

# THE WCR LEARNING COMMUNITY

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## Survivor stories

### Survivors of Indian Residential Schools tell their stories.

Adapted from *The Vancouver Sun*

Level 2

#### Alvin Dixon



Alvin Dixon is a survivor of residential schools.  
Photo: Jason Payne, *Vancouver Sun*

Alvin Dixon was 10 years old. He was taken from his home in Bella Bella. After that, he lived at a residential school for 8 years. He was punished for speaking his native language.

“A supervisor heard me, took me to the playroom in the basement, leaned me over the bench and walloped me over and over with the strap.”

Alvin is now 76 years old. He says the school was like a jail.

#### Chief Dr. Robert Joseph



Chief Robert Joseph and his daughter Karen display tiles painted by schoolchildren.  
Photo: Steve Bosch, *Vancouver Sun*

Chief Robert Joseph and his daughter Karen display tiles painted by schoolchildren.

Chief Joseph had bad times at residential school. He was angry and broken. Now he has changed. He is an open and loving father and grandfather.

Chief Joseph dreamed about a walk. He wanted thousands of people to walk together. His dream came true in September. Seventy thousand people walked together. They walked through Vancouver to honour First Nations people.

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## Exercise

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### Survivor Stories

Do you have stories to tell? Try these steps to tell your story.

1. Write a list of words and phrases that describe a personal story. The story can be happy or sad. For example:

pretty blue dress	6 years old	spoiled dress
cake	birthday	cried
excited	spilled	

2. Write sentences to describe an experience.

- My mother gave me a pretty blue dress.
- I was 6 years old.
- I was excited.
- I spoiled my dress.
- She made me a cake for my birthday.
- It was my birthday
- I spilled my drink on my dress.
- I cried.

3. Tell your story to someone.

4. Listen to their story.