

# A Secret Experiment

**W**e cannot survive or thrive without adequate food. Food is especially important for growing children.

Without a proper diet, a child's development suffers.

Former students at residential school talk about not having enough to eat. Basil H. Johnston, the renowned Anishinaabe author of *Indian School Days*, attended St. Peter Claver's Indian Residential School in Spanish, Ontario. He recalls receiving "just enough food to blunt the sharp edges of hunger for three or four hours."

In 2013, food researcher Dr. Ian Mosby, at the University of Guelph in Ontario, exposed experiments buried in the Department of Indian Affairs files. Documents from 1948 to 1952 revealed that close to 1,000 residential school students were used as nutritional research subjects. Although they were already malnourished, the children were further deprived of both food and health supplements such as vitamins. They were not given dental treatment, because healthy teeth could distort the researcher's results.

The students attended Alberni Indian Residential School in British Columbia; Cecilia Jeffrey Indian Residential School and St. Mary's



Indian Residential School in Kenora, Ontario; St. Paul's Boarding School and Blood Indian Residential School in Cardston, Alberta; and Shubenacadie Indian Residential School in Nova Scotia.

*A nurse takes a blood sample at Alberni Indian Residential School, Alberni, British Columbia, in 1948. Secret nutritional experiments were conducted here and at five other residential schools.*