

THE BOARDING SCHOOL & CUSHMAN PROJECT
STORIES FROM STUDENTS, PATIENTS & STAFF:
ST. GEORGE'S INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOL • CUSHMAN INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOL •
CUSHMAN INDIAN HOSPITAL & SANATORIUM

This section shares personal stories from students, patients and staff members who physically attended boarding schools or were patients at the Indian hospital on the Puyallup Tribal Reservation. Please reflect on the information presented in "Stories from Students, Patients & Staff: St. George's Indian Boarding School, Cushman Indian Boarding School and Cushman Indian Hospital & Sanatorium" and answer the following questions.

QUESTIONS FROM THE VIDEO

ST. GEORGE'S INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOL

1. If we pause and listen to the treatment one student from St. George's Indian Boarding School described, how would you classify the behavior of the staff?
 - Answer: Emotionally, verbally and physically abusive
2. If this happened in schools now, what would happen to the staff?
3. Could you imagine your child enduring this type of abuse on a daily basis?
4. Does this type of behavior reflect the Catholic/Christian teachings?

CUSHMAN INDIAN BOARDING SCHOOL

1. How did the strict regimen of Cushman Boarding School effect the children who attended?
 - Answer: Trauma endured at the school caused the children to pass their trauma on to the next generation in their adulthood, institutionalization into adulthood, obsessive compulsive disorders, fearful, mental shut downs
2. If you were a child who attended Cushman School and didn't receive any correspondence from your family, what would you think?
3. Why do you think the staff didn't pass on the letters and packages sent from the children's parents?

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1. What happened to the children as soon as they arrived to Cushman Indian Hospital?
 - Answer: They got their hair cut as soon as they arrived, military style
2. Why might this have been traumatic for the children?
 - Answer: In Native culture, long hair is important to our people. We cut our hair when someone close to us has passed away. Cutting our hair removed cultural ties and signifies death
3. If there were “wards” for children that weren’t sick and “wards” for children that were sick or in need of medical emergency, what would be the purpose of housing children that weren’t sick in hospital?
 - Answer: The purpose of housing children that weren’t sick in the hospital was to remove the children from their family and community
4. What would be the purpose of a general round up to remove children from their homes if they were not sick?
 - Answer: The hospital received funding for each child patient and performed unnecessary surgeries, treatments on them. This round up also served to remove the children from their families and communities
5. From one staff member’s account, what type of treatments were performed on patients at Cushman Indian Hospital?
 - Answer: She said they used patients to study the effects of treatments
6. Who were most of the nurses working at Cushman Indian Hospital?
 - Answer: Nurses in training, nurses from other countries such as Germany and France, and some Native nurses
7. What did the children do during Occupational Therapy?
 - Answer: Beading, carving, art and embroidery
8. A child of one of the doctors recalled his father doing what all day long to Native children?
 - Answer: Performing multiple tonsil operations all day long
9. What would be the purpose of the doctor allowing his son to watch these operations being performed?

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THE PUYALLUP TRIBAL LANGUAGE PROGRAM - 2020

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10. Who was bringing the children to the hospital and what were the children's reactions?
- Answer: Parents and healthcare providers from Native communities. Children were confused, hurt, and emotionally distraught
11. What happened to children when they finally were reunited with their families?
- Answer: Some children didn't know their parents when they came to pick them up, some had to adjust to home life, some missed their friends and nice nurses
12. What happened to many Yakama Indian children?
- Answer: Many were taken to the hospital to have their tonsils removed and sent back home
13. How were the Alaskan and Navajo children treated by staff?
- Answer: The Cushman staff were mean to the Alaskan and Navajo children because they were shy and didn't speak English well
14. What was happening to the Alaskan children once they were brought to Cushman Hospital?
- Answers: The Alaskan children's families didn't know where they were, they weren't informed when their children passed away in the hospital, they were not notified where their children were buried, they didn't have the option of bringing their children's bodies home due to lack of funding
15. How did patients create bonds and relationships with each other at the hospital?
- Answer: They would visit each other's rooms, they would use earphone radios and talk through them like a phone, they would pass notes out the window on string, and they met lifelong friends and some met their spouses at Cushman
16. Why do you think that former patients came back to work at the hospital as adults?
- Answer: Some expressed wanting to be around the Native community, some enjoyed the familiarity of the environment, some expressed it was a job that paid the bills
17. Why wouldn't some patients ever go to a doctor or dentist after their stay at Cushman Hospital?
- Answer: These patients encountered traumatic experiences attached to their memories of hospitals, doctors and any medical treatment
18. What were some patient's feelings upon returning to the Cushman building as an adult?
- Answer: Some enjoyed their time and memories there, some felt horror when returning to the building

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Now that you've answered questions from the video, it's time to begin looking into how these events impacted these people and personally envisioning what this did to these families lives.

PERSONAL REFLECTION

1. What new information did you learn?
2. How did you feel listening to the personal reflection exercise at the end of the video?
3. How did it make you feel envisioning your children being removed from your home?
4. What would an experience like this do to your community?
5. What are some of the ways you and your family would cope with these traumatic experience?
6. What would it do to the generations to come?
7. How did it feel hearing and seeing the firsthand accounts of students, staff and patients that were brought to the Puyallup Reservation?
8. Why do you think some Elders never shared their stories with their family members?
9. Why do you think the Elders who shared their stories wanted you to hear them?
10. Why do you think each Tribal name was spoken at the end of the video?