



**YUKON
REGION**

September 28, 2018

STATEMENT

For immediate release

STATEMENT FROM THE REGIONAL CHIEF ON ORANGE SHIRT DAY

Whitehorse, Yukon – September 30 is recognized as Orange Shirt Day. On this day, people across the country are encouraged to wear orange to bring awareness to the history and legacy of residential schools. As Orange Shirt Day falls on a Sunday this year, many are marking the day this Friday, September 28. Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Yukon Regional Chief Kluane Adamek issued the following statement today on Orange Shirt Day:

"As many of us wear orange today at our schools and workplaces, we remember the thousands of First Nations children who were taken from their homes, families and communities to attend schools focused on erasing their cultural identities. Children were shamed into believing they were inferior because of the colour of their skin. Many experienced unspeakable horrors and all forms of abuse at these institutions.

"Today, I also reflect on my family, especially my grandmother who attended residential school. The resiliency shown by her and our residential school survivors is a testament of our people's strength.

"Orange Shirt Day was inspired by Phyllis Webstad from the Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation. Phyllis' grandmother bought her a bright, orange shirt for her first day at mission school. When the new students arrived at the school they were stripped of all their clothes and Phyllis' new shirt was taken from her. She and her peers were left in tears with no one to comfort them.

"Through the sharing of her story, Phyllis has inspired people to learn more about the history of residential schools and, more importantly, to ensure our kids never experience feeling like they are inferior or that their lives don't matter.

"Though our communities continue to work through the painful legacy of residential schools, we see promise in our future. Our young people are eager to revitalize their languages and cultures. They want to know who they are.

"Let's commit to supporting a future where our young people always feel supported in practicing and learning their cultures, where every child attending school knows they matter, and where each student feels safe and cared for."

For more information on Orange Shirt Day, please visit <http://www.angeshirtday.org/>. Yukon Orange Shirt Day information can be found on Facebook here: <https://www.facebook.com/events/244894199690914/>.

– 30 –

Media Inquiries

Arturo Calvo, Communications & Policy Analyst
AFN Yukon Region

communications@afnyukon.ca | (867) 393-9200 ext. 9227