



# Orange Shirt Day

## *Honouring Residential School Survivors on September 30<sup>th</sup>*

As a young girl, Phyllis Jack Webstad was gifted a new orange shirt by her grandmother before she was taken to a B.C. residential school. On her first day of classes, the shirt was confiscated and destroyed by a teacher.

Phyllis' story has come to symbolize the trauma and abuse suffered by thousands of Survivors of the church-run government mandated residential schools.

Generations of Survivors have similar stories of being torn from family, community, language and culture. Inspired by Phyllis' story, people now wear Orange Shirts annually on September 30th.

It is the time of year when Indigenous children were taken from their homes to residential schools. Today, it is a time for us all to set the stage for the coming school year to address anti-Indigenous racism and the ongoing legacy of colonialism in B.C. and across Canada.

Wearing an orange shirt is our way to honour those who survived residential schools and remember those that didn't. It's an opportunity to listen, keep discussions on all aspects of residential schools open, learn and understand.

I hope you will join CUPE members across Canada in wearing an orange shirt on September 30<sup>th</sup> and take some time to reflect on responsibilities to fostering reconciliation in our schools, our communities and in our union.

In solidarity and safety,

Warren Williams  
President, K-12 Presidents Council, Local 9876



### Orange Shirt Day Resources

Learn more about Orange Shirt Day, listings for events in your area, and more about Phyllis Jack Webstad's story at [orangeshirtday.org](http://orangeshirtday.org).

CUPE's [Walking the Talk: a practical guide to reconciliation for CUPE locals](#) is available online at [cupe.ca](http://cupe.ca).

This guide provides CUPE locals & members with key resources to better acknowledge & include Indigenous members in our union, and to help locals and members take concrete action towards reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

The [National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#) ([nctr.ca](http://nctr.ca)) is the permanent home for all materials gathered by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It has an extensive collection of education resources on the legacy of residential schools. The NCTR is hosting [Every Child Matters](#), an online event for youth grades 5-12 on September 30<sup>th</sup>.