



# *The Importance of Understanding the Root Cause of Indigenous Homelessness*

Presented by:

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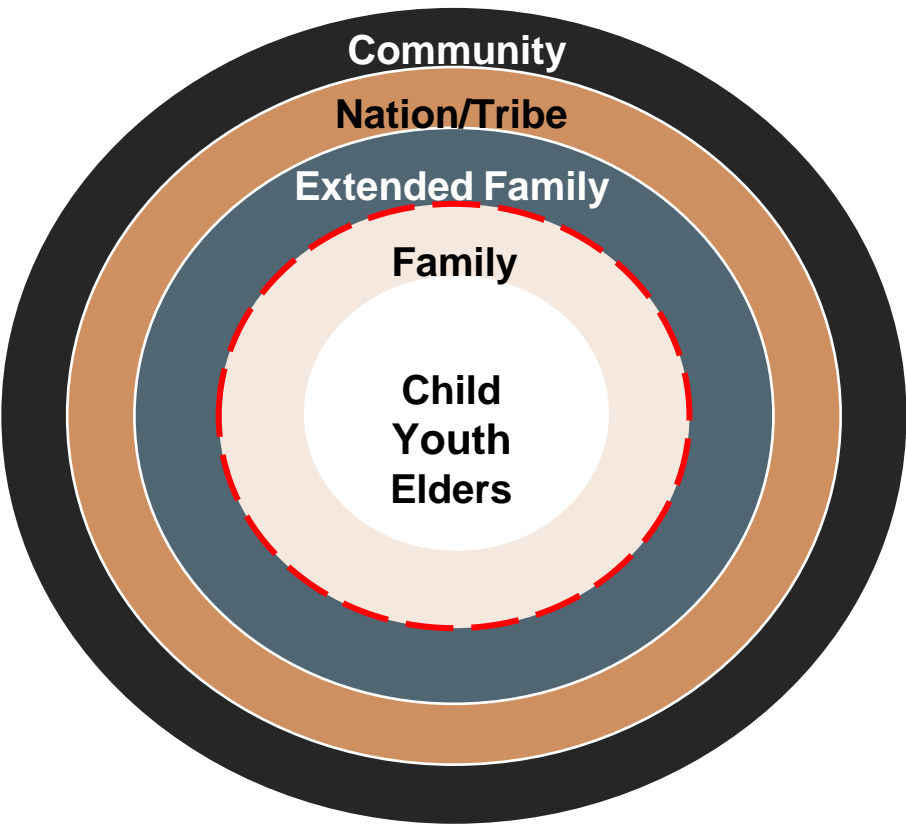


# What is Indigenous Homelessness?

Indigenous homelessness is a human condition that describes First Nations, Métis and Inuit individuals, families or communities lacking stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means or ability to acquire such housing. Unlike the common colonialist definition of homelessness, **Indigenous homelessness is not defined as lacking a structure of habitation; rather**, it is more fully described and **understood through a composite lens of Indigenous worldviews**. These include: **individuals, families and communities isolated from their relationships to land, water, place, family, kin, each other, animals, cultures, languages and identities**. **Importantly, Indigenous people experiencing these kinds of homelessness cannot culturally, spiritually, emotionally or physically reconnect with their Indigeneity or lost relationships.** (Definition by Aboriginal Standing Committee on Housing and Homelessness, 2012).



# LIFE BEFORE COLONIZATION



In my culture, my family structure looks a little different than the outside world. I don't have a great aunt because I call her Grandma. I don't have a great niece because she's my grandchild. It may seem complicated, but it's AMAZING! Let me show you.

## Dominant Society

Vs.

## My Culture



Great Aunt	becomes my	Grandma
Great Uncle	becomes my	Grandpa
2nd Cousin (male)	becomes my	Uncle
2nd Cousin (female)	becomes my	Auntie
Great Niece	becomes my	Granddaughter
Great Nephew	becomes my	Grandson



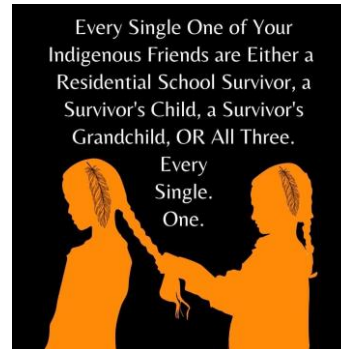
My own children call my 1st cousins auntie and uncle! That is super cool isn't it?! There's never a shortage of aunts and uncles in my culture!

We treat our nieces and nephews like our own kids.



# LIFE AFTER COLONIZATION

Stolen Land - Indian Act - Residential Schools and Day Schools - 60's scoop  
Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls – (MMIW)



- Loss for parents, and communities after children were forced – what they were left with
- Impact of abuse, neglect, connection, trauma, separation, starvation....
- Loss of Name and identity (given European Names, a Number a RS)
- Loss of Land
- Loss of Language
- Loss of Ceremony, medicines, ways of healing
- Loss of Children, Families, Parents (Children coming home to no parents, other siblings, grandparents)
- Loss of overall community
- Loss of Food, way of living
- Loss of Voice, Rights, Decision Making
- And so much more....

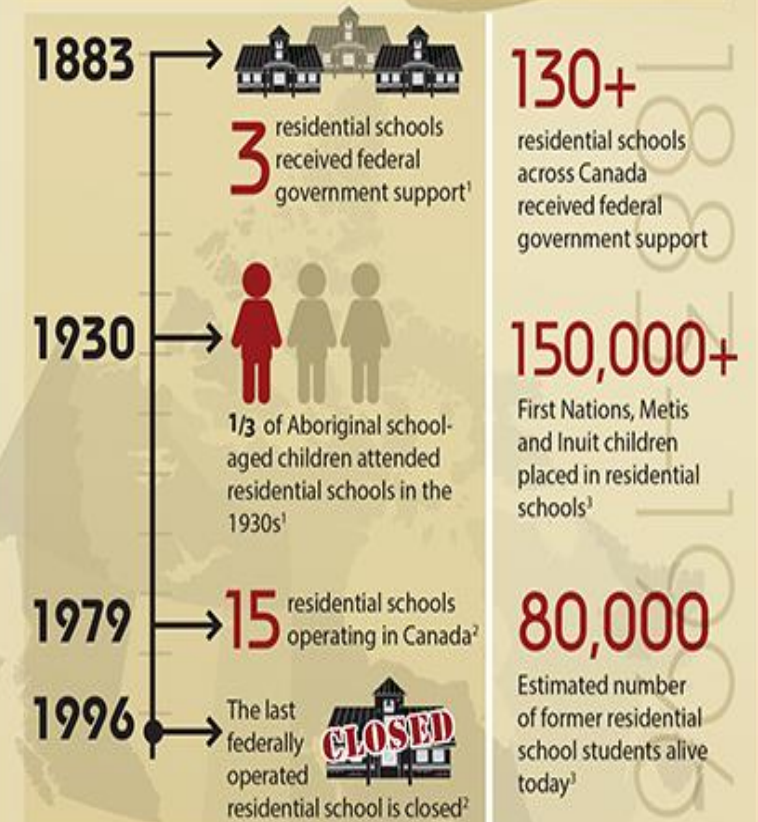


# Residential Schools in Canada



## A DARK LEGACY

100+ years of residential schools

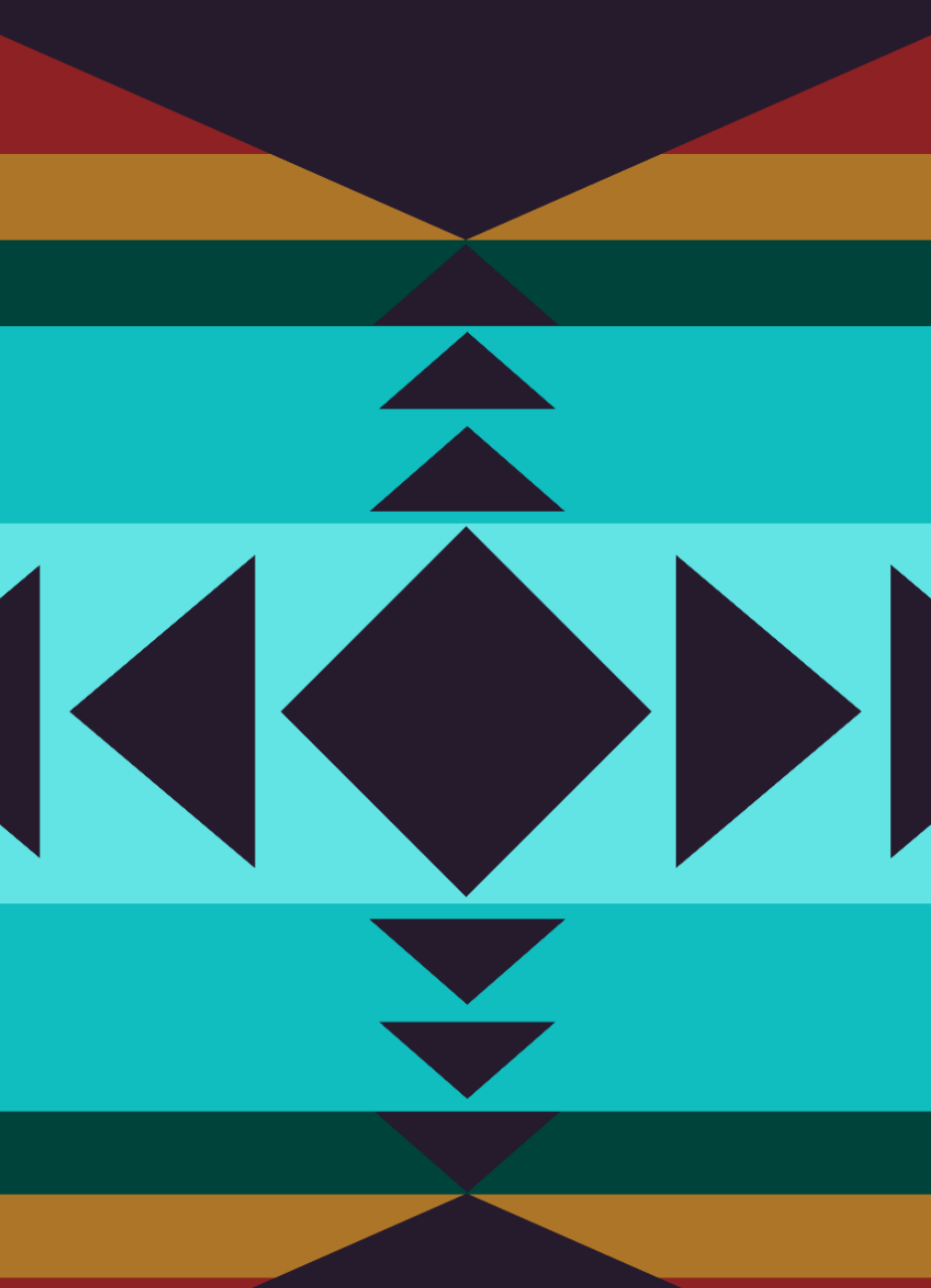


<sup>1</sup>Source: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Indian Residential Schools Overview

<sup>2</sup>Source: CBC [www.cbc.ca/news/canada/a-timeline-of-residential-schools-the-truth-and-reconciliation-commission-1.724434](http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/a-timeline-of-residential-schools-the-truth-and-reconciliation-commission-1.724434)

<sup>3</sup>Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Interim Report 2012





# Isadore Poorman

Residential School  
Survivor

"I was imprisoned"



[https://www.tiktok.com/@turtle.island.televised/  
video/6994161306207014149](https://www.tiktok.com/@turtle.island.televised/video/6994161306207014149)





# MAY 2021 - KAMLOOPS INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL

Heart shattering news:

**“Remains of 215 children found at Kamloops Indian Residential School.”**

- We knew all along
- Our people are grieving over the harsh reality of our babies and children that never made it home. And all the loss we have experienced...
- **Sept 30<sup>th</sup>** (2021)- recognized as the **National Day of Truth and Reconciliation**



**This banner lists the names of 2,800 children who didn't make it home from residential schools across Canada**

**#everychildmatters**



# We are Resilient!

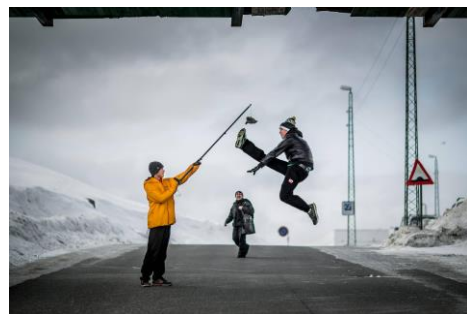
- We are Resilient people. “We are resilient because we had to be”.
- Resilient *before* colonization in how we lived, adapted various ways in living off the land
- Resilient *after* colonization – we are still here. Our Ancestors and Elders have carried on the knowledge, traditions, language, stories, and more through some of the darkest time in today’s history from this land.
- **Laughter brings healing.**

**Indigenous people  
laughing together is  
some strong medicine**

## Connection and Relationship ...



**Culture/Ceremony**



**Sports**



**Arts & Music**



# WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Learn about the traditional land you are on ... the place you call 'home'
- Educate yourself, your family, your community... Trainings, Independent learnings, etc
- Research and learn what it means to be a true ally and advocate
- Know of Indigenous specific supports, programs, centers, teachings, ways of living, traditions, etc.
- Hire Indigenous Staff, Leaders, Board Members
- Provide adequate pay, honorarium, protocols and supports for Indigenous Elders/Staff/Consultants...
- Review and be open to changing your policies, procedures, forms, assessments that are appropriate, inclusive, culturally safe
- Don't be performative, be aware of tokenism



# New! 2-Day Training on Indigenous Homelessness

## DAY 1

### **Part 1: Community/Our Roots**

*Learnings on what life was like before colonization, including Connection, Community, and traditional Family Dynamics*

### **Part 2: Colonization & the Effects**

*Learnings on the Government relations, the Indian Act, Residential Schools, 60's Scoop and Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.*

### **Part 3: Resiliency**

*Resiliency of our people before, during and after colonization, as well as components we carry today as Indigenous people.*

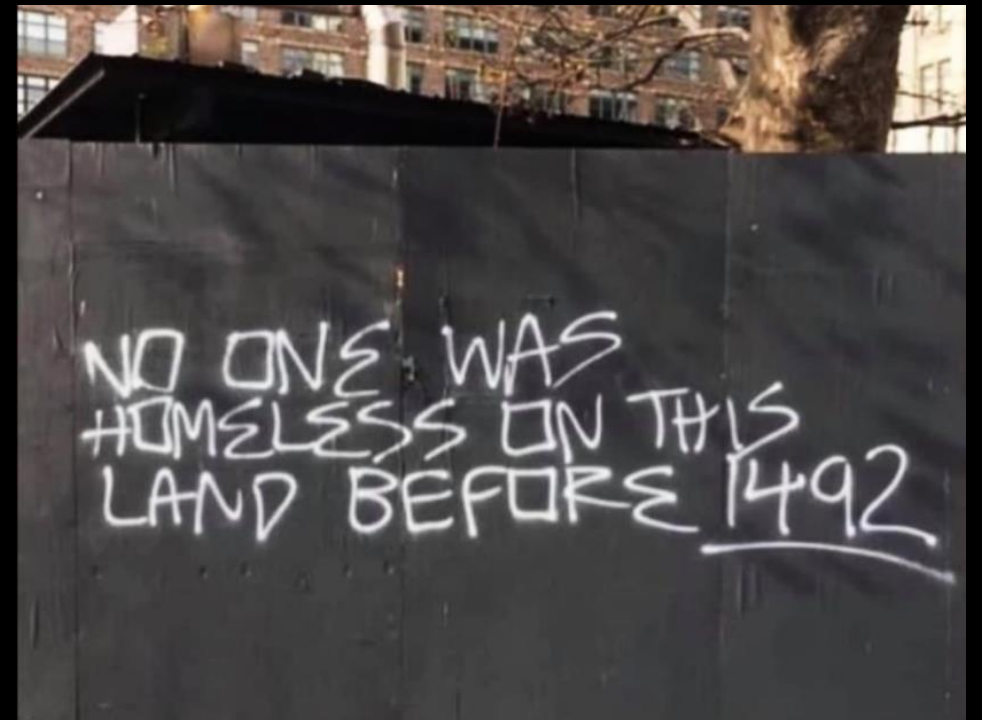
## DAY 2

### **Practical Components, Learnings and Takeaways (catered to each community's needs and expectations)**

- *Reflections of assumptions, privilege and power*
- *Examples of Indigenous case management models*
- *Challenges and barriers our Indigenous people face today. (ex. disconnection, loss of identity, racism, systemic challenges, etc)*
- *Practical tools to working with Individuals and Families and the challenges faced.*
- *Importance of Relationship and Connection*
- *Cultural Teachings, Protocols and other learnings*

# WHY IS TRAINING ON INDIGENOUS HOMELESSNESS IMPORTANT?

“Now, we must face this reality: Reconciliation between Canadians and Indigenous peoples is the most pressing, important and critical issue of our time. No relationship in Canada is more important, yet no relationship has been more exploited, denied, and ignored... The dire poverty, health and safety situations, and marginalization Indigenous peoples face in every aspect of Canada’s practices and policies cannot be denied any longer.” (Clearing the Plains)





# QUESTIONS?

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Hiy Hiy - Thank you!

