



National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC)
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Backgrounder

There are 118 Friendship Centres across Canada, and in many cities, Friendship Centres are the only providers of culturally-enhanced programs and services to urban Aboriginal residents. For over 50 years, Friendship Centres have been facilitating the transition of Aboriginal people from rural, remote and reserve life to an urban environment. For many Aboriginal people, Friendship Centres are their first point of contact to obtain referrals to programs and services. Given that the Aboriginal population is the fastest growing segment of the Canadian urban population, these Centres are vital pillars in the infrastructure of urban Aboriginal society.

The federal government has invested in Friendship Centres for more than 40 years. The long-term sustainability of Friendship Centres requires enhancements to the funding levels that were established over a decade ago. While the urban Aboriginal population over the past decade has more than doubled in some cities, funding through Canadian Heritage's Aboriginal Friendship Centres Program (AFCP) to support the core activities of Friendship Centres, has not changed. In order to protect the federal government's investment, and to ensure the long-term sustainability of these institutions, these funding levels need to be examined in the context of today's realities.

In 2008, the 118 Friendship Centres across Canada will deliver over 1,200 programs and services worth almost \$90 million to over 1,132,000 participants. With the \$16.1 million in support for core operations from AFCP, they will deliver over \$38 million for federal departments; over \$36 million for provincial/territorial governments; \$6.5 million for municipal governments; and \$5 million for non-governmental and other Aboriginal organizations.

The National Association of Friendship Centres (NAFC) represents the interests of Canada's 118 Friendship Centres and their urban Aboriginal membership.

For more information, or to set up interviews, please contact:

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