

People from all walks of life are welcome to our program. CoSA's core values are inclusivity, respect, and non-judgment.

IJC recognizes and acknowledges that we live and work on Treaty 1 territory and the traditional lands of the Dakota, Cree, Anishinaabeg, Oji-Cree, Dene, and Metis nations. We seek a new relationship with Indigenous communities based on honour and deep respect, moving forward in a spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

Supported integration for safer communities and no more victims



Interested in becoming involved?

Please contact us at:

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Interested in making a donation?

Follow these simple steps:

1. Visit the CanadaHelps website
2. Type "Initiatives for Just Communities" in the search bar
3. Select "Circles of Support and Accountability" in the drop down box

Thank you!



A Program of:
Initiatives
for Just
Communities

www.initiativesjc.org

Circles of Support and Accountability (CoSA)

A program of Initiatives for Just Communities, CoSA offers a caring community around people with offending histories, who are at high risk of harming themselves and others. Volunteers and staff offer a supportive environment to those integrating into the community after incarceration, serving Parole or Probation, or simply feel they need additional support to live safely.

People with offending histories often experience fear and isolation in the community as a result of the stigma surrounding their offences. While much of society considers high risk individuals as hopeless, CoSA utilizes a strength-based approach for constructive integration, reducing recidivism rates by 72- 83%. The mantra of the program is **no more victims**.

CoSA's approach is based heavily on the philosophy of **restorative justice**. We utilize a holistic approach, focusing on mending relationships affected by the offence, holding offenders accountable for harms they caused, and building stronger and safer communities.

At the centre of every circle is its Core Member, the individual with an offence history. Core Members voluntarily seek a Circle of Support and are included from the beginning in all decision-making regarding their safe and healthy integration into the community. Each circle consists of one Core Member, one CoSA Staff Person, and 3-5 trained Support Volunteers.

What does support look like?

- Connecting the Core Member to practical needs (i.e. access to medical services, social assistance, seeking employment and affordable housing, etc.)
- Providing a consistent network of emotional support
- Creating a safe and supportive community

What does accountability look like?

- Ensuring all actions and conversations prioritize community and personal safety
- Working to establish safe and healthy boundaries
- Encouraging honesty and transparency
- Addressing factors and triggers within offence cycles

CoSA also advocates with police, Parole, Probation, treatment professionals, social assistance networks, and neighborhood groups to best support the Core Member and the community at large.

Our community holds many qualified professionals who provide the training necessary for the success of our support circles, including Forensic Psychological Services and Klinik Community Health Centre. See below for a list of required trainings available to volunteers and supporters. We also offer numerous supplemental trainings, and are always seeking new learning opportunities to offer our volunteers, supporters, and staff.

Required Trainings:

- Introduction to CoSA
- Integration Concerns
- Victim Empathy and Awareness

Participation in a circle requires a commitment of one year of weekly two hour meetings.

Volunteering is an opportunity for the community to play a direct role in the restoration, reintegration, and risk management of people who are often seen with only fear and anger.

