

HONOURING MEMORIES



HOW TO CREATE A HEART GARDEN

Honouring Memories, Planting Dreams invites individuals and organizations to join in reconciliation by planting heart gardens in their communities. 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.

Hearts can be made by anyone of all ages and backgrounds. What's important is to be creative, and speak from the heart. Before getting your hands dirty, take the opportunity to **learn together** with your students or community group about the history of residential schools and their ongoing impacts. The following websites offer good starting points:

- nctr.ca
- <http://projectofheart.ca/resources/>
- <https://fncaringsociety.com/shannens-dream-school-resources>

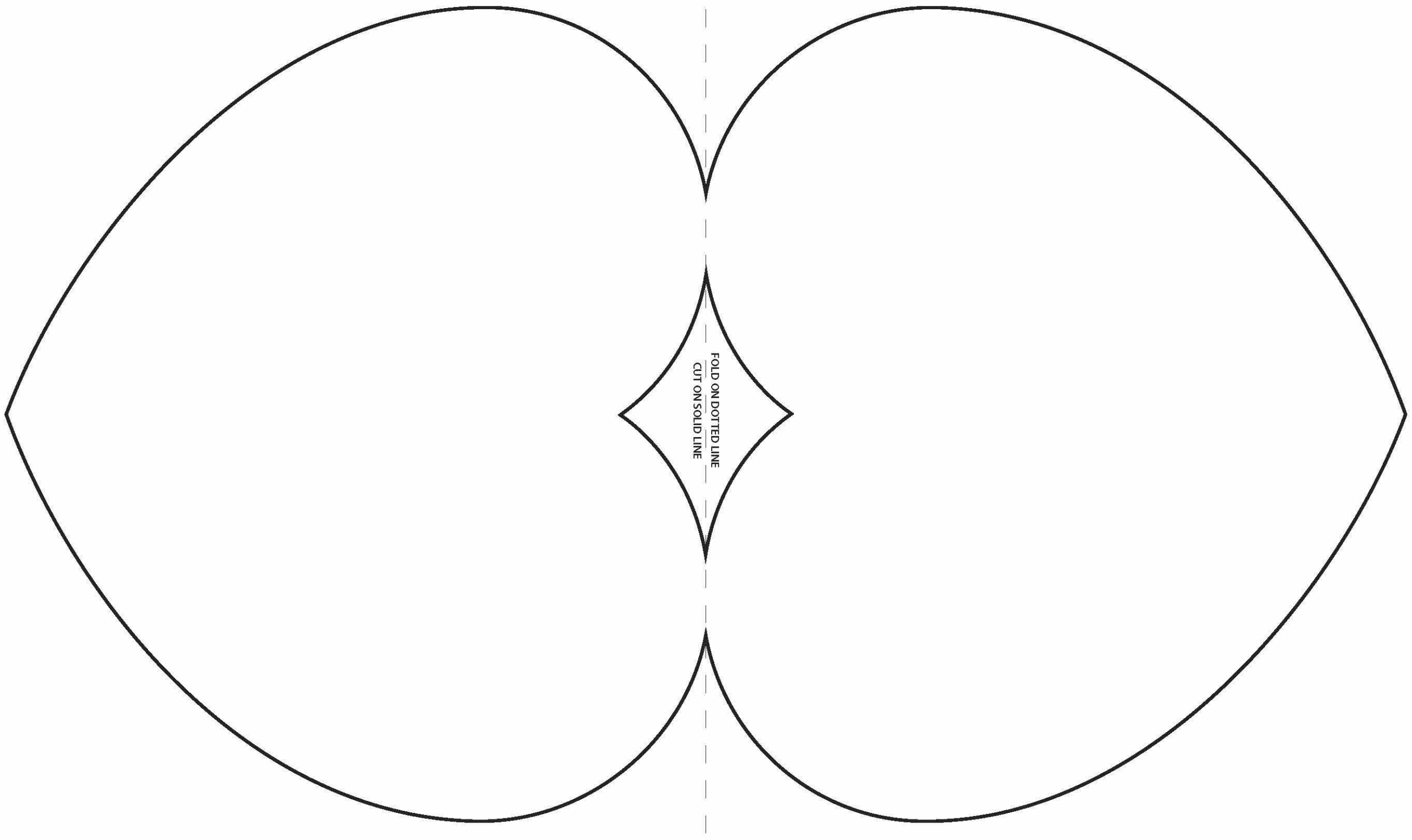
In addition to planting hearts in a garden, you may want to consult with a local Elder if you would like to plant sacred medicines in the garden to **create a living memorial** for residential school students and your community's shared commitment to reconciliation. Examples of sacred medicines include: tobacco, sage, cedar, and sweetgrass. If you decide to plant sacred medicines, be sure to ask the Elder(s) how to care for the plants so that they can grow up to be healthy and proud over the years.

The inaugural Honouring Memories, Planting Dreams event took place at Rideau Hall as part of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's closing ceremonies on June 3, 2015. In support of the main event, individuals and organizations across Canada planted more than 6,000 hearts in over 80 heart gardens.

STEPS TO CREATING YOUR HEART GARDEN

A template is included on the following page. It should be printed on legal-size paper (8.5"x14") to make sure that the hearts are large enough to fold over to glue on planting sticks after they are decorated.

1. Produce one blank heart for each participant. *Consider the materials you wish to use depending on the plan for your garden. Will you use biodegradable materials and let the heart decompose into the garden; will you laminate and take the hearts out of the ground once the plants start to grow; will you use something that will be permanent?*
2. After learning about the history and legacy of Indian residential schools, ask each participant to decorate a heart to honour the life of a child who attended or was lost to residential schools. Hearts can be decorated with any combination of images, colours, words, and so on, that the individual feels would be appropriate to honour a child who attended the IRS system. *Remind the participants that each heart will be unique just as each child who attended IRS was unique and precious.*
3. Cut out the heart and carefully leave it joined at the top so that it can be folded along the line.
4. Fold the heart at the top so that it will become two-sided, with decorations on both sides.
5. The stick should be able to be inserted in to the ground deep enough that it will hold up the heart in the Heart Garden and not be easily knocked over. Glue the stick in to one side of the heart, and fold the other over to seal both sides together and secure the heart to the stick (this will vary depending on the materials that you choose).
6. If you are planting a permanent heart garden, put seeds at the bottom of each stick and create a plan to make sure the plants are cared for as they grow.
7. Set a date during the week of May 31- June 5 (the anniversary week of the TRC closing ceremonies) to plant your heart garden to honour children lost to the residential school system. You will have to determine the location and program for your own ceremony.
8. Please register your ceremony at honouringdreamsplantingmemories.ca so that we can acknowledge your school or group.



FOLD ON DOTTED LINE
CUT ON SOLID LINE