



## 14<sup>th</sup> Annual Multiculturalism Day Highlights Need for Culturally Sensitive Counselling for Canada's Diverse Population

OTTAWA (June 27, 2016) Today, the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) is proud to recognize Canada's 14<sup>th</sup> annual Multiculturalism Day. The Government of Canada has designated June 27<sup>th</sup> of each year as Canadian Multiculturalism Day, a day that provides an important opportunity to celebrate Canada's diversity and commitment to democracy, equality and mutual respect. This day also provides a chance to appreciate the contributions of the various multicultural groups and communities that are important components of Canadian society.

"Multiculturalism Day allows us to celebrate Canada's diversity which makes us unique internationally, and our continued openness to people from around the world. Counsellors and psychotherapists from across the country are able to join in on these celebrations because of their own heritage and because of the diverse communities that they serve every day," said Natasha Caverley, CCPA President (a multiracial Canadian of Algonquin, Jamaican and Irish ancestry). "In recognition of Canadian Multiculturalism Day, the CCPA and its membership would like to thank all the multicultural groups and communities in Canada that continue to promote collaboration and strength through diversity."

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 is to ensure that all Canadians have equal access to timely, qualified, and effective support in culturally competent ways.

"Although multiculturalism has many benefits, it does come with its own set of unique challenges, especially for counsellors and psychotherapists. With Canada accepting thousands of Syrian refugees this year, as well as continuing to accept thousands of people from all parts of the world, there is a serious need for culturally appropriate mental health services," added Caverley. "As culture plays a fundamental part in human experience and goes beyond ethnic and national origins, it's important for all Canadians to be aware of cultural sensitivities. An individual's culture is important and certainly plays an integral role in interactions between counsellors and their clients."

Recognizing the richness of human diversity, counsellors and psychotherapists remain committed to ensuring that all individuals of all walks of life have the opportunity to have confidential dialogue on mental health issues with qualified practitioners.

From comprehensive guidance and counselling programs in schools, to early intervention and education across the lifespan, and ongoing support by trained professionals, qualified counsellors and psychotherapists can and do make a positive difference in the lives of all Canadians – encouraging self-awareness and the understanding of others within our broader society.

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*The Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA) is a national bilingual association providing professional counsellors and psychotherapists with access to exclusive educational programs, certification, professional development and direct contact with professional peers and specialty groups. CCPA promotes the 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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