



An Introspective Look into Barriers and Facilitators to Accessing Post-Secondary Indigenous Support

This exploratory study sought to assess support most needed by Indigenous students, the factors that impact students' decisions to access Indigenous support, and the barriers that impact Indigenous student services' ability to provide quality support.

EMERGING THEMES AND SUBTHEMES



Need for Wholistic Support

Indigenous students require wholistic support to overcome the barriers they face in post-secondary education.

- Community and Culture Access
- Mental Health Services
- Academic Supports
- Financial Aid and Assistance
- Housing Information and Resources
- Additional Support



Barriers to Delivering Support

Administrators face factors, many outside of their control, that restrict their ability to fully support Indigenous students.

- Limited Funding Availability
- Lack of Self-Determination
- Constraints on Staff
- Hiring of Indigenous Staff
- Hesitancy of Funders



Facilitators to Accessing Support

Despite challenges, there are many ways Indigenous student services can improve access and support.

- Encourage Student Engagement
- Create External Partnerships
- Increase Accessibility of Support
- Facilitate a Welcoming Community
- Advertise Available Support



"I want to pursue my PhD, and I am limiting where I'm applying based on where I think I could afford housing."

"Longer term [funding] would really benefit a lot of institutions to make more effective decisions with their resources."

"That disconnection from community makes me [feel] even more of a like an outcast in the academic community."

→ RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Create Welcoming Indigenous Student Lounges
2. Access to Indigenous-Specific Mental Health Support
3. Offer Academic and Peer Support Programs
4. Increase Financial Aid and Emergency Support
5. Navigate Affordable and Suitable Housing Options
6. Access to On-Campus Childcare Services
7. Increase Staff and Prioritize Indigenous Hiring (e.g. elder in residence or healer)
8. Provide More Flexible and Sustainable Funding
9. Engage in Facilitating Student Feedback
10. Boost Awareness of Services and Partnerships

