



## Statement Regarding Residential Schools in Canada

May 31, 2021

We are devastated to hear of the finding of 215 children who were killed at Kamloops Residential School. The residential school system was designed by the Canadian government and the Church as a method of genocide against First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples. From 1863 to 1996, when the last residential school closed, over 150,000 children – seven generations – were placed in these schools where they experienced severe physical, emotional, and sexual abuse. This was not a previous chapter. This is not history. The dark impacts of this system continue to be felt today by still living survivors due to their direct trauma experience, and by the generations that followed due to the intergenerational trauma.

First Nations, Métis, and Inuit individuals are still vastly overrepresented in the child welfare system. Beyond this, they are disproportionately affected by poverty, food insecurity, homelessness, mental health issues, unemployment, and so much more. The reality is, this event is likely going to trigger trauma responses in a large number of survivors and First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities do not have the funds or the resources to fully support them.

So, what can you do? You can take the following actions (derived from On Canada Project: Settlers Take Action):

1. Learn about whose land you live on. Oxford County is located on the territories of the Ho-de-no-sau-nee-ga (Haudenosaunee), Anishinabewak, Attiwonderonk (Neutral) and Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation. To explore, visit [www.native-land.ca](http://www.native-land.ca)
2. Do your research. Learn more about the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Peoples who originally cared for our land, and what has been done to them.
3. Read the Truth and Reconciliation Report, a landmark report released on the impacts of the residential school system, and it's 94 calls to action at <https://nctr.ca/>
4. Speak with our local Members of Parliament, Members of Provincial Parliament, local politicians, and service agencies to tell them to take actions called for in the report.
5. Speak to your friends, family, neighbours, and communities to spread awareness on this issue and fight anti-First Nations, Métis, and Inuit racism.

***The Social Planning Council Oxford illuminates the realities of poverty and marginalization to shift understanding and inspire collaborative action for positive change***