



SAMSON CREE NATION

Chief Vern Saddleback

P.O. Box 159
Maskwacis, Alberta
T0C 1N0
(780) 585-3793
Direct Line 421-4926
Fax (780) 585-2256
1-800-661-2579

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MEDIA RELEASE

It is disheartening to read yet another story of racism targeting the Maskwacis Cree.

It is particularly troubling to learn that today our children attending Ponoka School were put in 'hold and secure' after disturbing videos containing racial slurs and threats circulated on-line. The racial slurs are not new but it is unsettling that the students attending schools alongside our children at Ponoka School are the ones making the racist threats.

The Maskwacis Cree has a long history of working to redress discrimination. Since the early 80's Maskwacis elders, with the help of Chief Wilton Littlechild, worked tirelessly at the United Nations to protect the rights of Indigenous peoples against all forms of discrimination. The long hard fight for freedom from discrimination resulted in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples which has benefitted Indigenous peoples throughout the world.

Despite this concerted effort to protect Indigenous peoples from the devastating effects of racism and discrimination, we still experience racism on a daily basis, from our closest neighbours. And it is troubling to learn that the youth of our neighbouring communities are the agents of racism targeting the Maskwacis Cree.

This is a time for serious reflection.

While Samson Cree Nation will not tolerate racial discrimination, nor will we condone retaliation. We remain committed to our Treaty promise of peaceful coexistence. By respecting the rights of our neighbours to our shared space, we hope to protect the safety and security of our community and of our youth.

As Indigenous peoples everyone needs to calm down and look forward to a time where we can coexist with our neighbouring towns free from fear, free from hatred and free from discrimination. Towards that end, we will continue to promote understanding and racial tolerance so that of our youth and our community members can experience a quality of life comparable to all other members of society.

Chief Vernon Saddleback
Samson Cree Nation