



# SUPPORTING OUR RURAL COMMUNITIES:

Stigma-Free Society's Nationwide  
Rural Mental Wellness Program

Dear Stigma-Free supporters,

Our charity is on a mission to bring accessible mental health resources to rural

and agricultural communities across Canada through our [Rural Mental Wellness Program](#). We launched this program in 2021 to address the mental health crisis taking place in rural and agricultural areas. Due to a lack of resources and the stigma attached to mental illness, rural residents often have difficulty accessing mental healthcare, putting many people's wellbeing – and lives – at risk. We are committed to fostering a supportive, stigma-free environment in rural and agricultural communities nationwide through our program.

We focus primarily on delivering the program within Canada, but many of our resources are available virtually worldwide. In this month's Highlights, we are delighted to tell you all about the Rural Mental Wellness Program and how you can use these resources to make a difference.

Join us in spreading the word: help us bring this vital mental health and anti-stigma education to your community!

[Register for Rural Peer Support Fundamentals Training](#)

# RURAL PEER SUPPORT FUNDAMENTALS TRAINING



Peer support is a powerful tool, especially in rural areas where mental health services are limited. Our [Rural Peer Support Fundamentals Training](#), offered in partnership with [Sara Riel Inc.](#), empowers you to provide peer support and become a changemaker in your rural community.

Peer support groups create a safe space to share openly and provide support to those in your community who need it most. By the end of our training sessions, you'll be equipped to apply peer support skills in one-on-one and group settings and use your personal experiences to help others in their journey. You'll also be able to facilitate your own peer support group in your community and learn self-care strategies to prioritize your mental wellness. Our training is available online for rural residents across Canada.

**The next 2-day training will be held:**

**April 23 & 30, 2024**

**8:30 am – 3:00 pm PDT/ 10:30 am – 5:00 pm CDT**

### THE RURAL MENTAL WELLNESS TOOLKIT:



### Breaking Mental Health Stigma Through Education

The [Rural Mental Wellness Toolkit](#) is a no-cost comprehensive resource that offers mental health support to individuals living in rural and agricultural communities. Our Toolkit is completely accessible online and houses a wealth of resources tailored for people of all ages living in rural areas. Whether you need resources to help [youth](#) navigate challenges unique to rural environments or to support the mental wellness of [seniors](#) in your community, the Toolkit has something for everyone. Each section addresses specific challenges and aspects of rural life. Get started now with the resources below!

- [Conversation Cards](#): Our virtual conversation cards help you start fruitful discussions about mental health with people in your rural community, including the stigma people deal with in rural areas. Whether you use them at a community event or with your family, they will help you discuss these

issues openly and debunk myths about mental health. On this page, you'll also find a collection of educational videos about rural mental wellness.

- [Life and Work Wellbeing](#): Whether you are a farmer or business owner living in a rural area, you understand how difficult it can be to strike a balance between life and work. Our Life and Work Wellbeing section of the Toolkit offers practical ways to practice self-care and avoid burnout.
- [Inspiring Stories](#): One of the most powerful ways to reduce stigma around mental health in rural communities is to listen to others' stories. The Inspiring Stories section of our Toolkit features heartfelt videos of rural residents sharing their personal journeys and opening up conversations about mental health and stigma, helping others feel less alone and offering support to those who may be struggling. Each story resonates with the unique experiences of rural living and provides a platform for connection and hope. This section also contains Farmers' Documentaries, where farmers living in Canada share their experiences with mental health and stigma, highlighting the unique challenges of working in agriculture and offering words of encouragement.

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In addition to the resources above, we created a section dedicated to [Men's Mental Health](#) to reduce the stigma that prevents far too many men in rural communities from seeking help. Plus, explore our resources for [Family Wellness](#), [Help and Community Resources](#), and tune into our [Live Wellness Events](#) to connect with experts!

**Access these resources and more:**

[Explore the Rural Mental Wellness Toolkit](#)



**To every rural resident who has used  
our resources, participated in our  
training, and raised awareness  
throughout their community:**

*Thank you*

### **Get in Touch**

We are always looking to hear from rural residents about what their community needs and ways that we can support their mental wellness through our program. If you have any questions or feedback about our programs or resources, please don't hesitate to [contact us](#). Let's continue to build rural communities that understand, support, and uplift one another!

With gratitude,  
The Stigma-Free Society Team



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