

# **THE SIXTIES SCOOP HEALING FOUNDATION™**

## National Survivor Engagement Report



**IT STARTS WITH US**



***"Our strength is why we are  
here today... It was not by chance,  
it was because we finally said, 'enough.'"***

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# REFLECTIONS FROM THE ENGAGEMENT TEAM

The National Engagement Process with Sixties Scoop Survivors was an incredible experience with many emotional highs and lows as participants shared their hopes, fears, and frustrations. We were fortunate to meet hundreds of people from many Nations and work with local community leaders and Elders. The Argyle team provided stellar logistical management which made each event flow smoothly; the research associates provided solid recording and analyses of the collected thoughts and ideas from across the country; and the team remained consistently supportive of each other which helped us to keep our minds focused on our primary objective: to listen to Survivors and share their ideas. I am honoured to have been part of the process and my hope is that this report reflects your collective voices as accurately as possible.

*Kinanâskômitinawâw kâhiyâw niwâhkômakânâk.*  
Gratitude to all; all my relations.

- Dr. Raven Sinclair, Executive Advisor

In the 1970s, I came to child welfare and found a world built on ideas and practices veiled in the best interest of children, but actually culturally genocidal, built on foundations of racism, classism, and all the multiple toxicities of colonial Canada. Back then, with children in distress and families in need of help, the helping process itself, the wholesale removal of the children, created many of the problems experienced today. The teachings from that experience, now called the Sixties Scoop, were many. It set me on an activist course, taking me to this project and finally to this report.

I'm very grateful and want to thank the many people - the Survivors, who helped me not only know but understand. To the woman, so angry, and so isolated by that anger, thank you for showing the depth of feelings the issues evoke. To the elder, who thought

herself "slow" but was anything but, I thank her for helping me better understand the complexities of the Survivor experience. Thank you to the man, small but with huge heart and spirit, who told of his journey, by bicycle, crossing provincial boundaries, in snow, in search of his relations. One example of the tenacity, the resilience, and the fierceness, so common to the Survivors we met in our travels.

*Miigwetch.*

- Kenn Richard, Executive Advisor

Through Sixties Scoop Survivors' strength, courage and commitment to reconciling their past, we now have a path forward and vision of our future, which involves our collective healing and recovery from the mass apprehensions that we now know as the Sixties Scoop. Our Foundation, borne out of our pain and suffering, represents a beacon of hope to Survivors and serves as a symbol to Canada and Canadians of a dark and disturbing history.

The steadfast resolve thousands of Survivors demonstrated by sharing their hopes, dreams and aspirations for their Foundation should serve as an example to all of Canada the power to overcome, to heal and to reconcile. As a Sixties Scoop Survivor, I have never been so proud to wear the label as I have been over the past year. I witnessed the personal sacrifice, bravery, courage and resilience of Survivors that were dedicated to love, healing and justice. We might not have had a say in what happened to us in the past; however, thousands of Survivors have shared their voices to take greater control of our future through our Foundation. I am honoured, humbled and privileged to have played a small part in this historic and sacred process.

- Conrad Prince, Engagement Director

When I first was introduced to Sally (previously Marcia) Brown Martel about four years ago, I knew not a single thing about the Sixties Scoop. I moved to Canada from the United States as an adult. The citizenship test I took back in 2010 required no knowledge of this dark chapter in Canada's history. As a non-Indigenous person, it was easy—far too easy—to remain ignorant not only of the colonialism of the past, but also of its strong and sticky tentacles that continue to shape the institutions of today, and so many people's lives and visceral experiences. This ignorance is both privilege and prison.

Having the opportunity to listen and learn from Sally, Conrad, Raven and Kenn and from the hundreds of people we met on this journey—that has been one of the greatest gifts I've received in my life. Words cannot express the deep respect I feel for the resilience and strength of Sixties Scoop Survivors. Thank you for your generosity, in sharing your experiences and wisdom with me. I will take your teachings into my life, into my children's lives, and into the work I do for the rest of my days.

- Jessie Sitnick, Engagement Communications and Strategy Advisor

I am consistently honoured and humbled to do this work with such a terrific team and the Survivors who allowed me the privilege of listening to their stories. Never in my wildest dreams did I think that I would have the opportunity to be a part of a project that is so fiercely aligned with my own pursuit of compassion, healing and justice. I thank every Survivor who opened their heart to us and allowed us to carry their voice within this report.

I also thank the many Elders across Canada who I had the honour of meeting – your teachings will never be

forgotten. My heart is full thinking of these memories, and it aches for a better future – I look optimistically to the Foundation and its role in this.

As a First Generation Black Canadian, my understanding of Canada's history was limited, at best. Learning about the Sixties Scoop directly from the Survivors who suffered it, not only educates me about my privilege as a settler in this country, but motivates me every day to share this knowledge with respect, courage and truth.

- Brooke Graham, Engagement Coordinator

The research team was honoured to be part of the important work of the National Engagement process. Each session was superbly organized and the feedback from participants reflected gratitude and acknowledgement for the entire team's efforts. The nesting of the engagement process in cultural practices and protocols was crucial to its success. Each session was geographically and culturally unique and very much like a new adventure each time. The research team was inspired by the enthusiasm and willingness of participants to engage, despite the trepidation and fear that many felt being in a room with other Survivors for the first time in their lives. The consistency of suggestions and recommendations from across the country made our work a bit easier. We were thrilled to be part of the process; to travel to many beautiful territories and meet so many beautiful people. Once again, we wish to thank all the participants for their courage and willingness to share their voices. We hope that we listened well and that you see your voices reflected in this report.

- Priscila Silva, Hanah Molly, and Jenny Gardipy, Research Associates



# PREFACE

*A commentary about the term “Survivor” as used in this report:*

The term “Survivor,” in this report, refers to Indigenous children who were made crown wards, adopted, and fostered into non-Indigenous families between 1951 and 1991. We recognize that not everyone who had this particular experience views themselves as a “Survivor” because the word implies that the experience may have automatically been negative and/or harmful. We wish to acknowledge the fortunate individuals who had loving and supportive adoptive and foster families. At the same time, there are many individuals who did suffer abuse and trauma. Thus, the term “Survivor,” as we have used it in this report, is meant to reference all those who went through the child welfare system, regardless of the positive or negative nature of their experience.

Further, while the wording of the Settlement Agreement refers to the development of a Foundation to support “all those affected” by the Sixties Scoop, this report focuses very specifically on the voices of Survivors. “All those affected” by the Scoop includes Survivors’ partners and children, as well as their biological families. In addition, adoptive families were also affected by the Sixties Scoop and if we expand our perspective even more, individuals who worked in the system may also have been affected.

The decision of the interim Board of Directors, in consultation with the Expert Advisors, was to first focus on individuals who experienced adoption and foster care in non-Indigenous families, and to direct resources to them in order to create a Foundation that would best meet the needs of those most directly affected. The Foundation may, in the future, expand its attention and support to the other groups who were affected by the Sixties Scoop, but this report and the recently completed national engagement, prioritizes the voice of Survivors.

*A note on the use of quotations in this report:*

The content of this report is deeply rooted in the voices of the Survivors who courageously shared their feedback

with us throughout the Engagement Process. As such, it is important to us that Survivors reading this report see and hear their voices reflected. At the same time, our commitment to all those who participated in this process was that we would safeguard their identities—giving them the space and comfort to speak openly and freely. Thus, the quotations used throughout this report are *composite quotations*. Rather than representing the voice of a single individual, each quote draws on the words and ideas shared with us by numerous Survivors throughout this process.

*A note on the use of images in this report:*

As part of the Engagement Process individuals shared hundreds of drawings of the symbols and images that they felt would best represent the Foundation’s identity. The themes that emerged from these drawings are discussed in detail in this report. As all images were provided to us anonymously, we could not seek appropriate permissions to reproduce those images in these pages. However, we wanted to both honour participants’ creativity and bring it to life in this report in a visual way. We have therefore developed a series of images that reflect and are inspired by Survivors’ words and drawings, and the symbols and themes that they identified as meaningful.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

More than anything else, this report is about Survivors' voices and their aspirations for a Foundation that is both by them and for them. Over the course of six months (from August 2019 to February 2020), the Engagement Team spoke with, and heard from, hundreds of Survivors across Canada, as well as people with deep experience in Indigenous child welfare, mental health, and the charitable sector. We asked five questions:

- What should the Foundation do?
- What values should guide the Foundation?
- What are the qualities, talents and skills required for governing the Foundation?
- How should the Foundation be made sustainable?
- How should the Foundation's identity be expressed?

Then we listened. We gathered notes. We asked clarifying questions. And we studied that feedback carefully. The recommendations in this report are a direct reflection of what we heard. Of course, while there were many different responses to each of the questions we asked, clear and repeating themes emerged. Those themes gave us direction. We have done our best to frame this in ways that are actionable for those who will ultimately govern this new Foundation.

The comprehensive and detailed slate of recommendations presented in this report are based upon theme categories that were synthesized from over 3,000 suggestions (sticky notes) from participants. As a result, the scope of the themes and the recommendation is vast and while it would be ideal for every idea and recommendation to be implemented, we acknowledge that the Foundation may be limited in terms of funding and there is only so much that a small group of permanent Board of Directors members will be able to accomplish. This reality gives rise to a tension between Survivor wishes for a streamlined and cost-effective organization, and concurrent calls for multiple services, supports, and advocacy. The national engagement team has taken no liberties to limit the recommendations in any

way and we leave it in the capable hands of the interim and future permanent Board of Directors to address the competing tensions.

We submit these recommendations to the Interim Board with pride and humility. We are proud to have run an Engagement process that afforded Survivors the critical opportunity to shape this Foundation with their voices. We are humbled by the incredible responsibility of conveying those voices to you, and by the challenge of reaching as many Survivors as circumstances allowed. Given the limited resources and barriers in place that prevented us from reaching more Survivors, we acknowledge that there is underrepresentation of Inuit, Métis, 2SLGBTQ+ and Francophone participants. We view this Engagement Process as a beginning, not an end, of ongoing dialogue between the Foundation and those to whom it is accountable.



## RECOMMENDATIONS

The following areas of focus and key priorities represent a high-level thematic summary of what we heard. It was remarkable to see the degree of consensus on these. The categories and the language used to describe them are a result of considerable and animated discussion among our team. They can also be seen as representing a high level of agreement on what we heard. They can also be seen as representing a high level of agreement on what we heard was important.

### RECOMMENDATION 1: Areas of focus and key priorities

The Foundation's mission and mandate should be inclusive of seven key areas of focus, aimed at serving Sixties Scoop Survivors<sup>1</sup> and defining and exploring avenues for healing and reconciliation:

1. Cultural Reclamation
2. Mental health
3. Reunification and Supports
4. Advocacy & Collaboration
5. Education
6. Commemoration
7. Connection & Community Building

Based on what we heard, we recommend that the Foundation include, as one of its purposes, that of a funding body. The Foundation should foster innovation and capacity at the local, regional, and national levels to advance efforts that benefit Survivors.

Below, we articulate recommended priorities under each area of focus:

#### Cultural Reclamation

- Promote and fund cultural identity programs, gatherings and ceremonies specific to Survivors such as language programs, Elder and Knowledge Keeper traditional teachings, music and art, storytelling, land-based programs.

- Fund intergenerational programming specifically designed for Survivors and their families such as rites of passage, family support programs, ceremonial gatherings, healing/talking circles, summer camps.

#### Mental Health

- Strengthen mental health workers' knowledge about and ability to effectively serve Sixties Scoop Survivors in a way that is meaningful and culturally based (e.g. inclusive of the diversity of Sixties Scoop Survivors, cultural safety respected).
- Increase accessibility to counselling, support groups and clinical programs geared to Survivors' unique needs.
- Fund existing and new culture and land-based healing programs for Survivors and their families.
- Improve the information available to Survivors as to how to access mental health supports, including workshops and alternative therapies.
- Advocate for a specific mental health system providing immediate assistance for Survivors within the overall system (i.e. expand the current First Nation & Inuit Health Branch Mental Health system).
- Fund programs that enable Survivors to share their stories and experiences in a healing way.

#### Reunification & Supports

- Fund and promote wise practices in reunification to reconnect siblings, parents and communities. This could include investments in:
  - Research to determine needs and the most promising practices in this area; and
  - Innovative practices and program delivery models in this space.
- Fund and support community-targeted Sixties Scoop awareness and "welcome home" community-based initiatives to better equip communities to reintegrate Survivors.

#### Advocacy & Collaboration

Advocacy and collaboration should function as a core part of the role of the Foundation. Priorities will need

<sup>1</sup> For the purpose of these recommendations, we define "Sixties Scoop Survivors" as individuals who self-identify as being impacted by the 60s Scoop – including adoptees, crown wards, and their children, siblings, and parents.



to be agreed upon early, and should focus on:

- Championing legal, policy and program improvements in:
  - Continued reform in Indigenous child welfare
  - Mental health, health and well-being of Indigenous peoples
  - Access to status, treaty and Indigenous rights
  - Research collaborations and funding of Sixties Scoop issues
- Engaging with representative organizations (First Nations, Inuit, Métis and Indigenous issues-based organizations) so that they will take action to support Sixties Scoop Survivors.

## Education

### *Public Education*

- Raise the Sixties Scoop issue in the consciousness of average Canadians, as well as Indigenous organizations and communities.
- Actively work with partners to ensure the Sixties Scoop experience is included in course curriculums and materials at all educational levels in Canada.

### *Survivor Education*

- Support training and academic advancement for Sixties Scoop Survivors through scholarships, subsidized education and academic partnerships.

## Commemoration

- Facilitate research into and dissemination of Survivor's stories through the creation of tangible media (e.g. books, films, music, murals). The goal is to honour and respect, as well as to educate.
- Advocate for a day of recognition (akin to Orange Shirt Day).
- Funding and/or supporting national, regional, or local annual events/gathering memorials.
- Advocate for a physical memorial, a monument to commemorate those who went through the Sixties Scoop, including those who are no longer with us.

## Connection & Community Building

- Serve as an information hub and guide for Survivors to help connect them to organizations, programs and services that support their needs.
- Be a platform for Survivors and Survivor-focused organizations to connect, share information, create dialogue and amplify Survivors' voices.
- Actively engage Survivors and promote the Foundation's resources and funding opportunities.

## RECOMMENDATION 2: Organizational values

The following values should underpin the Foundation's vision, mission, and approach. These values should guide decision-making, collaborations, and communications with those the Foundation serves:

1. Accountability & Transparency
2. Honesty & Integrity
3. Kindness, Compassion & Empathy
4. Culture-based
5. Inclusivity & Acceptance
6. Accessibility & Equity
7. Safety
8. Holistic Multigenerational Perspective
9. Survivor-centred

Below, we define the proposed values:

### Accountability and Transparency

- The Foundation demonstrates accountability to Sixties Scoop Survivors and their families by providing regular and consistent updates on governance processes, activities, and financial status.
- The Foundation demonstrates financial accountability through public-facing annual audits and reports.
- The Foundation is accountable through responsiveness to constituents, partners, collaborators, and benefactors.
- The Foundation engages in ethical and transparent governance practices; organizational operations are grounded in both Indigenous and Western ethical principles. Governance practices are clear, consistent, reliable, and straightforward.

### **Honesty and Integrity**

- These values are exemplified through the Foundation's board and staff who are of good character and demonstrate wisdom, and act with honesty and integrity in all activities.
- The Foundation is known to practice open communication within the organization and with the public.
- The Foundation has a reputation of board members and staff following through on commitments and actively pursuing their mandate.

### **Kindness, Compassion & Empathy**

- The Foundation operates upon a diverse Indigenous knowledge teaching framework that prioritizes kindness, compassion and empathy, and these values are evident in board and staff conduct.
- The Foundation's board and staff listen and respond with care to Survivors' lived experiences and requests.

### **Culture-based**

- The Foundation's vision, mission, and leadership honour the diversity of Indigenous nations, cultures, and ways of knowing, and the Foundation adheres to the principle of cultural humility.
- Foundation board members and staff actively engage with Elders and knowledge keepers to deepen their understanding of Indigenous cultures, and how best to serve Survivors in their diverse cultural reclamation journeys.
- The Foundation demonstrates a commitment to diverse Indigenous cultures through all its practices and activities.

### **Inclusivity & Acceptance**

- The Foundation honours the diversity of Indigenous nations and cultures in its structure, functions, organization, and operations.
- The Foundation attends to an ethic of inclusion and acceptance regardless of gender, spirituality, ability, sexuality, age, language, and political orientation.

- The Foundation provides non-judgmental support for Survivors who are at different stages in their healing journeys and identity reclamation.
- The Foundation advocates for the diversity of Survivor needs including those most impacted by systemic oppression as expressed by issues such as homelessness, incarceration, mental health and addictions.

### **Accessibility & Equity**

- The Foundation is accessible to and serves the broad spectrum of Survivors accounting for their regional, linguistic, socio-economic and physical diversity.
- The Foundation makes its communications and services to Survivors accessible and available through multiple platforms.
- The Foundation exemplifies equity and fairness in its operations, and demonstrates geographical/nation, gender, age, and 2SLGBTQ2 representativeness through its board members and staff complement.

### **Safety**

- The Foundation exhibits the principles of personal, culture, and diversity safety that respect and honour the physical, emotional, spiritual, and mental well-being of constituents, through policies developed in consultation with Survivors.
- The Foundation exemplifies cultural safety through respect for cultural and nation diversity, as well as its commitment to trauma-informed training and organizational wellness.
- The Foundation respects the dignity and privacy of those with whom it interacts and serves; it demonstrates confidentiality of information in all aspects of its operations.
- The Foundation adheres to its anti-lateral violence policies and organizational stance.

### **Holistic Multigenerational Perspective**

- The Foundation operates with the understanding that serving Survivors means facilitating healing and

connection between generations—their parents and grandparents; children and grandchildren.

- The Foundation adheres to this intergenerational ethic in decision-making.
- The Foundation is respectful and inclusive of diverse cultural healing practices and initiatives that honour mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual dimensions of Survivor recovery through an intergenerational lens.

#### **Survivor-centred**

- The Foundation puts Survivors and their needs at the center of its governance, programs, operations, and policies.
- Foundation choices, decisions and directions emerge from the needs of Survivors and are accountable to Survivors.
- The Foundation demonstrates a high-level of ongoing communication and consultation with Survivors.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 3: Board composition and core qualities**

The Foundation board should be comprised of (minimum) 8 to (maximum) 12 individuals, the majority of whom are persons affected by the Sixties Scoop. The Foundation Board should aspire to the wisest practices in organizational management and operations, including continued learning for board members—specifically cultural and trauma-informed training.

The core qualities that should define board members include:

##### **Good character:**

An individual who is known as a “credible champion” within their community; known for being kind, authentic, accountable, and for acting with integrity.

##### **Cultural humility:**

An individual who demonstrates a strong respect for and acceptance of Indigenous Cultures and ways of knowing, in all of their diversity.

##### **Strong relationship skills:**

An individual who demonstrates the ability to build consensus and trust, and to work collaboratively with others. Known as a “peacemaker,” this individual is emotionally balanced and grounded, and is both self-reflective and self-aware.

##### **Strong thinking skills:**

An individual who demonstrates the ability to think strategically and apply ingenuity to solve problems.

#### **RECOMMENDATION 4: Board diversity and skills**

The Board should aim to represent the **vast diversity of Survivors**, specifically in terms of geography, language, culture, identity, age and experience. The following elements of diversity should be considered:

- First Nations, Inuit and Métis representation
- Francophone representation
- Youth representation
- Gender
- 2SLGBTQ+
- Urban, rural, remote, and on-reserve representation
- Representation from Northern, Eastern, Central, and Southern regions

In addition, the Board should encapsulate a diversity of knowledge and skillsets. In particular, the Board should be grounded in the reclamation of **Indigenous and Cultural Knowledge**, particularly as it relates to:

- Child welfare
- Research
- Health and mental health
- Political history
- Grassroots leadership
- Ceremony and cultural practices

Further, the Board should aim to include **individuals with the following skillsets:**

- Policy
- Finance/accounting

- Advocacy/ government relations
- Governance
- Management/Human Resources
- Legal
- Fundraising
- Communication/Marketing
- Culture-based program delivery

### **RECOMMENDATION 5: Board recruitment process**

The Board Recruitment Process can and should play an important role in building a relationship of trust between the Foundation and Survivors. To that end, we believe a successful Recruitment Process must:

- **Reflect the feedback from Survivors** regarding the skills, experience, and qualities they believe are critical for a permanent Board (as per above).
- **Run in an open, inclusive, and transparent way.** This means ensuring there is a strong awareness of the process, ample opportunity for individuals to apply, and a clear articulation of how the selection process will work and who is involved.
- **Engage a broad range of potential candidates.** This means doing everything possible to encourage Survivors of diverse backgrounds and experiences to apply and to remove barriers that could inhibit a wide range of applicants.
- **Demonstrate credibility.** This means creating a process that is thoughtful and as objective as possible, mitigating the risk of personal or political bias.

To this end, we recommend that the Interim Board appoint an ad-hoc “selection committee” of five individuals who are both highly regarded within Indigenous and Survivor circles and, at the same time, are non-partisan within the Survivor landscape. With **no interest in assuming board positions themselves** and assembled for the sole purpose of supporting the board selection process, these individuals will help create an additional “layer” of thoughtful and unbiased review.

### **RECOMMENDATION 6: Long-term Sustainability**

Survivors felt strongly that the Foundation should seek to operate “in perpetuity” rather than taking a spend-down approach. To that end, strong financial management, fundraising, and long-term investing (including considering an endowment model) should be key aspects of the Foundation’s operational planning.

In order to achieve long-term sustainability, we suggest considering the following practices:

- Create a long-term strategic and operational plan that identifies specific and measurable goals for the Foundation, articulating impacts the Foundation aims to achieve in terms of its core focus areas over time.
- Develop an ongoing long-term planning process for financial sustainability and impact.
- Engage in annual fundraising efforts to achieve short and longer-term revenue targets.

### **RECOMMENDATION 7: Naming and branding**

We recommend that, once established, the permanent Board undertake a branding process for the Foundation, to establish its visual identity (e.g. brand symbols and colours) and name. This process should include the development of a “Request for Proposals” (RFP), specifically targeting Indigenous designers, artists, and/or branding experts. Ideally, the selected candidate should produce multiple concepts for consideration. The Board may consider running an “open voting” process or establishing a selection committee to decide on a final brand.

In developing the RFP, the Board should emphasize the importance of a name and visual identity that is rooted in Indigeneity and is, at the same time, inclusive of diverse Indigenous cultures. Further, the Board should acknowledge the recurring themes and concepts contributed by Survivors through the Engagement process, as inspiration for the chosen brand. Overall, Survivors recommended themes and symbols that were positive and forward-looking, and emphasized culture, spirituality, growth, progress, and multiple generations.

We wish to acknowledge the under-representation of Métis and Inuit participation and that the visual and concepts predominately represent First Nations participation.

Recurring Themes:

- **Reconnection** – the idea of being reunited, brought together, of having relationships created and re-established, of unification between generations and communities.
- **Homecoming** – the idea of being welcomed back or welcomed home, invited into a place of love and safety.
- **Resilience** – the idea of strength and the ability to thrive in the face of trauma or loss.
- **Renewal and rebirth** – the idea of positive transformation or change, of growth.
- **Duality** – the idea of straddling two worlds or two states of being.

Recurring Visual Concepts / Symbols:

- **Trees, tree roots** - Connected to the idea of reconnection, growth, strength, multiple generations, and the earth.
- **Eagles, eagle feathers, eagle nest** - Connected to the idea of protection, safety, homecoming, and spirituality.
- **Medicine wheel** - Connected to the idea of holistic healing, recovery.
- **Children, the child within** - Connected to the idea of hope, future generations, and healing from past harms.
- **Fire, flames** - Connected to the idea of strength and resilience, enduring hardship and becoming stronger.
- **Hands** - Connected to the idea of unification, connection, welcoming back.







## SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE ENGAGEMENT

**" Ultimately, that is what today is about: the future. It is about how the Sixties Scoop Foundation can best serve Survivors along your journeys. We will ask you what you want the Foundation to do to best serve you in recovery and reclamation. How can the Foundation best support your goals? Your voices and your insight are critical in helping answer these questions."**

– Sally Susan Mathias Martel and Maggie Blue Waters, Co-Chairs of the Interim Board, in their Letter to Survivors participating in the Engagement process

**" My mother gave me the name of Sally Susan Mattias but that name is no more. And the 60s Scoop has come to this day, this great plateau. It is a great day in Canada when Canada's judicial system chooses to say that our children are so valuable and sacred and precious that we will protect them by law. What a day this is!"**

– Sally Susan Mathias Martel, February 14, 2017 (at a Toronto Press Conference the day Canada was found liable for harms in the Sixties Scoop Ontario Class Action)

## ABOUT THE SIXTIES SCOOP CLASS ACTION

In an Ontario courtroom in February 2017, after a decade of litigation plagued by diversionary and often pointless arguments, Justice Belobaba of the Ontario Superior Court brought some resolution and the promise of solace to the thousands of Indigenous people who, as children, were removed from their families and communities in what is now known as the “Sixties Scoop.” Sally Susan Mathias Martel, previously known by her adoptive name of Marcia Brown, is a First Nation woman from northeastern Ontario raised through adoption by a non-First Nation family. She asserted that she, and others sharing her experience, had an act of “identity genocide” committed against them and that she has suffered as a result.

Justice Belobaba agreed, and in his decision declared that the government failed in its “duty of care” by not protecting the identity of Indigenous children placed through adoption or foster care. In his judgment, he states:

***“The uncontroverted evidence of the plaintiffs’ experts is that the loss of identity left the children fundamentally disoriented with reduced ability to lead healthy and fulfilling lives. The loss... resulted in psychiatric disorders, substance abuse, unemployment, violence and numerous suicides”***

The courage and perseverance of Sally Martel and many other Survivors resulted in an acknowledgement of the wrongs committed against them, and it established a fiscal settlement for First Nations Survivors in non-Indigenous care between 1951 and 1991. Further, through the work of Survivors and dedicated advocates, that settlement was extended by the Federal government to include all qualified Survivors not only from Ontario, where the class action was initiated, but to Survivors from across the country.

At the time of writing, compensation is being disbursed to those who have registered and been deemed qualified under the terms of the Sixties Scoop Settlement Agreement, dated November 2017. As proposed by the Survivors, and agreed by the government, the settlement also directed that “a foundation be established to enable change and reconciliation, and in particular access to education, healing and wellness, and commemoration activities for communities and individuals.” It further states that it is intended to “bridge the generations and give meaning to suffering, as well as to provide healing and reconciliation to the whole of Canada, now and for the future.”

The settlement further directs that 50-million-dollars initially be granted to a Foundation, that it be governed by a board of no more than ten and not less than six, that it comply with the Canada Not for Profit Corporations Act, and at its discretion, it may “raise money from other sources.”



# THE ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

## OUR MANDATE

Although welcomed and applauded, the Foundation and its purposes as defined by the agreement were open to considerable interpretation. Here was an opportunity to give direction to the Foundation through the authentic voice and direction of Survivors themselves. This was celebrated as a chance for the empowerment of those who thus far were terribly disempowered through their experience as children of the Sixties Scoop.

“It starts with us,” the banner under which the Foundation set its course, acted to influence and create a consultation framework and process that could truly reflect the collective thinking and wishes of Survivors. This report represents the best effort of a small team who travelled Canada—East, West and North—with great ambition to capture and reflect the will of a broad, diverse and dispersed community. Online options for participation enhanced our capacity to engage and allowed us to be as inclusive as technologically possible. With that, we heard from the great diaspora of Survivors, thus helping achieve the aspiration of “all voices heard.”

This report is humbly presented to those Survivors who participated and to those who did not. It will be their judgment and theirs alone that will determine whether we have succeeded in the accuracy and the amplification of their collective voice.

## THE ENGAGEMENT

The task before the engagement team was a daunting one. While there was some discretion in the manner in which the engagement process was to be undertaken, we were instructed by an Interim Board of Directors to ensure that the consultation process adhere in form and in function to the dictates of an explicit set of guiding principles, or values.

These included:

- 1. Survivor voice will have primacy above all others*  
Perhaps the most compelling of all, this value clearly instructed the team to ensure we hold true to the “it starts with us” credo that underscored the meaning and purpose of the engagement sessions.
- 2. Maximum engagement of Survivors*  
It is estimated that over 20,000 claimants will be eligible for compensation under the agreement and our aim was to ensure that as many of these individuals as possible should have a chance in participating in the engagement process. We also recognized that many individuals may not qualify for individual payments under the settlement—including Métis Survivors as well as those who were taken after 1991. The Foundation is not limited to serving only those who qualify for individual payments under the Settlement Agreement; thus our process was inclusive of everyone who self-identified as a Survivor.
- 3. Diversity of Survivor experience and perspectives included*  
Within and beyond the 40 years covered by the settlement agreement many lives were lived, some traumatic, all unique in terms of experience and its impact. The perspectives gleaned from the diversity of that experience should inform the engagements in an inclusive manner.
- 4. All voices respected and heard*  
There are many possible answers to the questions posed through the engagement process as there are participants in the process itself. This is to be expected. It is important that all answers be given due consideration and weight in the recommendations in this report.
- 5. Accurate recording of Survivor responses to research questions*  
Recognizing that the total of responses to the engagement questions is impossible to report verbatim, it is therefore incumbent that the summary

rings true to what was said thematically. The words of the Survivors, processed through recognized analytical programs and processes, should result in all Survivors seeing themselves in the report.

#### 6. A culturally safe process

Considering that Survivors will express their Indigeneity in highly diverse and personal ways, the engagement process will welcome all Survivors no matter how they may construct their identity. It is important, however, to expose participants to a traditional process during the consultations so that their heritage is presented, recognized, and honoured.

## SUPPORTING SURVIVORS: CREATING SAFETY

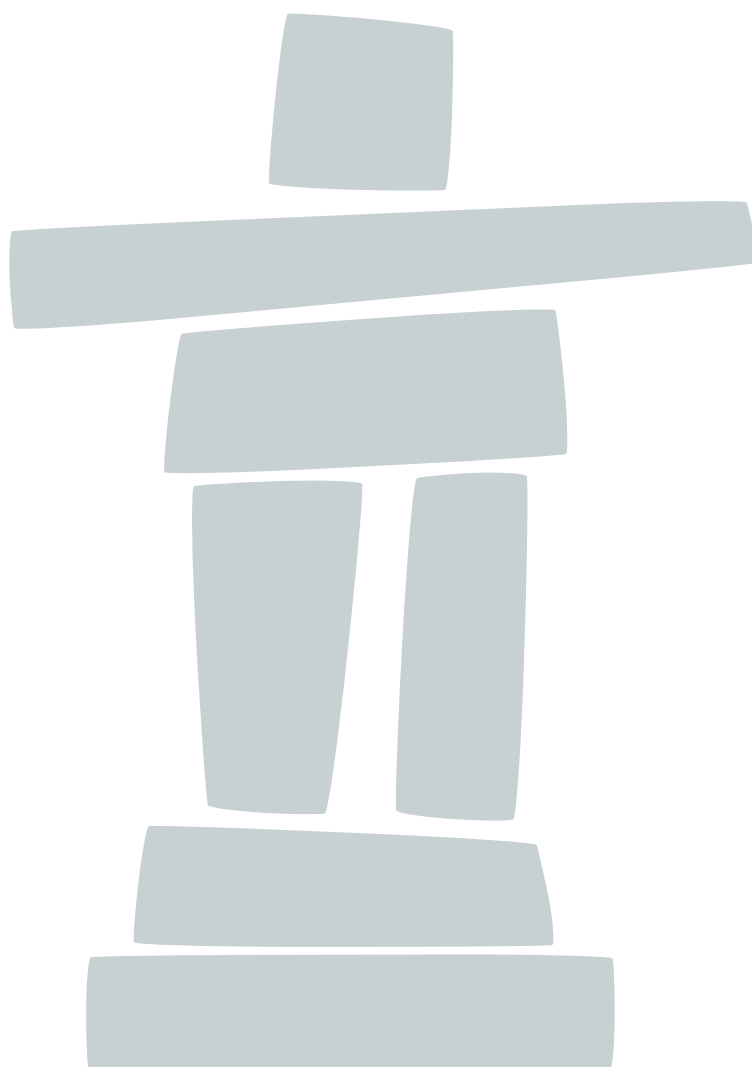
### The Talking Circle

Very early in the process of planning our consultation sessions, we appreciated that many Survivors would not have talked of their lives as Sixties Scoop Survivors. We thought that participants would want to tell their stories to others who shared their experiences. We were aware of the complex and often conflicting feelings shared by Survivors and that there was not often a chance to share with others who would truly understand. It was remarkable to hear so often from participants that they had never spoken of their Survivor experience before, and how appreciative they were to have been given a chance. That chance was in the form of a talking circle that allowed for small groups to share their story and to be supported by others and, in turn, to be supported by them.

For some, the experience was difficult and we made sure the participants had a helper available to them if they found themselves in distress. We encouraged a traditional process; we briefed people on talking circle protocols, and we used talking sticks to bring the appropriate spiritual and behavioural dimension to the session. Participants, almost to a person, appreciated this chance to share. For some, it was a cathartic experience.

For all, it was generally positive and a rare moment in their lives as Survivors when they could truly connect with the collective trauma, and resilience, and finally assurance that they were not as alone as they may have thought.

The talking circle served to change the social dynamics and move many participants from isolation to a more comfortable and supportive place in the collective. Doing far more than breaking the ice, it set the stage for a strong and cohesive response to the consultation questions that would come later in the day.



## THE ROLE OF ELDERS AND KNOWLEDGE KEEPERS

Defining the precise role Elders and knowledge keepers play using conventional conceptual frameworks is limiting. In practice, the role has multiple meanings and does many things. It varies across the country and can be expressed in many ways with many influences. The engagement sessions sought to use Elders and knowledge keepers at both the local level and as part of our team and its movement across the country.

We created space, both physical and in our agenda, for the Elders and knowledge keepers. We were mindful of the protocols and properly asked for their assistance. They opened and closed our sessions and kept watch with us to ensure the spiritual and emotional health of the gatherings. We created an option for Survivors to have their own time with Elders and knowledge keepers.

The team also included an Elder who assisted us in ensuring we were able to provide spiritual and ceremonial continuity to the sessions. His opening songs, with their

strong heartbeat resonance, set a tone that filled the room with Indigenous strength and courage. At one point in our process, when we were flagging, tired and perhaps a bit lost, he helped refocus and strengthen our collective capacities through an Anishinaabe Fanning ceremony. The power of ceremony became very real for us that evening.

No matter where or who the Elders and traditional people were, they were always empathetic and carried a hopeful message. When speaking in the language of the people, they exerted a calming influence and a sense of authenticity.

Of poignant significance, they often welcomed Survivors home.

## PROFESSIONAL SUPPORTS

We knew that Survivors carry the legacy of the Scoop experience in very personal and diverse ways. In our consultations, we needed to be mindful of the trauma that many experienced and consider what we needed to do to ensure people did not get hurt through their participation. This required us to create a safe space that allowed for full participation while doing no harm to those whose courage and conviction brought them to our sessions. It was recognized that not all participants would need support, but many would and we wished to be there for them.

As a result, at every session with Survivors, we had mental health professionals and emotional supports available. We engaged local Indigenous helpers and professionals who were vetted by the local community and deemed appropriate in accordance with their criteria and ours. We set aside a private space where participants could receive support. We tried to monitor the sessions in an effort to ensure those in emotional distress were identified early and where we could prevent an emotional crisis from happening.

We also engaged an Indigenous social worker and traditional knowledge keeper from Northern Ontario who

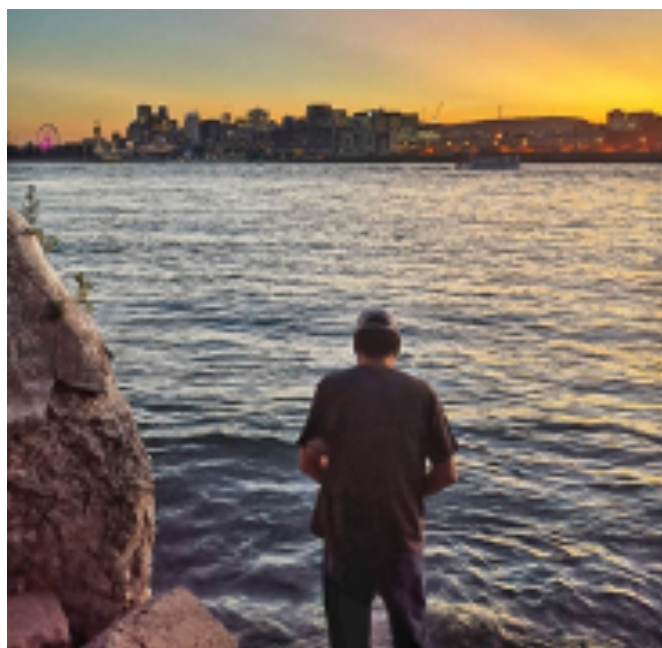


Figure 1: Elder Leroy Bennett performs a ceremony after the session, September 2019



travelled with the team to the Western sessions. This helper was especially knowledgeable and skilled in both mainstream and Indigenous practices. She attended as extra assurance that we could meet the needs in the West where attendance and Survivor numbers were greatest and where the Child Welfare system had wreaked havoc on individuals, families, and communities.





## SECTION 2: **WHAT WE HEARD**

# INTRODUCTION

This section reports on the 10 in-person engagement sessions that started in Montreal, QC, on September 22, 2019, and concluded in Iqaluit, NU on February 15, 2020. We include a summary of the demographic data to give a snapshot of the participants whose voices we gathered and an overview of how we organized and studied what we heard, enabling themes to emerge. Finally, we provide an in-depth exploration of those themes, which underpin this report's recommendations.

## Participation numbers and demographics

525 participants attended the engagement sessions. The average participation rate for in-person engagement session was 52 participants.

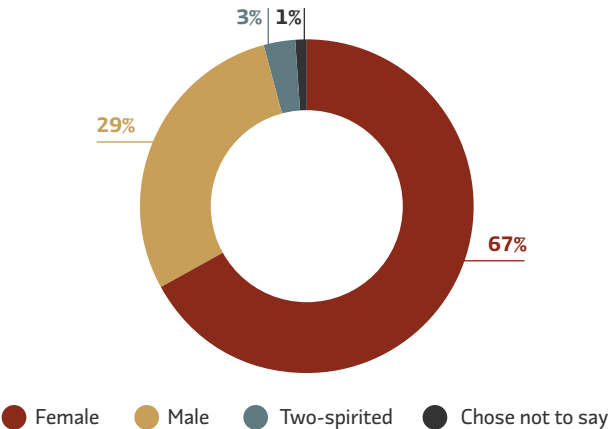
These sessions were predominately composed of First Nations women who preferred English to communicate and who had at least one child (78% of all participants identified as parents). There is no publicly available demographic information on the Sixties Scoop Survivors to compare this data to. Therefore, it is not possible to determine if our sample is representative of the Sixties Scoop population.

However, the engagement team did hear directly from Survivors that either identified as Inuit, Métis and/or spoke French as their preferred language, and they indicated they would have liked to have seen more individuals like them come out to participate in the sessions. Below, we show participation by gender, culture, and language preference in more detail. (Please see Appendix 3 for additional demographic information).

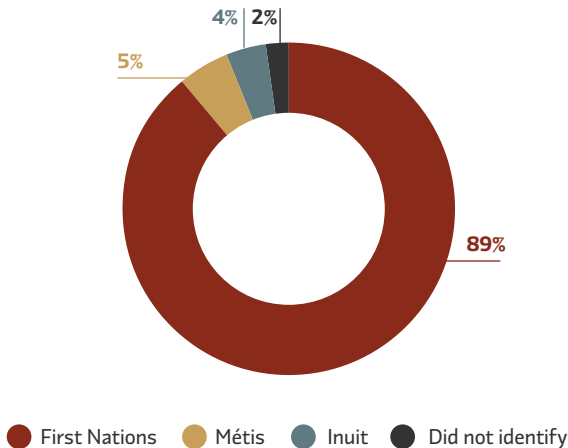
## Data and analysis

The five engagement questions amassed an incredible amount of information and ideas. We analyzed hundreds of pages of facilitation notes (verbatim recordings of the non-confidential introductions and discussions held in each session) and over 3,000 "sticky notes," which were individual responses to each of the five questions written

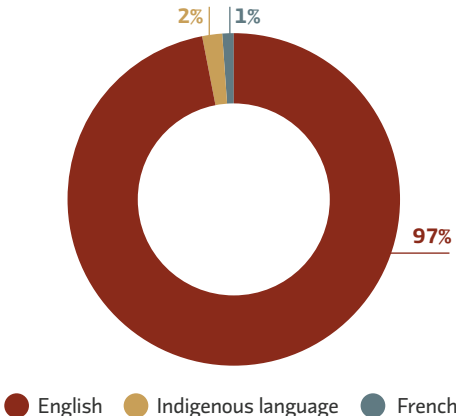
## Participants' Self-Identified Gender



## Participants' Self-Identified Culture



## Participants' Language Preference



on single post-it notes by participants and affixed to large wall posters - one for each question.

The data was thematically analyzed in the same way for each question. The facilitation notes and sticky notes were entered into a qualitative software program, which allowed us to more easily “clean the data” by taking out duplicates, incomplete, or un-codable post-its, and then organize the bits of information into theme categories. The research assistants completed the initial analyses and created thematic summaries for each session. The themes were then further distilled over many sessions and organized into comprehensive “grand themes” that form the basis for the recommendations.

This analysis process took several months and the involvement of the entire team through multiple analysis workshops. Many of the key themes were evident from the first sessions. For example, “mental health” and “cultural and language reclamation” appeared in every session.

From a research perspective, the findings are thorough and trustworthy. A key indicator of the integrity of the process is how participants felt about their own participation. Following every session, we asked Survivors to complete a short satisfaction survey, providing feedback on their experience. The vast majority (90%) told us that the session they attended was meaningful to them; over 85% told us they were comfortable expressing their views and that they felt heard. (Please see Appendix 5 for a detailed breakdown of the satisfaction survey data).

We believe we have accurately captured the collective voices of Survivors. Given the vast scope of information gathered, this section elaborates on the recommendations for greater clarity.

## WHAT SHOULD THE FOUNDATION DO?

The first question gave us the most information because Survivors have many ideas and recommendations about what the Foundation can do. The seven thematic categories under this question are:

1. Culture and language reclamation
2. Mental health
3. Reunification
4. Advocacy and collaboration
5. Education
6. Commemoration
7. Connection and community building

### **Culture and language reclamation**

This category includes traditional knowledge-based gatherings and the funds to create such gatherings. Participants referred to the desire for a wide array of gatherings where they could relearn culture and language with the safe spaces to do so. Traditional social events such as round dances and pow wows were often cited. Participants were almost unanimous in their desire to have ceremonial and healing gatherings and teachings available, as well as access to Elders, healers, language teachers, traditional midwives and medicine knowledge keepers, and access to traditional activities such as feasts, sweats, fasts, and other sacred ceremonies such as pipe and naming ceremonies.

### ***Ceremony and cultural considerations should be the basis of the Foundation and its work.***

The wish for many of these activities to be land-based was loud and clear. In addition, there were many calls for ways and means to learn traditional arts such as birchbark biting and handmade crafts, to learn music forms such as traditional singing and drumming, and to engage in sharing stories and storytelling.

A Cree Elder and knowledge keeper referred to a physical lodge where many of these activities could take place as a Mâmiwikamik. He explained it as a structure or building where teachings, ceremonies, and healing occur.

Participants expressed the desire to develop similar healing type lodges at the regional and local levels as these would meet the needs of diverse nations.

As an example, the creation of a Sixties Scoop wampum belt in the Haudenosaunee tradition is an equally profound ceremony that would create a sacred/spiritual canopy for Survivors in the East.

Ultimately, the slate of recommendations under Question 1 addressed the complex issues of identity and belonging that perplex many Survivors. Hence the themes of family and social events were significant and across the country, participants called for national gatherings and yearly celebrations. Underpinning all the suggestions was the request for funds to implement the slate of activities and many suggestions that funding should be dispersed regionally rather than centralized in an organization that would not be able to meet regional and local needs.

***Going back to the land, participating ceremonies and learning from Elders will promote healing for our families.***

### **Mental health**

This was a consistent and clear theme with a multitude of suggestions for supporting Survivors to recover wellness. Counselling and healing workshops for Survivors and their children was a frequent sub-theme and participants were very specific about their needs in this regard.

***There was a lot of trauma for many Survivors and the Foundation needs to understand and respond to that.***

Indigenous therapists are urgently needed and they should have expertise in trauma, abuses, and grief and loss; counselling and therapy needs to be accessible for urban and rural Survivors; there is a need for family

support groups, sharing circles, individual, family, sibling, and group therapy. These supports should exist in all major cities.

Ultimately, the supports that are developed must meet Survivors' specific needs and there is some urgency for access to mental health supports to be a priority. Some examples of the array of healing and wellness programs include: land-based healing camps, addictions treatment, and workshops on self-esteem and life skills; workshops to promote healthy living and recovery from past shames and hurts.

To this end, there were several suggestions for the inclusion of alternative therapies to support recovery and these included art therapy, animal-assisted therapies, massage and acupuncture, yoga and other physical therapies to improve health. One participant summed it up this way:

***The Foundation needs to be a safe place for healing ourselves and our families with tools unique to Survivors' needs.***

### **Reunification**

Another consistent theme was reunification, which not only refers to assisting Survivors in reconnecting with families, relatives, and communities, but it also encapsulates research on best practices in reunification, helping Survivors locate lost family members, preparing Survivors and families for reunion, and assisting in reuniting families that were torn apart. Survivors often experience lateral violence and judgment because of their experience being raised outside their families, communities and culture and these issues need to be addressed. Pre-and-post reunification support programs are recommended.

It also means educating Indigenous communities about the Sixties Scoop and its impact, as well as how to welcome Survivors back, developing welcome back ceremonies, and creating supports for reunification.



This work should include strategies that will mitigate lateral violence, hostility and rejection to Survivors returning home. Suggestions also include the creation of a database for families to conduct genealogical searches, the creation of books on cultural identity and similar Survivor themes.

***Reconnecting with communities requires resources. Our home communities/resources must be supported to welcome Survivors back.***

Underpinning reunification was the recognition that creating a sense of belonging for Survivors appears to be a universal theme. Again, the call for resources for reunification programs and/or supports was clear. Small grants to help Survivors travel for reconnection were recommended as were grants to communities to host welcome home gatherings and ceremonies.

**Advocacy and collaboration**

This theme cuts across many of the other categories because the advocacy needs expressed by Survivors are vast. Survivors want a voice that speaks to power about what they need, and what they are owed, by Canadian institutions, Indigenous bodies, and the network of social, health, and civil society agencies and organizations that provide and are gatekeepers to an array of critical services. We heard Survivors express repeatedly that their unique needs have been swept aside or ignored for too long. Their hope is that the Foundation can be a voice, actively working alongside other voices, that stands up for Survivors' interests.

***The Board and the Foundation should be a voice, advocate and educator to Survivors and all unjustly impacted by the child welfare system.***

We heard that Survivors want advocacy and collaboration to be core drivers of the Foundation, whether it is through funding local and regional advocacy campaigns or efforts, lobbying for improved child welfare practices, engaging with representative organizations to ensure

Sixties Scoop Survivors are supported, or championing mental health, reunification, and recovery supports, however those are realized.

The desire for a foundation built upon advocacy and collaboration, indeed, the slate of recommendations presented herein, is acutely aligned with the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action in relation to Child Welfare and Education specifically, and the entire array of Calls to Action generally. The Foundation will be poised to create powerful collaborative relationships with national Indigenous and reconciliation organizations that can support its advocacy on the myriad of fronts raised by Survivors, including child welfare, education, justice, language and culture, and mental health.

Advocacy and collaboration may mean supporting an individual to access their birth name or treaty status, supporting outreach to Survivors in prisons or on the streets, and lobbying for policy changes to the current child welfare system. This leads to another key role of the Foundation, which is education.

**Education**

The theme of **Education** spans two domains. The first is public education to raise awareness about the Sixties Scoop and to advocate for the inclusion of Sixties Scoop history in K-12 and university curricula as well as the development of teaching resources.

Many participants believe that the general public, the governments, service providers, new immigrants to Canada, and even adoptive families, are in need of greater awareness of the Sixties Scoop, as well as an awareness of how the Sixties Scoop impacted individual lives; especially situations where abuse and trauma were perpetrated.

This also includes education about the Sixties Scoop within Indigenous communities, education systems and organizations. Participants want greater public awareness geared towards Indigenous bands, some of whom have very little knowledge of the Sixties Scoop. They want

education targeted at health care workers, lawyers, and police, as well as NGOs and all service providers. Participants were creative in their suggestions about how such education could occur and suggestions included radio, television, documentaries, speakers, and media.

***The Sixties Scoop is unknown to many. By helping Canadian settlers and the Indigenous community learn about the hardships endured by Survivors and their families, we can work to prevent history from repeating itself.***

The second focus of this theme is Survivor education, which includes providing resources that support those seeking to understand what happened to them in the historical context. It also includes direct support for advancing academic education via scholarships, grants, and educational opportunities. The latter could mean creating academic partnerships to lobby on behalf of Survivors.

Survivors also want education about lateral violence due to the continual conflicts with which many Survivors contend. As mentioned, many Survivors also want to reclaim language and suggestions included the development of language apps and the creation of language classes, language programming at Survivor gatherings, tutorials, and language grants to cover the costs of learning nation-specific languages.

In the same vein, education in traditional Indigenous arts is very popular and suggestions ranged from sewing to carving, beading, moccasin making, drum and paddle making, beadwork, weaving, and regalia making.

### **Commemoration**

This category emerged from the collective desire of Survivors to honour their experiences and, in particular, those who are no longer present. One recurring theme was to potentially establish a monument or memorial garden to commemorate Survivors both living and deceased. One participant suggested that such a monument should exist in every province.

Other recommendations included the call for the establishment of a “National Sixties Scoop Day” and a national ceremony, as well as a specific colour “shirt” day. These events would be public and would potentially include art exhibits, memorial projects, showcasing individual experiences, speakers, round dances, and parades, and acknowledgement through official recognition. Attention to safe spaces would be a priority.

### **Connection and community building**

This category speaks to the ways and means that the Foundation can assist Survivors in connecting with each other, families, communities, and to culture. Achieving this will occur via the Foundation’s implementation of the recommendations under the aforementioned themes. For example, reunification will reconnect families, while culture and language reclamation and commemoration will serve to build community amongst Survivors. The support of local and regional activities will support Survivor connections and build upon nascent Survivor organizations and networks.

However, creating connection and building community can also be facilitated through the Foundation’s own communication channels and platforms. For example, the Foundation may create safe spaces online (e.g. through well-moderated Facebook Groups or other social media platforms) where Survivors can connect about issues relevant to the Foundation’s mandate. It could create a regular newsletter or email blast that helps Survivors feel connected to initiatives taking place across the country and to a broader community. Whichever tactics the Foundation decides to employ, its underlying communications strategy should consider the facilitation of connection and community a key goal and measurable objective.

***This is the first time I have been with others who share the same story as me. I feel part of something now.***

## WHAT VALUES SHOULD GUIDE THE FOUNDATION?

Question 2 brought forth an extensive list of themes about the values upon which Survivors want the Foundation to operate as well as the values they wish for Board members and staff of the Foundation to strive to embody. The nine values below provide the values mainframe for both the Foundation and the people who will be entrusted to operate it. Survivor voices in response to the values question were consistent across the country.

1. Accountability and transparency
2. Honesty and integrity
3. Kindness, compassion, and empathy
4. Culture-based
5. Inclusivity and acceptance
6. Accessibility and equity
7. Safety
8. Holistic multigenerational perspective
9. Survivor-centred

**Accountability and transparency** spoke to both financial and organizational accountability, but also to accountability to an ethical approach to operations and conduct, and especially accountability to Sixties Scoop Survivors.

The next two values created an image of the values and ethics of the individuals who will be tasked to lead and operate the Foundation. Survivors are seeking individuals of **solid character, and the highest levels of personal honesty, integrity, and ethics**, as well as **kind and compassionate** individuals who will be responsive and committed.

Survivors are generally desiring of a Foundation that operates on **strong Indigenous cultural values, protocols, and ethics**. Such values are expressed in Cree through the concept of *Wâhkôtawin* (relationships) and in Anishinaabe through the *Seven Grandfather*

*teachings*. Both of these unique cultural teachings were listed as examples of core ethical principles that should guide the Foundation. Decolonization, relational accountability, Indigenous governance, Indigenous laws, and holistic governance models were other examples of the culture-based values Survivors are seeking. Cultural values extend to the inclusion of Elders, and traditional knowledge keepers in Foundation operations, and the commitment to diversity of representation.

The values of **inclusivity and acceptance** encompass respect for the diversity of nations and cultures, as well as attending to sex, gender, age, ability, spirituality, and political diversity. These values should manifest in who represents the Foundation and how it operates. Spirituality is an example because many Survivors were raised in and maintain an adherence to Western religions. Thus, the inclusivity and acceptance that go hand-in-hand with culturally-based values, has to extend to all domains.

Similarly, Survivors wish for a Foundation that will be **accessible physically, linguistically, regionally, and socio-economically**. Ultimately, Survivors want the Foundation, and those who will lead it, to be respectful, accepting, responsive, safe, compassionate, and kind. For Sixties Scoop Survivors, feeling respected and heard is crucial. The sense of isolation and loneliness is very real and therefore, the Foundation will be required to create safe and welcoming spaces.

Survivors are unanimous that they want the Foundation to be **“Survivor-centred.”** This means that the Foundation acquires its mandate and agenda from the collective Survivor voice and demonstrates a commitment to the notion that “every voice” and “every experience” matters.

***We need to be able to see ourselves at every level of the Foundation and its work.***

The value of **family and community** emerged with frequency and involves a commitment to inclusivity

of families and community building. This might mean ensuring that programs, funding, and events are geared to Survivors and their families.

## WHO SHOULD GOVERN THE FOUNDATION?

We asked this question, not with the aim of receiving specific names of individuals, but rather to understand what *kind of people* should be given the responsibility of governing the Foundation in Survivors' views. To guide responses in that direction, we framed the question this way:

### **What are the most important skills, qualities and experiences a board member should have?**

The responses to this question included many of the same values Survivors identified for guiding the Foundation, and in addition, provided an array of desirable personal qualities for board members and the recommended skillset for the new Foundation board membership.

In addition, suggestions included many ideas about how the new permanent board of directors can be recruited. Thus, our recommendations fall under three main categories: (1) board composition and core qualities, (2) board diversity and skills, and (3) board recruitment process.

Under the category of board composition, there were a few suggestions regarding the creation of a board that is neither too big nor too small. The **number eight was mentioned in one session as a reasonably-sized board** and **the number 12 was suggested as the maximum size of a working board**.

In terms of the characteristics of board members, these were distilled into four primary values including **good character, cultural humility, strong relationship skills, and strong thinking skills**.

The suggested criteria for board members was thorough and detailed and the collective voice wants experienced individuals who can **be strong, ethical**

**leaders who demonstrate emotional intelligence, a healthy lifestyle, and have a good reputation in the community.** To this end, there were multiple suggestions that board members should have criminal record and vulnerable sector checks and be bondable.

***The board and staff need to have real life experience in the issues and credibility in their community.***

Personal characteristics included such qualities as goal-oriented, innovative, resilient, honest and trustworthy, kind and compassionate, patient, energetic, committed, charismatic, reliable, fair, positive, and dynamic.

In addition, **cultural knowledge, or openness to Indigenous cultural knowledge and protocols**, was held in high regard across the country, tempered by the acknowledgement of the loss of culture that confronts Survivors and the bi-cultural nature of their experiences.

***There are many different languages, traditions and lifestyles of a Survivor. This hybrid culture should be recognized and valued.***

**Cultural humility—the recognition and acceptance of diverse cultures and ways of knowing—**was considered an important characteristic.

Survivors provided an extensive list of professional skills, knowledge, and experience that board members could bring to the Foundation including leadership, communication skills, management experience, negotiation skills, and knowledge of legal, financial, and managerial fields. Although some preferred that education not be a barrier to board membership, there were many suggestions that members be educated in colonial history and have legal, political, historical, and cultural knowledge, and experience in community/grassroots organizing was mentioned frequently.

Survivors are invested in the strongest leadership possible. **The vast majority of Survivors stated that they thought the Board should be solely comprised of Survivors.**

***The unique experience of Sixties Scoop Survivors and our families have been overlooked for a long time. I want the Foundation to be led by someone who can relate.***

However, there were a number of participants who thought that non-Survivors, indeed non-Indigenous people, could be members of the Board, but only in exceptional cases where specific criteria are met, for example:

- They have letters of reference (or nominations) from recognized Indigenous leadership.
- They have demonstrated commitment to the issues through their extensive professional or volunteer work.
- They have knowledge and skills, or a position that is important and hard to locate.
- Their appointment is supported by all members of the electoral decision-making process.

Survivors are eager for a board appointment process that is transparent, ethical, and engages the broadest possible range of candidates. In addition, there were many comments regarding board diversity and representation; considerations must account for representation from Inuit and Métis, Francophone, youth, 2SLGBTQ+, urban/rural/remote/on reserve, as well as nation and geographic (North South, East West) representation. Lastly, participants were very interested in succession planning for the board through training and mentorship.

***Lots of people were affected by the Scoop and they all should be considered in the work of the Foundation.***

## **HOW CAN THE FOUNDATION BE SUSTAINABLE?**

Question 4 brought forth a wide range of suggestions with sustainability on several levels being discussed and financial sustainability emerging as a priority. Survivors do not want the Foundation to expend the funds and then close. Thus, **financial management, fundraising,**

**and long-term investing** were highlighted as important priorities. Financial management included multiple suggestions for taking a frugal approach to spending such as finances not being spent on the creation of a “fancy” organization or lavish events; rather participants expressed that producing manageable budgets and sound money management is a priority.

***We want the Foundation to ensure it goes on through the generations because the Sixties Scoop impacts us now and into our children’s future.***

Fundraising ideas included seeking sponsorship from corporate funders, donations from other foundations, seeking federal funding, and donations from the public. Many suggested hiring a professional fundraiser (or ensuring that skillset was on the Board).

Creative fundraising ideas included: hosting art galas and talent showcases; holding sports tournaments and benefit concerts with Indigenous singers like Buffy Ste. Marie, Twin Flames, and other groups; running accessible fundraisers such as barbecues, feasts and craft sales, and hosting casino and bingo nights.

Investment suggestions included developing trust funds, investments in several markets, and investments in environmentally-sustainable stocks and bonds.

Sustainability also addressed long-term strategic planning that would be inclusive of Survivor input, communications and dissemination of information strategies to “keep the circle strong.” This includes a solid online presence, meetings and gatherings, online networking through webinars and a website, online support rooms, and workshops.

Strategic planning would be directed towards establishing longevity of the Foundation and could include a business plan with short, medium, and long-term goals, a long-term healing plan, an engagement plan, a vision and mission statement, and the development of economic self-sufficiency. The inclusion of Elders and knowledge



keepers in ongoing strategy and long-term planning discussions was encouraged. Lastly, the development of regional offices or chapters in each province was recommended, and if there is one building, it should be in a central location.

## HOW SHOULD THE FOUNDATION'S IDENTITY BE EXPRESSED?

This question required more clarification than any of the other questions we asked, likely because the concept of “identity” is abstract. Our aim in asking this question was to elicit feedback from Survivors to inform what is commonly called a “brand.” While that term often triggers association with big private companies like Apple or McDonalds, the fact is that every organization with a public face has a “brand.” It consists of the way an organization presents itself: the words it chooses to use, and its tone (formal, friendly, open, cool), its name, the symbols, colours and typography it uses on its website, letterhead, and annual report (no matter how simple or complex). In a nutshell, a brand is both the “short-hand” for the organization in the mind of the public as well as its personality.

We developed a visualization exercise to support Survivors in responding to this question. It unleashed great creativity and some of the most moving responses – both written and visual.

From the diversity of words, phrases, and drawings Survivors submitted to us, clear themes emerged. Many familiar and time-honoured Indigenous symbols were evoked, including eagles and eagle feathers, the medicine wheel, the four directions, trees and root systems, fire and flames, tipis/wigwams, the sun and stars.

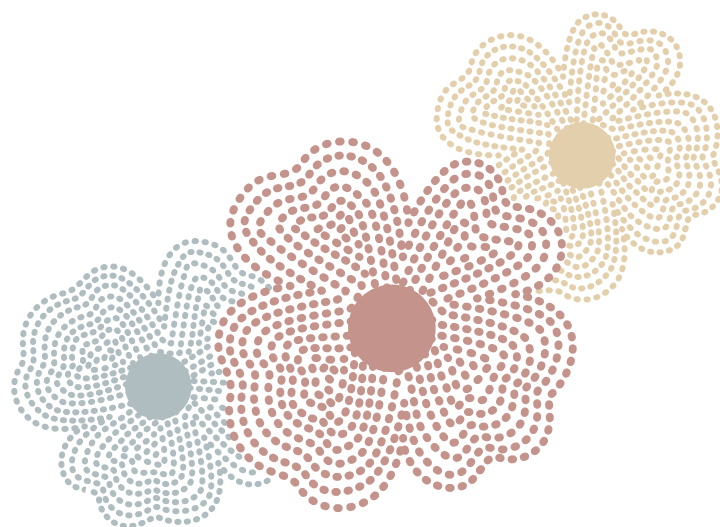
In addition to these symbols, the idea and image of hands—connecting, forming a circle, being held open

in generosity and caring—were often repeated. Other recurring concepts included that of children (the “lost child” or “inner child”), duality and straddling of two worlds, the sense of resilience and endurance. While no single colour emerged as the colour for the Foundation’s identity, combinations of red, black, and white were often repeated. Green, blue, and pink were suggested.

The overarching Foundation identity narratives that emerged from this exercise reflect and resonate with the experiences, values, and aspirations that underpinned answers to many of the other questions: reconnection, homecoming, resilience, renewal and rebirth, and duality.

Underpinning all these themes was the acknowledgment of diversity and inclusion through representative images/ logos that would encompass Inuit, Métis, and First Nation symbolism and the diversity of Indigenous nations.

Finally, some individuals aptly and correctly pointed out that developing a brand is a professional exercise that requires specific talents and skills. Several participants suggested commissioning Indigenous artists to develop the brand, while others suggested a public competition and voting system. Therefore, we suggest a formal process be developed and implemented, for brand development that draws on the creative and artistic talents within the Indigenous and Survivor community.





## SECTION 3: **PRE-CONSULTATION SESSIONS**

Prior to direct Survivor engagement, we undertook four pre-consultation sessions with those we believed could educate us in what to consider in light of their mandates, experiences and related perspective.

Our first step in the engagement process was a meeting with a representative group of senior leadership within the Survivor Associations. These are groups that have been developed at the grassroots level, and who have the accountability and capacity to speak for their region. Going to them first was the appropriate display of respect, true to our consultation values.

We also believed we needed the wisdom of those who have looked at the issues from different perspectives. To this end, two sessions were held with academics and experts, one in Toronto, the other in Saskatoon. We sought to hear about their extensive experience from not only within their professional world but for many, who were Survivors themselves, about how their dual experiences have shaped those perspectives.

Finally, we asked representatives from selected existing charitable foundations for advice. These were established entities that have demonstrated sustainability, presence and impact within the charitable sector. Some had Indigenous experience. We felt that the path to success in the philanthropic sector requires considerable practice wisdom and an extensive learning process to get things right. We are aware that the charitable sector is a highly competitive and crowded market and wanted to determine our appropriate and optimal space within it.

In addition to providing an overview of the pre-consultation sessions noted above, this section also highlights the uniqueness of each Survivor session and the distinct themes that emerged from each location. While there were many themes that were consistent across the country, it's important to reflect on the regional differences as well, and what we can learn from them.

This section includes the reflections of the three research associates, two of whom rotated as engaged observers and recorders at each session. Thanks to Priscila Ferreira da Silva, Hanah Molloy, and Jenny Gardipy for sharing their astute observations.

## **SURVIVOR ORGANIZATIONS**

### **SURVIVOR ASSOCIATION ENGAGEMENT SESSION (OTTAWA, ONTARIO – AUGUST 16, 2019)**

In our engagement with Survivor Associations, we sought to garner meaningful input into the National Survivor Engagement process and to secure their partnership and support of that process. We felt that they would be critical in the success of this process and that we would not succeed without their support. We also wished to engage collaboratively in making our Survivor engagement sessions as successful as possible and to help us give voice at the local level. We were correct in our assumptions and it is well acknowledged that their active support was key to success.

#### **Overview of Session**

This session, our first, invited Survivor Associations to submit an interest in our engagement process and using criteria developed to ensure a representative voice we then selected participants. We were able to include all who expressed interest.

This consultation served to set the stage for an ongoing and mutually beneficial relationship. Continuing to build trust with Associations will be dependent on the Foundation maintaining the relationship with transparency and with strict adherence to the consultation principles.

#### **The Foundation's Mandate**

On the highest-level, people thought the Foundation should be a powerful vehicle to educate Canadians on the Scoop and to act as a strong lobby on behalf of Survivors.

It should be a vehicle that commemorates the Survivor experience and should be able to assist in the building of capacity within the Survivor sector. It would do well to establish itself as a planning resource at the national level.

Funding was frequently mentioned. Whatever the business model chosen, additional funds, especially related to the sustainability of the Foundation, will be needed. The long-gone Aboriginal Healing Foundation model was mentioned as one that should not be repeated. The need for the Foundation to be safe for Survivors was stressed, along with inclusivity and a chance to share the Scoop experience with others. Culture in all its manifestations needs to be built in from the beginning. A space, culture-based and safe, was deemed a priority for the Foundation. One participant stated they:

***We have seen too many times where there is Indigenous programming that is run by non-Indigenous providers. We need Indigenous mental health professionals and perspectives in order to be accountable to communities and deliver the services they need.***

Further themes included the need to ensure the Foundation is accessible to all. The need for research to be included as part of the mandate was often stated, as we do not know enough about the extent and the impact of the Scoop over time.

#### **The Foundation's Governance and Governing Principles**

All agreed that the Board should be under the control of Survivors. Proven board experience and recognized leadership within the Survivor and related stakeholder communities were cited. Cultural knowledge was important with an ability to pass not only vulnerable sector checks but be able to be recommended by acknowledged Indigenous leaders.

***Sixties Scoop Survivors who have had experience in working with other Survivors at grassroots level; who have sat on a board before; who are dedicated to***

***Survivors and willing to listen to others; who maintain and respect confidentiality.***

The Board will need to be gender balanced and representative of the national scope of the Survivor community. First Nations, Métis and Inuit all need a place at the table.

Participants felt that the Board should have a clear nomination and appointment process that attended to the above, while at the same time be viewed as democratic and transparent. People felt different term lengths to be appropriate but all felt that fixed terms were what was needed. Consensus was deemed the best approach to decision making.

Strong consensus was that the Board should be grounded in the values, knowledge and preferred behaviours found in Indigenous cultures. At the highest level, it should incorporate traditional teachings such as the 7 Grandfathers and others within the diversity that is Indigenous Canada. Ceremony was deemed to be very important.

#### **The Foundation's Brand, Name and Identity**

Brand should reflect the dual identities of Survivors and have an image of strength and resilience. A positive message should be part of the public presentation with hopefulness and the potential for healing at the forefront. However, the Foundation should not ever shy away from speaking truth.

## **EXPERTS/ACADEMICS**

### **ACADEMIC AND CHILD WELFARE EXPERTS ENGAGEMENT SESSION**

**(TORONTO, ONTARIO - AUGUST 23, 2019 &  
SASKATOON, SASKATCHEWAN - AUGUST 27, 2019)**

The engagement with academic and child welfare experts was to get advice from the perspectives of those who had an in-depth understanding of the Sixties Scoop, its impact and its legacy. Two sessions were held, one in

the East and one in the West. The sessions included a diverse group—researchers, senior service providers, Elders and knowledge keepers, and a Family Court judge. A synergy was created through a facilitated round table discussion with a focus on several questions, all designed to solicit high-level advice to the Interim Board. Many in attendance were Survivors themselves which added immeasurably to the richness of the data.

### **Overview of Sessions**

The events were respectful, focused, and full of advice. It was remarkable to see how emotionally connected people were to the issue and how strongly they supported the Foundation. Indigenous leadership was clearly present and solid consensus generated good discussion.

We had three written submissions from Survivors, both leaders in Indigenous child welfare. The inclusion of a Family Court judge, plus the author credited with coining the term “Sixties Scoop”, added rich dimension to the conversation.

### **The Needs, Best Practices and Foundation Programs and Services**

All agreed that the needs of the Survivor population were linked to the painful legacies of the Scoop itself. The identity genocide of many Survivors has created multiple intersecting and complex problems at the personal, family and community level. There are multiple issues, and multiple options to address them, and our conversations covered the gamut regarding both analysis and potential actions.

Those carrying bundles spoke about the spiritual dimensions of the loss and how ceremony would be a crucial part of any healing journey. This needs to be built into the Foundation from the very beginning. Those involved in working within the current Child Welfare system – and many were – spoke of the reality that the Sixties Scoop is with us today. With so many kids in care and with new Indigenous approaches still lacking traction and impact, participants were clear that the needs are

not only historical but contemporary and will command attention far into the future. This should be of concern to the Foundation.

One Survivor and leader urged us to “fight the Indian Act,” the very genesis of the Scoop itself. Nobody disagreed. She urged us to not forget that many children who were scooped lost not only their identity but their status. The first step in addressing identity should be that they regain their legal status as First Nations people. Others thought the Foundation should lobby hard for a moratorium on adoptions and other colonial and oppressive practices still in existence today. This will involve collaboration with other Indigenous initiatives working on the resolution of systemic issues.

We were told not to forget those incarcerated, as well as those homeless and on the street. The overrepresentation of Scoop Survivors in this population is alarming and they are not often engaged, although they may have suffered the most. We were reminded that this is an international story that we should use creative outreach approaches to engage the broad diaspora of Survivors. We were told to find ways of engaging those Survivors who were not involved with others and excluded from the discourse. They may be doing well in life but they often have deep needs for an Indigenous connection. We note an absence of this profile within the consultation process itself.

Finally, we were told to consider the absence of records that has plagued those who personally wished to research their story, including important facts associated with their own identities, and entitlements as status Indians. The Foundation needs to ensure all were included, prioritized and attended to regarding their unique situations.

Other higher-level considerations should occupy the work ahead. Educating the Canadian public on the issues was deemed part of our obligation, as was the need to commemorate the experience of Survivors. All felt that the



gravity of the issues and their impact on Survivors is lost on many Canadians to the detriment of our national character.

The second question on suggested programs was informed by the issues above and takes them to the actions required for their improvement. On the higher level, it was said that the Foundation should dedicate resources to advocacy as a core mandate. The Foundation will potentially be the only national voice for the Survivor community and space needs to be dedicated to ensuring this is done well.

Systemic change would also be encouraged through educational programs, research, and a clearinghouse that not only focuses on the issues but continually improves our capacity to manage them to the benefit of Survivors.

The creation of historical archives, the sponsorship and delivery of national conferences, and training programs were referenced as ways to make a mark on Canadians. The articulation of best, promising, and wise practices in all aspects of child and family well-being is important work, as is creating and supporting innovative programs that hold promise in breaking the cycles that have caused children to come into care at alarming rates.

Whatever the eventual structure of the Foundation, whether it's a granting body or a provider of services itself, participants felt that it must view the good and welfare of Survivors as a priority. As such, programs meeting their needs and the needs of their families should be geared to their expressed needs as articulated by Survivors themselves. Thus, an on-going process of consultation and program refinement needs to be built in.

Trauma-informed, culturally-based, strength-based, holistic services under control and delivery of Indigenous people was generally the recommendation provided. Emphasis on programs that support identity, and all that it entails, was seen to be especially important.

Programs focused on the integration of Survivors back into their families and communities were seen as critical

in the establishment of identity. It was recognized that many Survivors will never go "home" in a literal sense, yet still need to feel connected in a way that meets their needs and their comfort level.

Participants cited that programs that deal with the pain experienced by Survivors today are vital. Trauma expressed through mental and emotional distress, family violence and addictions, were seen as critical as not only do they plague many Survivors, they remain the primary reasons children are still being brought into care.

Overall, the participants stated that programs need to cover the wide range of needs associated with the issues confronting Survivors, from systemic change to personal healing, to community building. All were deemed critical.

### **The Foundation's Priorities**

Participants were reluctant to identify priorities citing that the incoming Board will have to address that themselves. Of those willing to offer a position, it was best summed up in one written submission from Saskatchewan, from an academic and a Survivor, that stated the Foundation priorities should:

- Address historical, colonial, systemic and cultural genocidal practices and equalities affecting Sixties Scoop Warriors/Survivors and our communities;
- Strengthen circles of relationships within and between our families, communities and Nations who have also suffered the intergenerational effects of the Sixties Scoop;
- Achieve positive healing outcomes for our children, their children and generations to follow;
- Strengthen Sixties Scoop Warriors'/Survivors' opportunities for health and healing, as well for educational and economic development.

One participant, a leader and a Survivor from Ontario, argued against Western notions of innovation stating that this is a colonial obsession. She argued that ways and means to address issues is to go to tradition, the wisdom of Elders and the capacity of Indigenous



culture and its practices to heal ourselves. In her written submission she states innovation should be subject to containment within:

### **The Foundation's Governance and Governing Principles**

There are marked similarities between what experts have to say and what was to be said by Survivors in subsequent meetings. All felt the Board should be made up of Indigenous people, preferably Survivors, who have lived experience in governing initiatives of this scale. Gender balance, geographic representation, and an unblemished character were all cited.

Although non-Indigenous people should also be welcome, only those who have demonstrated adherence to the principles of self-determination for Indigenous people, and who have acted as allies, and can be nominated by an Indigenous leader or group, should be considered.

A board matrix should be developed that identifies the skills needed with law, finances, human service experience, political astuteness and strong understanding and promotion of Indigenous culture at its core.

Governance should be grounded in the same principles as articulated in our consultation process. Members should be nominated by others and elected democratically. Terms should be staggered and consensus should be the primary method of decision-making. The inclusion of Elders and knowledge keepers was felt to be critical to keeping the Foundation on the proper path.

It should be free of government interference of any sort. Some suggested a council of Elders could do much to assist in keeping the Foundation true to its values and its purpose.

## **CHARITABLE FOUNDATIONS**

CHARITABLE FOUNDATION ENGAGEMENT SESSION  
(TORONTO, ONTARIO - SEPTEMBER 10, 2019)

The purpose of our engagement with existing foundations was to help us inform practices, structures, and the governance approach of the Foundation. While the sample was not a large one, it was representative of diffuse mandates and had a mix of Indigenous and non-Indigenous participants. The attendees were impressive in terms of support for our Foundation. The message was welcoming, and they wanted to be helpful.

### **Overview of the Session**

It was clear from the outset that although there is support, the Sixties Scoop Healing Foundation is unique with no easily discernable reference points. This impacted the utility of our session. For example, participants came from organizations that were not only registered charities but actively so. They raised funds and had the authority to give receipts for income tax purposes. They fell under the legislation governing charities and are subject to its regulations.

Participants came with as many questions as they had answers. The day was a lively one, highly animated and wide-ranging in the ground covered. The presence and the contributions of the Elders served us very well in keeping the conversation grounded within the Indigenous context.

### **The Foundation's Development**

Very quickly we heard that the time for action was now. Indeed, some said too much talk could be the substitute for action. Most Canadians, including the charitable sector, were not familiar with the class action and its impact. Some participants however had signed on to a Declaration for Action by some 50 charities that committed themselves to a Reconciliation process. The impact of this remains unclear.

While the mandate of the Sixties Scoop Healing Foundation is not necessarily to engage others in the charitable sector, participants urged us to not only educate Canadians but to engage with other like-minded charitable allies. We were reminded that while those in attendance were open, the charitable sector itself

was still struggling and needed help in modernizing its thinking and behaviour around Indigenous people.

Another strong message, related to the first, was the potential for collaboration within the charitable sector. This goes beyond building relations and may involve the sharing of knowledge and resources. There can be joint actions at the broader sector or political level but can also be at the more practical level with shared services in such areas as human resource management, payroll, other administrative functions. It is recognized that close collaboration has to be based on mutual trust and confidence built over time.

Those in attendance with experience in the social enterprise approach to charity advised the Board to explore this model. Given the plethora of need experienced by many Survivors, there is compelling reason to market an approach that connects success with funding as a successful “investment” in the future of Indigenous people. We were told that this is an emerging approach that is being tested with favourable results.

We were also encouraged to be advocates. As has been stated, charitable organizations do face certain restrictions under Federal rules, but all said that organizations can often do more than they think without compromising their status as a charity. Some charities, for example, have dual purposes (that include both service and advocacy mandates) that can exist within the confines of the rules. While technical expertise and effort is required in structuring this, it can and has been done by many.

### **The Comparison of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Work**

These answers resulted in a wide range of responses that assisted us in really appreciating how unique our initiative is, and how promising. The non-Indigenous foundations present shared their experiences in working within the Indigenous sector.

While many were doing worthy things, none could approximate the work expected of the Sixties Scoop

Healing Foundation in terms of genesis, focus and accountability. As such their struggles and achievements do not provide clarity of direction specific to our mission but they did serve to reinforce the importance of it.

The non-Indigenous sector representatives spoke of programs that were more of an adjunct to existing core programs and special projects. This was not surprising given their broad mandates. Those with Indigenous programs or projects were clear on the need to have advisory councils and other accountability mechanisms made up of representative Indigenous people.

The Indigenous-led organizations spoke about how it's not given that because you have a compelling need that the charitable world will follow suit. It's a highly competitive market and, notwithstanding Reconciliation, you have to work hard on your message and have to be prepared to compete for funding. Many spoke of the challenge just to get a foot in the door. Once in, we were cautioned to ensure we maintain the integrity of the mission and not allow ourselves to be side-tracked by other agendas.

All participants, whether Indigenous or not, urged the Foundation to be modest in its initial aspirations. They referred to it as a “long game”. If the Foundation chooses to be a granting body then it should focus on building the capacity of grassroots organizations to prepare them better for receipt of program funding. The Foundation should consider the limited capacity of smaller and grassroots organizations when developing its granting application and reporting processes. It should ensure these processes do not pose a barrier or undue burden on these groups, but rather supports them in using their time, energy, and funding dollars as effectively and efficiently as possible. It's about building community as an integral part of the mission, a Survivor community.

The Elder reinforced the importance of cultural considerations and stressed the need for compassion and the nurturing of the Indigenous spirit. In the end,

the quality of the relationships, filtered through an Indigenous lens, will be the best gauge of the success of the Foundation.

### **The Best Practices for Sustainability**

Participants were unanimous in their opinion that the Foundation should be a long-term initiative and will need to secure its future through means well beyond the 50-million-dollar initial allocation. As such, the development of capacity to market the mission and to successfully compete in the charitable sector should be prioritized.

In addition to capacity development, there is the need to present an organization that is stable, without public conflict, and with a defensible governance model based on the principles of Indigenous and Survivor inclusion. A good strategic planning process is critical with strong consultation as the basis of its development. It will need to be visibly free of all government, including Indigenous government, control or influence. The Foundation needs to develop its skills in leveraging its 50-million-dollar initial allocation. Preservation of capital needs to be balanced by wise investing and this is part of the enhanced skill set that will confront the new Board.

We were told by all that the Foundation should seek partnership and collaboration. It is thought that our Foundation has much to offer, is timely and unique, and can help the non-Indigenous charitable sector meet its own aspirations regarding Reconciliation.





SECTION 4:  
**SURVIVOR ENGAGEMENT  
SESSIONS**

*For the first time, I see a chance for us to get back some of what most of us have lost.*

## **MONTREAL** | SEPTEMBER 22, 2019

Montreal was the site of the first Survivor engagement session and brought about many intense discussions about what Survivors want. There were many suggestions for support groups and creating community including healing circles and developing smartphone apps for networking. There was a strong call for the Foundation to be inclusive of Indigenous and French languages.

Montreal participants were especially interested in being involved in the development of the Foundation and being provided with regular information and updates. Many wanted to review the final report prior to its publication. It was a powerful session that brought home messages about diversity and inclusion in Foundation activities.

## **WINNIPEG** | OCTOBER 5, 2019

The Winnipeg session was supported by the involvement of the Bear Clan. They were invited to the session and held the space compassionately and in a non-intrusive manner. The thematic focus in Winnipeg leaned strongly towards culture-based healing and recovery through mental health supports and family cultural healing camps, and participants contributed a strong list of values to guide the Foundation and Board members.

The Winnipeg session was also well supported by local Elders and traditional healers and the easy access to the traditional healing room created a unified atmosphere.

## **HALIFAX** | NOVEMBER 9, 2019

The Halifax session was the only session that consisted entirely of women. Interestingly, many of the participants/Survivors were social workers and professionals in the fields of child welfare and human services. There were many inspiring women who spoke from the heart and openly shared their dreams and visions for the Foundation.

Much attention in this session was given to healing and recovery strategies, and the important characteristics of Board members who will lead the Foundation. Halifax participants stressed a positive image of Survivors to counteract the negative perspectives that are sometimes directed at Survivors. During the feedback and Q&A portion of the session, Survivors expressed their interest in creating a regional network so they could maintain the connections they made at the session.

## **TORONTO** | NOVEMBER 16, 2019

The strongest theme that emerged from the Toronto session was the ongoing negative impact of child welfare practices on young Indigenous people right now. A number of individuals spoke passionately and vehemently about the trauma and atrocities of the “Millennial Scoop” and the “Gen Z Scoop,” reminding all of us that this issue is not simply a part of history, but is an urgent issue requiring ongoing action.

The engagement team, including the facilitators, supported Survivors as they brought voice to their stories. The day was powerful with Survivors sharing their painful and complex stories of grief, loss, and trauma. There were also opportunities for relationship building and Survivor networking. The mental health therapist conducted a kindness exercise to close out the day’s session and it helped everyone to depart in a positive frame of mind.

## **CALGARY** | NOVEMBER 30, 2019

The Calgary session was one of the best-attended sessions due to the collaboration with the Alberta Sixties Scoop Survivor Association and their assistance with the session. Their involvement brought a powerful sense of energy and cohesion to the day. They helped to create an open and positive atmosphere.

The day was framed in cultural protocols and attendees participated enthusiastically. As a result, there was a wealth of information gathered. The thematic focus in



Calgary was broad in scope with regional representation and supports, and governance issues emerging as priorities. The Alberta group lobbied successfully for a provincial apology and in the process, connected with Survivors across the province. They have tremendous pride for their community and are clear about wanting the Foundation to support their local efforts.

## **SASKATOON** | DECEMBER 7, 2019

The Saskatoon session was a larger group. We were fortunate to have a table of eight Elders and knowledge keepers who attended and shared wisdom. The Saskatchewan Sixties Scoop Survivor association members attended and helped with local connections and logistics. Their participation contributed to a positive and cohesive event. One participant artist took some time to share his story and donate an original painting to the Foundation.

The focus in Saskatoon was on healing and recovery and the inclusion of Elders and knowledge keepers in the healing foundation. A renowned Elder provided some profound advice for tradition-based healing and recovery using Indigenous knowledge and language.

## **HAPPY VALLEY - GOOSE BAY** | JANUARY 11, 2020

This was an intimate session with nine Survivors joining us from various parts of the Labrador region. The engagement team changed the format to a roundtable to allow for greater ideation within this session. The entire group, including the team and the Survivors, felt comfortable enough to meaningfully engage right from the start of the session. During and after the talking circles, the team and Elder worked together to support Survivors as they shared their stories. Bringing a focus on Inuit and Innu representation, participants expressed a positive outlook on the future work of the Foundation in supporting their healing, health and well-being as well as their communities.

Some Survivors took the initiative to collect contact information from other Survivors attending to begin a Survivor Association group for Survivors in Newfoundland and Labrador.

## **VANCOUVER** | FEBRUARY 1, 2020

The Vancouver session had the largest turnout of all the engagement sessions. The session was opened by local Coast Salish Elders who were extremely helpful in providing direction regarding cultural protocols. There were tears and laughter throughout the day and this group, in particular, were invested in ideas around how the permanent Board of Directors will be nominated and how Survivors can be involved. The discussion period was longer than usual because many participants had a need to share stories of pain, resilience and recovery.

The thematic priorities included mental health supports for Survivors and cultural reclamation support, as well as supporting groups and organizing to enhance belonging and connection amongst Survivors.

## **YELLOWKNIFE** | FEBRUARY 8, 2020

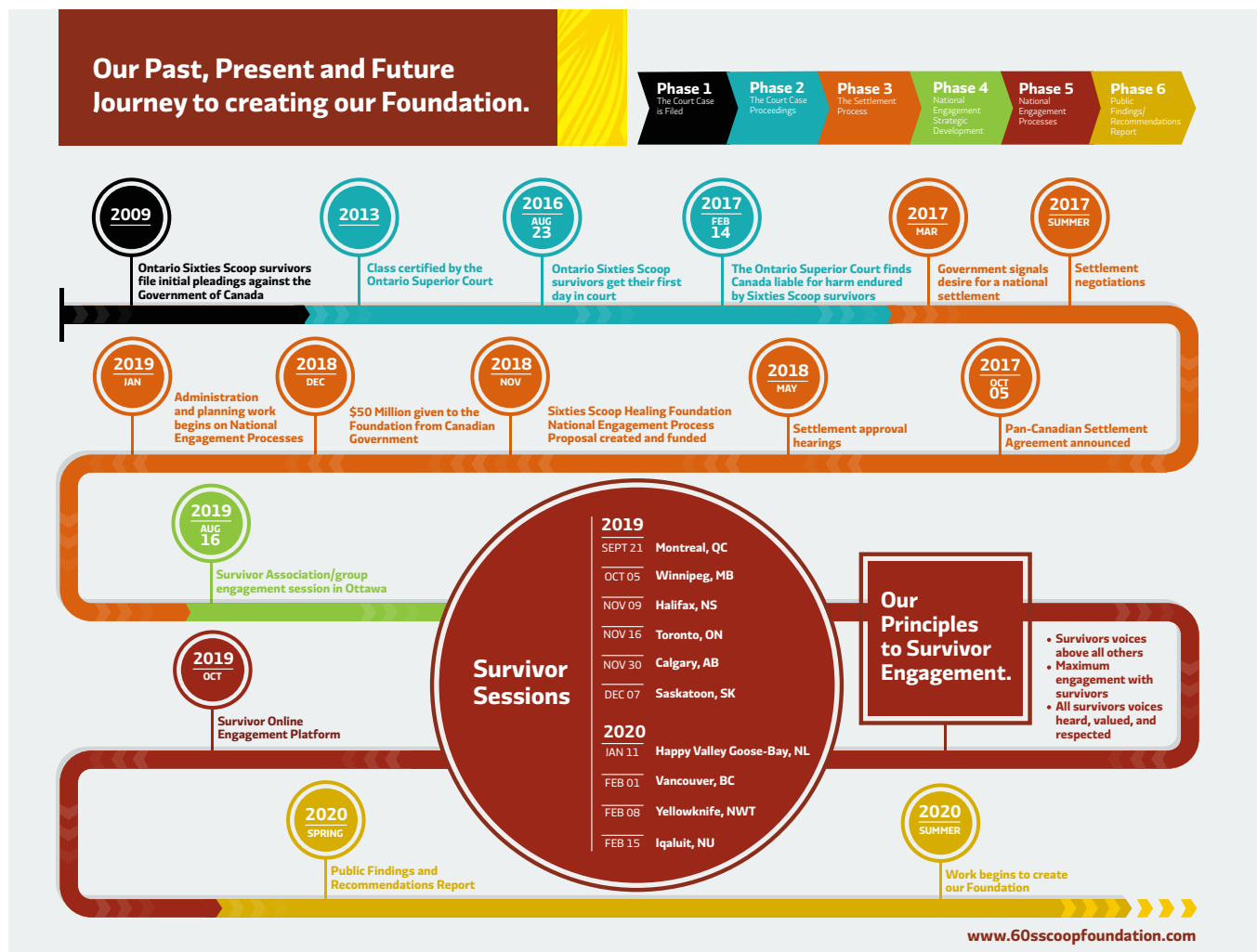
The Yellowknife session was intimate and the team adapted to the needs of participants in several ways. We altered the format of the afternoon to create a talking circle to ensure everyone had time to share their thoughts and ideas. The thematic focus in Yellowknife was on healing and recovery and in some ways the session itself became a sharing circle for Survivors who freely shared their experiences of loss and trauma. In addition, there was a forward-looking sentiment for some Survivors.

The participants reminded the team to respect local traditions and to ensure that the Foundation attends to the needs of Northern communities.

## IQALUIT | FEBRUARY 15, 2020

The Iqaluit session provided a strong reminder that the Foundation has an important role to play in terms of inclusion of Inuit people as well as strategizing to meet the needs of Inuit Survivors. The unique cultural and language context required the team to adapt the session and it became a conversational gathering where participants spoke about their experiences, many for the first time. There was a sense that the participants were relieved to finally be able to share their stories.

The thematic focus was on the issues facing the Inuit and how the Foundation can support Inuit Survivors. There were some cautions that it would not be easy due to the unique social, cultural and geographical constraints, and a reminder that there are three Inuit organizations that should be included. Iqaluit participants highlighted their desires to bring back their traditional way of life and in that way, for Survivors to recover their true Inuit identity. They wish to have an Inuit representative on the Board of Directors.





## SECTION 5: **ONLINE ENGAGEMENT**

In November 2019, the Engagement Team launched an online survey as an additional avenue for Survivors to provide feedback. We attracted approximately 1,130 authentic visitors to the survey. Of those, 400 individuals chose to answer our five questions, providing over 8,000 comments. The majority of comments we received were made by those who self-identified as Survivors. (Please see Appendix 4 for a description of our data integrity practices).

The same five questions asked during in-person sessions were repeated in the online survey. For questions one through five, participants were allowed to share five separate answers within one response. The single response criteria mirror the sticky note approach that was conducted for the in-person sessions.

The Online Engagement Survey Tool was developed in order to garner input and gather the voices and recommendations from Survivors who were unable to attend an in-person Engagement sessions. The survey also allowed non-Survivors to participate because the Engagement Team wanted to take the opportunity through this medium to gather a broader perspective. However, the principles of taking a Survivor-centred approach and Survivors' voices above all, still applies to our analysis and recommendations.

The survey allowed Survivors and non-Survivors to share their voice with the Foundation from wherever they are, whether they live in remote regions outside of Canada or are simply more comfortable engaging in a survey format.

The survey was modelled on the face-to-face Engagement session process and included similar background information that allowed Survivors and non-Survivors to provide their thoughts and opinions on their Foundation meaningfully. It was available in English and French, included a welcome video from our Executive Advisors, and allowed for open text responses, as well as video and text uploads. It was also accessible for hearing and visually impaired participants.

### **Question 1: What the Foundation Should Do?**

The top three themes that came up for Survivors were very similar to what was gathered and analyzed for the in-person sessions. Survivors would like to see free counselling offered that will help address the healing of the personal journeys of Survivors. Survivors would like help moving forward with their lives through education, employment or business ownership, and they would like to see the Foundation provide all necessities. Lastly, Survivors would appreciate support services that would assist them in healing themselves, their families and communities.

Non-Survivors responded the same as Survivors with one small difference. Non-Survivors want to ensure that Canadians never forget the tragedy that occurred so that it does not happen again. They would also appreciate better education about First Nations history, especially for young students and immigrants.

### **Question 2: What Values Should Guide the Foundation?**

The top three themes that came up for Survivors and non-Survivors were aligned with what was shared and analyzed for the in-person sessions. Online Survivors wanted the Foundation to be guided by emotional and interpersonal values, including respect, honesty, integrity and compassion.

Advocacy was also identified, and they would like to see the Foundation be an advocate in the forms of accountability to them and to advocate for meaningful apologies to Survivors from Canada.

Survivors also wanted the Foundation to be guided by traditional and cultural values, including the active participation of Elders and youth in traditions, rites of passage, healing circles and learning their language.

### **Question 3: What are the most important skills, qualities and experiences a board member should have?**

The themes that came up for Survivors and non-Survivors were similar to and aligned with the in-person

sessions. Both Survivors and non-Survivors felt emotional intelligence was an important character trait for a board member to have. This indicated awareness, control and expression of emotions was important for Board members to demonstrate. Interpersonal skills were also an important character trait for a board member to have, including working well with others, specifically Survivors, and excellent people skills.

In terms of who should be on the Board, Survivors indicated the Board should be composed of Survivors and Indigenous people. Non-Survivors did not indicate that the Foundation Board should be composed of Survivors or Indigenous people but focused more on general skills and attributes those Board members should bring.

#### **Question 4: How do we make sure the Foundation lasts into the future?**

The themes that came up for Survivors and non-Survivors the same as the in-person sessions with one small difference. Both Survivors and non-Survivors indicated that transparency was an important aspect for the future of the Foundation. They want to see

transparency on all aspects including finances and ensure accountability as the Foundation progresses. Despite this small but important distinction between the in-person and online themes, long-term financial and budget management was strongly recommended along with staying connected to Survivors, families and communities through conducting annual meetings and gatherings.

#### **Question 5.1: What words would best help express the Foundation's identity?**

The themes that emerged were once again similar to those shared in the in-person sessions. Survivors thought the Foundation's identity should be expressed by words and phrases that speak to its core values. Words like "resilience," "compassion," and "unity" are identified as some examples.

Words that connect to the Sixties Scoop Survivor experience such as "lost identity, long journey" and "repatriation, belonging" were also identified to express the Foundation's identity. Lastly, words that connect to culture, such as "taking back our culture" were also identified.

#### **Question 5.2: What colours would best help express the Foundation's identity?**

The main three colour themes that emerged were red, yellow and white. Most Survivors identified red as a colour to help express the Foundation's identity. This was explained as "red - show family we lost, or that was taken from us and to never see them or know them" and "red (for strength). Survivors also identified yellow as a colour to help express the Foundation's identity. This connects to "yellow - show lighting the way home." Survivors also identified white as a colour to help express the Foundation's identity. This is described in "Indigenous colours whether it be the four colours, Red, green, deep ocean blue, white yellow, turquoise, brown, orange. Colours that make one feel spiritually alive as in Indigenous artist paintings."





**Question 5.3: What name would best help express the Foundations identity?**

The primary themes that came up where Survivors felt that names associated with the Sixties Scoop would best help express the Foundation's identity. This can be connected to the example of the "Indigenous Scoop Education & Wellness Society." Additionally, traditional/cultural values emerged as a theme. Survivors felt that names associated with traditional and cultural values would best help express the Foundation's identity. An example would be "'The Ones Who Belong' (in an Indigenous Language). Lastly, healing was emphasized. Names associated with healing was also felt to best express the Foundation's identity. For example, "'Healing of Our Spirits' – Sixties Healing Scoop Foundation."

**Question 5.4: What other characteristics would best help express the Foundations identity?**

The major themes that emerged were personal characteristics such as "inclusivity, commitment, integrity". Another identified theme was Indigenous symbolism and imagery. An example of this is the "Tree of Life and Sacred Circle. Lastly, diversity emerged as another theme to best help express the Foundation's identity.

# CONCLUSION

The consultation team asserts that the measure of our success in this report is the degree to which the Survivors feel they have been heard, and whether their collective voice creates the Foundation they envision for themselves and their families.

While a difficult measure—it will take time to unfold—it might be best considered in the light of the work, the very behaviour of the Foundation itself. Now and into the future will the Foundation promote that sense of ownership and accountability articulated through the consultations and now expected going forward? Will the Foundation have the desired impact on the quality of life of Survivors and their families? Will the children of Survivors feel the Foundation's benefits? Will Canadians know and understand this history and its impact on Survivors and will they feel more empathy for those who went through it? Will the experience of Survivors, and the lessons learned from them, support reconciliation and help make this country a better place?

Some teachings speak of seven years as the timeframe to consider in the decisions we make today. These questions can act as considerations today, but should be answered directly tomorrow.

We do know a few things now. We know that the engagement process had consequences that only became clear at its conclusion. One was the process may have, for many, started a path toward resolution of long-standing questions, emotional burdens and legacies of trauma. Another is the awakening for some of their Indigenous selves, their identity, one often repressed, erased and subject to scorn.

But perhaps the greatest legacy is that engagement may have left behind a stronger sense of the collective, of community. We know that a sense of belonging is critical to our overall health and well-being and that being alone and unconnected is a huge deficit in some people's lives. It hurts them in multiple ways. Strengthening bonds, or, as was our case, creating bonds that may have not existed before, was gratifying. The energy created had

the momentum to carry this work forward.

Thus, when comes the right time, we might ask a final question. Did we help bring Survivors together as a community, one inclusive of all backgrounds and experiences, with a strong voice, sustainable over the long term, and focused on healing and hope?

In closing, we wish to acknowledge the enthusiastic collaboration and wisdom of the volunteer leaders of the Sixties Scoop organizations across the country. Their on-the-ground networking and organizational assistance was invaluable. We also wish to express appreciation to the Elders, knowledge keepers, and wellness workers who have provided a profound level of spiritual support and guidance. We acknowledge the Interim Board of Directors who gave tirelessly of their time and energy to oversee the progress of the Foundation's development, and we gratefully acknowledge the financial and logistical support of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada.

We wish to acknowledge the Survivors who have given of their time to provide input into the sessions, both in-person and online. For some, it was their first time speaking about their experiences and sitting with other Survivors.

Importantly, we honour the dedication and tenacity of Sally Susan Mathias Martel (formerly Marcia Brown Martel), and those like her, who sacrificed much to stand up for truth and rights. Listen to Sally sing and you will know the meaning of Indigenous spirit. The power of their collective commitment to this cause has been truly inspiring. Peter O'Chiese, Elder, spoke of protecting and serving children and their families as "clean work", but work that has been distorted and perverted by a colonial system. Thanks to the voices of Survivors, and their allies, we have a chance, through the work of this Foundation, to make it clean again.

All our relations.

- *The Sixties Scoop Healing Foundation Engagement Team*



# APPENDICES

## **APPENDIX 1: The National Engagement Team (names /bios)**

### **Executive Advisors**

The Executive Advisors are Dr. Raven Sinclair and Kenn Richard. They led the overall strategy for the National Engagement process (format, location, and approach to the Engagement sessions) and led the facilitation for each session. Also, they provided direction, guidance, and support for community and expert outreach activities and are key decision-makers for the Engagement Team. With their expertise and in collaboration with the entire team, they developed the final recommendations for presentation to the Board. Dr. Sinclair was supported in the data collection and analyses by three research associates – Priscila Ferreira da Silva, Hanah Molloy, and Jenny Gardipy.

### **Argyle - Secretariat**

Argyle Public Relationships was retained to provide full-service support and communications counsel to the Foundation Board. Argyle supports all logistics and communications for the Engagement process. This included: day-to-day supervisory oversight and staff support to the Director of Engagement, back-end support to the Board of Directors as needed, logistical and contracting services for all third-party vendors, as well as the digital, social media, earned media, writing and design requirements of the process. The Argyle team also provided support for the in-person sessions, facilitating Survivor travel, greeting and registering Survivors for each session, and supporting the smooth flow of each event – ensuring Survivors felt respected, honoured, and safe.

### **Engagement Core Team**

The Director of Engagement, Conrad Prince, led Survivor community outreach and Survivor community relationship management throughout the Engagement process, while also feeding into and supporting Engagement logistics. The Engagement Core Team included six Argyle staff members, two consultants, and the two Executive Advisors.

Members:

- Kenn Richard, MSW, MSC, Executive Advisor
- Dr. Raven Sinclair, Executive Advisor
- Jessie Sitnick, VP and Strategic Director, Argyle
- Conrad Prince, Director of Engagement, Argyle
- Brooke Graham, Engagement Coordinator, Argyle
- Sophie Fung, Logistics and Travel Lead, Argyle
- Ashley O'Connor, Digital Lead, Argyle
- Ereen Eskander, Financial Lead, Argyle
- Leroy Bennett, Elder-in-residence
- Stephanie Stephens, Indigenous Mental Health Specialist



## APPENDIX 2: Letter to Participants from Board

Tansi, Sekwan, Boujou, Ahneen, Weyktp, Wachay, Oki, Halu, Nú, Edlanet'e, Tanisi, Bonjour!

Dear Healing Foundation Participants:

On behalf of the Interim Board, we warmly welcome you and thank you for attending this engagement session!

We are so pleased that you are participating in this important and historic process. Our purpose is to create a Foundation that will serve everyone affected by child welfare removal and to hear voices and recommendations from as many affected individuals as possible, from across Canada. The journey to this moment has been long and challenging. While each of our paths is unique, many of us share common losses: culture, connection to our families and kinship networks, languages, ceremonies, and our lands, communities and nations. Some of us have experienced terrible traumas. Others were fortunate to have positive and nurturing experiences.

In joining together through this engagement process, we are working together collectively to break the destructive cycle of the Indigenous child removal system through focusing our individual and collective energies on recovery and on a better future. Ultimately, that is what today is about: the future. It is about how the Sixties Scoop Healing Foundation can best serve Survivors along your journeys. We will ask you what you want the Foundation to do to best serve you in recovery and reclamation. How can the Foundation best support your goals? Your voices and your insight are critical in helping answer these questions.

The Interim Board is fully committed to this national engagement process and to listening, with deep reflection and consideration, to all voices expressed along the way. The information you share will directly inform the mandate and structure of the Foundation—what it will do, how it will work, and how it will be led. The information you share will be compiled into a public report that will be available in the Spring of 2020. The engagement process is an opportunity to come together in a respectful, compassionate, and supportive forum and for all of us to be informed by our different stories, diverse experiences, and different feelings and perspectives. Thank you for taking the time to attend.

Thank you. Miigwetch,

Sally (previously Marcia Brown) Martel, Co-Chair, Interim Board

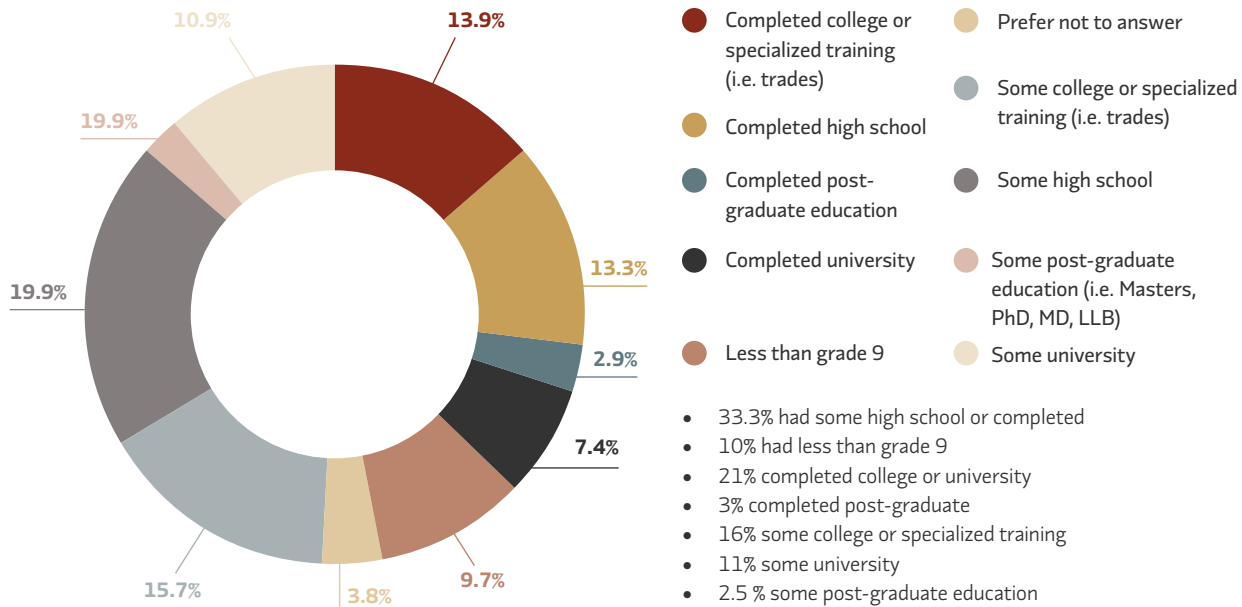
Maggie Blue Waters, Co-Chair, Interim Board

Sixties Scoop Healing Foundation

## APPENDIX 3: Breakdown of in-person participation

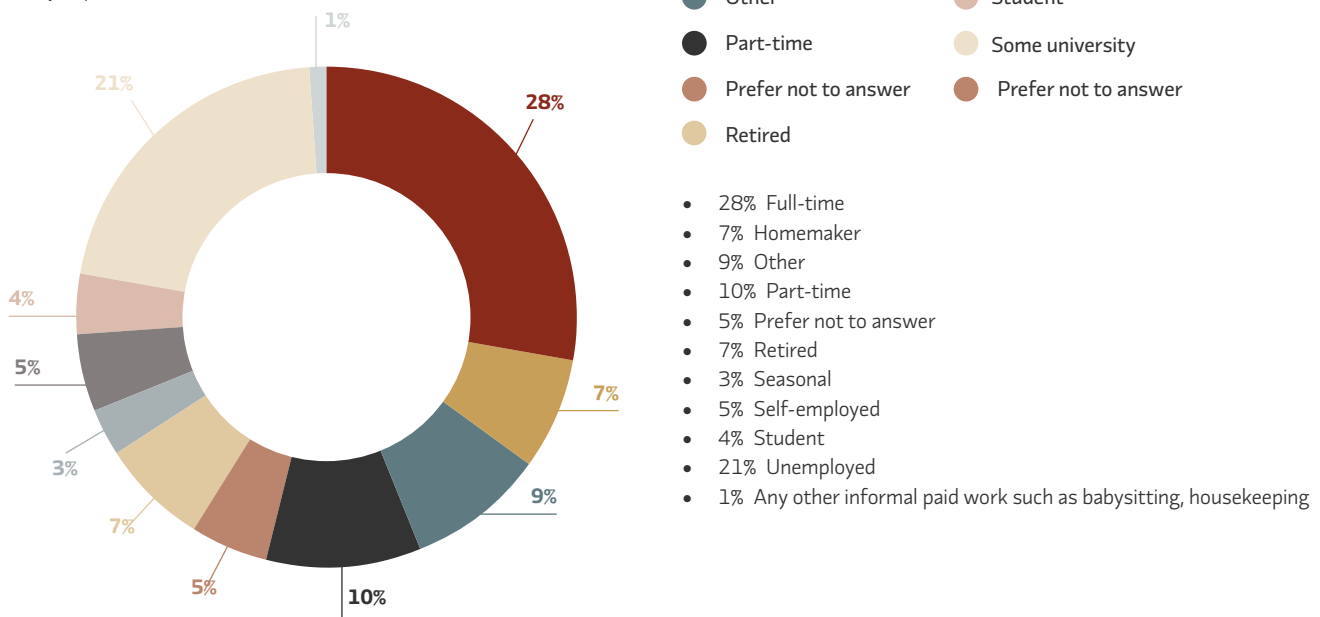
### HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION COMPLETED

What is the highest level of schooling you have ever completed?



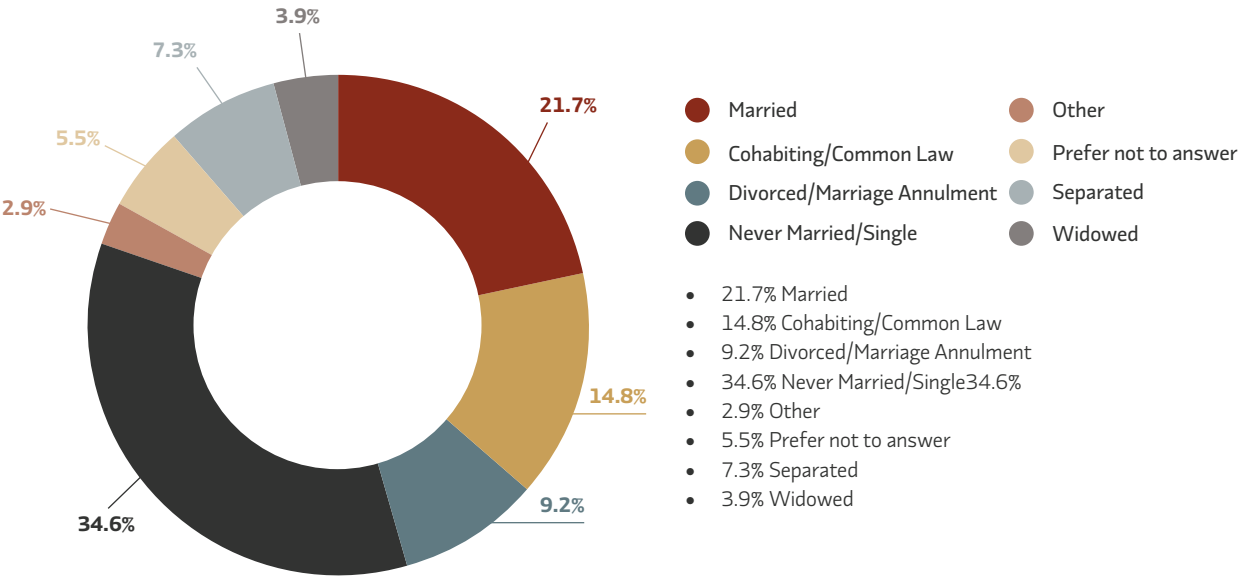
### EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Which of the following best describes your current employment status?



RELATIONSHIP/MARITAL STATUS

What is your marital status?



## APPENDIX 4: Breakdown of Online participation and data integrity

This document outlines the data integrity measures conducted for the Sixties Scoop data by Argyle when reviewing and analyzing the online engagement data from the Sixties Scoop Engagement survey for the “What We Heard” report.

Argyle designed the online engagement content and exported and analyzed the online data from the online platform, Survey Monkey. Survey Monkey is a third-party survey app that was used for its accessibility and ease of use for participants. Survey Monkey is not a part of the project team.

For the purpose of this document, scrubbing means reviewing data to determine whether it was considered suspicious activity that could be from individual tampering with the data or bot activity, and removing means eliminating and omitting the comment from the data set and analysis.

### *Description of data integrity practices*

Many of the responses from the data set were causing concern due to the nature of the comment, the language and the repetitiveness. The project team made use of various indicators to identify suspicious activity or bot activity in the data. Bot activity has become more sophisticated, using advanced AI that can jumble IP addresses, populate multiple-choice questions and use different language and words to submit long-form responses. Additionally, bots come directly to the site, rather than through other referrals such as social media or websites.

To identify suspicious activity and potential bots, the project team scrubbed responses for meeting at least three of the following criteria:

- comments that were not reflective of the topic asked;
- email address and/or postal codes that were incomplete or illegitimate;
- nonsensical or broken language;
- timestamps between midnight and 6 AM; and
- the location of the IP address (outside of Canada).

ACTION: Upon the analysis, the project team scrubbed the data and removed suspect responses from the data set to omit them from the results.

### *Judgment calls*

The project team was careful about scrubbing the data, as reasons for repeating IP addresses can include a shared public space like a library or office. Additionally, online engagement is meant to mirror in-person events, where multiple submissions can understand unique and valid sentiments. The project team was also careful in assessing the language, grammar and content to identify suspicious comments, as online participation is often expedited, with quick typing on a mobile, where responses from both English-speakers and other languages can sound broken.

### *Outcomes of the data integrity measures*

The project team scrubbed and removed comments that were suspect based on the criteria above.

In summary, all the question sets had data that had suspicious activity:

- **Question 1:** 145 responses making up 725 comments were removed, accounting for 27% of the overall data that was analyzed
- **Question 2:** 115 responses making up 575 comments were removed, accounting for 25% of the overall data that was analyzed
- **Question 3:** 92 responses making up 460 comments were removed, accounting for 22% of the overall data that was analyzed
- **Question 4:** 91 responses making up 455 comments were removed, accounting for 23% of the overall data that was analyzed
- **Question 5.1:** 71 responses were removed, accounting for 20% of the overall data that was analyzed
- **Question 5.2:** 73 responses removed, accounting for 20% of the overall data that was analyzed
- **Question 5.3:** 72 responses were removed, accounting for 20% of the overall data that was analyzed
- **Question 5.4:** 73 responses were removed, accounting for 20% of the overall data that was analyzed



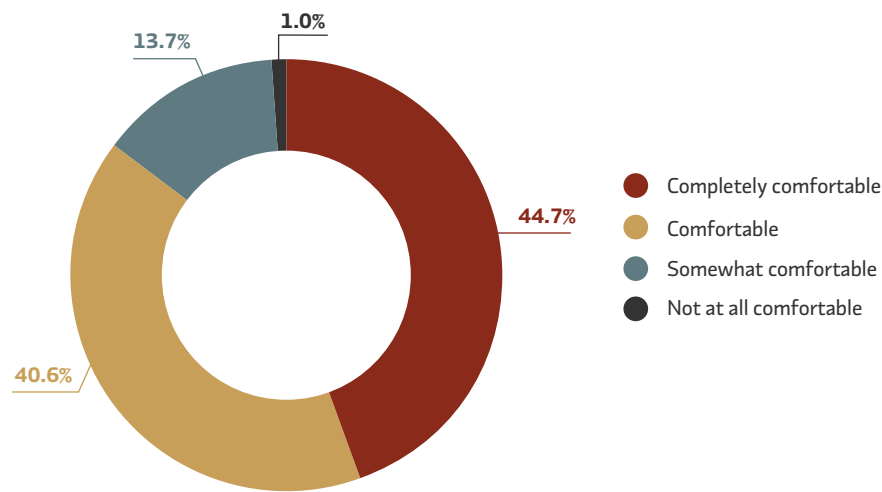
# APPENDIX 5: Engagement Satisfaction survey results (detailed)

Each of the in-person sessions included a session feedback survey that Survivors were encouraged to complete and submit. The purpose of the session feedback survey was not only to measure the experience of participating in the engagement session but also serve as an indicator of data quality and credibility.

For instance, if the majority of Survivors did not feel comfortable in voicing their thoughts or did not feel the session was meaningful and/or did not feel respected, then it would have an impact on data quality. Ultimately this situation would put into question the credibility of the report findings and recommendations.

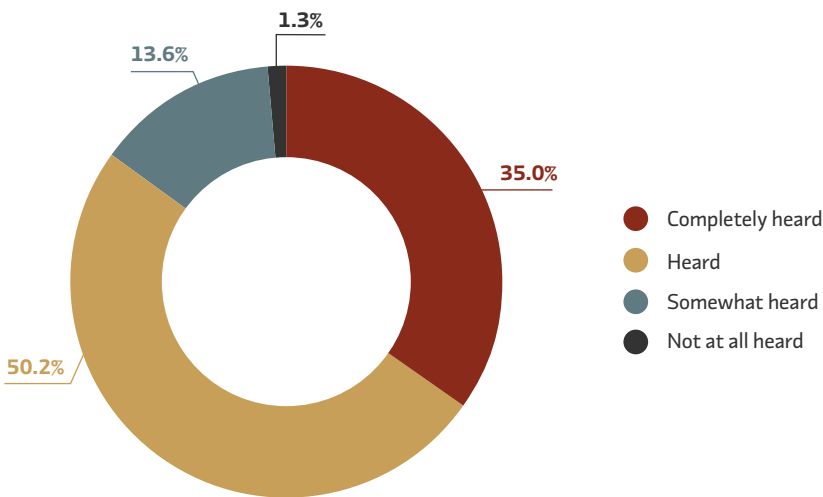
85.3% felt completely comfortable or comfortable expressing their views at the session.

## Do you feel comfortable with expressing your views at the session?



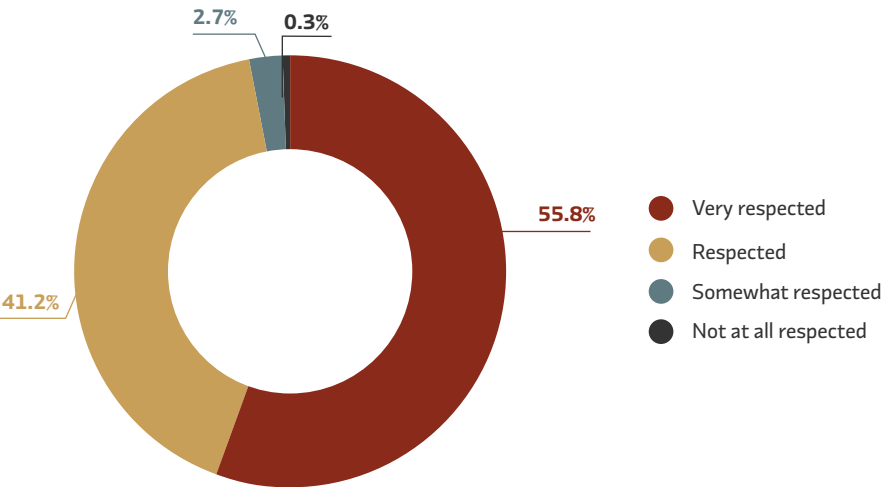
85.2% of participants felt they were completely heard or heard at the engagement session.

## Did you feel you were heard at the engagement session?



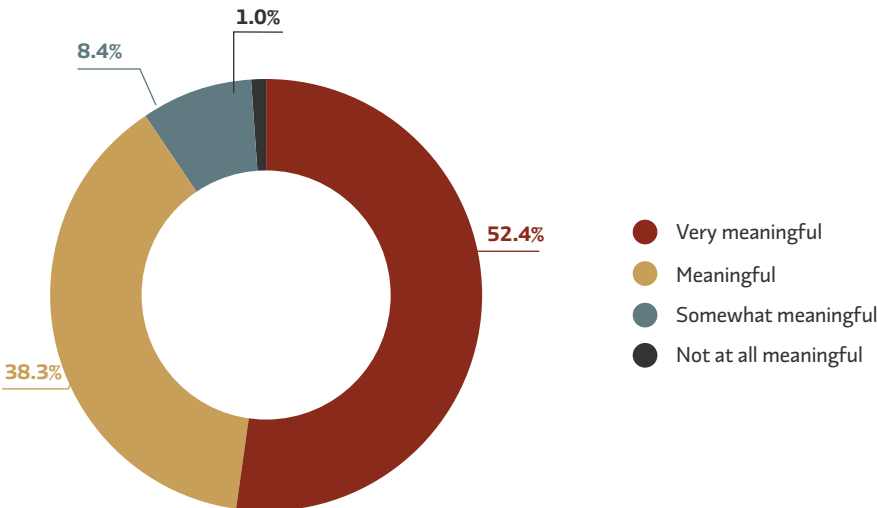
97% of participants felt their background was very respected or respected at the engagement session. (e.g. gender, culture, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, lifestyle, etc.)

**Did you feel your background was respected at the engagement session?**



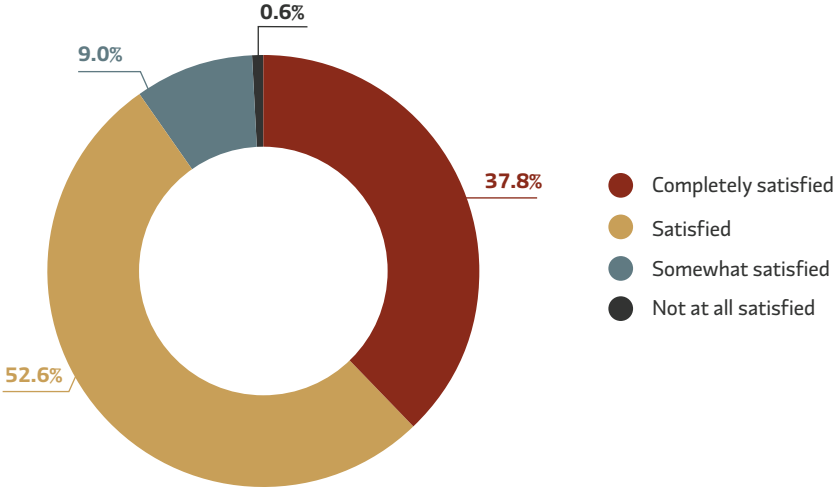
90.7% of participants felt the engagement session was very meaningful or meaningful.

**Did you feel the engagement session was meaningful to you?**



90.4% of participants felt very satisfied or satisfied overall with the engagement session.

**What is your overall satisfaction with the engagement session?**



With an overall average rating of 89.8% on indicators to measure the experience of Survivors had at the engagement session, we can say with a great degree of confidence the quality and credibility of the data and information provided is high.









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