



Reconciliation

June 21 WALK FOR RECONCILIATION **Rock Your Roots! LESSON PLAN K - 8**



Reconciliation Saskatoon would like to invite teachers to engage their students in the Rock Your Roots: Walk for Reconciliation on June 21 National Indigenous Peoples Day! The walk will take place at Reconciliation Circle in Victoria Park.

Following is all the information you need to make this a meaningful and memorable experience for your students. You can also visit beaconnectr.com/events for updates and information.



INTERESTING FACT:

At the end of 2017, part of Victoria Park was renamed “Reconciliation Circle” to recognize this site as an important location for Truth and Reconciliation in our city. Not only is this the site of National Indigenous Peoples Day celebrations and the Walk for Reconciliation. In 2015, this is where the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) hosted one of seven national events that marked the release of the TRC’s Final Report, which listed 94 Calls to Action that Canadians need to support to bring about Truth and Reconciliation.

BACKGROUND

The Rock Your Roots: Walk for Reconciliation gathers Indigenous, non-Indigenous and newcomer peoples to demonstrate their commitment to Truth and Reconciliation. Participants are invited to “Rock Your Roots” by wearing cultural regalia or carrying signs or flags that celebrate their heritage. The walk is preceded by Indigenous ceremony and led by Residential School Survivors who are honoured through this experience. An international cast of singers, dancers and musicians celebrate the diverse cultures of Saskatoon along the route of the walk.

The Rock Your Roots: Walk for Reconciliation is organized with Knowledge Keepers and Residential School Survivors, who remind us “nothing about us, without us.” Indigenous leadership and values are woven into everything we do.

➤ The Rock Your Roots: Walk for Reconciliation took place from 2016 to 2019, when we gathered 5,000 people on the South Saskatchewan River. It was cancelled in 2020 due to covid. In 2021, participants walked on their own or in small groups according to covid regulations to continue the legacy of honouring survivors and committing to truth and reconciliation.

➤ In 2022, the Walk for Reconciliation was cancelled due to weather, and rescheduled for September 30—the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. The event was so powerful and aligned so well with “Orange Shirt Day” that the community decided to keep it on that day in 2023.

➤ In 2023, the Residential School Survivors said they missed the school buses full of children arriving to Walk for Reconciliation! So the walk was moved back to June 21 so that teachers could bring their students back to Rock their Roots!

WATCH [“Building the Rock Your Roots: Walk for Reconciliation”](#)



LESSON FOCUS

What is the Rock Your Roots: Walk for Reconciliation and how was it created in response to the Canadian Residential School system? How can students contribute to the process of Truth and Reconciliation?

OUTCOMES

Students will listen to a Residential School Survivor share his story and the history of the Walk for Reconciliation. They will become more familiar with the Residential School System, and consider how they can honour Survivors who live in our communities.

OBJECTIVES

Students will participate in activities that recognize Residential School Survivors and invite more students to get involved in reconciliation:

- Activity #1: Create a birthday card for Residential School Survivors. The birthday cards that are created by students will be delivered to Residential School Survivors.
- Activity #2: Learn about the Vision for Reconciliation and have students participate in their own vision for moving forward!



PROCEDURES

1) Introductory Conversation about Residential Schools

- **WATCH ["Teaching about Residential Schools to children! - YouTube"](#)**
- **WATCH ["Eugene Arcand: The History of Saskatoon's Rock Your Roots Walk for Reconciliation"](#)**

2) After the videos have been completed, teacher will discuss "Who are Indigenous peoples of Canada?" This term refers to the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people that were in this country long before immigrants from Europe and elsewhere decided to settle.

3) Teacher will lead a discussion about what residential schools were and the age groups of the Indigenous children placed into schools. Many Indian Residential Schools were located far from Indigenous homes and communities, and enrollment was compulsory for Indigenous children. From 1867 to 1996, Indigenous children between the ages of 7 (and even younger) and 15 were taken from their families by the government to attend these schools.

4) Teacher will lead a discussion "Why were residential schools bad for children?" Children did not get the chance to grow up with their parents and some children did not return home after their stay in the school. Also, children in Residential Schools were punished for speaking their languages, and their connection to their families and culture was severed. The schools did not meet the basic needs of the children: for love, healthy food, etc. and they were severely mistreated. They were not held or told they were loved. They never celebrated birthdays and many didn't even know when their birthdays were.

5) The Rock Your Roots: Walk for Reconciliation began in 2016 to honour Residential School Survivors. Thousands of people have gathered on the riverbank and "rocked their roots" by wearing their own cultural regalia or holding symbols of their culture. It is an important part of reconciliation to know your own ancestry.

WATCH ["Building the Rock Your Roots: Walk for Reconciliation"](#)

This year, the Rock Your Roots: Walk for Reconciliation will take place on June 21 2024.

MATERIALS

- Construction paper or cardstock
- Stationary
- Coloring materials such as markers, crayons, and colored pencils
- Glue
- Stickers or rubber stamps

ACTIVITY #1

Birthday Cards (K - 8)

As you heard in the video from Survivor Eugene Arcand, Residential School Survivors never celebrated birthdays. Many times at the Walk for Reconciliation, we had cupcakes and sang happy birthday to the Survivors. This is a way of giving back an experience that they lost, and acknowledging that loss.

Invite the students to make birthday cards or artworks that will be delivered to Residential School Survivors! This invites reflection about the Survivors who are still with us. Talk about messages that Survivors might want to hear, or ways to let them know they are loved!



Cards can be mailed to:

Reconciliation Saskatoon

214 11th Street E
Saskatoon, SK
S7N 0E6

Bring your cards to the Walk for Reconciliation on June 21. At the end of the walk, golf carts carrying Residential School Survivors will line up to see the procession of people walk past. Students are invited to give their cards to a Residential School Survivor at this time!

ACTIVITY #2 (Grades 4 - 8)

HOW ARE WE MOVING FORWARD?: Vision for Reconciliation

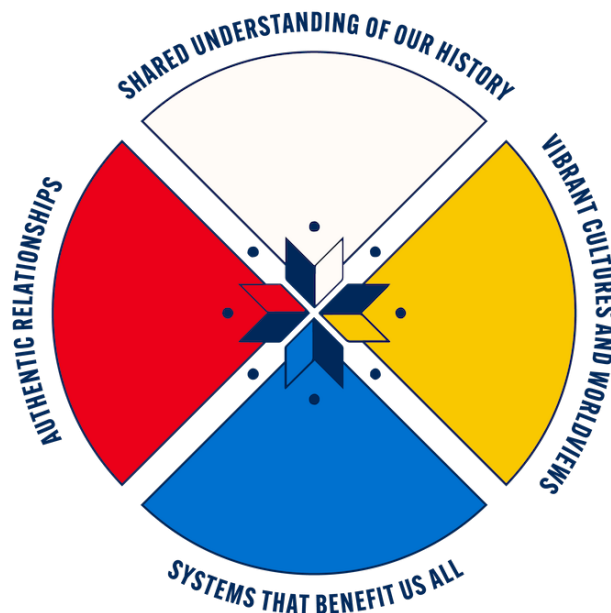
The Office of the Treaty Commissioner has been working with hundreds of partner organizations since 2014 to develop a common Vision for Truth and Reconciliation through Treaty Implementation. In this process, they have asked thousands of Indigenous and non-Indigenous citizens from Saskatchewan about the reconciliation story they would like to tell to the next generation. They believe that if we can come together on a common vision for success, that we can better work together, and determine whether progress is being made. They've told us that it involves four overlapping and continuous areas of work:

Shared Understanding of our History

- We will understand and honour the history of this land, including past and present wrongs
- We will have respectful relationships with our ancestors and with the land
- Individuals, families, communities and nations will be strong and healing

Vibrant Cultures and Worldviews

- Our cultures and languages will be strong; worldviews respected
- Our social experiences will be woven together; we share and learn from each other
-



Authentic Relationships

- Strong relationships, partnerships and trust will exist among all people
- We will have greater skills for communicating and managing conflicts

Systems that Benefit Us All

- We will have quality of life for all and systems will reject racism
- We will have representative leadership and workforce
- Treaty promises and Indigenous sovereignty will be honoured

ACTIVITY #2 (Grades 4 - 8) continued

Invite students to engage with the Vision for Reconciliation. Options include:

- Picture what reconciliation looks like when it has been successful. Can you draw a picture of Truth and Reconciliation?
- Write a paragraph about what Truth and Reconciliation will look like when it has been successful.
- Have a class wide discussion about each area of the Vision for Reconciliation. Is your school responding to any of the areas? Do you have ideas for how your classroom or school or family could repond to each area?

Source for the Vision for Reconciliation: http://www.otc.ca/pages/what_is_reconciliation.html



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Email: beaconnectr@gmail.com
Website: <http://www.BeAConnectR.com>

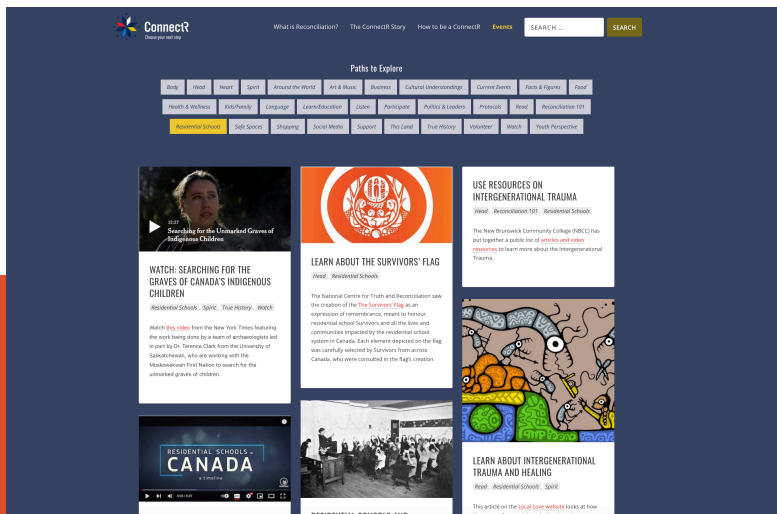
CONCLUSION

Today, residential schools do not exist anymore. The last residential school in Saskatchewan was closed in 1996. However, the children who attended those schools are now grown-up, and many are still dealing with the problems they faced as a child. We call them Survivors.

For these Residential School Survivors, we show them our support by showing up! Come to the Walk for Reconciliation on June 21 at Victoria Park.

Many people in our community work hard to heal the damage done by Residential schools and ensure that Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples are equal.

Check out ConnectR, an online project to help people find and respond to Calls to Action and move forward on a path of Truth & Reconciliation: www.BeAConnectR.com



EVENT DETAILS

Rock Your Roots: Walk for Reconciliation

The Rock Your Roots: Walk for Reconciliation starts in Victoria Park. School buses can drop off students at the top of Victoria Park at 10am. We've attached a map for school bus drivers!

From 10am – 10:30am people arrive and join the procession. We will begin walking at 10:30am and the route will take approximately 1 hour.

The route circles back and ends in Victoria Park, in the heart of the park close to the river. **Remember to wear your cultural regalia or ORANGE TSHIRTS!**

At the completion of the walk, there will be a stage and celebrations for National Indigenous Peoples Day—hosted by the Saskatoon Indian Métis Friendship Centre. Students are invited to stay and enjoy a grand entry, followed by speeches and cultural performances.

Programming will continue on this stage from noon – 4pm.

Friday, June 21

10am	Participants arrive
10:30am	Walk for Reconciliation begins
11:40am - 12pm	Walk ends in Victoria Park
12 - 4pm	Grand entry, speakers and cultural performances, park activities—

**Afternoon activities hosted by
Saskatoon Indian Métis Friendship Centre**

**Please email walkforreconciliation@gmail.com if
you plan to bring your classroom!**

Help us remember
MOTHER EARTH and
embrace our role in caring for her.

**At Rock Your Roots, this means reducing our
garbage by bringing a waste-free lunch and
your own water bottles!**

Composting and recycling stations will be
available in the park.



SCHOOL BUS Drop Off & Pick Up

School buses can approach from Avenue H South and turn east onto 16th Street W. The road will be blocked to regular traffic at 16th St W, so we will have volunteers removing blockades for school buses to enter.

School buses can stop along Spadina Cres W across from the Legion to let students off. We will have marshals and crossing guards to ensure the safety of the students and smooth traffic flow.

Please email walkforreconciliation@gmail.com if you plan to bring your classroom!



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