

# LET'S CELEBRATE OUR COLLECTIVE PRIDE

Pride Month may look a little different in the midst of a pandemic, but that shouldn't — and won't — deter us from celebrating all that the LGBTQ2+ community has achieved toward acceptance and inclusion.

June is dedicated to the uplifting of LGBTQ2+ voices, celebration of LGBTQ2+ culture and support of LGBTQ2+ rights.

Pride gatherings — like the parades and festivals that have been held in normal times and the virtual celebrations of today's COVID times — are rooted in the struggles that groups have endured for decades to overcome prejudice and be accepted for who they are.

An avenue to embrace diversity, these celebrations acknowledge history and achievements, and they continue the focus on fostering the rights and recognition that LGBTQ2+ Canadians deserve.

The rainbow flag, a well-known symbol of the LGBTQ2+ community, has evolved over the years, but its message is the same. It aims to encourage awareness, kindness and acceptance for all. Do you know what the six colours stand for? Each has its own meaning. Red is

**'The principle of inclusivity is key to the success of everything we do.'**

symbolic of life, orange of healing, yellow of sunlight, green of nature, blue of harmony and purple of spirit. Could there be anything lovelier?

The principle of inclusivity is key to the success of everything we do. By embracing diversity, we draw on all of the unique

strengths and abilities of Canada's population. Inclusivity unites all of us as one team, and Pride celebrations are a reminder of how amazingly diverse we are and how we garner strength through diversity.

Sharing our Pride gives us unity of purpose, making each of us better as people reflecting Canadian ideals of diversity, inclusion and respect.

The road that led us to this point has been a long one, and there is still much work to do. Together this month, in a safe and respectful manner, let's celebrate and show our individual and collective Pride.

We must remember that Pride matters for many reasons beyond celebration events in June. We must keep striving for total acceptance and inclusion, valuing what is most important to us — our people, all people — 365 days a year.

It comes down to this. Everyone should feel comfortable and safe being themselves wherever they are. Sadly, we're not there yet.

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## SNAPSHOT



Peter Scholz photo

A tree frog makes itself comfortable in a wooded area of Limehouse. Do you have a great local photo you'd like to share? Send it to sleblanc@metroland.com, along with a brief description.

## LETTERS & COMMENTARY

### WE ALL BEAR RESPONSIBILITY FOR ALL CANADIAN CHILDREN

Our Kids Network is situated on the Treaty Lands of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and the Traditional Territory of the Haudenosaunee and the Huron-Wendat peoples.

Our Kids Network empathizes with the incredible grief and heartbreak of the families and communities mourning 215 children, whose remains were discovered in an unmarked grave at the site of a former Kamloops residential school.

We send our deep sympathy to the Tk'emlups te Secwepemc Nation. We hold you in our hearts and we honour the lives of these 215 children, and those children who survived.

As a network of caring professionals who work with children and families every day, we believe pas-

**"We believe passionately that every single child matters, and has the right to thrive."**

**- Christine Hartley and Angela Bellegarde**

sionately that every single child matters, and has the right to thrive.

Canada's residential school system was purposely designed to remove and isolate children from their loving families, traditions, and cultures to assimilate them into the dominant culture.

This horrific discovery exposes Canada's long history of the inhuman and violent treatment of Indigenous families and children, and this continues today.

We all must take responsibility for the care and well-being of all of Canada's children.

June is National Indigenous History Month, and Our Kids Network calls up-

on you to face the truth about the Indian Residential School system so that you can take meaningful action toward Reconciliation.

"Reconciliation begins with oneself and then extends into our families, relationships, workplaces and eventually into our communities." — Reconciliation Canada

**CHRISTINE HARTLEY  
(EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR)  
AND ANGELA BELLEGARDE  
(INDIGENOUS LEAD)  
OUR KIDS NETWORK**

*For immediate assistance to those who may need it, the National Indian Residential School Crisis Line is available 24 hours a day at 1-866-925-4419.*

## ABOUT US

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