

Sep. 30, 2022

Province observes National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

Today is National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, also known as [Orange Shirt Day](#).

Due to Hurricane Fiona and ongoing recovery efforts, public events recognizing the importance of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation have been cancelled.

The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is a day to reflect on the legacy of the residential school system and its impacts on Indigenous people and communities across the Island and Canada.

“As the birthplace of Confederation, it is significant that Prince Edward Island, also known as Epekwitk, acted swiftly to formally recognize September 30 as the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, which coincides with Orange Shirt Day. This day is a direct outcome of decades of work by survivors, as well as families and communities, who fought tirelessly for recognition, healing and justice,” said Senator Brian Francis.

“On this National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, Islanders and all Canadians take pause to honour, remember and mourn the lives lost and impacted by the Indian Residential School System, Indian Day School System and other tactics of assimilation and violence imposed by the state on Indigenous peoples. We have a collective responsibility today and every day to not just confront these hard truths about our past and present but to take concrete actions that will result in a better and brighter future for all Indigenous peoples,” added Senator Francis.

“September 30 is a sombre day of commemoration and reflection. It is important that today is a statutory holiday here in Epekwitk, giving Islanders opportunity to take time and contemplate in respect of Epekwitnewaq Mi'kmaq and all Indigenous people across the country who still suffer from the legacy of residential schools,” said Chief Darlene Bernard of Lennox Island First Nation. “Acknowledging and reflecting on the truth of our past and present realities is necessary to proceed with reconciliation and working towards a brighter future. Education is key to understanding the real truths that have been historically oppressed, and with these truths, we can come together in the spirit of healing and moving towards a better tomorrow.”

“I hope all Islanders and Canadians take time today and throughout the year to think about the traumatic generational impacts of residential schools and how we can heal and move forward together,” said Chief Junior Gould of Abegweit First Nation. “While we have broken the silence to bring the truth to light, there is still much work to do here in our home of Epekwitk, and across Canada.”

The flags will be lowered at the provincial administration building to honour the lives of Indigenous peoples impacted by the residential school system.

“It is important that all Islanders take the time to learn about the history and legacy of the residential schools,” said Premier Dennis King. “Indigenous peoples are still affected by intergenerational trauma from residential schools. The Province is advancing reconciliation and looks forward to continuing its work with the PEI Indigenous communities on this important and defining work.”

In 2021, Premier King introduced an amendment to the Employment Standards Act to officially recognize September 30 as a provincial statutory holiday for all Islanders, which passed on November 17 with the support of Hon. Peter Bevan-Baker, Leader of the Official Opposition, and the Hon. Sonny Gallant, Leader of the Third Party.

Learn more about the [National Day for Truth and Reconciliation](#).

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