

ONTARIO REGION UPDATE

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For newsletter questions or to request a French copy, please email / Pour questions concernant la newsletter ou pour demander une copie en français, s'il vous plaît envoyez un e-mail :
ontario-communications@sac-isc.gc.ca





Sexual Health Awareness

February marks Sexual Health Week. It serves as a reminder and encouragement for people to:

- Have open conversations about sexual health with partners and healthcare providers
- Get tested regularly for sexually transmitted infections (STIs) if sexually active
- Take charge of their sexual health and protect themselves and their partners
- Learn about safer sex

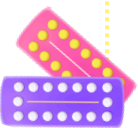
Rates of STIs such as syphilis, gonorrhea and chlamydia have been rising in recent years. Cases of congenital syphilis, where syphilis is passed to a baby during pregnancy or birth, have also been increasing.



To support sexual health awareness efforts all year, the Public Health Agency of Canada created a resources toolkit about sexual health awareness. It has ready-to-use content and materials that can be shared, posted or customized for your audience. [Print copies can also be ordered](#) for some of the posters and fact sheets at no cost.

Resources

- Toolkit: [Sexual health awareness resources](#)
- Print copies: [CATIE Ordering Centre](#)
- More information: [Canada.ca/STI](#)



Reduce the Spread of Infectious Diseases



Click on the image, pictured left.
It will take you to a downloadable infographic about reducing the spread of infectious diseases.



Cannabis Poisonings

Accidental poisonings in children from edible cannabis are a serious risk and can be life-threatening. Hospitals have seen an increase in visits to the emergency room and poison centres have seen an increase in calls.

Health Canada offers free educational and communication materials about protecting children from accidental cannabis poisonings. They recently updated materials, including a new poster, brochure, and video. Visit their online toolkit for free educational materials you can print, order, and download. Some items are available in multiple languages, including dialects of Ojibwe, Cree, and Inuktitut.

Resources

- [Cannabis poisoning in children](#) – Toolkit
 - [Social media images](#)
 - [Brochure](#)



Pictured above: An example of available content. Text is written in Ojibwe.



Help is Here Whenever You Need It

Support is available 24/7 for all First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples. Please find a list of mental health helplines below that are able to provide culturally relevant support. To find more services and resources, [visit the national Indigenous mental health page](#).



Hope for Wellness Helpline

Phone: 1-855-242-3310

Online chat: www.hopeforwellness.ca

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Support Line

Phone: 1-844-413-6649

Indian Residential Schools Crisis Line

Phone: 1-866-925-4419

Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Services

Phone: 9-8-8 (call or text)





Summer Work Experience Program

The call for proposals to support activities under the [First Nations and Inuit Summer Work Experience Program](#) is still open. The **deadline to submit a proposal is March 6, 2026, at 11:59 pm** (Eastern Time).

Funding is provided to eligible First Nations and Inuit communities, governments and organizations; First Nations schools or federal schools on reserve; not-for-profit associations and more.

Please visit the [program's guidelines](#) for more information about applying.



First Nations and Inuit Skills Link Program

The First Nations and Inuit Skills Link Program is one of two programs under the [First Nations and Inuit Youth Employment Strategy](#). The program supports activities that assist First Nations and Inuit youth in gaining the essential skills to help them with gaining employment, performing effectively in workplace settings, and learning about job and career options. Activities can include career promotion, science and technology activities, co-operative education placements, internships and mentored work placements.

The **deadline to submit a proposal is March 6, 2026, at 11:59 pm** (Eastern Time). Funding may be provided to eligible First Nations and Inuit communities, governments and organizations; First Nations schools or federal schools on reserve; not-for-profit associations and more.

Please visit the [First Nations and Inuit Skills Link Program website](#) for more information, including [eligibility](#) and [how to apply](#).



Indigenous Early Learning and Childcare

First Nations, Inuit and Métis children have [the right to access high-quality and culturally appropriate early learning and child care programs](#) that reflect their languages, traditions and values. Nearly \$47 million of federal funding will be available for approved projects related to these areas starting in 2026 to 2027. Funded initiatives can receive up to \$2 million with a maximum project duration of 36 months.

Communities, governments and organizations are encouraged to **submit applications by March 25, 2026, at 3:00 pm** (Eastern Time). Funded projects will focus on at least one of the listed themes, which were co-developed with First Nations, Inuit and Métis partners.

Please consult the [funding webpage](#) for more information or email:

EDSC.AGJEA.PAQ-QIP.IELCC.ESDC@servicecanada.gc.ca.



Canada–United States Border Information

Please scroll to the next page for the latest information about crossing the Canada–United States border as a person registered under the *Indian Act*.

Latest information when crossing the Canada-United States border as a person registered under the *Indian Act*



Here's what your community members need to know

Every country or territory decides who can enter or exit through its borders and the Government of Canada cannot intervene on behalf of Canadians who do not meet entry or exit requirements for the United States (U.S.).

Consular officials provide assistance to Canadians detained abroad (including by United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (commonly referred to as ICE)) in accordance with the [Canadian Consular Services Charter](#).

TIPS before you travel to the United States

Check [Travel advice and advisories for United States](#) for the latest information on safety and security, entry and exit requirements, consulate contact information, and more.

Sign up with the [Registration of Canadians Abroad](#) system to receive important updates.

If you're crossing the Canada-U.S. border for travel purposes with a status card

Registered persons, regardless of where they are born, have the right to enter and remain in Canada. Although any valid version of the status card can be presented to enter Canada, there may be a difference between the requirements to enter Canada and the requirements to enter the U.S.

While in the past you may have been able to enter the U.S. with any valid version of the status card, Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) now strongly recommends carrying a valid passport when you are travelling outside of Canada in addition to your Secure Certificate of Indian Status (SCIS), also known as the secure status card.

If you're already registered under the Indian Act and need your secure status card on an urgent basis, for example, to return to Canada, you can apply at any time, free of charge, and request priority processing. **Acceptance of all status cards is entirely at the discretion of U.S. officials.**

Status cards can't be used to cross the Canada-U.S. border by air.

If you're entering the U.S. to live and work as a registered person

You may be asked to provide documentation to prove the percentage of Indian blood required under U.S. law. For example, they may request a letter from Indigenous Services Canada or your First Nation. Indigenous Services Canada can issue a letter of ancestry confirming registered ancestors, but it does not list a person's blood quantum. You may be asked for more documentation.

[Get, renew or replace a status card](#)

[Crossing the Canada-U.S. border with a status card](#)

[Indigenous travellers](#)



Indigenous Services
Canada

Services aux
Autochtones Canada

Canada