



## *Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc*

(Kamloops Indian Band)

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF

June 4, 2021

On behalf of Council, I just wanted to provide you an update on what Council has been doing to follow up on the recent, heartbreaking findings at the Kamloops Indian Residential School. This was but the first week of what will be a long and emotionally challenging process. Chief and Council are committed to providing regular updates to our membership.

For Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc Council and I, as well as what we have heard in community, ceremonies, protocols, and justice are top of mind for all. This is only the beginning.

I want to take a moment to acknowledge the grief that we have all felt. This is traumatic and each and every one of us have been impacted by residential schools. It is time to be gentle with ourselves as this brings up so many emotions and hurts. I know that I am reaching out to my loved ones and encourage you to do the same.

### **MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORTS**

There are people that can help support you:

**24 hours a day, 7 days a week:** KUU-US Crisis Line Society: 1-800-588-8717 // A Toll Free Indigenous BC Provincial Crisis Line

**7 days a week from 8:30 am - 4:30 pm.** FNHA Doctor of the Day: 1-855-344-3800 // Open for all First Nations people living in BC

**Mon – Fri schedule varies, call for an appointment.**

- Sharnelle Matthew, MSW, Mental Health Clinician: 250-320-5100
- Tracy Davison, Mental Health Clinician at QHS: 250-314-6732

### **EXTERNAL OFFERS OF HELP**

The scope of this situation has reached worldwide and the outpouring of support we have been offered is overwhelming. People across Canada and around the world are learning about the truth of residential schools. Residential School survivors are no longer silenced.

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200-330 Chief Alex Thomas Way, Kamloops BC V2H 1H1

Phone: 250-828-9700 Fax: 250-372-8833

[www.tkemlups.ca](http://www.tkemlups.ca)



You may have spotted the “How to Support Tk’emlúps te Secwépemc” explainer that we prepared to answer the many offers of help. We are accepting donations- to be clear- donations will be used towards the work that is needed for further investigation (scientific and archival) and later memorialize the children (in collaboration with and shaped by TteS members, home communities and families of the children)

### **WORK TO DATE:**

It has been all about outreach and initial conversations about the tragic findings. We met with the Secwepemc leadership and BC Chiefs to let them know about the finding our children as well as so we could share together in the grief. We also met with former Kukukpi7s Manny Jules, Bonnie Leonard, Shane Gottfriedson and Fred Seymour in order to garner support and input on the situation and appropriate next steps.

Chief and Council have met internally and will continue to do so, to plan, organize and determine the best way forward. Our Language and Culture department have meet with survivors to give them the space to be supported. We have hired communications expert, Racelle Kooy, to support Chief and Council to deal with extensive media questions and interviews.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the Special meeting with Chief and Council on Tuesday evening.

This past week, we have led a series of initial meetings with many political figures including:

- United Nations rapporteur of Indigenous right – Francisco Cali Tzay
- Premier Horgan with NDP Federal leader Jagmeet Singh
- Minister Marc Miller
- Minister Carolyn Bennett
- Mayor Ken Christian and Councillor Bill Sadhu
- MP Cathy McLeod
- MLAs Todd Stone and Peter Milobar
- UBCIC, AFN, BCAFN, Leadership Council
- Bishop Joseph Nguyen

These meetings were each the beginning of what will be a careful and respectful approach to ensuring our community needs and the needs of the lost children in are care are met.

There are a couple upcoming events that are quite large in scope – these were organized outside of TteS. Nonetheless, we thank TteS staff who are working with appropriate departments to ensure health and safety of all. We have asked groups that are planning memorials to please contact TteS so we can be organized to receive their support.

We will be providing weekly updates both by video and written each Friday. Please take care!