

# Healing Words

Volume 2 Number 1 FALL 2000



*Shubenacadie Indian Residential School  
-Mount St. Vincent Motherhouse Archives*

featured

project

## St. Mary's First Nation UNITING FAMILIES

*The fact that 114 participants attended this gathering, the first of its kind, shows the interest and willingness that survivors, their families, supporters and community have in the issues relating to the impact of residential schools.*

-Alma Brooks, St. Mary's First Nation

The project goal is twofold:

- 1) To provide community-based training aimed at enhancing aboriginal capacity to develop, design and implement healing strategies and programs that will adequately address the impact of residential school experience on survivors and their descendants.
- 2) To reunite lost survivors, their families and community, to assess specific individual and family needs, and to evaluate/report results and prepare for next phase of the healing strategy.

### FOCUS ON ... A GATHERING OF SURVIVORS AND THEIR FAMILIES

*What a successful week-end! What a wonderful idea! All the goals were met and many were exceeded. The survivors' stories were emotional, tragic and real. Their ability to share their journey with others provided a sense of power of surviving which could not have come in any other way.*

-Brenda Robinson, St. Mary's gathering project

A three-day gathering of Shubenacadie Residential School survivors reunited lost survivors, their families and community as a first step in healing. The gathering was planned, organised and facilitated by Nechi Training, in conjunction with professional and community volunteers. The purpose of the gathering was to address the impact of residential schools, beginning the first step in the process of healing in the St. Mary's community.

This gathering was a highlight of community activity for the year. As a result of the collaboration of the media we were approached by the Woodstock Band, who requested our permission to allow three of their survivors to attend the gathering. (Reserves are small in Maliseet territory, and many family members connect most of the communities together.)

Originally, the gathering was planned with a focus on the St. Mary's membership. This changed when we realised that many more survivors would have attended had they received a personal invitation. Next year we will include survivors from all communities along the St. John River, both on- and off-reserve.

This style of gathering (combining traditional culture and contemporary methods of working with people) seems to work well in our community. We established a confidentiality policy which outlined the rights of survivors, and this was included in the brochure we presented to survivors at the gathering.

119 participants, all members of First Nation communities, -twenty-eight of whom were direct survivors- attended this gathering, the first of its kind. This response shows the interest and willingness survivors, their families, supporters and community have in the issues relating to the impact of residential schools.

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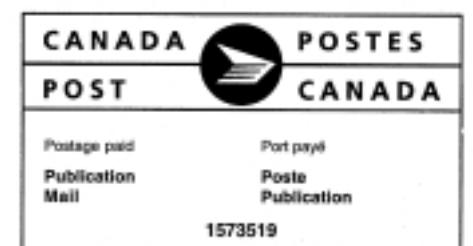
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**A**s the Aboriginal Healing Foundation approaches 2 and-a-half years of existence, we are able to look back on a growing list of experiences and accomplishments. Only 15 months ago, in June of 1999, we announced our first 35 funded projects. Now, in September of 2000, we have a total of 276 approved projects, with a further 108 projects pending. To date, we have committed over 53 million dollars in funding.

The Foundation's second deadline for the second round of funding proposals has passed. Not long ago, we were a new organization. Although still young, the Foundation now has an established track record as a funding agency. We are well-positioned to promote the best practices of healing. Each day, aboriginal and non-aboriginal people approach us as a clearing house for information on residential school issues and residential school healing. As our work progresses, we gather more of the experience and expertise which enable us better to promote, support, and encourage healing initiatives.

For instance, we know that our emphasis must continue to be on manageable, survivor-driven projects. In our experience, healing is best served through the support of many small, community-based programs. The focus must be on community participation, and projects must involve from the beginning survivors, their families and descendants. The alternative —overly ambitious mega-projects designed outside the community — would not serve the interests of survivors, or of their descendant and communities.

We hope and expect one legacy of the Aboriginal Foundation will be the gathering and sharing of accumulated knowledge, experience and wisdom. All across Canada, aboriginal people are seeking creative and innovative uses of both traditional and non-aboriginal healing methods

**From the Chairman, Georges Erasmus**



to address the intergenerational impacts of Canada's residential school system. Our funded projects, through the partnerships and linkages they foster, serve to strengthen aboriginal people everywhere. Our shared experiences, both good and bad, can make us stronger.

We will continue to refine our funding processes, focusing as always on timely turn-over of proposals. "Best practices" principles, proven through the experiences and hard work of aboriginal people, will help us to identify proposals with the greatest likelihood of success. Over the past year our approval rate has doubled. This is evidence that we are seeing strong proposals. The Foundation's modest number of staff is now able to process project applications, in most cases, within 3-5 months. Our turn-around time and careful use of resources compare very favourably with public and private funding agencies of similar size and scope.

In summary, our ongoing commitment to providing the best possible support for healing initiatives involves not only the provision of resources, but attention to the most effective healing principles and to the knowledge and wisdom of aboriginal people. We will continue to listen to survivors, their descendants, and families, and we will continue to refine the ways in which we do our work. And as always, we will look forward to the time when aboriginal people have addressed in a meaningful way the legacy of the residential school system, restoring their communities and healing their nations.

Masi,  
Georges Erasmus,  
Chair, Aboriginal Healing Foundation



*The purpose of Healing Words is to be an instrument for honouring the Foundation's commitments to survivors, their descendants, and their communities. It is one of the means by which we demonstrate our respect for the agreements the Foundation has signed. It is also a vehicle for supporting the mission, vision and objectives of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation as well as the goals of the Foundation's Communications Strategy.*

**Left: Franciscan Province of the Sacred Heart, St. Louis, Missouri. Aboriginal people attended church-run Indian residential schools in both Canada and the United States.**

## *The healing work that communities and their youth have undertaken to prevent suicide needs to be shared, as well the core messages they convey*

The root causes, nature and consequences of aboriginal youth suicide are complex and overwhelmingly painful, both for the ones who commit it and for the ones left to grieve it. The subject of Aboriginal youth suicide, like so many aspects of Aboriginal life, has been the subject of numerous investigations, research, studies, and reports. Most of what has been published on this subject is from an observer's perspective: it conveys facts and statistics, and provides rational and scientific explanations. This body of information is important and does provide some understanding, but healing is more than understanding facts. It has much more to do with looking courageously at root causes, finding the strength to share the pain, and transforming this experience into action.

There is a difference between looking at youth suicide from the usual risk factor angle and examining it from a root cause perspective. Many statements and questions in this article will require the exercise of both mind and heart.

The case made here is that the root causes and impact of youth suicide on Aboriginal communities cannot be dissociated from the relationship many surviving Aboriginal peoples and their communities now have with death... and life, as the result of the individual and collective trauma they suffered and are still enduring intergenerationally. A fact remains above all others: suicide was virtually unknown in traditional Aboriginal cultures. Today, with the rate of suicide amongst Aboriginal communities being three to four times the rates of non-aboriginal, it is being described as an epidemic.

Although there is a growing recognition of the many social and economical repercussions of this trauma, the deepest impact is rarely given full acknowledgement. The heart of the matter is that the first identity of Aboriginal people was, and is, fashioned from their relationship with the creator of a well-ordered universe. Aboriginal traditions, cultures and languages served to express and add meaning, substance and colour to this relationship. It is this first identity, the primal force animating the desire to live, to live well, that was almost destroyed by the policies of the dominant system.

The process of healing, therefore, logically acknowledges the principle that there is no dysfunction in the core beliefs and world view of Aboriginal people. What has been so often described as mental illness is simply the reaction of any individual who, having been deprived of his keys to wellness, has to function in an imposed dysfunctional system and world.

In that sense, the path to healing necessarily includes the rediscovery of this original identity and the reconstruction of the healthy, life sustaining worldview and practices that Aboriginal Elders have preserved and that youth will help pass on to future generations.

Displacement of the label of dysfunction from the dominant system to Aboriginal people also means that the concept of mental illness has to be seriously revisited by Aboriginal communities involved in healing work, especially those involved in preventing and healing youth suicide.



Another area which also needs to be considered carefully is the relevance of therapies that are in the service of healing Aboriginal "dysfunctions." Reflection on these important concepts will help ensure the use of methods which enhance the healing process and do not retraumatise or re-victimise.

Glen Coulthard, in his report *Colonisation, Indian Policy, Suicide, and Aboriginal Peoples*, makes this point clearly by quoting the following from therapist Allan Wade:

With the proliferation of practices that defined the victims of violence as damaged, dysfunctional, or disordered, the helping professions took up a highly specialized and critically important role within the colonialist enterprise. Whereas the project of colonization was directed outward against the deficient aboriginal ("for his own good"), the deficiency-oriented practices promoted by the health professions have contributed to a process of "psycholonization", that is, the inward movement of colonization, extended against the mind and spirit of the violated individual (once again, "for his own good").

### **Death accepting and life sustaining societies**

Because of their belief and through their practices, (and despite usual historical accounts) Aboriginal cultures were traditionally death accepting and life sustaining societies. The imposition of a death-denying, death-defying system, in which life is honored in words and death glorified in deeds, and in which material

power is synonymous with spiritual authority, led to the inferiorisation, desecration and almost successful destruction of Aboriginal beliefs, practices, world view, and environment. This imposition is responsible for altering, with catastrophic consequences, the very meaning of life, both at individual and collective levels. This loss of meaning, in turn, has resulted in a loss of motivation and greatly depressed ability to sustain life. In such a context, the definition of suicide can be logically extended to the slow death induced, indirectly or directly, by the refusal or neglect of the very elements that sustain life.

In many Aboriginal communities, where the life sustaining system of culture is being nurtured into renewal, youth are the arrows of hope sent into the future. Their death is a terrible retraumatizing blow. In communities where culture has been almost completely destroyed, the despair and pain of self-inflicted youth death is unbearable.

**Yet, to live in a society that is both death accepting and life sustaining remains, for Aboriginal people and for many other people, the highest aspiration. In this context the healing process that Aboriginal People have undertaken has a relevance that goes well beyond their own renewal.**

"Life's meaning... is found in our ability to express our uniqueness in the interrelated world in which we find ourselves."

-Alfred Painter

### **Courage, vision and commitment**

The healing work that communities and their youth have undertaken to prevent suicide needs to be shared, as well as the core messages they convey. So many individuals and communities have challenged this task with courage, vision and commitment. We cannot but follow in their footsteps, and open up the healing process by sharing some difficult factual and emotional facets of youth suicide. Some of the articles under this theme are known terrain, but others offer new insights. Many communities have discovered that, as painful as youth suicide is, the success of its prevention does not depend upon costly or complicated projects. We hope that what the stories tell you will comfort you and encourage you. We, at *Healing Words*, humbly acknowledge that we are learning along with you. If there are any gaps in our understanding, please teach us, share your ideas, and work with us and others in the spirit of healing.

### **It is not easy...**

It is not easy to speak about death in general. It is not easy to talk about death of young people. It is never easy to express feelings about the death of young people in our communities. Especially when these deaths are self-induced.

*continued on next page*

## *A Journey to the Heart of the Matter*

Death has profound and diverse meanings in all cultures and times. It bestows honour on the war hero, brings relief to the one doomed by a long illness, and offers escape to the one under pain or torture, is greeted as a welcome rest and new beginning to the frail old ones whose life journey has been long and fulfilling. It also shocks, angers, saddens, and shatters emotions and lives.

In the world today, where almost every death is not, as a norm, the natural conclusion of a healthy and fulfilling life, the concept of death, its meaning and purpose, is as confused as many ideas about life. On the one hand, the saving of a single life is acclaimed; on the other hand, human life as canon fodder—as in war—is still accepted. On the one hand, death is glorified; on the other, it is swept under the carpet. Old people are relegated to “Old peoples homes” and hospices, so that their death does not disturb us. But our eyes are glued to the screens when death, real or fictional, is blatantly displayed in all its violent ugliness. Required to be clandestine, hidden, silent, expeditious, death is abhorred. This abhorrence is summed up in the social edict to each individual to avoid at all cost an “embarrassingly graceless dying.”

Amidst all this confusion, there still seems to be a universal consciousness that the ideal death is the one that comes late and naturally. Thus, death coming after a long and useful life is recognised in almost every culture as the gentlest and most acceptable way either to pass on to a life beyond or simply to conclude this life. Acceptance of death, both by the person losing life and by those around him, is an essential part of the primal, deep sense of harmony with the law of the universe. It seems, then, that the main factor affecting the relationship between mankind and death is acceptance. This acceptance is found in cultures that are characterised by a knowledge of and deep rooted respect for the purpose and meaning of life and death. Contained in this meaning is the concept of actualisation of a human being's potential.

*“If we were to succeed in actualizing all our potentials, we would really be bringing life to its natural end. Life, then, would truly be completed.”*

-Lisl Marburg Goodman

### **A harmonious continuum**

*It may sound contradictory, but only when death is an intimate part of our lives—a constant presence—do we no longer live in its shadow; only when every moment in life becomes as important as the last moment do we truly live life to the fullest.*

-Lisl Marburg Goodman

In many Aboriginal cultures, acceptance of death had and still has its source in a world view and beliefs which find a dynamic expression in traditions, cultures and languages. Belief in the Creator of a perfectly interconnected, well ordered universe, and knowledge and respect of the universal laws that govern this

universe have always given Aboriginal people a solid and secure sense of the place and role of all created things in this universe. These give meaning to their life. It also made death, accidental or natural, an integral part of this vast continuum. In most Aboriginal culture both spirit and matter have life and both participate in an eternal process of transformation and evolution.

Far from being a form of fatalism, acceptance of death is a spiritual celebration of life itself. It frees the individual from the burdens of fear and therefore liberates the energy of peace and joy of living so essential to wellness and healing. Loss through death is felt and grieved, for absence is always painful. But at the deepest spiritual level, Aboriginal people possess not only a powerful drive for healing, honour and celebration, but also the necessary support systems to make this process a meaningful and comforting one.

Acceptance of death, in Aboriginal culture, is not passivity. The belief that death is in harmony with the principle of a universal continuum and evolution of all life, and that therefore it has a purpose beyond human kind's control, does not diminish the control that man has on his life, or the responsibility in playing, to the best of his ability, a meaningful part in the dynamic unfolding of this continuum.

In this context, the stages of birth, childhood, adolescence, maturity, and old age contribute their own qualities of diversity, usefulness and beauty to the spiritual, mental, emotional, physical and social life of the individual and the community.

The fresh, joyful, innocent life impulse of childhood, the energy and drive for change of youth, the stability of maturity, the broad vision of wisdom, all contributed to sustain and dynamize individual and collective life. Neglect of any one of these community assets means a general reduction, for each and all, of the benefits derived through them. It is the traditions, cultures and languages that hold together the fabric of community, providing the means for each to fulfill their spiritual and human responsibilities.

To preserve this continuum of community life and values, traditional cultures practice the art and science of longevity and health. Healthy diet and rightful living are part of optimizing life and health for the value and benefit they bring the individual and the community. Healthy mothers means healthy children; healthy men means healthy partners and fathers; healthy elders means more wisdom to create and maintain peace and prosperity to the community.

This continuum, which gives Aboriginal life balance, health and wellness on the social, psychological, emotional, mental and spiritual level, was forcibly broken by assimilation policies, especially those of the residential school system. Deprived of the self sustaining structures that were built on that continuum, the vibrant organ-

isms of Aboriginal communities were torn, reducing them to a state of precarious survival.

When a premature death occurs, the fragile healing tissues of the organs are torn apart. When death comes after a full life, grief is for the loss of a loved presence, but for the life lost too soon, there is the added wound of a lost potential.

Doesn't death mean separation and disintegration of the composing elements of a living organism? The trauma induced by the forced de-composition of the interconnected structures and practices that give life to Aboriginal communities is not relieved by the alternative imposed on them: a way of life where the gifts of each age are made irrelevant by a system built on the dynamics of death itself—separation, isolation, compartmentalisation.

How can a society where the gifts of all are equally valued, where the wisdom of old age is revered, its knowledge treasured, survive in a system where each generation is separated by a gap, where being old means dying a sad, solitary, and empty death? The trauma experienced by Aboriginal people can be measured by the gap between these two paradigms.

Anthropologist Colin Turnbull contends that love, care, respect, good child-rearing and aged-care practices are the luxuries of ordered societies. The heart of the matter is that these things were the norm in Aboriginal communities and immensely courageous efforts are being deployed to make them so again. For whom is there a rational case, then, for requiring any individual or community to live in an “ordered society” when these things are a luxury rather than a norm, especially when this luxury of love, care, and respect were never directed to them?

But deep wounding and survival has not meant disintegration. The movement in Aboriginal communities towards healing is getting stronger. The markers on the path of healing are growing in number and clarity. The articles offered in this issue are meant to highlight some of these markers. Thanks to them, we need not stumble so much on the path of healing, but walk taller, instead.

-GR.

*It takes strength to fit in  
It takes courage to stand out  
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*

-Anonymous

Incidence of suicide among Aboriginal young people, ages 15-24, is nearly four times that of the Canadian non-Aboriginal rate.

Although rates per 100,000 are good indicators of trends and the problems within large populations, they do not adequately measure the emotional and social impact of suicides among small Indian communities.

#### FACTS ABOUT SUICIDE:

Four out of five people who commit suicide have talked about it or threatened it previously. It is a myth that someone who talks about it won't do it. Most often that is a very clear call for help.

Drugs or alcohol are involved in two out of three suicides. Use of these chemicals intensifies the already-existing feelings of helplessness and hopelessness that the person is experiencing.

A suicidal person is not necessarily mentally ill. He/she may be simply seeing things through a very distorted and constricted lens—there seems to be only two choices for this individual: continuation of a powerful sense of pain, or a cessation of that pain.

The act of suicide is not seen as a moving TOWARD something, but as a moving AWAY from an unbearable pain. Most suicidal people are undecided about living or dying. Happily, most are suicidal for only a limited time and, if saved from self-destruction, go on to lead useful lives.

#### HIGH RISK FACTORS

High risk factors are simply factors or circumstances in the life of a person that make them vulnerable to the risk of self-destructive behaviour. We must be vigilant with the emotional and physical health of our youth. Much of it is common sense. In order to identify sudden changes in their behaviour patterns, for example, we have to be familiar with what their normal patterns are.

The risk factors that follow are not all-inclusive or presented in any particular order:

- Has previously attempted suicide
- Is a victim of domestic violence, child abuse, rape, or other assault
- Is a victim of incest
- Expresses a desire to die
- Demonstrates sudden changes in their normal behaviour or attitude
- Exhibits dare-devil or self-destructive behaviours
- Is disconnected or alienated from family, community, or culture
- Withdraws socially from family, relatives,

## SUICIDE FACTS AND FIGURES



friends, and teachers

- Is experiencing underachievement in school
- Drops out of school or changes classes often
- Has known a family member, relative, or friend who has completed suicide
- Is involved with alcohol or drug abuse or has a family member involved with alcohol or drug abuse
- Has had a recent significant loss or it is the anniversary of a significant loss
- Suddenly appears peaceful during a crisis
- Has diminished interest in usual pursuits
- Leaves poems, diaries, drawings, or letters to be found
- Expresses hopelessness, helplessness, worthlessness, and confusion
- Arranges to give away prized possessions
- Experiences a broken or difficult love affair
- Must confront unrealistic personal or parental expectations
- Has disintegrating family relationships
- Does not have a meaning and/or purpose in life
- Moves just after establishing meaningful relationships
- Has an inability to develop significant and empathetic relationships
- Has very poor impulse control
- Has no strength to tackle a problem and is blind to any way out

#### There are several high risk factors that require further discussion:

- The use of alcohol or other drugs
- Victims of sexual abuse, especially incest
- Has witnessed a suicide
- Has unresolved grief or loss

#### CLUES TO SUICIDAL BEHAVIOUR:

Most people give clues to others through their behaviours. Some of the things we can be aware of are:

- Marked changes in personality, behaviour, appearance
- Participation in new and self-destructive behaviours
- Talk of death
- Signs of depression such as insomnia or a noticeable loss of appetite
- Preparation for dying, such as giving away important and treasured objects

#### FOUR TYPES OF DANGER SIGNALS

Look for a clustering of warning signs within a context of recent loss, sadness, frustration, disappointment, grief, alienation, depression, loneliness, physical pain, or mental anguish.

**Suicidogenic Situations**—the situation itself is conducive to suicidal thoughts and feelings

**Depressive Symptoms**—the person has several symptoms which are commonly associated with the syndrome of depression:

- Insomnia
- Inability to concentrate
- Anorexia
- Weight loss
- Loss of sex drive
- Anhedonia (can't experience pleasure)
- No energy or hyperactive
- Apathy—no desire to socialize
- Seems withdrawn
- Seems preoccupied
- Often appears bored
- Agitated easily
- Poor personal hygiene
- Crying
- Feeling worthless
- Low frustration tolerance
- Dwells on problems
- Morbid views
- Appears sad

#### Verbal Warnings

"I'm going to kill myself!"  
"I wish I were dead!"  
"It hurts too much."  
"The only way out is for me to die."  
"I just can't go on any longer."  
"You won't be seeing me around any longer."  
"You're going to regret how you've treated me."  
"It's too much to put up with."  
"Life has lost its meaning for me!"  
"Nobody needs me anymore."  
"I'm getting out of here."  
"Here, take this (valued possession); I won't be needing it anymore."

#### Behavioural Warnings

- The giving away of a cherished object in a casual manner.
- The strongest behavioural warning is an attempted suicide!!!
- It has been estimated that about 45% of the people who kill themselves have previously attempted to do so before.

Elders and others have known for years that if Aboriginal peoples could hold on to their culture they could survive. Despite attempts by non-aboriginals to destroy our nations, the people have managed to survive. Secretly, some people held on to their beliefs, even practiced them by clandestine means. They are to be honoured for their efforts.

-Tehaliwaskenhas

## CULTURAL CONTINUITY AS A HEDGE AGAINST SUICIDE IN CANADA'S FIRST NATIONS

*Extracts adapted from a research article by Michael J. Chandler & Christopher Lalonde, the full text of which can be found on the Turtle Island Native Network.*

This research report, which is all about self-continuity and its role as a protective factor against suicide, comes in three parts.

### Youth and identity

Anyone whose identity is undermined by radical personal and cultural change is put at special risk of suicide because they lose those future commitments that are necessary to guarantee appropriate care and concern for their own well-being. It is because of this that adolescents and young adults—who are living through moments of especially dramatic change—constitute such a high risk group.

This generalized period of increased risk can be made even more acute within communities that lack a sense of cultural continuity which might otherwise support the efforts of young persons to develop more adequate self-continuity warranting practices.

Children tend to proceed gradually and fitfully toward first one and then another increasingly mature way of warranting their own continuous identity. En route to the construction of some acceptably grown-up ways of thinking about personal persistence, children and youth regularly abandon the outgrown skins of their own earlier ways of finding sameness within change.

Until newly refitted with some next-generation means of connecting the future to the past, they are often temporarily left without a proper sense of care and concern for the person they are becoming.

Under such transitional circumstances, when self-continuity has temporarily gone missing, suicide newly becomes a “live option.”

# Healing Life Through Culture

### CONCLUSION

Our aim in the present research report is to demonstrate that the risk of suicide run by First Nations youth is determined by the ways in which they undertake to construct and defend a sense of identity that allows them to survive as continuous persons despite often dramatic individual and cultural change.

What we hope will prevent this research program from being yet another in a long series of cultural assaults on aboriginal peoples is our attempt to show, not that suicide rates are demonstrably higher within the First Nations culture as a whole, but that: 1) that there is wide variability in the rates of youth suicide across different Aboriginal communities and, 2) that this variability is closely associated with efforts on the part of these communities to preserve and promote a sense of cultural continuity.

Our second set of findings—meant to demonstrate that some good measure of the variability in rates found between Native communities attaches itself to efforts to restore and rebuild a sense of cultural continuity—constitute what we hope is a step in the right direction of searching out variables that not only have some explanatory power, but also admit to some degree of potential for modification or provide opportunities for change.

Taken together, it also proved to be the case that having more of these factors present in the community was decidedly better: the observed 5-year youth suicide rate fell to zero when all six were found to be true of any particular community. Here at least are a half dozen examples from what is undoubtedly a much larger set of cultural factors, the promotion of which may hold some real promise of reducing the epidemic of youth suicide within certain First Nations communities.

## Markers of Cultural Continuity

### Self-Government

Although just over 12% of all Native youth (2,201 of 17,902) reside in communities that enjoy some measure of self-government, this factor appears to provide the greatest protective value with an estimated 102.8 fewer suicides per 100,000 youth within communities that have attained self-government against those that have not (18.2 vs. 121.0 suicides per 100,000).

The Self-Government classification recognized those few bands that, irrespective of having begun their land claims efforts early or late, were nevertheless especially successful in their negotiations with federal and provincial governments in having further established their right in law to a large measure of economic and political independence within their traditional territory.

### Land Claims

Each of BC's First Nations communities were classified as having taken, or not taken, early steps to actively secure title to traditional lands.

While the majority of youth suicides (50 of 97, or 51.5%), and the majority of the youth population (64.3%) are to be found within communities marked by long standing efforts to exert control over their traditional land base, the rate of suicide within these communities is substantially lower: 86.8 vs. 147.3 suicides per 100,000.

### Education Services

Data derived from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada were used to divide communities into those in which the majority of students either did or did not attend a band school.

While just 21.8% of the youth population live in communities in which a majority of children are known to attend band controlled schools, only 11.3% of all youth suicides occur in such communities. The difference in suicide rates between communities that do and do not have such educational systems in place is substantial: 71.1 vs. 116.2.

### Health Services

At the time our data were collected, communities could be rough-sorted into those that exercised some direct measure of control (provided funding for permanent health care providers within the community), and those that had little or no such control (temporary clinics and ‘fly-in’ care providers, or services rendered outside the community).

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## Healing Life Through Culture

A slight minority of the youth population (46.4%) live within communities that have some measure of control over the provision of health care services and, as expected, an even smaller percentage of youth suicides (38.1) occur in such communities, resulting in comparative rates of 89.0 and 125.1.

### Cultural Facilities

Community profile data from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and information obtained directly from individual band offices was used to calculate the number of communal facilities located in each community.

The percentage of suicides within communities that contain cultural facilities was lower (56.7) than the proportion of the population that reside in such communities (61.7), resulting in lower overall suicide rates: 99.4 vs. 128.7.

### Police & Fire Services

Data on these local efforts, provided by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, permitted bands to be classified as having or not having substantial control over their police and fire protection services.

Communities that control police and fire services contain 62.1% of all Native youth, but account for only 56.7% of all youth suicides, resulting in suicide rates of 99.0 and 123.7.

Taken all together, these results are abundantly clear: First Nations communities vary dramatically in the rates of youth suicide that they evidence, and these differences are strongly and clearly influenced by a group of predictor variables or protective factors all meant to index the degree to which these various bands are engaged in community practices that serve the purpose of helping them preserve and restore their Native cultures.

What we believe these restorative efforts could accomplish within these cultural communities is not just the strengthening of those family and peer relations that might help shepherd any adolescent from any cultural background across awkward transitional moments in the formation of a mature sense of self-continuity (though clearly they do this too), but, more importantly, such efforts serve to highlight the important connection between self- and cultural continuity.

The clear message that is sent by the evidence brought out in this report is that the communities that have taken active steps to preserve and rehabilitate their own cultures are also those communities in which youth suicide rates are dramatically lower.

- Invest in cultural heritage —insulate against suicide.
- Being connected to your culture provides you with a valuable resource, an ally to draw on when your sense of personal identity is in shambles.
- A strong continuity in culture —a strong protective factor.
- It is not true that all First Nations have a higher rate of suicide than the general population —but some First Nations do have dramatically high rates. Some communities have suicide rates 800 times the national average. But there are others where suicide doesn't exist.

First Nations communities could look at the fact that every band in BC that has taken all of the protective steps outlined in this report have a youth suicide rate of zero, whereas all those in which all of these community actions are missing show suicide rates that are best described as “a crying shame,” and still insist that, because “correlation doesn't equal causation,” nothing should yet be done. Or alternatively, it could be decided that doing all of those things that might only mimic a saving of lives is still better than no action at all. In either case, this research teaches what sorts of actions it would be wise to have in mind. •



*Above: Dave Tellier, AHF Data Entry Coordinator, sits beside the applications received for the August 25, 2000 deadline. Our proposal review process begins with data entry for each individual project submission.*

## Submission of stories

You may submit your articles or other contributions by fax, mail, or email. We prefer electronic submissions in Corel Word Perfect or MS Word. Please send your writing to:

The Editors, Healing Words  
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Ottawa, Ontario  
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Our fax number is (613) 237-4442 and our email addresses for submissions are:

grobelin@ahf.ca  
wspear@ahf.ca

Please send email submissions of photos in TIFF grayscale format, if possible. We ask for a resolution of 300 dpi. We cannot be responsible for photos damaged in the mail.

Please include a short biography with your submission as well as a return address and phone number. We may need to contact you about your submission.

The AHF does not pay for published submissions, but we do provide contributors with copies of the newsletter.

The views expressed by contributors to *Healing Words* do not necessarily reflect the views of the AHF.

There is no set length for manuscripts, but please try to keep submissions to a reasonable length (under 3000 words). All submissions are subject to the approval of the editorial team and may be edited for spelling, grammar, and length.

# ABORIGINAL SUICIDE IS DIFFERENT

“Every Aboriginal person in this study has a direct familial connection with the policy and practice of child removal. ‘Yesteryear’ is, in effect, yesterday.”

-Colin Tatz

In regard to youth suicide, two facts stand out amongst all others: the first is that all over the world the rates of youth suicide in Aboriginal communities are many times higher than in non-Aboriginal communities. The second is the commonality of the root causes driving this trend. Because of these two facts, Aboriginal youth suicide cannot be placed in the same category as other youth suicides. Aboriginal youth suicide is different; it needs to be viewed and responded to differently.

The following article makes the case for these commonalities and this difference. Although extracted from a report on Aboriginal youth suicide in New South Wales, the content of this research could just as well be a description of the situation of Aboriginal communities in Canada.

-Professor Colin Tatz, *Aboriginal Youth Suicide in New South Wales, The Australian Capital Territory and New Zealand: Towards a Model of Explanation and Alleviation.*

## Differentiating Aboriginal Suicide

“Think different” is the wording of a current Apple Macintosh computer advertisement. The phrase could well apply to the suicides of Aboriginal youth. Their suicide has different wellsprings, histories, sociologies, patterns, and even rituals. It is qualitatively different, and needs to be viewed and responded to differently. We cannot regard this behaviour as merely a part of the national youth suicide problem. To do so will certainly obfuscate this particular issue, would probably bury it, and would culminate soon enough in a regret or lament that yet another costly national approach to “prevention” or alleviation had failed to “take” in Aboriginal communities.



## What is different?

The collective and individual experience of contemporary Aboriginal lives is unique. No other group has endured the panoply of laws, edicts and administrative arrangements established to target an entire people regarded as being in need of care and protection. That the protection was in their “best interests” does not alter the reality that they were designated as a separate legal class of persons —minors in law— with all the attendant disabilities of that status. Accordingly, they were physically isolated, segregated, relocated and institutionalised. Their biological, cultural, political, economic and social lives were regulated by state and church “gatekeepers,” mostly in secret, with permit systems to keep Aborigines in and outsiders out of the areas known as reserves or missions.

Regardless of regional, linguistic, tribal, clan, and “degrees-of-blood” differences, Aborigines were, and are, perceived as one people. If there is indeed a one-ness, it lies in a commonality of history —victims of physical killing, settler animus, missionary contempt, decimation by disease, legal wardship, and destruction of their social institutions. History, rather than race, colour or culture, has been their unifying and sustaining separateness.

Conservative politics in Australia has been seeking to relegate these experiences to “yesteryear,” a period distant from us, with an implied statute of limitations on both immoral behaviour and on guilt or shame. Every Aboriginal person in this study has a direct familial connection with the policy and practice of child removal. “Yesteryear” is, in effect, yesterday.

We now see “disordered” communities struggling for existence. The anthropologist Colin Turnbull contends that love, care, respect, good child-rearing and aged-care practice are the luxuries of ordered societies. There are few such luxuries in many Aboriginal communities. Their losses have been catastrophic: a land base, their country, cultural practices

found to be “abhorrent” to white society, decision-making by the elders, discipline and control by elders, birth and mourning rituals, even the traditional employment of men and women as vegetable pickers, or men as railway gangers, fencers or shearers, and much more. These losses are not experienced only by those considered to be traditional people; they have occurred among those Aborigines living in the mainstream suburbs and towns who maintained a strong sub-culture of Aboriginality.

Regrettably, “disorder” has come to the surface as violence: domestic, interpersonal and now suicidal, a phenomenon virtually unknown in Aboriginal societies until 30 years ago. It has also appeared as sexual assault within families, drug-taking, alcohol abuse and corresponding involvement with the criminal justice system.

But “disorder” does not mean disintegration. Many embattled communities —most of them remote from, even denied, services taken for granted in urban centres— are surviving and some are finding paths to a sense of flourishing. There is a new-found determination, especially among the women, to overcome some appalling odds, to fashion lives which have purpose and meaning. I am less sanguine about the youth, too many of whom show a preference for death rather than life.

## The data

Youth suicide, unknown amongst Aborigines until three decades ago, is now double, perhaps treble, the rate of non-Aboriginal suicide. In 1997, the male youth rate was five times the already high national rate of between 24 and 26 per 100,000 of the population.

In 1997, ten suicides in the 15 to 24-year-old group amounted to an annual rate of 48.56 per 100,000, double the national figure. For males, the youth rate in 1997 (including two under 14) was a staggering 127.8 per 100,000, among the highest recorded in the international literature I surveyed. In the 5 to 15-



# In the absence of a coherent suicide letter, we can never really know why someone thought his or her life was not worth living. We all guess ... and then seek to explain (rather than understand) a seemingly incomprehensible phenomenon...

year-old cohort, the annual rate was 15.6 per 100,000 —three times that of the next highest I could find, 5.25 for Manitoba aboriginals.

The attempted suicides, or “parasuicides,” must be recognised as being on a continuum leading towards completed suicide. Some researchers suggest that there are six to eight attempts for each completed suicide; others go as high as between 50 and 300! I cannot quantify these actions and there is no need to do so. One doesn’t need to know precise numbers to recognise a rampant epidemic.

## The nature of Aboriginal suicide

Suicidology is now a recognised discipline. Within it, theories abound. However, “unravelling the causes after the fact is well nigh impossible,” wrote an esteemed American scholar, Joseph Zubin. In the absence of a coherent suicide letter, we can never really know why someone thought his or her life was not worth living. We all guess, literally, post mortem, and then seek to explain (rather than understand) a seemingly incomprehensible phenomenon which so intrigues and repels us.

Law, theology, sociology and medicine have perspectives which see suicide as offending against, or breaching, norms or conventions. Today’s almost standard biomedical approach— that youth suicide is occasioned by, or accompanied by, “psychiatric disorder”— is, in my view, inapplicable in the great majority of Aboriginal cases. The great majority of Aborigines I know, both inside and outside of this study, reject the “mental health” approach. It is hardly an appropriate response to say, as we might once have said, that they must embrace our Western approach.

I have found much of value in Louis Wekstein’s ten-fold “typology” of suicide and have added several new “pointers.” In Wekstein’s list, three are relevant to this study. First, the notion of chronic suicide, the

masking of an orientation towards death by excessive use of alcohol or drugs. Second, focal suicide, or self-mutilation, the idea of “partial death”, where a limited part of the body —limbs or sexual organs— are “killed.” Third, and of greatest value in this Aboriginal context, is existential suicide. This, in turn, is based on Albert Camus’ notion of ending the burden of hypocrisy, the meaninglessness of life, the ennui, and lack of motivation to continue to exist. Victor Frankl, the psychiatrist and concentration camp survivor, would have described this as people having no will to meaning, or those with no purpose in life.

## My additions include...

“Political suicide,” where the youth says aloud, “I’ll get even with you,” or to the police, “you’ll lose your job” or “you’ll pay for this.” It is both an attempt at rebuke and a stance against authority. Joseph Reser calls it “reactance” suicide.

- “Respect suicide” is very much akin to the above. There is much evidence of youth neglected, disrespected by siblings and family, disempowered and superseded in what should be their place in the family hierarchy, nobodies —who articulate their misery as “you’ll all have to come to my funeral”. And, of course, everybody does. Freud once suggested that youth believe their suicide is an act of physical courage but that their soul, psyche or unconscious being lives on, somehow as witness to their action.

“Grieving suicide” is real enough. Aboriginal life is one of prolonged grief, with one funeral a fortnight, or one weekly, common enough. There is no grief counselling. No longer is there any traditional mourning ritual —only Western, alcohol-centred wakes.

The “ambivalently rational” suicide occurs where the youth realises, in a moment of clarity rather than confusion, that he or she has run into a brick wall, often in custody, and

sees a way out of that insoluble predicament. “Appealing suicide” is a term used by the Israeli anthropologist Emanuel Marx. It occurs where youth are at the end of their tether, unable to achieve a single social aim without the aid of others. It is a violence directed against others, or towards self. It is partly a cry addressed to a public and partly an attempt to shift some of their obligations towards their dependents onto others.

Racism —not merely as an idea or an epithet— is all-pervasive: explicit in “them” as opposed to “us,” in phrasings such as “these people” and “you people,” in denial of employment, housing rentals, and sporting competition, in attitudes of teachers and schools, and in any town’s social life.

“Empowerment suicide” is akin to the political and respect categories above. Here what James Hillman calls “a small seed of selfhood” comes to the fore. It is really the youth’s moment of autonomy, suggesting that the only “thing” they own is their physical life.

Finally, the “lost suicide”—youth who feel that they have a “hole” in their lives but don’t know what it is. They endure the label “Aborigine,” yet cannot comprehend what it is in their “Aboriginality” that causes such antagonism or contempt.

*continued on next page*

My report contains a long chapter explaining and validating a veritable raft of actions which could lead, not to “prevention,” but to alleviation of suicidal behaviour. We can’t prevent what we don’t know, and we still don’t know why people take their lives. But we can alleviate group behaviours which look like movements towards self-destruction.

James Ellroy, the tough American writer who explores the underside of Los Angeles, says that suicide takes imagination. “You’ve got to be able to conjure up an afterlife or visions of rest—or be in such unbearable pain that anything is preferable to your suffering”. Aboriginal and Maori youth, I believe, have that kind of imagination and that kind of pain, rather than mental illness.

#### **Contributing factors: community values**

The all-too-visible existential distress in and across communities is caused by factors both within and without Aboriginal lifestyles. Some contributing factors can be mitigated or resolved by Aborigines alone; others need some assistance from those who engage with Aborigines on a daily basis, those whose job it is to treat—legally, medically or socially—their Aboriginal clients.

Locating factors within communities is not an exercise in blaming the victim. Whatever the manifold origins and explanations of what I call “disorder” in many lives, several of the consequences can only be addressed, or redressed, by those in distress.

#### **Contributing factors: societal values**

Societal values impinge—in degrees of seriousness—on youth suicide: endemic racism, the ambience of contempt and denigration of all things Aboriginal, the attitudes of service personnel, and the wilful and perhaps unconscious divide-and-rule philosophy of institutions which deal with Aborigines.

Racism—not merely as an idea or an epithet—is all-pervasive: explicit in “them” as opposed to “us,” in phrasings such as “these people” and “you people”; in denial of employment, housing rentals, and sporting competition; in attitudes of teachers and schools, and in any town’s social life.

A high degree of alienation towards Aborigines produces alienation amongst Aborigines.

Youth show existential distress and despair. They engage in aggressive, often violent behaviour; they drink, take drugs and commit break-and-enters. They take enormous physical risks and are often careless about life. To want to leave such a life is not to be mad, or bad.

This distress is not a mental disease. Existential frustration is in itself neither pathological nor pathogenic, as Victor Frankl tells us. Such existential despair cannot forever be treated by “dosages to dumbness,” as James Hillman calls it, or “buried under a heap of tranquillising drugs,” as Frankl argues.

There is value for individuals who seek therapy or assistance of any kind. What must be re-thought is the pejorative and singular “mental health” approach to diagnosis and treatment, and the blanket ascription to whole communities of a diagnosis of being “mentally unwell.”

#### **Lessons from abroad**

The North American suicide literature tends to be distant, statistical and non-contextual. Social, historical and political factors are often ignored. Rarely is “cultural conflict” evaluated, or discussed. There is no detail about lifestyle, or lifestyle differences, only of differences in geographic domain. The research papers are models of Western, urban concerns: high unemployment, low educational levels, low self-esteem, psychiatric disorders, substance abuse, availability of guns, and stress.

Most tribes and groups have high rates. Generally, the rates are between five and ten times the national rates. Several school and after-hours school “prevention” programs have succeeded in reducing suicide, attempts at suicide, drinking, teenage pregnancy, gang membership and delinquency.

#### **Towards alleviation**

My report contains a long chapter explaining and validating a veritable raft of actions which could lead, not to “prevention” but to alleviation of suicidal behaviour. We can’t prevent what we don’t know, and we still don’t know why people take their lives. But we can alleviate group behaviours which look like movements towards self-destruction.

I address theories of suicide, the need to liberate ourselves from a singular “mental disorder” model and the need to embrace a political, historical, social, cultural approach to Aboriginal suicide in general. New research directions include more attention to female suicide and the female propensity for “slashing up.” Alleviation projects include two New Zealand imports: a sport-based program of life goals and life skills which could have implications for suicide deflection, and a Maori “smoke-free” system which stresses the “coolness” of not smoking rather than the scariness of the lung-cancer advertisements. Given its success to date, this project could be adapted to a “coolness in living.”

A host of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cooperative initiatives could mitigate the incidence and effects of youth suicide: grief counselling, conflict resolution training, parenting advice, greater sports involvement, greater interaction with the Police and Community Youth Clubs, and the adoption of Ann Morrice’s literacy program which can achieve literacy in a matter of months.

Alfred Alvarez has a strong admonition: he says that “modern suicide has been removed from the vulnerable, volatile world of human beings and hidden safety away in the isolation wards of science.” I would hope that my research has gone some way towards rescuing youth suicide from that isolation.

*-Professor Colin Tatz, Director, Centre for Comparative Genocide Studies, Macquarie University, Sydney*

## VERA WABEIJIG

*vera m wabegijig is Anishnawbe:kwe from Ontario and a member of the Bear Clan. vera's poems have been published previously in: Gatherings VII, VIII; Native Women in the Arts; and Aboriginal Youth Today. Currently she is at the University of Victoria, working on a B.F.A. in Creative Writing as well as her first book of poetry. She lives in harmony with her beautiful daughter, Storm.*



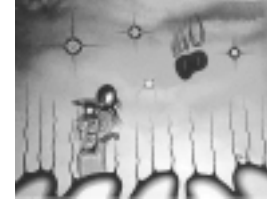
two tricky guys

raven and coyote swinging around the clubs  
at night, jiggling away, swinging by cafes,  
doing their dubs of poetry,  
i pray they didn't change anything...  
like they usually do  
but when they're together, that raven and coyote...  
you never know.

raven and coyote up to their old tricks  
on the west coast, boasting and toasting  
clinking their glasses on new year's day.  
i fear they're making plans for us humans  
but, i am convinced there's gotta be a lesson  
and teaching in all what they do even if it's sure to be a mistake...  
which is it likely to be ...

i saw raven and coyote  
one time at a pow wow  
dancing with crow doing the hop  
when coyote sneaks in a karate chop with flips and dips, enticing  
crow  
making her caw as she was freaking then falling  
down at coyote's paw and he sure did blush  
at the sight of crow's skirt up over her head  
coyote said with a bow, i am honoured crow  
but let's take it slow. you're just too fast for me!  
and i think to myself, that sly coyote  
so smooth, so slick, trying to trick crow...  
cause we all know he's just too fast for any of us!

cheers to raven and coyote  
who make us laugh and listen  
perk your ears to hear their stories,  
and keep close to mother earth  
but watch your back for those two tricky guys  
in their furry suit and ties ... 'cause you never know  
what is next with those freaky sneaks!



brand extension

adidas  
nike  
hang loose  
on brown bodies  
from hats to pants  
even hip undies  
walking billboards  
latest trend  
on pow-wow grounds  
not long braids  
or speaking mother tongue  
they are dancing  
but not to pow-wow drum  
it's a hip-hop beat from ghetto streets  
brand extension reaches  
bush rez and rezurbia  
re-connecting in spirit of  
community  
turning to  
gang clashes  
slang tongue twisting  
with ancestors and  
new-age ghost dance

# Focus on the Executive, Communications and Research departments



*Mike DeGagné, Executive Director*



*Linda Côté, Executive Assistant*



*Deborah Recollet,  
Administrative Assistant*



*Left to right: Gail Valaskakis (Director of Research), Jackie Brennan (Executive Assistant),  
Carolyn McDonald (Contract). Absent: Roberta Greyeyes (Research Officer)*



*Kanatlio (Allen Gabriel), Director of Communications*



*Marilyn McIvor, Executive Assistant (Communications)*



*Kyle Fletcher, Webmaster*



*Giselle Robelin, Communications Officer*



*Wayne K. Spear, Communications Officer*

featured

project

# Eskasoni Mental Health and Social Work Services

## BRINGING PEOPLE TOGETHER

*Our project has brought the community together and really had a positive effect on the youth*

Sister Franklin Ferguson, Eskasoni Mental Health

***Suicide is about endings: an end to confusion and hurt, an end to life without meaning. Suicide is about taking control of a life without control.***

## DESCRIPTION

To provide clinical therapy on an ongoing basis to community members who have been affected directly or indirectly by the residential school system. Multiple services will be provided to the survivors of the residential school system and their offspring (multi-modal, multi-generational therapeutic model).

Our project is intended to be a three-pronged approach to treatment. One part focuses on healing and resolution by addressing the deep psychological and emotional scars of residential school survivors through in-depth therapeutic clinical counselling services. A second part focuses specifically on youth. The third part, creation of a gathering place, is intended to nurture community interaction between youth and Elders and address family dysfunction.

Therapeutic counselling services are to be provided to respond to the needs of residential school survivors in a manner that respects, fosters and enhances Native culture, language and spirituality. The second part addresses the many intergenerational effects of residential school policies and abuse on the people of Eskasoni. The youth workers hired for this project will attempt to teach our youth culturally appropriate and healthy styles of living. Most of our youth struggle with grief issues related to such sudden losses as suicide. Suicide is too often an option chosen by our youth. A majority of children/youth come from alcoholic/dysfunctional families.

## FOCUS ON ... YOUTH FESTIVAL

Celebrating life, healing from suicide

Eskasoni is a growing Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq community with a population of approximately three thousand individuals. Its expansion rate at times has reached more than one hundred live births per annum. On the surface, a healthy birth rate seems indicative of the community itself. However, in Eskasoni, like many native communities in North America, this is not the case. Substance abuse, domestic violence, child abuse, neglect and suicide have plagued our community and impeded our development. Many of our people are residential school survivors and/or grandchildren of survivors.

Most of our youth struggle with grief issues related to such sudden losses as suicide. Suicide is too often an option chosen by our youth. A majority of children/youth come from alcoholic/dysfunctional families.

Our most recent suicide statistics for the year April 1, 1997 to March 31, 1998 indicated that we had 164 suicide attempts. Unfortunately, our community experienced its first completed suicide on April 8 1998, which was immediately followed by three tragic deaths in two separate motor vehicle accidents within one week of the completed suicide. It has become imperative to give our youth guidance and counselling to assist in choosing healthier lifestyles.

We find it alarming that the age range of individual suicide attempts begins at eight, with a heavy concentration below age 18. We have therefore identified youth as being the high risk group regarding suicide ideation and attempts.

*It is so important to have young adult role models for our youth. Often the youth are crying out to be heard and to be challenged into new directions by someone they respect and trust.*

Eskasoni Mental Health and Social Work  
– Annual Report 1999-2000

The Eskasoni Community Therapeutic Healing Program  
By Dale Sharkey, Psychologist,

The Eskasoni Mental Health and Social Work Service serves the Mi'kmaq on the Eskasoni Reservation in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia. The service has grown since its beginning in 1991 with one social worker to its present number of nine staff. Our holistic approach includes services which range from the in-depth counselling necessary to deal with deep seated emotional and psychological scars, to the provision of in home support and lifeskills training, to the provision of such positive experiences as youth, wilderness and family camps. Our dedicated and skilled staff come from a variety of cultural and educational

backgrounds. We are particularly proud of the fact that six of the nine people on our team staff are Mi'kmaq people from Eskasoni.

Like most counselling services in aboriginal communities, we have no core funding and our existence is dependent on the successful submission of proposals, on an annual basis, to a variety of government departments. Our growth has been dependent on and in response to an ongoing evaluation of the needs of our community. The most recent additions to our staff, a clinical therapist and youth worker, are the result of our seeking and receiving funding from the Aboriginal Healing Foundation. The services provided by the individuals in these positions reflect our holistic approach. While the Clinical Therapist focuses on healing the intergenerational effects of residential schools through the provision of therapeutic counselling services, the Youth Worker has focused more on the creation of positive life experiences and promoting healthy lifestyles.

In Eskasoni, like many aboriginal communities, the legacy of residential schools lives on in the form of substance abuse, family violence, sexual abuse, child abuse, along with family breakdown and dysfunction. We struggle with high rates of suicide. In one year alone, we had 164 attempted suicides. Like most aboriginal communities, we struggle to counter the devastating effect of residential schools where Mi'kmaq peoples were taught to devalue who and what they were. All these issues are inter-related and require a multi-faceted, holistic approach. We would like to share with you a recent initiative that we undertook that demonstrates this approach.

*In organizing, facilitating, and participating in events at this Festival, these Mi'kmaq Youth had an opportunity to control events in their life. They had a chance to celebrate themselves as Mi'kmaq people. Pride in their culture was reflected in poems and songs in their own language during the Mr. Eskasoni contest.*

Our Youth Worker, Tex Marshall, had been having focus groups with youth in our community to determine their needs. Out of these meetings came the decision to hold a Youth Festival. Billed as the "First Annual Aboriginal Youth Festival," an agenda was developed for three days of activities. The youth of Eskasoni were involved in every facet of organizing and planning the festival, which ran from July 13<sup>th</sup> to July 17<sup>th</sup>. Youth from surrounding reserves were invited. Events included a number of sports tournaments, dances, a karaoke contest, and the highlight of the Festival, a "Mr. Eskasoni" competition.

Suicide is about endings: an end to confusion and hurt, an end to life without meaning. Suicide is about taking control of a life without control. Suicide is about escaping a world where we feel unwanted and worthless. Suicide is about depression but it is also about anger. Suicide is about getting even, a way to hurt those who have hurt us.

In organizing, facilitating, and participating in events at this Festival, these Mi'kmaq Youth had an opportunity to control events in their life. They had a chance to celebrate themselves as Mi'kmaq people. Pride in their culture was reflected in poems and songs in their own language during the Mr. Eskasoni contest. Dressed in tuxedos, the contestants were judged on speaking and talent. The community as a whole came out to this event. The cheering and laughter at these events was a healthy outlet for all and an opportunity to recognize the positive accomplishments of the youth.



*Shubenacadie Indian Residential School*

## ABORIGINAL HEALING FOUNDATION REGIONAL GATHERINGS 2000

The Aboriginal Healing Foundation's Board of Directors will be gathering this Fall in five Canadian cities to engage in dialogue with Aboriginal people on the Foundation's funding process, issue an annual report, provide an update on funded projects and announce new initiatives. Last year, the Board held successful gatherings, meeting with communities and survivors in Yellowknife, Thunder Bay, Montreal and Edmonton.

The Aboriginal Healing Foundation is a not-for-profit corporation that funds community-based healing programs. The

Foundation is a key initiative of Gathering Strength Canada's Aboriginal Action Plan, a framework for renewed partnership with Aboriginal people which the federal government announced January 7, 1998. Formally launched on April 1, 1998, the Aboriginal Healing Foundation works closely with Aboriginal communities to address the intergenerational legacy of sexual and physical abuse suffered by Aboriginal people as a result of Canada's residential school system. 251 projects have been funded to date.



The first regional gathering for the year 2000 will take place in Iqaluit, September 28, at the Air Cadet Hall, Royal Canadian Legion, with interpretation in English and in Inuktitut. Other gatherings are scheduled in Winnipeg on October 12 (Indian & Métis Friendship Centre) in Vancouver on October 26 (Vancouver Aboriginal Friendship Centre) in Ottawa on November 9 (Odawa Native Friendship Centre) and in Moncton on November 23 (Delta Beauséjour). Board Directors and staff will present the Foundation's annual report, provide an update on funded projects, and announce new initiatives. The public is welcome to attend each gathering, but participants must cover their own travel costs. The Foundation will provide refreshment and a light lunch.

The Aboriginal Healing Foundation's community-based healing strategy is accessible to Métis, Inuit, and First Nations people, both on and off reserve. The Foundation selects appropriate programs for funding on the basis of funding criteria developed in consultation with Aboriginal people. Because the Aboriginal Healing Foundation will carry out several funding cycles over its lifetime, everyone will have an opportunity to submit proposals in the years to come.

### For more information or to register:

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**(613) 237-4441** or our toll-free number: **(888) 725-8886**  
*Marilyn McIvor* (extension 245) or *Wayne Spear* (extension 237)  
 To register by Email: **special@ahf.ca**

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## The Story of THE SACRED TREE

For all the people of the earth, the Creator planted a sacred tree under which they could gather. It is where the people could find healing, power, wisdom and safety. The roots of the tree spread deep into the body of Mother Earth. Its branches reached up like praying hands to Father Sky. The fruits of the tree are all the good things that the Creator gave to the people. (Love, Caring, Justice, Respect, Generosity, Wisdom and Humility).

The Elders said that the life of the tree is the life of the people. If the people strayed too far away or if they turned against the tree and began to

*It is important for us not to die without a past. Our past tells us who we are, why the Creator put us in this world and where we go from here.*

destroy it, a great sadness would fall upon them. Many would be sick at heart and lose their way. They would stop dreaming and seeing visions. They would begin to argue among themselves, no longer able to tell the truth or be honest with each other. They would forget how to live in their own lands. Their lives would become filled with anger and sadness. Little by little they would poison themselves and everything they touch. Our ancestors, who have gone before us, said that these things would happen. But they also said that the tree would never die, and as long as the tree lives the people will live. They said the day would come when the people would wake up from a long sleep and begin to search again for the sacred tree.

Aboriginal people have been robbed of the gifts that the Creator gave to them, and the poison has spread throughout the sacred tree of life. The time has come to wake up the sleeping giant, and listen to its roar—for it has been foretold that the tree will never die, and as long as the tree lives the people live. Because all things are connected, the present generations need to hear the stories about what happened in order to make sense of our lives today and to be able to see clearly the road to the future.

## A Healing Journey Back to Wellbeing

### THE TEACHINGS

It is important for us not to die without a past. Our past tells us who we are, why the Creator put us in this world, and where we go from here. We are “Waloostookwiyik” (people of the dawn), the ones who are of the beautiful river.

The land and river took care of us. She was a paradise of full and plenty. The Waloostookwiyik were happy then, completely contented, for they had everything they needed to live. Our relationship with the world was based on our belief and understanding of the sacred web of life and the great cycle of harmony and balance of universal power. The powers of our people are connected to the power of the land, the Creator’s power. Our gentleness and reflective nature was wrongly interpreted by the newcomers as being a “general lack of initiative and a passive state.”

E. Tappin Adney traveled extensively on the St. John River. He wrote articles about what the old people told him. He wrote letters to the government on their behalf and recorded things he learned along the way. He states in his memoirs,

their disposition is racially mild, until aroused by unbearable outrages. The eastern peoples had no priest caste system; they had leaders whose position was acquired by the belief in the power of the mind. They possessed naturally, or could acquire and increase powers, by knowledge of formulas that we dismissed as pagan superstition. Every man and all women possessed the magic formula and therefore every Indian felt himself master of his circumstances, and of his own life.”

Adney goes on to say, “Christian concepts were unknown to Indians although they had a perfectly good code of morality. The Indian stood whenever he talked about religion. He did not grovel before this chiefs, nor in the presence of the Great Mystery (Kitchi-Mundoak), the creative forces of the universe. When he made prayer for some purpose he first cleaned himself in the sweat bath and then made a treaty

with the spirits of the Sun. And, asking for nothing, he sacrificed some article of real value to him. The Indian untouched by civilization was consciously holding a respectful place, not close to nature, but a part of it.

William Neptune, who has done great things for his people, has re-mained at Pas-samaquoddy. Like all the Neptunes, he is a pagan, reviving the old customs. He has challenged the dominance of the visiting priests by telling them, “a little of that religion of yours is all right, but we can’t live by it, the Indian could live by this own religion.”

Our entire relationship to the universe is contained in the belief that without the Sun and Moon, life could not exist on earth. All things with apparent power of self-motion possessed that which we call life and had a spiritual as well as a material character, with powers that were beyond explanation but were comprised in a feeling and nothing more.

Tappan Adney explains in great detail the extreme measures that were taken by church leaders to change our concept of our world in the name of civilization. “The catholic missionaries turned mun’do’uk into the devil, and some of the protestant missionaries considered Kitchi-Mundoak very near their concept of God. Hence, they invented the expression Kitchi-Mun’I’to, the great spirit, giving it a Christian sense. This was rendered as the word God, instead of the meaning Gods. Today



Photo: Richard Erdoes

Mun’do’uk means devil to the Mic-Macs and Maliseets, while the word Mun’I’to means the great spirit (one god) to our cousins in the north, the Ojibway.

The Mun’do’uk were the invisible creative forces of all motion and action of every kind, including the action of the mind, upon which the mere physical depended. This mystery in human form was called Med’ew’ul’in. (the transformer). These mystery men and women exercised great influence among the people. For this type of leader, there was no official act of choosing leaders and hereditary chiefs that did not have to be sanctioned by the public opinion of the people. •



## When You Look Into His Face

Edna H. King

When you look into his face  
please don't condescend  
and, try not to impute,  
for he is only trying to belong.  
You grumbled.  
I know you did, I read your eyes  
in that meeting last spring.  
You grumbled when I said victim—  
victim of society.  
But, he is.  
He is the reflection of hundreds  
of years of pain.  
Go ahead, read his face.  
Do you not see "residential school" branded on  
the forehead of the face that stares out through  
your classroom window?  
Do you not see the fear of a possible genocide?  
Look deep into his eyes.  
You can see the hidden tears—  
the same ones his grandparents shed  
as new "educations" were forced upon them.  
Your history books deceive you.  
Though you've tried to mask the realities  
and hide the truths he knows.  
When you look into his face  
do you not recognize the glint that shows  
that he can see through you deception?  
He knows he can never be you.  
His history, his science, his art—  
visual and written, his music,  
his religion, his values, his spirit  
are different from the ones you offer.  
I know you don't want to believe it,  
but it's true. There is a genuine  
distinctiveness for the First Nations people  
then the ambiance you've created  
on Turtle Island.  
We don't expect you to understand it.  
Simply respect it.  
The Native student you have in your class—  
label him anyway you want,  
misbehaved, hyperactive, slow learner,  
doesn't like to sit still, and refuses to listen  
Go ahead, call him all that,  
Only remember, whatever you label him,  
Realize also, that you are creating him.  
When you look into his face,  
realize the difference and support him.  
Help him grow. Help him become himself.  
Be his friend.  
You never know,  
someday he may return the favour.

Reprinted from *The Indigenous Voices*, July-August, 1993.



## Residential School History in focus

Shubenacadie is not the first residential school in eastern Atlantic Canada. The Sussex Indian School (1787-1826) was considered an industrial school, established to teach Indians domestics and the "art and mysteries of farming." After a hundred years of war, native people in New Brunswick were scattered throughout their territory, many hiding from scalp hunters. A document authored by Mary Peck states, "the story of that school, well documented in public records, reads like one of Charles Dickens lurid accounts of social injustice." The New England Company of London, England established several missionary schools. After the revolutionary war the company formed a board of commissioners made up of leading Loyalists in New Brunswick. The Company's aim was to "civilize" the Indians, by converting them to Protestantism and teaching them English. The largest of the schools was the Sussex Vale School in Sussex, New Brunswick.

The graduating Indians were promised land, a cow, and some tools to start their own farming. This promise never did become a reality in the lives of those who attended this school. In fact, history records show that the Anglican Church were perpetrators who were just as criminal, destructive and evil as the Catholics later turned out to be.

Settlers took money that was meant for the Indian children attending the school and used it for their own benefit. By the 1800s, during the darkest hour in the history of Maliseets and Mi'kmaq, babies were bought as young as 11 months of age with food and blankets. These children were placed in foster care among the English settlers around Sussex until they were seven, when they were then apprenticed out as farm hands and house maids. Lands were promised, but most were claimed by the company. Many were left living on the fringe of the white settlement, begging to be hired by the settlers. Total disconnection from aboriginal families, community, and Nation was a legacy of this initiative.

For survival aboriginal family members had to forget about those who were taken, never to be spoken of again. The choices were either to give up the babies or to perish from starvation and/or exposure.

St. Mary's is made up of four families of Paul's. The records show a registration of children attending the Sussex Vale School in 1788. They list seven Paul children. James Paul is believed by some to be a brother of the late Isaac Edward Paul, the grandfather of one Paul family presently living in the community. Census shows a record of two Paul children born at the right period of time: Isaac Paul and James Paul, three years different in age. Oral history continues to be told of the 40s, 50s and 60s —stories of babies being killed and buried under the cement basement of the school.

The perpetrators are buried in a cluster, amongst each other, at the Anglican Cemetery in present day Sussex. Their headstones proudly display their names. "In loving memory of" George Arnold and his son Oliver Arnold (a reported rapist and sex offender) who brought disaster to many of the Indian children. Another is George Leonard, prominent Loyalist and Treasurer of the New England Company's board of Commissioners. The Commissioners were General John Coffin, Solicitor, Governor Thomas Carleton, and Judge Isaac Allen. This is the same Judge Isaac Allen who fraudulently stole "Savage" Island" (Ekpahak) from the Maliseets of the St. John River —the direct ancestors of the people presently living at St. Mary's. The stories continue to be told.

Scandal prompted the New England Company to investigate the School. What they found forced immediate closure in 1826, one generation prior to the opening of the Shubenacadie Residential School.

## FAMILY

Year 2000



### Aboriginal Statistics

According to the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, there are 610 First Nations in Canada, including 52 different cultural groups and more than 50 languages.

The total Aboriginal population of Canada in 1999 is estimated at 1,377,900: 390,300 status Indians on reserve; 284,500 status Indians off reserve; 426,800 non-status Indians; 215,300 Métis and 61,000 Inuit.

The Aboriginal population is growing fast. The on-reserve status Indian population is growing at a rate of 2.1 per cent as the off-reserve status population grows by 2.7 per cent annually –about twice the non-Aboriginal rate. From 1999 to 2009, the Status Indian population is expected to grow by 19 per cent, compared to about 10 per cent for the non-Aboriginal population.

Aboriginal people are relatively young, with more than 60 per cent of reserve residents under the age of 30.

Aboriginal people live across Canada, but there are high concentrations in the territories and western provinces.

Sixty-four per cent of the communities have fewer than 500 residents, while just five per cent have more than 2,000.

Fifty-three per cent of the registered Indian population over age 15 reported employment income in 1995 compared to 66 per cent of all Canadians in the same age group. For status Indians to reach the average Canadian employment rate, 10,000 to 18,000 jobs annually would have to be created for the next 10 years.

Our **FAMILY** ... is our first world. This is where we learn how to be human beings, to talk, to think, to feel and to behave, in the ways of our people and our culture. Our deepest values and beliefs, our sense of right and wrong, begin in our family... our childhood experiences with our grandparents, our parents, brothers and sisters and other people in our first family. That's the foundation for our life and our identity. When we think about our losses and grief, we must include family if those connections were broken for us.

### RESOURCES AND REFERENCES ON SUICIDE IN ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES

#### General information

Suicide prevention and crisis intervention among Aboriginal Youth (United States): [www.indian-suicide.org](http://www.indian-suicide.org)

*There is quite a lot of depression and suicide in our communities. How can we deal with this?* Canadian Health Network: [www.canadian-health-network.ca/faq-faq/aboriginal\\_peoples-autochtones](http://www.canadian-health-network.ca/faq-faq/aboriginal_peoples-autochtones)

Suicide, read this first:

[www.metanoia.org/suicide/](http://www.metanoia.org/suicide/)

Suicide and depression:

[www.hc-sc.gc.ca/real/suicide/e/text.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/real/suicide/e/text.html)

Measuring up:

[www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpb/lcdc/brch/measuring/mu\\_y\\_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpb/lcdc/brch/measuring/mu_y_e.html)

Suicide among Manitoba's Aboriginal people, 1988 to 1994

Brian Malchy,\* MD; Murray W. Enns,\* MD; T. Kue Young,† MD, DPhil; Brian J. Cox,\*‡ PhD:

[www.cma.ca/cmaj/vol-156/issue8/1133.htm](http://www.cma.ca/cmaj/vol-156/issue8/1133.htm)

Suicide in the Northwest Territories, a descriptive review:

Sandy Isaacs, Susan Keogh, Cathy Menard and Jamie Hockin

[www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpb/lcdc/publicat/cdic/cdic194/cd194c\\_e.html](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hpb/lcdc/publicat/cdic/cdic194/cd194c_e.html)

#### Statistics

Suicide Statistics:

[www.befrienders.org/info/statistics](http://www.befrienders.org/info/statistics)

GDSourcing —Research and Retrieval—

Aboriginal suicide (list of sites providing statistical data on suicide):

[www.gdsourcing.com/works/faqsuici.htm](http://www.gdsourcing.com/works/faqsuici.htm)

#### Research Reports/Studies

*Colonization, Indian Policy, Suicide, and Aboriginal Peoples*, Glen Coulthard: [www.ualberta.ca/~pimohte/suicide.html](http://www.ualberta.ca/~pimohte/suicide.html)

*Aboriginal Suicide is different.*

Professor Colin Tatz, Centre for Comparative Genocide Studies, July 1999: [www.aic.gov.au/crc/oldreports/tatz/index](http://www.aic.gov.au/crc/oldreports/tatz/index)

*Report: Suicide in Canada.* Update of the task force on Suicide in Canada:

[www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca) (Mental Health Division – Health Services Directorate)

A new study produced by Pierre Tremblay, associate researcher in suicide at the University of Calgary, shows that homosexual and bisexual men are nearly 14 times more at risk than heterosexuals for a serious suicide attempt. According to the survey, nearly two-thirds of young men who try to take their own life are gay or bisexual. Full details of the survey can be found on-line: [www.virtualcity.com/youthsuicide/](http://www.virtualcity.com/youthsuicide/)

*Suicide in Children, Adolescents and Seniors: Key Findings and Policy implications.* [www.nfh.hc-sc.gc.ca/publicat/execsumm/dyck.htm](http://www.nfh.hc-sc.gc.ca/publicat/execsumm/dyck.htm)

#### Useful sites

[www.nativeweb.org/resources/society\\_culture/health](http://www.nativeweb.org/resources/society_culture/health)

[www.rochford.org/suicide/resource/sites/details](http://www.rochford.org/suicide/resource/sites/details)

#### Sites with lists of publications

Suicide Information & Education Centre (SIEC): [www.siec.ca/list.html](http://www.siec.ca/list.html)

Aboriginal Nurses Association of Canada: [www.anac.on.ca/explorer/publications.html](http://www.anac.on.ca/explorer/publications.html)

BC Institute Against Family Violence: [www.bcifv.org/cataog.html](http://www.bcifv.org/cataog.html)

Native Health Research database —suicide: <http://129.24.33.43/NHRD/silverStream/Meta/Agents/Types/agtSearcharticles>

Australian information on youth suicide: [www.virtualcity.com/youthsuicide/news/australia](http://www.virtualcity.com/youthsuicide/news/australia)

Zagehdowin:

[www.anishnabek.ca/zagehdowin/suicide.htm](http://www.anishnabek.ca/zagehdowin/suicide.htm)

# Residential Schools in Canada



*NB: the terms "boarding school" and "hostel" were often used to describe institutions built prior to 1923*

## • British Columbia

**Alberni Indian Residential School** (Port Alberni Indian Residential School); Port Alberni; opened 1920; closed 1973

**Ahousaht Indian Residential School**; Ahousaht; opened 1901; closed 1950

**All Hallows Indian Residential School**; Yale; opened 1884; closed 1920

**Christie Indian Residential School** (New Christie Indian Residential School; Kakawis Indian Residential School); Tofino (Meares Island); opened 1900; closed in 1973; new school built in 1974; closed in 1983

**Cowichan Catholic Convent School**; Cowichan; opened 1863; closing date unknown

**Friendly Cove Day School**; Yuquot; opened 1930; closed 1964

**Greenville Mission Boy's Boarding School**; Naas River; opened 1863; closing date unknown

**Kamloops Indian Residential School** (St. Louis Mission Indian Residential School; St. Ann's Academy); Kamloops; opened 1890; closed 1978

**Kitimaat Indian Residential School** (Elizabeth Long Memorial School for Girls); Kitimaat; opened 1883; closing date unknown

**Kootenay Indian Residential School** (St. Eugene's Indian Residential School; St. Mary's Indian Residential School); Cranbrook; opened 1898; closed 1970

**Kuper Island Indian Residential School**; Chemainus; opened 1890; closed 1975

**Lejac Indian Residential School**; Fraser Lake; opened 1910; new building in 1922; closed 1976

**Lower Post Indian Residential School**; Lower Post; opened 1940; closed 1975

**Methodist Coqualeetza Institute**; Chilliwack; opened 1886; closed 1937; later became the Coqualeetza Hospital

**Metlakatla Indian Residential School**;

Metlakatla; opened 1891; closed 1962; combined Anglican and Methodist

**Port Simpson Methodist Girl's School**; Port Simpson; opened 1863; closed 1950

**Presbyterian Coqualeetza Indian Residential School**; Chilliwack; opened 1861; closed 1940

**Roman Catholic Coqualeetza Indian Residential School**; Chilliwack; opened 1890; closed 1941

**Sechelt Indian Residential School**; Sechelt; opened 1912; closed 1975

**Squamish Indian Residential School** (St. Francis Indian Residential School; St. Paul's Indian Residential School); North Vancouver; opened 1898; closed 1959

**St. George's Indian Residential School** (Lytton Indian Residential School); Lytton; opened 1901; new school built in 1928; closed 1979

**St. Mary's Mission Indian Residential School**; Mission; opened 1861; closed 1984

**St. Michael's Indian Residential School** (Alert Bay Indian Residential School); Alert Bay; opened 1929; closed 1975

**Thomas Crosby Indian Residential School**; Port Simpson; opened 1879; closed 1950

**Victoria Catholic Convent School**; Victoria; opened 1863; closing date unknown

**Williams Lake Indian Residential School** (Williams Lake Industrial School; Caribou Indian Residential School; St. Joseph's Mission); Williams Lake; opened 1890; closed 1981

**Yale Indian Residential School**; Yale; opened 1900; closing date unknown

**Yuquot Indian Residential School**; Yuquot; opened 1901; closed 1913

## • Alberta

**Assumption Indian Residential School** (Hay Lakes Indian Residential School); Hay Lakes; opened 1953; closed 1965

**Blue Quill's Indian Residential School** (Lac la Biche Boarding School; Hospice of St. Joseph); Lac la Biche; opened 1962; moved to Brocket in 1898 (Sacred Heart Indian Residential School; Saddle Lake Boarding School); moved lastly to St. Paul in 1931 (St. Paul's Boarding School); in 1970, became the first Native-administered school in Canada

**Convent of Holy Angels Indian Residential School** (Holy Angels Indian Residential School; Our Lady of Victoria Indian Residential School); Fort Chipewyan; opened 1902; closed 1974

**Crowfoot Indian Residential School**; Cluny; opened 1909; closed 1968

**Dunbow Industrial School** (St. Joseph's Industrial School; High River Industrial School); High River; opened 1888; closed 1939

**Edmonton Industrial School**; St. Albert; opened 1919; closed 1960

**Ermineskin Indian Residential School**; Hobbema; opened 1916; closed 1973

**Fort Smith Indian Residential School** (Breyant Hall); Fort Smith; opened 1955; closed 1970

**Immaculate Conception Indian Residential School** (Blood Indian Residential School; St. Mary's Mission Indian Residential School); Stand-Off; opened 1884; new school built in 1911 in Cardston; Stand-Off location closed in 1926; Cardston location closed in 1975

**McDougall Orphanage and Residential School** (Morley Indian Residential School); Morley; opened 1886; closed 1949

**Old Sun's Indian Residential School** (North Camp Residential School; White Eagle's Residential School; Short Robe Indian Residential School); Gleichen; opened 1894; closed 1912; new building erected in 1929; closed 1971

**Peigan Indian Residential School** (Victoria Jubilee Home); Brocket; opened 1892; closed 1965

**Red Deer Industrial School**; Red Deer; opened 1889; closed 1944

**Sarcee Indian Residential School**; Calgary; opened 1894; closed 1930

*continued...*

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**St. Albert's Indian Residential School;** St. Albert; opened 1941; closed 1948

**St. Andrew's Indian Residential School;** Whitefish Lake; opened 1895; closed 1950

**St. Barnabas Indian Residential School;** Sarcee; opened 1899; new school built in 1912; closed 1922

**St. Bernard Indian Residential School** (Grouard Indian Residential School); Grouard; opened 1939; closed 1962

**St. Bruno Indian Residential School** (Joussard Indian Residential School); Joussard; opened 1913; closed 1969

**St. Cyprian's Indian Residential School;** Brocket; opened 1900; new school built in 1926; closed 1962

**St. Francis Xavier Indian Residential School;** Calais; opened 1890; closed 1961

**St. Henri Indian Residential School** (Fort Vermilion Indian Residential School); Fort Vermilion; opened 1900; closed 1968

**St. John's Indian Residential School** (Wabasca Residential School); Wabasca; opened 1895; new school built in 1949; closed 1966

**St. Martin Boarding School;** Wabasca; opened 1901; closed 1973

**St. Paul Des Métis Indian Residential School;** St. Paul; opened 1898; closed 1905

**St. Paul's Indian Residential School;** Cardston; opened 1900; closed 1972

**St. Peter's Indian Residential School** (Lesser Slave Lake Indian Residential School); Lesser Slave Lake; opened 1900; closed 1932

**Sturgeon Lake Indian Residential School;** Sturgeon Lake; opened 1907; closed 1957

**Youville Indian Residential School;** Edmonton; opened 1892; closed 1948

• Saskatchewan

**Battleford Industrial School;** Battleford; opened 1883; closed 1943

**Beauval Indian Residential School;** Beauval; opened 1895; closed 1983; now Meadow Lake Tribal Council's Beauval Indian Education Centre

**Cowesses Indian Residential School** (Marieval Indian Residential School) Marieval; opened 1936; closed 1975

**Crowstand Indian Residential School;** Kamsack; opened 1888; closed 1913

**St. Michael's Indian Residential School** (Duck Lake Indian Residential School); Duck Lake; opened 1892; closed 1964

**Emmanuel College;** Prince Albert; opened 1865; closed 1923

**File Hills Indian Residential School** (File Hills Colony School); Okanese Reserve; opened 1889; closed 1949

**Gordon Indian Residential School;** Punnichy; opened 1889; new school built in 1911, burned down in 1929; closed 1975

**Guy Indian Residential School;** Sturgeon Landing; opened 1926; closed 1964

**Ile-à-la-Crosse Indian Residential School;** Ile-à-la-Crosse; opened 1878; closing date unknown

**Lake La Ronge Mission Indian Residential School;** La Ronge; opened 1914; new school built in 1920; closed 1947

**Muscovequan Indian Residential School;** Lestock; opened 1932; closed 1981

**Prince Albert Indian Residential School** (All Saints Indian Residential School; St. Albans Indian Residential School); Prince Albert; All Saints and St. Albans opened in 1865; amalgamated in 1951; closed in 1964

**Qu'Appelle Indian Residential School** (Fort Qu'Appelle Indian Residential School; Lebret Indian Residential School); Lebret; opened 1884; school burned down in 1908; closed 1969

**Regina Indian Residential School;** Regina; opened 1890; closing date unknown

**Round Lake Indian Residential School;** Whitewood; opened 1886; closed 1950

**St. Anthony's Indian Residential School** (Onion Lake Catholic Indian Residential School); Onion Lake; opened 1891; closed 1968

**St. Barnabas Indian Residential School** (Onion Lake Indian Residential School); Onion Lake; opened 1893; school burned down in 1943; closed 1951

**St. Phillips Indian Residential School** (Keeseekoose Day School); Kamsack; opened 1899; closed 1965

**Thunderchild Indian Residential School** (Delmas Indian Residential School); Delmas; opened 1933; school was burned down by students in 1948

• Manitoba

**Assiniboia Indian Residential School;** Winnipeg; opened 1957; closed 1973

**Birtle Indian Residential School;** Birtle; opened 1889; closed 1975

**Brandon Industrial School;** Brandon; opened 1892; became a Residential School in 1923; closed 1975

**Cross Lake Indian Residential School** (Norway House Roman Catholic Indian Residential School); Cross Lake; opened 1915; closed 1942

**Elkhorn Indian Residential School** (Washakada Indian Residential School); Elkhorn; opened 1888; closed 1919 as CP railroad purchased land on which school was built; school reopened in 1925; closed 1949

**Fort Alexander Indian Residential School;** Fort Alexander; opened 1906; closed 1970

**Guy Hill Indian Residential School;** The Pas; opened 1955; closed 1974

**Lake St. Martin Indian Residential School;** Fisher River; opened 1874; new school built in 1948; closed 1963

**MacKay Indian Residential School;** The Pas; opened 1915; closed 1933; reopened in Dauphin in 1955; closed 1980

**Norway House Methodist Indian Residential School;** Norway House; opened 1900; closed 1974

**Pine Creek Indian Residential School** (Camperville Indian Residential School); Camperville; opened 1891; closed 1971

**Portage la Prairie Methodist Indian Residential School;** Portage la Prairie; opened 1896; closed 1975

**Portage la Prairie Presbyterian Indian Residential;** Portage la Prairie; opened 1895; closed 1950

**Sandy Bay Indian Residential School;** Sandy Bay First Nation; opened 1905; closed 1970

**St. Boniface Industrial School;** St. Boniface; opened 1891; closed 1909

**St. Paul's Industrial School** (St. Rupert's Land Industrial School); Selkirk County; opened 1886; closed 1906

**Waterhen Indian Residential School;** Waterhen; opened 1890; closed 1900

• Ontario

**Albany Mission Indian Residential School** (Fort Albany Residential School); Fort Albany; opened 1912; closed 1963

**Alexandra Industrial School for Girls;** Toronto; opened 1897; closing date unknown

**Alnwick Industrial School;** Alderville; opened 1838; closed 1966; worked in partnership with Mount Elgin Indian Residential School

**Bishop Horden Memorial School** (Moose Factory Indian Residential School; Moose Fort Indian Residential School); Moose Factory; opened 1907; closed 1963

**Cecilia Jeffrey Indian Residential School;** Kenora; opened 1900; closed 1966

**Chapleau Indian Residential School** (Saint John's Indian Residential School); Chapleau; opened 1907; closed 1950

**Fort Frances Indian Residential School** (St. Margaret's Indian Residential School); Fort Frances; opened 1902; closed 1974

**Kenora Indian Residential School;** Kenora; opened 1949; closed 1963

**McIntosh Indian Residential School;** Kenora; opened 1924; closed 1969

**Mohawk Institute Residential School** (Mohawk Manual Labour School; Mush Hole Indian Residential School); Brantford; opened 1850; closed 1969

**Mount Elgin Indian Residential School**; Muncey Town; opened 1848; closed 1948; worked in partnership with Alnwick

**Singwauk Indian Residential School** (Wawanosh School for Girls; Singwauk Hall); Garden River; burned down six days after opening on September 23<sup>rd</sup> 1873; moved to Sault Ste Marie in 1873; Wawanosh School for Girls opened in Sarnia in 1877; Singwauk and Wawanosh combine to form a larger school in Sault Ste Marie in 1934; closed in 1971; currently houses Algoma University

**Sioux Lookout Indian Residential School** (Pelican Lake Day School); Sioux Lookout; opened 1911; closed 1973

**Spanish Indian Residential School**; Spanish; opened 1883; closed 1965

**St. Anne's Indian Residential School**; Fort Albany; opened 1936; closed 1964

**St. Joseph's Indian Boarding School** (Fort William Indian Residential School); Fort William; opened 1936; closed 1964

**St. Mary's Indian Residential School**; Kenora; opened 1894; closed 1962

**Wikwemikong Indian Residential School** (Wikwemikong Day School; Wikwemikong Manual Labour School); Manitowaning; day school opened 1840; became a residential school in 1879; closed in 1963

• Quebec

**Amos Indian Residential School** (St. Marc's Indian Residential School); Amos; opened 1948; closed 1965

**Fort George Anglican Indian Residential School** (St. Phillip's Indian Residential School); Fort George; opened 1934; closed 1979

**Fort George Catholic Indian Residential School**; Fort George; opened 1936; closed 1952

**La Tuque Indian Residential School**; La Tuque; opened 1962; closed 1980

**Pointe Bleue Indian Residential School**; Pointe Bleue; opened 1956; closed 1965

**Sept-Iles Indian Residential School**; Sept-Iles; opened 1952; closed 1967

• Nova Scotia

**Shubenacadie Indian Residential School**; Shubenacadie; opened 1922; closed 1968;

• Yukon

**Aklavik Anglican Indian Residential School** (All Saints Indian Residential School); Shingle Point; opened 1927; moved to Aklavik 1934 due to overcrowding

**Baptist Indian Residential School** (Yukon Indian Residential School); Whitehorse; opened 1900; closed 1968

**Carcross Indian Residential School** (Choooutla Indian Residential School; Caribou Crossing Indian Residential School; Forty Mile Boarding School); opened as Forty Mile Indian Residential School in Forty Mile (north of Dawson) in 1891; moved to Carcross in 1910; closed 1969

**St. Paul's Indian Residential School** (St. Paul's Hall); Dawson; opened 1920; closed 1943

**Yukon Hall**; Whitehorse; opened 1956; closed 1965; residences for local day school students

**Fort Resolution Indian Residential School**; Fort Resolution; opened 1867; closing date unknown

**Fort Simpson Indian Residential School**; Fort Simpson; opened 1920; closed 1970; Bompas Hall, Lapointe Hall, St. Margaret's Hall (names of residences); combined Roman Catholic, Anglican and non-denominational

**Hay River Indian Residential School** (St. Peter's Mission Indian Residential School); Hay River; opened 1898; closed 1949

**Yellowknife Indian Residential School** (Rocher River Day School); Yellowknife; opened 1948; closed 1970; Akaitcho Hall (name of residence)

• Nunavut

**Chesterfield Inlet Indian Residential School**; Chesterfield Inlet; opened 1929; closed 1970; Turquetil (name of residence)



*Shubenacadie Indian Residential School –Mount St. Vincent Motherhouse Archives*

• NWT

**Aklavik Anglican Indian Residential School** (All Saints Indian Residential School); Aklavik; formerly in Shingle Point; opened 1936; closed 1959

**Aklavik Catholic Indian Residential School** (later Inuvik Indian Residential School); Aklavik; opened 1925; closed 1952; Stringer Hall and Grollier Hall (name of residences)

**Fort McPherson Indian Residential School**; Fort McPherson; opened 1898; closed 1970; Fleming Hall (name of residence); non-denominational

**Fort Providence Indian Residential School** (Providence Mission Indian Residential School); Fort Providence; opened 1867; closed 1953

**Frobisher Bay Indian Residential School**; Frobisher Bay, Baffin Island; opened 1965; closing date unknown



featured

project

## Tsleil-Waututh

### HEALING THE NATION

*When words were used such as  
 "maybe they are too lazy"  
 we took all those negative words and threw them  
 out of the window  
 during our residential school  
 healing team meetings.  
 The members of our Nation covered every receipt,  
 every time schedule and every detail. Which  
 proves that TOGETHER WE CAN  
 ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING THAT  
 COMES OUR WAY.*

The project will address the legacy of abuse left by the residential schools at all levels. By all levels we mean not only the survivors of that experience and the children and children's children of those survivors, but other dimensions of the legacy as well. We must recognise, for example, that the legacy extends back at least one generation to the parents of children who were removed from their homes. Many of our elders may not have been directly involved in residential schools, but were violated in the broader sense of having their children removed and subjected to the general devastation of the residential school era and its community impact.

We will design, develop and implement a variety of unique healing programs to address the healing needs of Tsleil-Waututh members who are impacted directly or subject to intergenerational effects.

#### THESE PROGRAMS WILL INCLUDE...

- Educational circles geared to displacing the shame and blame from the direct and intergenerational victims of the residential school. This includes removal of the "blaming the victim" response so common in and destructive to our people.
- Healing circles to deal directly with the devastation in individual lives —survivors as well as later generations. There will be specific focus on youth-oriented healing circles designed to provide a sense of history and to explore the process leading to the residential school syndrome, and to instil pride, thus helping to destroy the cultural self-hatred which is one of the lingering effects of the residential school syndrome. There will also be women's circles designed to return voice to women.

Family mentoring and other mentoring programs.

Cultural retention and renewal to include:

- Spiritual ceremonies and teaching/renewal
- First Nations constitutional development process
- Back to the land camps and activities
- Language renewal/retention programs and activities
- Cultural activities (e.g. canoe racing, traditional music, singing and dancing)

A theme of the initiative will be to deal with the denial syndrome in a positive way that allows for healing at individual, family and community levels.

### FOCUS ON ... COMMUNITY MOBILISATION

Most of the programming came from the minds and hearts of our community members. Our philosophy became "What you can do for yourself and the Nation" rather than "what can we do to change you." We focused on the strength that lies within. We hired 90% community members rather than hire outside support workers that would leave after the program ends. We gave community members the chance to let us know how they can be part of this project. In response we had some people teach our youth to cook, teach our elders to knit, and help elders and youth make a drum. We bought jersey emblems for our youth and adult soccer teams if they agreed to fundraise for the remainder of the amount of money for their uniforms. We put trust in them and they came through. Some community members thought that we could not succeed with this style of programming, but we did. We started putting faith back into our people, even those members who were considered not talented enough. When words were used such as "maybe they are too lazy," we took all those negative words and threw them out of the window during our residential school healing team meetings. The members of our Nation covered every receipt, every time schedule and every detail. Which proves that "TOGETHER WE CAN ACCOMPLISH ANYTHING THAT COMES OUR WAY."

#### THE TAKAYA TOTS PROGRAM

The Takaya Tots program has been a positive place for our children and parents as well as a safe place for our Elders to visit. Each day has been filled with story time, tots learning their traditional dances, elders visiting our program, healthy snacks, and set schedules to help our children with daily routine.



*Debbie Parker and Carleen Thomas,  
Tsleil-Waututh Nation*

Many consider the Takaya Tots Program our most successful program. We have a teacher, an assistant and a cultural teacher all working with Elders, parents and our children. The success of this program is the growth of our parents and children. We have learned to weave cedar headbands, make traditional regalia and sing our traditional songs. We have learned some of our old legends and learned to say a few words in our language. We have learned to work as a community under a vision of providing a safe and healthy place for our children to grow and learn.

#### A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO ALL OUR CONTRIBUTORS

The information on the projects highlighted in this issue was provided by members of the project teams. We want to thank the following persons for accepting to share their experience and knowledge with all of us.

Eskasoni Mental Health and Social Work Services:  
 Dale Sharkey, Leta Bernard and George Marshall  
 (Tex)  
 Tsleil Waututh Project: Debby Parker and Carleen Thomas  
 St-Mary's: Alma Brooks, Brenda Robinson  
 Elder Joseph Paul: The story of the Sacred tree and  
 Waloostookwiyyik

#### S.O.S POETS

Thank you also to those poets, whose work we publish herefrom other sources. Do you know how hard it is to find you? PLEASE, to ALL poets out there in communities, young, older, already published or not, send us your thoughts, your work, in poems, prayers, chants or songs.

It is especially difficult to find poems that we can publish in our French newsletter. But we would love also to get poems and songs in your own language.

*continued from front cover*

Speakers and storytellers (who spoke in our language) participated throughout the three days. Bishop McDonald, from the Catholic Church, and Bishop George Lemmon, from the Anglican church, were observers at the gathering. These were the two churches that were involved in the residential schooling for Indians in the Atlantic region.

Much work was accomplished during the three days. Needs assessments were completed, and survivors were given the opportunity to share in circles as well as time for sharing with one another. They were provided one-on-one counselling when required. Survivors are looking forward to the next step in the process, when they address their issues and develop a plan of action for further healing.

A follow-up with each survivor was done before departure, and arrangements were made to ensure everyone got home to their respective places. Additional follow-up by telephone was made two weeks after people got home, to ensure that no one was having difficulty as a result of issues that had been discussed at the gathering.

After survivors were all safely on their way home, there was a debriefing session with staff, volunteers, organisers, community members and elders. People in this community had been touched very deeply during the three days of activity.

One barrier was the cost of travel over distances. Some of our family member survivors have to travel a long way to participate in the community-based healing process. We will be doing an analysis of this situation with the survivors to find some reasonable solution during the second year of our programming.

It is early in the healing process to be aware of all barriers to healing resulting from the total impact of sexual and physical abuse in the residential schools. Many more survivors must feel safe to share deeper issues. Healing takes time and must not be rushed. Continuity is essential for further healing work. It is important that support is available when needed; once they have committed themselves to a process of healing, residential school survivors would face yet another form of abuse if there were a sudden withdrawal of resources. Trust will be affected if there is not continuity in the healing process.

*It was important to show the acceptance of emotions without judgement. This provided a climate of understanding, support and strength. Even when the emotions were anger and frustration, there was no interjection or smoothing over. This is an important element of the healing process. People feel what they feel and there is no need to correct, deny, enhance or diminish these feelings.*

-Brenda Robinson, St. Mary's gathering project

#### FOCUS ON: GATHERING OF SURVIVORS

The St. Mary's "In Healing" program hosted the first ever Gathering in honour of the residential School survivors in the community. The three day gathering of Shubenacadie Indian Residential School survivors was planned, organized and facilitated by those community members who completed a ten week community based training program in Community Wellness, delivered by the Nechi Training Institute, as well as by professional and community volunteers.

The Shubenacadie Residential School was a combination School, Reformatory and Orphanage. It was situated in Nova Scotia, where all children from the Atlantic Region were taken.

Notices for the gathering were made by letters, newspapers and word of mouth, to ensure that no one was left out. Twenty five survivors were directly notified and, as the word spread, survivors from other reserves, Tobique, Woodstock and Oromocto made requests to attend. Letters were sent out to the community members at St. Mary's, inviting Elders, family, friends and other support persons.

One hundred and fourteen participants attended the gathering. Twenty five of them were direct survivors. Twelve of the survivors who attended were members of the St. Mary's First Nation. Eleven more members who had been invited changed their mind about attending, at the last minute.

The theme of the gathering was uniting family and community. Survivors were asked to select a trusted person to accompany them during the three days. Ironically, the event took place in the community's new Harold Sappier Memorial Elementary School, located in the centre of the St. Mary's community. What a better to hold a first ever gathering of survivors...such a far cry from the residential schools they had attended. It was hope for a better future for aboriginal children.

The objectives of the gathering were to bring survivors home to begin a process of reuniting important ties with family and community. To encourage cultural awareness and the sharing of history, building a knowledge base and restoring old memories; offering healing circles and initiate a first step in addressing issues, hurts and losses. The gathering also allowed us to do a needs assessment in the community and evaluate the activity itself.

The decision to include members of the clergy in this gathering was a hard one to make. After consulting with Elders, it was decided to invite a catholic bishop and an Anglican Bishop for one day as observers. This portion of the gathering was in plenary and speakers were sharing. They each spoke at the end of the day. They did not, however, offer words of validation, or apology for what happened, as we had hoped. For the most part they were silent observers. Some people were triggered by their presence, but were able to get through the day with no incidences.

#### Opening Ceremonies

An Altar of sweet grass, candles, sacred objects and other traditional medicines were set up in front of the semi circle of chairs in the gymnasium of the brand new school. Elder Margaret Paul of St. Mary's was asked to pray and sing in Maliseet, the language of our people. She smudge the room and the people, to set the spiritual tone for the day.

#### Welcome

A heart felt welcome was delivered by two band councillors, Candice Paul and Wayne Brooks.

"Welcome home. I acknowledge there must be feelings of all kinds coming back to the community. Families are important to any community. Please come and see me if there is anything I can do to make your week end as comfortable as possible. I would like to thank the organisers who worked hard to make this event possible. It makes me proud to know we have caring and giving people in our community. They are members who give so much and care so much, I am proud of them. Those survivors who are in the spirit world are also here with us today. I can feel the power of their presence in this room. I wish you the best during the week-end conference."

"Greetings. I welcome you here today also. I am honoured to be a part of this activity and that the Council asked me to welcome you on their behalf. I too have relatives who are survivors of Residential school. I am glad to be present to hear you share your stories and grief. With that, I say thank you."

#### Organisation

Speakers and helpers were presented and special announcements were made. Childcare workers were available to care for the children of the survivors. Permission to take pictures of family groups was acquired and those who would be uncomfortable with this, were completely respected.

A table of resources was made available to those who were interested in obtaining material on Maliseet history, Elders teachings and media updates. It was appropriate and educational to survivors that the gathering took place in the new Harold Sappier Elementary School at the heart of the community. If such a school had been available during the time the children were taken away, there might be a different story to tell today.

#### Code of Ethics

The organisers developed a code of ethics to be adhered to during the Survivors' gathering. It was distributed to everyone who attended. The code was developed in conjunction with several local survivors and professionals. The code dealt with the right to privacy, the right to informed consent, the right to information access.

#### Meals

Two meals a day were served on site. The sharing of food gave people a good chance to mingle and interact with each other in an informal and relaxed setting.

#### Healing circles

Healing circles were facilitated by the Elders in the evenings. This activity was closed, and involved only the survivors, the Elders and the helper of their choice. Nurses and social workers were also present. Some people felt some anxiety as talks proceeded, and they were free to come and go from the circle, as they felt the need. One on one counseling was available on site at all times. The healing circle was new for all but a couple of survivors present. It was the first experience for the majority. Other childhood abuse issues were triggered during the sessions and counsellors were made available to people, day and night. Future healing circles coupled with spiritual and cultural activities and ceremonies will be essential to the healing process for these survivors in the second stage of their work, in other words, continuity is important.

#### Closing ceremonies

During the gathering, the healing circles people were asked to write down losses, grievances and offer special prayers put on special pieces of paper symbols. These were then attached to a sacred flag, which was located on a special altar. The altar had been opened during a pipe ceremony, the day prior to the gathering. The altar held an assortment of old baskets that were made by the old people two or three generations ago. The sacred tobacco ties and medicines were present to work with.

At the ending of our gathering, all participants were asked to form a procession. Young boys and girls carried the sacred flags, then came the veteran's flags, then four young women carried the survivors' bundle. Elders came behind the people and cars carried those who could not walk. The procession walked through the community for most survivors the community that should have been their home. Memories were gathered during this walk and everyone proceeded to the sacred fire, that had been lighted and prepared in advance. This was located on a piece of land known as the old reserve. The bundle was then placed into the fire, at a ceremony, for transformation and closure.

This was a beautiful event. However, an oversight on the part of the organizers was that people should have gathered again at the school. Some people felt somewhat abandoned when everyone dispersed from the sacred fire site. This will certainly be taken into account at any future event. •



# Residential School Resources

*The following resource list is provided as a public service. The Aboriginal Healing Foundation does not endorse these materials. Included are books, articles, videos, audio tapes, reports and websites that address residential schools and/or their intergenerational legacy. This list is updated every issue. See earlier issues for other resources.*

## ARTICLES

Bull, Linda R. "Indian residential schooling: the Native perspective." *Canadian Journal of Native Education*. Vol.18 No. Supplement (1991): 1-63.

Grant, Peter R. "Settling residential school claims: litigation or mediation" in *Aboriginal Writes*. Canadian Bar Association National Aboriginal Law Section (January 1998).

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## BOOKS

Bryce, P.H. *The story of a national crime, being an appeal for justice to the Indians of Canada*. Ottawa: James Hope and Sons, 1922.

Dyck, N. *Differing Visions: administering Indian residential schooling in Prince Albert, 1867-1967*. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 1997.

Furniss, Elizabeth. *A Conspiracy of Silence: the care of Native students at St. Joseph's residential school, Williams Lake*. Williams Lake, B.C.: Cariboo Council, 1991.

Hodgson, Maggie. *Impact of residential schools and other root causes of poor mental health*. Edmonton: Nechi Institute, 1990.

Lascelles, Thomas A. *Roman Catholic Indian Residential Schools in British Columbia*. Vancouver: Order of OMI in B.C., 1990.

Morriseau, Calvin. *Into the Daylight: A Wholistic Approach to Healing*. Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1998.

Murphy, P.J., George P. Nicholas and Marianne Ignace, eds. *Coyote U: Stories and Teachings from the Secwepmc Education*

*Institute*. Penticton, B.C.: Theytus Books Ltd., 1999.

Teichroeb, Ruth. *Flowers on my grave: how an Ojibway boy's death helped break the silence on child abuse*. Toronto: Harpercollins Canada, 1998.

## REPORTS/THESES

Law Commission of Canada. *Institutional Child Abuse*. <http://www.lcc.gc.ca/en/forum/ica2000/index.html>

Marceau-Kozicki, Sylvie. "Onion Lake Indian Residential Schools, 1892-1943." M.A. Thesis, University of Saskatchewan, 1993.

Porter, E. "The Anglican Church and Native Education: residential schools and assimilation." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1981.

## WEBSITES

Aboriginal People and Residential Schools in Canada (a website of the University of Saskatchewan): <http://www.usask.ca/native-law/rsbib.html>, <http://www.usask.ca/nativelaw/rs.html> <http://www.usask.ca/nativelaw/rs2.html>

Assembly of First Nations (ADR, Alternative Dispute Resolution): <http://www.afn.ca/Residential%20Schools/Default.htm>

Bay Mills Community College (BMCC) Virtual Library: Three Fires Collection, boarding schools and residential schools: <http://www.bmcc.org/vlibrary/special/threefires/tfboardingschools.html>

Craven, James. "Judicial findings from the inter-tribal tribunal on residential schools in Canada." <http://kafka.uvic.ca/~vipirg/SISIS/resschool/tribunal.html>

*First Nations Periodical Index* <http://moon.lights.com/index2.html>

*Four Worlds Institute*, Residential Schools: <http://home.uleth.ca/~4worlds/4w/>

[resschool/directory.html](http://resschool/directory.html)

The Residential School Experience: One Nation's Story: [www.socserv2.mcmaster.ca/soc/courses/soc3k3e/stuweb/burnham/burnha04.htm](http://www.socserv2.mcmaster.ca/soc/courses/soc3k3e/stuweb/burnham/burnha04.htm)

Shubenacadie Indian residential School: [www.booth.k.12.nf.ca/prtojects/mi"kmaq/home.htm](http://www.booth.k.12.nf.ca/prtojects/mi)

## SURVIVOR GROUPS

*The Association for the Survivors of the Shubenacadie Indian Residential School*: Nora Bernard, 768 Willow Street, Truro, Nova Scotia, Canada, B2N5B6. Tel.: 902-893-4303 Canada.

*Please let us know if you have resources you would like to share with others.*

*Please look for more resources in future issues...*

## Reaching Us

237-4441/1-888-725-8886

*The Foundation's staff members are here to help you. Please call if we can be of service.*

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