



Envisioning a Canada without Suicide ● Envisageons un Canada sans suicide

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**Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention urges Canadian government
to ensure all Indigenous peoples have human rights met**

For 35 years, the Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention (CASP) has been advocating and educating with respect to suicide prevention in Canada. While each of us as individuals and all of our communities have roles to play in life promotion and suicide prevention, a person's circumstances can adversely influence their mental health even to the point where they have thoughts of suicide.

A roof over one's head is life promotion / suicide prevention.

Clean water is life promotion / suicide prevention.

Proper health care is life promotion / suicide prevention.

The absence of any of these in a rich nation such as Canada is hard to believe, yet many Indigenous people still continue to experience deficits in these areas alongside the intergenerational impacts of cultural genocide, colonial violence, and systemic racism. The lack of these basic human rights on top of these grievous wrongs works against the themes of healing and hope which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada emphasized and identified. Healing and hope are critical elements in life promotion and suicide prevention.

CASP calls upon the Government of Canada to act on their pledge to make things right with the Indigenous communities across the country, ensuring the basic human rights of First Nations people are met.

With the recent recovery of children's bodies at multiple former residential schools, CASP shares in the sadness being felt across the land. CASP supports every effort towards life promotion so that residential school survivors, their families, their friends and all those who remember, can heal. We urge the Canadian government to respond to these tragedies to ensure healing, justice, and remembrance of lives lost is served in a fitting way.

Senator Murray Sinclair, Dr. Ed Connors (*First Peoples Wellness Circle* and *Feather Carriers for Life Promotion*) and many others, refer to their Elders who brought forward four life path questions to reawaken and support people through life, at any life path stage. These questions of "Where do I come from? Who am I? Why am I here? Where am I going?" align with life promotion's central elements of hope, purpose, belonging, and meaning.

The frameworks of healing, hope and reconciliation all start with truth. Then centred in truth, reconciliation invites us to learn and value Indigenous approaches and perspectives. Reconciliation also represents healing together, establishing new relationships with one another, and working together to break patterns of isolation, marginalization and oppression. In doing so, we create the space for hope, to share, to learn and to grow from our past in order to establish an equitable and bountiful future that recognizes the many histories, languages and cultures that continue to influence a vibrant Canada.

At CASP, we embrace and value the Indigenous peoples of this land and believe we are stronger together.