



It was okay for these kids to pretend to be Indians...



... when it was not okay for these kids to actually be Indians

TODAY IT'S NOT OK FOR NON-NATIVES TO PRETEND TO BE INDIAN MASCOTS

Over 150,000 Native children in Canada and hundreds of thousands in the US were taken from their families, by law, as young as age four, to Boarding Schools in the US and to Residential Schools in Canada starting in 1879. The purpose was to “kill the Indian in him.” The last of these schools closed in the US in 1970’s and last residential school closed in Canada in 1996.

Arriving at these schools they took away their clothing and sacred traditional possessions, they cut off their hair, doused them with DDT powder (a carcinogenic pesticide), and they were forbidden to speak their language or they would have their mouths washed out with lye. They were forbidden to communicate with their siblings. Children were also abused- physically, spiritually, emotionally and sexually. Conditions were so dire they died in very high numbers. We are just finding their unmarked graves. Those who survived returned home at 18 not knowing their language, culture, and having lost connection to their families. They weren’t Indian and they weren’t white. We took their identities.