirited people and a school support program for two spirited youth that includes mentoring and counseling into addition to fostering better understanding of two-spiritedness.	Little detail is provided regarding the programs. Further research is required.
GLBTQ/2-Spirit History: November Lesson Planning Guide	Safe Schools Coalition. Available at: <a href="http://www.safeschoolscoalition.org">www.safeschoolscoalition.org</a>	Lesson guide provides an overview of important dates in GLBTQ and two-spirit history in addition to teaching resources, website links, books for elementary and secondary school students. The intent is to provide them with a more inclusive and sensitive perspective regarding GLBTQ and two spirited peoples.	Historical dates and some resources might be useful in framing sensitivity training for Friendship Centre staff. Information covers both Canada and the United States.	Information is not detailed and, for the most part, redirects the reader to other resources to other information contained on line or in books. There is no information regarding the specific service needs of two spirited peoples.

TITLE	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STRENGTHS/ RELEVANCE	WEAKNESSES/ GAPS
Going Far From Home to Feel at Home	Dalton Walker, New York Times, July 17, 2007	Article describes the experiences of a two spirited man and how his journey has led to the establishment of a two spirited society in New York City.	There is some stress on the importance of integrating cultural programming into organizations that represent or support two spirited people – an issue that will be of concern to Friendship Centres.	Very little detail is provided regarding the cultural content of programs and services and how these were created and offered.
Health and Wellness in the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Two-Spirit communities	Canadian Rainbow Health Coalition	Paper discusses the health issues of GLBTQ and two-spirit people, commenting on their causes and the inadequate response by the current health care system.	Report notes that issues confronting GLBTQ and two spirit peoples includes substance abuse, depression, low self-esteem, unemployment, physical violence, homelessness, HIV/AIDS much of which can be linked to coping with the stress of homophobia. Two spirit people deal with racism and colonization in addition to homophobia.	The report is very limited in offering solutions to these issues, only noting that additional research is forthcoming that may shed light on appropriate responses.

TITLE	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STRENGTHS/ RELEVANCE	WEAKNESSES/ GAPS
Health Blueprint Summary of Consulta- tions	Aboriginal Council of Manitoba & the Mother of Red Nation Women's Council	Report summarizes the consultations that occurred with Aboriginal women, including 2-spirited women, as part of the Aboriginal Blueprint process.	Some of the key comments made with respect to two spirited women deal with the need to cultivate community for these women including involvement in the broader Aboriginal community; information and resources on their unique needs must also be collected. One that might be useful for Friendship Centres is the creation of a two spirit advocate that helps two spirited people to navigate programs and services offered by Friendship Centres; programs identified as necessary to two spirited people include healthy living, HIV/AIDS and STI, sex education, self esteem, addictions, parenting and mental health counseling.	The report mostly deals with Aboriginal people although brief mention is made about two spirited people and their needs. More details are necessary regarding program and service requirements and the manner in which such services should be provided.
Homophobia and Use of Gay Affirmative Practice in a Sample of Social Workers and Psychologists	Catherine Crisp, Journal of Gay & Lesbian Studies, Vol.18(1) 2005	The article outlines the results of a study carried out to determine whether there is a difference in attitude between social workers and psychologists who work with gay and lesbian clients.	Identifies some of the negative consequences of homophobic practitioners. Also identifies the six fundamental principles of gay affirmative practice.	The Information contained in article is specific to the details of the research study and does not offer much beyond the conclusion that there was no significant difference between the attitudes of social workers and psychologists who participated in the study. Study did not include attitudes towards bisexual and transgendered individuals.

TITLE	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STRENGTHS/ RELEVANCE	WEAKNESSES/ GAPS
Inclusion Program – Assessment Tool Guidelines	Halifax Rainbow Health Project, Available at: <a href="http://rainbowhealth.ca/english/educational.html">http://rainbowhealth.ca/english/educational.html</a>	The manual provides information and guidelines to assist primary health care organizations in ensuring their services are welcoming and accessible to the 2-spirited (Rainbow) community. Outlines an assessment process that examines six major categories (Environment; Services; Policies; Intake and Assessment; Client's Rights; Staff)	General information and guidelines on how to conduct the assessment, including some topics to focus on in each of the six assessment categories. A detailed Standards of Care example is provided, as well as a listing of terminology and a 25 question assessment tool.	Focus is on primary health care providers (doctors, health clinics/ centres). Although the manual provides general information and an assessment tool, the authors recommend that the process be conducted by a facilitator with experience/ knowledge of the Rainbow community and health organizations.
It's All a Matter of Attitude: Creating and Maintaining Receptive Services for Sexual Minority Families	Linda Poverny, Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services Vol 10(1) 1999	Report discusses the unique service needs of sexual minority families and grapples with the concept of separating such services from mainstream service organizations or maintaining them within these places.	The report lists the problems that homosexuals encounter in accessing services from mainstream organizations noting that they are not specialized to the needs of homosexual clientele. This is relevant to Friendship Centres in that they can provide specialized services – cultural – that addresses the unique needs of the two-spirited. The report also outlines steps to redirect an organization to become more gay positive.	While some of the details provided by the report are useful, it is again written from a mainstream homosexual perspective with little allowance for the integration of homosexuality as part of a traditional culture.

TITLE	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STRENGTHS/ RELEVANCE	WEAKNESSES/ GAPS
LGTB Health Matters: An Education and Training Resource	Brian Dunn, The Centre Available at: <a href="http://www.lgtbcentre.vancouver.com/pdf_s/theManual_vFinal.pdf">http://www.lgtbcentre.vancouver.com/pdf_s/theManual_vFinal.pdf</a>	Document provides four modules for Health and Social Service workers to better respond to the needs of GLBTQ clientele. Modules include information about GLBTQ populations, heterosexism and phobia; determinants of health for this population; adapting programs to ensure accessibility and sensitivity to GLBTQ population; and performing as a health/social services advocate for GLBTQ populations.	Very detailed and informative process for developing knowledge about distinctions between GLBTQ populations and unique experiences, health issues and service concerns; topics cover spectrum from youth to elderly, parenting, health care, relationships, addictions and counseling; two spirited issues are discussed in addition to multiple oppression, specific health concerns of Aboriginal people, service delivery options and prevention factors.	Two spirited issues are not the main focus of discussion but an adjunct and are dealt with as a special interest. Focus is on mainstream, white GLBTQ interests.
Meeting the Needs of the Gay and Lesbian Community: Outcomes in Human Services	Elaine M. Maccio Howard J. Doueck, Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services Vol 14(4) 2002	Report involves a literature scan of gay and lesbian experience with accessing human services, particularly mental and physical health services.	Report comments that studies indicate that youth addictions treatment is homophobic and heterosexist – an issue that may have implications for Friendship Centre addictions programs. Report recommends that changes in service approach be accompanied by new policies, management role-modelling, staff sensitivity training and hiring of gay and lesbian staff.	The report makes no comment about two spirited people nor does it provide any insight beyond the mainstream “privileged” white experience.

TITLE	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STRENGTHS/ RELEVANCE	WEAKNESSES/ GAPS
Namaji: Two Spirit Organizing in Montreal, Canada	Fiona Meyer- Cook, Diane Labelle	Report documents some of the organizational activities undertaken in Montreal by two- spirited people.	The report notes activities taken by the Montreal Friendship Centre to respond to two spirited people – activities that may direct other Friendship Centres. The report also provides an important rationale for action on two-spirited issues: the high levels of suicide amongst two spirited youth. It also comments on the kinds of service needed: the spiritual/cultural aspects of two spiritedness, the provision of gay-friendly Elders and gay role models, healthy lifestyles and safe cultural spaces.	Since the report is specific to Montreal, it does not discuss any other activities taken by two spirited people in other centres. Further, information about what programs were managed by the Montreal Friendship Centre is not well- described. Further research would be required on this matter.
Positive Space Training Manual: Information and Resources for LGBT People and their Allies	Nancy Peters and Lesley Marple. March 2005 Available at: <a href="http://www.stfx.ca/campus/stu-serv/equity/Training%20Manual.htm">http://www. stfx.ca/ campus/ stu-serv/ equity/ Training% 20Manual. htm</a>	The Positive Space Program was developed to recognize and acknowledge rural LGBT lives and to assist in the development of ally support. The manual provides background information on gender identity and sexual orientation; the impact of oppression; how to be an ally and a workshop facilitator's manual.	A detailed facilitator's manual which outlines the seven steps of workshop planning, sample agendas, detailed workshop session plans and fact sheets for all workshops.	Limited information on Two Spirited people. Resource list of websites are Nova Scotia specific. Details on how to establish an ally program would require some modification for Friendship Centre use.

TITLE	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STRENGTHS/ RELEVANCE	WEAKNESSES/ GAPS
Proud Spirits	Zack Hudson, Southern Voice Online, November 17, 2006	Article discusses some of the activities being undertaken by two spirited men in coming to terms with their identity and educating the mainstream gay community about two- spirited people.	The intrinsic importance of culture to two-spirited people is reinforced in addition to the positive historical perspective that this status had with Aboriginal people. Information could direct some research into training for Friendship Centre staff.	Very little detail regarding services and programs and how two culture can be integrated into these.
Rainbow and Red	Emily Alpert, In The Fray, Available at: <a href="http://www.inthefray.org">www.inthefray.org</a>	Article provides an overview of two-spirited history, discussing evidence of tribal acceptance in relation to current organization of two spirited groups.	The article offers some explicit views with respect to the difference between two-spiritedness and GLBTQ. Specifically, two-spiritedness is founded in Aboriginal culture and spirituality. Cultural connection is an essential component of two spirited identity and, in some respects, is still paramount to it. This viewpoint reinforces the need to provide two-spirited services that integrate cultural activities.	There is little information about programs and services and how cultural activities can be incorporated into these to best meet the needs of two spirited individuals.

TITLE	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STRENGTHS/ RELEVANCE	WEAKNESSES/ GAPS
Rainbow Health Educational Toolkit	Developed by Narina Nagra and the Rainbow Health Network Education Committee. Available at <a href="http://rainbowhealth.ca/english/educational.html">http://rainbowhealth.ca/english/educational.html</a>	The toolkit was developed in 2006 to increase the capacity of healthcare and social service providers to address LGBT health and well being. The focus is health care providers, with statement that materials can be adapted for social service needs. Toolkit is a facilitator's workbook of 5 workshops and also contains 4 additional sections: Workshop Handouts, Additional Tools for Individual and Organizational Change, Facilitator Resources, and Web Resources.	The resource kit will allow a facilitator to conduct workshops on Diversity Awareness in Healthcare; Unlearning Homo/Bi/ Transphobia; Trans Issues in Health; Intersections of Oppression; How To Be an Ally. Each workshop module provides detailed instructions for the facilitator as well as handouts and resource material.	Not aboriginal specific. Much of the material has a health focus. Bulk of materials collected from other workshop kits/toolkits. Recommendation is that facilitators be LGBT or ally with at least one LGBT facilitator.

TITLE	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STRENGTHS/ RELEVANCE	WEAKNESSES/ GAPS
Reclaiming Space – Regaining Health: The Health Care Experiences of Two-Spirit People in Canada	Shari Brotman, Bill Ryan, Yves Jalbert, Bill Rowe Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services, Vol. 14(1) 2002	Report describes the qualitative findings of two-spirited peoples experiences with health care, including barriers on and off-reserve and the impact of cultural identity.	Report describes the intersection of two-spirited identity with cultural identity, a notion distinctive from western concepts of homosexuality. Comment is made about the vulnerability of two spirited people who leave the reserves: they no longer have protection from racism, although they are freer to express their homosexuality. Recommendation that safe spaces must be created for urban two spirited people that supports both their two-spirited identity, both culturally and individually. Sensitivity training should focus on anecdotal or real-life experiences of two-spirited people.	Although the report offers a sound overview of the two-spirited experience, it does not offer any real life practical examples of how these changes have been or can be accomplished.
Removing Barriers and Building Access: A Resource Manual on Providing Culturally Relevant Services to LGTB Victims of Violence	Peter Toppings, The Centre. Vancouver, 2004	An information manual, developed for victim service workers and organizations that provide support to victims. The manual provides information on glbt identity, history and culture as well as guidelines and suggestions on dealing with victims of glbt violence and victims of glbt relationship violence.	A useful handbook to assist staff in becoming more aware of glbt issues around violence as it is well-written, easy to read and well laid out. Although not designed as such, may be useful as a workshop trainer's resource manual.	Only available in hardcopy- must be ordered from the organization. As it is a BC developed manual, the appendix contains only BC based community resources. Limited information on 2 Spirit

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Resource Kit for Parents, Educators and Service Providers Working with GLBTTQ Parents and their Children	Around the Rainbow – Family Services a la famille Ottawa. Available at: <a href="http://www.aroundtherainbow.com/index.php?unique=277">http://www.aroundtherainbow.com/index.php?unique=277</a>	An accompaniment to the Parent and Educator Toolkits – provides additional reference material as well as an annotated bibliography of books for children, parents and teachers; and a directory of Ottawa, provincial and national resources and web links.	The Resource Kit provides detailed sources and websites for the various issues and topics that were raised in the toolkits. The annotated bibliography identifies books for all age groups as well as GLBTTQ parenting and family theory. Web Resources/ websites are also categorized.	Minimal information on two-spirited people. Focus is on pre-school and elementary school systems.
“River of Life, Rapids of Change”: Understanding HIV Vulnerability Among Two-Spirit Youth Who Migrate to Toronto	Doris O’Brien Teengs; Robb Travers	A report on the community-based research project to determine how migration experiences of two-spirited youth might heighten their risk for HIV infection. Thirteen two-spirit youth were interviewed as well as eight key informants.	Report provides general information on the reasons why two-spirit youth migrate to Toronto as well as general recommendations to meet the needs of these youth.	Focus of research project was HIV vulnerability of youth in Toronto – authors recognize this as a potential research limitation.

TITLE	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STRENGTHS/ RELEVANCE	WEAKNESSES/ GAPS
Sexual Orientation Bias Experiences and Service Needs of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Two-Spirit American Indians	Karina L. Walters, Jane M. Simoni, Pamela F. Horwath Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services, Vol. 13(1/2) 2001	Report describes the experiences of two-spirited people in accessing services from an Indian organization.	The report notes that greater knowledge and contact with GLBTQ and two spirited people improves the delivery of service and suggests ways in which staff can be acculturated. It also provides specific information about youth protection and counseling, domestic violence, drinking and substance abuse. In developing programs, Indian organizations should create culturally relevant ways to discuss GLBTQ issues in addition to integrating two spirited people in cultural events. They should provide elders, talking circles, information about the historic role of two spirited peoples, training to all staff, and mental health programming and safe spaces for Aboriginal youth.	More detail regarding successful programs and how they were implemented from start to finish would be helpful.

TITLE	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STRENGTHS/ RELEVANCE	WEAKNESSES/ GAPS
<p>Toolkit for Educators and Service Providers Working With GLBTTQ Parents and their Children: Creating GLBTT-friendly learning spaces for children 0-6</p>	<p>Around the Rainbow – Family Services a la famille Ottawa (84 pgs). Available at: <a href="http://www.aroundtherainbow.com/index.php?unique=276">http://www.aroundtherainbow.com/index.php?unique=276</a></p>	<p>The toolkit and its companion (Toolkit for GLBTTQ Parents/Guardians) provides information and resources to help parents and educators create safe and inclusive learning environments for children. Section 1 introduces glbttq issues; section 2 outlines a variety of children-related issues and section 3 provides information on creating inclusive space.</p>	<p>A detailed guide that provides a good overview of glbttq issues and family issues as well as child development, children’s rights and creating safe space for children. Contains a brief (14 questions) self assessment tool; as well as issues to examine in order to create inclusive space.</p>	<p>Minimal information on two-spirited people. Focus is on pre-school and elementary school systems.</p>
<p>Two Spirit Peoples</p>	<p>Bess Lovejoy, The Peak, Issue 5, Vol. 101, February 8, 1999</p>	<p>Article provides an overview of the meaning of two spirited, including its anthropological definition and the roles and responsibilities assumed by two spirit peoples across various cultures.</p>	<p>The article offers some important background information about two spirited people vis-à-vis Aboriginal culture. It also makes an important argument of human sexuality as following not the European linear spectrum but the Aboriginal circle. The article also includes important references to research already conducted on this issue.</p>	<p>No information about two spirited programs and services.</p>

TITLE	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STRENGTHS/ RELEVANCE	WEAKNESSES/ GAPS
Two-Spirit Youth Speak Out: Analysis of the Needs Assessment Tool.	Urban Native Youth Association, March 2004. Available at: <a href="http://unya.bc.ca/pspubvid_tsyso.htm">http://unya.bc.ca/pspubvid_tsyso.htm</a>	The report is a summary of 44 needs assessment surveys that were completed by 2-spirited youth in British Columbia. Report provides an analysis of the 33 questions that were asked as well as recommendations on how to meet the needs of 2-spirit youth.	Identifies issues and needs that are youth and 2-spirit specific. Recommendations provide a good starting point on how to proceed, for both social service providers and youth. Needs Assessment Survey is recommended by CAAN as a template in developing a tool to identify needs and safety issues for 2-spirit people.	Recommendations tend to be very general; there is limited information on specific program and services requirements.
We Are Part of a Tradition: A Guide on Two-Spirited People for First Nation Communities	Gilbert Deschamps, 2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations, 1998 Available at: <a href="http://2spirits.com/">http://2spirits.com/</a>	Developed in 1998, the purpose of the instructional manual is to assist individuals to give culturally sensitive information on 2-spirited people. The manual focuses on the concept of 2-spirited people and presents historical and contemporary information as well as information on homophobia, AIDS, and gay and lesbian youth. Also included is a lesson plan on 2-spirited people and an anti-homophobia sample workplan.	Provides a variety of documents written by different authors on the concept of 2-spiritedness as well as historical information on 2-spirited people. The lesson plan and sample workplan, although general in nature could provide a starting point in developing such documents. Also provides reading references and a resource list of people/ organizations.	As the manual was produced in 1998, some of the information may be out of date i.e. the summary of lesbian and gay rights across Canada. Since many of the articles are written by different authors on the same subject matter, there tends to be a lot of repetition of information; manual could be better organized.

TITLE	AUTHOR	SUMMARY	STRENGTHS/ RELEVANCE	WEAKNESSES/ GAPS
<p>"... We didn't Connect at All..." The Experiences of a Gay Client</p>	<p>Brian O'Neill, Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services Vol. 14(4) 2002</p>	<p>The report describes the experiences of one gay man as representative of the experiences of homosexuals in accessing mainstream mental health counseling, both individually and in a group setting.</p>	<p>The report provides relevant commentary about the distinctive service needs of gays and lesbians and proposes that mainstream organizations in the helping professions must re-organize their culture, policies and practices to make them gay-friendly.</p>	<p>There is no discussion about two spirited needs or the unique cultural dimension that may exist when accessing services.</p>
<p>Without Reservation: Native American Lesbians Struggle To Find Their Way</p>	<p>Diane Anderson-Minshall, CURVE. Available at: <a href="http://www.curvemag.com">www.curvemag.com</a></p>	<p>Article summarizes some of the struggles encountered by a number of Aboriginal lesbians in participating in combining their sexual and Indian identity.</p>	<p>There is some information regarding historical perspective of American tribes vis-à-vis two spirited women and attempts to reclaim this heritage; comments are made with respect to multiple discrimination faced by two spirited women: as Aboriginal, as two-spirited and as women; comment is also made with regard to the invisibility of issues around two-spirited women compared to two-spirited men; programs must ensure that these distinct needs are appropriately captured.</p>	<p>Mostly told from an American perspective, although there is some obvious similarities; historical information is very general and anecdotal. No information about how programs and services can better address needs of two spirited women.</p>





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