

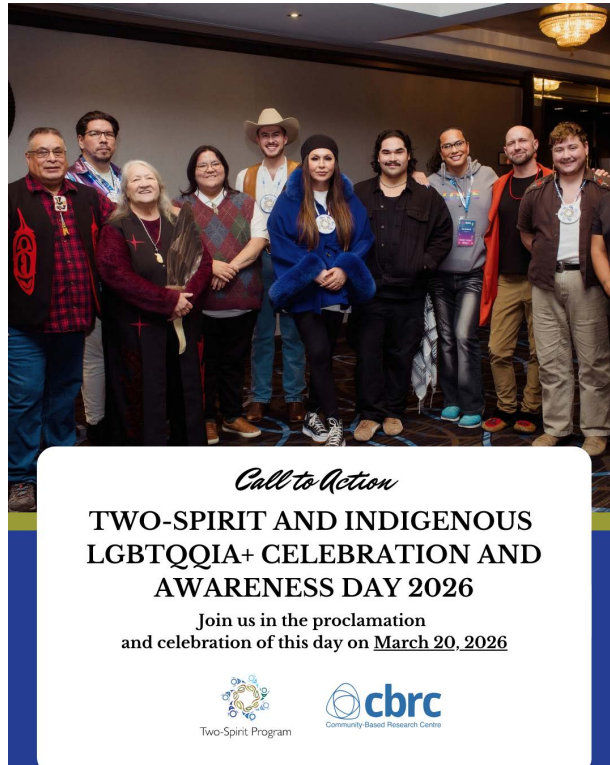
# The CBRC update

Friend,

**In this month's newsletter:** Smoke Break harm reduction webinar, call to action for this year's Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQQIA+ Celebration and Awareness Day, kiki ballroom as care, and more.

## THE LATEST

1. Join us on Tuesday, March 17 from 11:30 am-12:45 pm EST for [\*\*\*Practical Strategies to Improve the Health of 2S/LGBTQIA+ People Who Smoke.\*\*\*](#) Through a presentation, panel discussion, and Q&A, this webinar will provide **practical harm reduction strategies** to meet people where they're at. You will also be introduced to [\*\*Smoke Break\*\*](#), CBRC's free, virtual, peer-led program that addresses the national gap in smoking and vaping support for 2S/ LGBTQIA+ people.
2. If you are a 2S/LGBTQIA+ person in Canada with experience of an HPV diagnosis or treatment, or experience supporting someone with HPV, we invite you to join our **Community Champion Network**. As part of the Network, you will help create resources for community members and care providers on **HPV-related cancers**. For full details and to apply, click [here](#).
3. The Two-Spirit Program team is once again calling upon our relations, hereditary leaders, government officials, policy makers, and allies to proclaim **March 20** as [\*\*Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQQIA+ Celebration and Awareness Day\*\*](#). Celebrated annually since 2023, and held in alignment with the spring equinox, the day is a chance to uplift and bring greater awareness to Two-Spirit, trans and non-binary Indigenous people and communities across Turtle Island. Folks are encouraged to host local events, demonstrations, and celebrations in solidarity with one another, on or around Friday, March 20. This year's theme, "**Infinite Strength**" was chosen to convey a hopeful message about both the strength within each of us and the power we have when we join together. If you would like to plan your own activity, [please let us know](#).



## OUR COMMUNITY: Vincent Mousseau

Vincent Mousseau (they/he) is a social worker, researcher, and community organizer based in Montreal/Tiohtià:ke, where they are also a member of the kiki ballroom scene. In the past, they have been involved in the *Advance* alliance and CBRC's Summit. Vincent is currently completing a PhD in Health at Dalhousie University. Their research investigates how Black queer and trans communities have built care practices, kinship, and mutual aid — particularly through kiki ballroom culture.

Vincent recently presented at Summit 2025. Their presentation, titled “*Where Kiki Meets Care: Reimagining Mental Health for Black Queer and Trans Communities*,” highlighted how ballroom serves as a site of care and resistance for Black 2S/ LGBTQIA+ folks. “The framing in mainstream academic research has a tendency to individualize. One of the first lessons ballroom teaches us is that it’s about collective becoming, not individual self-discovery,” Vincent says. “And that’s a fundamentally different worldview than traditional, individualistic metrics of health.”

The kiki ballroom scene in New York City developed in close relationship with HIV prevention work supported by the [Gay Men’s Health Crisis](#), particularly efforts to engage younger Black queer and trans people in testing, as HIV transmission rates were — and remain — significantly higher among these communities. “Even our origin point was always about the fact that our lives have value. That they’re worth fighting for in the ways that we determine,” Vincent says. “If health interventions for HIV prevention actually worked for our communities, we wouldn’t need to develop these resources. And yet, we have.”

*Speculative care* is a concept that Vincent is currently developing. “Speculative care is a present-tense, relational model of care that exists outside of institutional structures. Essentially, it’s acting without certainty. It’s like, ‘I don’t know that this is going to work, but I know we can get through this.’” It emerges in a context where Black life is routinely exposed to institutional harm, situating care beyond state systems as an ethical and practical necessity. To engage in speculative care,

Vincent argues, Black queer and trans communities draw on a deep, embodied knowledge of systems and how those systems shape their lives. As they put it, “how can we assume that the health system is going to stand up for us?” Speculative care, then, is an adaptive, improvisational, and collective form of care.

In ballroom, the house structure is a kinship system that can be seen as a form of speculative care infrastructure. “There are house roles — like parents and godparents — but also legends and icons, who have been doing this work for decades. They act as forms of mentorship that prepare people for potential harm, or help them respond to harm,” Vincent says. “In a world that tells you that your life doesn’t matter, what does it mean to have created an entire infrastructure around you that tells you that you’re worthy of care?”

Entering ballroom as a site of research flipped the research heuristic on its head: “Ballroom asserts that care is already happening here despite you. It asks you to pull away from your position as a researcher and lean into an affective, relational connection,” Vincent explains. “That’s congruent with a lot of the messages in Africentric and Indigenous forms of research.”

Visit [Vincent’s website](#) to learn more about their work.

If you are in Halifax on February 12, you can [attend Vincent’s public lecture](#) on ballroom, Black queer community, and collective survival.



Photo: Vincent Mousseau

**“ If these systems were never meant to hold the knowledges that our ancestors gave us, then necessarily we need to find other ways to do that. My knowledge starts from the certainty that care is already happening elsewhere. In the wake of institutional violence, it is a much more productive area for us to start doing health intervention where care is already happening, than it is to put our energy into systems that were designed to kill us. ”**

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## IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

- Last month, we released [a new suite](#) of **syphilis education and awareness resources** designed for both community members and health care providers across Alberta.
- Our collaboration with [Script Health](#) continues in episodes two and three of their **Ask a Sexpert** series. Jaylene McRae, CBRC’s Two-Spirit Research Coordinator, [reflects on](#) what it means to foster **culturally safe sexual**

**healthcare**, while CBRC's Executive Director Michael Kwag [answers the question](#), "**What is Doxy-PEP and how does it prevent STIs?**"

- Codie Primeau, a researcher on the [SHAPE+](#) study, wrote [a blog post](#) on why understanding chronic pain in 2S/LGBTQIA+ communities matters. They are currently looking for participants.

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## COMING UP

Later on in **Black History Month**, we will be highlighting the contributions of **Black 2S/LGBTQIA+ health researchers** on our social media — stay tuned!

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## GET INVOLVED

The **Queer, Wise, Inquisitive Collective** is a new weekly discussion and dinner group for 2S/LGBTQIA+ people age 55+ in Vancouver. This February and March, join like-minded 2S/LGBTQIA+ elders and elders for weekly discussions and complimentary dinners. For full details and to join, [click here](#).

CBRC is looking for a **Human Resources Specialist** to join our Operations / Administration Department. The deadline to apply is February 16.

Want to get more involved with queer and trans communities in your area? CBRC has launched the **Community Call**, a monthly email full of meaningful ways you can take action and help build a better future for 2S/LGBTQIA+ people across Canada. Look for it in your inbox later this month! **Do you have something to include? Submit it to us via email at [media@cbrc.net](mailto:media@cbrc.net) by Wednesday, February 11.**



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