

Annual Report 2021-2022

Isaksimagit Inuusirmi Katujjiqatigiit Embrace Life Council

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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)
- Pauline Melanson (Royal Canadian Mounted Police)
- Marie Michael, Director (Qikiqtani Inuit Association)
- Victoria Madsen, Director (Government of Nunavut)
- Qovik Netser, Director (Kivalliq Inuit Association)
- Vacant, Director (Kitikmeot Inuit Association)
- Mary Kanayok Voisey, Director (Elder)
- Joanasie Akumalik, Director (Survivor Member)
- Jared Osborne, Director (Faith Community)
- Penelope Armstrong, 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

President's Report:

As we see, another year has come and gone – another year of transformation. Starting into the new year, it felt like a continuation of 2020-2021. Although, our mandates, strengths, and concerted efforts in helping to address the high rates of suicide in Nunavut will never waver for IIKELC staff and Board of Directors.

As we return to a semblance of normalcy, Inuit values that have stood out in IIKELC's work over these past years are – Qanuqtuurniq (being innovative and resourceful) Piliriatigiinniq (working together for a common cause) and, Pijisirniq (serving and providing for family and/or community).

Suicide remains a significant issue across our territory and has touched every person in Nunavut. In 2021, youth in Iqaluit and Rankin Inlet took to the streets in peaceful protests to call for more suicide prevention for Nunavummiut. Suicide prevention is collaborative work, and because we know prevention works, IIKELC's continues its ongoing efforts in raising awareness of evidence-based informed strategies and programs to address suicide prevention across Nunavut.

I express my immense gratitude to all Nunavummiut, our partners, funders and donors for their valuable insights, information, and support to our continued efforts towards suicide prevention.

Finally, to the staff, volunteers, and board members, thank you for your ongoing commitments and dedication to the Embrace Life Council. Your persistent optimism and dedication make a significant difference to well-being of Nunavummiut.

Matna, Qujannamiik, Koana,



Kylie Aglukark

Executive Director's Report:

This year was a special year for me! I celebrated 10 years with IIKELC in January 2022. I'm happy with what I have accomplished, my co-workers are my friends and this organization is more than a place to work. I'm so grateful for all of the support that I received from my colleagues, previous Directors and the Board of Directors over the last 10 years. It's been a wonderful journey and I would not be where I am at today without any of the IIKELC team members!

ELC has had another accomplished year with the development of numerous new resources and the delivery of many projects. It was so nice to return to normal activities after the covid-19 pandemic. We were able to deliver some of our workshops again in the communities when it was possible.

One of the priorities this year was to share our new resources and increase our communication/visibility with the communities. We identified two projects to increase our communication: the development of a new website and a social media contest. We launched our new website in November 2021, community members and partners can now download all of our resources from our new website. Our Bi-weekly Nuglagusuaq contest started in April 2021, it was offered on Facebook and Instagram until March 2022.

This report highlights all activities/programs and trainings that we have offered to Nunavut communities during the 2021-22 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 and Mental Health, Bell Canada, Northwestel, Pauktuutit, Kitikmeot Friendship Society, the Hamlet of Cambridge Bay, Pulaarvik Kablu Friendship Centre, Ilisaqsivik, Le Grand Elan, Atiigo Media, Nick Blachford, Mark Aspland, Livingworks, Julia's translations, Nunavut Arctic College, CESO, Arctic Children and Youth Foundation, Nunavut Marketing and many, many more.

In closing, I'd like to acknowledge the amazing work that the IIKELC team has done during this fiscal year. We are still working on a couple of big projects that started in 2021 and I'm so looking forward to sharing them with you in a few months.

Qujannamiik, Thank you, merci.



Cecile Guerin

Our Staff

Iqaluit office

- Cecile Guerin, Executive Director
- Elisapee Johnston, Support Coordinator (started this position in September 2021)
- Nastassja Fraser, Qikiqtani Regional Coordinator, Training and Program Development (started in November 2021)
- Tooma Laisa, Iqaluit Program Coordinator and Communications lead
- Kara Ashley, Qikiqtani Program Coordinator (started in January 2022)

Rankin Inlet office

- Sherry Morey, Program Coordinator, Kivalliq (May 2021-October 2021)
- Art Sateana, Kivalliq Regional Coordinator, Training and Program Development (started in January 2022)

Cambridge Bay office

- Julia Ogina, Program Coordinator, Kitikmeot (started in September 2021)



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 helps 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 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 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 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.

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 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 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.

Talking to Children about Suicide was developed in response to a number of requests from community members who wanted to know how best to support children who have experienced a death by suicide in their family, friend group or wider social circle.

Talking to Children about Suicide is a half-day workshop that aims to provide community members with information about:

- How to approach the topic of suicide with children
- How children may respond to a death by suicide,
- How to discuss the death in an age-appropriate way and,
- The importance of self-care when dealing with this difficult subject



This year, we hosted the following workshops:

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training

Community/Dates	# Participants	Examples of participants
Iqaluit	8	women's shelter staff, community members, GN employees
Kugluktuk	6	Women's shelter staff
Cambridge Bay	19	KFS, shelter staff
Rankin Inlet	19	Pulaarvik staff, community members
Total	52	

Youth Self Injury

Community/Dates	# Participants	Examples of participants
Kinngait	31	School staff
Total	31	

Our Children, Our Responsibility

Community/Dates	#Participants	Examples of participants
Rankin Inlet	34	School staff
Taloyoak	34	School staff
Gjoa Haven	21	School staff
Kugaaruk	31	School staff
Cambridge Bay	18	School staff
Whale Cove	19	School staff
Igloolik	56	School staff
Baker Lake	56	School staff
Panniqtuuq	43	School staff
Naujaat	48	School staff
Iqaluit	26	School staff, community members
Cambridge Bay	9	School staff
Total	340	

Baby-sitting course

Community/Dates	# Participants	Examples of participants
Iqaluit	43	Youth aged 11-14
Total	43	

Reach OUT

Community/Dates	# Participants	Examples of participants
Kinngait	32	School staff
Kugluktuk	10	Community members
Iqaluit	11	High school students
Total	53	

Trauma Informed Practice

Community/Dates	# Participants	Examples of participants
Iqaluit	20	Akausisarvik, Uquutaq, IIKELC staff and Kamatsiaqtut volunteers
Kugluktuk	7	Shelter's staff
Kinngait	33	School staff
Total	60	

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. We funded 18 trainings in 7 communities. Communities included:

- Cambridge Bay (13 participants)
- Iqaluit (34 participants)
- Sanirajak (36 participants)
- Chesterfield Inlet (12 participants)

- Taloyoak (13 participants)
- Gjoa Haven (22 participants)
- Kinngait (24 participants)

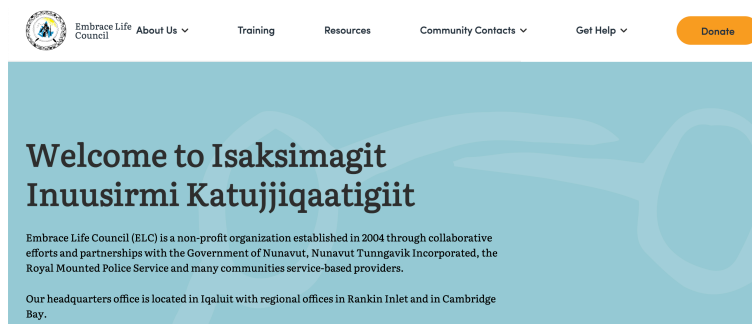
Public Education Projects

This year we completed multiple print resources under different topics:

- Healthy relationships posters (updated 2021)
- IIKELC + Kamatsiaqtut Helpline posters
- Online safety for kids (up to 9 years)
- Online safety for Tweens and Teens (10-17 years)



The new **Inuusiq website** was launched in November 2021. The new website includes a list of all workshops/training that are available, community contacts per region and all of our resources for downloading (pamphlets, posters, discussion guide...).



IIKELC launched the bi-weekly “Nuglugasuaq” contest in April 2021. This contest was offered on a bi-weekly basis with a different theme for each contest. The goal of this contest was to increase the communication with the communities, encourage wellness activities and promote the IIKELC resources. We received in total 662 submissions for the 24 small contests that we organized. 95 people won a prize to attend this contest. Iqaluit and Rankin Inlet were the two communities that had most often participants.



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;
 - Distributed educational pamphlets on healthy relationships and harm reduction;
 - Increased translation of materials (Inuktitut, Inuinnaqtun and French) for distribution 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 IIKELC 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, Isaksimagit Inuusirmi Katujjiqatigiit 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 IIKELC, 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 IIKELC;
- Participate as an active member in the Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy Implementation Committee; the Firearm Safety committee, the Katinnganiq Makerspace Network and the Nunavut Association for Non-Profit Organizations
- Contribute to research initiatives within the territory including ISPARX;
- Celebrate and administer our annual *Hope and Healing Art Contest*. For the 2021 annual contest, we developed postcards and greeting cards with the art from the winners. A package of all cards was sent to each community.



InuusiQ Pimmariujuq - Community support

Our IP funding supports community programs at the IIKELC offices (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.

- Embrace Life Day events in Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet and Cambridge Bay
- During the covid 19 pandemic IIKELC distributed Beading kits to 50 people in Iqaluit, 20 in Cambridge Bay and 15 in Taloyoak. Women and girls could do this project while they were in isolation.
- Tea and Bannock (June 21 and September 7), around 120 people attended on both days
- Fur scraps (leftover from programs), 30 people came to the event

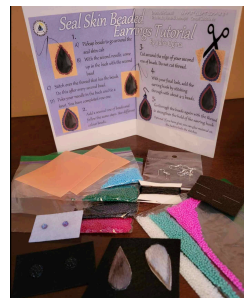
- Orange sweater for the National Day of Truth and reconciliation (60 sweaters were distributed)
- Self-care & creative alternatives, February 2022 (15 participants aged 11-14)
- Natural Highs program at Qimaavik, February and March 2022
- In partnership with KFS, we offered programs at the Girls club (over 50 participants)



Building capacity programs

IIKELC hired local instructors/carpenters to teach community members different skills:

- Distributed 17 sliding sleds for youth boys in Cambridge Bay
- Distributed 20 winter parkas for boys from the Boys club in Cambridge Bay
- Offered sealskin mitts making program for youth and women in Iqaluit from October 2020 to April 2021 (35 participants)
- Hat making program for adults offered in Iqaluit during fall and winter (21 participants) and for youth offered in November-December 2021 (12 participants)
- Youth Jewelry program in Iqaluit in February 2022 (9 participants)
- Athletic tapping for adults in Iqaluit (10 participants)
- Intro to sewing program for youth, winter 2022, Iqaluit (16 participants)
- Kids Parka drive in Rankin Inlet. Community members learned how to sew and made 15 kids parkas. All donated to the Department of Family Services for kids in need.
- Wall hanging program offered to 9 participants in Rankin Inlet
- Empowering women through sewing program in Cambridge Bay (8 participants)



Financial Reporting

See audited financial statement. Our core funding (operations and salaries) is provided by both the Nunavut Territorial Government via the Department of Health and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated via the Department of Social and Cultural Development.

Contact

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President

Embrace Life Council

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All things are connected through Mental Health
Nikita Emma Hainnu, 17, Iqaluit

My digital art work is trying to make a statement about how all things are connected to our mental health. I chose the black to represent the darkness of some mental health issues that many people suffer from. I chose bright glowing colors to represent hope. The different colors represent different things like love, hope, happiness, peace and wellness. Good mental health is for everybody!

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NUNAVUT TERRITORIAL GOVERNMENT
EMBRACE LIFE COUNCIL
COUNCIL SAKSIS LA VIE

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