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We, the Early Childhood Collaborative Research Centre (ECCRC) team, mourn the Indigenous children whose remains were found at the sites of former Residential Schools. These discoveries have been very distressing and further demonstrate that Canada's Residential Schools were sites of genocide for Indigenous children. These discoveries have sparked much reflection and discussion at the ECCRC about our responsibility toward truth and reconciliation. We echo the sentiments in the statement published by the [Child and Youth Study Department](#) regarding this tragedy.

### ***Recognition***

First, we acknowledge that the ECCRC at Mount Saint Vincent University is in K'jipuktuk, part of Mi'kma'ki, on the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaq Nation. We also recognize that we are a part of Mount Saint Vincent University, established by the Sisters of Charity. The Sisters of Charity supported both the Shubenacadie and Cranbrook Residential Schools. It is necessary for us to understand our past, identify our privilege as settlers who have benefited from colonialism, and consider how we can move toward reconciliation.

### ***Continuous Learning and Action***

At the ECCRC, we recognize that we still have much learning to do toward truth and reconciliation. As a team, we are engaging in further education to better understand the history of the residential school system and its lasting effects. Additionally, we need to reflect on and adapt our work to advance our commitment toward equity, diversity and inclusion. To do this, we have created space for our team to reflect, discuss and plan for action by adding it to our weekly agenda. We will also be actively creating opportunities to learn from and work with Indigenous peoples and communities to ensure our learning is translated into action.

### ***First Steps***

While we continue on our journey of intentional learning of the history of Turtle Island—particularly around the colonial systems of violence which have and continue to contribute to the violence and harms perpetuated against Indigenous peoples—we will be discussing specific actions we can take toward truth and reconciliation. One example of our action will be to ensure our social media channels are used as a tool to bring awareness to the need and urgency of these conversations and to encourage others to partake in these important conversations about our collective responsibilities. As a part of our ongoing outreach to families and early childhood professionals, we will be sharing resources related to our work in early childhood to help our followers in their journey toward reconciliation. We will further use the power and privilege we possess as academics in our collaborations with politicians and policymakers to demand further action.

We look forward to sharing our additional steps in the near future.

Sincerely,

The ECCRC Team