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### **OACYC Land Acknowledgement**

The Ontario Association of Child and Youth Care would like to acknowledge that our work takes place on Indigenous territories across the province of Ontario, which encompasses 46 treaties and other agreements with many First Nations communities.

In addition, we would also like to acknowledge that the Association's main office is located in Toronto/Tkaronto. We acknowledge the ancestral traditional territories of the Ojibway, Anishnabeg, Mississaugas of the New Credit, Huron-Wendat, Haudenosaunee, Chippewa, and Métis First Nations Peoples and that it is under Treaty 13.

"The Dish with One Spoon" Wampum Belt Covenant: "The "Dish", or sometimes it is called the "Bowl", represents what is now southern Ontario, from the Great Lakes to Quebec and from Lake Simcoe into the United States.

This covenant is between many nations including the Anishinaabe, Mississaugas of the Credit River, the Chippewa, the Wendat and Haudenosaunee First Nations. The members of this covenant shared in the resources of this land as well as its protection.

*"We all eat out of the Dish, all of us that share this territory, with only one spoon. That means we have to share the responsibility of ensuring the dish is never empty, which includes taking care of the land and the creatures we share it with."* (Ryerson University, n.d.)

Some of us have arrived here by choice as immigrants or seeking asylum from unsafe homes, while some of us have arrived here through forced displacement via various political actions such as through the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade.

Many of us descend from people who have arrived here by choice and have benefitted from the displacement, genocide and forced assimilation of Indigenous peoples. As this continues to this day, we must be vigilant in dismantling systems that permit these atrocities to continue.

We acknowledge the systemic abuse of Indigenous Peoples across Turtle Island/North America and are in solidarity for land, water and rights protections.



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We recognize that the contributions and historic importance of Indigenous Peoples must also be clearly and overtly connected to our collective commitment to make the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action (T.R.C.) as well as the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (M.M.I.W.G.) real in our communities and in our work.

We recognize that Land Acknowledgements are not enough. That words must be followed up by actions. We must become comfortable with speaking out about colonial systems that actively harm Indigenous peoples today. This includes governments, educational institutions, policies and even within our own field of Child and Youth Care and practices we may have embraced for many years.

We need to build meaningful relationships with Indigenous members, young people and Nations to support and amplify issues identified by the Nations, as directed by them. It is imperative that we look within ourselves as individuals and practitioners; understand our privileges and how we can utilize them to educate ourselves and others. In addition, we must understand and repair harms we may have incurred through our action or inaction, and commit to become driving forces in challenging colonialism, and becoming supportive allies to Indigenous Nations as they see fit. This is not a one-time action, but a committed journey.

This is a living document and will be amended periodically to reflect the ever-changing conditions of colonialism, Child and Youth Care and how they impact Indigenous Nations across Ontario.

### References

Duric, D. (2017). *The Toronto Purchase Treaty No. 13 (1805)*. Mississaugas of the Credit First Nations. Retrieved from <http://mncfn.ca/torontopurchase/>

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Ryerson University. (n.d.). *Land Acknowledgement*. Aboriginal Education Council. Retrieved from <https://www.ryerson.ca/aec/land-acknowledgment/>