



PR & Communications Narrative Report

# Xyólhmet ye Syéwiqwélh Project

(Taking Care of Our Children)



# Project Overview

## 72 Media Outlets

spanning local, regional, national, and international outreach and platforms.

## 59 Stories

written about this event demonstrated strong engagement.

## 36 Outlets

distributed stories from this event, demonstrating strong interest in the initiative.

## 15 Media Personnel

attended the event, highlighting the effectiveness of personalized outreach.

The Stó:lō Nation Chiefs' Council (SNCC), led by Chief David Jimmie, initiated a comprehensive project in response to the knowledge of unmarked graves in former residential school cemeteries. Phase 1 of this endeavour, named the Xyólhmet ye Syéwiqwélh (Taking Care of Our Children) project, aimed to investigate potential unmarked graves and missing children connected to three former residential school sites within S'ólh Téméxw, specifically St. Mary's, Coqualeetza and All Hallows institutions in British Columbia's Fraser Valley, as well as the Coqualeetza Indian Hospital.

The Xyólhmet ye Syéwiqwélh (Taking Care of Our Children) project team takes direction from the SNCC and advisory groups, including a number of additional First Nations and cultural advisors. It is operationalized through the Stó:lō Service Agency Board of Directors and Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre. Stó:lō Nation's main centre of operations is in Chilliwack, BC. The announcement of knowledge gathered over the last 18 months is just the first of multiple phases as this project is slated to take several years.

This report summarizes the Xyólhmet ye Syéwiqwélh Project's communication efforts and strategies, highlighting the importance of effective outreach and relationship-building with media and community stakeholders.

## *Recommendations*

To sustain positive media momentum, it's crucial to engage reporters for future events, establish interview time blocks, and provide media training for spokespeople. Ongoing communication with Survivors and the public is essential, using impactful materials and digital resources.

## *Future Considerations*

- Maintain a web page with video and resource transcripts.
- Ensure accessibility by coordinating with ASL interpreters ahead of events.
- Develop guidelines for displaying the project's traditional name, accommodating font limitations in various publications.

# PR Process

## Strategic Communications

### Communications Strategy & Reports

A communications strategy was developed with 50th Parallel PR to guide the dissemination of findings related to student deaths at the identified institutions. This strategy defined objectives, roles, and target audiences. It was informed by updates from prior investigations.

### Strategic Communications Work Plan

A comprehensive work plan was created detailing deliverables, due dates, and responsibilities, updated regularly based on ongoing communications.

### Project Communications Meetings

Weekly meetings between the project team and 50th Parallel PR provided updates and discussed media relations. Key meetings occurred on August 31, September 7, 13, and 15, 2023.

### Key Messaging

A key messaging document was crafted to ensure consistent external communications, adaptable for various audiences. This framework guided the drafting of the media release and other communications during the gathering.

### Day of Support

On September 21, 2023, the project team provided updates to Survivors and the public. 50th Parallel PR assisted in preparation, media management, and technical support for the live stream and media scrum.



## Media Relations Materials

### Media Kit

A user-friendly media kit was developed, including project details, imagery, and biographical information on Chief David Jimmie.

### Media List

A targeted media list was created, comprising 72 outlets and additional contacts, ensuring effective outreach for the gathering.

### Press Badges

Press badges were designed for media personnel to facilitate identification and registration at the event.

### Media Relations Process

A Media Process Guide outlined strategies for establishing relationships with the media, detailing interaction protocols and policies for future engagements.

### Media Advisory & Registration List

An advisory was distributed to 21 media outlets to encourage attendance, resulting in registration of 8 media outlets and 15 personnel.

### Media Release & Backgrounder

Post-event, a media release highlighting the project's significance and quotes from key figures was disseminated, along with a backgrounder.

### Media Monitoring

50th Parallel PR monitored media coverage post-gathering, identifying 59 stories across various platforms. Responses from organizations and correction requests were managed to ensure accurate representation.





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