



## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

# **Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQQIA+ Celebration & Awareness Day 2026 Announces “Infinite Strength” Theme, Honouring Unity and Collective Power**

[Vancouver – March 10, 2026] For the fifth consecutive year, the Two-Spirit Program at Community-Based Research Centre (CBRC) is calling upon relations, hereditary leaders, government officials, policy makers, and allies to proclaim and celebrate Friday, March 20, 2026, as **Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQQIA+ Celebration and Awareness Day** in Canada.

Held in alignment with the spring equinox each year, the day is intended for all Two-Spirit and Indigenous queer and trans people, as well as allies, families and friends to uplift and bring greater awareness to Two-Spirit, trans and non-binary Indigenous people and communities across Turtle Island. “Infinite strength is a reminder that the power inside of all of us is to be ourselves, truly,” says Jaylene McRae, Two-Spirit Research Coordinator. “And when we create an environment of inclusion and empowerment, anything is possible! We do this together for each other.”

“The purpose of Two-Spirit Day is to represent a sense of renewal, growth, and to recognize the leadership of Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer movements through celebration,” says Skye Wilson, Two-Spirit Research Assistant. “On this day, we celebrate our diverse cultural backgrounds as Indigenous Queer people. The levels of kinship and relationality within our communities highlight the importance of love, acceptance, and belonging, and this day reminds us of the strength we find when we reconnect.”

Through public demonstrations, proclamations, and community celebrations, Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQQIA+ people will be acknowledged and supported on this day to reclaim roles and spaces they have always occupied. Activities are being planned in numerous communities across Turtle Island, including Fredericton, Toronto, Sioux Lookout, and Winnipeg. CBRC encourages other Two-Spirit organizations, leaders, scholars, advocates, activists, Elders and community members to also host local events, demonstrations and celebrations in solidarity with these events on March 20, 2026.



## **TWO-SPIRIT PROGRAM TEAM ACTIVITIES**

This year, the Two-Spirit Program at CBRC will be inviting people to watch *Two-Spirit Resurgence*, a short documentary that highlights the ongoing resurgence of Two-Spirit and Indigiqueer identity happening across Turtle Island. Recorded during the 2022 Two-Spirit Symposium, with footage from Vancouver's Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQQIA+ Celebration and Awareness Day festivities in March 2023, the film features interviews with Elders, community leaders and Two-Spirit Program staff members. The film will be available to be viewed on cbrc.net on the morning of March 20, 2026.

Also on March 20, Two-Spirit Health Program Coordinator RJ Jones will appear as a special guest on Indigenous gamer and educator AngeeNoel's Twitch channel. An active member of the gaming community, and the founder of Gaming is Resilience, aimed at promoting Indigenous representation in gaming spaces, AngeeNoel will speak at length with RJ Jones about Two-Spirit identity and queer Indigenous expression online. "Given the current political landscape of Canada and the US with the rise of anti-LGBTQ+ sentiments, it's become important to create spaces for queer and trans people from different backgrounds to come together," says Jones. "In a way that's safe, and accessible. We're able to do that on platforms like Twitch, and Discord." The livestream begins at 11 AM ET

## **TWO-SPIRIT PROGRAM UPDATES**

Since the last Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQQIA+ Celebration & Awareness Day, the Two-Spirit Program team at CBRC has been hard at work and is excited to share updates on several of its current initiatives.

### Medicine Bundle

Since its launch in 2021, the Medicine Bundle project continues to adapt and evolve, responding to the needs of Two-Spirit, queer, and trans Indigenous people. A national response to the approval of HIV self-testing in 2020, the Medicine Bundle aimed to "bring the sacredness back into sex" by improving access to HIV self-testing, sexual health supplies, traditional medicine, and peer support to Indigenous people. The Two-Spirit Program is currently working with Indigenous partner organizations across the country to refine the Medicine Bundle, reshaping the existing model to better reflect community needs and cultural practices and beliefs more locally.

### Weaving Indigenous Community-led and Interdisciplinary Research to Develop Culturally Safer Wholistic Brain Health Assessment

The team is part of the Wholistic Brain Health Assessment Bundle Project, a research initiative with McMaster University exploring Indigenous understandings of aging, dementia, and cognitive health. Two-Spirit and Indigenous 2SLGBTQQIA+ remain underrepresented in data around aging and dementia. The multi-year project explores experiences and perspectives unique



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to Two-Spirit people and dementia, including cultural understandings of dementia and cognitive decline, gender affirming care, and cognitive assessment models. The team is so excited to soon share updates as the project evolves.

Strengthening Community Leadership to Address Stigma, Isolation, and Resilience Among Two-Spirit and LGBTQIA+ Indigenous Peoples Across Canada

After a busy year of national consultations, the Two-Spirit Program will be releasing a series of community resources exploring experiences of stigma, isolation, and resilience of Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQIA+ people. Two-Spirit identity and Indigenous understandings of gender and sexuality are resurgent, as community Elders, advocates, and researchers educate to empower and return to the understanding of Two-Spirit people as welcomed, revered, and essential members of the people and Nations of which they belong. Using data from CBRC's 2022 and 2023 Our Health national surveys, the Two-Spirit Program seeks to share stories and recommendations of Two-Spirit people across the country as folks are reintegrating and establishing new precedents and outlets for community connection and gathering since the wake of COVID-19, an evolving political climate, and environmental crises.

**ABOUT THE TWO-SPIRIT PROGRAM**

The Two-Spirit Program at CBRC is an Indigenous-led initiative supporting the health and wellness of the Two-Spirit and Indigenous LGBTQIA+ community. Through active and meaningful engagement, the program focuses on reclaiming, empowering, and celebrating Two-Spirit identities while raising awareness and addressing the colonial narratives that contribute to homophobia, transphobia, and stigma..

**ABOUT CBRC**

Community-Based Research Centre (CBRC) promotes the health of people of diverse sexualities and genders through research and intervention development. CBRC's core pillars of community-led research, knowledge exchange, network building, and leadership development position the organization as a thought leader, transforming ideas into actions that make a difference in our communities. CBRC was incorporated in 1999 and is a non-profit charitable organization. Our main office is located in Vancouver, British Columbia, with staff working remotely across Canada.

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