

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Matawa First Nations Communities to Participate in Residential School Memorial Day

Thunder Bay ON, August 30th, 2010- Matawa First Nations communities will honour and acknowledge those impacted during the residential school era on September 1st.

September marks the time of year when children were forced to leave their homes, taken away from their families, communities, culture, and language, and enrolled into Residential Schools. The schools were run by the churches for the Federal Government in a program designed to assimilate First Nations children.

To recognize the day several Matawa communities will honour the Memorial Day in their own way. A special event will be held at the Ginoogaming First Nation pow-wow grounds. Organizer Allan Towegishig says; "It is important to be there for our survivors and acknowledge our past. This event will include the lighting of a sacred fire, planting a memorial tree, pipe and drum ceremonies, along with a sharing circle."

On June 11th 2008 the Government of Canada formally apologized to Aboriginal Canadians for how they were treated in residential schools. First Nations students were enrolled in the schools between the 1880's and 1980's.

All of Matawa's nine communities will honour residential school students. Towegishig continues; "The event will bring the community together so we can also honour and support the family members who suffered as their children were taken away. It is important that we do not forget what our people went through, and it is just as important to move forward through the healing process."

Matawa Chiefs passed a resolution back in May of 2009 calling for the creation of a National Day to honour Residential School students on September 1st.

For further information, contact:

Amanda Bay- Communications Officer
Firedog Communications
T- (807) 767-4443
E- amanda@firedogpr.com

Allan Towegishig
Ginoogaming FN Event Organizer
T- (807) 876-2732
E- allan.towegishig@ginoogamingfn.ca