

# Orange Shirt Day Resources

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Please read this page before continuing:

**“Education is what got us into this mess...  
but education is the key to reconciliation.”**

**– Honorable Justice Murray Sinclair**

We are now aware of the importance of education around Orange Shirt Day, the Indian Residential School Legacy, and the continued effects today. This is a history and continued reality that all Canadians and students must understand. **We are also coming to learn that *how we educate* is just as important.**

The discussion of Residential Schools and the history of colonization in Canada can be very triggering for students. Prior to Orange Shirt Day, reflect on who in your class may be sensitive to such information:

- **Students whose family members may have attended Residential School**
- **Students who may have experience with Child Welfare / Foster Care**
- **Students who may be triggered by stories of abuse**

Based on the age, maturity level, and student experiences within your classroom, consider what you are going to share for Orange Shirt Day and ensure you check out all resources prior to sharing. Also, ensure your students know about support available to them if triggered (School Counsellor, Indigenous Liaison, Call Lines).

Truth & Reconciliation is a healing journey for all Canadians.  
Thank you for your part in this process.

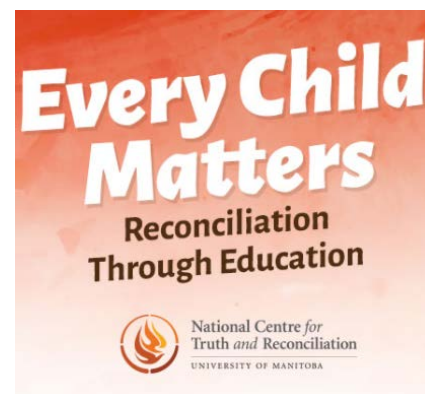
This resource was created by Indigenous Education Coordinator Brigitte Benning to aid staff in creating Orange Shirt Day Plans. If you have any questions, or ideas to share, please reach out:  
[brigittebenning@pwsd76.ab.ca](mailto:brigittebenning@pwsd76.ab.ca)

# 1 Virtual Event

## National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation

On September 30<sup>th</sup> from 9am – 2pm, the NCTR is hosting a virtual event that “provides an opportunity to learn first hand from Residential School Survivors, Elders, Knowledge Keepers, artists and leaders from nations and cultures across the country. Educators can select the events they wish to livestream for their students and download free educational resources.” **Grades 5-12.**

- [Register here today!](#)

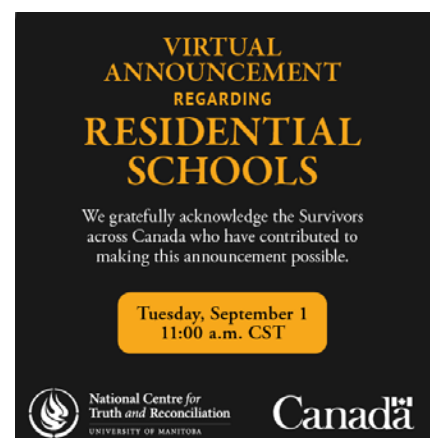


## 2 News Story

### September 1, 2020 – Federal Government & NCTR

The federal government designated the legacy of the IRS as **an event of national historical significance**. Also, two former school sites that were part of the IRS were designated as **national historic sites**. This is part of the response to Call to Action 79 from the TRC. **Grades 7-12.**

- [Watch the recording of the announcement for a limited time](#)
- [Read the Calls to Action and find #79](#)
- [Listen to this Survivor share why this event is important](#)

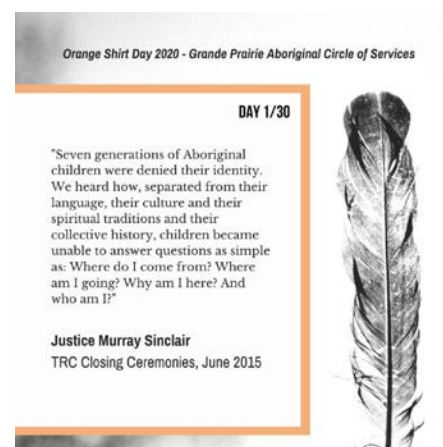


## 3 Videos & Books

### Grande Prairie Orange Shirt Day Committee – Video

This year the GP OSD committee is creating a local video that will talk about Orange Shirt day, and share messages from local community members (and some of PWPSD staff!). This video will be available to share on September 30<sup>th</sup>. The committee is also sharing graphics with important quotes related to OSD on their Instagram daily.

- [Follow the Grande Prairie OSD Facebook for video updates](#)
- [Follow the Grande Prairie OSD Instagram for daily quotes](#)



### 3 Videos & Books *continued...*

#### "Phyllis Webstad Orange Shirt Day"

- [Watch the official story of OSD](#)
- 2 minute video
- **Grades 4-12**



#### "Teaching about IRS to Children"

- [Explanation of Residential Schools](#)
- 1 min video
- **Grades 4-6**



#### "Namwayut: we are all one"

- [Survivor shares his experience](#)
- 4 min video
- **Grades 7-12**



#### "How should people feel?"

- [Responding to what you learned](#)
- 5 min video
- **Grades 7-12**



#### TRC Book List

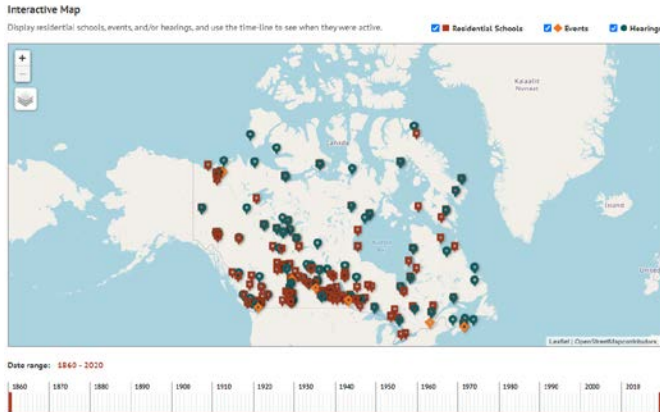
- [Extensive book list on Residential Schools](#)
- **Sorted by age** with book description



## 4 Maps & Timelines

### Interactive Map with Timeline Scroll

[From the Truth & Reconciliation Commission](#)



### Google Earth Map with Resources

[Explore school locations & deeper learning](#)



### Printable Map showing all IRS

[From the Truth & Reconciliation Commission](#)



### Interactive Map to Find Schools

[Explore the schools nearest your community](#)



### Timeline of Residential Schools

[From the Canadian Encyclopedia](#)

### Timeline of Residential Schools

[From the Legacy of Hope](#)



# 5 Discussion Guides

## Stepping Stones Resources – ATA, Walking Together

- These resources discuss the different experiences of First Nations, Inuit & Métis people
- Each resource is 3 pages of reading along with discussion/follow-up questions
- **Grades 7-12**

### First Nations Experience

*What was the purpose of residential schools, and what are the lasting impacts?*



PROVINCIAL ARCHIVES OF ALBERTA, FROM THE SISTER ANNETTE POTVIN FONDIS, PR2010.0475/1.

*Students at Blue Quills Residential School, Saddle Lake*

### Inuit Experience

*How did the residential school system experience impact the Inuit?*



NWT ARCHIVES/FLEMING/N-1979-050.0101

*First year, school girls at All Saints School in Aklavik.*

### Métis Experience

*How were the Métis people in Alberta impacted by the Indian residential school system?*



## Better Schools Activity - PWPSD

- This complete lesson plan & activity was made by Brigitte Benning in collaboration with Ms. Furstenworth's Grade 3 class at HBS, and was inspired by the project "Shannen's Dream".
- It is an especially good fit for younger classes that are having an emotional reaction to what they have learned about OSD, and have further questions / need to work through their feelings.
- **Grades 3-6**

### Lesson Plan

Better Schools' Project			
<b>Topic:</b> Residential Schools	<b>Grades:</b> 3-6	<b>Time:</b> 45 minutes	<b>Date Created:</b> May 10, 2019
<b>Overview</b> This project is meant to empower children after they learn about Residential Schools, and to aid them as they emotionally process what they have learned. The premise was inspired by Ms. Furstenworth's class at HBS (Blue Quills School), as well as "Shannen's Dream" to create safe and caring students for Indigenous children. Learn more at <a href="https://steppingstones.ca/better-schools-idea/">https://steppingstones.ca/better-schools-idea/</a>			
PHASES	TEACHER GUIDE	STUDENT GUIDE	
<b>Review</b> (15 min)	Review what you have discussed about Residential Schools. For example, what they were, who went, and whatever details that were age-appropriately shared.	Have the students share what they remember by putting up their hands. This will help you grasp their understanding of it.	
<b>Residential Schools</b> (15 min)	On the board, write "Residential schools" and leave room for a list underneath. Next to it, write "Better Schools" and leave room for a list.	Allow the students to share through putting up their hands. Write down what they share (wording or framing if necessary).	
	Ask the kids: "What about Residential Schools made it a hard place for Indigenous kids?"	If they need prompts ask questions such as "Were the kids able to speak their language?" etc.	
<b>Summarize</b> (15 min)	Summarize what was shared. Discuss how Residential Schools closed down and schools have gotten better. However, not all schools are perfect yet. Share a bit about "Shannen's Dream" which is about a First Nations girl fighting for better schools for kids.	This is a listening portion for the kids. Feel welcome to draw a picture of Shannen and to elaborate on her dream and the foundation that came from it.	
		Find extra teaching resources here: <a href="https://steppingstones.ca/shannen-dream-lesson-plan/">https://steppingstones.ca/shannen-dream-lesson-plan/</a>	

### Activity Sheet

**NAME:**

**What is the name of your school?**

**How does your school make sure Indigenous kids feel welcome?**

**How does your school make sure all kids feel welcome?**

## 6 Resistance

### Discuss Parental & Student Resistance to the IRS

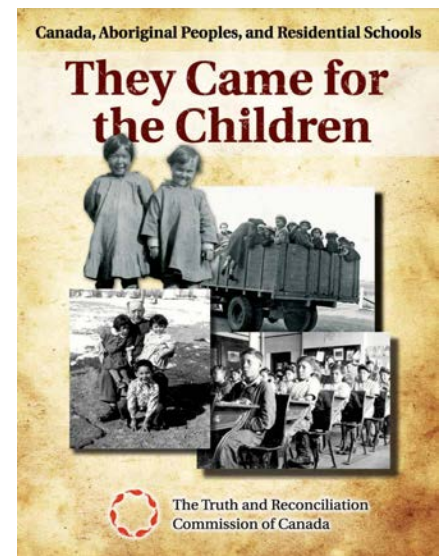
When discussing the history of Residential Schools, it is vital to address the resistance of both parents & students. Pages 49-53 from [They Came for the Children](#) discusses this resistance.

Once students have gone over these pages, consider the following discussion questions. The answers are summarized in the last paragraph on page 53.

- How did students show resistance at the Residential Schools?
- How did parents show resistance to Residential Schools?

#### *Mature Grades*

Additional Reading & Resources on this topic: [Resistance & Residential Schools](#)



### Lillian Elias: A Residential School Survivors Story

Watch this [2 minute video](#) from Historica Canada, where an Inuit Residential School Survivor shares how she kept her language. Consider the question:

- Why was it important for Lillian to keep her language and pass it on, despite the risks?

#### *Grades 7-12*



### Discuss Indigenous Heroes & Role Models

Have students choose one Indigenous Role Model from the following list and share about them in an assignment or with the class.

- Order these art cards/posters with descriptions from [Tipler Teachers](#)
- Read this article [“Top 10 Indigenous Heroes”](#) from CBC News
- Explore the past [Indspire Role Model Award](#) Laureates

#### *All Grades*



# 7 Suggested Lesson Structure

## 1. Recap what the students know

By now, some students have experienced a few years of Orange Shirt Day. Allow the students to share what they know with you/the class as a way to gauge where they are at, and to empower them in their learning. This will help with the “we already learned this” attitude, as you can dive deeper in certain areas or focus on different aspects.

## 2. Focus on the facts

The amount that is shared will depend on the age and the class. Examples of facts to focus on:

- What were Residential Schools and who attended them?
- How were Residential Schools a tool of assimilation?
- Who ran the Residential Schools?
- Which province/territory had the most Residential Schools?
- For how long did Residential Schools run and when did the last one close?
- What Residential Schools were there near here?
- Was it mandatory to attend the schools, and what act enforced this if so?
- How many students attended over the years?
- How many students died at the schools, and how many Survivors are alive today?
- How did we come to know about Residential Schools?
- What is the Truth & Reconciliation Commission? How many Calls to Action are there?

If you have a young class and have reached the amount of information you would like to share, but would still like children to discuss Orange Shirt Day, focus on the “Every Child Matters” messaging and create an activity around that (creating orange shirts out of paper, creating class rules around kindness and respect, etc.).

## 3. Share Indigenous perspectives

Utilizing books, readings, and videos.

## 4. Have the students explore

Utilize the interactive maps, timelines, and/or readings.

## 5. Create space for discussion & debriefing

This could occur as a classroom discussion or as a personal answer through a worksheet. If having a classroom discussion, ensure that it is a safe space for all students. Have a conversation about respect beforehand, do not single out Indigenous students, and ensure questions do not invite harmful discussions.

## 6. Always end with strength-based

Ending with strength-based means highlighting the resilience of Indigenous peoples, and the failure of the Residential School System to assimilate Indigenous peoples.

Discussion examples: Parental & student resistance to Residential Schools, inspiring Survivor stories, Indigenous Heroes of the past and role models of today, the failure of the Residential School System to assimilate Indigenous people, the continued reclamation of culture, language and justice by Indigenous people today, the Calls to Action, the roles of allies.