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## **SCO LAUNCHES TWO VITAL HEALING PROGRAMS**

### **We continue to strengthen supports for the healing and wellness of Survivors and inter-generational Survivors – Grand Chief Daniels**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 1, 2022**

**ANISHINAABE AND DAKOTA TERRITORY, MB** — The Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) is pleased to launch the month leading up to the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation by honouring Survivors, intergenerational Survivors, and the children who did not return home with the announcement of two new programs. The programs focus on healing for those dealing with the ongoing traumas associated with Indian Residential Schools (IRS), Indian Day Schools, Sixties Scoop, the child welfare system and the issue of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

“Time and time again, we hear from our communities that there is an urgent need to expand the range of culturally appropriate, responsive, and trauma-informed supports for residential and day school Survivors and inter-generational Survivors in southern Manitoba, as well as those impacted by the Sixties Scoop and child welfare system,” stated SCO Grand Chief Jerry Daniels. “This need has only been exacerbated since the discovery of the remains of the children who died at residential schools across Turtle Island.”

The SCO Survivors' Healing Supports Program, along with the Harm Reduction Awareness and Land Based Healing Fund, were both developed to provide the opportunity for Anishinaabe and Dakota people to re-connect with their cultures and traditions. They are also designed to assist Survivors with gaining better access to advocacy as well as supports such as the newly established SCO Mobile Crisis Response Team.

These initiatives come after the SCO Chiefs-in-Summit unanimously passed a resolution in September of last year, to support permanent, increased, and enhanced supports for Indian Residential School Survivors and a Resolution supporting Sixties Scoop Survivors.

“Generations of colonization aimed at removing us from our land and outlawing our ceremonies, our languages, and our cultures has had a devastating effect on our health and well-being,” added Grand Chief Daniels. “I am proud of our leadership and staff for heeding this urgent call to action for our peoples.”

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The Survivors Healing Supports Program has created a Survivors Advocate position and has begun hiring a team of Liaisons to assist families interacting with various colonial systems, and to help in the coordination of events and gatherings while providing emotional support for Survivors and their families. The Survivors Healing Supports Program has also announced a fund to support community gatherings and events in the SCO-member Nations.

The Harm Reduction Awareness and Land Based Healing Fund will offer additional opportunities to address the root causes of addiction by offering opportunities for people to re-establish connection with the land, which is considered sacred by First Nations. Funding will also be announced in the coming days to support community-based organizations wanting to offer land-based healing.

“Up until now, western systems have undermined our health systems by separating us from the land,” said Dakota Tipi First Nation Chief Eric Pashe. “We know that the land is both a healer and a teacher that promotes wellness and I am confident this fund and associated programming will lead to increased wellness for our relatives, especially those struggling with additions and other mental wellness trials.”

Both programs align with models where First Nation communities, leadership, and health care professionals have increased self-determination and self-governance authority. They also respond to the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, and the Calls for Justice issued by the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls.

“Having sovereignty over our health and well-being is critical for true healing,” concluded Grand Chief Daniels. “I am excited to see these programs being implemented and witnessing the positive results that will come from them.”

More information can be found on the [SCO’s Survivors Healing Supports Program page](#).

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*The Southern Chiefs’ Organization represents 34 First Nations and more than 81,500 citizens in what is now called southern Manitoba. SCO is an independent political organization that protects, preserves, promotes, and enhances First Nations peoples’ inherent rights, languages, customs, and traditions through the application and implementation of the spirit and intent of the Treaty-making process.*

**For Media Inquiries:**

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