Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action Priority Areas for Provincial Government Action

October 2015
Purpose:

This document lists the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada’s Calls to Action and priority areas for Provincial Government Action.

Background:

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) was created as a requirement of the Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement, reached in 2007. The TRC was officially established on June 2, 2008 and was completed in June 2015. Upon closing, the TRC released a report identifying 94 Calls to Action (recommendations) to “redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of Canadian reconciliation”¹. These Calls to Action were divided into two categories – legacy and reconciliation. The Calls to Action under the legacy category aimed to address the harms that resulted from the residential school system and covered a wide range of topics, including child welfare, education, language and culture, health, and justice. The reconciliation category aimed to advance the continued process of reconciliation in Canada.

The Calls to Action identified by the TRC cover a broad range of subjects and frequently are technically specific. Therefore, our recommendation to government is to focus on thematic areas identified by the TRC and to use the individual Calls to Action as objectives within each broader theme.

Priority Areas:

General

The OFIFC holds the position that the TRC Call to Action regarding the development of a new Royal Proclamation on reconciliation should be fully supported by the province of Ontario, as long as the reality of urban Aboriginal people and organisations is fully reflected.

As well, the OFIFC supports the Call to Action regarding the creation of a National Council and Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and the province should be a vocal supporter of this Call to Action as an essential step in fostering constructive dialogue about our common histories.

¹ The full report can be accessed at http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Findings/Calls_to_Action_English2.pdf
Children and youth in state custody:

There are extensive Calls to Action related to children in care, the administration, delivery and control of child welfare, and accountability by state institutions for Aboriginal children in care. The OFIFC and its’ partners, the Métis Nation of Ontario (MNO) and the Ontario Native Women’s Association (ONWA) continue to work with Ontario’s Ministry of Children and Youth Services (MCYS) on Aboriginal Children and Youth Strategy (ACYS), which will have a direct impact on the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal children and youth who are disproportionately involved with the child welfare system. While this recommendation is narrow in its scope of looking to “fix” the child welfare system, the OFIFC, in conjunction with the MNO and the ONWA, continues to advocate strongly for an ACYS that is centred on four key elements including; an increase in Aboriginal control, increases in prevention supports, government wide systems change, and a robust Aboriginal led framework for monitoring and evaluating outcomes. The OFIFC and its partners look forward to actual implementation of the ACYS in the very near term, without which we can anticipate prolonged poor outcomes for state-involved children in Ontario.

A significant challenge in this Area remains the provincial government’s reticence to commit to a concrete timeline for resourced implementation of the ACYS. On the understanding that certain important technical details remain to be determined (a governance model, performance measures identification) a gesture of goodwill such as the funding of the Aboriginal partners’ top priorities for impactful and ACYS aligned programming on the ground would be helpful. These priorities were identified a year ago with great urgency and have since languished. Meanwhile, in the case of the OFIFC, Friendship Centres continue to ask for an expansion of the Children Who Witness Violence program, which has proven its value both through qualitative and quantitative evaluation, as well as better cultural supports, which we would provide through the proposed Cultural Coordinator program. There is clear evidence supporting the use of culture to advance broader goals such as enhanced self-esteem, improved educational attainment and a host of other positive outcomes.

A further challenge addressed by the TRC Calls to Action includes training of child welfare staff. Therefore, part of the provincial government response to the TRC must include mandatory components in all Social Work degrees or diplomas on Aboriginal peoples and history in Ontario, as well as compulsory, regular cultural competency training provided by Aboriginal community-based organisations. The OFIFC successfully has provided such training to LHINs staff, school boards, police services and parts of the Ontario Public Service. A coherent, regularized and sustained cultural competency approach for all publicly funded programs, services and staff would go a long way to addressing significant levels of racism faced by Indigenous people daily across the province, and specifically may serve to address discriminatory behavior of child welfare authorities. This will serve to address the goals of the ACYS as well as well as the TRC.
More problematically, government hesitation to significantly resource the ACYS has been accompanied, at the highest levels, by silence on the subject matter of reducing the role of child welfare agencies, which are explicitly targets of the TRC Calls to Action. The failure of the child welfare system as a whole is incontrovertibly beyond dispute, yet child welfare agencies in Ontario have little to no obligations of accountability to government or community, yet they continue to be funded. Beyond the double standard this exposes vis-à-vis government’s attitude to large mainstream para-statal agencies such as child welfare agencies (hospitals and boards of education equally fall in this category) versus Aboriginal community-based organisations, it is clear that broader goals with respect to outcomes for Aboriginal children youth cannot be met in the current context, and the TRC Calls to Action cannot be heeded by the current child welfare framework. Thus a serious and robust commitment to significant change in the face of considerable opposition must be undertaken and acted upon immediately beginning with an immediate transfer of resources from the child welfare institutions to Aboriginal community based organisations in accordance with the ACYS.

Fortunately, Ontario is uniquely positioned to amend the CFSA in a manner that reflects the findings of the TRC and the input of Indigenous community organisations in the current review cycle. Specifically, the OFIFC and its partners are advocating for a strongly child and family-centred approach. These discussions have been taking place in depth at the MCYS Technical Table and we believe that our advice, if followed, may position the province as a leader in the field of child welfare vis-à-vis Indigenous children and families.

The OFIFC supports the call for governments to collaboratively eliminate the overrepresentation of Aboriginal youth in custody over the next ten years and believes that the best way to achieve this objective is through the immediate implementation of the ACYS. The OFIFC has been a vocal advocate against the overrepresentation of Aboriginal youth in provincial youth custodial institutions. In Ontario, while the overall absolute number of incarcerated youth declines, Aboriginal youth remain overrepresented. Aboriginal boys aged 12-17 are incarcerated at a rate five times higher than their share of the general population in Ontario and the proportion of Aboriginal girls in Ontario jails is 10.7 times higher than their share of the general population.2 Aboriginal youth are incarcerated at a higher rate than non-Aboriginal youth convicted of the same offences. According to 2009-2010 data, of young offenders convicted of assault, 25 percent of Aboriginal youth were incarcerated, but fewer than 15 percent of non-Aboriginal youth were sent to jail for the same offence.3 The OFIFC has been an active member of the MCYS’ Youth Justice Advisory Panel where we have advocated for the elimination of overrepresentation and the increase in preventative programming for Aboriginal youth. The Youth Justice Advisory Panel should be obligated to link up to and comply with, the ACYS.

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3 Ibid.
Through the MCYS ACYS process, the OFIFC, and its partners, the MNO and ONWA, are engaged with the MCYS in the development of an FASD strategy. This strategy should apply the principles articulated in the ACYS, which would facilitate the achievement of the TRC’s Calls to Action in this area. Further, any strategy that aims to address the issue of FASD must incorporate a strong commitment to the provision of province-wide resources for assessment and diagnosis, access to culturally-appropriate supports throughout the lifecycle, and promotion and prevention activities focused on communities, educators, employers, and the justice system. The OFIFC supports the call for culturally-appropriate FASD preventive programs developed in collaboration with Aboriginal people – these programs should acknowledge and address the root causes of addiction and mental health issues in Aboriginal people, such as intergenerational trauma. The wide-ranging and individually unique effects of FASD also necessitate a seamless and wholistic approach built upon cross-jurisdictional and cross-governmental collaboration.

Education:

Equally numerous are the TRC Calls to Action related to education and employment matters, with a particular focus on elements intended to alleviate the gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal educational and employment attainment.

Early Learning

The Ministry of Education has failed adequately to engage the OFIFC on the question of early learning and early childhood education generally, and has repeatedly ignored input from our organization. This constitutes a significant relationship failure and a critical lost opportunity for the province to support and build upon effective culture-based early years programming in Friendship Centres and other urban Aboriginal organisations. This item must be addressed to meet TRC Calls to Action.

Early Learning is a priority for Friendship Centre communities. Friendship Centres deliver key early years programming aimed at fostering positive self-identity, parent involvement in their child’s education, and delivering culturally appropriate services to urban Aboriginal children and their families. The latest research shows that high school dropout rates are correlated to complex, interrelated socio-historical dynamics which surface in the early years and early years interventions are imperative to the future success of Aboriginal students. Moreover, exposing Ontario’s children to Aboriginal culture from a young age is beneficial for all education stakeholders. We believe that this is a primary strategy to instill values of equity and inclusiveness, and to create safe and accepting schools in our province.

Sweeping changes to the early years landscape in Ontario requires sufficient engagement and collaboration with the urban Aboriginal community to ensure that the needs and perspectives of our community are adequately reflected in the ministry’s work moving forward. The province should review its approach on this issue and engage the OFIFC constructively.
Primary and Secondary

The Province of Ontario committed to eliminate education and employment gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Ontarians in the Ontario First Nation, Métis, Inuit Education Policy Framework. The Ministry of Education has been seeking to address many of the challenges facing Aboriginal students for some time. However, the extremely gradual, incremental approach has meant that the pace of change has been extremely slow overall. Lack of consistency and general absence of system accountability remains a problem. Given nearly a decade later the gap has not improved and in some geographical areas, such as northern Ontario, the gap has increased, the TRCs Calls to Action in this regard are pertinent.

A review of the province’s approach should include placing urban Aboriginal community organisations in advisory and decision-making roles at all levels of the education system. While 84.1% of Aboriginal people in Ontario live off-reserve this is not reflected in any of the current structures of the Ministry of Education or School Boards.

The OFIFC has been engaged in numerous activities such as curriculum review, and the projected expansion of training resources available to teachers to improve their performance in the class. Several Ontario curricula have been revised in recent years with input from the OFIFC, including: Health and Physical Education Curriculum and Social Sciences and Humanities Curriculum. These curricula demonstrated significant improvement over former curricula however, work remains to be done. The OFIFC has also advocated directly regarding Safe and Accepting School and Building Brighter Futures. We have delivered Aboriginal Cultural Competency Training throughout the education system. The OFIFC has long supported a mandatory course in teacher training programs on Aboriginal peoples.

Finally, with respect to the question of accountability, the OFIFC has long advocated for better access to information as an essential component of accountability to the urban Aboriginal community. The Ministry of Education has created Board Planning Tools to encourage boards to work with local Aboriginal communities to structure activities in the board within the goals and commitments of the Ontario FNMI Education Policy Framework. These tools are essential for informing communities about the ministry’s progress toward its goals. The OFIFC has been advocating for better access to this information and increased local input into the design of Board Planning Tools and the province should be moving more quickly in this direction.

We know culture-based programming, and culture-based contexts lead to improved educational outcomes. The OFIFC administers the Alternative Secondary School Program in 11 sites across Ontario. The program aims to increase enrollment, achievement and graduation of urban Aboriginal students in Ontario. This culture-based program meets a
significant need in that the majority of students has been pushed out of the mainstream system and would otherwise become entirely disconnected from education. An expanded and enhanced ASSP would meaningfully address one of the most difficult-to-reach populations among Aboriginal youth, and should be part of any strategy to eliminate education and employment gaps in our communities.

All of these activities speak to numerous TRC Calls to Action, and these should be increased and expanded.

Post-Secondary

There are a number of Calls to Action related to specific areas of post-secondary education. In particular, professional degrees such as those in health and education are singled out for their lack of attention to Aboriginal issues over all, due to the disproportionate influence and impact professionals have. Therefore, the OFIFC will continue to be involved in advancing changes for teachers as mentioned above. In addition, the OFIFC supports the call for the requirement that medical and nursing schools address Aboriginal health issues comprehensively. This should include issues related to access to health services, the effects of systemic racism, education on the social determinants of health model the value and benefits of traditional healing approaches.

It is problematic that, in spite of its expertise in various areas, including the delivery of highly effective cultural competency training, the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities had shown itself to be only minimally interested in engagement with the OFIFC. We look forward to a change in this position as part of the response to the TRC Calls to Action.

Literacy

In keeping with the TRC Calls to Action, the OFIFC continues to advocate for the recognition of Aboriginal languages within the Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) program funded in part through federal labour market transfers to the provincial government. The number of Aboriginal specific LBS program sites should be increased and the recognition of culturally relevant literacy programming, including Aboriginal languages, should be a core component of the LBS. Further, critical improvements must be made to the government’s administration of the LBS program in order for it to return to a basic level of functionality.

Language courses have continually expanded across the province since the initial release of the Ontario FNMI Education Policy Framework. The ministry has warned that there are an insufficient number of qualified teachers to meet the growing demand for Indigenous language courses. Additionally, the province is currently updating Native language curricula for Oneida, Mohawk and Cayuga languages. This work should be undertaken more vigourously by the province in order to address the Calls to Action related to Aboriginal languages.
**Employment**

As the largest urban Aboriginal Skills and Employment Training Strategy (ASETS) agreement holder in Ontario, the OFIFC should be considered a key partner in any strategy aimed at eliminating educational and employment gaps. To date, there has been an overall lack of commitment by the provincial and federal governments for specific urban Aboriginal education, training and employment initiatives. ASETS should be leveraged as one cornerstone of any future strategy to address employment gaps and this approach could be linked to achieving TRC targets.

**Health**

In order to address the Calls to Action in the area of health as they apply to the majority of Ontario’s Aboriginal population, the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care (MOHLTC) should immediately resource the Urban Aboriginal Health Table, where the OFIFC sits with the MNO and ONWA, and commit to the implementation of meaningful and concrete steps in addressing the critical issues of access to care, system racism, mental health and addictions issues, the lack of culturally appropriate treatment facilities, including Family Treatment Centres, the recognition of traditional healing approaches and the immediate implementation of strategies to address the health impacts of Violence Against Aboriginal Women.

The government should publicly re-commit to the Aboriginal Health Policy of Ontario. The federal government, MOHLTC and the 14 LHINs must develop more comprehensive performance measurement tools to monitor and evaluate the Aboriginal service system capacity in collaboration with the Ontario Aboriginal community. The measurable goals must include recognition of the urban Aboriginal population health needs.

Poor health and mental health remain significant barriers to achieving overall well-being in off-reserve and urban Aboriginal communities. Additionally, living in an urban centres presents unique challenges for Aboriginal people when accessing health services, including experiences of discrimination and cultural conflict when interacting with mainstream service providers. Access to and effectiveness of programs and services delivered off-reserve will be increased when urban Aboriginal organisations and communities are involved in planning, consultation, delivery and evaluation.

The provincial and federal governments must effectively coordinate and collaborate to overcome the jurisdictional gaps in order to provide seamless coverage of health and social services for the urban Aboriginal population.

**Ending Violence Against Aboriginal Women (EVAAW)**

The TRC addresses the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women. The OFIFC believes that when Indigenous women are murdered or go missing it is the culmination of myriad actions, behaviours, indifferences and traumas that must be addressed wholistically in order to be ended outright.
In Ontario, the OFIFC co-leads the process by which violence against Aboriginal women is being addressed in Ontario as a co-chair of the provincial Joint Working Group to End Violence Against Aboriginal Women. The Joint Working Group is guided by the nationally-recognized ‘Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Aboriginal Women’, co-authored in 2007 by the OFIFC and the Ontario Native Women’s Association.

In this context, the OFIFC recommends the adoption of a larger wholistic national strategic plan to end violence against Aboriginal women which can include key goals such as data collection and evaluation. An inquiry, which the OFIFC supports, is only a small portion of the work necessary and that the inquiry should be the catalyst which creates a climate of change nation-wide. In order to effectively and sustainably end violence against Aboriginal women, coordinated, strategic and fulsome culturally-competent approaches are needed within multiple sectors. The OFIFC has recommended the development of specific deliverables to end violence – not just safety plans or policing measures and justice responses, but a wholistic approach to ending violence. This means government-wide initiatives that are proven to ensure safety and healing in our communities. This means talking about an action plan with specific deliverables and priorities such as: housing; education; training; employment; health and healing; anti-violence education; Aboriginal cultural competency; men’s programming; and wholistic justice approaches.

The OFIFC delivers Aboriginal Healing and Wellness Strategy programs and initiatives including Kizhaay Anishinaabe Niin and Healthy Indigenous Male curriculum; the Children Who Witness Violence Program; and the Youth In Transition Program in Friendship Centres across Ontario. The programs and initiatives provide healing services and promote skills-building through culture-based programs and services, but are restricted in their delivery due to unstable program funding. Friendship Centres would benefit from enhanced funding to expand and enhance current programming to contribute to meeting the TRC Calls to Action related to this issue. Furthermore, in order to properly address violence against Aboriginal women in Ontario, the province must fully implement the Strategic Framework to End Violence. This work presents a unique opportunity for Ontario to become a national leader in EVAAW.

Conclusion:

The province of Ontario is uniquely positioned to take advantage of work that is already taking place but which has struggled to have purchase in many ministries and central agencies. The OFIFC is committed to working with the province to ensure the pace of this work is increased, and recognizes that in order for this work and its impact to be sustainable it must be done based on evidence, and with full accountability in all directions. Properly and fully implemented the recommendations below will move Ontario to becoming a national leader in reconciliation between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples and will position the province to reap the innumerable benefits of healthy, engaged Indigenous communities.
Recommendations:

It is recommended the Province of Ontario:

General:
1. Support the development and implementation of a Royal Proclamation on Reconciliation which includes urban Aboriginal people and organisations;
2. Support the creation of a fully resourced National Council and Centre for Truth and Reconciliation;

Children and Youth:
3. Immediately implement the Aboriginal Children and Youth Strategy including
   a. Immediate resource allocations based on priorities identified by the urban Aboriginal partners as a gesture of good faith;
   b. Development of an adequate and demographically correct governance model;
4. Ensure broad and deep amendments are made to the CFSA that reflect the goals of the ACYS, including:
   a. A child and family-centred approach;
   b. Accountability on the part of para-statal agencies to the urban Aboriginal community;
   c. Resource re-allocation towards culture-based prevention;
5. Develop and implement an FASD Strategy that properly reflects the needs of urban Aboriginal communities;

Education
6. Address the OFIFC’s concerns regarding the implementation of Early Learning;
7. Review of the FNIM Education Policy Framework for increased relevance and accountability to urban Aboriginal students and with a view to increasing the pace of reforms;
8. Expand the Alternative Secondary School Program in Friendship Centres;
9. Review all literacy programming with a view to increasing its relevance and functionality to Aboriginal users;
10. Work with the OFIFC and to leverage the impact of ASETS in Friendship Centre communities;

Health
11. Resource and advance action identified by the Urban Aboriginal Health Table;
12. Re-commit to the Aboriginal Health Policy for Ontario;

EVAAW
13. Fully resource and implement the Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Aboriginal Women.
Appendix 1

TRC Calls to Action pertaining to identified priorities:

Children and Youth:

1. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to commit to reducing the number of Aboriginal children in care by:
   i. Monitoring and assessing neglect investigations.
   ii. Providing adequate resources to enable Aboriginal communities and child-welfare organizations to keep Aboriginal families together where it is safe to do so, and to keep children in culturally appropriate environments, regardless of where they reside.
   iii. Ensuring that social workers and others who conduct child-welfare investigations are properly educated and trained about the history and impacts of residential schools.
   iv. Ensuring that social workers and others who conduct child-welfare investigations are properly educated and trained about the potential for Aboriginal communities and families to provide more appropriate solutions to family healing.
   v. Requiring that all child-welfare decision makers consider the impact of the residential school experience on children and their caregivers.

2. We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with the provinces and territories, to prepare and publish annual reports on the number of Aboriginal children (First Nations, Inuit, and Métis) who are in care, compared with non-Aboriginal children, as well as the reasons for apprehension, the total spending on preventive and care services by child-welfare agencies, and the effectiveness of various interventions.

4. We call upon the federal government to enact Aboriginal child-welfare legislation that establishes national standards for Aboriginal child apprehension and custody cases and includes principles that:
   i. Affirm the right of Aboriginal governments to establish and maintain their own child-welfare agencies.
   ii. Require all child-welfare agencies and courts to take the residential school legacy into account in their decision making.
   iii. Establish, as an important priority, a requirement that placements of Aboriginal children into temporary and permanent care be culturally appropriate.
5. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate parenting programs for Aboriginal families.

33. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to recognize as a high priority the need to address and prevent Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD), and to develop, in collaboration with Aboriginal people, FASD preventive programs that can be delivered in a culturally appropriate manner.

Education and employment

7. We call upon the federal government to develop with Aboriginal groups a joint strategy to eliminate educational and employment gaps between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.

8. We call upon the federal government to eliminate the discrepancy in federal education funding for First Nations children being educated on reserves and those First Nations children being educated off reserves.

9. We call upon the federal government to prepare and publish annual reports comparing funding for the education of First Nations children on and off reserves, as well as educational and income attainments of Aboriginal peoples in Canada compared with non-Aboriginal people.

10. We call on the federal government to draft new Aboriginal education legislation with the full participation and informed consent of Aboriginal peoples. The new legislation would include a commitment to sufficient funding and would incorporate the following principles:

   i. Providing sufficient funding to close identified educational achievement gaps within one generation.
   ii. Improving education attainment levels and success rates.
   iii. Developing culturally appropriate curricula.
   iv. Protecting the right to Aboriginal languages, including the teaching of Aboriginal languages as credit courses.
   v. Enabling parental and community responsibility, control, and accountability, similar to what parents enjoy in public school systems.
   vi. Enabling parents to fully participate in the education of their children.
   vii. Respecting and honouring Treaty relationships.

11. We call upon the federal government to provide adequate funding to end the backlog of First Nations students seeking a post-secondary education.
12. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate early childhood education programs for Aboriginal families.

13. We call upon the federal government to acknowledge that Aboriginal rights include Aboriginal language rights.

14. We call upon the federal government to enact an Aboriginal Languages Act that incorporates the following principles:

i. Aboriginal languages are a fundamental and valued element of Canadian culture and society, and there is an urgency to preserve them.

ii. Aboriginal language rights are reinforced by the Treaties.

iii. The federal government has a responsibility to provide sufficient funds for Aboriginal-language revitalization and preservation.

iv. The preservation, revitalization, and strengthening of Aboriginal languages and cultures are best managed by Aboriginal people and communities.

v. Funding for Aboriginal language initiatives must reflect the diversity of Aboriginal languages.

15. We call upon the federal government to appoint, in consultation with Aboriginal groups, an Aboriginal Languages Commissioner. The commissioner should help promote Aboriginal languages and report on the adequacy of federal funding of Aboriginal-languages initiatives.

16. We call upon post-secondary institutions to create university and college degree and diploma programs in Aboriginal languages.

63. We call upon the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada to maintain an annual commitment to Aboriginal education issues, including:

i. Developing and implementing Kindergarten to Grade Twelve curriculum and learning resources on Aboriginal peoples in Canadian history, and the history and legacy of residential schools.

ii. Sharing information and best practices on teaching curriculum related to residential schools and Aboriginal history.

iii. Building student capacity for intercultural understanding, empathy, and mutual respect.

iv. Identifying teacher-training needs relating to the above.

64. We call upon all levels of government that provide public funds to denominational schools to require such schools to provide an education on comparative religious
studies, which must include a segment on Aboriginal spiritual beliefs and practices developed in collaboration with Aboriginal Elders.

Health

18. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to acknowledge that the current state of Aboriginal health in Canada is a direct result of previous Canadian government policies, including residential schools, and to recognize and implement the health-care rights of Aboriginal people as identified in international law, constitutional law, and under the Treaties.

19. We call upon the federal government, in consultation with Aboriginal peoples, to establish measurable goals to identify and close the gaps in health outcomes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities, and to publish annual progress reports and assess long-term trends. Such efforts would focus on indicators such as: infant mortality, maternal health, suicide, mental health, addictions, life expectancy, birth rates, infant and child health issues, chronic diseases, illness and injury incidence, and the availability of appropriate health services.

20. In order to address the jurisdictional disputes concerning Aboriginal people who do not reside on reserves, we call upon the federal government to recognize, respect, and address the distinct health needs of the Métis, Inuit, and off-reserve Aboriginal peoples.

21. We call upon the federal government to provide sustainable funding for existing and new Aboriginal healing centres to address the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual harms caused by residential schools, and to ensure that the funding of healing centres in Nunavut and the Northwest Territories is a priority.

22. We call upon those who can effect change within the Canadian health-care system to recognize the value of Aboriginal healing practices and use them in the treatment of Aboriginal patients in collaboration with Aboriginal healers and Elders where requested by Aboriginal patients.

23. We call upon all levels of government to:
   i. Increase the number of Aboriginal professionals working in the health-care field.
   ii. Ensure the retention of Aboriginal health-care providers in Aboriginal communities.
   iii. Provide cultural competency training for all healthcare professionals.
24. We call upon medical and nursing schools in Canada to require all students to take a course dealing with Aboriginal health issues, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Treaties and Aboriginal rights, and Indigenous teachings and practices. This will require skills-based training in intercultural competency, conflict resolution, human rights, and anti-racism.

**EVAAW**

36. We call upon the federal, provincial, and territorial governments to work with Aboriginal communities to provide culturally relevant services to inmates on issues such as substance abuse, family and domestic violence, and overcoming the experience of having been sexually abused.

38. We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to commit to eliminating the overrepresentation of Aboriginal youth in custody over the next decade.

39. We call upon the federal government to develop a national plan to collect and publish data on the criminal victimization of Aboriginal people, including data related to homicide and family violence victimization.

40. We call on all levels of government, in collaboration with Aboriginal people, to create adequately funded and accessible Aboriginal-specific victim programs and services with appropriate evaluation mechanisms.

41. We call upon the federal government, in consultation with Aboriginal organizations, to appoint a public inquiry into the causes of, and remedies for, the disproportionate victimization of Aboriginal women and girls. The inquiry’s mandate would include:
   i. Investigation into missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls.
   ii. Links to the intergenerational legacy of residential schools.