



The Aboriginal Healing Foundation | Fondation autochtone de guérison
75 Albert Street, Suite 801 | Ottawa, Ontario K1P 5E7
75, rue Albert, pièce 801 | Ottawa (Ontario) K1P 5E7
Telephone/Téléphone: (613) 237-4441 | Toll-free/Sans frais: (888) 725-8886
Facsimile/Bélinographe: (613) 237-4442
Email/Courriel: programs@ahf.ca | Website/Site web: <http://www.ahf.ca>

MEDIA ADVISORY

No Funds Committed to Aboriginal Healing Foundation in Canada's 2010 Federal Budget

March 05, 2010 (OTTAWA) – Today, the Aboriginal Healing Foundation (AHF) Board of Directors acknowledged Canada's decision not to provide funds to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation in the 2010 Federal Budget.

This decision by the Federal Government means that a nation-wide network of one hundred and thirty-four community-based healing initiatives will no longer have AHF support after March 31, 2010, when current funds run out.

Aboriginal Healing Foundation President, Georges Erasmus, noted that "Budget 2010 commits \$199 million to mental health and emotional support services for former students and their families - money which will go to Health Canada for Government-run programs. It is good that there is support in the budget for Survivors. This budget does cast a dark shadow however over the good and effective work being done in Aboriginal communities, by Aboriginal people, to address the destructive residential school legacy and to create healthier, stronger communities."

Concerning the future, he added, "Without additional funds, community services will disappear at the end of this month, and the Aboriginal Healing Foundation will have no recourse but to wind down its operations. Our first priority now is to inform our funded projects of this news and to support them as they close."

The Aboriginal Healing Foundation (www.ahf.ca) is a not-for-profit, Aboriginal managed national funding agency which encourages and supports community-based healing efforts addressing the intergenerational legacy of physical and sexual abuse in Canada's Indian Residential School System. Currently, 134 community projects are funded across Canada.

Between 1892 and 1969, the Indian Residential School System operated across Canada through a partnership of the Federal Government and various church entities. Under federal law, Aboriginal children were institutionalized in hostels, industrial schools, and residential schools for the purposes of Christianization and assimilation.

On June 11, 2008, the Prime Minister of Canada issued a formal apology for the Federal Government's role in the Indian Residential School System. As part of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, an Indian Residential Schools Truth and Reconciliation Commission has been established to undertake a nation-wide, five-year truth-telling and reconciliation process.

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For more information: Wayne K. Spear, Director of Communications, the Aboriginal Healing Foundation, 613-237-4441 extension 237, or toll-free 1-888-725-8886.

Our mission is to provide resources which will promote reconciliation and encourage and support Aboriginal people and their communities in building and reinforcing sustainable healing processes that address the legacy of physical, sexual, mental, cultural, and spiritual abuses in the residential school system, including intergenerational impacts.

Notre mission est de fournir des ressources favorisant la réconciliation, d'encourager et d'appuyer les Autochtones et leurs communautés à développer et à renforcer des démarches de guérison durables qui s'attaquent aux effets des abus physiques, sexuels, psychologiques, culturels et spirituels subis sous le régime des pensionnats, y compris les répercussions intergénérationnelles.