

The Asper Foundation Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program -Program at a Glance-

Who

The Asper Foundation Human Rights and Holocaust Studies Program is administered by The Asper Foundation (<http://asperfoundation.com/>) located in Winnipeg, MB. The program Web site is at <http://humanrights.asperfoundation.com/>

Why

Through a specially designed education program, the program objectives are to educate grades seven to nine Canadian students about the Holocaust and:

- inspire them to take personal responsibility to combat antisemitism in particular and racism in general;
- show them the consequences of complacency and indifference;
- sensitize them to the consequences of racism; and
- promote respect for others

What

The program started in 1997 in Winnipeg, MB and is now a national initiative that is inclusive of students from many backgrounds. It is open to all schools/organizations in communities across Canada outside of a 2 hour-drive radius from Winnipeg. Since the program's inception to 2019, over 14,000 students and chaperones including over 1,000 First Nations, Metis and Inuit students in 205 cities spanning twelve provinces and territories across Canada have participated in this initiative.

Schools/organizations apply to The Asper Foundation to participate in the program which is comprised of:

- An 11-hour extra-curricular education program (*reduced from 18 hours in previous years*) for students, or its equivalent, on human rights and the Holocaust with an added emphasis on Canadian history and the current situation in the world today. The curriculum for the educational component of the program was developed specifically by Holocaust and human rights educators for The Asper Foundation and is delivered by qualified educators provided by program schools/organizations in students' communities (see below for more information).
- Students volunteering for 5 hours in their communities on public projects of their choice that meet program requirements (*reduced from 10 hours in previous years*). This has resulted in over 154,000 hours of community service being carried out across Canada since the program was established.
- A trip to Winnipeg that includes the architecturally-stunning Canadian Museum for Human Rights (www.canadianmuseumforhumanrights.com) and other sites of interest. The idea to create the museum was inspired and motivated by the extraordinary impact of the program. The museum explores the subject of human rights and its purpose is to promote understanding, respect and to encourage reflection, dialogue and action. It is the largest human rights institution and centre for education in the world. Also, it is the first national museum created in Canada since 1967 and the first national museum to be located outside the Ottawa region (see below for more information).
- A voluntary evening graduation ceremony held in students' communities to present a personalized Memorandum for Personal Responsibility to each student (see <https://tinyurl.com/yyqhbffg>). This document was commissioned by The Asper Foundation specifically for the program and written by Dr. Israel Asper, co-founder of The Asper Foundation. The Memorandum, which each program student signs, aims to provide them with a sense of the importance that they participated in the program and to remind them that they have a personal responsibility to stand up for human rights by taking action.

Where

The program educational student classes, volunteer work and voluntary evening program graduation ceremonies are held in participating home communities. The program trip is to Winnipeg, MB.

When

Program educational classes and student volunteer work takes place approximately October -April prior to the program trip. The trip to Winnipeg, MB is in the April-May period. Voluntary evening program graduation ceremonies are held after the trip.

Communication

The Asper Foundation communicates directly with administrators of program schools/organizations. The administrators are responsible to communicate with program students, their families and chaperones.

Responsibilities of program schools/organizations

- Communicate with The Asper Foundation to apply to the program.
- Select qualified students and communicate and coordinate with them and their parents/legal guardians regarding overall program structure, rules, requirements and guidelines, student guidelines and other relevant program information such as travel details.
- Deliver 11 hours of extra-curricular educational classes to program students through selection of qualified educators who have a professional background in teaching the subject matter of human rights (*reduced from 18 hours in previous years*).
- Collect and forward program monies to The Asper Foundation.
- Select qualified trip chaperones (not parents of program students) as agreed with The Asper Foundation including providing the chaperones with guidelines and other relevant program information. The program requires approximately one chaperone per seven students.
- Oversee program volunteer work requirements by students.
- Make all required group preparations for the trip to Winnipeg, MB including communication with the travel agency Canada One Travel (<https://canadaone.travel/>) and ensuring all travellers have the required travel documentation. The Asper Foundation partners with Canada One Travel in coordinating all trip logistics.
- Ensure all required forms, information and formal feedback from students, families chaperones and program schools/organizations are forwarded to The Asper Foundation.
- Participate in the trip to Winnipeg, MB.
- Coordinate voluntary Memorandum for Personal Responsibility graduation ceremony (if being held).
- Coordinate with community media regarding possibly covering participation of schools/organizations in the program.

Responsibilities of program students

- Participate in 11 hours of extra-curricular educational program classes (*reduced from 18 hours in previous years*).
- Carry out 5 hours of local volunteer work provided to or through a legitimate, non-profit or charitable community organization or institution (*reduced from 10 hours in previous years*).
- Adhere to program rules.
- Provide program monies and required forms/information to administrators.
- Participate in the trip to Winnipeg, MB.
- If being held, participate in a Memorandum for Personal Responsibility graduation ceremony.

Cost

The Asper Foundation covers over 50% of the hard costs of the program (*increased from 40% in previous years*) with the participating schools/organizations and students covering the remainder directly or through fundraising. Once a school/organization has reviewed the complete program information and indicates to The Asper Foundation that it is potentially interested in participating, it is provided with a budget based on the geographic location of school/organization and the approximate number of students and chaperones that would participate.

Responsibilities of The Asper Foundation - What's included in the program cost

- Complete oversight and management of program including communication and coordination with prospective and participating schools/organizations.
- Preparation of budget for prospective and participating schools/organizations.
- Detailed program guidelines document.
- Program curriculum binder for educators (nine, 75-minute sessions).
- Complete coordination and delivery of all three-night/four-day trip logistics including return air/bus travel from home community to Winnipeg, MB, hotel (four same-sex students per room and two same-sex adult chaperones per room), food, admissions, entertainment, security, ground travel, management/coordination fees, program materials, insurance (accidental death and disability, medical and liability) and incidentals. The Asper Foundation partners with Canada One Travel (<https://canadaone.travel/>) in coordinating all trip logistics (see below for more trip details.)
- Personalized Memorandum for Personal Responsibility graduation certificates for program students.
- Medical-advised aides provided by students' families can accompany students and medical-advised accompaniment by students' parents/legal guardians are permitted with the aides/parents/legal guardians' travel costs covered 100% by The Asper Foundation.
- Any additional costs related to providing a wheelchair-accessible bus in Winnipeg, MB are covered 100% by The Asper Foundation.
- Maintaining a program Web site (<http://humanrights.asperfoundation.com/>) for program students, their families, chaperones, administrators and the general public. The Web site includes over 300 video interviews of students on the impact of the program, thousands of professional photos documenting the trips, videos of Holocaust survivor presentations to students, over 140 media articles on the program published in numerous newspapers and extensive social media coverage. During the program trip, students are provided with the opportunity to *voluntarily* be part of a short video interview to share their personal thoughts on the program's impact which are posted on the program Web site.

What's not included in the program cost

- Costs related to voluntary Memorandum for Personal Responsibility graduation ceremonies (if held).
- Food on flight/bus en route to Winnipeg, MB and back to home community.
- Fees for medical-advised aides.
- Necessities for trip such as luggage, clothing, toiletries and electronics.
- Cost of substitute teachers covering for teacher-chaperones that participate in the program trip.

Program curriculum

11 hours in total – 75-minutes per session (*reduced from 18 hours in previous years*). Nine sessions are as follows*:

Social Responsibility and Human Rights	The Holocaust in Operation	The World's Reaction: Global Responsibility and Citizenship
Canada and Human Rights	Literature of the Holocaust	Leadership Values and Human Rights
The Setting of the Holocaust	The Holocaust in Film	Preparation for Winnipeg and Canadian Museum for Human Rights Visit

Note: Program schools/organizations can combine sessions at their discretion

Program Trip

Program schools/organizations enjoy a compelling trip shared with other schools/organizations that leaves their students with a life-changing experience. Trips to Winnipeg, MB are held from a Sunday to a Wednesday (three nights, four days) in the end of April, beginning of May.

The specific date is not confirmed until the fall and The Asper Foundation assigns program schools/organizations to a specific trip. Following are examples of trip activities though, aside from the visit to the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, not all items noted are necessarily done:

- Day at the Canadian Museum for Human Rights (www.canadianmuseumforhumanrights.com)
- Hermetic Code Tour at the Manitoba Legislative Building (<https://tinyurl.com/y5adcpqu>)
- Human rights speakers including a Holocaust survivor
- Private entertainment by Folklorama groups (<https://www.folklorama.ca/>)
- Winnipeg Harvest including an educational workshop (<https://winnipegharvest.org/>)
- Journey to Churchill at Assiniboine Park Zoo (<https://tinyurl.com/y5nkr8a8>)
- Theatre performance
- Visit to St. Boniface (<https://tinyurl.com/y3q3ap5h>)
- FortWhyte Alive (<https://www.fortwhyte.org/>)
- The Manitoba Museum (<https://manitobamuseum.ca/main/>)

Health, Safety and Security

The program treats the health, safety and security of program students and chaperones as paramount. Program schools/organizations are responsible to provide written confirmation to The Asper Foundation that all selected trip chaperones as well as any professional medical aides employed or contracted for students by their parents/legal guardians do not have a criminal record and are not listed on their provincial/territorial child abuse registry.

From lights out until wake-up, **private security** is provided by the program to guard the hotel floors that the students/chaperones are located. Qualified chaperones for the trip are selected by program schools/organizations and provided with specific guidelines to follow. Program students are provided with specific guidelines to follow. Use of a hotel pool (if available) is only allowed if it has been confirmed that a student can swim and they are accompanied by a chaperone that can swim. Private buses are used for all on-ground transportation in Winnipeg.

Program medical insurance provides access to **health** professionals for advice and/or treatment and accidental death and disability insurance is provided.

Food - Healthful and delicious catered food is provided on the program trip. Provisions are made for allergies, vegetarians, vegans and food sensitivities and kosher food is available on request.

Privacy - All information collected on program students and their families is treated as strictly confidential.

Inclusivity - The program is open to students of all abilities and any reasonable arrangements are made to accommodate students related to a medical disability or medical need. Medical-advised aides provided by students' families can accompany students and medical-advised accompaniment by students' parents/legal guardians are permitted.

Program Recognition and Impact

The program received the Human Rights Award from the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission and the New Brunswick Pioneer of Human Rights Award from the New Brunswick Human Rights Commission. As noted, the idea to create the Canadian Museum for Human Rights was inspired and motivated by the extraordinary impact of the program.

Past student program participants have remarked:

- *I think this program made me a more aware person who wants to make a difference. It may have inspired what I choose as a career.*
- *It was one of the most unbelievable educational experiences of my life.*
- *This program had a profound effect on me.*
- *You have no idea how much this experience meant to us all.*

Environment

To help alleviate the effects of the program's share of carbon dioxide emissions, The Asper Foundation makes annual donations to environmental organizations that address this issue.