



PCMCH Statement for the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation

September 30, 2022

On this National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, we remember, honour and grieve the 150,000+ First Nations, Inuit and Métis children who were forcibly taken from their families and sent to residential schools, the thousands who did not survive, the families who were torn apart, and the communities who were impacted. All never the same again, for generations to come.

This is also a time to reflect on the many other harms perpetrated against Indigenous Peoples and what we can do to bring much-needed change. As settlers of this land, it is imperative that we all take responsibility for what happened in the past. There is no doubt that even if we personally were not involved in carrying out harms against Indigenous Peoples, we all continue to “gain” from the history of colonialism that very much exists in Canada today. Colonial values are so deeply embedded within our structures, laws and systems, and very much influence our behaviours, attitudes, perceptions and how we treat others, often to the point where many do not even know this is happening.

Anti-Indigenous discrimination and bias have profound negative impacts on the health and wellness of Indigenous peoples. The resulting discrimination can be seen in obvious ways, and also in less obvious ways, that are deeply embedded and extremely damaging. Historic and current harms have not only led to a distrust in the medical system and a reluctance to seek care for many, but also to unfair, racist and dangerous treatment received by Indigenous peoples in healthcare settings. This mistreatment has had tremendous impact on their health, including but not limited to, horrific physical, sexual and emotional abuse and the deaths of thousands of children in residential schools, forced and coerced sterilization, mandatory birth evacuations, the disproportionate removal of Indigenous babies and children into the child welfare system, and preventable death.[†] The impact of these injustices is still very much felt by survivors and descendants, and will continue for years to come.

It is not enough to only be saddened or shocked by what has happened and continues to happen to Indigenous Peoples. It is not enough to only reflect on the issues on this day alone and do nothing further. Instead, we must stand in solidarity with all Indigenous Peoples in the land now called Canada, and work to make meaningful and continuous change.

As an organization, PCMCH takes this responsibility very seriously and is committed to being an ally and to contributing to meaningful change. While still early in our learning and allyship journey, some of the ways in which we are doing this can be [found here](#). Facing the truth can be uncomfortable and changing our ways can be challenging. The fear of making mistakes or saying the wrong thing can, in and of itself, be immobilizing if we allow it to be. We are committed to not letting this discomfort stop us from moving forward, being accountable to the past and being contributors to needed change.

† References

Aboriginal Healing Foundation Reports: Volumes 1-3. Retrieved September 2022 from: <https://nctr.ca/records/reports/#ahf-reports>

Addressing Racism Review Team. In Plain Sight: Addressing Indigenous-specific Racism and Discrimination in B.C. Health Care. Retrieved September 2022 from: <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/app/uploads/sites/613/2020/11/In-Plain-Sight-Summary-Report.pdf>

Canada's Build Trade Unions. Build Together: Indigenous Allyship. Retrieved September 2022 from: <https://buildingtrades.ca/workforce-dev/build-together-indigenous-peoples-of-the-building-trades/>