

RESIST DENIALISM!



Resist Indian Residential School Denialism: A Call for Truth and Reconciliation¹

Indian Residential School denialism is a harmful stance that seeks to undermine the truth and reconciliation process. It involves rejecting or misrepresenting basic facts about the existence and impact of the Indian Residential School (IRS) system. As we strive for genuine reconciliation, here are some strategies to counter denialism.

Learn more here:



“8 common claims of residential school deniers and how to shut them down” by Heath Justice & Carlton (2021).

Truth before reconciliation: 8 ways to identify and confront Residential School Denialism



¹ In full transparency, the author entered question into AI, reviewed, made small edits, added QR Codes, and graphics (Microsoft CoPilot, personal communication, April 4, 2024).

1. Educate and Raise Awareness:

- Know the Facts: Familiarize yourself with the historical roots of residential schools. Understand their purpose, impact, and the experiences of Indigenous children who attended them.
- Share Knowledge: Engage in conversations with others. Educate friends, family, and colleagues about the reality of residential schools. Use reliable sources and personal stories to convey the truth.

2. Challenge Denialist Arguments:

- Recognize Rhetorical Tactics: Denialists employ various arguments to distort the truth. Be aware of these tactics, such as minimizing the severity of abuse or questioning the existence of the IRS system.
- Fact-Check and Refute: When encountering denialist claims, fact-check their statements. Use evidence from reputable sources, such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) reports, to debunk misinformation.

3. Promote Indigenous Voices:

- Amplify Indigenous Perspectives: Listen to Indigenous Elders, survivors, and scholars. Their lived experiences provide invaluable insights. Share their stories and amplify their voices.
- Support Indigenous Initiatives: Attend events, workshops, and cultural activities organized by Indigenous communities. Learn directly from those who have firsthand knowledge of residential schools.

4. Hold Denialists Accountable:

- Publicly Challenge Denialism: When denialist views are expressed, respond respectfully but firmly. Correct inaccuracies and emphasize the importance of acknowledging historical truths.
- Advocate for Legal Mechanisms: Consider supporting legal measures to address denialism. Urgent consideration should be given to both civil and criminal sanctions.

5. Avoid Rushing Reconciliation:

- Prioritize Truth: Rushing reconciliation without acknowledging the truth undermines the process. We must confront denialism and ensure that the legacy of residential schools is fully understood.
- Let's prioritize truth.

Remember, genuine reconciliation requires facing uncomfortable truths. By resisting denialism and embracing historical accuracy, we honour the resilience of Indigenous communities and work toward justice.

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