

President's Blog: Marking the First National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

This Thursday, September 30, will mark the first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, a federal statutory holiday to commemorate the tragic legacy of residential schools in our country. The day coincides with Orange Shirt Day, which started in 2013, to honour Indigenous children forced to leave their families to attend residential schools. On this day, people wear orange shirts in honour of Phyllis Webstad, whose treasured new orange shirt was taken from her when she was brought to a residential school.

We have an individual and collective responsibility to take part in reconciliation, and this day provides us with numerous opportunities to participate, learn and become educated. We must acknowledge the past and recognize the ongoing harms of colonization, institutionalized racism, discrimination and violence, and come together to build a just and equitable society.

While some provinces will not be observing the holiday, as federal workers, postal workers across the country will have the day off work. It's up to all of us to make the most out of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. I encourage all CUPW members to take actionable steps towards reconciliation

Here are some of the ways you can mark the day:

- Participate in an event. While public observances may be scaled down due to the ongoing pandemic, virtual events are happening across the country. Join one in your community or watch and listen to all day special programming on CBC.
- Read the Truth and Reconciliation Report and learn about the [94 Calls to Action](#) found in the report.
- Educate yourself. The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation has numerous resources which you can access at <https://nctr.ca/education/>.
- Wear Orange. Better yet, purchase an orange shirt through an Indigenous-owned organization whose proceeds contribute to the cause.
- Learn how to properly acknowledge the land you live on
- Support Indigenous businesses, events and artists.

Most of all, remember that reconciliation takes more than one day. It is our duty to continue the work of dismantling the legacy of colonialism and repair our relationship with Indigenous Peoples.

In Solidarity,

Jan Simpson