



Embarking on the Wiikwogaming Journey: Unveiling a Path of Empowerment

Wiikwogaming Tiinahtisiwin is a collaborative effort to shed light on the dark history of the McIntosh Residential School. We aim to bring healing to former McIntosh Students and their communities. We also aim to bring recognition and justice for Students that never made it home. Our project is guided by our vision, mission, and goals, with the purpose of righting past wrongs and creating a more just and equitable future for First Nation peoples.



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Welcome to Wiikwogaming Tiinahtisiwin:

On behalf of Asubpeeschoseewagong (Grassy Narrows First Nation), I warmly welcome you to our journey of healing, truth, and reconciliation. It is an honor to have you with us in our pursuit of justice for the lost children of the McIntosh Residential School.



Hello everyone in the Asubpeeschoseewagong (Grassy Narrows First Nation) community, I wanted to give you an update on the progress we've made with the Wiikwogaming Tiinahtisiwin project.

Wiikwogaming Tiinahtisiwin sheds light on our dark history. We strive for a world where the legacy of residential schools is fully acknowledged, and healing and reconciliation are ongoing. Together, we bring recognition, healing, and justice to survivors and their families, ensuring the memory of the lost children is never forgotten.

Approaching our work with empathy, compassion, and commitment to truth, we listen to silenced stories, amplify voices, and heal the wounds of the past. Our Elders' wisdom guides us, and we extend gratitude to our dedicated team for bringing this initiative to life.

Join us, engage, honour the lost children, support survivors, raise awareness, and take action. Together, we create a future where past injustices are acknowledged, and healing and reconciliation are lived experiences.

Welcome to Wiikwogaming Tiinahtisiwin. Together, guided by truth, compassion, and resilience, we make a lasting impact for those affected by the McIntosh Residential School.

Chi-miigwetch (Thank you).

Chief Rudy Turtle

As the Wiikwogaming Tiinahtisiwin Portfolio Holder, I'm excited to share the achievements of the Wiikwogaming Tiinahtisiwin Working Group and Elders Advisory.

We've established the Elders Advisory Circle, and they have been incredibly helpful in guiding our initiatives. Our staff team has been dedicated and passionate in supporting the goals of the Wiikwogaming Tiinahtisiwin project.

We recently had a workshop with the working group and Elders. Together, we created a unique brand for the project, including a logo and key messages. We also have a comprehensive website with up-to-date information, and we've prepared our first quarterly newsletter to update you on our progress from April to June 2023.

We held Elders gatherings in Winnipeg and Thunder Bay, where we focused on developing the mental health framework and archival research project parameters. During a three-day strategic planning session, we also created a plan to guide our future efforts.

I'm proud of what we've achieved so far and grateful for your support. Let's continue working together for healing, truth, and reconciliation.

Chi-miigwetch (Thank you).

Bear Copenace, Councillor
Wiikwogaming Tiinahtisiwin Portfolio Holder

Meet the Elders Advisory Council:



ELDER KATHERINE FOBISTER



ELDER WILLIAM FOBISTER SR



ELDER ROY ASSIN



ELDER EVELYN PAHPASSAY



ELDER GERALDINE FOBISTER



ELDER LOUIS ASSIN

Our Vision

A world where the legacy of residential schools is fully acknowledged, and healing and reconciliation is an ongoing process.

Our Mission

- To search and find all the missing and unidentified children.
- To remember, respect and never forget the lost children.
- To acknowledge and support through a trauma informed approach.
- To make the world aware of the genocide and never allow history to repeat itself.

Our Goals

- Provide support to survivors and their families.
- Engage in community-led research.
- Raise awareness about the ongoing impacts of residential schools.

Meet the Wiikwogaming Tiinahtsiisiin Team:



Hello Newsletter Readers,

Welcome to the latest edition of the Wiikwogaming Tiinahtsiisiin newsletter! I'm Arnold Pelly, the Team Lead for this important initiative. Together, we honor lost children, support survivors, and promote healing.

At Wiikwogaming Tiinahtsiisiin, we seek truth, justice, and reconciliation around unmarked graves. Our team consists of compassionate individuals from diverse backgrounds dedicated to making a positive impact on affected lives.

Let me introduce our exceptional team members, including advisors, researchers, community outreach coordinators, and administrative professionals.

In this newsletter edition, we'll share progress, insights, resilience stories, and healing initiatives. Your engagement and support amplify our efforts for lasting change.

Together, we're building an inclusive and compassionate future. Join us on this meaningful journey to make a difference in survivors' lives and contribute to collective healing.

We deeply appreciate your support. It's an honor to have you in our community as we work towards a brighter tomorrow.

Warm regards,

Arnold Pelly
Wiikwogaming Tiinahtsiisiin
Team Lead



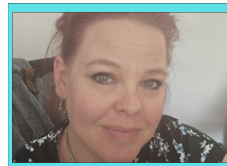
Steve Lands
Team Support Lead



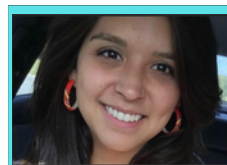
Marie Lands, Project
Coordinator



Henrik Akerlund,
Legal Advisor



Janalee Jodouin
Proposal & Budget
Consultant



Autumn Boivin,
Administrative
Assistant / Event
Coordinator



Michelle Boivin,
Communications
Coordinator



Our logo is a visual representation of our organization's roots and values. It was designed to evoke a sense of home and convey the importance of our youth, adolescence, and elders within the community.

Our logo features two faces that represent the balance between man and woman. The presence of a feather symbolizes masculinity, while its absence represents femininity. This reflects the significance of family, history, and ancestral roots within our community. The faces coming together signify the unity and collective effort of our people, joining together for important causes and emphasizing the strength and importance of community.

The butterfly, another prominent symbol in our logo, represents new beginnings and growth. It serves as a powerful representation of our Anishinaabe warriors and those who have passed on, continuing to guide and inspire us in spirit. The small leaves in the logo symbolize growth and emergence, reflecting the vitality and promise of our youth.

Finally, our logo incorporates the sacred teachings of the four directions present in our culture. It honors the wisdom and traditions associated with the North, East, South, and West. We chose blue as a tribute to certain Anishinaabe communities where blue remains the original colour associated with the West, instead of black.

Reflecting on the Grassy Narrows Elders Gathering in Winnipeg: Warriors Building a Mental Health Framework and Archival Research Project

BY ARNOLD PELLY, WIKWOGAMING TIINAHTIISIWIN TEAM LEAD

Boozhoo, Community Members,

We would like to share a recap of the Grassy Narrows Elders Gathering that took place in Winnipeg in April 2023. As the lead First Nation and having the strongest connection to the Wiikwogaming area, Grassy Narrows initiated this gathering. It marked the beginning of a powerful journey where survivors and warriors came together to develop a Mental Health framework based on collected data and to design an Archival Research Project.

1. Elders Gathering Sessions and Objectives

The information sessions held in Winnipeg provided former students of McIntosh Residential School with essential updates. Attendees had the opportunity to learn about the progress made in locating unmarked burial graves and actively engage in the ongoing work being conducted. The sessions created a safe and supportive environment where attendees could share their experiences, seek answers to their questions, and contribute to the mission of locating the graves.

2. Warriors Building a Mental Health Framework

The Grassy Narrows Elders Gathering in Winnipeg brought together warriors who aimed to build a Mental Health framework rooted in their experiences and the data collected. Recognizing the deep impact of the residential school system on mental well-being, the gathering provided a safe space for sharing personal stories, challenges, and triumphs. The collective wisdom and knowledge of the warriors formed a foundation for developing a framework that would address the unique needs of the community.

3. Archival Research Project Design

KnowHistory will work with the Grassy Narrows First Nation to complete preliminary research and analysis to identify children who went missing at McIntosh Residential School during its operations from 1925 and 1969, and to document the conditions of the school more broadly. This early phase of work will lay the foundation for a successful research project and will involve a research and goals scoping workshop, the creation of a customized Airtable database, archival scoping and the creation of a detailed research plan.





4. Importance of Honouring the Lost Children

The gatherings emphasized the importance of locating and honouring the children who never returned from the residential school, and aimed to provide closure for the families and the community by acknowledging the deep trauma and harm inflicted by the residential school system. By honouring the lives lost, the gatherings served as a powerful step toward reconciliation. Let us maintain our collective effort to honor the lives of those who were lost and ensure that their memory is never forgotten.

5. Embracing the Gathering's Purpose

The Grassy Narrows Elders Gathering in Winnipeg was a testament to the strength and resilience of the warriors. By sharing their personal journeys and insights, they contributed to the development of a Mental Health framework and an Archival Research Project that will empower our community and promote healing. The gathering emphasized the importance of cultural identity, mental well-being, and the preservation of history for future generations.

6. Moving Forward with Determination

The warriors who participated in the Grassy Narrows Elders Gathering left with a renewed sense of purpose and determination. They recognized the significant role they played in building a Mental Health framework and designing an Archival Research Project. Their commitment to their community's well-being and cultural heritage continues to drive them forward, as they strive for healing, empowerment, and resilience.

7. Call for Support and Collaboration

As the warriors continue their journey, they extend a call for support and collaboration. The success of the Mental Health framework and the Archival Research Project relies on the collective effort and participation of the community and its allies. Together, we can ensure that the voices of the past are preserved, and the mental well-being of the community is nurtured.

In conclusion, the Grassy Narrows Elders Gathering in Winnipeg marked the beginning of a transformative process. Warriors came together to develop a Mental Health framework and design an Archival Research Project, recognizing the importance of mental well-being and preserving history. With their collective wisdom and determination, they are paving the way for healing, empowerment, and resilience within their community and beyond.

Journey of Healing and Remembrance: Reflecting on the Thunder Bay Gathering for McIntosh Indian Residential School Survivors

BY ARNOLD PELLY, WIIKWOGAMING TIINAHTIISIWIN
TEAM LEAD

Boozhoo, Community Members,

We would like to reflect on the recent Thunder Bay Elders Gathering, which took place in May 2023, and was organized by the Asubpeeschoseewagong (Grassy Narrows First Nation) and the Wiikwogaming Initiative Team. This gathering specifically focused on providing updates to former students of McIntosh Residential School regarding the progress made in locating unmarked burial graves. Let us delve into the key highlights of this significant event.

1. Elders Gathering Sessions and Objectives

The Thunder Bay Elders Gathering served as a crucial platform for former students of McIntosh Residential School to receive essential updates. Attendees had the opportunity to learn about the progress made in locating unmarked burial graves and actively participate in the ongoing work. Through these sessions, a safe and supportive environment was created, allowing attendees to share their experiences, seek answers to their questions, and contribute to the mission of locating the graves.

2. Progress in Locating Unmarked Burial Graves

Remarkable progress has been achieved in the collective efforts to locate unmarked burial graves at the former site of McIntosh Residential School. Extensive historical research, community engagement, and guidance from field experts continues to be undertaken by the members of Asubpeeschoseewagong and the Wiikwogaming team. Their commitment to conducting this work with utmost care, respect, and transparency remains unwavering, ensuring that the community is continually updated on their progress.



3. Importance of Honouring the Lost Children

The Thunder Bay Gathering emphasized the profound significance of locating and honouring the children who never returned from the residential school. By acknowledging the deep trauma and harm inflicted by the residential school system, the gathering aimed to provide closure for the families and the community. It served as a powerful step toward reconciliation, urging us to maintain our collective effort in honouring the lives of those lost and ensuring that their memory is never forgotten.

4. Impact of the Gathering

The Thunder Bay Elders Gathering successfully provided a safe space for former students and warriors to share their experiences, express their concerns, and seek answers. By fostering unity, solidarity, and community among those affected by the residential school system, the gathering contributed to reconciliation, healing, and increased awareness of the ongoing journey towards justice and understanding.

Moving Forward with Resolve

As we reflect on the Thunder Bay Gathering, we are reminded of the resilience and strength of the McIntosh Indian Residential School survivors. Their collective commitment to justice, healing, and closure continues to inspire us. Let us join hands and support their transformative journey towards reconciliation. Together, we can ensure that the voices of the lost children are heard, their memories are honoured, and their legacy becomes a catalyst for positive change.

In closing, we express our gratitude to all those who participated in the Thunder Bay Elders Gathering and extend our heartfelt appreciation to the McIntosh Indian Residential School survivors and warriors. Your unwavering determination fuels our collective efforts, and we stand beside you as we strive for healing, understanding, and a brighter future for all.



Wiikwogaming Tiinahtisiwin: - Strategic Plan & Goals at a Glance:

The Working Group was first established in November 2022 and came together in June 2023 to identify the major steps and tasks of this work. Our goals for the planning process were to:

- Establish a shared understanding of work underway or completed.
- Identify our vision for the work and the principles that will guide us.
- Identify a comprehensive list of activities to be include in the plan.
- Explore challenges that may block progress and identify solutions.
- Develop a three-year roadmap of work that will inform funding applications.

To ensure our success, we invited Elders, Chief and Council to share their wisdom and guide our discussions. We used a participatory process to share wisdom and insights and create a consensus around the new plan. This plan represents our shared view of a path forward.



A world where the legacy of residential schools is fully acknowledged, and healing and reconciliation are ongoing processes.

Mission

- To search and find all the missing and unidentified children.
- To remember, respect and never forget the lost children.
- To acknowledge and support through a trauma informed approach.
- To make the world aware of the genocide and never allow history to repeat itself.

Goals

- Provide support to survivors and their families.
- Engage in community-led research.
- Raise awareness about the ongoing impacts of residential schools.

Outcomes

- All the children's names are known and acknowledged
- Historical protected site
- Community wellness

LOCAL RESEARCH & KNOWLEDGE GATHERING

- Communication & Outreach:** Ensure Treaty 3 and Treaty 9 communities are fully apprised of our work.
- Research:** Discover what happened to the lost children who went to McIntosh Residential School.

MEMORIALIZATION & COMMEMORATION

- Protecting and caring for the grounds:** Ultimately, we want the site to be declared protected, sacred and belonging to Grassy Narrows.

BRING OUR CHILDREN HOME

- Project Admin & Planning:** Establish appropriate funding, systems and processes.
- New Beginnings:** Conduct the appropriate ceremonies; prepare the land for ground penetrating radar and/or LIDAR surveys; establish a commemoration structure on the site.

Wiikwogaming Tiinahtisiwin: - Mental Health Framework

Emotional Support

When survivors were asked to outline emotional supports that would be needed to help them cope with the trauma of being part of a project on unmarked graves, they spoke about learning to more effectively cope with difficult feelings and increase positive emotions. They believed that this could be accomplished through a connection to their cultural traditions, a greater understanding and acceptance of these past experiences and their effects, and the availability of healing programs and services.



Mental Supports

Survivors identified cultural ceremonies and activities and acquiring knowledge and understanding as the key mental health supports that would help them cope with involvement in a project on unmarked graves. In addition, they indicated specific goals for these supports, the human resources needed to provide these supports, and potential obstacles to these supports.



Physical Supports

Survivors identified two primary supports required for their physical wellbeing. These were healthcare services to address their physical health concerns and community-based programs that would include culturally-based, recreational, and therapeutic programs. They also discussed the need for human, material and financial resources to support these services and programs.



Spiritual Supports

Survivors reported on a number of spiritual supports they would require, primarily focusing on traditional teachings, ceremonies, cultural identity and connecting to the spiritual. They identified the need to integrate and respect different belief systems and to concentrate on caring for others and introducing programs to help people.



Introducing the Wiikwogaming Tiinahtsiisiin Website - www.wiikwogaming.ca



Exploring the Website

Let's embark on a virtual tour of the Wiikwogaming Tiinahtsiisiin website and discover its key features and pages:

1. Home Page:

As you enter our website, the home page warmly welcomes you with its engaging design and captivating content. It offers an overview of our project's goals and objectives, inspiring visitors to learn more about our mission and the impact of residential schools.

2. About Page:

Dive deeper into the heart of our initiative on the dedicated About page. Here, we share the story behind Wiikwogaming Tiinahtsiisiin - providing a comprehensive understanding of our history, mission, and core values. This page serves as the foundation of our commitment to justice and healing.

3. Our Stories:

We believe that personal narratives have the power to illuminate the lasting impacts of residential schools. On the Our Stories page, former McIntosh Residential School students and their families generously share their experiences, providing a window into the pain, resilience, and strength of those affected. These stories remind us of the importance of our work and the urgent need for healing.

We are proud to present the Wiikwogaming Tiinahtsiisiin website, a significant milestone in our journey to locate and identify the unmarked graves of children who tragically lost their lives while attending the McIntosh Residential School. Our community-led project is dedicated to conducting research in a respectful and ethical manner, honouring the memories of those who have suffered.



4. Research Page:

The research conducted by our community-led project is a vital component of our mission. On this page, you can delve into the methodologies, progress, and findings of our ongoing research efforts. We approach this work with the utmost respect and ethical considerations, ensuring that every step we take honours the lives lost and supports healing.

5. Contact Us:

Do you have questions, suggestions, or a desire to get involved? The Contact Us page provides a direct line of communication to our dedicated team. We value your input and welcome your engagement in our collective journey towards healing, truth, justice, and reconciliation.

6. Community Resources:

Supporting those affected by residential schools is of paramount importance to us. The Community Resources page offers a comprehensive collection of valuable information and support services for former McIntosh Residential School students and their families. It serves as a bridge between our project and the resources necessary for healing and empowerment.

7. Newsletter:

Stay connected and informed by subscribing to our newsletter. The Newsletter page allows you to sign up and receive regular updates on Wiikwogaming Tiinahtsiwin. Stay up to date with the latest news, research developments, upcoming events, and opportunities for involvement. Join our growing community of advocates and allies working towards a brighter future.

8. Events:

Engagement and collective action are key components of our project. The Events page provides information about upcoming gatherings, workshops, conferences, and other events related to Wiikwogaming Tiinahtsiwin. These events offer opportunities for education, collaboration, and meaningful connections with individuals and organizations committed to positive change.

9. Media Coverage:

Explore the media coverage section to find links to articles, interviews, and documentaries that shed light on the significance of our initiative. This page serves as a valuable resource for understanding the broader impact of our work and the growing awareness surrounding the issue of unmarked graves in residential school contexts.

Join Us in Building a Just Future

The Wiikwogaming Tiinahtsiwin website provides a dynamic and informative platform for sharing stories, fostering healing, and advocating for justice. Our website is designed to be mobile-friendly and user-friendly, ensuring easy navigation and accessibility for all visitors. With its long-form home page, we offer comprehensive information, engaging storytelling, and visually impactful content.

By visiting the website at www.wiikwogaming.ca, you can join us in creating a better future for First Nation peoples. We invite you to explore our pages, read the personal stories, learn about our research, access community resources, sign up for our newsletter, and participate in events. Your involvement and support are crucial in our collective efforts to honour the memories of those lost and work towards healing and reconciliation.