

Learning about our Shared History and the Impact of Colonization
on Indigenous Communities

The second stage of the Bundle moves us towards *Where We've Been: Learning About Our Shared History, and the Impact of Colonization on Indigenous Communities.*

This Quadrant explores the violent effects colonization has had within Indigenous communities. It begins by exploring the traditional roles and lifestyles of Indigenous cultures prior to contact. A historical overview of colonization (from an Indigenous point of view) offers participants insight into human rights violations.

The issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls is explored, as well as the impacts of Residential Schools and the 60s Scoop. Finally, violence against Indigenous men and boys is also examined.

**Experiential Teaching:
Talking Stick Art Making Project
(7 notches – one for each part)**

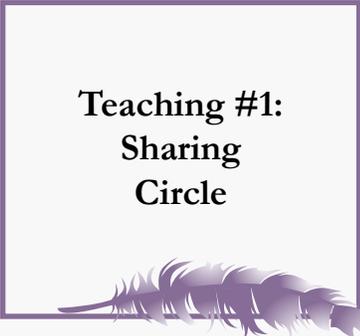
Facilitators may choose to create a talking stick with participants. If facilitators are not skilled in woodcarving, they may seek the help of an Elder or artist to assist. Seven separate notches or parts to the talking stick symbolize the seven teachings contained in this quadrant. Talking sticks may be painted with vibrant colours, adorned with feathers, fur, and leather. They may be used in traditional ceremonies, Sharing Circles and storytelling circles. The purpose is to ensure that respect is offered to the person talking with the stick.

Making a talking stick can be as easy as finding a wooden spindle about 20cm long that can be decorated with coloured yarn and feathers using hot glue, as pictured here.



For more information on how to make a talking stick, please visit: http://ravenspeaks.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/How_To_Make_A_Talking_Stick_2.pdf ¹²

12 Raven Speaks, "How to make a talking stick," Retrieved from www.ravenspeaks.ca , 2015.



**Teaching #1:
Sharing
Circle**

Learning Objectives:

Participants will:

- Experience sharing in a group setting;
- Deepen their understanding of how to articulate and share emotions and practice active listening;
- Increase their sense of belonging within their community;
- Form initial Sharing Circles; and,
- Understand the importance of confidentiality.

Before You Begin:

Sharing Circles are a way to build connection, share life experiences and feelings, and do healing work. They are a critical part of many Indigenous cultures, used to mediate conflict, create connection, and make decisions. Circles are powerful because everyone in the circle can see each other. When participants in Sharing Circles have the opportunity to listen and be heard by others, they are more likely to have healthy relationships, because they have practiced empathy and compassion, and have seen that others care about their struggles. In a circle, everyone is equal and interconnected. In this way, healing can take place, when participants see that others see their struggle, and that struggle is universal. Additionally, when participants practice sharing their emotions, this can lead to a decrease in violence in relationships, especially in times of conflict or difficulty, because individuals are better able to articulate a wider range of emotions rather than relying solely on displays of anger. Circles can take hours from start to completion, often involving multiple rounds for everyone to speak. It is hoped that this teaching will serve as the beginning of circle practice for communities, and become an ongoing teaching to build connection and community.

Starting the Teaching:

Facilitators may indicate to participants that this teaching is about creating and growing connection between participants. Facilitators may ask participants if they have previously participated in a Sharing Circle, and if so, what this experience was like, and what worked well about the Sharing Circles. For those who have not participated in a Sharing Circle, facilitators may share the information contained in **Before You Begin** (above).

Facilitators Guide:

Prior to beginning the Sharing Circle, if facilitators think it is necessary, they may seek or establish guidelines for the Sharing Circles.

The following are recommended guidelines:

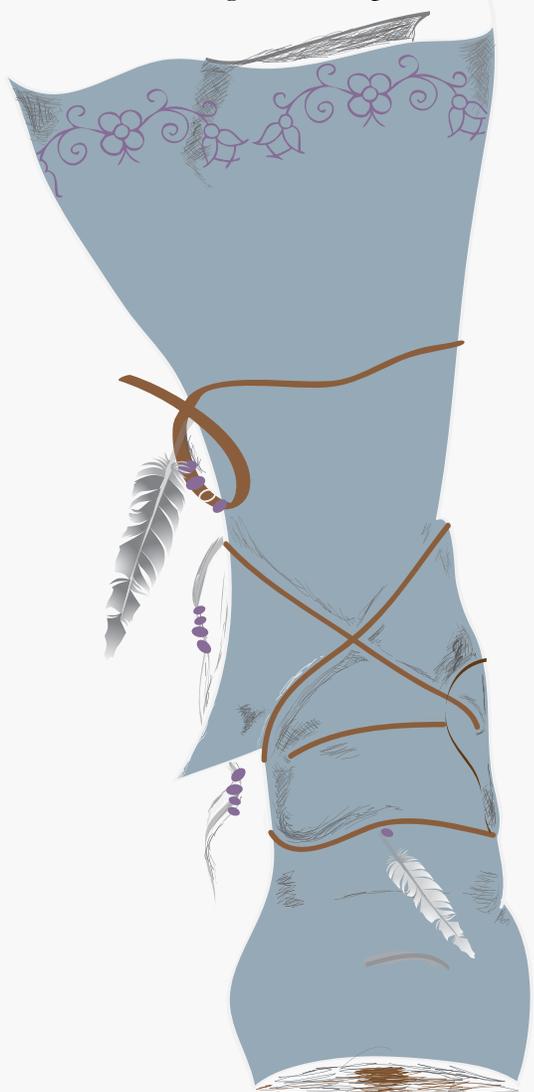
1. No one has to share anything;
2. Participation is completely optional;
3. Practice respectful listening by using the whole body (e.g. not just ears, but eyes, with body facing the person talking);
4. Put all distractions away (cell phones powered off and ideally placed in a basket, unless someone has an urgent personal situation they need to be monitoring);
5. Doors to the space are closed;
6. No interrupting of the person talking;
7. Use a talking stick, eagle feather, or rock, to speak with courage from the heart (any feather will work if an eagle feather is not available);
8. Respect confidentiality (what is personally shared by individuals stays in the circle, but ideas can be shared).
9. Facilitators may indicate that a Sharing Circle will now occur. Facilitators may ask participants to share their name, and any difficult experiences and emotions they have had or felt recently, as well as a positive emotion they have had. Facilitators may choose to remind participants that there are many participants, and that they should be mindful about leaving sufficient time for everyone to share.
10. Upon completion of the round, facilitators may ask participants to share something they heard from someone else in the circle. This process of mirroring back what participants have heard is a way of building connection and allowing participants to know they have been witnessed.
11. Facilitators may close the circle by asking participants how they feel having shared feelings and emotions.
12. Facilitators may engage in a discussion about how Sharing Circles may be promoted within their communities.

Closing the Teaching:

Facilitators may close the teaching by asking participants what they think the impact of participating in Sharing Circles will have in their lives, and how this can help end violence against Indigenous women and girls.

Checklist:

- Provide historical context of Sharing Circles
- Clarify objectives
- Establish and emphasize guidelines to create safety for participants
- Each participant shares their emotions (if they want)
- Engage in reflective process whereby participants mirror the feelings and experiences of other participants
- Ask the participants for an honest assessment of what worked well and what might need improvement



Additional Resources:

Crowfeather and Muin'iskw, "Mi'kmaw Spirituality – Talking Circles." Mi'kmaw Spirit, Nova Scotia. Retrieved from: <http://www.muiniskw.org/pgCulture2c.htm>

Raven Murphy, "About Sharing Circles." 2015. Retrieved from: http://ravenspeaks.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/Sharing_Circle_Instructions_SECONDARY.pdf



**Teaching #2:
Indigenous
Culture
Prior to
Contact with
Settlers**

Learning Objectives:

Participants will:

- Discuss Indigenous cultures prior to contact with settlers;
- Think critically about gender roles within communities; and,
- Grow awareness and appreciation of Elder teachings in the community.

Before You Begin:

Prior to colonization (the settlement of this land and establishment of control over the original nation's territories), Indigenous communities lived in very different ways compared to life today. For example, many Indigenous communities moved freely across the land and ocean, hunting, fishing and gathering food for their needs. They were stewards of the land and had a very intimate relationship with the natural world. Despite the hardships of the times, their land-based cultures and philosophies enabled them to live a balanced life. Women and children were valued and cherished as sacred beings. Land ownership did not exist. These nations also had various cultural and spiritual teachings, practices and ceremonies, which guided their life cycles. The establishment of colonial institutions, the settlement of newcomers, the powers and influence that the church held, and the development of various industries (timber, mining etc.) on Indigenous lands all contributed to the erosion, destruction and erasure of Indigenous cultures and ways of life. The original nations of Turtle Island (what is now referred to as Canada, United States and Mexico) are survivors of genocide. However, many Indigenous groups practice and celebrate their cultures, engage in ceremonies, language, music, art, food, and traditions. This teaching intends to highlight this richness. It is most ideally led by a female Elder, or by a female and male Elder.

Starting the Teaching:

Facilitators may indicate to participants that this teaching is about acknowledging and celebrating the strength and resilience of Indigenous cultures. Facilitators may also express gratitude for the presence and generosity of Elders in attendance. Facilitators may generate discussions aimed to be interactive with participants.

Facilitators Guide:

1. Facilitators need to set up the space in circle format.
2. An Elder may begin with a welcome, land acknowledgement and opening.
3. Facilitators may start by acknowledging and appreciating the richness and diversity of life within Indigenous communities prior to contact and how women and girls played a significant role in sustaining customs and practices.
4. Facilitators may ask participants what customs or local practices have survived in their community. Depending on what emerges, facilitators may ask participants the meaning and significance of these customs.
5. Facilitators can then ask participants how they believe life was different prior to contact with settlers.
6. Facilitators may now invite the Elder to present and share stories about relevant cultural teachings and life prior to contact. At this time the Elder may also choose to discuss how colonization interrupted traditional Indigenous conceptions of gender.
7. After the Elder has finished sharing their stories and speaking, facilitators may invite participants to engage with the Elder on what they have heard, emphasizing that Indigenous men and boys can carry these traditions forth to ensure that Indigenous women and girls are being supported.

Closing the Teaching:

To close the teaching, facilitators may invite participants to share their feelings about colonization and the impact on Indigenous cultures and communities. Facilitators may acknowledge some of the feelings they heard and transition to the next teaching by noting that a historical overview of colonization will take place, in which genocide and violence will be explored.

Checklist:

- Provide historical context (Indigenous prior to contact with settlers)
- Clarify objectives
- Emphasize local cultural practices that survived colonization (discussion)
- Participants share their point of view on life prior to contact with settlers
- Elder storytelling with an emphasis on how colonization negatively impacted indigenous conceptions of gender
- Open discussion about life prior to contact (sharing feelings about colonization and the detrimental impacts it had on the participants' home communities)



Teaching #3: Historical Overview of Colonization

Learning Objectives:

Participants will:

- Discuss colonization in a Sharing Circle format;
- Increase their understanding about the ways in which colonization has impacted Indigenous (First Nations) women and girls lives through the Indian Act (Government legislation that states how First Nation's communities are governed in Canada); and,
- Reflect on male power and privilege.

Before You Begin:

Colonization has had, and still has, profound impacts on Indigenous communities. When settlers arrived, they engaged in treaty negotiations with Indigenous nations with the objective of acquiring ownership of these lands, as well as resources resulting from land use. Settler Nation-States did not honour most of these treaties. The dishonouring of the treaties entrenched the ongoing colonial agenda at the time. Continual lack of understanding and disrespect for the treaties persist to this day, as do the residual effects of colonization on communities. Exploitation of the land through industrialization has led to the verge of total environmental collapse, exemplified by climate change, air and water pollution, and species extinction. Indigenous resistance to colonization includes movements such as Idle No More, Standing Rock and acts of resistance such as reclaiming the space on the Parliament Hill grounds during the 150th celebration of Canada.

Discriminatory policies based on sex, embedded in the Indian Act, have led to and continue to marginalize Indigenous (First Nations) women and girls. Indian Residential Schools, Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls, all exemplify the sexism of colonization. The Indian Act of 1876 stated: "Provided that any Indian woman marrying any other than an Indian or non-treaty Indian shall cease to be an Indian in any respect within the meaning of this Act..."¹³ As a result, prior to 1985, the Indian Act¹⁴ specified that when Indigenous (First Nations) women married non-Indigenous men they lost their status as Indigenous (First Nations) women. This led to gender-based discrimination and ostracization within their own communities. Sex discrimination endured until 1985, when amendments allowed some women to regain their status. Sexism and discrimination within the Indian Act result in the devaluing of Indigenous (First Nations) women and girls. This is reflected in the high rates of violence Indigenous (First Nations) women and girls face. While Indigenous men and boys also face

13 Gary P. Gould and Alan J. Semple, *Our Land: The Maritimes*. Saint Annes Point Press, Fredericton, New Brunswick, 1980. P. 95.

14 Government of Canada, Indian Act. April 2015. Retrieved from: <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/PDF/I-5.pdf>

discrimination (including racism), and their lives have also been impacted because of colonization, they often have power and privilege that many Indigenous women and girls do not. This is reflected in the higher levels of violence that Indigenous women and girls experience. For example, Indigenous women are killed at six times the rate of non-Indigenous women.¹⁵

This teaching will be most successfully delivered if facilitators research and understand the general history of Canada, the historical agreements between the Crown and Indigenous nations, and the various legislations that impacted the lives of Indigenous peoples. Facilitators need to be very thorough in preparing to deliver this teaching. The following graphic illustrates timing and location of treaties and may contribute to understanding colonial history:

Source: <http://scoinc.mb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/CrownAboriginalMap.jpg>

15 Homicide in Canada, 2014, Statistics Canada, p.14. Available at: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-002-x/2015001/article/14244-eng.pdf>

Starting the Teaching:

Facilitators may indicate to participants that this teaching is about exploring the impacts of colonization within Indigenous communities and the root causes of violence. Facilitators may emphasize that it can be difficult and upsetting to hear some of the content of this teaching. Feelings such as anger, grief, sorrow and sadness may arise, which should be acknowledged from a support system on site, which could accompany the participants through a therapeutic process established by the host community. This process should always be consistent with local protocols and customs.

If settlers (those who have come to settle here, also known as colonizers) are present during the teaching, facilitators may emphasize that it may be difficult and upsetting to hear some of the content of this teaching. Emphasize that this teaching is a time for listening and acknowledgement, and not for challenging the realities of colonization. Active and reflective listening, whereby experiences are mirrored back, can be healing for those sharing their experiences of violence. Facilitators can demonstrate what active and reflective listening looks and sounds like (listening using the body, not just ears, but with eyes, and bodies facing the person speaking).

Facilitators Guide:

1. Facilitators need to make note of the various resources and supports available in their own community. It will be particularly useful if facilitators can discuss their own choices when seeking resources and supports, thereby modeling the opportunity for participants to do this if they feel triggered or flooded.
2. Facilitators may explain that colonization intentionally sought to acquire lands and resources and by doing so, they have dispossessed Indigenous peoples, and altered and interrupted their cultural and customary practices, freedom of movement, traditional systems of governance etc., which resulted in a genocide against the original nations of Turtle Island. Facilitators may introduce the concept of genocide.

Article 2 of the UN's Convention on Genocide (1948)¹⁶ defines genocide as actions:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.

Facilitators may ask the participants what forms of genocide have occurred on Turtle Island. Examples are: Indian Residential Schools, the 60s Scoop, and the Millennium Scoop (the broader term to describe children being taken from Indigenous families by child protection and service agencies), which endures to this day, with Indigenous children being taken from their families and placed with non-Indigenous families. Indigenous women and girls were also subjected to forced sterilization, as D. Marie Ralstin-Lewis noted:

Estimates indicate that, from the early to mid-1960s up to 1976, between 3,400 and 70,000 Native women—out of only 100,000 to 150,000 women of childbearing age—were coercively, forcibly, or unwittingly sterilized permanently by tubal ligation or hysterectomy. Native women seeking treatment in Indian Health Service (IHS) hospitals and with IHS-contracted physicians were allowed neither the basic right of informed consent prior to sterilization nor the right to refuse the operation.¹⁷

It is important that facilitators have an opportunity to describe these mechanisms of genocide.

3. Facilitators may introduce the Indian Act and identify three or four of the various impacts that it has on Indigenous (First Nations) communities.

4. Facilitators may acknowledge that there is a spectrum of gender identities, and that Two Spirited individuals continue to be heavily discriminated against due to colonization. Depending on the answers from participants, facilitators may emphasize that men have historically and to this day, had more power and privileges than women. Facilitators may then ask participants how the Indian Act specifically discriminated against Indigenous peoples (First Nations), but particularly women and

16 United Nations, Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. 1948. New York, NY: United Nations, P. 1. Retrieved from: <http://www.hrweb.org/legal/genocide.html>

17 Ralstin-Lewis, D. Marie. "The continuing struggle against Genocide: Indigenous Women's Reproductive Rights." *Wicazo Sa Review* 20.1 (2005): 71-95.

girls. Encourage participants to reflect on their lived experience. Depending on the answers given, facilitators may emphasize that one of the most glaring forms of discrimination of the Indian Act was the disenfranchisement (defined as being deprived of a right or rights) of Indigenous women who left reserves and married non-status men. This led to the devaluing of women, and contributed to genocide. Additionally, women who married ‘status’ Indian men from another community lost their band status and became members of their spouse’s community.¹⁸ [Bill C-31](#)¹⁹ and the current [Bill C-3](#)²⁰ were created to address the sexual discrimination in the Indian Act using the section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (see below for resources).

5. Facilitators may ask if there are any other impacts arising from the Indian Act.

6. Facilitators may now indicate there is a strong connection between the violence done toward Indigenous women and girls and the violence being done to Mother Earth through colonization. The disregard for the rights of Mother Earth has led to a state of environmental crisis globally, and has been caused by colonization. Facilitators may indicate that they will show the Lee Maracle film “[Connection between Violence against the Earth and Violence against Women](#)²¹” and read the following description: There is a direct connection between violence against the Earth and violence against women: looking to the past to restore our future. Lee Maracle is a writer, activist and performer from the Stó:lô nation located in the area now known as British Columbia. She is currently the Aboriginal Writer-in-Residence for First Nations House, and an instructor in the Aboriginal Studies Department at the University of Toronto. Lee is one of the founders of the En’owkin International School of Writing in Penticton, BC, and Cultural Director of the Centre for Indigenous Theatre in Toronto. She mentors young people on personal and cultural healing and reclamation.

7. After the film is finished, facilitators may ask participants for their thoughts, reflections and feelings about the film. They may also ask what participants think about the connection made between the disregard for Mother Earth and violence against Indigenous women and girls.

8. Facilitators may now share the Native Women’s Association of Canada factsheet on [Violence against Aboriginal Women](#)²², asking participants to read the factsheet, thinking about what does and does not surprise them. Facilitators may ask participants for their reflections and how the factsheet relates to their personal experience in their communities.

18 Rabble.ca, “Gender discrimination and the Indian Act,” Retrieved from: <http://rabble.ca/toolkit/on-this-day/gender-discrimination-and-indian-act>

19 First Nations Studies Program (UBC), “Indigenous Foundations,” 2009. Retrieved from: http://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/bill_c-31/

20 Parliament of Canada, “Legislative Summary of Bill C-3: Gender Equity in Indian Registration Act”, March 18, 2010. Retrieved from: https://lop.parl.ca/About/Parliament/LegislativeSummaries/Bills_ls.asp?Language=E&ls=c3&source=library_prb&Parl=40&Ses=3

21 Lee Maracle, “Connection between Violence against the Earth and Violence against Women.” First Voices! First Women Speak! teach and community gathering hosted by KAIROS Canada and IPSMO, August 28, 2012. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VdxjYhbTvYw>

22 Native Women’s Association of Canada, Factsheet: Violence Against Aboriginal Women. Akwesasne, ON, 2015. https://nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/Fact_Sheet_Violence_Against_Aboriginal_Women.pdf

9. Facilitators may ask male participants what their thoughts and feelings are regarding the impacts of colonization on the power and privilege they possess in comparison to Indigenous women and girls. During this discussion, facilitators may recommend that participants explore the lived experiences of Indigenous women and girls, by reading important literary works such as *Half Breed*, the biography of Maria Campbell, a Métis woman impacted by violence, racism, drug addiction, transformation and healing.²³
10. Facilitators may offer space for men and boys to share their own experiences of violence and trauma within systems of violence and racism, and how this has impacted their lives and relationships.
11. Facilitators may want to ask participants if they have any questions during each topic contained with this teaching to ensure everyone understands and is being supported throughout the process.

Closing the Teaching:

Facilitators may provide an overview of the key discussion themes and include a brief summary of the Indian Act as a form of gender-based discrimination, which marginalizes Indigenous (First Nations) men, boys, women and girls. Facilitators may then acknowledge gratitude for the willingness of participants to be present and listen to the stories of violence against Indigenous women and girls. To transition into the next teaching, facilitators may indicate that the next teaching will entail discussion about Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls.

Checklist:

- Provide history of colonialism
- Clarify objectives
- Increase understanding that violence within Indigenous communities is a result of colonialism
- Discuss male privilege and accountability for violence against Indigenous women and girls
- Discuss activity with participants to ensure they are feeling safe

Additional Resources:

Melina Laboucan-Massimo, “Linking abuse of Mother Earth to the abuse of Aboriginal women.” *Musk-rat Magazine*, Toronto, Ontario, 2013. Retrieved from: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KDNfamaooA>

Riwi Brown, “Once Were Warriors.” Fine Line Features, New Zealand, 1994. [Trailer.](#)

23 Maria Campbell, *Half-Breed*. Formac Publishing Company Limited. Halifax, NS, 1973.



**Teaching #4:
Missing and
Murdered
Indigenous
Women and Girls**

Learning Objectives:

Participants will:

- Understand the root causes of Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls;
- Increase their awareness about the Native Women's Association of Canada, and their work to raise awareness about Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls; and,
- Brainstorm direct actions that communities can take to create safer conditions for Indigenous women and girls.

Before You Begin:

For a comprehensive overview of Missing and Murdered Indigenous women, please see the [Native Women's Association of Canada factsheet: Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls](#).

The Native Women's Association of Canada has maintained a comprehensive database of cases of Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls, noting the ages most commonly impacted, and the geographical regions with the highest numbers of Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls.

Starting the Teaching:

Facilitators may indicate to participants that this teaching is about exploring the causes of Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls, and finding ways to take action to end this violence. Facilitators may also acknowledge the deep pain and sorrow that exists around Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls. It will be important for facilitators to refer participants to local resources if personal traumas are triggered, ideally available at the location of the gathering.

Facilitators Guide:

1. Facilitators may ask participants what they know about Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls. Depending on what emerges, facilitators may choose to distribute the [Native Women's Association of Canada factsheet](#) and highlight key points to create greater awareness and understanding about Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls. At this time, facilitators may discuss the important work of the Native Women's Association of Canada [Sisters in Spirit program](#), designed to “conduct research and raise awareness of the alarmingly high rates of violence against Aboriginal women and girls in Canada.”²⁴
2. Facilitators may then ask participants if anyone would like to share personal experience of being directly affected by Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls. In advance, facilitators may also arrange for friends or family of Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls to speak to participants.
3. Facilitators may indicate that they will show the film “[Finding Dawn](#)”²⁵ and share the following description from the film website: “Acclaimed Métis filmmaker Christine Welsh presents a compelling documentary that puts a human face on a national tragedy: the murders and disappearances of an estimated 500 Aboriginal women in Canada over the past 30 years. This is a journey into the dark heart of Native women's experience in Canada. From Vancouver's Skid Row to the Highway of Tears in northern British Columbia, to Saskatoon, this film honours those who have passed and uncovers reasons for hope. “[Finding Dawn](#)” illustrates the deep historical, social and economic factors that contribute to the epidemic of violence against Indigenous women and girls in this country.”²⁶ Facilitators may ask participants to discuss the historical, social and economic causes of Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls, highlighted in the film.
4. Facilitators may ask participants to discuss the historical, social and economic causes of Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls, highlighted in the film.



24 Native Women's Association of Canada, “Sisters In Spirit.” Akwesasne, ON. 2009. Retrieved from: <http://www.nwac.ca/policy-areas/violence-prevention-and-safety/sisters-in-spirit/>

25 Christine Walsh, “Finding Dawn.” National Film Board, Montreal, PQ, 2006. Retrieved from: https://www.nfb.ca/film/finding_dawn/

26 Ibid.

5. To raise awareness and prevent future murders and disappearances of Indigenous women and girls, facilitators may ask participants to discuss in small groups what actions communities and individuals may take, similar to the Memorial Walk featured in “Finding Dawn”. Additionally, facilitators may also discuss how Indigenous men and boys can be effective allies to Indigenous women and girls. After the small group discussions, participants may have a representative present to the larger group.
6. If not mentioned, facilitators may share additional actions Indigenous men and boys can take to end violence against Indigenous women and girls. Some actions that facilitators can share include:
 - a) Indigenous men and boys can acknowledge violence against Indigenous women and girls;
 - b) To listen and learn from Indigenous women and girls’ personal stories of violence and resiliency;
 - c) To be a positive role model to men and boys in their lives;
 - d) To acknowledge the ways in which personal trauma has impacted one’s sense of self and relationships; and,
 - e) To speak out against all forms of discrimination and violence.

Closing the Teaching:

Facilitators may close this teaching by emphasizing that the continuing violence against Indigenous women and girls is part of a larger system of violence, in which women in general are dehumanized and objectified. An example of objectification is the way women are seen as sexual objects in various forms of media, or the way they are sometimes referred to as ‘the wife’ or ‘the girlfriend’. Addressing and challenging the way that these views are learned is an effective form of resistance and violence prevention.

Checklist:

- Provide information on the causes of Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls
- Clarify objectives
- Increase understanding about who is responsible for Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls
- Discuss male privilege and accountability for violence against Indigenous women and girls
- Highlight resilience work of Indigenous women (including the Native Women’s Association of Canada)
- Follow up with participants to ensure they are feeling safe and have the resources and supports required

Teaching #5: Indian Residential Schools



Learning Objectives:

Participants will:

- Increase their understanding about Indian Residential Schools as a state-sanctioned, church-endorsed, colonial practice and its multi-generational impacts, particularly on Indigenous women and girls; and,
- Increase their awareness and understanding of the origins of intergenerational violence experienced by Indigenous communities.

Before You Begin:

Indian Residential schools forcibly removed an estimated 150,000 Indigenous children from their homes and communities, in efforts to fulfill the mandate of the Indian Act--genocide of Indigenous individuals.²⁷ Catholic, Presbyterian, United and Anglican Churches administered a total of 130 Residential Schools. Indigenous children were not allowed to speak their languages, practice their customs or have connection to their culture. Many children died in these Residential Schools, and their parents were never informed. Children experienced high rates of violence, including sexualized violence. Those that did survive often lived lives filled with struggle, violence, and addictions, due to the traumas experienced in Residential Schools. The experience of Residential Schools for Métis was different based on perceived identity, lifestyle and religious affiliation. Many, but not all, Métis children were forced to attend Residential Schools. Despite experiencing similar impacts as First Nations and Inuit children in Residential Schools, the Métis Nation has been systemically excluded from the “Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, the Prime Minister’s 2008 apology and the mandate of the TRC itself.”²⁸ Links have now been drawn via the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) between Residential Schools and violence against Indigenous women and girls.²⁹ Facilitators may opt to seek out a Residential Schools’ survivor speaker and other information through the www.legacyofhope.ca.

This teaching provides an opportunity for settlers to participate in a healing dialogue and reconciliation process with Indigenous communities. By listening and gaining understanding of the experiences of Indigenous participants, healing can take place, and action can be taken to acknowledge the deep and harmful wounding committed against Indigenous communities and individuals through genocide.

27 CBC News, “A History of Residential Schools in Canada.” Ottawa, ON, May 16, 2008. Retrieved from: <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/a-history-of-residential-schools-in-canada-1.702280>

28 Métis Nation, “Excluded Again!” Ottawa, ON, June 1, 2015. Retrieved from: <http://www.metisnation.ca/index.php/news/excluded-again>

29 Kathryn Blaze Baum, “Report links residential schools with missing and murdered women.” Globe and Mail, Toronto, ON. June 2, 2015.

Starting the Teaching:

Facilitators may indicate to participants that this teaching is about acknowledging the impacts of Residential Schools, and the way that this was part of genocide, as has been articulated in **Before You Begin**. It is important to emphasize that Residential Schools led to intergenerational violence within Indigenous communities (including those within the Métis Nation), particularly against Indigenous women and girls.

Facilitators Guide:

1. Facilitators may ask participants if anyone would like to share how Residential Schools have impacted them or their families. Facilitators may also have prearranged for an Elder survivor who may begin this process of sharing by speaking about their Residential School experiences. It may be particularly useful to use a talking stick for this process, focusing the attention of participants onto the speaker with the talking stick. Depending on what emerges from survivors, facilitators may emphasize that high rates of post-traumatic stress, addiction, violence, depression and suicide, can all be attributed to the genocide imposed through the Indian Act and Residential Schools. Additionally, systems of local governance, dispute resolution, child rearing, land management and education were disregarded, compromised or outlawed.

2. Facilitators may invite participants to ask questions of the survivors and express gratitude for sharing their story. Depending on the responses from participants, facilitators may also pose the following questions to participants to be discussed in small groups, with reporting back to the larger group:

- How have the effects of intergenerational trauma from Residential Schooling been passed from generation to generation, and led to violence against Indigenous women and girls?
- How did Indian Residential Schools perpetuate violence against Indigenous children and youth, and especially women and girls?
- How did Indian Residential Schools impact the lives of the mothers of the children? How might they have felt to lose their children?
- What were the ways in which children endured this experience?
- What was daily life like at Indian Residential Schools?
- For survivors, how has this impacted your life, sense of self, and relationships?

3. Facilitators may generate discussion if it has not emerged already, about why Residential Schools were imposed. Depending on what participants cite, facilitators may emphasize that Residential Schools were used to separate children from their parents, and prevent the learning of culture, language, and Indigenous belief systems. This was part of the genocide imposed through the process of colonization by settler populations.

4. Additionally, it is highly recommended that facilitators ask participants how Residential Schools have specifically led to higher vulnerability to violence for Indigenous women and girls. To generate discussion, facilitators may discuss the links being made by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission between Residential Schools and Missing and Murdered Indigenous women and girls. Additional resources are provided at the end of this teaching, and may be distributed to participants.

5. If settlers are present for this teaching, facilitators may ask Indigenous participants what they need from settlers. Conversely, settlers could ask Indigenous participants what they need from them. Prior to the process beginning, it will be useful for facilitators to emphasize that active and reflective listening involves listening with the body, not just with ears, but with eyes, and with bodies facing the person speaking.

Closing the Teaching:

To close this teaching, facilitators can acknowledge gratitude for all those who have shared their stories and experiences, emphasizing that it can be very difficult for survivors of violence to do so. They may also emphasize that it is very important to hear these narratives of genocide, to help build understanding about the root causes of violence in Indigenous communities. Facilitators may indicate that the next teaching will explore the 60s Scoop---forced removal of Indigenous children from their parent's homes, to place children in foster care, and continue the legacy of the Indian Act.

Checklist:

- Provide information on the history of Indian Residential Schools
- Increase understanding about the fact that Indian Residential Schools were part of the genocide committed against Indigenous peoples
- Make links between Indian Residential Schools and the susceptibility of Indigenous women and girls to violence
- Discuss the perpetuation of intergenerational trauma as a result of Residential School experiences
- Ensure all participants feel safe and have access to resources and supports throughout this teaching

Additional Resources:

First Nations Education Steering Committee, “Grade 10 Indian Residential Schools and Reconciliation learning resources”. Vancouver, BC. Retrieved from: <http://www.fnesc.ca/grade-10irsr/>.

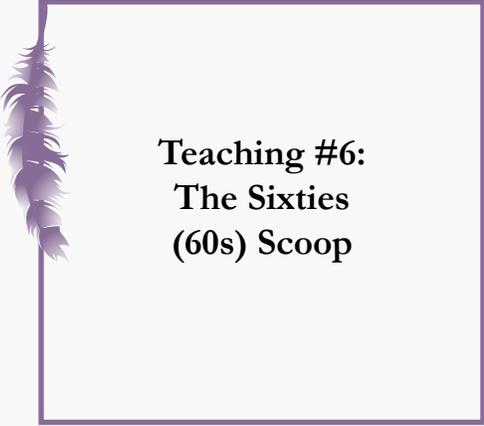
Doug Saunders, “Residential schools, reserves and Canada’s crime against humanity.” Globe and Mail, Toronto, ON, June 5, 2015. Retrieved from: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/commissions-report-puts-canada-on-brink-of-a-historic-reckoning/article24825565/> (for non-indigenous participants--to be read in advance if possible)

Lynda Gray, “Why silence greeted Stephen Harper’s residential-school apology.” Georgia Straight, Vancouver, BC, June 12, 2008. Retrieved from: <http://www.straight.com/article-150021/unyas-lynda-gray-responds-prime-ministers-apology>

Gord Downie and Jeff Lemire, *The Secret Path*. Arts & Crafts Productions Inc, Toronto, ON, 2016.

Beverley Jacobs and Andrea Williams, “Legacy of Residential Schools: Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women,” from *Speaking My Truth: Reflections on Reconciliation & Residential School*, by Jonathan Dewar, Mike DeGagné, and Shelagh Rogers. Legacy of Hope Foundation, Ottawa, ON, 2012.



A purple square box with a feather-like graphic on the left side. Inside the box, the text reads: **Teaching #6:
The Sixties
(60s) Scoop**

Teaching #6: The Sixties (60s) Scoop

Learning Objectives:

Participants will:

- Understand the impacts of the 60s Scoop on Indigenous families; and,
- Increase their understanding about the ways in which government policies led to assimilation of Indigenous children and were part of deliberate efforts to commit genocide.

Before You Begin:

The 60s Scoop was a government policy that forcibly removed at least 20,000 children from their parents' homes and adopted out or placed them in foster care, from the 1960s until the mid-1980s.³⁰ The goal of the 60s Scoop was similar to that of Residential Schools: to assimilate and remove cultural identity from children. As the film "[Birth of a Family](#)"³¹ demonstrates, many Indigenous children grew into adults, determined to reconnect with their families and culture. To learn more about the 60s Scoop, facilitators may access any of the resources contained in the footnotes for this teaching.

Starting the Teaching:

Facilitators may indicate to participants that this teaching is about exploring the impacts of the 60s Scoop, particularly for women whose children were removed from their care. Facilitators can then ask participants what they know about the 60s Scoop. Depending on the answers, facilitators may provide background information contained in the footnotes.

30 Just what was the Sixties Scoop? TVOntario. February 17, 2017. Retrieved from: <http://tvo.org/article/current-affairs/shared-values/just-what-was-the-sixties-scoop>

31 Tasha Hubbard, "[Birth of a Family](#)." National Film Board, Montreal, PQ, 2016.

Facilitators Guide:

1. Facilitators may acknowledge the damage done by the 60s Scoop to families and children, and that this legacy of genocide still endures to this day, as adults begin to reconnect with their families, customs and cultures.
2. Ideally, facilitators will introduce a survivor of the 60s Scoop to discuss the impact on their lives. This needs to be arranged and agreed upon in advance, and will enhance the delivery of this teaching significantly.
3. Facilitators may then indicate that they will show “Birth of a Family” and read this description of the film: “Three sisters and a brother, adopted as infants into separate families across North America, meet for the first time in this deeply moving documentary by director Tasha Hubbard. Removed from their young Dene mother’s care as part of Canada’s infamous Sixties Scoop, Betty Ann, Esther, Rosalie and Ben were four of the 20,000 Indigenous children taken from their families between 1955 and 1985, to be either adopted into white families or to live in foster care. As the four siblings piece together their shared history, their connection deepens, bringing laughter with it, and their family begins to take shape³².”
4. Following the film, facilitators may ask for thoughts, reflections, and feelings from participants. Additionally, facilitators may ask participants about ways that survivors of the 60s Scoop have been and can be successfully supported and included within Indigenous communities.

32 Ibid.

Closing the Teaching:

To close the teaching, facilitators may acknowledge the harm caused by the 60s Scoop, and that Indigenous children continue to be taken from Indigenous parents to this day. This is known as the Millennium Scoop. It is estimated that nearly 50% of children in care in Canada are Indigenous.³³ Alternatively, a survivor may offer similar thoughts and reflections, and speak to the resiliency and power of survivors to overcome adversity. Facilitators may also acknowledge the resiliency and power of survivors to overcome adversity, heal, and build healthy relationships in their lives.

Checklist:

- Provide factual information on the history of the Sixties Scoop
- Increase understanding about the fact that the Sixties Scoop was part of the genocide committed against Indigenous peoples
- Make links between the Sixties Scoop and the susceptibility of Indigenous women and girls to violence
- Discuss the perpetuation of intergenerational trauma as a result of the Sixties Scoop
- Take steps to ensure all participants feel safe and have access to resources and supports

Additional Resources:

60s Scoop Class Action website: <https://sixtiesScoopclaim.com/>

The National Indigenous Survivors of Child Welfare Network website: www.sixtiesscoopnetwork.org and www.niscw.org

33 Murat Yukselir and Evan Annett, "Where the kids are: How Indigenous children are over-represented in foster care." Globe and Mail, Toronto, ON, April 18, 2016. Retrieved from: <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/indigenous-kids-made-up-almost-half-of-canadian-foster-children-in-2011statscan/article29616843/>

**Teaching #7:
Full Spectrum of
Violence that
Indigenous Men
and Boys
Experience**



Learning Objectives:

Participants will:

- Increase their awareness of the violence faced by Indigenous men and boys;
- Learn about the mental health impacts of violence;
- Increase their understanding about the need for survivors to seek resources and supports, and what these supports are depending on their location;
- Expand their conceptions of violence faced by Indigenous men; and,
- Learn about the high rates of incarcerated Indigenous men.

Before You Begin:

While *Walking In Her Moccasins* is focused on preventing and ending violence against Indigenous women and girls, it is undeniable that Indigenous men and boys also face violence. Often this violence originates from other men and boys. It is important that Indigenous men and boys be engaged in a conversation about the need to seek support and resources for their own trauma. This directly impacts ending the cycle of violence. Additionally, acknowledging the other impacts of experiencing violence, including mental health impacts, addictions, and high rates of incarceration, is important for Indigenous men and boys to begin building healthy Indigenous masculinities.

Starting the Teaching:

Facilitators may indicate to participants that this teaching is about acknowledging that although participants have gathered to discuss ways of preventing violence against Indigenous women and girls, violence against Indigenous men and boys also happens and needs to be addressed so healing can occur. This can also help address root causes of violence against Indigenous women and girls. Facilitators may then ask for examples of shared (similar to Indigenous women and girls) and unique forms of violence against Indigenous men and boys.

Facilitators Guide:

1. Facilitators may pass out [Handout #1: Letter To My Younger Self](#) from former baseball pitcher Dwight Gooden, explaining that he struggled with addiction and self-harm issues. Facilitators may ask for a volunteer to read the letter out loud, or do so themselves. After the letter has been read, facilitators may ask participants for their thoughts on the meaning and implications for all men and boys of the following quote from this letter: *You will want to try to fix your issues on your own. This is how you think a man handles his problems. It isn't. Being a man is about reaching out for help when you need it.*

Depending on what emerges, facilitators may emphasize that it is critical for all men and boys to access supports and resources so that they can end the cycle of violence, which may continue if they have experienced violence and not done healing work. Facilitators may ask participants what local resources exist for those who have experienced violence, and provide a list of supports and resources.

2. Facilitators may ask participants what the impacts of experiencing violence can be. Depending on the issues being faced by communities and answers from participants, facilitators may indicate that the following impacts are common:

- a) Depression;
- b) Self-harm including suicide (Note: discussing suicide requires careful consideration and appropriate planning. Facilitators may emphasize that anyone having suicidal ideations may benefit from seeking resources and support.);
- c) Substance abuse and addictions;
- d) Post-traumatic stress;
- e) Committing crimes; and,
- f) Incarceration.

3. Facilitators may indicate to participants that they will listen to the CBC radio clip "[Out In The Open](#)" about self-harm and suicide. The playing of this radio clip should be prefaced with discussion about how important it is to discuss self-harm, and to create safe spaces for men and boys to get the support and resources they need.

4. Facilitators may call upon a male survivor of violence (identified and prepared in advance) to talk about their experiences with and healing from violence. Ideally, this man will highlight the impacts of violence on him, and his corresponding healing journey, which will open a rich dialogue with participants, allowing them to also share their experiences with the group, if they feel comfortable and safe to do so.

5. Facilitators may indicate that they will show the film “Inside Peace,”³⁴ and read the following description of the film: “Inside Peace” follows a group of inmates doing hard time in a Texas prison as they embark on a journey of personal discovery while struggling with society’s roadblocks and dangers. Facilitators may then indicate that the film will be viewed to explore the ways in which non-white men face higher rates of incarceration and unique challenges while building lives free from violence.”³⁵

6. Following the film, facilitators may ask the following questions to generate discussion about violence against Indigenous men and boys:

- a) What did you learn about the way that men and boys can practice resilience?
- b) What is difficult about being a man and a boy?
- c) How can we be allies with other Indigenous women, girls, men and boys to live free from violence?

7. Facilitators may now open a discussion about violence faced by Indigenous men and boys due to colonization, noting that it is increasingly recognized Indigenous men and boys are also vulnerable to experiencing violence, including being murdered or going missing.

Closing the Teaching:

To close this teaching, facilitators may ask participants how Indigenous men and boys can support each other if they are experiencing or have experienced violence.

Checklist:

- Provide space for Indigenous men and boys to discuss violence in their lives
- Increase understanding about the fact that this violence has occurred because of colonialism
- Hold space for survivors to be seen and heal
- Provide Indigenous-centered resources for participants
- Ensure all participants feel safe and know about applicable resources and supports



34 Rosie Lee, “Inside Peace,” Studio View Productions, Westlake Village, CA, 2017. Retrieved from: <http://insidepeacemovie.com/>
35 Ibid.

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