

URBAN ABORIGINAL TASK FORCE

Ottawa Final Report

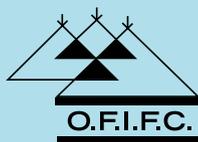
MARCH 2007

Commissioned by

The Ontario Federation of Indian
Friendship Centres

The Ontario Metis Aboriginal
Association

The Ontario Native Women's
Association



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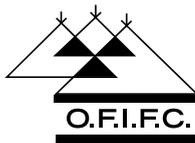
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*The Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres,
the Ontario Native Women's Association,
and the Ontario Métis Aboriginal Association
thank the following for their support.*

*Ontario Secretariat for Aboriginal Affairs
Ministry of Children and Youth Services
Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
Ministry of Community and Social Services
Statistics Canada*

*We would like to thank members of the Task Force,
the Ottawa Community Advisory Committee
and members of the Ottawa Aboriginal community that gave generously
of their time and expertise to contribute to this study.
Meegwetch.*

—Don McCaskill and Kevin Fitzmaurice

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

The Joint Steering Committee of the Urban Aboriginal Task Force (UATF) is pleased to present the *Ottawa Site Report* of the UATF Ottawa community research project to the Board of Directors of the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres, the Board of Directors of the Ontario Native Women's Association, the Board of Directors of the Ontario Métis Aboriginal Association, the partner Ministries, and the Ottawa Aboriginal community.

In early 2003 the Urban Aboriginal Task Force (UATF) was established with the aim exploring the issues facing the urban Aboriginal community in the province of Ontario. The idea was conceived of by the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres as a way to follow up on the work done by the original Task Force on the Needs of Native People in an Urban Setting, in 1981. While originally six community research sites were sought, the UATF settled on a final five: Ottawa, Thunder Bay, Barrie-Midland, Sudbury and Kenora. Through ups and downs the UATF has persevered in seeking to explore policy questions from a grassroots, community-based perspective.

The Urban Aboriginal Task Force would like first and foremost to express its gratitude to all the community members who participated in the research and provided us with their input, insight and experience. Without you there would be no way of pushing the policy agenda forward in a constructive way, based on the real needs of the community as you have articulated.

The Urban Aboriginal Task Force equally wishes to thank our researchers for conducting the extensive research required for such a comprehensive approach to the subject of Aboriginal people in an urban setting in each of the research sites.

The *Ottawa Site Report* is intended to provide support for the development of a strategic approach to resource allocations to address the needs of urban Aboriginal people. The *Ottawa Site Report* is also intended as a tool for communities, government and other agencies to advance a renewed policy agenda based on a rigorous, community-based understanding of the effects and implications of current policy approaches and legislative frameworks. The Task Force believes this *Report* sheds new light on the on-going struggles and critical new developments taking place in urban Aboriginal communities across the province.

The *Ottawa Site Report*, along with the four other site reports, will inform the preparation of the *Final Report of the Urban Aboriginal Task Force*. It is our hope that the *Final Report* will initiate a new wave of positive, cooperative policy, programme, and legislative change aimed at improving the quality of life for all urban Aboriginal people in Ontario.

Sincerely,

Sylvia Maracle

Executive Director, Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres
on behalf of The Joint Steering Committee, Urban Aboriginal Task Force

INTRODUCTION

Urbanization is a relatively new phenomenon, in the last 20 to 30 years. What is needed is a strong and supportive family. Education is the real key in this whole puzzle. You see the changes taking place as Aboriginal people become more educated. (KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW)

1.1 Background

The Urban Aboriginal Task Force Study builds on the original *Task Force on the Needs of Native People in an Urban Setting*, published in 1981. We believe the original Task Force was the first major research on urban Aboriginal people in the country. Both the original Task Force and the Urban Aboriginal Task Force Study were initiated by the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres. The original Task Force was a partnership between the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres, the Ontario Native Women's Association, the Ontario Métis Aboriginal Association, and government focused on the issues affecting urban Aboriginal people. The original Task Force findings and recommendations resulted in the creation of new policies and programmes to address the needs identified.

The Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres (OFIFC) conducted a feasibility study for the Urban Aboriginal Task Force Research Project in January 2003. The OFIFC funded the study and contracted Don McCaskill to conduct the feasibility study. It culminated in a two day workshop held at the OFIFC office on May 5 and 6, 2003. The feasibility study included a literature review of relevant research pertaining to urban Aboriginal people and interviews with 35 stakeholders from Aboriginal organizations and provincial and federal governments.

The OFIFC then approached the original Aboriginal partners—the Ontario Native Women's Association and the Ontario Métis Aboriginal Association—to determine their level of interest in updating the 1981

report and determine the needs of urban Aboriginal people today. The Aboriginal partners identified and engaged a number of provincial and federal government representatives and a new partnership was established to update the research.

1.2 Initial research interests

Virtually all feasibility study participants supported a renewed Urban Aboriginal Task Force Research Project. Participants supported this study for the following reasons: lack of research, large numbers and high visibility of urban Aboriginal people; increasing awareness of challenging social issues and unmet needs of urban Aboriginal people; recognition by Aboriginal people and governments that governments are not effectively addressing these needs; governments’ acknowledgment of jurisdictional wrangling and poor coordination of programs involving urban Aboriginal people; various Aboriginal constituencies interest in addressing urban Aboriginal self-government; and, recognition of Aboriginal people who are both economically successful (i.e. the emerging “middle class” of urban Aboriginal people) and wish to participate in Aboriginal cultural and social activities in the city.

1.3 The Task Force partners

Organizations and government came together as a partnership of Aboriginal organizations and federal, provincial and municipal govern-

TABLE 1A Research priorities of the Task Force

Research topics for all sites	Research considerations that span topics
Racism	Culture and identity
Homelessness and housing	Gaps and delivery of services
Poverty	Elders and long term care
Youth	Women and children
Women	Access to resources
Health	Assessment of Aboriginal services

ments. This group, the Urban Aboriginal Task Force, oversaw the research. The composition of the Task Force included representatives from the following organizations:

- Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centers
- Ontario Native Women's Association
- Ontario Métis Aboriginal Association
- Ontario Secretariat for Aboriginal Affairs
- Ministry of Children and Youth Services
- Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care
- Ministry of Community and Social Services
- Statistics Canada
- Native Child and Family Services of Toronto
- Office of the Federal Interlocutor
- Urban Aboriginal Strategy

The Task Force oversaw the entire research project from the planning phase to the final reporting phase. Through a series of meetings in 2005-2006, the UATF chose five research sites; Ottawa, Thunder Bay, Barrie/Midland/Orillia, Sudbury, and Kenora. The Task Force also determined the province-wide research priorities and considerations noted in *Table 1A*.

The Task Force chose a community based research approach and created Community Advisory Committees (CAC) in each of the research sites. The Task Force sought funding, hired the Research Director and Associate, and decided on the research tools for each site including: key informant interviews, focus groups, plenary sessions, literature reviews, life histories, and a community-wide survey. Once the local CACs were in place the Task Force met periodically, allowing the CACs to guide the research priorities and directions in a locally appropriate manner.

The firm Mukwa Associates was contracted to undertake the research for all sites. Mukwa Associates reported regularly to the Task Force and the Ottawa CAC throughout the research. The contract for the research set out in its terms and conditions that the material produced as a result of the research agreement is the property of the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres.

METHODOLOGY: A COMMUNITY BASED APPROACH TO RESEARCH

2.1 The Ottawa Community Advisory Committee

The Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres invited representatives from Aboriginal agencies to an initial meeting to learn about the UATF and Ottawa's inclusion as a research site. A Community Advisory Committee (CAC) was formed at an initial meeting on September 1, 2005. The CAC members were as follows:

Lorraine Augustine, Makonsag Aboriginal Head Start
Gary Lafontaine, Odawa Native Friendship Centre
Jerry Lanouette, Tewegan Transition House
Marc Maracle, Gignul Housing
Pamela Tabobundung Washington, Tabobundung and Association
Alison Fisher, Wabano Center for Aboriginal Health
Castille Troy, Minwaashin Lodge, Aboriginal Women's Support Centre
Verna McGregor, National Aboriginal Circle Against Family Violence
Tina Slauven-White, Tewegan Transition House

The CAC met eight times from September 2005 to December 2006 to determine the study design based in local research priorities, develop research methods by creating and vetting research tools, provide strategic sampling for research participants, provide ongoing feedback and amendments to the emergent design of the research, give feedback on the final report, and assist in bringing back the findings to the Ottawa community.

2.2 CAC local research priorities

The Ottawa CAC began by reviewing the research priorities of the Urban Aboriginal Task Force Research Study and discussing previous commu-

nity planning initiatives undertaken in the local urban Aboriginal community. The CAC developed the following research priorities,

- education
- Aboriginal culture and identity in Ottawa
- political representation
- housing issues
- economic development
- racism
- health
- economically successful residents
- youth issues
- gaps in social services

Next, the CAC collaborated regularly to hire the Research Site Coordinator, Allen Deleary and two Research Assistants, Dawn Otter Eyes, and Carol Eshkakogan, approved research tools, selected and provided access to a diversity of community respondents, gave feedback on the Final Report and communicated the findings to the community. The CAC members' direction has been critical to the success of this research project.

2.3 Data gathering

Data collection and applying emergent-design research included the methods recommended by the Task Force representatives (as above): key informant interviews, life histories, focus groups, and a community survey. Community researchers conducted research from December 2005 until June 2006 and collected quantitative data through the community survey, and qualitative data through interviews, focus groups, and life histories. The Research Director (Don McCaskill) and the Research Associate (Kevin Fitzmaurice) of Mukwa Associates also participated in key informant interviews and facilitated focus groups.

The study included 340 respondents of which there were 250 community surveys, 42 focus group participants, 3 life histories, and 45 key informant interviews. The number of respondents varies by method and by question, based on how many people participated in any given method. All respondents always had the choice not to answer any question on any guide or in any group setting. A list of the research instruments

developed for Ottawa study is included in the appendices of this report (research instruments are available upon request). An overview of the research methods is described in the following sections.

All Ottawa UATF research participants were Aboriginal. This sampling was intentional, as the research sought Aboriginal participants to speak to their experiences living in Ottawa. The research methods and the number of participants are shown in *Table 2A* below.

TABLE 2A Sample of respondents per research method (UATF)

Method/quantity	Total respondents
Key informant interviews	45
Life history	3
Focus groups	42
Community survey	250
Total	340

- 88 participants (35%) participated in the qualitative research
- 250 (65%) participated in the quantitative research
- N = 340

2.4 Interviews

Researchers developed the interview guides based on initial discussion with the CAC, and the CAC then approved them. There were three main interview guides for three groups of respondents: executive directors, staff of Aboriginal agencies and community members. The executive director interview guide was the main template used to capture the full breadth of questions, and included 123 questions that were specific to the organization and clients, and also general to the executive director. The staff interview guide contained 115 questions that also focused on the organization, the client base and personal information relating to the respondent. The community member interview guides had the fewest number of questions (73) that focused on a variety of issues including, but not limited to, culture and identity, demographics and community involvement.

The interview guides were structured, in that there was a series of set questions for participants to answer. The interview guides contained a

mix of closed-ended and open-ended questions. The structured nature of the interview guide and the question format did not prevent respondents from speaking outside of the question. Most commonly research participants provided examples and stories to complement and expand their responses. Interviews were completed predominantly in individual settings. Interviewees were recommended by the CAC or chosen by the researchers. Interviewees were sought because they met the criteria of being significantly involved in the urban community. Respondents included Executive Directors and Staff of Aboriginal agencies and a diversity of community members. Every effort was made to be as inclusive as possible in the research sample.

Ethical research guidelines were developed and followed for the key informant interviews. These guidelines relate to a guarantee of confidentiality and anonymity for the research participants. In every instance interview respondents read an information letter and completed a consent form. Key informant interview participants were free to withdraw their consent at any time in the research process. A copy of the Research Description and Consent Form is available upon request.

Interview analysis was based upon emerging themes. The researcher coded interviews using a coding manual that was vetted by the Research Director and Research Associate. Where applicable, researchers analyzed interview questions for frequencies and percentages of responses as well as cross tabulations for the variables of gender, income, age, and marital status.

2.5 Life histories

The life history component of the qualitative research provided the most in depth information concerning the participants' experiences in Ottawa. The researchers are particularly grateful to these participants who generously shared their time and their stories, which were at times difficult for them to tell. The UATF paid a \$150 honorarium to life history participants to recognize their contributions.

The life history guide was developed by the researchers: the CAC approved the guide and suggested participants. The life history guide was unstructured, using only general topics for the respondents to speak to. The unstructured nature of the life histories made each one distinct, with

respondents determining the foci and the emphasis placed on his or her story.

Ethical research guidelines were developed and followed for life history respondents. These guidelines relate to the research participants' confidentiality. Anonymity was not guaranteed, because of the detailed nature of the information about the individual's life; however, life history participants are not named in this report. In every instance interview respondents were asked to read an information letter and complete a consent form, making explicit to the participant that anonymity was not guaranteed. The consent form also sought participants' permission to audio-tape the sessions. Withdrawal of consent was permitted at any time in the research process. One respondent withdrew consent, and the life history was withdrawn from the research data. The life histories were sent to the respondents for their approval before they were finalized.

2.6 Focus groups

The main features of a focus group are that they: have fewer than 10 participants; use a non-structured approach, are facilitated with several broad questions; and, last from one to several hours. *Table 2c* below shows the sample of respondents for focus group sessions of Ottawa UATF research project.

Table 2c Sample of focus group respondents (UATF Qualitative)

Session Type	No. of sessions	Participant type	Total no. of participants
Women's issues	1	various	7
Housing and homelessness	2	community members	4 and 9
Gaps in services	1	community members	6
Youth issues	1	students and teacher (1) of the Alternative High School	10
Culture and identity	1	community members	6
Total	6		42

2.7 Community survey

Researchers developed the survey, with CAC approval. Researchers conducted a pilot study with four participants. The researchers revised the survey for clarity and content, based on the pre-tests and additional CAC vetting. The 29-page final survey consisted of a mix of 123 closed-ended and open-ended questions. The closed-ended questions required yes/no or forced-option choices. Open ended questions allowed for responses without prompts. Survey respondents received an information letter explaining the research, guaranteeing confidentiality and anonymity, and informing them of the option not to answer any question, or to quit at any time during the survey. Respondents received \$2.00 coffee certificates for participating.

Researchers approached CAC member agencies and other Aboriginal community organizations as survey sites. Researchers distributed surveys and, in most cases, were available to clarify any questions. Surveys were also provided to organizations for distribution to staff and clients, without researchers present. Individuals were asked to fill out a community survey in various public places such as shopping malls and Aboriginal events like powwows and other community gatherings.

Researchers analyzed the community survey data using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software designed for quantitative data analysis. Questions were run for frequencies and percentages of responses as well as cross tabulations.

2.8 Looking back, looking forward

As was mentioned earlier, this study of Aboriginal peoples in urban centres of Ontario was initially formed to build on the 1981 Task Force. The data for the following chapters comes mostly from the qualitative and quantitative Ottawa, UATF research described above. However, between 1981 and 2006 there have been other localized research studies with Aboriginal peoples in Ottawa. In the following sections and the next chapters of this report we integrate information from a UATF special run of Ottawa Statistics Canada 2001 Census data. This research is referenced as Statistics Canada 2006. As well, we build upon recent Ottawa research including: *MOVING FORWARD: Report on Community Consultation for*

the Urban Aboriginal Strategy, A New Aboriginal Housing Framework: Transformative Change, and the Evaluation of and Recommendations for Services for the Aboriginal Homeless in Ottawa.

The following chapters of this report explore the topics identified by the CAC using the methods described above. We begin placing the UATF study into the context of Ottawa and defining the population through demographic data provided by respondents of the studies. It is important to note that this demographic chapter is a snapshot of urban Aboriginal peoples during a six month period in 2006. We attempt to build upon the other four sources of information from the past four years.

CONTEXT, DEMOGRAPHICS AND MOBILITY PATTERNS

3.1 Placing the study in its urban context

Ottawa has a complex history when it comes to Aboriginal peoples. The city is built on the traditional land of the Algonquin peoples. Ottawa was an important trading area for Aboriginal peoples and it continues to serve as a meeting place for a diversity of Aboriginal cultures. The closest First Nation community to Ottawa is Golden Lake, otherwise known as the Algonquins of Pikawanagan. On the Quebec side, Ottawa is surrounded by Algonquin communities of Lake Kipawa, Kitigan Zibi, Rapid Lake and Eagle Village First Nations. The Mohawk communities that surround Ottawa are Kanasatake, Akwesasne, Kahnawake, Doncaster, and Tyendinaga. Aboriginal people from Northern First Nation communities along the James Bay and Hudson's Bay coastline, as well as a significant number of Inuit people from Nunavut, also reside in Ottawa. Importantly, the Department of Indian Affairs is located in Ottawa (Hull) and many Aboriginal organizations have their head offices here as well. This fact attracts a diversity of Aboriginal people from across the country looking for meaningful employment and training.

The community survey shows that for those who identify with a specific Aboriginal group, 11.4% indicated that they were Inuit, 18% indicated that they were Métis, and 14% indicated that they were First Nations. Participants also could choose to identify their specific nation. The highest percentage of people identifying with their nation was Cree at 13%, Ojibway at 11%, Algonquin at 9.7% and Mohawk at 4.6%. Other options such as Naskapi, Montagnais, Dene or Tsimshian were available at lower frequencies (0.4%).

Ottawa has three Ontario post secondary institutions: University of Ottawa, Carleton University and Algonquin College. The University of

Ottawa has an Aboriginal Resource Centre that provides support directly to Aboriginal students and also works with faculty, government agencies and Aboriginal communities and organizations. The University of Ottawa, through the Faculty of Arts, offers a three year Aboriginal Studies program, and a community based Native Teacher Education Program.

Carleton University offers an Aboriginal Enriched Student Support Program. This provides a mechanism for Aboriginal students to transition into a degree program. Carleton also has a Centre for Aboriginal Culture and Education. This centre provides a variety of support services to Aboriginal students. Algonquin College also offers an Aboriginal Studies program in the General Arts and Science program in either a one year certificate or two year diploma program. The Mamidosewin Centre for Aboriginal Students offers many student support services at Algonquin College which includes, but is not limited to counseling services, cultural programming and workshops. These three institutions also bring in students not only from within Ottawa, but from communities across Canada. Many of these students require a variety of services beyond the perimeter of the campus.

Demographics

In sections 3.2 to 3.5 below participant responses about gender, education, age and income levels for the UATF survey are discussed. The demographic profile below portrays Aboriginal peoples of Ottawa.

3.2 Gender

The Ottawa UATF respondents' gender profile is shown in *Table 3A*.

TABLE 3A Gender of participants (UATF Qualitative and Survey data)

Respondent/method	Females	Males	Total
Key informant interviews (%)	76%	24%	100%
Quantitative data (%)	67%	35%	100%
Average (all research)	71%	29%	100%

- 71% of all research respondents were female
- 29% of all research respondents were male

Importantly, the researchers did attempt to generate a diverse (across, gender, age, culture, and income) sample of respondents. Nonetheless, the higher number of urban Aboriginal women respondents in the UATF research reflects the Statistics Canada Census data for Ottawa, in that there are both more Aboriginal women living in the region and they tend to work in the health, social service and administrative sectors, areas of particular concern for this study.

According to the Aboriginal Population Profile for Ottawa, there is a total of 13,485 people who have an Aboriginal identity. This may include First Nation people, both registered and non-registered under the Indian Act, Métis and Inuit people. According to Statistics Canada, in 2001 there were 6515 Aboriginal men and 6970 Aboriginal women. It is important to note, however, that Aboriginal agencies believe that Statistics Canada data under represents the true number of Aboriginal people living in Ottawa.

3.3 Education

In Ottawa in 2001, more than half (57%) of Aboriginal women aged 24–34 years had completed post secondary education, similar to their non-Aboriginal counterparts.

— Statistics Canada, 2006, p. 2

Education levels are important to labour force participation, and an education is seen as the way out of poverty for many Aboriginal peoples. The data presented below draws from two sources, Statistics Canada Census data and UATF qualitative and quantitative data and portray increasing but still low education levels for urban Aboriginal peoples in Ottawa.

It is important to acknowledge that Statistics Canada data is often criticized for the under-reporting of Aboriginal people and their experiences. We have, nonetheless, felt it useful to incorporate this data in places where there is both an absence of UATF quantitative findings as well as where we can highlight important contrasts in data sets; with most notable contrasts appearing in the areas of income and education levels of urban Aboriginal people in Ottawa.

The data below comparing Aboriginal people in Ottawa with non-Aboriginal people in Ontario indicates that there are notable differences in educational attainment. The Aboriginal men and women residing in

Ottawa have higher levels of education than their non-Aboriginal citizens. This is not surprising, considering that Ottawa has a high proportion of professionals working in various Aboriginal agencies in the city as well as within the federal government.

TABLE 3B Population by highest level of schooling

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001

	Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Population 20-34 years old	Percent			
Less than high school graduation certificate	11.3	8.3	14.9	11.5
High school graduation certificate or some postsecondary	30.5	27.1	36.1	31.5
Trades certificate or diploma	8.3	6.2	9.6	6.2
College certificate or diploma	19.4	22.2	16.4	22.4
University certificate, diploma or degree	30.5	36.2	23	28.4
Population 35-44 years old	Percent			
Less than high school graduation certificate	14	11.5	18.8	16
High school graduation certificate or some postsecondary	21.3	25.2	23.8	27.3
Trades certificate or diploma	10.5	7.4	15	8.2
College certificate or diploma	19.3	23.1	18	24.1
University certificate, diploma or degree	34.9	32.8	24.4	24.4
Population 45-64 years old	Percent			
Less than high school graduation certificate	19.3	20.8	26.5	28.4
High school graduation certificate or some postsecondary	20.1	26.6	29.9	25.7
Trades certificate or diploma	10.6	6.4	15.8	7.7
College certificate or diploma	14.2	18.2	13.8	19.2
University certificate, diploma or degree	35.8	28	24	19.0

According to Statistics Canada, in 2001 of those Aboriginal people above the age of 25 years, 19% of Aboriginal men had less than high school, while 25% had graduated high school and had some postsecondary training and 36% had either a trades certificate or diploma or college certificate or diploma. And lastly, 20% of Aboriginal men also had a University degree.

Aboriginal women in Ottawa appear to lag a little behind their male counterparts. In 2001, 24% of Aboriginal women had less than a high school education and 24% of Aboriginal women in Ottawa had graduated high school and attended some post secondary education. Women who had either earned a trades certificate or diploma or a college certificate or diploma accounted for 32% of the above 25 years Aboriginal population and the percentage of Aboriginal women in Ottawa with a University certificate is on par with the men, at 20%.

TABLE 3C Education levels total in Ottawa

Source: Statistics Canada, Census of Canada, 2001

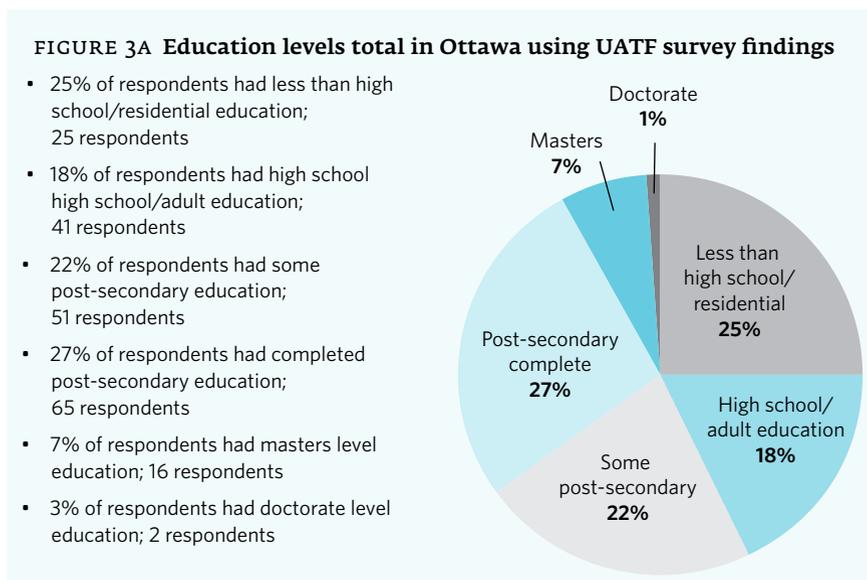
Total Population by Highest Level of Educational Attainment	Total
Less than high school graduation certificate	9.8
High school graduation certificate or some postsecondary	28.8
Trades certificate or diploma	7.25
College certificate or diploma	20.8
University certificate, diploma or degree	33.35
Population aged 35-44	
Less than high school graduation certificate	12.75
High school graduation certificate or some postsecondary	23.25
Trades certificate or diploma	8.95
College certificate or diploma	21.2
University certificate, diploma or degree	33.85
Population aged 45-64	
Less than high school graduation certificate	20.05
High school graduation certificate or some postsecondary	23.35
Trades certificate or diploma	8.5
College certificate or diploma	16.2
University certificate, diploma or degree	31.9

Importantly, Statistics Canada data does re-enforce the generalized view in Ottawa that most Aboriginal people in the city are well educated and economically successful, which as will be examined below, overshadows a significant level of Aboriginal poverty in the region. In addition, census data often does not include some types of individuals who are poor (i.e. homeless people and people who move frequently in lower income areas).

In contrast to the total population Statistics Canada findings, 25% of UATF survey respondents reported that they had not completed high school. UATF findings also report that 40% had completed high school or some post secondary. 27% of UATF respondents indicated that they had completed a University certificate or degree, and an additional 7% had a master’s degree and 1% had completed a doctorate (2 of the 237 respondents). This data is shown in Figure 3A.

When considering the UATF community survey results with the Statistics Canada data we see generally lower levels of educational attainment for the UATF community respondents.

The UATF key informant interview respondents, on the other hand, tended to be those persons (Executive Directors and Staff) working within the Ottawa Aboriginal social services sector. The education levels of this group of respondents were, therefore, comparable to the Stats Canada



findings, which seems to confirm the Statistic Canada reliance on the more easily surveyed and perhaps affluent members of Ottawa Aboriginal community.

Community key informant interviews show that out of 38 respondents, the majority had completed either some postsecondary (44%) or an undergraduate degree (42%). 11% of community key informant respondents had only completed high school, and 3% had a master’s degree. The Aboriginal organization staff key respondent interviews (10 in total) revealed that 20% had completed some post secondary, 40% had an undergraduate degree, and 40% had a master’s degree. Of the seven Executive Director key informant interviews, 43% had some post secondary education and 57% had an undergraduate degree.

3.4 Age

Respondents to Ottawa UATF research were strategically selected to be 16 years and older, for consent purposes. The qualitative and quantitative data did not use the same age categories, thus the data cannot be merged. The research respondents’ age range for the qualitative and quantitative data is shown below, with quantitative data in *Figure 3B* and *Table 3D*, and qualitative data in *Figure 3C*.

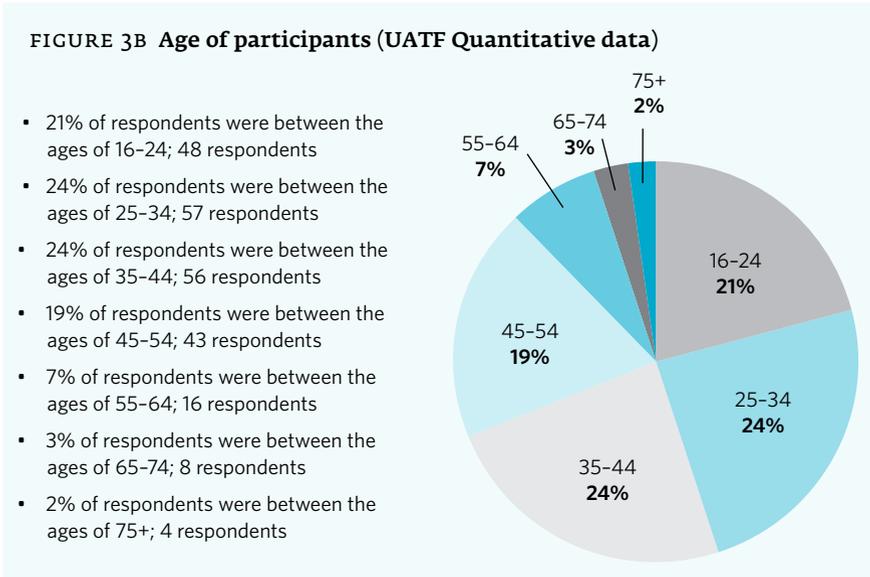


TABLE 3D Age of participants (UATF Quantitative data)

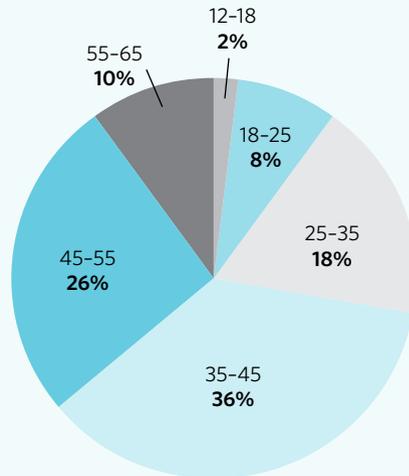
Range	16-24	35-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75+
%	21%	24%	24%	19%	7%	3%	2
Frequency	48	57	24	43	7	8	4

The qualitative data from all the community, staff and executive director key informant interviews have different age categories. However, there are some similarities in responses. The majority of respondents were between the ages of 35-45 (36%), between 45-55 (26%) or between the age of 25-35 years old (18%).

The Census reported that the Aboriginal population living in Ottawa is quite young. In 2001, 38.4% of the Aboriginal people were under the age of 25 and only 3% of Aboriginal people were 65 years and over, compared to 11% in the non-Aboriginal population. According to Statistics Canada, one-fifth (20%) of Aboriginal people living in Ottawa were under the age of 15. UATF data confirms this general youthfulness of Ottawa Aboriginal population, with our lower community survey figures of 21% (rather than 38.4%) of respondents under 25 due primarily to the UATF 16 years of age cut off point for potential respondents.

FIGURE 3C Age of participants (UATF Qualitative data)

- while key informant interviews have different age categories, there are some similarities in responses: the majority of respondents were between the ages of 35-45 (36%), between 45-55 (26%) or between the age of 25-35 years old (18%)



While 2001 Census data shows that Aboriginal people made up about 1.2% of Ottawa’s total population, Aboriginal children only represented about 1.3% of the city’s children (which represent 19.3% of Ottawa’s total population). Census data population figures are widely acknowledged to under-represent the number of urban Aboriginal peoples in the city. That said the largest group of males and females at the time of the 2001 census (those between the ages of 5–14) are now between the ages of 15-19 and for the next fifteen years these children will be making their way through the education system, into the labour force, and the housing market. These youth will have a significant impact upon Ottawa’s demographics but, given the current low graduation rates from mainstream schools, this cohort of youth may not have the opportunity to make a significant contribution to the economy.

UATF study findings cannot address this group of urban Aboriginal children and youth because they did not participate in this research study. Despite this research limitation, recommendations and resulting programs and services must bear in mind the implications of the predominance of the young Aboriginal population of 2006 and beyond.

3.5 Income levels for Aboriginal people in Ottawa

Notably, Statistics Canada data tracks the median income for Aboriginal people at \$39,899, \$3,763 higher than their non-Aboriginal counterparts. (See *Table 3E* below.)

TABLE 3E Income Figures for Ottawa (Statistics Canada)

Median employment income for the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations 15 years of age or older, Ottawa, 2001

	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal
Both sexes	\$39,899	\$ 36,163
Men	\$ 42,170	\$ 40,355
Women	\$ 37,705	\$ 31,037

- Median income for the Aboriginal population is \$39,899, or \$3,736 more than their non-Aboriginal counterparts in Ontario.

- Median income for Aboriginal men is \$42,170, or \$1815 higher than non-Aboriginal males in Ontario.
- Median for Aboriginal women is \$37,705 which is \$6668 higher than non-Aboriginal female counterparts

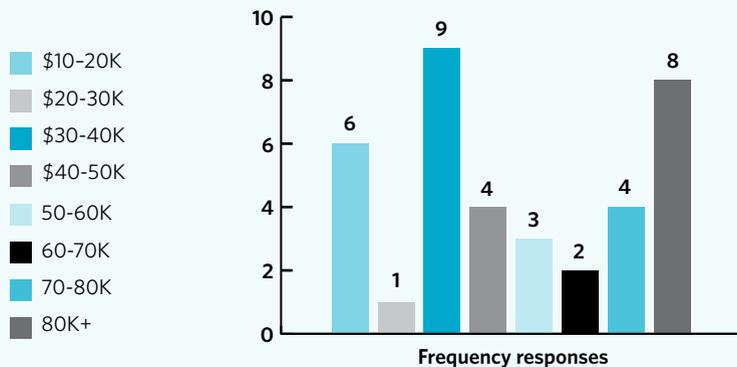
TABLE 3F Annual income of Aboriginal respondents in Ottawa (quantitative data)

Income/Year	Frequency	Percentage
\$10-20,000	71	38
\$20-30,000	23	13
\$30-40,000	29	16
\$40-50,000	16	9
\$50-60,000	16	9
\$60-70,000	6	3
\$70-80,000	5	3
\$80,000 +	16	9

Thus, according to Statistics Canada, in 2001 the mid-point income is consistently more for Aboriginal men and women in Ottawa than their non-Aboriginal counterparts in Ontario. However, as in the case with educational attainment, the UATF community survey, points to a less affluent Aboriginal population, with a significant majority of respondents 67% earning less than \$40,000 and 51% earning less than \$30,000, suggesting

a medium income of approximately \$27,000 (See Figure 3D.)

FIGURE 3D Qualitative data — community key informant interviews: total family income



Importantly, a significant percentage (16%) of the lower income group (\$10,000 to \$20,000) is further borne out in the qualitative, key informant interview results. (See Table 3F.)

Statistics Canada data is widely used by governments to assess needs of urban Aboriginal people, which translates into funding dollars for different programs and services. The census data fails to provide an accurate portrayal of the socio-economic situation of urban Aboriginal people in Ottawa, and does not capture the growing number of families in the low income areas. This is a troubling issue as agencies and organizations attempt to justify increases or maintenance of funding with their client base statistics against census data. A larger socio-economic assessment in Ottawa with a high sample size may provide agencies and organizations with more accurate and reliable data.

3.6 Residency in Ottawa

As stated previously, many Aboriginal peoples are migrating to Ottawa. The Statistics Canada data from the 2001 Census suggests that between 1996 and 2001 there was an increase in population of 6.5%. This section explores residency from three distinct but related perspectives: participants'

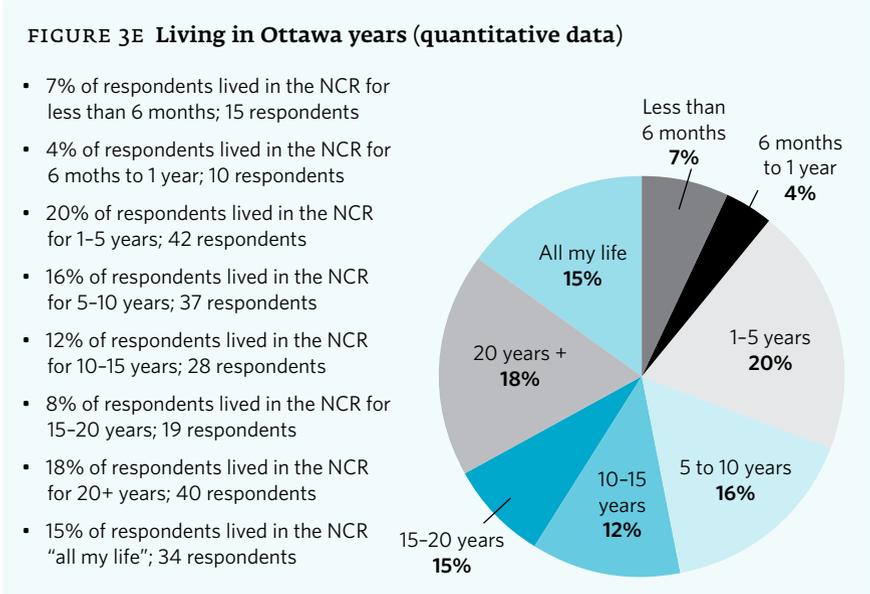


TABLE 3C How long have you lived in Ottawa

Time	Frequency	Percent
< 6 months	15	7
6 months to 1 year	10	4
1 to 5 years	42	20
5 to 10 years	37	16
10 years plus	28	12
15 to 20 years	19	8
20 years plus	40	18
all my life	34	15
Total	225	100.0

responses to how long they have been living in Ottawa, why they came to Ottawa, and the respondent’s housing arrangements in the city. The section begins with the below, which reveals the number of years that community survey residents have lived in Ottawa.

This data indicates that the Aboriginal population of Ottawa is relatively stable, with 53% of residents having lived in the city for over 10 years and 69% of its residents having lived in the city for more than 5 years. It would

appear that while there is migration into the city, with 11% being newer residents (less than 1 year), many residents have chosen to remain in the city. The service and programming needs for the Aboriginal residents must respond to the stable population accordingly.

Among the new arrivals to Ottawa (11%), it appears that the primary reason for moving to Ottawa is to look for employment (46%) and education (34%) opportunities. But also, many Aboriginal people (32%) are coming to Ottawa to be with family. And lastly, a minority of people (4%) are moving to Ottawa to access medical services not available in their previous community.

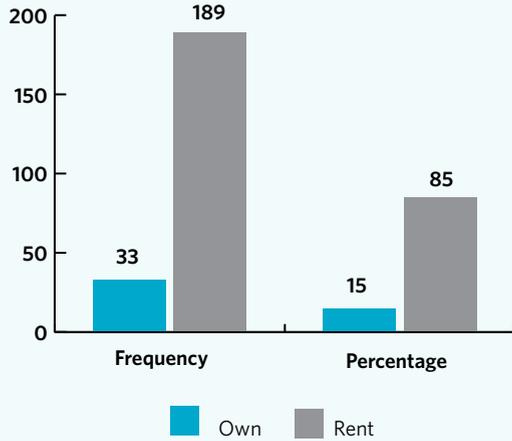
3.7 Housing

This section explores whether Aboriginal people in Ottawa rent or own their home. Statistics Canada (2006) notes that “[w]hen examining housing needs, whether one owns or rents their home is an important factor to consider.” The chart below shows the responses to the rent versus own question from the UATF community survey and reveals a community predominantly (85%) of renters.

From *Figure 3F* we see that 85% of UATF community survey respondents live in rental accommodations and only 15% own. This finding is some-

FIGURE 3F Rent versus Own (quantitative data)

- 33 or 15% of question respondents indicated that they own their home
- 189 or 85% of question respondents indicated that they rent



what expected, given the income levels reported by survey respondents (see Section 3.5). The issue of housing is significant for Ottawa and will be explored more fully in Chapter 13.

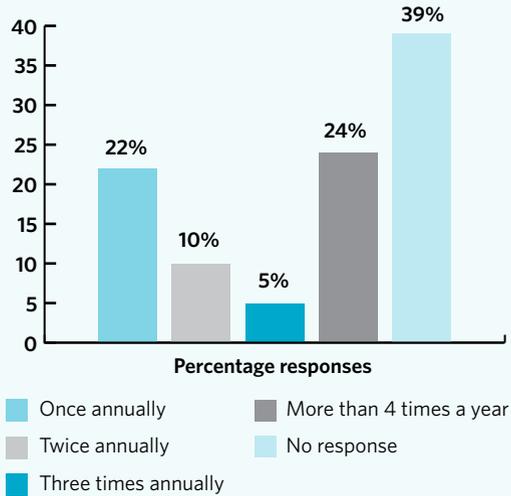
3.9 Mobility

Mobility is an important factor in suggesting how connected residents are to their community of origin. This measure can also provide some insight into the types of service provision residents require. Many factors may determine the frequency of visits to respondent's home communities such as distance, holiday time from work, relationships with family members in home communities, connections to home communities or whether residents are members of a First Nation or not. Importantly, 38% of respondents did not answer this question making it difficult to draw clear conclusions from this data. Nonetheless, it does appear that, of those who did respond to this question, there is a significant amount of movement between Ottawa and the communities of origin.

Ottawa is generally not in close proximity to the surrounding First Nations, with an average driving time of 1 ½ hours to the closer communities. Community respondents did, however, provided a variety of reasons to go home (primarily to visit family, and friends and for holidays),

FIGURE 3G Frequency of return to home community

- 53 respondents indicated that they have visited their home community in the last 12 months
- 23 respondents return twice a year to their home community.
- 13 respondents return three times a year to their home community.



which are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Specifically, respondents stated that:

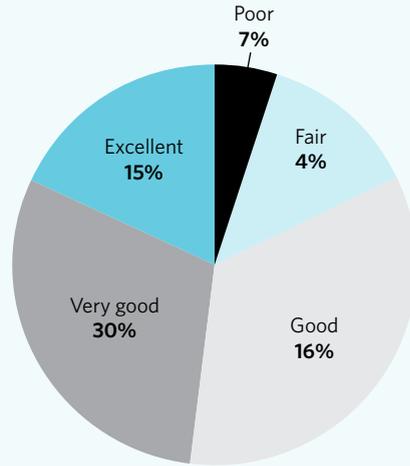
- 73% went home to visit family
- 47% went home to visit friends
- 9% went home for employment
- 37% went home for cultural reasons
- 43% went home for a holiday
- 16% answered that they went home for other reasons.

It is also important to gauge the intent of residents in returning back to their community of origin or home community. When asked this question, 30% of respondents indicated that they did intend on moving back to their home community, while 38% of respondents indicated that they were not intending on moving back to their home community, and 32% were unsure.

Overall, the high proportion of respondents who travel to their community of origin more than 4 times a year (24%) is quite significant and may indicate that this community is within a close proximity, that their needs in the urban centre are not being met, or they have the financial means to travel back and forth. Importantly, the data did reveal that re-

FIGURE 3H Overall health (quantitative data)

- 42 or 18% of respondents felt they were in excellent health
- 68 respondents or 30% felt their health status was very good
- 34% or 78 respondents felt their health was good
- 13% or 31 respondents felt their health was fair
- 5% or 11 respondents felt their health was poor



spondents who fall within the \$50,000 to \$60,000 income bracket tended to visit their community of origin more often than those within other income brackets. There is an interesting correlation between the high level of long term residents and the high frequency of those who travel back and forth several times a year. While Ottawa does have many long-term residents, these residents appear to maintain strong links with their communities of origin.

3.10 Health

Participants were asked about how they maintain their health and where they go to meet their health needs. The chart and the table below show the overall personal rating of health of respondents. A discussion follows.

How many times residents visit a physician may also be an indicator of health. In the past twelve months, 80% of respondents indicated that they have seen a health professional. 16% of respondents had not seen a health professional in the last 12 months, and 1.7% were unsure.

Aboriginal health services

In Ottawa, specific Aboriginal health service agencies are available. Respondents were asked whether they were aware of the Aboriginal

health services in Ottawa. Eighty percent of respondents indicated that they were aware of these services, 12% were not aware of Aboriginal health services, and 8% were unsure. Respondents were also asked whether they preferred to access services from an Aboriginal health agency. Sixty six percent of respondents indicated that they preferred accessing Aboriginal health services over mainstream services, 11% did not prefer Aboriginal health services, and 23% were unsure.

Respondents were also asked whether they had seen a traditional healer in Ottawa. Forty-three percent of respondents had seen a traditional healer, 51% had not seen a traditional healer, and 6% were unsure. Respondents were also asked where they go for their health needs in Ottawa, the response (not being mutually exclusive) breakdown is as follows

- 45% go to a walk-in clinic
- 45% go to Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health
- 17% go to a doctor
- 9% go to other for their health needs

These findings indicate that few Ottawa residents have a family physician and rely not only on the walk-in clinic, but also the Aboriginal health services (Wabano) for their health needs. The reliance on walk-in clinics indicates a troubling situation where those with chronic illnesses or reoccurring conditions may not have their health needs met by the same physician consistently. Additionally, the findings indicate that the reliance (45%) and preference (66%) for Aboriginal health services such as Wabano is significantly higher than the reliance and preference for mainstream health services, in spite of the overlapping use of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal health services. A more complete discussion of health issues as they affect Aboriginal people in Ottawa is contained in Chapter 11.

SERVICE DELIVERY TO ABORIGINAL PEOPLE

Overall I would like to see programs and services which remain intact and sustained for a number of years, not just a couple of months. We have a routine in this city to start programs but never finish them.

(KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW)

When prisons become shelters for the winter and places where men get their smokes, tv, and don't have to look after the kids...etc, well we know we're in trouble as this certainly promotes violence.

(FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT, 04-12-06)

4.1 Evolution of Aboriginal agencies

Programs and services in Ottawa have changed for Aboriginal peoples coming into the city. There are far more Aboriginal agencies available than in 1975 when the Odawa Native Friendship Centre opened its doors. The vast majority of Aboriginal organizations are social service agencies established to meet the pressing social problems facing Aboriginal people in Ottawa. Our research respondents came from 12 Aboriginal agencies. This agency growth parallels the large numbers of Aboriginal peoples coming in to the city.

It is important not to underestimate the tremendous diversity of programs and services supported by the Federal and Provincial governments in attempting to respond to the needs of urban Aboriginal people. In the last several years, some integral programs have been implemented in Ottawa which include:

- Aboriginal Criminal Courtworker Program
- Aboriginal Family Support Program

- Aboriginal Healthy Babies, Healthy Children
- Aboriginal Prenatal Program
- Aboriginal Victim of Crimes Program
- Akwe:go Program
- Dreamcatchers Youth Program
- Employment Referral and Training Program
- Healing and Wellness Program
- Lifelong Care Program
- Parents as Teachers
- Program for Early Parenting Support
- Aboriginal Homeless Initiative
- Shawenjeagamik Drop-in Centre
- Odawa Sweetgrass Child Care Agency
- Aboriginal and Inuit Headstart
- Urban Aboriginal Highschool

The following section on service delivery examines the current context of service delivery agencies and government, particular to Ottawa.

4.2 Major challenges in service delivery

There is too much politics in this town, which contributes to conflict amongst organizations. There is always this talk about which agency is serving which Aboriginal population, and people need to remember that we are all striving towards the same goal of trying to make things better for Aboriginal people in general. (COMMUNITY SURVEY, NO DATE)

Provincial shelters are getting reimbursed for Native women through INAC...but for Native shelters who are status blind, we take in non-Native women but do not get reimbursed from the province. (FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT, 04-12-06)

Service delivery is critical to urban Aboriginal peoples. Much has been written of the lack of coordinated urban Aboriginal policy or programming and unresolved federal, provincial, municipal, and First Nation jurisdictional issues. The Urban Aboriginal Strategy details that over \$270 million dollars per year is invested in urban Aboriginal programming. However, this amount is spread over 22 federal departments and to 80

different programs. According to the UAS, this has resulted in a patchwork of individual programs and initiatives which have led to frustration within Aboriginal organizations, communities, governments and other partners. Navigating the bureaucratic system and competing with other agencies for funds has become a main source of energy output for many Aboriginal agencies. The lack of stability around core funding is echoed across many Aboriginal agencies and organizations across all UATF sites. The strain on funding spills over to the client base.

We respond to many of the needs in the community, but I see an important gap in funding and so I see gaps in all of the services that we provide ... health, recreation, housing, etc ... but resources are so limited ... and the demand is great and our frustration is that we continue to struggle to do proposals to get a position and then to satisfy a need at the time ... that is, counselling position ... we needed \$60,000 but only got \$20,000. (FOCUS GROUP, 04, 12, 06)

I spend 70–80% of my time doing administrative work in terms of reporting. (FOCUS GROUP, 04, 12, 06)

We need to look at what we are giving in relation to the dollars that we are getting ... there is a huge discrepancy in funding gaps for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal services. For example: Average mainstream shelters are funded \$450,000, while average INAC shelters are funded \$150,000. (FOCUS GROUP, 04, 12, 06)

Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal agency representatives described the challenges that clients using their agencies face. Table 4A describes the major gaps in services indicated throughout the key informant interviews with staff, executive directors and community members. Twenty six per cent (26%) of respondents indicated that health was the major program and service gap, followed by employment (18%), and education (16%).

TABLE 4A Major gaps in services for urban Aboriginal people in Ottawa

	Funding	Jurisdictional Issues	Health	Youth	Education	Employment	Lack of Culturally Aware Agencies
%	2	16	26	14	16	18	2

4.3 Gaps in services

In the community surveys, respondents were asked if they experienced gaps in programs and services for urban Aboriginal people. Seventy nine percent of respondents did experience gaps in programs and services. This is a significant number and indicates that community members are not having their current needs met through the available programs and services in Ottawa.

TABLE 4B Gaps in services (quantitative data)

	Flexibility	Partnerships	Youth supports	Total
Frequency	30	1	7	38
Percentage	78.9	2.6	18.5	100

Of those community survey respondents who agreed that there were gaps in programs and services (n=37), 35% indicated that health was a major gap, 24% saw employment as a major gap, 21% saw education gaps, and 19% indicated that youth issues were a major gap. Importantly, the community survey data parallels that of the key informant interviews in terms of the significance of the various gaps in services, except in the areas of funding and jurisdictional issues where the key informant interview respondents (mostly organizational people) identified these issues as important gaps to service and program delivery.

Particular to Ottawa is the provincial border between Quebec and Ontario which, because of a lack of reciprocal funding reimbursement arrangements between provincial governments, impedes service delivery and creates gaps for those Aboriginal people residing in Quebec.

If you are from 'out-of-the-province' services are practically nil Wabano can't serve residents of Quebec. We want Aboriginal health services and access to healer benefits from the workshops but we can't access services. Services in Ontario are better than in Gatineau...basically there are no services for Aboriginal people in Gatineau.

(KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW, NO DATE)

An urban reservation might work, all these agencies are spread through out city and transportation is an issue. If it were central, it is someplace to call your own. Separation, isolation, and division becomes the reality

when we don't have a central place to call our own. We are even further isolated when we live in Gatineau and other Quebec areas.

(KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW, NO DATE)

The key informant interview respondents and Focus group participants further identified some additional specific and pressing needs or gaps in services, including:

- services that meet the unique needs of Inuit people which are not presently being adequately addressed by existing services;
- a diversity of housing services, including: emergency, transitional, long term, and youth/men.
- a center to specifically address the diverse needs of sex trade workers. There is presently no support for these women in Ottawa;
- support specifically for two-spirited people, as shelter and treatment facilities can be hostile, and unsafe spaces;
- support services for the elderly;
- transportation that facilitates access to services; and
- services that support entrepreneurs in writing business plans and conducting market research.

4.4 Growing Cooperation among local Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal agencies

The reality is that we work with non-Aboriginal agencies. We have received 27 letters of support from non-Aboriginal agencies in Ottawa for money for an Aboriginal specific shelter, but we have presently not had success with this. There is no need to compete for clients as there is no shortage of clients. (FOCUS GROUP, 04-12-06)

There is no cultural component in non-Aboriginal services. Sometimes the quality is better in non-Aboriginal services like health, housing and education services. (KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW 10-05-06)

I don't think there is as much of a difference as there should be (between mainstream and Aboriginal organizations), some not all. Agencies use the Eurocentric model and plunk Indigenous faces on top. The differences need to be ...on values, reclaiming tradition and culture.

(KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW 28-04-06)

The community survey revealed that executive directors and staff of Aboriginal agencies were aware of mainstream agencies that delivered programs and services to Aboriginal people in Ottawa. Eighty six percent of executive directors and 100% of staff were aware of such organizations. The mainstream organizations that they identified were:

- Children's Aid Society
- Algonquin College, Heritage College, University of Ottawa, Carleton University
- Rideau Woods Addictions Centre
- Ottawa Housing, Shepherds of Good Hope
- Pine Crest Day Care, Queensview Day Care

Respondents were then asked to rate the overall coordination and co-operation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations in terms of delivering services and programs to Aboriginal people in Ottawa.

There needs to be an Ottawa community council or structure set up to identify gaps, access funding and provide community programs/services to address those needs. Currently there is little coordination among local groups. (29-05-06)

A significant number of respondents (30%) felt unsatisfied in some way that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal organizations were coordinating and cooperating with one another, while 27% felt that they were satisfied and 18% were somewhat satisfied.

In discussing the major differences between Aboriginal and mainstream organizations in terms of the ways in which they provide programs and services, the qualitative data reveals that the majority of community members respondents (84.2%) and Aboriginal agency staff (60%) felt that there was a difference between Aboriginal and mainstream organizations in terms of service delivery.

Community members (67%) felt that Aboriginal agencies were better equipped to deal with Aboriginal clients. Aboriginal agency staff and executive directors both agreed that cultural awareness was the main difference. Other differences included jurisdictional issues, competing agencies, and warm and friendly atmosphere.

Culturally appropriate service delivery is essential for full communication between delivery providers and clients. Non-Aboriginal training

programs invariably fail with Aboriginal people whether it is justice, health, employment, housing, corrections, etc. (29-05-06)

4.5 The priorities of government

As stated previously, there are a large number of federal and provincial governments that are involved in Aboriginal programming and the funding of Aboriginal agencies. Agency executive directors were asked in the key informant interviews about their level of satisfaction in how funding was allocated to their agency. Forty three percent (43%) of executive directors were “not very satisfied” at how their funding was allocated. When asked to explain this situation, the funding model and the lack of sufficient funds were cited as the most common difficulties. The executive director responded that funding for staff and wages was the biggest challenge (85.7%) followed by finding qualified staff given the inadequate wage offerings of most Aboriginal agencies (14.2%).

A lot of our workers are making sacrifices in terms of pay scales and at any given time for our organizational people they are at risk of homelessness. We have very little job security, benefits etc..to offer our employees. There is funding for new centers but we are not adequately funding our centers right now. (FOCUS GROUP, 04-12-06)

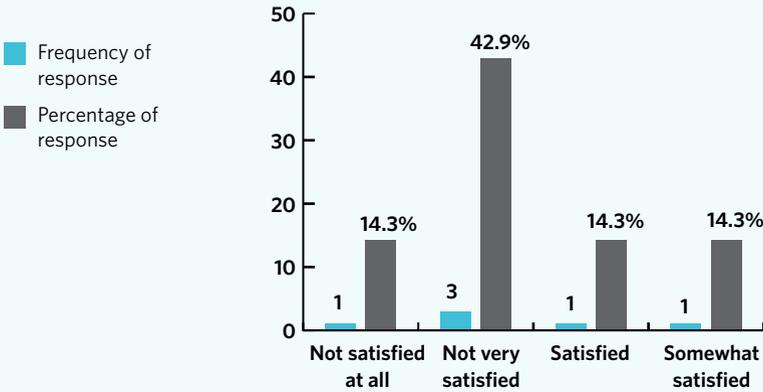
The lack of human resources and adequate financial resources contributes to poor service. There is no job security, and complacency sets in through no fault of their own as they are under resourced.

(KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW: 25-04-06)

4.6 The issue of funding equitability and community accountability

Funding of service delivery agencies can be based on a number of approaches including, per capita (based on population), need, formula-driven, proposal-based, as well as core funding. In terms of access to funding potential, the qualitative research revealed that Aboriginal agencies feel that there is not equitability between Aboriginal and mainstream organizations in terms of the funding process and amounts of available

FIGURE 4B Satisfaction with funding allocation



funding. Fifty seven percent of executive directors interviewed felt that Aboriginal organizations are treated unfairly by the primary funders when compared to the mainstream organizations.

Beyond the parameters of funding, both staff and executive directors (66%) felt that, in the case of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal agencies, there was a difference in the degree of accountability to the Aboriginal community in Ottawa in terms of program delivery. The executive directors described some of these differences as being racism and cultural awareness, jurisdictional issues, and overall accountability. To address these issues, executive directors identified the need for funding equitability, cross cultural training and networking partnerships.

CULTURE AND IDENTITY

As culture moves and changes across time, place and people, its boundaries, expressions and many meanings can often be very difficult to succinctly capture in a report such as this. Our respondents from the community survey, key informant interviews, focus groups and life histories spoke about culture in a great diversity of ways. Patterns of responses did, however, emerge around the following themes:

- the importance ‘being there’ in terms of simply spending time together as an urban Aboriginal cultural community;
- the importance of the values of care, family, food, and day to day acts of generosity;
- that culture is mobile and can flourish in urban the Aboriginal community, but that a sense of community must be intentional and encouraged in order to deal with the reality of individualism in the city;
- the importance of ceremony and the challenges of maintaining the integrity of ceremonial practice in culturally diverse urban centers; and
- the need for cultural events and opportunities for learning for all Aboriginal people and not solely for those members of the community deemed at risk.

The below series of quotations from focus groups embody many of these themes:

How do I express my heritage? I was very close to my grandfather. I used to follow him around and I picked up many things from him. You don't realize that this is culture. It is not teaching in the western sense of school; it is just about being there. And 40 years later I can still look back

and think what he might have done, and that would be the best thing to do. (31-05-06)

My culture to me is mostly about living in my heart. I don't have regalia, I don't have a drum, I let people know that I am proud to be an Indian. I know who I am, and I don't care about racist attitudes. I am fascinated by other tribes as well...I went to the powwow this weekend and this was really great. (31-05-06)

How I practice my culture is about being really adaptable in the city. For example, the way this feather is traveling today, and there are different directions that have different meanings. (31-05-06)

I used to go on fishing trips and logging trips and when I would come back...my grandfather would cry as he was so happy to see me, and this caring is part of our culture. (31-05-06)

When I was in my twenties and thirties I wasn't a very good person, but they put up with me. Why? Because I am family and this is very important for Aboriginal culture, and my kids are still with me even though they are older, but this is a good thing. (31-05-06)

When I went to my grandmothers there was always food and if somebody didn't show up that food was given to the grandfathers. There was a feast that was going on all the time and she would walk through the house with frying pan and tobacco...and I still do these things. (31-05-06)

A growing body of Canadian research is examining urban Aboriginal peoples and culture and identity (see for example, D. Newhouse and E. Peters, eds). Nonetheless, there is no existing research on culture and identity issues for urban Aboriginal peoples in Ottawa specifically.

There does persist, as Krotz (1980) notes, 'a strong, sometimes racist, perception that being Aboriginal and being urban are mutually exclusive' (p. 10-11). In terms of challenges, however, UATF respondents tended to focus on the issues of living with movement and change, the diversity of Aboriginal cultures in the urban center, developing trust and familiarity with Elders and other traditional people, the lack of Aboriginal cultural content in the urban, mainstream school curriculum, and the difficul-

ties associated with attempting to cultivate a sense of community among such diverse cultural groups.

There are dangers when you participate in your culture in the city. For example, the Mide society is a society that is also a community of people who know each other very well and so you are safe in ceremony. In the city there is this other kind of community who are very different from each other. In the city there are people who have great potential but who are learning and do not know how to use it and so there are strangers in the city which can cause dangers. (31-05-06)

There are all kinds of sweats in the city, some with standing offers, and I don't go to them. There are those in the city who act traditional, but who really are not. (31-05-06)

There is a problem with some people who experience ceremony, but then try to teach it to others right away. Ceremonies need to be constant, but there is an urbanization process happening as well. There even is this one person who has not had any teachings and still holds sweats and still feels the energy in what he does and so this seems okay. (31-05-06)

And then there is this question of who is an Elder as somebody who is wise who you can learn from. I am interested in how you become an elder here. Sadly I have heard of self-appointed Elders. The old people had rules to conduct your life and it was based upon logic and it made good sense. The identification of elders is a real challenge in this community and there is a problem with those people teaching things that they haven't learned. (31-05-06)

I have a hard time finding elders. When you are in the community you know who your elders are and there are elders who have specialty like drums, or songs, but in the city it is not so easy. There are elders in this community I would never use. (31-05-06)

The general ignorance of mainstream teachers on native studies issues (which is one little chapter in the text which lasts one day of the year) is a really big problem. The other students in my school couldn't speak up for themselves and they have all dropped out as they were tired of fighting

with the teachers. This erasure of history leads to very destructive behaviour for our youth who feel like outsiders. (31-05-06)

I lived in Orleans and then Gloucester and then when I moved to the west end I found out that there was Odawa...and so I came to visit...in these other parts of town, there really weren't any Native services. But now I am building a sense of community here in the west end. (31-05-06)

There are pockets of community: Métis, AFN, Odawa and it would be nice to bring us all together. (KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW)

As organizations, we are all dealing with negative social issues for about 15% of the local population where is the other 85%. We are not connected there is always a challenge in bringing people together in community.

(FOCUS GROUP)

5.1 Cultural identity and expression

The key informant interviews revealed a similarly diverse community, although we interviewed more First Nation and Inuit people than Métis, perhaps reflecting the composition of identities working within Ottawa social service sector. Thirty seven percent (37%) of respondents indicated that they were First Nation, 11% Inuit, and 5% identified as Métis. From this same question, 8% identified as being a Status Indian, and 5% non-Status. The largest proportion of respondents identified as being Cree, followed by Oji-Cree (5%), Algonquin (5%), Mohawk (5%), and Salteaux (3%).

I always feel strong support and caring amongst urban Aboriginal people in the cities I have lived in Canada...Aboriginal people always come together when there is a crisis.

(COMMUNITY KEY RESPONDENT INTERVIEW, NO DATE)

Elders are vital in an urban setting – they are keepers of knowledge and help retain culture. They are a reminder of culture; even though they are not experienced in organizational and community development they maintain the culture of the city (28-04-06).

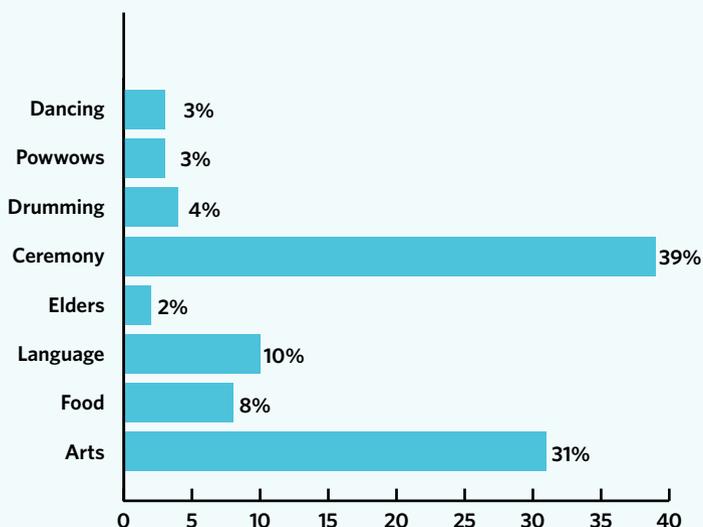
In terms of traditional Aboriginal culture, both the community survey and the key informant interviews revealed a high (81%) participation rate for Aboriginal people living in Ottawa that primarily involves ceremony and the arts, but also includes (in order of preference) language, food, drumming, powwows, dancing and access to Elders. (See *Figure 5A*.)

The correlation between participation in Aboriginal cultural events generally across age, gender and income is notable. Essentially, the older one gets, the more inclined one is to participate, with involvement increasing from 60% from ages 16 to 24, to 100% from ages 65 and older. Furthermore, more women (78%) than men (72%) participate in Aboriginal cultural events and in terms of income, the lowest (less than \$20,000) and the highest (above \$60,000) income earners tend to be the most involved with 74% and 84% participation rates respectively.

5.2 Languages spoken

With respect to the ability to speak one's own Aboriginal language, only 47% of community survey respondents and 30% of key informant interview respondents replied yes to this question. Of those that could speak

FIGURE 5A Expressions of Aboriginal culture (qualitative data)



their Aboriginal language, 44% of community survey respondents considered their fluency levels to be excellent (18%), very good (11%), or good (15%). The survey further indicated that the language is most often (35%) spoken at home, followed by when they visit their community of origin (33%) and then at Aboriginal events in the city (25%). Aboriginal languages are least often spoken at work (11%) and at school (7.6%).

Age can be an important factor when it comes to language retention. The data reveals that from ages 16 to 64 the ability of respondents to speak their language is quite high with an average of 47%. There is, however, a dramatic increasing ease in ability (75%) for those respondents over 75 years of age.

The data also revealed that 64% of male survey respondents were able to speak their Aboriginal language, and only 37% of surveyed females could speak their language and this discrepancy further translated to fluency whereby 53.6% of men were fluent in their language, while only 35% of women were fluent. The ability to pass language on to future generations has broader implications for Aboriginal youth and cultural identity, issues which will be explored in Chapter 7.

POLITICAL REPRESENTATION IN OTTAWA

Many of the political groups that represent Aboriginal people across Canada, such as the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), the Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO), the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP), and Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) have their head offices in Ottawa. As a result, there is a prevailing misconception that these organizations represent the local interests of Aboriginal people in Ottawa. Moreover, when this idea is combined with the further distortion of the economic success of all Aboriginal people living in Ottawa, then those Aboriginal people living on the margins of the local community and the agencies that attempt to assist them in meeting their basic needs tend to fall through the cracks of the social safety net.

Generally, community members expressed confusion over the state of local political representation with 43% responding (community survey) that they were unsure as to whether they thought that there was an Aboriginal organization that represented their interests as an Ottawa Aboriginal community member. However, 35% of community members stated that they did not feel represented politically on local matters.

In contrast, 85.7% of the key informant interview respondents (the majority of whom work in the social services sector) did not consider themselves represented politically on local matters by a political Aboriginal organization. Overall, the lack of local, Aboriginal political representation was felt to be a serious problem that contributed to much hardship to local agencies and their clients.

The majority of Aboriginal organizational respondents expressed a sense of being under-funded and 'stretched to the limit' and without the time or capacity to organize a concerted, effective lobby effort on behalf of their local clients. Rather, what has tended to result from these exter-

nal stresses is the development of a culture of inter-agency competitive-ness for scarce resources.

There is too much politics in this town, which contributes to conflict amongst organizations, there is always this talk about which agency is serving which Aboriginal population, people need to remember we are all striving towards the same goal of trying to make things better for Aboriginal people in general. (KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW)

We are reactive...when we can be proactive...but we spend the majority of our time being accountable and following funds...but we need to work cooperatively and we are moving down that road. (12-04-06)

One board member needs to take the lead...and push for political representation... a board member has more influence than an executive director of an agency. (12-04-06)

At what cost....overworked, overstressed...we don't have competitive dollars to hire good people...we are losing a diabetes worker very soon and this will have an affect. (12-04-06)

There needs to be an Ottawa community council or structure set up to identify gaps, access funding and provide community programs/services to address those needs. Currently there is little coordination among local groups. (12-04-06)

Ultimately, this lack of political representation and inter-agency co-operation and coordination can lead to the outward appearance of disorganization and the actual duplication of services, as well as being politically ineffective at generating the much needed political leverage for the protection and promotion of local Aboriginal interests.

Importantly, there has been the creation in Ottawa of an inter-agency coalition of local Aboriginal agencies, established five years ago (2001) as the 'Ottawa Aboriginal Coalition'. Ideally, this coalition could become a broad-based alliance that oversees the coordination of services, the lobbying of different levels of government to promote funding and programming equity and the delivery of culturally appropriate services. The Coalition is currently acting as a liaison to the three levels of Canadian government.

ABORIGINAL YOUTH IN OTTAWA

If you compare this society to our society 300 years ago...right now I think that the young people have a hard time; so much change. New teachers every year, new houses, people are always moving. In the 50s we were taught to respect your elders and so you could not bad mouth anybody. The old people watched your every move and then they tried to shape your life as an artist, hunter, boat builder, etc... Now there are too many choices, and this is a problem. (KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW, UNDATED).

I would like to see more programs offered for Aboriginal youth. Particularly in the way of justice for young Aboriginal women. Overall I would like to see programs and services which remain intact and sustained for a number of years, not just a couple of months. We have a routine in this city to start programs but never finish them.

(KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW, UNDATED)

7.1 A Young Aboriginal population with unique concerns

The Aboriginal population living in Ottawa is significantly younger than the non-Aboriginal population. In 2001, nearly four in ten (38%) Aboriginal people were under the age of 25. Only 3% of Aboriginal people were 65 years and over, compared to 11% in the non-Aboriginal population. One-fifth of Aboriginal people in Ottawa are under the age of 15 (Statistics Canada, 2006).

Overall, in 2001, Aboriginal youth (15 to 24 years of age) had lower school attendance rates than their non-Aboriginal counterparts (63% versus 70%). This difference was accounted for by the gap between young

Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal men (56% versus 69%). There was no difference in the school attendance rates of young Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women. (Statistics Canada, 2006).

This growing Aboriginal youth population are challenged by disparities in high school completion levels and unemployment rates. In 2001, 19% of Aboriginal men and 24% of Aboriginal women 25 years and over had less than high school as their highest level of schooling. The 2001 Aboriginal Peoples Survey found that among the off-reserve Aboriginal population in Canada, men and women had different reasons for not completing high school.

For young Aboriginal men aged 15 to 34, the most commonly reported reason was 'bored with school'. 'Pregnancy/taking care of children' topped the reasons provided by young Aboriginal women in the same age group. In terms of unemployment rates, 2001 saw 19% of North American Indian youth aged 15 to 24 years were unemployed, compared to 13% of non-Aboriginal youth. (Statistics Canada, 2006).

Overall, the community survey and key informant interviews revealed the following challenges for urban Aboriginal youth in Ottawa:

- the lack of employment and recreational opportunities;
- the lack of opportunities for the youth to learn their language and culture and the corresponding and gradual loss of their culture; and
- the lack of Aboriginal cultural content and cultural sensitivity in the mainstream schools.

As Aboriginal youth are coming to Ottawa from outside the community and as youth are born and raised in the city, what are the educational and economic responses necessary to accommodate this growing population and the specific challenges that they face? The following section some insightful perspectives from the youth themselves.

7.2 Aboriginal youth speaking for themselves

A youth focus group was held with students from the alternative high school. This school is based on a partnership between the Odawa Native Friendship Centre and Ottawa Carleton District School Board. In the focus group, participants talked about some of the issues they faced in the

urban setting, and what they would like to see for the next seven generations. Much of the discussion focused on the positive and negative experiences of incorporating Aboriginal culture within the educational system.

Drum with seats, because dancing is a big part of life and education, we can learn so much by being a part of the circle/drum. Sharing through dance and culture, education happens everywhere in all things at all times. (23-05-06)

There is an upside and a downside. I like the Ontario curriculum rather than on the reserve but it is hard because there is not as much access to ceremonies and culture. (23-05-06)

Distraction, kids come from the reserve and get distracted after they get to the urban area. (23-05-06)

Challenges, good or bad... especially for Aboriginal people in the city, there are always challenges. Schools don't understand the needs of Aboriginal students. There is much ignorance about Aboriginal people. (23-05-06)

Later, when the same respondents were asked what services they have used in Ottawa and what they valued most, there was a lot of focus on the programming provided by the Odawa Native Friendship Centre in the past, specifically 'Little Beavers'

Odawa used to have a Little Beavers program and many youth had the opportunity to grow up in the city with culture and knowledge. It would be good for "tweens." (23-05-06)

Dream catchers program: I really depended on it and it kept me out of trouble. Good relationships with the youth workers helped me feel safe with them. It was the main program in the city. (23-05-06)

Youth participants were then asked about their aspirations for the next seven generations.

Power and voice. If things didn't change then they could come together to use their voice and strength to avoid substance abuse and overcome things. (23-05-06)

Success, what is success? Graduating when you are supposed to. (23-05-06)

One respondent discussed the problem of internal discrimination:

I just don't like the way city people give "rez" people a hard time and vice versa. Not a major problem, but it happens. Discrimination amongst Aboriginal people occurs and it is a problem. I would like to see us working together. (23-05-06)

Importantly, all of the Aboriginal youth participating within this focus groups talked about the desire to finish high school and to go for some form of post-secondary education that would help them follow their particular dreams. They did, however, also speak of the support that they needed to help them along the way. In particular, respondents identified the following important concerns:

- the need for affordable housing for Aboriginal youth;
- employment opportunities beyond minimum wage fast food and retail positions;
- useful skills development through employment and entrepreneur training;
- accessible and affordable fitness centers;
- organized and affordable sports in addition to hockey; and
- an Aboriginal cyber-café as part of school and research facilities.

ABORIGINAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN OTTAWA

I believe there is a subtle form of racism in our own Aboriginal community. I have asked for help trying to get an upholstery business and got nowhere. A business plan for this was filed at Odawa and found about 8 years later gathering dust. (11-05-06)

8.1 Urban Aboriginal businesses

The community data reported significant findings on the awareness and value of Aboriginal based businesses in Ottawa. Fifty seven percent of community survey respondents were aware of Aboriginal businesses within Ottawa and 51% of respondents indicated that they were customers of Aboriginal businesses. While the awareness of Aboriginal businesses seems only moderate, 79% of respondents indicated that they would use an Aboriginal business directory if it was available.

Urban Aboriginal economic development can become a daunting task especially when seeking start-up funding. However, programs such as Aboriginal Business Canada (located in Ottawa) are available to provide start-up funds and other business related services. One successful restaurant in Ottawa, the Sweetgrass Bistro, which was named Ottawa's 2004 "Business of the Year" accessed ABC for start-up funds.

The need for ABC to have more business partnerships and mentoring in Ottawa is evident through this key informant interview comment:

I would like to see offered skills development & training for small business entrepreneur...in particular women entrepreneurs, life skill & personal development for women. (KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW 27)

The frustration of not getting entrepreneurial funds and mentorship was echoed throughout the key informant interviews and life histories.

There should be people to help with things like business plans, regardless of what part of the country you are from. I asked for help a couple of times, and the first question was: what tribe are you from? When I said BC tribe, they told me to go and ask my band for help. (11-05-06)

We need small business assistance: start-up money, you need a business plan (...I don't know how...and I don't want to go to school for this, these are not my strengths). I would rather do other parts of business and have a business manager. (11-05-06)

8.2 Jurisdictional issues

There are many jurisdictional issues when it comes to all aspects of funding. On reserve communities receive economic development funds, however they typically chose to spend it on reserve based business opportunities that benefit their local, on-reserve membership. Off reserve members have to rely on outside mechanisms that often send them back to their First Nation. This situation is evidenced in the following key informant interview response,

As a tribal member, I am included in my band's membership. In theory, I should be able to access services available to all our members, but that's not the case. I've asked for help for my business, but been turned down because the band says that the money will be better spent on reserve land. (11-05-06)

The need for an increased presence of Aboriginal businesses, Aboriginal start-up and business development funds are well documented throughout the research. Aboriginal businesses provide the self-sufficiency that many urban Aboriginal people require, and a sense of pride that can be achieved through hard work and accomplishment.

INCOME LEVELS, RATES OF POVERTY AND ECONOMIC SUCCESS

In the Aboriginal community, either you are rich or poor. There is a big gap between. It is really hard to pull oneself out of poverty, but people do it.

(KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW, 10-05-06)

Many of the key informant interview respondents spoke of the persistence of Aboriginal poverty in Ottawa in spite of the prevailing misconception of extensive Aboriginal economic success. The UATF quantitative data (community survey) confirms this view in that it found significantly less evidence of general Aboriginal economic success and a greater incidence of low income levels when compared to Statistics Canada data. Nonetheless, our results did confirm a notable degree of economic prosperity among the urban Aboriginal population that suggests the emergence of a group of economically successful Aboriginal people who stand in contrast to the poorer members of the community.

9.1 Income levels

In the report on urban Aboriginal child poverty in Ontario released in 2000 by the Ontario Federation of Indian Friendship Centres, the issue of poverty was found to be prevalent across Ontario for many Aboriginal people. This report stated specifically that:

- 52.1% of all Aboriginal children are poor;
- 12% of Aboriginal families are headed by parents under the age of 25 years;
- 27% of Aboriginal families are headed by single mothers;

- 40% of single Aboriginal mothers earn less than \$12,000 per year; and
- 47.2% of the Ontario Aboriginal population receives less than \$10,000 per year.

Statistics Canada Census data revealed an interesting portrait of income levels in Ottawa. Data showed median income for the city, the point where half of the people are earning more and half of the people are earning less than the income stated, as \$29,618 for all Aboriginal residents of Ottawa as shown in *Figure 9A*. Aboriginal people in Ottawa earned on average approximately \$5289 more than non-Aboriginal people in Ontario.

TABLE 9A Statistics Canada income figures for Aboriginal people in Ottawa

Median employment income¹ for the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations 15 years of age or older, Ottawa, 2000

	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal
Both sexes	\$29,618	\$ 24,329
Men	\$ 31,361	\$ 28,480
Women	\$ 27,871	\$ 20,057

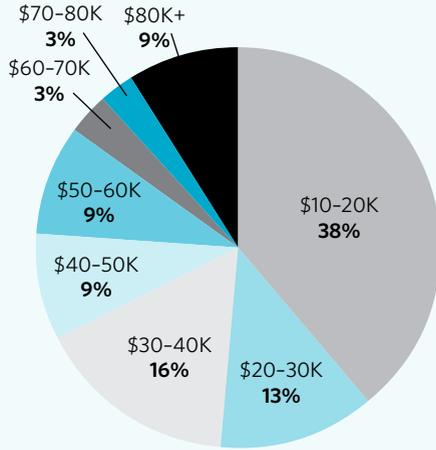
¹The median income: the incomes in 1980 and 2000 are calculated in constant \$ for the year 2000. (Statistics Canada, catalogue No. 89 -613)

While this information from Statistics Canada would presume that the majority of Aboriginal people in Ottawa are economically successful, the inability of census data to capture all groups of people cannot be overstated. Those who are transient, move around the city from place to place, are homeless or have no fixed address are typically overlooked by census data. The UATF survey was able to capture a different perspective of Ottawa residents around the issue of income. Survey participants were asked to provide their total household income and the results are calculated next.

Each of these survey instruments used different categories to capture the earnings of urban Aboriginal peoples in Ottawa. Nonetheless, when taken together, the data points to a large proportion of urban Aboriginal

FIGURE 9A Annual income of Aboriginal respondents in Ottawa

- 38% of participants indicate they earn \$10-20,000 per year; 71 respondents
- 13% of participants indicate they earn \$20-30,000 per year; 23 respondents
- 16% of participants indicate they earn \$30-40,000 per year; 29 respondents
- 9% of participants indicate they earn \$40-50,000 per year; 16 respondents
- 9% of participants indicate they earn \$50-60,000 per year; 16 respondents
- 3% of participants indicate they earn \$60-70,000 per year; 6 respondents
- 3% of participants indicate they earn \$70-80,000 per year; 5 respondents
- 9% of participants indicate they earn \$80,000+ per year; 16 respondents



peoples earning under \$20,000 (38%). Low rates of income point to a large range of socio-economic issues, including access to affordable housing, education, domestic violence, and child hunger. Relying on Statistics Canada data solely to understand poverty will not provide accurate portrayals of the situation in Ottawa, as indicated in the following quotes from community key informant interviews:

We are told that we should eat wholesome foods like brown bread. But someone on a limited income will buy the cheaper white bread because brown bread costs too much. Lettuce is out of the question at \$2-3 a head when we can buy Kraft dinner at 66 cents a box. Healthier (lean) hamburger is twice the cost of regular hamburger, etc, etc. (11-05-06)

In addition, the 1981 Urban Aboriginal Task Force indicated that 93% of its Aboriginal respondents across Ontario were earning less than \$17,000 per year. In Ottawa, as previously discussed, 38% of Aboriginal people earn less than \$20,000 per year. However, the current UATF data further indicates that there are 31% of the local Aboriginal population earning over \$40,000 per year and 12% earning over \$60,000 per year. Although one must be cautious when comparing Ontario-wide and Ottawa specific

figures, these findings do suggest the emergence of a group of economically successful Aboriginal people in Ottawa.

This may be due partly to the large amount of high paying government positions available in Ottawa. As well, the stability of the population may also indicate that many residents have made Ottawa a long term or permanent residence, which positively impacts on personal stability and economic success for this emerging group.

In spite of this economic success and pointing to persistent problems of racism and sexism, it is important to note that, according to Statistics Canada, Ottawa's Aboriginal population continued to earn less than their non-Aboriginal counterparts. In 2000, Aboriginal people were earning 83% of what non-Aboriginal people were earning. The gap between the earnings of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people is smaller for women than for men, although Aboriginal men earned slightly more than Aboriginal women.

For those who are economically successful, it is important to provide services and programs that meet their needs as part of the larger effort of supporting an urban Aboriginal, cultural community. Many Aboriginal agencies are considered to only meet the needs of those who fall within lower socio-economic groups, and lose their "appeal" as people move out of that category and enjoy greater economic success. However, many of the research participants had a shared family history of poverty, family dysfunction, CAS involvement and a sense of shame of being Indian stemming from direct experiences with non-Aboriginal racism and systemic oppression. One participant talked about the importance of education in moving beyond the parameters of poverty,

Urbanization is a new phenomenon, in the last 20 to 30 years. What is needed is a supportive and strong family...education is the real key in this whole puzzle. You can see the changes taking place as Aboriginal people become more educated. (15-05-06)

Economic success and education does not always provide a solution to the many issues that plague many residents in Ottawa. Often the traumas experienced through childhood, being children of alcoholic parents, going through residential schools, being abandoned, all surface despite working in a professional environment. An example is provided by this life history respondent:

I found working in the office environment easy and how good it was. I took liquor to work and it broke down inhibitions. I covered with Scope and gum. I hid my drinking. I was good at it although some of my friends, who could see through me, told me I was only cheating on myself. I only learned gradually, it takes time for me to reach my decisions.

(KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW).

Economic success does not always translate into stable home lives. Many people in professional roles or in highly skilled trades positions often require other types of programming and services. There is a perception that Friendship Centres and service agencies are only for those who are experiencing not only economic hardships, but hardships in general. The reality in Ottawa is that there are some large gaps between those who are economically successful and those who are not and that reaching out to both of these groups is integral to building a sustainable urban Aboriginal community that can respond to each other's needs.

Indeed, respondents who were economically successful frequently indicated that there were not enough opportunities in the city to express their Aboriginal culture. They often indicated that they did not feel comfortable going to Aboriginal agencies which were oriented to social services. Some respondents expressed a desire for an Aboriginal school where they could send their children which had a balance of academic and Aboriginal cultural curriculum. It is clear that, for some economically successful Aboriginal people, Ottawa does not offer enough organizations and programs to meet their cultural needs.

RACISM AND ABORIGINAL PEOPLE IN OTTAWA

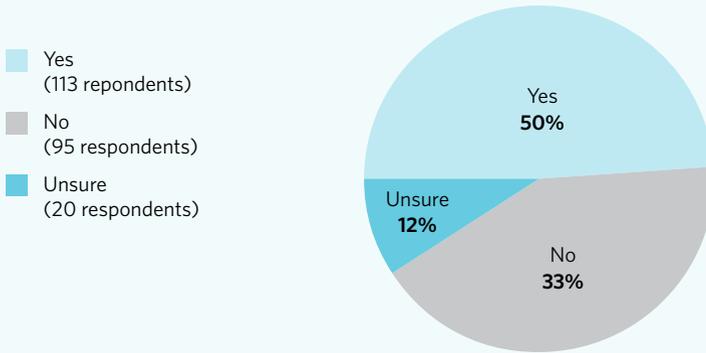
I face it daily, it is subtle as well as blatant—buses, stores, the streets, the landlord—everyday life. (KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW)

Racism is a part of life. It is an on-going challenge for me; status card usage, covert and hidden racism. It's all over the media—the white man is always the hero, not us. (KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW)

Although race and racism are a complex phenomenon and many definitions seem to co-exist, there are some common elements that most can agree upon. Primarily, racism is about power and the differential and unequal treatment of one group of people by another more dominant group on the basis of supposedly biological and cultural characteristics. As a meaningful scientific category, race has been consistently dismissed by the scientific/genetics community for roughly three decades now. Nonetheless, race as a socially constructed concept of inferior and fixed (stereotypical) difference continues to have devastating effects on 'racialized' minorities, intersecting with colonialism and sexism to oppress Aboriginal people generally and Aboriginal women in particular.

The results of the community survey point to the continued and widespread problem of racism in Ottawa whereby 74% of community survey respondents felt that racism against Aboriginal people in Ottawa is a problem. In terms of where respondents experience racism, the following places are listed from most to least the prevalent, restaurants/malls (57%), schools (54%), the workplace (50%), and housing (47%). Importantly, 70% percent of the respondents felt that racism was either a constant (39%) or on the rise (31%).

CHART 10A Racism among Aboriginal people in Ottawa



Racism is increasing. There was a KKK poster that made it to Caledonia from Ottawa and so racism is alive and well everywhere. We are still unappreciated for our role in Treaties and there is a general ignorance and lack of historical awareness of Aboriginal-State relations.

(KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW)

Survey respondents (64%) also felt that racial profiling takes place by authorities in Ottawa.

I have seen a lot of problems with the police; a lack of understanding of Aboriginal people generally & Inuit specifically. This lack of understanding results in racism. There needs to be more accountability for police who victimized Aboriginal people. (KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW)

Moreover, 49% of respondents also felt that internal racism was also a problem within the Aboriginal community, between Aboriginal people.

Internal Aboriginal racism is complex and appears to revolve around questions of internally vying for racial as well as other form of social distinction and power. It can take the form of a racial/cultural authenticity in terms of the privileged identity of being from a reserve, having status and 'brown skin'. Often, however, one can be discriminated against internally if one appears to be 'too Indian' and thus stereotypically lacking in education and/or urban sensibilities.

You didn't come from the rez, then people say you are not a real Indian, that your bloodline is not enough. (KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW)

Moreover, respondents focused on the roles of the media in reproducing racial stereotypes,

Racism is due to media attention, they do not address the issues or stereotypical attitudes, they just show the negative and not the positive contributions of Aboriginal people in society. (KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW)

Every time Aboriginal peoples are in the media, it affects us all wherever we live. (KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW)

In terms of the relationship of racism (both external and internal) to the categories of age, income and gender, our research found that the experience of racism remained fairly constant across age and income levels except for the elderly (75+) and the most economically successful (\$80,000+) where the experience of racism was significantly less frequent. Also, Aboriginal men and women tended to experience external racism equally, while Aboriginal men were the targets of internal racism more often (54%) than women (46%).

Respondents did seem to come together on the issues of combating racism through building education, awareness and understanding through cross cultural training and community cooperation,

Aboriginal service agencies continue to play a bigger role, get involved with mainstream agencies, expand the circle, initiate dialogue & develop a relationship with mainstream. (KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW)

Aboriginal awareness activities/events prove to be educational and well received by the non-Aboriginal community. Weekly pow wows, round dances, Métis culture, Inuit culture events, should be held at the same locations. (KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW)

I think it's important for various agencies in Ottawa to come together and create some sort of task force that addresses the issue of racism, and raise more awareness about the issue. (KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW)

ABORIGINAL HEALTH ISSUES IN OTTAWA

It is difficult to fully understand the scope of medical problems facing the Inuit. (KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW)

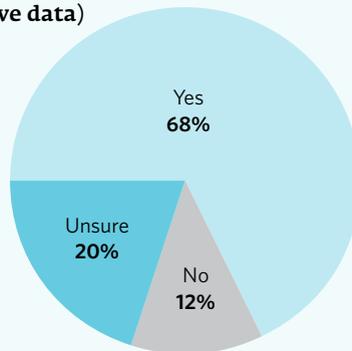
At certain times I would prefer to access (mainstream) health services and not run into acquaintances or friends in the Aboriginal community. On the other hand there are many services that I would only access from the experts in the Aboriginal community. (KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW)

11.1 Health access sites

The community survey and qualitative data revealed some notable characteristics of urban Aboriginal health matters in Ottawa around access

FIGURE 11A Preference in accessing health services from an Aboriginal agency (qualitative and quantitative data)

- Yes
(181 respondents)
- No
(33 respondents)
- Unsure
(55 respondents)



to physicians, preference and use of Aboriginal health services and traditional healing practices. A majority (66%) of respondents indicated that they prefer Aboriginal health services to mainstream health services. This may indicate that respondents are pleased with the services that they currently receive from Wabano, and would like to continue to access these services.

The Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health, established in 1998, provides the majority of Aboriginal health services. They have a variety of programs that include:

- Counselling/Mental Health Program
- Child Art Program
- Cultural Health Education/Promotion
- Cultural Program
- Community Garden
- Diabetes Program
- Early Years Program
- HIV/AIDS Project; The Healing Blanket
- Homelessness Mobile Health Outreach
- Intergenerational Program
- Perinatal Program
- Sacred Smoke Smoking Cessation Program
- Victims' Services Project

In addition to these programs, Wabano provides key health services to the urban Aboriginal community in Ottawa. Their mandate is to “create and deliver services that will prevent ill health, treat illness and provide support and aftercare. Services will be offered in a culturally-sensitive way that welcomes, accepts and represents all Aboriginal people(s).” Some of the services they provide include:

- Primary Health Care Services by appointment or walk-in including Family Physicians and Nurse Practitioners services (they also do appointments and walk in)
- Laboratory services
- Perinatal care and Well-Baby check-ups
- Footcare
- Chiropractic care

- Anonymous HIV testing
- Laboratory services
- Anonymous HIV testing
- Needle Exchange program
- Referrals to specialists including Elders

While a high proportion of Ottawa residents use Wabano as their main source for health services, there were some concerns expressed by residents throughout the research.

Because there is one health centre (Wabano) with a huge clientele – they are overworked. They are doing a great job but demand is huge. There is a high turnover rate with doctors at the health centre.

(KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW)

At Wabano, Quebec First Nations cannot access the services. Access to health is an uncertainty because of foreign boundaries.

(KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW)

Wabano can't serve residents of Quebec. We want Aboriginal health services & access to the benefits of a healer from workshops but I can't access services. Services in Ontario are better than in Gatineau. There are zero services for Aboriginal people in Gatineau.

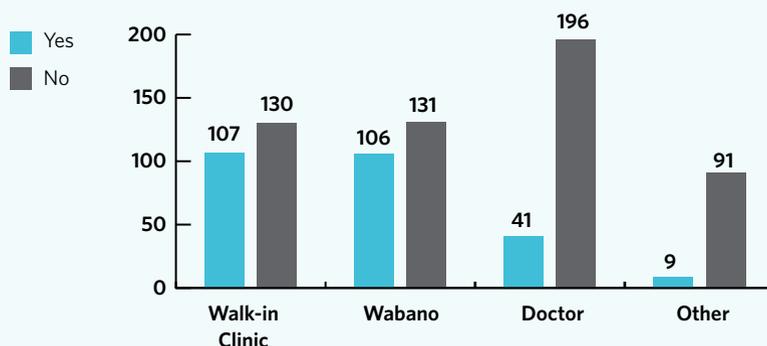
(KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW)

The community survey revealed that a large proportion of Aboriginal people in Ottawa seek out health services from a traditional healer (43%) with the following breakdown of regularity:

- 68.6% of respondents who see a traditional healer, see one yearly
- 19.6% of respondents who see a traditional healer, see one monthly
- 10.8% of respondents who see a traditional healer, see one weekly

It is important to distinguish where urban Aboriginal people are seeking out the majority of their health needs. Community survey respondents were asked where they frequently go for their health needs as shown in *Figure 11B*.

FIGURE 11B Seeking health services in Ottawa



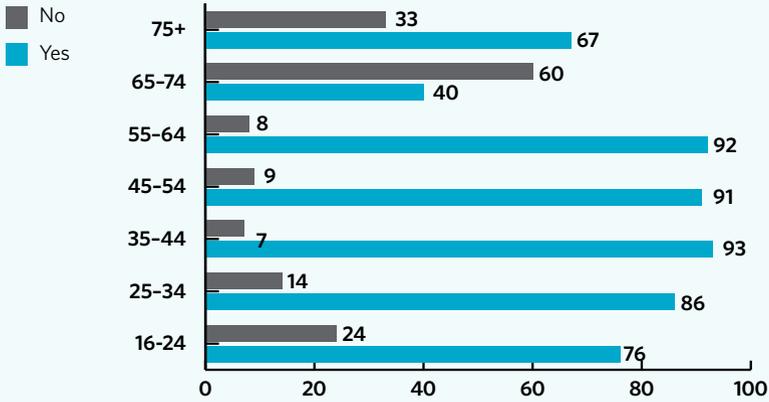
To better understand the health needs of Aboriginal people who are seeking specific types of services, we can look to age and income correlations. Our data reveals that respondents over the age of 65 do not prefer Aboriginal specific agencies for health services. The high proportion of respondents in the 65-74 age categories who prefer mainstream agencies may be explained by the need for special physician care such as diabetes and related illness treatment and cancer.

My health needs are not adequately being met. Accessing service like Wabano? Well, there are 3600 registered clients & waiting lists currently. Wabano was intended for urban Aboriginal people. We need a dentist, optician, after care, chiropractors, pharmacies. A lot of clients can't afford vitamins & supplements. (KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW)

Measuring how people who fall within different income levels access health services is also important because we can see if income impacts whether someone is more likely to see Aboriginal services or mainstream services. In the case of Ottawa, level of income does not seem to be a major factor in choosing where to access health services, except for only 58% of respondents who earn over \$80,000/year who prefer Aboriginal health services.

The community survey also reveals that gender does play a factor in preference over Aboriginal health services in that more Aboriginal men

FIGURE 11C UATF Preferences in accessing health services from mainstream or Aboriginal agencies based on age



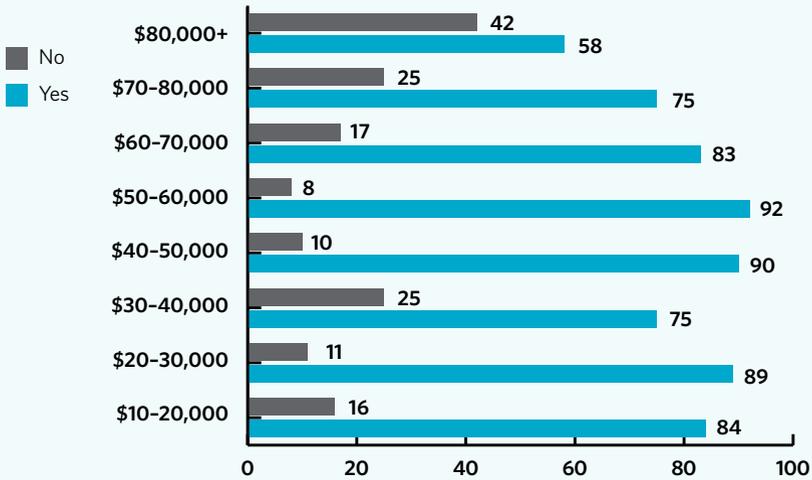
(71%) than women (63%) prefer accessing health services from Aboriginal agencies.

The Aboriginal agencies provide me with the cultural & spiritual components that are comforting. Aboriginal agencies also afford me more time – they don’t rush me. (KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW)

11.2 Use of traditional healing for health needs

Accessing traditional medicine and ceremony for health needs can be difficult in many urban centres. However, Ottawa, UATF data reveals that a high proportion of respondents access traditional healing practices. This is significant in many ways because it indicates a high value on cultural practices and the importance of cultural identity. The data reveals that 46.1% of respondents who answered this question do see a traditional healer. Looking at these responses based on income, we see that those who earn over \$70,000/year see a traditional healer. Respondents who fall within the \$40-60,000.00/year income range are less likely to see a traditional healer, and those under \$40,000/year may or may not see a

FIGURE 11D Preferences in accessing health services from mainstream or Aboriginal agencies based on income



traditional healer on an even basis. The high proportion of high income earners may be explained by the ability to receive more vacation time to go away for ceremonies such as fasts.

FIGURE 11E Percentage of respondents who see a traditional healer based on income

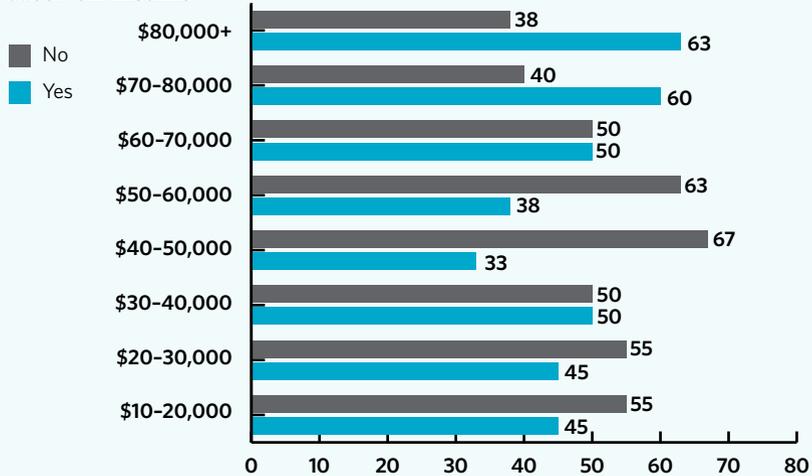
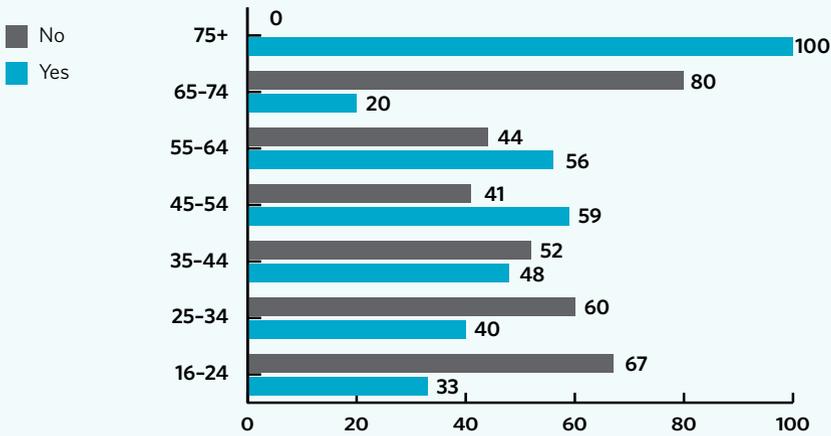


FIGURE 11F Percentage of respondents who see a traditional healer based on age



The age groups that visit a traditional healer also reveals some interesting data for Ottawa. The UATF data reveals that certain age groups are less likely to see a traditional healer than other age groups. For instance, 33% of respondents aged 16-24 see a traditional healer, compared to 100% of respondents over the age of 75 years old. The second highest group that sees a traditional healer is age 45-54 years old (59%), with the next highest category being 53% of the 55 to 64 age group. Respondents in various age groups may see a healer for a variety of reasons that are not limited to physical health and may include emotional or spiritual issues.

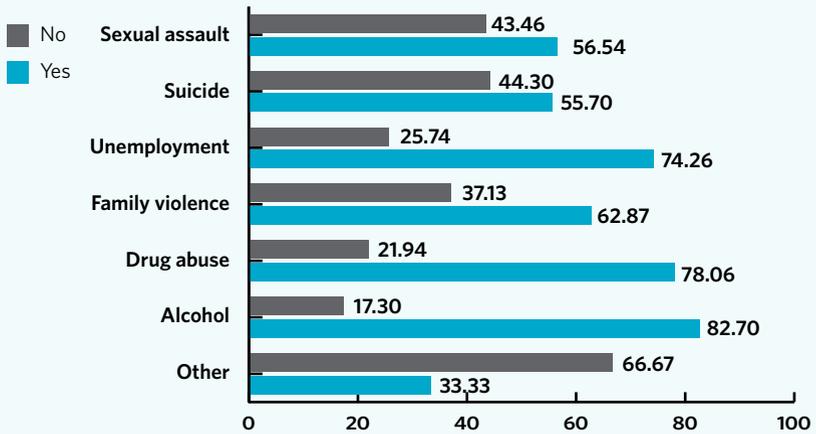
11.3 Perception of Aboriginal health problems in Ottawa

There is an increase in infection rates of HIV and AIDS, particularly amongst women in heterosexual relationships. (FOCUS GROUP, 28-06-06)

There are emerging addictions, crystal meth is difficult to treat.
(FOCUS GROUP, 28-06-06)

Community survey respondents indicated an array of health problems for Aboriginal people in Ottawa. Importantly, alcohol abuse, unemployment, and family violence are those health problems most frequently

CHART 11C Perception of major health care issues for urban Aboriginal people in Ottawa



identified. The following chart indicates the percentage of responses per issue identified:

In terms of mental health issues, the qualitative research touched upon the links between addictions, mental health and transition,

Most of the treatment centers are reserve based/staffed and not appropriate for urban Aboriginal people and so it is a big gap that we don't have a treatment center here in Ottawa . We also need programs that inform the families of the treatment that people have received which is needed for the transition back to daily life. (FOCUS GROUP, 12-04-06)

ABORIGINAL WOMEN IN OTTAWA

Many women are leaving the reserve due to family violence and then they go into urban shelters and then face homelessness. (12-04-06)

12.1 Poverty and unmet needs

Using a focus group, key informant interviews and community surveys, this research has been able to document the many diverse and often difficult experiences of Aboriginal women living in Ottawa. Beginning with Statistics Canada data, we see that generally Aboriginal families tend to be larger than non-Aboriginal families and to be headed by single moms. More precisely, one in four (26%) of Aboriginal families in Ottawa were headed by a single parent, compared to 13% of non-Aboriginal families. The proportion of Aboriginal families that were headed by a single parent and had three or more children was double that of non-Aboriginal families (6% versus 3%). Moreover, of all Aboriginal families living in Ottawa in 2001, 22% were single-parent families headed by women and 3% were single-parent families headed by men.

In terms of attempting to access basic services, many women expressed great frustration with lack of empowerment, poverty, capacity, violence, mental health, addictions, jurisdictional issues and sexuality. Respondents in the women's focus group discussed the issue of service agencies and authorities having poor relations with women, particularly those women in conflict with the law and women who are dealing with domestic violence.

Some of the barriers to success for women in Ottawa were identified as follows:

- persistence of poverty, racism and sexism;
- lack of treatment centres and detox beds;
- emerging addictions (crystal meth);
- lack of access to political process;
- lack of adequate housing services;
- lack of basic services for sex trade worker;
- lack of child care services; and
- increasing incidents of HIV/AIDS.

When it comes to authorities and service agencies, a respondent in the women's focus group commented,

With Ontario Works, some of the workers are especially dismissive and racist. There is an inability to understand and work with Aboriginal women, their cultures, and the diversity of people and their needs.

(28-06-06)

Another focus group respondent commented,

ODSP is even worse than Ontario Works. There are too many hoops, no access, no incentive, neither is an adequate support system, preconceived notions of our people. Neither system supports the other. It is an illogical service delivery model where the clients are penalized.

(28-06-06)

Respondents in a focus group on service delivery discussed women involved in the sex trade industry, and the support available to them was perceived to be lacking,

The other issue that rarely gets mentioned is sex trade workers. Young Aboriginal women, and no one is working with them. Extreme violence is done to them by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal men.

(12-04-06)

Yesterday I had a young Aboriginal sex worker who wanted a way out... but all I could suggest to her was a treatment centre. There is nothing else for these women.

(12-04-06)

Women who are in high risk situations, who suffer from addictions, are in violent home environments or who work in the sex trade industry, have little support directly suited to their needs. This was identified very clearly in the gaps in service focus group,

We see little support for women coming from the detention centres. We need more programs and services that are specific to youth: employment, sex trade, treatment centres...the waiting list for a treatment centre is 4 to 6 months. The detox centre is no place to be for a 16-year-old. (12-04-06)

Gangs are connected across the country. Hells Angels are running with them and the police are very aware and crystal meth is going into native communities. Once they are dependant then they are 'fronted' and the girls 8, 9, 10 years old are on the street and the money goes to Hells Angels or the Banditos and the police know all about it. (FOCUS GROUP)

12.2 Working in social services

Importantly, as the research progressed, the gender imbalance in respondents became apparent and the researchers made significant efforts to include men. Nonetheless, Aboriginal women were the more prominent members of the community as directors and staff of social service agencies and the more visible and available for this research. Aboriginal women are thus occupying a dual role in Ottawa. They are both the most violently oppressed members of the community and the most active in working to end that oppression.

Working predominantly within the social services sector, Aboriginal women in Ottawa make, on average, less (\$2,271) than Aboriginal men. Furthermore, Aboriginal women have a greater tendency to return to school later in life than both their male and non-Aboriginal counterparts. For example, 9% of Aboriginal women 35 years of age or older were attending school in 2001, compared to 7% of non-Aboriginal women in the same age group. In Ottawa in 2001, more than half (57%) of Aboriginal women aged 25 to 34 years had completed post-secondary education, similar to their non-Aboriginal counterparts.

HOUSING IN OTTAWA

We need affordable housing apartments for young, single Aboriginal men and women. (KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW)

Stress around maintaining a stable household impact all income levels, age categories and family situations. For some, socio-economic situations drive the issue of housing as one of the most immediate and pressing needs they have. For those others in a more stable financial situation, the security of ownership remains elusive, with only a small minority owning their homes. The following data from the UATF research reveals the scope of issues around housing in Ottawa. The reality of an emerging group of economically successful Aboriginal people in Ottawa might suggest that housing is not a high priority in Ottawa. However, the data reveals that this is not the case, and that stable and affordable housing, especially for those in the lower socio-economic groups is a persistent and unmet need.

13.1 Housing issues

Whether someone is able to afford to own their home or whether they rent it is a good indicator of their financial success. In Ottawa, only 14.6% of survey respondents own their homes, while 85.4% rent. This contrasts sharply with the perceived levels of economic success in Ottawa. Of those who own homes, almost twice (18%) as many women owned their homes as men (9%). Of those who earned above \$50,000.00 per year, 49% owned their home, and 51% rented. For respondents earning less than \$50,000.00/year, only 6% owned and 93% rented.

The correlation between age and whether respondents own or rent shows some interesting trends. The highest age category that owns instead of rents is 65–74 years old where 42.9% own their home. The second highest age category is 45–54 years old, where 23.3% own their home. Table 13A shows a breakdown of home ownership and age.

There is no safe housing for the kids that want to get off the streets and away from the gang mentality – which is all about culture and housing. (FOCUS GROUP, 15-06-06)

Community surveys also asked about whether their housing needs were currently being met; 54% of respondents indicated that their housing needs were not being met. The responses from this question provided some interesting information based on marital status and income. In order of descending dissatisfaction, divorced (71.4%), common law (64.1%), widowed/separated (52.9%) and single people (51.8%) felt strongly that their housing needs were not being met. Moreover, of those without relationship partners (without a common law or married spouse), 53.9% are not having their housing needs met. This indicates that there are huge gaps for these individuals.

When looking at age and housing needs, only 23.9% of seniors (those over the age of 65) felt that their housing needs were being met, and 76.1% did not. As well, 75.8% of youth, those surveyed between the ages of 16–24, felt that their housing needs were not being met. Out of those surveyed who fall within the economically successful range (over \$50,000.00/year) 64.7% are not having their housing needs met. For those who earn less than \$50,000/year, 79% are not having their housing needs met.

This data indicates that over seventy five (75%) of those within lower income categories are not having their housing needs met, and that almost 66% of those considered economically successful are not having their housing needs met. This is a significant percentage of respondents who need assistance in some form or another in the area of housing.

TABLE 13A Home ownership based on age

Age	Own (%)	Rent (%)
16-24	2.2	97.8
25-34	18.5	81.5
35-44	16	84
45-54	23.3	76.7
55-64	7.1	92.9
65-74	42.9	57.1
75+	0	100
Total	260	100.0

Issues about qualifying for housing programs in Ottawa were discussed in the housing focus group. One example is the following quote from the housing focus group,

There are many people who would not qualify to go into any housing, because of a lot of trauma. There is a lot of abuse in our lives and most of our people will not disclose it. All we will see is a drunk, drug addict, and prostitutes. Budgeting problems often come from compulsiveness which is a response to trauma; which is historical and generational. There is so much healing that has to be done that must come from within.
(15-06-06)

Gignul is affordable housing with 173 units and a 2 year waiting list. We are constantly turning people away. Many single female parent access our services, but there is also a need for housing for men with illness. We have a major need for single men who are not working or who can't get work and they are unfortunately on the bottom of the priority list.
(15-06-06)

Another comment on the connection to healing and housing,

They have to agree to heal, and they need a place to heal. Then there is the after-care, then there is a stable home. They need a medical doctor, a counsellor, just to stabilize. And so we are looking at a very big gap from the street to a stable home. (15-06-06)

13.2 Homelessness and poverty in Ottawa

My daughter said to me 'I am not angry that you chose to be poor.' This hurt because I didn't choose to be poor.' (15-06-06)

In 2005, the City of Ottawa Community Capacity Building Team for Homelessness released a report called the *Evaluation of and Recommendations for Services for the Aboriginal Homeless in Ottawa*. This report provides important findings on the profiles of Aboriginal people who are homeless in Ottawa. It found that the majority of homeless Aboriginal people were men, who ranged in age from 17 to 48 years old (Social Data Research Ltd., 2005: 3).

The Odawa Native Friendship Centre estimates that 85% of their homeless population are men. Youth are also represented in the homeless populations, and it is estimated by the Odawa Native Friendship Centre report that 15% of their homeless clients are youth (Social Data Research Ltd., 2005: 4). This report also states that issues of addictions and poor mental and physical health, as well as women fleeing abusive domestic situations are some of the main reasons for Aboriginal people becoming homeless.

Racial stereotyping and other forms of discrimination by landlords was also an important barrier identified by many of the respondents,

Just recently homeless because of lifestyle, discrimination against transgender, landlord called the police and they searched my room when I wasn't there and the police didn't leave a card to say that they were there. Landlord was evicting me so I left on my own. (FOCUS GROUP)

Mission for 2 months working at the Market "under the table"; can't get anyone to chip in on a place and still looking for a place. Can't get a lease because I am native that is what they tell me. On the phone it is OK but after I get there they say no longer available. (FOCUS GROUP)

Homeless 4 years. Same thing each day, discouraging and give up. One phone call after another, face to face and always the answer is no. This is what it is like to be homeless and looking for a place every day.

(FOCUS GROUP)

In Ottawa, there are a number of temporary housing options available for people finding themselves homeless. These include:

- mainstream emergency shelters: offered throughout the city for short term homeless and chronically homeless;
- Oshki Kizis Lodge (operated by Minwaashin Lodge): for homeless and abused women and their families;
- supportive/transitional housing: focus on individual rehabilitation, skills training and community integration;
- Tewigan Transition House: for young single Aboriginal women who are homeless;

- social housing: geared to income housing operated by the Ottawa Community Housing Corporation has long waiting lists for families and single persons;
- Gignul Non-Profit Housing Corporation: Aboriginal specific social housing provider has long waiting lists;
- private market housing: rooming houses offer affordable housing options for low income people;
- Shawenjeagamik Drop In Centre; and
- Inuit Non-Profit Housing Corp.

The issue of housing is but one of many factors that urban Aboriginal people face. While permanent housing does provide stability, a range of other services are required to create a stable and positive environment for high risk individuals. Housing programs must work in tandem with a variety of professionals to deal with these individuals and families,

Even if we got a rooming house we could fix it up and put the money back into it for Aboriginals instead of profit. It could be for women, men, elders like the “Na-Ne-Res” in Toronto for males or like Council Fire in Toronto it’s a shelter and they give you an allowance, referral to treatment, just like “Pignodin Lodge” here in Ottawa used to do. (FOCUS GROUP)

At Gignul housing we do counseling, social work, but there is a segment that we are not capable of helping as we don’t have the capacity, and they don’t have the skills to manage their home (budgeting, rent, bills, food — general household management).

(FOCUS GROUP)

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is important to note that the recommendations below are those of the Ottawa Community Advisory Committee. The recommendations of the Urban Aboriginal Task Force are contained in the *Urban Aboriginal Task Force Final Report*.

The following discussion and recommendations are based on findings from the study. Every effort has been made to ensure that empirical evidence in various forms from the study support the individual recommendations. These recommendations are intended as suggestions as to how to improve the overall situation of Aboriginal people living in Ottawa. Some of the recommendations are Ottawa-specific, that is, they pertain exclusively to the local situation in Ottawa. Other recommendations have a more regional or provincial focus and relate to larger issues and levels of government.

The data from the research clearly demonstrates that, despite the stereotype that Aboriginal people living in Ottawa are economically well-off, there are serious problems that need to be addressed if all Aboriginal people are to take their rightful place as citizens of Ottawa. It is in everyone's best interest that all Aboriginal people attain a satisfactory quality of life and become contributing members of the community. Poverty, lack of affordable housing, health care issues, unemployment, problems of mental health and addictions, racism, internal divisions, lack of adequate political representation and barriers to economic development are all major challenges facing Aboriginal people in Ottawa. Despite the substantial number of Aboriginal and mainstream agencies in Ottawa that exist to address these needs and significant federal and provincial government funding, there exists significant gaps and lack of coordination in services, especially for youth ages 7 to 17 and Aboriginal women. Respondents reported that governments have consistently avoided de-

veloping ministry structures with a mandate for long-term, stable programs and services with adequate funding to address the needs of urban Aboriginal people. In addition, existing programs and funding formulas sometimes do not “fit” the needs of service organizations or their clients. Clearly, new thinking and new initiatives are required to address the issues and enhance the situation of all sectors of Ottawa Aboriginal community.

At the same time, there are many emerging success stories and many programs and services offered that have been effective in alleviating the social and economic issues facing Aboriginal people. Government funding has often been effective in assisting Aboriginal and mainstream agencies in their work. In addition, as the Census data demonstrates, a substantial number of Aboriginal people have attained a satisfactory level of economic stability in the city. Indeed, Ottawa probably has among the highest per capita incomes among Aboriginal people of any city in Canada. Yet there is a need for these people and their children to have opportunities to practice their Aboriginal culture, support their identity, volunteer, and exercise leadership with a view to becoming more active participants in Ottawa Aboriginal community.

14.1 Government mandate, funding and coordination

It is clear that there can be no solution to the problems articulated above without the involvement of all three levels of government in collaboration with local Aboriginal organizations. All levels of government are providing significant amounts of funding to a wide diversity of programs and services for urban Aboriginal people. At the same time, research respondents suggested that a number of barriers currently exist that inhibit effectively meeting urban Aboriginal people’s needs that relate to government mandates, programs, funding and coordination. Many individuals emphasized the fundamental problem regarding insufficient recognition of the changing demographics of Aboriginal peoples by government ministries at all levels. There is little acknowledgement, in terms of mandates and programs, of the significant numbers of Aboriginal people living in cities. Only recently have governments acknowledged that they have a role to play in providing programs and services to urban Aboriginal peoples. But it remains the case that no federal or provincial government ministry has clear responsibility for Aboriginal people living

off reserves. As stated previously, both the federal and provincial governments have recognized the need to address the jurisdictional issues and the necessity for greater cooperation and coordination regarding urban Aboriginal people.

RECOMMENDATION 1 In light of the fact that both the federal and provincial governments have recognized that over fifty per cent of Aboriginal people in Ontario currently reside in urban areas, that units within all ministries be designated as having responsibility for urban Aboriginal people. These units should be allocated a substantial budget and work with Aboriginal organizations to meet the needs of urban Aboriginal people.

RECOMMENDATION 2 That the federal government and government of Ontario establish an Inter-departmental Committee composed of representatives of all ministries at both levels of government that are involved with urban Aboriginal people, with a mandate to coordinate policies and fund programs and services to urban Aboriginal people in Ontario.

RECOMMENDATION 3 That federal, provincial, and municipal governments in the National Capital Region establish a National Capital Region Aboriginal Funder's Table with a mandate to coordinate with the Ottawa Aboriginal Alliance to ensure that appropriate changes are made to local and regional government ministries (including mandated structures, processes and resources) and allocate core funding to the Alliance with a view to ensuring its long-term stability.

RECOMMENDATION 4 That the government of Ontario fund a new body, the National Capital Region Urban Aboriginal Alliance to oversee and coordinate the development appropriate programs and services to provide coordinated service delivery to Aboriginal people in Ottawa.

RECOMMENDATION 5 That federal, provincial, and municipal governments consider funding a cultural centre in Ottawa. For example, Canadian Heritage consider expanding the mandate of the Cultural Education Centres Program to include off-reserve urban communities.

RECOMMENDATION 6 That the governments of Canada, Quebec, Ontario, and Ottawa enter into discussions to address the issue of confused jurisdiction regarding access and payment for health and social services for Aboriginal people who utilize services across Ontario and Quebec jurisdictions with a view to enabling “seamless” access of services throughout Ottawa.

14.2 Service delivery and agency coordination

A significant number of the respondents spoke of the need to address the many gaps in services due to funding inequities, particularly in terms of health, employment, education, Inuit specific needs, women, and youth. Also, of particular concern were the jurisdictional barriers to access posed by the Ontario and Quebec border and the piece-meal nature of programming and the lack of coordination in service delivery. An important barrier to providing the appropriate services is the current lack of coordination among agencies, especially between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal agencies. This is not unusual as organizations develop and grow based on meeting specific needs with specialized mandates, often according to funding priorities of governments. The issue is particularly pressing now as more and more non-Aboriginal agencies are servicing larger numbers of Aboriginal clients. The research uncovered significant efforts to address this issue being initiated through the formation of various groups and partnerships.

Many Aboriginal organizations believe that they face additional challenges, compared to non-Aboriginal agencies, in providing services including, being in a disadvantaged position for the competition for funding, not receiving as much funding as mainstream agencies for providing similar services, being burdened by elaborate application and reporting requirements, long delays in receiving funding from government, having to rely on short-term funding agreements, not having stable long-term core funding, having to be more accountable to Ottawa Aboriginal community, and having to provide a “culturally-based” approach to service delivery. All of these factors require more time, effort and funding to offer adequate programs and services to Aboriginal people. Also, contributing to the lack of coordination among agencies is the competition for funds due to government mandates and funding requirements.

RECOMMENDATION 7 That a new body, the Ottawa Urban Aboriginal Alliance, be created composed of representatives from a wide variety of Aboriginal agencies and community leaders as a coordinating group with a mandate to work with the three levels of government in overseeing and ensuring the equitable funding and coordination of Aboriginal programming in the city.

The Alliance will determine unmet needs and gaps in services and recommend appropriate action to meet the needs, including initiating the establishment of new agencies and articulating additional support required for existing ones. The Alliance should include in its mandate ensuring that services to Aboriginal people are delivered in a culturally appropriate manner. All three levels of government should be involved in discussion of the Alliance as observers to ensure effective coordination with existing government policies, mandates and funding as well as the creation of new ones. The Alliance should seek funding from the provincial government to support its mandate.

RECOMMENDATION 8 That the Ottawa Urban Aboriginal Alliance, as part of their mandate, sponsor a series of cross-cultural workshops with municipal and provincial social service organizations which deal with Aboriginal people with a view of making the delivery of programs and services to Aboriginal people more culturally appropriate.

14.3 Aboriginal health issues

The research revealed some notable characteristics of urban Aboriginal health matters in Ottawa around access to physicians, preference and use of Aboriginal health services and traditional healing practices. A majority (68%) of respondents indicated that they prefer Aboriginal health services to mainstream health services, although they tended to recognize that Wabano (the Aboriginal health provider in Ottawa) has long waiting lists and high physician turnover. Moreover, Aboriginal residents of Gatineau-Hull were unable to access Wabano due to jurisdictional barriers.

Community survey respondents further indicated an array of health problems for Aboriginal people in Ottawa. Importantly, alcohol abuse,

unemployment and family violence are those health problems most frequently identified. As well, accessing traditional medicine and ceremony for holistic health needs can be difficult in many urban centres. However, Ottawa, UATF data reveals that a high proportion of respondents access traditional healing practices. This is significant in many ways because it indicates a high value on cultural practices and the importance of cultural identity.

RECOMMENDATION 9 That, given the large number of Aboriginal people utilizing the services of Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health, it be provided with additional financial resources to increase its level of providing health services to Aboriginal people in Ottawa.

RECOMMENDATION 10 That a series of inter-agency meetings of representatives from existing health service agencies and relevant government health ministries be convened to discuss how to more effectively meet the physical and mental health needs of Aboriginal peoples in Ottawa with a view to develop a holistic and coordinated continuum of care strategy to address those needs. Particular attention should be paid to mental health needs and to barriers to accessing health services. Partnerships among agencies should be encouraged to maximize effectiveness and efficiency in service delivery. Priorities should be set and new initiatives, funded by government, should be undertaken.

RECOMMENDATION 11 That the Ottawa Urban Aboriginal Alliance address the issue of ensuring effective understanding and communications between Aboriginal users of the health care system and health providers by instituting such programs as workshops to sensitize health workers to Aboriginal cultural and assure that adequate Aboriginal language interpretation services are available to Aboriginal patients.

RECOMMENDATION 12 That Ottawa Urban Aboriginal Alliance conduct a workshop of traditional healing to identify the local healers, provide the necessary support for their work and to coordinate their efforts.

14.4 Aboriginal culture in Ottawa

A significant number of respondents from the community survey, key informant interviews and focus groups spoke about culture in a great diversity of ways. Patterns of responses did, however, emerge around the following themes:

- the importance of ‘being there’ in terms of simply spending time together as an urban Aboriginal cultural community;
- the importance of the values of care, family, food, and day to day acts of generosity;
- that culture is mobile and can flourish in urban the Aboriginal community, but that a sense of community must be intentional and encouraged in order to deal with the reality of individualism in the city;
- the importance of ceremony and the challenges of maintaining the integrity of ceremonial practice in culturally diverse urban centers;
- the need for cultural events and opportunities for learning for all Aboriginal people and not solely for those members of the community deemed at risk; and
- the importance of supporting efforts of language instruction and immersion.

In terms of challenges, however, UATF respondents tended to focus on the issues of living with rapid changes, the diversity of Aboriginal cultures in the urban center, developing trust and familiarity with Elders and other traditional people, the lack of Aboriginal cultural content in the urban, mainstream school curriculum, and the difficulties associated with attempting to cultivate a sense of community among such diverse cultural groups.

RECOMMENDATION 13 That the Ottawa Urban Aboriginal Alliance convene a meeting of Aboriginal people in Ottawa (to include existing leaders, rank-and-file- community members and individuals currently not involved with the community) with a view to discussing the desirability of establishing an Aboriginal cultural centre in Ottawa. If there is agreement, then a non-profit society should be formed to conduct

a feasibility study to determine the specific nature of such a facility. Initial funding for the centre should be provided by the federal, provincial and municipal levels of government (i.e. Ottawa could donate suitable land for the centre) as well as a Building Fund set up to accept donations from the Aboriginal community in Ottawa. Members of the Aboriginal community should be the prime sponsors of the centre with as little reliance on governments as possible. The process of funding raising and the operation of the centre should be independent of any existing organization.

14.5 Aboriginal youth

The Aboriginal population living in Ottawa is significantly younger than the non-Aboriginal population. In 2001, nearly four in ten (38%) Aboriginal people were under the age of 25. Only 3% of Aboriginal people were 65 years and over, compared to 11% in the non-Aboriginal population. One-fifth of Aboriginal the people in Ottawa were under the age of 15 (Statistics Canada, 2006).

Importantly, a significant number of Aboriginal youth are experiencing a diversity of challenges living in Ottawa. More specifically, this growing Aboriginal youth population is challenged by disparities in high school completion levels and unemployment rates. In 2001, 19% of Aboriginal men and 24% of Aboriginal women 25 years and over had less than high school as their highest level of schooling. Overall, in 2001, Aboriginal youth (15 to 24 years of age) had lower school attendance rates than their non-Aboriginal counterparts (63% versus 70%). This difference was accounted for by the gap between young Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal men (56% versus 69%). There was no difference in the school attendance rates of young Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women. (Statistics Canada, 2006).

Overall, the community survey and key informant interviews revealed that the following challenges for urban Aboriginal youth in Ottawa:

- the lack of employment and recreational opportunities;
- lack of housing and shelter opportunities for street youth;
- the lack of opportunities for the youth to learn their language and culture and the corresponding and gradual loss of their culture;
- and

- the lack of Aboriginal cultural content and cultural sensitivity in the mainstream schools

RECOMMENDATION 14 That Aboriginal leaders in Ottawa enter into discussions with the Ottawa School Board with a view to establish an Aboriginal Cultural School in Ottawa. The school should be geared to Aboriginal people in Ottawa who wish to have their children achieve high academic standards while at the same time learning about Aboriginal culture, language, history and contemporary issues. As part of the process to establish the school a study of best practices of various cultural schools in Canada be undertaken. The school should not duplicate the program of study currently offered at the alternative school at the Odawa Friendship Centre. The school should not focus on the needs of “high risk” students or special needs students but rather should concentrate on meeting the needs of students currently enrolled in mainstream schools.

RECOMMENDATION 15 That the Ottawa Urban Aboriginal Alliance contact various business leaders and organizations in the private sector to enter into discussions with a view to creating various small business training courses target to Aboriginal youth. A joint body composed of business people and Aboriginal people should be established to oversee the resulting initiatives. Funding for the initiative should be provided by appropriate government ministries in cooperation with the private sector.

RECOMMENDATION 16 That the Ottawa Urban Aboriginal Alliance facilitate the creation of a youth housing program to meet the housing needs of Aboriginal street youth in Ottawa.

RECOMMENDATION 17 That the Ottawa Urban Aboriginal Alliance enter into discussions with organized labour leaders to establish effective apprenticeship programs for Aboriginal youth to facilitate their entry into the labour market. Attention should be paid to both recruitment and job retention strategies to ensure long-term stable employment opportunities.

RECOMMENDATION 18 That the Odawa Native Friendship Centre organize an Aboriginal Youth Fitness Club with memberships and regular operating hours at the Centre to meet the fitness needs of Aboriginal youth.

RECOMMENDATION 19 That the Odawa Native Friendship Centre organize a Youth Sports and Recreational League to facilitate Aboriginal youth to engage in various sports and recreational activities. The league could liaison with mainstream athletic leagues in Ottawa.

RECOMMENDATION 20 That Aboriginal and mainstream agencies enter into discussions with government to establish a diversity of youth programs such as, peer mentoring/tutoring, big brother/big sisters programs, cyber café's, cultural events and programs etc. for Aboriginal youth in addition to those that already exist.

14.6 Aboriginal economic development

Many of the key informant interview respondents spoke of the persistence of Aboriginal poverty in Ottawa. The UATF quantitative data (community survey) confirmed this view in that it found significantly less evidence of general Aboriginal economic prosperity than what is reported in 2001 Statistics Canada data. Nonetheless, our results do reveal a notable degree of economic affluence among the urban Aboriginal population that suggests the emergence of a group of economically successful Aboriginal people.

This growing cadre of Aboriginal professionals and entrepreneurs are establishing partnerships with non-Aboriginal people, working in a diversity of areas (including Aboriginal agencies and related government departments) and accessing capital assistance services such as those offered by the Aboriginal Business Canada (located in Ottawa). One successful restaurant in Ottawa, the Sweetgrass Bistro, which was named Ottawa's 2004 "Business of the Year", accessed ABC for start-up funds.

The community data further reported significant findings on the awareness and value of Aboriginal based businesses in Ottawa. Fifty seven percent of community survey respondents were aware of Aboriginal businesses within Ottawa and 51% of respondents indicated that they were

customers of Aboriginal businesses. While the awareness of Aboriginal businesses seems only moderate, 79% of respondents indicated that they would use an Aboriginal business directory if it was available.

RECOMMENDATION 21 That Aboriginal leaders in Ottawa in cooperation with mainstream private sector representatives establish a National Capital Region Urban Aboriginal Economic Council as a partnership between the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal private sector. Its mandate would be to oversee the development of Aboriginal owned and operated businesses and other economic development initiatives in Ottawa. Successful Aboriginal business persons should be approached to participate on the Council. The Council should foster such activities as: information sharing, networking, assistance with business plans, peer support, investment clubs, joint-venture initiatives, entrepreneur role models and training programs.

RECOMMENDATION 22 That the Ottawa Urban Aboriginal Economic Council undertake an inventory of Aboriginal owned and operated businesses in Ottawa and produce an Aboriginal Business Registry that can be used as a resource for people interested in utilizing Aboriginal businesses as well as for future economic development.

RECOMMENDATION 23 That the Ottawa Urban Aboriginal Economic Council establish an “Aboriginal Peoples Retention and Advancement Strategy” whereby Aboriginal employees within Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal agencies, businesses and organizations are assisted to remain and be promoted within the organization, especially from entry-level positions to middle management. Issues such as: mentoring, peer support, “culture shock” (i.e. clash of cultural values and norms) and the “glass ceiling” (i.e. barriers to promotion based upon negative stereotypes or lack of effective communication between Aboriginal employees and non-Aboriginal managers) should be addressed in the strategy. Various organizations with Aboriginal employees should be approached to participate in the strategy.

RECOMMENDATION 24 That the Ottawa Urban Aboriginal Economic Council establish a series of investment clubs composed of like-minded

Aboriginal people to pool their resources and invest in such ventures as: equity bonds, stocks, lending circles etc. with the advice of financial experts and other resources.

RECOMMENDATION 25 That the Ottawa Urban Aboriginal Economic Council work with Aboriginal Business Canada and other financial institutions to develop an Aboriginal Business Capital Fund and develop a process whereby capital can be made more readily available to Aboriginal people who wish to start businesses. Links to other resources such as CESO, the Board of Trade, the Chamber of Commerce, Professional Associations etc. should also be established to assist in developing viable business plans, market strategies, partnerships and other financial resources that can facilitate the availability of loans and business expertise to Aboriginal entrepreneurs.

14.7 Racism

The results of the community survey point to the continued and widespread problem of racism in Ottawa whereby 74% of community survey respondents felt that racism against Aboriginal people in Ottawa is a persistent problem. In terms of where respondents experience racism, the following places are listed from most to least the prevalent: restaurants/malls, schools, the workplace, and housing. Importantly, the vast majority (70%) of the respondents felt that racism was either a constant or on the rise.

Internal Aboriginal racism is also a reality in Ottawa. Racism and other forms of discrimination against Aboriginal people by Aboriginal people is complex and appears to revolve around questions of racial authenticity in terms of the privileged identity of being from a reserve, having status and 'brown skin'. Often, however, one can be discriminated against internally if one appears to be 'too Indian' and thus stereotypically lacking in education and/or urban sensibilities.

Overall, respondents did seem to come together on the issues of combating racism through building education, awareness and understanding through cross cultural training and community cooperation as well as incorporating meaningful Aboriginal content in mainstream, school curriculum.

RECOMMENDATION 26 That Ottawa establish an office of Aboriginal Ombudsman with sufficient independence, authority, and staff to investigate complaints of racism and discrimination, as well as undertake education and awareness programs so as to bring about necessary changes to racist practices.

14.8 Aboriginal women in Ottawa

Aboriginal women occupy two very notable positions within Ottawa Aboriginal community; they are both the most violently oppressed and the most socially active in working to end that oppression. Our research has shown that within both of these social groups there are both gaps in services and agencies that require much needed enhancement and support.

Using a focus group, key informant interviews, and community surveys, this research has been able to document the many diverse and often difficult experiences of Aboriginal women living in Ottawa. Aboriginal families tend to be larger than non-Aboriginal families and to be headed by single mothers.

In terms of attempting to access basic services, many women expressed much frustration with lack of empowerment, poverty, capacity, violence, mental health, addictions, jurisdictional issues, and sexuality. Respondents in the women's focus group discussed the issue of service agencies and authorities having poor relations with women, particularly those women in conflict with the law and women who are dealing with domestic violence.

Some of the barriers to success for women in Ottawa are:

- general poverty;
- lack of treatment centres and detox beds;
- emerging addictions (crystal meth);
- lack of access to political process;
- lack of adequate housing services;
- lack of basic services for sex trade worker;
- lack of child care services; and
- increasing incidence of HIV/AIDS.

At risk Aboriginal women in Ottawa require a coordinated and geographically consolidated array of services that are geared towards providing safe and culturally supportive spaces that respond to both immediate

and the longer term transitional needs away from poverty and violence. These most vulnerable members of the community require an array of counseling services, including those that meet their most basic needs of food, safe shelter, clothing, and transportation.

Specifically for those Aboriginal women and girls working in the sex trade in Ottawa of basic needs services aimed at immediate harm reduction is required. Shelters or safe houses for these women should provide all of these basic needs and be openly available during the day and should not have evening curfews.

In transitioning out of abusive relationships, extreme poverty and violence, Aboriginal women require an array of counseling services including: addictions, mental health, relationship, life skills, and legal. It is important that these services are offered in a culturally sensitive manner and that Aboriginal women be given direct and priority access to these services. The provision of transitional housing is a key factor as women move from shelters to more private and stable home environments. Education and training will be an important aspect of the movement to healing as will mentoring and the building of new social networks and community.

Importantly, culturally appropriate childcare is a concern for all Aboriginal women in Ottawa and should be openly available at all levels in the community. Basic needs and transitional services should provide childcare as an integral part of the delivery of those services. As well, childcare must be available to those Aboriginal women at work and in school to support these efforts.

RECOMMENDATION 27 That Ottawa Urban Aboriginal Alliance organize a comprehensive urban Aboriginal Women’s Strategy for Ottawa with the intent of coordinating existing social services and developing new programs and services that provide a continuum of care for all Aboriginal women in Ottawa.

RECOMMENDATION 28 The immediate expansion of support services to Aboriginal women in Ottawa with specific priority given to the following:

- Healthy food, safe shelter, clothing, and transportation;

- Addictions, mental health, relationships, life skills, and legal counseling;
- Transitional housing;
- Education and training; and
- Childcare as an integral part to the provision of all of these services.

RECOMMENDATION 29 That, through the funding of the Ottawa Urban Aboriginal Alliance, there be the development of community (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal agency) protocols and a database of those Aboriginal women at risk who will facilitate their direct and prioritized access to the above identified essential services.

RECOMMENDATION 30 That there be increased support for the work of existing agencies working with Aboriginal sex workers and that government representatives and community leaders working in this (or closely related) sectors work collectively towards the creation of a safe house that will provide an array of basic needs services and be openly available during the day and night.

RECOMMENDATION 31 That Ottawa Urban Aboriginal Alliance, as part of its activities, reach out to Aboriginal middle class women through a series of workshops and open houses with the intent of developing an Aboriginal women's mentor program that will assist women at all levels of the community in their healing, educational, professional and cultural lives, and in particular assist those Aboriginal women seeking to build new communities away from their former high risk social networks.

RECOMMENDATION 32 That, through the funding of Ottawa Urban Aboriginal Alliance, there be the development of a community-wide (Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal agency) public awareness campaign aimed at ending the violence against Aboriginal women in Ottawa through education, consciousness raising, media reporting and efforts to decrease the under-reporting of violent incidences by Aboriginal women.

14.9 Aboriginal housing

The quality of our home living environment and the security and stability that it provides relates directly to our ability to move outwards and live healthy and meaningful lives within the greater community. In Ottawa, the stress associated with having an unstable household has an impact on the majority of income levels, age categories and family situations. For some, socio-economic situations lead to housing being one of the most immediate and pressing needs they have. For those in more stable financial situations, the security of ownership remains, nonetheless, elusive. The reality of an emerging group of economically successful Aboriginal people in Ottawa might suggest that housing is not a high priority level in Ottawa. However, the data reveals that this is not the case, and that stable and affordable housing, especially for those in the lower socio-economic groups is a persistent and unmet need.

Importantly, the majority of Aboriginal people in Ottawa did not feel that their housing needs were being met. As well, issues of racism and other forms of discrimination were cited as a significant barrier to accessing affordable housing. And lastly, there was a significant number of responses that spoke to the need for a continuum of care in housing as the homeless are assisted into emergency shelters, transitional homes, and then to more stable housing which incorporates a diversity of social services.

RECOMMENDATION 33 That the Ottawa Urban Aboriginal Alliance organize a comprehensive urban Aboriginal Housing Strategy for Ottawa with the intent of coordinating existing housing services and developing new programs and services that better meet the needs of all Aboriginal people in Ottawa.

RECOMMENDATION 34 That increased financial support be provided for the existing Aboriginal housing services infrastructure in Ottawa with a view to reducing waiting lists, providing a diversity of housing options, providing a continuum of care and services as people move through homelessness, to shelters, to transitional homes, and then to stable housing.

RECOMMENDATION 35 That a program be established to increase the number of Aboriginal housing units available to meet the specific needs of single mothers and their children.

RECOMMENDATION 36 That a program be established to increase the number of Aboriginal housing units designed specifically to meet the diverse needs of single people, including youth, men, and Elders.

RECOMMENDATION 37 That a program of financial support and equity building for first-time Aboriginal home buyers be established to assist Aboriginal people living in Ottawa move from rental accommodation to home ownership.

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RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS

The following research instruments were used during the study:

1. Key Respondent Interview Guides

- Aboriginal Organizational Key Respondent Interview Guide—Executive Director
- Aboriginal Organizational Key Respondent Interview Guide—Staff
- Aboriginal Organizational Key Respondent Interview Guide—Youth Worker
- Non-Aboriginal Organization Key Respondent Interview Guide
- Government Key Respondent Interview Guide
- Aboriginal Community Member Key Respondent Interview Guide

2. Community Survey

3. Focus Group Questions

4. Plenary Session Questions

5. Life History Questions

Copies of all research instruments are available upon request at:
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URBAN ABORIGINAL TASK FORCE

Ottawa Final Report

Throughout 2005 and 2006, the Urban Aboriginal Task Force, a partnership of Aboriginal organizations and government agencies, oversaw community-based research in five urban sites: Thunder Bay, Ottawa, Barrie/Midland/Orillia, Sudbury, and Kenora. Designed to shed new light on on-going struggles and critical new developments taking place in urban Aboriginal communities across the province, the project investigated racism, homelessness, poverty, youth, women, and health, also considering broader concerns of culture and identity, gaps in delivery of services, Elders and long-term care, women and children, access to resources, and assessment of Aboriginal services.

The *Ottawa Final Report* constitutes the second of the five site reports and with the other site reports will inform the preparation of the *Final Report of the Urban Aboriginal Task Force*. It is our hope that the *Final Report* will initiate a new wave of positive, cooperative policy, programme, and legislative change aimed at improving the quality of life for all urban Aboriginal people in Ontario.

Additional copies of this report are available for download from www.ofifc.org.