

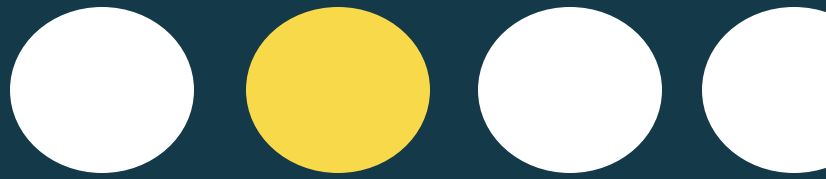
Mount St. Mary Hospital Reconciliation Handbook

June 2025



Table Of Contents

Background	3
Timeline of colonialism	5
United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and Truth and Reconciliation Commission Commitments	7
Truth and Reconciliation	11
Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) BC	14
Doctrine of Discovery	17



Catholic Church Actions and Commitments	20
Recent Developments	22
Mount St. Mary Hospital's Commitments to Date	25
Resources	30
Lexicon of Terminology and Notes	34



01

Background

In Canada, Catholic healthcare services are coordinated through several key alliances and organizations dedicated to providing compassionate care rooted in Catholic values.

Catholic Health Alliance of Canada (CHAC)

The CHAC is an alliance of 14 sponsor organizations across Canada. One of the 14 sponsors is the sponsor for Mount St. Mary Hospital, the Sisters of St. Ann Apostolate's. In health care, a Catholic sponsor refers to a religious entity linked to the Catholic Church that oversees and ensures a health care organizations adherence to Catholic values, ethical directives, and mission.

(Health Ethics Guide (2012): CHAC

https://www.chac.ca/documents/422/health_ethics_guide_2013.pdf)

These institutions encompass a spectrum of care, including acute and teaching hospitals, palliative, mental health and addictions services, rehabilitation, housing, and long-term care. CHAC is committed to honouring each person as sacred and focuses on serving the most vulnerable in communities.

These alliances and health care organizations having Catholic identity collaborate to uphold the tradition of Catholic health care in Canada, emphasising ethical reflection, innovation, and a commitment to service the most vulnerable populations.

There has been some significant work done by the CHAC leading to today. This work is documented further in this handbook for organisational memory.

Mount St. Mary Hospital was founded in 1941 by the Sisters of St Ann. MSMH operates independently See more background on Mount St. Mary Hospital on page 25.

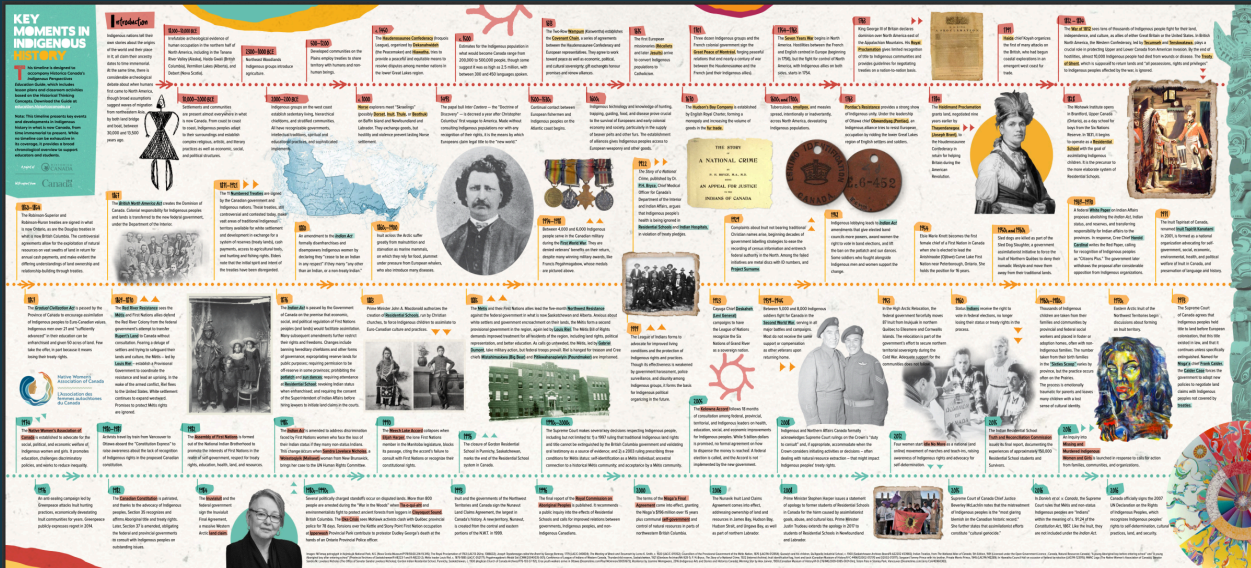




02

Timeline of colonialism

To see an enlarged image, and zoom in, visit: <https://education.afn.ca/afntoolkit/web-modules/plain-talk-7-first-nations-historical-timelines-and-maps/timelines/>





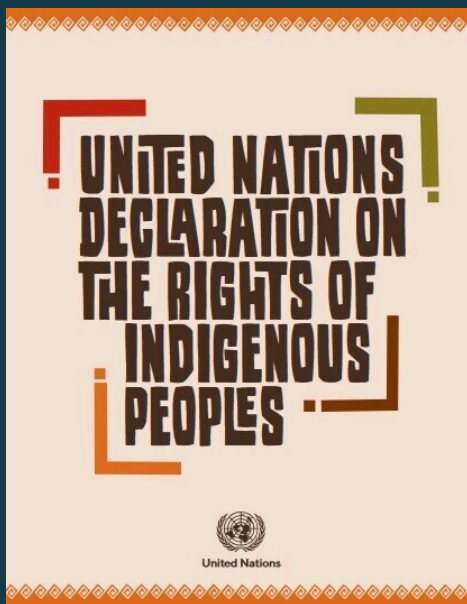
03

**United Nations
Declaration on the
Rights of Indigenous
Peoples and Truth and
Reconciliation
Commission
Commitments**

Significant articles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) encompasses 46 articles detailing the rights of Indigenous peoples globally. While each article holds significance, several are particularly pivotal:

Article 3: Right to Self-Determination



Affirms Indigenous peoples' right to freely determine their political status and pursue their economic, social, and cultural development.

Article 4: Autonomy and Self-Government

Recognizes the right to self-govern in matters relating to internal and local affairs, including financing autonomous functions.

Article 5: Preservation of Political, Legal, Economic, Social, and Cultural Institutions

Ensures the right to maintain and strengthen distinct institutions while participating fully in the state's political, economic, social, and cultural life.

Article 8: Protection from Forced Assimilation

Protects against forced assimilation or destruction of culture, including actions aimed at depriving integrity as distinct peoples or dispossessing lands and resources.

Article 10: Prohibition of Forced Removal

States that Indigenous peoples shall not be forcibly removed from their lands or territories without free, prior, and informed consent and just compensation.

Article 11: Right to Cultural Practices

Affirms the right to practice and revitalize cultural traditions and customs, including the restitution of cultural property taken without consent.

Article 12

Right to Spiritual Practices and Sacred Sites:

Many spiritual practices and sacred sites are often preserved and upheld by Elders. This article protects these practices and their leaders.

Article 13: Right to Languages

Ensures the right to revitalize, use, develop, and transmit languages, oral traditions, and literatures to future generations.

Article 19: Participation in Decision-Making

Mandates that states consult and cooperate in good faith with Indigenous peoples to obtain free, prior, and informed consent before adopting measures that may affect them.

Article 26: Rights to Lands, Territories, and Resources

Recognizes the right to lands, territories, and resources traditionally owned or occupied, including legal recognition and protection of these lands.

Article 31: Intellectual Property Rights

Affirms the right to maintain, control, protect, and develop cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and traditional cultural expressions, including intellectual property over such materials.

These articles collectively emphasize the importance of self-determination, cultural preservation, and participation in decision-making processes, serving as a framework for the protection and promotion of Indigenous rights worldwide.

Article 34

Right to Maintain Distinct Institutions and Traditions:

Elders are key to maintaining Indigenous customs and institutions. This article recognizes the importance of sustaining traditional practices.

Articles that uphold access to health care and health and well-being:

- **Article 21:** Emphasizes the right of Indigenous peoples to the improvement of their economic and social conditions, including health.
- **Article 23:** Affirms the right of Indigenous peoples to determine and develop priorities and strategies for exercising their right to development, particularly in health programs.
- **Article 24:** Explicitly states that Indigenous peoples have the right to their traditional medicines and health practices, and to access all social and health services without discrimination.

These articles collectively underscore the importance of accessible, culturally appropriate health care services for Indigenous communities, recognizing their right to maintain traditional health practices and ensuring equitable access to modern health care systems.



04

Truth and Reconciliation



The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) issued 94 Calls to Action to address the legacy of residential schools and advance reconciliation. While all are important, several have been particularly impactful:

Call to Action 1: Child Welfare

Urges governments to reduce the number of Indigenous children in care by providing adequate resources to keep families together. This addresses the overrepresentation of Indigenous children in the child welfare system.

Call to Action 5: Culturally Appropriate Parenting Programs

Calls for the development of culturally appropriate parenting programs for Indigenous families, recognizing the importance of cultural continuity in child-rearing practices.

Call to Action 6: Education

Seeks the repeal of Section 43 of the Criminal Code of Canada, which justifies the use of physical discipline on children, acknowledging its disproportionate impact on Indigenous children.

Call to Action 13: Language and Culture

Urges the federal government to acknowledge that Indigenous rights include language rights, emphasizing the preservation and revitalization of Indigenous languages.

Call to Action 18: Health

Calls upon governments to recognize and implement the health-care rights of Indigenous peoples, addressing disparities in health outcomes.

Call to Action 43: United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

Calls upon governments to fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as the framework for reconciliation.

Call to Action 57: Professional Development and Training for Public Servants

Urges governments to provide education to public servants on the history of Indigenous peoples, including the legacy of residential schools, to foster better relationships.

Call to Action 62: Education for Reconciliation

Calls for the development of age-appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Indigenous peoples' contributions to Canada, in consultation with Indigenous peoples.

For a comprehensive list of all 94 Calls to Action, you can refer to the TRC's official publication. ([Government of Canada Publications](#))



05

Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) BC

The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (DRIPA) is British Columbia's legislative framework to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) within the province. Enacted in November 2019, DRIPA outlines specific obligations for the provincial government and its agencies to align laws and policies with UNDRIP's principles. (https://bctreaty.ca/timeline_milestones/bc-dripa-action-plan/)

Key Requirements Under DRIPA:

1. Alignment of Laws:

- The provincial government must ensure that all existing and future laws are consistent with UNDRIP. This involves reviewing and amending legislation to uphold Indigenous rights as outlined in the Declaration.

2. Action Plan Development:

- DRIPA mandates the creation of an action plan, developed in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous peoples, to achieve the objectives of UNDRIP. This plan outlines specific measures and timelines for implementation.



3. Annual Reporting:

- The government is required to prepare annual reports, in consultation with Indigenous peoples, detailing progress made toward aligning laws with UNDRIP and implementing the action plan. These reports are submitted to the Legislative Assembly and made publicly available.

4. Consultation and Cooperation:

- DRIPA emphasizes the necessity for meaningful consultation and cooperation with Indigenous peoples in decision-making processes that affect their rights and interests. This includes developing policies, programs, and services in partnership with Indigenous communities.

5. Establishment of the Declaration Act Secretariat:

- To support the implementation of DRIPA, the province established the Declaration Act Secretariat. This central agency guides and assists the government in ensuring that provincial laws align with UNDRIP and are developed in consultation and cooperation with Indigenous peoples.

Through DRIPA, British Columbia commits to a transformative process of reconciliation, aiming to recognize and uphold the rights of Indigenous peoples as articulated in UNDRIP. This legislative framework sets a precedent in Canada for integrating international Indigenous rights standards into provincial law.

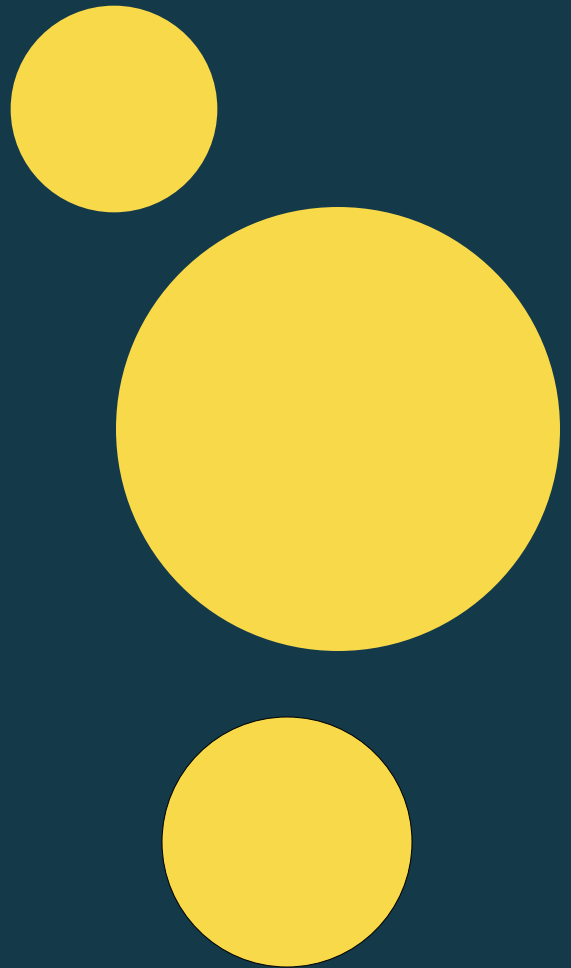


06

Doctrine of Discovery

The Doctrine of Discovery refers to a series of 15th-century papal bulls that granted Christian explorers the right to claim lands they "discovered" and assert dominance over Indigenous populations. This doctrine became a foundation for European colonialism, justifying the seizure of territories and the subjugation of non-Christian peoples. It established a legal and moral framework that denied Indigenous sovereignty and facilitated widespread dispossession and cultural erasure.

In the context of reconciliation, the Doctrine of Discovery represents a historical injustice that continues to impact Indigenous communities. Addressing its legacy is crucial for reconciliation efforts, as it involves acknowledging past wrongs, repudiating doctrines that justified colonization, and restoring rights and lands to Indigenous peoples. For instance, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Call to Action 47 urges governments to repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous lands, such as the Doctrine of Discovery, and to reform laws and policies that continue to rely on such concepts.




In summary, the Doctrine of Discovery has had profound and lasting effects on Indigenous peoples, and confronting its legacy is essential to advancing reconciliation and establishing equitable relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. (<https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/04/un-expert-hails-vatican-rejection-doctrine-discovery-urges-states-follow>).






07

Catholic Church Actions and Commitments



In Canada, Catholic health care services collaborate through several key alliances and organizations dedicated to providing compassionate care rooted in Catholic values. Notable among these is the Catholic Health Alliance of Canada (CHAC) of which Mount St. Mary Hospital is a member. There was a concerted effort during the Truth and Reconciliation process to participate and act with diligence. And in 2021, when ground-penetrating radar showed 215 potential graves of children were found at Tk'emlups te Secwepemc, the CHAC, Mount St Mary Hospital and other health care organizations with Catholic identity issued a statement of support and concern. The Mount St. Mary Hospital Board of Directors issued a statement, "Our Commitment to Indigenous Peoples" in May 2025.



Building from there, Mount St. Mary Hospital has begun its first steps of reconciliation work.





08

Recent Developments

The Catholic Church in Canada has issued several key statements acknowledging its role in the historical injustices faced by Indigenous peoples, particularly concerning the residential school system. Notable declarations include:

Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops (CCCCB) Apology (September 2021): The CCCC formally apologized for the Church's involvement in the residential school system, expressing profound remorse and acknowledging the suffering inflicted upon Indigenous communities. They committed to supporting healing and reconciliation initiatives ([CIRNAC](#)).

Pope Francis's Apology (April 2022): During a meeting with Indigenous delegates at the Vatican, Pope Francis apologized for the conduct of some members of the Catholic Church in Canada's residential school system, expressing sorrow and shame for the abuses suffered ([CBC](#)).

Pope Francis's Apology in Canada (July 2022): On Canadian soil, Pope Francis reiterated his apology, acknowledging the Church's role in the "catastrophic" policy of Indigenous residential schools and the lasting impact on Indigenous cultures and communities.

Pope Francis has acknowledged the flaws inherent in the Doctrine of Discovery. On March 30, 2023, the Vatican formally repudiated this doctrine, which had historically been used to justify the colonial-era seizure of Indigenous lands. This repudiation was articulated in a joint statement by the Dicastries for Culture and Education and for Promoting Integral Human Development, clarifying that the Doctrine of Discovery is not part of the Catholic Church's teachings and that the associated papal bulls "have never been considered expressions of the Catholic faith." ([Vatican Press](#))

This formal rejection followed Pope Francis's earlier actions, including his 2022 visit to Canada, where he apologized for the Catholic Church's role in the abuses committed within the residential school system.

During this visit, Indigenous leaders had called upon the Pope to renounce the Doctrine of Discovery, highlighting its detrimental impact on Indigenous communities. (Al Jazeera)

The Vatican's repudiation represents a significant step in addressing historical injustices and advancing reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, acknowledging the doctrine's role in facilitating colonial exploitation and oppression.



Figure 1: Anishinaabe artist Danielle Robinson created these 215 butterflies to cover the residential school representing the children flying home.



09

Mount St. Mary Hospital's Commitments to Date

Mount St. Mary Hospital, located at 861 Fairfield Road in Victoria, British Columbia, stands on the traditional territories of the Lekwungen-speaking peoples, specifically the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations. These Indigenous communities have inhabited and stewarded the land for millennia, engaging in various cultural activities throughout the region.

While specific records detailing cultural activities at the exact site of Mount St. Mary Hospital are limited, the broader area, including nearby locations such as Beacon Hill Park (known as Meegan) and the surrounding coastal regions, was integral to the Lekwungen peoples' way of life. These areas were utilized for seasonal gatherings, resource harvesting, and spiritual practices.

The establishment of Mount St. Mary Hospital in 1941 by the Sisters of St. Ann marked a significant development in the area's more recent history. The Sisters arrived in Victoria in 1858 with the mission to provide education and health services to both new settlers and Indigenous peoples.

Their contributions are acknowledged, though it's important to recognize the complex and often challenging interactions between colonial institutions and Indigenous communities during that period. (Heritage BC)

Today, MSMH is embarking on its own Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) working with local community Indigenous members and also establishing a Reconciliation Organisational Sponsor Team (ROST). The ROST will be the MSMH focal point for actions, activities and questions for staff, residents and partners.



St. Ann's Academy, located in Victoria, British Columbia, has a rich history as an educational institution established by the Sisters of St. Ann. Founded in 1858, the Academy began as a modest log cabin schoolhouse, marking the Sisters' commitment to education in the region. (St Ann's Academy) Over the years, the Academy expanded significantly. The main building, constructed between 1871 and 1910, served multiple purposes: it was a girls' Catholic boarding and day school for grades 3–12, accommodated boys in kindergarten through grade 3, and functioned as the Provincial House, convent, and novitiate for the Sisters.

Regarding its role in Indigenous education, St. Ann's Academy was not classified as an Indian Residential School. However, it did play a part in the broader educational landscape for Indigenous students. First Nations orphans and girls were sent to the Academy from other missions operated by the Sisters of St. Ann.

Additionally, the Academy's student register from the early years lists 'Les Indiens' among the pupils, indicating the presence of First Nations students. (St Ann's Academy)

In summary, St. Ann's Academy functioned as both a boarding and day school, primarily serving non-Indigenous students but also educating Indigenous children, particularly orphans and girls from other missions. While it was not designated as a residential school, its involvement with Indigenous students reflects the complex history of Indigenous education in Canada.

While there may not be detailed documentation of specific cultural activities at the precise location of Mount St. Mary Hospital, the surrounding region holds deep cultural and historical significance for the Lekwungen-speaking peoples. The hospital's establishment reflects a chapter in the area's colonial history, intertwined with the longstanding presence and traditions of the Indigenous communities.

The area now known as downtown Victoria, British Columbia, is located on the traditional and ancestral lands of the Lekwungen-speaking peoples, who are primarily represented today by the Songhees Nation and the Esquimalt Nation. These Indigenous communities have lived in and cared for this land for millennia. Here are key details about the Indigenous communities historically tied to this region:

Lekwungen-Speaking Peoples

- The Lekwungen peoples, often referred to as the Songhees and Esquimalt, are part of the Coast Salish cultural group. Their traditional territory includes much of what is now the Greater Victoria area, including downtown Victoria.
- Lekwungen refers to their language, which is part of the Coast Salish family.
- The region was a hub for fishing, hunting, and gathering, with rich resources from the surrounding ocean, forests, and lands.

Songhees Nation

- The Songhees (also spelled Songish or Songessi) traditionally occupied areas on both sides of the Strait of Juan de Fuca.
- In the downtown area, key sites of significance include areas near James Bay, Beacon Hill Park, and the Inner Harbour, which were used for fishing, shellfish harvesting, and other traditional activities.
- "Songhees" derives from their word for the cluster of rocks near Esquimalt, a site that held great spiritual and cultural significance.

Esquimalt Nation

- The Esquimalt Nation's traditional territory overlaps with that of the Songhees. Historically, their village sites and resource-gathering areas were concentrated in the Esquimalt Harbour and adjacent regions.
- Like the Songhees, the Esquimalt people relied on the land and water for food, trade, and cultural practices.

Key Historical Sites

- Camosack Village: A significant Lekwungen village site was located near what is now the Inner Harbour in downtown Victoria.
- Beacon Hill Park: Known to the Lekwungen people as Meegan, this area was used for spiritual practices, gatherings, and seasonal food harvesting.
- Clover Point and the Gorge Waterway: Important areas for fishing, canoe travel, and resource harvesting.

Other Indigenous Influences

- While the Lekwungen-speaking peoples are most closely tied to downtown Victoria, their territory intersects with those of other nearby Coast Salish Nations, including:
 - W̱SÁNEĆ Peoples (Saanich): The W̱SÁNEĆ traditional territory includes the Saanich Peninsula and overlaps with Lekwungen lands.
 - Cowichan Tribes: Their territory is farther north but historically intersected with Lekwungen peoples through trade and intermarriage.

Today, the Songhees Nation and Esquimalt Nation continue to advocate for the recognition of their rights, title, and stewardship of their lands. Downtown Victoria remains an important cultural and historical space for these communities, and their presence is increasingly acknowledged through public art, place names, and land acknowledgment.





10

Resources



Educational video clips, interactive tools or lists

- [One Minute Facts](#) – First Peoples Law Society (Explains all the major Indigenous issues in one-minute sessions)
- The Witness Blanket- a national interactive look at Residential Schools and their impact. Video and background: <https://witnessblanket.ca/>
 - If you click on explore the blanket tab, then you can hover over images and see who contributed and what it means. (There is also an app from the app store on this that you can download and explore very easily.)<https://witnessblanket.ca/explore>
 - Picking Up the Pieces: Residential School Memories and the Making of the Witness Blanket – Carey Newman and Kristie Hudson, 2019
- Residential School Resources:
 1. National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation: <https://nctr.ca/records/reports/>
 2. Survivor Stories: https://legacyofhope.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Speaking-my-truth_-PDF-EN.pdf
 3. Detailed account of Residential Schools: <https://legacyofhope.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Where-are-the-children-PDF-EN.pdf>
 4. Timeline of colonialism: This one is a short one - <https://nctr.ca/exhibits/residential-school-timeline/>
 5. This link is a very detailed timeline: <https://legacyofhope.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/100-years-of-loss-PDF-EN.pdf>
 6. Interactive timeline: <https://legacyofhope.ca/wherearethethechildren/>

- Allyship: <https://legacyofhope.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/WHAT-YOU-CAN-DO-PDF-EN.pdf>
- How to Be an Ally: <https://legacyofhope.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Ally-Toolkit-2024-EN.pdf>
- What You Can Do: <https://legacyofhope.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/WHAT-YOU-CAN-DO-PDF-EN.pdf>

Non-Fiction

- The Orange Shirt (children 7-10) and Phyllis's Orange Shirt Story (children 4-6) – Phyllis Webstad.
- Speaking Our Truth: A Journey of Reconciliation – Monique Gray Smith, 2017
- Speaking My Truth: Reflections on Reconciliation & Residential School. Selected readings chosen by: Shelagh Rogers, Mike DeGagné and Jonathan Dewar, Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 2012.

Fiction (local or BC Indigenous authors)

- Richard Wagamese
 - Indian Horse, 2013
 - Medicine Walk, 2014
 - Embers, 2016
- Darrel J McLeod
 - Mamaskatch: A Cree coming of Age, 2018
 - Peyakow: Reclaiming Cree Dignity, 2021
- Michelle Good
 - Five Little Indians, 2020
 - Truth Telling: Seven Conversations about Indigenous Life in Canada, 2024



National Fiction

- Tanya Talaga:
 - Seven Fallen Feathers, 2017
 - All our Relations: Finding the Path Forward, 2018
 - The Knowing, 2024
- Niigaan Sinclair:
 - Wînipêk: Visions of Canada from an Indigenous Centre, 2024

Children's Books from Indigenous authors in Victoria

- Monique Gray Smith
 - Tilly: A Story of Hope and Resilience, 2013
 - My Heart Fills with Happiness, 2016
 - You Hold Me Up, 2017
 - Speaking our Truth, 2017
 - Braiding Sweetgrass for Young Adults, 2022
 - I Hope, 2022
 - Circle of Love, 2024
- George Littlechild
 - The Spirit Giggles Within, 2003
 - What's the Most Beautiful Thing You Know About Horses, 2003
 - This Land is My Land, 2014
 - A Man Called Raven, 2014

Indigenous Alumni of University of Victoria Reading List:

<https://www.uvic.ca/alumni/info-for/indigenous-alum/indigenous-alum-reading-list.php>



11

Lexicon of Terminology and Notes

1. Aboriginal Peoples

The term “Aboriginal Peoples” was used for a long time by the Government of Canada to refer to Indigenous Peoples. You may see this term from time to time still, for example in government documents. It is now considered to be an outdated term when talking about Indigenous peoples and is not necessarily appropriate for white settlers or other non-Indigenous people to use.[1] [2] [3]

2. AFN

The Assembly of First Nations (AFN) is a national advocacy body which meets at different times through the year to discuss matters, challenges, and issues put forth by chiefs, other elected officials, or proxies of different First Nations across Canada. The AFN has and can provide recommendations and collaborate on policy with different government bodies. There is also the B.C. AFN which is a provincial body whose mandate is generally the same to that of the national AFN in addition to providing oversight to the government of B.C. on title to land and treaty rights of First Nations throughout B.C.[4] [5]



3. Birth alerts

The practice of birth alerts was done in B.C. by the social welfare system. The concept is that health staff would notify the social welfare body of the birth of a child when that child's safety and health might be at risk with the known parents or caregivers. This practice has indiscriminately harmed Indigenous children and families in B.C. as the practice became a form of structural and systemic racism and violence perpetuated against Indigenous families, as birth alerts were consistently in practice for many Indigenous families. This practice only ended in B.C. in 2019.[6] [7]

4. Ceremony

Just as there many Indigenous cultures, there are many different Indigenous ceremonies. Ceremonies can be a place to gather to celebrate or mourn, to practice different parts of culture, and may be tied to the different ecological aspects of the land or seasons. To be "in ceremony" is generally considered to be a sacred and spiritual place and space. Different ceremonies have been at risk of eradication by colonialism such as the potlach in B.C. Different Indigenous communities may protect ceremonies from those outside the culture if they feel it is necessary, and it is a best practice to assume that it is closed to those outside of the culture until invited in.[8] [9]

5. Child protective services

Child protective services is usually a provincially mandated service to oversee the safety and protection of children. In B.C., as well as many other regions in Canada and around the world, the government agencies that provide these services have been systemically and institutionally harmful to Indigenous families and children with higher numbers of Indigenous children being removed from their homes and communities and placed in care. The government of B.C. is continuously working to provide equity to Indigenous children which includes designating Indigenous-run child protection agencies.[10] [11]

6. Comprehensive Claim

Comprehensive claims always refer to land claims, and they may also be called “modern treaties.” These claims are usually brought forth in areas that have never been settled in a treaty or other legal process, and under Indigenous title and ownership of the land is being pursued by the Indigenous group against the government of Canada.^[12]



7. Creator

Creator belongs to a worldview and belief that is grounded spiritually about the origin of life and the power and force of this belief in shaping life and referred to and part of many different Indigenous cultures in Canada and around the world. This might sound similar to a spiritual belief in God; however, Creator can be constituted culturally very different, even across Indigenous Peoples, and it is important to listen and try to understand how different Indigenous cultures refer to either Creator or other spiritual beliefs.^[13]

8. Erasure

The concept and lived reality that genocidal policies and practices have or have attempted to erase Indigenous cultures and languages. There are many programs and efforts to restore languages and practices within Indigenous communities, which can involve partnerships with settler institutions like government departments or universities. Due to this, there is also a distinct lack of Indigenous representation in all levels of systems, institutions, governments, and other spaces in Canada of Indigenous ways of being and knowing. Organizations can practice inclusion by making space for people to practice their culture within the organization's space.^[14]
^[15]

9. First Nations

A specific cultural designation of Indigenous Peoples in B.C. and Canada. There are over 200 First Nations in BC alone, and over 35 First Nations languages.^[16] ^[17] ^[18]

10. FNHA

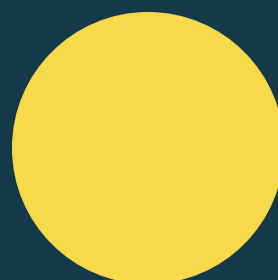
The First Nations Health Authority (FNHA) is an Indigenous provincial health authority in B.C. First Nations in B.C. began meeting and collaborating on different frameworks for coordinating and improving health services for First Nations families and children in B.C. around 2006-2008. From these meetings the mandate for FNHA was created and since this time it has steadily grown into a large organization which provides support to the over 200 First Nations in B.C. The First Nations Health Authority operates as a distinct organization which collaborates and partners with varying government bodies and other organizations.[19]

11. Forced relocation

The forceful removal and relocation of different Indigenous cultural groups and communities of people to other lands and reservations. This was part of the genocide of Indigenous Peoples. Connection to the land helps formulate a cultural worldview held by many Indigenous cultures, and these removals were considered part of “colonial national building.” The return of land and even acknowledgement of theft of land by colonial agencies and institutions is a large focus of reconciliation today. The goal of this was assimilation or elimination of different Indigenous Peoples.[20] [21]

12. Forced sterilization

This was a violent medical practice done to Indigenous women without consent. In Canada, many Indigenous women were forcefully sterilized – had their reproductive system medically ended through surgeries – without consent or by coercive measure by medical professionals.[22]



13. Genocide

Genocide is the attempt to destroy a national, ethnic, racial, cultural or other distinct identity group of people. In Canada, it is now widely understood that colonial practices through many decades have constituted an ongoing genocide against Indigenous Peoples. The wide sweeping attempts to deny, block, and destroy Indigenous languages and cultures accompanied by forcible removal and assimilation programs encompass a lot of this understanding of genocide, and this goes along with institutional and systemic inequities and violences perpetuated to Indigenous Peoples in Canada and around the world to this day.^[23] ^[24] ^[25]

14. Indian

The term “Indian” also refers to what we now say today are Indigenous Peoples. Its origins are widely attributed dating to the time Christopher Columbus came to the Americas and confused his arrival in the Americas with being in India and so referred to Indigenous Peoples as “Indians.” The term is rooted in colonialism and harms perpetuated against Indigenous Peoples and such documents as the “Indian Act” are both a living form of oppression, as well as a painful reminder of this term used derogatorily against Indigenous Peoples. It is often now considered to be a harmful term and is not okay for white settlers or non-Indigenous people to use.^[26]

15. Indigenous Peoples

A name for different first peoples of the land in Canada, who are different than the settlers who arrived. This term is also used for many first peoples including in Australia, New Zealand, different South American countries, and other places around the world.^[27] ^[28]

16. Institutional barriers

This term may also overlap with “institutional violence” or “institutional harms.” These terms generally refer to the structural inequities and harms that are perpetuated against different marginalized and targeted communities and peoples from different institutional and service settings, and this includes Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Examples can include lack of care and attention in medical settings, discrimination in hiring practices, and inability to access different government services that many white settlers and non-Indigenous people can access among many other examples. This is often being perpetuated alongside systemic barriers.[29]

17. Intergenerational trauma

Intergenerational trauma refers to the cyclic nature of one generation’s experience of trauma being repeated and handed down to the next generation. It does not mean that the exact same harm is perpetuated or downloaded down, but that harm continues. In the context of Indigenous communities and families in Canada, the nature of intergenerational trauma is understood to be rooted in colonial harms and perpetuated today by institutional and structural barriers such as a lack of access to mental health care and psychotherapy, other therapy and recovery programs, and most importantly time, space, and resources to access and practice one’s culture.[30] [31]



18. Interpersonal violence

This refers to when one person or group does physical or psychological harm to another individual. The governments of Canada and British Columbia monitor and track statistics of different forms of violence. Interpersonal violence may include emotional or psychological, physical, financial, and sexualized violence. It is important to know that historically and currently there can be higher statistics of interpersonal and other forms of violence within Indigenous communities, and stereotypes about these statistics from outside Indigenous communities are perpetuated. There is also significant research which presents direct correlations between colonial violence and trauma and current issues and challenges such as interpersonal violence. There are also often not enough services to support the change and reduction of these types of violence, which includes opportunities to connect to culture. From a systems perspective, it is important to know that colonial historical and ongoing traumas are the root of these statistics, and that Indigenous Peoples are so much more than these numbers, most importantly survivors and strong and resilient.[32] [33] [34]

19. Inuit

A specific cultural designation of Indigenous Peoples in B.C. and Canada. Although B.C. does not have any traditional Inuit homelands, Inuit people have moved over time to B.C. and live here.[35] [36]

20. Lateral Violence

Lateral violence is the spread of abuses, toxic behaviours, and unhealthy relationship dynamics between people in the same group. In this case lateral violence in Indigenous communities can look like gossip and spreading of rumours, workplace bullying, or shaming others. Indigenous communities are examining how they can address this challenge, and this work starts with the understanding that these behaviours are rooted in colonial trauma and oppressions with resulting systemic and institutional harms and violence.[37]

21. Medical experiments

Indigenous children and Peoples have been subjected to horrific medical experiments in Canada's history. These have included forced sterilization, exposure to malnutrition and under nourishment (i.e. forced starvation), and denial of care or experimental treatments for tuberculosis among others. While different health and medical bodies have apologized to Indigenous communities in Canada for these harms, these collective experiences, along with ongoing systemic racism and structural barriers, contribute to health inequities and mistrust of health systems by marginalized and targeted groups of people, including Indigenous Peoples in Canada.[38] [39] [40]

22. Medicine(s)

Indigenous Peoples traditional wellness practices utilized different medicines that were known, practiced, and cultivated by Indigenous communities in Canada and around the world. Although historically the use of these medicines and traditional healing practices have been dismissed by colonial systems, there is a growing recognition to provide more equity and inclusive space for people of different cultures to use their traditional healing methods and medicines and to make space for that alongside western medicine or entirely on its own. There may be spiritual elements that are part of any given culture, and those practices, protocols, and beliefs should be respected. [41]

23. Métis

A specific cultural designation of Indigenous Peoples in B.C. and Canada. Métis people are not simply mixed ancestry peoples, as they are often confused to be. They are defined by a distinct cultural identity, languages, and traditions.[42] [43] [44]

24. Native

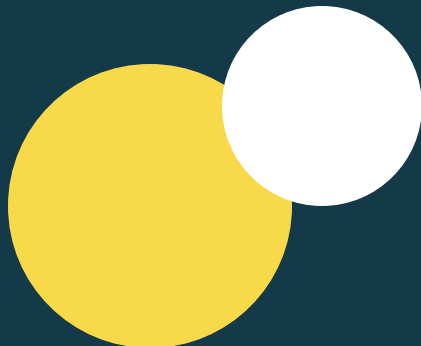
The term "native" or "native people" may be used in different contexts when generally describing Indigenous Peoples. While the term "native people" may be used globally to refer to Indigenous Peoples, in Canada this is not necessarily appropriate for white settlers and those who are not Indigenous to use.[45]

25. Pass system

The pass system was a systemically and institutionally racist policy that came from the Indian Act where Indigenous Peoples were policed and monitored for their movements on and off reserve following forcible removal and relocation to reservations. Indigenous Peoples living on reservations were given “passes” – or were not given them and therefore their freedom of movement was restricted – to go off reserve.^[46]

26. Residential Schools

A system first initiated by different churches in the earlier 1800's, then adopted by the federal government by the 1880's as compulsory attendance for all Indigenous children in Canada. At one point defined as a program, this is now known as a system of violence intended to inflict genocide and assimilation of Indigenous children and elimination of Indigenous communities and cultures. There were boarding schools and day schools, and all involved some form of forced removal and relocation of Indigenous children away from their families, communities, and cultures. Children who were forced to attend these schools suffered many abuses at the hands of school administrators, both church and state-run, including emotional, physical, and sexual abuse. The last schools to officially close their doors as Residential Schools were the Gordon Reserve Residential School in Punnichy, Saskatchewan and the Kivalliq Hall Residential School in Rankin Inlet, Nunavut in 1996 and 1997 respectively.^{[47] [48] [49]}





27. Specific Claim

Specific claims are made by First Nations groups in Canada against the government of Canada. These claims may be land related, although they also may not be, and generally encompass the “righting of past wrongs” by the federal government towards any given First Nations group.^[50]

28. Systemic barriers

This term may also overlap with “systemic violence” or “structural violence” and has significant ties to “structural racism.” These terms generally refer to different policies, programs, or laws that perpetuate violence and inequities towards different marginalized and targeted communities, and this includes Indigenous Peoples in Canada. These examples may have existed historically and are transformed to a contemporary version such as the “Indian Act” or may be newly evolved such as a lack of diversity, equity, and inclusion principles and enactments in any given service or program.^[51]

29. Treaty Rights

Treaties historically were agreements made between the different governing colonial authority at whatever time (often the government of Canada) and various Indigenous groups throughout time. There are also “modern treaties” of which one example are comprehensive land claims and are made between different Indigenous groups with the federal and/or provincial governments. Treaties define rights and responsibilities for all those party to the agreement. Treaty rights for Indigenous Peoples are often about land boundaries and accompanying rights to the ecology of the land such as hunting and harvesting. Specific claims exist so that Indigenous groups can put forth “grievances” regarding treaties or claims by the government. Due to this history, one of the aspects of modern treaties that is to be upheld in most cases is the duty to consult principle where governments must engage in meaningful and honest presentation of knowledge and information and good faith negotiations.^[52]

30. TRC

This stands for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. This body was born out of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement in 2007, and its mandate was to investigate and document the harms and atrocities committed against Indigenous Peoples and communities out of the Residential Schools system, which involved travel across the country to interview and hear from those harmed and witnesses of the harms. The TRC produced a subsequent body of work titled “Calls to Action” and it outlines the steps that need to be taken at all levels towards “reconciliation” of the harms done in the past that continue today.^[53]

31. Unceded Territory

Unceded territory or unceded land has a few different meanings, but generally refers to land which was never negotiated and signed away in treaties. There is also an understanding that even if a treaty was signed it does not mean that Indigenous group intentionally gave up their land, and there was a misunderstanding in the treaty process, or deception on the government's part. Much of B.C. is considered to be unceded territories as there were relatively little historical treaties signed this far out west. This is often why it is important to hear and remember that unceded land is part of most land acknowledgements and discussions in B.C.[54]

32. UNDRIP

This stands for the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. This declaration was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 2007 and supported by Canada. It outlines the recognitions and definition of Indigenous Peoples as a distinct global group and the rights and attention this collective group deserves, including the right to sovereignty, self-determination, and self-governance. Canada adopted UNDRIP and officially passed it into law in 2021. This follows the government of B.C. adopting and formally declaring UNDRIP to be passed into law in 2019. The adoption of UNDRIP into law is a formal recommendation from the TRC Calls to Action of all levels of government and organizations in Canada.[55] [56]



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