

Partnerships for Success

Government partnerships that foster positive outcomes for Indigenous people, businesses and communities

Michif Children's Books

Ministry of Government Relations

Language is the foundation of all cultures around the world. With more than 70 Indigenous languages spoken across Canada¹, some languages are widely spoken, while others, such as Michif, are endangered.

Primarily spoken by the Métis, Michif is a language that combines French and Cree. In 2016, 1,170 people reported speaking Michif fluently in Canada, with 41.9 per cent of those speakers living in Saskatchewan.² As Michif is an endangered language, it is important to preserve the language for future generations.

The Government of Saskatchewan is contributing to the preservation of the Michif language through the publication of five children's books. Published in 2019, each title provides the phonetic pronunciation of Michif words, as well as the English translation so that a parent or teacher can read and teach the words to children. This gives children and adults the opportunity and confidence to learn more about the culture and language of their communities.

Michif Children's Book Highlights

- Five titles were created with 465 books distributed province-wide.
- The Government of Saskatchewan contributed \$20,000 towards the initiative.

The Gabriel Dumont Institute has been producing Michif language resources for years, so it was a natural fit for the partnership. Along with Prince's Trust Canada, and Say IT First, the ministries of Government Relations and Education each contributed \$10,000 towards the publications. As of January 2021, 465 copies of the series were distributed to schools and libraries across the province.

The success of this initiative meant something deeper for His Honour Russ Mirasty, the Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan. In the fall of 2019, His Honour had the opportunity to visit northern Saskatchewan communities and present the books to children, "I travelled to northern communities to present student awards and I had the opportunity to give the schools these beautiful story books written in the Michif language. My first language is Woodland Cree, and retaining my culture has been critical to my identity and well-being. I think this is true for all people. I'm grateful to the partners who created these books. They are a valuable resource and a wonderful way to rejuvenate the Michif language."

For more information, visit <https://www.sayitfirst.ca/projects/children-books>

Produced by: Ministry of Government Relations

Source: Government of Saskatchewan, Government of Canada, Gabriel Dumont Institute, Prince's Trust Canada, and Say IT First.

¹ & ² The Government of Canada's 2016 Census of Population on Aboriginal languages of First Nations people, Métis and Inuit.

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Michif Children's Books



The **Michif language** was created as a combination of **French and Cree**.



1,170 people speak Michif in Canada, with **41.9%** of speakers living in **Saskatchewan**.



5 titles were created with **465 books distributed** across Saskatchewan.



Did you know that the term **Indigenous** refers to **First Nation, Métis and Inuit peoples**?

This initiative was made possible with contributions from the Gabriel Dumont Institute, the Government of Canada, the Government of Saskatchewan, the Lieutenant Governor's Office of Saskatchewan, the Prince's Trust Canada, and Say IT First.