

Engaging with the  
**National Day for Truth  
and Reconciliation**  
Toolkit



Indigenous  
Initiatives

Western  
UNIVERSITY • CANADA



## Engaging with the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (NDTR) at Western

A campus-wide commitment to observing the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (NDTR) is foundational to progress in Western's strategic plan *Towards Western at 150* (2021), specifically Theme 2: People, Community, and Culture. While NDTR is a day observed annually, the work of Truth and Reconciliation must be embraced daily to foster meaningful and lasting change. For campus partners, events recognizing NDTR can span the month of September and into October. Last year, OII profiled over 40 NDTR-related events from mid-September to early October hosted by Western faculties, departments, and support units across campus, supporting discipline-specific opportunities for their staff, students and faculty.

This document is intended to provide educators, staff, and leaders at Western University with information and context relevant to the observation NDTR as well as furthering the work of Reconciliation year-round. Western University has designated Monday, September 30 as a non-instructional day to observe the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on campus.

At Western, leaders across campus **are invited to coordinate and plan NDTR events** that:

- honour survivors and the children who did not make it home
- engage truth-telling and debunking Indian Residential School denialism
- are relevant to their disciplines, faculties, units, and students (encouraged to collaborate where possible; interdisciplinary)
- amplify institutional commitments to Reconciliation; and
- Increasing our personal and collective understanding of the actions required by all in the Western community to advance Truth and Reconciliation at the University

We will raise the Orange Flag on Monday, September 23, 2024, and have compiled NDTR partner and campus-related events on our website under the "[Truth and Reconciliation](#)" tab. Deshkan Ziibing Anishinaabeg (Chippewa of the Thames First Nation) are hosting an Indigenous Art Market & Concert for Orange Shirt Day 2024 to help fundraise for their Save the Barn campaign. OII and other local organizations are supporting this initiative's planning and success.

Follow [@WesternUOII](#) on Twitter and [@WampumLearningLodge](#) on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#) for updates and programming.

Note: Western University has designated September 30 as a non-instructional day. No formal class components are scheduled or delivered. All regularly held lectures, classes, labs, tutorials etc. will not operate on this day so that everyone at Western may participate within the robust NDTR activities that are planned instead.

We hope you will join us in this learning and unlearning journey.

## Table of Contents

<b>What is the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation?</b> .....	3
<i>Who is this day for?</i> .....	4
<i>What is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada?</i> .....	5
<i>TRC Calls to Action</i> .....	6
<i>Reconciliation Definition</i> .....	6
<b>What is Orange Shirt Day?</b> .....	7
<i>Where to buy Orange Shirts in London, Ontario:</i> .....	8
<b>What are Indian Residential Schools?</b> .....	8
<i>What are Indian Day Schools?</i> .....	9
<i>Local Legacy: Save the Barn Campaign and the Mount Elgin Monument</i> .....	10
<b>What is the significance of unmarked graves?</b> .....	10
<i>Are communities near London searching for graves?</i> .....	11
<b>Engaging Students, Staff and Faculty in NDTR and Reconciliation at Western</b> .....	13
<i>What can Faculties, Departments, and Support Units do for NDTR?</i> .....	13
<i>How do you engage Indigenous speakers and presenters for NDTR?</i> .....	14
<i>Posting your event on Western’s Event Calendar:</i> .....	14
<i>Encouraging people to participate in NDTR events:</i> .....	15
<b>A Trauma-Informed Approach</b> .....	15
<i>Tips for Teaching this topic with care:</i> .....	16
<i>Support Resources</i> .....	16
<b>Learning Opportunities</b> .....	17
<i>Online Learning Resources</i> .....	17
<i>Creating Accountable Spaces</i> .....	20
<i>Building Accountable Space Guidelines</i> .....	21
<b>Beyond NDTR</b> .....	22
<i>Considerations in the ongoing work of ReconciliACTION:</i> .....	23
<b>Appendix</b> .....	24
<i>Principles for Reconciliation</i> .....	24
<i>Quick Facts on Residential Schools</i> .....	25
<i>Indian Residential School Denialism</i> .....	25
<i>Further Resources</i> .....	27
<i>Sources</i> .....	28
<i>A Note on Authorship</i> .....	29

## What is the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation?



T-SHIRT DESIGN BY SHANA ELIJAH OF ONEIDA  
NATION OF THE THAMES

*“Residential schools are a tragic part of Canada’s history. But they cannot simply be consigned to history. The legacy from the schools and the political and legal policies and mechanisms surrounding their history continue to this day. This is reflected in the significant educational, income, health, and social disparities between Aboriginal people and other Canadians. It is reflected in the intense racism some people harbour against Aboriginal people and in the systemic and other forms of discrimination Aboriginal people regularly experience in this country. It is reflected too in the critically endangered status of most Aboriginal languages.” (TRC Report, 135).*

The official observation of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (NDTR) takes place on September 30. This date was previously (and still is) observed in Indigenous communities as *Orange Shirt Day* in Canada. This day seeks to raise awareness and honour direct and intergenerational survivors of Indian Residential Schools (IRS), and those who did not make it home. Many people also include honouring Indian Day School survivors in their observances as well.

IRS were boarding schools over 150 000 Indigenous children were forced to attend, or sent to. They were funded by the Canadian government but operated by various church sects from the 1870s until 1996 (Union of Ontario Indians 2013). The NDTR comes out of decades of advocacy by IRS survivors and families of survivors and children who did not return.

The roots of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) began in 1991, when the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) was established following the [1990 Oka Crisis](#) in Kanesatake. After over 100 public hearings, testimonies and research submissions, the RCAP report was published in 1996, outlining hundreds of proposed solutions towards justice and equity for Indigenous Peoples. This included a recommendation to establish a public inquiry into Indian Residential Schools (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1996).

In 2008, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was initiated following an Indian Residential School settlement that concluded in May 2006 (IRS History and Dialogue Center 2023). The purpose of the commission was to document Residential School Survivors’ accounts so that no one in Canada could claim they did not know about this legacy and commit it to historical record (Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2015). The Commission completed its work and released a report with [94 Calls to Action](#) in 2015, asking for all Canadians and levels of government to participate, due to the ongoing impacts of the IRS legacy. The Truth and

Reconciliation Report's executive summary stresses that "the impacts of the legacy of residential schools have not ended with those who attended the schools. They affected the Survivors' partners, their children, their grandchildren, their extended families, and their communities" (135-136).

The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation was established in 2021 in response to the TRC Call to Action #80:

*80. We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, to establish, as a statutory holiday, a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation to honour Survivors, their families, and communities, and ensure that public commemoration of the history and legacy of residential schools remains a vital component of the reconciliation process.*

### *Who is this day for?*

All people living in Canada are encouraged to commemorate NDTR and Orange Shirt Day in ways that centre and honour survivors, their families, and communities.

While the TRC Calls to Action largely focus on the IRS legacy, there are many Calls that seek to address other systemic inequities such as the Indian Act, or concepts of [terra nullius](#) and the [Doctrine of Discovery](#). The TRC and report are looked at as a catalyst for action towards the systemic barriers and discrimination Indigenous people have, and continue to face, however "Reconciliation" is also a contested and heavily critiqued movement by many Indigenous people. Historically, reports and recommendations such as RCAP and various inquiries have been stymied by government and institutional apathy, lack of funding and commitment. Anishinaabe scholar Leanne Simpson critiqued the focus of Reconciliation on solely IRS, in her book *Dancing on Our Turtle's Back*, published in 2011.

*"As reconciliation becomes institutionalized, I worry our participation will benefit the state in an asymmetrical fashion, by attempting to neutralize the legitimacy of Indigenous resistance. If reconciliation is focused only on residential schools rather than the broader set of relationships aimed at assimilation and political genocide, legislation, and practices, then there is a risk that reconciliation will "level the playing field" in the eyes of Canadians. In the eyes of liberalism the historical "wrong" has now been "righted" and further transformation is not needed, since the historic situation has been remedied." (Simpson 21-22)*

In Call to Action #80, all levels of government as well as organizations and institutions are asked to "ensure that public commemoration of the history and legacy of residential schools remains a vital component of the reconciliation process."

It is important to consider how the work we do around Reconciliation honours and centres Survivors, as well as their families and communities. Many families live with the impacts of the schools and will continue to do so for generations; however, the schools were and are not the only violence inflicted upon Indigenous Peoples and lands in Canada. Simpson (2011) writes:

*“I also worry that institutionalization of a narrowly defined “reconciliation” subjugates treaty and nation-based participation by locking out Elders - the ones that suffered the most directly at the hands of residential schools - in a position of victimhood. Of course, they are anything but victims. They are our strongest visionaries, and they inspire us to envision alternative futures. Are we participating in a process that allows the state to co-op the individual and collective pain and suffering of our people, while also criminalizing the inter-generational impacts of residential schools and ignoring the larger neo-assimilation project to which our children are now subjected?” (Simpson 22)*

Addressing the legacy of the Indian Residential School System, and Indian policies, involves nuanced discussions and acknowledgment that the systemic discrimination is still ongoing. For example, Indigenous Peoples are disproportionately represented in Canada’s justice system, and [Indigenous youth make up almost half of Canada’s incarcerated youth population](#). Indigenous youth also [make up over half of the children currently in the child welfare system](#) and advocates point to this statistic as a [direct correlation to the dysfunction created in families whose members attended Indian Residential Schools](#).

### *What is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada?*



JUSTICE MURRAY SINCLAIR, CHAIR OF THE TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION COMMISSION, SAYS IT IS UNFORTUNATE THAT AN EXTENSION OF THE COMMISSIONS WORK WAS NECESSARY. PHOTO: MARITES N. SISON ([SOURCE](#))

The [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada](#) was struck after the Indian Residential Schools Settlement\* in 2006. The survivors who participated requested the Commission be created to ensure that no one in Canada could claim ignorance of what happened, and to facilitate reconciliation. You can find the official mandate [here](#). The TRC travelled across Canada from 2008-2015, gathering over 6500 stories from survivors and their families that were included in the report, as well as families of those who did not make it home. It is from those stories that the 94

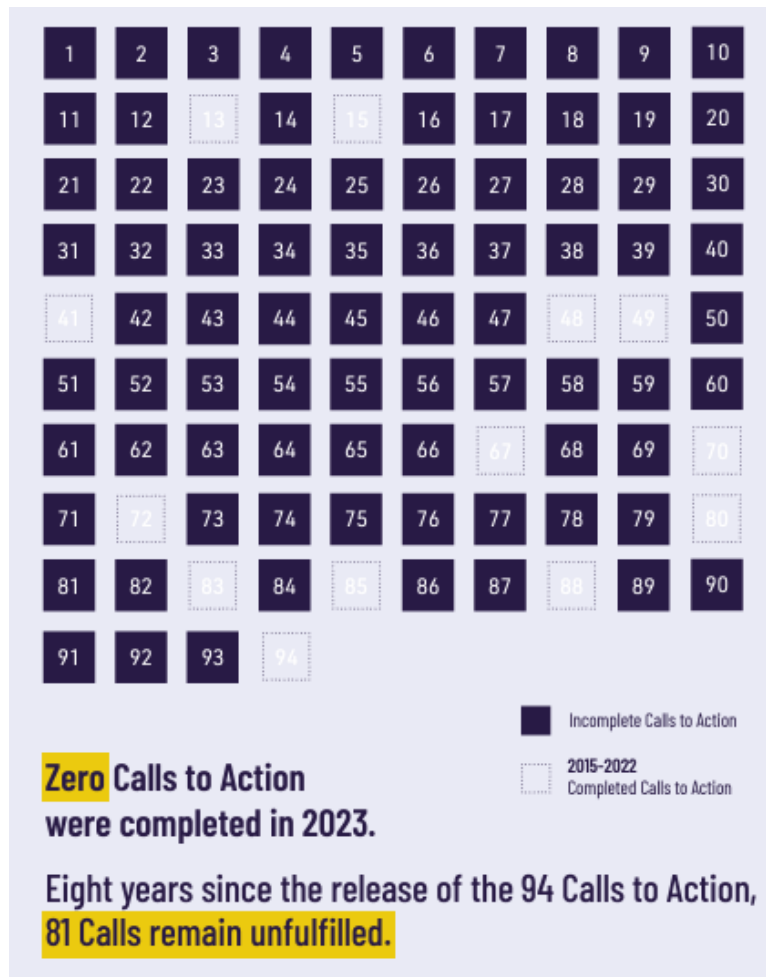
Calls to Action were created. The TRC also held national educational events and created a historical record of the Indian Residential School system, gathering documents from the Canadian government and some churches and organizations, including Huron College here at

Western. Today, the [National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#) continues to educate Canadians and newcomers on the legacy of Residential Schools.

\*The settlement, as well as the TRC, did not account for every IRS, nor the Day Schools that operated in the same timelines.

*Why is the word 'Aboriginal' used in the Truth and Reconciliation report and not 'Indigenous?'*

'Aboriginal' is the legal term used in the Constitution and laws of Canada, as is the term "Indian" (e.g., "Indian Status" and the *Indian Act*). There is no legal definition of the term "Indigenous" in Canada and therefore the word Aboriginal is the most appropriate in this context. For more information on terminology see [The Elements of Indigenous Style](#) or Chelsea Vowel's blog post "[What to Call Us.](#)"



### TRC Calls to Action

The 94 Calls to Action were created by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in response to the evidence and stories they gathered from 2008-2015. These Calls are intended as a roadmap to facilitate Reconciliation in Canada. You can read them [here](#). In 2023, no Calls to Action were completed or initiated by the federal government.

IMAGE: FROM THE YELLOWHEAD INSTITUTE'S [CALLS TO ACTION ACCOUNTABILITY: A 2023 STATUS UPDATE ON RECONCILIATION](#)

### Reconciliation Definition

This term came into use in the post-WWII period to mark socio-

political processes of healing and transformation in the wake of gross human rights violations and major political conflicts. In Canada, reconciliation has come to signify a process of grappling with colonialism and forging better relationships between the Government of Canada (as well



as society more broadly) and Indigenous peoples. The TRC “defines reconciliation as an ongoing process of establishing and maintaining respectful relationships. A critical part of this process involves repairing damaged trust by making apologies, providing individual and collective reparations, and following through with concrete actions that demonstrate real societal change” (Honouring the Truth, 2015, p. 16).

Debates: Unfortunately, “reconciliation” is used in very different ways by different constituencies. The Government of Canada often uses the term to suggest that colonialism is over and that the government’s relationship with Indigenous peoples has now changed for the better. However, others contend that reconciliation operates as a “politics of distraction,” obscuring the fact that colonialism has not ended (Corntassel & Holder, 2008, p. 472).

For many Indigenous peoples, righting colonial wrongs involves much more than symbolic gestures; it necessitates fiscal compensation, the return of significant portions of land, and meaningful recognition of Indigenous rights to self-determination. The etymology of the word “reconciliation” also makes its application to the Government of Canada’s relations with Indigenous peoples problematic. First, the “re” in “reconciliation” suggests a return to a previously amicable state of relations that, many scholars assert, never existed in the context of colonization (Chrisjohn & Wasacase, 2009, p. 222). Additionally, the word “reconciliation” is steeped in Catholicism, where it signifies a sacrament through which sinners are “reconciled with the Church” (Garneau, 2012, p. 35). Some Indigenous peoples contend that the term “conciliation” is more appropriate because it “acknowledge[s]” that conflict has occurred and that “distrust” must be “overcome” (Amagoalik, 2008, p. 93).

(View citations and other definitions: [Office of Indigenous Initiatives Key Terms](#))

## What is Orange Shirt Day?

From OrangeShirtDay.org:

“Orange Shirt Day is a legacy of the St. Joseph Mission (SJM) Residential School (1891-1981) Commemoration Project and Reunion events that took place in Williams Lake, BC, Canada, in May 2013. This project was the vision of Esketemc (Alkali Lake) Chief Fred Robbins, who is a former student himself. It brought together former students and their families from the Secwepemc, Tsilhqot’in, Southern Dakelh and St’at’imc Nations, along with the Cariboo Regional District, and the mayors and municipalities, school districts, and civic organizations in the Cariboo Region.

The events were designed to commemorate the residential school experience, to witness and honour the healing journey of the survivors and their families, and to commit to the ongoing process of reconciliation. Chief Justice Murray Sinclair challenged all participants to keep the



reconciliation process alive, because of the realization that every former student had similar stories.

Orange Shirt Day is a legacy of this project. As spokesperson for the Reunion group leading up to the events, former student Phyllis (Jack) Webstad told her story of her first day at residential school when her shiny new orange shirt, bought by her grandmother, was taken from her as a six-year old girl” ([OrangeShirtDay.org](https://www.OrangeShirtDay.org)).

Phyllis attended Residential School in 1973/74. You can find her story [here](#).

### *Where to buy Orange Shirts in London, Ontario:*

It is recommended that people buy orange shirts from Indigenous creators, and organizations that directly support and/or provide services for Indigenous people. [The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#) and [Orange Shirt Day](#) are great places to start. The Western Bookstore also has Orange Shirts and profits go to the Save the Barn Campaign (Chippewas of the Thames First Nation). You can also purchase shirts from [Atlohsa pop ups](#) (follow them on social media) and [Rezonnance Printing](#) in London.

## What are Indian Residential Schools?



(Image credit: *The Scream*, Kent Monkman/Collection of the Denver Art Museum)

The Indian Residential School system was formally in operation from the 1870s until 1996 in Canada, with many schools operating before Confederation, such as the Mushhole in Six Nations. Over 150,000 Indigenous children attended the schools, which were funded by the Canadian government and administered by Christian, Catholic and Anglican churches.

In many cases, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) [removed children from their homes to bring them to the schools](#). You can find more information in the [TRC Reports](#) or on [UBC's Indigenous Foundations page](#). Kent Monkman, a Cree two-spirit artist, painted *The Scream*

(2017) as a visual depiction of the chaos caused by the RCMP forcibly removing Indigenous children from their communities to attend the schools as part of the aggressive assimilation tactics employed by churches and the Government of Canada.

Locally, the [Mount Elgin Residential School](#), also known as the Muncey Institute, operated near Muncey, ON, where Chippewas of the Thames First Nation (COTTFN) is located. The school was founded in 1847 and was run from 1851 to 1862 by the Wesleyan Methodist Society, and again from 1867 to 1946, with the United Church of Canada taking over in 1925. The building is no longer standing, but there is a monument in COTTFN featuring the names of all the students who attended.

The Mohawk Institute Residential School, known colloquially as “The Mushhole,” is another institution that operated in nearby Brantford, ON. The school was converted into [The Woodland Cultural Centre](#) in 1972, dedicated to preserving the school’s history and revitalizing the languages and cultures the school sought to destroy. In operation from 1831 to 1970, the Mushhole was run by the Anglican Church and is notorious for the abuses students faced there. Read more about the Mohawk Institute [here](#).

In 2008, [the Canadian government issued an apology to Indian Residential School Survivors on behalf of all Canadians](#). You can watch the video [here](#). The Anglican, Presbyterian and United Churches have also publicly apologized, and in 2022, the Pope formally apologized to survivors and families of those who did not make it home, but [there is controversy and criticism surrounding this apology](#). The Roman Catholic Church [also has yet to pay the \\$25 million ordered in the 2007 Residential School settlement](#).

Western University is a part of Indian Residential School system, and the larger European settler-colonial expansion, due to its roots and origins with Huron University, and relationships to King’s University College (Cross et al 2021). Both Catholic and Anglican denominations ran Indian Residential schools, but also clergy were trained at Huron. The relationship of Bishop Hellmuth to Shingwauk Indian Residential School is explained further in an article by Huron University faculty Thomas Peace and Natalie Cross entitled [“My Own Old English Friends”: Networking Anglican Settler Colonialism at the Shingwauk Home, Huron College and Western University](#) (2021).

### *What are Indian Day Schools?*

[Indian Day Schools](#) operated on First Nations reserves across Canada from the mid-1800s until the year 2000, with an estimated 200 000 children attending them over the time period. Like the Indian Residential Schools, they were funded by the Canadian government, but operated by various Christian or Catholic denominations. As well, Indigenous students attending these schools also experienced a litany of abuses similar to their peers in Residential Schools. In 2019, a [class action lawsuit](#) to obtain justice for 200 000 students was launched, however many people criticize the exclusion of almost [700 other schools from the Federal Indian Day School](#)

[settlement](#). [Many survivors have spoken out about the process as re-traumatizing](#), and are still awaiting outstanding payment. You can view a map of the schools and learn more at [www.IndianDaySchools.org](http://www.IndianDaySchools.org).

### *Local Legacy: Save the Barn Campaign and the Mount Elgin Monument*



MOUNT ELGIN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL MEMORIAL LOCATED IN CHIPPEWA OF THE THAMES. ([JAMES CHAARANI/CBC](#))

Located near the Mount Elgin Residential School site, in Chippewas of the Thames First Nation, is an old barn whose beams carry etchings made by children who attended the school. The First Nation launched a petition and fundraising campaign to preserve the structure in 2021.

“We know there are beams on this barn that have been engraved on by former students. We want to capture that and to be able to turn it

into an interpretive centre, which would house Mount Elgin’s residential school history, as well as reclaim and revitalize our culture and language” – Gina McGahey, COTTFN ([London Free Press 2021](#)).

Watch a short video that features some of the etchings [here](#).

COTTFN [created a monument dedicated to the students who attended Mount Elgin in 2012](#). It is accessible to the public, with visitors asked to contact the Heritage Centre first.

## **What is the significance of unmarked graves?**

Since the [discovery of 200 potential unmarked graves at the Kamloops Indian Residential School grounds in May of 2021](#), thousands more anomalies have been detected at old school grounds across Canada using ground-penetrating radar. The TRC reports and accounts estimated 3213 children died at Residential Schools, and even then it was believed the number was higher. A report published in 2015 (in addition to the TRC’s six volumes of reports) entitled “[Where are the Children Buried?](#)” has more detailed recommendations on how to address the issue.

Finding the graves is Call #75 in the Calls to Action:

*75. We call upon the federal government to work with provincial, territorial, and municipal governments, churches, Aboriginal communities, former residential school students, and current landowners to develop and implement strategies and procedures*

*for the ongoing identification, documentation, maintenance, commemoration, and protection of residential school cemeteries or other sites at which residential school children were buried. This is to include the provision of appropriate memorial ceremonies and commemorative markers to honour the deceased children.*

Many First Nations have already begun this work, or are continuing it, and since 2021, the findings of potential graves have been highly publicized. This has invoked a high level of scrutiny from a variety of media organizations, academics, and historians, who claim that the work being done to uncover the graves is not only blown out of proportion, but some go as far as to claim it is a hoax. (See the appendix on denialism later in this document.) Since 1974, 20 First Nations, mostly in Western provinces, have identified thousands of anomalies near a variety of Residential School sites, but quantifying the number is difficult, as some communities might choose to never release publicly what they've found.

This is a difficult topic to unpack for many reasons, primarily due to the direct impact on families of Survivors and those who did not make it home that are met with disbelief and denial. Each community and First Nation is addressing the anomalies at Residential School sites according to its own customs, traditions, and healing journeys. For some, that may mean the potential graves remain untouched, and for others that they are dug up. However, Canadians should need no further proof of the atrocities committed at the Schools, as they are detailed explicitly in the TRC reports and subsequent special reports. It is also important to remember that many more students died after attending Residential Schools or Day Schools, due to the abuses and trauma they experienced, who are not included in these counts.

In a [June 2022 CBC Opinion article, Kisha Supernant and Sean Carleton write](#): “A total count for the number of children who died or went missing will likely never be known. Many Indigenous Nations have asked for people not to focus on tallies—treating relatives as mere numbers, as was done in many residential schools—but instead to remember that every child matters. One child in an unmarked grave is one too many.”

More Information:

- [Sacred Responsibility: Searching for Missing Children and Unmarked Burials Interim Report](#) (June 2023)

### *Are communities near London searching for graves?*

[Deshkaan Ziibing Anishinaabeg](#) (Chippewas of the Thames First Nation) are leading an investigation into possible unmarked student graves at the [former Mount Elgin Industrial Residential School](#), just outside of London. At the request of leaders from Deshkaan Ziibing Anishinaabeg, Western University is humbled to support the investigation with its expertise, and Western's Office of Indigenous Initiatives is helping to coordinate the University's involvement. Communication about the search will be at the discretion of Deshkaan Ziibing Anishinaabeg.



There are also many Western scholars involved in national and provincial organizations investigating the Residential Schools, such as Dr. Rebekah Jacques, who serves on the National Advisory Committee on Missing Children and Unmarked Burials.

Read news coverage here:

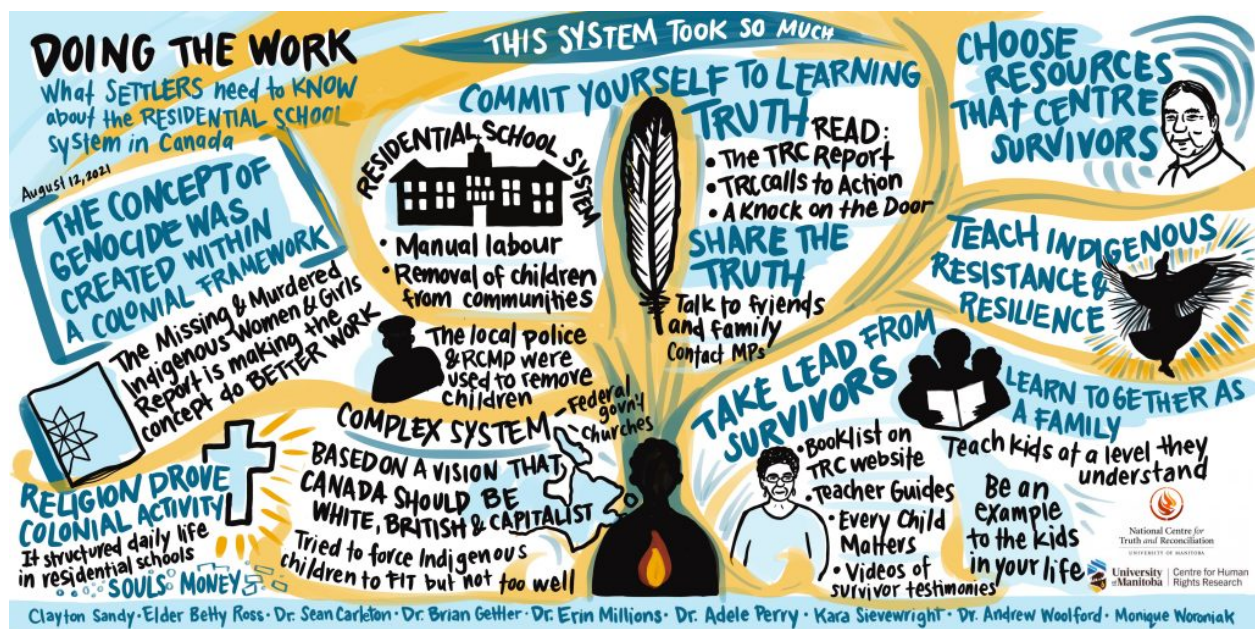
[First Nation getting clearer picture of who attended Mt. Elgin residential school](#) (*Simcoe Reformer*, 2022)

[Search at Ontario's Mount Elgin residential school seen as step toward healing](#) (*CTV News*, 2021)

[Search for unmarked graves at former Mount Elgin Residential School to start in fall](#) (*Global News*, 2021)

[Western professor offers forensic expertise to investigate missing Indigenous children](#) (*Western News*, 2022)

## Why is it important to participate in Reconciliation and observe this day in your classroom, office, or unit?



[SOURCE: RESOURCES FOR NON-INDIGENOUS CANADIANS ON RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS AND COLONIALISM IN CANADA](#)

Treaties with Indigenous Peoples are how Canada came into existence. While Indian Residential Schools were not the direct wish or order of every Canadian, the last school closed in 1996. The schools were effectively created to “kill the Indian in the child” under the government

established by Sir John A. McDonald. Duncan Campbell Scott, who managed Residential School systems and policy from 1913 to 1932, notoriously said:

*“I want to get rid of the Indian problem. I do not think as a matter of fact, that the country ought to continuously protect a class of people who are able to stand alone...Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question, and no Indian Department, that is the whole object of this Bill.”* ([Canadian Encyclopedia](#))

This statement clearly expresses the intent of the schools. Under the Indian Act, the Canadian government designates who is and is not an Indian through “Indian Status.” Once all “Indians” were assimilated into the body politic of Canada, Treaties would cease to have effect—and thus the schools, and this policy, were intended to eradicate Indigenous nationhood.

Upon release of the Truth and Reconciliation final report in 2015, Justice Murray Sinclair outlined the work the Commission had done, thanked the Survivors, and [stated](#):

*The Survivors have entrusted us, and by extension, all the people in Canada, with two priorities: First, the Survivors need to know before they leave this earth that people understand what happened and what the schools did to them. Second, the Survivors need to know that, having been heard and understood, we will act to ensure the repair of damages done* (*Maclean’s Magazine*, June 2, 2015).

It is in this spirit of reconciliation that every Canadian is invited to reflect upon the legacy of Residential Schools and to work together to ensure that this part of Canada’s history is never forgotten and that the damages are repaired.

More suggestions on how to engage in Reconciliation can be found in this guide from the University of Manitoba’s Centre for Human Rights “[Doing the Work: Truth Before Reconciliation](#)” which emerged from a panel discussion held in collaboration with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. The graphic above comes from the panel.

## Engaging Students, Staff and Faculty in NDTR and Reconciliation at Western

The Office of Indigenous Initiatives invites units, departments, programs and institutes to create internal and/or external learning opportunities for staff, faculty and students to observe the day in a meaningful way. Additionally, we suggest you encourage staff to attend Indigenous community and OII-led events. We ask that you submit your event to the Western Events Calendar and tag “Indigenous” (further instructions below).

### *What can Faculties, Departments, and Support Units do for NDTR?*

- Amplify NDTR messaging from OII, Western Comms, and discipline-specific organizations/Leaders

- Host discipline-specific, or collaborative/interdisciplinary events that support the intentions of Truth and Reconciliation to benefit your own staff, students, and faculty with your existing resources and budgets
- Ensure all staff, faculty, and students in your Department/Unit are aware of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, NDTR-focused events, and support their meaningful engagement.
- For example, by giving them time to attend events or learn about it as part of their workload. Encourage staff and faculty to attend community-led events, that may occur outside of regular work hours, and consider their attendance part of their work hours.
- Share details about your NDTR event(s) on Western's Indigenous Calendar of Events
- Cross-promote community and OII NDTR events
- Invite staff, faculty, and students to complete the 4 Seasons of Reconciliation Module **\*\*updated modules in Brightspace coming soon!\*\*** Check the OII website for updates
- Sponsor exhibits on Indigenous histories, cultures, traditions, leadership, art, etc
- Support students with meaningful classroom opportunities to engage with the work of Truth and Reconciliation
- Review [Western's Indigenous Strategic Plan](#) from 2016 and how the then-identified directions, goals, and strategic suggestions apply to your department/unit.
- Review the Calls to Action and principles for Truth and Reconciliation (Volume 6, Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report pg 16), as well as Universities Canada Principles for Reconciliation, and identify how they apply to your department/unit

#### *How do you engage Indigenous speakers and presenters for NDTR?*

- Since NDTR is a National event, Indigenous speakers and presenters are in high demand. Invite speakers and presenters as far in advance as possible.
- Review the [Guidelines for Working with Indigenous Community Members](#)

#### *Posting your event on Western's Event Calendar:*

How do you view Western's Indigenous Calendar of Events?

- a. Visit the calendar via this direct link:  
<https://www.events.westernu.ca/events/indigenous/>
- Navigate to the calendar from the main [Western Events Calendar](#), search "Indigenous" under the left column's "Search for Dept/Unit" search bar, select "Indigenous"

How do you submit to Western's Indigenous Calendar of Events?

1. Go to the [Western Events Calendar](#)



2. Select 'Add Your Event' in the left column
3. Entire all details for your unit's event as normal
4. When you reach "Also show this event on these Dept/Faculty/Unit calendars" ensure you select "Indigenous"

\*Please note: all Western Events Calendar feedback and changes are to be sent to [calendar@uwo.ca](mailto:calendar@uwo.ca), not OII.

### *Encouraging people to participate in NDTR events:*

It is possible that some people may feel uncomfortable about participating in NDTR events or not view them as a significant priority. That is OK, as that is where they are in their learning journey. All you can do is encourage staff, faculty, and students to attend events, give them time to attend within work hours, or as part of their work, or grade, and offer as much background information as you can to help them navigate protocols and appropriate ways to commemorate and honour Indian Residential School survivors, their families, and those who did not make it home.

Some of the barriers to participation in NDTR and other Indigenous learning opportunities we have heard are:

- Not having enough time or staff not being compensated in their contracts for participation
  - Consider how to make space for staff and faculty to engage in these types of events, in alignment with the *Western Towards 150 Strategic Plan* for "Building Relationships with Indigenous Peoples and Communities."
- Events are not considered professional development, but extracurricular.
  - Indigenous learning opportunities are often alongside, and with community – not necessarily online modules and should be considered professional development.
- Some students may not be aware of NDTR or may not view attending NDTR events as a priority
  - By building participation into their syllabus and/or providing reflection assignments, faculty could encourage more participation

## A Trauma-Informed Approach

It is important to consider how the conversations around Indian Residential Schools and their legacy will impact Indigenous people with lived experiences in your classroom, office and on campus. While every educator has a responsibility to facilitate learning experiences through generative discussion and debate, conversations around the severity or impact of the Schools, or whether the Schools constitute an instrument of genocide, will have impacts far beyond the classroom; such discussions should focus on fostering a sense of belonging for Indigenous people and promoting Reconciliation on campus and in our society. The topic of Indian

Residential Schools and the TRC should be treated with care, as Indigenous communities are living with the extensive impacts of the Schools today—in everything from education, child welfare and incarceration, to mental, physical, and emotional health, culture, and spirituality.

### *Tips for Teaching this topic with care:*

When discussing or providing information on Indian Residential Schools, please provide a content warning in advance of the lecture, materials, or discussion. The purpose of providing content warnings is to ensure that anyone opening or seeing content that might upset them or trigger a trauma/emotional response, be prepared to navigate the content or forego it. Allowing Indigenous students to avoid content on topics that may be disturbing or triggering for them is one possible compassionate approach to teaching this material. Anyone, regardless of who they are, could be upset by what they learn in this context. Offer space and time for students to reflect, sit with the stories and impacts they hear, and process the emotions evoked.

Content warnings could include language around: genocide, suicide, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, Indian Residential Schools, sexual abuse, violence against Indigenous Peoples (e.g., *Content Warning: Indian Residential Schools, sexual abuse*).

- [Trauma-Informed Schools](#) (Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres)
- [Trauma-Informed Practice for Indigenous Peoples](#) (Halsey & Boodhai 2022)
- [Trauma-Informed Practice: Working with Indigenous Individuals](#) (Southwest Aboriginal Health Access Centre)
- [Trauma-Informed and Culturally Appropriate Approaches in the Workplace](#) (Native Women’s Association of Canada)

### *Support Resources*

Please provide the following support resources alongside any content, films, resources or messaging around Indian Residential Schools to your students, staff, and faculty:

- Elders and cultural supports [from the Indigenous Student Centre](#) may be accessed by students via virtual and in-person appointment; contact the Centre by phone (519 661 4095), [email](#) or by connecting with Mandy Bragg at the Centre
  - Faculty and staff can also invite an Elder to their classroom or event to facilitate debrief circles and offer support. Consider how to meaningfully engage Elders beyond providing openings and ad hoc support. Review the [Guidelines for Working with Indigenous Community Members](#) before reaching out. Please contact Paula Hedgepeth ([phedgepe@uwo.ca](mailto:phedgepe@uwo.ca)) or Sara Mai Chitty ([saramai.chitty@uwo.ca](mailto:saramai.chitty@uwo.ca)) with your course, or event, reason for seeking to invite an Elder, and applicable dates. We will review your request and respond within one business week – however we’d appreciate at minimum four weeks of notice to make arrangements on your behalf. Please note we may not be able to accommodate everyone.

- Crisis Health & Wellness supports (including Mental Health Support) is available via [Western’s Student Crisis Contact Information](#)
- Off-campus support is also available via [Atlohsa’s Family Healing Services](#) and the 24-hour Crisis Line at [1-800-605-7477](tel:1-800-605-7477).
- [Zhaawanong Women’s Shelter](#) provides emergency shelter and support for Indigenous women and their children who are at risk of violence, abuse and/or homelessness. Crisis Line: Toll free 1-800-605-7477
- The National Indian Residential School crisis line is available to provide 24/7 support to Residential School survivors and others who are affected: 1-866-925-4419
- Hope for Wellness Helpline is available 24/7 to all Indigenous people across Canada. Online chat function is available ([Home - Hope for Wellness Helpline](#)) as well as their phone line: 1-855-242-3310.

## Learning Opportunities

### Online Learning Resources

Western Libraries and the Office of Indigenous Initiatives have collaborated to procure licensing for the use of two online learning courses, created by external organizations, to give staff, faculty, students and leadership foundational context on Reconciliation and Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Both resources live on OWL, and the files can be imported into OWL course sites. In the link below, you will find a description and learning outcomes for each resource; a chart for determining which resource is best suited to your needs, and instructions on how to access the modules. [Access them here](#).

Additionally Atlohsa has created an online primer “[Truth Comes Before Reconciliation](#)”

Check out these additional free and paid online learning opportunities below:

Online Resource	Summary	Link to Access	Cost
Indigenous Canada MOOC	<p>“Indigenous Canada is a 12-lesson Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) from the Faculty of Native Studies [at University of Alberta] that explores the different histories and contemporary perspectives of Indigenous peoples living in Canada.</p> <p>From an Indigenous perspective, this course explores complex experiences Indigenous peoples face today from a historical and critical perspective highlighting national and local Indigenous-settler relations.”</p>	<a href="https://www.ualberta.ca/admissions-programs/online-courses/indigenous-canada/index.html">https://www.ualberta.ca/admissions-programs/online-courses/indigenous-canada/index.html</a>	Free
Indigenous Corporate Training Inc –	Provides foundational and advanced training in person; live virtually or asynchronously.	<a href="https://www.ictinc.ca/training?hsCtaTracking=bd994c2e-">https://www.ictinc.ca/training?hsCtaTracking=bd994c2e-</a>	See site for pricing

variety of modules		<a href="https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/abed101/what-is-reconciliation/">af66-498c-b5c9-df5df9f4e781%7Ca454473c-d31d-477c-a53d-7bde706fd2b7</a>	
What is Reconciliation? (OISE)	<p>“The mandate of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada has come to an end, bringing a historic opportunity to build a shared future together.</p> <p>Mutual understanding is fundamental to achieving genuine reconciliation between Indigenous people and all Canadians. Envision what reconciliation means and how education can be an important site for renewing the relationship.</p> <p>Learn what it means to be an ally and think through concrete ways of contributing to social justice and positive change.”</p>	<a href="https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/abed101/what-is-reconciliation/">https://www.oise.utoronto.ca/abed101/what-is-reconciliation/</a>	Free
Virtual National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation Programming for TRC Week 2024	<p>“Truth and Reconciliation Week 2024 is a transformative five-day journey for students (grades 1-12), educators, and the broader community to engage with the poignant history and enduring spirit of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples.</p> <p>Explore interactive workshops, witness the profound “Mino-pimatisiwin – The Good Life” youth empowerment gathering, engage in meaningful dialogues, and contribute to our collective path toward reconciliation.”</p>	<a href="https://trw-svr.nctr.ca/">https://trw-svr.nctr.ca/</a>	Free
4 Seasons of Reconciliation	Created by the First Nations University of Manitoba, this nine-part module takes participants approximately 3.5 hours to complete and provides a basic, foundational knowledge on Truth and Reconciliation. Intended for Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners, the course and its bonus video library shine a bright	Access to 4 Seasons in Brightspace coming soon! <a href="#">Find updates on this page.</a>	Free

	<p>light on the contributions of Indigenous Peoples, debunk myths, stereotypes and racism while meeting the Calls to Action in the workplace from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC).</p> <p>4 Seasons of Reconciliation follows Indigenous principles and is guided and overseen by the First Nations University of Canada to offer bilingual courses for secondary, post-secondary, and the workplace.</p>		
<p>The Path by NVision</p>	<p>Created by NVision, The Path is designed to offer Indigenous cultural awareness, the five-part online module gives general background and context about First Nations, Metis and Inuit in Canada.</p> <p>Topics: First Nations, Inuit and Metis History and distinctions; Indigenous worldviews; Treaties; Indigenous Rights; Terminology</p>	<p>The Path is migrating to Brightspace! <a href="#">Find updates on this page.</a></p>	

### *Suggested in-class or group activities:*

- Invite participants to review the Truth and Reconciliation Report and the Calls to Action.
  - a. Invite them to identify calls that are relevant to their discipline/field. How have Calls been implemented? If they haven't been, what are some ideas towards addressing them?
- Invite participants to review the Calls to Action and reflect in groups on ways individuals can contribute, or on things they need to do to build their own capacity to engage meaningfully in Reconciliation
- Using CBC's [Beyond94](#) Resource, invite participants to explore the progress of various levels of government on the TRC Calls to Action – discuss what are the factors delaying action. How could these barriers be addressed?
- Invite participants to explore how Western and/or Affiliates have contributed towards relevant TRC Calls to Action
- Read the Yellowhead Institute's [Calls to Action Accountability Report 2023](#) and discuss the key questions posed from the 2022 report:
  - a. Seven years after the released TRC's Calls to Action, what kind of "value" do Canadians see in Reconciliation?
  - b. Every year we note that the progress on Call to Action implementation is slow. It continues to be. How can we explain this?
  - c. What does this rate of progress, and which Calls get addressed, say about Reconciliation in Canada?
- Instructors: have students participate and attend in NDTR events and write a reflection as part of a course assignment
- Units: create a community of practice around online learning and/or other resources such as novels, podcasts, Yellowhead Briefs or other academic articles, to drive engagement in ongoing learning, as well as offer opportunities for reflection and debriefing for your team
  - Helpful resources on Community of Practices:
    - [Creating and Sustaining a Community of Practice for Instructional Leaders: Acquiring and Applying Indigenous Foundational Knowledge](#)

### *Creating Accountable Spaces*

Learning and unlearning challenging topics such as genocide, oppression, abuse, and state violence can be an uncomfortable process. Taking a holistic approach to these conversations allows us to account for emotions, alongside evaluating facts and differing opinions. A helpful practice can be to create "Accountable Spaces" in lieu of "Safe Spaces" and "Brave Spaces." Read Elise Ahenkorah discuss the differences [here](#).

*“Accountability means being responsible for yourself, your intentions, words, and actions. It means entering a space with good intentions, but understanding that aligning your intent with action is the true test of commitment.” (Ahenkorah, 2020).*

Creating a safe space can be difficult, because we can't promise that people won't think or say harmful things – we can only control how we respond to them. As well, by placing the onus on “brave people” to bring up difficult nuances, it often leaves people, especially people with a direct relationship to the topic at hand, open to re-traumatization. As educators, as well as staff and leadership in an educational institution, we have a responsibility to provide accountable learning environments for ourselves, and our students.

It is also important to note that peoples' complex identities are a part of these conversations and they do need to be considered, especially when people have been directly impacted by the events being discussed. Consider invoking humility by acknowledging bias as a person who has never experienced what is being discussed.

### *Building Accountable Space Guidelines* ([adapted from Elisa Ahenkorah adapting UCLA](#))

For Facilitators/Event leaders:

- Establish the parameters of the learning environment with everyone present. Explain these guidelines, or ones that work for you, the event and the space.
- Acknowledge that we are all learning and this can be a contentious space
- Ask your audience if there are other guidelines needed to support them to ensure the conversation does not create further trauma
- Ask your audience what accountability can look like in this space. What will help people walk away grounded in mutual respect and understanding?
- Ensure everyone leaves the space in a good headspace or that they have tools and supports available to them to navigate lingering feelings and emotions
- Include accountable space guidelines in your event's registration process, so attendees know these guidelines before entering the space
- Offer content warnings
- Have support people at your event, such as an Elder, or counsellor, to support

For Participants:

- Come with a learning mindset, ready to listen with an open heart and mind
- Please do not interrupt others
- Listen actively, instead of just waiting to speak. Use a pen and paper to record your thoughts, if necessary
- Be mindful of your total talk time and, if you are comfortable, contribute to the conversation, ask questions
- Give everyone a chance to speak, without unnecessary pressure



- If you said something offensive or problematic, apologize for your actions or words being offensive — not for the person feeling insulted
- Recognize and embrace friction as evidence that multiple ideas are entering the conversation — not that the group is not getting along.
- Give credit where it is due. If you are echoing someone’s previously stated idea, give the appropriate credit. Attribute stories and anecdotes
- Ask for clarification — try not to assume or project. If you find yourself doing this, keep listening and reflect on what assumptions or projections you are making and interrogate what they are rooted in.
- Speak for yourself. Use “I” statements and avoid sharing others’ lived experiences.
- Positionality is relevant. Your social class, culture, gender, sexuality, all impact how you experience the world, as well as others.
- Words and tone matter. Be mindful of the impact of what you say, and not just your intent. If you are hurt by someone’s tone and/or words, ask for accountability in a kind way. Consider your own positionality.
- If you attend as an ally of the community, please allow space for diverse and marginalized communities to share their experiences

## Beyond NDTR



Reconciliation is not a one-day event. It is an ongoing commitment to the survivors and those who did not make it home to eliminate the systemic structures and barriers Indigenous Peoples face as part of the legacy of Indian Residential Schools and colonization.

Wearing orange and creating opportunities for commemoration is important—but the legacy will not be healed simply by putting on a T-shirt. The Yellowhead Institute Report on Calls to Action Accountability points to four fundamental barriers to doing Reconciliation work:

1. “The absence of political will to tackle the hardest Indigenous issues, specifically issues of land and self-government.
2. Structural, legislative and institutional barriers embedded in the federal, provincial and territory colonial governance systems.
3. Systemic racism and discrimination entrenched within multiple sectors of society.
4. Failure to collect and disseminate quality data makes accurate reporting on various statistical measures difficult”

(Yellowhead Institute, Calls to Action Accountability 2022, p 42)

***Consider: How do those barriers reproduce themselves within our own institutions?***

*Considerations in the ongoing work of ReconciliACTION:*

- How can faculty embed Calls to Action and Reconciliation in course content throughout the curriculum? Are there learning outcomes tied to Reconciliation?
- Are there opportunities for staff and faculty to continue their learning and unlearning as part of their expected workloads?
- How is Western University responding to the Education Calls to Action?
- How is Western University measuring its progress towards Reconciliation? Is this assessment within an Indigenous framework?
- As a university, how are we meaningfully engaging with Treaty responsibilities around education, and the local Nations that are party to them?
- How can Western publicly acknowledge its relationship to Residential Schools and teach this as part of such days as Founders Day?
- How are Western and the Affiliates making documents, files and data in their archives on Indian Residential Schools accessible to Indigenous community members?

Additionally, Reconciliation is not just about Indian Residential Schools. Treaties remain unhonoured, and other issues connected to the Residential School legacy require attention. It is important to keep conversations and action continuing.

Here are some resources to continue work beyond NDTR:

- [Maamwi Gizekewag: Indigenous Curriculum and Learning Subcommittee Report](#) (Western University, 2021)
- Yellowhead Institute [Cash Back](#) and [Land Back](#) Reports

- [Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two Spirit People Report](#) and [Calls for Justice](#)
- [Indigenous Peoples Atlas: The Road to Reconciliation](#)

## Appendix

### *Principles for Reconciliation*

Excerpt from Volume 6 of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Final Report (2015):

"A reconciliation framework is one in which Canada's political and legal systems, educational and religious institutions, corporate sector, and civil society function in ways that are consistent with the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which Canada has endorsed. The Commission believes that the following guiding principles of truth and reconciliation will assist Canadians moving forward:

1. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples is the framework for reconciliation at all levels and across all sectors of Canadian society.
2. First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, as the original peoples of this country and as self-determining peoples, have Treaty, constitutional, and human rights that must be recognized and respected.
3. Reconciliation is a process of healing of relationships that requires public truth sharing, apology, and commemoration that acknowledge and redress past harms.
4. Reconciliation requires constructive action on addressing the ongoing legacies of colonialism that have had destructive impacts on Aboriginal peoples' education, cultures and languages, health, child welfare, the administration of justice, and economic opportunities and prosperity.
5. Reconciliation must create a more equitable and inclusive society by closing the gaps in social, health, and economic outcomes that exist between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.
6. All Canadians, as Treaty peoples, share responsibility for establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationships.
7. The perspectives and understandings of Aboriginal Elders and Traditional Knowledge Keepers of the ethics, concepts, and practices of reconciliation are vital to long-term reconciliation.
8. Supporting Aboriginal peoples' cultural revitalization and integrating Indigenous knowledge systems, oral histories, laws, protocols, and connections to the land into the reconciliation process are essential.
9. Reconciliation requires political will, joint leadership, trust building, accountability, and transparency, as well as a substantial investment of resources.
10. Reconciliation requires sustained public education and dialogue, including youth engagement, about the history and legacy of residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal

rights, as well as the historical and contemporary contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canadian society” (16-17)

### Quick Facts on Residential Schools

From the [Canadian Encyclopedia](#):

What were residential schools?	Residential schools were government-sponsored schools run by churches.
What was the purpose of residential schools?	The purpose of residential schools was to educate and convert Indigenous youth [to Christianity] and to assimilate them into Canadian society.
How many students attended residential schools?	An estimated 150,000 children attended residential schools.
How many children died at residential schools?	An estimated 6,000 children died at residential schools (records are incomplete).
How many residential schools were there in Canada?	- In total, over 130 residential schools operated in Canada between 1831 and 1996. - In 1931, there were 80 residential schools operating in Canada. This was the most at any one time.
When did the first residential school in Canada open?	The Mohawk Institute in Brantford, Ontario, accepted its first boarding students in 1831.
When did the last residential school in Canada close?	The Gordon Residential School in Punnichy, Saskatchewan, closed in 1996. It was the last federally-funded residential school in Canada.

### Indian Residential School Denialism

*“Fighting for the truth thus requires us to take residential school denialism more seriously. Denialism is, as TRC chair Murray Sinclair argues, the “biggest barrier” to reconciliation. It needs to be confronted at every opportunity. Taking comfort in delusions and disinformation will not advance healing and justice in this country. There is no shortcut. We need truth before reconciliation.”*

([Supernant, K. Carleton, S. CBC News, 2022](#))

The current public discourse surrounding topics of Reconciliation, alongside Anti-Racism and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, is often contentious, or controversial. Since the announcements of unmarked grave searches beginning in 2021, articles questioning the validity of these claims and searches have evoked what is being termed “Residential School Denialism.”

Learning about violence and oppression in your own country, as a citizen who did not grow up learning about, or experiencing those things, can be devastating, frustrating, and sometimes elicit feelings of guilt. This is totally normal, and space must be made to work through those feelings. However, we must also make space to listen to Survivors, and families and learn about the legacy of these schools, in good faith. Everyone in Canada is impacted by these shared histories, through the legacy of Indian Residential Schools that remains. By refusing to acknowledge what happened, Canadians can unintentionally perpetuate the ongoing project of colonialism and risk reinforcement of harmful stereotypes about Indigenous Peoples, as well as further marginalizing and harming them.

At Western, part of our Indigenous Strategic Plan asks that we “Nurture an inclusive campus culture that values Indigenous peoples, perspectives and ways of knowing.” This includes acknowledging, naming and examining Indian Residential School Denialism, and ensuring the safety of Indigenous students is prioritized in these instances.

It is not easy to uncover and sit with truths, especially when they do not correspond to how and what you know, and your own experiences. As well, we are currently in an era of disinformation and misinformation, making it difficult to discern what “truth” even means. By coming together with patience and kindness, and a willingness to listen, we can build bridges across divides, identify shared oppression, and create solidarity. For many Indigenous people, these conversations can feel—and be—violent, taking an immense emotional toll, and it is important to acknowledge this. The more informed people are, and the greater capacity they build to hold space for each other to have difficult conversations, the greater will be the pathways that allow truth to emerge.

More Information and Resources:

- [Truth before Reconciliation: 8 ways to identify and confront Residential School denialism](#) (Justice, Daniel H. Carleton, S 2021)
- [Residential School Denialism Is on the Rise. What to Know](#) (The Tyee 2023)
- [Residential-school denialism doesn't stand up to reality](#) (National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation 2023)
- [The Dangerous Allure of Residential School Denialism](#) (The Walrus, 2023)
- [Lawyer says residential school denialism should be added to Criminal Code](#) (CBC News 2023)
- [Canada should consider legal solution to fight residential school denialism: report](#) (CTV News 2023)
- [What is residential school 'denialism' and should it be banned?](#) (CBC News 2023)

- “I don’t need any more education’: Senator Lynn Beyak, [residential school denialism, and attacks on truth and reconciliation in Canada’ by Sean Carleton](#)

### Further Resources

#### Local Residential School Context:

- <https://www.niindahlohke.ca/>
  - “This book takes its title from the phrase for “I work” in Lunaape, the traditional language of Munsee Delaware people, and was inspired by the work of the Munsee Delaware Language and History Group. Written for the descendants and communities of children who attended Mount Elgin and intended as a resource for all Canadians, Nii Ndahlohke tells the story of student life at Mount Elgin Industrial School between 1890 and 1915. Like the school itself, Nii Ndahlohke is structured in two sections. The first focuses on boys’ work, including maintenance and farm labour, the second on girls’ work, such as cooking, cleaning, and laundry.  
In Nii Ndahlohke readers will find a valuable piece of local, Indigenous, and Canadian history that depicts the nature of “education” provided at Canada’s Indian residential schools and the exploitation of children’s labour in order to keep school operating costs down. This history honours the students of Mount Elgin even as it reveals the injustice of Indian policy, segregated schooling, and racism in Canada.”
- [Woodland Cultural Centre](#)
- [Our Healing Journey](#)  
(Two parts – YouTube; Chippewas of the Thames First Nation)
- [Mount Elgin Residential School – YouTube Documentary](#) by User: Jaguar Bird
- [“My Own Old English Friends:” Networking Anglican Settler Colonialism at the Shingwauk Home, Huron College and Western University;](#) Natalie Cross & Thomas Peace

#### National Contexts:

- [National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#)
  - [Reports](#)
  - [NCTR Archives](#)
- [Orange Shirt Day official website](#)
- [Indian Residential School Survivors’ Society](#)
- [The Path, Module 3](#)
- Yellowhead Institute’s [Calls to Action Accountability: A 2023 Status Update on Reconciliation](#)
- CBC’s [Beyond 94](#) - looking at Calls to Action that have been achieved or are ongoing
- [The Children Remembered](#)



- [Historica Canada: Education Guide](#)
- [Legacy of Hope: Where are the Children \(Survivors Stories\)](#)
- [apihtawikosisan: Indigenous Issues 101](#)

#### Podcasts & Episodes:

- [Historica Canada Residential Schools Podcast](#)
- [Canadaland: Residential Schools](#) (Ryan McMahon & Chelsea Vowel)
- [All of it: Connie Walker on Residential Schools](#)
- [Porcupine Podcast: Finding Healing after Surviving Residential Schools with George Tuccaro](#)

#### Documentary Films/Videos:

- [We Were Children](#) (NFB)
- [Our People Will be Healed](#) (NFB)
- [Namwayut: We are all One, Truth and Reconciliation in Canada](#) (CBC Animation, Chief Robert Joseph)
- [Gord Downie's The Secret Path + Panel](#) (CBC Arts)
- [Canada's Dark Secret](#) (Al Jazeera English)
- [My Auntie Survived Residential School](#) (Sarain Fox, CBC Docs)
- [Murray Sinclair's Statement on Kamloops discoveries](#) (CBC)

#### Fictional Films:

- [Indian Horse](#)
- [Rhymes for Young Ghouls](#)

#### Indian Day Schools:

- [Canadian Encyclopedia: Indian Day Schools in Canada](#)
- [UBC: Indian Day Schools](#)

#### Non-Profits:

- [The Indian Residential School Survivor Society](#)
- [Atlohsa Family Healing Centre](#)

#### Sources

Cross, Natalie, and Thomas Peace. 2021. "My Own Old English Friends': Networking Anglican Settler Colonialism at the Shingwauk Home, Huron College, and Western University". *Historical Studies in Education / Revue d'histoire De l'éducation* 33 (1). <https://doi.org/10.32316/hse-rhe.v33i1.4891>.

Indian Residential School History and Dialogue Centre. (2023, November 24). *The Indian Residential School Settlement Agreement*. <https://irshdc.ubc.ca/learn/the-indian-residential-school-settlement->



[agreement/#:~:text=In%20May%202006%2C%20the%20Indian,a%20Truth%20and%20Reconciliation%20Commission.](#)

Research guides: Truth and Reconciliation Commission: *Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*. (n.d.). <https://guides.library.utoronto.ca/c.php?g=527189&p=3617127>

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. (1996, October),. *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*. Library and Archives Canada. <https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/aboriginal-heritage/royal-commission-aboriginal-peoples/Pages/final-report.aspx>

Union of Ontario Indians. (2013). *An Overview of the Indian Residential School System* (1st Printing) [PDF]. Creative Impressions. <https://www.anishinabek.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/An-Overview-of-the-IRS-System-Booklet.pdf>

### *A Note on Authorship:*

This resource guide was compiled by Sara Mai Chitty, Curriculum and Pedagogy Advisor in the Office of Indigenous Initiatives. It was created in 2021 and continues to be updated every year.

Suggested citations:

Office of Indigenous Initiatives (August 2024). *Engaging with the National Day for Truth & Reconciliation 2024*. Western University. Retrieved from URL.

Chitty, S.M. Office of Indigenous Initiatives (August 2024). *Engaging with the National Day for Truth & Reconciliation 2024*. Western University. Retrieved from URL.



This resource guide was compiled by Sara Mai Chitty, Curriculum and Pedagogy in the Office of Indigenous Initiatives. It was created in 2021 and continues to be updated every year.

**Suggested citations:**

Office of Indigenous Initiatives (September 2024). *Engaging with the National Day for Truth & Reconciliation 2024*. Western University. Retrieved from URL.

Chitty, S.M. Office of Indigenous Initiatives (September 2024). *Engaging with the National Day for Truth & Reconciliation 2024*. Western University. Retrieved from URL.



Indigenous Initiatives  
1151 Richmond Street  
London, Ontario, Canada N6A 3K7  
Tel: 519.661.2111 x83240  
indigenousinitiatives@uwo.ca