

Head Office

Swan Lake First Nation 200-200 Alpine Way, Headingley, Manitoba R4H 0B7

**Winnipeg Sub-Office**

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SCO LAUNCHES SURVEY TO ENSURE SURVIVORS INFORM PRIORITIES

Survivors and intergenerational Survivors of residential and day schools asked for input to guide action

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Thursday September 15, 2022

ANISHINAABE AND DAKOTA TERRITORY, MB — The Southern Chiefs' Organization (SCO) is launching a survey, leading up to the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, asking Survivors and intergenerational Survivors of the residential and day school system for their guidance and priorities.

“It is of utmost importance that we listen to the voices of Anishinaabe and Dakota Survivors and intergenerational Survivors as we plan our next steps,” said SCO Grand Chief Jerry Daniels. “We want to ensure that we are aligning our actions with the very real and timely needs of our citizens.”

The short survey is open to all southern First Nation citizens and asks how to best achieve education and awareness, healing, and accountability, and about the importance of tools such as research, policy, and legislation. The survey also asks how to best honour the children who did not return home from residential schools. The responses will be analyzed and compiled into a report that will guide the direction of SCO.

“This is about listening to our citizens and bringing healing and reconciliation to our Nations,” concluded Grand Chief Daniels. “As all Canadians continue to grapple with and learn the true history of this country, this process honours Survivors and will ensure we are on the right path.”

The survey will run for six weeks ending on October 27, 2022 and can be found at

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SCO-survivors-Survey>

The residential and day school system represents one of the darkest moments in Canadian history. The schools sought to ‘kill the Indian in the child’ and assimilate First Nation children. In Manitoba, there were 19 residential schools and 115 day schools. The residential schools were established by the Canadian government starting in 1831 and administered over the next 165 years by Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, United and other Christian denominations. More than 150,000 children were forced to attend residential schools and more than 200,000 were forced to attend day schools. Once at the schools, students faced harsh discipline and physical, emotional, and sexual abuse.

SCO recently launched a [Survivors Healing Supports Program](#) and a Harm Reduction Awareness and Land Based Healing Fund to support Survivors and intergenerational Survivors.

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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.

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