



Solidarity in Grief



Dear friends of AEMS,

We share this message with hearts that feel broken. Over the next few days, in the wake of the Islamophobic attack on a Muslim family in London, Ontario, that has left 4 dead and a child orphaned, AEMS will be sharing with you information and resources specific to Islamophobia.

However, at this time, we come together in community. Over the last months, grief has compounded upon grief. Our communities, Muslim and not, have borne witness to death, murder, genocides, and egregious violations of human rights upon vulnerable populations.

As educators, our first instincts have us thinking about children. We are haunted by the voices and faces of those whose wishes and dreams will never be fulfilled, whose shoes will never be walked in, who are now pictures on a front page, who are disappeared, who face adult courts and adult jails because their childhood and humanity has been stripped from them, and those who are sole survivors of what the ignorant call “senseless violence” and what those who know call the manifestation of deeply entrenched hate.

While our tears fall, we think of the children for whom we are responsible every day. We have been entrusted with a responsibility to ensure they are safe and protected. This means supporting them in knowing that the harsh realities they face are valid and real, rather than being complicit in erasing, dismissing, and silencing those realities and their traumas. Together, we hold true to our values of human rights for all, hold strong in our commitment to truth, and stand together in solidarity against hate and oppression.

It is incumbent upon us to ensure that our students have the social-emotional supports they need. We share with you the beginnings of a list of culturally relevant supports, and ask that this list be shared with all students. Whether directly or indirectly impacted by the anniversary of the murder of George Floyd, the anniversary of Mullikaival, the farmers’ protest, the on-going impacts of Covid-19, anti-Asian and anti-East Asian racism, the on-going and intergenerational traumas of colonization and residential schools, the human rights violations of Palestinian peoples and the Islamophobia and antisemitism that have been intensified by those who would exploit the situation, the globalized Islamophobia manifesting in so many parts of the world, or the localized Islamophobia that is thoroughly normalized in our schools, access to support is a key step in validating the hurt students may be experiencing.

We thank our friends who have shared these resources with us, and we thank our friends who stand with us.



Culturally Responsive Mental Health & Wellbeing Services for Students and Families (Alphabetized)

[**Across Boundaries**](#) provides a dynamic range of dignified, inclusive and compassionate mental health and addiction services and programs for racialized communities in Afrikaans, Amharic, Arabic, Bengali,, Caribbean dialects, Dari, Farsi (Persian), Harare, Hindi, Mandarin, Pashto, Punjabi, Shona, Somali, Swahili, Tsonga, Twi, Urdu, Xhosa

[**Black Youth Helpline**](#) (416-285-9944/1-833-294-8650) serves all youth and specifically responds to the need for a Black youth specific service

[**BounceBack Ontario**](#) is a free, guided self-help program that's effective in helping people aged 15 and up who are experiencing mild-to-moderate anxiety or depression, or may be feeling low, stressed, worried, irritable or angry. Services available in Arabic.

[**Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture**](#) is a community-based organization that helps victims of torture, war, genocide and crimes against humanity. CCVT provides treatment, tools and support that allow refugees to heal from trauma and become active community members. Youth Settlement Counselor: 416-363-1066 EXT: 227; Parenting Support: 416-363-1066. [**Children and Youth Programs**](#) Support is available in various languages including Arabic.

[**Distress Centres of Greater Toronto Area**](#) provides support in [English](#), [Cantonese](#), [Mandarin](#), [Portuguese](#), [Spanish](#), [Hindi](#), [Punjabi](#) and [Urdu](#).

[**Family Services of York Region**](#) Supported languages Tamil, Hindi, Urdu, Farsi, Mandarin/Cantonese, Gujarati, Punjabi

[**Harriet's Youth Support Line**](#) (1-877-695-2673) is a 24-hour emergency / crisis response line for African, Caribbean, and Black youth. Text messaging is available for young people who do not feel like speaking to someone, but are still in need of help.

[**Hong Fook**](#) provides a continuum of mental health services covering the spectrum from "promoting wellness" to "managing illness" in Cambodian, Chinese (Cantonese and Mandarin), Korean, Vietnamese and English.

[**Hope for Wellness Helpline**](#) (1-855-242-3310) offers immediate help to all Indigenous peoples across Canada. It is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week and offers counselling and crisis intervention. Connect to access support via phone or online chat.

[**ICNA Relief Canada**](#) (905-858-1067) provides a non-clinical aspect of counselling to clients in need

[**Jewish Family and Child Services**](#) is a multi-service agency that strengthens and supports individuals, children, families and communities within the context of Jewish values. Jewish Family and Child Services offers affordable, professional counselling that is confidential and convenient.

[**JVS Toronto**](#) offers individual counselling for children, adolescents and adults addressing symptoms related to mental health such as anxiety, depression or anger. They also offer counselling to parents as they



strive to provide the best for their children while dealing with their own stressors.

[Khalil Center](#) is a psychological and spiritual community wellness center advancing the professional practice of psychology rooted in Islamic principles. Khalil Center utilizes faith-based approaches rooted in Islamic theological concepts while integrating the science of psychology towards addressing psychological, spiritual and communal health

[Muslim Family and Child Services](#) (416) 910-1253 is a not for profit organization using an integrated network of professional consultants and community support services including crisis intervention

[Naseeha](#) (1-866-627-3342) provides an anonymous, non-judgmental, confidential and toll-free peer support helpline for Muslim and non-Muslim youth experiencing personal challenges. Naseeha's services are open to all regardless of age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, family makeup, social status, income, ability, physical and mental health, and religion.

[PCHS - Punjabi Community Health Services](#) offers mental health and addictions, geriatric, settlement, child, youth and family services.

[Pflag York Region](#) (Anonymous Support Line: 1-866-977-3524) is York Region's LGBTQ2 support, resource and education network – bringing together all members of the community.

[Sikh Family Helpline](#) (1-800-551-9128) is a non-emergency helpline providing support and connecting individuals to service providers in English and Punjabi

[SOCH Mental Health](#) aims to empower South Asian community members to recognize and accept mental health as an essential part of their wellness through education, prevention, and building resilience.

[TAIBU Community Health Centre](#) provides intersectional, equity-based and culturally affirming practices for YRDSB students who self-identify as Black, including Individual Therapeutic Counselling with a referral via a school Social Worker or Psychology Services Professional

[York Rainbow Support](#) (1-888-967-5542) provides Individual, Couple and Family counselling services for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Two Spirit, Queer & Questioning individuals.

General Supports for Emotional Well-Being (Alphabetized):

[310-COPE](#) provides crisis counselling for all. Professional counsellors are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

[Kids Help Phone](#) provides support for children and youth. Professional counsellors are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

[MOBYSS](#) (The Mobile Youth Walk-In Clinic) offers a safe space to talk to a medical or mental health professional in a warm, welcoming, and friendly environment. Services are 100% free and confidential with staff who are caring and non-judgemental. A health card is not required and there are no referral requirements.

[Victim Services of York Region](#) provides crisis counselling and referrals for longer-term support. Advice and support for families and educators on best practices for providing support can be found here.



THE ALLIANCE OF EDUCATORS
FOR MUSLIM STUDENTS