

Wiping of the Tears Healing Ceremony

June 18th, 19th, 20th, 2021
Lejac, Nadleh' Whut'en Traditional Territory

Hadih (Hello) and Welcome to the Lejac Wiping of the Tears Ceremony

This is a co-hosted event of Nadleh Whut'en and Stellat'en First Nation with support from Carrier Sekani Family services.

Purpose

This event is to remember the 215 children found buried on the grounds of the Kamloops Indian Residential School.

It is also to remember all of the children of residential schools who did not make it home. We further want to acknowledge all children and their families who experienced residential schools.

This ceremony is to provide indigenous people and their allies with a culturally relevant way to grieve, heal, and respectfully pay tribute to those impacted by residential school.

This event is about healing, not politics. We welcome all people to this site and our ceremony, regardless of race or culture. We encourage survivors, family of survivors, community members, and non Indigenous allies to join us in one collective embrace to help heal those who were hurt through the residential school system.

This event will run from 10am – 6 pm daily from Friday June 18 to Sunday June 20.

There will be an opening ceremony 10am Friday and closing remarks by selected individuals starting 2pm on Sunday.

What to Expect

The ceremony will follow a traditional Carrier wake ceremony where three days of mourning take place. At the ceremony community members support each other in their grief, which is shared between everyone who attends, and gets lighter over the duration of the ceremony.

A number of sacred fires will be lit and a fire keeper will be present, tending to each fire. Cultural ceremonies and healing activities will occur throughout the three-day event, including drumming and singing, as well as smudging.

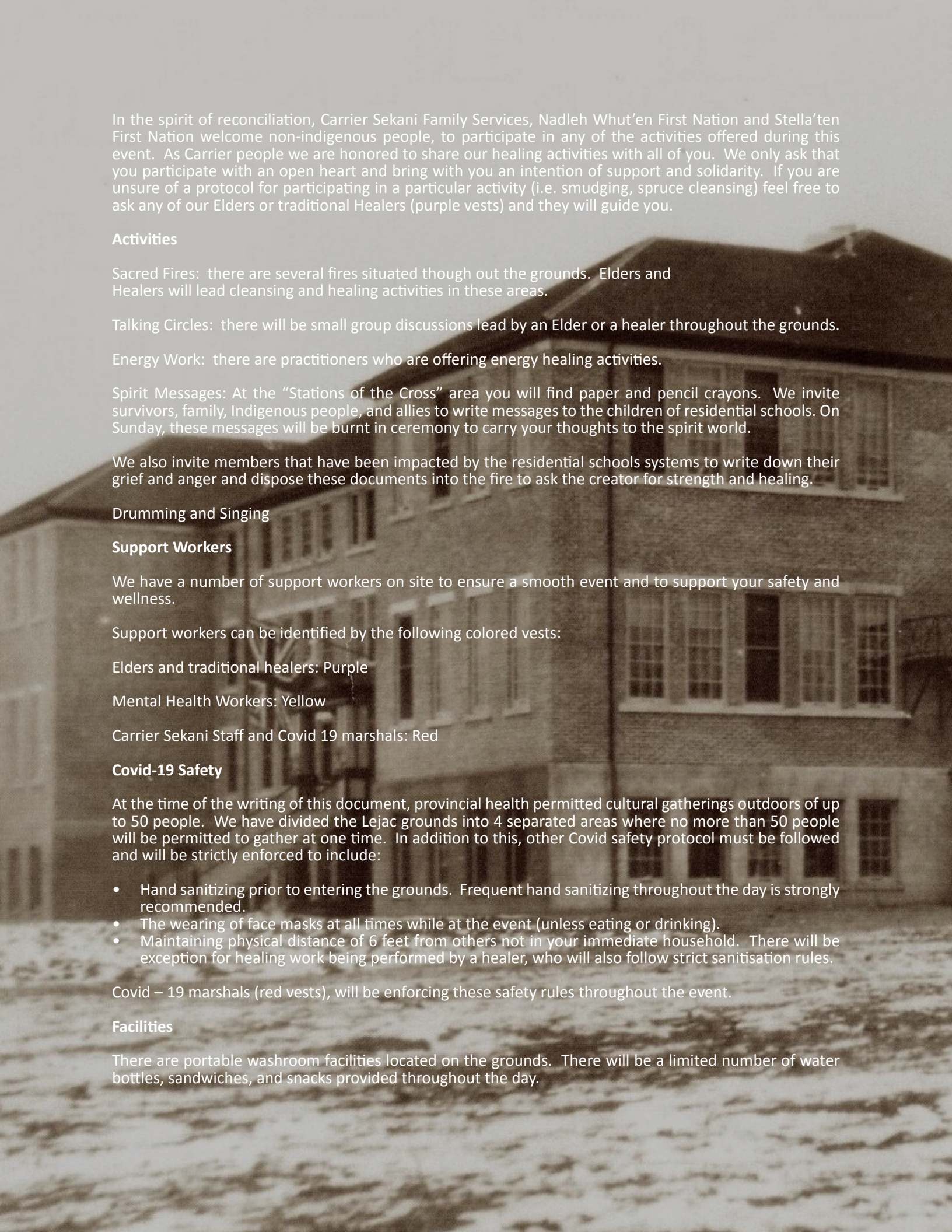
People are welcome to come and go at any time during the ceremony.

Protocols

People should attend the ceremony in a clear mind and body, free of any recent alcohol or drug use. Alcohol and drug use (including marijuana) is prohibited on these grounds.

The mood is very somber at the onset of the ceremony and making loud noises or laughing is not culturally appropriate. As the ceremony progresses over the three days the mood gets lighter.

This event is meant to support the respectful honoring of residential school children. As such, we expect that all participants display thoughtful and respectful conduct.



In the spirit of reconciliation, Carrier Sekani Family Services, Nadleh Whut'en First Nation and Stella'ten First Nation welcome non-indigenous people, to participate in any of the activities offered during this event. As Carrier people we are honored to share our healing activities with all of you. We only ask that you participate with an open heart and bring with you an intention of support and solidarity. If you are unsure of a protocol for participating in a particular activity (i.e. smudging, spruce cleansing) feel free to ask any of our Elders or traditional Healers (purple vests) and they will guide you.

Activities

Sacred Fires: there are several fires situated though out the grounds. Elders and Healers will lead cleansing and healing activities in these areas.

Talking Circles: there will be small group discussions lead by an Elder or a healer throughout the grounds.

Energy Work: there are practitioners who are offering energy healing activities.

Spirit Messages: At the "Stations of the Cross" area you will find paper and pencil crayons. We invite survivors, family, Indigenous people, and allies to write messages to the children of residential schools. On Sunday, these messages will be burnt in ceremony to carry your thoughts to the spirit world.

We also invite members that have been impacted by the residential schools systems to write down their grief and anger and dispose these documents into the fire to ask the creator for strength and healing.

Drumming and Singing

Support Workers

We have a number of support workers on site to ensure a smooth event and to support your safety and wellness.

Support workers can be identified by the following colored vests:

Elders and traditional healers: Purple

Mental Health Workers: Yellow

Carrier Sekani Staff and Covid 19 marshals: Red

Covid-19 Safety

At the time of the writing of this document, provincial health permitted cultural gatherings outdoors of up to 50 people. We have divided the Lejac grounds into 4 separated areas where no more than 50 people will be permitted to gather at one time. In addition to this, other Covid safety protocol must be followed and will be strictly enforced to include:

- Hand sanitizing prior to entering the grounds. Frequent hand sanitizing throughout the day is strongly recommended.
- The wearing of face masks at all times while at the event (unless eating or drinking).
- Maintaining physical distance of 6 feet from others not in your immediate household. There will be exception for healing work being performed by a healer, who will also follow strict sanitisation rules.

Covid – 19 marshals (red vests), will be enforcing these safety rules throughout the event.

Facilities

There are portable washroom facilities located on the grounds. There will be a limited number of water bottles, sandwiches, and snacks provided throughout the day.