

September 30, 2023



The RFABC and our members respectfully acknowledge the traditional and unceded territories in BC on which we live, work and play. Over the weekend many will have participated in activities or events to honour the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, also known as Orange Shirt Day.

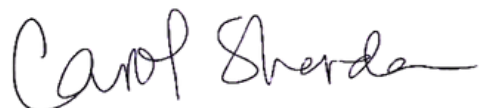
Phyllis Webstad (nee Jack) is Northern Secwepemc (Shuswap) from the Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation (Canoe Creek Indian Band). In 2018 Phyllis Webstad launched her children's book called *The Orange Shirt Story* to share her story in her own words. The Orange shirt story tells the story of young Phyllis having her orange shirt taken away on her first day of residential school and never to see it again. A simple orange shirt has become a conversation starter for all aspects of residential school across Canada and beyond. Phyllis has inspired thousands and thousands of people to honour residential school survivors and their families and share the call on September 30th of each year that "EVERY CHILD MATTERS."

The 2023 hockey season also marks the 10th anniversary of the [Orange Jersey Project](#). The idea behind the Orange Jersey Project was to give youth hockey players across Canada an orange jersey to wear at practice, so players would ask the question "Coach, why are we wearing orange jerseys?" This simple question has the power to create awareness of the intergenerational impacts of Indian Residential Schools and strengthen the path toward truth and reconciliation with Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Peoples.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) was created through a legal settlement between Residential Schools Survivors, the Assembly of First Nations, Inuit representatives and the parties responsible for creation and operation of the schools: the federal government and the church bodies. The TRC's mandate was to inform all Canadians about what happened in residential schools. The TRC documented the truth of Survivors, their families, communities and anyone personally affected by the residential school experience. Please take the time to read the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission 94 Calls to Action](#). The RFABC believes that our members, through the safe and efficient operation of recreation facilities across BC, can contribute to the decolonizing journey we all share together by doing our part to answer the calls to action (#87, #88, #89, #90 and #91) that are specific to Sport and Reconciliation.

On behalf of the RFABC staff and Board of Directors, I encourage all members to honour the lives and experiences of Survivors and educate themselves to gain a deeper understanding of the impacts of the Residential School System on the Indigenous peoples in Canada. In the words of the Webstad family, "with this awareness comes learning and unlearning, understanding, acceptance, and change." Together we will work to create a safe space for conversation and learning on the path toward truth and reconciliation.

Sincerely,




RFABC President, Carol Sheridan

References & Resources

- [Orange Jersey Project](#)
- [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada](#)
- [The Outdoor Learning Store: Indigenous Resources](#)
- [IndigiNews](#)
- [Indigenous Sport, Physical Activity & Recreation Council](#)



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