



**A Teachers Resource for  
Every Child Matters: Reconciliation Through Education  
September 2020**

**Thank you for reading this guide!**

*Congratulations to you, your class and your school for taking part in Orange Shirt Day! Orange Shirt Day is an important opportunity to come together to honour residential school Survivors, learn more about Truth and Reconciliation, and to honour those that did not return home from residential schools.*

We acknowledge the incredible work of Phyllis Webstad and countless other Residential School Survivors in making this day possible.

Teachers are a most precious gift to society.

We thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all that you do!!

**About the program – *Every Child Matters: Reconciliation through Education***

The program is presented in two main acts; each act is 45 minutes.

- The **first act** focuses primarily on truths about residential schools. Survivors, Elders and others will share information on the history and impact of residential schools.
- The **second act** focuses primarily on reconciliation. Several well-known speakers speak to the importance of using one's voice while also thinking critically about issues of racism and other systemic issues in Canada.
- This program reflects the important concept that truth must come *before* reconciliation.
- Programming has been carefully selected to ensure it is age appropriate, inspiring and uplifting while still dealing with difficult subject matters.



Funded by:



## **Watching the program:**

- The program will primarily be accessed by a web stream for educators. This link will be available at [education.nctr.ca](http://education.nctr.ca)
- A link will also be provided to you in advance as a registered teacher to allow advanced viewing of the program.
- You have agency to start and stop the program if you decide that is needed.
- The NCTR's main broadcast will commence at 11am CST but you are welcome to start the program at a time that makes sense for your class and students.

## **Sensitive subject matter**

The nature of the residential school tragedy is such that difficult truths and subjects emerge throughout the program.

Educators are advised that mentions of abuse are present in the program.

## **Specifically**

- Physical, emotional, and spiritual and sexual abuse is referenced throughout the program.
- One segment, late in the program, contains a very brief excerpt from a Survivor statement which mentions his pants being pulled down but does NOT contain further discussion of what occurred.
- Some speakers raise issues related to conduct of staff and government officials. There are some references to "priests and nuns" in the program.
- The honouring of all children that never returned home from the schools near the end of the first act may be quite emotional for some.
- Discussions of racism are also present. In certain instances, Indigenous speakers refer to "Indians" when describing negative depictions of Indigenous people. Some discussion of the presumed racial superiority of non-Indigenous peoples also occurs.

## How to prepare students

We encourage you to:

- Have discussions with your students before tuning into the program on September 30<sup>th</sup>.
- Provide students with advanced notice that there may be some emotional elements to the program
- Inform your students that participation is *voluntary*. The program will be available online; students should not be forced into tackling emotions they are not yet ready or able to confront.

## If students are watching from home

- Students watching the program from home should be encouraged to watch the program with a friend or trusted relative, so they have someone available to support them if they have questions or concerns about the content.
- Encouraging kids to reach out to one another during the program can be helpful in ensuring students feel supported and not alone while viewing the program.

## Emotional responses in students

- Talking through the emotions possibly raised by the program is important.
- Allowing space for those emotions to occur is important.
- Segments may have different impacts depending on the past and lived realities of your students.
- Content may affect Indigenous students differently than non-Indigenous students.
- Sadly, there is abuse and trauma world-wide. Some children may suffer abuse in their household presently.
- Helping kids know that it is important to talk about their feelings, and that there are *safe* places to talk about those emotions is important.
- Offering youth the opportunity to debrief and talk about what they saw on the day of the program is an important time for reflection and processing.

## Debriefing with students

- Activities such as journaling and various forms artistic expression are effective tools to help process emotions.
- For other students, physical activity such as sports or dance may be the best way to process emotions raised.
- Sharing circles can be an important way to share thoughts and emotions after watching a program such as *Every Child Matters*. Allowing each student to a chance to speak, or in turn not to speak, gives opportunity for everyone to hear how they are doing and what emerged for them. Creating an atmosphere of respectful dialogue and listening where everyone's voice matters can be an important gift.

## If they need it, supports for students

- Contact information for the National Residential Schools Crisis line and the national Kids Help line will be shown at multiple times through the program. These programs are open and available to anyone seeking support.
- The National Residential Schools Crisis line can be reached at 1-866-925-4419 and the Kids Help Line can be reached by texting CONNECT to 68 68 68

Throughout the program, students will be encouraged to speak with a trusted friend, family member, Elder or teacher. Students should be reminded of these supports prior to heading home for the day.