



NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION RESOURCE GUIDE

SEPTEMBER 2024

This month we are preparing for National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (NDTR), a day dedicated to acknowledging the painful legacy of Residential Schools in Canada. Annually on September 30, this day invites all Canadians to learn, reflect, and commit to the ongoing process of Reconciliation.

Originally known as Orange Shirt Day, this movement began in 2013 and was led by Esketemc (Alkali Lake) Chief Fred Robbins, a Residential School survivor. It was inspired by the St. Joseph Mission (SJM) Residential School Commemoration Project in Williams Lake, BC, where survivors came together to honour their healing journeys. The day is symbolized by the story of Phyllis (Jack) Webstad, who, at six years old, had her new orange shirt purchased by her grandmother and taken from her on her first day at the SJM Residential School. This experience highlights the deep emotional scars left by these institutions and serves as a powerful reminder of the need for Reconciliation.

NDTR is also a response to Call to Action #80 from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, it urges us to recognize this day as a time to honour those impacted by Residential Schools and to deepen our understanding of the colonial project:

“We call upon the federal government, in collaboration with Aboriginal peoples, to establish, as a statutory holiday, a National Day for Truth and Reconciliation to honour Survivors, their families, and communities, and ensure that public commemoration of the history and legacy of residential schools remains a vital component of the reconciliation process.”

At Rise Consulting, we stand in solidarity with Indigenous Peoples and communities, using this day to listen, learn, and take meaningful action. Reconciliation is not just for today but a continuous journey that demands our daily commitment. Let September 30 be a reminder that our work toward Truth and Reconciliation is ongoing, as we strive to build a future rooted in respect, understanding, and justice for all.

What Can We Do?

Listen and Learn

Understanding the truth about residential schools is the first step toward healing and Reconciliation. Listening to survivors validates their experiences and corrects ongoing misinformation in our education systems. This National Truth and Reconciliation Week, let’s work toward Reconciliation together.

- The Gord Downie & Chanie Wenjack Fund is leading a Truth and Reconciliation Week series:
 - Lil’wat Teachings with Talon Pascal – Part 1, September 23, 2:00 pm - 6:00 pm ET
 - Lil’wat Teachings with Talon Pascal – Part 2, September 24, 2:00 pm - 6:00 pm ET
 - Lil’wat Teachings with Talon Pascal – Part 3, September 25, 2:00 pm - 6:00 pm ET
 - Sports and Reconciliation with Dallas Soonias, September 26, 2:00 pm - 6:00 pm ET
- The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation is hosting a free Lunch and Learn webinar series, September 23 – 27.



- Listen to:
 - Nuxalk Radio, a radio program based in Q'umk'uts' in Bella Coola, released Nuximta
 - Woven Spirit: Threads of Wisdom, a new podcast series by the Indian Residential School Survivors Society (IRSS) launching on September 30
- The Alberta Chambers of Commerce is hosting a virtual NDTR event for the business community on September 27, 10 am MT.
- Read 781: A Story of Sports and Survival in Canadian Residential School
- Get your news from these platforms and get updated on current ReconciliAction:
 - IndigiNews
 - Indigenous Watchdog
 - CBC | Indigenous

Reflect

Spend time reflecting to understand your motivations and interests. Ask yourself:

- Does my workplace honour and support NDTR? How can I be an ally and honour NDTR next year?
- Do I appreciate and acknowledge whose land I am on, and the Indigenous Peoples in my life today?
- How do I contribute to or challenge systemic inequalities that affect Indigenous communities, both in my personal life and within larger societal structures?
- Do I engage with Indigenous events, artists, or businesses? How can I?
- How can I use my privilege, platform, or resources to support indigenous-led initiatives, promote cultural preservation and advocate for policy changes that benefit Indigenous communities?

Act

In April, Rise was in a discussion, organized by the YAWC, with 17 communities that identified the following action items they wish to see reflected for NDTR events; Increased Support for Indian Residential School (IRS) Survivors, Class Action Lawsuit, Wide-spread Celebrations, Empowering IRS Survivors and Ongoing Education/Learning.

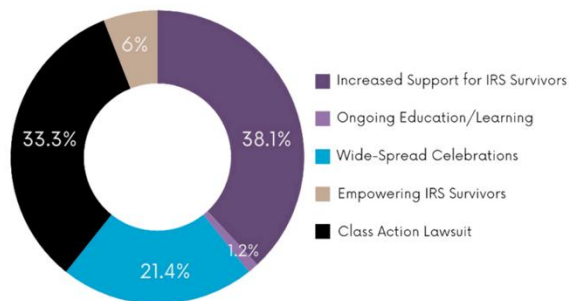


Figure 1. NDTR Commemoration Recommendations identified by participants during engagement event. Organized by theme and frequency (percentage) based on dotmocracy activity.

Rise is committed to supporting communities and aligning with the end of the month is our sponsorship and participation at the Honouring Traditions and Reconciliation Powwow and Artisan Expo in Lethbridge, a time for widespread celebration and empowering Indian Residential School survivors. Our clients are committing to



increasing support for survivors, encouraging cultural engagement and bringing the youth into ongoing education and celebration of their culture. For example, one client is enhancing youth participation by involving six Indigenous young people in key roles at an international conference, where they crafted the opening welcome and ensured Indigenous community representation, thus integrating youth voices into decision-making processes. Another client is enhancing survivor support by offering specialized grief and trauma counselling for women, particularly in Northern communities, with services provided by certified First Nations counsellors. This approach integrates traditional healing practices like connecting with land and Elders, alongside conventional mental health support, to help survivors of sexual violence navigate their healing journey. Other clients are fostering cultural celebration and learning by gifting hides and fur from hunting to Nations, enabling children to learn traditional mitten-making. This initiative supports cultural engagement and well-being by encouraging participation in traditional practices and connecting younger generations with their heritage. We hope these stories inspire you to listen to community and create and participate in relationships in the right way to celebrate and support your Indigenous peers, colleagues, friends and family. Other actions you can take include:

- Wearing your Orange Shirt and participating at community events
- Joining an Orange Shirt Day Run/Walk, like the 4th Annual Orange Shirt Day Run/Walk Every Child Matters RunConciliAction – Edmonton and Saskatoon: September 30, 2024 12:00 PM MDT
- Attending events such as:
 - Heritage Park will honour Truth and Reconciliation on September 29, Calgary, AB Treaty 7 Territory.
 - Athabasca Tribal Council (ATC) Cultural Festival, September 12 to 15, 2024, at Snye Point Park, AB Treaty 8 Territory.
 - Second Annual Honouring Traditions and Reconciliation Pow Wow + Artisan Expo at the Agri-Food Hub and Trade Centre in Lethbridge, AB, on Blackfoot Confederacy lands.
 - NDTR: Reclaiming Ceremony Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society, September 30, virtual and in-person Edmonton, AB Treaty 8 Territory.
 - Trout Lake Community Centre, Vancouver, BC is hosting a free film screening of “We Were Children”
 - Echoes of Reconciliation Music & Arts Festival, September 20 at the Burlington Music Centre, Burlington, ON
 - ReconciliAction Market, September 22, St. Lawrence Market in Downtown Toronto
 - More events and actions at First Nations Child and Family Caring Society
- Plan for next year:
 - Start thinking about entering the 2025 Orange Shirt Day Design Contest (open to K-12 students across Turtle Island likely starting January 31, 2025)
 - Consider these speakers for your next NDTR event
 - Look at the TRC Calls to Action for further actions you can take.

Purchase

Support Indigenous-led or Indigenous-owned businesses, especially those where the proceeds are given directly to the Orange Shirt Society or another Indigenous charity or non-profit in your community. Here are a few organizations that we’ve found:



- Orange T-Shirts and Indigenous-owned Clothing and Accessories:
- Official Orange Shirt Day 2024 Merchandise
- Orange Shirt Day Pin
- The Cedar Basket
- Native Arts Society
- Leading Edge Branded Apparel and Promotional Products
- Moonstone Creation
- Legacy of Hope Foundation
- Decolonial Clothing
- Mini Tipi
- Kokom Scrunchies
- Tópa
- Birch Hill Studio
- Miywâsin Beading
- Sapling & Flint

Wellness:

- Omisimâw Wellness
- Sequoia® Proudly Indigenous
- Land of Daughters
- Indigenous Box
- Up the Hill at Loakin Botanicals

Bookstores and Print:

- Massy Books
- Iron Dog Books
- Strong Nations
- Indigenous Marketing Solutions

If you need additional support this month, you can access Hope for Wellness Online Chat Counselling Services at: www.hopeforwellness.ca or the Indian Residential School Survivors and Family crisis phone line at: 1-800-721-0066.