



Restorative Inquiry: Committed to Community

Welcome to the first Restorative Inquiry newsletter. One of the first phases of the Restorative Inquiry is **Building Relationships** and **Gathering Knowledge**. The RI team has been travelling the province to share information about how the Restorative Inquiry will work, but also to learn what people hope to see in the process. The RI has met with former NSHCC residents, community service providers and civil servants in Amherst, Cape Breton, Halifax, Kentville and Yarmouth, with upcoming visits planned to the Pictou and Guysborough-Lincolntonville regions. Here's a sample of some themes we've heard so far:

Government and community relationships: Many people touched on the need to build stronger relationships between government and African Nova Scotian communities. Communities need to have a voice in issues and policies that affect them. The importance of "being heard" is a phrase we heard in many places.

Righting systemic wrongs: Every community has its own examples of how systemic and institutional racism have had an impact on everything from education and employment to access to health care. The Restorative Inquiry has a mandate to address these big-picture issues through the context of the NSHCC.

Children in care: One key theme is how children wind up in care and how they are treated—not only in the past, but today. Many former residents have told us how important it is for them that their stories make a difference for children still in care today.

Helping residents heal: People have stressed the importance of acknowledging the harms former residents endured and helping them in their healing journey. The Restorative Inquiry has to be a process that does no further harm.

We will do our best to keep everyone informed and involved as the RI progresses. Visit our website at restorativeinquiry.ca to sign up for our email list and show your support by signing the Statement of Commitment.



Restorative Inquiry
Nova Scotia Home for Colored Children

A Different Way Forward

Restorative Inquiry
Newsletter

Vol. 1 - May 2016

Meet the Restorative
Inquiry Team:

Council of Parties

Tony Smith (co-chair)
Chief Judge Pamela
Williams (co-chair)
Mike Dull
Jean Flynn
Wayn Hamilton
Shawna Hoyte
Joan Jones
Jennifer Llewellyn
Gerry Morrison
Sylvia Parris
Dean Smith
Carolann Wright-Parks

Facilitation/Coordination Team

Carolann Wright-Parks,
Coordinating Director
Terry Dixon, Operations
Diane Govindsamy,
Briefer/Navigator
Ashley Harrison,
Facilitation/Youth
Engagement
Danielle Jackson,
Community Engagement
Chad Lucas,
Communications

Going Together: Conversations on the Way Forward

The Restorative Inquiry offers an unprecedented opportunity to address major issues affecting African Nova Scotian communities, and to work on solutions together.

The RI team will be hosting the first of what we imagine will be many community conversations on June 10 at the East Preston Recreation Centre (24 Brooks Drive, East Preston) from 8:30 am-4 pm. Join us for a day of World Café-style discussions on topics including:

- The impacts of systemic racism
- Education and employment
- Supports for African Nova Scotian families
- Community leadership
- Mental health and well-being
- African Nova Scotians and the Justice system

This **free-of-charge** event, featuring guests **Nene Kwasi Kafele** and **Tyler Simmonds**, is an opportunity to join the conversation and help shape the work of the Restorative Inquiry. To register, send an email to info@restorativeinquiry.ca by June 1. Space is limited.

The Healing Journey—A Focus on Health Support

One of the guiding principles of the Restorative Inquiry is to **do no harm and support healing**. While the Inquiry must deal with painful events and difficult topics, we want to make sure that all who take part—especially the former residents—are supported in a way that doesn't cause them further trauma.

The RI team has been meeting and forming partnerships with health service providers, including the Nova Scotia Brotherhood, the Health Association of African Canadians, and the Healthy Minds Cooperative. These partnerships will help us meet the needs of participants in the process, and help support former residents in their healing.



Nene Kwasi Kafele, left, is the founder and CEO of **Akoma Learning Centre**, a collaborative training, capacity building and wellness space focused on community development, research, anti-oppression, trauma resilience, collaborative leadership and social justice planning and advocacy.

Tyler Simmonds, right, is a filmmaker, designer, stylist and mental health advocate from North Preston. He is passionate about raising awareness and support for youth who are living with mental illness. Find him online at www.tylersimmonds.com

One theme already arising from our conversations is the challenge many African Nova Scotians face in receiving accessible, culturally appropriate care and services for their physical and mental health needs. We will continue to work with partners to explore this issue as the Restorative Inquiry unfolds. Stay tuned for more information on health-related activities.



SANKOFA:

“To reach back and get it”

Sankofa is a Ghanaian word that translates as “to reach back and get it.” The principle of Sankofa is that one should gather the best of what the past has to teach in order to succeed in the future. It is expressed visually as a bird that flies forward while looking backward with an egg in its mouth.

Restorative Inquiry - NSHCC
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