

Annual Report 2020-2021

Isaksimagit Inuusirmi Katujjiqatigiit Embrace Life Council

P.O. Box 2259, Iqaluit, Nunavut, X0A 0H0

Phone: (867) 975-3233

Fax: (867) 975-3234

Email: embracelife@inuusiq.com

Website: www.inuusiq.com

Facebook and Instagram: @EmbraceLifeNU



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Background

The Isaksimagit Inuusirmi Katujjiqatigiit Embrace Life Council (IIKELC) was established in January 2004 as a result of partnerships of many organizations. Efforts to create the council began in 2003 with the recognition that there needed to be a coordinated initiative in addressing the high suicide rate in Nunavut. The Council's twelve-member board collaborates to provide leadership to a small staff team

- Kylie Aglukark, President (Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated)
- Sheila Levy, Vice-President (Nunavut Kamatsiaqtut Helpline)
- Jay McKechnie, Treasurer (Nunavut Teachers' Association)
- Jamie Savikataaq, Secretary (Royal Canadian Mounted Police)
- Becky Kilabuk, Director (Qikiqtani Inuit Association)
- Bernadine Rogers, Director (Quality of Life Secretariat)
- Qovik Netser, Director (Kivalliq Inuit Association)
- Presley Taylor, Director (Kitikmeot Inuit Association)
- Mary Kanayok Voisey, Director (Elder)
- Tony Bird, Director (Nunavut Association of Municipalities)
- Joanasie Akumalik, Director (Survivor Member)
- Jared Osborne, Director (Faith Community)
- Vacant, Director (Student Member)

The council is a non-profit organization with charitable status. According to our bylaws, the Council aims to:

- Contribute to the mental, emotional, and physical health and community wellness of Nunavut residents by providing education, research and statistical analysis, a clearing house, training, and a coordinated holistic approach to suicide prevention activities;
- Recruit, coordinate, and provide on-going training to volunteers in order to give them the expertise to deliver suicide prevention and community wellness activities;
- Educate the public on the issues of suicide, mental health, community health, and related issues;
- Acquire sufficient resources in cash or in kind to support the objectives of the Council and communities throughout Nunavut

Our guiding principles are:

- Embracing life—not just preventing death
- Inuit history and Inuit pride drive the programming
- Communities identify their own solutions, recognizing that every community is unique
- Families are central to life—focus on parenting skills, kinship, and teamwork
- Protecting and being aware of and guided by the environment

Our mission is to support and encourage Nunavummiut to Value Life

President's Report:

Throughout this annual report are examples of the training, program development, program delivery, and public education that has been achieved during 2020-2021. These actions and continued advocacy support the mission of Embrace Life Council.

Our unique combination of services provides the framework needed to help Nunavummiut in addressing the high suicide rates. The critical pieces that help produce successful outcomes come from our dedicated staff, committed volunteers, Board of Directors, and partnerships.

During 2020-2021, we, like so many others have faced many hurdles due to the COVID-19 pandemic. I have been humbled to witness through hard times how humankind come together, and this past year is no exception. I've seen the entire Embrace Life team come together to transform the way we work, adapting to remote and virtual work/outreach while finding creative ways to connect and support one another and Nunavummiut.

Moving forward we know we have learned important lessons from the past year and moving into this next year, we embrace these lessons for greater change. The support of many dedicated partners and allies, our staff and Board of Directors have spent the last year demonstrating that we can rise to overcome any obstacle while continuing to support Nunavut communities.

Finally, I thank the staff, volunteers, and board members for your ongoing commitments and dedication to the Embrace Life Council. It is your contribution that leads to the improved well-being in Nunavut.

Matna, Qujannamiik, Koana,



Kylie Aglukark

Executive Director's Report:

ELC has had an accomplished year with the development of numerous new resources and the delivery of special projects. The Covid19-pandemic has brought about many barriers for our work and as a result, we have not been able to offer as many workshops/training in the communities as planned. However, ELC kept our focus on the "protective factors", in order to help and better support our communities during these extraordinary times. All the things that help communities contribute to better their mental wellness. The new version of the Community Resource Cards, the Helpful information for families after a suicide, the online safety booklets and the Children's colouring books were developed or completed during the year.

The ELC team has been very flexible to start new programs/activities and projects that were meeting the needs of our communities. Through the different projects like "Breakfast in a bag", "Backpacks of Hope" and "Christmas gifts" we still followed our mission and vision. Promoting life and offering support to communities continues to be our priority.

This report highlights all activities/programs and trainings that we have offered to Nunavut communities during the 2020-21 fiscal year.

In addition to the agencies on our Board of Directors and those that were acknowledged in the report, I would like to express my gratitude to the Government of Nunavut - Inuusivut, Bell Canada, Northwestel, Pauktuutit, Recreation and Parks Association of Nunavut, the Hamlet of Cambridge Bay, Pulaarvik Kablu Friendship Centre, Ilisaqsivik, Le Grand Elan, Atiigo Media, Nick Blachford, Becky Kilabuk, Mark Aspland, Livingworks, Julia's translations, Nunavut Arctic College, Arctic Children and Youth Foundation, and many, many more.

In closing, I'd like to acknowledge the ELC team, I am fortunate to be working with great individuals that do not hesitate to take on more projects during that year.

There is so much more work to do, so as we look ahead, I am focused on our objectives and goals that were identified in the Strategic Plan 2021/24.

Qujannamiik, Thank you, merci.



Cecile Guerin

Our Staff

April 2020 – June 2020

- Cecile Guerin, Executive Director
- Elisapee Johnston, Program Coordinator, Qikiqtani
- Esther Powell, Program Coordinator, Kivalliq
- Nastassja Fraser, Volunteer Program Development Coordinator

July 2020 – September 2020

- Cecile Guerin, Executive Director
- Elisapee Johnston, Program Coordinator, Qikiqtani
- Esther Powell, Program Coordinator, Kivalliq
- Charles Zikalala, Territorial Intervention Coordinator
- Jason Doiron, Communications officer (casual)
- Tooma Laisa, Program Coordinator (casual)
- Amanda Pallister, Program Coordinator (casual)
- Nastassja Fraser, Volunteer Program Development Coordinator

October 2020 – March 2021

- Cecile Guerin, Executive Director
- Elisapee Johnston, Program Coordinator, Qikiqtani
- Esther Powell, Program Coordinator, Kivalliq
- Tooma Laisa, Program Coordinator, Iqaluit
- Kofi Ampofo, Program Coordinator, Kitikmeot (casual)
- Charles Zikalala, Territorial Intervention Coordinator
- Nastassja Fraser, Volunteer Program Development Coordinator

Training Program Delivery

We have made a couple of changes to our programming this year. Currently, we are able to offer the following workshops in Nunavut communities when requested:

Uqaqatigiiluk! (ASIST): is the Nunavut version of ASIST, a two-day course from Living Works Education (www.livingworks.net). The workshop is structured around small group discussions and skills practice based on adult learning principles. Participants learn to recognize the signs of suicide behavior and the skills to talk to people who are thinking of killing themselves. It empowers participants to feel comfortable intervening and keeping a person safe by making a plan or connecting them with further help.

Reach OUT: This workshop will help community members aged 15 and up to feel more comfortable, confident, and competent in directly preventing the immediate risk of suicide. It is a half day suicide alertness workshop that will provide tools and guidelines to:

- **Recognize** the signs of distress,
- **Ask** about suicide with more ease,
- **Listen** by using helpful attitudes,
- **Refer** to appropriate resources.

Trauma Informed Practice Training: Trauma Informed Practice is a full-day workshop designed to increase individual success and wellbeing in Nunavut. It helps participants understand how to better support individuals who have experienced trauma, whether first hand, historically, or intergenerationally. Participants do not need any formal preparation to attend the training. We encourage all frontline and service staff to take this training, from support through administration.

Youth Self-Injury: Youth Self-Injury is a half-day workshop designed by Nunavummiut for Nunavummiut to provide an overview in understanding the reasons why youth may self-injure and then to provide practical strategies for working with self-injuring youth. Participants do not need any formal preparation to attend the training. We encourage all frontline and service staff to take this training, from support through administration.

Our Children, Our Responsibility: Our Children, Our Responsibility was developed in partnership between Embrace Life Council, Voicefound, and the Government of Nunavut. OCOR is a full day Nunavut-specific child sexual abuse prevention workshop designed to improve community awareness, knowledge, and behavior. It provides hope for the adults who take it that we can become more supportive of children and reduce children's vulnerability to childhood sexual abuse. Participants also learn how to respond to reports of child sexual abuse.

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Inuusiq Pimmariujuq is a two-day strategic planning event designed to promote community health, wellness, suicide prevention, and life affirmation. The event enables participants to create a community-specific action plan for implementation. The event begins with a sharing circle honouring our stories before moving into a discussion of how far we've come in Nunavut since the pre-contact era. With this grounding, we begin an active review of strengths and opportunities in the community, which will inform the final action plan. Inuusiq Pimmariujuq includes a plan for follow-up and support by Embrace Life Council Program Coordinators with the community development team.

Healing Support Group Facilitator Training: Healing Support Group Facilitator Training is a two to three-day training designed to promote healing and enable local community adult paraprofessionals to facilitate group healing. Participants will be given the practical skills and tools they need to coordinate and facilitate group healing sessions, as well as suggested access to potential sources of funding to support their group programming. The training includes mindfulness and self-care strategies to assist facilitators to maintain their own wellness while providing this valuable community service. Embrace Life Council provides ongoing debriefing and troubleshooting support as community healing groups are implemented.

Canadian Red Cross Babysitter Training Course: The Canadian Red Cross Babysitting course covers everything from managing difficult behaviours to essential content on leadership and professional conduct as a babysitter. Babysitting promises to deepen and enhance the responsibility that older youth feel when caring for younger children. This updated curriculum, complete with new science, also provides improved learning when it comes to giving the appropriate care in the event of an emergency.

Train the Trainer Workshop

We hosted the OCOR Training for Trainers in Iqaluit and Cambridge Bay. A total of 20 individuals successfully completed the training. On March 31st, 2021, we had 15 ASIST active trainers in the Territory.

Inuusiq Pimmariujuq - Community Training and Development

We have developed a new community action planning tool specific to Nunavut entitled ***Inuusiq Pimmariujuq*** (Life Matters). This strategic planning tool includes elements of healing, trauma informed practice training, strategic planning, and dedicated, long-term follow-up by IIKELC Program Coordinators. In 2020/21, ELC team traveled a couple of times to Kinngait to meet the members of the interagency committee and other key people that

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offer services to the community. We had planned to deliver the IP workshop but due to Covid-19 Outbreak in Iqaluit it has been postponed to the Fall 2021.

Our IP funding also supports community programs at the ELC office (sewing programs, beading classes, parka making program...) and community outreach for individuals at the Qimaavik Women's Shelter, the Women's Healing Centre and the Young Offenders' Facility.

Canadian Firearms Safety Course

We secured again funding in order to provide the **Canadian Firearms Safety Course** (CFSC) to Nunavummiut free of charge. The CFSC was developed in partnership with the provinces and territories, national organizations with an ongoing interest in firearms safety, and many firearms and hunter educator course instructors from across Canada. In Nunavut, this course not only supports a valuable life skill, but also provides an opportunity to educate community members about the safe storage of firearms in order to reduce access to a means to attempt suicide. CFSC funding is accessible to all certified trainers in the territory to deliver firearms training to community members. We funded 9 trainings in 4 communities. Communities included:

- Cambridge Bay
- Iqaluit
- Kinngait
- Qikiqtarjuaq

This year, we hosted the following workshops:

Our Children, Our Responsibility

Community/Dates	#Participants
Iqaluit	6
Cambridge Bay (T4T)	13
Iqaluit (T4T)	7
Total	26

Reach OUT

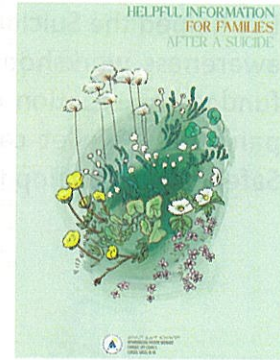
Community/Dates	# Participants	Examples of participants
Igloolik September 24, 2020	7	Community members
Naujaat November 12, 2020	30	High school students
Iqaluit February 20, 2021	10	Community members
Iqaluit March 19 2021	16	Community members
Total	63	

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training

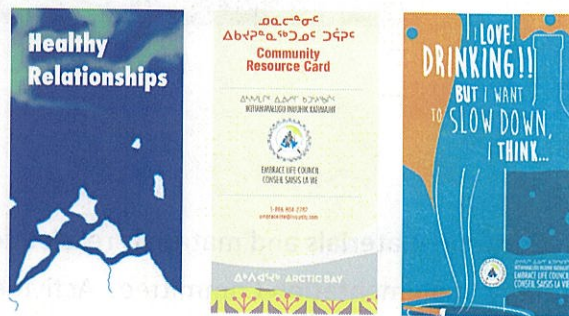
Community/Dates	# Participants - completed	Examples of participants
Iqaluit September 2-3 2020	7	women's shelter staff, community members, GN employees
Rankin Inlet September 8-9 2020	6	PKFC staff
Iqaluit September 15-16 2020	8	Educators, GN employees
Iqaluit October 17-18 2020	5	Community members
Naujaat September 26-27 2020	9	Educators, community members
Iqaluit October 27-28 2020	9	City of Iqaluit recreation staff
Iqaluit October 29-30 2020	8	Iqaluit Fire Department
Rankin Inlet November 4 & 6 2020	9	Educator, interpreter, elder, nurse, counselor
Iqaluit February 23-24 2021	4	Security guards
Iqaluit March 6-7 2021	12	Federal employees, GN employees
Total	77	

Public Education Project

This year we developed multiple print resources, including brochures, community resource cards and the *Help for Families After a Suicide* handbook. The handbook was completed in March 2020 and will be launched during the Embrace Life Day 2021.

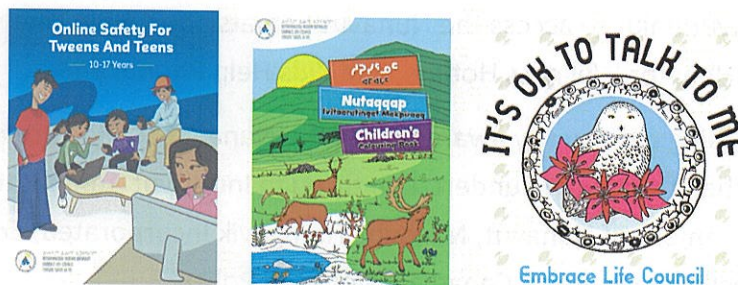


- A strong foundation for a healthy partnership (healthy relationships)
- I love drinking but I want to slow down, I think (substance use)
- Community Resource Cards (trifold version) for the 25 communities



Other resources that were developed during the fiscal year 2020/21 and will be completed later in 2021:

- Online safety for children and Tweens/Teens
- Children's Colouring Book
- New Inuusiq website
- Discussion guide Teen relationship campaign
- The Guardian of the Community (new symbol for caregivers)



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ELC helped the Suicide Prevention team in Nunavik with the development of a new suicide awareness workshop **“Reach OUT”**. Nunavik led the development of this program and funded the creation of the presentation. ELC led the development of the tools (poster, pamphlets, wallet cards, thank you card, videos). ELC will use the funding from Bell SafeTALK to develop the tools.



Ongoing activities:

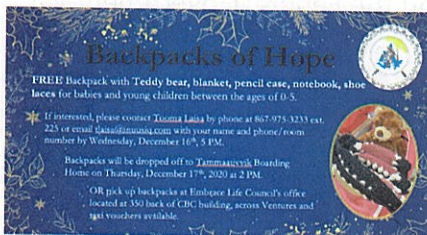
- Distribution of public education materials and materials related to the Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy Implementation Committee. Activities to date include:
 - Community resource cards for Nunavut communities;
 - Increased production and distribution of educational pamphlets on healthy relationships and harm reduction;
 - Increased translation of materials for distribution to Nunavummiut on public bulletin boards, website, social media, etc.;
 - Development and distribution of promotional materials for Embrace Life Day across Nunavut that promoted the work of Embrace Life Council and directed Nunavummiut to access the Nunavut Kamatsiaqtut Help Line, First Nations and Inuit Help for Wellness Hotline, and Kids Help Phone; and,
 - Increasing community awareness of the Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy and the efforts being undertaken through Inuusivut Anninaqtuq by the Government of Nunavut, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, Embrace Life Council and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

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- Continuing updating our social media to be more user friendly and reach target audiences in Nunavut with both resources and materials from the Embrace Life Council, but also on the Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy and Action Plan;
- Provide administrative support to the Embrace Life Council Board of Directors;
- Manage financial and administrative functions within Embrace Life Council;
- Partner with Recreation and Parks Association of Nunavut to deliver the “FitMOM program” in Iqaluit;
- Participate as an active member in the Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy Implementation Committee;
- Contribute to research initiatives within the territory including ISPARX;
- Celebrate and administer our annual Hope and Healing Art Contest

Other projects

- Distribution of 256 “Backpacks of Hope” to families in Iqaluit and other communities
- Distribution of over 150 Christmas toys in partnership with Angel Tree
- Distribution of approximately 100 winter clothing (jacket, pants, mitts, fleece jacket, socks, boots, hats...) for children and youth in Iqaluit
- Funded a Breakfast program in Cambridge Bay, Rankin Inlet and Iqaluit. 600 bags of breakfast food were distributed in Iqaluit in July/August 2020. More than 100 people have attended the two “Tea and bannock” events organized in Iqaluit.
- Distribution of 100 “Go To” pack for Middle school and High School students (feminine hygiene products, hair products...)



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