



YWCA Canada Commitment to Reconciliation

YWCA Canada is the country's oldest and largest women's multi-service organization. The first local YWCA was founded in 1870. We are as old as the country and inextricably woven through the breadth of Canada's history. We are part of the hard truths of the past and of the present, as well as leaders in the movement for women's equality.

Our vision today is one of women and girls empowered in a safe and equitable society. Issues lived by First Nation, Métis and Inuit women - including violence, poverty, inadequate housing and homelessness - which are central to the work of YWCA Canada and crucial to achieving safety and equity for *all* women and girls. In our work, we witness the barriers First Nation, Métis and Inuit women continue to face in Canadian society. Many of us see the ramifications of historic and ongoing injustices in our programs on a daily basis. As an association committed to improving the lives of women and girls, we cannot be silent in the face of these.

We hear a call for non-Aboriginal people to become informed and to take action to redress and reconcile. This chord is resonating nationally and internationally because there are deep veins of injustice in this country, veins that we recognize as Canadians.

We all have a role to play in creating and sustaining healthy relationships. As the nation's single largest provider of shelter and services to women and children escaping violence, YWCA Canada knows that mutual respect is the foundation of healthy relationships.

The work of reconciliation requires the participation of non-Aboriginal Canadians. YWCA Canada commits to taking up a role in the work of redress and reconciliation. Our vision of a safe and equitable society for women and girls requires a renewed Canada, built on respect. A renewed Canada that is dedicated to ending violence against First Nation, Métis and Inuit women, beginning with a National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women.

The well-received recommendations of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal People have been gathering dust for almost two decades. Canada has signed the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, but rights require enactment. We encourage all Canadians to move forward with respect for treaty rights, human rights and the international agreements and covenants which Canada has signed.

In our reconciliation work, YWCA Canada commits to:

- Continue to strengthen our partnerships with First Nation, Métis and Inuit communities and organizations
- Develop succession plans to ensure First Nation, Métis and Inuit women move into leadership positions within our organization
- Continue to work to end violence against First Nation, Métis and Inuit women through programs, research and advocacy
- Continue to develop programs to build leadership skills of First Nation, Métis and Inuit girls and young women
- Work to end the homelessness of First Nation, Métis and Inuit girls and women through providing housing, services and advocacy.

In a historic moment filled with possibility, let us not shy away from the hard work of reconciliation. Our country will be stronger and better for the work we do.

Vancouver
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