



# Orange Shirt Day



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## Every Child Matters

The slogan "Every Child Matters" is used to recognize the atrocities that were committed in Canadian Residential schools. It acknowledges the belief that all children are important as these families are healing from the losses and trauma of these events.

## Importance

To commemorate this day, it is suggested to wear an orange shirt and honor the victims of residential schools. The government of Canada has passed bill C-5 that makes September 30th a statutory holiday to honor to victims and family of the residential schools. This is an important part of the reconciliation process.

## What Can You Do?

- Wear Orange clothing on September 30th
- Read Phyllis' story "The Orange Shirt Story" with your classroom or your family. It's available in English, French and Shuswap.
- Encourage the sharing of stories, experiences, and ways you can support together.
- Explore and read books by indigenous authors that explain residential schools
- A reflection activity is to trace your hand and share ideas on how to make people feel like they matter
- Participate in local indigenous events

## What is it?

- Orange shirt day is a Canadian federal statutory holiday otherwise known as The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. This day is meant to reflect, learn and discuss Indigenous peoples and history, specifically the effect of residential schools in Canada.

## History

- 1870's-1990's- About 150,000 Indigenous children were taken from their homes and forced to attend residential schools, where they were stripped from their culture, beliefs and families, and forced to assimilate to Christian culture.
- 1973- Orange shirt day was stemmed from Phyllis Webstad from Stswechem'c Xgat'tem First Nation and was a survivor of a residential school. In 1973 she shared her story of when she was stripped of her orange shirt on the first day of arriving to the residential school. This event represents her being stripped of her identity, culture and freedom.
- 2013- The first 'orange shirt day' took place in Williams Lake, BC, organized by the St. Joseph Mission Residential School commemoration project
- 2017- Orange shirt day was officially recognized by the Government of Canada as National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.



Check out Phyllis's story



# References

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