



**ReAct**

Respect in Action



A METRAC  
Program

# journey to healing

for youth by youth



## Land Acknowledgement

This youth educational resource was developed in Toronto (as in the Haudenosaunee word, “Tkaronto”) which is still home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island. We pay our respect to the Elders and Ancestors of this land, and those who may be here physically and spiritually.

For thousands of years, this land has been the traditional territory of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, Haudenosaunee, and most recently, the territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit River. The territory was the subject of the Dish with One Spoon, Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Anishinaabeg, Haudenosaunee and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. This territory is also covered by Upper Canada Treaties.

METRAC’s Board of Directors and staff are committed to upholding the spirit and intent of the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s recommendations, and call to action. To this end, at the beginning of all METRAC meetings, we make a statement through which we hope to raise awareness, understanding and respect for the traditional indigenous territories of Ontario.

We recognize the traditional Indigenous territories on which our organization is located, and on which our programs and trainings take place.

We recognize the failure of settlers to uphold Indigenous sovereignty of this land, and we commit to decolonize our organization and bring this history to light.

We are grateful to have the opportunity to live and work on this land.

We wish to express gratitude to Mother Earth and for the resources we are using, and honour all the First Nation, Metis and Inuit people who have been living on this land.

## About This Acknowledgement

*We are aware that our settler acknowledgement uses language which may differ from language used by First Nations, Metis and Inuit people. We understand that language is fluid and living and we respect this diversity. We are also aware that not all First Nations people refer to themselves in the same way. Some may refer to themselves in spiritual or religious contexts, while some use regional names.*

# journey to healing

for youth by youth

Introduction.....	2
What is Respect in Action?.....	2
What's in this zine?.....	3
Facts About Violence.....	4
What is Violence?.....	5
Dealing with Violence.....	6
Knowing Your Rights?.....	7
Safety.....	8
Boundaries.....	8
Creating Your Own Safety Plan.....	9
Support.....	11
Getting Support.....	11
How to Support Yourself.....	13
Giving Support.....	14
Youth Supporting Youth.....	15
Community Supports: How and Why to Access Them.....	16
What is Trauma?.....	17
Understanding and Practicing Self-Care.....	18
Ways to Care for Yourself.....	19
Loving Yourself.....	21
Community Resources and Support.....	22

# Introduction

## What is Respect in Action?

**ReAct stands for Respect in Action**, a youth education program led by youth in Toronto. We work with high school and middle school students and other youth, to build their knowledge and leadership in ending violence towards women and youth. ReAct is a program of METRAC: Action on Violence, a not-for-profit organization with a goal to prevent gender based violence in Ontario.

Through discussions, art and media activities with youth, we address bullying, gender roles, dating violence, sexual violence, community safety, relationships and self-care with youth. We name the violence youth often face, why it happens and what we can do about it. ReAct is a program of the **Metropolitan Action Committee on Violence Against Women and Children (METRAC)**, a community-based, not-for-profit organization that works to prevent violence against women and youth.

The constant blaming, shaming and labelling of youth as troublemakers, unmotivated, senseless results in youth feeling stigmatized when accessing the supports they need to survive and thrive. We understand that blaming young people for the violence they experience only further isolates them from their peers and community which can have long lasting effects on their self-esteem, mental, physical and emotional well being.

Youth are at huge risk of violence, especially young women and youth who are of colour; those who identify as Black, Indigenous, Muslim, Newcomer, Living with disabilities, Youth experiencing homelessness and poverty, Poor, Working Class, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, Non-Binary and Two-spirit youth.

Youth are not usually given the spaces they need where healing could happen. There needs to be brave spaces where youth can heal. It is not enough to simply cope with the violence you experience, it is necessary that you heal from it.



*"The messages we receive are that our lives don't matter, that we don't deserve love, or even to exist." By loving and caring for ourselves we are fighting the system; "to choose instead to value ourselves, our health, and the health of our communities – all as one, not at odds with each other – is radical, it's self-determination."*

- Adrienne Marie Brown

## What's in this zine?

This zine begins with the facts about how youth experience violence; it explains what violence is, and how it hurts youth in visible and non visible ways.

This zine contains the ideas, experiences and hopes of healing from the voices of almost 100 young people across Toronto. Inside this zine, you will find tools, practices and resources from other youth on how they heal, how they thrive, and how they keep going in a society where violence is everywhere. We hope this zine will help to further conversations with yourself, and with friends, on how to take steps in your own healing, as well as how to support the healing of others. We offer these resources as options that you may choose from to add to your own self-care tool kit. There are many roads to healing, so we don't claim to have all the answers. We appreciate that every situation is different. Take what you need and leave what you don't.

Throughout this zine there are messages of empowerment for youth by youth to support yourselves and to build communities of care in which you and your peers feel safe, respected and included.

**Content Warning:** This zine contains information about violence that can be upsetting to the reader. It's okay to take a break; to come back to the zine when you feel ready; and/or to stop reading altogether. **If you need support, please turn to pages 22-29 for information on community resources that can help.**

This zine is designed so that you can pick and choose what speaks to you.

## Facts About Violence



The rates of violent crime against women aged 15-24 are 42% higher than rates for women aged 25-34, and nearly double the rates of women aged 35-44



27% of Canadian high school, college and university students with a disability report being bullied because of their disability



64% of students reported feeling unsafe in school



Every day, someone under the age of 25 is shot by a gun in Ontario



78% of Trans students indicated feeling unsafe in some way at school



1 in 5 internet users aged 15-29 reported having been cyberbullied or cyberstalked

We know that violence can impact youth in different ways. We also know our healing journeys are unique, complex and of our own to decide on what that looks, sounds, feels like.

# What is Violence?

Often, the most talked about form of violence is physical violence. We know violence can present in many forms and looks different for each person.

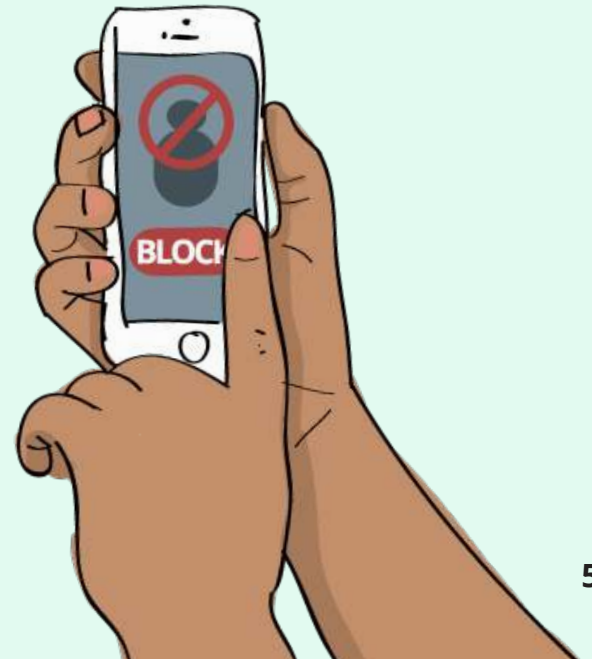


Young people don't talk about violence in these ways, sometimes they define violence they experience or witness as pain, fear, intimidation, control, slut-shaming, insecurity, discomfort, numbness, not being able to afford transportation and/or scared of going to a neighbourhood because of a turf war.

Everyday discrimination in the form of Racism, Sexism, Islamophobia, Homophobia, Transphobia, Anti-Indigeneity, Classism and all the other 'isms' can be hurtful and create so much stress in a young person's life.

Violence is never okay and its important that we take care of ourselves when we experience it.

There is no "right" way to dealing with a violent situation.





## Dealing with Violence

First, figure out what your goal is. What do you think will make you feel better? Do you want to deal with it on your own or talk to someone? Do you want to press charges or find another way to hold the person who is/was violent towards you responsible?

When you think about the question, "How do I heal from this?", what does the answer look like?

Write what you want and where you want to be when you get through this:

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# Knowing Your Rights

Knowing your rights can help you stand up for them. We're not talking about your legal rights, like your right to have a lawyer. Of course, legal rights are important! But we're talking about your rights as a survivor of violence.

You have the right to:

- be angry about what you have experienced;
- be listened to and believed;
- change your mind about what you want to do after you have gone through violence;
- talk about the violence with whomever you choose - you don't have to tell everyone who asks;
- be loved and love yourself;
- feel safe;
- make your own decisions about how to deal with your situation.

Sometimes our rights aren't respected.  
We don't always get the support we should.  
But knowing our rights can help  
us find the support we need.

**To learn more about your legal rights, check out the community resources section under "Legal Help and Information" on page 27.**



# Safety

## Boundaries

*"Setting healthy boundaries is the core of true self-love. You have to make space for yourself to feel without the influence of anyone or anything. Making the decision to set boundaries gives you creative control over your life."*

-Lyneisha Watson

Boundaries are rules or limits that a person creates for themselves. Boundaries are reasonable and safe ways for other people to behave around you and a guide to how you should behave around others. Take a moment to reflect on the current boundaries you have presently with your family and friends and write them down.

Name below your current boundaries:

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## What is a boundary?

A boundary is a limit you can set on what you will accept from someone whether that's words or actions.

### Boundaries can be:

#### Physical Boundaries

e.g. personal space, sexual boundaries, looking through someone's phone, email, social media, texts

#### Emotional Boundaries

e.g. your beliefs, behaviours, choices, sense of responsibility

#### Financial Boundaries

e.g. borrowing/loaning money, buying gifts, going out for dinners

#### Social Boundaries

e.g. going to see friends, family

### Setting healthy boundaries can help you:

- Practice self-care
- Communicate your needs in a relationship (family, friends, dating, etc.)
- Make time and space for positive communications
- To set limits in a relationship in a way that is healthy

## Creating Your Own Safety Plan

A safety plan is a practical guide that helps you lower your risk of being hurt by someone who is violent towards you. It includes information specific to you and your life that will help keep you safe. Youth deserve safe, healthy and supportive relationships.

If you are in a relationship that is hurting you, it is important for you to know that the abuse is not your fault. It is also important for you to start thinking of ways to keep yourself safe from the abuse, whether you decided to end the relationship or not. While you can't control an abuser's behaviour, you can take action to keep yourself as safe as possible.

If you decide not to get support right now, here are some tips and ideas for staying safe if the violence continues or gets worse:

1. Using a "risk scale" of 1 to 10 (1=low risk, 10=high risk), decide what makes you feel more or less at risk of experiencing violence and what you'll do if it happens (e.g. 6=scared someone might beat me up so I'll ask friends to walk me home, 9=thinking about suicide so I'll call a crisis line or go to the hospital).

Promise yourself that you'll do these things to keep yourself safe. Look into some groups you could call when you're ready. Keep their contact information somewhere safe.

Turn to the resources section at the back of this zine to find different places you can contact.

What makes me feel unsafe:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

What I'll do to keep myself safe if this happens:

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# Creating Your Own Safety Plan (continued)

What makes me feel at risk:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

What I'll do to keep myself safe if this happens:

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What makes me feel at risk:

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

What I'll do to keep myself safe if this happens:

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- 2. Look into some groups you could call when you're ready. Keep their contact information somewhere safe. Turn to the resources section at the back of this zine to find different places you can contact.
- 3. Have an emergency contact number (e.g. a number for a friend or help line) programmed in your phone or written in something you always have with you.
- 4. Pack a bag with things you might need if you ever have to leave home or the place where you live quickly (e.g. clothes, keys, medication, bus fare).
- 5. If possible, put aside a bit of cash too.
- 6. Make copies of important documents (eg. birth certificate, ID, health card, passport, SIN card) ). Give them to someone you trust to hold onto.
- 7. Consider telling a trusted friend or family member who they should contact if they don't hear from you in a while. This may be important if you are at risk of experiencing violence and isolation at home.
- 8. Listen to your instincts: your gut feelings, doubts, anxieties and fears. Take them seriously and put your safety first.



# Support

*"I am mine before I am ever anyone else's"*  
- Nayyirah Waheed

## Getting support

Before you can support someone else, it's important to check-in with yourself to ensure you are safe and able to give support. **We will be providing tips on how to give support on page 13.**

Getting support for yourself can look like many things such as talking to someone, going to a community space where you feel safe, surrounding yourself with trusted people etc.

*If you decide you want to talk to someone to get support,  
there are still a few more things to think about!*

• I want to talk to someone I *know* / *don't know* (circle one) who will: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(e.g. listen to me/give me advice/understand what I've been through)

• I want to talk to someone *within* / *outside* of (circle one) of my community.

My community is: \_\_\_\_\_

I want the person I talk with to be: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(e.g. the same age, gender or faith, older, a professional, a friend)

• I want to talk to someone I trust, and to me trust means: \_\_\_\_\_

• I want to understand more about why this happened to me and similar things other people have gone through. To do that, I want to learn about: \_\_\_\_\_

•I want to talk to someone who can give me advice about: \_\_\_\_\_

•In order to be safe, I need to: \_\_\_\_\_

*(e.g. find a new place to stay, make a safety plan, change schools, tell someone)*

•I **do** / **I don't** (choose one) want to hold the person who hurt me accountable. To do this, I want them to:

*(e.g. not be in any spaces where I am, apologize, take an anger management class)*

•I want people to help me hold the person who hurt me accountable by: \_\_\_\_\_



## How to Support Yourself

Often, youth voices are ignored. This usually happens in situations with people who have power or are in positions of power. Self-advocacy can be used as a tool to support yourself when you are feeling unsafe, without the issue escalating.

Asserting yourself allows you to act in ways that line up with your best interests and well-being. When a young person wants to practice self-care, there can be barriers or challenges that prevent the young person from taking care of themselves. It's important that you learn skills that will support you in asserting yourself. Asserting yourself means asking for what you deserve even when people don't understand or what you want is different from what other people want from you.

Here is an example on "How to Assert Yourself":

Your best friend Taylor, is asking you for money for the 3rd time this month. They have been pressuring you continuously to give them money, but you can't this time. What Taylor doesn't know is that this is causing you financial burden and STRESS!

### How to Assert Yourself

**Describe the situation:** "Taylor you're asking me for money again."

**Express your emotion:** "That makes me feel stressed and worried."

**Ask for what you need:** "I want you to stop putting pressure on me to give you cash"

**Reinforce what you need:** "I want us to enjoy the time we spend together, and for it to not be about money."

**Be Mindful:** "I can tell that you're upset but once again, I don't have the money to loan you."

**Appear Confident:** Body language is most important here. It might help if you practice this in the mirror, with a trusted friend, or record yourself.

**Negotiate:** It's up to you to figure out where there are areas for compromises.

This technique is unique to each young person. It is an opportunity for you to reflect on what you value and what is important.



# Giving Support

*"Affirming each other even in the most oppressive spaces and caring for each other is self-care as is the work of building relationship and support."*

- El Jones

You can support a person to make their own choices about what they want and need to feel safe and healthy. This is done by understanding that they know best what is right for them and letting them make their own decisions about how they choose to heal.

It's important that we know what to do and say when our friends come to us!

## What do other youth say was helpful from their friends?

- **"Take the situation seriously."** Even if the situation doesn't seem serious to you, it's serious to them.
- **"Offer to spend time with them so they don't feel alone."** Being around others can help someone give their mind a break and make them feel less isolated.
- **"Encourage them to talk to other people as well as to you."** Offer to go along with them to talk with a trusted adult or community support service. This is especially important if you don't know how to support someone.
- **"Let them know you care."** They may try to brush you off. Stay in touch. Reach out. Let them know they don't have to pretend to be happy, they can just be.

## What did they say wasn't so helpful?

- **"They had never been in the situation"**
- **"They didn't really want to do much"**
- **"They judged me for being in a bad relationship"**
- **"Didn't really understand what I'd been through"**
- **"Said the same things that everyone always says"**

# Youth Supporting Youth

## Remember CLUES - Five Action Steps to Support a Friend:

**Connect:** Reach out to your friend and talk with them. You don't need to be in the same place to support a friend, try calling or texting your friends.

**Listen:** Make the effort to listen attentively. It's okay, you don't need to have all the answers. Just listening to your friend can be a way to support.

**Understand:** Let your friend know that you take what they are telling you seriously and that you hear them.

**Express Concern:** Say you care, you believe them, and that you want to offer them help in the ways that you can.

**Seek Help:** Going to an older trusted adult with experience and the ability to help can mean your friend has a larger circle of support around them to heal.

*"They want us to think that youth are better at breaking each other down than building each other up. BUT the truth is now we live in a world where youth empowerment is finally being recognized globally. It is because of the hard work and dedication that youth have done to support one another we are seeing so much success.*

*When youth come together to support each other, the outcomes are so much more powerful! Because we are powerful, we create community spaces, resilient relationships and keep each other safe; all while being daughters, sons, students, sisters, brothers, bosses, athletes and maybe mothers and fathers too.*

*Are you looking for a way to empower yourself and other young people around you? Just let go of that jealousy, stretch yourself beyond your clique of friends, and reach out to another young person who may be dealing with something very similar to you."*

-Quote from Youth Advisory  
Members Sakinah and Brittney



# Community Supports: How and Why to Access Them

Survivors of violence often report feeling isolated after a traumatic experience. It can be hard to find support or know where to go and sometimes our support networks, the people we rely on for support don't know what to do either. It can feel overwhelming but having even one more source of support can make the journey towards healing that bit easier.

Having community supports and expanding our support network can be make a huge difference when healing and caring for yourself after a violent experience. Sometimes our friends and loved ones who understood and empathize with us only know how to support us in ways they know. When you find yourself in need of support, it can be helpful and relieving to know where to go and how to access them.

Being able to go to a space that can provide support with housing, finding a lawyer, medical and counselling services, education can also help with providing you with more options on what steps you would like to take on your journey towards healing.

Here are some tips on how and why to access a community support or resource:

- 1. Call Ahead** - Sometimes calling ahead allows you to get a sense if it's a right fit for you in terms of the support you are looking for. It's also a chance for you to ask questions.
- 2. Bring Someone** - You Trust and Feel Safe With- After you've chosen to go to a community support, it can help having someone there with you so you feel more comfortable in the space.
- 3. Connections To Other Supports** - Community centres are a great place to find other services you are looking for. Sometimes a community centre can provide other useful programs or services for youth. Check out the community resource section to find out more.

# What is Trauma?

Trauma is when you experience or witness physical, emotional or mental harm. The violence youth experience can result in a young person feeling hurt, isolated, silenced, shamed, overwhelmed and scared. It is important that youth understand how trauma works so they can integrate practices that support their resilience, transformation and healing.

Trauma can have effects on the body and mind such as:

## Body

- Sleep problems, including nightmares
- Physical tiredness
- Body memories and flashbacks  
(a feeling of reliving the traumatic experience)
- Headaches, nausea
- Muscle tension in the neck and shoulders

## Mind

- Not knowing how to trust
- Having difficult being close to people
- Having problems in dating and sexual relations
- Being afraid of others
- Being isolated and withdrawn
- Not knowing how to give and take in relationships



# Understanding and Practicing Self-Care

*“Document the moments you feel most in love with yourself -  
what you’re wearing, who you’re around, what you’re doing.  
Recreate and repeat.”*

-Warsan Shire

When you feel like you are in crisis mode, moments of grief, before and after trauma, it’s important to remember we need each other to survive and thrive.

It’s important that we remind ourselves and each other of our worth, our humanity and that we are never disposable.

During these situations of grief and trauma, it is a radical act of self love and care to name our needs and to ask for support when we need it.

Self-care is about taking steps to feel healthy, safe and loved before, during and after trauma.

Whether it happened recently or years ago, self-care can help you cope with the short and long-term effects of a trauma like bullying, physical violence, etc.

Sometimes we need help in integrating self-care into our day-to-day life.

Examine your schedule and daily activities. See where you can add in some self-care routines. Commit to taking some time each day for yourself, even if it’s 5 minutes.

This is an example of a daily schedule that you can use in your notebook, on a piece of paper or in your journal.

Daily Schedule

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Morning							
Afternoon							
Night							

Self-care is not always easy to do on your own, sometimes it means practicing self-care with the support of others. Check out “Getting Support” on page 11.

# Ways to Care for Yourself

## MENTAL

### No Cost:

- Take deep breaths
- Snuggle under a cozy blanket
- Take a hot shower or a warm bath
- Cuddle with a pet
- Take a walk in your local park
- Listen to music
- Garden

### Low Cost to High Cost:

- Get a massage
- Burn a scented candle
- Go watch a movie
- Go out for dinner
- Make art, collage, draw, etc



## SENSORY

### No Cost:

- Clean your room
- Burn a scented candle
- Read
- Cook
- Meditate
- Crossword puzzles
- Do a word search
- Take a nap

### Low Cost to High Cost:

- Yoga
- Aromatherapy
- Counselling or Therapy



# Ways to Care for Yourself (continued)

## SPIRITUAL

- Attend Church, Mosque, Temple, Synagogue, etc
- Find a therapist, counselor or clergyperson you trust and make an appointment
- Read poetry or inspiring quotes
- Light a candle
- Write in a journal
- Pray
- List five things you're grateful for

## PHYSICAL

- Try yoga
- Go for a walk or a run
- Dance
- Stretch
- Go for a bike ride
- Avoid skipping sleep to get things done

## EMOTIONAL

- Accept your feelings. They're all ok. Really.
- Write your feelings down
- Cry when you need to
- Laugh when you can
- Attend Community or Local Youth Programs
- Dance
- Spend time with friends and/or family
- Call a close friend, and vent with no censoring
- Watch a super sad movie and cry your eyes out
- Reach out to those who make you smile

## SOCIAL

- Go on a lunch date with a good friend
- Calling a friend on the phone
- Participating in a book club
- Joining a support group

Self-care can also mean remembering that others go through similar experiences and difficulties as we do. We're not alone.





# Loving Yourself

Fill out the following sentences:

I like myself because...

I'm an expert at...

I feel good about...

My friends would tell you I have a great...

My favorite place is...

I'm loved by...

People say I am a good...

I've been told I have pretty...

What I enjoy most is...

The person I admire the most is...

I have a natural talent for...

Goals for my future are...

I know I will reach my goals because I am...

People compliment me about...

I feel good when I...

I've been successful at...

I laugh when I think about...

The traits I admire myself for are...

I feel peaceful when...



# Community Resources and Supports

Please note that most of the community resources and supports listed are located in the Greater Toronto Area.

## Key groups and Supports

**Central Toronto Youth Services:** Mental health clinic; programs and counselling for youth  
65 Wellesley Street East, Suite 300 | 416-924-2100 | [www.ctys.org/](http://www.ctys.org/)

**Justice for Children and Youth:** Legal representation for low income youth in conflict with legal, education, social service or mental health systems  
55 University Ave, 15th Floor | 1-866-999-5329 | <http://jfcy.org/en/>

**Planned Parenthood of Toronto:** General and sexual health services and information for youth  
36B Prince Arthur Avenue | 416-961-0113

**Kids Help Phone:** 24 hr service to support the well-being of young people  
416-595-9230 | [www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca)

**Supporting Our Youth (SOY):** For lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex, queer, questioning and two-spirit youth; safe spaces, mentorship, recreation, housing and employment  
333 Sherbourne Street | 416-324-5077 | [www.soytoronto.org](http://www.soytoronto.org)

**Toronto Rape Crisis Centre/Multicultural Women Against Rape:**  
Anonymous, confidential; counselling, support, education and activism for survivors of sexual violence  
416-597-8808 or 416-597-1214 (TTY) | [www.trccmwar.ca](http://www.trccmwar.ca)



## 24-hour contacts

If you are in an emergency or immediate danger,  
you can call 911 to reach police, ambulance and fire

**Assaulted Women's Helpline:** Anonymous, confidential crisis line for women being abused; 154 languages  
1-866-863-0511 or 1-866-863-7868 (TTY) | #SAFE (cell phone) | [www.awhl.org](http://www.awhl.org)

**211 Toronto:** Information about resources and services in your community; many languages  
211 | [www.211toronto.ca](http://www.211toronto.ca)

**Distress Centres of Toronto:** Confidential, anonymous phone support, crisis intervention and suicide prevention; 150 languages  
416-408-4357 or 416-408 0007 (TTY) | [www.torontodistresscentre.com](http://www.torontodistresscentre.com)

**Kids Help Phone:** Confidential, anonymous help and referrals  
1-800-668-6868 | [www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca)

**Trans Lifeline:** Dedicated to the well-being of Trans people  
1-877-330-6366 | [www.translifeline.org](http://www.translifeline.org)

**Teen Legal Helpline:** Free and confidential legal advice to Ontario teens 19 and younger  
147 Liberty St. Suite, 215 | [www.teenlegalhelpline.org](http://www.teenlegalhelpline.org)

## Youth Centres and Groups

**The Black Daddies Club:** Programs and groups for young black fathers  
[info@theblackdaddiesclub.com](mailto:info@theblackdaddiesclub.com) | [www.theblackdaddiesclub.com](http://www.theblackdaddiesclub.com)

**For Youth Initiative (FYI):** Support youth to graduate high school, enroll in post-secondary education, gain employment and prepare for adulthood  
1652 Keele St. | 416-653-3311 | [www.foryouth.ca](http://www.foryouth.ca)

**The Peer Project:** Mentorship program for youth by youth  
5734 Yonge Street, Suite 401 | 416-932-1919 | [www.thepeerproject.com](http://www.thepeerproject.com)

**JVS Toronto (Locations all over Toronto):** Employment support and programs for youth who have been or are at-risk of being imprisoned  
416-787-1151 ex. 1 | [www.jvstoronto.org](http://www.jvstoronto.org)

**Native Canadian Centre of Toronto:** Programs, events, support for Aboriginal youth  
16 Spadina Road | 416-964-9087 | <http://ncct.on.ca/>

## Youth Centres and Groups (continued)

**SKETCH (downtown):** Art programs for youth 15 -29 who are homeless, living in a shelter, at risk of losing housing and/or street-involved

416-516-1559 | 580 King Street West, 2nd Floor | [www.sketch.ca](http://www.sketch.ca)

**The Spot:** Drop-in centre for youth between 13 and 30

1 Yorkgate Blvd Suite #228 | 416-736-4413 | [www.thespotyouth.org](http://www.thespotyouth.org)

## Counselling, Support Groups, Help Lines

**Barbra Schlifer Clinic:** Legal, counselling, interpretation, advocacy and referrals for women survivors of violence  
416-323-9149 | 416-323-1361 (TTY) | [www.schliferclinic.com](http://www.schliferclinic.com)

**Black Youth Helpline:** Information, referrals and support for black youth; parenting support, support to stay in or return to school

416-285-9944 | [www.blackyouth.ca](http://www.blackyouth.ca)

**East Metro Youth Services (Scarborough):** Programs for youth and their families

1200 Markham Road, Suite 200 | 416-438-3697 | [www.emys.on.ca](http://www.emys.on.ca)

**Jessie Centre:** Health services, counselling, education, housing, prenatal classes, parenting groups and support for pregnant teenagers, teenage parents and their children

205 Parliament Street | 416-365-1888 | [www.jessiescentre.org](http://www.jessiescentre.org)

**MDAO Mood Disorders Association of Ontario:** Free support programs to people across Ontario, and their families, who are living with depression, anxiety or bipolar disorder.

36 Eglinton Ave. West, Suite 602 | 416-486-8046 | [www.mooddorders.ca](http://www.mooddorders.ca)

**Naseeha Muslim Youth Helpline:** For Muslim youth, with focus on issues in Muslim communities;

open 6 to 9 pm, Monday to Friday

1-866-Naseeha | [www.naseeha.org](http://www.naseeha.org)

**Skylark Youth:** Serving children, young people and their families struggling with complex mental health and developmental needs.

255-40 Orchard View Blvd. | 416 482 0081 | [www.skylarkyouth.org](http://www.skylarkyouth.org)

**Sheena's Place:** Programs for those with eating disorders

416-927-8900 | [www.sheenasplace.org](http://www.sheenasplace.org)

**YouthLink:** For young people, their families, and professionals working with them, who seek services for emotional, mental and intellectual wellbeing in Scarborough.

636 Kennedy Road | 416-967-1773 | [www.youthlink.ca](http://www.youthlink.ca)

# Mental health crisis lines and services

Mental health can be about depression, suicide, anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, feeling paranoid, etc.

**Breakaway Addiction Services:** For youth 13 to 25 and families with drug or alcohol addiction  
2 Billingham Road, 4th floor | 416-234-1942 | [www.breakawayaddictions.ca](http://www.breakawayaddictions.ca)

**Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH):** Programs and services for people affected by mental health and addiction  
(416) 535-8501 | [www.camh.ca](http://www.camh.ca)

**Distress Centre:** Our crisis and emotional distress services are available via hotline, online chat, and text  
[www.torontodistresscentre.com](http://www.torontodistresscentre.com) | 416-408-4357

**Gerstein Crisis Centre:** Emergency support for people over 16 in a mental health crisis; mobile response to homes and communities  
416-929-5200 | [www.gersteincentre.org](http://www.gersteincentre.org)

**Good2Talk:** Free, confidential helpline providing professional counselling and information and referrals for mental health, addictions and well-being to post-secondary students in Ontario.  
[www.good2talk.ca](http://www.good2talk.ca) | 1-866-925-5454

**Griffin Centre:** Mental health services and counselling to youth, adults and families; addresses things like family conflict, issues at school, addictions, sexual abuse and sexual orientation  
24 Silvertown Drive | 416-222-1153 | [www.griffin-centre.org](http://www.griffin-centre.org)

**Pieces to Pathways:** A Breakaway Addiction Services program for queers and trans youth  
2 Billingham Road, 4th floor | 416-234-1942 | [www.breakawayaddictions.ca](http://www.breakawayaddictions.ca)

**Stella's Place:** A place for young adults in Toronto, aged 16 to 29, who are experiencing mental health challenges and who want to learn about the best way to move forward and to get the support they need  
18 Camden St. (5 locations in TO) | 416-461-2345 | [www.stellasplace.ca](http://www.stellasplace.ca)

**St. Elizabeth Health Care:** For people over 16 in a mental health crisis; mobile response and emergency housing (Etobicoke and North York) | 416-498-0043 | [www.saintelizabeth.com](http://www.saintelizabeth.com)

**What's Up, Walk in Clinics:** Immediate mental health counselling for children, youth, young adults and their families, and families with infants  
65 Wellesley St. E, Suite 500 | 416-395-0660 | [www.whatsupwalkin.ca](http://www.whatsupwalkin.ca)

# Sexual Assault Services

**Scarborough Hospital Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Care Center:** 24-hour confidential medical treatment and emotional support for youth over 12 who have just experienced sexual assault; counselling for anyone sexually assaulted in the last 2 years  
3030 Birchmount Road | 416-495-2555 | [www.schcontario.ca](http://www.schcontario.ca)

**Toronto Rape Crisis Centre/Multicultural Women Against Rape:** Anonymous, confidential; counselling, support, education and activism for survivors of sexual violence  
416-597-8808 or 416-597-1214 (TTY) | [www.trccmwar.ca](http://www.trccmwar.ca)

**Women's College Hospital Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence Care Centre:** For anyone who experiences sexual assault and intimate partner abuse; medical and counselling services  
76 Grenville Street | 416-323-6040

**WomenatthecentreE / Women's Centre for Social Justice:** Created by survivors for survivors to empower women through self-advocacy  
18 Wynford Drive, Suite 714 | 416-323-6040

## Shelters and Housing

**City of Toronto Assessment and Referral Centre:** 24-hour phone line to help single adults, youth and couples find a shelter  
416-338-4766 or 1-877-338-3398

**Central Family Intake:** Phone line to help families who are homeless or at risk of losing their homes  
416-397-5637

**Eva's Initiatives:** Emergency and transitional housing and programs for youth  
401 Richmond St W, Suite 245 | 416-977-4497 | [www.evas.ca](http://www.evas.ca)

**Covenant House:** To protect and safeguard homeless and trafficked youth  
20 Gerrard Street East | 416-598-4898 | [www.covenanthousetoronto.ca](http://www.covenanthousetoronto.ca)

**Horizons for Youth:** Shelter for homeless and at-risk youth; life training skills, counselling and advocacy  
422 Gilbert Avenue | 416-781-9898 | [www.horizonsforyouth.org](http://www.horizonsforyouth.org)

**Tumivut Youth Shelter:** Shelter for homeless youth 16-24 with no outstanding warrants; programs have emphasis on Aboriginal cultures  
26 Vaughan Road | 416-651-6750

**YMCA Sprott House:** Shelter for LGBTQ2S youth between 16 and 24  
21 Walmer Rd | 416-438-8383

**Youth Without Shelter:** Shelter for youth 16 to 24; basic necessities, training and education  
6 Warrendale Court | 416-748-0110 ex. 24 | [www.yws.on.ca](http://www.yws.on.ca)

# Legal Help and Information

**Community Legal Education Ontario (CLEO):** Online legal information to help people understand and exercise rights  
416-408-4420 | [www.cleo.on.ca](http://www.cleo.on.ca)

**Family Law Education for Women:** Online family law information for women  
[www.onefamilylaw.ca](http://www.onefamilylaw.ca)

**Ontario Justice Education Network (OJEN):** Provide education to understand law  
180 Dundas St W, Suite 505 | 416 761 9963 | [www.ojen.ca](http://www.ojen.ca)

**Ontario Women's Justice Network:** Online information for women and youth on the law and violence against women  
[www.owjn.org](http://www.owjn.org)

**Justice for Children and Youth:** Legal representation for low income youth in conflict with legal, education, social service or mental health systems  
55 University Ave, 15th Floor | 1-866-999-5329 | [www.jfcy.org/en/](http://www.jfcy.org/en/)

## Legal Services

**Ontario Provincial Advocate for Children and Youth:** For youth in foster care, group homes and detention centres who have complaints about their care  
416-325-5669 | 1-800-263-2841 | [www.provincialadvocate.on.ca](http://www.provincialadvocate.on.ca)

**Legal Aid - Youth Justice:** Free legal advice. Criminal law services for those 17 and younger  
1-800-668-8258 | [www.legalaid.on.ca](http://www.legalaid.on.ca)

**Community and Legal Aid Service Programme (CLASP):** Legal questions and referrals; can take up to 5 days for an answer  
4700 Keele Street | 416-736-5029 | [www.osgoode.yorku.ca/clasp](http://www.osgoode.yorku.ca/clasp)

**ARCH Disability Law Centre:** Protects and advances rights for people with disabilities  
55 University Avenue | 1-866-482-2724 or 1-866-482-2728 (TTY) | [www.archdisabilitylaw.ca](http://www.archdisabilitylaw.ca)

**Human Rights Legal Support Centre:** For people on Ontario who experience discrimination  
1-866-625-5179 | [www.hrlsc.on.ca](http://www.hrlsc.on.ca)

**Lawyer Referral Service:** Lawyers who provide a free 30 minute consultation  
1-800-268-8326 | [www.lsuc.on.ca](http://www.lsuc.on.ca)



# LGBTTIQ2S Youth Services

For lesbian, gay, bi, trans, intersex, queer, questioning and two-spirited youth

**2 Spirited People of the First Nations:** Counselling, referrals, recreation, ceremonies, support and education  
593 Yonge Street, Suite 202 | 416-944-9300 | [www.2spirits.com](http://www.2spirits.com)

**519 Church Street Community Centre:** Youth programs include trans support, drop-ins and children's camps  
519 Church Street | 416-392-6874 | [www.the519.org](http://www.the519.org)

**Lesbian Gay Bi Trans Youth Line:** Confidential, by youth, for youth; support, information and referrals  
1-800-268-9688 | [askus@youthline.ca](mailto:askus@youthline.ca)

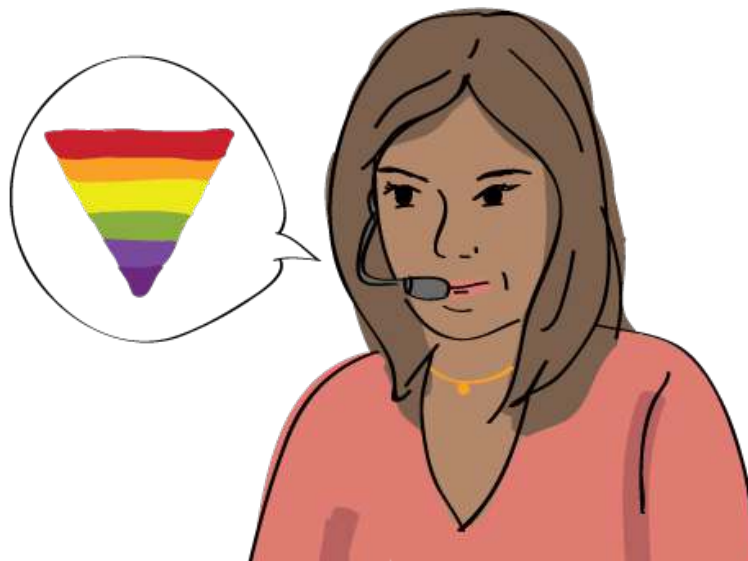
**YMCA Sprott House:** Shelter for LGBTQ2S youth between 16 and 24  
21 Walmer Rd | 647-438-8383

## Workplace Support

**Ontario Ministry of Labour Employment Practices Branch:** Enforces employment standards  
416-326-7160 | [www.labour.gov.on.ca](http://www.labour.gov.on.ca)

**Workers Action Centre:** Support to deal with a bad employer or get unpaid wages  
416-531-0778 | [www.workersactioncentre.org](http://www.workersactioncentre.org)

**Youth Employment Services (YES):** Locations across Toronto; training, education, help finding a job  
555 Richmond Street West, Suite 711 | 416-504-5516 | [www.yes.on.ca](http://www.yes.on.ca)



# Health Services

**Access Alliance:** For refugee and immigrant youth 13 to 24; primary healthcare, one-on-one counselling, peer mentorship, social and life skills, education, arts and recreation  
340 College St, Suite 500 | 416-324-8677 | [www.accessalliance.ca](http://www.accessalliance.ca)

**Hassle Free Clinic:** Free sexual health and counselling; drop-in for women/trans people and men/trans people  
66 Gerrard Street East | 416-922-0566 | [www.hasslefreeclinic.org](http://www.hasslefreeclinic.org)

**Sherbourne Health Centre:** Health care and programs for lesbian, gay, bi, trans, intersex, queer, questioning and two spirited communities and homeless communities  
333 Sherbourne Street | 416-324-4180 | [www.sherbourne.on.ca](http://www.sherbourne.on.ca)

**Shout Clinic:** Walk-in clinic for homeless and street-involved youth 16 to 24  
168 Bathurst Street | 416-703-8482 | [www.ctchc.com](http://www.ctchc.com)

**Telehealth Ontario:** Anonymous, confidential phone line for general health information  
1-866-797-0000 | 766-797-0007 (TTY) | [www.health.gov.on.ca](http://www.health.gov.on.ca)

**Women's Health in Women's Hands:** (health centre for women of colour 16 and older  
2 Carlton Street, Suite 500 | 416-593-7655 | 416- 593-5835 (TTY) | [www.whiwh.com](http://www.whiwh.com)

## Other websites and online resources

[www.aloebud.com](http://www.aloebud.com) (information on self-care)

[www.athinline.org](http://www.athinline.org) (anti-bullying campaign)

[www.betterworld.net](http://www.betterworld.net) (information about dating violence)

[www.courtprep.ca](http://www.courtprep.ca) (information about the court process)

[www.ihollaback.org](http://www.ihollaback.org) (information on about harassment prevention, intervention and support)

[www.selfcare.tech](http://www.selfcare.tech) (information on self-care)

# The End

# P.S. You are worth it!

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