Housed in the University of Alberta’s Faculty of Education, the Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services (iSMSS) leads groundbreaking research that affects policy development, intervention, education and community outreach for sexual and gender minorities (SGM), nationally and globally.

Bringing together research, teaching, institutional service and community outreach under one umbrella enables us to combine our studies and services functions in ways that create opportunities for innovative intellectual work and sustained educational and community outreach.

Our research not only helps youth at large, but also guides professional development and education for teachers, social workers, family physicians, psychologists, guidance counsellors and other caring professionals, enabling them to be better resources and advocates for SGM youth and their families.
MISSION

The Institute for Sexual Minority Studies and Services is an interdisciplinary hub for scholarly and community work on sexual and gender minority identities, issues and concerns. Our mission is to advance groundbreaking research, policy and practice focused on education, health and social services, emphasizing children, youth, families and communities.

RESEARCH AND ADVOCACY

Foci of Research Program of Canada Research Chair in Sexual and Gender Minority Studies

- Comprehensive health, educational, and cultural concerns of sexual and gender minority (SGM) youth and young adults in intersections with race, class, Indigeneity, and other relational differences.
- Addressing sexual and gender minority issues in educational and social policymaking, law, and legislation in Canada and its provinces and territories.
- Parameters of caring professional development and practice for teachers, nurses, police officers, social workers, counselling psychologists, and other professionals working with vulnerable SGM youth and young adults.
- Researching resilience as a construct, process, and outcome in helping sexual and gender minority youth and young adults to deal with adversity and trauma.
- Advancing greater synchronicity among interdisciplinary research, policy, and practice in working with sexual and gender minority youth and young adults in Canada.
- Using research to inform the ongoing development of an evidence-based C3 model for working with SGM youth and young adults, which is focused on comprehensive health education and outreach, community intervention and supports, and compassionate policing.

PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

iSMSS offers a variety of innovative programs and services, including:

- Camp fyrefly: A summer leadership camp for LGBTQ2S+ youth
- fyrefly in Schools: A free peer-to-peer education program for junior & senior high schools
  - Where the Rivers Meet: Using culturally relevant teachings, and recommendations put forward by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, in partnership with local Indigenous peoples and communities to create inclusive and respectful school and community environments for LGBTQ2S+ youth
  - Franco-Queers: A partnership with Francophonie Jeunesse de l’Alberta to create space for LGBTQ2S+ folks in Alberta’s francophone communities
Highlights of some major activities from the past year include:

**MAYOR'S PRIDE BRUNCH**
With over 600 community leaders, supporters and friends of fYrefly, we celebrated camp successes and raised funds to help cover the costs of Camp fYrefly Edmonton.

**PRIDE TAPE**
In 2017 Pride Tape won a Clio international award in the social good category!

**ISMSS SCHOLARSHIPS**
We offer several undergraduate and graduate scholarships for UofA students focused on LGBTQ2S+ research, leadership activities and community service.

**YOU CAN PLAY**
Postdoctoral Fellowship in Building Inclusive Sporting Communities
(Dr. Cheryl MacDonald, iSMSS Post-Doc researcher)

**RESEARCH**
Dr. MacDonald is currently studying attitudes towards homosexuality among former and retired National Hockey League (NHL) players and is currently conducting interviews that will inform enquiries about aggressive and stoic masculinity in hockey, how those representations may be connected to homophobia in the sport, and why there are no openly gay players in the NHL.
OUR PEOPLE

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FIND OUT MORE

Visit isMSS.ualberta.ca for detailed information about our research, programs and services.

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