



## Celebrate National Aboriginal Day Sunday, June 21<sup>st</sup>

OTTAWA (June 19, 2015) The Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) is proud to celebrate National Aboriginal Day (NAD) taking place this Sunday, June 21<sup>st</sup> around the country. This very special day celebrates the unique heritage, diverse cultures and outstanding achievements of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples in Canada.

“CCPA encourages all Canadians to take part in celebrations this Sunday that acknowledge and celebrate Indigenous peoples’ vibrant heritage that contributes to the vitality of Canada’s cultural mosaic,” said CCPA President Natasha Caverley (a multiracial Canadian who is a member of the Algonquins of Ontario). “There are a number of events taking place in every province and territory across Canada. It is CCPA’s hope that families, individuals, communities and organizations take time on June 21<sup>st</sup> to reflect on this important day and share in the joy of the celebrations.”

CCPA’s commitment to raising awareness on issues that affect Indigenous clients and families includes the Indigenous Circle Chapter that extends networking and professional development opportunities to CCPA members who provide counselling and psychotherapy services in various regions in Canada – many of which are Indigenous communities.

The Indigenous Circle Chapter aims to provide opportunities for its members to meet and discuss issues of interest to Indigenous practitioners. By sharing effective practices, networks can build and expand upon collective knowledge within an Indigenous context. The Chapter hosts complimentary webinars and professional development activities for its members which educates them on the distinct field of Indigenous mental health—combining Indigenous healing approaches with Western-based therapeutic approaches.

“Cultural loss and intergenerational trauma manifests in the lives of Indigenous individuals and communities in many ways, creating or compounding mental health challenges,” said Andrea Currie, Indigenous Circle Chapter President. “Indigenous wisdom informs our counselling practice, and healing and decolonizing go hand in hand.”

“As the recent findings revealed in the executive summary presented by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC), Indigenous peoples have long faced indignities and degradation and were denied adequate access to counselling services offered to assist them through traumatizing experiences,” said Bill Thomas, CCPA Indigenous Director. “While CCPA looks forward to reviewing the six volume final report later this year, the Association wishes to commend the Commission’s work and applauds the ‘call to action’ put forth.”

Qualified counsellors and psychotherapists are part of the continuum of care in primary health care and make vital contributions to the mental health and well-being of all Canadians. CCPA believes that the most critical factor in providing effective counselling and psychotherapy is to ensure that all Canadians have access to timely, qualified, and effective support. CCPA members endeavour to provide therapeutic services that respect cultural traditions, practices and values of clients and communities as they address mental health issues which may arise across the generations.

“We recognize past and present hardships experienced by Indigenous peoples in Canada,” added Caverley. “We also know of the extraordinary contributions Indigenous peoples have made, and continue to make, to the Canadian experience. Today, we are proud to celebrate and recognize these wonderful accomplishments.”

*profession and its contribution to the mental health and well-being of all Canadians. For more information on the counselling and psychotherapy profession, please visit [www.ccpa-accp.ca](http://www.ccpa-accp.ca) or [www.talkingcanhelp.ca](http://www.talkingcanhelp.ca).*

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