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## **YMCA Canada Statement on Canada 2022 - July 1, 2022**

This Canada Day, YMCA Canada is reflecting on this moment in time, the state of our country, and the world. From the work to support refugees who continue to flee from countries like Ukraine and Afghanistan, to divisions around COVID-19 safety protections, and continued inequities in our society, it is clear that many challenges lie ahead of us. We have seen what is possible when we work together for a greater good, as we have throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. But we have also seen what happens when we ignore our collective responsibility to each other.

At the YMCA, we have always believed in the greater good, and even when things seem dark, we fiercely hold onto this belief as our guiding light. That together, we can be a place for people to connect, hear each other, and live up to our collective responsibility. That we can help people do more than participate —we can help them contribute. That when we do this, we build healthy communities.

We're hopeful that the sentiment that everyone has the right to belong, thrive, and have their basic needs met will persevere. We recognize the harm to communities when that is not the dominant sentiment, and we hold no tolerance for harmful ideologies. We believe people can learn and transform and come to realize that everyone has the right to belong. This is the [Canada We Want](#).

Last year on Canada Day, many called for [the need for reflection and action](#) on truth and reconciliation, as Indigenous communities mourned and grappled with the identification of Indigenous children's remains at former residential school sites in British Columbia, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan. Also in 2021, Canada marked its first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Since last year's Canada Day, more searches have begun and recoveries have been made across Turtle Island. As Indigenous communities expect the number of unmarked graves to continue to rise, today we are taking time to acknowledge the grief and outrage that is being felt through the ongoing recovery process, and to amplify calls for further progress on the [TRC Calls to Action](#).

As one of Canada's largest service charities, the YMCA has a vital role to play in furthering truth and reconciliation efforts within our organization and beyond. This is reflected by our [Statement of Reconciliation](#), our 2020 report on [Reconciliation Initiatives within the YMCA Associations of Canada](#), and the ongoing learning and dialogue events and workshops taking place for YMCA staff, volunteers, and members. We still have much work to do.