

SPOTLIGHT ON: Across Boundaries supporting mental wellness in the Black community



Across Boundaries accept the award for Accreditation Canada's, 'Accreditation with Commendation' award (2019-2024).

This article originally appeared on 680news.com

By Tijuana Turner
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“Reaching out for help is an important part of our mental well-being.”

HISTORY

[Across Boundaries](#) (AB) has been providing mental health supports for members of racialized communities in the G-T-A for over 25 years.

In 1995, a group of individuals came together to develop a service to address the gap in mental health services for Black people and other racialized groups.

Executive Director, Aseefa Sarang was one of those people.

Sarang says they applied for funding from the [Ministry of Health](#) and were given approval for 4 staff members. Today they have 40 staff members and over 800 people use their services annually.

SERVICES

Across Boundaries focuses primarily on [counselling support](#) for individuals age 16 and older.

They have programs to support clients with mental health and addiction issues as well as those experiencing homelessness and members of the [LGBTQ2S+ community](#). They also support individuals who have had contact with the criminal justice system by helping them address their issues, find housing and divert from the system.

Sarang says while their programs are similar to other agencies, they anchor their services in [an anti-oppressive and anti-racism lens](#).

“We recognize our clients experience racism and other forms of discrimination daily and their mental health is impacted greatly. So when we offer our supports we recognize mental health, racism and discrimination are all intertwined,” she said.

Sarang adds, to address one without acknowledging the others would be a great disservice to those who use their service, especially given the stigma surrounding mental health.

“We’re breaking that stigma. It’s not negative to need mental health services. Mental illness is a part of our life and reaching out for

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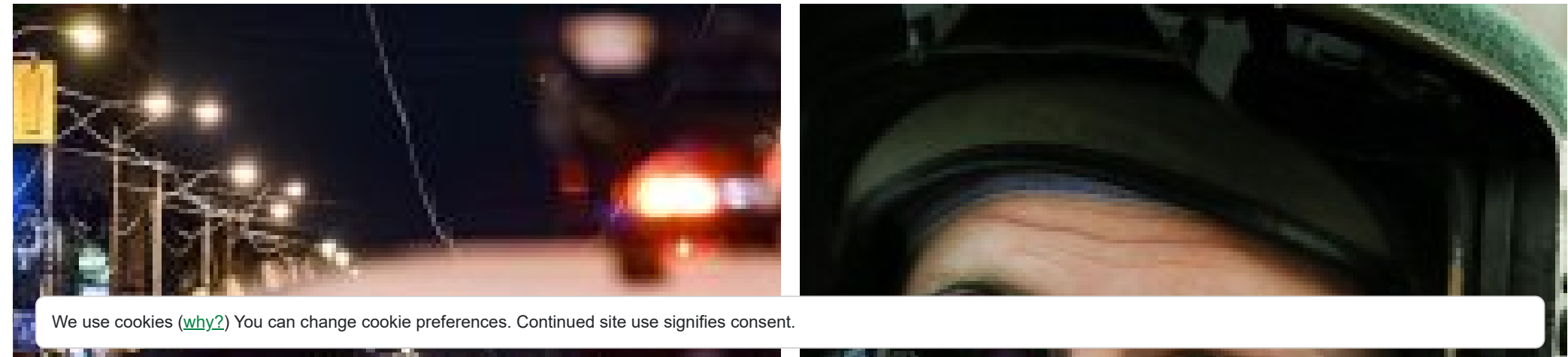
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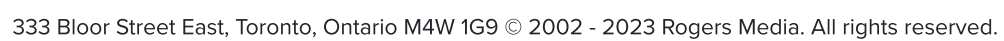
A transit advocacy group is strongly criticizing Toronto's government after Wednesday's proposal to boost the TTC's bottom line and hike fares by 10 cents, noting that subway wait times could also increase by several minutes.

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