

National Indigenous Peoples Day – June 21, 2018

Kathryn Wilkinson, VP Education

June 21 is National Indigenous Peoples Day, designated by the Government of Canada in cooperation with Indigenous Peoples' national organizations. The date chosen corresponds with the summer solstice, or the longest day of the year, and is the date on which many Indigenous Peoples' Groups have traditionally celebrated their culture and heritage.

When the day was first announced in 1996, by then Governor General of Canada, Roméo LeBlanc, it was called National Aboriginal Day but on June 21, 2017, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau issued a statement announcing the intention to rename the day National Indigenous Peoples Day.

... Every year, we join together on this day to recognize the fundamental contributions that First Nations, Inuit, and the Métis Nation have made to the identity and culture of all Canadians. The history, art, traditions, and cultures of Indigenous Peoples have shaped our past, and continue to shape who we are today.

"No relationship is more important to Canada than the relationship with Indigenous Peoples. Our Government is working together with Indigenous Peoples to build a nation-to-nation, Inuit-Crown, government-to-government relationship – one based on respect, partnership, and recognition of rights ...

The 150th anniversary of Confederation this year reminds us of the legacy of the past. As we look forward to the next 150 years, we commit to move ahead together in a spirit of reconciliation and respect ...

At the CFUW National AGM in June 2017, CFUW also made a commitment to Canada's Indigenous People by adopting Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Metis and Inuit) as our third national Initiative. By making this commitment, CFUW aims to offer educational opportunities to our members to learn more about the issues facing Indigenous Peoples and to build partnerships that support Indigenous Peoples' rights. You might call it Indigenous Education for non-indigenous people.

To learn more about what CFUW is doing, check out the website:

<http://www.cfuwadmin.org/AdvocacyResolutions/NationalInitiatives/indigenouspeoples.aspx>

There you will find links to

Reconciliation - what does it mean?

150 Acts of Reconciliation for the Last 150 Days of Canada's 150
Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action

Indigenous Films Festival 2018 – a project of the CFUW Indigenous Study Group.

National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIWG) linked to the CFUW National Initiative on Violence against Women.

Access to Safe Drinking Water and Sanitation – advocacy tools

2017 AGM, CFUW members passed a resolution on the Right to Safe, Clean, Accessible and Affordable Drinking Water and Sanitation on First Nations Reserves in Canada.

Write to your local elected representatives.

CFUW Aboriginal Women's Award

AND ideas for Club programs, book clubs, issues groups, etc.:

<http://www.cfuwadmin.org/Portals/1/cfuwadminfiles/webfiles/advocacy/nationalinitiatives/indigenouspeoples/Indigenous%20Peoples%20and%20Resources.pdf>

In February 2018, CFUW hosted a webinar on 150 Steps to Reconciliation and the first and simplest step is one we can all take – to learn the land acknowledgement for our regions so I will conclude by acknowledging that I am writing from my home which sits on part of the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit.

Learning about Canada's Indigenous Peoples is on ongoing journey but there is no shortage of information, resources and opportunities.