

## Open Letter on Residential Schools,

Brock University's Department of Child and Youth Studies shares in the grief and anger that has arisen in response to the mass graves that have been uncovered and newly acknowledged, including those at the Kamloops Indian Residential school in the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, and at Cowessess First Nation. We urge the Canadian government to address the Calls to Action 71-76 of the 2015 Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which include locating and documenting the children who died in residential schools.

Addressing the Calls to Action supports Indigenous children and their families for whom the consequences of the grim legacy of residential school systems--as well as discrimination and colonial violence driving these systems--are ongoing. The tragic events at the Kamloops Indian Residential school, Cowessess First Nation, and other locations represents only a small, heartbreaking fraction of the significant, widespread, systematic crimes and injustices connected to the residential school system in Canada, including forced separation of Indigenous children from their families, sexual abuse, experimentation on Indigenous children, loss of Indigenous language and culture, and ongoing intergenerational trauma.

The ways in which we collectively think through the unyielding impacts of colonial violence and confront injustice deeply matter. As a department dedicated to research and teaching in child and youth studies, we recognize the urgent importance of sober reflection and reparative reimagining of research and teaching, including how we think with our students about the discrimination and injustice that make up the past and present realities of Indigenous children and their families. All children deserve respect and unconditional care, yet historically and currently, Indigenous children and their families have not received enough of either.

Department of Child and Youth Studies, Brock University