

# 16 Collective Traumas Affecting Inuit Communities

**Presented to Ottawa  
Employment and Social  
Services**

March 9, 2022



*Tungasugitsi! (several people)*  
*Tungasugit (to one person)*

ტუნგასუგით  
ც

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- My Beverly's, role in this course is simply as facilitator, to point participants to the voices of Inuit, as recorded in art forms, information and print or image resources that are authored by Inuit themselves. Therefore, this session is not to be considered as having any authority in, or of, itself.
- Note : that the discourses and rhetoric are changing quickly in the 'Inuit world', as the understanding broadens in mainstream culture of the decolonizing of Indigenous peoples globally, and as the recognition of Reconciliation and Restoration as global and just responsibilities of human kind increases. Therefore it must be noted that the information and links presented in these sessions are not static and will quickly become outdated and obsolete as more and more Inuit voices are heard, and better connections between all people in Canada, and indeed in the world, are made.
- ~~The opinions stated during this course are those of Beverly Illauq and~~





# “Reconciliation”

- **We are decolonizing. We need to be indigenizing.”** Joe Osawabine, Debajehmujig Storytellers
- **Lateral thinking keeps you connected to your mind.**  
**Circular thinking keeps you connected to your heart, mind, spirit, and body.”** Liz Akiwenzie, Knowledge Keeper, Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation

- With understanding and education, relationships can shift in this country
- It's not going to be fast, and it's not going to be easy, but it's going to be rich and uplifting for us all.

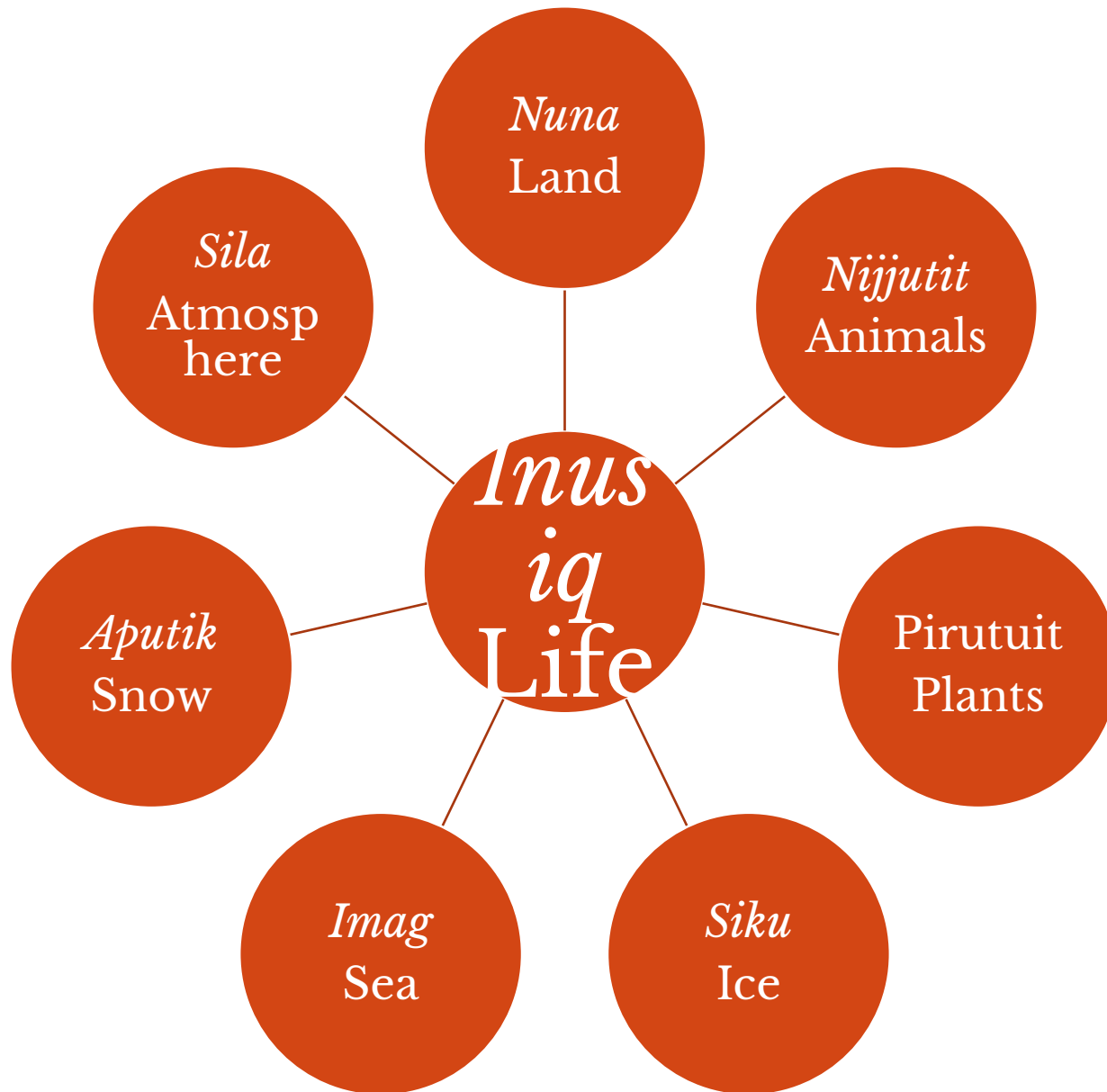
Dr. Marie Wilson, TRC Commissioner

**Niore Iqalukjuak ,  
Inuit photographer  
Listen to  
& Understand  
Inuit VOICES**





The ice told me we need to wait, so we wait.” Stephen Kasarngnak





# “Inuit” (several) or “Inuk” = Human Beings

No personal  
pronouns

Therefore no  
‘diversification’  
of peoples –  
little room for  
objectivizing  
individuals.

“Diversity” and  
inclusion  
concept to Inuit  
is forgeign... All  
human beings  
are included!  
Inuit are *doing*  
reconciliation .



# Indigenous Canadians (Canada's First Peoples)

```
graph TD; A["Indigenous Canadians  
(Canada's First Peoples)"] --> B["First Nations  
1,670,000 (2020)"]; A --> C["Inuit  
64,235 (2020)"]; B --> D["Metis  
537,835 (2016)"];
```

*“Indians”*

**First Nations**

1,670,000 (2020)

**Inuit**

64,235 (2020)

*“Eskimos”*

*“Half Breeds”*

**Metis**

537,835  
(2016)



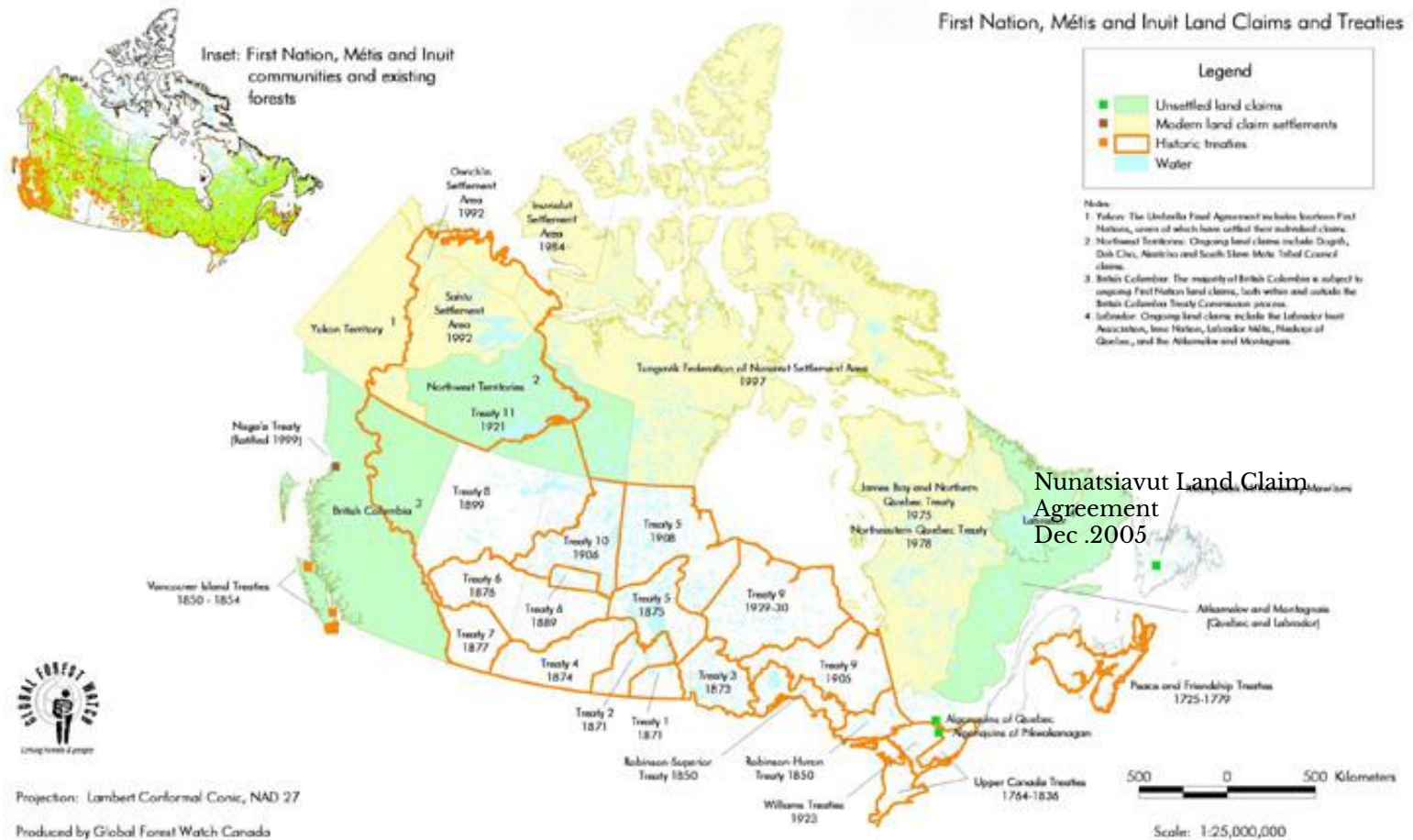
We are all immigrants to the Americas .  
Who knows the land best?  
Who welcomed whom?

# Indigenous Groups in Canada





# First Nations Land Claims have been and are being settled by Treaties





Métis Nation – no specified land claims or treaties yet.





Inuit have negotiated their Land Claims

# Signposts to Reconciliation for FNIM peoples in Canada

- *Indian Conditions* Gov't of Canada report 1980
- Royal Commission on Aboriginal People 1991-1996 with a 20 year agenda for implementing chg
- Aboriginal Healing Foundation 1998 – 2011 -healing issues resulting from Residential School Abuse
- Prime Minister's Apology, (Stephen Harper) June 11, 2008
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2008-present . TRC Report , with 93 Recommendations tabled in May, 2015 , Accepted in November, 2016
- Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women, published 2019 , 31 Recommendations
- Findings of Unmarked graves at former Residential Schools properties in Canada Summer 2021 & Ongoing



# Comparison of First Nations and Inuit Cultures



Know the





Know the  
difference!







Iii  
!

*Inuit*





*Inuit*

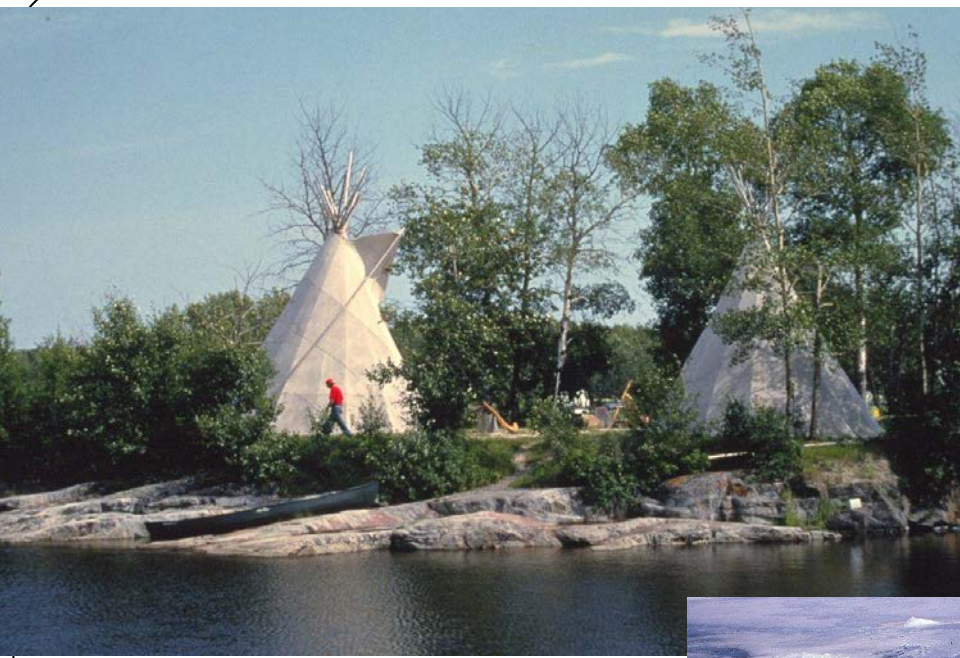
# Dene Nation of the northern provinces and the NWT



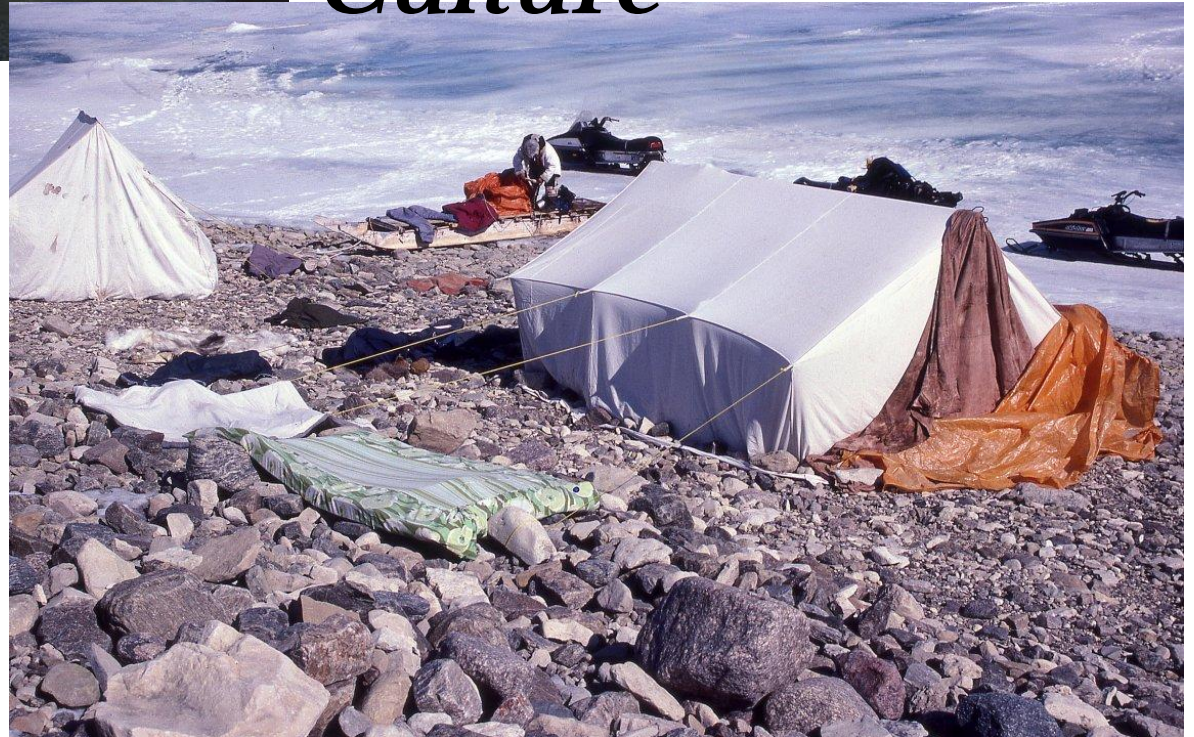
*Inuit  
Culture*







## *Inuit (Arctic) Culture*







## Spring Travel: Inuit on the sea ice









First Nations Drum  
group

Inuit drumming  
group





First Nations Pow Wow  
Dancers

Inuit  
dancers







Inuit : Sewing Caribou Skin clothing







Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in ~ People of the River



I



Inui



# Signposts – some data





**In Nunavut...**

**35, 580**

**Ethnic groups: 29,950 Inuit 5, 630 Other**

**First Languages/ Mother Tongue:**

**22,600 Inuktitut , 11,020 English, 595  
French**

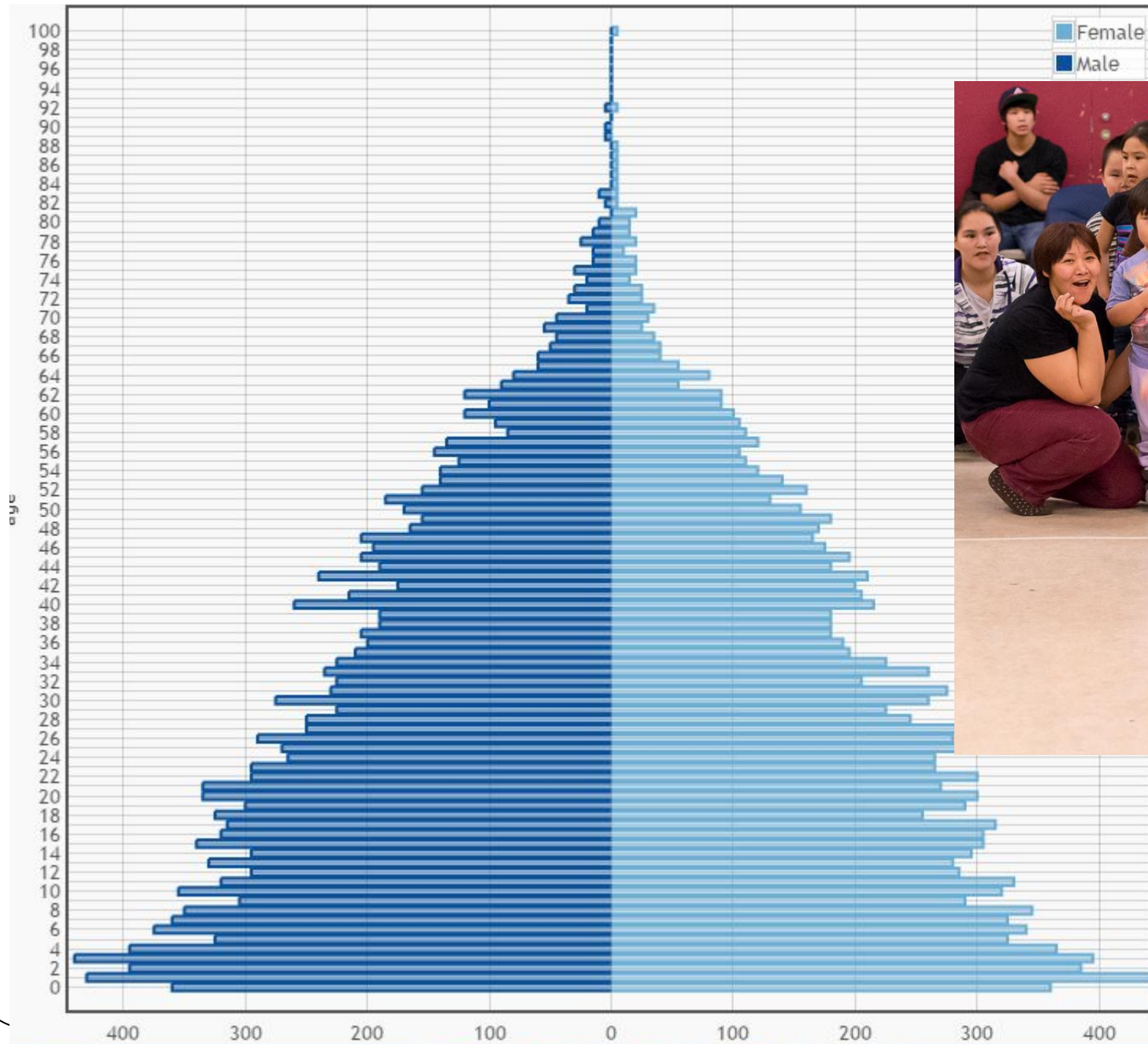
**Government Transfer Recipients: 421, 890**

**Median Gov't Transfer: \$2,524 annually**

**Lowest Median Age: 24.1 years**

Census Profile – 2016 retrieved March, 2022, Gov't of Canada

# Population by single year of age and sex, Nunavut,



Stats Can  
11.21.16

# Survival in all different ways...







COMMUNIT  
Y!!



About 6000 Inuit in Ottawa, about 60% are homeless either couch surfing or on the streets.





# Facing the Future, Finding Voice...

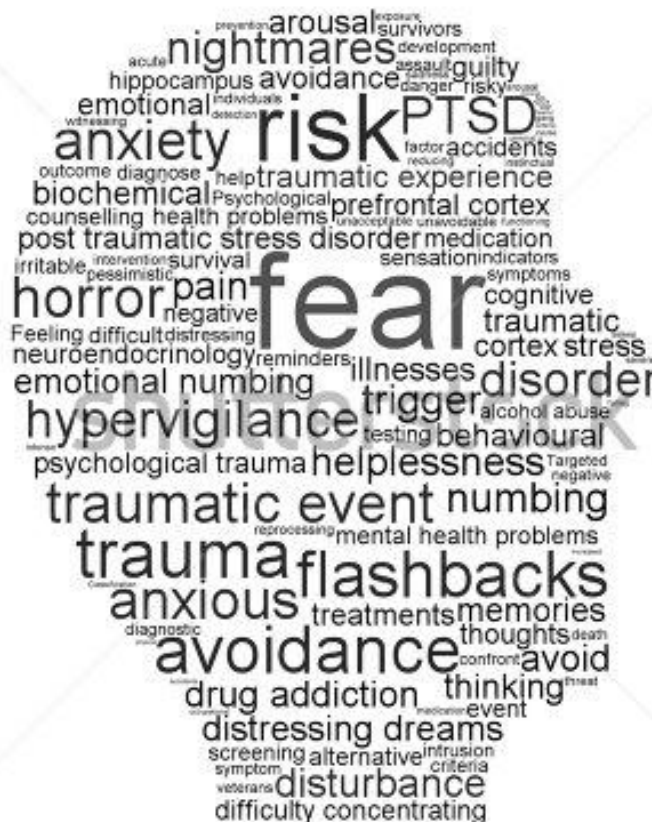




# What is Trauma?

What is  
Trauma?

*Post Traumatic Stress  
-Tataluakqaaniq! –affects us all!*

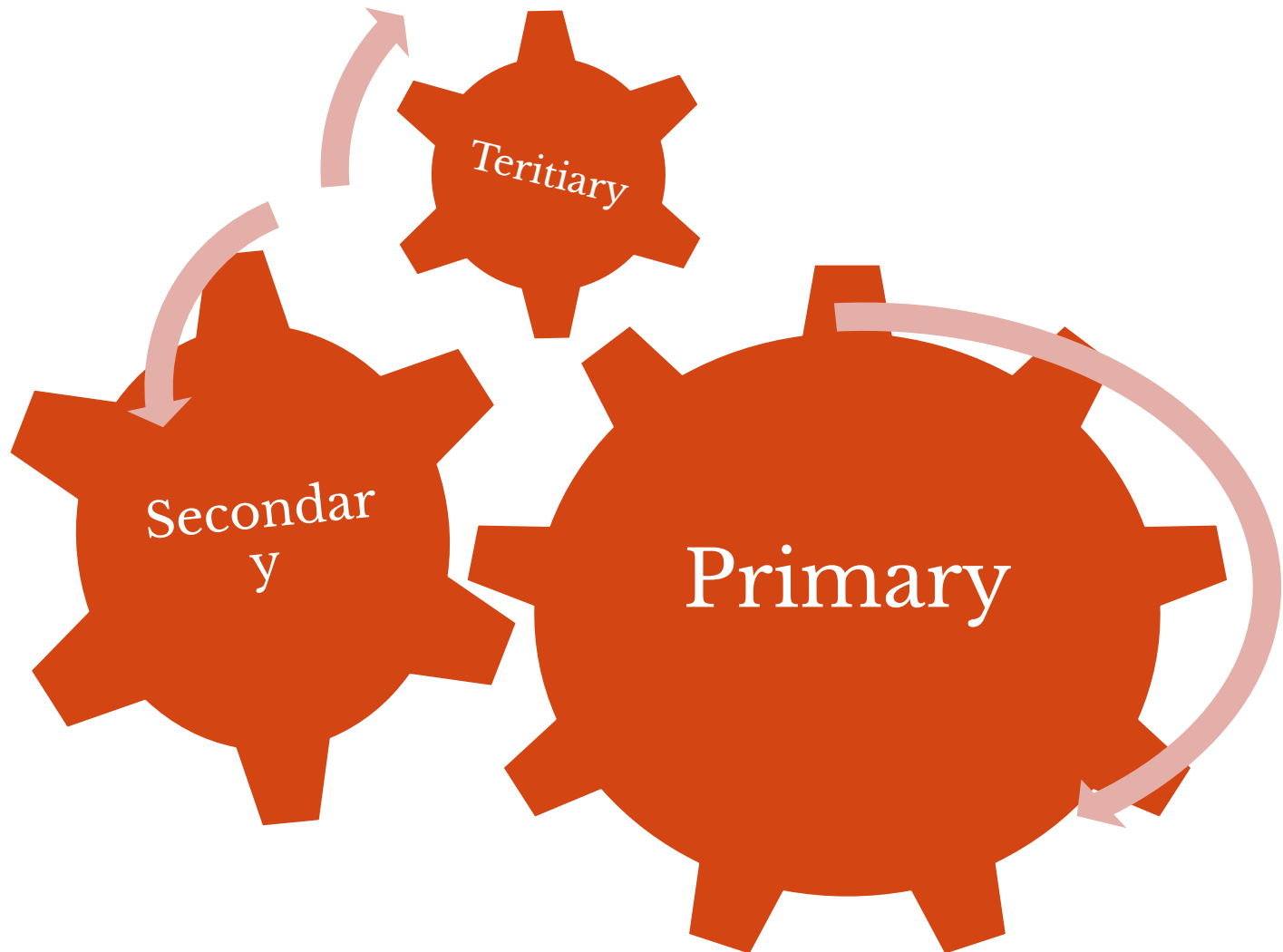


Overwhelming emotional responses  
become 'stuck' in brain, body, and soul...





# Experience levels



# Intergenerational Effects of Complex PTSD



# Collective Inuit Traumas



# #1 Historical Epidemics



## #2 IRS – Residential School Mistreatment




# Residential High Schooling






# “Experimental Eskimos” in the South

 CANADA

DEPARTMENT OF NORTHERN AFFAIRS AND NATIONAL RESOURCES  
NORTHERN ADMINISTRATION BRANCH



in Canada

OFFICE OF THE ADMINISTRATOR OF THE ARCTIC  
NORTHERN RESOURCES  
OTTAWA, ONT.  
6216  
Ottawa 4, May 29, 1964. C 500-1  
EH

the results of the experiment involving  
and Peter Konginjuak, who are attending  
es six, seven and seven respectively.  
no doubt regarding their passing into  
mination papers which they bring home  
above class average and that they  
above children in southern Canada.  
Report cards indicate that Zebodee is above average in all subjects.  
all three boys have adjusted

# #3 Day School Abuse



Ed  
Horne

## #4 Hospitalization in TB Sanatoriums





# #5 Forced Re Locations

## *Families relocated from Port Harrison to Resolute Bay in 1953 (cont.)*

Lizzie	daughter	15
Markoosie	son	13
Johnny	son	5

## *Families relocated from Pond Inlet to Craig Harbour (Grise Fiord) in 1953*

Simon Akpaliapik	husband	33
Tatigak	wife	44
Ruthie	daughter	7
Tookahsee	daughter	3
Inutsiak	son	1 mo
Samuel Anukudluk	husband	
Qaumayuk	wife	
Mukpanuk	grandmother	
Tamarisee	daughter	
Rhoda	daughter	
Jonathan	son	
Phoebe	daughter	

## *Family relocated from Pond Inlet to Resolute Bay in 1953*

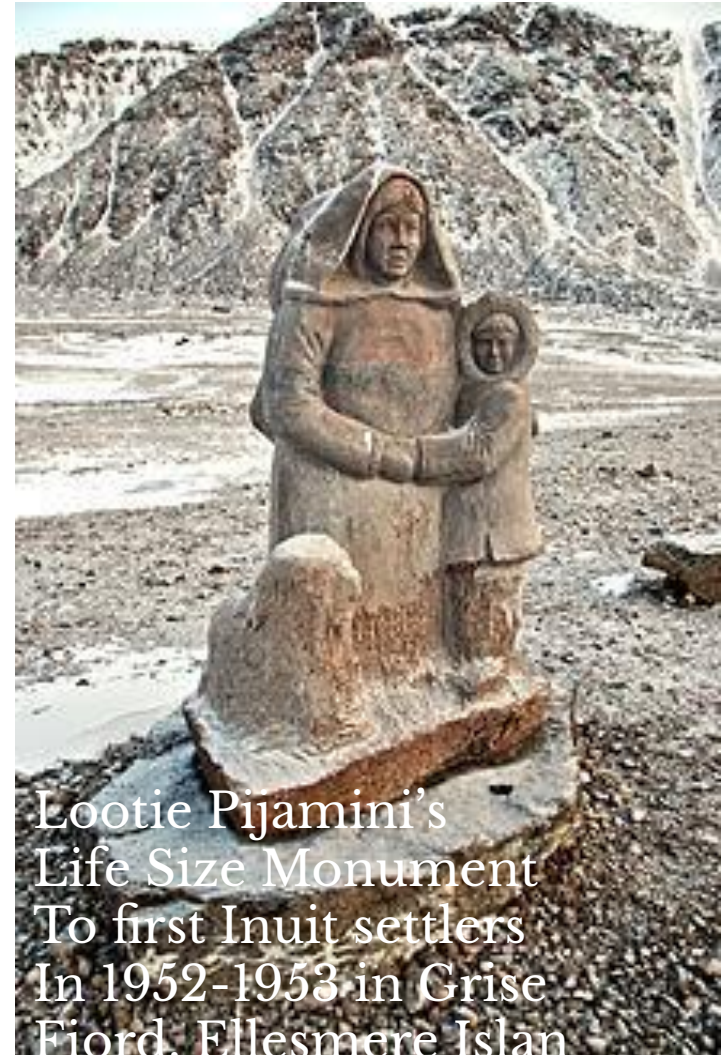
Jaybeddie Amagoalik	husband	37
Kanooinoo	wife	36
Ekaksak	son	10
Merrari	daughter	2

## *Family relocated from Port Harrison to Craig Harbour (Grise Fiord) in 1955*

Josephie Flaherty	head	35
Rynee	wife	28
Martha	daughter	5
Mary	daughter	2
Peter	son	6 mos

## *Families relocated from Port Harrison to Resolute Bay in 1955*

Levi Nungak	husband	31
Alici	wife	25
Annie	daughter	8
Minnie	daughter	5
Philipusie	son	4
Anna	daughter	1
Johnnie Echalook	husband	46
Minnie	wife	45
Lizzie	daughter	17
Rynee	daughter	15
Peter	son	1



Lottie Pijamini's  
Life Size Monument  
To first Inuit settlers  
In 1952-1953 in Grise  
Fiord, Ellesmere Island

# The consequences of relocations are still being experienced...

- Inuit still retain some oral histories of abuse (sexual, physical, emotional, and by withholding provisions by RCMP and other government agents)

# Re-locations to establish sovereignty

- Northern Quebec to Ellesmere Island
- Northern Quebec to Resolute Bay
- Northern Quebec to Cape Dorset ?
- Cape Dorset & Lake Harbour to Resolute Bay
- Three families each from Pangnirtung, Cape Dorset & Pond Inlet to Craig Harbour with the RCMP, on Ellesmere Island, 1930 (approx)
- Two Inuit families were moved to Dundas Harbour against their will by the RCMP in 1945.
- *Amitirmuiut* & *Uqqurnirmiut* area Inuit moved to Cape Christian area (Clyde River



# Relocations to make Inuit more readily accessible

For: Schooling (Gov't), Medical attention (Gov't) , & Enumeration (Gov't) , Evangelization (Mission Societies of Churches) and Fur Harvesting (Hudson's Bay Company).

Inuit still retain some oral histories of abuse (sexual, physical, emotional ) and by withholding provisions by RCMP and other government and Hudson's Bay agents

- Back River Inuit to Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet
- *Paldlirmiut* to Arviat, Rankin Inlet
- South Baffin Inuit to Frobisher Bay,( Iqaluit) and Apex

## #6 Dog Team Slaughters (1960's)



# #7 Maternal Evacuation from Communities for Childbirth



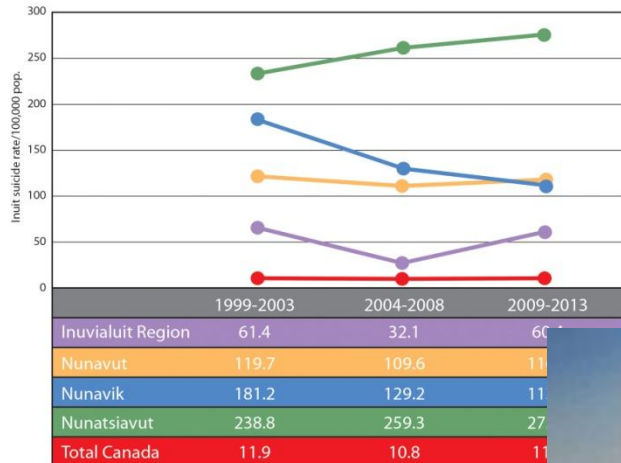
Two-day old Kalgen with mom Jenny Ilgok in Kugluktuk in the spring of 2016. They had just returned home from the hospital in Yellowknife. (Loren McGinnis/CBC)

***“Starting now, pregnant Indigenous women in Nunavut travelling out of their communities to give birth won't have to go alone. The situation is less clear for Indigenous women in the N.W.T. and Yukon.” April 12, 2017, News North***



# #8 High Rate of Suicides

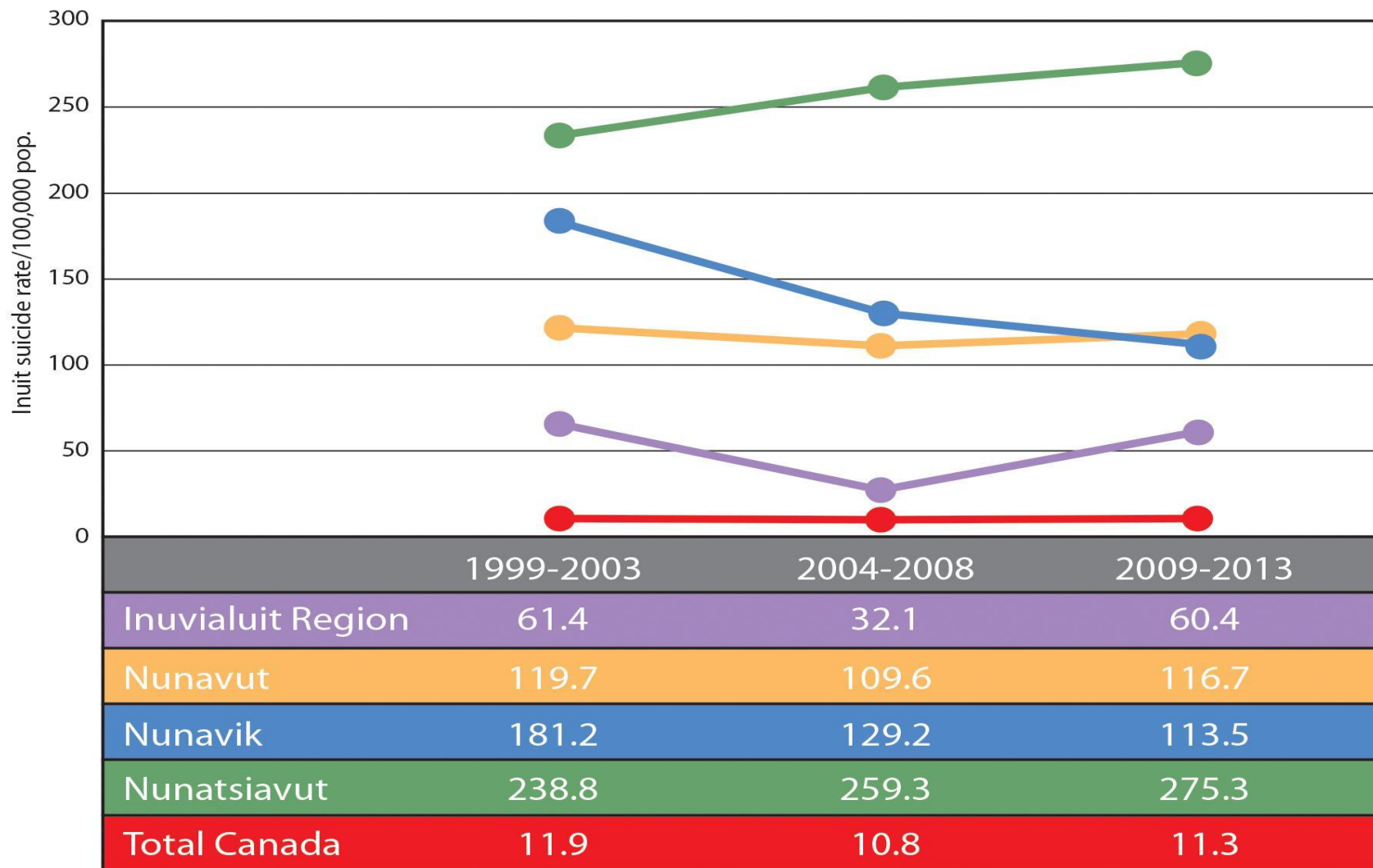
(Highest rate of suicides in the world: North Baffin- late '90's – present)



**Note:** Rates for all populations are crude. Total Canada rates are for 2001, 2006 and 2011.  
**Sources:** a) Inuit data prepared for ITK by J. Hicks; b) Total Canada data – Statistics Canada, Table 100-05 – Deaths and mortality rate, by selected grouped causes and sex, Canada, provinces and territories

Out of approx 200 children my son started School with in 1990 Clyde River, NU,  
(Pop. Approx 1200)  
71 have Died by suicide...





**Note:** Rates for all populations are crude. Total Canada rates are for 2001, 2006 and 2011.

**Sources:** a) Inuit data prepared for ITK by J. Hicks; b) Total Canada data – Statistics Canada, Table 102-0552 – Deaths and mortality rate, by selected grouped causes and sex, Canada, provinces and territories, annual.

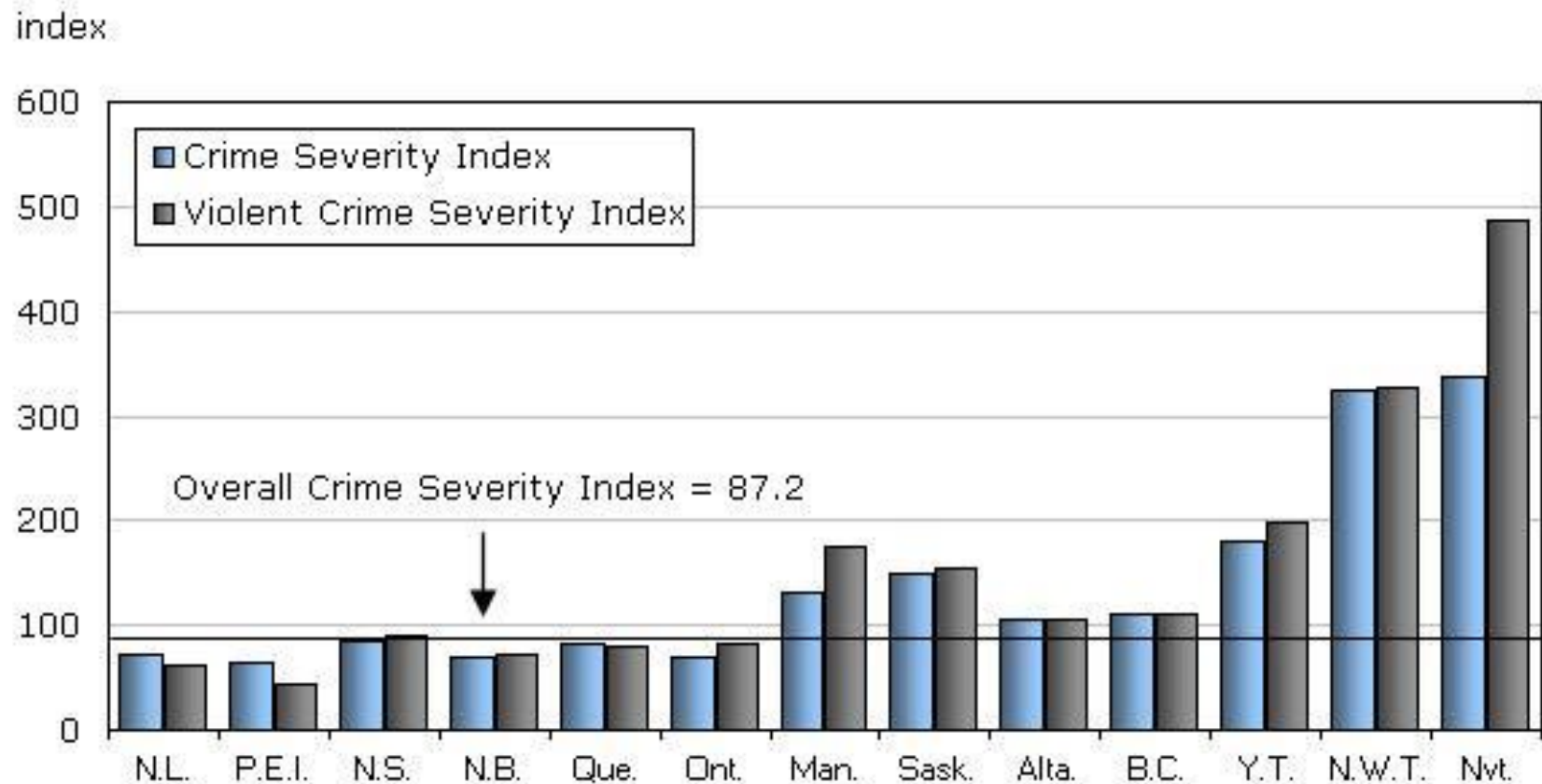
Note That

First Generation Survivors of Residential school survivors who are the scapegoats for the violence within





# #9 High rates of interpersonal violence and murder



Stats Canada data, NUNATSIAQ NEWS:  
Nunavut July 26, 2010

# #10 Mistreatment & Brutality by Police : RCMP

- Abraham Natanine Incident , May 2020



# #11 Systemic Racism: Hospitals

- Lack of Interpretation into Inuktitut
- Eg. A patient's kidney being removed for no reason, due to mis interpretation. (eg. a speaker of Inuktitut translating instead of a real translator).
- NOT EVERY INUK CAN INTERPRET FOR A PATIENT!!!
- Even escorts can not usually interpret for the person they are escorting. Escorts are primarily for physical and social support. IT IS THE JOB OF PROFESSIONALS providing services TO ENSURE THAT TRANSLATION IS PROVIDED AS NEEDED.



# #12 Child “PROTECTION” services “Interventions”

- Child “PROTECTION” services taking children from a family and placing them into foster families
- The ‘System’ is so foreign to Inuit.
- A lack of understanding of Inuktitut, and Inuit ways.... A lack of good interpreters
- Very difficult for young parents in a new environment, with no family in the south to rely on; no family members to provide respite or care, or to advocate on their behalf.

#13 Orphaned or troubled Inuit youths or children are still being 'shipped south', entering the system and getting stuck after they age out, in Ottawa.



Ranch Erhlo, Regina,  
Saskatchewan

# #14 High Frequency of Land/Sea travel incidents in Inuit communities





# #15 Community people functioning as Emergency Response team members with minimal to no mental health supports



# #16 Housing Crisis for Inuit

. Whole Families living in laundry rooms of their family members homes

- 60 % homeless rates of 6000 + Inuit men, women and Children living in Ottawa

No Inuit specific shelters – eg. of Inuit women .... **This family of five lives in a laundry**

**room, a sign of Nunavut's housing crisis**

Social Sharing

Housing organizations say they

have seen as many as 20 people

sharing a two-bedroom home

Kieran Oudshoorn · Posted:

Mar 18, 2019 5:02 AM ET





# PTSD/ Trauma levels piggy-back and are extremely high

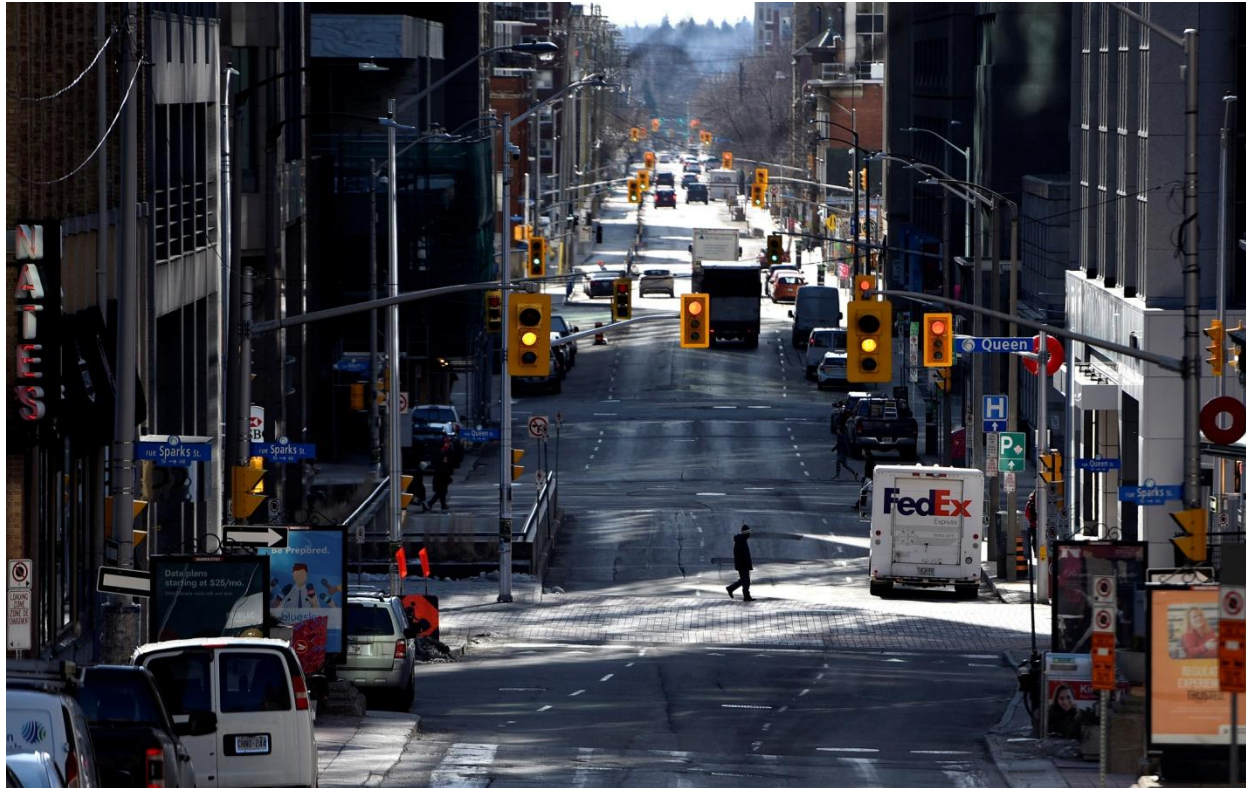
- Most Ottawa Inuit have arrived south, fleeing terrible traumas in the North
- Many layers of intergenerational traumas - Primary, Secondary and Tertiary - has done everything but decimated Inuit language & cultural values, as colonial values have been impressed and 'hard wired' into 5 generations of Inuit





# Overwhelming Living Circumstances for Inuit living in the South

# #1 City Streets



## #2 Navigating the streets, with very few vehicles in the Ottawa Inuit Community

**Family distraught after Inuk woman's death in Ottawa**

*Neeve Oqqallak had gone shopping on Friday and was hit by a passing vehicle when she crossed the Sir John A.*

*Macdonald Parkway near the Richmond Road overpass.*

Author of the article:

**Matthew Lapierre**

Publishing date:

Aug 28, 2021 • August 28, 2021 •





## #3 Southern Atmosphere and Environment

# #4 Great number of people to deal with in the South





# #4 Adaptation to new living conditions – especially foods and availability of products.



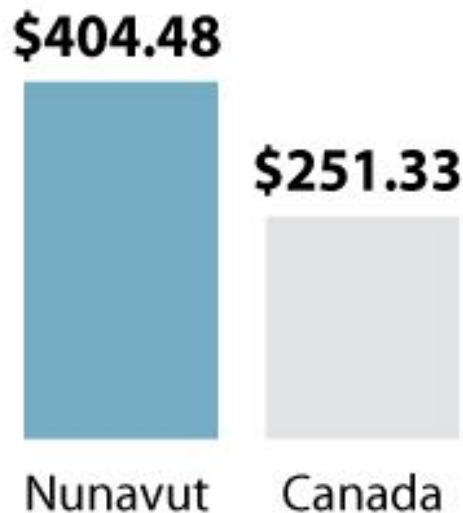


#5 - Lack of Food Security is a significant barrier to wellness in all Inuit communities and prompts Inuit leaving home .. Sharing everything they have whether North or South. Tremendous pressure on Inuit household in Ottawa.

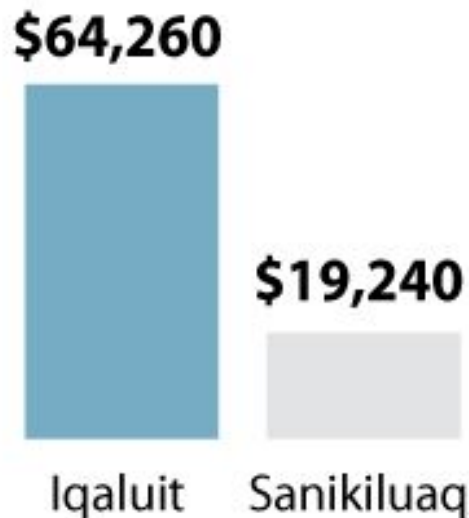


# High prices of Food, nutritious or not...

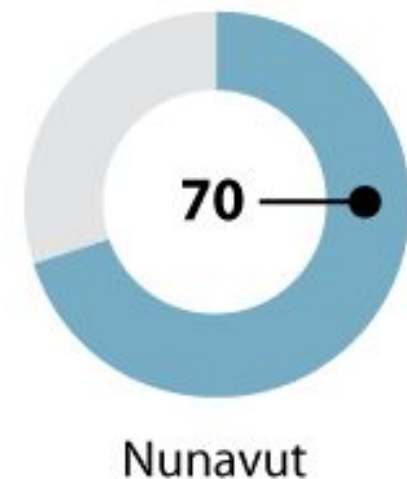
*FOOD PRICE BASKET  
(33 items - March 2014)*



*MEDIAN TOTAL INCOME  
OF TAXFILERS IN 2012*



*FOOD-INSECURE  
INUIT HOUSEHOLDS (%)*



SOURCE: STATISTICS CANADA; NUNAVUT BUREAU OF STATISTICS

THE CANADIAN PRESS

#0 = Housing Crisis = 65% of mult  
in Ottawa couch surfing or  
homeless





#7 No one to talk to about it... No Southern Psychologists/ Counsellors can understand the Inuit way... And help in the Inuit way... And understand Inuktitut



Not the Inuit  
way



The Inuit  
Way

# #8 Almost NO Culturally appropriate resources for those needing substance abuse or trauma treatment programs



Not the Inuit Way





#9 Almost no Culturally appropriate resources for those incarcerated or leaving jail





# # 10 High rates of Alcohol Abuse and other Addictions



FOR HELP TO STOP DRINKING, OR FOR MORE INFORMATION  
ABOUT FASD, TALK WITH YOUR HEALTH-CARE PROVIDER.



Government of Nunavut/Twitter

It costs **MORE** than you think.

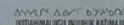
[illegible]

**But there is HOPE and there is HELP.**

$\rho \nabla \sigma$  ኃኔኑ። ምሳሌ፡  $\Delta b \nabla c$

Break the cycle. Contact:  
 415.375.6225 • C.A.S.® • 415.375.6225  
 562.415.6225

inuusiq.com



EMBRACE LIFE COUNCIL  
CONSERVATION SAVINGS PLAN

Funded by  
The CDC #5U01CE00146









## *Piqatauniapi t?*

Martha Flaherty  
one of the Inuit relocated  
from Inukjuak, Nunavik  
To Grise Fiord as a child.  
Resident of Ottawa for 40  
years  
Interpreter/ Translator,  
Artist, Film maker  
(NFB Martha of the North)  
& one of 4 founders of  
Isaruit .

Check out “Martha of the  
North”



# Isaruit Inuit Arts

- Bird (OWL) style organization – one wing is sewing, beading etc. & one is workshop carving, tool making, jewelry making, etc.
- Based on Cultural Consultation, Innovation and Reconciliation in an Inuit



ΔΕΡΔΕ

isaruit inuit arts

[illegible]