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Little Learners Preschool

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Unfolding the Truth: Can We Learn About Canadian Indigenous History in Today's Educational System?

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In this paper I examine the role that education can play in the process of reconciliation as outlined by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Education has been used as a key tool in the project of colonization in Canada. My research questions the gaps and barriers of a current education system which, despite promised changes for an inclusive education, only plans to implement those changes of Indigenous studies to specific grades in public schools and still as somehow separate from the story of Canadian history.

A common argument is that young children are not able to handle the brutalities of the story of colonial conquest and should thus not to be exposed to it. I disagree. As an early childhood educator I argue that the truth about Indigenous history can (and should) be taught to children as young as three years old. Therefore, I developed a teaching tool which addresses the history of the colonial past and the dispossession of Indigenous Peoples from land and their relocation onto reserves in British Columbia. In this paper I also discuss not just why this learning is important to all children in Canada but what kinds of opportunities it invites for numerous curriculum extensions to build inclusive Indigenous studies in (and about) Canada.