



Canada's Residential School Aboriginal Survivor Series



Photo Credit: The Shingwauk Project - The Kirpatrick "Snap Shot Album"

Canada's Residential School History

1620-1680 - In New France the first boarding school arrangements are made for Indian Youth by the Récollets, a French order, and later the Jesuits and the female order the Ursulines. By 1680 the New France experiment of educating Indian children in residential establishments is terminated.

1842 - Bagot Commission Reports that Indians ought to acquire "industry and knowledge" laid cornerstone for IRS. (D.Napier, Anglican Journal)

1847 - Egerton Ryerson report to Indian Affairs: "The education of Indians consists not merely of training the mind but of a wearing of the habits and feelings of their ancestors and the acquirements of the language, arts and customs of civilized life." He suggested a partnership between government and church and that schooling be of a religious nature. (D. Napier, Anglican Journal)

1857 - Gradual Civilization Act passed to assimilate Indians.

1867 - Constitution Act - Canada is responsible for Indian and their lands—adopts a policy of assimilation.

1870-1910 - Period of assimilation where the clear objective of both missionaries and government was to assimilate Aboriginal children into the lower fringes of mainstream society.

1910-1950 - Period of Segregation where policies were to segregate Aboriginal children, teach Aboriginal children enough to return home and be self supporting.

1920 - Compulsory attendance for all children ages 7-15 years. Children were forcibly taken from their families by priests, Indian agents and police officers.

1922 - Industrial Schools abandoned in favor of boarding schools, or residential schools.

1931 - There were 80 residential schools operating in Canada.

1945 - There were 9,149 students in residential schools with over 100 students in grade 8 and none registered in grade 9 or higher.

1948 - There were 72 residential schools with 9,368 students.

1950's-1970's - Integration policy recognized the failure of the residential school system and

by the mid to late 1950s began the placement of Indian children into mainstream public schools. This process happened in different areas of the country at different times.

1960 - Indians gain the franchise - the right to vote and became citizens of Canada.

1969 - Government assumes full control of schools. There were 52 residential schools with 7,704 students.

1972 - National Indian Brotherhood called for Indian control of Indian education and was endorsed by the Canadian government in 1973.

1979 - There were 12 residential schools with 1,899 students.

1980's - Residential School students began disclosing sexual and other forms of abuse at residential schools.

1998 - The AFN establishes the Indian Residential Schools Resolution Unit.

2001 - PM Chrétien announces creation of the Office of Indian Residential Schools Resolution Canada.

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Commissions & Inquiries not source of significant change.

Aboriginal Peoples history with Canada has had a profound negative impact on the life and development of our Nations.

Commissions & Inquiries have not been the source of significant change in our communities.

Institutionalization in resident schools, foster homes, and jails place us in a unique position for policy reform.

Acknowledgement and validation of our residential school experience is an important step in recovery.

“I think we must by slow degrees, educate generation after generation, until the nature of the animal is changed by the nature of the surroundings.”

Prime Minister John A. Macdonald before a House of Commons in 1884.

Survivors Across Canada

Status Indians	84,600
Non-Status	6,050
Métis	9,600
<u>Inuit</u>	<u>5,050</u>
TOTAL	105,300

*1991 INAC estimate

AFN review of the Alternative Dispute Resolution Process

Fall Edition 2004

In 1998, under the leadership of National Chief Phil Fontaine, the AFN Indian Residential Schools Unit was established. Over the past fifteen years, the AFN Chiefs have passed many resolutions calling for the federal government to address the historical effects of the Indian Residential School system. Our goal is to influence expedient settlement of IRS claims by influencing proposed policy and judicial developments affecting former students of Indian Residential Schools as well as ensuring a long-term healing strategy that may lead to healing and reconciliation between First Nations, Governments and Churches.

The Government of Canada announced a new Alternative Dispute Resolution in the fall of 2003. There have been numerous complaints from former students of residential schools about the application form and the process for compensation. The Assembly of First Nations will continue to be proactive in the resolution of residential school claims.

In March of 2004, the Assembly of First Nations and the University of Calgary jointly sponsored a conference, "The Residential School's Legacy: Is Reconciliation Possible?". There were 64 recommendations made by residential schools survivors, government and church representatives. The AFN contracted the University of Calgary and leading experts to examine the Dispute Resolution

process with a view to determine how it could best achieve fair and just compensation for residential school harms in an efficient, accessible manner which should lead to reconciliation between First Nations, Canada and the Churches.

The University of Calgary report is near completion and ready for release. A major recommendation will include baseline compensation for deceased and former students of Indian Residential Schools of \$10,000, including an additional \$3,000 for every year in attendance at a residential school. Other components including a Healing Strategy and addressing loss of language and culture will be addressed. A copy of the report can be accessed on our Assembly of First Nations Residential Schools website.



Photo Credit: Bob D'Amico / Assembly of First Nations Residential Schools Unit

Restoring Dignity: Law Commission of Canada - 2000

Executive Summary - It is often said that children are our future. How we treat our children and how we allow them to be treated reveals much about ourselves and about our values as a society.

Over the past ten to fifteen years, child abuse has surfaced as a painful issue for Canadians. With greater public discussion, has come greater awareness that children have been abused not only in their homes and by strangers, but also in institutions where they were placed for their education, welfare, rehabilitation or even protection.

Many of these institutions were run by or on behalf of federal, provincial and territorial governments.

The institutions now under close public scrutiny were intended to improve the lives of the children placed in them.



Photo Credit: Bob D'Amico / Assembly of First Nations Residential Schools Unit

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

November 21, 1996 the final report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples was tabled in the House of Commons in Ottawa.

The Commission concluded that:

"(A) full investigation into Canada's residential school system, in the form of a public inquiry..., is necessary to bring to light and begin to heal the grievous harms suffered by countless Aboriginal children, families and communities as a result of the residential school system... (The inquiry) should be authorized to recommend whatever remedial action it believes necessary for governments and churches to ameliorate the conditions created by the residential school experience. Where appropriate, such remedies should include apologies from those responsible..."

Canada's Statement of Reconciliation

In January 1997, Honourable Jane Stewart, Minister of Indian Affairs and Honourable Ralph Goodale, Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status issued the Statement of Reconciliation.

"...Particularly to those individuals who experienced the tragedy of sexual and physical abuse at residential schools, and who have carried this burden believing that in some way they must be responsible, we wish to emphasize that what you experienced was not your fault and should never have happened. To those of you who suffered this tragedy at Residential Schools, we are deeply sorry."

"We need to work together on a healing strategy to assist individuals and communities in dealing with the consequences of this sad era in our history."

“ Children do not choose to live in institutions. Societies plan and establish institutions for children with a beneficial purpose in mind. ”

Law Commission of Canada

Indian Residential School Museum of Canada

Long Plain First Nation is seeking support and partners to work with us for funding, in-kind resourcing and sharing of materials and archives to create this important Museum.

The vision for the Indian Residential School Museum of Canada (IRSMC) is 'from a place of hurting to a place of healing'. Healing comes in many forms but always must start with the recognition of the wound, by cleansing and by doing all that can be done to address the needs of the people involved.

The IRSMC will strive to address these stages of healing through its programs, displays and archives.

The Museum will also work to identify the intergenerational affects of the Residential Schools on Aboriginal families and communities. The Museum will reveal the perspective that the Aboriginal peoples had of the Residential Schools and their impact on their culture and community.

The IRSMC will also enable people from non-Aboriginal backgrounds to experience the building, the history and come away with an understanding of how the Residential Schools have had an impact on not only Aboriginal peoples, but also all Canadians.

Members of the Aboriginal community will have access to the database, archives and will be invited to share their stories. There will be displays and exhibits and rest areas as well as a classroom simulation from the days when the Portage Indian Residential School was in operation.

The IRSMC will belong to the First Nations People of Canada and will welcome the input of regional organizations in creating a museum that also serves as a place of remembrance and healing.

Assembly of First Nations Resolution No. 34(B)2001 "Therefore be it resolved that the Assembly of First Nations support the establishment of a national Indian Residential School Museum and further be it resolved that this national Indian Residential School Museum be established on the Long Plain Indian Reserve within the Rufus Prince Building and/or former Portage Indian Residential School." Excerpt from AFN Resolution No. 34(B)2001

Exploratory Dialogue; Reconciliation & Healing Alternative Resolution Strategies for Dealing with Residential School Claims

Between September of 1998 and June 1999, an extraordinary series of dialogues took place across Canada to explore ways for mitigating the impacts of the Indian residential school experience.

Barriers identified by Aboriginal people is that the government only acknowledges physical and sexual abuse, lack of trust and bargaining in good faith especially by the churches, recruiting tactics by lawyers without appropriate safety net for survivors, and that time was of the essence.

Barriers identified by the government included apportionment with the Churches, lack of experience in ADR's and the need to put survivors interests "front and center."

Church identified fear of loss of the churches, difficulty in trusting process and bad policy through the ADR process.

Aboriginal Healing Foundation

The Federal Government provided \$350 million establishing a healing fund. The government established the Aboriginal Healing Foundation to administer the fund.

Various projects and treatment programs have been established across Canada to support residential school survivors.

Language and Culture is being addressed through a separate program from the Government of Canada.

Strength & Courage

It takes strength to conquer;
It takes courage to surrender.

It takes strength to feel a friend's pain;
It takes courage to feel your own pain.

It takes strength to hide feelings;
It takes courage to show them.

It takes strength to endure abuse;
It takes courage to stop it.

It takes strength to stand alone;
It takes courage to lean on another.

It takes strength to love;
It takes courage to be loved.

It takes strength to survive;
It takes courage to live.

Author Unknown

Notice of Class Actions

The Government of Canada wants to make sure that you are aware of the choices open to you to resolve your claim for harms suffered at an Indian Residential School. You may use the Alternative Dispute Resolution Process to claim for certain kinds of harms, or you may sue for damages in the courts. You may sue in the courts as an individual, or as a member of a proposed class of claimants. You should be aware that other former students have begun proposed class actions in which they ask for damages on behalf of themselves and others for harms suffered at residential schools. You may already be a member of one of the proposed classes of former students.

Currently there are, 5 proposed class actions have been started on behalf of former students.

We refer to these class actions as “proposed”, since a class action must be certified by a court before it can proceed. Certification means that a judge has given permission for the class to proceed to trial to resolve the common issues in their claims together. No class action for residential school claims has yet been given this permission.

The federal government will oppose certification in the courts. If a class proceeding is certified, the court will determine what common issues will be dealt with in it. There will then be a trial to determine those issues. Following the trial

of the common issues, and any appeals regarding it, the courts would normally consider how remaining issues, such as damages including individual claims for damages, should be determined.

All Residential School survivors should speak with a lawyer about their rights before considering any resolution proposal.

The 5 classes seeking certification (permission from the court to proceed as a class) are as follows:

1. The Cloud Class Action

In the Cloud Action, the Applicants asked the Court to certify all Aboriginal persons who attended the Mohawk Institute Residential School in Brantford, Ontario between 1922 and 1969 and their family members as a Class.

2. The Baxter National Class Action

The Baxter National Class Action has been launched in the Ontario Superior Court of Justice on behalf of all Residential School Survivors throughout Canada and their families. You may be a member of this class and could be entitled to benefits in the action.

3. The Dieter Class Action

In the Dieter Action, the Applicants are asking the Court to certify all Aboriginal persons resident in Canada, who were transported to and/or confined in Residential Schools in one or more of the

Western Provinces between January 1, 1920 and December 31, 1996 as a Class.

4. The Pauchay National Class Action

In the Pauchay Action, the Applicants are asking the Court to certify all Aboriginal persons who attended various Indian Residential Schools across the Dominion of Canada from the 1940's to the 1980's as a Class.

5. The Straightnose Class Action

The Straightnose Claim is on behalf of all Saskatchewan residents who attended a residential school in Saskatchewan between 1920 and 1996 and who suffered abuse (including emotional, cultural and psychological abuse) and/or who did not get a “proper education”.

View the entire Notice of Class Actions with complete contact information, on our website at:

<http://www.afn.ca/residentialschools>



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