

Annual Report 2019-2020

Isaksimagit Inuusirmi Katujjiqatigiit Embrace Life Council

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Background

The Isaksimagit Inuuksirmi 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:

In November 2019 I was honored to be elected as President of the Embrace Life Council (ELC) replacing long standing President and student member David Lawson. I want to take this time to recognize David for his many accomplishments during the time of his Presidency and thank him for his hard work and dedication to ELC.

2019-2020 was a busy year with the launch of Our Children, Our Responsibility, ongoing training and outreach to our communities. ELC continues to strive to offer services and programming that work towards suicide prevention and wellness for all Nunavummiut.

Our staff faced many challenges through out 2019 with turnover and vacant positions but continued their work with pride. I want to take this time to express my sincere gratitude to our long serving employee and now Executive Director Cecile Guerin. Cecile has been a part of ELC for 8 years, she has worked tirelessly in all positions within our office including acting Executive Director on 2 occasions. Cecile's compassion for her work does not go unnoticed, she is dedicated to the work that ELC does and shows compassion to her staff, the Board of Directors and to all Nunavummiut daily.

I thank the Staff and board members for your ongoing commitments and dedication to ELC and the sometimes-difficult working environment that is presented. It is your contribution that leads to the improved wellbeing in Nunavut.

Matna, Qujannamiik, Koana,

Kylie Aglukark

Executive Director's Report:

This report highlights all activities/programs and trainings that we have offered to Nunavut communities during the 2019-20 fiscal year.

Early in the fiscal year, we launched, ***Our Children, Our Responsibility***, a Nunavut-specific child sexual abuse prevention workshop and resource. We are so grateful to our partners at Voice Found and the Government of Nunavut Department of Health for helping create OCOR. I know this resource has already made a positive impact on our children and our communities.

With the knowledge of our community members and in consultation with our partners at Ilisaqsivik and Mental Health and Addictions, we created ***Healing Support Group Facilitator Training*** in 2018. This training was offered to two communities this year, Arctic Bay and Sanikiluaq.

Through our workshops and community trainings, we have created new opportunities to reduce the stigma for those with mental health challenges. Our conversations have brought strong community connections with representatives from a multitude of organizations who bring a variety of lenses to our team.

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 Quality of Life Secretariat, Bell Canada, Northwestel, Pauktuutit, Community and Government Services' Sport and Recreation Division, Recreation and Parks Association of Nunavut, the Hamlet of Cambridge Bay, Pulaarvik Kablu Friendship Centre, Ilisaqsivik, Le Grand Elan, 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 able to work with such a super group of individuals. I would also like to thank our former ED, Kim Masson, who worked really hard during the past three years with us. I learned a lot from her and I will always be thankful for her guidance and support.

There is so much more work to do, so as we look ahead, I am focused on our objectives for next year!

Qujannamiik, Thank you, merci.

Cecile Guerin

Our Staff

April 2019 – June 2019

- Adam Akpik, Program Development Coordinator
- Rachel Michael, Program Coordinator
- Elisapee Johnston, Program Coordinator (Casual)
- Cecile Guerin, Acting Director and Territorial Intervention Coordinator
- Pamela Pilikapsi, Program Coordinator, Kivalliq

July 2019 – December 2019

- Esther Powell, Executive Director
- Elisapee Johnston, Program Coordinator
- Cecile Guerin, Territorial Intervention Coordinator
- Carmen Barrieau, Program Coordinator (September-December 2019)

January 2020 – March 2020

- Cecile Guerin, Acting Director and Territorial Intervention Coordinator
- Elisapee Johnston, Program Coordinator
- Esther Powell, Program Coordinator, Kivalliq

Training Program Delivery

We have significantly increased our programming in the past twelve months. 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.

safeTALK: safeTALK helps participants become alert to suicide. Suicide-alert people are better prepared to connect persons with thoughts of suicide with life-affi help. Over the course of their training, safeTALK participants will learn to:

their training, safeTALK participants will learn to:

- Notice and respond to situations where suicide thoughts may be present,
- Recognize that invitations for help are often overlooked,
- Move beyond the common tendency to miss, dismiss, and avoid suicide,
- Apply the TALK steps: Tell, Ask, Listen, KeepSafe, and
- Know community resources and how to connect someone with thoughts of suicide to them for further suicide-safer help.

Trauma Informed Practice Training: Trauma Informed Practice is a half to 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 half-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.

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.

Mental Health First Aid Inuit: Mental Health First Aid Inuit is a 3-day course that aims to:

- Increase awareness of the signs and symptoms impacting mental wellness
- Increase awareness and encourage meaningful discussions about mental wellness
- Increase confidence and skills to help those dealing with mental wellness concerns
- Decrease stigma about mental health and wellness
- Co-Facilitated Courses by Inuit Instructors who can speak to:
 - Unique communities with majority Inuit populations across Inuit Nunangat
 - Different community supports in each region
 - Inuit realities, culture and language can vary depending on community and region

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 ASIST/Uqaqatigiiluk 11.1 Training for Trainers in January, 2020. A total of 9 individuals successfully completed the training, 1 new trainer is fully bilingual Inuktitut/English. On March 31st, 2019, we had 16 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.

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. It also funds interpretation and refreshments at our Healing Support Groups in Iqaluit and in communities we visited (Arctic Bay, Sanikiluaq in 2019). In 2019 ELC funded as well the wages of a youth counsellor at the Youth Center in Iqaluit for a few months.

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 18 trainings in 9 communities. Communities included:

- Cambridge Bay
- Kugaaruk

- Kugluktuk
- Pond Inlet
- Iqaluit
- Gjoa Haven
- Resolute Bay
- Igloolik
- Taloyoak

This year, we hosted the following workshops:

Our Children, Our Responsibility

Community/Dates	#Participants
Iqaluit (T4T) <i>June 18-19</i>	15
Cambridge Bay <i>September 18 2019</i>	7
Cambridge Bay <i>September 19 2019</i>	7
Iqaluit <i>September 27 2019</i>	Approx. 70 (Nunavut Principals conference)
Iqaluit <i>October 20 2019</i>	Approx. 80 (Nunavut Teachers conference)
Iqaluit <i>October 23 2019</i>	25 (Nunavut School Community Counsellors conference)
Arctic Bay <i>November 15 2019</i>	9
Kugaaruk <i>January 21 2020</i>	28
Cambridge Bay <i>February 19 2020</i>	6

Rankin Inlet <i>February 20 2020</i>	5
Total	252

Safe TALK

Community/Dates	# Participants	Examples of participants
Igloolik <i>April 16 2019</i>	12	High school students
Iqaluit <i>May 7 2019</i>	15	High school students
Iqaluit <i>May 9 2019</i>	21	QEC staff members
Cambridge Bay <i>May 9 2019</i>	13	Community members
Pond Inlet <i>October 2 2019</i>	10	High school students
Pond Inlet <i>October 3 2019</i>	11	High school students
Cambridge Bay <i>November 21 2019</i>	16	High school students
Kugaaruk <i>January 21 2020</i>	27	Educators
Kugaaruk <i>January 22 2020</i>	7	Community members
Total	132	

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training

Community/Dates	# Participants - completed	Examples of participants
Kugaaruk <i>April 11-12 2019</i>	11	Student (NTEP), women's shelter manager
Pangnirtung <i>April 17-18 2019</i>	11	Educator, counselor
Pond Inlet <i>April 24-25 2019</i>	11	Educator, nurse, corrections officer, volunteer
Arctic Bay <i>October 23-24 2019</i>	6	Nurse, counselor, social worker, volunteer
Iqaluit <i>October 28-29 2019</i>	11	Youth outreach worker, non-profit worker, CIRNAC

Iqaluit <i>October 31-November 1 2019</i>	12	Direct care worker, non-profit project manager, researcher, educator
Clyde River <i>November 5 -6 2019</i>	16	Educator, interpreter, elder, CHR, nurse, counselor
Iqaluit <i>November 25-26 2019</i>	10	Case manager, adjudicator, claims officer, social worker
Cambridge Bay <i>February 4-5 2020</i>	10	Student, administrator, career development worker
Whale Cove <i>February 10-11 2020</i>	17	Educator, administrator, school secretary
Arctic Bay <i>February 18-19 2020</i>	11	Educator, hunter, CHR, dental therapist, nurse, student
Cambridge Bay <i>February 19-20 2020</i>	22	Mental health outreach worker, shelter worker, educator
Iqaluit <i>March 24-25 2020</i>		
Total	148	

Public Education Project

This year we updated multiple print resources, including brochures, community resource cards and the ***Help for Families After a Suicide*** toolkit.

We have launched end of March. 2019, ***Our Children, Our Responsibility***, a Nunavut-specific child sexual abuse prevention training resource. After delivering several workshops this year, we have updated the participant and trainer manuals and created the Inuktitut versions of all the resources.

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. In December 2019, the Territorial Intervention Coordinator participated to a two-day meeting in Kuujjuaq. This meeting had two objectives: go over the full presentation with the team members in order to make the proper changes and, identify the tools that will be developed for this half day program. ELC will lead 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.

Other 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 Inuuusivut Anninaqtuq by the Government of Nunavut, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, Embrace Life Council and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.
- 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 create and deliver Recreation Leader Training through a trauma-informed lens with a focus on suicide prevention, harm reduction, means restriction, and informed risk-management;
- 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

Financial Reporting

See audited financial statement. Our core funding is provided by both the Nunavut Territorial Government via the Department of Health, and the Federal Government via Health Canada.

Contact

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