

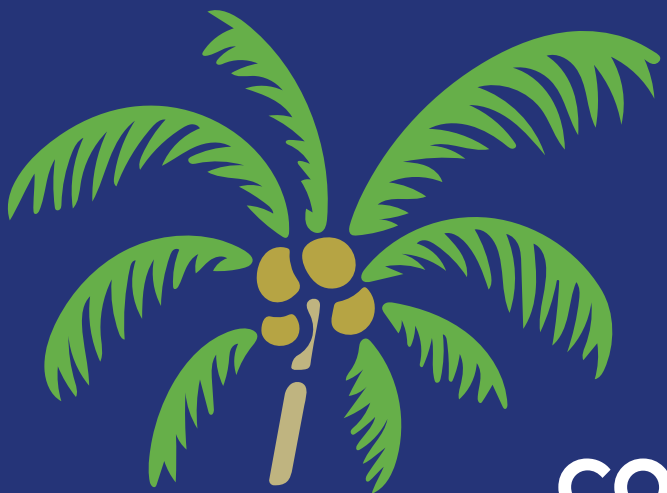


**Barbados Association of Winnipeg**

## **Towards Positive Change to Promote Mental Health and Well-being for Black Canadians**

Development of a culturally appropriate toolkit on mental health promotion for Black Canadians to enhance access to culturally relevant and empowering mental health promotion resources.

**Time period:** 24 months (Oct. 2019 – Sep. 2021)



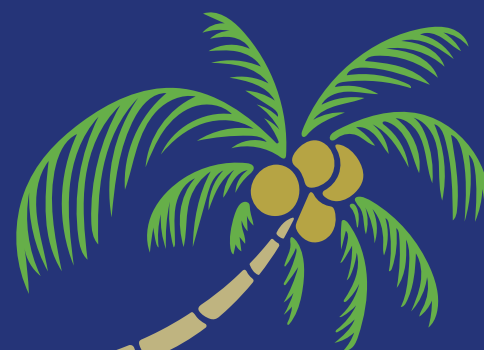
## CONTEXT



Black Canadians of African and Caribbean heritage need to be at the front and center of the development of relevant culturally-based tools.



Black Canadians lack access to culturally-relevant mental health promotion resources that may not only inform themselves and others, but also empower and provide information. This can facilitate taking positive steps about the determinants of mental health and the well-being of Black Canadians.



# APPROACH



## Cultural Adaptation & Addressing Racism:

The toolkit was developed by Black Canadians with lived or shared experiences. It integrates the experiences, voices and visual representation of Black Canadians with multiple forms of inequities, racism and discrimination and/or the impacts of racism on mental health.

## Audiences:

This toolkit can be used to serve a range of Black Canadian populations, including immigrants, persons with disabilities, children, youth, adults, LGBTQ2, and seniors. Program, policy and legislation professionals may also be interested in this toolkit.

## Activities Summary:

The project researched existing mental health promotion tools and developed a culturally appropriate model for Black Canadians.

Online community wide forums, focus groups, town hall meetings, a key informant group, group orientation sessions, and online self-learning opportunities were implemented. Group information sessions for health, social services and education sectors were also held.

A website and Zoom were used for connecting with the community and the project team, especially during the pandemic.

## Partnerships:

Youth, adults, and senior Black Canadians of African and Caribbean heritage including those with disabilities residing in Manitoba, as well as health, social services and education sectors were involved in the development of the toolkit. Individuals and Black-led organizations were invited to participate in planned project activities:

- E.g. African Community Organizations of Manitoba (ACOMI) and Council of Caribbean Organizations of Manitoba (CCOM), Canadian Multicultural Disability Centre Inc. which are cultural organizations representing many Black-led organizations.
- E.g. Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA), Women's Health Clinic, Jamaican Association of Manitoba and Winnipeg Regional Health Authority also played significant supportive consultative roles.



# OUTCOMES & IMPACTS

## Products/Resources:

Black Mental Health Promotion Toolkit:

[www.blackmentalhealthpromotion.ca/live-toolkit-2/](http://www.blackmentalhealthpromotion.ca/live-toolkit-2/)

## Reach:

- More than 300 individuals from the Black community engaged in the development and the validation of the toolkit including surveys, focus groups and orientation sessions.
- Nearly 50 Black-led organizations participated in the orientation sessions.
- As of August 2023, 371 visitors accessed the toolkit for self-learning through the website
- As of August 2023, over 1770 hard copies were ordered for more than 75 organizations such as educational institutions, businesses, cultural and community groups, and shelters

## Sustainability:

Barbados Association of Winnipeg's ongoing activities for a year included hosting of the website with the toolkit. Online access to the toolkit and the website are being tracked over time.

Partnerships formed will hopefully grow and lead to systemic changes.

## Result Highlights:

Representatives of Black-led organizations who took part in the toolkit orientation sessions improved their knowledge, skills and abilities related to mental health and its determinants affecting Black Canadians.

When surveyed, 3 months after the orientation session, the majority (18/29, 62.1%) of the participants indicated that they had used the newly developed toolkit.

Some of the ways the toolkit was used included:

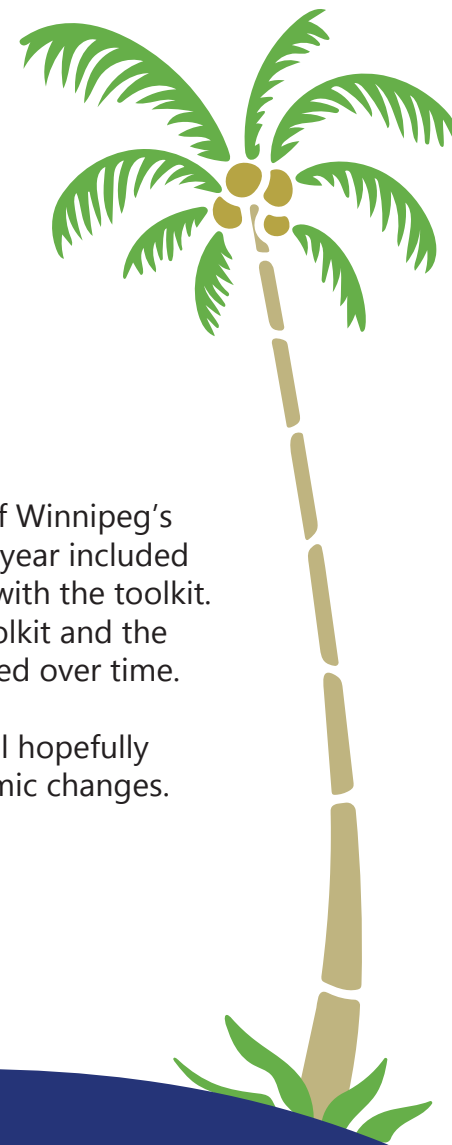
- briefly discussing the toolkit with their organizations and people in their communities
- sensitization of the toolkit in their families, workplaces and neighborhoods

- helping their friends improve their mental health and assuring them they are not alone
- developing some positive attitudes such as being patient, tolerant, accommodating, and more open towards friends and family

The majority (18/29, 62.1%) indicated that they took steps in the past three months to promote positive mental health in their organizations.

Some steps that were taken to promote positive mental health in their organization included:

- engaging mental health professionals
- educational awareness on mental health resources
- ensuring that the workplace feels like a safe space for all (workplace inclusion)



*I encourage them to talk to someone when they feel blue and to go through the toolkit about mental health.*





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The [Promoting Health Equity: Mental Health of Black Canadians Fund](#) supports community-based projects across Canada to develop more culturally-focused knowledge, capacity, and programs aimed at improving mental health in Black communities.

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