



For Immediate Release

May 31st, 2021

The Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Society's Statement on the discovery of 215 children at a Kamloops Residential School

The Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies is holding the families and communities of the 215 children who were found at the site of the Kamloops Residential School in our hearts. We mourn their deaths, and we mourn the loss of all that they would have brought to their families and communities had they not been killed.

While the uncovering of the bodies of these 215 children is singular and devastating, it is also not unique. We hold space for the grief that is shared by all residential school survivors, their families, and their communities.

It is widely known that even though the last residential school closed in 1996, the practice of forcibly removing Indigenous people from their communities is an ongoing practice in Canada via the foster care and criminal punishment systems – which are inextricably linked. We recognize that colonization is not a historical event, but a continuing project. This is made clear in the disproportionate criminalization and incarceration of Indigenous people.

In response to calls from other community organizations and individuals, and on behalf of our membership, we recommit to:

- Reading or re-reading the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and related reports: <https://nctr.ca/records/reports/>
- Reading or re-reading the final report of the national inquiry into the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls: <https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/final-report/>
- Centering the TRC Calls to Action and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice in our advocacy work
- Amplifying the messages and statements of Indigenous led organizations, activists, and survivors.
- Working in solidarity with Indigenous led organizations to end the cycle of victimization and criminalization that disproportionately harm Indigenous women, non-binary, trans, and Two Spirit people

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