

# WHY WE WEAR ORANGE

## SEPTEMBER 30

The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

Public commemoration of the painful history and ongoing impacts of Residential Schools to Indigenous Peoples and a vital day to the reconciliation process



(Government of Canada, 2021, September 29).

Occurs on September 30th, as it was the time of year children were taken from their homes to Residential Schools (Orange Shirt Day, n.d.).



## ORANGE SHIRT DAY

Why we Wear Orange on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

Originates from the story of Phyllis Webstad from the Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation, who had her shirt taken from her on her first day attending the St. Joseph Mission Residential School (Orange Shirt Day, n.d.).



This story created the Orange Shirt Day as a representation of the colonial legacy of Residential Schools and honours Indigenous Children, Survivors, Families, and Communities (Orange Shirt Day, n.d.).



## ANTI-INDIGENOUS RACISM

"anti-Indigenous racism is the ongoing race-based discrimination, negative stereotyping, and injustice experienced by Indigenous Peoples within Canada" (Government of Ontario, 2021).

Anti-Indigenous racism is established and maintained through power imbalances, systemic racism and barriers, inequitable access to resources and violence directed at Indigenous Peoples that stems from historical and ongoing colonial practices in Canada (Government of Ontario, 2021)

"Racism is a social injustice based on falsely constructed, but deeply embedded, assumptions about people and their relative social value; it is often used to justify disparities in the distribution of resources" (MacKinnon, 2004)" (Loppie et al., n.d.).

## WHAT IS A RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL?

- A schooling structure created by the Canadian Government and administered by Christian Churches to forcibly assimilate Indigenous People and Children to European and Christian values that operated for approximately 160 years with the last school closing in 1996 (Handson, 2009).
- Indigenous children were taken from their families to live at the residential schools where they were forbidden to acknowledge their Indigenous heritage, culture, and languages (Handson, 2009).
- The residential schooling system is considered a genocide as it was a purposeful attempt from the government to eradicate Indigenous culture (Handson, 2009).



90-100%

OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN SUFFERED SEVERE PHYSICAL, EMOTIONAL AND SEXUAL ABUSE AT RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

There was a **40-60%** mortality rate in residential schools

**150 000** Indigenous children were taken from their families

Over 130 residential schools were located across Canada

(Reconciliation Canada, n.d.).

# The Unmarked Graves of Indigenous Children

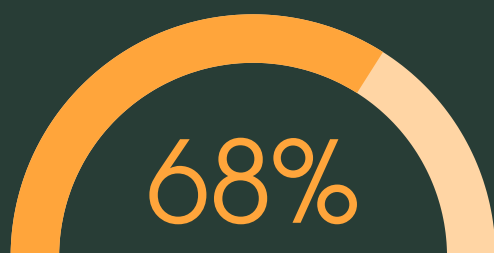
There has been a recent discovery of unmarked graves of Indigenous children across various residential school sites in Canada

Currently, **1300+** unmarked graves have been discovered through ground-penetrating radar (Idle No More, 2021).



## OF CANADIANS ARE VERY FAMILIAR WITH RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

Despite 72 percent of Canadians being saddened by the news of the mass grave, Only 10 percent of Canadians are VERY familiar with the history of the residential school system (Assembly of First Nations, 2021).



## OF CANADIANS SAY THEY WERE UNAWARE OR SHOCKED OF ABUSE AT RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS

68 percent of Canadians polled said they were either unaware of the severity of abuses at residential schools or completely shocked by it (Assembly of First Nations, 2021).

## RECONCILIATION

Establishing and maintaining mutually respectful relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples in Canada (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015).



“there has to be awareness of the past, acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted, atonement for the causes, and action to change behaviour.” (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015, p.6).

## Indigenous Activism and Support



### Idle No More:

- "Idle No More calls on all people to join in a peaceful revolution which honours and fulfills Indigenous sovereignty and which protects the land, the water, and the sky." (Idle No More, 2021).



### Hope for Wellness Line:

- 1-855-242-3310
- 24/7 Helpline for counselling and crisis intervention for immediate help to Indigenous Individuals

Resource Created by: Angel Monks

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