

be successful as a teacher. So ... that little tiny bit of Common Experience Payment doesn't compensate for all that loss.⁷³

Almost no one with some university or college education who spoke to the Commission had been able to obtain that education directly after high school. Most, like Geraldine Bob, had lost years to the time it took them to heal enough to even consider the possibility of upgrading their schooling.

If access to post-secondary education is to be improved, increasing the rates of secondary school completion is an important step. But even for those who qualify for a university program, there are significant obstacles. Federal funding for post-secondary education suffers from the same 2% funding cap that has been imposed on elementary and secondary schools since 1996. The First Nations Education Council estimates that there is a backlog of over 10,000 First Nations students waiting for post-secondary funding, with an additional \$234 million required to erase that backlog and meet current demands.⁷⁴ The financial barriers and other difficulties that Aboriginal people face in attending post-secondary institutions deprive the Canadian workforce of the social workers, teachers, health-care workers, tradespeople, legal professionals, and others who can help address the legacy of residential schools.

Call to Action

- 11) We call upon the federal government to provide adequate funding to end the backlog of First Nations students seeking a post-secondary education.

Early childhood education programs

Aboriginal families continue to suffer from a general lack of early childhood education programs. The Assembly of First Nations reported that, according to 2011 data, 78% of children up to the age of five have no access to licensed daycare, let alone to intensive early childhood programs.⁷⁵ Such programs are vital to support the development of young children and, by extension, address some of the deficit in parenting skills that is the legacy of residential schools.

Call to Action

- 12) We call upon the federal, provincial, territorial, and Aboriginal governments to develop culturally appropriate early childhood education programs for Aboriginal families.

To close the education and income gaps, there needs to be stable and adequate funding of Aboriginal education that takes into account the challenges of the legacy of residential