



Media Release || September 29, 2022

Sylx Okanagan Nation Demand Justice on National Day of Truth and Reconciliation

tkwəniwt (Westbank), Sylx Territory: On September 30, 2022, starting at 10 am, the Sylx Okanagan Nation will host a 5 kilometer “Walk for the Children”. This takes place on the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation, the walk will go from the Penticton Peach at Okanagan Lake and move to the Sylx Indian Residential School Nation’s monument on En’owkin Trail. This event is open to anyone who wants to participate. As part of an ongoing commitment to cultivate support for the Sylx victims of Indian Residential Schools this walk is meant to raise awareness throughout the general public about the ongoing trauma and devastation that Sylx people face as a result of Indian Residential Schools, while demonstrating our collective support for victims and their families.

Actions like these take place while the Government of Canada has again gone back on their commitment for either truth and reconciliation, this time “forever discharging” the Catholic church from having to raise the \$25 million that they had initially promised to Indian Residential School survivors across Canada. Such disturbing acts highlight the hollow promises and empty commitments of the federal government when it comes to honouring the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s Calls to Action.

“The Province of BC and Government of Canada continue to use the term “Truth and Reconciliation” as a means for political gain, because it makes them look good. On the ground, we continue to fight and are challenged every day with their colonial bureaucracy and legislation that have profound impacts on our daily lives. All Canadians must hold their government to task and ensure that paths toward both truth and reconciliation take place in a meaningful and lasting manner. This goes far beyond wearing an orange shirt for a day, but requires consistent direct action. It includes everything from accessible health and wellness services to providing long-term, secure funding to support language and culture revitalization in ways that are clear of bureaucratic tape and provided directly to the people that deserve these services,” yilmix^wm (Chief) Greg Gabriel stated.

The Sylx Okanagan Nation remain committed to standing united and demand justice for the thousands of children who never returned from Indian Residential Schools. As part of this commitment, we support the Sylx Indian Residential School Committee in their ongoing efforts to collectively support each other through bringing these traumas to light.

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The Sylx Indian Residential School (SIRS) Committee is a group of highly dedicated, intergenerational Sylx Indian Residential School survivors. The SIRS Committee is invaluable in providing direction to the Nation on numerous projects regarding the Indian Residential Schools. This Committee, represented by the seven member communities, has expressed that they feel a sense of belonging from participating on this Committee. They have a true ownership role in ensuring projects move forward, taking into account their knowledge and experience. For more information on the Sylx Indian Residential School experience visit: www.sylx.org/wellness/indian-residential-school/

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