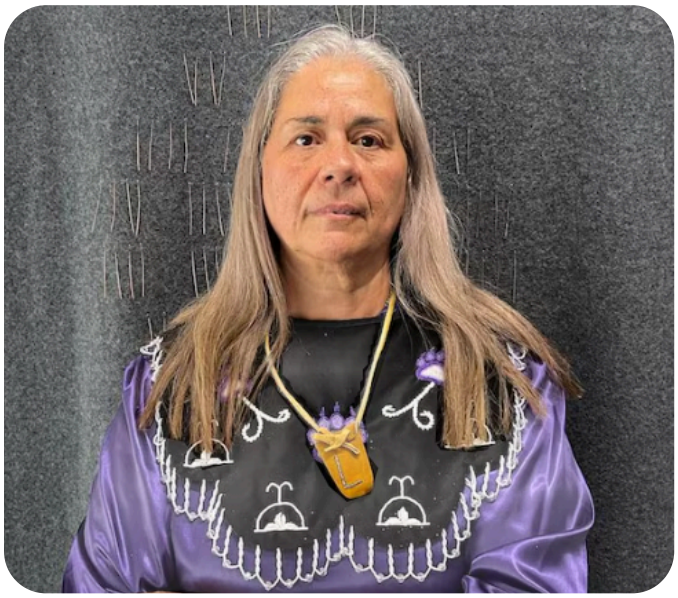
SURVIVORS' SECRETARIAT

2025-2026 Annual Report

October 2026

Letter from the Secretariat Lead



As we reflect on the 2025–2026 fiscal year, I remain deeply humbled by the strength and commitment demonstrated by Survivors in the face of ongoing adversity. We began the year without critically needed funding and confronted a growing tide of denialism.

This year demanded strength and commitment and was, in many ways, an uphill battle. Federal and provincial support was not approved until March 29, 2026, only two days before the end of the fiscal year. Despite the considerable impact on our operations, our work continued through the determination of Survivors, staff, families, communities, and partners.

We are particularly grateful for the generosity of SNGREC, organizations across Ontario, initiative-specific funders, and community partners whose contributions helped sustain our work during this difficult period. Their support reinforced the importance of collective responsibility in advancing truth, remembrance, and healing.

Across our four pillars - ground search, document collection, advocacy, and commemoration, we continued to advance critical investigations, strengthen relationships, and support Survivor-led truth-telling.

A significant milestone was our collaboration with the Office of the Chief Coroner to review records associated with 105 identified child deaths connected to the Mohawk Institute. This partnership strengthened information sharing, improved access to critical records, and established promising practices that may benefit other communities undertaking similar investigations.

Following two years of development, we also completed *Stolen Childhoods*, a travelling exhibit grounded in Survivor testimonies, archival records, and the history of the Mohawk Institute. Designed in two formats: an interactive multimedia display for museums and galleries, and a portable exhibit for libraries and community spaces. This initiative will help bring these important truths to audiences across Canada.

Letter from the Secretariat Lead (cont'd)

Our Wellness and Outreach teams also expanded community engagement, strengthened relationships, and supported cultural and intergenerational learning opportunities. From the Knowledge is Sacred, Truth is Healing Gathering in Thunder Bay to attending the reopening of the former Mohawk Institute, these efforts created important opportunities for Survivors, families, and communities to connect, share knowledge, and access support.

Our Ground Search Department continued its careful, culturally grounded investigations while preparing for advanced data analysis with archaeologists, geophysicists, and academic partners. Despite operational challenges, the team maintained rigorous investigative standards and Survivor-guided protocols in the ongoing search for missing and disappeared children.

Throughout the year, we also strengthened our stewardship of historical records and continued improving our document collection, review, and preservation processes. These efforts remain essential to protecting Survivor knowledge and ensuring future generations have access to the truth.

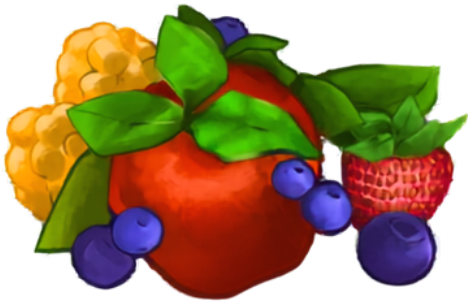
As we close this fiscal year, I extend my sincere gratitude to the Survivors who continue to guide our work, the staff who carry it forward, and the many individuals and organizations who stand alongside us.

Our investigation into the Mohawk Institute Indian Residential School remains unfinished. While challenges persist, so does our commitment to uncover, document, and share the truth.

We will continue this work with care, determination, and accountability, guided by Survivors and our shared responsibility to the children who never came home.

In good medicine,

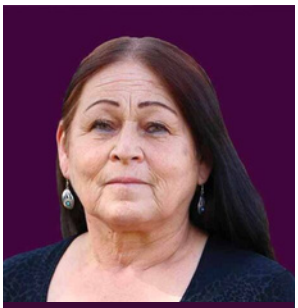
Laura Arndt
Secretariat Lead, Survivors' Secretariat



SURVIVORS' SECRETARIAT

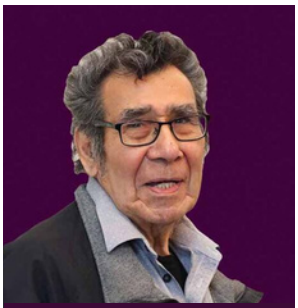
Board of Directors

Sherlene Bomberry



Diane Hill

Roberta Hill



Geronimo Henry

Lonnie Johnson

Leo Nicholas

Kathy Mair

The Survivors' Secretariat is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of Survivors and Intergenerational Survivors of the Mohawk Institute Indian Residential School.

Board Members bring their lived experience, cultural knowledge, and decades of community leadership, grounding the Secretariat and its work.

Their leadership shapes the Secretariat's governance and strategic priorities, ensuring that Survivor voices remain central in our work.

> "Every Survivor holds a piece of history. Our stories are not just memories, they are medicine for future generations. - Sherlene Bomberry, Board Chair"

OUR TEAM

The Survivors' Secretariat remains deeply grateful for the unwavering dedication of our staff, expert advisors, and consultants, whose commitment and professionalism continue to guide this sacred work. Their compassion has sustained our efforts and ensured that truth-seeking, documentation, and community engagement move forward with integrity.

We also extend our appreciation to the organizations and community partners who work alongside and Stand with Survivors. Their support including continued access to the lands associated with the Mohawk Institute remains essential to advancing our mission to uncover, document, and share the truth.

Secretariat Staff 2025–2026

- Ashly Monture, Executive Liaison
- Misty Ladd, Community Outreach
- Eric Patterson, Ground Search Coordinator
- Shelley Clarke, Cultural Wellness Support
- Jessie Squire, Ground Search Coordinator
- Mika Patterson, Data Librarian
- Liviu Georgescu, IT Director
- Laura Arndt, Secretariat Lead

Expert Advisors

- Mark Pritchard, Investigative Advisor
- Dr. Scott Hamilton, Archaeological Panel
- Tanya Hill-Montour, Archaeological Panel
- Ed Eastaugh, Archaeological Panel
- Liam Wadsworth, Archaeology

Professional Services

- Know History Historical Services
- Animikii Indigenous Technology
- Ingaged Creative Productions Inc
- The Albert Group / NanFan
- Fluid Consulting
- Jessica Hill, Cultural Wellness Support

Allied Organizations

- Mohawk Village Memorial Park
- Six Nations of the Grand River
- Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation
- City of Brantford
- Mohawk Chapel
- Nations Uniting

SHAPED BY PRINCIPLES

The Survivors' Secretariat operates on a foundation of values that honour Survivors, their families, and the communities affected by the Mohawk Institute Indian Residential School. Guided by Survivors' voices, the Secretariat is committed to uncovering, documenting, and sharing the truth about what happened to the children who never returned home. Our work is shaped by principles that ensure it remains Survivor-led, community-centered, and trauma-informed approaches that uphold truth, respect, and heal in every aspect of our mandate.

SURVIVOR – LED

The Survivors' Secretariat was established in 2021 by a dedicated group of Survivors from the Mohawk Institute. As a not-for-profit organization, we are led by a Board of Directors compromised of Survivors and Intergenerational Survivors. The Secretariat Lead ensures our work reflects the Board's priorities.

COMMUNITY – CENTERED

The Survivors' Secretariat's work is rooted in truth-telling and healing, starting with family and community. We work to include Intergenerational Survivors, community members, and youth from communities impacted by the Mohawk Institute to help guide our work.

TRAUMA – INFORMED

The Survivors' Secretariat is committed to taking a trauma-informed approach. Our aim is to create a supportive environment where each Survivor can share their truth or bear witness to the truth-telling of the lived experiences of Survivors' who attended the Mohawk Institute.

STANDING WITH SURVIVORS

On behalf of the Board of Directors, staff of the Survivors' Secretariat, and Survivors, we extend our gratitude to the individuals and organizations who have stood with Survivors through their financial and/or in-kind support in 2025/2026.

Your commitment strengthens our work and affirms that truth, healing, and justice matter. We are honoured to have you Stand with Survivors and the Secretariat as we work together to Bring the Children Home.

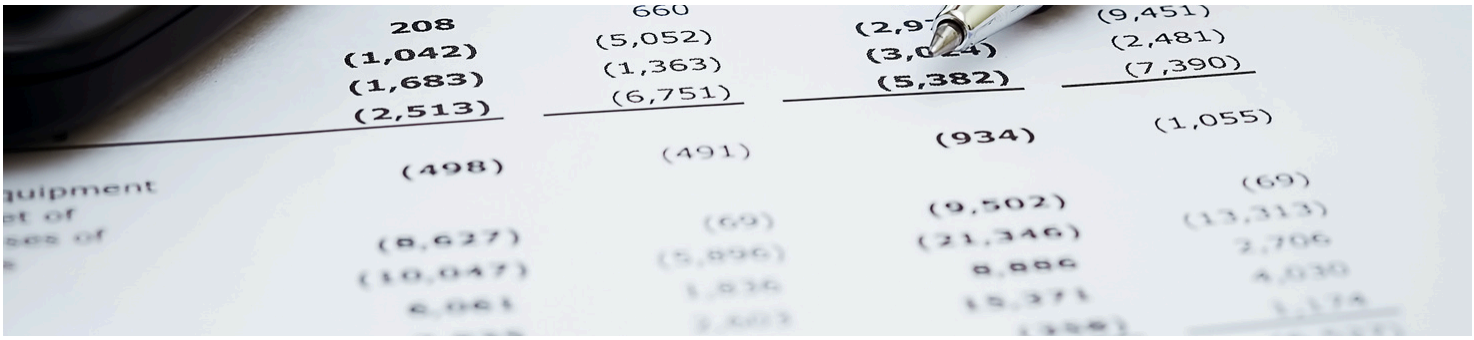
Nia:wen to the Standing with Survivors 2025–2026

- Jays Care Foundation
- Six Nations Health
- Metcalf Foundation
- Law Foundation of Ontario
- COBS Bread, Brantford, ON
- The City of Brantford
- The Albert Group
- Hamilton-Wentworth Elementary Teachers' Local
- Canadian Heritage
- The Government of Ontario
- The Government of Canada

Funded by the Government of Canada

2025/2026

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS



To download our Audited Financial Statements for 2025-2026, scan the QR code to visit our website.

2025-2026 FINANCIAL SNAPSHOT

Revenue	**$3,458,831**
Expenses	**$3,283,492**
Excess Revenue over Expenses	**$175,339**

FUNDING DEPENDENCY

The Survivors' Secretariat began the work of Bringing the Children Home in spring 2021 with an initial federal funding commitment of $10.3 million over three years (2021–2024).

In 2024-2025, the Secretariat began its year with carryover funding from the previous 3-year commitment. New federal funding was denied in 2024-2025 and by year end the Organizations was in a deficit of $48,733.

Operations were able to continue in 2025-2026 through deferred revenue, loans, donations, and project specific funding as federal funding for the 2025-2026 fiscal year, was not approved or received until March 29, 2026, just 2 days before the end of fiscal year.

SUBSEQUENT EVENTS

Subsequent to year end the agreements with the federal and provincial governments have not yet been renewed. The impact on the Organization cannot be determined at this time but is being reviewed on an ongoing basis. Should funding not be received, the Organization would significantly reduce expenditures (Note 17). In addition, subsequent to year end the Organization has begun the process to apply for a charitable organization designation.

2025/2026

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

SURVIVORS' SECRETARIAT

Assets	2025-2026	2024-2025
Cash (Note 4)	619,557	115,269
Accounts receivable	7,304	27,550
Grant Receivable	2,675,000	538,882
Loan Receivable	-	20,000
Prepaid Expense (Note 5)	19,640	-
Government Receivable	59,719	79,872
Capital Assets (Note 6)	14,447	85,862
Intangible Assets (Note 7)	2,710,450	1,799,800
Total	**6,106,117**	**2,667,235**

ASSETS

The Survivors' Secretariat has capital assets, which are amortized over the lifetime of the asset (Note 3 & 6) including Leasehold Improvements, Sonar Equipment, Computer Equipment, and Security System. Intangible assets (Note 3 & 7) including the records database ($2,554,800) and digitial knowledge bundle ($155,650).

LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

The Survivors' Secretariat's current liabilities include Accounts Payable and Accrued Liabilities ($1,157,217) as well as Deferred Revenue ($2,056,452), Loan Payable ($100,000), Deferred Capital Contributions related to Capital Assets ($2,554,800), and Unrestricted Net Assets or Donations ($237,648). Liabilities totaled $6,106,117).

DEFERRED REVENUE

At the end of 2025/2026 Survivors' Secretariat had a deferred revenue of $2,056,452 (Note 8), with $687,794 deferred from Federal-CIRNAC; $783,344 from Ontario-Ministry of Indigenous Affairs; $317,715 from The Law Foundation of Ontario; $142,599 from Six Nations Health; $75,000 from the Diocese of Hamilton; $50,000 from the Diocese of Toronto.

Deferred Revenue	2025-2026	2024-2025
Deferred Grant Revenue, Beginning of Year	10,186	4,799,721
Net Grant Received/ Receivable	6,058,786	1,619,500
Total	**6,068,972**	**6,419,221**
Grants Utilized in the Year	(4,012,520)	(6,409,035)
Deferred Grant Revenue (Note 8)	**2,056,452**	**10,186**

2025/2026

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

SURVIVORS' SECRETARIAT

PRIMARY REVENUE SOURCES

In 2025/2026 fiscal the Organization received approximately 26.22% (2024/25 - 45.77%) of its revenue from The Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada (CIRNAC) and 39.39% (2024/25 - 48.89%) of its funding from the Province of Ontario- Ministry of Indigenous Affairs. A total of 65.61% (2024/2025 - 94.66%) of funding derived from government sources.

Revenue	2025-2026	2024-2025
Grants - Federal	883,242	2,602,580
Grants - Provincial	1,300,524	2,749,017
Grants- Heritage Canada	217,354	126,346
Grant- Six Nations Health	856,400	-
Grant - The Law Foundation of Ontario	-	25,074
Grant - Thunder Bay CEDC	-	30,000
Amortization Related to Capital Assets (Note 9)	85,862	77,008
Donations	86,718	51,216
Other Income	23,628	45,126
Interest	5,103	31,239
TOTAL	**3,458,831**	**5,737,606**

Expense	2025-2026	2024-2025
Outreach & Engagement (Note 11)	397,921	687,600
Meetings & Hospitality	274,049	1,929,133
Occupancy Costs	69,238	110,849
Office	41,456	62,101
Administration & Staffing	854,994	1,119,541
Travel & Accommodation	21,231	54,945
Vendor Contract Services (Note 12)	1,510,877	1,724,658
Amortization Expense	15,499	77,008
Bad Debt Expense	20,000	-
Ground Search Expenses	5,800	20,504
TOTAL	**3,211,065**	**5,786,339**
Excess Revenue over Expenses before undernoted item	247,766	(48,733)
Loss on disposal of capital assets	(72,427)	-
Excess Revenue over Expenses	**175,339**	**(48,733)**

YEAR IN REVIEW 2025–2026

Over the 2025–2026 fiscal year, the Survivors' Secretariat continued to create spaces for truth-telling, learning, healing, and advocacy. Guided by Survivors, the Secretariat worked with communities, partners, and allies to advance investigations and strengthen public awareness. This progress required significant perseverance, as federal funding for the fiscal year was not approved or received until March 29, 2026, just two days before year-end.

Despite these challenges, the Secretariat's work moved forward through donations, initiative-specific funding, and the support of community partners. The Secretariat has continued to preserve the lived experiences of Survivors and share their knowledge, ensuring future generations understand the impacts of the Indian Residential School system.

The following highlights capture the events, milestones and initiatives that shaped our year. From community gatherings and educational events to investigations and national advocacy, they reflect our commitment to advancing our four pillars: Commemoration, Ground Search, Advocacy and Document Collection.

APRIL 2025

On Easter Monday, Senator Kim Pate met with Survivors' Secretariat Board and staff at the former Mohawk Institute.

Her visit emphasized the need for sustainable federal funding for community-led investigations, the full release of residential-school records, and support for Survivor-led initiatives. The 2024 Senate report Missing Children, Missing Records reinforced these priorities and called for continued action on archival record access and community stewardship.

MAY 2025

In May, the Secretariat hosted its annual Six Nations Community Awareness Open House. Welcoming community members to learn about ongoing Survivor-led investigations into the Mohawk Institute's 140+ year history.

Outreach and wellness teams supported cultural events and gatherings throughout the month, strengthening community connection and visibility.

JUNE 2025

June marked National Indigenous History Month and the launch of the Students Supporting Survivors Summer Program (YSSP), supported by Six Nations Elected Council.

Training included Grid Set Day and total station instruction led by archaeological advisor Ed Eastaugh, while cultural teachings such as the Three Sisters Garden workshop and Strawberry Thanksgiving reinforced land-based learning and community wellness.

JULY 2025

In July, the Secretariat welcomed Kathy Mair, Leo Nicholas and Alfred "Lonnie" Johnson to our Board of Directors. We participated in the Shingwauk Gathering, *Life After Residential Schools*, providing wellness support to Survivors and Board members and supporting opportunities for reflection and connection. We also presented at the Nishnawbe Aski Nation National Gathering in Ottawa, sharing our work and strengthening relationships with First Nations communities undertaking similar efforts across the country.

AUGUST 2025

In August, the Secretariat participated in the National Site Search Forum in Ottawa. The forum provided opportunities to advance Survivor- and Elder-guided protocols that shape this work with care, respect and accountability.

We also concluded the Youth Supporting Survivors Summer Program. Our Board and staff presented each student with an eagle feather—a symbol of honour, respect and responsibility.

SEPTEMBER 2025

In September, the Secretariat supported truth and reconciliation by attending public events, including the reopening of the former Mohawk Institute, marking its renewed role as a place for public learning and remembrance.

The Secretariat's annual Memorial 105 Display, arranged as an eagle in flight, honoured the children who never returned home from the Mohawk Institute. We also participated the Walk for the Park, honouring Mohawk Institute Survivor and founding Board member John Elliott.

OCTOBER 2025

In October, the Survivors' Secretariat hosted the 3rd *Knowledge is Sacred, Truth is Healing* Gathering in Thunder Bay, bringing together Survivors, community representatives, and advocates.

Discussions centered on funding challenges, access to Indian Residential School records, and investigations into unmarked burials. Indigenous Data Sovereignty was a central theme and the work of reclaiming the truth and protecting lived experiences to ensure that Survivors decide how their histories are preserved and shared.

NOVEMBER 2025

In November, the Secretariat held its Annual General Meeting for the 2024-2025 fiscal year. The Secretariat also participated in the annual Six Nations Santa Claus Parade, connecting with community members and families while celebrating the beginning of the holiday season.

DECEMBER 2025

December marked a period of advocacy and connection. A highlight of the month was the Secretariat's annual Holiday potluck where staff and Survivors gathered to share a meal and express gratitude, to all who helped advance the Secretariat's mission throughout 2025.

The Secretariat advocated for the preservation of Indian Residential School Survivor records and urged the federal government to protect Independent Assessment Process (IAP) records scheduled for destruction in 2027, noting their potential importance to investigations into missing children and unmarked burials.

JANUARY 2026

The new year began with strengthened partnership development, planning sessions, and training opportunities to support continued outreach and engagement. The Secretariat worked to renew relationships with community organizations and identify upcoming collaborative programming opportunities. A one-year celebration of life was held for John Elliot at the Secretariat office. The focus for this event was to uplift the memories we had and to celebrate the time we spent with John.

FEBRUARY 2026

February focused on continued partnership development, community engagement planning, and wellness support for Survivors and community members.

The Final recording of Survivors' testimonies for the upcoming Stolen Childhoods travelling exhibit progressed throughout the month.

MARCH 2026

March also brought positive news for the organization, with confirmation of federal funding for the 2025–2026 fiscal year received on March 29, two days before the fiscal year end. This funding provided important support for the continuation of the Secretariat's work.

A highlight of the month was the participation of Survivors of the Mohawk Institute in the *Bridging Generations* event hosted by Brantford Native Housing. The gathering created opportunities for meaningful dialogue helping to foster knowledge sharing across generations.

FOUR PILLARS

GROUND SEARCH

Uncover. Document. Share.

The 2025-2026 year marked a continued shift toward data analysis, interpretation, and long-term planning for the Ground Search Department. Field operations at the former Mohawk Institute slowed as the team focused on organizing, consolidating, and preparing the extensive geophysical data collected over the past three years.

The ground search team worked closely with experts including Ed Eastaugh, Dr. Scott Hamilton, Dr. Charly Bank, and Dr. Andrew Martindale to develop standardized reporting frameworks and prepare for advanced geophysical analysis. A formal partnership with Western University is now underway to support academic collaboration, GPR interpretation, and spatial analysis research.

Operational responsibilities remained steady, including construction site monitoring across Brantford and surrounding areas. The Youth Supporting Survivors Program (YSSP) continued to strengthen local capacity by training Indigenous youth in GPR, GNSS, drone operations, and archaeological surveying. This work continues to be guided by Survivors' leadership, community-led, and with scientific integrity ensuring that every step taken supports the sacred responsibility to Bring the Children Home.

Ground Search Progress as of March 31, 2026:

18.86	536	3%
Acres surveyed	Grids surveyed	Of search area

Total search area: 607.5 acres. Several grids were resurveyed to correct earlier mapping.

FOUR PILLARS

DOCUMENT COLLECTION

Uncover. Document. Share.

During the 2025–2026 fiscal year, the Secretariat's research and document collection work continued to advance. Guided by our Data Librarian, the Secretariat reached a major milestone: migrating all records from its temporary Airtable system to the new community archival database. This transition supports Indigenous data sovereignty, ensuring records are securely housed and remain under the stewardship of Survivors, families, and communities.

The Secretariat continued working to identify every student who attended the Mohawk Institute, reviewing records from more than 50 repositories across North America and the United Kingdom. Collaboration with Know History and Animikii supported archival development and the completion of the Stolen Childhoods travelling exhibition, keeping Survivor voices central to its interpretation and design. Partnerships with the Office of the Chief Coroner of Ontario were strengthened through coordinated document sharing, advancing truth-telling and respectful record stewardship.

The Secretariat also expanded internal research capacity, visited Library and Archives Canada, and explored secure storage and software solutions to safeguard Indigenous data. Together, these efforts reinforce the Secretariat's commitment to truth, transparency, and community-led stewardship of records.

- **105 Known Deaths**
- **60+ Impacted Communities**
- **2,100 Key Persons Identified**
- **6,200+ Students Identified**

*Data as of March 2026

FOUR PILLARS

ADVOCACY & COMMEMORATION

Uncover. Document. Share.

ADVOCACY

Survivor voices remain at the heart of the Secretariat's advocacy, guiding its pursuit of truth, justice, accountability, and the ongoing work to Bring the Children Home.

Through formal collaboration with the Office of the Chief Coroner of Ontario, the Secretariat advanced investigations into the deaths of children associated with the Mohawk Institute. Guided by Survivor priorities, continued partnerships and advocacy strengthened efforts to uncover the truth, honour the children, and ensure Survivor experiences are heard and respected.

UNCOVER. DOCUMENT. SHARE.

COMMEMORATION

Guided by Survivors, commemoration honours their experiences, protects memories, and remembers the children who never returned home. Through Fireside Chats, screenings of Nature is Healing film, and community gatherings, the Secretariat created spaces for Survivors to connect, reflect, and share their experiences.

Survivor knowledge guided the Memory Project and the community-driven archive. The completion of the *Stolen Childhoods* travelling exhibit further supported efforts to preserve and share their truths for future generations.

Stolen Childhoods

A Survivor-guided travelling exhibition

Created by the Survivors' Secretariat with support from Know History and funding from the Museums Assistance Program (MAP), the *Stolen Childhoods* exhibition explores the history and impacts of the Mohawk Institute, Canada's longest-running Indian Residential School, located in Brantford, Ontario.

This exhibition brings together archival records, photographs, digital storytelling and interactive touch screens to share more than 140+ years of history through the lived experiences of the Survivors who attended.

Stolen Childhoods is an act of truth-telling and reclamation. It honours experiences long denied or minimized, connects generations, and deepens public understanding of Indian Residential Schools. This exhibit is also available in French and Mohawk via a QR Code.

Host the exhibition

To inquire about hosting the exhibition at your school, museum, organization or community space.
Contact: info@survivorssecretariat.ca

Scan the QR Code to learn more about *Stolen Childhoods*.

SURVIVORS' SECRETARIAT

NIA:WEN | THANK YOU

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