

SETTLERS TAKE ACTION

HOW TO MAKE THIS MOMENT OF MOURNING A MOVEMENT FOR CHANGE

7 Ways Non-Indigenous folk can Take Action and Stand in Solidarity with the Indigenous People after 751 more unmarked graves have been found.



CONTENT WARNING
THIS POST DISCUSSES WRONGFUL
DEATH & ABUSE SUFFERED UNDER
RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

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It was announced on Thursday, June 24, 2021, that **751 unmarked graves** were found at **Marieval Indian Residential School in Saskatchewan**, likely **belonging to children**. This government-funded school, like many others, was designed to strip Indigenous children of their languages, cultures, identities and ultimately "take the Indian out of the child."

This brings the recent findings of children buried in unmarked, unreported graves at Residential Schools to **over 1000**. This is compounded by our knowledge of more than **4100 children who died in residential school who have already been identified**, a finding which in itself is unacceptable.

Painfully, this is likely not going to be the last of the findings, and we likely will never be able to account for the thousands of Indigenous children that never came home.

This news alone is horrific, but there is also **ongoing systemic violence** against the Indigenous people of this land that continues **to this present moment**. Indigenous people are still suffering from personal, intergenerational trauma *and* systemic oppression and violence.

We ask that you read this twice. Sit with the discomfort. Feel the weight of it. We cannot collectively work towards reconciliation without individually accepting the Truth.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Report was published **over 6 years ago**, outlining **94 Calls to Action**, meant to advance reconciliation and bridge the systemic gaps faced by Indigenous people, and yet we've seen **minimal to no progress** on it from our governments.

We love this country, but respectfully, we do not trust our elected officials to actually take meaningful action. **We do**, however, **trust and believe in you**, our community. Over this past year, we've built a relationship with each other, and we genuinely believe **the change our country needs lies in our generations, in people like all of us**.

We cannot wait for our leaders to take action. Even the most well-intending leaders are beholden to the **colonial structure** that is the Canadian system of government and a party system that is often focused more on winning re-elections than they are on the people they are being elected to serve.

Standing in solidarity **cannot be performative** in nature. We need to take action and sustain solidarity, **even when it is difficult**, until all 94 Calls to Action from the TRC are met.

We can do better than our history. We can meet the Indigenous people of this land with the compassion and solidarity they deserve. We can do this in a continuous and ongoing way. We can refuse to let our leaders and the media move on from this moment.

Your Next Steps

1. Learn About Whose Land You Live On

Remember Land Acknowledgements? Take it a step further by actually learning about whose traditional territories you live on. Check out **Native-Land.ca** for an interactive map.

2. Do Your Research

Now that you know whose traditional territory you live on, the next step is to actually learn about the Indigenous People who were the land's original caretakers. Google them, look up not only their history but also the current issues their communities face are and how you could help.

3. Read the Truth and Reconciliation Report

Take a look at the recommendations made by the landmark report released in 2015 and its **94 Calls to Action**.

Your Next Steps

4. Connect with your Elected Officials

Tell them to stop talking about how much they care and actually take action on the 94 Calls to Action from the TRC. Ask them directly what they are doing to make a change.

5. Be Public About Your Solidarity

The more non-Indigenous people take action and become vocal about their solidarity with the Indigenous people of this land, the more likely we are to create sustainable change. The more likely we will peak and hold the interest of politicians so that they radically shift the way they take action around this.

Amplify Indigenous voices on your social media, lend your support to the causes and bills they care about, and share your findings from Native-Land.ca. Do more than has been done by those before us.

6. Create Momentum Online

Hashtag **#SettlersTakeAction** to help start a movement around this moment.

Your Next Steps

7. Solidarity Against Canada Day 'Celebrations'

We acknowledge that after the past year, being able to gather on a holiday is a necessary part of our individual well-being. As a result, gathering on July 1st (in a COVID-safe way) may feel necessary.

However, we invite you not to celebrate but rather simply observe Canada Day as we believe this should be a period of national mourning.

We invite you to join us in **wearing black or orange** on July 1st in solidarity with the Every Child Matters campaign and **active resistance** against the typical *'thoughts and prayers'* response from elected officials.

An On Canada Project community member pointed out that, on average, Canadians spend about **\$91 on fireworks** on Canada Day. Regardless of how much you personally spend, if you are financially able to, we invite you to **donate \$91** (or what you can) **to The Indian Residential School Survivors Society (IRSSS).**

Donate to the IRSSS at: www.irsss.ca

I stand in **solidarity** with the Indigenous Peoples of the land now called Canada.

I acknowledge this moment of national mourning and pledge to observe Canada Day by wearing black or orange.

I will donate \$91 (or what I can) to The Indian Residential School Survivors Society.

I promise to be better than the non-Indigenous people of the past and practice solidarity with Indigenous people of this land.



Mental Health Resources

Support is available for anyone affected by the lingering effects of residential schools, and those who are triggered by the latest reports. The Indian Residential School Survivors Society (IRSSSS) can be **contacted toll-free at 1-800-721-0066.**



Take Action

Are you a Settler who wants to take action? Want to unlearn some history? Find helpful resources and ways to take action on our website:

www.oncanadaproject.ca/SettlersTakeAction

About Us

The On Canada Project launched on June 1, 2020, to address the gaping inequities in pandemic-related communications.

We've since grown to use our conversational, credible, compassionate and critical lens to talk about a variety of issues facing our country and the people who live in it.

Our goal is simple; we want to make it easy for Millennials and Gen Z in Canada to engage in public discourse, we want to make it easy for them to take action and champion change.

Why? Because we love Canada, but we also know that it's an imperfect nation with many social inequities, and we want it to be better. We do this work because we want to make it easier for folks to practice active allyship and champion change.

The best thing about us? We're a ragtag team of your friendly neighbourhood nerds and active citizens - 170 internet strangers that volunteer, some full-time, to make this project possible. We're grassroots, Millennial and Gen Z led, volunteer-based. Our executive leadership is comprised of a diverse group of women-identifying folk between the ages of 21-31 who have never met in real life. Our project is currently self-funded but accepting financial contributions.

SUPPORT OUR WORK

The On Canada Project project is self-funded and made up entirely of young Millennials and Gen Z volunteers.

If this free resource guide has been helpful and you want to help our team continue to bring a **conversational, critical, credible** and **compassionate** lens to information sharing in Canada, please consider financially contributing to our work.

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