



TWO SPIRIT YOUTH AND ELDERS SUMMIT

WHAT IS IT?

A summit is a meeting or conference usually of top-level officials and executives, to conduct diplomatic negotiations and ease international tensions.

The Two Spirit Youth & Elders Summit (**2S YES**) does not fit that definition, although it is just as important.

WHO'S BEHIND IT?

2S YES is being hosted by **Egale, Canada Human Rights Trust**

Egale is a national charity that promotes the human rights of sexual minorities through education, research and community engagement.

Its vision is a Canada, and ultimately a world, without homophobia, biphobia, transphobia and all other forms of oppression so that every person can achieve their full potential, free from hatred and bias.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE IN 2S YES?

60 Indigenous high school students from northern Ontario, who self-identify as Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit, Métis, status and non-status) and LGBTIQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Intersex and Queer), or who identify as Two Spirit.

The process involves the attendance of staff at the Summit, such as the Equity Officer, Guidance Counsellor or a teacher who is queer-positive. For example, a staff member who is currently involved with or planning to be involved with a Gay Straight Alliance.

WHEN & WHERE IS 2S YES?

2S YES will be held in Thunder Bay from Wednesday, January 11 to Saturday, January 14, 2017. Once youth and teachers have registered they will be provided with information about the exact location and travel details. **Transportation, accommodation, meals and snacks will be provided at no cost to attendees.**

WHY ARE WE HOSTING A SUMMIT SPECIFICALLY FOR TWO SPIRIT YOUTH?

Two Spirit people are an especially vulnerable population. They face dual oppression due to racism and discrimination—for being Indigenous and belonging to a sexual minority.

We will be consulting with attendees about their needs and the obstacles that they face as Two Spirit and LGBTIQ identified Indigenous youth. We will use this feedback to ensure that current and future programming is meaningful, culturally relevant and focused on the specific needs and concerns of Two Spirit people.



WHAT WILL HAPPEN AT THE 2S YES?

2S YES will bring together three Two Spirit Elders, with 60 Indigenous high school students from northern Ontario. There will also be a team of volunteers to help support discussion groups.

Attendees will learn about the history of Two Spirit people, and there will be several presentations on subjects such as Two Spirit Teachings and Two Spirit Spirituality. Evening activities include a performance of Agokwe, a play written and performed by Waawaate Fobisher, and a movie night featuring Two Spirit content.

There will be presentations for all attendees, as well as smaller discussion groups where youth will have the chance to discuss what they're learning and any questions or comments that they might have. The discussion groups will be co-facilitated by a Two Spirit Elder and a student from Lakehead University.

There will be discussion groups for school staff attending the conference to provide them with information and skills to better support their Two Spirit students.

As part of 2S YES's programming, we will be creating an electronic support network. It will provide participants with a way to keep in touch and share updates with one another after 2S YES is over. It will also provide the youth with a support system after the Summit if they are faced with oppression, violence or other forms of societal push-back.

NOW WHAT?

You received this information package because of your role, and to seek your assistance in recruiting youth participants.

As you know, when "spreading the word" about such a sensitive topic, one must be mindful of the need to respect the student's right to privacy and confidentiality while ensuring their safety.

There is a fine line between providing information about 2S YES and not creating situations where bullying or other forms of oppression may occur. This is especially relevant if potential students are not "out" in school or in their community.

If your school wants to be involved, please contact Egale's Two Spirit Program Coordinator, Rebecca Benson, by e-mail at rbenson@egale.ca or calling toll-free at 1-888-204-7777, ext. 7103. Rebecca will assist you with registration and answer any questions.

Details about the exact location will be provided after schools/participants register online.