

# update

March 2023

Friend

This month: Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQIA+ Celebration and Awareness Day, Jour de la Francophonie, Our Health webinars, research study participation opportunities, and more.

Note: If you prefer to receive this newsletter in either English or French only, [please change your preferences](#).

## THE LATEST

1. Join us **TODAY at 11:30 AM PST / 2:30 PM ET** for a webinar where CBRC Research Director Nathan Lachowsky will share findings from the **Our Health: 2SLGBTQIA+ Community Study**, with a special focus on how the COVID-19 pandemic has shaped the health and wellbeing of people in our communities. Save the date: We're also hosting another Our Health webinar on **March 23rd at 9:30 AM PST / 12:30 PM ET**, where members of CBRC's research team will share learnings about the impact of chronic health on our communities. To register, visit [CBRCevents.net](#)
2. In advance of **International Women's Day**, Tara Chanady, CBRC Board member and Executive Director of the Quebec Lesbian Network, writes about the unique challenges that lesbian, bi, and queer women face, and how lesbian and lezbiqueer folks often feel invisible in both 2S/LGBTQ+ and women's rights groups and communities. "We are hopeful to see many more community and research projects develop around lezbiqueer needs in terms of sexual and mental health, initiatives against gender based violence and to address structural and economical inequalities," she writes. [Read it here](#).
3. The Two-Spirit Program at CBRC are calling upon our relations, government officials, policy makers, and hereditary leaders across Turtle Island in the proclamation and celebration of **Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQIA+ Celebration and Awareness Day** – taking place this year on **Monday, March 20, 2023** – in alignment with the spring equinox. To learn more and join our call to action, [click here](#).
4. CBRC recognizes that the communities we work alongside experience historical and ongoing harm through various institutions, which include research. There is a wide spectrum of opinions on research for/with/on marginalized communities. For these reasons, we're excited to share our **Research Principles**. Building extensively on our past work, and being deeply rooted in community responses to HIV/AIDS, this document provides a framework for our research team, staff, community advisors, collaborators and partners, affiliated and external researchers, and others who we may work with.
5. More than anyone else, we are the ultimate experts on our bodies, lives, and needs. This is the message echoed by social workers, practitioners, community organizers and activists in CBRC's new collection of videos on sexual and reproductive health. Click here to watch **Community Voices on Sexual and Reproductive Health**, in which community leaders touch on the need to centre pleasure in sexual health, and for community members and providers alike to identify and challenge their own biases around ability, bodies, race, and gender.

## THE READ

To kick off *le Mois de la Francophonie*, CBRC's Francophone Content Strategist, Francesco MacAllister-Caruso, writes about access to **2S/LGBTQIA+ community services for Francophones living outside Québec**. Francesco highlights the issues facing queer and trans Francophone minorities, emphasizing the realities of racialized and newly-settled Francophones in Canada. "Queer and trans people, just like Francophone minorities, know all too well that our place in society is not guaranteed, and that we must continuously fight to preserve the advances we have made," they say. "By joining our forces and showing solidarity for each other's struggles, it will not only be easier to ensure access to the services we are owed in our language, but also to adapt our practices to ensure that no one is left behind within our respective communities." To read the full article, [click here](#).



Photo: A picture of Francesco from 2018, in Ottawa, at the protest against the provincial government's decision to eliminate funding for the UOF and abolish the OFLSC.

## OUR COMMUNITY: Chris DiRaddo

CBRC's outgoing Associate Director of Communications, Chris DiRaddo (he/him) got his start in 1995, working in communications for Divers/Cité, Montreal's LGBTQ pride organization. Since then, he's worked for a variety of cultural organizations, including CBC Radio, Canada Council for the Arts, Blue Metropolis Literary Foundation, and the Quebec Writers' Federation. Prior to joining CBRC, Chris worked as a managing editor for a corporate marketing agency. Losing his job at the beginning of the pandemic, he knew that he wanted his next role to have more meaning, "particularly one that dealt with queer and trans issues, or one that dealt with health." So, CBRC felt like a natural fit.

As CBRC's Associate Director of Communications, Chris oversees the development of the organization's internal and external communications (like this newsletter – although this profile was not his ideal). "What excited me most about my work at CBRC was seeing how we can effect real change," he shares. "Although there is still much more to do, advances in things like the conversion therapy ban, or the change in Canada Blood Services' policies, demonstrate what we can do when we are united."

Outside of his 9-5, Chris is also a published author. With two novels under his belt (*The Geography of Pluto* and *The Family Way*), he plans to use his time after CBRC to finish a draft of his third book. Although he will be departing the organization at the end of March, he hopes to remain connected in some way to the work being done. "I love the organization, I love my colleagues, and I think the work we do is extremely important," he says. "But writing has always been my first love. I need to give myself space to follow that dream further."

In 2014, Chris created the **Violet Hour Reading Series & Book Club**, a platform for 2S/LGBTQ+ writers to bring their works to new audiences. Every month, folks gather to read a classic or contemporary work of queer literature. Chris also co-created the Violet Prize, awarded annually to an established 2S/LGBTQ+ writer to honour a legendary career.

When asked about his role models, Chris names his parents, describing them as actively involved in their church's community. "Growing up as a queer kid in the church was confusing because I didn't think there was a place for me." However, bearing witness to a community of people who raised funds for the poor with spaghetti dinners, or rallied to the bedside of a community member in need, taught him about the importance of community building. "It's strange, but in some ways I feel like I'm doing similar work – but through my church, which is the queer community."



Photo: Christopher DiRaddo by Marlon Kuhnreich

"Leaving CBRC is a bittersweet moment. I'll miss everyone, but I need to tend to the nagging voice in my head telling me to write the next book."

## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

- Save the Date! **Summit 2023 is returning in-person to Vancouver November 16-17**. The conference will be offered in a hybrid format this year, which means there will be more opportunities for participants to engage virtually.
- We published **The Care I Want**, a comic strip full of tips and advice to make best use of health services, particularly when it comes to sexual and reproductive health for 2S/LGBTQIA+ people.
- Lane Bonertz, our Two-Spirit Program Lead, wrote a [blog post for CATIE](#) on the **Medicine Bundle project**, the approach to this work, and the team's hopes moving forward.
- For **Summit 2022: Pushing Possibilities**, we partnered with **CATIE** to create a **series of short interviews with 2S/LGBTQ+ health leaders at the conference**, asking them to share with us their thoughts about Summit 2022. Their perspectives are presented in [these 12 short videos](#).
- We created a **national service map for PnP harm reduction support** for 2S/LGBTQIA+ people who party 'n play!

## COMING UP..

We're currently working on a **resource guide for trans folks who PnP**.

In the coming weeks, we'll be publishing blog posts on **workplace discrimination with Pride At Work Canada**.

Also, stay tuned for our **Summit 2023 call for proposals!**

## Get Involved

Are you non-binary or a GBT2Q man? Do you have experience with using dietary supplements? Please consider [filling out our questionnaire](#). Your insights are crucial to our research project, which is being conducted in collaboration with the University of Guelph.

We're conducting a new study documenting the experiences of BIPOC, as well as newcomer, immigrant and refugee 2S/LGBTQ+ people who have experienced conversion 'therapy' practices in Canada. [Click here](#) to learn more.



Community-Based Research Centre (CBRC) promotes the health of people of diverse sexualities and genders through research and intervention development.

To learn more visit [www.cbrc.net](http://www.cbrc.net).

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