



BCAAFC | BC Association of
Aboriginal Friendship Centres

Statement in Support of Indigenous Elders, Families and Communities Impacted by the Residential School System

May 28, 2021 – We at the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres (BCAAFC) extend love and support to the Elders, families and communities impacted by the Canadian Residential School System.

The Tk'emlups confirmed findings of 215 children buried on the site of the former Kamloops Indian Residential School brings forward the trauma experienced by residential school survivors, families and communities from the insufferable actions of the Canadian Government.

We raise our hands in high respect and appreciation for the strength of Elders and community members who are holding space for one another at this time.

Wally Samuel, Ahousaht Elder, BCAAFC Elders Council Member, and Survivor of the Alberni Indian Residential School, is part of a collective organizing a vigil for survivors, outdoors at the Port Alberni Friendship Center. Community members are encouraged to bring their feathers, regalia and drums to honour victims of the residential school system, their families and communities.

The vigil organized at Port Alberni Friendship Center is one example of the love and leadership demonstrated by Indigenous communities to heal and take care of one another in the face of unspeakable loss.

We encourage survivors and families in urban Indigenous communities to reach out to their local Friendship Centre community for support. The BCAAFC will be holding a ceremony in honour of survivors at our next annual general meeting.

Support resources available:

- National Indian Residential School Crisis Line: 1-866-925-4419
- [Indian Residential Schools Survivors Society](#): 1-800-721-0066
- [Indian Residential Schools Program](#) (First Nations Health Authority)

In solidarity, on behalf of BC Friendship Centres,

Leslie Varley
Executive Director