

Hello:

This Thursday, Sept. 30, marks the first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation — a day which has also been commemorated as Orange Shirt Day since 2013. The new federal statutory holiday honours the survivors of residential schools and their families and communities. Action 80 of the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission's](#) (TRC) [94 Calls to Action](#) called for this day to "ensure that public commemoration of the history and legacy of residential schools remains a vital component of the reconciliation process."

Thank you for reaching out to your local Indigenous organization to learn more about how you can support your Indigenous community. While this isn't a complete list, here are some ways Indigenous and non-Indigenous people can participate in the day — things you can watch, listen to, read and do, as well as where you can donate to support those affected by residential schools. Note, there is a lot of information out there and it can be difficult to know which is appropriate or not, so please make sure your information is from a reputable source.

### **Orange Shirt Day:**

- 1) <https://youtu.be/rOvp2KSgKfw>

I was recently asked to make this video for Monterey Middle School by their Principal and Vice Principal. The video acknowledges a special art project that I made for the students and their classrooms. I hope that it inspires them to learn more about the Residential School History and how they can provide positive change in their current day and years to come.

- 2) <https://www.orangeshirtday.org/teacher-resources.html>
- 3) <https://education.afn.ca/afntoolkit/learning-module/residential-schools/>
- 4) Xe xe Smun eem-Victoria Orange Shirt Day: Every Child Matters virtual/in person ceremony: <https://fb.me/e/1N7MdFnqg>

The community is invited to wear orange and attend the Xe xe Smun' eem-Victoria Orange Shirt Day: Every Child Matters Ceremony Thursday, September 30 from noon to 2:30 p.m. in Centennial Square. Xe xe Smun' eem means "Sacred Children" in the Cowichan or Quw utsun language.

Join us for a blessing of the land and welcome, and the Orange Shirt Day flag raising followed by a moment of silence to honour and remember those who did not survive residential school.

The event will include Indigenous performances and guest speakers who will share their personal experiences with residential schools and reconciliation.

Event organizers Eddy Charlie and Kristin Spray will speak to the importance of raising awareness about residential schools to honour the more than 4,000 children who died, and the sacrifices that were made by 150,000 residential school survivors and their families across Canada.

All are welcome to this free event which will happen rain or shine. Please dress for the weather. Masks are recommended.

Orange Shirt Day is an opportunity for Indigenous Peoples, local governments, schools and communities to come together in the spirit of reconciliation and hope for generations of children to come. September 30 was chosen because it is the time of year in which children were taken from their homes to residential schools. Starting this year, Orange Shirt Day coincides with Canada's new federal statutory holiday, the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on September 30. This day is an important step in the reconciliation process. It provides an opportunity to recognize and commemorate the tragic history and ongoing legacy of residential schools, and to honour Indigenous survivors, their families and communities.

The ceremony will also be live streamed on our Facebook page.

Learn more: <http://ow.ly/Mrwf50GbhpC>

## Websites:

- 1) <https://www.cbc.ca/life/culture/ways-to-participate-in-the-national-day-for-truth-and-reconciliation-1.6192414>
- 2) 48 books by Indigenous writers to read to understand residential schools
- 3) [https://www.cbc.ca/amp/1.6056204?\\_vfz=medium%3Dsharebar&fbclid=IwAR2ihuaqLhD2iJtYumpCtUhXgXbuFKCCGzbkai0JP6xHxSw5eLw1Q9VoPdA&\\_twitter\\_impression=true](https://www.cbc.ca/amp/1.6056204?_vfz=medium%3Dsharebar&fbclid=IwAR2ihuaqLhD2iJtYumpCtUhXgXbuFKCCGzbkai0JP6xHxSw5eLw1Q9VoPdA&_twitter_impression=true)
- 4) <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/campaigns/national-day-truth-reconciliation.html>
- 5) <https://beingheretogether.com/info/>
- 6) Truth and Reconciliation Week: hosted by the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation September 27 6:30am Pacific Daylight Time (PDT) through to 2pm October 1, 2021.  
Register for free tickets via Eventbrite: [https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/truth-and-reconciliation-week-tickets-153491752965?keep\\_tld=1](https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/truth-and-reconciliation-week-tickets-153491752965?keep_tld=1)

## Films:

- 1) **The Road Forward, Musical Documentary, 2017, 1 hr 41 min**

[https://www.nfb.ca/film/road\\_forward/](https://www.nfb.ca/film/road_forward/)

*The Road Forward*, a musical documentary by Marie Clements, connects a pivotal moment in Canada's civil rights history—the beginnings of Indian Nationalism in the 1930s—with the powerful momentum of First Nations activism today. *The Road Forward's* stunningly shot musical sequences, performed by an ensemble of some of Canada's finest vocalists and musicians, seamlessly connect past and present with soaring vocals, blues, rock, and traditional beats. A rousing tribute to the fighters for First Nations rights, a soul-resounding historical experience, and a visceral call to action.

- 2) **Picking Up the Pieces: The Making of the Witness Blanket, Documentary Film, 2019, 1 hr 30 min**

<https://humanrights.ca/story/picking-up-the-pieces-the-making-of-the-witness-blanket>

The Witness Blanket stands as a national monument to recognize the atrocities of the Indian residential school era, honour the children, and symbolize ongoing reconciliation. Inspired by a woven blanket, this large-scale art installation is made from hundreds of items reclaimed from residential schools, churches, government buildings and traditional and cultural structures across Canada.

The process of gathering these objects and their stories took artist Carey Newman and his team from coast to coast. They travelled over 200,000 kilometres, visited 77 communities, met over 10,000 people, and welcomed over a thousand objects into their care. Each object has a story to tell, each survivor has something to say. The 90-minute feature documentary film *Picking Up the Pieces: The Making of the Witness Blanket* weaves those stories with Carey Newman's personal journey, examining how art can open our hearts to the pain of truth and the beauty of resilience.

The makers of the documentary have made it freely available online to share the power of storytelling and testimony during a time of fear, uncertainty and social isolation. They invite you to bear witness.

This film shares traumatic stories of Indian residential school survivors. Please watch and share with gentleness. If you or your family members have a history with residential schools, make sure before watching that you can connect with support.

### 3) **Cold Journey, Feature Film, 1976, 1 hr 15 min**

[https://www.nfb.ca/film/cold\\_journey/](https://www.nfb.ca/film/cold_journey/)

Fifteen-year-old Buckley (Buckley Petawabano) attends residential school, where he longs for his home and dreams of fishing and hunting. Yet when he returns to the reserve for the summer he feels like a stranger, unable to speak his Cree language or live off the land like his father and brothers. Johnny (Johnny Yesno), an Indigenous caretaker at the school, takes Buckley under his wing, introducing him to Indigenous history, culture, and knowledge. After finding Buckley's frozen body in the snow, Johnny pieces together the events of the boy's short life and tragic death, which left him unable to find a place for himself between the white and Indigenous worlds.

Featuring the soulful music of Willie Dunn, *Cold Journey's* narrative is like the true story of Charlie Wenjack, a young Anishinaabe boy who froze to death running away from residential school in 1966. The film was made with members of the Indian Film Crew and features Chief Dan George.

### 4) **nîpawistamâsowin: We Will Stand Up, Documentary, 2019, 1 hr 38 min**

<https://www.nfb.ca/film/nipawistamasowin-we-will-stand-up/>

On August 9, 2016, a young Cree man named Colten Boushie died from a gunshot to the back of his head after entering Gerald Stanley's rural property with his friends. The jury's subsequent acquittal of Stanley captured international attention, raising questions about racism embedded within Canada's legal system and propelling Colten's family to national and international stages in their pursuit of justice. Sensitively directed by Tasha Hubbard, *nîpawistamâsowin: We Will Stand Up* weaves a profound narrative encompassing the filmmaker's own adoption, the stark history of colonialism on the Prairies, and a vision of a future where Indigenous children can live safely on their homelands. See the 52-minute version [here](#).

### 5) **Our People Will Be Healed, Documentary Film, 2017,**

[https://www.nfb.ca/film/cold\\_journey/](https://www.nfb.ca/film/cold_journey/)

*Our People Will Be Healed*, Alanis Obomsawin's 50th film, reveals how a Cree community in Manitoba has been enriched through the power of education. The Helen Betty Osborne Ininiw Education Resource Centre in Norway House, north of Winnipeg, receives a level of funding that few other Indigenous institutions enjoy. Its teachers help their students to develop their abilities and their sense of pride.

### 6) **Trick or Treaty? Documentary Film, 2014, 1 hr**

[https://www.nfb.ca/film/trick\\_or\\_treaty/](https://www.nfb.ca/film/trick_or_treaty/)

Covering a vast swath of northern Ontario, Treaty No. 9 reflects the often-contradictory interpretations of treaties between First Nations and the Crown. To the Canadian government, this treaty represents a surrendering of Indigenous sovereignty, while the descendants of the Cree signatories contend its original purpose to share the land and its resources has been misunderstood and not upheld. Enlightening as it is entertaining, *Trick or Treaty?* succinctly and powerfully portrays one community's attempts to enforce their treaty rights and protect their lands, while also revealing the complexities of contemporary treaty agreements. *Trick or Treaty?* made history as the first film by an Indigenous filmmaker to be part of the master's section at TIFF when it screened there in 2014.

### 7) **SGaawaay K'uuna (Edge of the Knife), Documentary Film, 2018, 1 hr 40 min**

<https://canadianfilmday.ca/film/sg%CC%B2aawaay-%E1%B8%B5uuna-edge-of-the-knife/>

(Trailer), found on Crave with right subscription

### 8) **The Mountain of SGAana, Animated Short, 2018, 10 min**

<https://blog.nfb.ca/blog/2018/08/01/mountain-of-sgaana/>