



Final Report

Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada

2017

UAKN Atlantic

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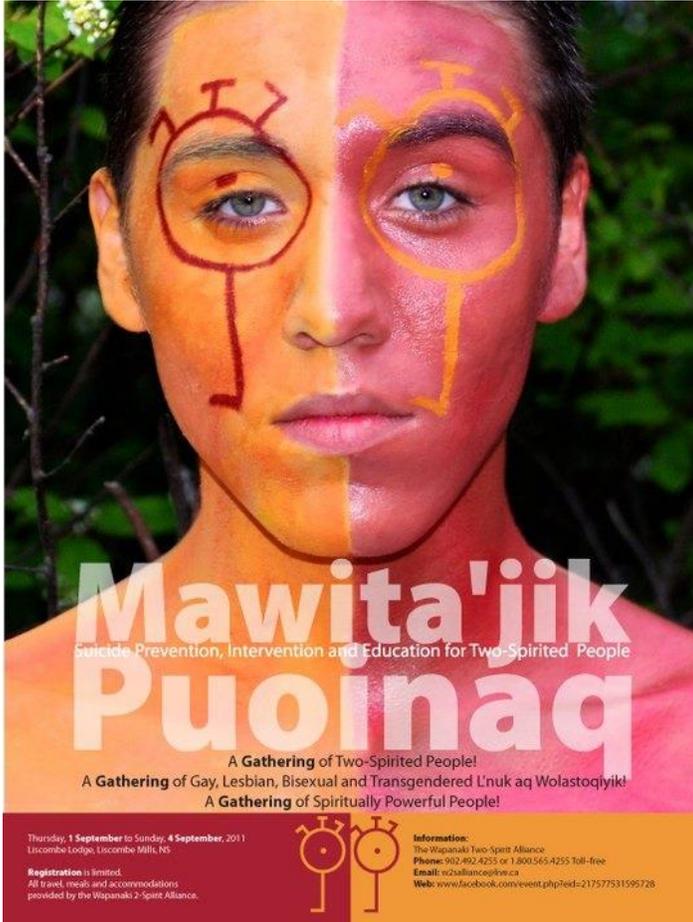
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Social Sciences and Humanities
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en
sciences humaines du Canada

Canada



Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada

Research Project Report 2017



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Atlantic Research Centre

The Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance (W2SA) received an Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network Atlantic Research Centre (UAKN) research grant to conduct a study on the coming out processes of Two Spirits in Atlantic Canada. This study captured stories of resilience by Two Spirits in their surroundings where there were lack of mental and/or health supports on First Nations, or available supports targeting Aboriginals in urban centres in the Atlantic region. The role of family and community is an important contributing factor for Two Spirits in their coming out process. Therefore, resilience through family and community supports is an important contributing factor for Two Spirits well-being.

John R. Sylliboy
Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance

Acknowledgements

Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance (W2SA) would like to acknowledge the following partners and stakeholders for this research:

Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network Atlantic Research Centre
Halifax Native Mi'kmaw Friendship Centre
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council
Mount Saint Vincent University **Cape Breton University**
Egale Canada **Healing Our Nations**

Two Spirits and all indigenous Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and those in process and those yet to come out from all over Atlantic Canada. This research is your voice and your leadership.

Research Advisory Committee

- **Walter Johnson**, Elder, Eskasoni First Nation – Halifax, N.S.
- **Kenny Prosper**, Eskasoni First Nation – Halifax, N.S.
- **Alan Polchies Jr. (Chicky)**, St. Mary's First Nation, N.B.
- **Jeremy Dutcher**, Tobique First Nation, Toronto, Ont.
- **Diane Rowe**, Halifax, N.S.

The W2SA expresses its sincerest gratitude to all Two Spirits and all indigenous Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, and those in process and those yet to come out from all over Atlantic Canada.

This research is your voice and your leadership.



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

The Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network Atlantic Research Centre (UAKN) provided funding to the Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance (W2SA) for its study: *Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada*. Principal researchers, John R. Sylliboy, Mount Saint Vincent University MAED Candidate, and Tuma Young, Arizona State University SJD Candidate, are also co-founders for the W2SA. The study identifies characteristics about coming out among 20 Two Spirits in Atlantic Canada. It provides an understanding about the state of mental health and well-being during that process and identifies the types of supports Two Spirits relied on during that process. Coming out for some individuals was very natural and straightforward, while others identified a longer more gradual process. The commonality of the narratives is a collective voice of strength and resilience.

Background

The Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance was established to build supports in areas of health, culture, education, awareness and research on matters related to Two Spirit and LGBTQ indigenous people in Atlantic Canada. W2SA began as a small group of volunteers in 2010 in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The Alliance grew in members and volunteers after a facebook page was started in 2011. It currently has 371 members on the page. In 2014, it established itself as an association, registered in Nova Scotia. It is a regional organization representing interests of all self-identified Two Spirits and indigenous LGBTQ people covering On Reserve/rural communities and urban populations. The Alliance relies on health data from research conducted by other organizations, but there is a gap of data that is specific to the region. Other research does not consider specific social-cultural contexts of the Atlantic Two Spirited community. W2SA recognizes that there is little or no literature or research on Two Spirited people in Atlantic Canada. Therefore, this research is the Alliance's initial process in building evidence based knowledge to begin to address the health needs of Two Spirits in Atlantic Canada.

Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance (W2SA)

The Alliance hosted a gathering of Two Spirits at the Liscombe Lodge, Nova Scotia in 2011. It was a safe space that culminated into the consolidation of the Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance as a support group. Two Spirits celebrated in ceremony of healing and its new journey to act and lead advocacy for Two Spirits in the Atlantic region. It was mandated that research become a priority and to use research to collect coming out stories. Evidence based research would shed light in building knowledge about Two Spirits and to understand gaps in service and supports for mental health and well-being. This would lead to developing supports for people who may face

challenges in their coming out process or in their process of accepting their nature as Two Spirits, especially youth during their evolving gender and sexual identities.

W2SA aims to publish coming out stories as an education tool and a source of empowerment and voice for Two Spirit youth. Two Spirits offered to share their stories. Stories are traditional ways of transmitting cultural knowledge (Battiste, 2009). Their stories of resilience, hope and empowerment is a source of cultural continuity (Robinson, 2014) of positive experiences and stories to be passed down.

Rationale

The W2SA needed research to better understand fully the challenges that Two Spirits face on Reserves and urban centres (TASSC, 2013) and coming out. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer youth often suffer from mental health distress caused by stigmatized sexual identities (Toomey, 2010) which may lead to suicide (Hill, 2003, Evans-Campbell, 2012, AFN, 2015).

In 2010, one Atlantic Mi'kmaw community shared that at least four out of the ten (4/ 10) suicides were LGBTQ or Two Spirits in that community alone. It was unknown what went through their minds or what they were suffering at the time and their family and friends shared that they were either gay or lesbian, but not necessarily 'out'. It appeared that the young people who took their lives were dealing with multiple issues related to mental health and addictions.

In support of the rationale, Two Spirits who gathered in 2011, recognized that critical supports were needed for addressing mental health and wellness for LGBTQ/Two Spirits and youth in general. There is no evidence that the suicides were related to homophobia, bullying or lack of health supports for youth who have challenges with self-identity and sexuality, but the community raised their warning flags about a potential correlation. The fact remained that there were four suicides by Two Spirits or LGBTQ Mi'kmaq and six other young people that year and it was considered a health crisis. The community is the largest Reserve in the region, so if they have little or no identified supports for mental health, then the remaining 32 smaller First Nations in the region would likely have gaps in their mental health supports as well. This was an invitation by the community to rally together to look for solutions.

Methods

This study was a qualitative study using mixed methods with interviews and an online survey. A literature review was also part of the research to determine what research has been done in the Atlantic region.

The interviews had guided questions to capture data on the coming out process for Two Spirits in this region. Interviewees also filled out demographic sheets to identify emergent themes/issues; the quantitative (the survey) will enable us to quantify the prevalence of those themes/issues.

A) Research Question:

There are four inter-related research questions:

1. What are the coming out stories of community and urban Aboriginals living in Atlantic Canada?
2. How can the findings from the proposed coming out stories and on-line survey deepen our understanding of the mental distress (despair, suicidal ideation) experienced by Two Spirits persons?
3. How can these coming out stories and survey data inform the development of supports for mental health and resilience, suicide prevention, Two Spirit cultural identity and awareness?
4. What quantitative and qualitative data do we have on mental resiliency and related determinants of Two Spirits persons living in Atlantic Canada? Where are the qualitative and quantitative data gaps & how might those data gaps be addressed?

This research incorporates elements of community perspectives, participants' lived experiences, stories, focus groups, and the research team in collaboration to ensure a community-based approach to research.

Coming Out Narratives and Analysis

Interviews – Number of Participants = 20

The narratives provide a solid picture about the coming out process for Two Spirits. Two Spirits shared personal journeys into their private lives. The stories about lived experiences are a collective voice of knowledge, camaraderie and hope. In analyzing the data, the intricate details about process, cultural kinship, and resilience is common for those who faced suicide ideation and even suicide attempts. These narratives are a primary source in a western approach to research, but from our indigenous perspectives, their stories are spiritual and cultural knowledge. The following data is glimpse from the study's findings which the W2SA will further analyze with its research team. W2SA will host another regional gathering in fall 2017 to disseminate the report and to plan next steps. One of the main objectives from this report is to develop appropriate health supports such as mental health, suicide prevention, and to learn about any distinct cultural characteristics about coming out for Two Spirits. The following are statistics from the narratives which are further analyzed in the report.

Coming Out Process

- 55% of Two Spirits “come out” more than one time in their lifetimes.
- 60% come out to a close friend as their first step.
- 45% come out to mothers/parents.
- 73% of Two Spirits between the ages of 12-19 come out to a friend first.
- 50% of females come out to parents and 50% to friends.
- 88% of males come out to friends and 12% to others.
- 70% of the participants maintain a sense of connection with their indigenous community.

Identified Supports during Coming Out Process

- 60% identified friends as their main supports.
- 45% mentioned parents as their supports.
- 35% recognized their siblings as their part of their supports.
- 25% either mentioned or sought health support during their coming out process.
- 15% mentioned supports in the school or campus as their main supports.

Mental Health and Well-being

- 7/20 or 40% of the participants experienced suicide ideation in their lifetime.
- 13/20 or 60% of the participants did not relate any experiences with suicide ideation.
- Suicide ideation among males: 3/7 = 42.86%
- Suicide ideation among females: 4/7 = 57%
- Trans. Male: 1/2 = 50% and Trans. Female: 1/2 = 50%
- Total of Attempted suicides: 3/20 = 15% of total participants
- Attempted suicide among males: 1/3 = 33.33%
- Attempted suicide among females: 2/3 = 66.66%
- Attempted suicide among transgender: 2/3 = 66.66%

Identified Supports for Coming Out

Siblings – 6 = 30%

Mom/Parents – 9 = 45%

Friends – 12 = 60%

Family – 5 = 25%

Community – 2 = 10%

Spirituality – 2 = 10%

Health Supports (clinic, social worker) – 5 = 25%

School Supports (teacher, counselor) – 3 = 15%

Online Survey

Survey: Total Participants - 70 online + 20 paper = 90

W2SA conducted an anonymous online survey through social media and email contacts. In 2016, W2SA hired a summer employment student to promote, distribute and manage the survey results. There were 90 completed surveys from all over the Atlantic region including ones from Reserves, rural and urban centres. The survey was distributed through the Atlantic members of the Association of Friendship Centres via the Halifax Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre. It was also distributed through contacts in the Atlantic Aboriginal Advisory Networking Group (AAANG) among 16 post-secondary institutions in Atlantic Canada.

The survey results provide an intersectionality between urban, on Reserve, student, and adult samples. It gathered data, such as mental health status (suicide ideation, health concerns, well-

being), demographics (age, gender identity, ethnicity) and types of supports (family, community and health) for coming out. This study is about capturing data on supports and understanding individual experiences with respect to coming out, including challenges and supports identified leading up to – during – and after coming out. Further research is essential to understand what services and mental health supports exist for Two Spirits, especially with the increasing number of individuals who seek information about services for transgenders in First Nations in Nova Scotia¹.

Meaningful Research about Two Spirits and Indigenous LGBTQ

Suicide Ideation and suicide Attempts

These findings will require further analysis especially in comparing rates of suicide ideation and suicide attempts among First Nations to the general population regionally and nationally. Further analysis is required to explore the study's findings between the differences in gender where females have higher incidents of suicide ideation than males. In suicide attempts, the female rates are higher than male rates in this study. This compares to the findings in the Regional Health Survey between phases one 2002/03 and phase two 2008/10 where it was identified that females increased in their suicide attempts rates higher than males between ages of 12-14 years of age (Survey, 2008).

Intersectionality among LGBTQ and Two Spirits in Suicide Ideation and Suicide Attempts

It is necessary for further analysis on the rates of suicide ideation and suicide attempts within the LGBTQ2S+ subgroups. Four out of twenty (4/20 = 20%) of the participants self-identified as transgender and they represent 66% of the total of attempted suicides in this study. More emphasis is needed to understand the coming out process of transgenders to provide more culturally appropriate and culturally safe mental health supports. Evidence shows that transgenders face challenges which are unique to them in their coming out process. Their gender identity and sexuality demonstrates an ongoing flux from one self-identified gender to the next. Their coming out process is self-described as ongoing and they come out more than on one occasion. Three out of four (75%) of transgenders shared that their struggles with suicide ideation from mental distresses caused by their individual and social conflicts associated with coming out and gender identity. Much of the distress is not having the supports and knowledge to understand their reality. This data will be further analyzed with experts from the transgender community to build a clearer understanding about the findings.

Supports include Peers, Parents and Mentors

The coming out process is considered one of the most important milestones in one's life. The narratives clearly provide evidence that Two Spirits come out to friends and family especially for

¹ Although there is no official research about the numbers of people who ask about services specific for transgenders, five Health Directors in Nova Scotia mentioned that their health centres were approached for information and guidance in 2015-2016.

youth between the ages of 13-19 years. 60% of the total of participants identified their friends as part of their support group. This outlines the importance of developing Gay Straight Alliances or similar peer programs in First Nations. Mentor programs would be excellent ways to address youth concerns and discussions about their mental, spiritual, physical and emotional needs as Two Spirit youth. There could be workshops on youth empowerment, cultural identity, Two Spirit awareness and suicide prevention strategies. These would be proactive and cost efficient preventive programs which could be integrated in school or community activities through grassroots youth councils, youth seminars and gatherings. Partnerships are needed to bridge local and regional youth programs like The Red Road Project, Mi'kmaq Maliseet Atlantic Youth Council (MMAYC) with provincial initiatives like the Youth Project in Nova Scotia. The W2SA must build efforts for youth leadership to take place in the Alliance to help build those bridges among other youth initiatives outside of indigenous context.

Recommendations

Future research

This study is only a stepping stone for further research. The focus of this study was to look at coming out stories and their supports which are identified from the coming out narratives. The next step for the W2SA is for further community validation of its findings at the next regional gathering in fall 2017. There are opportunities to further research from this study alone. The Alliance will seek funding to bring the research back to the community and to consult on next steps for this study and discuss further research.

Policy development

The community-based evidence needs are outlined in the report. Recommendations include partnership development among stakeholders, such as First Nations Inuit Health Branch, provincial health departments in areas of mental health and addictions specific for Two Spirits and LGBTQ youth. There is an upsurge of awareness and acceptance about Two Spirits and transgenders, therefore, there is an increase in numbers of Two Spirits seeking health supports and information about transgender policies. There is a need for development of specific cultural policies to support Two Spirits who navigate from Reserve and urban centres in search of safe and appropriate supports.

This research is evidence that Two Spirits will seek out their supports within their families, but these supports should be considered part of the whole process in getting adequate mental health supports, especially for Two Spirits who suffer from mental health distress due to their coming out process. Their experiences relate an ongoing struggle in navigating for supports and information about specific transgender related issues. There are no clear policies in place for them at best of times, so their process about coming out is unique and require unique approaches for supports. Their coming out process is longer and more complex as it evidenced in their coming out stories.

Community Supports

The evidence from the coming out stories shows that Two Spirits continue to live on their communities or remain closely associated with their families or communities both on Reserve and urban centres. Many shared their reality of navigating back and forth from Reserves and urban centres because of socio-economic and education needs as well as their need to live in places where they can be with other Two Spirits or LGBTQ communities.

It was mentioned that there are more people who are coming out in indigenous communities and many remain to live in their communities. Transgenders find it challenging to seek health services and supports on the community, which may affect their mental health well-being. More specific research is needed to understand the challenges faced by transgenders living on Reserves.

Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada

Background

The Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance was established to build supports in areas of health, culture, education, awareness and research on matters related to Two Spirit people in Atlantic Canada. W2SA began as a small group of volunteers in 2010 in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The Alliance grew in members and volunteers after a facebook page was started in 2011. It currently has 371 members on its facebook page. In 2014, it established itself as an association, registered in Nova Scotia. However, it is a regional organization representing interests of all self-identified Two Spirits and indigenous LGBTQ people covering On Reserve/rural communities and urban populations. A literature review on health data identified that organizations like Egale Canada, Health Canada and various studies and reports have Two Spirit content, but none specific to social-cultural contexts and needs of the Atlantic Two Spirit community. W2SA recognizes that this study is only baby steps in addressing gaps in knowledge. This research is the Alliance's initial process in building evidence based knowledge to address the health needs of Two Spirits in Atlantic Canada.

The themes were identified as priorities at the Liscombe Lodge Two Spirited Gathering by more than 50 participants in 2011. In a Sharing Circle, participants expressed their sense of urgency for developing supports for Two Spirited youth. The Circle was a safe space and a source of healing for many individuals who openly talked about their lived experiences with suicidal ideation and mental health (W2SA, Mawita'jik Puoinaq: A Gathering of 2 Spirited People!, 2011). The Circle provided a spirit of healing from sharing each other's stories. Participants and organizers witnessed how individual experiences immediately transformed into a powerful collective voice of courage and resilience. This collective experience is what the participants at the Gathering would like others to experience as a means of hope for those who suffer from suicidal ideation or lack of self-identity with respect to their gender and sexuality. The document resulting from our research will be used to heighten awareness and increase knowledge sharing among indigenous communities, tribal organizations, education and health institutions and with mainstream organizations who provide supports for LGBTQTS+ at large. Most importantly, the research process and resulting documentation will be a source of healing for those who are dealing with their own struggles with coming out.

These coming out narratives by Atlantic Two Spirits provide a sense of guidance, hope and awareness for young people who struggle with self-identity and acceptance (ANAC, 2002), their stories will be a collective voice in present history of coming out experiences among Two Spirits in Wabanaki territory² (W2SA, Mawita'jik Puoinaq: A Gathering of Two-Spirited People, 2011).

“Individual life stories are very much embedded in social relationships and structures and they are expressed in culturally specific forms; read carefully, they provide unique insights

² Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance recognizes its territory to include Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Gaspé region in Quebec, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland & Labrador, and Maine which includes Penobscot, Passamaquoddy Nations, Mi'kmaq, Maliseet, Innu Nations and Inuit.

into the connections between individual life trajectories and collective forces and institutions beyond the individual” (Laslet, 2008, p. 3).

In summary, this research into the coming out stories of Two Spirits and indigenous LGBTQ people living in communities and urban environments across the Atlantic region, will culminate in a publishable document titled “Coming Out of Atlantic Two Spirits” that will provide a source of pride, empowerment and cultural identity, which are crucial for education, cultural awareness, and knowledge translation for the LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ communities in general. The Alliance aims to mobilize these valuable research findings in the development of supports for mental health and resilience, suicide prevention, Two Spirit cultural identity and awareness in the region and elsewhere in Canada.

Rationale

The W2SA needed research to better understand fully the challenges that Two Spirits face on Reserves and urban centres (TASSC, 2013) and coming out. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer youth often suffer from mental health distress caused by stigmatized sexual identities (Toomey, 2010). In 2010, one Atlantic community shared that at least four people out of the ten suicides were LGBTQ or Two Spirits (W2SA, Mawita’jik Puoinaq: A Gathering of Two-Spirited People, 2011). It was unknown what went through these young peoples’ minds or what they were suffering at the time, but their families and friends shared that they were either gay or lesbian, but not necessarily ‘out’ in the community. It appears these young people who took their lives were dealing with multiple layers or issues related to mental health and well-being and being gay. Studies show that many indigenous men suffer from mental distress and suicide because of the shame they may feel in their communities because of being gay (Hill, 2003). Two Spirits at the Liscombe Lodge gathering recognized that critical supports for mental health and addictions, suicide prevention and positive role models from the Two Spirits and indigenous LGBTQ are lacking on Reserves.

Two Spirits also expressed their despair and suicide ideation in a sharing circle activity at the Gathering. Fifty individuals shared their coming out stories in a circle and nearly 50% of those participants mentioned suicide ideation as part of their coming out experience (W2SA, Mawita’jik Puoinaq: A Gathering of 2 Spirited People!, 2011). The circle was an experience of empowerment and uplifting of spirits for those who, for the first time, shared their coming out experiences. Two Spirits and indigenous LGBTQ who shared their stories explained that sharing their stories was a source of healing for them. As a result, it was recommended that the newly formed W2SA needed to conduct research about whether Two Spirits experience suicide ideation in their process of coming out and to understand their resilience in that process. In relation, it was also prioritized that W2SA to conduct research about Two Spirits in Atlantic Canada, including gender identity and sexuality, social determinants and demographics on Two Spirits and to build cultural awareness about Two Spirits in the general public and extend this knowledge with sister organizations that provide supports for LGBTQ2S+ in Atlantic Canada. It was understood that there was no research with respect to Two Spirits and that needed to change to improve their health and well-being.

Egale is Canadian national charity which promotes lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans (LGBT)

human rights through research, education and community engagement. It shares the following data on suicide.

Every year, an average of five hundred Canadian youth take their own life (Statistics Canada, 2008).1 What is unknown, however, is how many of these youth identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, Two Spirit or queer, or are struggling with questions about their sexual orientation or gender identity (LGBTQ).2 What is apparent today is that LGBTQ youth experience a high degree of vulnerability to suicidal ideation and behaviour, both in Canada and the United States, particularly in comparison to their non-LGBTQ peers: approximately half of LGBT youth have thought about suicide, and they are over four times more likely to attempt suicide than their non-LGBT peers (cf. Eisenberg and Resnick 2006; Scanlon et al. 2010; Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2009). Nonetheless, LGBTQ youth are routinely and systemically ignored in research, education, and health and social service programming related to suicide prevention. This reality precipitates an urgent need for action and partnerships among researchers, educators, service providers, practitioners, LGBTQ community and youth agencies, policy makers and decision makers. (Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, 2012)

This study's literature review confirms that there next to no is no research data in Atlantic Canada with respect to health, education and socio-economic determinants among Two Spirit people (W2SA, Mawita'jik Puoinaq: A Gathering of Two-Spirited People, 2011). This lack of data augmented the need to further explore ways to build supports among our Aboriginal communities and service providers. There is a lack of orientation data being collected in general (Hottes, 2014). Hottes also states that there is probably an under count in the number of suicides among gay and bisexuals based on autopsy studies. The implications for not having evidence based data about Atlantic Two Spirits puts the W2SA in a disadvantage for lobbying for services for health and education supports, or even developing strategies for suicide prevention.

The Aboriginal population is the fastest growing demographic in Canada, yet it remains to be a vulnerable population due to historical and ongoing effects of colonization (AFN, 2015) and Indian Residential Schools which resulted in inequitable social-economic development in health and education (Loppie & Wien, 2009). By not addressing health inequities for Aboriginals, there is a chance they will "likely result in a great burden of ill health," (Latimer, 2014, p. 25) which continues to put Aboriginals at disadvantage. The gathering of much needed data and sharing coming out stories of Two Spirits in Wabanaki territory will reveal what Maynes identifies as "historical and social dynamic that has been deliberately silenced" (Maynes, 2008, p. 9), but this research begins to address that. Voices by Two Spirits are no longer silenced.

There is a growing population of Aboriginals in urban centres in Canada who are seeking better opportunities for employment, education and amenities provided in larger urban centres (Ristock, September 2011). According to this study, this is not the only reason why Two Spirits move to the urban centres. The Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study (UAPS) reported evidence that "Two Spirit youth in their sample moved to the city to avoid homophobia and seek a better life" (Ibid, p. 6).

This correlates with experiences shared by Two Spirits from the Liscombe Lode in 2011. It was expressed by the participants that many faced hardships in their home communities because of contrasting values with respect to being Two Spirits because of religion, misappropriation of

cultural beliefs and homophobia (Centre, 2012). Many individuals felt pressure to leave their families and communities to explore their identity in safer environments often found in the urban settings (Lerat, March 2004). It begs to question whether youth face forced mobility due to family and community pressure to conform to heteronormative expectations. The stories have shed light on the reality faced by Two Spirits and indigenous LGBTQ in the Atlantic region of Canada.

Aboriginal youth who dealt with homophobia in their home communities and migrate to the cities often face added health, social and economic distresses because they experienced urban culture shock. Youth face hardships in getting proper housing, acquiring proper services for health, in developing their skills & training for employment preparedness and education. Then there is the added discrimination Aboriginal youth face due to racism (TASSC, 2013). There are endless cycles. Nevertheless, these are not necessarily negative factors according to one report, which states that these experiences provide youth a sense of resilience and survival skills to face life challenges, which are required to live in the urban centres as Two Spirits (Ristock, September 2011).

Coming out stories are a part of a plan for social action to deconstruct the social ills of homophobia, stigmatization and inequitable health supports for Two Spirits. The stories are a collective voice. These life stories are part of a social reconstruct which needs to occur for Two Spirits to relinquish social stigmatization and begin their process of self-acceptance, both individually and as a community according to W2SA.

The Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance is on a mission to provide education on Two Spirit culture to provide much needed supports for youth who come out. Education about Two Spirit culture in urban centres will maintain a sense of cultural connect for youth, which would only aid in their coming to accept their Two Spiritedness.

Another important justification for this this research is to capture any cultural perspectives around Two Spirit identity and their roles in modern contexts. Review on literature on Two Spirits demonstrates that many indigenous groups have language and culture that contextualizes Two Spirit identity, but this is not the case in Atlantic Canada among Wabanaki cultures. Part of mental health and suicide prevention for indigenous youth is the importance of promoting youth empowerment through cultural pride in language and ceremony. A process of self-ascription (Medicine, 2002) will need to reconceptualize Two Spirit identity whereby language and collective identity instil a cultural pride for a reawakening of ceremony by Two Spirits and its cultural continuity (Robinson, 2014).

The research on Two Spirits in Atlantic Canada will provide Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance evidence-based data for policy development and lobbying. It will also assist the Alliance and others in establishing priorities for health, education and cultural awareness building and future research.

Method

It is a qualitative study using mixed methods with interviews and online survey. A literature review was also part of the research to determine what research has been done in the Atlantic region or the area covering the Wabanaki territory. The interviews are guided questions (Appendix 3) to capture data on the coming out process for Two Spirits in this region. Interviewees also filled out demographic sheets to identify emergent themes/issues.

Participatory Action Research as a community-based approach will ensure that “...voices of the participants become central elements in the research and their initiatives guide the process of change” (Topshee, 2011). This research incorporates elements of community perspectives, participants’ lived experiences, stories, focus groups, and a research team all working with lead researchers to ensure a community-based approach to research.

A) Research Question:

There are four inter-related research questions:

1. What are the coming out stories of community and urban Aboriginals living in Atlantic Canada?
2. How can the findings from the proposed coming out stories and on-line survey deepen our understanding of the mental distress (despair, suicidal ideation) experienced by Two Spirits persons?
3. How can these coming out stories and survey data inform the development of supports for mental health and resilience, suicide prevention, Two Spirit cultural identity and awareness?
4. What quantitative and qualitative data do we have on mental resiliency and related determinants of Two Spirits persons living in Atlantic Canada? Where are the qualitative and quantitative data gaps & how might those data gaps be addressed?

Components of the mixed methods approach included: literature review, interviews on “coming out” and an online survey.

1. **Qualitative Data:** W2SA gathered stories and analyzed the findings to flesh out common themes and characteristics about demographics, process, mental health supports, concerns and recommendations. The analysis brought to surface the process by which Two Spirits explained their coming out process. See appendix 3.
2. **Quantitative Data:** W2SA conducted an anonymous online survey to capture demographics, health statistics, LGBTQ2S+ self-identification statistics, health supports, characteristics about fears, and socio-economic statuses. Online Survey Monkey was used to capture data for this study. See appendix 2.

Guided interviews: Two Eyed Seeing Approach

The guided questions were developed in a culturally sensitive way because indigenous people often face multiple and complex health issues with respect to health. The theme about coming out is a sensitive topic and must be approached in that manner. A Two Eyed Seeing (Cheryl Bartlett, 2009) approach was implemented in the development and implementation of the interviews. The questions were developed to avoid using language around suicide ideation or

suicide, except during the explanation of the overall project. The questions were developed to be as culturally sensitive as possible to the needs of the participants to ensure participants' safety and well-being. Two Eyed Seeing is a co-learning philosophy coined by Elders Albert and Murdena Marshall, Eskasoni First Nation (Ibid). The use of western and indigenous knowledge to learn, understand or develop new knowledge by interviewing both perspectives in research and methods. In this case, the Two Eyed Seeing is useful in both for data collection and analysis of the stories. The researchers consulted with study's advisory on the process for the interviews. It was recommended to use an indigenous approach of story exchange to gather the stories. This would be respectful of how knowledge is exchanged among indigenous people (Battiste, 2009, Bear, 2009). Western approaches for data collection are extensive and varied, but an integrative approach for data gathering and analysis would strengthen the findings.

Kinship Building and Swapping Stories over Tea

Two Eyed Seeing enables the "interview" process to take place in a more cultural-like way because it emulates a conversation. While the western approach for interviewing has set goals to engage the participants, to establish trust, to provide instructions on the process, and to ask questions while keeping the process as constant as possible among all participants, Two Eyed Seeing is about relationship building and sharing of knowledge in a safe way, in a safe setting, and based on kinship practices of enjoying time to share stories. The Two Eyed approach combines that western interviewing process, but slows down the speed of that process so that there is time for interaction that allows to explore kinship before the interview begins. Therefore, by using Two Eyed Seeing, the process is not so time structured and sterile.

Part of the process allows relationship building between the interviewer and participant. This was done by sharing a hot beverage or "tea" (Cheryl Bartlett, 2009, p. 3) or simply by exchanging family stories to warm up the setting and discussion. Once that process was completed, the interviewer began the actual formal process by confirming the consent process, to explain the study and objectives for the discussion and remind the participant that it is a recorded session. This time frame is a natural interaction between the interviewer and the participant, like it would be in a natural conversation session between two acquaintances. Then the recordings began at this point. An extremely important protocol point is to acknowledge the person's time and commitment for the interview, which is considered a visit at the same time. Applying proper social-cultural protocol is important, such as having that time for tea for story swaps or establishing that relationship with the Elder by acknowledging them with tobacco or a gift.

Part and partial to the process is to allow the interaction to be as natural as possible in conversation. Two Eyed Seeing considers the importance of allowing sufficient time for that ceremony of the visit to take place. This also builds that safe space process, especially if the visit is in the home of the participant. 17 of the 20 visits took place in the participants' homes. One interview took place in a public library and two were hosted in the interviewer's home. It was also a priority to use appropriate language to assure the interaction was as natural as possible – like a conversation, not full of research jargon. The idea was to make the participants feel as though they are sharing a story. None of the questions asked about suicide ideation or suicide, but if they evolved in the story, or came up in the story exchange, then it was appropriate to ask for clarification.

The questions were developed to help build that story, while maintain a sense of purpose and goal - to gather data. The interviewer recognizes that stories are lived-experiences and when shared, they have an added dimension of connectivity. Two Spirit voices transform into a Mi'kmaq/indigenous/collective consciousness (Cheryl Bartlett, 2009, pg. 15), therefore, each story through language or collective consciousness has a spiritual tense for healing. This correlates with the narratives from various Two Spirits who shared that their coming out process was also a release of mental distress and anxiety, which are common causes for suicide ideation. In fact, many of the narratives mention spirituality as part of their re-awakening of interests in cultural identity and to learn more about Two Spirit culture.

Narrative Inquiry and Storytelling

Part of the process was to respect the tradition of storytelling among indigenous people (Battiste, 2009), which we consider is the Two Eyed Seeing approach to interviewing. By knowing that the process was to revisit individual's stories about coming out, it was important to try to avoid or minimize any mental distress in that process. Reliving stories is an important process for indigenous people because it is a form of teaching others (Ibid) and a source of empowerment and transformative knowledge based on experience (Dworkin, 1959). The narratives have a spiritedness to them and can be complex in nature. This method of gathering stories is part of the narrative inquiry. The narratives are three-dimensional with respect to time, space and personal/social settings (Candinin, 2000). Each participant goes back to the memory of the lived experience; then recalls the associated emotions and experiences, then retells that story of that coming out process, and lives the story in the present setting by sharing that experience during the guided discussion. The guided discussion planned for this to develop as appropriately as possible.

It is of vital importance to understand that these stories are about hope and resilience which is why conducting research using indigenous perspectives or an integrate approach like Two Eyed Seeing. The narratives offer a sense of a cultural or spiritual connectiveness (Cheryl Bartlett, 2009) for this research and this is acknowledged that from the beginning of this research. Elder Murdena Marshall shares her wisdom, "As indigenous people whose connectiveness with our cultures and those who enliven them has been damaged, we are learning to integrate that is withheld and devalued" (Ibid, pg. 15). As an Mi'kmaw researcher conducting this study, it is part of our protocol to understand and develop ways to honour the spiritual connectiveness of our stories shared by Two Spirits.

Two Spirits Gender and Sexuality in Flux?

The narratives are powerful, insightful and knowledge building processes to understand how the coming out process is for Two Spirits and indigenous LGBTQ individuals. The collection of narratives is a primary source of expanding the analysis to explore how gender and sexuality can be further explored or understood. Everyone shared their lived experience which provides a first-hand knowledge about how either their gender and/or sexuality evolves in their lifecycle. This is only mentioned here in this report because this research will be further developed using these findings to explore that flux in gender identity and sexuality in the author's own current thesis on *Two Spirits: Conceptualization in a L'nuwey Worldview* at Mount Saint Vincent University.

Crisis Intervention Awareness

It is important to be aware as an interviewer that the discussion or the story may retrigger mental discomfort, distress, and trauma in the story sharing process. We planned for any eventuality by providing the participant as many help-line/direct-line to either community crisis lines, provincial supports or information on crisis-intervention workers during the consent process, during and at the end of the session. We had no reported cases about the need for crisis intervention.

Literature Review:

John R. Sylliboy, a Mount Saint Vincent University, MAED candidate, conducted a literature review of Two Spirit identity, culture and concepts related to LGBTQ theory and Aboriginal contexts in academic journals, books, and any relevant documentation found in Canada and elsewhere. The literature review was included as part of Sylliboy's Masters thesis in Educational Foundations.

Participants' Narratives

The participants are from the Atlantic region. There was a call out for participants of self-identified Two Spirits and indigenous LGBTQ through social media, via Native Friendship Centres, and by word of mouth. The stories were gathered from June 2016 until November 2016. The interviews are mainly autobiographical involving each participant own lived experiences in a process of composing annals and chronicles (Clandinin, 2000). Consent forms and interview guide questions will be provided when this proposal is submitted to respective ethics.

The narrative analysis provides a wealth of understanding on what coming out (Brown, 2011) is to Atlantic Two Spirit youth. The stories capture dimensions of how social – cultural and environmental contexts play a role in determining how the process of coming out is among Aboriginals in the Atlantic. These personal narratives are a potent source of framing historical, cultural, time and spatial realities of individual's lived experiences (Maynes, 2008). The narratives include lived experiences by all who participated including the autobiographical experiences by its advisory (Clandinin, 2000) to give a sense of wholeness representing Two Spirits in Atlantic Canada.

According to Brown, coming out stories can be analyzed using an intersectional framework especially with respect to class, gender and race. The most important consideration using narrative analysis is how the stories were told from Two Spirits as actors who lived through levels of narratives: individual, interpersonal, institutional, cultural and social. Their voices are being heard.

Table 1 Narratives: Summary of Themes

Code	FN//M Self Identify	Gender	Age Come Out	# Coming Out	Suicide Ideation	Attempts	Place of Residence	Supports Identified
2S01	2S	F	16, 19	2x	Yes	No	Reserve - Urban	Sibling//Mother/Counsellor
2S02	2S	M	15, 23	2x	No	No	Urban	Teacher/Grandma
2S03	*Gay (lesbian)	F	39	2x	No	No	Reserve	Daughter/ Siblings/community
2S04	Gay	M	19	2x	No	No	Urban - Reserve	Friend/Mother
2S05	Trans	M	15	1x - ongoing	Yes	Yes	Urban - Reserve	Friend/off-reserve Supports/ group supports
2S06	2S	M	18	1x	No	No	Reserve	Friends/family
2S07	Gay/2S	M	27,30	2x	No	No	Urban - Reserve	Sister/Mother
2S08	Gay	M	17,19	2x	Yes	No	Urban	Friend
2S09	Trans	F	15,19	2x	Yes	No	Urban - Reserve - Urban	Cousin/Spirituality
2S10	Bi/Trans/2S	F	13, 17, 19	3x	Yes	Yes	Urban	Parents/health supports Spirituality about 2S
2S11	Gay	M	16,19	2x	No	No	Urban - Reserve	Friend/Mother
2S12	Gay	M	12	1x	No	No	Reserve - Urban	Lover/Family/community
2S13	Gay	M	57	1x	No	No	Urban - Reserve	Friends/family
2S14	Bi/Pansexual/2S	M	18, 22	2x	Yes	No	Reserve	Friend/Mother
2S15	Bi/2S	M	17, 21	2x	No	No	Urban	Friend/Parents
2S16	2S/Pansexual Non-gendered (Trans)	M	19, 21, later years	3x	No	No	Urban	Friend/Children/Health supports
2S17	Gay	M	27	1x	No	No	Urban	Friend/Family/Campus counselling services
2S18	2S	F	18, 20	2x	No	No	Urban/Reserve	Friends/Sibling/Family/Culture
2S19	Lesbian	F	9	1x - ongoing	No	No	Reserve	Sibling/Mother/school counsellor
2S20	Lesbian	F	15, 24, 29	3x	Yes	Yes	Reserve	Friends/Mother/Health Supports
Totals	<p>2S = 7 or 35% Gay = 7 or 35% Trans = 4 or 20% Bi = 3 or 15% Lesbian = 2 or 10% Pansexual = 2 or 10% 1 lds. = 15 or 75% 2 lds. = 2 or 10% 3 lds. = 3 or 15%</p> <p>35% self-identify as Two-Spirits and/or Gay</p> <p>*Self-identifies as gay, not lesbian</p>	<p>F: 7/20 = 35% M = 13/20 = 65%</p>	<p>Preteen=10% Teen= 70% 20-30=10% 30-40=5% 40-50=0% 50+ = 5%</p> <p>70% of participants are 13-19 age range</p>	<p>1x = 40% 2x = 55% 3x = 15%</p> <p>55% come out 2x during their process</p>	<p>Yes: 7/20 = 40% No: 13/20 =65%</p> <p>M: 3/7 = 42.86% Trans. Male: 1/2 = 50% F: 4/7 = 57% Trans. Female: 1/2 = 50% M: 3/20 = 15% F: 4/20 = 20%</p>	<p>Yes = 3/20 = 15% No = 17/20 = 75%</p> <p>Suicide Ideation & Attempt.: 3/7= 42.86%</p> <p>Attempt: F: 2/3 = 66% M: 1/3 = 33.33% Trans. Female: 1/3 = 33.33%</p> <p>Female: 1/3 = 33.33% Trans. Male: 1/3 = 33.33%</p> <p>Trans. Total: 2/3 = 66.66% attempted suicide</p>	<p>Urban = 30% Urban -Reserve = 30% Reserve = 25% Reserve. -Urban =10% Res-Urb-Res =5%</p> <p>70% of participants connected with Reserve</p>	<p>Siblings – 6 = 30% Mom/Parents – 9 = 45% Friends – 12 = 60% Family – 5 = 25% Community – 2 = 10% Spirituality – 2 = 10% Health Supports – 5 = 25% School Supports – 3 = 15%</p> <p>12-19 age – 11/15 or 73% Come Out to Friends first</p> <p>Female - 6/15 or 40% 50% Come out to a friend 50% Come out to family</p> <p>Male – 9/15 or 60% 88.88% Come out to a friend 11.12% Come out to other (teacher)</p>

Data Analysis of Narratives

W2SA analyzed the coming out stories in themes which prove valuable insight about coming out among Two Spirits or indigenous LGBTQ in Atlantic Canada. 55% of Two Spirits come out more than one time in their process. Data analysis of the narratives indicates that 60% come out to their closest friends and 45% come out to mothers or parents. 73% of Two Spirits between the ages of 12-19 come out to friends first. 50% of the females come out to friends and 50% of them come out to parents in strong contrast to 88% of males come out to a friend and 12% to another person such as a teacher or support worker. This information will help the W2SA to plan how to develop resources and strategies to target gender needs for Two Spirits in the area.

Another important finding is that 60% of participants identified their main supports coming from their friends, 45% from parents and 35% from siblings respectively. 25% identified supports coming from health and 15% from the school or campus setting. This begs the question whether there is lack of identified supports for LGBTQ individuals in First Nations or cultural specific supports in the urban centres, or whether existing supports have components of cultural safety for Two Spirits, or a combination of reasons.

70% of individuals who identify as indigenous or aboriginal remain in close contact with their families and community during and after their coming out process. This is important because literature indicates that indigenous youth often face forced mobility because they do not feel safe in their communities or that there are no opportunities for them in their community because of the lack of health and social supports (Ristock, September 2011). If young people are provided love and nurturing in their families and communities, they are more likely to have stronger cultural values and cultural identity, which are identified as a means of suicide prevention and “healthy identity integration” (Garret & Barret, 2003). Equally important to highlight is the fact that many of the narratives mentioned that their interest in spirituality and cultural identity reawakened in their coming out process. The key is to explore ways to implement culture and suicide prevention for Two Spirit awareness and education.

Online Survey

Online Survey

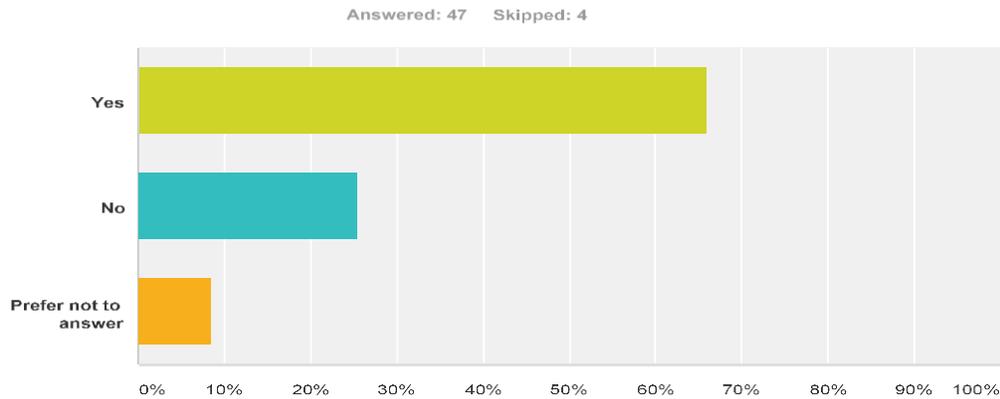
Survey: Total Participants - 70 online + 20 paper = 90

W2SA conducted an anonymous online survey through social media and email contacts. In 2016, W2SA hired a summer employment student who was hired for the summer to promote, distribute and manage the survey results. The survey collected data from 90 participants from all over the Atlantic region including from Reserve, rural and urban centres. The survey was distributed through the Atlantic members of the Association of Friendship Centres via the Halifax Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre. Lastly, the survey was distributed through contacts in the Atlantic Aboriginal Advisory Networking Group (AAANG) among its fellow post-secondary institutions in Atlantic Canada which are members. The survey results provide an intersectionality between

urban, on Reserve, student, and adult samples.

The survey is to gather data, not only to identify mental health characteristics, demographics and supports in the process of coming, but to identify associated themes when coming out among Two Spirits in Atlantic Canada. Common themes may include: mental health status and suicide ideation, participants' place of residence and mobility (forced or not), age of coming out, HIV status, socio-economic well-being, and how individuals come out? It is essential to research on why individuals find it so difficult to come out, which in turn will provide W2SA direction to where to build supports to aid in this process for Two Spirits. It is also vital to know what coping mechanisms are identified and why individuals felt safe to come out. The survey was developed and tested among our research team members as part of PAR. (See appendix 2)

Table 2 Suicide Ideation when Coming Out based on the Survey



Yes	65.96%	31
No	25.53%	12
Prefer not to answer	8.51%	4
Total	100	47

Gaps in Analysis

The W2SA has compiled rich data which it will use for further research. However, it has not completed all the data analysis from the surveys. The aim is to analyze data from the surveys and from the narratives for comparative purposes especially in identifying the supports, coming out

process, mobility and other demographics. W2SA plans to conduct this analysis with the research advisory team for community validation and perspective. The survey results are included as Appendix 6.

Data Collection

1. Community Support:

W2SA gained community support from its research stakeholders both in urban and community organizations. The Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre and Healing Our Nations both are collaborators and supporters for this research. The Eskasoni Mental Health and Elsipogtog Crisis Line also extended their support by providing their crisis line and support team information for the interviews and online surveys. The W2SA facebook page members have continuously supported the study and were invited to provide feedback. The next process for this study is to bring the knowledge back to them.

2. Review Boards and Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch:

W2SA submitted and was given approval by three review boards which provided this study both indigenous and western academic approvals.

- 1) Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch
- 2) Cape Breton University Ethics
- 3) Mount Saint Vincent University Ethics

3. Accountability and Dissemination:

W2SA's priority is with Two Spirits in Atlantic Canada who have supported this research since it was at the gathering in 2011, *Mawitajik Pouinaq Two Spirits Atlantic Gathering* that this research topic was identified as a main concern.

This project is a collaboration of minds and resources. It is equally important to acknowledge the contribution from funders and stakeholders. This report will be shared widely with all of those as well. Part of the accountability process is to consult with our Research Advisory Committee for final approval to release this and all corresponding data related to this research.

In addition to this report, W2SA will also present at regional and national conferences, seminars and Pride events to share specific or general knowledge generated from this research. It is considered a high priority that this research is shared widely because there is so little or no research about Two Spirit content in the Atlantic region.

TOTAL NUMBER OF INDIVIDUALS CONSULTED: 90

Recommendations and Moving Forward

1) Recommendations For Future Research:

- Expand the research in other regions of Canada to gather more evidence on challenges and recommendations about more cultural specific knowledge about Two Spirits.
- Conduct an environmental scan of mental health and addictions supports in the Atlantic region.
- Conduct a conceptual map of services provided by LGBTQ2S+ services, supports and information available provincially, regionally and nationally.
- Ongoing surveys on Two Spirit and indigenous LGBTQ demographics.
- Promote research and capturing data on LGBTQ and Two Spirits, such as the Regional Health Survey
- Research on the mental health distresses and supports for Two Spirits in the region and elsewhere in Canada.
- Provincial and Federal government agencies must provide funding for policy and research development of mental health supports for Two Spirits/LGBTQ and ALL youth in general.

2) Recommendations For Policy Development:

- Develop a suicide training module with Two Spirit and indigenous LGBTQ youth.
- Partner with LGBTQ2S+ organizations for information sharing about cultural specific needs for Two Spirits and indigenous LGBTQ youth.
- Develop cultural safe training with Two Spirit and indigenous LGBTQ content
- Build partnerships with health agencies and organizations for knowledge sharing opportunities, cultural awareness and safety, development of mental health supports specific for Two Spirits and indigenous LGBTQ youth, such as provincial health departments, federal funding agencies, and district/capital health departments.
- Provincial and Federal government agencies must provide funding for policy and research development of mental health supports for Two Spirits/LGBTQ and ALL youth in general.

3) Recommendations for Community Supports:

- Conduct a scan on mental health and addictions services.
- Expand Two Spirit and LGBTQ awareness to On Reserve health centres, addictions centres and youth groups.
- Develop cultural specific content about Two Spirit and LGBTQ that could be included in future curricula development and language learning to encourage cultural pride for youth.
- Target education and awareness campaigns about gender identity and sexuality, Two Spirit culture and LGBTQ pride to younger ages.

- Promote mandatory inclusion of Two Spirit/LGBTQ content at youth related gatherings and youth councils.
- Provide continuous youth empowerment and strong cultural identity education for cultural continuity.
- Federal government agencies must provide funding for policy and research development of all health supports for Two Spirits/LGBTQ and ALL youth in general.

4) Recommendations for Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance:

- Expand this research to emphasize On Reserve data and demographics.
- Seek core funding to operationalize W2SA as a support organization like other LGBTQ organizations with administrative and support staff.
- Continue to build partnerships with provincial and regional LGBTQ2S+ organizations for information sharing, knowledge networking and building supports for all youth initiatives.
- Provide continuous education and awareness campaigns about Two Spirit culture and identity in the region.
- Promote mandatory inclusion of Two Spirit/LGBTQ content at youth related gatherings and youth councils.
- Provide continuous youth empowerment and strong cultural identity education for cultural continuity.
- Lobby federal government agencies must provide funding for policy and research development of all health supports for Two Spirits/LGBTQ and ALL youth in general.
- Share this research.
- Do more research.

CONCLUSIONS

The Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance will mobilize this community evidence-based knowledge to continue to build relationships and partnerships with health sectors, support organizations and indigenous communities to develop strategies and policies to support Two Spirits and indigenous LGBTQ youth, adults and Elders in the Wabanaki traditional territory. This study is literally just scraping the surface about the wealth of knowledge that could/should be further researched about Two Spirits in Canada.

Two Spirits are one of the most resilient of indigenous groups due to historical and social traumas experienced by forced assimilation of patriarchal and heteronormative laws and policies (Canon, 1998) by colonialization practices, the Indian Act, and Indian Residential Schools. Their intragenerational effects are ongoing and deep rooted in current history. The effects in mental health and addictions for indigenous people including Two Spirits and indigenous LGBTQ people is known in our communities, but not necessarily researched. This study opens dialog about the reality of the challenges and hopes by Two Spirits in their coming out process.

The next process is for the W2SA to further analyze the findings about mental health distresses and conditions that are evidenced in both the surveys and interviews. This will require a more in depth understanding from a cultural perspective with our Wabanaki communities. This process would require time, space and funding to consult and validate the data and findings in a respectful and thoughtful way. This is not mere research protocol, but a deep need to reflect on cultural identity and culturally specific supports for Two Spirits through ongoing community building relationships.

This research was conducted on the spirit of hope that was mandated to the W2SA to capture the truth about coming out and its relation to suicide. This study provides that and much appreciated knowledge that can be mobilized for educational purposes and further research.

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Appendices

- Glossary of Terms Appendix 1
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Appendix 1 Glossary of Terms

Glossary of Terms

The following terms and their definitions are directly taken from the Egale’s final report: *Every Class in Every School: Final Report on the First National Climate Survey on Homophobia, Biphobia, and Transphobia in Canadian Schools* (Taylor, 2015). It is the most current published document in Canada. “Egale Canada Human Rights Trust is a national organization that conducts research and delivers educational programming on lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) human rights in Canada” (Ibid, pg. 4).

LGBTQ “stands for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Two Spirit, Queer and Questioning. These terms and the acronym “LGBTQ” are used in the study to refer to sexual orientations and gender identities that differ from the dominant cultural norms of cisgender heterosexuality” (Taylor, 2015, p. 5)

Bisexual: a person who is attracted physically and emotionally to both males and females.

Gay: a person who is physically and emotionally attracted to someone of the same sex—gay can include both males and females, or refer to males only

Lesbian: female who is attracted physically and emotionally to other females.

Queer: historically, a negative term for homosexuality, but more recently reclaimed by the LGBT movement to refer to itself— increasingly, the word “queer” is popularly used by LGBT youth as a positive way to refer to themselves gender expression to correspond with what they feel their true gender is.

Note: We use the term “trans” in this report for both transgender and transsexual in order to reflect the generally preferred term in the trans community.

Two Spirit: some Aboriginal people identify themselves as Two Spirit rather than as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender— historically, in many Aboriginal cultures twospirited persons were respected leaders and medicine people. Two-spirited persons were often accorded special status based upon their unique abilities to understand both male and female perspectives.

Gender Expression: the way a person publicly shows one’s gender identity through clothing, speech, body language, wearing of make-up and/or accessories and other forms of displaying masculinity or femininity.

Gender Identity: a person’s internal sense or feeling of being male or female—gender expression relates to how a person presents their sense of gender to the larger society. Gender identity and gender expression are often closely linked with the term transgender.

Perceived Sexual Orientation: when someone wrongly assumes that you are lesbian, gay, or bisexual without knowing what your true sexual orientation really is (heterosexual).

Sexual Identity/Orientation: a person’s deep-seated feelings of emotional and sexual attraction to another person— this may be with people of the same gender (lesbian or gay), the other gender (heterosexual/straight) or either gender (bisexual).

Questioning: a person who is unsure of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Straight/Heterosexual: a person who is sexually and emotionally attracted to someone of the “opposite” sex.

Transgender: a person whose gender identity, outward appearance, expression and/or anatomy does not fit into conventional expectations of male or female—often used as an umbrella term to represent a wide range of non-conforming gender identities and behaviours.

Transsexual: a person who experiences intense personal and emotional discomfort with their assigned birth gender—some transsexuals may undergo treatments (i.e., sex reassignment surgery and/or hormone therapy) to physically alter their body and gender expression to correspond with what they feel their true gender is Note: We use the term “trans” in this report for both transgender and transsexual in order to reflect the generally preferred term in the trans community.

Homophobia: fear and/or hatred of homosexuality in others, often exhibited by name-calling, bullying, exclusion, prejudice, discrimination, or acts of violence—anyone who is LGBTQ or assumed to be LGBTQ can be the target of homophobia.

¹ Mi’kmaw, a word ending with a “w” is understood to be an adjective of the word Mi’kmaq, while the word ending in a “q” is a stand-alone noun. Example: He is a Mi’kmaw (adjective) man. He is Mi’kmaq (noun).

¹ The geographical/cultural extent of the Mi’kmaq in the Maritime Provinces, Gaspé Peninsula of Quebec, Newfoundland and northeastern part of Maine, which is also the ecosystem that has developed a L’nuwey worldview.

Indigenous – indigenous is used as the identifier of original peoples from Canada, unless

aboriginal is used by others in their language use.

Aboriginal(s) – this word is capitalized throughout the report as a sign of respect from the report author.

Mi'kma'ki - Mi'kmaw territory which includes the four Atlantic provinces and the Gaspé region in Quebec. It may also be referred to as Wabanaki.

Mi'kmaw/Mi'kmaq – used alternately depending on its use. Mi'kmaq as a stand-alone is a noun: The Mi'kmaq live in Nova Scotia. If used as an adjective, then it becomes Mi'kmaw. The Mi'kmaw culture is vibrant in Nova Scotia.

LGBTQ2S+ - Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, 2 (Two) Spirits and + (for additional descriptors: questioning, asexual, pansexual, non-gender, non-binary).

Appendix 2 Online Survey

Appendix C: Background/Demographic Questionnaire

Questionnaire/Demographic Form: **Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada**

A Qualitative Study

Title of the Research: Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada - A Qualitative Study

Collaborator Institutions: Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network, Cape Breton University, Egale Canada, Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre, Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance (W2SA), Mount Saint Vincent University.

Investigators:

MA Candidate John R. Sylliboy (902-880-4337)
SJD Candidate Tuma Young (tuma_young@cbu.ca)
Research Assistant(s) TBD

Introduction

I am a graduate student under the supervision of co-investigator, Tuma Young, Professor at Cape Breton University. We are conducting a research study to better understand the coming out process of Two Spirited (LGBTQ Indigenous) in Atlantic Canada, including their stories

about resilience and coping mechanisms in coming to terms with self-acceptance and self-identity as LGBTQ-Two Spirited.

Purpose of the Research

The aim is to collect coming out narratives in order to relate coping strategies by Two Spirits in dealing with suicide ideation; this may include identifying physical, mental, emotional and spiritual supports for coming out for Two Spirited people.

Confidentiality

Your questionnaire responses will be confidential and they will be kept in a secure, locked location on the Cape Breton University campus. The interviewers will sign confidentiality agreements to protect you and your information.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire is designed to collect data on demographics about Two Spirited people in the Atlantic Canada. The questions are personal and sensitive in nature, but they are important to help our study to collect data on gender and sexuality, health concerns, resilience, mobility trends, and coming out experiences by Two Spirited people. We appreciate your support for our project.

Questions from #1 - #13 are demographics: status, income, education, health status, residence, mobility, gender and sexual identity.

1. What is your status as an Indigenous person?

Non-Aboriginal ___ (Stop Here)

Inuit ___ Innu ___ Métis ___

First Nations (status) – please specify Nation/band _____

First Nations (non-status) – please specify Nation/band _____

Other (please specify – e.g., Bill C-31) _____

2. Identify your age range?

18 – 25 _____ 26-35 _____ 36 – 45 _____ 46 -55 _____ 56 – 65 _____ 66-75 _____ 76+ _____

3. What is your highest level of education?

Grade 9 - 12, but not completed high school _____

High School Diploma _____ Some College/University _____

Completed College Certificate/Diploma _____ Completed University degree _____

Post-graduate or higher _____

4. What is your source of income? (Check all that apply)

Federal /Provincial Assistance (E.I., Social- assistance) ____

Full-time Work ____ Part-time Work ____ Casual Work ____

Student Funding (Band funding, Student Loan) ____

Sex Trade ____ Drug Trade ____ Supported by partner or family ____

5. What term would you use that best defines your sexuality?

Heterosexual/Straight ____ (Stop Here)

Gay ____ Lesbian ____ Bisexual (like both sexes) ____ Two-spirit ____ Queer ____

Unsure of my sexual orientation ____ Not defined ____ No answer ____

Other (please specify) _____

6. What word best describes your gender?

Female ____ Two Spirit ____

Male ____ Gender Queer ____

Transgender (male to female) ____ Transsexual ____

Transgender (female to male) ____ Intersex ____ Pansexual ____

Other (please specify) _____

7. What are your short/long term health concerns?

None ____ Diabetes ____ HIV ____ Hep C ____

Cancer ____ Tuberculosis ____ Weight Concerns ____ STI's ____

Other ____

8. Where do you live? (i.e. Halifax, Fredericton, reserve)

Most of the time _____

How long have you lived here? _____

Some of the time _____

How long have you lived here? _____

9. Do you live in your original home community/town/reserve/city?

Yes ___ No ___

10. Where did you move away from (choose one or more choices which apply)?

Home Yes _____ No _____

Neighbourhood Yes _____ No _____

Community Yes _____ No _____

Town Yes _____ No _____

Reserve Yes _____ No _____

City Yes _____ No _____

11. Why did you move?

Because of school (college, university, institute) Yes _____ No _____

Because of employment Yes _____ No _____

Because I didn't feel safe at home/community/Reserve Yes _____ No _____

Because my family moved Yes _____ No _____

Because my partner moved Yes _____ No _____

Other reason: _____

12. Did you ever have to move away from your home community because of your sexual or gender identity?

Yes _____ No _____

This question is specific for people who moved from the rural community/Reserve to the urban centre/city.

13. What supports did you have/look for when you moved away from your home community to the urban centre?

Friendship Centre _____ Shelter _____ Social Assistance _____ Employment _____

Friend supports _____ Partner supports _____ School funding _____

Note: In the following questions, the use of **Coming Out** and **Out** are in reference to being “openly LGBTQ-Two Spirited” or “living your life as an open Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Two Spirit.”

14. Are you “out”? Yes ___ No _____

**If you answer is “yes” to #14, please answer questions 15 – 20
If your answer is “no”, go to question 21.**

15. Are you “Out”?

To your Family? Yes ___ No ___

To you Friends? Yes ___ No _____

In your home community (City, Reserve)? Yes _____ No _____

At your work? Yes ___ No ___

At your place of school (high school, college, university, institute)? Yes ___ No _____

16. How old were you when you came out? _____

17. Was it your choice to come out? Yes _____ No _____

Explain: _____

18. Who did you come out to first?

Parent/Guardian/Grandparent? If yes, specify _____

Sibling _____ Cousin _____ Best Friend _____

Elder _____ Teacher _____ Health Professional (nurse, social worker) _____

Other _____

Why did you “come out” to this person? _____

19. What/Who were your supports for your coming out process?

Family (Parents, Grandparents, Siblings, Aunts/Uncles, Other family) _____

Community supports: Teacher ____ Health Care Professional _____ Support Group (LGBTQ/Two Spirit/GSA) _____

Community Health Supports (on Reserve, treatment, counseling) _____

City/Urban supports (helpline, health centre) _____

I dealt with "coming out" on my own _____

20. If you were to describe your coming out experience, would say it was?

Strongly Negative	Negative	Slightly Negative	Neutral	Slightly Positive	Positive	Strongly Positive

Other (specify) or describe more in detail: _____

–

21. Do you feel safe to be Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Two-Spirit? (choose all the apply)

At Home: Yes ____ No ____

In the Community (On Reserve): Yes ____ No ____

In the city where you live: Yes ____ No ____

At work: Yes ____ No ____

At school Yes ____ No ____

22. Have you thought about coming out? Yes ____ No ____

23. What prevents you from coming out?

I am scared Yes ____ No ____

I am not sure of my sexuality Yes ____ No ____

I don't feel I am ready Yes ____ No ____

I don't know how to come out Yes ____ No ____

I don't have supports (family, friends, Elder, community support people like social worker, teacher)

Yes _____ No _____

Other reason, please explain: _____

24. By coming out, I was/am scared of losing:

Family supports (economic, living situation, love) Yes _____ No _____

Community Supports (social, respect) Yes _____ No _____

Relationships (partner, friends) Yes _____ No _____

My job Yes _____ No _____

Other, please explain: _____

The following questions are very personal and you have no obligation to answer them. We want to assure you that the information will be kept confidential and anonymous. It is to help us understand if why people who are LGBTQ – Two Spirit think about suicide.

25. Have you ever thought about suicide? Yes _____ No _____ Prefer not to answer _____

26. Have you thought about suicide because of your sexuality? Yes _____ No _____ Prefer not to answer _____

27. Have you thought about suicide because of your gender? Yes _____ No _____ Prefer not to answer _____

28. Did you think about suicide before/during/after "Coming Out"? Yes _____ No _____ Prefer not to answer _____

29. What helped you cope with thought(s) of suicide? (Check all that apply)

Family _____ Friends _____ Community Supports _____ Health Supports _____

Elder _____ Helpline _____ Medication _____ I got through it on my own _____

Other, please explain _____

30. What Two Spirited (Indigenous LGBTQ) issues are priorities for research? (Check all that apply)

Mental Health _____ Education & Awareness _____ Suicide Prevention _____ Anti-bullying _____
Policy Development _____ Employment _____ Two Spirited culture _____

31. What were your living arrangements for the past 12 months?

Renting an house or apartment ___ Room & Board ___
Own a house or apartment ___ Sleeping on a couch or “couch surfing” ___
Streets ___ Bed in a Hostel ___
Correctional Institution ___ Live with Family/Friends ___

32. Do you have children? Yes _____ No _____

33. Do your children live with you? Yes _____ No _____

34. Did you attend a Residential School?

Yes _____ If yes, for how long? _____
No _____

35. Did your parents, guardians, grandparents or other relatives attend a Residential School? Yes _____ No _____ Don't Know _____

Mother _____ Father _____ Guardian(s) _____
Grandparents _____ Other relative _____

36. Have you ever-experienced domestic violence in a same sex/LGBTQ relationship?

Yes ___ No _____

37. Do you speak your Traditional Language?

Fluently ___
Knowledge of some of my traditional language _____

No ____

38. Do you participate in traditional cultural practices?

____ Yes ____ No

If yes, please check all that apply:

____ Dancing ____ drumming ____ singing

____ Spiritual practices ____ living on the land (hunting/gathering)

____ Medicines ____ ceremonies ____ language

____ Art Other _____

Appendix 3 Guided Interviews

APPENDIX B

Interview Guide: **Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada**
A Qualitative Study

Title of the Research: Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada - A Qualitative Study

Purpose of the Research

The aim is to collect coming out narratives in order to relate coping strategies by Two Spirits in dealing with suicide ideation; this may include identifying physical, mental, emotional and spiritual supports for coming out for Two Spirits.

Hello, my name is John R. Sylliboy (or name of research assistant), and I am here today because we are conducting a research study to better understand the coming out process of Two Spirited (LGBTQ Aboriginals) people in Atlantic Canada, including understanding the challenges and successes in that process.

We want to interview you about your coming out process. Is that ok with you? If you don't feel like staying for the whole session just let me know, you can stop at any time. Coming out is defined as a term to describe an individual who is freely open to live as gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer or two spirited.

Let's get started.

If you have read the information about the study topic, I have just a few questions about coming out and your experience in that process.

1. How do you self-identify? Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Two Spirit? Or any other specific preference?

2. Are you out? If yes, how old were you when you came out?
3. Who did you come out to first? (family, friends, teacher, social worker, other)
4. When did you decide to come out? How did you decide to come out? Could you provide details about this process?
5. Was it difficult to make the decision to come out? Did you have any fears about coming out?
6. Could you share your coming out story?

In the next three questions, describe your emotional, physical, mental and spiritual state before, during and after coming out. (**emotional**: sad, happy, scared - **physical**: fit, active, tired – **mental**: depressed, healthy, worried – **spiritual**: confused, lost, culturally-stable)?

7. How did you feel before coming out?
8. How did you feel during the process of coming out?
9. How did you feel after coming out?
10. Did your emotional, physical, mental and spiritual state change before and after you came out?
11. Did you have any supports in your coming out process? What were those supports?
Family - community/city health services, peer groups, access to services in the community or city for coming out?
12. Did you ever think you wouldn't ever come out? Why or why not?
13. What advice would you give a young Aboriginal person who wants to come out?
14. What is your role as a Two-spirit? Or what do you consider to be your future role?
Interests?
15. Are you fluent in your language?
16. Do you know any words to describe being gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender or two spirited in your language?
17. What is your role as a Two Spirit person? Prompt: How do you look at the role of Two Spirits?

We are talking to other youth, adults, and Elders. Once we collect everyone's ideas we will put it all together and then bring it back to share with you.

Thank you very much for taking the time to share your story and knowledge. In appreciation of your time, we are giving you a \$50 Gift Card.

Appendix 4 Narrative Themes

Title of the Research: Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada - A Qualitative Study Demographics and Theme Analysis

Code	Id.	Out?	Coming Out Age(s)	Came out to?	Supports?	Fears?	Suicide Ideation	Health Before Coming Out	Health After Coming Out	Relevant Characteristics/Ideas	Advice
2S01	2S, both male /fem.	yes	16 – bi 19 – gay	Brother mother	Sibling, family, therapist (off- Reserve) father was biggest support, no community supports	Rejection, fear of acceptance	Yes	Depression, moved around, partied,	empowered, felt in the right skin, found art as spirituality	Process: in the community, off the community and back in the community over 3 years. Needed to move away from the community, but eventually returned to finish the coming out process <u>Resilience</u> : found art and spirituality through art expression	Move away from home if it is not the right place to find yourself, find something that drives you
2S02	2S	Yes	15 (gr.9) 33	Teacher Grandma Friends Mother (2 nd time)	Grandma (home), friends, no nearby supports at the time besides the school counselor	Social stigma, rejection,	No	Apprehension, nervousness , uncertainty,	Relieved, wanted to be a mother	Process: ongoing and continuous over a span of years. Assessed the process before coming out and before making a move within the lgbtq community, aboriginals don't always fit in the mainstream lgbtq cultures, so this research is important, “you'll be always outing yourself, it will never end”	Find a mentor in the community or try to find services attuned to aboriginal communities, seek out a welcoming environment,
2S03	Gay (Lesbian is too harsh)	Yes	39	Daughter, siblings, parents, later friends		Fear of not knowing what her reaction would be, fear of being stigma, shared that the others have left the community when they were known to be gay – so she was afraid of being blacklisted like people in the 70s/80s. - also feared the church		Hiding was stressful, “it was like lugging a basket of nails on my back in a knapsack”	Huge relief	<u>Process</u> : thought about it since her early-mid 20s - told daughter first, then siblings, then parents, friends, then community “My daughter gave me strength” <u>Self-realization</u> : puberty kicked in, - during many years, she lived in the shadows and had “small affairs”, - then got married for a period of time. - “but I still kept looking at women. So I knew that somewhere down the line, I'm going to have to come forward and say, Yep, I know what I want.” - Community was accepting	
2S04	2S, Gay	Yes	19	First in the city, mother, family	Always felt safe at home, dressed up in front of aunts – grandma, access to	It was not difficult to come out, but he wanted to be accepted by the dad and in the	No	Anxious for reaction and to set the record straight,	Felt great and celebrated with closest friends	Process: outside of the community then back in the community over a year period. School, education was a way to move away to explore – and attend post- secondary	Self-identity is a personal matter therefore, you have to be very comfortable with yourself, “know your audience before you start to

					supports were minimal then, no community supports	community						perform"
2S05	Trans	Yes	15	Friends, Best Friend	Best friend, grandmother, no school supports, no community supports, tried to attend an urban support group but did not feel good either, receives health supports for transition	Fear of rejection, being kicked out, and abuse which all happened	Yes, attempt	Depression, anxious from the age of 8, felt abused by mother, cutting, emotionally a wreck, not eating,	Some of the behaviours continued because the abuse from the family and sibling continued, even though there was a sense of individual relieve, there were more abuses to face	Process: has been ongoing over 5+ years. Felt that self-harm (cutting and not eating) was a way of coping, coming out has been a 5-year long process that has been difficult Resilience: "I'm strong-minded and strong-willed too, so things will get better, it is just a bad chapter that I'm living – not my whole life"	Just make sure to have a strong support system, ease your parents into your transitioning process, ease your family into it, just take your time and test the waters, look for supports.	
2S06	2S	Yes	18	Friends, family	Friends and family, recognizes that there are no community supports, but that one could seek them outside	There were no fears, it felt natural to come out, but he did think about the younger generation and wondered what they would think	No	Since there were no fears, there was a sense of calm to come out	Felt relieved that everyone knew	Process: There was no ceremony or process. It was just simple one time event. The process was very natural and without incident, in fact, there were others who are older that commented that their coming out was much more difficult. He acknowledges that it is an evolving community: "I think it was just a shift in time...It just felt natural"	Recommends for young people to reach out to cultural teaching, elders	
2S07	Gay/2S	Yes	27, 30	Sister, Mother and family	Family and community	Fear of being isolated and not being with family, or rejection, but recognized that it would be difficult for this to happen to a First Nation person	No	Learned to fear outside the community – in urban centres, feared other environments, coming out affects one physically and emotionally	Felt relieved, took on activism, became involved	Coming out was a phase. Resilience: "I always look behind my back" to take care of myself, The process in the community was very accepting, although it was very new. "Depression can be treated, conditioned, monitored. But suicide can't"	Look for a good support person and the resources that are available. Recommendation: LGBTQ2S+ Rights should be taught; community people and parents need to be educated about Two Spirits as well. Two spirits awareness is needed and taught to children and Elders.	

2S08	Gay (easier to explain to straight friends)	Yes	17, 19	Best Friend, parents, at university	Friend, on campus supports and active counseling	Difficult decision to make to come out, fear of friend and family rejection, afraid of gossip,	Yes	Depression, anxiety, fear, drinking excessively, gaining weight, felt alone in the coming out process at the beginning until treatment was found through counselling	Felt "free" and stable, established a relationship – married, which cemented "my gay identity"	Process extended over a couple of years, where dating was continuous between men and women. Alcohol was used to come out in most situations, alcohol was also a coping mechanism in that aspect. "coming out is an ongoing process...but it was just like ripping off the band aid. I just needed to do it" . <u>Resilience</u> : look for alternative ways to address depression, aside from pharmaceutical approaches.	Get counselling if you need it, look for those resources, also look for alternatives to medical treatments (antidepressants) by looking for other ways to address supports
2S09	Trans - female	Yes	15, 19	Best friend/Cousin,		As a kid being teased, then later as a teen and during transition – fears were of guys hurting her.	Yes	As a gay male, it was difficult because there was depression or had to deal with people being negative towards the subtle expression of transitions around the ages between 16-18. "So it was like for me, it was like I couldn't really – it was like either I continue living on the road or I could commit suicide and it, because at that point in my life before, I transitioned, that's where it was, it was kind of on par with one another."	"I was happy about being open about who I was"	Process: began coming out as a gay male at first - then explored wearing make up and feminine clothing - "I always knew I was Trans – like I wanted to be transgender. I always knew I wanted to be the other gender from a very early age" "I used to when I went to sleep at night, I used to always, I remember I would always be like 'Please God, could you make me a girl? Like when I wake up in the morning, can you make me a girl?' It was never like, "Please God, could you make me straight when I wake up in the morning?' I wanted the total opposite. I wanted, "Can you please make me a girl, I don't want to be a boy!"	Share the stories and the process for others to understand.

2S10	Bi, trans, 2S	Yes	13, 17, 19	Parents, best friend	Parents and friends, she sought health supports in the first process, but she felt threatened by the counseling process. She has ongoing health supports for her transitioning process. Looks for supports and spaces within culture, language and teachings.	Fears of rejection, afraid of religious backlash, community rejection, not being accepted socially as a woman, fears for her mental health, continues to feel her health and well-being is threatened by the environment, unsafe places	Yes - attempt	Her fears affected the mental health and well-being in all aspects: suicide ideation, depression, fear, social anxiety,	Each coming out process offered a sense of relief, but there were added challenges as well. It was the 3 rd coming out process as trans that she finally felt a sense of truer identity. It was also the time of coming to understand two-spirit identity. "I feel complete with my identity but not with my culture"	Process: 3 stages of coming out 1) gay 2) bi 3) trans "My path is still on the way. So, I guess it's two years of coming out as two spirited and it's still spilling out. So. That's the 3 rd time I've come out. But the third time is the hardest because it is ongoing. <u>Resilience</u> : connecting to two-spirit and cultural teachings have provided a sense of spiritual connection, which have also gave her strength to deal with challenges.	Providing different spaces for people to feel comfortable and to be themselves is important. It could be indigenous-safe spaces on campus, our natural outdoor spaces for smudging, drumming, meditation, and for other spiritual/ceremonial practices. - provide networking supports, meetings, access to information about services.
2S11	Gay	Yes	16, 19	Friend, Mom	Felt safe in the family, there were no supports in the community, but was able to explore some in the city and on campus	Fear of stigma, cultural differences on the reserve	No	Felt sad due to a breakup	Pressure and anxiety went away – felt closer to his family and felt better about relationships around him, including about dating	The process was natural over dinner. Shared that there are people that leave the community to go to university who may feel that they can come out, perhaps as a beginning of their coming out process when they are away from home. They may come out individually, then later with the family – or community. It wasn't a planned process, it just happened. He also knew that he felt safe with the family because of the language that was used. Read a lot of information	Look for information about coming out and self-identity and the importance of being out. Peer support is important. Communities resources would be important. Younger people would benefit from mentoring from others...even Elders. The health centres should have people that knows about lgbtq supports and where to get them. There should be crisis supports as well.
2S12	Gay	Yes	12	Friend - lover	There were no supports except the fact that people didn't bother him. Family didn't say anything about him.	No fears, but it took time to build up courage.	No	He was aware that he was different. Prior to coming out, he was only afraid of being treated badly by his then lover.	The family was aware that he was in a relationship with another person – for nearly 20 years. They never interfered, but he felt that he established his boundaries from the get	"I knew that I wasn't going to go out with the women at all. So, I had to come out with somebody". He only came out to his best friend, who later became his lover. He never actually told anyone in the family. It was the late 60s and early 70s, so it was not talked about it, but they did say that it was his life anyway. They thought that he would get over it (as in a phase), which never happened. Both	Take your time to come out, drop hints. Don't force yourself in the process

									go.	families knew about the relationship. He felt protected by friends and family. He felt that protection was extended to anyone who came out afterwards. Later in life, he moved to the city and became very active in his partying and acting wild, until the sickness (AIDS) came about.	
2S13	Gay	Yes	57	Friend, mother, family	Friends were his support. No supports in the community or in the city. He felt that he didn't need any.	Fears of being judged and stigma prevented him from coming out sooner. Some family members looked down at gay people.	No	Felt it was time. Lived a life of denial and hiding. There was a lot of pressure to be straight.	"I'm more happy with myself".	Came out later. It was difficult to come out because he felt he was ready. In his earlier age, being gay was not talked about openly besides in gossip.	Look for supports or someone that will listen.
2S14	Sexual human being, Bi, pansexual, 2S	Yes	18, 22	Best friend, mom (family)	Friend. Then when the family knew, they were extremely supportive. Professional help through counselling.	Feared rejection. Feared to be labeled a pervert in the community.	Yes, even considered it	Suffered anxiety and depression. He felt he had to be cautious about talking about the topic because he felt that people were ignorant of anything lgbtq/two-spirit due to IRS.	Became quite spiritual, knew how to deal with the mental parts through counselling. Felt relieved. Knew how to deal with things.	Although he came out freely to a friend, it was forced in the second time with his family. He was outed by another person, which led to the second process. <u>Spiritual</u> : During the coming out process, spirituality helped to get away from negative thoughts. Wanted to learn more from a cultural perspective. Started to write and paint and look at music. Those are all ways to cope. Coming out was about dealing with himself and loving who he is.	<u>Resilience</u> : If one has to deal with various difficult things in their coming out process, then it is important to take time to heal as well. Get help. Took time to understand what was happening with his process.
2S15	Bi, 2S	Yes	17 & 21	Friend, other friends, family	Friends, parents, on campus supports as well.	Just cautious about going out alone, then learned fear later outside of the home.	No	Ok at first, but then he felt frustrated that some were bi-phobic	The process was like a river...fast, slow, over rocks, etc. - there were occasions when he felt discriminated within his own culture which caused anxiety, Coming out at work was not usually an issue, but folks needed to adjust.	Process: it kind of all just flowed "I didn't have to have a coming out discussion" in the initial process, but there were other times when he had to come out again when he moved to new places to live in other provinces and countries. <u>Cultural/spiritual identity</u> : re-grasping cultural identity, "getting back into my Grandfather's culture and it really helped me that way", then learning about 2S identity further made him understand the cultural connection	Recommendation: Queer Elder or older mentors would be great to know and talk to especially for people who life in the urban centres. Don't be fearful to reach out to those have been through it.
2S16	2S, non-gendered, queer	Yes	19 & 21 (late 70s, early 80s).	Best friend, later told an aunt,	Friend, but when he felt alone coming out as trans.	Fear for my career, fear of losing friends, fear of physical	No	Confused, no information or identity descriptors	There was many different occasions that he felt	"I was always different and I knew I was different and I knew there was something". <u>Process</u> : back and forth between genders, sexually	That a person needs to understand themselves... Recommendation:

	, pans ex.				Nurses were supportive, tried groups but he didn't quite fit in either, drag queens supported him,	altercations,		(gay and lesbian were the only ones), didn't trust others too much at work to uncover her/his identity, there were sodomy laws at the time, "I was confused. Mentally, I was a mess. Emotionally, I was a mess". Got married at 27 (back in the closet) and had children,	that he was alone facing the whole process, there were hardly any people who understood Trans life,	and physically, she/he was confused and was trying to find where to "fit" in (gym, sports, friends). Then, physicality was a way to try to fit in...running, weightlifting, competitive, etc. "I always felt that my spirit was just trying to seek a connection, so that I could understand it better". At 27, she went back into the closet and married,	the aboriginal community needs to be aware of people in similar lives, There are many interpretations of two-spirit, but it must be understood by the community. Look for a safe place that has the resources and the knowledge because it may be too hard to do it alone from the community.
2S17	Gay	Yes	27	Best friend/room-mate, rest of the friends	Family, friends, but felt there was no other place where there were other people like him (referring to being young) "when I was a little kid, I thought I was the only boy in the world that liked other boys".	Rejection, disappointing family,	No	Uptight, had to hide everything, depressed "I couldn't pretend anymore".	Felt better, emotionally and physically, the pressure was off and it made dealing with other issues easier, more relaxed, don't have to watch what you do all the time so much	"It wasn't a difficult decision to make, it was difficult doing it" "The more people I told, the easier it got". Process: came to a crossroads – marry or come out to himself, then to others (friend/family), later it was with co-workers.	Deal with stuff, be honest, pick a person who you think is the most open or accepting to share your thoughts about coming out.
2S18	2S	Yes	18, 20	Friends (other gay people), sister (who helped her to come out to the rest)	Only supports during the process were friends, later family was supportive. It wasn't talked about, but the support was felt at home. (It was the early 80s).	Not being accepted, afraid to lose family members	No	Felt she had supports so it did not feel it was a difficult decision to come out. Felt distanced from the family. Expressed a bit of nervousness in the coming out part, but not real fear.	It was a relief to come out. Felt that she needed assurance from other family members, which took time.	Process: moved away from the reserve for school, then told her sister, who then shared it with the family. Noticed that friend dynamics changed as with the relationship with certain family member. "But I did gain friends: I lost friends, I gained friends".	Recommendation: look towards your culture and spirituality, know who you are as an indigenous person, go to an Elder, - It is healthier to look within your culture for supports than it is to go out an party and drink. "I think it would be a more healthier way of coming out rather than going out partying, drinking and this and that. You know your roots to go by, I think it's important to have those roots first."
2S19	Lesbian	9	Yes	Sister, mother	Sister and mother, then other	Fears of being judged and getting	No	Was scared to tell her sister – felt	Felt relief once she came out to	Process: she told her sister first, who then told the mother. She shared that	Recommendation: talk to someone who you trust a lot.

					immediate family was supportive, but not the extended family so much. Later she looked for social/health supports, but was disappointed in their lack of knowledge/training, went to a school counsellor for other issues at school, there were also off-reserve supports.	beat up. Fears of being bullied at school.		terrified at the time. Later, the school coming out process was the most difficult as was the coming out with the rest of the family (cousins, aunts). Bullied at school often as an out lesbian with a partner.	the family. "I felt better but I was still scared about going to school" . Confidence grew in time. Sense of maturity played a part.	the family already "knew" and they just confirmed their love to her no matter what. The sister asked the mother, "what would you do if she came out gay to you"? the mother replied, "Well she's already gay. I already know. I'll still love her no matter what." Then that was kind of the end of it. So, my Mom knew and everyone else. It was just for me to come out" .	Just tell your mom or family if you can.
2S20	Lesbian	Yes	15, 24, 29,	Friend (gay), Mom (but wouldn't hear it) others, then Mom accepted at 29	Looked for supports everywhere, but mainly relied on close friends. Received support through the hospital and social workers (but felt that they didn't understand her situation).	Mixed feelings: not scared to come out in the community, but was scared to see the family reaction.	Yes, attempt	"Before I came out, I was lost" - continuously considered suicide, depressed, drugs were a contributing factor in the suicide ideation	"After I came out I was alright" . - mentions that it took 14 years in that process to get well	In her coming out, others often felt that her being lesbian was a product of the environment, which she had to clarify often that it wasn't – that she is who she is. <u>Process</u> : coming out was coming to terms with it herself, - then she first came out to her lover - but later she went back in the closet again/hiding because she was with a closeted woman. - then the final out process was when her mother told her that she knew that she was with the other woman as she was dying. - lastly come out as a couple <u>Resilience</u> : "That's it. Like, I'm tired of hiding and I'm tired of you guys wondering, and every time I told you guys, you didn't want to believe me. So, after all that it was like I'm doing it for me. I don't care if you guys want to be here for me or not." "What I did was wrong, but made me stronger. It made me realise a lot of stuff. I would never do it again. And they (youth) always think – well you got scars. I do. I didn't even cover them up. Because it's a reminder	Comments and Recommendations: "It takes long but you do get there" - stop hiding in the closet, you will be happier out of the closet.

											that I've been through everything possible; that I can't be brought down anymore. I already hit rock bottom and I fought back"
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Appendix 5 UAKN Research Proposal

Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance (W2SA) Funding Proposal

Part I Proposed Topic or Title

Coming Out Stories: Narratives by Two Spirits in Atlantic Canada

The goal of this proposal is to request \$15,000.00 from the Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network (UAKN) to fund a Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance’s research project which will gather, analyze and share experiences related to the concept of coming out of Aboriginals in Atlantic Canada.

Part II Research Proposal

The Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance was established to build supports in areas of health, culture, education, awareness and research on matters related to Two Spirit people in Atlantic Canada. W2SA began as a small group of volunteers in 2010 in Halifax, Nova Scotia. The Alliance grew in members and volunteers after a facebook page was started in 2011. It currently has 267 members on the facebook page. There is an Advisory Group, consisting of two co-chairs. In 2014, it established itself as an association, registered in Nova Scotia. However, it is a regional organization representing interests of all self-identified Two Spirits, covering Aboriginal/rural communities and urban people. The Alliance relies on health data from organizations like Egale Canada and Health Canada, which are not specific to social-cultural contexts of the Atlantic Two Spirited community. W2SA recognizes that there is little or no literature or research on Two Spirited people in Atlantic Canada. The Alliance urgently requires to conduct its own community-based research to address these gaps in knowledge with respect to Two Spirits in Atlantic Canada.

The Alliance aims to conduct research that will inform the development of supports for mental health and resilience, suicide prevention, Two Spirit cultural identity and awareness. These themes were identified as priorities at the 2011 Liscombe Two Spirited Gathering by more than 50 participants. In a Sharing Circle at the Gathering, participants expressed their sense of urgency for developing supports for Two Spirited youth. The Circle was a safe space and a source of healing for many individuals who openly talked about their lived experiences with suicidal ideation and behaviour because of being gay. (W2SA, Mawita'jik Puoinaq: A Gathering of 2

Spirited People!, 2011) The Circle provided a spirit of healing from sharing each other's stories. Participants and organizers witnessed how the individual experiences immediately transformed into an extremely potent collective voice of courage and resilience. This collective experience is what the participants at the Gathering would like others to experience as a means of hope for those who suffer from suicidal ideation. It was at the Liscombe Gathering that it was recommended that W2SA publish coming out stories. The document resulting from our research will be used to heighten awareness and increase knowledge sharing among Aboriginal communities, tribal organizations, First Nations education institutions and the public at large. Most importantly, the research process and resulting documentation will be a source of healing for those who are dealing with their own struggles with coming out.

The documented coming out experiences of Atlantic Two Spirit will provide a sense of guidance, hope and awareness to young people who struggle with self-identity and acceptance. (ANAC, 2002) In essence, their stories will be a collective voice of historical, social and cultural characteristics of coming out experiences among Two Spirits in Wabanaki territory³. (W2SA, Mawita'jik Puoinaq: A Gathering of Two-Spirited People, 2011) "Individual life stories are very much embedded in social relationships and structures and they are expressed in culturally specific forms; read carefully, they provide unique insights into the connections between individual life trajectories and collective forces and institutions beyond the individual." (Laslet, 2008, p. 3).

To summarize, our research into the coming out stories of two spirited Aboriginal persons living in communities and urban environments across the Atlantic region, will culminate in a publishable document titled "Coming Out of Atlantic Two Spirits" will provide a source of pride, empowerment and cultural identity, which are crucial for education, cultural awareness, and knowledge translation for the LGBTQ and non-LGBTQ communities in general.

A) Research Question:

There are four inter-related research questions:

1. What are the coming out stories of community and urban Aboriginals living in Atlantic Canada?
2. How can the findings from the proposed coming out stories and on-line survey deepen our understanding of the mental distress (despair, suicidal ideation) experienced by Two Spirits persons?
3. How can these coming out stories and survey data inform the development of supports for mental health and resilience, suicide prevention, Two Spirit cultural identity and awareness?
4. What quantitative and qualitative data do we have on mental resiliency and related determinants of Two Spirits persons living in Atlantic Canada? Where are the qualitative and quantitative data gaps & how might those data gaps be addressed?

³ Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance recognizes its territory to include Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Gaspé region in Quebec, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland & Labrador, and Maine which includes Penobscot, Passamaquoddy Nations, Mi'kmaq, Maliseet, Innu Nations and Inuit.

B) Rationale:

The W2SA would like to research the challenges Two Spirits face in communities/urban settings (TASSC, 2013) and coming out. Lesbian, gay, bisexual youth often suffer from mental health distress caused by stigmatized sexual identities. (Toomey, 2010). In support of Toomey's finding, there was a clear expression of despair and suicide ideation among Two Spirit individuals who spoke at the Liscombe Lodge Gathering.

The proposed research and analysis of coming out stories will explore if there is a correlation between Two Spirit individuals who suffer mental health distress, such as suicide ideation and behaviour associated and being gay. In this case, mental health distresses can also be perceived as a lack self-acceptance, social stigmatization, and or a lack of health and social supports.

The impetus behind this perceived⁴ need to further explore the theme of mental resiliency in coming out stories was in part due to continued numbers of successful and attempted suicides in Atlantic First Nations, and a further observation that it is conceivable that some of these suicides and attempts are from individuals struggling with their sexual orientation.

Egale is Canadian national charity which promotes lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans (LGBT) human rights through research, education and community engagement. It shares the following data on suicide.

Every year, an average of five hundred Canadian youth take their own life (Statistics Canada, 2008).1 What is unknown, however, is how many of these youth identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, Two Spirit or queer, or are struggling with questions about their sexual orientation or gender identity (LGBTQ).2 What is apparent today is that LGBTQ youth experience a high degree of vulnerability to suicidal ideation and behaviour, both in Canada and the United States, particularly in comparison to their non-LGBTQ peers: approximately half of LGBT youth have thought about suicide, and they are over four times more likely to attempt suicide than their non-LGBT peers (cf. Eisenberg and Resnick 2006; Scanlon et al. 2010; Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2009). Nonetheless, LGBTQ youth are routinely and systemically ignored in research, education, and health and social service programming related to suicide prevention. This reality precipitates an urgent need for action and partnerships among researchers, educators, service providers, practitioners, LGBTQ community and youth agencies, policy makers and decision makers. (Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, 2012)

There is no specific data in Atlantic Canada with respect to health, education and socio-economic determinants among Two Spirit people (W2SA, Mawita'jik Puoinaq: A Gathering of Two-Spirited People, 2011) This lack of data augments the need to further explore through research or other fact finding missions ways to build supports among our Aboriginal communities and service providers. There is a lack of orientation data being collected in general. (Hottes, 2014) Hottes also states that there is probably an undercount in the number of suicides among gay and bisexual in autopsy studies. The implications for not having evidence based data about Atlantic

⁴ This is "perceived" because there is only evidence based on stories told by members of one community to the reason why four young people committed suicide.

Two Spirits puts the W2SA in a disadvantage for lobbying for services for health and education supports, or even developing strategies for suicide prevention.

The Aboriginal population is the fastest growing demographic in Canada, yet it remains to be a vulnerable population due to historical and ongoing effects of colonization and Indian Residential Schools which resulted in inequitable social-economic development in health and education. (Loppie & Wien, 2009) By not addressing health inequities for Aboriginals, there is a chance they will “likely result in a great burden of ill health,” (Latimer, 2014, p. 25) which Latimer states continues to put Aboriginals at disadvantage. The gathering of much needed data and sharing coming out stories of Two Spirits in Wabanaki territory will reveal what Maynes identifies as “historical and social dynamic that has been deliberately silenced.” (Maynes, 2008, p. 9)

There is a growing population of Aboriginals in urban centres in Canada who are seeking better opportunities for employment, education and amenities provided in larger urban centres. (Ristock, September 2011). According to this study, this is not the only reason why Two Spirits move to the urban centres. This Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study (UAPS) reported evidence that “Two Spirit youth in their sample moved to the city to avoid homophobia and seek a better life.” (Ibid, p. 6)

This correlates with experiences shared by Two Spirits from the Liscombe Lode in 2011. It was expressed by the participants that many faced hardships in their home communities because of contrasting values with respect to being Two Spirits because of religion, misappropriation of cultural beliefs and homophobia. (Centre, 2012) Many individuals felt pressure to leave their families and communities to find their true identity in safer environments often found in the urban settings. (Lerat, March 2004) It begs to question whether youth face forced mobility due to family and community pressure to conform to heteronormative expectations. The hope is that coming out stories will provide data for this as well.

Aboriginal youth who dealt with homophobia in their home communities and migrate to the cities often face added health, social and economic distresses. Youth face hardships in getting proper housing, acquiring proper services for health, in developing their skills & training for employment preparedness and education. Then there is the added discrimination Aboriginal youth face due to racism. (TASSC, 2013) There are endless cycles. Nevertheless, these are not necessarily negative factors according to one report, which states that these experiences provide youth a sense of resilience and survival skills to face life challenges, which are required to live in the urban centres as Two Spirits. (Ristock, September 2011)

Coming out stories are a part of a plan for social action to deconstruct the social ills of homophobia, stigmatization and inequitable health supports for Two Spirits. The stories will be a collective voice for its narrators. These life stories will then be part of a social reconstruct which needs to occur in order for Two Spirits to relinquish social stigmatization and begin their process of self-acceptance, both individually and as a community.

The expected outcome is that Coming Out Stories will shed light on the Two Spirits' struggles with homophobia, suicide ideation, health inequalities for Aboriginal youth and include their stories of courage, pride, resilience and positive experiences for coming out.

The Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance is on a mission to provide education on Two Spirit culture in order to provide much needed supports for youth who come out. Education about Two Spirit culture in urban centres will maintain a sense of cultural connect for youth, which would only aid in their coming to accept their Two Spiritedness.

The research on Two Spirits in Atlantic Canada will provide Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance evidence-based data for policy development and lobbying. It will also assist the Alliance and others in establishing priorities for health, education and cultural awareness building and research.

C) Relevant Background Literature:

Aboriginal youth in Canada are suffering from staggering rates of suicide (Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, 2012), mental health (Hottes, 2014) and alcohol consumption (W2SA, Mawita'jik Puoinaq: A Gathering of 2 Spirited People!, 2011) (McMullin, 2004) and depression (Loppie & Wien, 2009), just to name a few. Although there is increasing data on health determinants among Aboriginals in Canada to identify gaps and their needs for health supports, there is no research for Two Spirit individuals in Atlantic Canada. (W2SA, Mawita'jik Puoinaq: A Gathering of Two-Spirited People, 2011).

The opportunity to share coming out stories from the Atlantic Two Spirits provides a source of documentation of historical and cultural contexts of sexual identity of Aboriginals in this region "often designed to reveal the damage inflicted by blatant homophobia suffered by homosexuals, or the more veiled dynamics of the heteronormativity." (Maynes, 2008, p. 7)

The majority of the Liscombe Gathering participants volunteered to be a part of this project. Sharing their experiences is a way to extend their support to the younger generations who are struggling with identity. (McNaron, 2005)

The reality of suicide is a continuing dilemma among LGBTQ (Hottes, 2014) and for Aboriginal youth (Canada, 2012), nevertheless this research is also about providing hope for people who may feel alone, isolated and desperate in their process in coming to terms with their self-identity as Two Spirits. Hottes research is relevant in that suicide is comparable to the leading cause of death to HIV/AIDS among gay and bisexual men, which seems to show a correlation to what Two Spirits may be facing. The W2SA aims to research if there is a correlation for Two Spirits in Atlantic Canada.

D) Methodology:

This research is community based and uses a mixed methodology to mean both quantitative and qualitative methods. There is strength in this approach: the qualitative data (interviews & focus groups) will enable us to identify emergent themes/issues; the quantitative (the survey) will enable us to quantify the prevalence of those themes/issues.

Components of the mixed methodology approach to include: Quantitative Data: literature review, gathering narratives about “coming out”, narrative analysis and meta-analysis and final report.

Quantitative Data includes: on-line survey and interviews

1. Qualitative Data: The process by which W2SA will gather stories is through narrative inquiry, where participants will tell their stories. Narrative analysis will provide researchers a means to reconstruct contexts of time and space for the stories. 30 key informant interviews will be conducted in Atlantic Canada. The numbers will vary according to each province, but emphasis will be put on equal distribution between Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, PEI, and NL. Data will be analysed by lead researchers which in turn will be shared with the research team and focus group comprised of W2SA senior advisory members, youth representatives, community and urban participants. Each stage of the research, including gathering stories, surveying, data analysis, final reporting and knowledge translation will be an ongoing process involving team researchers, Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance and stakeholders to keep in line with participatory action research.

Implementing participatory action research is a logical approach to understanding and developing perspectives on the concept of Two Spirit in Mi’kmaq and Maliseet. The importance of giving voice from the Two Spirit community in Atlantic Canada is a powerful process of empowerment for social change. Youth will have an opportunity to share their stories faced in the current settings; adults will share their challenges faced in their communities and/or urban areas; and Elders will provide a deeper sense of historical context to being Two Spirits in the communities.

PAR as a community-based approach will ensure that “...voices of the participants become central elements in the research and their initiatives guide the process of change.” (Topshee, 2011). This research incorporates elements of community perspectives, participants’ lived experiences, stories, focus groups, research team all working with the lead researchers to ensure a community-based approach to research.

1.1. Literature Review:

John R. Sylliboy, a Mount Saint Vincent University Masters candidate, will conduct a literature review of Two Spirit identity, culture and concepts related to LGBTQ theory and its relation with Aboriginal contexts in academic journals, books, and any relevant documentation found in Canada and elsewhere. The literature review for this project will be integrated into the literature review required for his Masters thesis in Educational Foundations.

1.2. Coming Out Stories: Gathering Narratives

The Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance will gather coming out stories from volunteers who expressed interest to share their coming out experiences for publication and research. The participants will be from Atlantic Canada. There will be a call out for participants of self-identified Two Spirits with postings on facebook, Native Friendship Centres, community health centres, and other social media.

The stories will be gathered as oral history interviews, mainly autobiographical involving each participant own lived experiences in a process of composing annals and chronicles (Clandinin, 2000). This process will enable the narratives to come together in similar light where individual experiences will develop into a common experience in the Atlantic region. Consent forms and interview guide questions will be provided when this proposal is submitted to respective ethics.

There are participants who will provide their own autobiographical accounts of their coming out stories, which would be used as research texts. (IBID) Similarly, coming out stories without applying oral history interviews can be analyzed to achieve the same objective to construct a collective story.

1.3. Narrative Analysis:

Narrative analysis would provide a wealth of understanding on what coming out (Brown, 2011) is to Atlantic Two Spirit youth. It would also identify how social – cultural and environmental contexts play a role in determining how the process of coming out is among Aboriginals. Personal narratives is a potent source of framing historical, cultural, time and spatial realities of individual's lived experiences (Maynes, 2008). The narratives will include lived experiences by all who participate including the autobiographical experiences by its researchers (Clandinin, 2000) to give a sense of wholeness representing Two Spirits in Atlantic Canada.

According to Brown, coming out stories could be analyzed using an intersectional framework especially with respect to class, gender and race. The most important consideration using narrative analysis is the how the story is told from Two Spirits as actors who live through levels of narratives: individual, interpersonal, institutional, cultural and social.

Qualitative Data:

1. Survey

W2SA will conduct an online survey among the members of the Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance. The survey will need to be developed in coordination with focus groups including Elders, youth, Two Spirit members and the urban community. The sample size for the survey is 40-50 participants from the Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance members list on facebook. The survey will also be distributed through the Atlantic members of the Association of Friendship Centres via the Halifax Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre. Finally, the survey will be distributed by the Mount Saint Vincent University Aboriginal Student Centre to the Atlantic Aboriginal Advisory Networking Group (AAANG) among its fellow post-secondary institutions in Atlantic Canada which are members. This would provide an intersectionality between urban, on Reserve, student, and adult samples.

The survey is to gather data, not only to identify coming out processes and characteristics, but identify associated themes when coming out among Two Spirits in Atlantic Canada. What are the common experiences in process, supports, and reasons why and how individuals come out? It is

essential to research on why individuals find it so difficult to come out, which in turn will provide W2SA direction to where to build supports to aid in this process for Two Spirits. It is also vital to know what coping mechanisms are identified and why individuals felt safe to come out. The following are questions to keep in mind for the survey. They will be further developed through focus group and research team meeting discussions as part of PAR.

1. How is the concept of Two Spirit explained in Mi'kmaq or in Maliseet? (Historical contexts, contemporary roles, traditional roles, spirituality, etc.)
2. What were/are the coping mechanisms used by Two Spirit individuals who face suicide ideation? How prevalent is suicide ideation among Two Spirits?
3. What are the common challenges faced by Two Spirits in Atlantic Canada? (Bullying, discrimination, abuse, etc.)
4. Are there any education, health, and/or social supports for Two Spirits in urban centres to help with their coming out process?
5. Are there common narratives based on demographics (age, gender) in coming out processes?
6. What were the steps/stages/processes involved in coming out?
7. What made you feel safe to come out? (Setting, supports, life occurrence, preparation, etc.)
8. What are the common FAB experiences for coming out? There is far too hype around the negative experiences associated with coming out, there has to be a celebration of wonderful experiences when coming out.

1.2. Meta-analysis

The data will be grouped and analyzed into common themes in the hope of providing a story on the process of Coming Out, including abovementioned themes with respect to Atlantic Two Spirits.

4. Focus Groups:

Two Spirit participants will take part in the discussion to identify its concept of what it is to be Two Spirit in Atlantic Canada. The opportunity will be provided to explore the concept of coming out from Wabanaki (Mi'kmaq, Maliseet, Inuit, Innu, Passamaquoddy and Penobscot) perspectives. Spiritual teachings and culture for Aboriginals “involves intimate and endless talks with elders and relatives, and is a process that takes patience and prudence.” (Battiste). This process is true for learning about Two Spirit cultures of the Wabanaki Nations. The dialogue needs to begin. Focus groups will provide direction in that sense. There is no guarantee if the concept will be fully explained or even conceptualized using Mi'kmaq or Maliseet, but the discussions will begin.

The process of engaging Elders in focus groups is mainly to begin the discussion to identify what the concept of Two Spirit is in Mi'kmaq and Maliseet. It is important to provide a historical context about various terms used in English to describe Two Spirits. Currently, there is a cultural appropriation of the concept of Two Spirit, which is homogeneous in North American Aboriginals. An expected outcome is to learn through discussions in focus groups what oral traditions teach about Two Spirit culture in the Atlantic region. This method is an excellent way to engage community based research in spirit of PAR.

Potential subthemes: transgender, gender, queer culture, homophobia, and Two Spirit cultural appropriation

5. Meta-Analysis and Report

The final stages of the research will be to observe the findings from the previous stages of research. Lead researchers will provide the focus groups their findings for further group analysis and feedback before drafting the report. The report will drafted by the lead researchers, which will be a back and forth process with all participants involved on the research, as expected of participatory action research.

6. TCPS2 Research Agreement:

A TCPS2 Research Agreement will be entered into by Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network, Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance and the Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre, prior to the REB submission to the following institutions: Cape Breton University, Mount Saint Vincent University, and Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch. The TCPS2 RA will set out who owns the data, how it can be used, how it is to be stored and so on.

7. REB/Ethics Process.

The research project will submit to the Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch (MEW) and Mi'kmaq Confederacy of Prince Edward Island (MCPEI), prior to submitting to the Mount Saint Vincent University and the Cape Breton University ethics.

The project will engage with both urban and community Aboriginals in the Atlantic Provinces, therefore, it must respect the research protocol established by respective universities as well as existing community research protocols under the MEW and Mi'kmaq Confederacy Ethics Review Committee.

E) Research Timeline:

UAKN RESEARCH PROJECT: COMING OUT STORIES: TWO SPIRIT NARRATIVES IN ATLANTIC CANADA												
Phase 1: Gather 'coming out' stories from Atlantic Two Spirited people		2014			2015				2015			
		Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.
Activity												
1.1	Submit UAKN Research Proposal	X	X	X								
1.2	Ethics submission to MEW/CBU/MSVU/UAKN				X	X						

1.3	Research Team, Focus Group and RAs meeting in Halifax					X			X			X
1.4	Test interview discussions and surveys among research team					X						
1.5	Recruitment/Info. sessions: W2SA, Social media, Friendship Centres, Universities, Aboriginal communities					X	X					
1.6	Literature Review					X	X					
1.7	Data collection via interviews and surveys						X	X	X			
1.8	Data analysis, Draft Report and Feedback session with Focus Group								X			
1.9	Final Report, Draft book publication,								X	X	X	
1.1	Final publication of Coming Out Stories										X	X

Phase 2: Dissemination and Knowledge Sharing Strategy		2015			2015				2015			
		Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.
Activity												
2.1	Report and Book Launch at the W2SA Regional Gathering									X		
2.2	Book publication will be distributed to urban and Aboriginal community health and education centres									X	X	X
2.3	Report will be shared at the Atlantic First Nations Health Conference, Atlantic Health Directors meeting, B.C Gay Men's Health Summit									X	X	X
2.4	Research Dissemination Sessions: Atlantic Friendship Centres									X	X	X
2.5	Focus Group: continuous involvement throughout the duration of the project	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

F) Plans for Dissemination:

There is a need for cultural continuity or “traditional intergenerational connectedness, which is maintained through intact families and the engagement of elders, who pass traditions to subsequent generations” (Loppie & Wien, 2009, p. 18). The Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance encourages the re-rooting of Two Spirit culture and pride among the Aboriginal community – both rural and urban, in order for cultural continuity to nourish and nurture our youth, young adults and Two Spirits in Atlantic Canada. This is the base of building knowledge and developing supports for youth.

The “Passing of the Crown” as Tuma Young put it at the Mawita’jik Puonaq Gathering, is part of knowledge translation where younger Two Spirits who witness any ceremonial or cultural events at Gatherings are expected to pass on knowledge to the next generations. In fact, there was a ceremony that incorporated oral tradition as the form of recording the events of the Gathering, which is expected to be shared in the following Gathering. The Liscombe Gathering was recorded through oral tradition and as a written document through report writing. A ceremonial blanket was wrapped around a participant who was chosen or nominated to “witness” the event. This was agreed to be used at Gatherings as a cultural teaching. This is one of the most important components that this project will continue to use. The importance of involving Elders, youth and knowledge holders is part of the tradition.

In addition to oral tradition, there will be the following for knowledge translation:

- Gathering of Stories in the form of a published document. The objective is to publish a coming out stories book by Wabanaki Two Spirits. There will be a launch of the book at the next regional Two Spirit Gathering scheduled for mid-2015. The book will also be launched in each of the four provinces largest urban centres through the friendship centres in Halifax, N.S, St. John’s, NL, Fredericton, N.B., and Charlottetown, P.E.I.
- W2SA will coordinate workshops to coincide with the launching of the book, in order to provide an opportunity to provide awareness and share cultural knowledge about Atlantic Two Spirits. The target populations will be urban Aboriginal populations, health service providers and health policy advisors in the four provinces. These workshops will be excellent opportunities for providing cultural competency on Two Spirit culture, build partnerships among urban Aboriginal populations and develop ideas for further research.
- There will be a final report from the research project.
- The final report and the book will be shared with all Aboriginal communities’ schools, health centres and mental health and wellness support centres, tribal organizations, Friendship Centres and post-secondary institutions in downloadable format. Hard copies will be disseminated to both community health centres and Friendship Centres in Atlantic Canada.

- W2SA will provide a presentation at the annual Atlantic First Nations Health Conference hosted by Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Secretariat and to the Atlantic First Nations Health Directors
- W2SA will provide a workshops on the research project at the principal Friendship Centres in the Atlantic via members throughout the Wabanaki territory.
- Research findings will be disseminated at a regional Gathering in 2015, where the book will be launched.

G) Budget: Total Costs for Research Process

W2SA will use this funding during the remaining fiscal year with the hope to submit funding proposals to complete the research.

Facilitation	1,000.00
Team Meetings	2,500.00
Transportation	2,500.00
Interviews	3,000.00
Researchers (2)	6,000.00
Totals	\$15,000.00

Part III Criteria

A) Research Team:

- Academic co-applicant: Tuma Young, Assistant Professor, Political Science and Indigenous Studies, Unama'ki College of Cape Breton
- Emerging Urban Aboriginal Scholar: John R. Sylliboy, Masters Student in Educational Foundations, Mount Saint Vincent University
- Elders: Walter Johnson and/or Kenny Prosper, Urban Halifax residents
- Government Representative: Diane Rowe, Nova Scotia, Department of Justice, Legal Services Division
- Urban Aboriginal community organization: Pam Glode-Derosche, Executive Director, Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre, Halifax
- Youth Representatives: Jeremy Dutcher, W2SA Co-Chair & Egale Native Outreach worker, Toronto, Ontario and Mitchell Syvret-Caplin, 3rd Year Student, Honours Psychology, Major Criminology, St. Thomas University, Fredericton, New Brunswick. Caplin,

- Community Representatives and Senior W2SA Advisory members: Band Councillor Alan Polchies Jr., St. Mary's First Nation, Gabe Pictou, Bear River First Nation – Urban Halifax resident.

B) Project Partnership Profiles:

1. The Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre is a project partner with this research. It will recommend a person to be part of the focus group and research team. The Friendship Centre is the link for Aboriginals in the Halifax Regional Municipality to urban supports. It provides supports for: training and skills development, adult education and upgrading, day care, housing and counseling services for addictions. The Friendship Centre provides a voice for Aboriginals in Halifax for various social, economic and cultural needs.

2. Cape Breton University is a partner by supporting Tuma Young as the co-applicant and lead researcher. CBU houses the Unama'ki College of Cape Breton has developed Aboriginal programming for approximately 30 years. It demonstrates leadership in development of innovative supports for Aboriginal students on campus, including delivery of programs both in Mi'kmaw communities, which eventually transition to campus studies. It is the university with the most of amount of Aboriginal faculty in the Atlantic region.

3. Egale gave a letter of support for Jeremy Dutcher who will also be part of the research team. Egale Human Rights Trust has extended support and interest in the Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance since its beginning. The organization has invited W2SA to present at their youth suicide summit, which led to the hiring Jeremy Dutcher as Egale's Aboriginal Outreach worker. Egale is Canadian national charity which promotes lesbian, gay, bisexual, and trans (LGBT) human rights through research, education and community engagement. Its main offices are located in Toronto.

4. Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU) is currently in development of supports for Aboriginal students on campus. Its project, *Engaging Aboriginal Communities Through Education: A Consultation on Post-Secondary Education Needs*⁵ led by John R. Sylliboy. MSVU partnered with 8 Mi'kmaw nations in Nova Scotia to identify their post-secondary education needs. In the last four years, MSVU has made important steps to build its ties with the Aboriginal community. Its Aboriginal population has tripled in three years, since it kept data on self-identified Aboriginal students. It provides an Aboriginal Student Centre on campus, which has offered space to host research meetings and space to conduct the coming out conversation sessions for this research project.

There will be more partnership building on this project with regional and national projects including:

- Community-Based Research Centre for Gay Men's Health with expressed support from Rick Marchand, PhD

⁵ See link for the report:

<http://www.msvu.ca/site/media/msvu/Documents/FINAL%20REPORT%20Engaging%20Aboriginal%20Communities%20Through%20Education.pdf>

- Healing Our Nations
- National Association of Friendship Centres
- Mount Saint Vincent University will need to approve this research project as a Master's thesis for John R. Sylliboy.

C) Community Partners Identified:

Community Partners

- Mi'kmaq Native Friendship Centre - representing the urban community
- Healing Our Nations – tribal organization
- Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance – regional organization in Atlantic Canada
- Cape Breton University – academic institution
- Mount Saint Vincent University – academic institution
- Province of Nova Scotia – government

Letters of Support

- Mi'kmaq Friendship Centre
- Healing Our Nations
- Cape Breton University
- Egale Canada Human Rights Trust
- Diane Row as Public Government employee, Nova Scotia Department of Justice, Legal Services Division

E) Reflection of UAKN Research Themes:

Human Development

Needs and outcomes of families and communities

It is a fact that the Aboriginals are at higher risk of suicide than non-Aboriginal youth in Canada. (Canada, 2012). It is also known that LGBTQ youth are at higher risk of suicide in Canada than its non-LGBTQ counterparts. (Egale Canada Human Rights Trust, 2012) These two realities combined paint a dramatic picture for Aboriginal youth across Canada. The knowledge gained from this research project will benefit everyone from families to communities and urban Aboriginal Two Spirits.

The importance of gathering data on Two Spirit youth in Atlantic Canada with respect to mental health and wellness, depression, and suicide is essential to develop supports and strategies for Two Spirits in the region. Families and communities will benefit both.

Social Cohesion

Community well-being, justice and education.

The project **Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada** is to build awareness and supports for First Nations, Inuit and Métis who are struggling with their own coming out processes and self-identity as Two Spirits. The expected outcome is to gather narratives: oral and/or written from Two Spirits to publish a book. This research and publishing of a “coming out” book is a source of education and justice for those who have long suffered with social stigmatization as Two Spirits, who often have been displaced from their true identify and home communities.

F) Contribution to urban Aboriginal policy, community development and well-being as well as scholarly knowledge

The research project is a first step in developing future policy on Two Spirit matters in the Atlantic region.

There are numerous opportunities to expand on research to many directions stemming from this potential research. The immediate result will be that one of the lead researchers will be using elements from this project for his thesis at Mount Saint Vincent University.

G) UAKN Guiding Ethical Principles

Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance will adhere to the ethical principles outlined by the OCAP, Mi’kmaw Ethics Watch (MEW), research ethic boards at Cape Breton University and Mount Saint Vincent University and the guiding principles followed by the Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network research guidelines.

H) Community-based Researchers/Student Researcher

The research team will include a focus group, research team and a Masters candidate as researcher on this process. One of the objectives is to invite post-secondary students to participate as research assistants for recording and transcriptions of the stories.

Refer to Part A to get a full list of researchers.

Part IV Intended Audience

The intended audience is first and foremost Two Spirits in the Atlantic Region, who have shared their stories in order to provide a voice to empower other youth in their coming out and their process of self-acceptance as Two Spirits.

Audience also includes Aboriginals in urban and community settings, especially who provide health, education and social services for Two Spirits. Policy makers and leadership will benefit from the awareness campaign which will be part of the dissemination process.

The general audience such as educators, youth advocates, aspiring Two Spirit leaders, mainstream LGBTQ groups in the Atlantic and grassroots organizations will benefit from knowing who Two Spirits are.

Finally, provincial and federal sectors will be intended audiences because they are stakeholders, partners and funding supports for development of projects for the Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance.

Part V Primary Researcher/Co-applicant

Primary Researcher

John R. Sylliboy

Consultant and Co-Founder of Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance (W2SA)

6285 Almon St. Halifax, NS, B3L 1V1

johnrsylliboy@gmail.com

902-880-4337

Co-applicant Primary Researcher

Tuma Young

Associate Professor, Cape Breton University

47 Englewood Crescent, Sydney, NS, B1S 3LB

tumayoung@me.com

902-999-1938

Part VI Partner Information

1. The Mi'kmaw Friendship Centre is a project partner with this research. It will recommend a person to be part of the focus group and research team. It will also be a central location to host research team meetings.

2. Cape Breton University is a partner by supporting Tuma Young as the co-applicant and lead researcher. Cape Breton University has a long standing history of supporting research among Aboriginal interests, especially in the Cape Breton region with the Mi'kmaq.

3. Egale gave a letter of support for Jeremy Dutcher, who will also be part of the research team. Egale has been a partner and supporter of Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance's projects for building supports for Two Spirits in Atlantic Canada.

4. Mount Saint Vincent University's Aboriginal Student Centre (SAC) has offered meeting space to host meetings, focus groups and interviews for the duration of the project. A letter of support will be provided.

5. Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance has support by Healing Our Nations, Atlantic Policy Congress of First Nations Chiefs Secretariat and the Atlantic Aboriginal Advisory Networking Group (AAANG), which is in process of collecting letters of support.

Part VII Partnership Funding

The Wabanaki Two Spirit Alliance is currently submitting funding proposals to regional and national organizations, including First Nations Inuit Health Branch, Health Canada and UAKN.

References

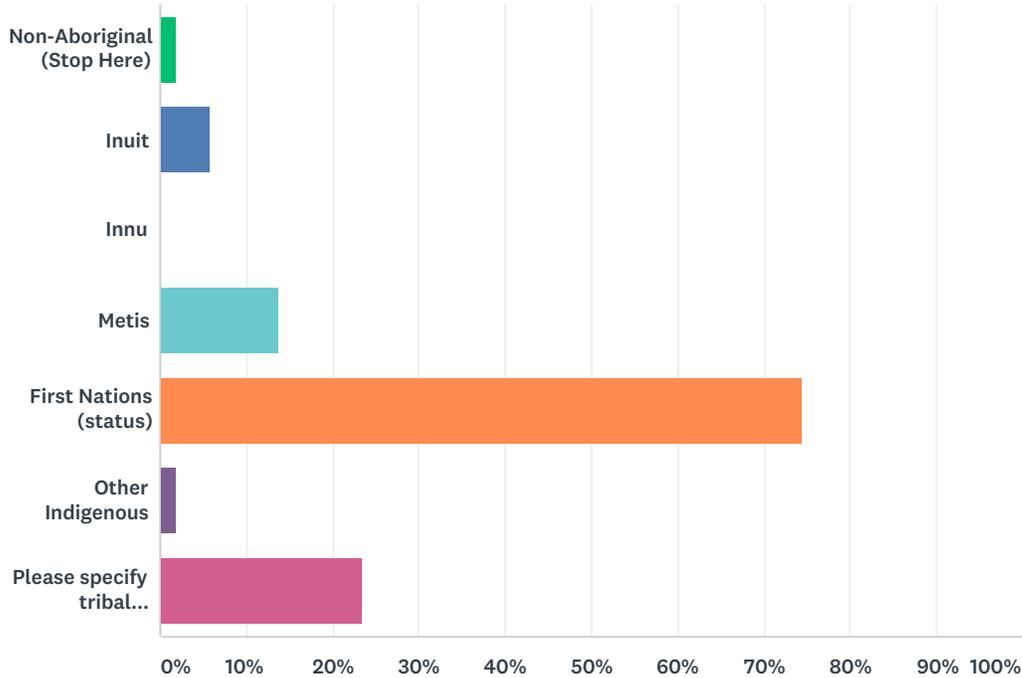
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Appendix 6 Online Survey Data

Q1 What is your status as an Indigenous person?

Answered: 51 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Non-Aboriginal (Stop Here)	1.96%	1
Inuit	5.88%	3
Innu	0.00%	0
Metis	13.73%	7
First Nations (status)	74.51%	38
Other Indigenous	1.96%	1
Please specify tribal affiliation:	23.53%	12
Total Respondents: 51		

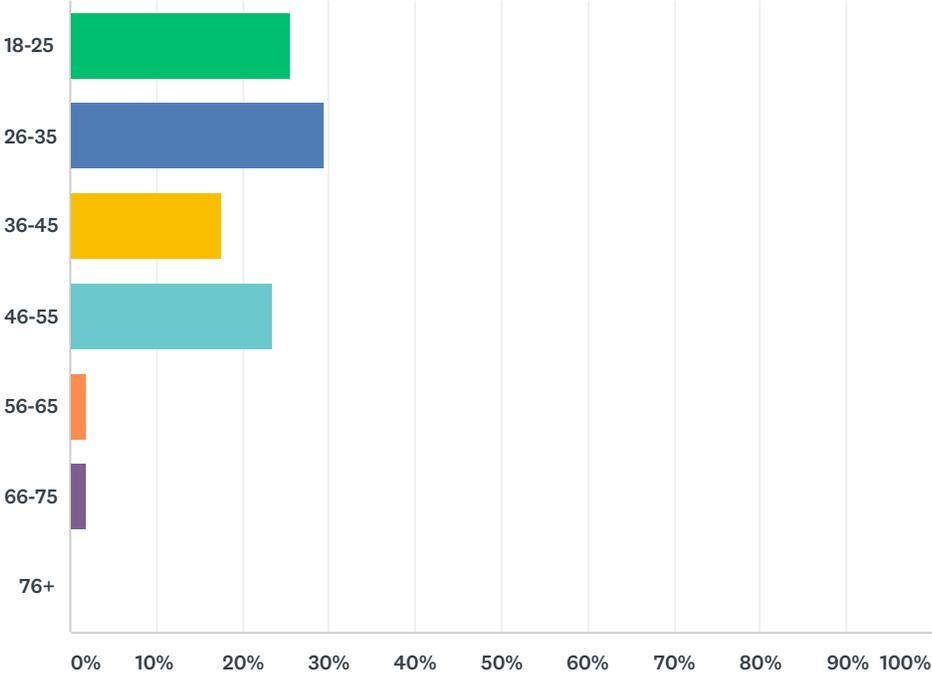
#	PLEASE SPECIFY TRIBAL AFFILIATION:	DATE
1	Mi'kmaq	9/17/2016 1:52 PM
2	Mi'kmaq, Cree, Nez Perce, Abenaki, Okanagan.	9/16/2016 11:01 PM
3	Mi'kmaq	9/16/2016 9:19 PM
4	Mi'kmaq	9/12/2016 10:27 AM
5	Ojibwe + Cree	9/12/2016 10:10 AM
6	Ojibwa	9/11/2016 3:34 AM
7	Wolastoqiyik Nation	9/10/2016 11:45 PM
8	Mi'Kmaw	9/9/2016 12:37 PM
9	L'nu	9/8/2016 6:48 PM

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10	Mi'kmaq	9/8/2016 7:31 AM
11	Mi'kmaq	8/25/2016 11:52 AM
12	Mi'kmaq	8/15/2016 11:49 PM

Q2 Identify your age range?

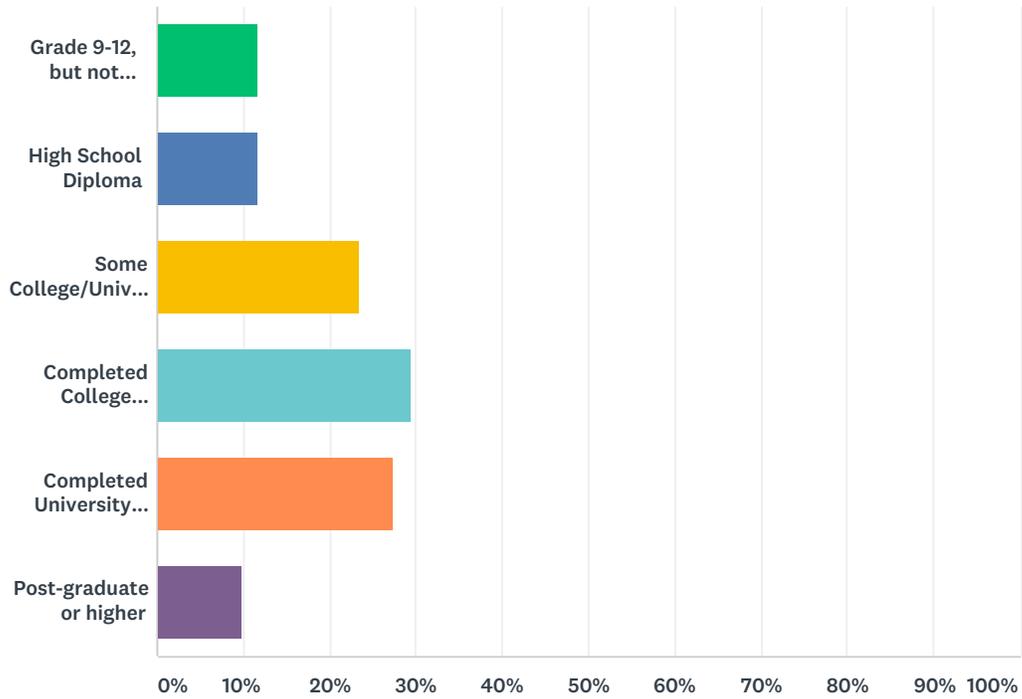
Answered: 51 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
18-25	25.49% 13
26-35	29.41% 15
36-45	17.65% 9
46-55	23.53% 12
56-65	1.96% 1
66-75	1.96% 1
76+	0.00% 0
Total Respondents: 51	

Q3 What is your highest level of education?

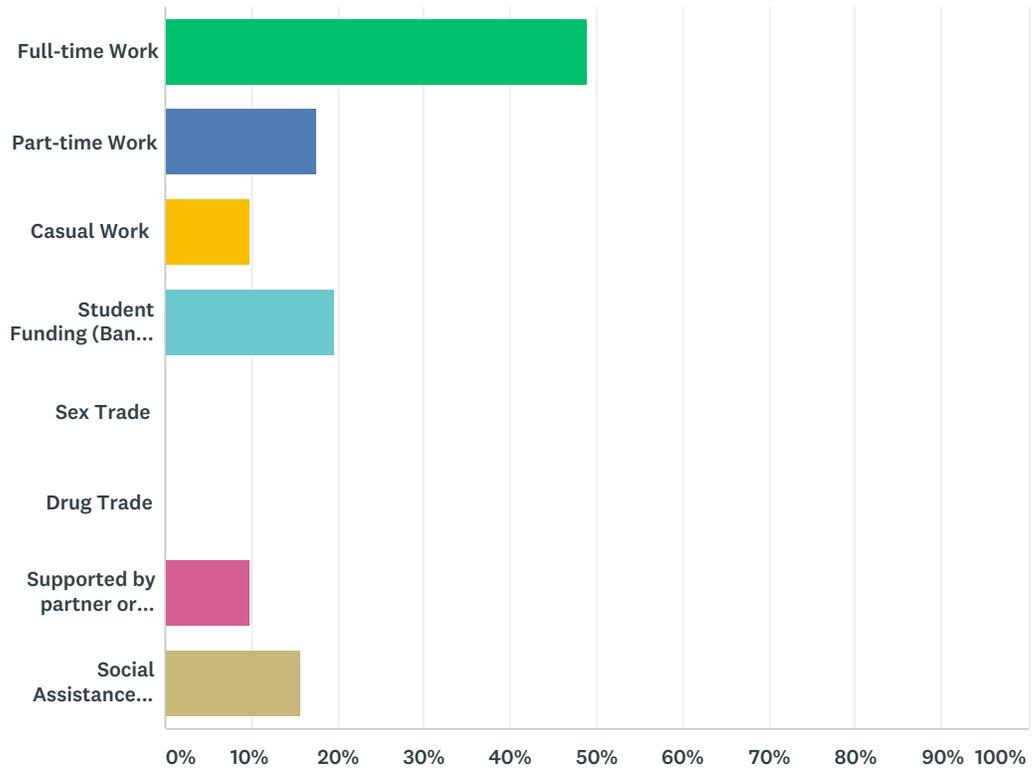
Answered: 51 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Grade 9-12, but not completed high school	11.76%	6
High School Diploma	11.76%	6
Some College/University	23.53%	12
Completed College Certificate/Diploma	29.41%	15
Completed University degree	27.45%	14
Post-graduate or higher	9.80%	5
Total Respondents: 51		

Q4 What is your source of income? (Check all that apply)

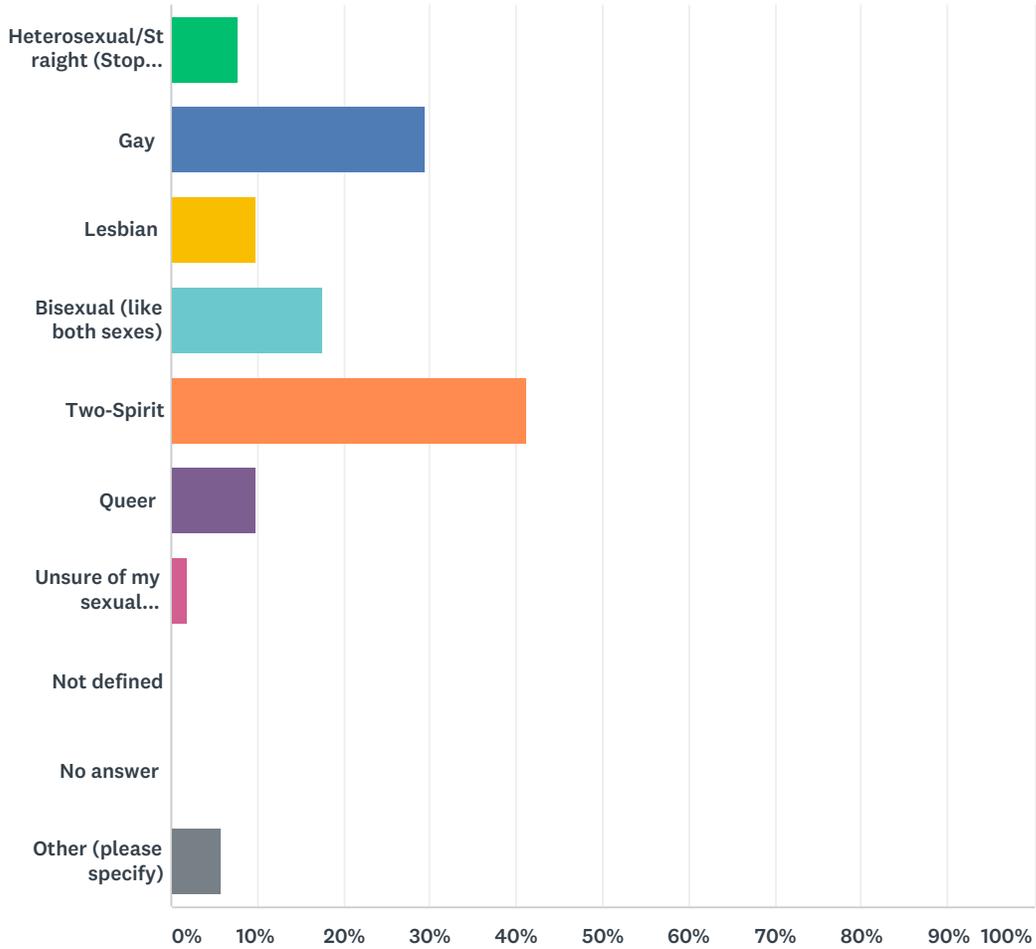
Answered: 51 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Full-time Work	49.02%	25
Part-time Work	17.65%	9
Casual Work	9.80%	5
Student Funding (Band funding, Student Loan)	19.61%	10
Sex Trade	0.00%	0
Drug Trade	0.00%	0
Supported by partner or family	9.80%	5
Social Assistance (Fed/Provincial/Municipal/First Nation).	15.69%	8
Total Respondents: 51		

Q5 What term would you use that best defines your sexuality?

Answered: 51 Skipped: 0



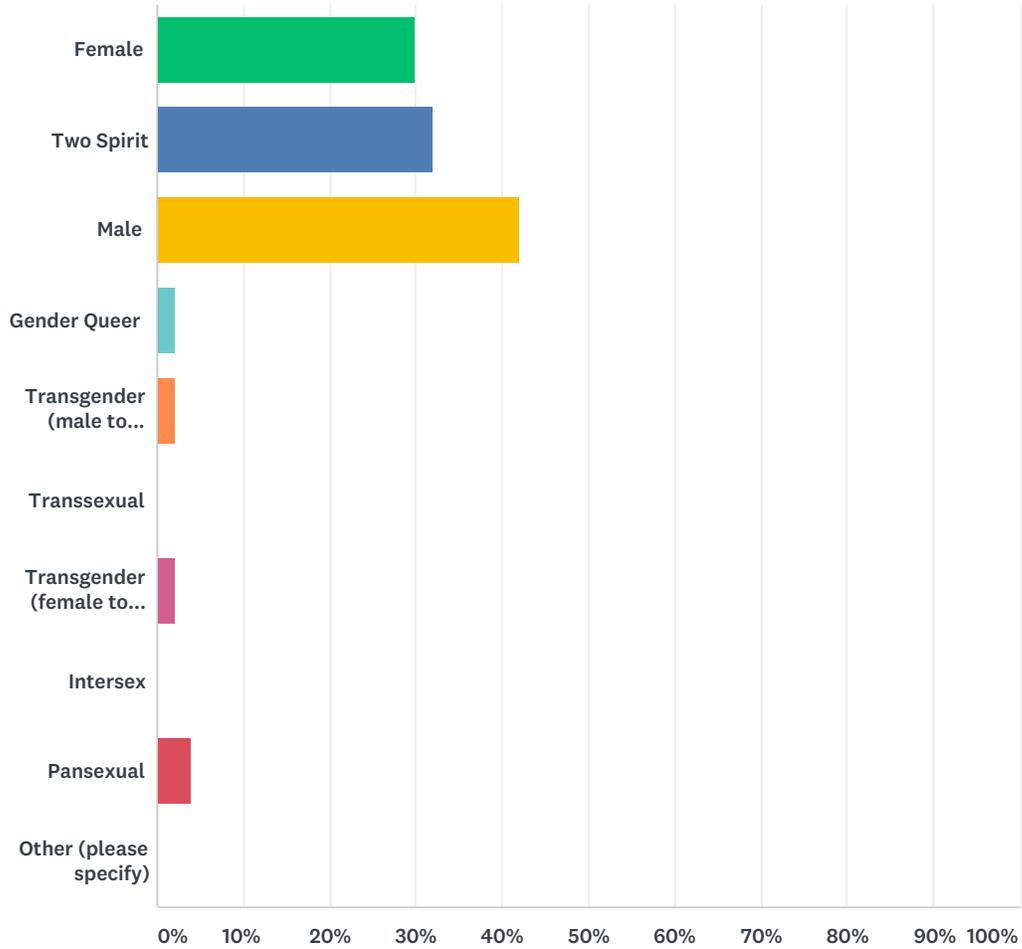
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Heterosexual/Straight (Stop here)	7.84%	4
Gay	29.41%	15
Lesbian	9.80%	5
Bisexual (like both sexes)	17.65%	9
Two-Spirit	41.18%	21
Queer	9.80%	5
Unsure of my sexual orientation	1.96%	1
Not defined	0.00%	0
No answer	0.00%	0
Other (please specify)	5.88%	3
Total Respondents: 51		

Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	It's about hearts not parts	9/8/2016 10:36 AM
2	Pansexual	8/16/2016 10:24 AM
3	Pansexual	8/16/2016 9:48 AM

Q6 What word best describes your gender?

Answered: 50 Skipped: 1



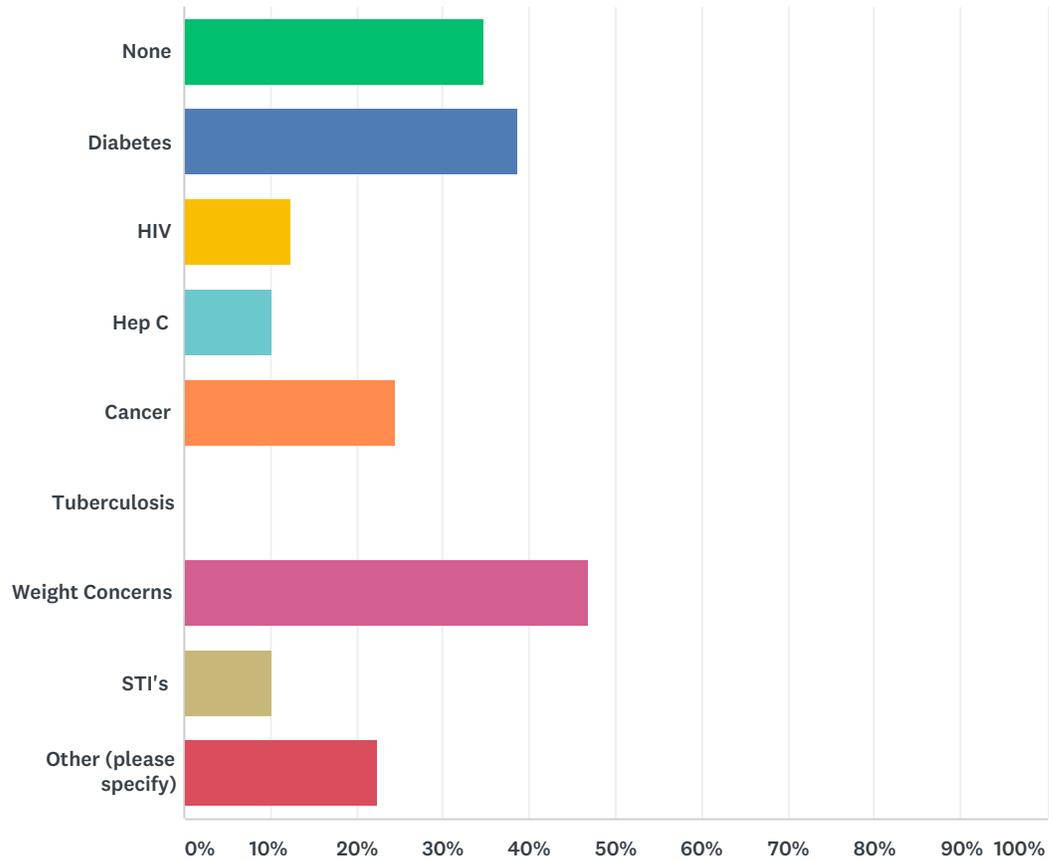
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Female	30.00%	15
Two Spirit	32.00%	16
Male	42.00%	21
Gender Queer	2.00%	1
Transgender (male to female)	2.00%	1
Transsexual	0.00%	0
Transgender (female to male)	2.00%	1
Intersex	0.00%	0
Pansexual	4.00%	2
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 50		

Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
	There are no responses.	

Q7 What are your short/long term health concerns?

Answered: 49 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
None	34.69%	17
Diabetes	38.78%	19
HIV	12.24%	6
Hep C	10.20%	5
Cancer	24.49%	12
Tuberculosis	0.00%	0
Weight Concerns	46.94%	23
STI's	10.20%	5
Other (please specify)	22.45%	11
Total Respondents: 49		

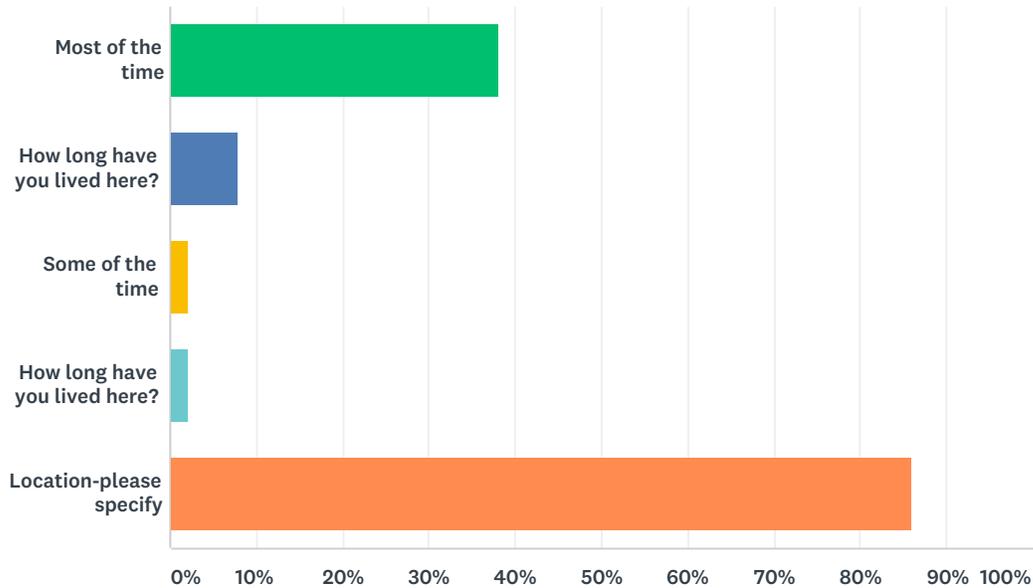
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	heart, blood pressure.	9/17/2016 1:52 PM
2	Highblood pressure	9/17/2016 12:27 PM

Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada

3	Alcoholism	9/16/2016 11:01 PM
4	Mental health concerns	9/16/2016 9:19 PM
5	DVT, heart disease	9/12/2016 10:27 AM
6	HPV	9/2/2016 12:58 AM
7	I recieve a disability pension from Social Assistance for undiagnosed extreme dizzy spells and extreme fatigue. coupled with severe arthritis and dozens of other symptoms that come and go. Not fun at all.	8/30/2016 2:37 PM
8	cholesterol	8/23/2016 10:40 AM
9	autoimmune diseases	8/16/2016 10:24 AM
10	Heart issues	8/16/2016 9:48 AM
11	IBS	8/15/2016 6:24 AM

Q8 Where do you live? (i.e. Halifax, Fredericton, reserve

Answered: 50 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Most of the time	38.00% 19
How long have you lived here?	8.00% 4
Some of the time	2.00% 1
How long have you lived here?	2.00% 1
Location-please specify	86.00% 43
Total Respondents: 50	

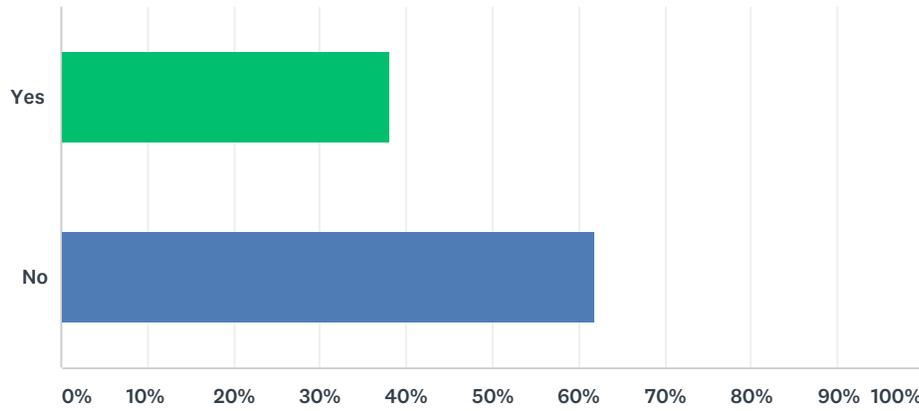
#	LOCATION-PLEASE SPECIFY	DATE
1	Sydney	9/17/2016 1:52 PM
2	Antiginish	9/17/2016 1:07 PM
3	Esk	9/17/2016 12:27 PM
4	Fredericton	9/17/2016 9:45 AM
5	Reserve Eskasoni NS	9/17/2016 9:40 AM
6	Cape Breton Eskasoni	9/16/2016 11:02 PM
7	Vancouver	9/16/2016 11:01 PM
8	5 years, Little Anse, Nova Scotia	9/16/2016 9:19 PM
9	Halifax-Bedford	9/16/2016 6:33 PM
10	MMFN	9/12/2016 12:59 PM
11	MMFN	9/12/2016 12:46 PM
12	Antigonish	9/12/2016 12:41 PM
13	HRM - 26 years	9/12/2016 10:53 AM

Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada

14	Halifax, 20 years approx.	9/12/2016 10:27 AM
15	Halifax	9/12/2016 10:10 AM
16	Halifax	9/11/2016 3:34 AM
17	First Nation Community	9/10/2016 11:45 PM
18	Lawrencetown NS	9/9/2016 12:37 PM
19	Fredericton	9/8/2016 11:03 PM
20	Toronto. 10 years.	9/8/2016 1:17 PM
21	Port Hawkesbury	9/8/2016 11:24 AM
22	Dartmouth	9/8/2016 10:36 AM
23	Ontario	9/8/2016 9:35 AM
24	Bedford	9/8/2016 7:31 AM
25	Eskasoni	9/7/2016 8:09 AM
26	Millbrook	9/3/2016 12:25 PM
27	RESERVE	9/2/2016 12:58 AM
28	The south shore of Nova Scotia. I've lived here 18 years and prior to that 15 years in Halifax.	8/30/2016 2:37 PM
29	Halifax	8/23/2016 10:40 AM
30	Woodstock	8/20/2016 11:55 PM
31	29 years	8/16/2016 7:28 PM
32	Halifax, 4 years	8/16/2016 12:44 PM
33	St. John's Newfoundland	8/16/2016 11:19 AM
34	St.John's	8/16/2016 10:24 AM
35	Halifax	8/16/2016 9:48 AM
36	Happy Valley-Goose Bay, NL since 2009, moving though to St. John's, NL this October 2016	8/16/2016 9:41 AM
37	Kingsclear first nation	8/16/2016 7:48 AM
38	6 years	8/16/2016 7:45 AM
39	Halifax	8/15/2016 11:49 PM
40	Mainland Nova Scotia	8/15/2016 6:24 AM
41	Listuguj	8/14/2016 2:15 AM
42	British Columbia	8/13/2016 1:55 AM
43	NS - life	8/12/2016 5:58 PM

Q9 Do you live in your original home community/town/reserve/city?

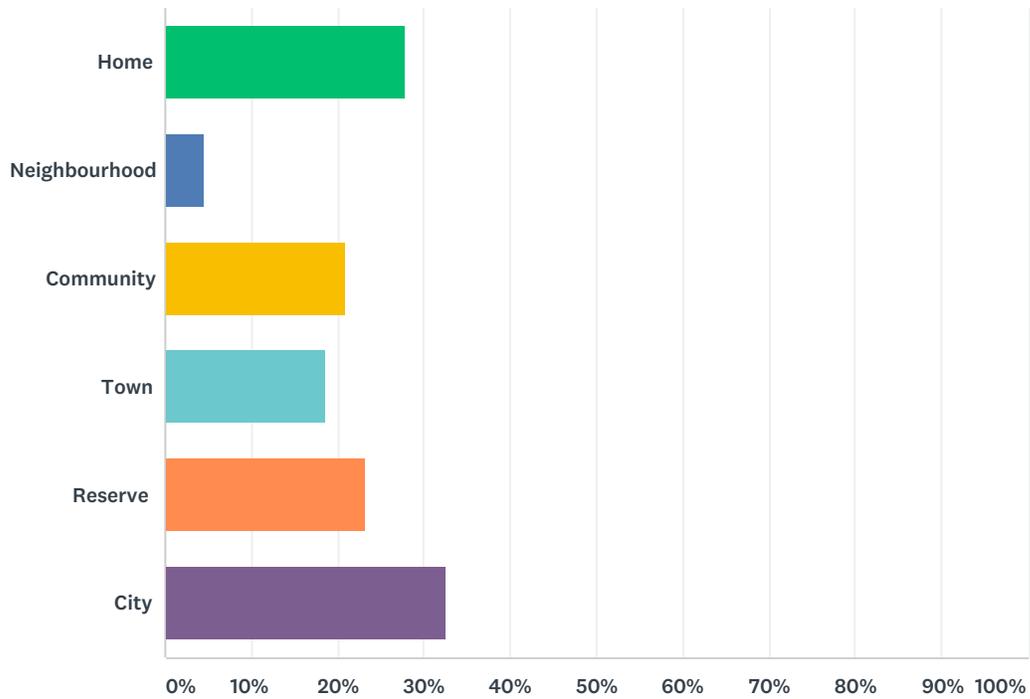
Answered: 50 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	38.00%	19
No	62.00%	31
Total Respondents: 50		

Q10 Where did you move away from (choose one or more choices which apply)?

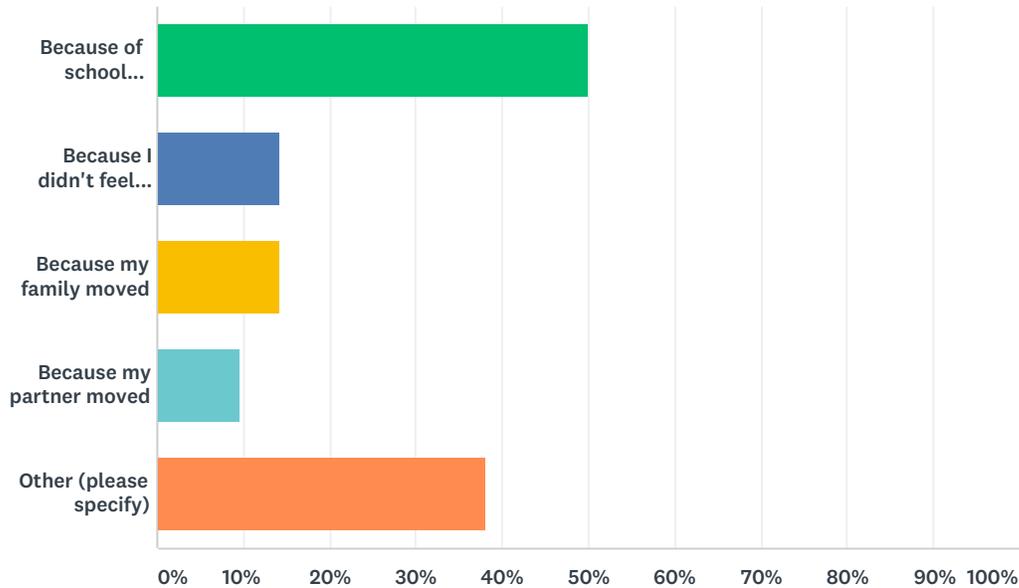
Answered: 43 Skipped: 8



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Home	27.91%	12
Neighbourhood	4.65%	2
Community	20.93%	9
Town	18.60%	8
Reserve	23.26%	10
City	32.56%	14
Total Respondents: 43		

Q11 Why did you move?

Answered: 42 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Because of school (college,university,institute)	50.00% 21
Because I didn't feel safe at home/community/Reserve	14.29% 6
Because my family moved	14.29% 6
Because my partner moved	9.52% 4
Other (please specify)	38.10% 16
Total Respondents: 42	

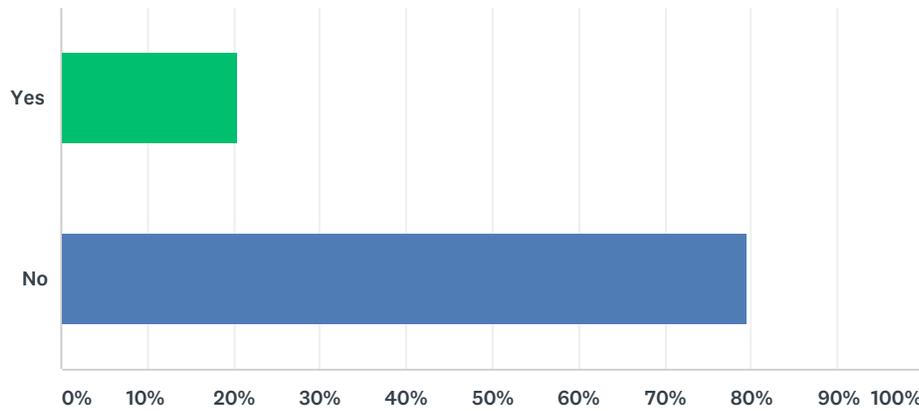
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Got my own house wit my kids	9/17/2016 9:40 AM
2	Work	9/16/2016 11:02 PM
3	Began a slippery slope into depression, addiction and the aspiration to be suicidal.	9/16/2016 11:01 PM
4	Graduated	9/16/2016 9:19 PM
5	Because I bought my own house	9/12/2016 10:53 AM
6	I moved to my FN community from a city. employment opprotunity.	9/10/2016 11:45 PM
7	Job	9/8/2016 7:20 AM
8	There was no work here so moved to Halifax.	8/30/2016 2:37 PM
9	Closer to work	8/16/2016 7:28 PM
10	Work	8/16/2016 11:19 AM
11	job opportunities	8/16/2016 10:24 AM
12	I moved out west with my family. Then back to Nova Scotia for University.	8/16/2016 9:48 AM
13	Divorced and returned to my home region (Labrador)	8/16/2016 9:41 AM

Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada

14	Purchased new home	8/16/2016 7:45 AM
15	Moved home to reserve to care for ailing parent.	8/15/2016 6:24 AM
16	Not enough work	8/14/2016 2:15 AM

Q12 Did you ever have to move away from your home community because of your sexual or gender identity?

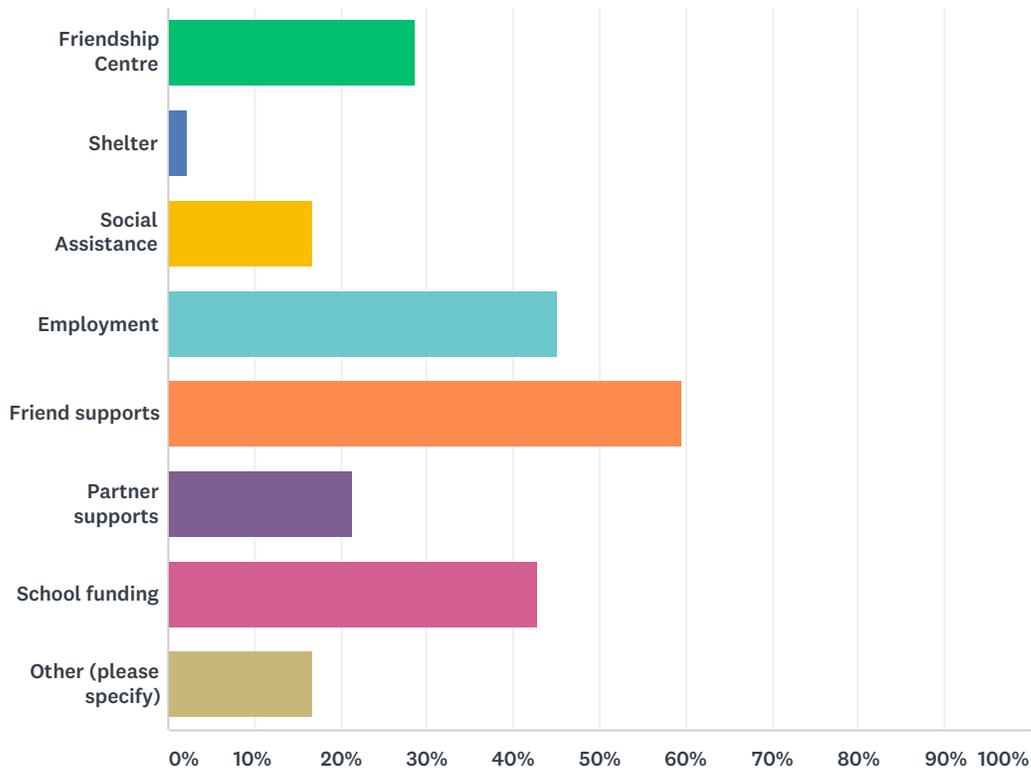
Answered: 49 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	20.41%	10
No	79.59%	39
Total Respondents: 49		

Q13 What supports did you have/look for when you moved away from your home community to the urban center?

Answered: 42 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Friendship Centre	28.57% 12
Shelter	2.38% 1
Social Assistance	16.67% 7
Employment	45.24% 19
Friend supports	59.52% 25
Partner supports	21.43% 9
School funding	42.86% 18
Other (please specify)	16.67% 7
Total Respondents: 42	

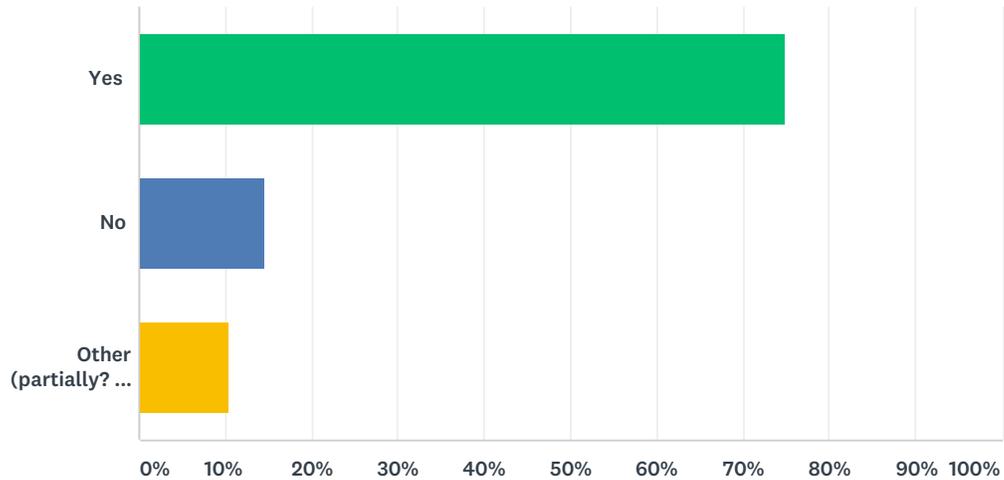
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Never moved fm rez	9/17/2016 12:27 PM
2	Had no supports originally.	9/16/2016 9:19 PM
3	Native council	9/11/2016 3:34 AM
4	n/a	9/8/2016 11:03 PM

Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada

5	Gay community	9/8/2016 10:36 AM
6	Community	8/16/2016 9:48 AM
7	nonprofits	8/16/2016 9:41 AM

Q14 Are you "out"?

Answered: 48 Skipped: 3

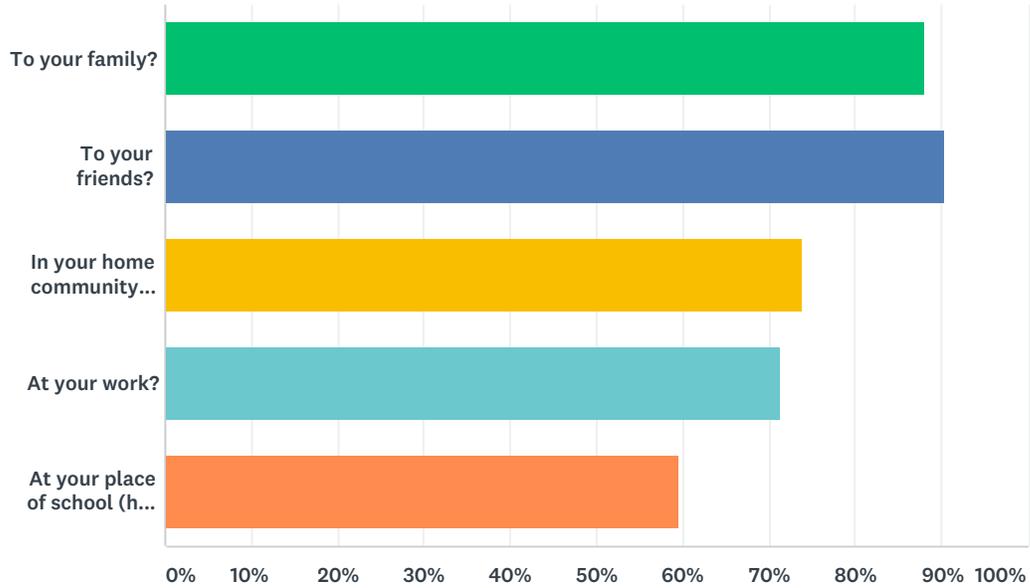


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	75.00%	36
No	14.58%	7
Other (partially? to a few people?...)	10.42%	5
TOTAL		48

#	OTHER (PARTIALLY? TO A FEW PEOPLE?...)	DATE
1	People assume I'm gay rather than Two-spirited or pansexual. Safer that way.	9/16/2016 9:19 PM
2	Depends on the person.	9/16/2016 6:33 PM
3	Partially, not at work	9/12/2016 10:27 AM
4	Mostly out but not to all family don't discuss it	9/11/2016 3:34 AM
5	Im know to be gay to those that know me, but I dont advertise that I am to others.	9/10/2016 11:45 PM

Q15 Are you "Out"?

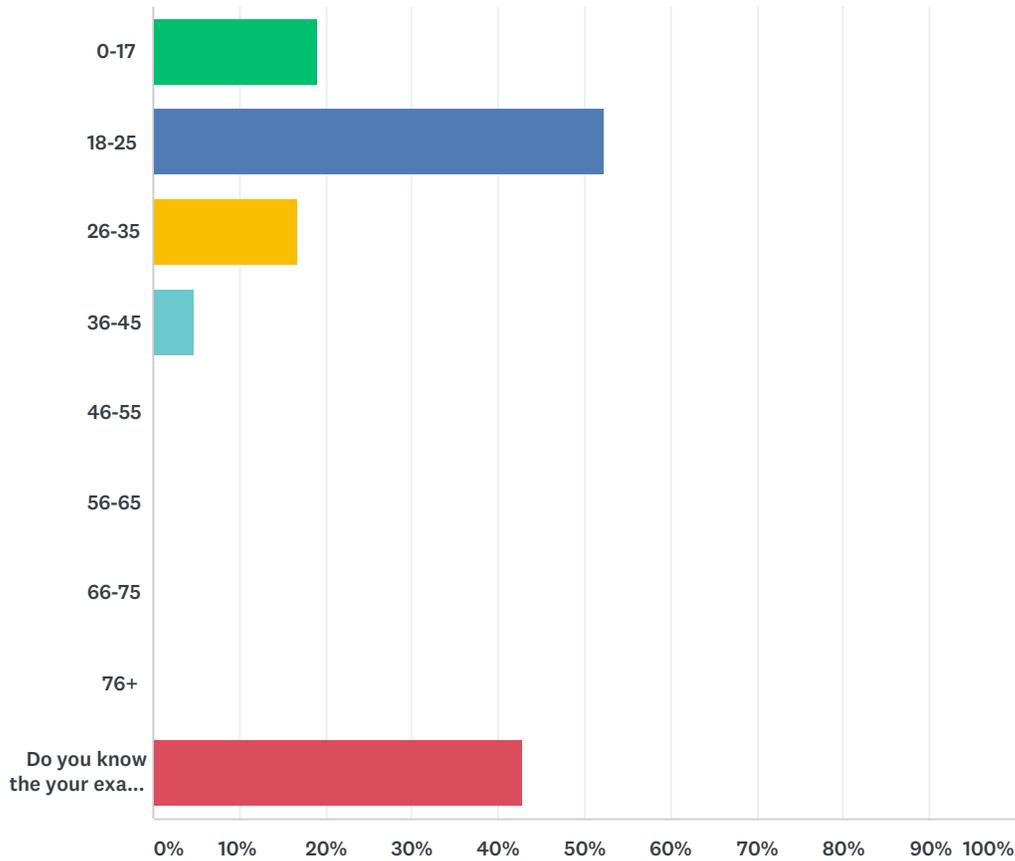
Answered: 42 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
To your family?	88.10%	37
To your friends?	90.48%	38
In your home community (City, Reserve)?	73.81%	31
At your work?	71.43%	30
At your place of school (high school,college,univerisity,institute)?	59.52%	25
Total Respondents: 42		

Q16 How old were you when you came out?

Answered: 42 Skipped: 9



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0-17	19.05%	8
18-25	52.38%	22
26-35	16.67%	7
36-45	4.76%	2
46-55	0.00%	0
56-65	0.00%	0
66-75	0.00%	0
76+	0.00%	0
Do you know the your exact age when you came out?	42.86%	18
Total Respondents: 42		

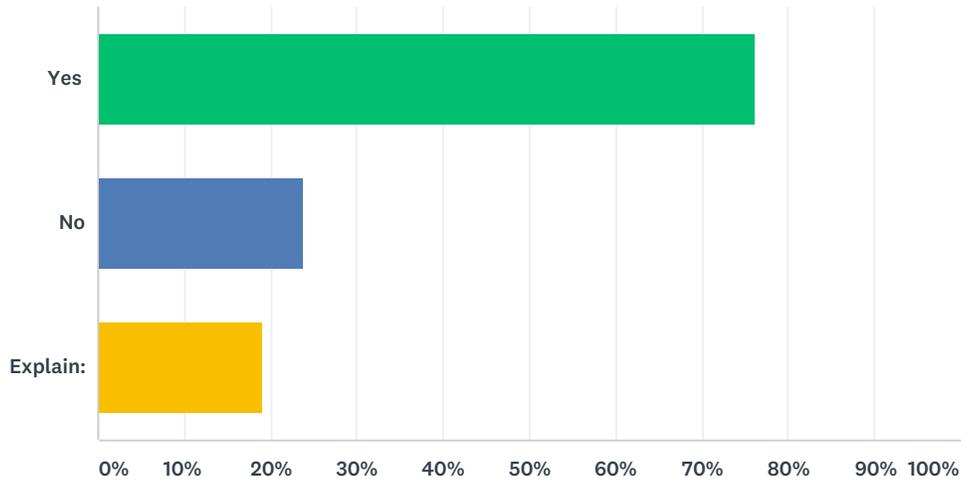
#	DO YOU KNOW THE YOUR EXACT AGE WHEN YOU CAME OUT?	DATE
1	around 12	9/17/2016 1:52 PM
2	Not gay	9/17/2016 9:40 AM

Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada

3	23	9/16/2016 9:19 PM
4	14-18	9/16/2016 6:33 PM
5	19	9/12/2016 12:41 PM
6	19	9/12/2016 10:53 AM
7	28	9/12/2016 10:27 AM
8	16	9/12/2016 10:10 AM
9	21	9/8/2016 1:17 PM
10	21	9/8/2016 10:36 AM
11	20	9/8/2016 9:35 AM
12	16	9/8/2016 8:49 AM
13	Completely out by 23 yrs.	8/30/2016 2:37 PM
14	18	8/23/2016 10:40 AM
15	21	8/20/2016 11:55 PM
16	14 as bisexual 29 as lesbian	8/16/2016 11:19 AM
17	18	8/16/2016 9:41 AM
18	14	8/14/2016 2:15 AM

Q17 Was it your choice to come out?

Answered: 42 Skipped: 9

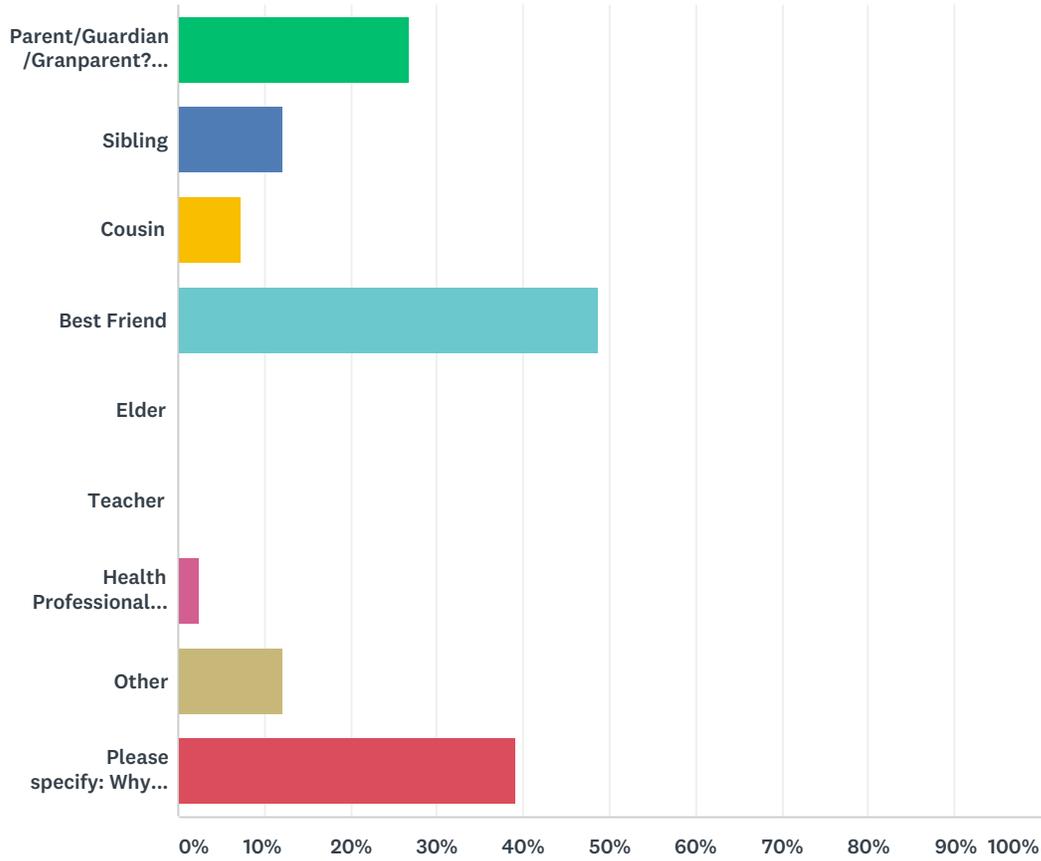


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	76.19% 32
No	23.81% 10
Explain:	19.05% 8
Total Respondents: 42	

#	EXPLAIN:	DATE
1	Outed by a bigoted classmate	9/16/2016 9:19 PM
2	When I came out it was as much a surprise to me as anyone else. It came out of my mouth before I knew what I was saying.	9/12/2016 10:27 AM
3	There was a level of feeling I "had" to come out but I otherwise chose to	9/12/2016 10:10 AM
4	Dad found out and threatened to disown me	9/8/2016 8:49 AM
5	a one night stand outed me to both his and my family	9/2/2016 12:58 AM
6	I had found words to fit how I felt. So I told people, who I was now. Due to the communities I have had been gifted with. I was able to be open about who I am with them.	8/16/2016 9:48 AM
7	My father found a letter my partner wrote to me and outed me to her family, that led me to coming out to my mom and eventually all my friends	8/16/2016 9:41 AM
8	Blackmailed by family member	8/13/2016 1:55 AM

Q18 Who did you come out to first?

Answered: 41 Skipped: 10



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Parent/Guardian/Granparent? If yes, specify	26.83% 11
Sibling	12.20% 5
Cousin	7.32% 3
Best Friend	48.78% 20
Elder	0.00% 0
Teacher	0.00% 0
Health Professional (nurse, social worker)	2.44% 1
Other	12.20% 5
Please specify: Why did you "Come out" to this person?	39.02% 16
Total Respondents: 41	

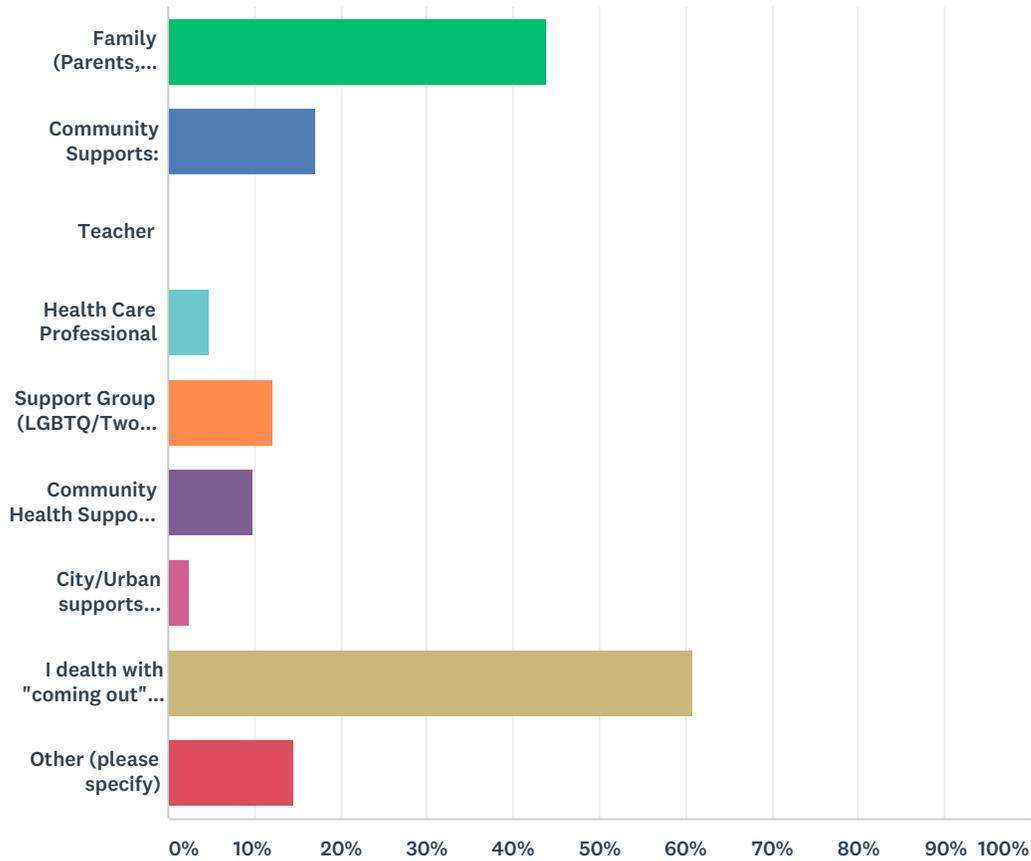
#	PLEASE SPECIFY: WHY DID YOU "COME OUT" TO THIS PERSON?	DATE
1	Suicide attempt	9/16/2016 9:19 PM
2	Parents first policy	9/12/2016 12:59 PM

Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada

3	They already knew	9/12/2016 12:41 PM
4	They were gay as well.	9/12/2016 10:53 AM
5	She was my spouse. It came out as part of another discussion.	9/12/2016 10:27 AM
6	I actually explored my gender identity with my best friend so I didn't "come out", instead we found ourselves together	9/12/2016 10:10 AM
7	My mother ask me if my partner was a friend or my boyfriend and then said she know I was gay my entire life. It was a great moment.	9/10/2016 11:45 PM
8	I knew they would be safe to talk to because of the positive things they said about gay people	9/8/2016 8:49 AM
9	Mother	9/3/2016 12:25 PM
10	It was the guy I was having sex with in my teens	8/30/2016 2:37 PM
11	everyone in province via newspaper article	8/23/2016 10:40 AM
12	I had a crush on someone and needed to talk about it	8/20/2016 11:55 PM
13	Husband at the time	8/16/2016 11:19 AM
14	Cause she is more them my mom. She is my best friend.	8/16/2016 9:48 AM
15	Mom. Because my dad was threatening to tell her and was keeping me from coming back to his house because he found out I was a lesbian. I didn't want her to hear if from him, my parents are divorced and live in different communities	8/16/2016 9:41 AM
16	Was like a big sister, she had a biological child with gay male friend	8/14/2016 2:15 AM

Q19 What/Who were your supports for your coming out process?

Answered: 41 Skipped: 10



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Family (Parents, Grandparents, Siblings, Aunts/Uncles, Other family)	43.90% 18
Community Supports:	17.07% 7
Teacher	0.00% 0
Health Care Professional	4.88% 2
Support Group (LGBTQ/Two Spirit/ GSA)	12.20% 5
Community Health Supports (on Reserve, treatment, counseling)	9.76% 4
City/Urban supports (helpline, health centre)	2.44% 1
I dealth with "coming out" on my own	60.98% 25
Other (please specify)	14.63% 6
Total Respondents: 41	

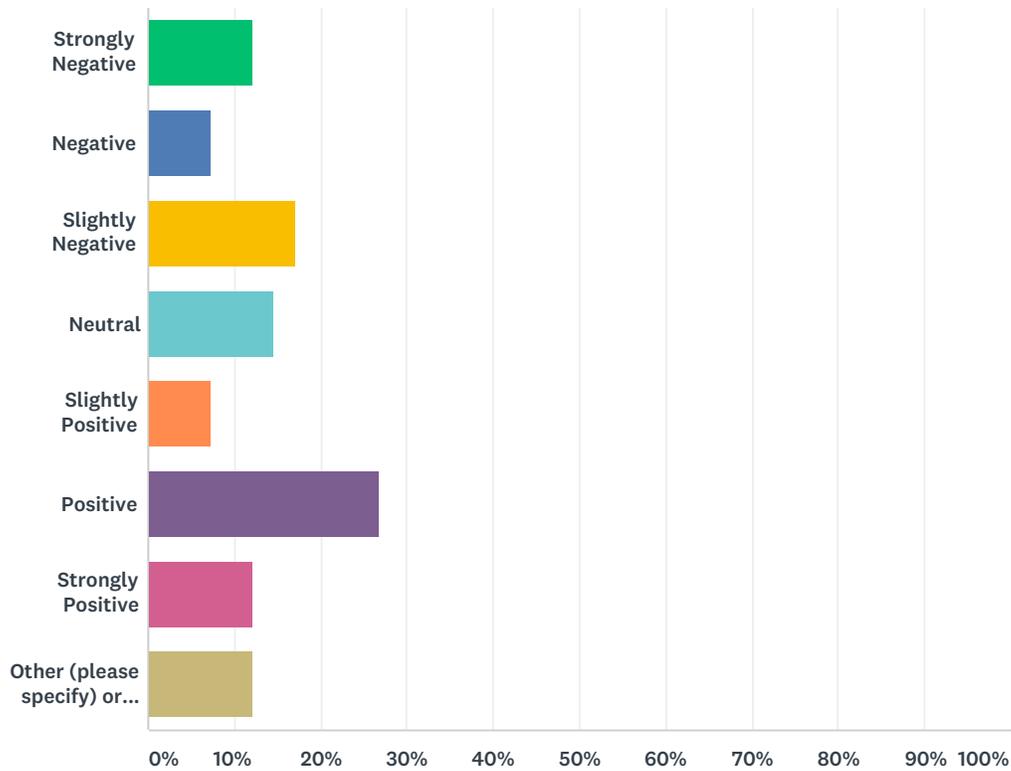
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Friends sometimes	9/16/2016 6:33 PM
2	Spouse	9/12/2016 10:27 AM

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3	Friends and boyfriend	9/11/2016 3:34 AM
4	Girlfriend	8/16/2016 11:19 AM
5	University family.	8/16/2016 9:48 AM
6	some of my friends and my gf at the time	8/16/2016 9:41 AM

Q20 If you were to describe your coming our experience, would you say it was?

Answered: 41 Skipped: 10

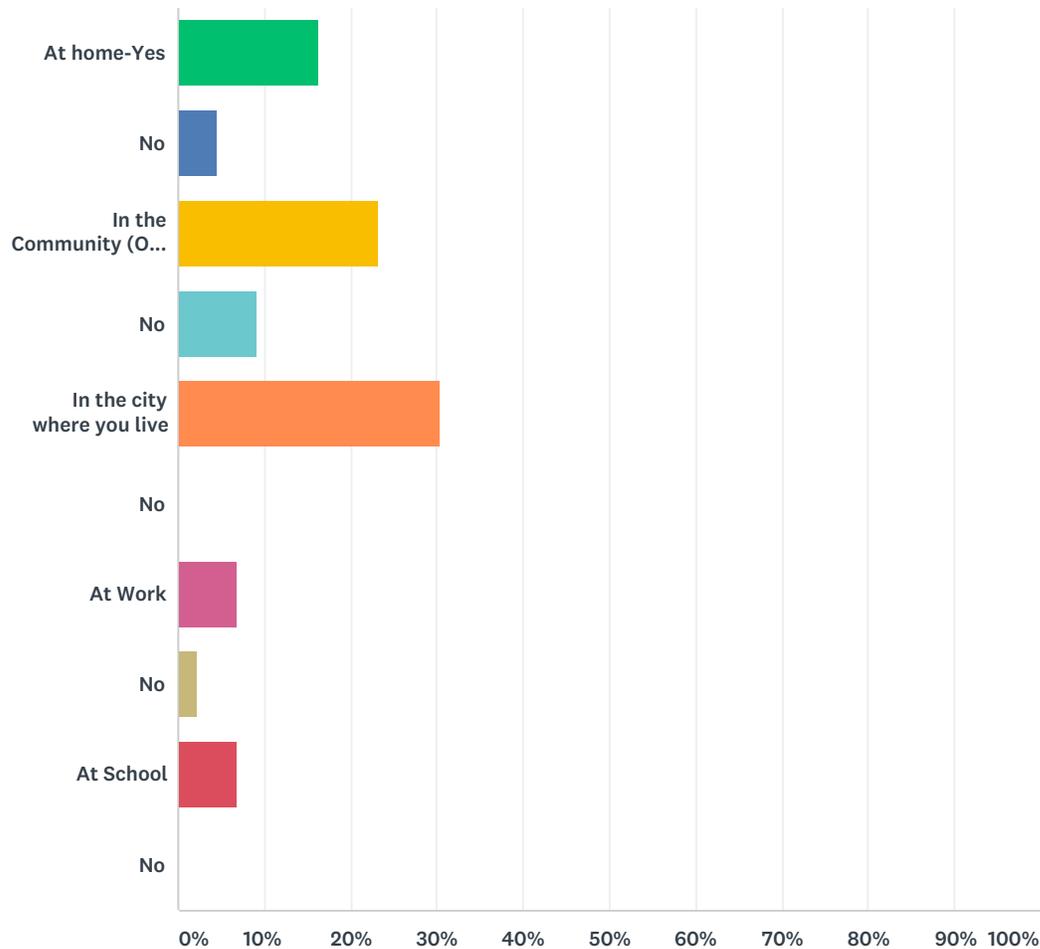


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly Negative	12.20%	5
Negative	7.32%	3
Slightly Negative	17.07%	7
Neutral	14.63%	6
Slightly Positive	7.32%	3
Positive	26.83%	11
Strongly Positive	12.20%	5
Other (please specify) or describe in more detail:	12.20%	5
Total Respondents: 41		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY) OR DESCRIBE IN MORE DETAIL:	DATE
1	Please correct your grammatical error (typo), it makes this survey look unprofessional and hasty.	9/16/2016 11:01 PM
2	At first it was very negative, I felt compelled to take it back for a few years until I couldn't ignore it anymore	9/12/2016 10:27 AM
3	Positive in terms of friends and lgbt community, negative in terms of immediate family	9/12/2016 10:10 AM
4	People disagreed with a wife and mother of two - leaving husband for woman	8/16/2016 11:19 AM

Q21 Do you feel safe to be Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Two-Spirit? (choose all that apply)

Answered: 43 Skipped: 8



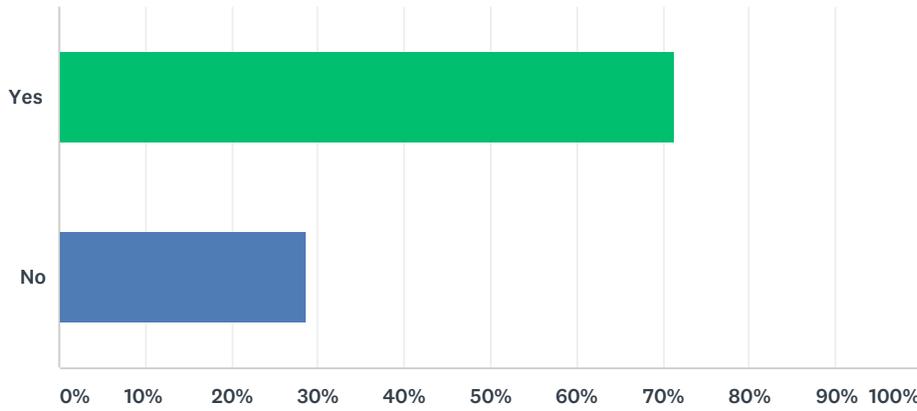
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
At home-Yes	16.28%	7
No	4.65%	2
In the Community (On Reserve)	23.26%	10
No	9.30%	4
In the city where you live	30.23%	13
No	0.00%	0
At Work	6.98%	3
No	2.33%	1
At School	6.98%	3
No	0.00%	0

Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada

TOTAL		43
#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	all of the above	9/17/2016 1:52 PM
2	The amount of ignorance in my hometown is saddening.	9/16/2016 11:01 PM
3	With family and friends yes.	9/12/2016 10:27 AM
4	Only in the lgbt community in my city	9/12/2016 10:10 AM
5	All the above, but I didnt let me choose them all.	9/10/2016 11:45 PM

Q22 If you are not "Out" have you thought about coming out?

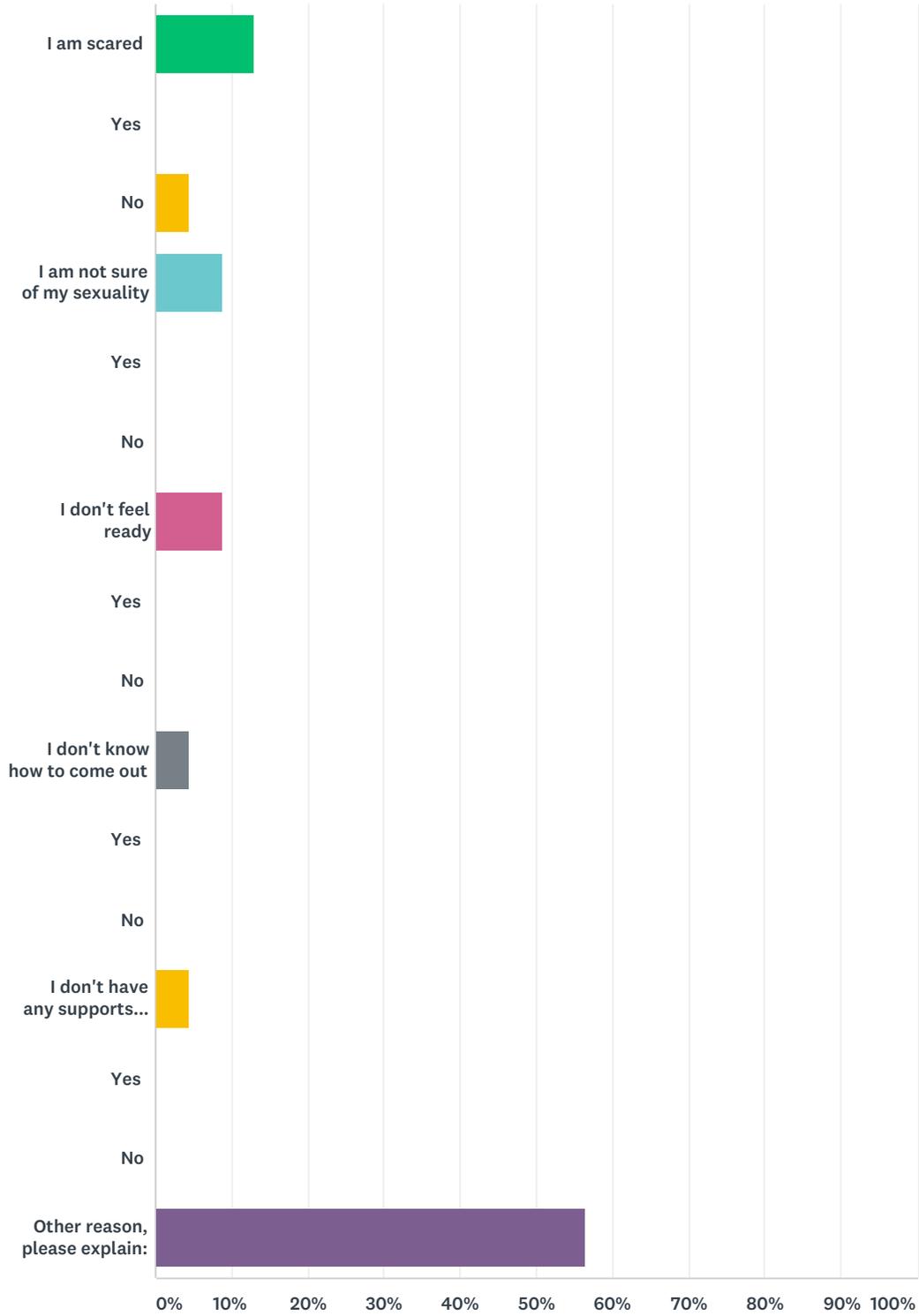
Answered: 21 Skipped: 30



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	71.43%	15
No	28.57%	6
TOTAL		21

Q23 What prevents you from coming out?

Answered: 23 Skipped: 28



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
I am scared	13.04% 3

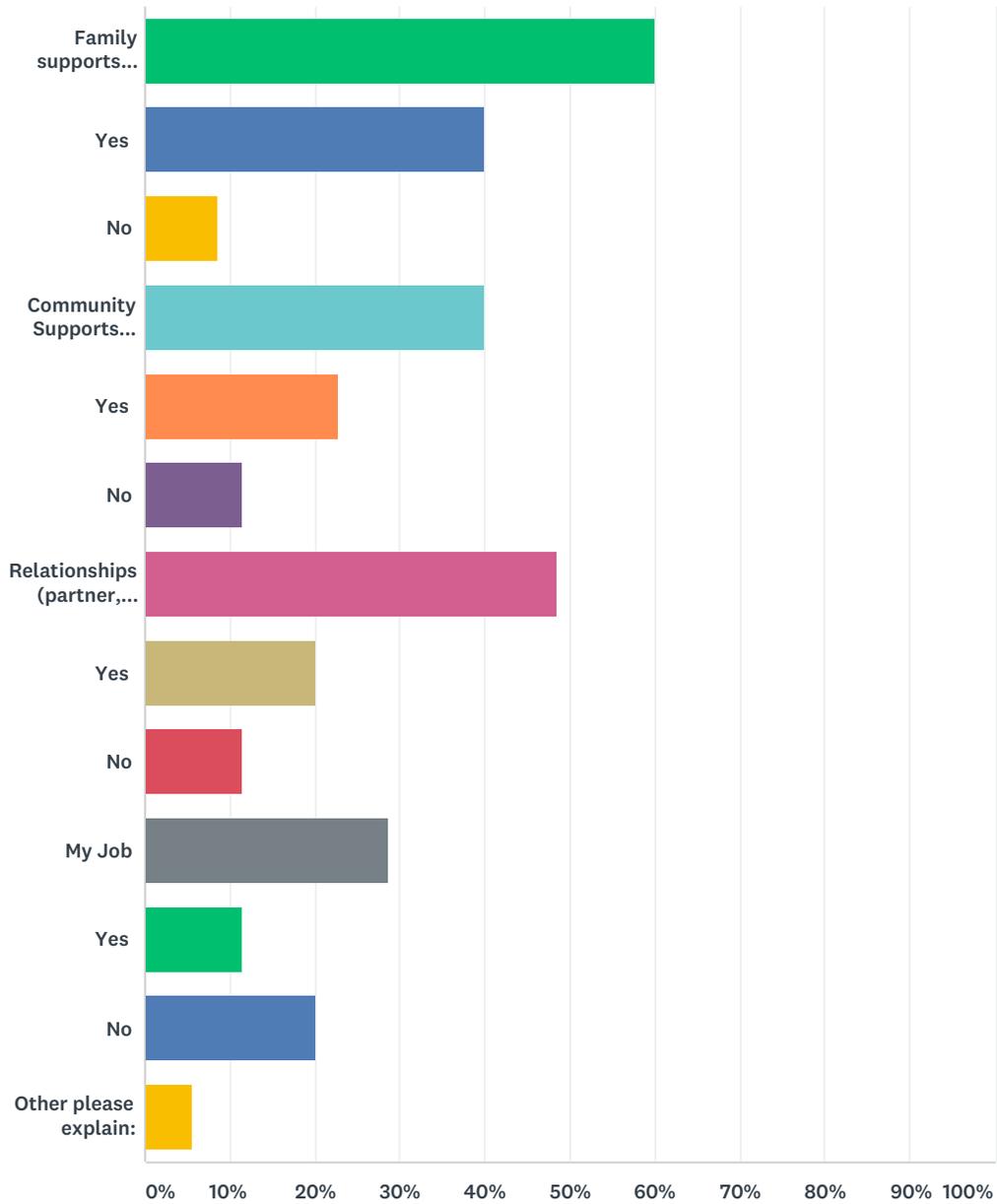
Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada

Yes	0.00%	0
No	4.35%	1
I am not sure of my sexuality	8.70%	2
Yes	0.00%	0
No	0.00%	0
I don't feel ready	8.70%	2
Yes	0.00%	0
No	0.00%	0
I don't know how to come out	4.35%	1
Yes	0.00%	0
No	0.00%	0
I don't have any supports (family, friends, Elder, community support people like social worker, teacher)	4.35%	1
Yes	0.00%	0
No	0.00%	0
Other reason, please explain:	56.52%	13
TOTAL		23

#	OTHER REASON, PLEASE EXPLAIN:	DATE
1	People have only started to accept gay people here and I own a business - can't afford to rock the boat	9/16/2016 9:19 PM
2	Little family support, majorly scared	9/16/2016 6:33 PM
3	Out already	9/12/2016 12:59 PM
4	Nothing	9/12/2016 12:41 PM
5	Already out	9/12/2016 10:53 AM
6	With work, I'm afraid to lose my job, it's out entire means of financial support.	9/12/2016 10:27 AM
7	I'm out	9/8/2016 11:31 AM
8	NA	9/8/2016 9:35 AM
9	I'm out	9/8/2016 8:49 AM
10	Already out	9/8/2016 7:20 AM
11	re my work place, I don't want to be defined by my sexuality, with my parents, they won't understand.	8/16/2016 10:24 AM
12	I didn't think I had to come out. People should not have assumed that I was not queen in the first place. Love is love. People should be allowed to be them self. We should not say that every is heterosexual until they say other wise. In my life, everyone is queen until told they are heterosexual.	8/16/2016 9:48 AM
13	Our people do not have a traditional sense or knowledge of two-spirited people, currently in my opinion we have adopted an assimilated view of these issues.	8/15/2016 6:24 AM

Q24 By coming out, I was/am scared of losing:

Answered: 35 Skipped: 16



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Family supports (economic, living situation, love)	60.00%	21
Yes	40.00%	14
No	8.57%	3
Community Supports (social, respect)	40.00%	14
Yes	22.86%	8
No	11.43%	4

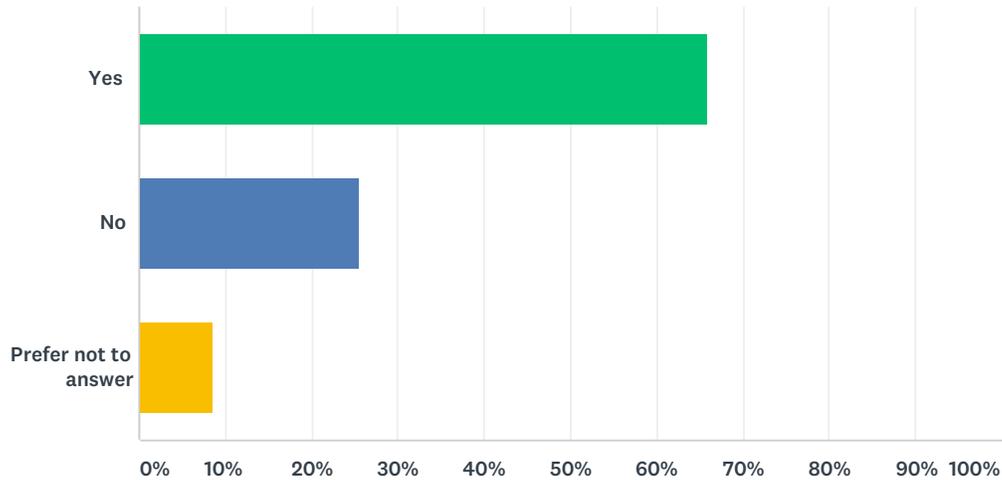
Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada

Relationships (partner, friends)	48.57%	17
Yes	20.00%	7
No	11.43%	4
My Job	28.57%	10
Yes	11.43%	4
No	20.00%	7
Other please explain:	5.71%	2
Total Respondents: 35		

#	OTHER PLEASE EXPLAIN:	DATE
1	N/A	9/12/2016 10:53 AM
2	NA	9/8/2016 9:35 AM

Q25 Have you ever thought about suicide?

Answered: 47 Skipped: 4

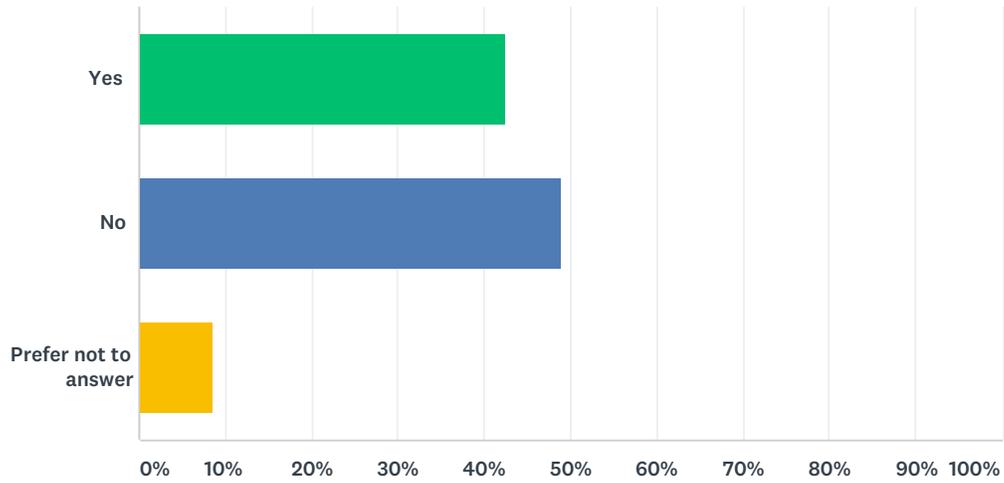


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	65.96%	31
No	25.53%	12
Prefer not to answer	8.51%	4
Total Respondents: 47		

#	NOTE:THE QUESTION ABOVE AND THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ARE VERY PERSONAL AND YOU HAVE NO OBLIGATION TO ANSWER THEM. WE WANT TO ASSURE YOU THAT THE INFORMATION WILL BE KEPT CONFIDENTIAL AND ANONYMOUS. IT IS TO HELP US UNDERSTAND IF WHY PEOPLE WHO ARE LGBTQ- TWO- SPIRIT THINK ABOUT SUICIDE.	DATE
1	Who hasn't?	9/16/2016 11:01 PM
2	When I was a young teen, 13 -15yrs, I thought of it often. Things got better though. I think we all probably think about it at one point or another.	8/30/2016 2:37 PM
3	I am seeing someone, once or twice a month to talk about it.	8/16/2016 9:48 AM

Q26 Have you thought about suicide because of your sexuality?

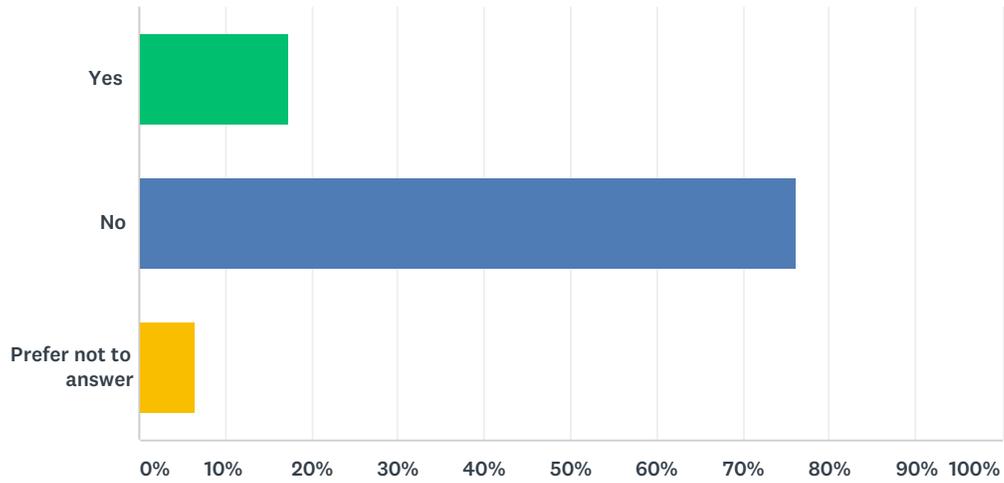
Answered: 47 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	42.55%	20
No	48.94%	23
Prefer not to answer	8.51%	4
TOTAL		47

Q27 Have you thought about suicide because of your gender?

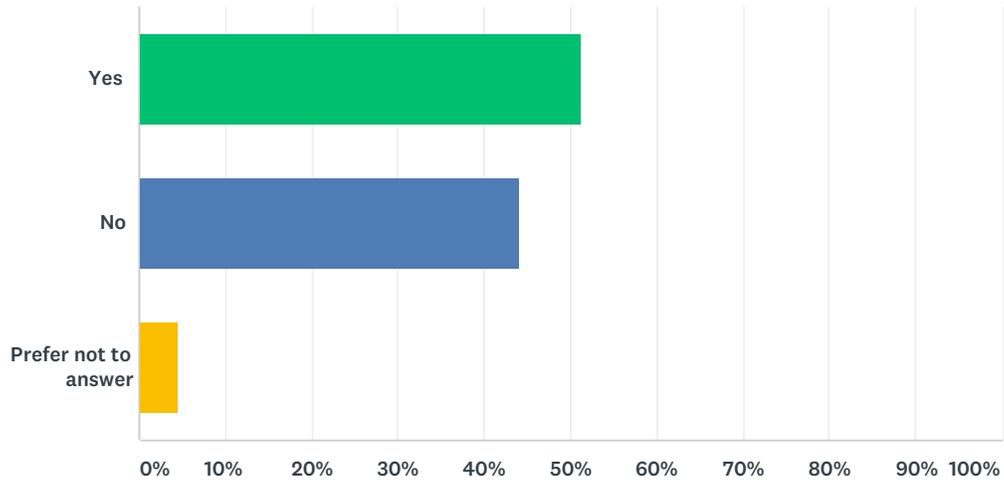
Answered: 46 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	17.39%	8
No	76.09%	35
Prefer not to answer	6.52%	3
TOTAL		46

Q28 Did you think about suicide before/during/after "Coming out"?

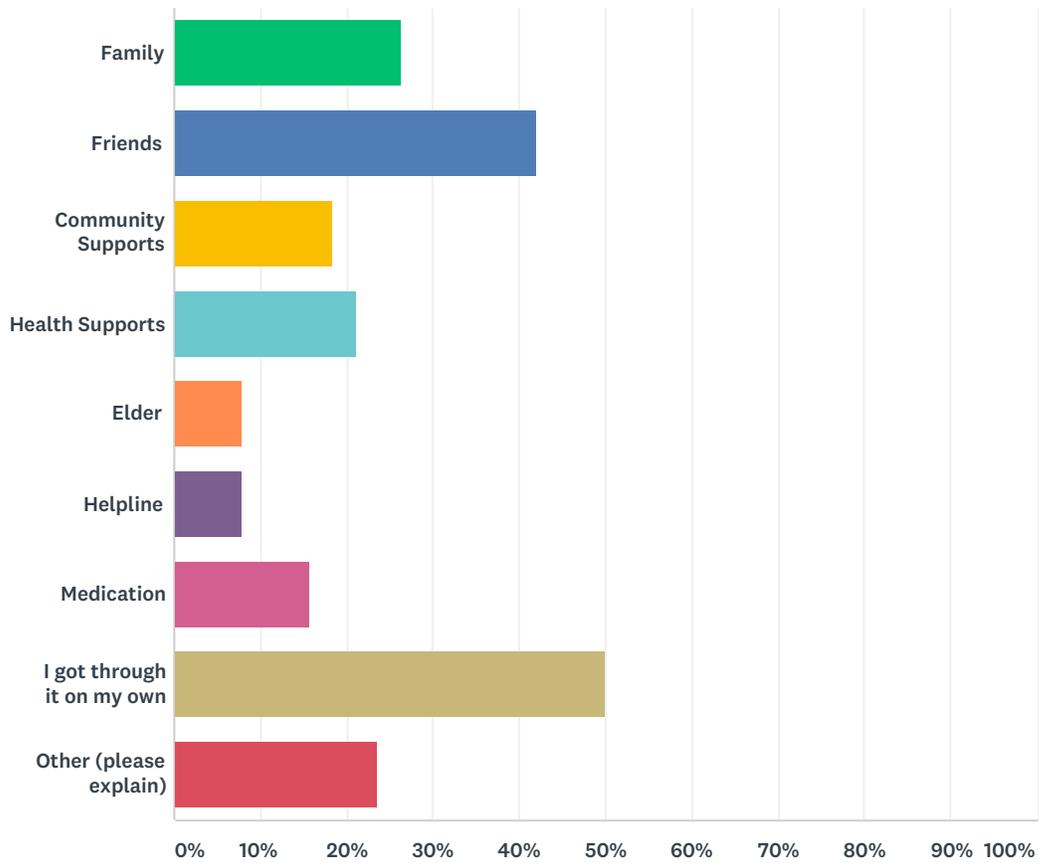
Answered: 43 Skipped: 8



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	51.16%	22
No	44.19%	19
Prefer not to answer	4.65%	2
Total Respondents: 43		

Q29 What helped you cope with thought(s) of suicide? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 38 Skipped: 13



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Family	26.32% 10
Friends	42.11% 16
Community Supports	18.42% 7
Health Supports	21.05% 8
Elder	7.89% 3
Helpline	7.89% 3
Medication	15.79% 6
I got through it on my own	50.00% 19
Other (please explain)	23.68% 9
Total Respondents: 38	

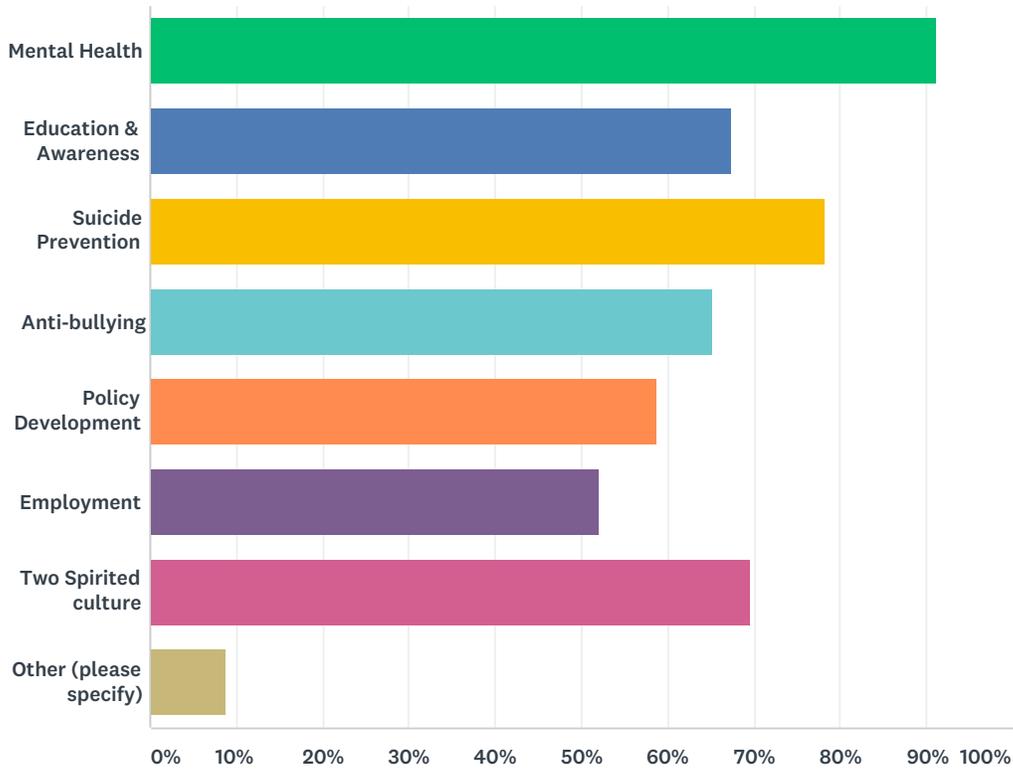
#	OTHER (PLEASE EXPLAIN)	DATE
1	Councelling	9/17/2016 12:27 PM

Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada

2	n/a	9/12/2016 10:53 AM
3	My sister committed suicide a few years ago, I don't want to put my family through that again. I also have a daughter. That being said, I have made 3 attempts in my life.	9/12/2016 10:27 AM
4	Therapy	9/11/2016 3:34 AM
5	I went through decades of alcoholism	9/10/2016 11:45 PM
6	NA	9/8/2016 9:35 AM
7	Anxiety	8/16/2016 9:48 AM
8	sad to say that addictions helped keep me alive in some ways, happy to say I am sober now and strong, I no longer think about suicide as an option	8/16/2016 9:41 AM
9	I'm a parent of two children, I grew up without much contact with my dad. I couldn't put my children thru that.	8/15/2016 6:24 AM

Q30 What Two Spirited (Indigenous LGBTQ) issues are priorities for research? (Check all that apply)

Answered: 46 Skipped: 5

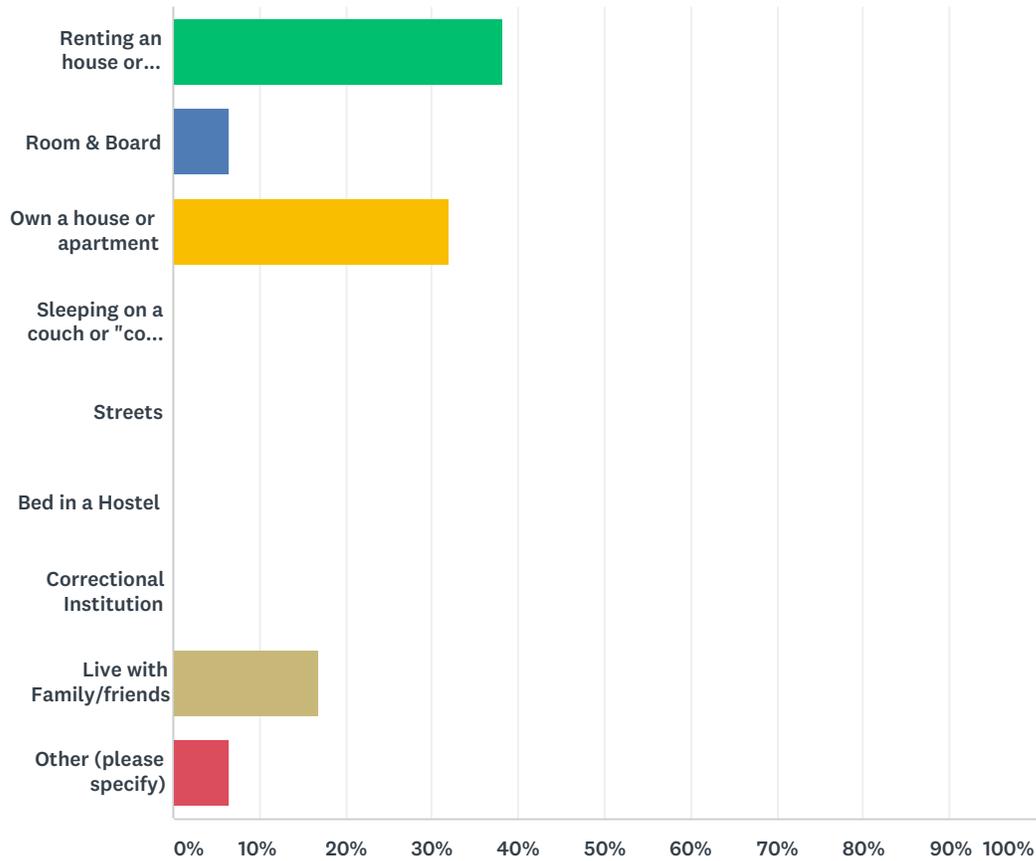


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Mental Health	91.30% 42
Education & Awareness	67.39% 31
Suicide Prevention	78.26% 36
Anti-bullying	65.22% 30
Policy Development	58.70% 27
Employment	52.17% 24
Two Spirited culture	69.57% 32
Other (please specify)	8.70% 4
Total Respondents: 46	

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	the wabanaki two spirit alliance was formed by ego, fabrication and misconceptions, we need authentic two-spirit teachings/history, not made up fantasies...	9/2/2016 12:58 AM
2	Ceremony inclusion	8/16/2016 9:48 AM
3	Healing from trauma (collective and intergenerational trauma) and Addictions	8/16/2016 9:41 AM
4	Traditional teachings related to two-spirited persons in our culture.	8/15/2016 6:24 AM

Q31 What were your living arrangements for the past 12 months?

Answered: 47 Skipped: 4

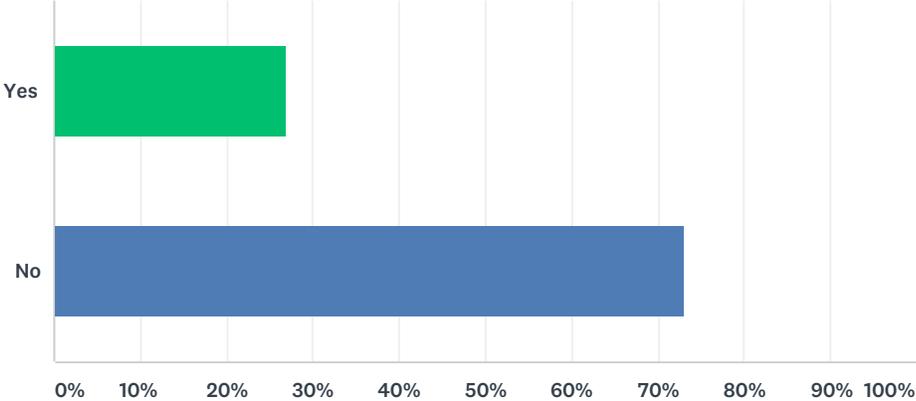


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Renting an house or apartment	38.30%	18
Room & Board	6.38%	3
Own a house or apartment	31.91%	15
Sleeping on a couch or "couch surfing"	0.00%	0
Streets	0.00%	0
Bed in a Hostel	0.00%	0
Correctional Institution	0.00%	0
Live with Family/friends	17.02%	8
Other (please specify)	6.38%	3
TOTAL		47

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Living arrangements are included in our employment	9/12/2016 10:27 AM
2	Campus, and then between an apartment and family home	8/16/2016 9:48 AM

Q32 Do you have children?

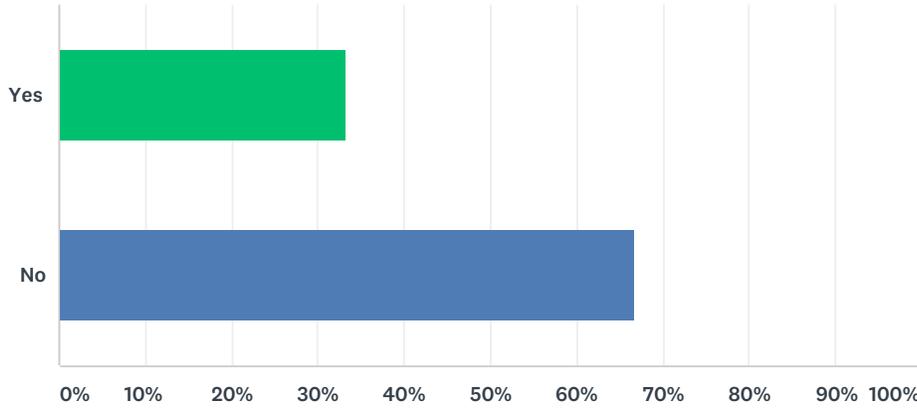
Answered: 48 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	27.08%	13
No	72.92%	35
TOTAL		48

Q33 If so, do your children live with you?

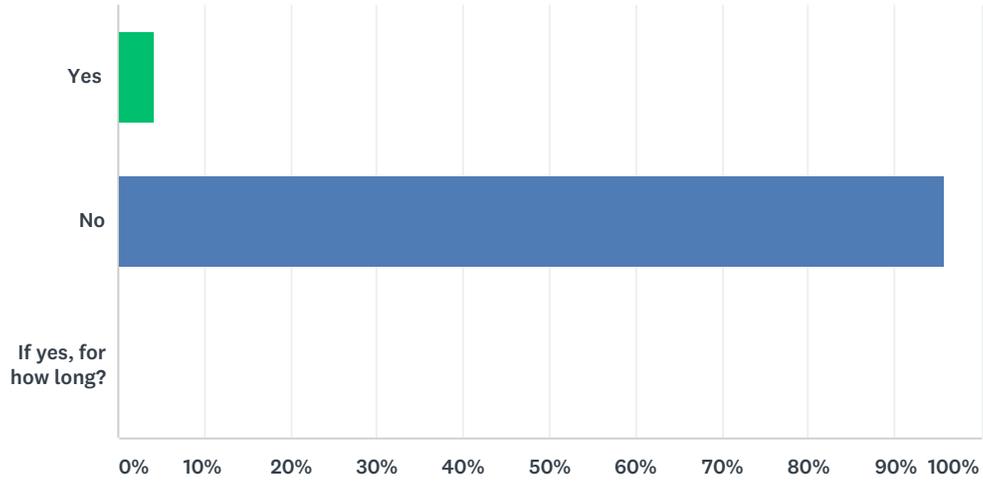
Answered: 30 Skipped: 21



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	33.33%	10
No	66.67%	20
TOTAL		30

Q34 Did you attend Residential School?

Answered: 49 Skipped: 2

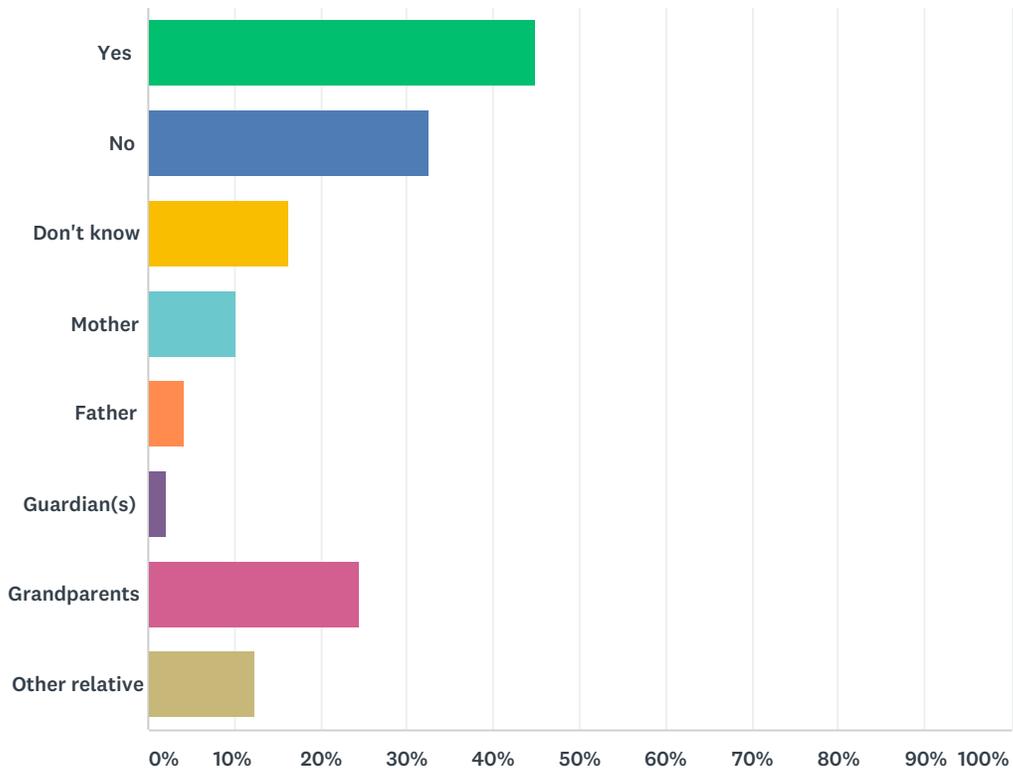


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	4.08% 2
No	95.92% 47
If yes, for how long?	0.00% 0
Total Respondents: 49	

#	IF YES, FOR HOW LONG?	DATE
There are no responses.		

Q35 Did your parents, guardians, grandparents or other relatives attend a Residential School?

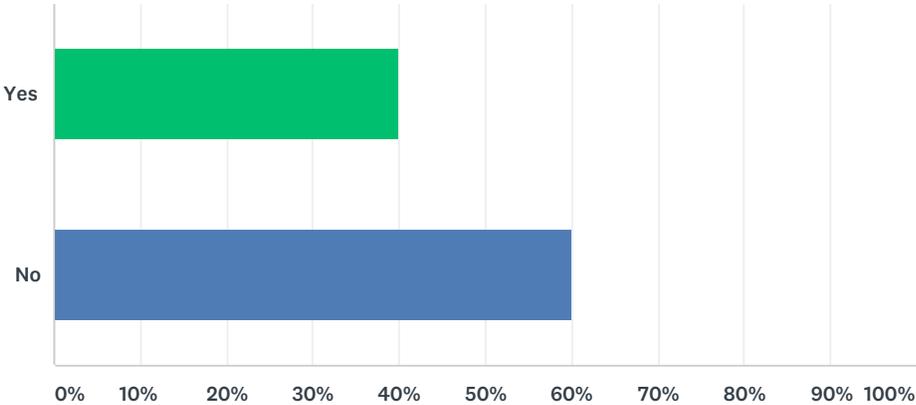
Answered: 49 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	44.90%	22
No	32.65%	16
Don't know	16.33%	8
Mother	10.20%	5
Father	4.08%	2
Guardian(s)	2.04%	1
Grandparents	24.49%	12
Other relative	12.24%	6
Total Respondents: 49		

Q36 Have you ever experienced domestic violence in a same sex/LGBTQ relationship?

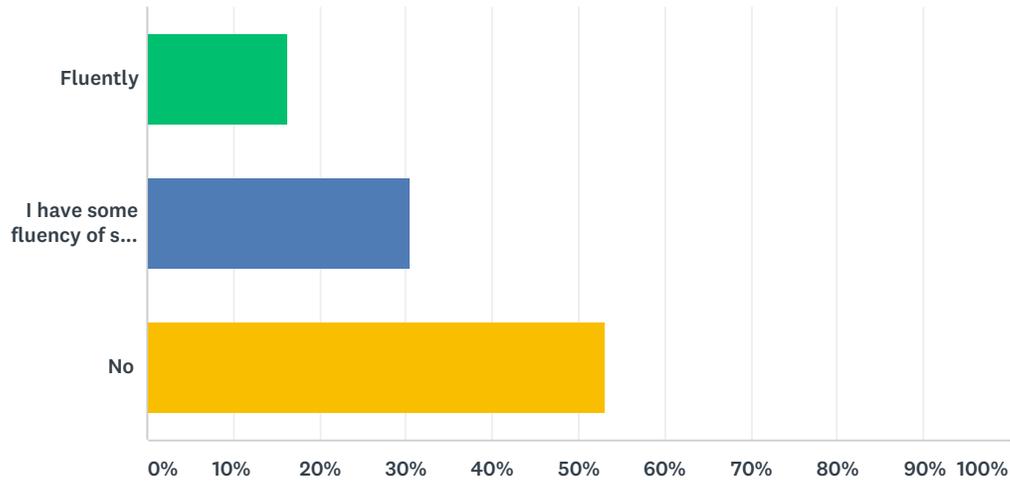
Answered: 45 Skipped: 6



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	40.00%	18
No	60.00%	27
Total Respondents: 45		

Q37 Do you speak your traditional language?

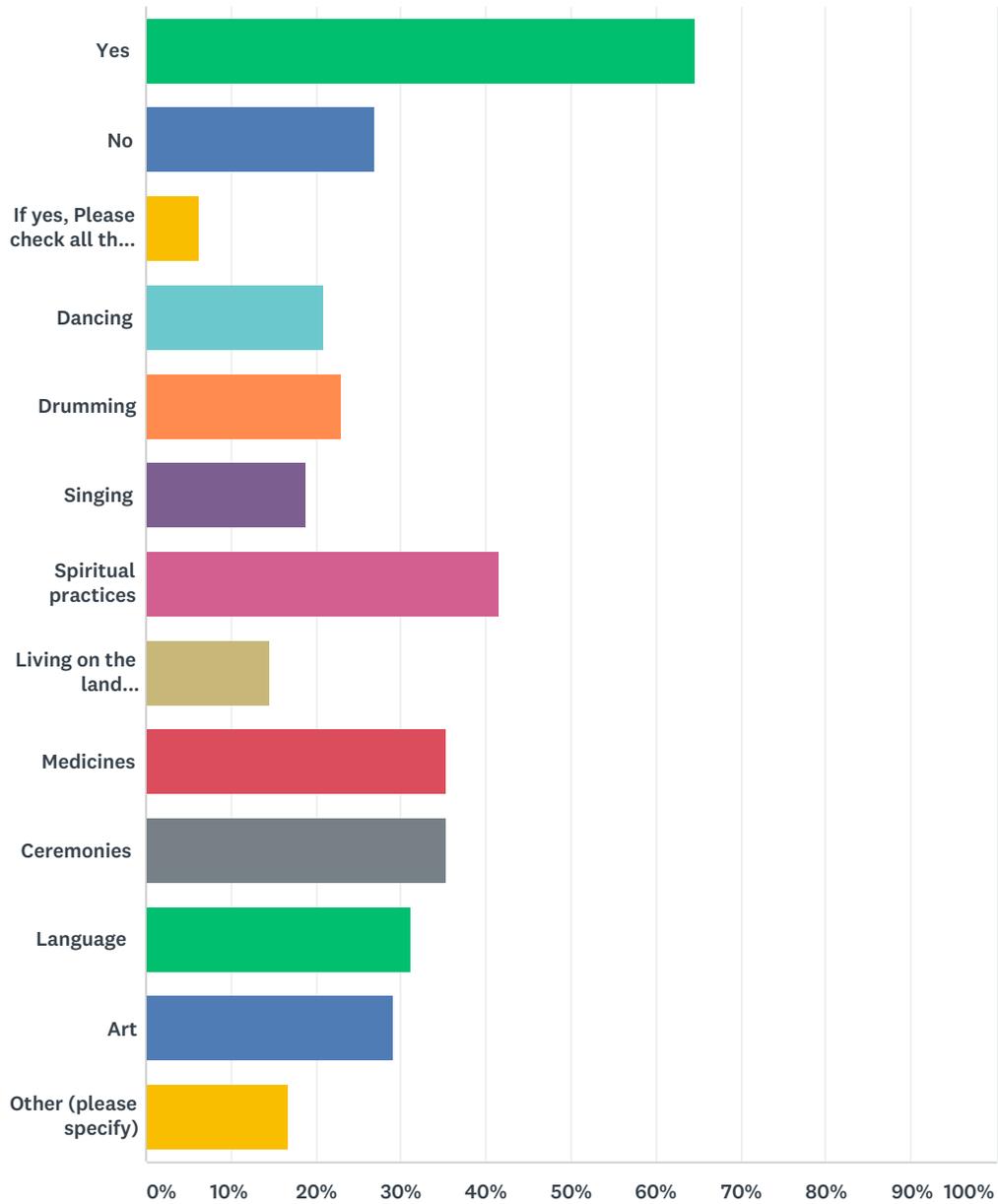
Answered: 49 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Fluently	16.33%	8
I have some fluency of some of my traditional language	30.61%	15
No	53.06%	26
Total Respondents: 49		

Q38 Do you participate in traditional cultural practices?

Answered: 48 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	64.58%	31
No	27.08%	13
If yes, Please check all that apply:	6.25%	3
Dancing	20.83%	10
Drumming	22.92%	11
Singing	18.75%	9

Coming Out Stories: Two Spirit Narratives in Atlantic Canada

Spiritual practices	41.67%	20
Living on the land (hunting/gathering)	14.58%	7
Medicines	35.42%	17
Ceremonies	35.42%	17
Language	31.25%	15
Art	29.17%	14
Other (please specify)	16.67%	8
Total Respondents: 48		

#	OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	DATE
1	Powwow	9/16/2016 11:02 PM
2	I am not aloud to partake in cultural practices because of my constant use of marijuana.	9/16/2016 11:01 PM
3	i am not aboriginal but i do attend	9/12/2016 12:46 PM
4	Attempting to learn my traditional language.	9/12/2016 10:27 AM
5	I haven't lived near my Métis family since I was a child, so I am disconnected from my culture	9/12/2016 10:10 AM
6	Trying to learn my language	9/9/2016 12:37 PM
7	I am learning much from friends that are more involved in our culture. Some of the medicines are in my head from my Grandfather. They come to me sometimes and I don't know how I know them. It had to be him teaching when I was young and had forgotten them.	8/30/2016 2:37 PM
8	Just wanted to say that question 21 doesn't let you select more than one option. I feel safe in all parts of my life now	8/16/2016 9:41 AM