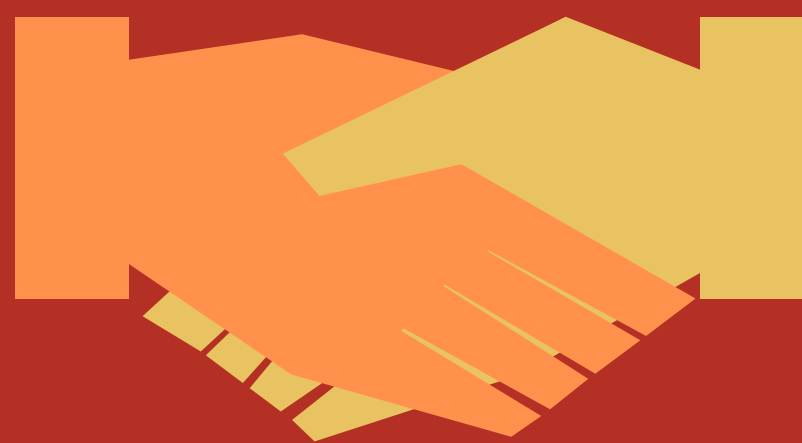


# INDIGENOUS AWARENESS & ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ARPA would like to acknowledge the First Nations, the Métis, and all of the people across Alberta who share a history and a deep connection with this land. We dedicate ourselves to moving forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in the spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

## RECONCILIATION



Like many of us in the recreation and parks sector, ARPA is on its own reconciliation journey with diverse Indigenous peoples and communities across Alberta. Our goal is that through our actions, as a member-based organization, we demonstrate our dedication to moving forward in partnership with Indigenous communities in the spirit of reconciliation and collaboration.

In our collaborative efforts, we encourage and embrace the approach of **“two-eyed seeing”**, which means bringing together both the strengths of Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives to create balance with each other. Seeing through both lenses can lead to benefits for all.

Now more than ever, it is crucial that **“Canadians do more than just talk about reconciliation; we must learn how to practice reconciliation in our everyday lives - within ourselves and our families, and in our communities, governments, places of worship, schools, and workplaces”** (TRC Final Report, Volume 6). Doing more consists of learning about and understanding the past and the lasting racist and discriminatory impacts that colonization has had on Indigenous families and communities.

Two **fundamental reports** that are paving the way for reconciliation in Canada include:

- The **United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP)** was adopted by the United Nations on September 13, 2007
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) issued its **94 Calls to Action report** in 2015

## ALLYSHIP

**Allyship is a way to facilitate and engage in reconciliation.** Our partners at the Calgary Foundation describe the responsibilities of being an ally as follows:

- “Being an ally is about disrupting oppressive spaces by educating others on the realities and histories of marginalized people;
- An ally recognizes that every person has a basic human right to dignity, respect, and equal access to resources;
- An ally acknowledges that building relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people is work of the heart. It requires a certain humbling to allow our hearts and minds to accept new, and often challenging information.”

Visit: <https://calgaryfoundation.org/about-us/reconciliation/indigenous-ally-toolkit/>





# INDIGENOUS AWARENESS & ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

## INCLUSIVE RECREATION



With the population of Indigenous people being one of the **youngest and fastest growing populations** in the country, it is paramount that ARPA contributes to enhancing and ensuring meaningful recreation opportunities that are reflective of and inclusive to Indigenous culture, practices, and traditions.

**“These populations and other ethnocultural/racial groups enrich our recreational experiences with multiple languages, historical context and diverse cultural identities, while challenging recreation to respond to their unique needs and strengths.”** ([Pathways to Wellbeing: A Framework for Recreation in Canada, 2015](#))

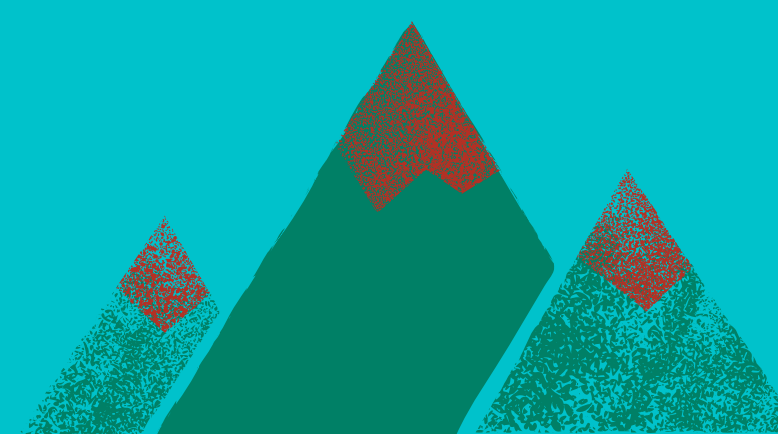
Recreation is an integral part of Indigenous culture and is rooted in a holistic framework that relies on building connections, relationships, and trust. Especially for Indigenous children and youth, recreation is the vehicle for positive development of their individual sense of belonging, identity, competence, and understanding of their relationship to others, the community, and their nation.

Recreation is also a tool that offers engaging and interactive settings for children and youth to learn about cultural values, protocol, history and traditional teachings while promoting skill development, healthy living, and community healing ([BCRPA, Sport and Recreation in Aboriginal Communities](#)).

The following content is derived from the foundational document [Parks for All 2017](#), which was initiated by a partnership between Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA) and Canadian Parks Council (CPC).

Parks and natural environments can have great **spiritual meaning** for Indigenous people, and the relationships Indigenous people hold with the environment are rooted in practices of reciprocity. This reciprocity is understood as: **When you take from Nature, you give something back to maintain balance and harmony between all living things - because all living things are connected.**

It is important to recognize and understand that the history of parks across the continuum includes denial, dispossession and violence, and that colonialism is an ongoing reality for Indigenous people today. As recreation and parks professionals, it is our duty to **restore balance and reciprocity in parks and green spaces** by “ensuring Indigenous leadership and inclusion are available at all levels in the parks community” (Parks For All, 2017).



## INCLUSIVE PARKS

## A SUCCESS STORY AT ARPA

On Saturday, Oct. 27, 2018 at the ARPA Conference in Jasper, Alberta, Siksika Health Services (SHS) and ARPA signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to formalize their important partnership rooted in their shared beliefs that recreation and parks in Alberta are vital to our interconnected social fabric, and contribute significantly to better holistic health outcomes for all.

This historic event marks ARPA's first ever MOU signing with an Indigenous community in its nearly 70 years of existence. Both parties are proud and honoured to embark on this monumental journey together where they seek to learn from one another as colleagues and friends. It is a partnership that is grounded in mutual respect and a shared commitment to uphold the rights outlined in the United Nations' Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, and the calls of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission.





# INDIGENOUS AWARENESS & ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

## CULTURAL USE OF LAND & LAND SOVEREIGNTY



Indigenous peoples are recognized for being stewards of the land. Parks, open spaces and natural areas are essential to ecological survival and are spaces that help to promote arts and culture, which are some of the best ways for expressing the spirituality of the land and encouraging stewardship ethics (Mantioba - Recreation Director's handbook, 2008).

Growing threats to the natural environment have made the role of environmental stewardship increasingly important to the recreation field (Pathways to Wellbeing: Framework for Recreation in Canada, 2015) and is a role that is foundational to Indigenous culture and ways of living.



## INDIGENOUS TRADITIONAL FOOD SYSTEMS

ARPA's Healthy Eating in Recreation Settings (HERS) Indigenous Traditional Food Systems online eModule serves as **an educational piece for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to learn about land and food sovereignty through an Indigenous lens.**

Some of the **key takeaways** from this eModule include:

- Generally speaking, Indigenous Traditional Food Systems are the traditional or original ways that Indigenous Peoples interacted and used their knowledge of the environment to live off the land (i.e. hunting, fishing, gathering, and agriculture).
- Past and recent historical events, urbanization and government regulations have all played a role in the loss and disconnect of some Indigenous communities from the land and traditional knowledge.
- Despite the barriers that exist, returning to Traditional Food Systems come with various benefits. They have the potential to create or enhance community wellbeing and resiliency by providing and supporting:
  - 1) Indigenous food sovereignty;
  - 2) Health benefits;
  - 3) Community benefits

To access the free eModule, visit:

<https://arpaonline.ca/program/walking-with-indigenous-communities/ecourse/>





# INDIGENOUS AWARENESS & ENGAGEMENT TOOLKIT

## RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

At the root of our Reconciliation efforts is our acknowledgement of the damaging legacy of intergenerational trauma that the Residential school system has created and continues to perpetuate among Indigenous populations across the province and nation.

With over 130 located across the country, Canadian residential schools date back to the 1870s - with the last school having closed as recently as 1996. During this era, more than 150,000 First Nations, Métis, and Inuit children were forcibly taken away from their parents and placed into government-funded, church-run schools, where they were forbidden to speak their language or practice their own culture.

With an estimated 80,000 survivors living today, the ongoing impact of residential schools has been felt throughout generations and has contributed to social problems that continue to exist.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada has a mandate to learn the truth about what happened in the residential schools and to inform all Canadians about what happened in the schools.

For more information, visit:  
<http://www.trc.ca/about-us.html>

Also, take a look at this video by CBC News titled: "Canada's Cultural Genocide of Indigenous Peoples"



## ARPA'S INDIGENOUS ORAL KNOWLEDGE HUB

We are excited and proud to share with our community members and partners our Indigenous Oral Knowledge Hub - a place where various stories, teachings, and resources live on our Walking With Indigenous Communities website. The purpose of this resource is to not only continue acting on our journey of reconciliation as an organization, but to help those in our sector and beyond start their own learning journey in reconciliation. Our huge thanks go to the Elders and to our partners who have shared the gift of these incredible stories and teachings.

Visit:  
<https://arpaonline.ca/program/walking-with-indigenous-communities>

## FOUNDATIONAL RESOURCES

- [United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#)
- [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action](#)
- [Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls](#)
- [Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples](#)

For more resources, visit:  
<https://arpaonline.ca/program/walking-with-indigenous-communities/resources7/>

