DAVID GALLANT & ALEX MITTON

CANADIAN INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL SYSTEM & ITS LASTING EFFECTS

1 — JANUARY 1, 1620

Mission Schools for Indigenous Children

Religious orders run mission schools for Indigenous children for more than two hundred years - serving as a precursor to the residential school system

2 — MARCH 29, 1867

Federal Responsibility

The establishment of the Constitution Act gives official government authority over First Nations and land reserved for First Nations

3 — APRIL 12, 1876

THE INDIAN ACT

The introduction of the Indian Act served as a way to eradicate First Nation culture in order for the communities to assimilate into Euro-Canadian society. The introduction of the Indian Act also brought forward the notion of Indian Status.

4 — JULY 1, 1883

Residential Schools Authorized

Sir John A. Macdonald puts pen to paper to authorize the creation of the residential school system. The schools are designed to displace Indigenous children to further assimilate them into Euro-Canadian Society. Cutting all ties with their culture and families.

5 — NOVEMBER 15, 1907

Health at Residential Schools

According to the Chief medical officer for Canada's Department of Interior and Indian Affairs, Peter Henderson Bryce, mortality rates are alarmingly high for Indigenous children attending residential schools. Lack of proper sanitation and poor living conditions left students vulnerable to multiple diseases (e.g. tuberculosis, influenza, Spanish flu, etc.)

6 — APRIL 01, 1920

Residential Schools Become Mandatory

Attendance at residential school is now mandatory for all Indigenous children between the ages of 7 and 16.

7 — JANUARY 1, 1960

The Sixties Scoop

Amendments to the Indian Act give provincial jurisdiction over child welfare on reserves. Over 20 000 First Nation, Métis and Inuit children are displaced and adopted into non-Indigenous families. An additional step towards assimilation in Euro-Canadian society.

8 — JANUARY 1, 1996

The Last Federally Operated Residential School Closes

Following 100+ years of Federally run Residential schools, Gordon's Residential School, Canada's last remaining residential school, closes its doors for good.

9 — SEPTEMBER, 2007

Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement (IRSSA)

The IRSSA is a class action settlement that recognized the damage inflicted on Indigenous peoples that attended residential schools. The multi-billion-dollar fund was put in place to support former residential school survivors in their recovery.

10 — 2021 - PRESENT

Hundreds of Unmarked Graves Found Across the Country

Throughout the summer of 2021, multiple communities across the country discovered hundreds of possible undocumented and unmarked graves at former residential school. These discoveries led to many investigations; some that are currently ongoing.

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Deeper Dive

The intergenerational effects of Indian Residential Schools: Implications for the concept of historical trauma.

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Intergenerational Trauma

Scan the QR Code to watch a short video about how intergenerational trauma can affect communities across Canada.