



PUBLIC STATEMENT

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STATEMENT TO THE ONTARIO GOVERNMENT AND CITIES WITHHOLDING SUPPORT FOR TRUTH & RECONCILIATION DAY

The Mohawk Council of Akwesasne shares disappointment and frustration in the Ontario government's decision not to recognize Truth & Reconciliation Day on September 30th. With this day being declared a federal holiday, all provinces had the opportunity to show their commitment to building relationships with First Nations communities and supporting the residential school healing process. Instead, Ontario and the cities that chose to follow suit have let down their Indigenous community members and failed to act as leaders to all citizens and children in the province.

The tragedy of residential schools is real, and it is recent. People alive today have been directly impacted by the unfathomable abuses of these schools. Our children suffered, our parents and families suffered, and our culture and language suffered. Turning a blind eye to this reality by ignoring Truth & Reconciliation Day is insensitive, counterproductive, unnecessary, and un-Canadian.

Premier Doug Ford, we urge you to take action as a leader and speak words of hope, compassion, reconciliation and unity to the people of Ontario and the more than 300,000 indigenous people who reside here and deserve to be seen.

To the cities and townships that chose to take steps on their own to recognize Truth & Reconciliation Day, we thank you for your expression of respect and friendship. Niawenhkó:wa to the City of Cornwall, Township of South Glengarry and the Township of South Stormont for closing their offices for the day on September 30th, and niawenhkó:wa to the Township of South Dundas and the Township of North Dundas for officially observing September 30th.

On September 30th, we encourage everyone to wear orange and reflect on the tragedies of the past, learn more about the history of indigenous people and residential schools, and make a solemn oath to be a part of our healing and ensure such history does not repeat itself.