



# Inunnguiniq Parenting Program

Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre

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*Supporting the Health of Survivors of Family Violence*



# FINAL NARRATIVE REPORT

TITLE: INUNNGUINIQ PARENTING PROGRAM IN 'HIGH RISK' SETTINGS IN NUNAVUT TO ADDRESS DETERMINANTS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE IN OUR COMMUNITIES.

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CONTRIBUTION AGREEMENT HOLDER:

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## INTRODUCTION – *INUNNGUINIQ* PARENTING PROGRAM IN ‘HIGH RISK’ SETTINGS

*Inunnguiniq* means the “making of a human-being” and incorporates Inuit ways of knowing, and is a trauma-informed, multi-sectorial, community- and evidence-based program. The program content, which was developed at the [Qaujigiartiit Health Research Centre](#) and piloted over 5 years, focuses on revitalizing Inuit knowledge that was suppressed as a result of colonial settlement policies and residential schools in Canada’s Eastern Arctic. In *Inunnguiniq* philosophy, the roles of parents and extended family, child-rearing, and the development of practical life skills grounded in Inuit societal values, are intertwined with a holism lens on the ways Inuit support a whole person to achieve their best. More information about the *Inunnguiniq* Program is available on the Qaujigiartiit website.

*“It is still important to consider how we carry over knowledge and skills from our past in order to help future generations be prepared.” - Elder Mariano Aupilardjuk*

Our communities in Nunavut believe and understand that the *Inunnguiniq* teachings are essential for revitalizing Inuit wisdom and practices to support healing and recovery from historical and on-going trauma, strengthening the roles of extended family and community in child-rearing, and ending cycles of violence.

A 5-day (35 hour) *Inunnguiniq* course was developed at Qaujigiartiit and was designed and adapted collaboratively through community engagement and consultation by multidisciplinary teams of elders, participants, community members, mental health professionals, community service providers, and researchers. It is grounded in traditional and contemporary Inuit knowledge to which provides frontline providers with immense resources to support Inuit families and the community-at-large.

### PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

This specific project with the funding through Public Health Agency of Canada, was to adapt, pilot, and evaluate the evidence-based *Inunnguiniq* Parenting Program with ‘high-risk’ parents/caregivers in Nunavut over a 5-year period.

The objective was to address key determinants of family violence in Nunavut - including trauma and disrupted attachments - through training of service providers in an evidence-based, Inuit-led, trauma-informed intervention.

A secondary objective was to strengthen capacity in Nunavut communities to deliver parenting support programs to Nunavut parents, and to revitalize the role of *Inunnguiniq* (Inuit child-rearing and family philosophy) in the lives of Nunavummiut today, to foster supportive, loving homes for children

The Public Health Agency of Canada provided \$2,453,033.00 from *March 1st, 2016 to March 31st, 2022*, through the Supporting the Health of Survivors of Family violence investment. Qaujigiartiit provided \$250,000 of in-kind support.

### EVIDENCE TO SUPPORT APPROACH

In Nunavut, a complex colonial history is well recognized as a primary determinant of family violence as processes sought to assimilate and dominate Inuit into European cultural society (1-4). Colonization created power imbalances, severed family connections, and removed Inuit from their land further contributing to systemic challenges including poverty, overcrowded housing, low academic achievement, elevated crime rates, food insecurity, and lower health determinants (5-9). Many families were forcibly separated and traumatized during that period of time in the Canadian North (10). Many children of that time period experienced physical, sexual, and emotional abuse in the residential school system and in interactions with missionaries (11). Intergenerational trauma continues to be a significant concern in Nunavut communities today (12-15). Many Nunavummiut have identified the need for Inuit knowledge revitalization in daily life and in services provided in the territory in light of the traumatic events experienced by families during and since the settlement and residential school eras (4, 11, 12, 16-18). *This project aimed to address this need by training service*

providers in Inunnguiniq so that they may better support Inuit on their healing journey and end the cycles of violence that continue to persist.

**WHAT DID WE ACCOMPLISH WITHIN THOSE 5 YEARS?**

Within the last 5 years of the project, our audiences have included individuals who work directly with parents such as social workers, pediatricians, front-line health care workers, early childhood educators, shelter employees, corrections officers, Government of Canada employees, parents, community members and many Nunavummiut. We also reached Nunavummiut in every region of the territory, and beyond into other Inuit regions in Canada and Greenland. Below, we expand on the geographic scope and the activities of this project.

**GEOGRAPHIC SCOPE**

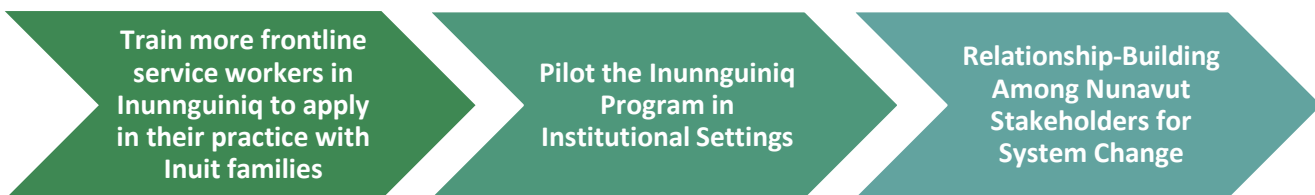
Within Nunavut the Inunnguiniq Train-the-Trainer course was delivered in Arviat, Cambridge Bay, Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, Clyde River, Nauyasat/Repulse Bay, & Kugluktuk over the course of this project, often multiple times in those communities.

Figure 1. Nunavut-based learning sites for this project over 5 years.

We have had indirect reach in multiple geographic locations within Canada such as across Nunavut, Nunatsiavut, Northwest Territories, and Ottawa, and also presented the content at Arctic health and wellbeing conferences in Greenland and Denmark.



**ACTIVITIES**



**TRAIN MORE FRONTLINE WORKERS IN INUNNGUINIQ TO APPLY IN THEIR PRACTICE WITH INUIT FAMILIES**

- As identified above, Qaujigiartiit delivered 23 Inunnguiniq Facilitator (In-Person) training courses over the course of 5 years.

Table 1. Number of service providers in Inunnguiniq Courses over the Project Period by year.

- 403 were trained to deliver the Inunnguiniq Program in their communities, and/or incorporate the teachings in their practice through this project.

These Training sessions were held in various Nunavut communities, along with some in Ottawa, Ontario with partner agencies serving Nunavummiut in a regional tertiary care centre.

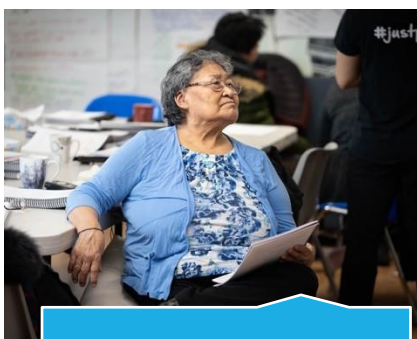
<b>2016-17</b>	<b>37</b>
<b>2017-18</b>	<b>70</b>
<b>2018-19</b>	<b>86</b>
<b>2019-20</b>	<b>68</b>
<b>2020-21</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>2021-22</b>	<b>96</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>403</b>

**PILOT THE INUNNGUINIQ PROGRAM IN INSTITUTIONAL SETTINGS**

- The Inunnguiniq program was piloted at Inuuqatigiit Children’s Centre, the YWCA-Aggyvik Women’s shelter in Iqaluit, the Rankin Inlet Healing Centre, Ilisaqsivik Society in Clyde River, and Mamisarvik (addictions treatment centre) in Ottawa.
- We estimate that approximately 2400 Nunavummiut were exposed to the Inunnguiniq teachings either through participation in the pilot program deliveries and/or through one-on-one client interactions with a trained service provider.

## RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING AMONG NUNAVUT STAKEHOLDERS FOR SYSTEM CHANGE

- A significant portion of the project involved building and nurturing relationships among the different actors working with 'high-risk' families in Nunavut, such as legal aid, shelters, addictions treatment, Elder's committees, social services, and others.
- This project involved numerous partnerships and strategic alliances that permitted that facilitated the uptake of the intervention at different sites.
- The goal of stronger relationship-building was to effect systems change and identify new opportunities for Inuit-led service delivery



Elder Martha Enuaraq observes in a group activity



Frontline service workers participate in a relationship-building activity



Frontline service workers with their new certification in Inunnguiniq pose with Elder instructor Aalasi Joamie

## PROJECT OUTCOMES

- Representatives from 45 organizations attended the courses. Of the 15 respondents, 10 organizations reported change in their institutional operations as a result of attending the Inunnguiniq Train the Trainer courses (30 did not respond and 5 reported change was unknown)
- We have had 400+ individuals attend the Inunnguiniq Parenting Program Train-the-Trainer Course within the last 5 years with additional reach to parents and individuals who work directly with families and children of 2400+ individuals in total since the project started.
- 100% of the respondents to the post-course evaluation survey indicated they were incorporating teachings from the Inunnguiniq course in their practice and that clients reported improved engagement.
- New initiative to have the course accredited at a Canadian university

## LEARNINGS

The Government of Nunavut has a very high rate of turnover among employees, particularly those on the front lines. Unfortunately, many of the partners who indicated support for this project left their jobs before or during the pandemic,

which caused some issues with implementation at planned pilot sites. We were able to pivot, however, and deliver with frontline workers in other organizations.

## WHAT WILL BE THE LASTING IMPACTS OF THE INUNNGUINIQ PROJECT?

As a direct result of this 5-year project, where Inunnguiniq was a fledgling intervention at the start of this project, it has now grown tremendously into the following interventions:

- **Inunnguiniq Program was named in the Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy Action Plan as a promising intervention** to turn the tide of the suicide epidemic in Nunavut (19)
- **An Inunnguiniq workplace mentorship program initiative** was launched as a direct result of this project in 2019, to support Inuit working in policy to adopt Inunnguiniq practices in their workplaces and become Inunnguiniq leaders and instructors among their workplace teams.
- **Embedding Inunnguiniq in professional practice.** Many trainees reported incorporating their learnings into their practice. For example, in their one-on-one interactions with women and children in family from Tungasuvvingat Inuit incorporated the Inunnguiniq teachings into their work with urban Inuit in Ottawa including 'high-risk' Inuit populations, such as families fostering children from Nunavut and struggling Inuit women seeking additional support, e.g. sex workers.
- **Inunnguiniq Online.** Due to the pandemic, Qaujigiartiit recorded some of the instructional activities in order to develop videos for online access. We hope to launch an Introduction to Inunnguiniq online course in 2022-2023, which would serve as an introduction to the content that will be covered in the full 35-hour course
- **Inunnguiniq Program Implementation - ongoing.** Beyond the pilot programs delivered in this project, participants in the Inunnguiniq courses have been and continue to deliver the program with their population. For example, the Rankin Inlet Healing Centre will be working with the inmate population of that facility once COVID-19 measures are lifted.
- **Inunnguiniq Mentorship Program.** An Inunnguiniq Mentorship Program is currently completing with 3 mentees. We are seeking graduate-level accreditation for the program in hopes of a) ensuring Inuit knowledge is recognized as valuable in an academic context and b) building capacity amongst the younger generation of Nunavummiut.
- **Inunnguiniq in the Shelter System and Child Advocacy Centre in Nunavut.** This project is a new initiative that Qaujigiartiit is launching in partnership with all the family violence shelters in Nunavut and the Government of Nunavut Dept. of Family Services in 2022-2023. Through this project, we will be working to develop the cultural competencies of shelter workers across Nunavut, as well as evaluating the incorporation of Inuit knowledge into a holistic care and service delivery model at the Umingmak Child Advocacy Centre for child victims of violence. This project is a direct result of the findings from the PHAC-funded family violence project.

## MORE INFORMATION

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