

# Orange Shirt Day



Indian Residential Schools had a profound effect on the culture and language of Indigenous people across Canada, and forever changed the lives of thousands of Aboriginal children. As the terrible legacy of these schools has become public, the Canadian Government offered an apology to Aboriginal people for the forced cultural assimilation embodied in the residential school system that existed from 1884 to 1996. The government then instituted a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to document much of the suffering on the public record, and to offer recommendations for a new relationship.

Orange Shirt Day was created during the St. Joseph Mission Residential School Commemoration Project in Williams Lake, BC, in May 2013. As part of the project, former student, Phyllis (Jack) Webstad, told the story of her first day at residential school when her shiny new orange shirt, bought by her grandmother, was taken from her as a six-year old girl, which prompted the realization that many survivors have similar stories. As a result, Orange Shirt Day is gaining visibility as an influential movement helping to educate our students and communities on the history of Canadian Residential Schools. Teachers are encouraged to embrace and explore this topic within their classroom leading up to September 30th, and use the colour orange as a way of bringing attention to this issue.

Our work in advancing reconciliation is helping to build a stronger and healthier Canada.

**Please go to:**

**<http://www.angeshirtday.org/>**

**For more information.**