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### **YMCA's Statement on Canada Day**

Saskatoon, SK: As we approach July 1, the YMCA of Saskatoon has decided to take guidance from Chief Cadmus Delorme of Cowessess First Nation. We will be using the Statutory Holiday to reflect on our role as settlers and colonizers on Treaty 6 land.

This past year has been full of pain for many communities within Saskatoon. During the month of June alone, we have seen hate speech directed at members and allies of the 2SLGBTQ+ community as they painted a side walk, 751 bodies of children confirmed at Cowessess First Nation and a Muslim man attacked and assaulted outside of his home.

This might not be our Canadian experience as settlers however, this is the daily reality of Canada for many. While we have many things to be grateful for, the continued oppression and forced assimilation of minorities can't be overlooked.

Chief Delorme told CBC's Ian Hanomansing, "You know in 2021 we all inherited this. If we want to say we're proud Canadians, then we will accept this beautiful country we have today and we will accept what we all inherited. "

The YMCA has been in Saskatoon and since 1908 and we are accepting what we inherited, acknowledging our role as colonizers and educating ourselves this Canada Day and beyond.

Chief Delorme recommended all Canadians use July 1 to listen and learn by reading the 94 calls to action provided by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as well as the 231 calls to justice outlined in the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women.

Beyond this, the YMCA will be recommending all staff and volunteers continue to educate themselves on the ongoing discrimination that many minority groups face. It is important that we don't forget our history and actively work to change the way people are treated today.

"The YMCA of Saskatoon is a community centre where we strive for everyone to belong." said Dean Dodge, CEO. "We will continue to speak up and raise awareness for injustices we see in our community until we can ensure our city is a safe place for everyone."



As one of Saskatoon's largest service charities, the YMCA has a role to play in fostering social inclusion. Over the last year we have been expanding our focus on anti-racism and addressing systemic discrimination, including creating learning opportunities for staff and volunteers, working with community partners, and conducting research on our practices to help us understand how we can better reflect the diversity of the communities we serve.

We will continue to invest in these efforts and engage in listening, learning, and improving, to ensure that the YMCA is a space that is safe and welcoming for everyone

Canada continues to grow and develop as a country, and we can choose what kind of country we want to be. By fostering belonging and inclusion in our organizations and in our communities, we can be the Canada we want. Here's to building that better future, while never forgetting where we've been.

Please find the following resources to assist you in your education:

[Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada Calls to Action](#)

[Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls to Justice](#)

[Nisitohamowin: An Introduction to Understanding Indigenous Perspectives in Canada \(login works until July 15\)](#)