



INDIGENOUS HEALTH NETWORK

Serving Hamilton, Niagara, Haldimand, Brant, Burlington and Norfolk

August 31st, 2021

Open Letter to our many thousands of Indigenous community members within the LHIN 4 area living on reserve and living off reserve

To Whom It May Concern:

These past few months we have all heard the news of the hundreds of buried children in unmarked graves in British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Manitoba. This is beyond sad and heartbreaking. These discoveries have touched and affected many in the community who are already dealing with concerns related to injustices, racism, recognition and acknowledgment.

Our Nations have been deeply impacted and living with the disastrous outcomes of Indian Residential Schools, the Sixties Scoop, the Indian Day School, the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls, and other ongoing means to dampen, bury and silence our Indigenous spirit. Kamloops was the first that has come to light and there will continue to be many more. We have always known that there were lost children in our communities and everyone has been affected in some way by the residential schools. We have heard the stories and we know there are many more. The lost children have been left in secrecy for far too long, in the dark alone and away from their homes and families.

We are calling out to our friends, allies and neighbours to bring these atrocities from the past to light and support our communities. As humans, Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples we have a responsibility to community, families, children and each other. They tried to bury our history and now the things they buried are making history. Please stand with all nations on Turtle Island and help bring our children home.

Sincerely,

Maggie Copeland

Maggie Copeland, Co-Chair of the Indigenous Health Network
& Supervisor/Community Health Nurse Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation.

Jessica Durand

Jessica Durand, Co-Chair of the Indigenous Health Network
& Miyo Maskihikya Coordinator/Manager, Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre