



DKS

DAVID KELLEY SERVICES
LGBTQI2S+ & HIV/AIDS Counselling Services

DKS Pride 2020 Statement

June 25, 2020

Pride is a significant time of year for LGBTQI2S+ communities in Toronto and around the world, and this year the spirit of Pride feels as relevant and vital as ever. COVID-19 has challenged our abilities to come together as a community to celebrate our successes, mourn our losses and fight for our rights. Nonetheless, we will stay safe, stay connected, stay strong and stay proud.

It is with pride that we witness protests today for the freedom to live, love, and thrive – protests against White supremacy and colonization. The murder and persecution of Black and Indigenous people is also the murder and persecution of Black and Indigenous queer, trans, and two-spirit people, of our families of choice, our families of birth, our friends, and our allies. The fight against White supremacy and colonization cannot be separated from the fight for queer liberation, and queer liberation will not happen until Black and Indigenous people can live without fear of police brutality, poverty, and the many interrelated systemic oppressions and inequities that support colonization and White supremacy.

We see and cherish the many Black and Indigenous people who have been and continue to be instrumental in the fight for queer liberation. We know that the fight for queer liberation is inextricably tied to generations of activism against White supremacy and colonization. It is with pain that we see Indigenous and Black death, and the trauma those deaths leave in their wake. It is with pride that we see so many acting against White supremacy and colonization.

As an agency, our values are firmly rooted in the commitment towards celebrating diversity, pursuing equity and practicing inclusion in all of our communities. This daily commitment is delivered with pride and a striving for excellence, along with a deep awareness that we can, and must, do better for our most marginalized community members who continue to be persecuted and victimized both by individual and systemic racism. To network with our Indigenous and Black allies is to create a united front against the atrocities which are so routinely excused by policy makers and implementers; atrocities such as the murders of Indigenous and Black community members whose deaths are so frequently dismissed by our criminal justice system.

Although the Pride 2020 celebration will be held at a physical distance, we believe that in reflecting upon the origins of Pride as an act of political resistance, this year's Pride will perhaps be significant as one that can offer hope and inspiration for a lasting and radical shift in our political and social structure: with physical distance but social solidarity.

We resolve to stand in solidarity with our Black and Indigenous communities,

David Kelley Services



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