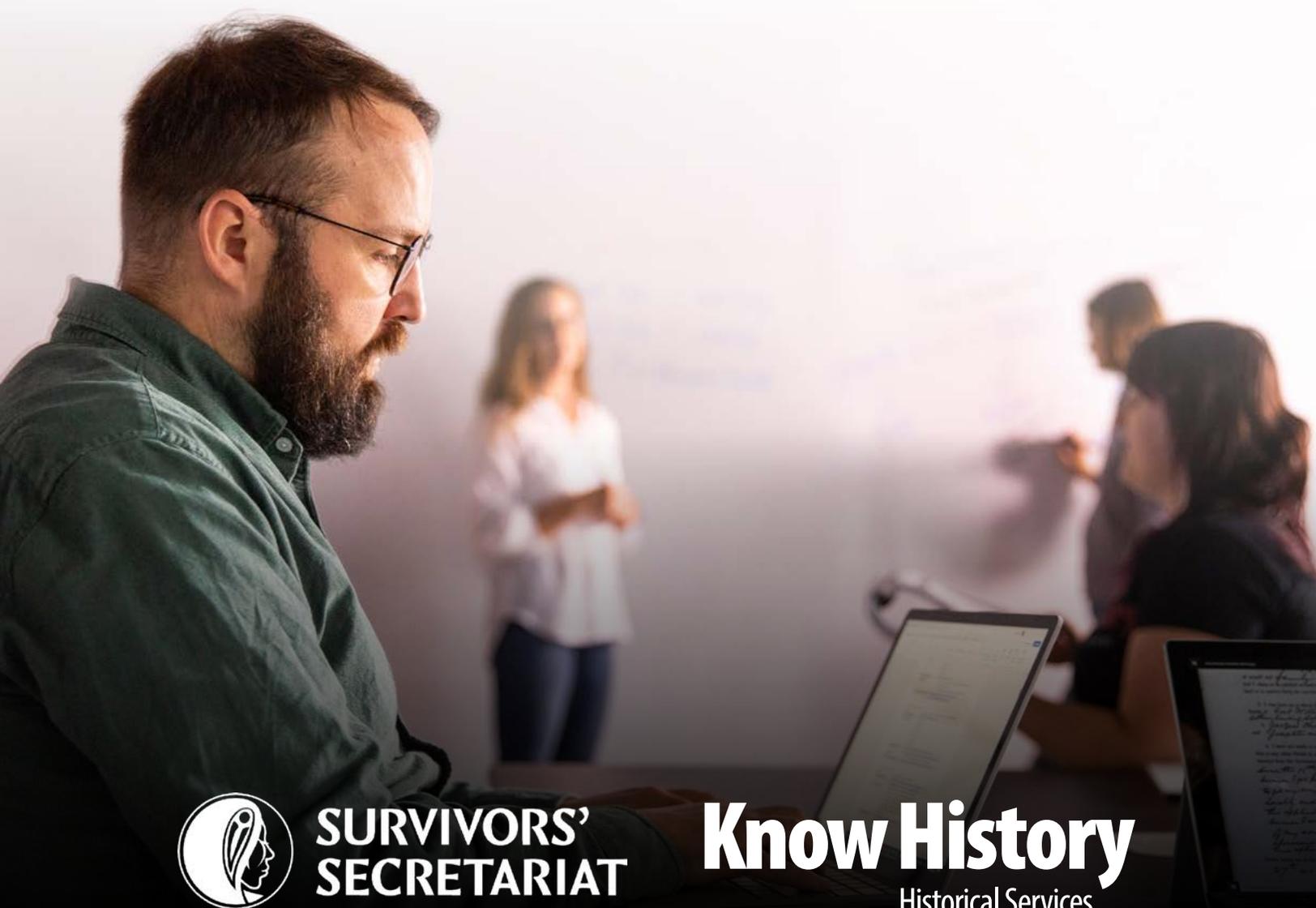# Researching the Missing Children:

An Introduction to Designing and Conducting an Archival Research Project

SURVIVORS'
SECRETARIAT

Know History
Historical Services

This is a living document; it will be updated with additional resources and information as they become available. If you have questions about or recommendations for this document, please contact *ryan@knowhistory.ca*.

Contents

About This Guide

This guide is intended to help individuals and communities successfully plan and manage community driven research projects around residential schools, missing children, and unmarked burials. It is an introduction to the complex process of identifying, collecting, and reviewing hundreds, if not thousands, of historical documents to uncover key information.

Your research may involve visiting libraries and archives and collecting large amounts of data. It could involve talking to survivors or other knowledge keepers. While the material may be overwhelming at times, it is important to remember that you are not just collecting records or compiling a list of names; rather, you are documenting your community's history and lived experience with residential schools. There will be difficult topics, such as death and abuse, but there will also be stories of resistance. There will be narratives of children who won awards, played hockey, and built friendships. These were your community's children, and the documents that tell their stories should be preserved and shared.

We acknowledge that some of the information in this guide may be triggering and could result in unpleasant thoughts and feelings. We encourage you to practice self-care and reach out to your community for support. You can contact the Indian Residential School Survivors Society toll-free at 1 (800) 721-0066 or the 24-hour Crisis Line at 1 (866) 925-4419 if you require assistance.

We hope that your find this guide useful. To further support your work, we have compiled a list of additional resources, which can be found at the back of this publication.

Sincerely,

Ryan Shackleton | Founder and Director
Know History

What can Historical Documents Tell Us?

Historical documents about residential schools can tell us:

NAMES OF STUDENTS
Quarterly returns, census records, and other documents provide the names of students who attended residential schools.

NAMES OF STAFF
Administrative records, financial documents, and letters provide the names of teachers and other staff who worked at residential schools.

CONDITIONS OF BUILDINGS
Letters and reports sent between school and government officials often include descriptions of various buildings and the maintenance they require.

WORK CHILDREN PERFORMED
Annual reports, letters, and other documents describe the agricultural and household work performed by children.

INFORMATION ABOUT NUTRITION
Letters, reports, and financial documents sometimes provide information about the food given to children.

OPERATING BUDGETS
Financial statements, annual reports, and letters provide information about schools' operating budgets over time.

RECORDS OF STUDENT DEATHS
Official reports and documents, along with letters and other unofficial documents, provide information about students who died at residential schools.

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE SCHOOL AND OTHER INSTITUTIONS
Letters, memos, and reports sent between and about various institutions (such as churches, hospitals, the RCMP, provincial governments, and the federal government) provide insight into the important roles they played in the residential school system.

Historical documents provide important insights; however, they can also be problematic and misleading. These documents were created by government officials, religious organizations, and school administrators, who were motivated to disguise or minimize the horrors of residential schools. For this reason, it is important that all historical documents are read critically, and that the experiences and memories of survivors are prioritized.

Project Planning

Research projects can vary greatly in scale. You may have many resources and ample time to complete the project, or you may have few resources and be under a tight timeline. All of these factors will shape your research project. Regardless of the scope, the most successful projects start with a solid plan. And while your plans may change, having a road map of where you are going is an important first step.

In this guide, we will work through these topics and share how to answer the following questions:

1 Define the Scope

- **WHAT IS THE FOCUS?**
- **WHAT IS YOUR TIMELINE?**
- **WHAT IS YOUR BUDGET?**

2 Organize Your Research

- **HOW WILL YOU ORGANIZE THE DATA?**
- **HOW WILL YOU ACCESS THE DATA AT THE END OF THE PROJECT?**
- **WHERE WILL THE INFORMATION BE STORED?**

3 Identify Collections

- **HOW DO YOU ACCESS COLLECTIONS?**
- **WHAT COLLECTIONS ARE AVAILABLE TO YOU?**
- **HOW DO YOU DETERMINE WHICH COLLECTIONS ARE MOST RELEVANT?**

4 Research and Collect

- **WHAT INFORMATION ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?**
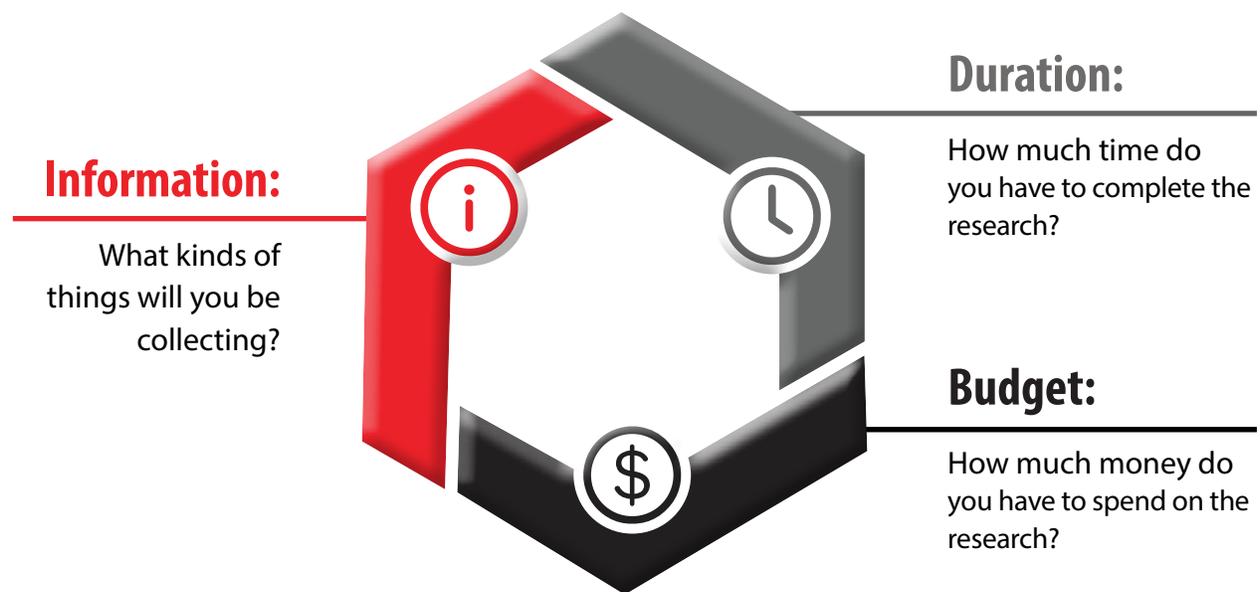- **WHERE CAN YOU FIND THIS INFORMATION?**

5 Analyze the Data

- **WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH THE COLLECTED MATERIAL?**
- **WILL YOU CONDUCT ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEWS?**

1-Define the Scope

WHAT IS THE FOCUS? | WHAT IS YOUR TIMELINE? | WHAT IS YOUR BUDGET?

As you begin your project, it is important to determine the project scope before any work is done. Consider what you want to achieve through the project, how long it will take, and who will be involved when developing the project plan. Hosting community engagement sessions or establishing a board may help you define the project scope and identify the research questions that your project will answer.

There are three interdependent considerations when defining scope. Each consideration is reliant on the other.

Duration:

How much time do you have to complete the research?

Information:

What kinds of things will you be collecting?

Budget:

How much money do you have to spend on the research?

Information:

What kinds of documents and information are you looking to collect? Clearly determine what you would like researchers to be looking for and collecting. This can be written down and shared as a research plan, so all researchers on your team are clear about the project objectives. This helps to set expectations for the community and ensures that resources are not wasted.

For example, are you looking to collect the names of missing children or gather information about perpetrators? Are you hoping to track down biographical information about children and other community members? Are you looking for statistics rather than stories? Would you like to speak with survivors only? Did members of your community travel to many different schools?

Clearly outlining your research objectives early on will save you from having to go back and do additional research later in the project. It will also keep the project accountable to community expectations and needs.

Duration:

How long do you have to complete the research? Are there deadlines for things like funding cycles, ground penetrating radar sessions, or grant reporting that may impact your timeframe?

Research can take a long time, and archives are not always quick to respond, so you may need to prioritize the most promising research areas. When identifying the duration of your project, take into consideration the availability of resources, legal processes (if needed), and key project deadlines.

Budget:

Research can be very expensive. Community researchers will need training if they are new to this work, then researchers will need funds for travel, accommodations, and any equipment they may be using to photograph and store documents at various archives. When putting together the budget, keep in mind that the collection and organization of information take time.

If there are events or advisory meetings and planning sessions associated with your project, this can also take up significant portions of your budget. Be sure to include these costs into your planning budget.

Identifying the total available budget will help you determine the scope and size of the project, the information you will be able to collect, how many researchers you can have, the number of community events that can take place, and the duration of the project. Remember to always request more funding than you think you may need when applying to a funding source. There are often unforeseen costs in research projects.

Historians and community members conducting historical research.

Archival boxes containing historical documents related to residential schools.

2-Organize Your Research

HOW WILL YOU ORGANIZE THE DATA? | HOW WILL YOU ACCESS THE DATA AT THE END OF THE PROJECT?
WHERE WILL THE INFORMATION BE STORED?

As your project moves ahead, you may end up collecting dozens of oral histories and thousands of documents, including letters, maps, reports, and plans. Before starting the research, consider how your team will store and organize the information you collect.

If you are working with a team, research team members will need to be able to save their findings somewhere and see what others have collected. They need to be able to view each other's work, primarily to make sure nothing is being duplicated, but also to benefit from the information collected. This type of tracking will also help keep the community updated on your team's progress.

Your community may already have document collection policies and tools, or you may have a local heritage society that has access to various library systems. However, it is likely that you will need a computer program to help organize the data.

This program can be simple or complex, but it should allow you to record the material and add notes about what you found. Whatever you choose, it is important to plan what your database is going to look like, then follow the procedures to make sure all information is accurately inputted.

Historians at Library and Archives Canada, 2018.

Here are some available options:

LOW-COST OPTIONS
Programs like Excel and Google Sheets offer a low-cost option for data organization. However, these programs are not intended for this work and as such have limited functionality.
Excel: *https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/microsoft-365/excel*
Google Sheets: *https://www.google.ca/sheets/about/*

$

ONLINE DATABASE PROGRAMS
An online database program like Airtable operates like a spreadsheet and is designed to organize large amounts of information. Though there are monthly costs per user, Airtable is scalable and transferable, especially when supported by an online storage tool like Dropbox.
Airtable: *https://www.airtable.com/* | Dropbox: *https://www.dropbox.com/*

$$

CUSTOMIZED SOLUTIONS
A customized solution will be the most expensive option but will also offer the most functionality and robust data organization. Though there are often costs to maintain these systems, and they may require more onboarding for users, they will provide the best community-based research tool.
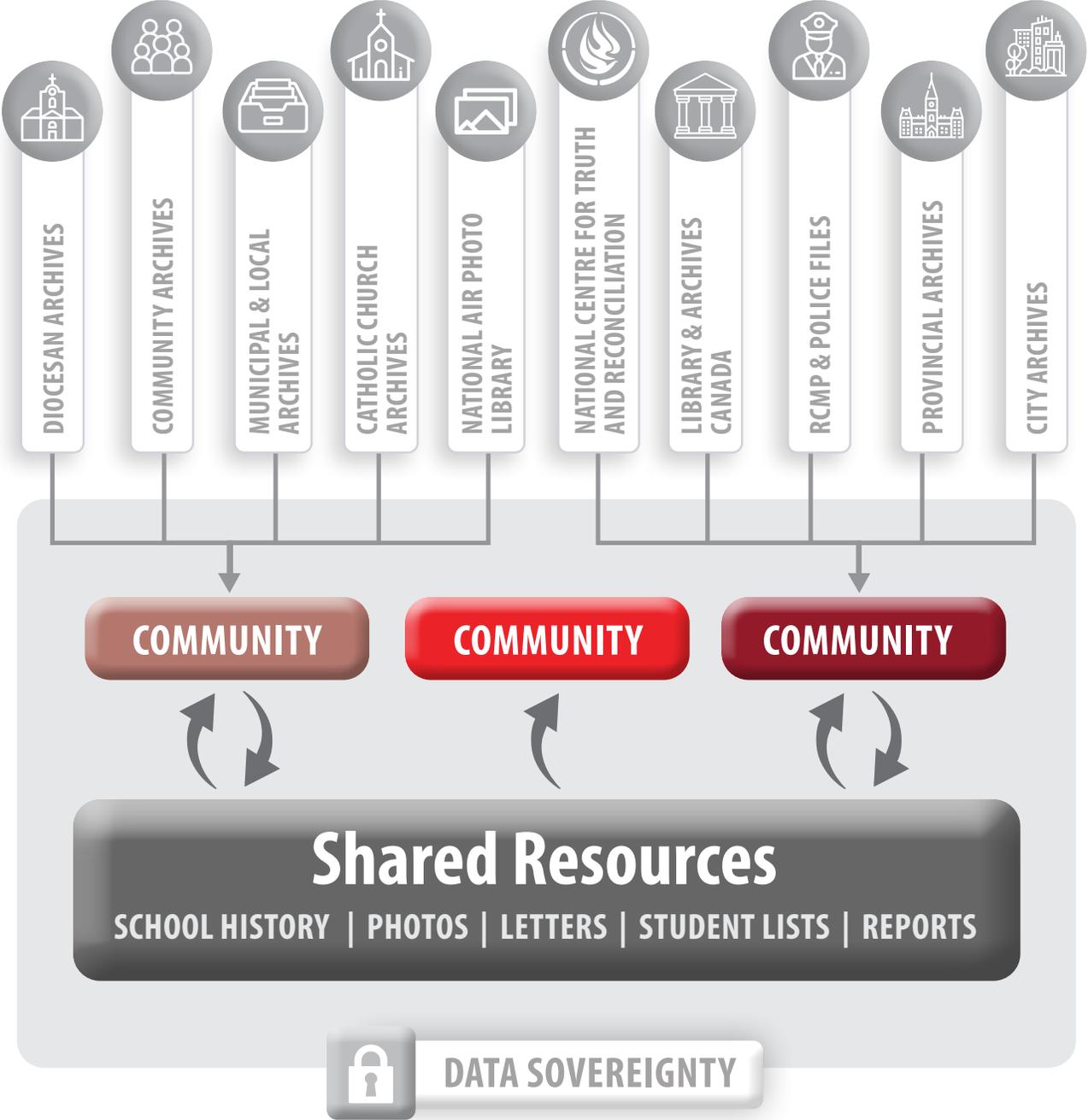
$$$

SAFEGUARDS
Be sure to have mental health safeguards in place for community members, elders, and researchers while working on the project. Outside resources are available to supplement community protocols if deemed appropriate by community and/or project leadership. These could include the National Indian Residential School Crisis Line (1-866-925-4419), vicarious trauma training for researchers, and ongoing spiritual and emotional support. Build time into your research schedule for team members to take breaks to cope with the material being collected and reviewed. Time for ceremony and meeting with cultural support is another important aspect of this work.

Creating a Shared Database

When designing your project, you can reach out to other Nations to speak about their research. There may be opportunities for collaboration as children from neighboring Nations were often sent to the same schools. This means that historical documents related to various Nations will be held in the same archival files. By collaborating with other communities and sharing research, you can save time and money. Just ensure that everyone is clear on the scope of work and what can and can't be shared between Nations. It will also be helpful to have a central repository of information that Nations can contribute to.

DIOCESAN ARCHIVES

COMMUNITY ARCHIVES

MUNICIPAL & LOCAL ARCHIVES

CATHOLIC CHURCH ARCHIVES

NATIONAL AIR PHOTO LIBRARY

NATIONAL CENTRE FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION

LIBRARY & ARCHIVES CANADA

RCMP & POLICE FILES

PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES

CITY ARCHIVES

COMMUNITY   **COMMUNITY**   **COMMUNITY**

Shared Resources
SCHOOL HISTORY | PHOTOS | LETTERS | STUDENT LISTS | REPORTS

DATA SOVEREIGNTY

Protocols and Guidelines

When beginning a research project about a specific residential school, or all the residential schools that have impacted your community, it is important to identify the protocols that will guide the work. This includes protocols about how data will be collected, stored, and shared; how this work will be undertaken in a respectful and meaningful way; how key decisions will be made; and how the mental health of all those involved will be supported.

Determining protocols and guidelines is a vital step in preparing to conduct this research. The process will look different for each community. Below are a series of questions that could help you develop your community specific protocols:

▶ What are the goals of this research?

▶ How will personal information be stored and protected?

▶ Will ceremonies become part of the process?

▶ What healing supports are needed?

▶ Will these documents be accessible to the entire community or only to survivors and their families?

▶ Will there be extended stewardship and preservation?

▶ Who is the research team accountable to?

▶ Who needs to be involved in key decision-making processes?

Having a clear understanding of what the end goal is and who will have access to the research is vital. Communities want the whole truth, which includes access to records, where children went, and the entities responsible. Having unclear answers about how this information will be gathered and shared can create hesitancy and cause problems as the project unfolds.

Communities may consider forming protocol working groups that bring together people with different knowledges to guide the research process. The collaborators of this group will look different depending on the dynamics of the community and the nature of your research goals.

Team could include:

▶ Elders

▶ Language speakers

▶ Survivors and intergenerational survivors

▶ Hereditary and elected leadership

▶ Traditional and academic community scholars

▶ Youth

3-Identify Collections

HOW DO YOU ACCESS COLLECTIONS? | WHAT COLLECTIONS ARE AVAILABLE TO YOU?
HOW DO YOU DETERMINE WHICH COLLECTIONS ARE MOST RELEVANT?

There are many valuable record collections kept in archives throughout Canada. Two of the most important are the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation and Library and Archives Canada. As a starting point for your project, you may want to contact these organizations. They have archivists to help direct your research and dedicated guides for searching the collections. Depending on the province the school was located in and which church ran the school, there may also be significant collections in provincial and church archives.

See "Repositories" at the end of this booklet for a list of repositories throughout Canada that may be useful during your search.

Where to Look

Beyond the national and provincial archives, there are many other places with information on your research topic.

COMMUNITY HISTORIES
Community Histories are a great place to start, as the truth lies with communities. Ask community members for input on important events and/or people they remember and use this information to help narrow your search. Archives and other residential school resource centres may have already collected oral histories from survivors who have passed on.

POLICE FILES
Police files can offer lots of information. Both federal (e.g., RCMP) and provincial (e.g., OPP) files can be explored. These files may be difficult to access, but they could hold very valuable data. Information may be found in the following types of files: residential schools, police inquiries, investigations into death, or other behavior. The records may be accessed through provincial or national institutions, depending on the police force. Leveraging social or political influence could be helpful in gaining access to these records.

INDIVIDUAL COLLECTIONS

Individual collections, like those of anthropologists or ethnohistorians, are often housed in universities or museums. They typically include extensive research notes, collected materials, and sometimes oral histories. Ask community members if they can remember any historians or anthropologists who may have visited the area in previous decades. Publications from these academics may be available with museums, archives, or university libraries.

MUSEUMS

Museums at the local, provincial, and national level hold artifacts, maps, journals, oral histories, and much more.

HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

Historical societies frequently have collections donated by settlers, local newspaper collections, small local history publications, and more. Though they may not have the specific records you are looking for, they may know of other collections that could be of use or be able to point you in the right direction.

MEDICAL RECORDS

Medical records are typically housed in provincial repositories and can be very useful, though they can be hard to access and may require additional legal processes.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ARCHIVES

Local government archives will have records about property holdings, such as local maps, municipal property charts, county atlases, and more. This can be achieved by contacting the municipality where the residential school was located.

MILITARY RECORDS

Military records are extensive and can provide a wealth of information about military employees, cadets programs, recruitment, as well as the land around military bases. These records are primarily available at Library and Archives Canada.

Band Council Resolutions

By the nature of your research, accessing information will be difficult since much of it is private. You may run into archivists and government employees who tell you that you cannot look at something because it is restricted. But there are some tools you can use.

The most important tool is a Band Council Resolution (BCR). The national archives and federal government have provisions that allow researchers to access files that are relevant to a specific band, but they require a BCR. The BCR formally appoints the researcher for the project and grants them access.

The BCR should contain the following:

◗ The name of the researcher or research firm

◗ The institution(s) the researcher/firm should be given access to

◗ The purpose of the research

◗ The name of the reserve, band, and province or territory

◗ The signatures of the Chief and Council (in a quorum)

Some files will be further restricted and can not be accessed with just a BCR. Access to these records can be requested through an Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP) request. This will allow you to access restricted material from government institutions like LAC and CIRNAC.

It is a good idea to reach out to the archive with any questions about your ATIP request. Be mindful that, depending on the archive, it can take a long time to gain access to your requested files. It is best to submit these as soon as possible to avoid delaying your research.

> For more details on provincial and municipal privacy legislation, please see the Freedom of Information section under Resources.

4-Research and Collect

WHAT INFORMATION ARE YOU LOOKING FOR? | WHERE CAN YOU FIND THIS INFORMATION?

During your research, you will find a variety of textual documents in the collections you encounter. Textual documents often fall under specific classifications that cover a range of subject materials related to the administration and daily matters of residential schools. Condition reports, student lists, financials, and inspections tended to happen on a quarterly basis (September, December, March, June). Some of the materials you see may differ from school to school but could include the following:

◗ Quarterly Returns (student lists)

◗ Quarterly or Bi-Monthly Reports

◗ Inspection Reports

◗ Principal's Correspondence

◗ Staffing Correspondence

◗ Clergy Correspondence

◗ Parental Correspondence

This list is not exhaustive, and documents will vary based on which religious denomination or order ran the school and the time period. Further, the records that are available today are the ones that were chosen to be archived by the administration, government, and church. The "official" record will have gaps, and survivor oral histories, witness testimonies, and physical evidence will likely offer a picture that differs from the one painted by the documents.

In addition to written documents, there are many other types of files that could be relevant and provide more information.

Maps, Plans, and Aerial Images

Maps, plans, and aerial images show the evolution of property boundaries and layout. This can include the locations of buildings, roads, and waterways. The landscape has likely changed over time, so understanding its progression will help with ongoing search efforts. Many aerial photographs can be found at the National Air Photo Library, a federal institution that has been conducting aerial photography research for over 70 years.

Local archives may hold property records that show boundaries and lots. They also have registers that show how land has been divided up over time. Government records almost always have information about building locations and when buildings were erected at residential school sites.

Another avenue of research is to map of your community's knowledge. During an oral history interview with a survivor, offer to look at a map of the area and mark places that they know about. Placing a map in front of someone often gives them reference points and encourages insightful discussion. They may recall details about travel routes, where buildings were located, or sites of significant events. This work can be completed with the assistance of your local lands department or geographers in your community.
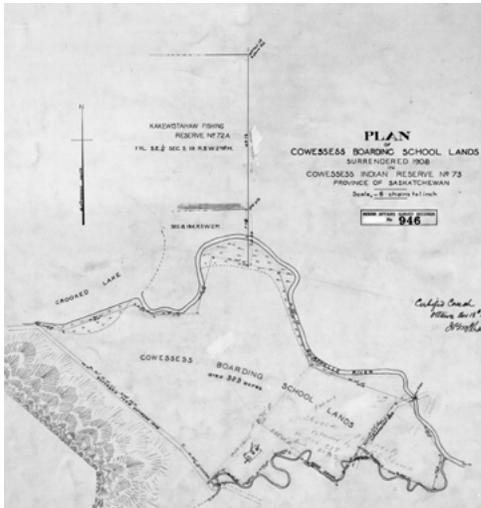
Cowessess Boarding School map, 1901. Archives / First Nations Reserves – Western Canada / Library and Archives Canada / 23533.
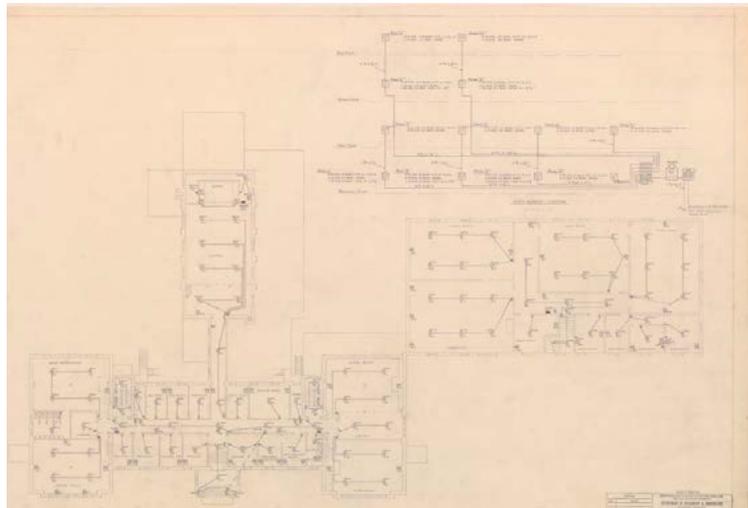
Saddle Lake Indian Agency, Blue Quills Residential School re-wiring plan, 1956. Government of Canada / Library and Archives Canada / 2126463; Copyright: Crown.

You can create custom maps using a variety of software programs. ESRI ArcGIS offers a full suite of programs that can be used to create everything from custom maps, to interactives. The program includes learning tools and has a beginner-friendly interface.
https://www.esri.com/en-us/arcgis/products/arcgis-online/overview

For an open source (free) mapping software, QGIS is available. QGIS has similar functionality, but fewer bells and whistles. Training videos and modules are available online.
https://www.qgis.org/en/site/

Photographs

Photographs can show how land or buildings have changed over time and guide future research. They can be used in tandem with maps and aerial images to track changes to the layout of a residential school site. They can also be used as interview prompts; however, researchers should be aware that images could trigger painful memories for survivors, and the project team should have appropriate safeguards in place and approval before using the photographs.

Group of men and boys carrying supplies during the reconstruction of Cross Lake Indian Residential School. Cross Lake, Manitoba, summer 1939. Canada. Dept. Indian and Northern Affairs / Library and Archives Canada / e011080272.

EXAMPLES:
The image on the left was taken at Cross Lake Residential School in Manitoba after a fire. It shows us the location of storage sheds, mounds in the distance, and an access route. All of this can be helpful when researching how the land and buildings have changed over time.

In some cases, the photographic record will reveal much larger plans. In the example below, the entire layout of the Caribou Indian Residential School is captured in a rare panoramic image. Visible are roadways, barns, and the church. Images like these can be used as a starting point for discussions with survivors and to guide additional research.

Panorama of Cariboo Indian Residential School grounds, William's Lake, British Columbia, 1949. Canada. Dept. Indian and Northern Affairs / Library and Archives Canada / e 011080297.

Ancestry

CENSUS RECORDS

Ancestry.ca (or *Ancestry.com*) is a significant repository of historical records, uploaded from both archival collections and personal users. Ancestry holds census, church, military, and vital statistics records.

Ancestry has Census of Canada records from 1825 to 1921, as well as specific census records for the Maritimes (Nova Scotia and Newfoundland), the Prairie Provinces (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta), and communities in Ontario. (Note: Census records can also be accessed through Library and Archives Canada).

Residential school students were enumerated in the district where the schools were located. While they can be useful, most of these records were informed by administrators or quarterly returns and should be reviewed critically.

> **CAUTION WITH USING ANCESTRY**
> Ancestry is a great resource for locating information and tracking specific individuals. However, researchers should be cautious, especially with vague or incomplete records. It was common for multiple students to have the same name at any one residential school, making locating the correct records challenging.
>
> Additionally, if public users have created public family trees in Ancestry, their research may include inaccurate information. Be cautious when collecting records uploaded by other users or when relying on public family trees. Check your settings to ensure that any information you want to remain private is marked as such.

Tips for Locating Residential Schools on Census Records

It can be difficult to find residential schools on census records, as the institutions were inconsistently recorded on the census over time. When searching for a school on the census:

◗ Locate the district or subdistrict of the school (be mindful that these changed over time). LAC has a helpful resource to help you find districts and subdistricts for each census (e.g., 1901: **https://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/census/1901/Pages/census-districts-sub-districts.aspx**).

◗ The name of the school usually does not appear, but sometimes the census will indicate "Indian School."

◗ The head of the school is usually listed as the first person on the census for the residential school. Therefore, knowing principals' names can help you with this research.

◗ Children are usually listed under the principal and other school officials. They can be listed as "pupils," "lodgers," "S" (for son), "D" (for daughter), and other terms.

◗ Students may be listed under a name or origin that differs from the one their families are looking for.

◗ Sometimes residential schools do not appear on the census, even if they were running the year the census was taken.

1911 Census of Canada. Ontario. District of Nipissing. Moose Fort Factory, p. 1. Originally sourced from LAC Series RG31-C-1. Accessed on Ancestry.ca.

This is the 1911 Census for Moose Fort Boarding School, the residential school in Moose Factory at the time. The principal is listed as the head. Below him are the names of teachers at the school, followed by the students. The children attending are listed as "pupils."

BIRTH, MARRIAGE, AND DEATH RECORDS

There are some provincial collections for births, marriages, divorces, and deaths on Ancestry. While collections continue to be added to the online repository, materials for Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, British Columbia, the Territories, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador are still limited.

Death records may be available for individuals whose deaths were registered with the province (depending on the school's remoteness and the date of death, the deaths may not have been officially registered). These records often provide details about the cause of death, burial information, and who reported the death.

CHURCH RECORDS

There are some digitized church records; however, they appear to be for public churches rather than the chapels built into residential school sites. If schools were close to a town or city, there may be cases of schools using a municipal church for confirmations and marriages, but this would not apply to most schools.

MILITARY SERVICE RECORDS

Military service records can be helpful when looking for a particular student who may have joined the service. Payrolls and service records are available on Ancestry, and most are indexed and therefore searchable. Ethnicities, origins, and family information may not always be accurate. Some regiments were exclusively composed of Indigenous soldiers, so it can be helpful to note the place of residence at the time of enlistment and regiment the person joined.

TIPS AND TRICKS FOR SEARCHES

Researchers will need to have some basic information about specific students (which, unfortunately, is not always easy to come by). Knowing an approximate birth date and spelling variations of their known names is a good starting point. Other helpful information would be which residential school they attended and the location. Researchers may need to identify and search using the historic names of towns, municipalities, or counties where residential schools were located.

Wildcard searches made using an asterisk (*) with partial spellings of first names and surnames, and the broad/exact tool in the search feature, can help you to get more search results. If a student's name changed while at school, or they had a different legal name, you will need to do multiple searches.

Records that have optical character recognition are searchable with quotations ("") to find exact phrases within digitized documents. This can also work for names of schools or school officials.

Newspapers

Newspapers provide stories, images, and details on local events. There are drawbacks to using newspapers, as they have a bias and are time consuming to search through. However, newspapers can provide important details on accidents at schools, investigations, school events, and changes to buildings and grounds. While looking through microfilm and archives for newspapers may become necessary, start your search with **Newspapers.com**, which has fully digitized, high-resolution papers from over 350 different newspapers in Canada. These papers cover from the 19th to the 21st century in cities across the country.

A great feature of Newspapers.com is that all of the papers have undergone optical character recognition. This means that words and phrases within the text are fully searchable, making them much easier to navigate than microfilm.

Article about the Mohawk Institute in The Brantford Expositor, April 23, 1903. Newspapers.com.

SURVIVORS' SECRETARIAT

The Survivors' Secretariat was established in 2021 to organize and support efforts to uncover, document, and share the truth about what happened at the Mohawk Institute residential school in Brantford, Ontario, during its 140 years of operation.

Project Description

In the fall of 2021, the Survivors' Secretariat began working with a team of historians at Know History to access and obtain information, documentation, and records related to children who were taken to the Mohawk Institute.

Information gathered through archival research will:

▶ Support the ongoing investigation into unmarked burials of Indigenous children on the Mohawk Institute grounds

▶ Create and maintain a Survivor-owned archive

▶ Guide future commemoration policies and activities.

Mohawk Institute Indian Residential School

Operated 1828–1970 | Brantford, Ontario

▶ 140+ year legacy, making it the longest running Indian Residential School in Canada.

▶ First opened as a school for Indigenous boys under the New England Company's operation.

▶ Operations later transferred from the New England Company to the Government of Canada in 1922.

▶ Original property was over 600 acres, which is now owned by a variety of land title holders.

▶ An estimated 90–200 students attended annually until its closure in 1970.

> **"**
> *If we are to have true Indigenous Data Sovereignty, we must clear the roadblocks that limit our access to the documents that exist about us. These are our people's stories, and we must be the holders of this knowledge moving forward.*

- Laura Arndt
Secretariat Lead, Survivors' Secretariat

Mandate

The work of the Survivors' Secretariat is governed by a Board of Directors comprised of seven Survivors of the Mohawk Institute. The Survivors' Secretariat's primary focus is on Recovery, Reclamation, and Revitalization. The Survivor-Led organization strives to take a Trauma-Informed Approach to fulfilling its mandate and four primary objectives.

Archival Research & Document Collection

Obtaining access to and organizing all information, documents, and records related to the children who were taken to, transferred from, or associated with the Mohawk Institute.

Advocacy

Working with individuals and organizations who stand with Survivors to support efforts to uncover, document, and share the truth about what happened to the children at the Mohawk Institute.

Ground Search Efforts

Analyzing and collecting ground search data using technology and processes currently available to locate unmarked burials on grounds associated with the Mohawk Institute.

Commemoration

Using a trauma-informed approach when working with Survivors, their families, and communities to affirm the voices of children who survived and to commemorate the children who never returned home.

Survivor-Led Trauma-Informed Community-Involved

Supported by Haudenosaunee Law and Legal Principles

Respect for Nationhood and Nation to Nation Diplomacy

Research Undertaken

Defining the Scope & Organizing the Research

The Survivors' Secretariat defined the scope of the project by clearly detailing what type of information researchers should be looking for and collecting. Know History was instructed to collect all information related to the Mohawk Institute and the children that were sent to or transferred from the institution. This also includes information related to the administration and operation of the institution and its associated grounds. Collected information is being organized and tagged in an internal database. The Survivors' Secretariat will maintain ownership of all collected data and will determine how individuals and communities will be able to access the database once it is complete.

Identifying Collections & Gaining Access

The Survivors' Secretariat, in partnership with Know History, identified key collections and defined specific areas of interest to guide researchers. Once identified, archives and repositories were contacted to negotiate access to the materials (i.e., National Centre of Truth and Reconciliation and the City of Brantford). To gain access to restricted information, Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP) requests were submitted and legal proceedings were undertaken where necessary.

Recovery, Reclamation and Revitalization

20,000
Relevant documents identified

11,800 **Documents collected, reviewed & organized**

27 **Archives and other repositories identified with relevant collections**

OVER
4,600
Known students

96 **KNOWN STUDENT DEATHS***

* The number of known student deaths change as more information is collected and reviewed

Research and Collection

The Survivors' Secretariat continues to conduct research to share the truth about the Mohawk Institute and its history. Documentation has been collected from 27 different archives and repositories within Canada and internationally. Currently, documentation spans over 130 years of the institution; however, it is important to note that there are significant gaps in documentation that extend over years and, in some cases, decades.

To date, over 4,600 children of the estimated 15,000 students have been identified. This includes 96 known children who died while attending or were associated with the Mohawk Institute. The Survivors' Secretariat and Know History use the term "known" to indicate deaths that have been identified through the collection of records. Information is still being gathered on the Mohawk Institute and the children who were sent there, and we expect these numbers to grow.

Analyzing the Data & Supporting the Ground Search

Though research is still underway, the Survivors' Secretariat, in partnership with Know History, has begun analyzing the documents to gain a greater understanding of the history of the Mohawk Institute and the stories of children who attended. New information about the institutional history of the Mohawk Institute, the names of staff and employees, and key figures who were involved in the Mohawk Institute's operations have been uncovered.

Detailed information has also been gathered on the disciplinary measures used against children, student illnesses and injuries, and complaints voiced by members of the public about conditions at the Mohawk Institute.

Historical documents are instrumental in supporting ongoing ground search efforts. Historical documents provide information about buildings or natural features (such as rivers) that were present over the past century. Survivor knowledge combined with historical records can help experts determine which areas are best suited for ground-penetrating radar, and which areas may require the use of other technologies.

As an example, a map of the historic rifle range near the Mohawk Chapel was overlaid onto aerial photographs of the region from 1945 and the present day to analyze how the river shifted over the years. This research provides vital information on the natural changes to the land, allowing the Survivor s' Secretariat to better assess how to tackle over 600 acres of ground search around the Mohawk Institute.
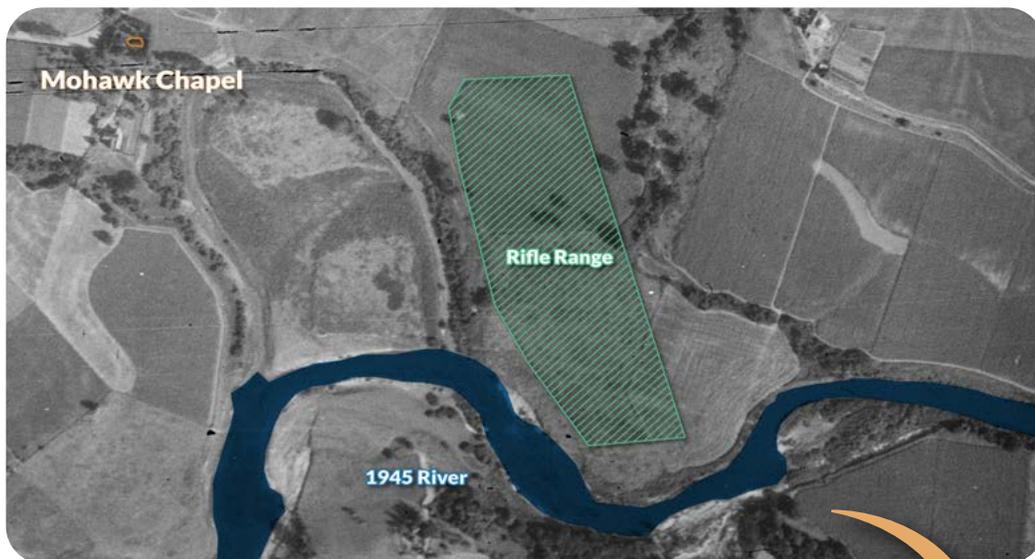
Key locations of a historic rifle range and the river are shown on a 1945 aerial photograph of the Mohawk Chapel and surrounding area. A present-day image shows how the river has changed over time and how this could impact the GPR search of these grounds.
Source: National Air Photo Library.

Ongoing Work

This research is far from complete. Every historical record provides another piece of evidence about what happened at the Mohawk Institute. The Survivors and their communities have the right to own and control this important data. As the document collection and analysis continues, the Survivors' Secretariat is discussing how the information will be shared and preserved for future generations.

Contact Us

If you or a loved one attended the Mohawk Institute and are interested in learning more about the project or wish to share your own story with the Survivors' Secretariat, please reach out to info@survivorssecretariat.ca.

For more information, visit
www.survivorssecretariat.ca

Planning your Trip to the Archives

Historical documents can be found in various archives and repositories across Canada. Although some files will be available for review online, many documents are not digitized and can only be accessed in person. To begin your research, identify which archives have relevant documents (see a list of institutions on page 29 of this document).

Then, follow these steps for each relevant archive:

1

CREATE A LIST OF KEYWORDS TO USE AS SEARCH TERMS. KEYWORDS CAN INCLUDE:

▶ The name of the school (and different spelling variations)

▶ Any past names or nicknames of the school

▶ Names of staff or key individuals

▶ Names of institutions affiliated with the school (such as churches or the New England Company)

▶ Names of nearby institutions where students may have been sent (such as hospitals or correctional facilities).

2

ENTER EACH KEYWORD (OR COMBINATIONS OF KEYWORDS) INTO THE ARCHIVE'S ONLINE SEARCH FUNCTION.

3

REVIEW THE FILE DESCRIPTIONS TO DETERMINE IF THEY ARE RELEVANT.

Some archives have finding aids to provide more information on the contents of larger file series. Make sure the file dates and locations fall within your research scope.

4

MAKE A DETAILED LIST OF THE RELEVANT SEARCH RESULTS.

Make note of any files that are restricted (more information on this in "Accessing Restricted Files").

Some archives do not have online search functions. If this happens, you can email the archive to tell them about your research and provide them with a list of keywords. They should be able to identify any relevant files in their collection for you.

Once you have identified the files you wish to review, contact the archive to request the files. To do so:

5 LOCATE THE ARCHIVE'S EMAIL ADDRESS.
This can usually be found on their website under "Contact Us." Some archives, like Library and Archives Canada, have online file request forms, which can be submitted directly on their website.

6 SEND THE LIST OF RELEVANT FILES TO THE ARCHIVIST AND TELL THEM THE DAY THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO VISIT. THEY WILL PULL THE FILES SO THAT THEY ARE READY WHEN YOU ARRIVE.

7 TRAVEL TO THE ARCHIVE. BE SURE TO BRING:
- A camera, phone, or scanner to digitize files (check the archive's rules to ensure this is allowed)
- A USB stick and external hard drive to save your digitized files to
- A laptop or pencil and paper to take notes (pens are not allowed)
- A sweater (archives and reading rooms are always kept cool).

8 WHEN YOU ARRIVE, WALK UP TO THE FRONT DESK, AND TELL THEM YOUR NAME.
They should bring you to a table with the files you requested.

9 OPEN FILE FOLDERS ONE AT TIME AND BEGIN REVIEWING THE DOCUMENTS. BE SURE TO KEEP THE FILES IN ORDER.

10 WHEN YOU FIND A RELEVANT FILE, YOU CAN PHOTOGRAPH IT OR ASK THE ARCHIVE STAFF TO SCAN IT.
Be sure to record the citation information for each file that you photograph so that you can find the file again later or cite it in a report.

The process of accessing documents can be complex, and you might run into roadblocks. However, as an Indigenous Nation, you have the right to access all historical documents about your Nation. Be persistent and follow the archive's policies and procedures, and you will gain access to these records.

Technological Options

While reviewing historical files in the archive, photograph relevant documents to share with your research team and community. There are a variety of different technologies that you can use, including:

▶ Phone or tablet: Depending on your device, this method can produce lower quality images. You should also download a document scanner app to your device.

▶ Camera and tripod: This will produce higher quality images and allow you to easily photograph larger documents like maps. You will also need a camera memory card.

▶ Hovercam: These are compact, easy to use, and produce high quality images, but are not ideal for large documents. You will need to plug this into your laptop.

▶ USB stick: These can be used to save microfilm images directly from the computer or microfilm reader at the archive.

Always back up your digitized files to an external hard drive or cloud-based storage system.

Historian using a hovercam connected to a laptop.

5-Analyze the Data

WHAT WILL YOU DO WITH THE COLLECTED MATERIAL?

Data analysis is an ongoing process where you examine and then pinpoint relevant information from the documents you collect. It is important to keep track of information that you want to include in your final report, share with the community, or use to guide further research. When theme areas emerge, it can be helpful to create "tags" to remember which documents detail a specific theme.

A few things to remember:

▶ No document is going to have the whole history. You will need to use the evidence from many different sources to construct the complete narrative. A map, an oral history, and a government record will together create a holistic story.

▶ The majority of the documents you will find were created by those who developed and ran these institutions. As such, they are inherently biased. In reading these documents, be sure to keep your community's perspective front and centre.

▶ When you are doing your analysis, keep in mind how you might like to use the information in the future. You will see themes emerge, and it would be helpful to track them. Also keep note of important images and maps so that you can make use of them later.

▶ If you are hiring outside researchers, ensure that they abide by your policies of community ownership.

▶ Keep your project goal in mind; the research is not just about collecting documents and entering them into a database. These documents will have impacts that go beyond the research phase of your project.

Historians and community members conducting historical research.

Conclusion

Each research project consists of many phases and tasks. Defining your project's goals at the beginning will help keep you on track throughout the process. Organizing your research and identifying the relevant collections will simplify the process and ensure researchers are working efficiently. By analyzing the data as it is collected, researchers can note significant finds and pinpoint additional areas of research.

These steps will help you reach your research goals, whether that be identifying children and providing closure to families, creating a community archive on those who were lost, or collecting the experiences of the children and survivors. By embarking on a research project that is led by and for your community, you will have the opportunity to reclaim these historic documents and control the narrative.

Resources
Freedom of Information

National
- Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) – Semi Active Files Request contact information: *aadnc.recordsncrarchivalresearch.aandc@canada.ca*
- Access to Information and Privacy (ATIP) Online Request: *https://atip-aiprp.apps.gc.ca/atip/welcome.do*

Provincial/Territorial

BRITISH COLUMBIA
- *https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/about-the-bc-government/open-government/open-information/search-open-information-resources*

ONTARIO
- *https://www.ipc.on.ca*
- Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA) or the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA). *https://www.ontario.ca/document/freedom-information-and-privacy-manual/access-procedures*

MANITOBA
- *https://www.gov.mb.ca/fippa/*

SASKATCHEWAN
- The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act relates to government institutions such as ministries, Crown corporations, agencies, boards, and commissions. *https://publications.saskatchewan.ca/api/v1/products/527/formats/694/download*
- The Local Authority Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act relates to local authorities such as school boards, post-secondary institutions, rural municipalities, and regional health authorities. *https://publications.saskatchewan.ca/api/v1/products/605/formats/850/download*

ALBERTA
- *https://www.servicealberta.ca/foip/resources.cfm*

YUKON

- *https://yukon.ca/en/request-access-information-records*
- *https://www.yukonombudsman.ca/yukon-information-and-privacy-commissioner/for-public-bodies/atipp-act*

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES

- Copy of the ATIPP Act (Amended last in July 2021) *https://www.justice.gov.nt.ca/en/access-to-information-held-by-public-bodies/#:~:text=An%20Access%20to%20Information%20and,corrections%20to%20personal%20information.*

NUNAVUT

- *https://www.gov.nu.ca/eia/information/how-place-atipp-request#:~:text=The%20ATIPP%20Act%20provides%20individuals,in%20writing%20with%20this%20form.*

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

- *https://www.gov.nl.ca/atipp/accessrequestform/#:~:text=Contact%20the%20ATIPP%20Office%20by,.nl.ca%20for%20assistance.*

NOVA SCOTIA

- Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPOP). *http://nslegislature.ca/legc/statutes/freedom.htm*
- *https://novascotia.ca/nse/dept/foipop.asp*
- *https://beta.novascotia.ca/apply-access-information-under-freedom-information-and-protection-privacy-foipop-act-form-1*

PEI

- Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPP). *https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/legislation/f-15-01-freedom_of_information_and_protection_of_privacy_act.pdf*
- *https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/justice-and-public-safety/freedom-of-information-and-protection-of-privacy-foipp*

NEW BRUNSWICK

- Right to Information and Protection of Privacy Act (RTIPPA). *http://laws.gnb.ca/en/BROWSECHAPTER?listregulations=R-10.6&letter=R#R-10.6*
- *https://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/finance/office_of_the_chief_information_officer/content/rti/request.html*

QUEBEC

- Act respecting Access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information. *http://legisquebec.gouv.qc.ca/en/showdoc/cs/A-2.1#:~:text=of%20personal%20 information-,A%2D2.1%20%2D%20Act%20respecting%20Access%20to%20documents%20 held%20by%20public,the%20Protection%20of%20personal%20information&text=This%20 Act%20applies%20to%20documents,agency%20of%20a%20third%20party.*

- *https://www.quebec.ca/en/access-information*

Students and staff at Shubenacadie Indian Residential School, Shubenacadie, Nova Scotia, circa 1923. Library and Archives Canada/Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development fonds/e011311461.

Repositories

There are numerous repositories throughout Canada that may be useful during your search.

National

- Archives, Society of Jesus, Upper Canada Province:
  http://archivesjesuites.ca/en/visiting-the-archive/
- Canadian Museum of History: *https://www.historymuseum.ca/collections/*
- Library and Archives Canada: *https://recherche-collection-search.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/home/search*
- National Air Photo Library: *https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/maps-tools-and-publications/satellite-imagery-and-air-photos/air-photos/national-air-photo-library/9265*
- United Church of Canada: *https://www.unitedchurcharchives.ca/residential-school-records-in-united-church-of-canada-archives/*

Anglican Church

NATIONAL
- Anglican Church of Canada, General Synod Archives: *http://archives.anglican.ca/en*

NEW BRUNSWICK
- Anglican Church of Canada, General Synod Archives: *http://archives.anglican.ca/en*

ONTARIO
- Diocese of Algoma: *http://archives.algomau.ca/main/?q=node/28480*
- Diocese of Huron: *https://diohuron.org/resources/huron-archives*
- Diocese of Keewatin: *https://www.dioceseofkeewatin.ca/*
- Diocese of Moosonee: *https://biblio.laurentian.ca/research/guides/archives*
- Anglican Diocese of Ontario Archives: *https://ontario.anglican.ca/resources/archives*
- Diocese of Ottawa Archives: *https://www.ottawa.anglican.ca/archives*
- Diocese of Toronto Archives: *http://www.toronto.anglican.ca/parish-administration/archives/*

MANITOBA
- Diocese of Rupert's Land: *https://www.rupertsland.ca/resources/archives*

SASKATCHEWAN
- Diocese of Saskatchewan: *https://www.skdiocese.com/resources/archives*
- Diocese of Qu'Appelle: *https://quappelle.anglican.ca/archives/*

ALBERTA
- Diocese of Edmonton: *https://edmonton.anglican.ca/about-us/pages/archives*
- Diocese of Calgary: *https://www.calgary.anglican.ca/resources/documents/pages/diocesan-archives*

BRITISH COLUMBIA AND YUKON
- Diocese of Islands and Inlets: *https://bc.anglican.ca/resources/archives*
- Diocese of New Westminster and the Ecclesiastical Province of British Columbia & Yukon: *https://www.vancouver.anglican.ca/resources/archives*

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, NUNAVUT, AND NUNAVIK
- Diocese of the Arctic: *https://www.arcticnet.org/*
- United Church of Canada Archives: *https://www.unitedchurcharchives.ca/*
  A guide to their residential schools holdings: *https://www.unitedchurcharchives.ca/residential-school-records-in-united-church-of-canada-archives/*
- Pacific Mountain Regional Council of the United Church of Canada Archives: *https://pacificmountain.ca/ministry/the-pmrc-archives/*
  A guide to their residential schools holdings: *https://pacificmountain.ca/wordpress2021/wp-content/uploads/PMRC-Archives-Info-on-IRS-Records.docx.pdf*

Catholic Church

NATIONAL
- Archives, Society of Jesus, Upper Canada Province: *http://archivesjesuites.ca/en/visiting-the-archive/*

QUEBEC
- Archives de l'Archidiocèse de Québec: *https://archivesacrq.org/*
- Diocese of Montreal: *https://www.diocesemontreal.org/en/archdiocese/archives*

ONTARIO
- Diocese of Hamilton Archives: *https://hamiltondiocese.com/chancellor/library/*
- Diocese of Hearst Archives: *http://www.uhearst.ca/archives/index.php/tag/diocese-de-hearst/*
- Archdiocese of Kingston Archives: *http://www.romancatholic.kingston.on.ca/*
- Diocese of London Archives: *https://dol.ca/archives*
- Diocese of Sault Ste. Marie - Diocesan Archives: *https://dioceseofsaultstemarie.org/chancery*
- Diocese of Thunder Bay: *https://www.dotb.ca/roman-catholic-diocese-of-thunder-bay/services-departments/diocesan-archives/*

MANITOBA
- Diocese of Winnipeg: *https://www.archwinnipeg.ca/main.php?p=37*

SASKATCHEWAN
- Archdiocese of Regina: *https://archregina.sk.ca/archives-records*
- Diocese of Prince Albert: *https://www.padiocese.ca/archives*

ALBERTA
- Diocese of Calgary: ***https://rcdcarchives.ica-atom.org/***
- Archidiocese of Grouard-McLennan:
https://www.archgm.ca/governance/forms/archives-and-research/

BRITISH COLUMBIA AND YUKON
- Archdiocese of Vancouver: ***https://rcav.org/archives-office/our-collection***
- Diocese of Victoria: ***https://www.rcdvictoria.org/archives***
- Diocese of Kamloops: ***https://www.memorybc.ca/diocese-of-kamloops-archives***

Provincial

ONTARIO
- Archives of Ontario: ***http://www.archives.gov.on.ca/en/access/our_collection.aspx***
- Shingwauk Residential Schools Centre: ***http://archives.algomau.ca/main/***
- Woodland Cultural Centre: ***https://woodlandculturalcentre.ca/***

BRITISH COLUMBIA
- B.C. Government Archives: ***https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/services-for-government/information-management-technology/records-management/government-archives***
- Royal BC Museum and Archives:
https://royalbcmuseum.bc.ca/bc-archives/about-us/about-bc-archives

MANITOBA
- Archives of Manitoba: ***https://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/***
- Includes HBC Archives: ***https://www.gov.mb.ca/chc/archives/hbca/***
- NCTR Archives: ***https://nctr.ca/records/view-your-records/archives/***

SASKATCHEWAN
- Provincial Archives of Saskatchewan: ***https://www.saskarchives.com/***
- University of Saskatchewan Archives and Special Collections: ***https://medhumanities.mcmaster.ca/index/libraries-archives-museums/canada-and-ontario/saskatchewan/university-of-saskatchewan-archives-and-special-collections-(saskatoon-saskatchewan)***

ALBERTA
- Glenbow: ***https://www.glenbow.org/art-artifacts/library-archives/***
- Provincial Archives: ***https://provincialarchives.alberta.ca/***

QUEBEC
- Aanischaaukamikw Cree Cultural Institute: ***https://creeculturalinstitute.ca/***
- BaNQ: ***https://www.banq.qc.ca/accueil/***
- McCord Museum: ***https://www.musee-mccord.qc.ca/en/collections/***

NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
- Provincial Archives: *http://www.explorenewfoundlandandlabrador.com/Genealogy/provincialarchivesofnewfo undl.htm*
- The Rooms: *https://www.therooms.ca/collections-research*

NOVA SCOTIA
- Provincial Archives: *https://archives.novascotia.ca/*

NEW BRUNSWICK
- Provincial Archives: *https://archives.gnb.ca/archives/?culture=en-CA*

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND
- Archives PEI: *http://www.archives.pe.ca/atom/*
- PEI Public Archives:
  https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/service/search-public-archives-material-online

YUKON
- Yukon Government Archives: *https://yukon.ca/en/places/yukon-archives-hours-and-location*

NORTHWEST TERRITORIES
- NWT Archives: *https://www.nwtarchives.ca/*

NUNAVUT
- Territorial Archives: *https://www.gov.nu.ca/culture-and-heritage/information/archives*

Inuit Elders, community members, and historians gathered to share and record knowledge during a Parks Canada project in Gjoa Haven. Photo Credit: Michelle Valberg, 2018.

Funding
Residential Schools Research Grants

FEDERAL
- Residential Schools Missing Children - Community Support Funding:
https://rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1622742779529/1628608766235
- SSHRC - Partnership Engage Grants—Residential Schools Joint Initiative: *https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/programs-programmes/peg_residential_schools_joint_initiative-sep_initiative_conjointe_pensionnats_autochtones-eng.aspx*

NATIONAL
- Na-mi-quai-ni-mak Community Support Fund:
https://nctr.ca/memorial/na-mi-quai-ni-mak/na-mi-quai-ni-mak-community-support-fund/

BRITISH COLUMBIA
- The BC Residential School Response Fund: *https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/indigenous-people/residential-school-response*

ONTARIO
- Indigenous Affairs, Ontario (IAO): The roll out of Ontario's $10 million in funding will be led by IAO in collaboration with Indigenous leaders. This process has yet to be finalized.
Contact Person: Rebecca Ramsarran (IAO), Assistant Deputy Minister, Indigenous Affairs: Strategic Policy and Planning Division. Phone: 416-520-9664; *rebecca.ramsarran@ontario.ca*

NORTH WEST TERRITORIES
- Information on programs that the Government of the Northwest Territories funds, like the Cultural Places Program and GPR projects: *https://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/en/services/culture-and-heritage/supporting-research-unmarked-burials-northwest-territories*

MANITOBA
- The government has committed funds to research: *https://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?item=53977&posted=2022-03-23* For more information contact: *mgi@gov.mb.ca*

SASKATCHEWAN
- Funding is available through Federation of Sovereign Indigenous Nations, contact them here:
info@fsin.com

ALBERTA
- The Residential Schools Community Research grant program: *https://www.alberta.ca/residential-schools-community-research-grant.aspx#:~:text=is%20now%20closed.-,Overview,residential%20school%20sites%20in%20Alberta.*

About Us

Know History is a historical services firm in Ottawa and Calgary. We are experts at locating and analyzing historical records in archives and institutions across the country. Over the past eleven years, we have worked with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit throughout Canada to complete hundreds of historical research projects, from large-scale genealogical research to documentary production and museum exhibit design.

We understand that colonial narratives often fail Indigenous peoples, as they do not account for Indigenous experiences and misrepresent Indigenous stories. We are committed to doing history differently. We believe that amplifying Indigenous perspectives, building respectful relationships, and contextualizing colonial sources are vital to decolonizing history.

We are committed to reconciliation and supporting the people and communities that we work with. To see an overview of our impact, visit *https://indigenous.knowhistory.ca/giving-back.*

Researchers and videographers preparing to conduct an oral history interview, 2021.

Know History

Historical Services