



# EARLY YEARS INDIGENOUS CULTURAL SAFETY RESOURCE GUIDE

**BC MINISTRY OF CHILDREN  
AND FAMILY DEVELOPMENT**



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If you have questions, feedback, or suggestions about this guide,  
please send us an email

**[EarlyYearsOffice@gov.bc.ca](mailto:EarlyYearsOffice@gov.bc.ca)**

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*EARLY YEARS INDIGENOUS CULTURAL SAFETY RESOURCE GUIDE  
MARCH, 2019*

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# 1. ABOUT THIS GUIDE

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## PURPOSE

The purpose of this guide is to help Early Childhood Educators who work with Indigenous children, families, and communities find appropriate and meaningful resources that will increase their ability to provide culturally safe and respectful care.

## CULTURAL COMPETENCY: WHY YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT IT

Cultural competency involves being aware of and sensitive to your own values and biases, and developing practice skills for interacting in respectful ways with people who are different from you.<sup>1</sup>

Cultural competency does not require you to become an expert in cultures different from yours, it simply requires that you reflect on how your values and biases affect your interactions with others. It is only by understanding a family's culture through communication and relationship building that you can provide cultural safety to children in your care.

## HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE GUIDE

This guide contains educational resources to develop Cultural Competency for Early Childhood Educators. The inclusion of these resources is not an endorsement; it is up to each individual learner to determine which resource works best for them.

## WHO SHOULD USE THIS GUIDE

Early Childhood Educators who work with Indigenous children, families, and communities.

## SPONSORS

This resource guide is an initiative sponsored by the Province of British Columbia's Ministry of Children and Family Development.

*The Province of British Columbia recognizes that a distinctions-based approach is needed to ensure that the unique rights, interests and circumstances of Indigenous peoples in B.C. are acknowledged, affirmed, and implemented. The Province recognizes First Nations, the Métis Nation, and Inuit as the Indigenous peoples of Canada, consisting of distinct, rights-bearing communities with their own histories, including with the Crown. The work of forming renewed relationships based on the recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership must reflect the unique interests, priorities and circumstances of each people.*

## 2. WHAT IS CULTURAL COMPETENCY

### A NOTE ON DEFINITIONS

The definitions in this guide are basic in nature. To be equitable and culturally safe, Indigenous nations and organizations may define cultural safety in a manner appropriate to the interests and needs of their children and youth.

### DEFINITION OF CULTURAL COMPETENCY

Cultural competency is the ability “to provide care to individuals with diverse values, beliefs and behaviours. . . [to] meet their social, cultural and linguistic needs”<sup>2</sup>. Whether a child or family feels **culturally safe** is dependent in part on whether the care provider is **culturally competent**.

### DEFINITION OF CULTURAL SAFETY

**Cultural safety** means attending to “culture and cultural differences, including recognition of the importance of respecting differences. It is also important to understand that power differentials, which are a part of providing care, impact cultural safety”<sup>3</sup>.

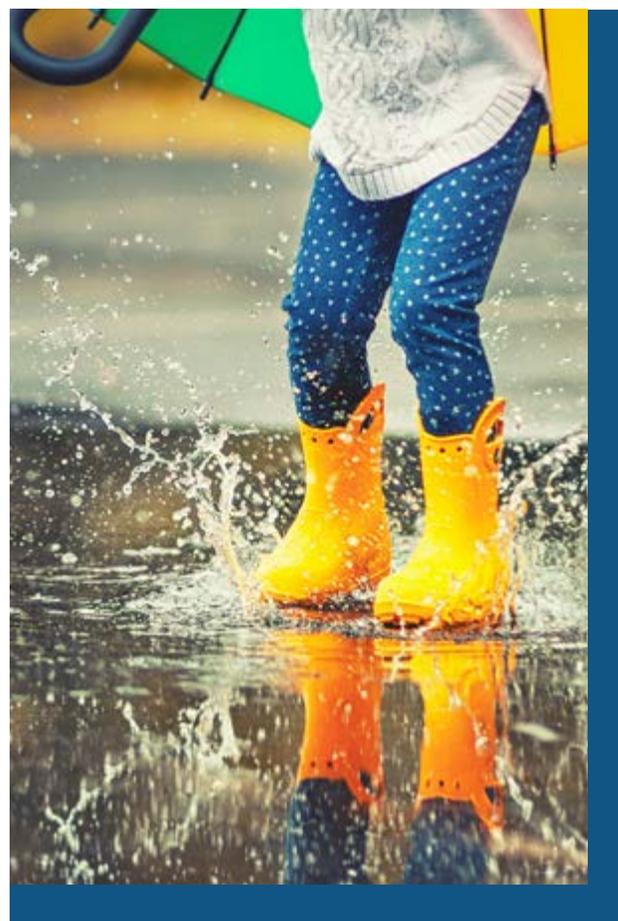
### CONTEXT

Cultural safety is important when two or more cultures interact within the same space, as one culture is often dominant.

This means that the values of the dominant culture are placed above those of the marginalized group. This is true in Canada, where many Indigenous cultures and traditions are often intentionally or unintentionally invalidated. Cultural safety means creating a space where these cultures are respected and treated equally.

### RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CULTURAL SAFETY AND CULTURAL COMPETENCY

To be culturally competent, it is necessary to be aware of understand the culture and belief of the communities where you work. Cultural competency is a necessary step towards providing a culturally safe experience for children. Developing cultural competency will help you work towards providing cultural safety.



1. (Betancourt, Green, Carrillo & Ananeh-Firempong, 2003, p. 5)

2. (Health Care Assistant Core Competencies, 2014)

## 3. ONLINE TRAINING

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### BEST START RESOURCE CENTRE

#### *“Sense of Belonging”:* Supporting Healthy Development in Aboriginal Families

This learning bundle provides culturally specific information and approaches that can be applied to support Aboriginal families and children.

**Cost:** \$24

**Time:** Unknown, self-led

<http://courses.eceedu.ca/courses/a-sense-of-belonging>

### INDIGENOUS HEALTH AND SOUTHWEST ONTARIO ABORIGINAL HEALTH ACCESS CENTRE

#### *Indigenous Cultural Safety Collaborative Learning Series*

This learning bundle provides culturally specific information and approaches that can be applied to support Aboriginal families and children.

**Cost:** Free

**Time:** Each is approximately one hour

<http://www.icscollaborative.com/home>

### INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES SOCIETY

#### *Cultural Perspectives Training*

This course helps individuals deepen their understanding and develop actionable ideas to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s Calls to Action. Includes in-class learning, sharing, and collaboration with self-guided resources.

**Cost:** \$250 per person

**Time:** 7 in-class hours and 8 online hours

<http://ipsociety.ca/training/cultural-perspectives-training/>

### PROVINCIAL HEALTH SERVICES AUTHORITY

#### *Indigenous Cultural Safety Training*

This course is designed to increase knowledge, enhance self-awareness, and strengthen the skills of those who work both directly and indirectly with Indigenous people.

**Cost:** \$250 per person

**Time:** Self-paced over a 6 week window

<http://www.sanyas.ca/training/british-columbia>

### UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

#### *Indigenous Canada*

This course takes an Indigenous perspective, to explore key issues facing Indigenous peoples today from a historical and critical perspective.

It includes a focus on national and local Indigenous-settler relations from a historical and critical perspective.

**Cost:** Free

**Time:** Unknown, self-led

[www.ualberta.ca/admissions-programs/online-courses/indigenous-canada](http://www.ualberta.ca/admissions-programs/online-courses/indigenous-canada)

### UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

#### *Reconciliation through Indigenous Education*

This course looks to show how Indigenous ways of knowing, content, perspectives, and pedagogies can be made part of classrooms and schools.

**Cost:** Free

**Time:** Unknown, self-led

<https://www.edx.org/course/reconciliation-through-indigenous-education-0>

### UNIVERSITY OF VICTORIA

#### *Cultural Safety Modules*

Three interactive modules designed to reflect on Indigenous peoples’ experiences of colonization and racism through the concept of cultural safety as it relates to health and health care.

**Cost:** Free

**Time:** Unknown, self-led

<http://web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/courses/csafety/mod1/index.htm>

## 4. EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

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These learning resources are intended to be accessed by a community, group, or organization.

### **FOUR WINDS WELLNESS CENTRE**

*Jann Derrick PhD R.M.F.T.*

Facilitating a variety of workshops and trainings focused on Indigenous historical trauma, residential trauma, and its intergenerational effects in communities.

**Location:** Kamloops

<http://www.4windswellness.ca>

### **LITTLE DRUM CONSULTING**

*Monique Gray Smith*

Facilitating participatory sessions and lectures based in cultural competency and safety, and a belief in the strength and resiliency of Indigenous people.

**Location:** Victoria

<http://www.littledrum.com/>

### **BUILDING BRIDGES THROUGH UNDERSTANDING THE VILLAGE**

*Kathi Camilleri*

This experiential workshop helps participants understand traditional Aboriginal ways and values. Participants explore their own personal role in supporting the revival of those values that worked so beautifully for thousands of years. Participants will explore the effects of Residential Schools and Canada's Policy of Assimilation. This workshop is geared to solutions rather than recrimination and is a great forum in which to ask questions.

**Location:** Various locations in BC

<http://villageworkshopseries.com/>



## 5. WEBSITES

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### ABORIGINAL HEAD START ASSOCIATION OF BC

An organization dedicated to the development of Indigenous children and their families, working in collaboration with other organizations and government to ensure consistent quality standards of cultural safety.

[www.ahsabc.com/copy-of-resources](http://www.ahsabc.com/copy-of-resources)

### FIRST NATION HEALTH AUTHORITY

A province-wide health authority, responsible for administering health programs and service for First Nations people living in BC. This site offers a series of webinars on culture and cultural safety.

[www.fnha.ca/wellness/cultural-humility/webinars](http://www.fnha.ca/wellness/cultural-humility/webinars)

### NATIONAL COLLABORATING CENTRE FOR ABORIGINAL HEALTH

Using a holistic, co-ordinated and strengths-based approach to health, the NCCAH fosters links between evidence, knowledge, practice and policy while advancing self-determination and Indigenous knowledge in support of optimal health and well-being.

#### Webinar: Cultural Safety for Indigenous Peoples

[www.ccnsa-nccah.ca/495/Webinar\\_Cultural\\_safety\\_for\\_Indigenous\\_peoples\\_A\\_determinant\\_of\\_health.nccah?id=162](http://www.ccnsa-nccah.ca/495/Webinar_Cultural_safety_for_Indigenous_peoples_A_determinant_of_health.nccah?id=162)

#### Indigenous Cultural Competency Training Options

[www.ccnsa-nccah.ca/docs/other/CCSDH-Cultural-Competency-Training-EN.pdf](http://www.ccnsa-nccah.ca/docs/other/CCSDH-Cultural-Competency-Training-EN.pdf)

### THE EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT INTERCULTURAL PARTNERSHIPS

An ongoing program of community-university research contributing to knowledge and practice addressing conditions affecting the health, development and success of children in Canada and around the world.

[www.ecdip.org/](http://www.ecdip.org/)

### THE MÉTIS NATION BRITISH COLUMBIA

The Métis Nation British Columbia (MNBC) represents nearly 90,000 self-identified Métis people in British Columbia, of that, nearly 18,000 are provincially registered Métis Citizens with MNBC. The Métis National Council and the Provincial Government of British Columbia, as well as the Federal Government of Canada, recognizes the MNBC as the official governing organization for Métis in BC.

[www.mnbc.ca/](http://www.mnbc.ca/)

## 6. PRINT RESOURCES

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### BC ABORIGINAL CHILD CARE SOCIETY

Revised Handbook of Best Practices in Aboriginal Early Childhood Programs, 2008

[www.acc-society.bc.ca/resource/handbook-of-best-practices-in-aboriginal-early-childhood-programs-2008/](http://www.acc-society.bc.ca/resource/handbook-of-best-practices-in-aboriginal-early-childhood-programs-2008/)

### EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT INTERCULTURAL PARTNERSHIPS

Cultural Safety in Practice with Children, Families and Communities

#### Five principles of cultural safety

[www.ecdip.org/culturalsafety/](http://www.ecdip.org/culturalsafety/)

#### Corresponding poster

[www.ecdip.org/docs/pdf/Cultural%20Safety%20Poster.pdf](http://www.ecdip.org/docs/pdf/Cultural%20Safety%20Poster.pdf)

### UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN BRITISH COLUMBIA NATIONAL COLLABORATION CENTRE FOR ABORIGINAL HEALTH

Various articles on culturally focused early intervention.

[www.wabano.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Creating-Cultural-Safety.pdf](http://www.wabano.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Creating-Cultural-Safety.pdf)

### WABANO CENTRE FOR ABORIGINAL HEALTH

#### Creating Cultural Safety (Ottawa)

Collected information on how Cultural Safety is achieved and the lived experiences of culturally unsafe practice.

[www.wabano.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Creating-Cultural-Safety.pdf](http://www.wabano.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Creating-Cultural-Safety.pdf)

## 7. PODCASTS

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### EARLY YEARS INDIGENOUS CULTURAL COMPETENCY PODCASTS

The Indigenous Cultural Competency Early Years Podcast series is intended to support individuals, child care centres and agencies that support Indigenous children and families and/or want to ensure they are respectfully weaving Indigenous ways of learning, knowing, being and doing into their programming. All of the podcasts described can be found at the link below.

<https://soundcloud.com/bcgov/sets/early-years-podcast/s-dhqHz>

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#### *Podcast Descriptions*

##### **EP 1: THE JOURNEY BEGINS WITH MONIQUE GRAY SMITH (29 MIN)**

Welcome! This episode is all about ensuring you feel welcome and ready for the journey that this series will take you on as you continue to expand your learning of Cultural Competency. As the host, I will introduce myself and then we begin to briefly explore the contents and guests of future episodes. An integral aspect to Indigenous worldview is that relationships are at the centre of that worldview; thus, you will find these podcasts include learning about who the person is you will be listening to, not just their career and career contributions. Also included in this episode, is an introduction to various terminology that will assist you in your continued journey. As with each episode, you are encouraged to give yourself the gift of time. Not only to listen, but to also take time to reflect and consider how what you have heard will influence you and your contributions to children and families.

##### **EP 2: HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE WITH MONIQUE GRAY SMITH (40 MIN)**

We will embark on an active and respectful exploration of Canada's collective history, our present and our future. For some of you, this may be a time of significant change in your understanding of Canada's history and may be the first time you've thought about how this history impacts the children and families you are working with. In 2009, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) was launched and listened to almost 7000 stories across Canada. This episode only briefly touches on history and the TRC, and for some of you this may be the first time you are exploring what reconciliation means and, more specifically, what it means to you and what your role in it is.

##### **EP 3: TRAUMA INFORMED PRACTICE WITH MONIQUE GRAY SMITH (25 MIN)**

We will explore the various impacts trauma can have on children and their learning. Included is a description of how the body responds to trauma and how that may look in an early year's program. As well, tips are shared as ways to support children and families who may be or have experienced trauma.

##### **EP 4: IN CONVERSATION WITH WEDLIDI SPECK (PART 1) (33 MIN)**

Wedlidi is a member of the 'Namgis First Nation of Alert Bay and is a hereditary Head chief of the G'ixsam Clan of the Kwakiutl proper. He often describes himself as a bi-cultural First Nations man caught in the web of contemporary times who is committed to helping Indigenous and non-Indigenous people strengthen communities. Through our conversation, Wedlidi shares the various strategies for strengthening communities, working with Indigenous children and families and introduces us to cultural agility.

##### **EP 5: IN CONVERSATION WITH DIANA ELLIOT (47 MIN)**

Diana is Coast Salish and member of Cowichan Tribes in Duncan, BC with equal roots from the Nuu-Chah-Nulth Tribal Territory and the Hupacasath First Nation in Port Alberni, BC. She is a proud grandma, mom and daughter. Diana has contributed to early years programs in BC for almost 30 years: 14 years as a front-line worker and program manager, and the last 15 years as the Provincial Advisor for Aboriginal Infant Development Programs (AIDP). Through our conversation, Diana shares the concept of 'Be a Good Neighbour' and other strategies for engaging with and creating working relationships with Indigenous families and communities.

##### **EP 6: IN CONVERSATION WITH DR. ONOWA MCIVOR (35 MIN)**

Onowa is maskiko-nehiyaw (Swampy Cree) and Scottish-Canadian. Her Nehiyaw family is from Norway House and Cross Lake in northern Manitoba. As an Associate Professor in the Department of Indigenous Education at the University of Victoria, Onowa's work has focused on Indigenous language learning and revitalization. In this conversation, Onowa speaks to how her own personal journey to learn Nihiyaw (Cree) led her to her passion of language learning. She shares the importance of ensuring the part of children's spirits that are connected to culture and language are always taken care of. Onowa provides strategies for weaving Indigenous language into early years programs.

## Podcast Descriptions (continued)

### EP 7: IN CONVERSATION WITH BONNIE LABOUNTY (38 MIN)

Bonnie LaBounty is from Lower Nicola Indian Band, which is just outside of Merritt, BC. And is the Healthy Children's Specialist with the First Nations Health Authority. She is a mom of two young women and has been involved with Aboriginal Head Start On-Reserve since 1999. In our conversation, Bonnie will introduce us to Head Start and how the 6 components of Head Start relate to Cultural Competency. She shares stories with us about children participating in Head Start and the ripple effect with families and communities. As well, Bonnie shares strategies for weaving culture and language into early years programs.

### EP 8: IN CONVERSATION WITH JOAN GIGNAC (39 MIN)

Joan Gignac hails on her mother's side from the Sagamok Anishnawbek, Ojibway Nation in Northern Ontario and is French from her father's side. Joan is an Early Childhood Educator and has been living in BC since 1990 and previously was the Child Care Manager for Nutsumaak Lelum: the St'uminus First Nation Child Care Centre. For the last ten years, she has been the Executive Director of the Aboriginal Head Start Association of British Columbia. Joan is a fireball and trailblazer and, in our conversation, she shares the importance of children and families feeling 'at home' in early years centres. As well, she provides insights to strategic leadership, the importance of supporting and learning from each other and how all of this strengthens programs for our youngest citizens and their families.

### EP 9: IN CONVERSATION WITH WEDLIDI SPECK (PART 2) (19 MIN)

This is the second part of the conversation with Wedlidi and focuses on the importance of storytelling. Wedlidi shares stories about the Big House, Half Boy and others. Pour yourself a cup of tea, get cozy and give yourself the gift of 20 minutes to be transported into stories and be reminded of how stories can both teach and transform us.

### EP 10: IN CONVERSATION WITH NADINE GAGNÉ-L'HIRONDELLE (PART 1) (37 MIN)

Nadine Gagné-L'Hirondelle is the Provincial Métis Early Years Program Coordinator for the Métis Nation of British Columbia. She is the first person to hold this position and as of April 2019, this is the only role like this in Canada. Nadine has vast experience working in early years and in this episode she provides a brief journey into Métis history and it's relevance in contemporary times. Nadine shares important cultural teachings that are specific to Métis children and families and why this new role and the work being undertaken is vital and important. Nadine is also a well known entertainer and vibrant personality, all of which weaves it's way into this dynamic interview.

### EP 11: IN CONVERSATION WITH KELLY L'HIRONDELLE (40 MIN)

Kelly L'Hirondelle is of Métis-Cree decent born in Edmonton Alberta, raised in the Comox Valley on Vancouver Island. Kelly has been a dedicated grassroots community advocate for over twenty years and in 2013 he became the Executive Director of Métis Community Services in Kelowna, BC. He is well known for being a leader, a visionary and someone who makes things happen. In this episode, he speaks primarily about the Aboriginal Dad's group he helped found and the importance of this group on not only the Dads who participate, but also the children. Numerous Dad or Fathering programs across the province have been inspired by the work Kelly and his team are doing.



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# APPENDIX A

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## FACT SHEETS

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The following are one page sheets for sharing. They are standalone resources.

These resources were created by the Ministry of Children and Family Development for shared education and learning. You may copy and distribute unaltered versions of these pages as needed.

***In the digital version of this document you can hover and click through on text for sources and more information.***

**Content Warning:** the content in the following resources addresses topics that include information on residential school, substance misuse, suicide and intergenerational trauma, and may trigger unpleasant feelings or thoughts of past abuse.

Individuals who may need emotional support and resources can contact the Crisis Line Association of BC Mental Health Support Line at 310-6789 (no area code needed). Indigenous peoples who may require emotional support can also contact the 24-Hour KUU-US Crisis Line at 1-800-588-8717.

# KEY TERMS

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## WHAT DOES INDIGENOUS MEAN?

Indigenous refers to a person who is native to an area. It is the term currently utilized by the United Nations, as well as the Canadian and British Colombian governments. There is no common definition, rather the basis is on self-identification with pre-colonial societies, traditional territory, and cultural systems.



*Important note: most Indigenous peoples and Nations prefer to self identify. If you aren't sure, it's respectful to ask.*

## EXPLORE LEGAL TERMINOLOGY

Aboriginal peoples, as defined in the 1982 Constitution, refer to First Nations, Inuit and Métis people. Aboriginal is a legal concept.

A **Band** is a legal term used to refer to groups of Indigenous peoples. Most prefer to use the terms Nation, First Nation, or Community.

A person who is **Status** meets the definition of an Indian under the Indian Act and has certain rights and restrictions.

A **reserve** is a tract of land set aside by the Indian Act for the use of a specific Band.

A person who is **Non-Status** does not meet the definition of an Indian or chooses not to register, yet still identifies as First Nations.



*Indian is a legal term, and in most other contexts is considered offensive.*

## CLICK TO LEARN MORE

[BC Assembly of First Nations](#)

[First Nations Health Authority](#)

[BC Aboriginal Child Care Society](#)

[Métis Nation British Columbia](#)

[Métis Nation Canada](#)

[Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami](#)

## FIRST NATIONS

There is no legal definition of First Nations, but it can refer to both a collective (i.e. Snuneymuxw First Nation) or an individual.

As of 2016 there are 172,520 people who identify as First Nations in BC, which makes up 63.8% of all Indigenous people in BC.

There are 203 First Nations that live in BC that speak 34 unique languages.

## MÉTIS

Members of the Métis nation trace their origins to the fur trade in the Red River Valley. Métis people self identify as being distinct from other Indigenous people, and share a common culture, language, and a shared history and homeland.

As of 2016, there are 89,405 people who identify as Métis in BC, making up 33% of all Indigenous people in BC. There are nearly 18,000 Métis citizens registered with Métis Nation BC, the Métis provincial governing body.

Métis have their own unique culture, language (Michif), traditions, way of life, government, and nationhood. The blending of traditions from their Indigenous mothers and European fathers has created a rich and unique Métis culture.

Métis Nation BC represents the Métis people in BC. MNBC is mandated to develop and enhance opportunities for Métis people and communities through culturally relevant social and economic programs and services.

## INUIT

Inuit refers to Indigenous peoples of Northern Canada, the word means "people" in Inuktitut. Inuit people have a distinct language and culture.

In Canada, Inuit have inhabited communities stretching from the westernmost Arctic to the eastern shores of Newfoundland and Labrador for uncounted generations. This area, known as Inuit Nunangat, refers to the land, and surrounding water and ice, which Inuit consider to be integral to their culture and way of life.

There are around 1,615 Inuit living in BC, making up 0.6% of all Indigenous people in BC.

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami is the national representative organization for Inuit in Canada.

# INDIAN ACT

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## BACKGROUND

**Coming into force in 1876**, the *Indian Act (the Act)* is the principal statute through which the federal government administers Indian status, local First Nations governments, and the management of reserve land and communal monies.

The *Act* does not apply to **Métis, Inuit, and non-status First Nations peoples**. However, since the Daniels decision in 2016, Métis and non-status First Nations are considered 'Indians' under s.91 (24) of the Constitution, which places them under federal jurisdiction.

The *Act* was **amended significantly in 1951, which removed many political, cultural and religious restrictions**; yet introduced new restrictions on status that discriminated against First Nations women. The *Act* was amended again in 1985 following the passage of Bill C-31, which called for the reinstatement of status to those who had been discriminated against and giving bands control of their membership lists.

Despite amendments, **the *Act* continues to be heavily criticized**, and its historical impacts are felt to this day. The *Act* is administered by Indigenous Services Canada (ISC).

## PRESENT DAY

### Jurisdiction

Provincial laws that do not contradict the Indian Act apply to Indians in that province.

*Example: The Child and Family Community Service Act*

### Finances

Personal property and income is tax exempt only when an Indian is living on reserve and income is generated on reserve.

### Healthcare

Essentials are provided by Non-Insured Health Benefits In BC, this is administered by the First Nations Health Authority.

### Land and Housing

Reserve lands are held in trust by the Crown. Individuals cannot own reserve land unless they are granted a certificate.

Housing on reserve is typically owned collectively

### Education

Schools can be established and run under the Indian Act. Educational funding is provided by Canada and administered by the Band.

While the *Act* outlines rights to housing, funding for education and access to healthcare, **not all Indians will receive these benefits**. There are limitations and exclusions to the medical coverage provided. Some reserves are limited in size and cannot offer housing to band members.

The education funds offered are limited, resulting in students receiving partial funding or funding being deferred if there are more eligible students than funds available.

## UNDERSTANDING STATUS

**Status Indians may be eligible for a range of benefits, rights, programs and services** offered by the federal and provincial or territorial governments.

**Status must be applied for.** The Indian Registrar determines eligibility, and maintains a federally controlled list.

There is currently **no federal register for Inuit or Métis**. Métis people can register as members of their local or regional Métis organization (Example: Métis Nation BC). Inuit people may be members of a land claim agreement.

## CLICK TO LEARN MORE

Read more about the Pass System in Canada

The Indian Act - The Canadian Encyclopedia

Census: Aboriginal People in BC

Indigenous Services Canada: Education

First Nations Health Authority: Benefits

On-Reserve Housing and Infrastructure

Canada: What is Indian Status

Canada: Eliminating Sex Based Inequities

# RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

## BACKGROUND

The Canadian state funded church-run schools in order to assimilate Indigenous children into Canadian Society. The schools operated from the 1860s to the 1990s, and **over 150,000 children attended**.

Children were often sent to residential schools **far away from home and separated from their siblings**, in an effort to destroy connection to community and culture. Other children were compelled to attend Indian Day Schools each day, where they experienced the same types of abuse as Residential School Survivors.

Daily activities included religious worship, physical labour and education. Many **children were malnourished and exposed to the elements** due to improper clothing and derelict buildings.

Children were **punished with physical force and confinement** for using their traditional languages or demonstrating ties to their culture.

Children **experienced physical, sexual, emotional, cultural and psychological abuse**. Many died while trying to return home, or from serious illness. Some residential schools had a **death rate as high as 50%**.

While the last residential school in BC closed in 1984, **there were residential schools open in Canada until 1997**.

## GOVERNMENT ACTION

1951

Mandatory attendance is removed from the Indian Act

1969

The federal government takes control of residential schools from the churches

1980s

Lawsuits are filed by survivors

1990s

Churches begin to issue formal apologies

1996

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples conducts mass research on residential schools

2008

Stephen Harper formally apologizes

2015

Final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is released, including the 94 Calls to Action

2018

A new statutory holiday to memorialize residential schools is proposed by the federal government

## LEGACY

The trauma experienced in residential schools has **affected every aspect of Indigenous life**, and has had intergenerational effects on language, culture, and family and community structures.

**Cycles of abuse** began with those who attended residential schools and has been passed on through generations. Many survivors experience feelings of guilt, shame, depression, and hopelessness - all of which have led to coping mechanisms such as substance misuse and suicide.

The Métis experience has been under emphasized in the telling of residential school history. **Métis people attended and survived** residential schools, and many Elders are beginning to share their stories. The impact of residential schools has had unique implications for Métis people, with significant impacts on their political and cultural history.

## CLICK TO LEARN MORE

Watch "Namayut: We Are All One Video"

Watch Phyllis Webstad's Orange Shirt Day Presentation

Learn more about Orange Shirt Day

Métis History & Experience in Residential Schools in Canada

Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action

We Were So Far Away - The Inuit

Experience of Residential Schools - They came for the children

*Cree students at their desks with their teacher in a classroom, All Saints Indian Residential School, Lac La Ronge, Saskatchewan, March 1945  
Photo: Bud Glunz - Collections Canada*



Orange Shirt Day (September 30) is a commemorative event inspired by [Phyllis Webstad's story](#) of having her new orange shirt taken away when she arrived at St. Joseph Mission Residential School in Williams Lake. This day is an opportunity for all to come together in the spirit of reconciliation and hope for future generations.



# SIXTIES SCOOP

## BACKGROUND

In 1951, amendments to the Indian Act gave **provinces jurisdiction over Indigenous child welfare**. Discriminatory child welfare practices led to a surge of Indigenous children in provincial care.

**The Sixties Scoop refers to the large scale removal of Indigenous children in provincial care.** The scoop took place from the 1950s through to the 1980s; although many have pointed out that the over representation of Indigenous children has remained high ever since (the Millennial Scoop), despite shifts in policy and practice.

Due to colonial policies and intergenerational trauma, Indigenous children and families struggle with many social and economic barriers. It was **provincial policy during this era to remove Indigenous children**, often without consent of the family or community.

In BC, the percentage of **Indigenous children in care rose 33% in 13 years** - from 1% in 1951 to 34% in 1964. 70% of the children removed were placed in non-Indigenous homes.

Approximately **11,000 children were removed, but many believe it to be closer to 20,000** due to the erasure of non-status and Métis identity in the gathering of data - even though these groups experienced the Scoop.

Children were separated from their families and siblings, many even being adopted out of the country - **losing all ties to their culture and identity.**

## GOVERNMENT ACTION

1970s

Indigenous communities begin lobbying for control over child and family services.

1985

Justice Edwin Kimelman releases a report concluding that “cultural genocide has taken place in a systematic, routine manner”.

1980s

Many legislative changes take place, including requiring Band notification and prioritizing placements with extended family members.

1992

A moratorium is placed on non-Indigenous families adopting Indigenous children in BC, which was later replaced by an Exceptions committee to determine care plans.

1996

BC passes the Child, Family and Community Services Act & the Adoption Act, both of which require greater inclusion of a child’s community and culture in decision making.

## LEGACY

The removal of Indigenous children continues to be a widespread issue; as of March 2018, 63.5% of children in care in BC are Indigenous. Indigenous children are often removed due to poverty, which is linked to systemic barriers and intergenerational trauma.

The federal government has reached an agreement to commit \$800 million to Sixties Scoop survivors for loss of cultural identity. This agreement has received criticism because it does not account for abuses suffered, and excludes non-Status and Métis survivors.

There are currently 18 active lawsuits throughout Canada. The federal settlement is expected to settle many of them.

## CLICK TO LEARN MORE

Sixties Scoop - The Canadian Encyclopedia

Sixties Scoop - University of British Columbia

The Sixties Scoop and Indigenous Child Welfare -

The First Peoples Child and Family Review

National Indigenous Survivors of Child Welfare Network

Pe-Kiwewin Project - Mapping Indigenous Adoptees



Informative Video on the Sixties Scoop and its legacy

[https://youtu.be/kH\\_bdlYnFU](https://youtu.be/kH_bdlYnFU)

# INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA

## BACKGROUND

Through **colonial assimilation policies** such as mandatory attendance at residential schools, forced hospitalizations, and removals during the Sixties Scoop, Indigenous peoples have been subject to **traumatic experiences that have affected their well-being**.

Intergenerational trauma occurs when an older member of a community **transfers the effects of trauma** onto younger members, **affecting their ability to lead healthy lives** mentally, physically, emotionally, or spiritually.

Trauma can result in but is not limited to: the **loss of language, culture, and connection to community and family**, low sense of self-esteem, internalized racism, disconnection from Indigenous and Western society, abuse, addiction, alcoholism and suicide.

Different communities and Indigenous groups experienced colonization and trauma in different ways, resulting in different effects. For this reason, **each Indigenous person's story and history should be treated as unique and valid**.

## IMPACTS

### Self Harm

Suicide and self-inflicted injuries are the leading cause of death for Indigenous youth. Suicide rates are respectively 6.5, 3.7 and 2.7 times higher for Inuit, First Nations and Métis than for non-Indigenous people.

### Children

62.8% of children in care in BC are Indigenous (Feb 2018). Indigenous children are 16 times more likely to be taken into care.

### Violence against women

Indigenous women in Canada are 2.7 times more likely to face violence, and these women made up 24% of homicides nationally in 2015.

### Prison

While Indigenous people only make up 4% of the Canadian population, they account for 26.4% of the federal prison population.

### Community Health

First Nations communities have reported (2008-2010) that alcohol and drug abuse, housing, and employment are the top three challenges to community well-being.

### Mental Health

Indigenous people struggle with mental illness at much higher rates, yet few programs or strategies exist especially for Métis, urban, and non-Status people.

## RESILIENCE

While Indigenous communities are often encouraged to move on from the past era, this feat is not a simple matter. Legacies from residential school, the 60s Scoop, along with ongoing issues like inadequate housing, lack of capacity, and continued discrimination under the Indian Act make recovering from colonial trauma an ongoing and complex process.

Indigenous communities are actively revitalizing and reclaiming traditional practices and fighting against ongoing colonial policies and attitudes.

Indigenous communities are actively healing from trauma.

**The Aboriginal Foundation** has identified three pillars to healing:

- Legacy Education - connecting past to present
- Cultural Interventions - re-centering Indigenous experiences, traditional teachings, and culture
- Therapeutic Interventions - individual, family, and community healing events

## CLICK TO LEARN MORE

Aboriginal Healing Foundation  
First Nations Health Authority: Traditional Healing  
First Peoples Cultural Council  
Gladys We Never Knew: The life of a child in a BC Indian Residential School  
National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation Reports  
Where are the Children? Healing the Legacy of the Residential Schools  
Indian Residential School Survivors Society  
Tsow-Tun Le Lum Society Substance Abuse and Trauma Treatment Centre



Monique Gray Smith's TED Talk Resilience and the Power of One

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=edMcljKndEQ](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=edMcljKndEQ)

# STRUCTURAL INTERVENTION

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## BACKGROUND

**Systemic barriers are hidden in the rules, procedures, policies and operations** of organizations and are intentionally or unintentionally discriminatory. These barriers limit access to services, goods, programs, and facilities.

A structural risk is an issue that results from **systemic problems beyond the control of any individual** (i.e. poverty, lack of housing, discrimination)

Because of systemic barriers, **Indigenous children are over-represented in the child welfare system**. While some Indigenous children are removed for valid reasons, many are removed due to structural risks such as poverty, unstable housing, and substance abuse.

## GOVERNMENT ACTION

2005

The creation of a *New Relationship with Aboriginal Peoples in British Columbia*.

2006

The development and signing of the *Transformative Change Accord* and the *Métis Nation Relationship Accord*.

2010

Supporting the release of *Healthy Minds, Healthy People: A Ten-Year Plan to Address Mental Health and Substance use in BC*.

2017

The provincial government endorses the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People* and the *Truth and Reconciliation Commissions' Calls to Action*.

2018

The province releases the *Draft Principles that guide the Province of British Columbia's Relationship with Indigenous Peoples*.

## STRUCTURAL INTERVENTION

A structural intervention **allows the service provider to adapt programs and services to reduce the presence of structural risks**.

This type of intervention requires **recognizing the existing social order**, and acknowledging that the cause of Indigenous peoples over-representation across the social sector is because of the ongoing discrimination and systemic barriers that they face.

Structural interventions promote a **holistic service delivery by treating the source of the problem**, not the symptoms.

The **cycle of trauma will continue** if systemic barriers and the source of socio-economic problems are not addressed.

Structural interventions help **build strength-based, collaborative relationships** with children, youth and families in British Columbia.

## CLICK TO LEARN MORE

Information Sheet: Structural Interventions in Child Welfare  
Structural Intervention Research Paper

## JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE

An example of structural intervention.

Jordan's Principle is a **child-first principle named in memory of Jordan River Anderson**, a First Nations child from Norway House Cree Nation in Manitoba.

Jordan spent more than two years unnecessarily in hospital **while the Province of Manitoba and the federal government argued** over who should pay for his at home care. Jordan died in the hospital at the age of five years old.

Jordan's Principle **aims to make sure First Nations children can access all public services in a way that is reflective of their distinct cultural needs**, takes full account of the historical disadvantage linked to colonization, and without experiencing any service denials, delays or disruptions because they are First Nations.

First Nations Health Authority is leading the implementation of the Jordan's Principle in B.C.

# CULTURAL SAFETY

## BACKGROUND

Due to a history of colonialism, oppression, and marginalization, **Indigenous people are over-represented in almost all areas of social services.**

**Past and ongoing trauma at the hands of government institutions** have made Indigenous people less likely to trust service providers, and cultural barriers may cause an Indigenous person to avoid interactions in order to get the help they need.

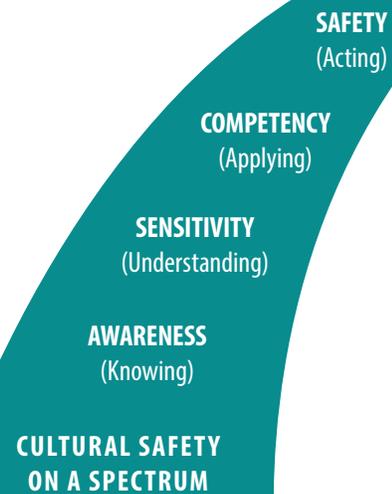
Government institutions and service providers **are not designed by and for Indigenous people**, and Indigenous people often feel alienated, humiliated, or under-served when they try to access support.

## Cultural Safety

Cultural safety is an outcome based on respectful engagement that recognizes and strives to address power imbalances inherent in the system. It results in an environment free of racism and discrimination, where people feel safe. (First Nations Health Authority)

Cultural Safety represents a journey into wisdom, where wisdom is to know that culturally significant knowledge, shared histories and experiences are relevant and must guide decisions and actions. (MCFD, Aboriginal Recruitment and Cultural Safety)

Cultural safety is based on a framework of two or more cultures interacting in a colonized space - where one culture is legitimized and the other is marginalized. This can happen in hospitals, schools, workplace, and in many different service settings.



## MCFD ACTION

### Supporting

Delegated Aboriginal Agencies

### Implementing

the Aboriginal Policy and Practice Framework

### Increasing

staff knowledge through training

### Ongoing Work

being done by the Aboriginal Recruitment and Cultural Safety Team



Video: Learning about cultural safety from Indigenous Elders (Wabano Health Centre)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b08oTRMV-m8>

## CLICK TO LEARN MORE

Cultural Safety in Practice with Children, Families and Communities

Indigenous Cultural Safety Learning Series

Cultural Safety in First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Public Health

What is Indigenous Cultural Safety - and Why Should I Care About It?

Cultural Safety - University of Victoria

BC Government Indigenous Relations Behavioral Competencies

# SUMMARY OF ONLINE RESOURCES

## KEY TERMS

BC Assembly of First Nations  
<http://bcafn.ca/>

First Nations Health Authority  
<http://www.fnha.ca/>

BC Aboriginal Child Care Society  
<https://www.acc-society.bc.ca/>

Métis Nation  
[www.metisnation.ca](http://www.metisnation.ca) - Canada  
[www.mnbc.ca/](http://www.mnbc.ca/) - British Columbia

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami  
<https://www.itk.ca/>

Notable Statistics  
[www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/171025/dq171025a-eng.htm](http://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/171025/dq171025a-eng.htm)  
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/statistics/infoline/infoline-2017/17-138-2016-census-indigenous-people-canada>

## INDIAN ACT

Read more about the Pass System in Canada  
[www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/pass-system-in-canada](http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/pass-system-in-canada)

The Indian Act - The Canadian Encyclopedia  
[www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/indian-act/](http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/indian-act/)

Census: Aboriginal People in BC  
<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/data/statistics/people-population-community/aboriginal-peoples-bc/census-profiles-aboriginal-peoples>

Indigenous Services Canada: Education  
<https://www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1100100033601/1521124611239>

First Nations Health Authority: Benefits  
[www.fnha.ca/benefits](http://www.fnha.ca/benefits)

On-Reserve Housing and Infrastructure  
[www.parl.gc.ca/Content/SEN/Committee/412/appa/rep/rep12jun15-e.pdf](http://www.parl.gc.ca/Content/SEN/Committee/412/appa/rep/rep12jun15-e.pdf)

INAC: What is Indian Status  
[www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100032463/1100100032464](http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100032463/1100100032464)

INAC: Eliminating Sex Based Inequities  
[www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1467214955663/1467214979755](http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1467214955663/1467214979755)

## RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

Learn more about Orange Shirt Day  
[www.orangeshirtday.org/](http://www.orangeshirtday.org/)

Métis History & Experience in Residential Schools in Canada  
[www.ahf.ca/downloads/metiseweb.pdf](http://www.ahf.ca/downloads/metiseweb.pdf)

Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action  
[http://nctr.ca/assets/reports/Calls\\_to\\_Action\\_English2.pdf](http://nctr.ca/assets/reports/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf)

We Were So Far Away - The Inuit  
<http://weweresofaraway.ca/>

Experience of Residential Schools - They came for the children  
<http://projectofheart.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/They-Came-for-the-Children.pdf>



Watch Phyllis Webstad's Orange Shirt Day Presentation  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3vUqr01kAk&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3vUqr01kAk&feature=youtu.be)



Watch "Namayut: We Are All One Video"  
[www.cbc.ca/player/play/1115758147760](http://www.cbc.ca/player/play/1115758147760)

## SUMMARY OF ONLINE RESOURCES (CONTINUED)

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### SIXTIES SCOOP

Sixties Scoop - The Canadian Encyclopedia

[www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/sixties-scoop/](http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/sixties-scoop/)

Sixties Scoop - University of British Columbia

[http://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/sixties\\_scoop/](http://indigenousfoundations.arts.ubc.ca/sixties_scoop/)

The Sixties Scoop and Indigenous Child Welfare -  
The First Peoples Child and Family Review

<http://journals.sfu.ca/fpcfr/index.php/FPCFR/issue/view/25>

National Indigenous Survivors of Child Welfare Network

<https://sixtiescoopnetwork.org/>

Pe-Kiwewin Project - Mapping Indigenous Adoptees

[www.60scoop.com/](http://www.60scoop.com/)



Informative Video on the Sixties Scoop and its legacy

[https://youtu.be/kH\\_bdYNnFU](https://youtu.be/kH_bdYNnFU)

### INTERGENERATIONAL TRAUMA

Aboriginal Healing Foundation

[www.ahf.ca/downloads/final-report-vol-3.pdf](http://www.ahf.ca/downloads/final-report-vol-3.pdf)

Cultural Interventions

[www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/traditional-healing](http://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/traditional-healing)

[www.fpcc.ca/Default.aspx](http://www.fpcc.ca/Default.aspx)

Legacy Education

<https://bctf.ca/uploadedFiles/Public/AboriginalEd/GladysResource/eBook.pdf>

<http://nctr.ca/reports2.php>

<http://wherearethechildren.ca/en/>

Therapeutic Interventions

<http://irsss.ca/>

[www.tsowtunlelum.org/programs/kwnatsustul/](http://www.tsowtunlelum.org/programs/kwnatsustul/)



Monique Gray Smith's TED Talk Resilience and the Power of One

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=edMcljKndEQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=edMcljKndEQ)

### STRUCTURAL INTERVENTION

First Nations Health Authority is leading the implementation of the Jordan's Principle in B.C.

[www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/maternal-child-and-family-health/jordans-principle](http://www.fnha.ca/what-we-do/maternal-child-and-family-health/jordans-principle)

Information Sheet: Structural Interventions in Child Welfare

<https://fncaringociety.com/sites/default/files/Information%20Sheet%20-%20Structural%20Interventions%20in%20Child%20Welfare.pdf>

Structural Intervention Research Paper

[www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16736355](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/16736355)

# SUMMARY OF ONLINE RESOURCES (CONTINUED)

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## CULTURAL SAFETY

Cultural Safety in Practice with Children, Families and Communities

[www.ecdip.org/culturalsafety/](http://www.ecdip.org/culturalsafety/)

Indigenous Cultural Safety Learning Series

[www.icscollaborative.com/webinars](http://www.icscollaborative.com/webinars)

Cultural Safety in First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Public Health

[www.nccah-ccnsa.ca/en/publications.aspx?sortcode=2.8.10&publication=88](http://www.nccah-ccnsa.ca/en/publications.aspx?sortcode=2.8.10&publication=88)

What is Indigenous Cultural Safety - and Why Should I Care About It?

[www.heretohelp.bc.ca/visions/indigenous-people-vol11/what-is-indigenous-cultural-safety-and-why-should-i-care-about-it](http://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/visions/indigenous-people-vol11/what-is-indigenous-cultural-safety-and-why-should-i-care-about-it)

Cultural Safety - University of Victoria

<http://web2.uvcs.uvic.ca/courses/csafety/mod1/index.htm>

BC Government Indigenous Relations Behavioral Competencies

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/careers-myhr/job-seekers/about-competencies/indigenous-relations>



Video: Learning about cultural safety from Indigenous Elders  
(Wabano Health Centre)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b08oTRMV-m8>

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**VISIT OUR WEBSITE AT  
GOV.BC.CA/EARLYYEARS**

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