



Press Release

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Indigenous students attend summit to strengthen community resilience

November 27 and 28, Calgary, Alta- More than 300 students, teachers, community members and Elders from First Nations and Métis communities across Alberta gathered at Winsport for a summit on health, wellness and resilience.

The two-day event began with a host of active icebreaker activities that saw students interacting with new faces right off the bat. Then, 18-year-old keynote speaker Izaiah Swampy-Omeasoo, an aspiring politician of Samson Cree Nation, spoke to students about the importance of language in revitalizing culture.

“It’s like losing a library,” said Swampy-Omeasoo of the deaths of Elders. He reminded the crowd that their ancestors never spoke English, and in order to communicate through prayer and after passing on, they must learn their Indigenous languages.

Students attended art, physical activity and knowledge sharing sessions, from resilience through poetry, to outdoor traditional Dene and Blackfoot games, to Elder circles. They had the opportunity to participate in ‘wellness breaks’, where they tried wheelchair basketball with Wheelchair Sports Alberta, ice luge with Winsport, a tour of the Canada Sports Hall of Fame, badminton, boxing, or skating with players from the Calgary Hitmen. On Wednesday evening, they gathered once again for an open mic night that invited students to share their talents. Performers sang and danced for their peers, encouraged by emcee Dwight Farahat of [Antyx Arts](#). On Thursday, students dove straight back into sessions and then regrouped to present posters showcasing their school's initiatives that support health, wellness, resilience and culture with other school teams in the room.

The Resiliency Summit, hosted annually by Ever Active Schools, was sponsored by Canadian Tire Jumpstart Charities, Enbridge, CN Rail, Winsport, Canada’s Sports Hall of Fame, Crest, the RBC Foundation and Alberta Blue Cross.

About Ever Active Schools: [Ever Active Schools](#) (EAS) is a provincial initiative that supports healthy school communities. EAS engages schools through a Comprehensive School Health framework, which addresses health and education goals to improve the social outcomes of children and youth in Alberta. Their [Resilient Schools](#) initiative works in Treaty 6, 7 and 8 and partners directly with First Nations and Métis school communities to promote language, culture and resilience as pathways to wellbeing for Indigenous youth.

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