

# National Gathering on Unmarked Burials: Upholding Indigenous Laws

**March 27 - 29, 2023**

Sheraton Centre  
Toronto, ON



**Office of the Independent  
Special Interlocutor**

for Missing Children and Unmarked  
Graves and Burial Sites associated  
with Indian Residential Schools

Wellness and Cultural Health Supports will be on site throughout the Gathering

## Logo of the Office of the Special Interlocutor



Representing strength, family and healing, bears are the primary element in the Office of the Independent Special Interlocutor's logo. The larger bear represents the parent, family, and community, while the smaller bear symbolizes the children who were stolen and never returned.

The Northern Lights in the night sky are the Spirits of our ancestors dancing. The dancing guides the children to reunite with their ancestors.

The stars depict the connection between the children taken from their communities and the parents left behind, who would stare at the same stars longing to be reunited.

The flowers in the larger bear signify life and the resilience of Indigenous Peoples.

The changing colours in the dotted path illustrate the on-going search for truth, justice and healing. The three pairs of moccasins honour and acknowledge all First Nations, Inuit and Métis children.

At the first National Gathering on Unmarked Burials in Treaty 6 territory, Regional Chief Gerald Antoine observed that on the back of the larger bear, there is a clear outline of a child's face looking up at the sky. Although this was not intentionally part of the design, it has shown us yet another way that the children's Spirits are speaking to us all.



*"For the child taken,  
For the parent left behind."*

TRC Interim Report, 2012

# Welcome



**Kimberly R. Murray**

Independent Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites associated with Indian Residential Schools

I am honoured to welcome you to the fourth National Gathering on Unmarked Burials, which will focus on Upholding Indigenous Laws in the search and recovery of the missing children. I begin by acknowledging the many Indigenous Peoples who have taken care of these lands and waters over the years, including the Wendat Peoples, the Anishnaabeg, the Haudenosaunee, the Chippewa, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. I acknowledge the various treaties that cover this Territory – the Dish with One Spoon, Treaty 13 and the Williams Treaties – and the principles of peace, friendship, and respect that underlie the treaty relationships. I also acknowledge that Toronto has been and continues to be home to many First Nations, Inuit, and Métis people.

We are here because of the unwavering dedication and advocacy of Survivors. I have had the honour of meeting Survivors who are leading search and recovery work in relation to Indian Residential Schools, and associated sites, across Canada. Survivors have continued to share their truths about the atrocities perpetrated at these institutions, and have provided important information relating to unmarked burials and missing children.

I honour all those leading search and recovery work. Survivors, Indigenous families and communities continue to push Canada and the churches for justice and to ensure the bodies and Spirits of the missing children are treated with the honour, respect and dignity they deserve. There are currently over 100 Indigenous communities leading searches and investigations across Canada. In meetings and at previous National Gatherings, communities have shared the ways in which they are incorporating Indigenous Laws and protocols in their search and recovery efforts.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada emphasized that Indigenous Laws and protocols are essential to truth-finding; this includes finding the truth about the identities of the missing children; the causes of their deaths; the locations of their burials; and the number of children who are missing. The search and recovery of missing children must be governed by Indigenous Laws. Indigenous Peoples have their own laws – laws and protocols relating to burials, funeral practices, protecting lands, and upholding their responsibilities to the missing children. We know the way forward lies within Indigenous cultures, Indigenous languages, and Indigenous Laws.

Over the next few days, this National Gathering will provide an opportunity for us to learn from Survivors, Elders, Knowledge Holders, intergenerational Survivors, Youth, Indigenous legal scholars, Indigenous leaders, and technicians leading search and recovery work within their own communities. We will have important discussions about Upholding Indigenous Laws relating to grieving, ceremony, repatriation, commemoration, and the protection of lands. We will also discuss what is needed for accountability and justice under Indigenous Laws. As we gather to exchange knowledge, let us commit to holding the Spirits of the children and the Survivors at the center of our discussions.



# Mandate of the Independent Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites associated with Indian Residential Schools

The Special Interlocutor will identify needed measures and make recommendations for a new federal legal framework to ensure the respectful and culturally appropriate treatment of unmarked graves and burial sites of children associated with former residential schools. This will be done in close collaboration with First Nations, Inuit and Métis governments, representative organizations, communities, Survivors and families, other departments of the Government of Canada, provinces and territories, and other relevant institutions such as church entities and record holders.

The Special Interlocutor will function independently and impartially, in a non-partisan and transparent manner to achieve the objectives of her mandate.

The Special Interlocutor has a two-year mandate and will deliver interim and final reports, with recommendations, to the federal Minister of Justice and the Attorney General of Canada. Knowledge shared at this National Gathering will inform the interim and final reports and recommendations.

## The work of the Special Interlocutor will

### Engage

with First Nations, Inuit and Métis governments, representative organizations, communities, Survivors and families to discuss issues of concern around the identification, preservation, and protection of unmarked graves and burial sites, including the potential repatriation of remains

### Examine

the existing federal, provincial and territorial laws, regulations, tools and practices that currently apply and have applied to protect unmarked graves and burial sites connected to former Indian Residential Schools, as well as applicable Indigenous Laws and protocols, in order to develop a description of the current legal framework

### Identify

areas of improvement in Canadian law and make recommendations for a new federal legal framework to identify, protect, and preserve unmarked burial sites connected to former Indian Residential Schools and lands associated with the schools

## At the Gathering

The Osgoode Ballroom is located on the Lower Concourse Level of the Sheraton Centre. All breakfasts and lunches will be available at no cost to attendees.

Portions of the National Gathering taking place in the Osgoode Ballroom are being live-streamed for accessibility and transparency.

If members of the media are expected or present, an announcement will be made.

A photographer will be present and taking photos at the Gathering for use by the Office of the Special Interlocutor.

This Gathering is a public event where photography, audio and video recording may occur. By attending the event, all attendees consent to the potential release and publication of photos and audio/video recordings by the Office of the Special Interlocutor. If you have concerns about this, please speak with a staff member from the Office of the Special Interlocutor.

## Indigenous Teachings

During the course of our time together, we hope that you take this opportunity to participate in the Indigenous teachings that are taking place on the Osgoode Hall Grounds. Knowledge Holders and Elders will share Indigenous ways of knowing from a Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabeg, Inuit and Métis perspective in relation to Indigenous Laws.

## Protocols

There will be a Sacred Fire on-site at the Osgoode Hall Grounds which will remain lit throughout the duration of the Gathering. This Sacred Fire ensures that the Spirits and Teachings guide and protect us while we meet. Please help us respect the protocols of the Sacred Fire. The Firekeeper has been entrusted with tending to this flame and deserves the utmost respect.

## Wellness and Cultural Health Supports

Trauma-informed and culturally appropriate health and wellness supports will be provided by the Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre and Anishnawbe Health Toronto throughout the Gathering. Additional relaxation and therapeutic services will be provided on site in the Health Supports Room on the conference level. Due to the difficult content that will be discussed, participants are encouraged to access these supports as needed, at any time during the Gathering. There will be regular reminders and information about where and how to access support services.



## Artistic Expression



Michelle Derosier, Writer and Director

### *A Boy and His Loss*

This seven-minute film, was gifted to the Office of the Special Interlocutor for sharing and is dedicated to those still carrying the heavy weight.

Michelle's late Shoomis attended Residential School in Kenora and the film is in loving memory of narrator Jody Porter.



Michael Etherington, Producer and Songwriter

### *Bring the Children Home*

This is a message of unity, healing and commemoration for Indigenous children who never returned home. Michael dedicates his life's work to reconciliation and building bridges through awareness and education while staying guided by his family, community, and Elders.



Gary Miller

Gary Miller's Art transcends the standard apologetic accounts of residential schools by showing Gary's story/truth in a series of large paintings and sketches about his experience of the Mohawk Institute Indian Residential School. It is a story of a two-year old Mohawk/Cayuga child taken away from his home in Six Nations to a residential school for 11 years (1953-1964), told through color, line, and shadows. The exhibit shows what the Mohawk Institute was, what happened to the child, and how the artist has coped/not coped with the afterlife of his experience. The art does not hold back and is difficult and disturbing to see, but its aesthetic quality is high and registers Gary Miller's truth. The exhibit repudiates the necropolitics of North American settler-colonialism, and affirms Indigenous sovereignty through powerful visual commemoration. It encourages all Survivors to tell their stories.

# AGENDA

## Monday, March 27, 2023

Time	Event	Location
7:00 AM	<b>Lighting of Sacred Fire - Sunrise Ceremony</b>	Osgoode Hall Grounds
12:00 PM	<b>Registration Opens</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Welcome Packages and “Grab &amp; Go” lunch provided</li> <li>▪ Gary Miller: Response from a Mohawk Institute Survivor</li> </ul>	Foyer  Toronto City Hall, Rotunda
4:00 PM	<b>Welcome Ceremonies</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ganohonyohk/Thanksgiving Address</li> <li>▪ Opening Prayer</li> <li>▪ Lighting of Qulliq</li> <li>▪ Empty Chair Ceremony</li> </ul>	Osgoode Ballroom
5:00 PM	<b>Dinner</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Masters of Ceremony: Kathleen Lickers &amp; Adam Fiddler</li> </ul> <b>Welcome to the Territory</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mohawk Chief Allan McNaughton</li> <li>▪ Elected Chief Mark B. Hill, Six Nations of the Grand River</li> <li>▪ Elected Chief R. Stacey Laforme, Mississaugas of the Credit</li> </ul> <b>Remarks &amp; Honouring of the Youth</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Kimberly Murray, Independent Special Interlocutor</li> </ul> <b>Artistic Performance: “Bring the Children Home”</b> <b>Remarks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ President Margaret Froh, Métis Nation of Ontario</li> <li>▪ The Honourable David Lametti, Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada</li> </ul> <b>Cultural Sharing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Six Nations Women Singers</li> <li>▪ Haudenosaunee Traditional Dancers</li> </ul> <b>Closing</b>	Osgoode Ballroom



## Tuesday, March 28, 2023

Time	Event	Location
7:30 AM	<b>Breakfast</b>	Foyer
8:30 AM	<b>Opening Prayer</b>	Osgoode Ballroom
8:45 AM	<b>Opening Comments</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gathering Co-Chairs: Kathleen Lickers &amp; Adam Fiddler</li> </ul>	Osgoode Ballroom
9:00 AM	<b>Voices of Survivors: Upholding Indigenous Laws in the Search and Recovery of Missing Children</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Doug George-Kanentiio, Mohawks of Akwesasne</li> <li>Piita Irniq, Naujaat</li> <li>Louis Gardiner, Île-à-la-Crosse</li> </ul>	Osgoode Ballroom
10:00 AM	<b>Opening Address</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kimberly Murray, Independent Special Interlocutor</li> </ul>	Osgoode Ballroom
10:15 AM	<b>Wellness Break</b>	Foyer
10:30 AM	<b>Keynote Address</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tom Porter, Elder, Spiritual Leader and Author, Mohawks of Akwesasne</li> </ul>	Osgoode Ballroom
11:00 AM	<b>Participant Dialogue &amp; Sharing</b>	Osgoode Ballroom
12:00 PM	<b>Lunch</b>	Foyer
1:00 PM	<b>Panel: Indigenous Laws Relating to Burials</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sara Mainville, Couchiching First Nation</li> <li>Michelle LeClair, Métis Nation Saskatchewan</li> <li>Pakak, Iqaluit</li> </ul>	Osgoode Ballroom
1:45 PM	<b>Participant Dialogue &amp; Sharing</b>	Osgoode Ballroom



## Tuesday, March 28, 2023

Time	Event	Location
2:30 PM	<b>Wellness Break</b>	Foyer
2:45 PM	<b>Interactive Breakout Sessions</b>	
	<b>Session 1 - Revitalizing Indigenous Laws to Address Trauma and Kindle Hope</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>John Borrows, Loveland Chair in Indigenous Law at the University of Toronto Law School, Chippewa of the Nawash First Nation</li> </ul>	Osgoode Ballroom
	<b>Session 2 - Upholding Indigenous Laws: Healing &amp; Commemoration Through Storytelling</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Michelle Derosier, "A Boy &amp; His Loss"</li> <li>Michael Etherington, "Bring the Children Home"</li> </ul>	Sheraton C
	<b>Session 3 - Upholding Indigenous Laws through Medicines</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beedahbin Peltier, Wiikwemikoong Unceded Reserve</li> </ul>	Sheraton E
	<b>Session 4 - Anishnaabeg Teachings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peter Schuler, Elder, Mississaugas of the Credit</li> </ul>	Osgoode Hall Grounds
	<b>Session 5 - Haudenosaunee Teachings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Leroy Hill, Faithkeeper and Sub-Chief, Cayuga Nation</li> <li>Wendy Hill, Traditional Healer, Cayuga Nation</li> </ul>	Osgoode Hall Grounds
	<b>Session 6 - Inuit Teachings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Piita Irniq, Cultural Advocate, Naujaat</li> </ul>	Osgoode Hall Grounds
	<b>Session 7 - Métis Teachings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dr. Lynn Lavallee, Knowledge Holder, Métis Nation of Ontario</li> </ul>	Osgoode Hall Grounds
4:30 PM	<b>Return to Plenary and Facilitator Highlights</b>	Osgoode Ballroom
5:30 - 7:30 PM	<b>Reception with Artist Gary Miller</b> <b>Artistic Response from a Mohawk Institute Survivor</b> <i>Light Food and Refreshments</i>	Toronto City Hall, Rotunda

## Wednesday, March 29, 2023

Time	Event	Location
7:30 AM	<b>Breakfast</b>	Foyer
8:30 AM	<b>Opening Prayer</b>	Osgoode Ballroom
8:40 AM	<b>Opening Comments</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gathering Co-Chairs: Kathleen Lickers &amp; Adam Fiddler</li> </ul>	Osgoode Ballroom
8:50 AM	<b>Essay Recital by Nevaeh Pine</b> , Youth, Garden River First Nation	Osgoode Ballroom
9:00 AM	<b>Voices of Survivor Families - Youth “Perspective on Upholding Indigenous Laws in the Search and Recovery of Missing Children”</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Scott Fox, Blood Tribe</li> <li>Jordyn Playne, Métis Nation Ontario</li> <li>Stephanie Nirlungayuk, Tunngasugit Inuit</li> </ul>	Osgoode Ballroom
9:45 AM	<b>Upholding Indigenous Laws and Ceremony</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Elder Keith Chiefmoon, Kainai Nation and Blackfoot Confederacy</li> <li>Elder Pauline Shirt, Saddle Lake Cree Nation</li> <li>Elder Fred Campion, Drift Pile Cree Nation</li> </ul>	Osgoode Ballroom
10:30 AM	<b>Wellness Break</b>	Foyer
10:45 AM	<b>Participant Dialogue &amp; Sharing</b>	Osgoode Ballroom
12:00 PM	<b>Lunch</b>	Osgoode Ballroom
1:00 PM	<b>Indigenous Community Perspectives: Indigenous Laws and the Colonial Legal System</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kahentinetha and Kwetiio, Kanien'keha:ka Kahnistensera (Mohawk Mothers)</li> <li>Emilien Janvier and Jordyn Burnouf, Île-à-la-Crosse Residential Boarding School</li> </ul>	Osgoode Ballroom
1:45 PM	<b>Participant Dialogue &amp; Sharing</b>	Osgoode Ballroom
2:30 PM	<b>Wellness Break</b>	Foyer

## Wednesday, March 29, 2023

Time	Event	Location
2:45 - 4:00 PM	<b>Interactive Breakout Sessions</b>	
	<b>Session 1 - Upholding Indigenous Laws: Justice and Reparations for Missing Children</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Koren Lightning-Earle, Legal Director at Wahkohtowin Law and Governance Lodge, Samson Cree Nation</li> <li>▪ Hadley Friedland, Academic Director at Wahkohtowin Indigenous Law and Governance Lodge, Edmonton</li> </ul>	Osgoode Ballroom
	<b>Session 2 - Upholding Indigenous Laws and the Protection of Land</b>	Sheraton C
	<b>Session 3 - Cree Traditional Laws in the Recovery of Missing Children at the Onion Lake Cree Nation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Eleanore Sunchild, KC, Sunchild Law, Thunderchild First Nation</li> <li>▪ Bernadine Harper, Council Member of the Onion Lake Cree Nation</li> </ul>	Sheraton E
	<b>Session 4 - Anishnaabeg Teachings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Peter Schuler, Elder, Mississaugas of the Credit</li> </ul>	Osgoode Hall Grounds
	<b>Session 5 - Haudenosaunee Teachings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Leroy Hill, Faithkeeper and Sub-Chief, Cayuga Nation</li> <li>▪ Wendy Hill, Traditional Healer, Cayuga Nation</li> </ul>	Osgoode Hall Grounds
	<b>Session 6 - Inuit Teachings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Piita Irniq, Cultural Advocate, Naujaat</li> </ul>	Osgoode Hall Grounds
	<b>Session 7 - Métis Teachings</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dr. Lynn Lavallee, Knowledge Holder, Métis Nation of Ontario</li> </ul>	Osgoode Hall Grounds
4:15 PM	<b>Return to Plenary and Facilitator Highlights</b>	Osgoode Ballroom
4:30 PM	<b>Closing Remarks</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Kimberly Murray, Independent Special Interlocutor</li> </ul>	Osgoode Ballroom
5:00 PM	<b>Closing</b>	Osgoode Ballroom

## Cultural Advisors



**Hohahes  
Leroy Hill**

Hohahes Leroy Hill, is of the Cayuga Nation and Bear Clan. He is a Faithkeeper and Sub-Chief. He has been married for 34 years, has 5 children and 11 grandchildren. He is a sanctioned speaker of The Great Law of Peace and Gaihiwiyo. He is a speaker of 3 Haudenosaunee languages and one of the Wampum/Record Keepers for the Haudenosaunee. He has helped develop and remains an advisor for numerous language programs. As well, he is a cultural advisor to numerous departments and organizations at Six Nations and surrounding communities. Also, Leroy is a Professor of Indigenous Knowledge (2013) and worked as Co-Instructor of Indigenous Studies at McMaster University. He assisted with an Indigenous Law Course at the University of Windsor, as well as assists with the “People of the Longhouse” course at Wilfred Laurier University. He currently works as Coordinator for the Haudenosaunee Resource Centre.



**Wendy Hill**

Wendy Hill is from the Cayuga Nation which is one of the Six Nations/ Longhouse people. Wendy's spiritual knowledge began as a child through her dreams and spiritual experiences. She was raised through her people's traditional ceremonies and continues her ancestors' spirituality. At twenty years old she had a near death experience and was given insight to her abilities as a healer. Today she works as a healer and peace-builder in many different Native communities in North America. She travels extensively motivating community wellness and healing, as well as awareness of the earth changes. She does hands-on healing for pain and illness, as well as emotional, mental and spiritual healing. Wendy continues to enlighten and share guidance, direction and healing wherever she goes.



**Peter  
Schuler**

Elder Peter Schuler is a grandfather and Elder of the Mississaugas of the Credit and a member of the Minweyweygaan Midewin Lodge in Manitoba. An amateur writer and artist, Peter tries to pass on traditional Ojibwe teachings through storytelling, art and craft making. Since his retirement from construction work, he has taken these stories to elementary and high schools and works to educate the public in an effort to fight racism and to promote understanding of First Nations history and culture.



## Gathering Co-Chairs



**Adam Francis  
Fiddler**

Adam Fiddler is a lawyer and former Chief of Sandy Lake First Nation in Northwestern Ontario.

He lives and works out of his home in Sandy Lake where he was raised in part by his grandmother immersed in the language and culture.

Adam has a passion for the land and maintains strong connections by spending time hunting, fishing or just being out there. He was instilled with the Elder's teachings that we have a spiritual connection to the land and that it is medicinal and full of healing.

Adam's law practice focuses first on Anishinabe law and utilizing Indigenous laws within a modern context. Specifically with emphasis on including and prioritizing traditional laws in major developments affecting First Nations or the creation of institutions that affect Indigenous People.



**Kathleen  
Lickers**

Kathleen Lickers is Seneca, Six Nations of the Grand River, is a member of the Ontario Bar (1995). Her career began with the Indian Specific Claims Commission as an Associate Legal Counsel and then Commission Counsel charged with responsibility for federal public inquiries into unresolved specific claims advanced by First Nations across Canada. She established her own law practice at Six Nations in 2003.

Her professional highlights include serving as Co-Counsel to the Chiefs of Ontario to the Ipperwash Inquiry; serving as Facilitator of an Intergovernmental Forum between Ontario, Canada, and the Chiefs of Ontario; Independent Examination of Tobacco on Reserve; External Advisor to the Assembly of First Nations; and External Advisor to the Office of the Auditor General. She is an Adjudicator with the Law Society of Ontario Tribunal.

She was awarded a Law Society Medal by the Law Society of Ontario and designated an Indigenous Peoples Counsel by the Indigenous Bar Association in 2018.

## Keynote Speakers



**Tom Porter**  
Elder,  
Spiritual Leader  
and Author

Mr. Porter has authored various books and pamphlets, all of which teach about Mohawk traditions and spirituality. He is the spokesman and chief spiritual leader of the Mohawk community of Kanatsiohareke in Fonda, NY. Akwesasne is his home community. Because he recognized that Mohawk language and culture were slowly vanishing, he assisted in establishing the Akwesasne Freedom School. He is particularly known as a master storyteller, in the best tradition of Haudenosaunee orators.



**The Honourable  
David Lametti**  
Minister of Justice  
and Attorney General  
of Canada

The Honourable David Lametti was first elected in 2015 as the Member of Parliament for LaSalle—Émard—Verdun. He has served as Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada since 2019.

A proud resident of Montréal for over 30 years, Minister Lametti was born and raised in Port Colborne, Ontario. The story of his parents, two Italian immigrants, is one of generational sacrifice: they left their home and came to Canada so that their children could have a better life than they did. Minister Lametti believes that his parents' hard work and commitment to education gave him the opportunity to succeed.

Before entering politics, Minister Lametti was a Professor of Law at McGill University for nearly 20 years, and established himself as an accomplished legal academic and expert in property and intellectual property law.

Minister Lametti holds a Bachelor of Arts in Economics and Political Science from the University of Toronto, a Bachelor of Civil Law and Bachelor of Laws from McGill University, a Master of Laws from the Yale Law School, and a Doctor of Philosophy in Law from Oxford University. He has taught or lectured in many of the world's most well-known universities in French, English, and Italian.

Minister Lametti is the father of three adult children and lives in Montréal.

## Gathering Speakers



**John Borrows**

John is Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Law at the University of Victoria Law School (on leave); Loveland Chair in Indigenous Law at the University of Toronto Law School. Publications include, *Recovering Canada*; *The Resurgence of Indigenous Law*; *Canada's Indigenous Constitution*; *Drawing Out Law: A Spirit's Guide* (2010); *Freedom and Indigenous Constitutionalism*; *The Right Relationship* (with Michael Coyle, ed.); *Resurgence and Reconciliation* (with Michael Asch, Jim Tully, eds.); and, *Law's Indigenous Ethics*. He is the 2017 Killam Prize winner in Social Sciences and the 2019 Molson Prize Winner from the Canada Council for the Arts, the 2020 Governor General's Innovation Award, and the 2021 Canadian Bar Association President's Award winner. He was appointed as an Officer of the Order of Canada in 2020. John is a member of the Chippewa of the Nawash First Nation in Ontario, Canada.



**Jordyn  
Burnouf**

Jordyn is Advisor to Michelle LeClair, Vice President and Minister of Environment and Justice of the Métis Nation- Saskatchewan. Jordyn is a member of Black Lake First Nation and grew up in the Métis community of Île-à-la-Crosse, SK. As a proud northerner and Cree woman, Jordyn has an inherent connection to the land and spends her time away from the office with her family at Pemmican Lodge, harvesting wild rice, and exploring the vast beauty of the land and water she grew up on. Her work is centred on clean energy and environmental stewardship with a passion for expanding a global understanding of land-based knowledge, the need for cultural inclusion, and empowering young people. Jordyn is an inter-generational Survivor and has been working alongside the Île-à-la Crosse Survivors Committee.

## Gathering Speakers



**Fred Campion**

Elder Campion is a Nêhîyaw (Plains-Cree) spiritual Elder and traditional knowledge keeper. He was raised by his mother, who was a respected medicine woman and fierce advocate for the rights of Indigenous women. Since Fred was a child, he was trained to understand our traditional medicine and spirituality. At 21 years old, he already became a ceremonial lodge keeper, and began fulfilling his purpose to bring healing to our people and traditional knowledge to live well. Fred is one of the leading experts alive in his practice and he takes pride in being able to pass down his knowledge to his many students, children, and grandchildren.



**Keith  
Chiefmoon**

Onistaya Kopi (Blackfoot name), a member of Gai'na, Blood Tribe, Great grandson of Chief Red Crow, Blackfoot Confederacy, Treaty 7, Standoff, Alberta.

Keith is a Lead Piercing Sundancer for the Gaina nation; a part of the Sundance ceremony outlawed in 1897, commonly referenced as “making of a warrior”; members of the Gai'na including Keith repatriated this component in the mid 80's and continues annually.

Keith is also an educator, he survived the atrocities of the genocidal and Colonial education system embraced by Canada; he completed a high school diploma, a BA in Native American studies, a B.Ed and was accredited as a Social and Aboriginal, Blackfoot Language Teacher and went on to complete a Masters in Educational Supervision and Administration.

Keith as a member of Tribal Council advocated for the inclusion of Aboriginal and Treaty rights of the current s.35 of the Canada Act, 1982.



## Gathering Speakers



**Michelle  
Derosier**

Michelle is Anishinaabe from Migisi Sahgaigan First Nation in Treaty 3 Territory in Northwestern Ontario. She is a mother, grandmother, artist, activist and filmmaker who is deeply rooted in her Anishinaabek culture. Michelle has always lived and practiced in the north and has been making films for 15 years. Michelle's art practice has focused on creating stories of healing and power for her family, communities and ancestral land.

She has screened internationally at Sundance, MaoriLand, Traverse City, INDIANER INUIT: Das Nordamerika and ImagineNATIVE, to name a few. Her first short animation, the Grandfather Drum, was selected to screen at the 2016 Sundance Film Festival. In 2017, Michelle completed her first dramatic feature film, Angelique's Isle, co-directed with Montreal filmmaker Marie-Helene Cousineau. Angelique's Isle has screened at festivals internationally and aired on CBC. Her recent works include directing the episode "Amplify: the Fire" for a new APTN 13-part documentary music series that aired in October 2020 and directed the short documentary "Audrey's Story", which is now screening internationally.



**Michael  
Etherington**

Michael is Omushkego Cree from Treaty 9 and a member of Fort Albany First Nation. He is currently an Indigenous Consultant for the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) and serves as a member on the Board of Directors for World Wildlife Canada. With career highlights such as: TEDX Talk Speaker, United Nations 2nd World Summit Keynote and invited speaker for inaugural Treaty Recognition Week alongside former Premier Wynne in 2016. He served in prior roles as Manager of ReconciliACTION for Downie Wenjack Fund, Cultural Program Manager for Native Canadian Centre of Toronto and a Trainer for Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres. He also dedicated many years volunteering his time speaking to schools, colleges, and universities through Passages Canada.

## Gathering Speakers



**Scott Fox**

Oki niikso'kowaiksi. Kitohkanaiksimatsimohpowaowa. Nistowakoka Sspopii. Nimoheto'tsitapii Mamioyiiksi, Aakaipokaiksi. Niksissta litsoyohkoomii. Ninna Sikapii. Naaahsiksi Ihkitsikaam, Otaikimmaakii, Nii'ta'kaiksamaikoan, kii Naapiaakii.

Welcome, all my relatives. I happily greet all of you. I am Turtle. My spirit comes from the Fish Eater and Many Children Clans. My mother is Calls From The Water. My father is Black Horse. My grandparents are Seven Seas, Golden Woman, Many Coups, and White Woman.

I am currently meaningfully and gainfully employed at the Blood Tribe Department of Health Inc. Wellness Program as an Indian Residential School Cultural Support.

My formal education is in Native American Studies with a minor in Political Science (U of L '14). Culturally, I belong to three traditional societies and have the honour of playing an active role in our annual Aakokaa'tsis "Circle Camp".

I am deeply humbled to be part of this National Gathering.  
Aakaitamatsinohpowaowa – I will see you all again.



**Dr. Hadley Friedland**

Hadley is an Associate Professor at the Faculty of Law. Her research focuses on Indigenous law, Aboriginal law, Family law and Child Welfare law, Criminal Justice, Therapeutic jurisprudence and Community-led research. Dr. Friedland holds a Child and Youth Care diploma from MacEwan University, an LLB from the University of Victoria, and an LLM and PhD from the University of Alberta. She works extensively with Indigenous communities across Canada to identify and articulate their own laws. She has published numerous articles but is most passionate about collaboratively producing accessible Indigenous legal resources for Indigenous communities, legal professionals and the general public. She is author of the book, *The Wetiko (Windigo) Legal Principles: Cree and Anishinabek Responses to Violence and Victimization*, University of Toronto Press, 2018. Dr. Friedland is Academic Director and Co-founder of the Wahkohtowin Indigenous Law and Governance Lodge, a dedicated research initiative developed to uphold Indigenous law through supporting community-led research.

## Gathering Speakers



**Louis Gardiner**

Born and raised in the historic Métis community of Île à la Crosse (founded in 1776). Survivor of the Île à la Crosse Residential School. Parents were traditionalists who survived and lived off the land, they were also survivors of the residential school. Louis lives a healthy lifestyle and promotes his Métis culture to the young generations.



**Doug  
George-  
Kanentiio**

Akwesasne Mohawk; Trustee: National Museum of the American Indian; Co-founder: Native American Journalists Association; Editor: Akwesasne Notes-Indian Time; Co-founder: Akwesasne Communications Society-Radio CKON; Trustee: World Parliament of Religions; Chairperson: Akwesasronon Shonataaten:ron (Residential School Survivors of Akwesasne); Mohawk Nation Land Rights Negotiator; Cultural Adviser: Marvel Films; Mohawk Institute Survivor.



**Bernadine  
Harper**

Bernadine was born and raised at the Onion Lake Cree Nation, Sask. Both her parents attended Indian Residential School, as did Bernadine. A very traditional woman, she has used ceremonies for her healing. She obtained a bachelor's degree in Indian Social Work at the First Nations University. With a background in community wellness, Bernadine now serves her community as headwoman, serving as elected Band Councilor. She speaks fluent Cree and lives according to Indigenous laws.

## Gathering Speakers



**Piita Irniq**

Piita is a cultural proponent, artist, public servant, Commissioner of Nunavut (born 1947 at Lyon Inlet, NT). He represented the Keewatin region in the Council of the Northwest Territories from 1975 to 1979. From 2000 to 2005, he served as the second commissioner of Nunavut. Piita has worked to preserve and promote Inuit culture and languages. He grew up in the traditional Inuit way, trapping, hunting and living off the land. He and his family lived in igloos in the winter and tents in the summer; they travelled by dogsled and spoke Inuktitut. Piita recalls his parents being told by missionaries in 1958 that he would have to go away to school. Without any prior consultation, Piita and other local children were sent off to residential school. Piita went to Sir Joseph Bernier Federal Day School in Chesterfield Inlet, Northwest Territories, and, from 1963 to 1964, the Sir John Franklin School in Yellowknife, Northwest Territories.



**Emilien Janvier**

Elder Emilien is 75 years old and was born in La Loche, Saskatchewan. At the age of 6, he was sent to the Île-à-la-Crosse boarding school where he spent the next 10 years. Being away from home at such a young age, meant Elder Janvier never really knew his family, something that still stirs bitter emotion.

After a 25-year government career working with physically and mentally challenged individuals in Moose Jaw, he and his wife of 52 years, moved back to La Loche. They enjoy spending time with their daughter, two granddaughters and three great grandchildren.

Elder Janvier has been active in Métis politics in Saskatchewan almost his entire life and plans to run again to be a board member with MN-S Local #39 in La Loche.

Elder Janvier says the trip to the Vatican was an opportunity of a lifetime.



**Lynn Lavallee**

Lynn Lavallee is a citizen of the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO). She has been an active member of her community, sitting on multiple non-profit boards, such as the Aboriginal Sport Circle, Indigenous Sport and Wellness Council of Ontario, Aboriginal Team Ontario, Native Canadian Centre of Toronto, and Toronto and York Region Métis Council. In the Toronto community she is well known as being an Oshkebawis for the late Elder Vern Harper.



## Gathering Speakers



**Michelle  
LeClair**

Michelle is a proud Métis woman, a mother, and grandmother, and currently serves as the Vice President of the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan. Born into a tight-knit Michif family of seven children, she has been immersed in Métis culture, traditions, and activism since childhood. A lawyer by training, Vice President LeClair represented families fighting to get their children out of care and continues to advocate for a system that supports Métis mothers, fathers, and families. She was elected as the Vice President of the Métis Nation-Saskatchewan in 2021, having been actively involved with the government since the 1990s. Vice President LeClair is a tireless advocate for Métis Survivors of the residential school system and their families. She is proud to advocate at the provincial and federal levels, alongside Survivors and their families, for proper recognition and justice of the Métis experience in residential school.



**Koren  
Lightning-  
Earle**

Koren Lightning-Earle, '00 BA(Rec/Leisure), '04 BA, '07 LLB, '18 LLM, CIC.C, Blue Thunderbird Woman, is Cree from Samson Cree Nation. She is the Legal Director of Wahkotowin Law and Governance Lodge. She is a Board Member for First Nations Caring Society. Koren received her Master of Laws from Osgoode Hall Law School, York University, where her concentration was Alternative Dispute Resolution. Koren's work focuses on working with Indigenous clients and supporting the revitalization of Indigenous Laws. Koren advises in the areas of Indigenous Governance, Indigenous Child Welfare, and Indian Act matters. She was recently awarded the "Pringle/Royal sessional teaching excellence" Award from Faculty of Law, University of Alberta for 2021/2022. She was awarded the "Tomorrow's Leader" Award from Women in Law Leadership Awards in 2019. She was also awarded the Alumni Horizon Award from the University of Alberta in 2017. Koren is an alumnus of the Governor General's Canadian Leadership Conference and participated in the 2017 NWT Tour. She is a sessional instructor at Maskwacis Cultural College and University of Alberta, Faculty of Law.

## Gathering Speakers



**Sara Mainville**

Sara has been called to the Ontario bar since 2005. Sara has a Management degree (Lethbridge) and an LL.B. (Queen's). She has earned an LL.M (Toronto) which has engaged her in a lifetime of study working with the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty 3 and with Anishinaabe (Indigenous) law and legal orders. After being an Associate for a well-known Anishinaabe-led law firm in Ontario, in 2014, Sara was elected Chief of Couchiching First Nation. Sara has been honoured to work with the Chiefs of Ontario in creating First Nation Sovereign Wealth LP and assisting leadership in understanding emerging legal issues such as the UNDRIP Act. Sara has been Lexpert® ranked as “Most Frequently Recommended” in Aboriginal Law since 2018, as one of the Best Lawyers in Aboriginal Law in Best Lawyers in Canada in 2021 and 2022. In 2022, Sara has joined the prestigious JFK Law LLP.



Kanien'kehá:ka Kahnistensera – implementing Indigenous protocol in searching unmarked graves. As the Kanien'kehá:ka Kahnistensera (Mohawk Mothers), Kahentinetha, Karennatha and Kwetiio, of the Bear clan of Kahnawake, and Karakwine, of the Turtle clan of Kanensatake, have taken the responsibility to carry out our duties as progenitors of the soil and nurturers of our future generations to come. To heed the testimonies of survivors of medical experiments at the old Royal Victoria Hospital stating that the land contained unmarked graves, they have successfully sought an injunction in the Superior Court of Quebec to stop excavation work for a development project on October 27, 2022. Their struggle as self-represented Plaintiffs in the court was only based on the principles of their ancestral constitution, the Kaianerehkowa, the Great Peace of the Rotinonshionni Confederacy, still in effect on their ancestral territory – including Tekanonkak (Mount-Royal), where the hospital sits. The struggle to uncover the truth is thus also a struggle to put Indigenous ancestral ways back in place.

## Gathering Speakers



**Beedahbin  
Peltier**

Beedahbin grew up in Wiikwemkoong unceded territory, in a family and community that values anishinaabemowin (language, science, and philosophy), aki'ing (place-based responsibility), anishinaabe awi aadizwin (wellness literacy) and akendaasiwin (ways of knowing). Now based and living in Nogojiwanong, in Michi Saagiig aki'ing, treaty 20, Williams Treaty territory, he continues to share this passion of anishinaabe akinoomoshin. This includes plant knowledge, ecological responsibility, reinforcement of anishinaabe identity, and living out our ancestor's wildest dreams. Beedahbin is the co-founder of Indigenize.ca, Indigenization consultant and educator. At Indigenize.ca, he supports curriculum development, delivery, and weaving anishinaabe ways of knowing, with other approaches to learning and understanding. He is also a professor of Indigenous Perspectives in the school of environmental and natural resource sciences at Fleming College. And teaches with First Nations University of Canada in the Teacher Education program.



**Nevaeh Pine**

Nevaeh Pine is a proud citizen of the Garden River First Nation. Nevaeh comes from a long line of hereditary leadership and follows her Clan as a Crane Person (Chijauk Dodem) and is grounded in her Anishinaabe culture as a Jingle Dress dancer and the sacred teachings she has been gifted with.

Nevaeh is an aspiring academic who plans to attend post-secondary learning and is an emerging youth leader in her community in grade 11 at White Pines High School. In recognition of her outstanding leadership Nevaeh has taken up the leadership role of the Chair of the Northern Indigenous Youth Council and sits as the Indigenous Student Trustee for the Algoma District School Board (ADSB). This role provides Nevaeh the opportunity to offer her voice to the Board on youth initiatives from the Ojibway Worldview.

Nevaeh carries a strong voice for her people and is an advocate on Every Child Matters and MMIW2S.

## Gathering Speakers



**Stephanie  
Nirlungayuk**

Stephanie is a proud urban Inuk who lives in Winnipeg Manitoba, she belongs to the remote community of Kugaaruk, Nunavut in the central Arctic. She serves as the vice president on the board of directors for Tunngasugit Inuit Resource Centre, and has a diverse background in cultural consulting, operations management and is dedicated to addressing social issues in her community by using wholistic and sustainable approaches to ensure indigenous peoples live in safe, healthy and thriving communities.



**Richard (Pakak)  
Picco**

My name is Pakak Picco, born and raised in Iqaluit Nunavut. As I grew older I found myself in turmoil about my identity as an Inuk man. Through learning from my elders and doing cultural practices I began finding my identity. During this time of self-growth I learned from many people who were and are truly resilient, as I later found out that there were survivors amongst those who helped me with my cultural identity. This gathering is a step forward in helping the healing process for our people and I am glad to take part.



**Jordyn  
Playne**

Jordyn (she/her) was born and raised along the shores of Georgian Bay where she has been an active member of her community for many years. Jordyn is a citizen of the Métis Nation of Ontario and a descendant of the Dusome-Claremont family line. Jordyn is the current President of the Métis Nation of Ontario Youth Council and Youth Representative on the Provisional Council of the Métis Nation of Ontario. She holds a Master's Degree in Social Work within the Indigenous field of study program from Wilfred Laurier, a Bachelor of Social Work from Lakehead University and a Bachelor of Arts Honors in Sociology and Canadian Studies.



## Gathering Speakers



**Pauline Shirt**

Grandmother Pauline Shirt was born and raised with her seven sisters and one brother in Alberta, Canada on the Saddle Lake Reserve. Her family raised horses and farmed the land. She is fluent in her first language of Plains Cree. In the late sixties she moved her family to Toronto, where she and her then husband, the late Vern Harper raised their five children. She has been part of an Indigenous Medicine Society since the early 1980's, where she holds a degree in sacred Indigenous Knowledge, equivalent to a PhD in western based education systems. Pauline is a wisdom keeper and pioneer in Indigenous education, holistic health and judicial system changes in Canada. This continues to make her well sought after for her traditional teachings, lectures, and wise counsel.



**Eleanore  
Sunchild**

Eleanore Sunchild, King's Counsel is a proud member of the Thunderchild First Nation, Saskatchewan. She graduated from the University of Alberta, Faculty of Law and has been a member of the Saskatchewan Bar since 1999. Eleanore has a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and studied in French immersion at Faculté St. Jean, U of A. Eleanore is the sole owner of Sunchild Law, a law firm that specializes in Indigenous issues. Eleanore is sought after for her knowledge of the Indian residential school system, 60's scoop and the historic and continuing impact on generations of First Nations.



## Map of Toronto City Hall Grounds



**A) Sheraton Centre (Osgoode Ballroom)**

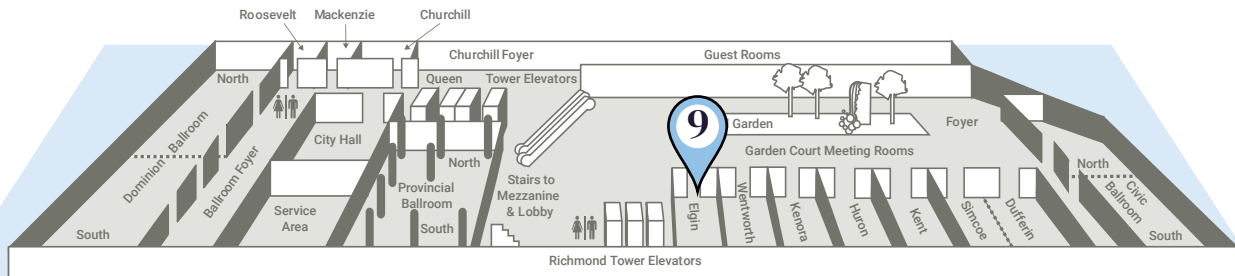
**B) Toronto City Hall Rotunda**

Gary Miller: Artistic Response from a Mohawk Institute Survivor

**C) Indigenous Teachings - Osgoode Hall Grounds**

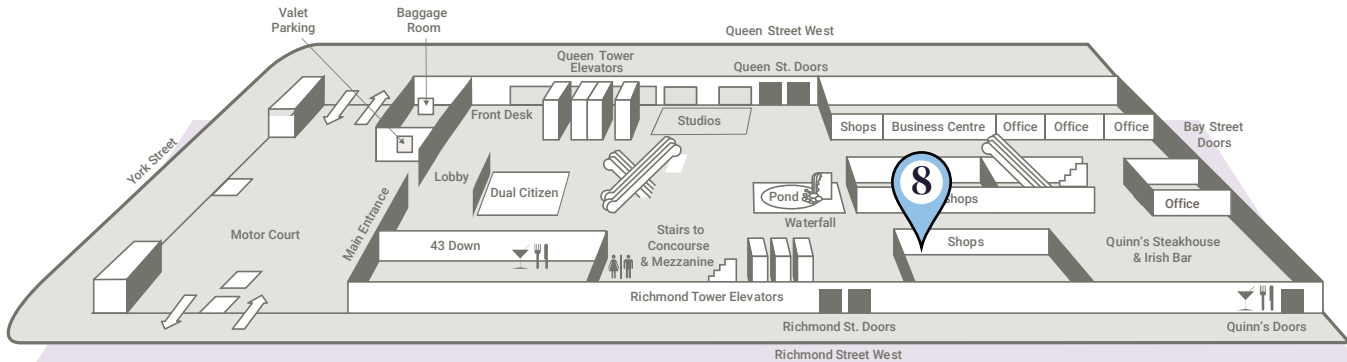
South East Lawn

# Map of Venue



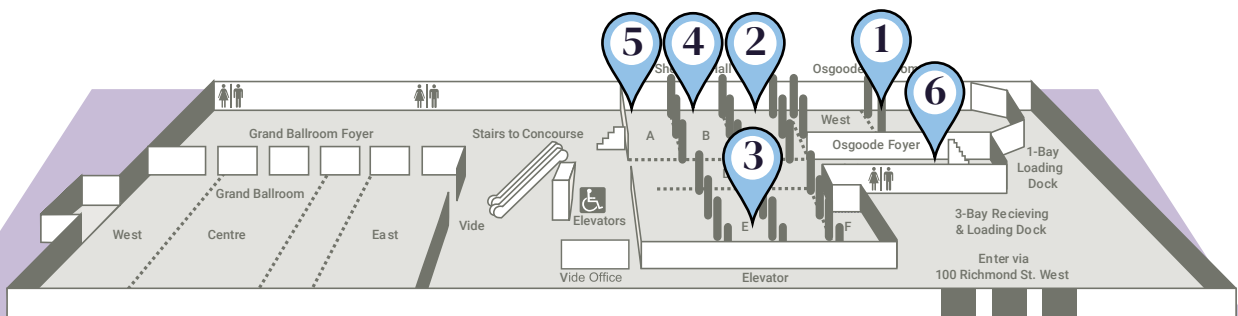
## 2nd FLOOR

### 9) Elgin: Statement Gathering



## LOBBY LEVEL

### 8) TMM 2 Health Supports



## LOWER CONCOURSE

- 1) Osgoode Ballroom
- 2) Sheraton Hall C (Breakout Room)
- 3) Sheraton Hall E (Breakout Room)

- 4) Sheraton Hall B (Elder Lounge)
- 5) Sheraton Hall A (Health Supports)
- 6) Foyer (NCTR Statement Gathering Registration)

# Information Booths

## **Toronto Council Fire**

<https://www.councilfire.ca>

## **Office of the Independent Special Interlocutor**

<https://osi-bis.ca>

## **Know History**

<https://www.knowhistory.ca>

## **National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation**

<https://nctr.ca>

## **Ontario Ministry of Indigenous Affairs (IAO)**

<https://www.ontario.ca/page/ministry-indigenous-affairs>

## **Canadian Geographic Enterprises**

<https://canadiangeographic.ca>

## **Aboriginal Legal Services**

<https://www.aboriginallegal.ca>

## **Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/crown-indigenous-relations-northern-affairs.html>



## Acknowledgement and Appreciation

The Office of the Independent Special Interlocutor is pleased to have partnered with Aboriginal Legal Services for our Fourth National Gathering: Upholding Indigenous Laws. Special recognition to Johnathan Rudin.

Special thanks to Survivors, Indigenous Leaders and community members who are leading this Sacred work. We recognize the dedication of our Cultural Advisors, Knowledge Keepers and Helpers who have looked after everyone for the duration of the National Gathering. We express our appreciation to our co-chairs Kathleen Lickers and Adam Fiddler and Cultural Advisors Peter Schuler, Leroy Hill and Wendy Hill. We further express our gratitude to the generous support provided by the Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre, Anishnawbe Health Toronto and the Law Society of Ontario, in particular Andrea Chrisjohn and Leslie Saunders.



We also sincerely thank the following partners and supporters for their generosity of time and resources.



**ABORIGINAL LEGAL SERVICES**  
*Gaa kina gwii waabamoo debwewin • All those who seek the truth*



**OFIFC**

Ontario Federation of  
Indigenous Friendship Centres



**Law Society**  
of Ontario

**Barreau**  
de l'Ontario



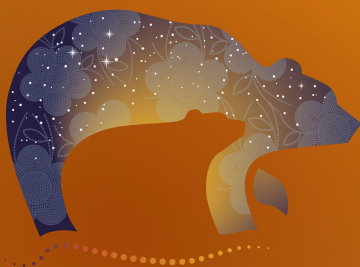
# National Gathering on Unmarked Burials:

Supporting the Search and Recovery  
of Missing Children

## Save the Date

Montreal

September 6-8, 2023



**Office of the Independent  
Special Interlocutor**

for Missing Children and Unmarked  
Graves and Burial Sites associated  
with Indian Residential Schools

For more information about the Office of the Independent Special Interlocutor for Missing Children and Unmarked Graves and Burial Sites associated with Indian Residential Schools, please visit our website at: <https://osi-bis.ca> or by email: [info@osi-bis.ca](mailto:info@osi-bis.ca).



**osi-bis.ca**

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