



First Nations Health Authority  
Health through wellness

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## **Kamloops Indian Residential School Memorial Gatherings** **Wellness is our priority**

### **BE SAFE, BE COOL AND BE WELL**

Since we have heard the tragic news that the grounds of KIRS are the resting place of at least 215 children, we have all felt a need to respond to the hurt, the anger and the deep need to be with people to share our pain and express our emotions.

In the context of the present pandemic and knowing that the summer season is upon us, it is very important to keep ourselves safe and to assure that no one else around us is negatively impacted.

#### **COVID transmission prevention:**

While many people have been vaccinated and COVID case numbers are getting much lower, members of Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc have only received a single dose, and COVID is still active in our communities:

- If you are sick, or symptomatic (fever, shortness of breath, achiness, loss of sense of taste or smell) protect others and PLEASE stay home. Make arrangements to get tested for COVID.
- If you can, please wear a mask if you are not able to physically distance by at least 2 metres. This will be hard in crowds, so masking can be especially important. Understanding that high temperatures may make this uncomfortable, but every effort to mask when close to others is important.
- Wash your hands, especially after using the washroom, before smoking/vaping and before you eat. Hand sanitizer is a great thing to carry with you if you can and some may be available on-site.

#### **Heat, Hydration and Exhaustion:**

Summer in the Interior can be very warm and dry, and increased periods of activity, and gathering in crowds can be risky.

- Make sure you drink plenty of water throughout the day
- Wear a hat, or seek shade for a break when possible
- Don't go beyond your ability when it comes to activity
- Wear good, comfortable shoes for walking
- Seek medical care if you show signs of heat exhaustion (dizziness, headache, nausea, muscle cramps), are injured, or feel otherwise unwell.

## **Mental, Cultural and Spiritual Wellness**

This has been a week of terrible pain for many people. Residential school survivors, families and communities have been re-traumatized. The emotional toll is high and our abilities to cope with all of the challenges are limited.

- Seek supports – mental health and traditional supports will be available. Call a friend. Participate with trusted loved ones. Bring a phone to call and talk to someone if you need to.
- Be cautious about the use of substances
- Participate in ceremony
- Make sure you have a safe way to get home

## **Mental Health & Crisis Support Lines**

### **Hope for Wellness Helpline: 1-855-242-3310**

Offers 24-hour immediate mental health counselling and crisis intervention to all Indigenous people across Canada

### **Indian Residential School Survivors Society: 1-604-985-4464 or toll-free 1-800-721-0066**

### **KUU-US Crisis Line Society: 1-800-588-8717**

Indigenous crisis line in BC. Available 24 hours per day

### **Tsow-Tun Le Lum Society: 1-250-268-2463**

24-hour support line for people struggling with addiction, substance misuse, and trauma, including residential school survivors

### **Health Link BC: 811**

Be well,



Dr. Shannon McDonald

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