Yukon

Reporting on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action

2023

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Cover Photo: We would like to thank Northern Cultural Expressions Society and carvers: Wayne Price (Lead Master Carver), Justin Smith, Duran Henry, the late William Callaghan, Ben Gribben, Owen Munroe, Sara Villeseche, Joshua Lesage and Colin Teramura for granting permission to use this image of the Healing Totem. (Photo: Jolie Patterson)

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Photo: Minnie Clark

Introduction

In 2015, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada prepared a comprehensive report detailing the ongoing impacts of the Canadian residential school system. The report's 94 Calls to Action are actionable policy recommendations that provide direction to all levels of government, the corporate sector, churches and other organizations about taking action to address the harm and ongoing impacts of the residential school system on Survivors, their families, and communities.

Over more than a century, approximately 150,000 Indigenous children were separated from their families and forced to attend one of 139 residential schools across Canada. Residential and day schools have had a lasting effect on Indigenous people in the Yukon. Six residential schools operated in the Yukon between 1903 and 1985: Chooutla School in Carcross; Coudert Hall, Yukon Hall and Whitehorse Baptist Mission in Whitehorse; the Shingle Point School in Shingle Point on the Yukon's Arctic coast; and St. Paul's Hostel in Dawson. Yukon First Nations students also attended the Lower Post School in northern British Columbia.

Addressing the harms caused by residential schools and colonial policies is a key priority for the Government of Yukon. Success will only be possible if our actions involve close collaboration with Indigenous governments.

Reflecting on our progress and continuing forward together

Our last report on the Calls to Action was published in 2016. In 2023, we are taking this opportunity – the 50th anniversary of *Together Today For Our Children Tomorrow* and the 30th anniversary of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* – to reflect on our progress towards the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's goals.

This report covers actions being taken to address the Calls to Action that were directed at the Yukon government and covers various topic areas including child welfare, health, education and justice.

This report captures much important work, but it is not an exhaustive list of our collaborative initiatives and reconciliation-related work. Reconciliation touches almost every aspect of our work across all departments of our government.

This report and the accompanying *Pathways magazine* are an opportunity to share and reflect on our progress towards addressing the Calls to Action. Reconciliation is an ongoing journey and a shared responsibility of all governments and individuals in our society. The Yukon government is deeply committed to continuing this journey.

1. Child welfare

Government of Yukon Calls to Action:

1, 2, 3, 5, 55, 57

Summary: These Calls to Action relate to reducing the number of Indigenous children in care, providing adequate resources to keep families together and developing culturally appropriate parenting programs. Actions include training for social workers, reporting on children in care and implementing Jordan's Principle.

Yukon government lead:

Health and Social Services

Yukon government support:

Education

Photo: Isidore Champagne

Key Actions:

Child and Family Services Act (Calls 1, 2)

Guided by the Child and Family Services Act Steering Committee, Yukon amended the Child and *Family Services Act* in March 2022. The committee included representatives from Yukon First Nations and was co-chaired by the Council of Yukon First Nations and the Government of Yukon.

The foundation of the new Act is to safely support children within their families, extended families and communities. The amendments have six goals:

1. Support family preservation and family reunification;
2. Improve access to cultural activities and establish cultural plans for all children in the care of the Director of Family and Children's Services;
3. Expand transitional support services for children up to the age of 26 (and beyond this in exceptional circumstances);
4. Provide access to preventative support services for pregnant people at risk of becoming involved in child protection;
5. Provide the ability to place children with their extended family or a community member; and
6. Increase the involvement of Yukon First Nations in decision-making processes.

Support for families (Calls 1, 5)

In February 2022, the Government of Canada, the Government of Yukon, Yukon First Nations and the Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN) launched the Cultural Connections project. This project included funding to develop cultural parenting programs to support Yukon First Nations families involved in the child welfare system, and to revitalize traditional parenting practices.

In 2021, Family and Children's Services (FCS) completed a territory-wide Caregiver Strategy in collaboration with Yukon First Nations and CYFN to develop more culturally appropriate placements and improve the recruitment and retention of caregivers. FCS and CYFN are developing an action plan that will include Yukon First Nation-driven solutions for individual communities. The strategy includes a review of caregiver approval policies and processes to ensure policies are culturally sensitive and less complex or intimidating for potential caregivers.

Photo: Cathie Archbould

In 2019-20, we created the Family Resource Program by combining the Healthy Families Program and the Family Support Program. The Family Resource Program provides universal, barrier-free preventative services to families with children up to 19 years of age. Services include in-home assistance and parenting education to help people be the best parents possible.

From 2017 to 2019, we made significant policy and program changes to the extended family care program to bring it to parity with the foster care program. The outcome is more culturally appropriate placements for children and connection to their families. Extended family care placements are up 30% since November 2018. welfare where the family develops their own solutions.

In collaboration with CYFN and Yukon First Nations, in 2018 Health and Social Services adopted Signs of Safety as the child welfare practice model for the Yukon. Signs of Safety provides a culturally sensitive and strengths-based approach to child welfare where the family develops their own solutions.

Reporting (Calls 2, 55)

In 2021, Family and Children's Services launched a new electronic case management system resulting in better tracking, monitoring and reporting on First Nations children involved in the child welfare system.

The Child and Family Services Act requires that annual reports on child welfare be shared with the Minister of Health and Social Services and the public. Data includes the number of Indigenous children and number of children who are members of Yukon First Nations.

We provide monthly reports to each Yukon First Nation, the Inuvialuit Regional Corporation and CYFN on data relating to children in care and extended family care agreements. CYFN only receives data for First Nations that have authorized this access.

The Yukon government has an agreement with CYFN not to release data that differentiates Indigenous and non-Indigenous clients without CYFN's consent.

Training (Call 1):

All FCS staff involved in frontline service delivery (e.g., social workers, support workers and group care staff) must complete trauma-informed and trauma-responsive care training that focuses on understanding and addressing the underlying trauma that may be affecting a child or family, including residential school experiences.

We worked with CYFN and Yukon First Nations to deliver Core training to all new social workers with modules on cultural sensitivity, inter-generational trauma, the history and impact of residential schools, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's findings and Calls to Action, and Jordan's Principle. Training includes the collaborative planning process and a half-day on the land to introduce new workers to Yukon First Nations teachings. Yukon First Nations are invited to participate in training with incoming social workers to build relationships.

FCS and CYFN work together to ensure staff are exposed to First Nations teachings and continue to gain an awareness of the past as well as an understanding of how FCS-mandated services impact families and communities in the Yukon.

An outcome of this work is that all FCS social workers and Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services (MWSU) staff must complete Yukon University's Yukon First Nations 101, which provides basic knowledge of Yukon First Nations, including Yukon history and the implementation of land claims and self-government agreements.

We encourage and support FCS, MWSU and Youth Achievement Centre (YAC) staff to take supplemental training offered by the Public Services Commission, including the Blanket Exercise, Seven Grandfather Teachings and Mental Health First Aid for First Nations and other appropriate training.

In 2020, all FCS social workers and First Nations family support and community liaison workers joined a two-day course on using Signs of Safety with families. Since then, FCS social workers have completed multiple five-day advanced trainings and case consultations with Signs of Safety trainers.

Jordan's Principle (Call 3)

The training for social workers includes a module on Jordan's Principle and how to apply for Jordan's Principle funding.

FCS ensures all Yukon children with child protection concerns receive the services they need regardless of their location in the territory. We ensure that First Nations children have full access to immunization programs, dental, optical and medical services, and can access Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services.

In Whitehorse and through four community hubs, clinical counselors with the Child Youth and Family Treatment Team (CYFTT) provide a range of counselling and support services for school-aged children, youth and families in the Yukon.

The Yukon is a signatory to the Provincial/Territorial Protocol on Children and Families Moving Between Provinces and Territories, which provides a framework for providing consistent and quality services to children and families moving between jurisdictions.

2. Education

Government of Yukon Calls to Action:

12, 55, 57, 62, 63, 64

Summary: The education-related Calls to Action highlight the need to have culturally appropriate early education programs, develop curriculum on residential schools, treaties, and Indigenous history and contributions, support teachers to integrate Indigenous knowledge into classrooms, and establish senior government positions dedicated to Indigenous content in education.

Yukon government lead:

Education

Photo: Yukon First Nation Education Directorate

Key Actions:

Culturally appropriate early childhood programs (Call 12)

The Department of Education works with Yukon First Nations and other partners to enhance early learning and child care programming and provide access to high-quality, affordable, accessible and inclusive early learning and child care.

Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) established a program-level advisory committee to support and develop high-quality early learning and child care programs. Committee members represent Yukon First Nations governments, Whitehorse and rural communities, French language program, educators, Child Care Board, Yukon First Nation Education Directorate and the Child Development Centre.

ELCC provides funding to Yukon First Nations governments to support the evaluation of ELCC's early learning and child care programs and the *Child Care Act*.

As of February 15, 2023, 50 programs and 297 early childhood educators accessed cultural enhancement funding or cultural resource kits curated by early learning specialists. Eighteen early kindergarten teachers in Yukon schools received cultural resource kits.

We are funding Yukon University to provide enhanced early learning courses on rural Yukon campuses. We partner with the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate and the Early Years Program to offer Understanding the Early Years, a course that leads to a level one early childhood educator certificate.

All licensed operators are signed on to Yukon's universal ELCC program including Yukon First Nations government-owned and operated, Family Day Home operators, private sector and not-for-profit sector. The funding agreements include a mandatory wage grid for early childhood educators, funding for operators to access comprehensive health insurance benefits, and funding increases for cultural and program enhancements.

Early Kindergarten is available in all rural schools except Dawson City. The Department of Education is working with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation to implement Early Kindergarten in Dawson City.

ELCC supports Dusk'a Head Start Family Learning Centre, owned and operated by Kwanlin Dün First Nation, to deliver culturally appropriate, experiential and land-based learning opportunities.

Collaboration with First Nations (Call 62)

In 2022, the Department of Education and the First Nations Education Commission finalized the Yukon First Nations Education Collaboration Framework, which outlines how the department and Yukon First Nations will address joint education priorities. The framework complements the Joint Education Action Plan and relates to Article 19 of the UN Declaration of Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

In 2022, the First Nation School Board was created after years of collaboration between the Department of Education, the Chiefs Committee on Education and the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate. Eleven schools voted to join the school board. These board-run schools will tailor programming and lesson delivery to reflect Yukon First Nations worldviews, including putting students first and taking a strengths and community-centered approach. In April 2023, the Department of Education entered into a 15-month agreement to support the new First Nation School Board.

We work with Yukon First Nations on a government-to-government basis through community-level education agreements, supported by transfer payment agreements that ensure culturally respectful programs and supports for students both inside and outside of the school.

We work with Yukon First Nations through the Yukon Forum, Yukon Native Language Centre, Chiefs Committee on Education, First Nations Education Commission, First Nation School Board and the data sharing working group, which creates and distributes annual *How Are We Doing* reports.

The Department of Education will continue to work in partnership with Yukon First Nations governments to improve educational outcomes for students and respond to the 2019 Education Report of the Auditor General of Canada. This includes the work to re-imagine inclusive and special education and to develop a strategy to improve student outcomes, particularly for Yukon First Nations and rural students. We developed 14 Student Outcome Statements in consultation with all 14 Yukon First Nations and education community partners.

We have a Memorandum of Understanding and Transfer Payment Agreement with the Yukon Native Language Centre to support language revitalization and plan for more First Nations Language teacher training.

Curriculum (Calls 62, 63)

The Department of Education is working to establish a more inclusive public education system, to ensure schools meet the needs of Yukon First Nations students and offer all students opportunities to learn about Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being.

We worked with the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council to implement an Indigenous Academy at F.H. Collins Secondary School.

Approved locally-developed courses include Ancestral Technology, Youth for Dignity, Mentorship, Outdoor Education, Yukon First Nations Leadership and Learning Strategies. Yukon First Nations Studies 12 was adapted from B.C.'s First Peoples 12. The Grade 5 and 10 Residential School Unit is in the final stages of development and the Grade 9 Unit is in development.

We work with Yukon First Nations governments and partners to develop a policy to accredit cultural, language and land-based experiential learning delivered or facilitated by Yukon First Nations governments, Elders and knowledge keepers.

Training and support for educators (Calls 57, 63)

We provide professional development on integrating Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being into day-to-day

Photo: Department of Education

teaching of the curriculum and on challenging colonial perspectives. Yukon and its partners launched culturally responsive literacy and numeracy strategy working groups to provide recommendations on culturally relevant, research-based strategies for improving outcomes.

We foster a Community of Inquiry (Re-imagining Inclusive and Special Education - RISE) on experiential education and cultural camps and programming. In the 2023-24 school year we are piloting a training program for two Yukon Association of Education Professionals employees to take paid professional development leave to further their skills and fluency in Yukon First Nations languages.

The Department of Education has supported Indigenous main administration staff to learn their Indigenous language. Education also supports secondment opportunities to Yukon First Nations governments.

We fund the Yukon Native Teacher Education Program at Yukon University, which includes modules to assist graduates with integrating Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods in classrooms.

School administrators studied Collective Equity over the 2022-23 school year and are integrating what they learned into their schools.

Senior position (Call 62 iv)

In 2019, the Department of Education created a new Assistant Deputy Minister of First Nations Initiatives position to lead our partnership with Yukon First Nations on joint education priorities. Yukon First Nations are involved in the staffing of this position and in 2022-23 Education and the Chiefs Committee on Education began to review the role and identify further ways to collaborate.

First Nations Initiatives Division supports:

- Yukon First Nation Education Directorate for operations and special programs;
- Yukon First Nations governments to support implementation of joint Education Agreements;

Photo: Department of Education

- Yukon Native Language Centre to support operations;
- discretionary funding to the First Nation School Board to improve student outcomes and Indigenization of the curriculum; and
- funding to implement Indigenous programming in schools.

Reporting and data (Call 55)

We work with each Yukon First Nation to provide access to their student information and analysis through student data dashboards. We are also ensuring access to collaboration platforms in schools for Yukon First Nations education staff.

Each Yukon First Nation has a dashboard that allows comparative analysis (e.g., comparing Yukon First Nations and non-Yukon First Nations students, urban and rural, and subsets like urban Yukon First Nations to rural Yukon First Nations).

3. Health

Government of Yukon Calls to Action:

17, 18, 22, 23, 55, 57

Summary: Calls to Action on health ask that we acknowledge, close and report on the gaps in Indigenous health that are a direct result of our colonial history and policies. Actions include integrating Indigenous healing practices, recruiting and retaining Indigenous health care professionals, and providing cultural competency training for health care professionals. Call 17 recommends waiving fees for those reclaiming names changed by the residential school system.

Yukon government lead:

Health and Social Services

Yukon government support:

Public Service Commission

Key Actions:

Putting People First (Calls 22, 23, 57)

The Department of Health and Social Services is working to transform the health and social system to better meet the needs of Yukoners by implementing the recommendations of the *Putting People First report*. This includes reconciliation-focused work to close health disparity gaps and ensure culturally appropriate services are available.

In July 2023, a Yukon First Nations Chiefs Committee on Health was formed to provide direction and oversight and ensure First Nations perspectives are embedded in the processes to improve the Yukon's health care system.

The Chiefs Committee will help advance recommendations from the *Putting People First report*, including integrating cultural safety into the health and social services system, understanding and addressing Indigenous determinants of health, increasing access to Yukon First Nations cultural and land-based healing, and creating Health and Wellness Yukon, a new health authority to deliver day-to-day health services.

The goal of this work is a person-centred health and social system where systemic racism is addressed, Yukoners are connected to a primary care team, services are connected and culturally safe, prevention is a primary focus, and communities and people with lived experiences are involved.

Indigenous healing practices (Call 22)

Health and Social Services (HSS) is working with Indigenous partners to explore ways of providing more culturally safe and respectful care. Cultural safety and humility training are an integral part of this work.

In 2020, HSS hired a cultural wellness consultant. The role is focused on developing a cultural wellness strategy for Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services (MWSU). We support land-based healing through different programs and partnerships:

- MWSU contracts with a land-based healing camp to provide all inpatient treatment programs (adult and youth) and has a weekly Elders Program.

Photo: Government of Yukon/Katrina Couch

- We fund on-the-land healing and cultural camps, including the Jackson Lake land-based healing program run by Kwanlin Dün First Nation.
- We work with Liard River First Nation and Teslin Tlingit Council to collaborate on land-based healing initiatives.
- We support the Hives for Watson Lake partnership with Liard First Nation. The program uses beekeeping to engage community members in activities focused on harm reduction, mental health, life promotion, suicide prevention and increased community-nature connection.
- In March 2023, the Yukon government and Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in provided a land-based camp for youth involved with MWSU's Roots of Hope initiative.
- MWSU staff assist and provide in-kind support and counselling services to First Nations on-the-land activities.

MWSU partnered with the Mental Health Commission of Canada on the Roots of Hope project. They have hired a Roots of Hope Coordinator to work with First Nations to develop suicide prevention strategies and support their plans.

Continuing Care has developed a First Nations Advisory Committee to work with Indigenous partners to explore ways of providing more culturally safe and respectful care, review policies and provide feedback on long-term care programming. All new Continuing Care long-term care home designs include healing rooms and First Nations traditional food preparation areas in kitchens to ensure access to Indigenous healing practices.

In 2023, Continuing Care is reviewing its policies to improve clarity for the support of traditional healing practices and their use, in collaboration with Indigenous healers and Elders, when requested by Indigenous residents.

Photo: Corentin Favre

Recruitment and retention of Indigenous health care professionals (Call 23)

We are committed to increasing Indigenous representation in the public service and have recruitment initiatives across government, including the health care field. Our hiring preference initiative for qualified Indigenous job candidates applies to all job competitions, including those in the health care field. Through the Public Service Commission, we provide resume support and interview advice for Indigenous job candidates. We encourage participation of Yukon First Nations individuals within hiring boards for job competitions. When Yukon First Nations individuals cannot participate on hiring boards, the Diversity and Inclusion Branch can help coordinate First Nations representation.

Within the health care field, we work with Yukon University on the delivery of Practical Nurse and Home Support Worker programs to support local training, especially for First Nations citizens. Community Nursing participates in job fairs held in the rural communities. We provide job shadowing opportunities for First Nations students interested in a nursing career. Community Nursing is also developing positions for community-based health program assistants that will serve as an entry to health careers and focus on Indigenous hiring.

We developed a position in Community Nursing for a Manager of First Nations Policy and Clinical Infrastructure. This position will bring a First Nations perspective into branch policy, programs and new health centre builds. Community Nursing invites First Nations Health Directors to participate in interviews for the Nurse In Charge and community Nurse Practitioner positions.

In 2020, MWSU hired a cultural wellness consultant. They provide training and consultation for MWSU clinical staff to better incorporate Indigenous practices and healing into therapy. This position leads culturally inclusive projects and develops appropriate training for MWSU staff.

Cultural competence training, individualized assessment and First Nations Services and Relations staff help create a welcoming and culturally safe environment to recruit staff through word of mouth and by offering positions that support the delivery of cultural services in long-term care.

We are also working to create an Indigenous Student and Youth Engagement Coordinator. This role will collaborate with Yukon First Nations

governments, the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, Yukon Hospital Corporation, and various departments, divisions and branches across the Yukon government to support Indigenous students and youth pursue health and social care careers.

Homecare leads local recruitment efforts to hire First Nations Home Support Workers in the communities.

The Yukon government and Yukon Hospital Corporation created a Health Human Resources Steering Committee, which includes representatives from Yukon First Nations, to develop a strategy to address the Yukon's health sector human resource challenges. This includes work to identify recruitment and retention barriers for Indigenous employees.

Cultural competency training for health care professionals (Call 23)

In March 2023, HSS created a cultural competency program led by a Director of Cultural Safety. They will lead the implementation of *Putting People First* recommendations on advancing reconciliation, including developing mandatory cultural safety and humility training for all HSS and hospital staff. We are also working with Yukon University to develop other appropriate training.

Both the Roots of Hope Coordinator and the MWSU Cultural Wellness Consultant offer training for teams throughout the year. Training topics include the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, Southern Tutchone and Indigenous films from Canada about suicide and cultural safety.

Continuing Care and MWSU staff are required to take the Yukon First Nations 101 course with Yukon University. Continuing Care is exploring other accessible cultural competency training, such as 4 Seasons of Reconciliation, offered online through the First Nations University of Canada and the University of Saskatchewan.

The Continuing Care senior leadership team, with support from the Diversity and Inclusion branch of PSC, completed the Intercultural Development Inventory, an assessment for building cultural competence, to inform their understanding of how to create culturally safe work environments.

First Nations Liaison Workers in long-term care homes offer education sessions and do peer education work to share understanding of history, culture and knowledge.

Community Nursing onboarding includes a two-week classroom orientation with an introduction to residential schools, high-level information sharing of Yukon First Nation cultures, and how to access more information and be learners in the communities.

We ask Community Nursing staff to complete the online Harvard Implicit Bias test to assist with self-reflection on hidden biases. Community Nursing staff also attend the Blanket Exercise. The Primary Health Care Nurse Scope of Practice, a comprehensive document that outlines standards and competencies for practice, has been revised and now contains standards for cultural competencies. The Community Health Nurse Scope of Practice is under review and will contain the same update.

The First Nations Health Program of the Yukon Hospital Corporation delivers Yukon University's Yukon First Nations 101 to all Yukon Hospital Corporation employees, pays course fees and tracks completion rates. Following a November 2019 decision by the Yukon Medical Association, physicians also complete the course.

Name changes (Call 17)

Vital Statistics accepts and waives fees for applications for legal name change of Indigenous residents who wanted to reclaim their Indigenous name.

4. Justice

Government of Yukon Calls to Action:
30, 31, 33, 34, 36, 38, 40, 41, 42

Summary: These Calls to Action include eliminating the overrepresentation of Indigenous adults and youth in the criminal justice system and supporting alternatives to imprisonment that respond to the underlying causes of offending. Some calls urge us to address and prevent Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD) and ensure the justice system meets the needs of those with FASD. Other calls ask governments to provide culturally-relevant services to offenders and victims, investigate the causes and remedies for the disproportionate victimization of Indigenous women and girls, and recognize and implement Indigenous justice systems.

Yukon government lead:

Justice

Yukon government support:

Health and Social Services; Yukon Liquor Corporation; and Women and Gender Equity Directorate

Key Actions:

Overrepresentation and alternatives to imprisonment (Calls 30, 31, 38)

The Integrated Restorative Justice (IRJ) Unit is a new pilot project that combines existing resources from Justice (for adults) and Health and Social Services (for youth) to explore "one window" service delivery that aims to increase diversion and restorative justice practices. A goal of the IRJ is to decrease the overrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples in the criminal justice system.

The IRJ Unit offers pre- and post-charge diversion services for adult and youth referrals, and where appropriate, offers a restorative process that addresses individual and community harm and provides a voice for victims. In addition, the IRJ Unit works closely with Yukon First Nations to advance community-designed and community-led restorative justice initiatives.

There are two long-standing therapeutic courts in the Yukon – the Domestic Violence Treatment Option Court and the Community Wellness Court – that provide an alternative to incarceration and offer therapeutic services to address the underlying causes of offending.

The Justice Wellness Centre (JWC) provides a wrap-around service and support for clients in the therapeutic courts. They provide integrated treatment and Indigenous programming to address the underlying causes of criminal behaviour.

Clients who complete therapeutic court have a reduced sentence that typically does not include incarceration. The JWC develops working relationships with local community resources to provide ongoing support to clients. This means they have community-based support even after they finish their involvement with the justice system, which decreases the likelihood of recidivism.

The Corrections Branch continues to review the individual circumstances of each person incarcerated at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre (WCC) to determine which, if any, could be released on a temporary absence and housed in the community without compromising their safety or that of the public.

Photo: Liard First Nation

We provide funding to Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN) to develop and administer a Gladue report writing program for Indigenous offenders. Gladue reports describe the impacts of systemic discrimination and the background of Indigenous offenders that should be considered during sentencing. The Corrections Branch works with First Nations partners to develop training and policies to apply Gladue factors in correctional decision-making to support individual rehabilitation and reintegration needs.

We continue to work with Yukon First Nations and justice stakeholders to maximize the use of bail throughout the territory. Yukon Community Corrections and Indigenous Court Workers continue to support individuals who are interested in applying for bail.

The Indigenous Court Worker program helps Indigenous individuals navigate the criminal justice system to obtain fair, just, equitable and culturally-sensitive services. This program provides several Yukon First Nations with community-based capacity to assist Indigenous individuals who are involved in the criminal justice system.

Justice is a member of the Federal Provincial Territorial Aboriginal Justice Working Group which is tasked with developing a Pan-Canadian Strategy on the Overrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples in the Criminal Justice System. We also take part in the related Indigenous Justice Strategy. These strategies are intended to address the overrepresentation of Indigenous Peoples in the justice system.

The Connective Support Society, in partnership with Justice, operates a 24/7 supervised community housing program for justice-involved men (since May 2020) and women (since June 2023). The Crime Prevention and Victims Services Trust Fund, managed by Justice on behalf of a Board of Trustees, provides funding to crime prevention initiatives that are developed and delivered at the local level.

Youth Justice works with Yukon First Nations and the Council of Yukon First Nations to provide diversion and community-based restorative justice programming for young offenders. The Youth Justice Panel diverts youth from the court process and increases the use of extra-judicial sanctions in the community. The Panel has representation from community partners and provides recommendations on whether a matter should be referred to extra-judicial sanctions or the formal youth court system.

Culturally relevant services and support for inmates (Call 36)

The Yukon government continues to implement the recommendations from the 2018 *Whitehorse Correctional Centre Inspection Report* (Loukidelis Report) including those related to mental health and First Nations related programing.

WCC offers various programs to all clients (mandatory for sentenced clients) and works closely with CYFN to ensure programming is culturally relevant. Each year we review all programming to ensure Whitehorse Correctional Centre is meeting client interests and needs.

WCC hired a First Nations Liaison Officer to help provide culturally relevant support to Indigenous inmates. The officer also supports rehabilitation, reconciliation, community reintegration, cultural awareness, staff training and First Nations community engagement.

The Corrections Branch has incorporated First Nations culture into the fabric of operations and programming at WCC. Examples include providing traditional foods, engaging with Elders, language training for inmates, staff training on First Nations culture and recruiting First Nations staff. WCC has a healing room and an outdoor healing circle which allows for spiritual and healing activities.

Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services (MWSU) provides counselling and substance use programming to inmates at WCC and to young offenders and high-risk youth. Additionally, the Forensic Complex Care Team provides case management and mental health support to inmates.

Youth Justice works with the Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN to provide cultural programming in the Young Offenders Facility, including Elder supports, drumming, storytelling, and access to ceremonies (e.g. sweat lodges, smudging).

Other Youth Justice programs, such as the Youth Achievement Centre, work with Yukon First Nations and CYFN to support cultural connections and access to Indigenous-led programming for youth.

Addressing Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (Calls 33, 34)

The Yukon government continues to collaborate with First Nations and community partners to implement the 2019 Yukon FASD Action Plan, including creating a First Nations FASD Action Plan Coordinator position at CYFN. HSS delivers a range of FASD-prevention initiatives including:

- a digital campaign on the effects of alcohol for pregnant women;
- targeted prevention focused on individuals experiencing addiction-related issues;
- training for front-line health and social service providers on how to talk to pregnant women about alcohol and their pregnancy;
- educational resources for primary school children; and
- support for a new sexual health clinic in Whitehorse to provide accessible information on alcohol and pregnancy.

We fund and work with community partners on several prevention initiatives. The Youth Achievement Centre, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Society Yukon (FASSY), and community health nurses and other providers deliver preventative counselling and education to high-risk teens. Kwanlin Dün First Nation delivers a healing camp for substance abuse, Tutchone Resources delivers a 10-day healing camp, and FASSY delivers a healing camp at Jackson Lake.

In partnership with Kwanlin Dün First Nation's Jackson Lake Healing Camp, MWSU and the Yukon Liquor Corporation supported the Fetal

Alcohol Spectrum Society Yukon to hold a week-long on-the-land camp for families living with Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

The Yukon Liquor Corporation promotes responsible alcohol consumption in partnership with organizations including MADD, Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle and the Dawson Women's Shelter. HSS works with First Nations, community agencies and health practitioners to provide FASD diagnostic and assessment services for children and adults. A CYFN representative sits on the FASD Diagnostic Clinic's Advisory Committee.

HSS provides a range of support services to assist adults and children with FASD to live in their community including:

- an agreement with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Society Yukon (FASSY) to provide support services to high-risk and marginalized individuals;
- financial, personalized and counselling supports for adults and children with disabilities, including FASD;
- interventions for children with FASD;
- modified Healthy Families parenting program approach and curriculum to address FASD-related issues for parents and children;
- residential care options for adults with disabilities (including FASD); and
- funding agreements with NGOs to provide a range of supports to individuals with disabilities (including FASD).

The FASD Prevalence Study was completed at WCC and offers insight into the prevalence of the disorder within the correctional system.

The Corrections Branch collaborates with HSS and non-governmental agencies to increase support and services for individuals with FASD, including reintegration, with a focus on continuity of care for the individual. We implemented a Forensic Care Complex Team to better address the needs of clients with cognitive impairments. Services are delivered to clients of both Whitehorse Correctional Centre and Yukon Community Corrections.

WCC continues to evaluate and improve programs available to inmates living with FASD including restructuring programs to support learning.

Probation Officers receive training through FASSY to help them work more effectively with clients with FASD or signs of FASD. Justice Wellness Centre collaborates with FASSY to increase supports for people with FASD in the therapeutic courts and provide FASD training for court staff.

Services for Indigenous victims of crime (Call 40)

Yukon established a Sexualized Assault Response Team in 2020 and is now working to expand this service to communities outside of Whitehorse. The team provides integrated services from different agencies including a Yukon-wide support line, victim support workers, mental health services, reporting to the RCMP, and a roster of specially trained on-call physicians.

Victim Services provides support for victims of crime including crisis support, help navigating the court process, and urgent support from the Victims of Crime Emergency Fund.

Since 2017, Victim Services has been providing services for families of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-Spirit+ People through the Family Information Liaison Unit (FILU). Funded by the Government of Canada, the Yukon FILU works with the Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council (YAWC). The Yukon FILU provides support to families to gather and access information about their loved one's case and to access supports.

The Integrated Restorative Justice Unit works closely with victims and young offenders to address individual and community harm and provide a voice for victims. Young offenders may be diverted to traditional treatment programs where the victims play a role, such as Women of Wisdom (Skookum Jim Friendship Centre) and Kwanlin Dün First Nation's circle sentencing.

Photo: Manu Kegenhoff /Government of Yukon

Women and Gender Equity Directorate (WGED) provides funding and support to many organizations including the Prevention of Violence Against Aboriginal Women Fund, the Women's Legal Advocate, the Women's Equality Fund, Yukon Sisters in Spirit project, and the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two Spirit+ People Accountability Forum.

Inquiry into victimization of Indigenous women and girls (Call 41)

In 2015, Yukon government supported a delegation of ten, including Chiefs, Indigenous women leaders, an affected family member and the Premier to attend the National Roundtable on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in Ottawa.

The Yukon Advisory Committee (YAC) on MMIWG2S+ formed in 2015 includes representatives of Yukon First Nations governments, all three Indigenous women's organizations, families of Survivors, an Elder and the Government of Yukon. YAC supported the first Yukon Regional Roundtable in early 2016 and connects the work of the National Inquiry to Yukon families, Survivors, experts and communities.

In June 2019, the National Inquiry released Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. In December 2020, YAC released the Yukon's *MMIWG2S+ Strategy: Changing the Story to Upholding Dignity and Justice*. The Yukon was the first jurisdiction to release a strategy in response to the Final Report of the National Inquiry.

YAC released priority action items for the Strategy in 2022, and Yukon government released an initial report. In June 2023, YAC released the full implementation plan with concrete objectives, milestones, considerations and proposed lead organizations for 32 action items.

Photo: Minnie Clark

Recognize and implement Indigenous justice systems (Call 42)

Eleven of 14 Yukon First Nations have Self-Government Agreements. Section 13.6 of these agreements provides for Administration of Justice Agreements (AJA) which address how self-governing Yukon First Nations will exercise their authority and jurisdiction for the administration of justice.

We are committed to working with interested Yukon First Nations and the Government of Canada to negotiate and implement AJAs. For example, the Teslin Tlingit Council (TTC), Government of Yukon and Government of Canada negotiated an Administration of Justice Agreement in the Yukon in 2011. TTC has established a Peacemaker Court that provides consent-based dispute resolution services and eventually will provide adjudication and appeal services for violations under Teslin Tlingit laws.

The IRJ Unit pilot project is advancing restorative justice options and services including supporting the development and delivery of Indigenous-led restorative justice models. This project supports the Indigenous Court Workers and Community Justice Workers in First Nations governments across the territory.

Community Safety Officer programs in the Yukon are First Nations-designed, led and implemented. They address community safety issues, improve citizens' feelings of safety and complement existing law enforcement. Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Selkirk First Nation, Teslin Tlingit Council and Carcross/Tagish First Nation have established Community Safety Officer programs.

5. Legal matters

Government of Yukon Calls to Action:

26, 47, 52

Summary: Several Calls to Action urge all governments to address certain legal concepts. Call 26 recommends that we amend statutes of limitation so that legal actions related to historical abuse can be brought forward. Call 47 asks that we repudiate concepts used to justify European sovereignty over Indigenous Peoples and lands. Call 52 is about how Indigenous title claims are established.

Yukon government lead:

Executive Council Office; Justice

Photo: Minnie Clark

Key Actions:

Review statutes of limitations to ensure historical abuses can be brought forward by Indigenous people (Call 26)

There is no limitation period for sexual assault or misconduct against minors under the *Limitation of Actions Act*.

Legal concepts related to Indigenous title (Calls 47, 52)

The Government of Yukon has Final and Self-Government Agreements with 11 of the 14 Yukon First Nations. We are in negotiations and discussing priorities with the Yukon and trans-boundary Indigenous groups that do not have land claim agreements. In line with Canadian common law, we consult with Indigenous governments whose rights may be impacted by the actions or decisions of the Government of Yukon.

The Aboriginal Relations division of the Executive Council Office no longer develops "Preliminary Assessments" of the strength of the claims of (non-Treaty) Indigenous governments on a regional basis. Such assessments were rooted in the ability of an Indigenous group to provide evidence of use and occupation of an area at the time of European contact in order to establish a claim to Aboriginal rights. Instead, we use a new approach which recognizes Sites of Significance to an Indigenous government and uses that information to inform consultation and accommodation approaches on individual projects.

6. United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples:

Government of Yukon Calls to Action: 43

Summary: Call to Action 43 asks that all levels of government fully adopt and implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (the Declaration) as the framework for reconciliation.

Yukon government lead:
Executive Council Office

Photo: Minnie Clark

Key Actions:

The Yukon government is reviewing the Declaration to identify how it might further advance reconciliation goals while implementing modern treaties, advancing joint priorities at the Yukon Forum and negotiation tables, and collaborating with Indigenous governments on key legislation.

The Yukon's modern treaty context plays a critical role in our approach to reconciliation. We worked with Canada and all Yukon First Nations to develop the Umbrella Final Agreement (UFA) as a framework for reconciliation in the early 1990s. The UFA was inspired by the 1973 Yukon First Nations document *Together Today for our Children Tomorrow*. Many of the principles of the Declaration are represented in those two documents and in the 11 Final and Self-Government Agreements that resulted from them. In the words of Elder Judy Gingell, former Chair of the Council of Yukon First Nations, "the terms of the TRC and UNDRIP recommendations are in our land claims agreements. We did it before these documents ever came out." (per the official minutes of the Council of Yukon First Nations Intergovernmental Forum on May 24, 2022).

The Declaration has influenced and informed our approaches to reconciliation, but it has not been identified as Yukon's "framework for reconciliation" given our existing shared frameworks and priorities established through the treaties and joint processes like the Yukon Forum.

We have had initial conversations about the Declaration with Yukon and trans-boundary First Nations and the Inuvialuit. We will work with Indigenous groups to explore this topic further if they identify it as a priority.

The Yukon government continues to engage with Canada regarding their efforts to implement their United Nations Declaration on the *Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act*.

7. Professional development and training for public servants

Government of Yukon Calls to Action: 57

Summary: Call 57 urges all levels of government to provide education to public servants on the history of Indigenous Peoples, including the history and legacy of residential schools, the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, treaty and Aboriginal rights, Indigenous law and Indigenous-Crown relations.

Yukon government lead:

Public Service Commission; All

Key Actions:

Public Service Commission

The Public Service Commission (PSC) expanded and enhanced training to public servants on the history of Yukon First Nations, residential school awareness, anti-racism and cultural safety.

The Organizational Development Branch hired a dedicated employee to develop, coordinate and oversee training on cultural safety and Indigenous awareness. The Respectful Workplace Office also hired a dedicated employee to enhance cultural safety for employees accessing services and to improve connections with Indigenous staff.

We introduced the Intercultural Development Inventory assessment across Yukon government departments. This tool assesses individuals' and teams' abilities to shift cultural perspectives and adapt behaviour in cross-cultural interactions.

We offer the Blanket Exercise to Yukon government employees. The immersive experience covers 500 years of history in a participatory workshop followed by a group debriefing. PSC is partnering with Health and Social Services to develop and deliver training for health care workers on cultural safety.

In 2019, the Yukon government released its plan to create an inclusive Yukon public service, representative of Yukon First Nations people. The 10-year strategic plan, *Breaking Trail Together: An Inclusive Yukon Public Service*, was developed in collaboration with Yukon First Nations. We are working to renew the next operational plan under *Breaking Trail Together*. This will include an Elder-in-residence position to support Indigenous retention and cultural safety in the workplace and a corporate anti-racism strategy for the Government of Yukon.

Executive Council Office

The Aboriginal Relations division of the Executive Council Office provides support and advice to all Yukon government departments on Indigenous relations, consultation, policy, negotiations and modern treaty implementation. We provide training and resources on topics such as engagement, consultation, Yukon's treaties and intergovernmental relationships with First Nations.

Aboriginal Relations has delivered training to senior government leadership on Yukon First Nations history, culture, governance and other topics related to reconciliation. In 2022 and 2023, we hired IRP Consulting to develop and deliver an Honest Conversations course which explores deeper reconciliation concepts and questions in a safe and respectful space. Since 2018, we have offered Executive Yukon First Nations 101 courses to senior management to better support reconciliation in the Yukon.

Photo: Minnie Clark

We are working on a project to improve the quality and consistency of Yukon's consultations with Indigenous governments, including creating reference and education materials.

Highways and Public Works

The Department of Highways and Public Works (HPW) created a First Nations relations unit which supports reconciliation efforts. We coordinate on-boarding and training designed to raise awareness and understanding among HPW employees related to First Nations history, reconciliation and Final and Self-Government Agreements. Topics include:

- Engagement and Consultation with First Nations;
- Yukon First Nations 101 (mandatory);
- Blanket exercise;
- Intercultural competency training (with Diversity and Inclusion Branch);
- Reconciliation in Action and Indigenization in HPW seminars;
- Land Acknowledgment Workshops;
- First Nations relations orientation during employee onboarding; and

Photo: Jolie Patterson

Tourism and Culture

Our Yukon First Nations Heritage Advisor position:

- Delivers cross-cultural and cultural competency workshops to departmental staff on topics including: Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women Girls and Two-Spirit+ People, Sixties Scoop, Residential School Survivors, Impacts on First Nations in Yukon, Truth and Reconciliation Commission, treaties, and United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples;
- Advises department staff on best practices and cultural protocols; and
- Promotes and educates events such as Orange Shirt Day (the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation) and Rock Your Mocs.

Justice

The Department of Justice's guiding principle of "*Reconciliation with Yukon First Nations*" highlights the importance of employee education on First Nations history. Senior leadership encourages and sometimes requires cultural competency training for its public sector employees.

Learning opportunities include:

- Corrections staff are required to complete Yukon First Nations 101;
- The Whitehorse Correctional Centre First Nations Liaison Officer provides information and education through awareness campaigns and staff training. Additional First Nations training is available, as well as programs and services at WCC;
- Council of Yukon First Nations provides a half-day training for all new correctional officer recruits;
- As members of the Yukon Law Society, Legal Services Branch lawyers are required to learn about Indigenous history, culture and laws.

8. Missing children and burial information

Government of Yukon Calls to Action: 71, 75, 76

Summary: These Calls to Action call upon governments and communities to work together to identify, document, maintain and commemorate the deaths and burial sites of residential school children. This work should be led by affected Indigenous communities. Survivors and knowledge keepers should inform the work, and Indigenous protocols should be respected before any burial sites are investigated.

Yukon government lead:

Executive Council Office

Photo: Max Leighton

Key Actions:

The Yukon Residential School Missing Children Project (YRSMCP) Working Group is leading the work to discover the truth about children who went missing from Yukon residential schools. An executive committee and working group with representatives from each First Nation leads YRSMCP.

The mandate of the working group is to identify, locate and search unmarked or missing graves at residential school sites in the Yukon. This work includes archival research, interviews with Survivors and ground-penetrating radar searches.

The YRSMCP began their Yukon-wide work at the Chooutla Residential School site near Carcross and conducted ground-penetrating radar searches in the summer of 2023. The project shared results with the working group, First Nations communities and the public in the fall of 2023. First Nations leadership and communities will decide how to proceed. This work is community-driven and will rely on First Nations protocols and ceremony to bring closure and healing to families.

In future years, the working group will investigate the other five residential schools: Coudert Hall, Yukon Hall and Whitehorse Baptist Mission in Whitehorse; the Shingle Point School in Shingle Point on the Yukon's Arctic coast; and St. Paul's Hostel in Dawson.

The Yukon and federal governments provide funding and administrative support to the committee as they lead this important and difficult work. We will continue to support the working group by providing information and technical support as needed and remove potential barriers.

9. Records for the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation

Government of Yukon Calls to Action: 55, 77

Summary: Call 77 asks governments to identify and share all records relevant to the history of residential schools with the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. Call 55 recommends that all levels of government share data with the National Council for Reconciliation when it is established so that it can report on progress towards reconciliation.

Yukon government lead:

Tourism and Culture; All

Photo: Max Leighton

Key Actions:

Yukon Archives supported the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in several ways:

- Provided all public records requested by the TRC consistent with exemptions under the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act*;
- Provided copies of private records that TRC researched and found of interest;
- Assisted in identifying records from the Roman Catholic Church and Anglican Church in Yukon Archives holdings; and
- Completed a bibliography of sources relevant to the history and legacy of Yukon residential schools and provided this to the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation.

In 2021, we developed a research guide, *Colonialism, Archives and Yukon First Nations*, which highlights records created by the Yukon government pertaining to colonialism and its impact on Indigenous Peoples.

The National Council of Reconciliation has not yet been established by the federal government. We will provide relevant and available records and data to the National Council for Reconciliation when they are ready to start tracking progress on reconciliation.

10. Commemoration

Government of Yukon Calls to Action: 82

Summary: Call 80 calls upon the federal government to establish the statutory day of National Day for truth and Reconciliation. Call 82 asks all provincial and territorial governments to work with Survivors to install a publicly accessible, highly visible Residential Schools Monument in each capital city to honour Survivors and all the children who were lost to their families and communities.

Government of Yukon Lead:
Tourism and Culture

Photo: Jolie Patterson

Key Actions:

In 2012, a healing totem was erected on the Whitehorse waterfront at the end of Main Street. The Northern Cultural Expressions Society created the totem and the Yukon government provided land and assumed stewardship for the totem, including its long-term care and conservation. In 2019, Northern Cultural Expressions Society, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, Ta'an Kwächän Council and City of Whitehorse developed and installed interpretive signage together.

Tourism and Culture worked with the Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle to install a monument on the Whitehorse Waterfront in honour of former students of the Whitehorse Indian Mission School.

We amended the Employment Standards Act to make the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (2023) and National Indigenous Peoples Day (2017) official Yukon statutory days.

11. Sports

Government of Yukon Calls to Action: 87, 88

Summary: These calls highlight the need for inclusive sport policies, programs and initiatives; Indigenous athlete development; continued support for the North American Indigenous Games; and public education that tells the story of Indigenous athletes in history.

Yukon government lead:

Community Services

Key Actions:

Photo: Star Flower Photography

Support for athletes

The Sport and Recreation Branch provides multi-year funding and we partner with the Yukon Aboriginal Sport Circle to ensure programming is available for long-term development, growth and recognition for Indigenous athletes. We provide multi-year funding to Yukon Aboriginal Sport Circle to provide greater flexibility in program development.

The Yukon Aboriginal Sport Circle works closely with schools to promote and develop competency in arctic sports, Dene Games and archery. We support the Sport Yukon Kids Recreation Fund which helps 550 to 800 youth access funds to participate in sport and recreation. Most recipients are Indigenous youth.

The Yukon Aboriginal Sport Circle, with support from Sport and Recreation Branch, administers the $1 million 2007 Canada Winter Games Legacy Fund which provides financial support to Indigenous athletes in their pursuit of sport participation and excellence.

Sport and Recreation Branch and the Department of Education work together to deliver traditional and non-traditional sport and recreation programming at the Rural Education Model. This project brings rural high school students together twice a year to expose them to classes and activities they are not able to access in their home communities.

We promote and support the Aboriginal Coaching Program. This program promotes Indigenous participation in the National Coaching Certification Program and provides culturally relevant materials to empower Indigenous coaches to make positive and long-lasting impacts in their communities. Through the Aboriginal Apprentice Coach Program, the Yukon supported local coaches at the 2019 Canada Winter Games, 2022 Canada Summer Games and the 2023 Canada Winter Games.

Photo: Star Flower Photography

Sporting events

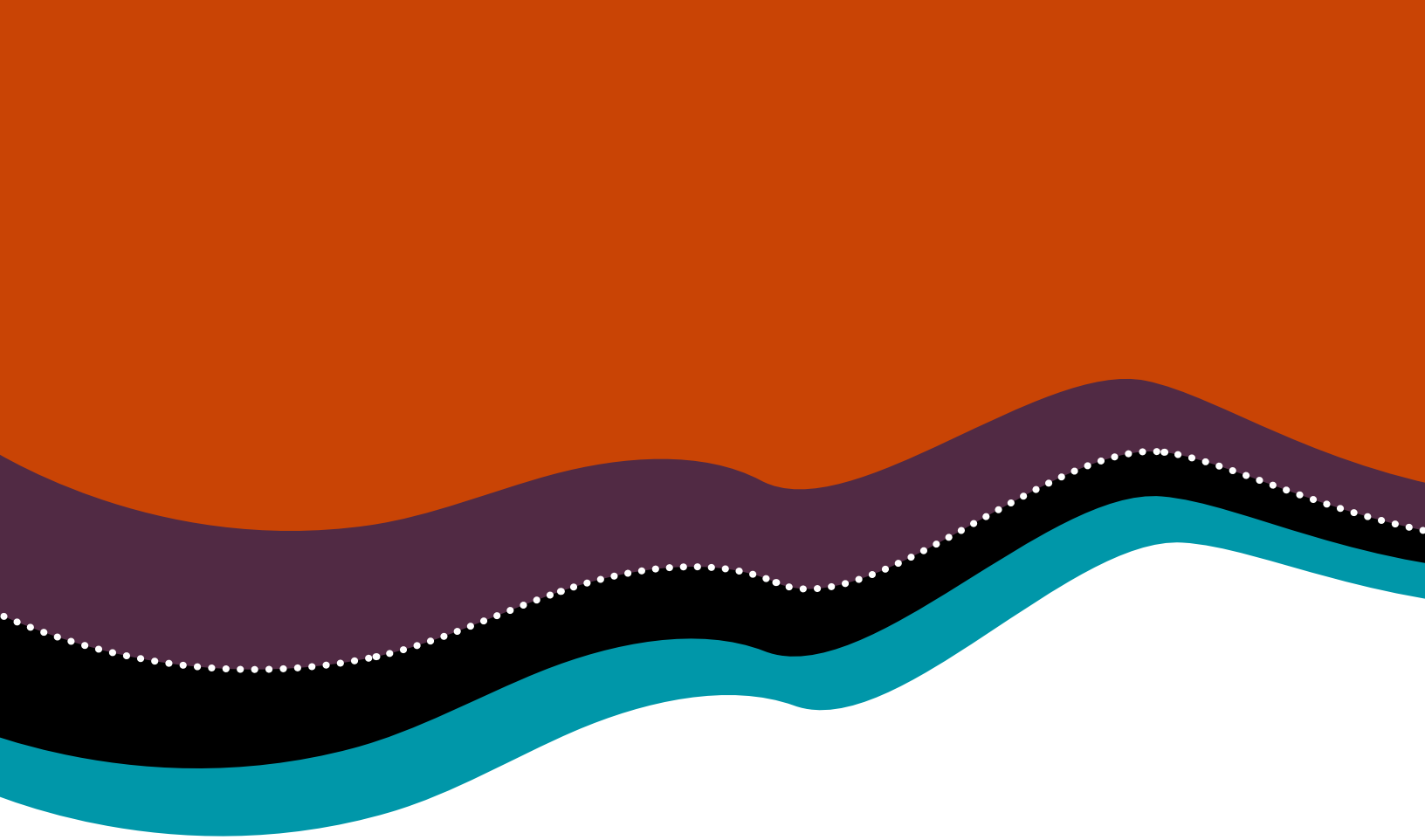
The Yukon and federal governments fund Team Yukon through the Yukon Aboriginal Sport Circle to participate in the North American Indigenous Games (NAIG). The Sport and Recreation Branch and Yukon Aboriginal Sports Circle coordinate the administration and logistics of Team Yukon. We almost doubled funding support for the 2023 NAIG and it was Team Yukon's most successful games to date. Team Yukon participated in 11 different sports and brought home 39 medals from 5 different sports.

Aboriginal Sport Development funding provided to Yukon Aboriginal Sports Circle helps Indigenous athletes prepare for NAIG, Arctic Winter Games and Canada Games.

Recognition

As part of a pan-territorial project, we provided financial and technical support to create two books: *Dene Games, an Instruction and Resource Manual*, and *The Culture and Practice of Arctic Sports*.

The Sport and Recreation Branch and the Yukon Aboriginal Sport Circle collaborate on the annual Celebration of Sport Excellence Awards Night celebrating Indigenous athletes. Award winners receive a hand-carved medallion created by a local Indigenous carver.



Yukon