



# YOUNG LEADERS

## Post-Secondary Student Unions, Associations and Clubs

### ABOUT THIS CALL TO ACTION

We are counting on **you** to start the conversation within your student union, association, club, student body, friends and family. We need you to encourage openness and renewed relationships, and most importantly, to invite your peers to take part in this movement. At the end of the day, we are all one and we must move forward together.

Included in this package are reconciliation engagement ideas (including step-by-step 'how-to' instructions) and the materials that you will need to implement them.

### BACKGROUND

#### Who is Reconciliation Canada?

**Our Vision:** A vibrant, inclusive Canada where all peoples achieve their full potential and shared prosperity.

**Our Purpose:** Reconciliation Canada is an Aboriginal-led organization building meaningful relationships through transformative experiences.

Reconciliation Canada is building new relationships between Aboriginal peoples and all Canadians – relationships built on a foundation of openness, dignity, understanding and hope. Our focus extends beyond the Indian Residential School experience to those communities who have received official apologies from the government of Canada, including the Jewish, Sikh, Chinese and Japanese peoples.



Our initiatives engage people from every part of Canadian society in open and honest conversation about our diverse histories and experiences in order to build resilient and sustainable communities.

Born from the vision of Chief Dr. Robert Joseph, Gwawaenuk Elder, Reconciliation Canada is a charitable nonpartisan, community based initiative which was formed

as a collaboration between Tides Canada Initiatives (TCI) Society and the Indian Residential School Survivors Society (IRSSS).

## START THE CONVERSATION: 'HOW TO'

### Elders in Reconciliation (Elders in Residence)

Do you know if your post-secondary institution hosts Aboriginal Elders? If so, are all students welcome to meet, share or learn with and from the Elders? Have you ever thought about multi-cultural Elders in Residence, could you imagine that?

**Who:** Work with the appropriate Department and/or Faculty to discuss hosting a multi-cultural group of Elders, including: Aboriginal Elders from local territories, Newcomer Elders, Chinese-Canadian Elders, etc. All students, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal will be welcome to learn from one another, and the Elders in Reconciliation.

### Materials (See Appendix 3):

- a. Reconciliation Canada – Language of Reconciliation Video  
*Access here: [www.reconciliationcanada.ca/explore/elders-statement](http://www.reconciliationcanada.ca/explore/elders-statement)*
- b. Elders in Reconciliation — Discussion Questions (see Appendix 1.1)

### How-to:

1. Read the Reconciliation Canada Dialogue Guide (see appendix 1.3) and watch the Language of Reconciliation video to find inspiration.
2. Draft a proposal for an 'Elders in Reconciliation' program at your post secondary institution, this should include: number of Elders, which communities, compensation and commitment expectations, schedule, available meeting space, etc.
3. Work with the appropriate Department and/or Faculty members to take the proposal to administrators.
4. Work with the local Nations, community and cultural centres and retirement homes to invite Elders who live and understand reconciliation to participate in the program.
5. Use the Discussion Questions to gauge each Elder's embodiment and understanding of reconciliation.
6. Collaborate with the Elders to create the Elders in Reconciliation program: including a definition of reconciliation, what to expect, talking points, and cultural protocols.

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## APPENDIX 1

### 1.1 Elders in Reconciliation – Discussion Questions

These questions are intended to be answered by both (or all) parties present:

- *Does your name have a story; do you have a traditional name?*
- *Where you are from; what is your cultural identity/background?*
- *What does reconciliation mean to you?*
- *Why is reconciliation meaningful to me?*
- *What is my story and/or experience to share?*
- *What are the greatest things that I have had to overcome?*
- *What do you envision for the Elders in Reconciliation program?*

### 1.2 Quick Facts about Indian Residential Schools

- Aboriginal children were forcibly taken from their homes by RCMP.<sup>1</sup>
- 150,000 Aboriginal children were taken from their families.<sup>3</sup>
- 90 to 100% suffered severe physical, emotional, and sexual abuse.<sup>1</sup>
- There was a 40 – 60% mortality rate in Indian residential schools.<sup>1</sup>
- Residential schools date back to the 1870s.<sup>3</sup>
- Over 130 residential schools were located across Canada, and the last school closed as recently as 1996.<sup>3</sup>
- Two-thirds of Canadians believe (and four in ten strongly believe) that Canadians with no experience in Indian Residential Schools have a role to play in reconciliation between Aboriginal peoples and all Canadians.<sup>2</sup>

1. Dr. Bryce Report 1907, Medical Inspector, Department of Indian Affairs

2. 2008 National Benchmark Survey, Indian Residential Schools Resolution Canada

3. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

## 1.3 Reconciliation Canada Dialogue Guide

The Reconciliation Canada Dialogue Guide is typically used for official Reconciliation Dialogue Workshops and is intended only to be a reference source for this Community Action Toolkit.

To download, visit the following link:

**[www.reconciliationcanada.ca/dialogue-workshop-guide](http://www.reconciliationcanada.ca/dialogue-workshop-guide)**