

[View this email in your browser](#)

Honoring & Remembering the 215 Indigenous Children

It is with heavy hearts that we, the Alberta Mentoring Partnership (AMP) team, join others across the country in remembering and honouring the 215 Indigenous children whose bodies were recently found buried in an unmarked grave near the former Kamloops Indian Residential School.

The wounds from the legacy of residential schools still run deep and this discovery reminds us that there are thousands of others who also never returned home, and the survivors, their family members and communities who still endure the inter-generational trauma inflicted by the Canadian government and their assimilation policies. We all must bear witness to this tragedy and both be better and do better as we affirm our commitment to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Indigenous peoples of this land.

All young children who were forced to attend a residential school were Canadians. A Canadian who had a mom & dad, grandparents, uncles, aunties, cousins, and friends. Each child coming from an Indigenous community rich in culture, traditions, teachings, and family. We pray that the 215 children are returned home, and that effort is made to locate the thousands of others who never made it home to their families and communities.

For many residential school survivors, family members, and Indigenous youth this discovery has triggered traumatic memories and/or strong emotional reactions. If you are feeling distressed and need support, there are resources available through the [Indigenous Hope for Wellness Help Line](#), [Alberta Health Services](#), and through the [Indian Residential School Survivors Society](#).

We amplify the call from Alberta's Indigenous communities, that we must work together towards true reconciliation, collectively (as a province, community, organization) while also taking individual responsibility to increase our own knowledge about Indigenous histories and the key issues facing Indigenous peoples today.

We can take meaningful action and support our Indigenous brothers and sisters by:

- understanding the findings of the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission](#) and the resulting [94 Calls to Action](#);
- identifying which Calls to Action you, your family, and/or workplace can act upon;
- learning about Indigenous peoples in your community and/or region, perhaps by registering for the [free Indigenous Canada online course](#) at the University of Alberta
- and by joining [AMP](#) and Alberta youth-serving agencies in amplifying the need for mentors for Indigenous Youth. We are stronger together!

Rest in Paradise 215 Indigenous Children. #EveryChildMatters #NeverForgotten

Alberta and Canada mourn together.

From across the Province, on Treaty 6,7, & 8 land & Metis territory, Albertans join Canadians in honoring the residential school children with memorials of children's shoes and teddy bears.

Creating Hope Society – works diligently for the betterment of Aboriginal families involved in the Child Welfare system.



Photos provided by Peggy Nepoose, Staff Member, Creating Hope Society

To honor the 256 deaths of children, youth, & young adults receiving Child Intervention Services & 215 children discovered in the mass grave, the Creating Hope Society held a Blanket of Remembrance Pipe Ceremony on May 31st, followed by walking the path (that has the dedicated trees) to honor and remember all the Indigenous youth who cannot walk and did not make it home.

This memorial is located at Central McDougall Park (Edmonton) 10630 109 ave. The society would like to acknowledge the many generous people from Maskwacis, Wetaskiwin and Edmonton region who donated shoes.



Tiny Humans laying down a stuffy and boots to remember the 215 who never made it home. By Ashley Lamothe, AnishnaabeKwe



Half-mast by Paul Courvette

Message from AMP's Indigenous Engagement Lead



My name is Tanya Tourangeau. I am Dene First Nation originally from the Northwest Territories, working on Treaty 6 territory in Edmonton. I am wearing my orange shirt to honor the 215 and all Indigenous children taken from their homes and forced to assimilate. Our people are still healing from the loss of family, culture, and language that the legacy of residential schools left behind. The white buffalo on my shirt is very meaningful as it represents a common Indigenous prophesy that many of our ancestors envisioned. The appearance of a white buffalo is sacred and signifies hope.

My hope is that we work together to build a better tomorrow for our Youth that are here today and for the next 7 generations. Our Youth need mentors, Indigenous and non-Indigenous. Research shows that mentored Youth are more likely to develop resiliency and achieve success in education, work, and make positive life choices. Let's lift our Youth up by mentoring them! Mentors can be teens in school mentoring younger grades, post-secondary mentoring high school kids, or adults mentoring youth.

Feel free to reach out to me to discuss Indigenous mentoring.

Tanya.Tourangeau@AlbertaMentors.ca

“For the children the 215 they found in a mass grave, and for the thousands yet to be found.”

When they buried the children
What they didn't know
They were lovingly embraced
By the land
Held and cradled in a mother's heart
The trees wept for them, with the wind
they sang mourning songs their mothers
didn't know to sing
bending branches to touch the earth
around them. The Creator cried for them
the tears falling like rain.
Mother Earth held them
until they could be found.
Now our voices sing the mourning songs.
with the trees. the wind. light sacred fire
ensure they are never forgotten as we sing
JUSTICE.

- Abigail Echo-Hawk

How can non-Indigenous organizations show their support?

Sharing messages of condolences and sympathy is a natural way to show support and we encourage everyone to share support for our Indigenous people and communities.

If you are not sure where to start, begin with:

- drawing from other messages of condolences;
- identify what action(s) your organization is committing to; &
- ask others to join you and provide ways/opportunities for them to do so.

If the pandemic has taught us anything, it is that things cannot stay the same and social change is needed. Be the change.

Educational Resources:

- An Overview of the Indian Residential School System: [An-Overview-of-the-IRS-System-Booklet.pdf \(anishinabek.ca\)](#)

Children's books from Indigenous Authors:

- <https://www.cbc.ca/books/14-inspiring-children-s-books-from-indigenous-writers-1.4832091>
- <https://babylibrarians.com/11-indigenous-canadian-childrens-books-to-read-to-your-children/>

7 Grandfathers Teachings:

- <https://empoweringthespirit.ca/cultures-of-belonging/seven-grandfathers-teachings/>

- <https://www.todaysparent.com/family/parenting/the-seven-grandfather-teachings-have-become-the-foundation-of-my-daily-parenting-practices/#gallery/the-seven-grandfather-teachings/slide-1>

Indigenous People in Alberta

- <https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/page7634.aspx>
- [Indigenous cultures | Alberta.ca](#)
- [National Indigenous Peoples Day presented by Indigenous Tourism Alberta](#)

Please check back with us for information, education, and resources for Indigenous Mentoring!



Copyright © 2021 Alberta Mentoring Partnership, All rights reserved.

You are receiving this message as a member of the Alberta Mentoring Partnership's e-mail list, you may unsubscribe at anytime or contact us if you have any questions

Our mailing address is:

Alberta Mentoring Partnership
9425 109A Avenue
Edmonton, Ab T5H 1G1
Canada

[Add us to your address book](#)

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).