

ORANGE SHIRT DAY



WHEN? September 30

WHAT? A day to listen, learn, and celebrate Indigenous culture. It is an Act of Reconciliation to recognize this day.

CONTEXT: Orange shirt day finds its roots in the story of Phyllis Webstad, a Secwepemc person from the Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation, near Williams Lake, British Columbia, Canada. Watch this video to meet Phyllis! <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E3vUqr01kAk>

WHY Orange Shirts? Orange Shirt Day is a legacy of the St. Joseph Mission (SJM) residential school commemoration event held in Williams Lake, BC, Canada, in May 2013. It grew out of Phyllis' story of having her shiny new orange shirt taken away on her first day of school at the Mission, and it has become an opportunity to keep the discussion on all aspects of residential schools happening annually. The date was chosen because it is the time of year in which children were taken from their homes to residential schools, and because it is an opportunity to set the stage for anti-racism and anti-bullying policies for the coming school year. It also gives teachers time to plan events that will include children, as we want to ensure that we are passing the story and learning on to the next generations. Orange Shirt Day is also an opportunity for First Nations, local governments, schools and communities to come together in the spirit of reconciliation and hope for generations of children to come.

<http://www.orangeshirtday.org>

Wearing an orange shirt and promoting the slogan, Every Child Matters, is an affirmation of our commitment to raise awareness of the residential school experience and to ensure that every child matters as we focus on our hope for a better future in which children are empowered to help each other.

<https://www.cbc.ca/kidscbc2/the-feed/what-is-orange-shirt-day>

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/every-child-matters-orange-shirt-day-remembers-residential-school-victims-1.4115510>



Phyllis

There is a longing among all people and creatures to have a sense of purpose and worth.

To satisfy that common longing in all of us, we must respect each other.

Chief Dan George