



# The Disappearance of Indigenous Languages

Indigenous languages are disappearing at rapid rates. There are more than **70** Indigenous languages spoken in Canada, however, **most of these languages are at risk of disappearing**. In response to this crisis and the need to act immediately to protect these valuable languages, the UN declared:

**2019 as The Year of Indigenous Languages**

**2022-2032 as the International Decade of Indigenous Languages**

## Why are Indigenous Languages Disappearing?

- Languages are threatened to become extinct when there are not enough people who speak the language.
- Languages are lost when they are not able to be passed on to younger generations.
- Colonization has played a large role in the loss of Indigenous languages.
- Residential schools were designed to erase Indigenous culture, traditions, and languages.
  - Indigenous children were forced to attend residential schools and were forbidden and punished for speaking their own languages.

## Did You Know:

In 2010, the UNESCO reported that Inuktitut was "overall one of the most viable [Indigenous] languages in Canada, with a relatively large speaker population that includes children" (UNESCO, 2010).

Today, most dialects of Inuktitut in Canada are considered to be vulnerable by the UN (Sinclair, 2019).

## Language Revitalization

Language Revitalization- the attempt to stop a language from going extinct.

Some examples of current Indigenous language revitalization work includes:

- **Language Nests**
- **Language Immersion Schools**
- **Language Learning Groups**

**Explore Local Language Revitalization Work!**

**Kingston Indigenous Languages Nest (KILN)**      **Tsi Tyónnheht Onkwawén:na (TTO)**