



## Meet the latest recipients of the Bell Let's Talk Diversity Fund

\$1 million in grants to increase access to culturally informed mental health services in diverse communities

MONTRÉAL, January 20, 2021 – Bell Let's Talk today announced the next round of recipients of the new Bell Let's Talk Diversity Fund, with grants totalling \$1 million going to 8 organizations working to improve access to mental health care for members of Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) communities in Canada with culturally informed and evidence-based mental health and wellness programs.

“With mental health support needed now more than ever due to the twin crises of COVID-19 and systemic racism, Bell Let's Talk is pleased to empower the work of these outstanding organizations through our Diversity Fund,” said Mary Deacon, Chair of Bell Let's Talk. “Each of them is taking timely, innovative and culturally informed action to make a positive difference for the mental health of Canada's ethnically diverse communities.”

Established in July 2020, the [Bell Let's Talk Diversity Fund](#) provides grants of up to \$250,000 for organizations working to address the impact of systemic racism on the mental health of BIPOC communities. The fund launched with inaugural donations to [Black Youth Helpline](#) and the [National Association of Friendship Centres](#) and an invitation to groups across the country to submit expressions of interest to receive funding.

Working with mental health experts, persons with lived experience and community leaders from within BIPOC communities in every region, Bell Let's Talk has selected the following organizations to receive Diversity Fund grants:

- [African Community Wellness Initiative](#), Ontario  
“Recently there has been growing awareness of social disparities and gaps in services that affect African, Caribbean and Black-Identifying (ACBI) communities in Canada. Our Afrocentric Counselling Services project will help ACBI women and youth of Ontario communities benefit from psycho-educational and therapeutic group counselling services led by cultural Mental Wellness Practitioners,” said Fanis Juma, Founder and Lead Practitioner. “We are grateful to the Bell Let's Talk Diversity Fund for allowing us the opportunity to serve our community in such a meaningful and impactful way.”
- [Centre des jeunes l'Escale de Montréal-Nord](#), Québec  
“Our grant will help provide 75 young people in the Montréal-Nord community with more than 50 hours each of activities to develop resilience, leadership and tools to help them emotionally and also increase their chance of success,” said Sophie Laquerre-Duchesne, Director. “Bell Let's Talk is helping empower young people aged 15 to 25 by enabling us to offer psychosocial services and support.”
- [Hillside Elementary School at Kettle and Stony Point First Nation](#), Ontario  
“Our project, Land as Our First Teacher, will help support student success and mental health at Hillside Elementary. Through this project our elementary program will be enhanced to be more reflective of students and their identity, utilizing community knowledge keepers and school staff,” said Steve Styers, Principal and Director of Education. “We are grateful to the



Bell Let's Talk Diversity Fund for this opportunity and support. Chi-Miigwetch! Miigwetch to Aaki Kwe (Mother Earth) for the healing and support of our students' well-being."

- [Mosaic Newcomer Family Resource Network](#), Manitoba  
"With COVID-19 making mental health supports needed now more than ever, Thriving in a New Home is a timely and innovative mental health promotion project for isolated newcomer refugee parents and their children," said Shereen Denetto, Director of Family Programs. "Our grant from the Bell Let's Talk Diversity Fund is enabling us to work more closely with trauma-affected families to help them build resilience, heal and thrive even in these challenging times."
- [North End Community Health Association](#), Nova Scotia  
"We have seen our community struggle since the beginning of the pandemic," said Marie-France Leblanc, Executive Director. "This support from the Bell Let's Talk Diversity Fund could not come at a more pivotal time as it will help provide innovative, respectful and compassionate health and wellness services and supports for African Nova Scotians who are struggling in the middle of this unparalleled health crisis."
- [Pour 3 Points](#), Québec  
"A coach can make all the difference in the future of a young person. With the support from the Bell Let's Talk Diversity Fund, Pour 3 Points can develop its expertise and train coaches to look out for the mental health of youth, particularly now during the pandemic when young people are facing unprecedented challenges," said Fabrice Vil, Founder. "We thank Bell for supporting this initiative to offer hope for youth and their coaches, helping youth develop skills to succeed at school and in their lives."
- [Yorktown Family Services](#), Ontario  
"The Bell Let's Talk Diversity Fund grant creates the opportunity to provide barrier free access to members of Black identifying communities through the Black Youth Mental Health and Wellness Program," said Suzette Arruda-Santos, Executive Director. "Thanks to Bell's support we can deliver culturally accessible programs dedicated to children, youth and young adults in Black Communities."
- [Yukon University](#), Yukon  
"We're grateful to the Bell Let's Talk Diversity Fund for supporting the development and implementation of our new Mental Health and Wellness Strategy, including enhancements to our wellness facilities and programs," said Dr. Maggie Matear, interim President and Vice Chancellor. "This project really puts the focus on student wellness. We hope that our renewed focus on understanding the diverse experiences of our multi-cultural community will allow more employees to support students and one another."

A further group of grant recipients from the first round of expressions of interest to the Bell Let's Talk Diversity Fund will be announced this spring.

### **Webinars about Diversity and Mental Health**

Bell Let's Talk is partnering with Queen's University, McGill University and Montréal's Jewish General Hospital to host webinars on mental health in diverse communities and engage in discussion about resiliency and mental well-being.



Moderated by Dr. Ghayda Hassan, the French-language webinar will be held Thursday, January 21 at 12pm ET. To register for the webinar, please click [here](#).

Moderated by Dr. Jane Philpott, the English-language webinar takes place Friday, January 22, 12pm ET. To register for this event, please click [here](#).

### **Bell Let's Talk Day is January 28**

On Bell Let's Talk Day January 28, Canadians everywhere will join in the global mental health conversation. You can use a wide range of communications platforms to join in – and directly drive Bell's donations to Canadian mental health programs simply by participating.

On Bell Let's Talk Day, Bell donates 5 cents to Canadian mental health programs for every applicable text, local or long distance call, tweet or TikTok video using #BellLetsTalk, every [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Pinterest](#), [Snapchat](#), [TikTok](#), [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#) view of the Bell Let's Talk Day video, and every use of the Bell Let's Talk Facebook frame or Snapchat filter. All at no cost to participants beyond what they would normally pay their service provider for online or phone access.

### **About Bell Let's Talk**

The largest-ever corporate commitment to mental health in Canada, Bell Let's Talk is focused on 4 key action pillars: Anti-stigma, Care and Access, Research and Workplace Leadership. Since its launch in September 2010, Bell Let's Talk has partnered with more than 1,100 organizations providing mental health supports and services throughout Canada, including hospitals, universities, local community service providers and other care and research organizations. To learn more, please visit [Bell.ca/LetsTalk](http://Bell.ca/LetsTalk).

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