

Inuvialuit Regional Corporation (IRC) has begun a difficult initiative to **find the remains of Inuvialuit children who attended residential schools and who never returned home.**

## PROJECT GOALS

- Search and identify places where Inuvialuit children who never returned home are buried.
- Memorialize the children by installing headstones and placing appropriate grave markers.
- Collaborate with and be guided by survivors, families, elders and other leadership throughout the project.
- Provide safe and respectful mental health and emotional support services to those involved.
- Host memorial ceremonies for each family whose loved one's resting place was identified.
- Offer closure to families and community members.

The project team will host awareness sessions in each ISR community to inform community members about the new initiative and fieldworkers will gather and record information collected through oral history, digital and archival research.

## LEARN MORE ABOUT RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

*Finding Inuvialuit Children Lost in the Residential Schools System – The Factbook* provides highlights of the history of the residential schools system, its impacts and the ongoing reconciliation efforts in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, Northwest Territories, and Canada.

**To request for more information or for a free copy of the factbook, please contact Beverly Lennie at: [blennie@inuvialuit.com](mailto:blennie@inuvialuit.com)**

IRC gratefully acknowledges the financial support of the Government of Canada through Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC), in making this project possible.

Cover photo: "Children in Line for School" September 16, 1929, the first day of school at Shingle Point Residential School. Credit: The Anglican Church of Canada Archives

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## FINDING INUVIALUIT CHILDREN LOST IN THE RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL SYSTEM



## INUVIALUIT RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS MISSING CHILDREN PROJECT (IRSMC) FIELDWORKERS

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## THE RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL LEGACY

From the early 1830s to 1996, over 150,000 First Nations, Inuit and Métis children were forced to attend residential schools as part of the federal government's attempt to assimilate Indigenous Peoples into the settler culture. Federal policies on the use of education as a tool for assimilation began in the 1840s and continued into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Indian Act was amended in 1920 to make attendance at residential schools mandatory, by law, for Indigenous children aged 7-15 years old.

This continued until the 1970s when the federal government began transferring education management to Indigenous Peoples because of negotiations with the National Indian Brotherhood. The last federal residential school was closed in 1997.

The impacts of the residential school system have affected generations of Indigenous Peoples and some of these impacts include extinction of Indigenous languages, loss of identity, culture and spirituality, loss of positive parenting role models, skills and nurturing experiences, the development of addictions as a coping mechanism and the perpetuation of cycles of abuse within families and across generations.

The residential and day school systems were late in coming to the North. Their impact here has been significant and continues to be present. **According to the 2001 Statistics Canada Aboriginal Peoples Survey, over 50% of Indigenous peoples 45 years of age and older in the Northwest Territories and the Yukon attended a residential school.**

*Photo: Former locations of western Arctic Anglican residential schools are marked with white dots. The General Synod Archives, Anglican Church of Canada.*

