

Heart Gardens & How we Honour Survivors

Content Warning

The Truth and Reconciliation Challenge features content that is sensitive and may be distressing to some. Please take care.

If you find yourself experiencing distress, please reach out for support.

- AHS Mental Health Helpline 1-877-303-2642
- Provincial Line - 811
- Crisis Text Line – Text Connect to 741741
- National Indian Residential School Crisis Line – 1-866-925-4419
- Hope for Wellness Helpline is available 24/7 to all Indigenous People across Canada. Chat online or call 1-855-242-3310.

How can we honour Residential School Survivors and their families?

- Learn and share the true history and harmful legacy of the residential school system in a respectful way.
- Recognize and share the positive contributions from Indigenous Peoples within Canada and Wood Buffalo.
- Participate in community events that support truth and reconciliation, such as the Community Walk held on Sept. 30 in honour of National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.
- Continue to learn more and work to develop your own personal commitment to reconciliation.

An example of an event honouring survivors and their families is the Survivors' Dinner, which will be held on Thursday, Sept. 25.

Moving towards Reconciliation with Heart Gardens



TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION LEARNING EXPERIENCE



The Truth and Reconciliation Champions will be planting the Heart Garden in front of Jubilee Building. The hearts will be collected from departments this week.

Heart Gardens honour residential school survivors and their families, as well as the legacy of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

Each heart represents the memory of a child lost to the residential school system, and the act of planting represents that individual's commitment to finding their place in reconciliation.

How to Create Your Heart Garden

Pre-cut hearts and materials will be available in staff lunchrooms, or from your supervisor and TRC Champion upon request. Please bring these home, to be completed by family and friends, and bring them back to work by Friday. The champions will gather the hearts from participants and bring them to the heart garden planting ceremony.

After writing your message and decorating the heart, attach the heart to the skewer using tape. Be sure to **securely** tape the heart to the skewer so the heart does not get damaged or lost.

The skewer will be used as a garden stake to allow the heart to be planted.

For a step-by-step guide please read [Honouring Memories and Planting Dreams](#).

TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION LEARNING EXPERIENCE



Heart Garden Planting Ceremony

A Heart Garden Planting ceremony will take place at the canoe flower bed in front of Jubilee **on Monday, Sept. 29 at 10 a.m.**

- Opening prayer, welcome, remarks from Elder
- Sharing circle, reading messages written on collected hearts.

Additional Resources

Video – Honouring residential school survivors with Heart Gardens
[IRR Advisor Allison Flett speaks to the importance of honouring residential school survivors](#), and how to participate in a Heart Garden (2 minutes).

Honouring Survivors and Planting Dreams
[Step-by-step guide to participating in a Heart Garden](#)

Reflection Questions

For the presenter: If you wish to share any thoughts or ideas in response to the reflection questions, please write them down on this sheet and interoffice mail it to Indigenous & Rural Relations, 6th floor, Jubilee Building.



TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION LEARNING EXPERIENCE



After these past four weeks, do you think you better understand the importance of participating in the Community Walk for National Day of Truth and Reconciliation on Sept. 30?

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