



# INDIGENOUS YOUTH ROOTS

# THE RUNDOWN

ISSUE 11 | WINTER 2024

A POLICY 'ZINE FOR INDIGENOUS YOUTH

FROM THE CENTRE FOR INDIGENOUS POLICY & RESEARCH

# Welcome to The Rundown!



Whether you're interested in politics (the drama, the intrigue!), looking for ways to dismantle settler-colonial-hetero-patriarchy, or just confused about what politicians ACTUALLY do all day, The Rundown is here for you!

With each season, IYR's Centre for Indigenous Policy and Research will bring you a new edition of The Rundown recapping everything you need to know about what's going on in Canadian policy when it comes to Indigenous rights, community, and reconciliation.

# **THIS EDITION OF THE RUNDOWN CONTAINS MENTIONS OF RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS AND COLONIAL VIOLENCE.**



**MMIWG2S+ Support Line:**

**1-844-413-6649**



**Residential School Survivors & Families Support Line:**

**1-800-721-0066**



**Hope for Wellness:**

**1-855-242-3310 or [www.hopeforwellness.ca](http://www.hopeforwellness.ca)**

# TRUTH & RECONCILIATION

> TRC CALLS TO ACTION PROGRESS: With the end of 2023, we mark eight years since the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) published its historic reports and 94 Calls to Action – outlining steps for governments and other institutions to take to address the legacy of Canada’s residential school program and advance reconciliation.

As of November 2023, Indigenous Watchdog, a non-profit monitoring how reconciliation is advancing, reports that only 13 out of the total 94 Calls to Action have been completed. Additionally, they report that 46 are in progress, 20 have been stalled indefinitely, and 15 have not been started. In its 2023 TRC review, the Yellowhead Institute noted that no Calls to Action were completed in 2023 and that if Canada continues at this pace, they won’t be completed until 2081.

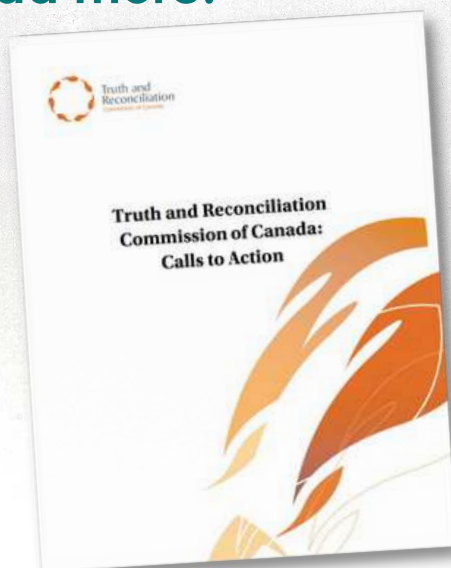


## Completion status of the Calls to Action by theme:

CHILD WELFARE	0/5
EDUCATION	0/11
LANGUAGE/CULTURE	2/5
HEALTH	0/7
JUSTICE	1/21
RECONCILIATION	10/45



## Read more:



# TRUTH & RECONCILIATION CONT'D

> FIRST NATIONS CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SETTLEMENT: On October 24th, the Federal Court of Canada approved the historic First Nations Child and Family Services, Jordan's Principle, Trout and Kith Class Settlement Agreement. The agreement pledges \$23.34B for those discriminated against by the First Nations Child and Family Services (FNCFS) program, as well as those who have been impacted by the limited application of Jordan's Principle. An additional \$20B has been allocated to reform the on-reserve child welfare system and other family services. Over 300,000 children and families will receive compensation through this settlement.

To find out if you or your family can file a claim, [visit this website](#).



## JORDAN'S PRINCIPLE

is a legal rule named after Jordan River Anderson, a child from Norway House Cree Nation who passed away in hospital at age five while federal and provincial governments argued about who should pay for the medical care he needed to be at home with his family.

The principle requires the government of first contact to pay so that all First Nations children living in Canada can access the products, services, and supports they need, when they need them.

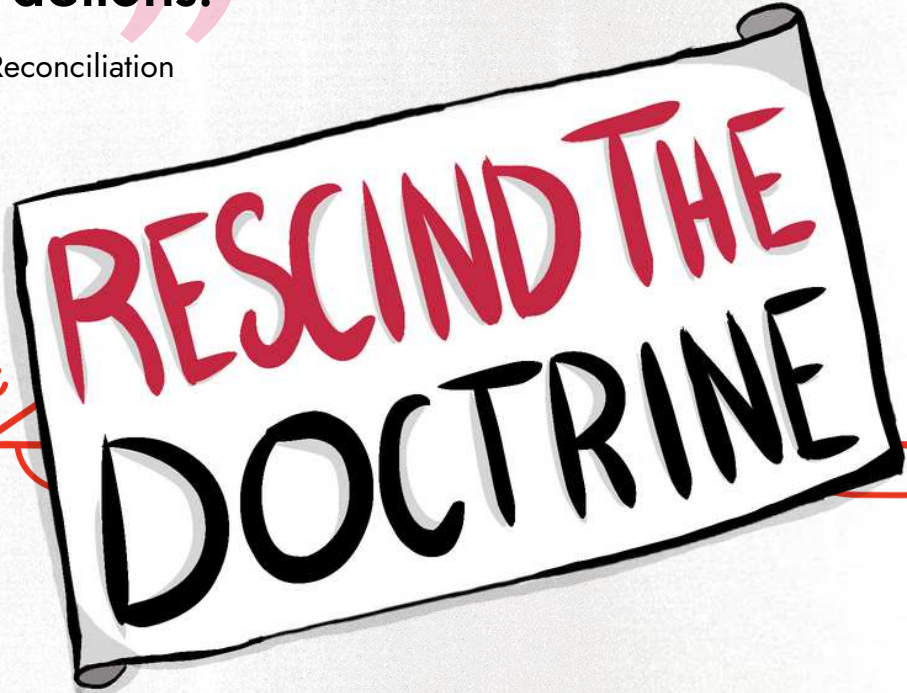


# TRUTH & RECONCILIATION CONT'D

> REJECTING THE DOCTRINE: Nearly 500 years after the Pope and the Roman Catholic Church issued decrees legitimizing colonization, the Vatican has officially repudiated – or rejected - the so-called Doctrine of Discovery. The rejection of the Doctrine echoes long-standing demands made by Indigenous communities for the Church to acknowledge its role in colonial atrocities.

**“The repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery is one step among many that should be taken by the Catholic Church towards taking responsibility for its actions.”**

-The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation

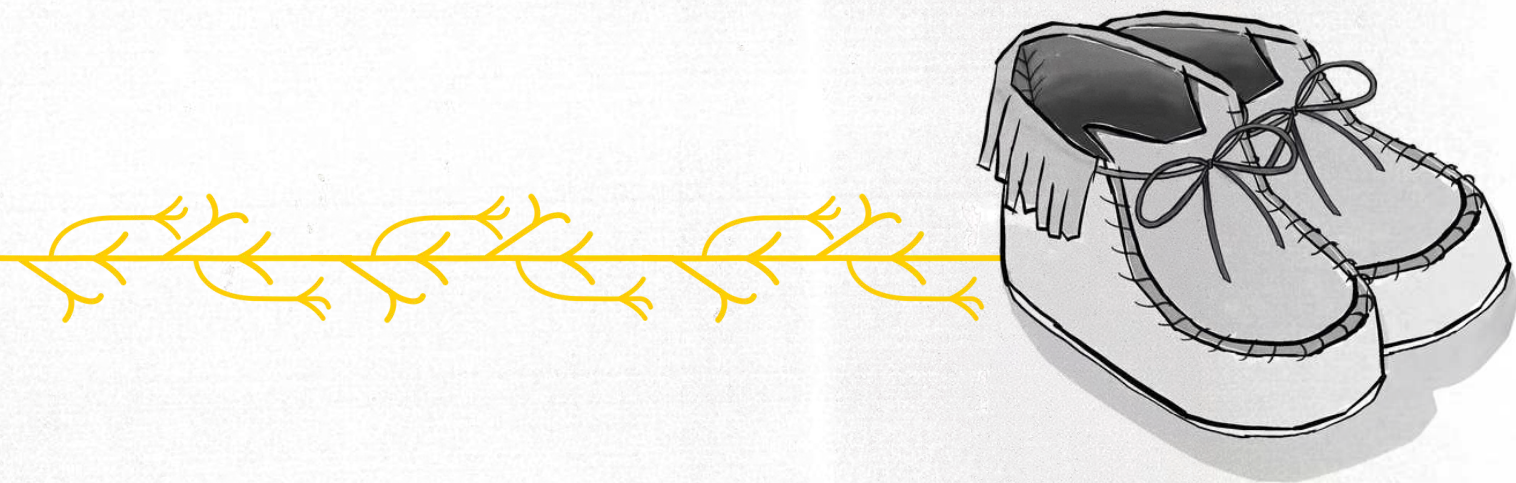


**RESCIND THE  
DOCTRINE**

# TRUTH & RECONCILIATION CONT'D

> MISSING RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL RECORDS: Earlier in 2023, we highlighted findings from a progress report submitted to Justice Canada by the Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked Graves, Kimberly Murray, submitted to Justice Canada. In the report, Murray expressed concerns about delays in accessing records from Library and Archives Canada, local churches and diocese, and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. In addition, the report highlighted concerns shared by Survivors, Indigenous families, communities and Leadership, such as insufficient funding, delays in analyzing data, barriers in accessing lands, and lack of accountability and justice.

Similarly, the Senate Standing Committee on Indigenous Peoples released an interim report this summer, revealing that the Federal government, Library and Archives Canada, Roman Catholic entities, and provincial governments had failed to release all documents in their possession relating to residential schools that they operated. Since then, related concerns have been brought before the Standing Senate Committee on Indigenous Peoples by Saskatchewan Treaty Commissioner Mary Musqua-Culbertson, who has faced numerous challenges in accessing Catholic Church records for residential schools that operated in the province.



# TRUTH & RECONCILIATION CONT'D

> RESTOULE V. CANADA: In November, nearly six years since the case was first brought before the courts, the Supreme Court of Canada (SCC) is hearing Restoule v. Canada. In this case, communities signatory to the Robinson Huron and Robinson Superior Treaties argue for increased annual Treaty payments tied to revenues from their lands, which have remained at \$4 per person, per year, since 1875. Check out this brief by Yellowhead Institute to learn more about the Restoule case, and how it could affect Treaty interpretations in Canada!

## WHAT'S AN ANNUITY?

**An annuity is a yearly payment promised by the federal government to First Nations communities under specific treaties. Most treaty annuity payments in Canada are \$4-\$5 per year, per person.**

> LEGAL LITERACY PROJECT: In 2023, students at Dalhousie University's Schulich School of Law, guided by lawyer Naiomi Metallic of the Listuguj Mi'gmaq First Nation, launched Abajignmuen. On the website, you will find easy-to-follow guides that help break down various aspects of Indigenous and Aboriginal law. The project gets its name from the Mi'gmaq word for "community giving" – and was created to empower community members with relevant legal knowledge as well as educate the broader public.





# COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

> AFN ELECTION: In December, Cindy Woodhouse was elected National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) after a competitive election process. She came out on top after six rounds of elections, with her main opponent, David Pratt, dropping out of the race. Woodhouse is recognized for her dedication and experience, having worked as an AFN negotiator and promising to bring a fresh approach to the organization.

**“My commitment...is to advocate on behalf of all our communities and to improve life for all First Nations. That advocacy starts with accountability, transparency and dialogue. I look forward to working alongside the AFN Executive Committee on advancing our priorities in each region. There is much work to do and I am eager to get started on behalf of all our people.”**

-Cindy Woodhouse



# COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP CONT.

> CELEBRATING LEADERSHIP IN INDIGENOUS EDUCATION: On November 16th, eight Indigenous youth leaders were invited before the Senate Standing Committee on Indigenous Peoples to participate in the annual Voices of Youth Indigenous Leaders event. The youth leaders participated in meetings with senators and shared their student experiences in an official committee meeting. In addition, 123 Indigenous youth from across the country submitted texts about their educational experiences across various systems. The statements shared with the committee generally spoke to the desire for educational reform, including cultural integration, enhanced teacher training, and sustainable funding to enrich learning experiences. To learn more, you can read the final report here.

> PREMIER WAB KINEW: Hon. Wabanakwut "Wab" Kinew, leader of the provincial New Democratic Party (NDP) in Manitoba, has been elected premier following the province's most recent general election. Over the last seven years, Premier Kinew, who is from Onigaming First Nation, served the people of Manitoba as the MLA (Member of Legislative Assembly) for Fort Rouge and the Leader of the Official Opposition. At just 41 years old, Kinew became Manitoba's first First Nations premier.

Shortly after being elected, the Premier issued a formal apology to the grieving families of Morgan Harris and Mercedes Myran and pledged to search a local landfill for their remains. Recent developments have been made to the extent that multiple levels of government and representatives of the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs (AMC) have been engaged in ongoing discussions to coordinate the process.

# COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP CONT.

> RED DRESS DAY: May 5th marks the National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and Two-Spirit Peoples (MMIWG2S+), also known as Red Dress Day. This year, several protests and vigils were held in solidarity with the families of Morgan Harris and Mercedes Myran – calling on the government to take decisive action and search the landfills where their remains are believed to be.

It's been four years since the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Women and Girls issued its report and 231 Calls to Justice. To date, only two of the calls have been completed. You learn more about the status of all of the calls to justice here.

**Read the government's National Action Plan:**



**NO MORE  
STOLEN  
SISTERS**



# COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP CONT.

> NATIONAL INUIT YOUTH COUNCIL: Susie-Anne Kudluk, a 25-year-old from Kangirsuk, has been elected as the president of the National Inuit Youth Council. Last summer, Kudluk was elected by youth council members from all Inuit regions after pledging to focus on mental health and cultural preservation. As president, Kudluk is tasked with advocating on behalf of Inuit youth with Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, the Inuit Circumpolar Council Canada and the Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee.

> NEW INDIGENOUS HEALTH CARE COURSE: Indigenous students and faculty in McGill University's School of Population and Global Health, have led the way in the development of a new course that looks at Indigenous worldviews and research ethics in health. The course offers graduate students the opportunity to learn about the impacts of colonialism on Indigenous health, drawing on the tragic case of Joyce Echaquan. The students participating in the new course are enrolled in programs that allow them to eventually work in fields like public health, epidemiology, and biostatistics. Co-creator Sidney Leggett, a Métis graduate student, envisions the course as a step toward increasing Indigenous representation in epidemiology, healthcare, and policymaking.



# COMMUNITY BUILDING AND SOLIDARITY

>THE INDIGENOUS SÁMI PEOPLES OF SWEDEN: In Sweden, a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was launched to investigate the abuses of the Sámi people by the Swedish state. For years, Sámi leaders lobbied for a truth and reconciliation process like the commission held in Canada. Since being launched in 2022, Sámi leaders have looked to the expertise of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit folks for guidance. In January 2023, Geraldine Shingoose, a Saulteaux woman from Manitoba, shared her journey of being invited to Sweden to exchange knowledge with members of the Swedish TRC. In March, Governor General Mary Simon spoke about the importance of fostering international relationships between Indigenous peoples, notably with the Sámi of northern Europe.

>BRIDGING INDIGENOUS AND NEWCOMER COMMUNITIES: Starting in 2021, The Surrey LIP undertook a project, in partnership with the Fraser Region Aboriginal Friendship Centre Association (FRAFCA) called Building Solidarity Between Indigenous and Refugee Communities. Through the project, a resource guide was developed that addresses misconceptions about Indigenous peoples and provides clear information about the historical and current realities Indigenous people experience. This resource guide includes sections on the History of Land-Based Nations, Indigenous Rights and Title, as well as Anti-Indigenous Racism in Canada. You can check out the entire resource guide, here!

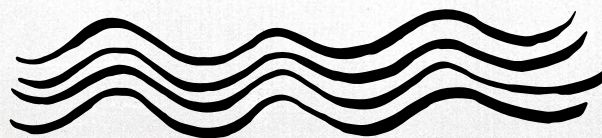


# COMMUNITY BUILDING AND SOLIDARITY CONT.

>THE BIPOC2COP PROJECT: The BIPOC2COP Project, spearheaded by BIPOC youth, including Nhattan Nguyen, Carlee Loft, and Jordyn Burnouf, aims to amplify Indigenous and racialized voices in the global climate change dialogue. Launched in 2021, this peer-support initiative provides mentorship and training to help ensure effective youth participation in annual United Nations climate change conferences and foster a decolonized approach to climate advocacy.

**“Attending COP27 has inspired me to advocate for my lands and waters at every level of society and government”**

-Participant feedback



**“On the ground when I was at COP, I felt I had a mini community of people to support me because of the relationships built during the lead up.”**

-Participant feedback

# AT PARLIAMENT HILL

> A NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR RECONCILIATION: In 2023, [Bill C-29](#), which aims to establish a National Council for Reconciliation, progressed closer to becoming law. The bill directly responds to TRC Call to Action 53 – creating an independent and Indigenous-led body responsible for monitoring and advancing reconciliation across the country. In May 2023, [IYR recommended to the Senate](#) that incorporating the insight of Indigenous youth into the governance of the National Council for Reconciliation is essential to meaningfully advancing reconciliation efforts that will resonate across generations. As of November 2023, the bill has been sent back to the House of Commons so new amendments made by the Senate Standing Committee on Indigenous Peoples can be considered. For more about the bill, [check out the explainer we published last Spring](#).

> RESHUFFLING OF TRUDEAU'S CABINET: In a sweeping Cabinet reshuffle in 2023, many federal Ministers changed positions, including some involved in Indigenous relations, causing [mixed reactions](#) among [First Nations](#), [Métis](#), and [Inuit](#) leaders. As part of the shuffle, [Gary Anandasangaree](#) was appointed the new Crown-Indigenous Relations Minister, succeeding Marc Miller. Miller now has a new role as Minister of Immigrant, Refugees, and Citizenship. Patty Hajdu still remains the Minister of Indigenous Services. You can see all the changes made in the reshuffle [here](#)!



# AT PARLIAMENT HILL CONT.

> THE NATIONAL ACTION PLAN FOR UNDRIP IMPLEMENTATION: In July 2023, the federal government published its 5-year National Action Plan for the implementation of UNDRIP into Canada's legal framework. Since its release, concerns have been raised about the plan's lack of detail and concrete measures. Several have pointed out that while the plan includes 181 action items, clear execution strategies are lacking.

**"Today's release by Canada of the action plan to advance Métis rights and needs indicates the potential for reconciliation and better days moving forward. While the action plan is not perfect, the Métis National Council recognizes the work Canada has done to draft the action plan working with Indigenous governments and representative institutions."**

-Métis National Council President Cassidy Caron

**"The UN Declaration outlines the fundamental human rights of Inuit, not aspirational policy goals. We welcome the completion of this action plan, which spells Inuit priorities, to be implemented through the Inuit-Crown Partnership Committee, as well as key measures intended to benefit all Indigenous peoples."**

-Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami President, Natan Obed

**[This work] "requires taking immediate and concrete actions to ensure its effective implementation, including ongoing dialogue and collaboration with provinces and territories as well as municipalities to adopt a comprehensive and coordinated approach."**

-Regional Chief Terry Teegee, BC Assembly of First Nations



# AT PARLIAMENT HILL CONT.

> **THE RECOGNITION OF METIS SELF-GOVERNMENT ACT, BILL C-53:** On June 21, 2023, Bill C-53 was introduced by the Government of Canada in the House of Commons. This piece of legislation would implement self-government agreements the Métis Nations of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Ontario each signed with Canada. Furthermore, Bill C-53 honours past agreements made with respect to Métis self-determination and solidifies these rights within the constitutional framework, meaning that each Nation will have control over its own governance no matter what federal political party is in power. As of November, the proposed legislation is under consideration by the House of Commons Standing Committee on Indigenous and Northern Affairs.

> **2023 FALL ECONOMIC STATEMENT:** In November, the federal government released its 2023 Fall Economic Statement (FES). The FES provides an update on the government's economic plan for the fiscal year. In terms of reconciliation spending in 2023, the statement highlights \$778M for Jordan's Principle funding, \$37M for implementing An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Metis Children, Youth, and Families, and \$110M for increasing funding for First Nations elementary and secondary school education (p. 96).

When the 2024-25 budget comes out in the spring, IYR will be breaking it down in an edition of IYR Explains – stay tuned!



# WHAT WE'RE READING

> NEVER WHISTLE AT NIGHT: "Never Whistle At Night" is an original selection of 26 stories in genres of sci-fi, fantasy, horror, and crime. Authors include Cherie Dimaline, Darcie Little Badger, Nick Medina, Waubgeshig Rice, and Rebecca Roanhorse.

> UNBROKEN: In "Unbroken: My Fight for Survival, Hope, and Justice for Indigenous Women and Girls," Angela Sterritt tells her story of growing up on the streets of Vancouver while also covering the last 30 years of the MMIWG2S+ crisis in Canada.

> FINDING EDWARD: Sheila Murray's "Finding Edward" explores Canada's Black history through the journey of Cyril Rowentree, and his discovery of various letters documenting the experience of a mixed-race man named Edward, and his adoption in the 1920s.

> REHEARSALS FOR LIVING: In "Rehearsals for Living", Robyn Maynard and Leanne Betasamosake Simpson discuss and imagine a future of liberation, drawing from Black and Indigenous perspectives. Responding to recent Indigenous land defense and global protests, they explore histories of slavery and colonization, and call for a new way of living on Earth.

**My overall intention was for people to understand that Black people have been in Canada for a very long time.**

-Sheila Murray



# WHAT WE'RE LISTENING TO

> **INKTITUT:** "Inuktitut" is a remarkable new album by Inuk singer-songwriter Elisapie. In this album, Elisapie translates 10 pop and rock classics, such as "Dreams" by Fleetwood Mac and "Heart of Glass" by Blondie, into Inuktitut. This unique project is more than just a cover album – it's a journey through Elisapie's childhood memories, reclaiming them with the language she grew up hearing in Salluit, Québec.

> **SUPER BLOOD WOLF MOON:** "Super Blood Wolf Moon" is Kristi Lane Sinclair's exciting new album, released in April 2023. Sinclair is a Toronto-based Cree/Haida singer-songwriter who channels grunge, folk, and classical sounds into her music.

> **STOLEN:** "Stolen: Surviving St. Michael's" is a Spotify-Original podcast, and the first to win both Pulitzer and Peabody awards in the same year. Hosted by Connie Walker, a Cree reporter from Okanese First Nation, it uncovers the dark history and trauma at the centre of Canada's residential school system. Stolen follows Connie as she looks into her father's experience at a residential school in the 1960s.

> **BLACK-INDIGENOUS SOLIDARITY THROUGH MUSIC:** Last summer, CBC published a discussion with DJ Shub, Shad, and Mamarudegyal MTHC about how hip hop has served as a powerful medium for Black and Indigenous communities in Canada to express their shared experiences of systemic racism and resistance. Read the article and check out the linked tracks in it here!





# **THE RUNDOWN**

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**QUESTIONS, COMMENTS, SUGGESTIONS?**

Send them to [centre@indigenouslyouthroots.ca](mailto:centre@indigenouslyouthroots.ca)



**INDIGENOUS  
YOUTH ROOTS**