



The Residential School Survivors Flag

About the Survivors Flag

The Survivors' flag is an expression of remembrance, meant to honour residential school Survivors and all the lives and communities impacted by the residential school system in Canada. Each element depicted on the flag was carefully selected by survivors from across Canada, who were consulted in the flag's creation.

Elements of the Flag

The Family

Some saw the adults as our ancestors watching over us; others saw these as parents signifying whole families ripped apart and also reuniting to represent healing.

The Children

More than one child is depicted in the design as often whole sibling groups were taken from their parents, younger siblings, grandparents, and community.

The Seeds Below Ground

Represent the spirits of the children who never returned home. Although they have always been present, they are now seen and searched for.

Tree of Peace

Haudenosaunee symbol of how nations were united and brought to peace, which in turn, provides protection, comfort and renewal.

Cedar Branch

Sacred medicine that represents protection and healing, but also what is used by some Indigenous cultures when one enters the physical world and then again when they pass on to the next (i.e. medicine bath). The seven branches acknowledges the seven sacred teachings taught in many Indigenous cultures.

Cosmic Symbolism

Represents Sun, Moon, Stars and Planets. The Sun represents the divine protection that ensure those who survived came home. The North Star is prominent as it is an important navigation guide for many Indigenous cultures.

The Métis Sash

The Sash is a prominent ceremonial regalia worn with pride. Certain colours of thread represent lives that were lost, while others signal connectedness as humans and resilience through the trauma. All the threads woven together spell out part of history, but no single thread defines the whole story.

The Eagle Feather

The Eagle Feather represents that the Creator's spirit is among us. It is depicting pointing upwards which mirrors how it is held when one speaks their truth.

The Inuksuit

Inuksuit are used as navigational guides for the Inuit people and link to tradition.