

PRESS RELEASE

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Shuswap Nation Tribal Council

NATIONAL DAY OF RECONCILIATION

One year will pass since Prime Minister Stephen Harper formally apologized to former students of Canada's Indian residential schools on June 11th, which has since been dubbed the National Day of Reconciliation.

"The treatment of children in Indian residential schools is a sad chapter in our history," lamented the Prime Minister. "Today, we recognize that this policy of assimilation was wrong, has caused great harm, and has no place in our country. The government now recognizes that the consequences of the Indian residential schools policy were profoundly negative and that this policy has had a lasting and damaging impact on Aboriginal culture, heritage and language."

Although, of great significance in and of itself, the apology also calls for significant changes to the standards of treatment that Aboriginal people receive by the federal government. The National Day of Reconciliation is meant to gently remind the federal government of its obligations as dictated by the Prime Minister's apology.

"After so many years of pain, frustration, grief and loss, the Indigenous people of Canada have finally been able to move one step forward as a result of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's apology," says Chief Wayne Christian of Splotsin. "However, we cannot forget the implications of his words, and as a people must come together to remind Canada that we know who we are, and where we have come from. We have not forgotten this 'sad chapter' in our collective history."

To generate unity and positive growth, the Shuswap Nation Tribal Council supports the celebration of the National Day of Reconciliation in Secwepemc communities, as well as across Canada.

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