

**NEWS RELEASE**  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
December 4, 2020

## **Alberta Blue Cross® supports Ever Active Schools in securing \$100,000 for Indigenous Youth Mentorship Program**

Alberta Blue Cross is proud to announce that its community partner Ever Active Schools has received funding of \$100,000 through the [Healthy Futures program](#), offered by the Toronto-based organization LEAP | Peacut Centre for Social Impact. This funding will be put towards the Indigenous Youth Mentorship Program (IYMP), which Alberta Blue Cross currently supports through funding from its community foundation.

“IYMP is an Indigenous youth-led program where older students mentor younger students in order to build resiliency within Indigenous communities,” says Brian Torrance, Executive Director of Ever Active Schools. “This funding will help Indigenous communities continue to channel the strength of their youth in order to overcome challenges presented by the COVID-19 pandemic and further improve the communities’ overall health.”

The IYMP was one of just 11 winners selected from more than 150 applications submitted across Canada. With funding from LEAP now secure, Ever Active Schools can enhance the breadth of its programming and expand the IYMP from the 50 communities it currently serves to more than 100 communities over the next five years.

“IYMP is founded from the voice of youth,” says Rebecca Smillie, Manager, Community Impact. “This opportunity will equip any community across Canada to lead an IYMP program in their community. The result? Equitable community wellness. We’re just thankful to be supporting this work.”

In 2020, a total of 265 high school leaders were trained as youth mentors for the IYMP. Data collected by Ever Active Schools and the University of Alberta shows that Indigenous youth who participated in the program saw a reduced risk of chronic disease, improved school attendance, an increased sense of belonging at school, increased connections among host Indigenous schools and improved access to health-promoting partnerships.

The IYMP program has also been researched by Dr. Kate Storey through the University of Alberta’s School of Public Health, which found a significant increase in the health outcomes of the communities where the program operates. With this extra \$100,000 funding from LEAP, IYMP can continue to build on the strengths, talents and natural leadership of the people in their communities.

==30==

### **For more information, please contact**

Sharmin Hislop, Director, Corporate Relations, Alberta Blue Cross  
780-498-8283  
[shislop@ab.bluecross.ca](mailto:shislop@ab.bluecross.ca)

[ab.bluecross.ca](http://ab.bluecross.ca)

Edmonton Blue Cross Place 10009 108 Street NW T5J 3C5 780-498-8000	Calgary Main Floor 715 5 Avenue SW T2P 2X6 403-234-9666	Grande Prairie Suite 108 10126 120 Avenue T8V 8H9 780-532-3505	Lethbridge 470 Chancery Court 220 4 Street S T1J 4J7 403-328-1785	Medicine Hat 95 Carry Drive Plaza 105 Carry Drive SE T1B 3M6 403-529-5553	Red Deer 103 Elements at Rivers Edge 5002 55 Street T4N 7A4 403-343-7009
--	---	--	---	---	--

®\* The Blue Cross symbol and name are registered marks of the Canadian Association of Blue Cross Plans, an association of independent Blue Cross plans. Licensed to ABC Benefits Corporation for use in operating the Alberta Blue Cross Plan.

® † Blue Shield is a registered trade-mark of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association. ABC 31262 2020/04

