Case Study XIII

Language, Identity, and Community Control: The Tagish First Voices Project

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To all my children, we are losing our language. You are our future leaders; you must learn our language. It is the root and heart of our culture. I pass you our language. You must learn our language. — “A Message to our Children,” Tagish First Voices Web site.

From the turn of the century into the early 1970s, the Choutla Anglican residential school at Carcross in the Yukon Territory was home to generations of Tagish and Tlingit children. Victims of an assimilationist educational ideology that separated them from their families for at least ten months of the year, many children were denied the teachings of their elders, the right to speak their native language and, as a result, many aspects of their identity as native people. The Tagish and Tlingit community at Carcross has since come to terms with the pain and loss associated
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