



WRAPAROUND SERVICE RESPONSE

Culturally competent services for African-Caribbean-Black-Canadian children, youth and families

Peel is one of the most culturally diverse regions in the country, and Peel CAS is committed to responding to the unique needs of families in our region. We have developed a series of culturally competent service models, in partnership with local community organizations, to ensure that children, youth and families receive service that is anti-racist, anti-oppressive, and respectful of their culture. These services recognize the systemic barriers and oppression racialized youth and families experience and help to address them through cultural sensitivity and enhanced community partnerships.

How does it work?

Families who identify as African, Caribbean or Black are eligible to participate in the Akoma Wraparound program. Participating families are paired with a cultural liaison, also known as a wraparound worker, who collaborates with the family, Peel CAS, and other community agencies, to foster an environment of understanding. This worker ensures each family member receives culturally respectful services rooted in a foundation of anti-racism and equality.

The cultural liaison works jointly with the Peel CAS worker to connect the family with Afro-centric parenting support and enhanced mental health services, along with improved access to employment, housing, education, and childcare. Akoma helps the family to build a network of family and community support around them to improve their lives now and into the future.

What are the benefits?

Akoma allows families to receive services that are better suited to their particular situation, from providers who understand the unique challenges faced by the Black community. The wraparound worker can help the family navigate complex systems and connect them to the services and resources best suited to their needs.

Since the Akoma program launched in 2020, it has shown great success in improving outcomes for families. In its first year of operation, every child involved with Akoma remained with their family, and participants reported a high level of satisfaction with the service.



Akoma is the Akan word
for *heart*

Client testimonials

"I am very grateful for all the support and help I have received from Akoma. Thank you for everything; we as a family certainly feel like there are people out there that care because of you."

"Akoma has given my family a sense of safety and reassurance that no matter what, there is always a solution to any situation that may arise."



"Akoma has provided my family with a variety of resources that we were not aware of prior to becoming involved with the organization."

What kinds of services are available?

Akoma offers a range of culturally-centered services and resources, including:

- Joint visits with a CAS worker and Akoma counsellor to ensure the use of Black-focused best practices
- Afro-centric parenting and network support
- Access to employment, housing, education and childcare support
- Facilitating mental health services through community partnerships

For more information

Ask your CAS worker or contact our Client Service and Support team at 905-363-6131 extension 3045 or MJohn@peelcas.org.

Learn more about Akoma and our other culturally competent service models at www.peelcas.org.



The Akoma Wraparound Service Response is a partnership between Peel Children's Aid Society, the Black Community Action Network, Roots Community Services, and the Free for All Foundation

