



*Tsi Nahò:ten Karihwanákere Nó:nen'k*

# PRESS RELEASE

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## Kahnawake to honor Residential Schools victims tomorrow - Thursday, September 30<sup>th</sup>

### For immediate release

**Kahnawake – 29, Seskehkó:wa/September 2021)** The Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke wishes to remind the public that the community will be observing tomorrow's National Day for Truth and Reconciliation as a time of reflection to honor the memory of the victims lost and those affected by the Residential School system.

Canada announced September 30<sup>th</sup> as National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. This federal statutory holiday will be observed for the first time on Thursday, September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2021. All offices and organizations in Kahnawà:ke will be closed on September 30<sup>th</sup>, which is now considered a statutory holiday within our community. Concurrently, September 30<sup>th</sup> has also been marked "Orange Shirt Day" since 2013, to honour the thousands of Indigenous children who were taken to residential schools, and the families who suffered these traumatic losses.

"Because the Residential School system was a federally-mandated tool of systematic assimilation, it has had an enormous impact on Indigenous people across the country, which continues to be felt today," said Ohén:ton Í:iente ne Ratitsénhaienhs (Grand Chief) Kahsennenhawe Sky-Deer. "This will be a day for us to reflect upon the failures of the Canadian Government, and to help educate all Canadians on the crimes and injustices their government imposed upon the First Peoples of this land."

"History's truth has now been revealed," she added, referring to the discovery of mass graves containing the remains of thousands of children who did not survive Residential Schools. "Until now, I don't think that Canadians were aware of the scope of the abuse, and the depth of our hurt. Now that they are, it is time for real reconciliation to begin."

The creation of this National Day of Truth and Reconciliation will, hopefully, create an atmosphere of understanding and cooperation that will allow all of us – Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike – to rebuild the trust and respect that has been lost through laws, policies and events that none of us here today had a part in creating. We owe it to those lost children to do better.

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