



Kamloops Sexual Assault Counselling Centre would like to express our profound grief and sorrow to the people of Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, and to all Indigenous people, with the confirmation of what community members have always known to be true: the unmarked graves of 215 children at the former Kamloops Indian Residential School. We know that this suffering isn't new, and that Indigenous communities have been bearing the weight of this tragedy for generations. We stand in solidarity with those impacted.

We know that this is about more than 215 children. It's about 215 families missing their ancestors. It's about 215 children who should have grown up to be knowledge keepers and community leaders. 215 little souls that were loved and cherished by their families and communities, but who never returned home. And of course, we know it's about all those children yet to be found, and all those families and communities living through the trauma of this violent legacy.

We know that this news will be re-traumatizing and triggering for many survivors. As an organization committed to supporting survivors of violence, we understand the overlap and connection between the horrors of residential schools and the horrors of sexualized violence. We want survivors to know that they are not alone; we are here for you.

KSACC also acknowledges our complicity in colonial systems. As we work to decolonize our practice, we must be accountable for the harm that social service agencies and the justice system have perpetuated against Indigenous people, and how our organization has benefitted from colonial structures and white supremacy. As we stand in the discomfort of facing this truth, we commit to the principles of justice, equity, and humility.

We grieve alongside Indigenous communities. And as we grieve, KSACC staff and Board of Directors commit to action. Here is how we hope to help support the community in the coming days and months:

- Prioritizing Indigenous clients needing services: we understand that this resurfacing of intergenerational trauma puts Indigenous survivors at increased risk. As such, we will work to provide prioritized counselling services to any Indigenous clients accessing our services.
- Offering services to Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc and other communities: we want to extend our services and support in whatever capacity would be the most useful to those trying to manage this loss. We are available to support in any way Indigenous leaders feel would benefit their communities.
- Donating our resources: as a staff team, we will be pooling donations to contribute on behalf of our organization to Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc to use in whatever way best supports community healing.
- Holding our leaders accountable: our municipal, provincial, national, and religious leaders all have roles to play in addressing this tragedy. We commit to listening to Indigenous voices, and amplifying their demands to our governments and institutions.

Please join us in action and grief as we move through this time of immense sorrow. Indigenous lives matter, those 215 children's lives matter, the lives of all those yet to be found matter, and we stand in solidarity with Indigenous peoples in their calls for justice.

Survivors: we see you and we believe you. You matter.