



MEDIA ADVISORY

REMEMBERING THE CHILDREN: APTN AND NCTR HOST NATIONAL LIVE EVENT FROM OTTAWA

Led by residential school survivors and their families, thousands of people are expected to attend a commemorative gathering on National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

TREATY 1 TERRITORY, WINNIPEG, Man., Sept. 1, 2022 — In honour of the second annual National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (NDTR), APTN and the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) have come together to produce a one-hour commemorative gathering at LeBreton Flats Park in Ottawa on September 30.

The gathering will be broadcast live across all APTN channels and a wide network of other Canadian broadcasters from coast to coast to coast. The commemoration, entitled *Remembering the Children*, received funding from Heritage Canada and will serve as an opportunity for Indigenous Peoples to grieve, heal and educate non-Indigenous Canadians on the tragic legacy that residential schools have left behind.

EVENT DETAILS

The event will begin with the arrival of thousands of attendees who will be joining in from the “Remember Me: A National Day of Remembrance” spirit walk from Parliament Hill. The group will be led by children and residential school Survivors. They will make their way to the stage at LeBreton Flats Park, in front of which they will place Indigenous children’s footwear. The shoes will act as a symbol of remembrance and a visual representation of all the children who never made it home. The live broadcast of this special gathering will take place from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. ET.

An Algonquin drum group will play as Survivors and guests are seated. In tandem, a procession will arrive onstage to place the eagle staff and the [NCTR’s Bentwood Box](#). The NCTR’s Bentwood Box contains symbolic items from across the country and serves as a tribute to residential school survivors and their experiences. On stage, survivors will speak about their experiences and about the importance of reconciliation.

“By gathering to witness stories directly from survivors, APTN will guide the nation in reflecting about the ongoing impact that residential, day and boarding schools have had, not only on Indigenous Peoples, but also on people in Canada as a whole,” said APTN CEO Monika Ille. “National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is a moment for us to focus on remembrance and reconciliation and to share truth with people across the country.”

The general public is invited to attend the gathering at 1 p.m. ET and participants are encouraged to bring a pair of shoes to honour missing Indigenous children. After the event, the footwear will be donated to charity.

The commemoration will include a mixture of personal remembrances, artistic reflections and calls to unlearn and relearn the truth about residential, day and boarding schools. The event hosts are Charles Bender and Madeleine Allakariallak, who will be presenting in English, French and Inuktitut.

“Indigenous Peoples cannot walk the path of reconciliation alone; each person in Canada must play a part,” says Stephanie Scott, executive director of the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation. “This broadcast is an opportunity to take a meaningful step towards reconciliation by hearing the truth and pausing to reflect on what reconciliation really means for us as individuals, as institutions, and as communities.”

“The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is a moment to listen thoughtfully and sincerely to the Survivors as they share their truths so we may build a future for generations to come,” says Eugene Arcand, residential school Survivor.

“Each of us has a responsibility to learn more about the enduring effects of residential schools in Canada,” says Minister of Canadian Heritage Pablo Rodriguez, “I encourage everyone to reflect on the role each of us has in the healing process. This commemorative gathering and national broadcast on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation provides us with an opportunity to honour Survivors, their families and their communities, and to continue our journey on the path of reconciliation.”

For those who are unable to watch or participate on September 30, the broadcast will be available for streaming on [APTN lumi](#) on October 2. It will remain available on the platform until October 10, 2022.

In addition, APTN will broadcast 35 hours of special programming to honour residential, day and boarding school survivors and their families. This special programming, which will feature a range of educational shows and documentaries, will begin at 7 p.m. on September 29 and will air across all APTN channels.

Visit www.apntv.ca/ndtr for specific show times and more information.

BACKGROUND DETAILS

WHAT IS NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION?

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is an opportunity to [“recognize and commemorate the legacy of residential schools.”](#) It was originally proposed in 2015 by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) as part of their 94 Calls to Action. In Call to Action #80, the TRC called upon the federal government, in collaboration with Indigenous Peoples, to establish a statutory holiday [“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.”](#)

THE EVOLUTION OF ORANGE SHIRT DAY

Since 2013, September 30 has been observed as Orange Shirt Day, a movement to recognize the colonial legacy of residential schools and commit to the ongoing process of reconciliation. Orange Shirt Day recalls the experience of residential school survivor Phyllis Webstad, who at age six was stripped of her brand-new orange shirt on her first day attending the St. Joseph Mission Residential School near Williams Lake, B.C.

WHY SEPTEMBER 30?

The date was chosen because it is the time of year in which children were taken from their homes and forced to go to residential schools. The timing also presents an opportunity to set the stage for anti-racism and anti-bullying policies for the upcoming school year. It encourages Indigenous Peoples, local governments, schools and communities to come together and create a more equitable world for future generations.

WHAT ARE RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS?

Residential schools were government-sponsored Christian schools that were established to assimilate Indigenous children into Euro-Canadian culture. Although the first residential facilities were established in the early 1600s, the term usually refers to schools established after 1880, as this is when they began to receive funding from the federal government. Residential schools permanently disrupted lives and communities, creating intergenerational traumas that continue to impact Indigenous Peoples today. The last residential school closed in 1996.

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About APTN

[APTN](#) launched in 1999 as the first national Indigenous broadcaster in the world. Since then, the network has become a global leader in programming that celebrates the rich diversity of Indigenous Peoples across Turtle Island and beyond. A respected non-profit and charitable broadcaster, APTN shares authentic stories in English, French and a variety of Indigenous languages with over 10 million Canadian subscribers. APTN proudly features over 80% Canadian content and inspires audiences via multiple platforms, including its Indigenous-focused streaming service, [APTN lumi](#).

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