



May 28th, 2021

The tragic announcement of the remains of 215 children found at former Residential School in Kamloops, British Columbia.

This is a brief communication to be followed by further recommendations in the days that follow:

Trauma is stored in the body and very much at the cellular level, including the burdens of intergenerational trauma. The bodies of two hundred and fifteen Indigenous children, found on the grounds of the former Kamloops Residential School has elevated that burden for many Indigenous peoples as the past, and much of the unresolved present now converge.

We must understand that trauma does not necessarily create new dynamics in human systems; it just intensifies already existing symptoms. Therefore, this is not a time to seek out the positives to lessen anyone's pain. "It is a time to be present, to make space, to listen, and to let those we care about hear us say "I believe you" and "I care."

Like any grieving family, there needs to be a time of coming together. If and when Indigenous individuals and families reach out to us; we should listen with an open heart and mind and do our best to wrap around and provide support as appropriate.

During traumatic aftermath, some people need to talk, and others do not. Secure and caring attachments will lower anxiety more than any words. Recognize that intensified emotions will likely build over the days to follow. The fields of Violence Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA) and Crisis/Trauma Response are inseparably connected. There may be those who lack compassion or insight or who may attempt to cause further emotional harm to those who are grieving. As such, all VTRA leads across the province should convene to identify any potential dynamics that are worrisome and move to intervene in a timely way to avoid any potential risk. Local crisis response teams should prepare, as necessary, for "Whole Community" interventions to support Indigenous and non-Indigenous children, youth, and families in processing the many implications and effects.

Sincerely,

Theresa Campbell

CEO / President

Safer Schools Together

J. Kevin Cameron M.Sc., R.S.W., B.C.E.T.S., B.C.S.C.R.

Executive Director

North American Center for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response

The following is a list of resources and hotlines dedicated to supporting Indigenous people.

24/7 supports:

[KUU-US Crisis Line](#)

1-800-588-8717

[Indian Residential School Survivors and Family](#)

1-866-925-4419

Mon – Fri, 8am – 8 pm PT:

Weekends, 10 am – 2pm PT:

[Tsow-Tun-Le-Lum Society](#)

1-888-403-3123

[Aboriginal Wellness Program](#)

604-675-2551 or 1-866-884-0888

[Canadian Mental Health Association - British Columbia Division](#)

1-800-555-8222

[HeretoHelp](#)

1-800-661-2121

First Nations Health Authority – Mental Health Benefit

<https://www.fnha.ca/benefits/mental-health>

Métis Nation BC – Mental Health Services

<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/mental-health-substance-use/resources/kuu-us-crisis-line>>

National Crisis Hotlines

[Kids Help Phone](#)

1-800-668-6868

[Crisis Services Canada](#)

1-833-456-4566 or text 45645

[First Nations and Inuit Hope for Wellness Help Line](#)

1-855-242-3310