

newsletter

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Honouring Memories, Planting Dreams

Each May and June, people of all ages are encouraged to participate in Honouring Memories, Planting Dreams, an opportunity to plant heart gardens in memory of the children lost to the residential school system, honour residential school survivors and their families, and support the legacy of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

We are so happy to see some heart gardens in full bloom! Heart gardens can include wildflowers, paper hearts, and even native species that support pollinators like bees. If you are using paper hearts for your heart garden, we encourage you to include a message about your commitment to reconciliation somewhere on the heart before you plant it.

We are always so glad to see how Honouring Memories, Planting Dreams is

being taken up across communities. Feel free to share photos using the tag **#HonouringMemoriesPlantingDreams** or **#CVRJardinDeCoeurs**.

For more information and to register your Heart Garden, visit honouringmemoriesplantingdreams.ca.

Some of the paper hearts that Mrs d'Abadie's students (Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board) planted in their class heart garden



First
Nations
Children's
Action
Research and
Education
Service

FNCARES: First Nations and Class Actions: Reconciliation or Wreckonconciliation?

There is a proliferation of class action lawsuits affecting First Nations peoples, but most of us know very little about them. Thanks to a webinar presentation by Dr. Cindy Blackstock of the Caring Society and Andrew Eckart from the Class Action Clinic at the University of Windsor, we now know a little bit more.

Dr. Cindy Blackstock began the webinar by discussing some of the questions that arose when class action cases

were brought against Canada after the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal ordered Canada to compensate First Nations children and families who experienced discrimination in relation to child welfare and Jordan's Principle. Dr. Blackstock noted that, in her experience, people harmed most often want two things: (1) compensation for damages done to them; (2) to make sure the same thing doesn't happen to others.

She wondered if class action proceedings are good at addressing both.

Andrew Eckart explained the basics of class actions, including the differences between a

class action and an individual suing to get justice, the rights of class members, what "opting out" means, if one can object to a settlement offer, and much, much more. The webinar ended with a lively and informative Q&A session.

Watch the video of the webinar at bit.ly/FirstNationsandClassActionsWebinar.

Read the resource list at fncaringociety.com/publications/first-nations-and-class-actions-resource-list.

The Class Action Clinic is a not-for-profit that offers advice, assists with filing claims in settlement distribution processes, and represents class members in court proceedings. Visit their website at classactionclinic.com.



Cindy Blackstock (left) and Andrew Eckart (right) in the First Nations and Class Actions Webinar



Bear Witness Day

On May 10, people from across Canada honoured Bear Witness Day and used their voices to raise awareness of Jordan River Anderson and equity for First Nations kids like him.

We especially want to acknowledge the Juniper Elementary School students who shared why Bear Witness Day is important to them with CBC Kids! You can read their article at cbc.ca/kidsnews/post/bear-witness-day-may-10.

Elsewhere across the country, caring individuals and organizations hosted events with their teddy bears and stuffed animal friends to honour Jordan River Anderson and his family by writing letters to decision-makers calling for them to fully implement Jordan's Principle. We were so happy to see such great engagement again this year, with **#JordansPrinciple** and **#BearWitnessDay** trending across Twitter throughout the day!

Some children and young people in Ottawa also spent Bear Witness Day at a Teddy Bear Tea Party at the Senate of Canada, where they were able to speak directly with Senators about equity for First Nations children, young people, families, and communities. The youth asked the Senators to respond to the water boil advisories still prevalent in many First Nations communities, to create a plan for climate change led by First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples, to provide accessible mental health services on reserve for children, youth, and families, and to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Call to Action 66, which calls on the federal government to establish multi-year funding for community-based youth organizations working on reconciliation.

We wish to extend our sincere thanks to the offices of Senators Audette, Francis, and Klyne for their help in hosting such an important event, and to all who came out to use their voices for action.

Senator Audette speaks to the young people who attended Bear Witness Day at the Senate



Spirit Bear's Second Film Is Out!

Spirit Bear's second animated film, *Spirit Bear: Fishing for Knowledge, Catching Dreams*, was released on April 12, and it has already received rave reviews from kids!

Grade 3 students from Mr. Anderson's Class at Maple Leaf School in Winnipeg gave the film **4 out of 4 Paws** and wrote:

We really liked the style of stop-animation they used to create the film.... Whether young or old, the film helps everyone to learn more about truth, justice, Indigenous people, and communities, and how we can all help to make the world a better place. We think Shannen's Dream is so special, and we are hopeful to help make her dream come true, because even though we're small, it doesn't mean we can't stand tall!

In another review, a student named Summer wrote:

I thought that the movie was really nice and sweet. I learned that the First Nations people did not get treated the right way by the government and that we can make a difference even though we're kids. I like the message of the story and would recommend this for kids my age.

Thanks to everyone who watched and reviewed the film, and to the filmmakers at Spotted Fawn Productions for their beautiful rendering of Spirit Bear's adventure learning about traditional knowledge and residential schools, and his trip to Algonquin territory where children teach him about Shannen's Dream for safe and comfy schools.



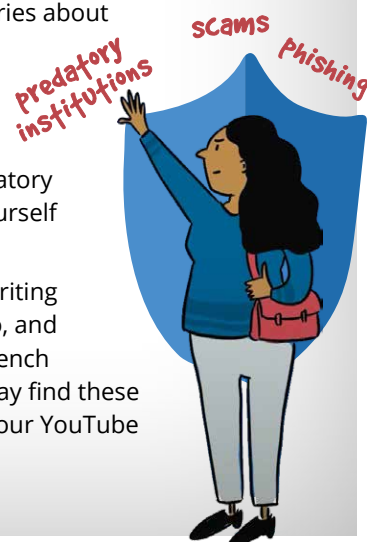
Visit Spirit Bear's film page to watch the trailer and find out how to order the film at fncaringsociety.com/spirit-bear/films.



REMINDER Check out Our Financial Literacy Video Series!

A year ago, we released a graphic video series about financial literacy, and the topic remains as important as ever. The three videos cover areas that youth identified as relevant information to them: (1) choosing a bank and opening an account, (2) avoiding predatory financial institutions, and (3) protecting yourself from scams.

We remain grateful to Connor Lowes for writing the scripts and recording the English audio, and to Byanka Petrin for the translation and French recordings! Do you know someone who may find these videos useful? You can find each video on our YouTube channel at bit.ly/CSFinancialLiteracy.



UPDATE ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS CASE FOR FIRST NATIONS KIDS

The Caring Society and AFN Announce Revised Final Settlement Agreement on Compensation

On April 3, 2023, the Caring Society and the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) announced a revised Final Settlement Agreement (FSA) on compensation valued at over \$23 Billion for the approximately 300,000 First Nations children, youth and families who experienced discrimination due to Canada's flawed approach to the First Nations Child & Family Services Program and Jordan's Principle.

The revised FSA addresses key issues raised by the Canadian Human Rights Tribunal in its 2022 CHRT 41 order, which found that the previous class action FSA did not fully satisfy its compensation orders. To address these concerns, the Caring Society and AFN worked with other Parties to revise the FSA to satisfy the Tribunal's compensation orders. The revised FSA ensures:

- comparable compensation for children in placements not funded by Indigenous Services Canada;
- compensation entitlements for parents who had multiple children removed from their care;
- comparable compensation for parental estates;
- comparable compensation for entitlements for children and their caregiving parent or grandparent who experienced a delay, denial, or service gap under Jordan's Principle; and
- comparable interest on compensation owed to all eligible individuals.

For the latest information on compensation, please visit fnchildcompensation.ca. For more information on the human rights case, including background and an information sheet on the revised FSA, please visit fnwitness.ca.



SAVE THE DATE Orange Shirt Day 2023

Orange Shirt Day is an annual nationwide event bringing awareness to the residential school system and honouring residential school Survivors. On September 30, 2013, Phyllis Webstad (née Jack) started Orange Shirt Day based on her experiences attending St. Joseph Mission Residential School. It is an opportunity for all Canadians to learn about the legacy of the residential school system and take action by wearing an orange shirt to demonstrate their commitment to reconciliation.

Partnering with Ottawa-based community groups and organizations like Beechwood Cemetery, the Caring Society will co-host our third Orange Shirt Day and National Day for Truth and Reconciliation in Ottawa on Saturday, September 30. This will be a free, public event where people of all ages can learn about Canada's history in the spirit of truth and reconciliation, reflect on the legacy of the residential school system and take action.

Keep watch on our social media and website for the latest information about how you can participate!

Participants listen to A7G young people giving Reconciling History tours at Beechwood Cemetery.

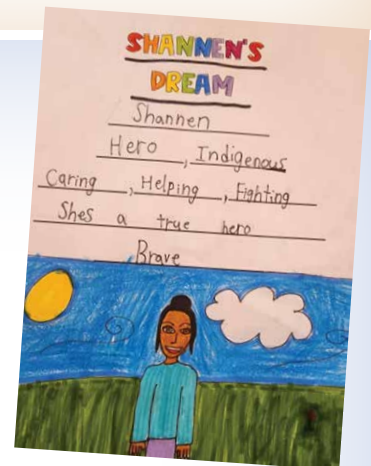


School is a Time for Dreams!

Throughout March and April, children, youth, organizations, schools, and communities across Canada participate in School is a Time for Dreams in support of equitable education for First Nations young people in Canada. It's also a time to honour Shannen Koostachin and her dream for all First Nations kids to go to safe and comfy schools.

On social media, we saw many messages from students about what they want to be when they grow up and many also wrote letters to their elected officials to demand equitable access to quality education for First Nations kids. Year after year, it remains clear that children and youth continue to see Shannen as a hero.

Individuals, organizations, and communities across Canada were also invited to watch Spirit Bear's new film *Fishing for Knowledge, Catching Dreams*, which shares parts of Shannen's story. The film was released to the public on April 12 and will remain available online. Visit our website to learn more about how you can watch it at fncaringociety.com/spirit-bear/films.



Student artwork for School is a Time for Dreams



Ambearrister Spotlight: Gi'nup Tjitj

Taylor Ginnish, LPN, Mi'kmaq Family Support

We received our Ambearrister in early 2021. In April 2021, our team organized a traditional naming ceremony where he received his name; Gi'nup Tjitj from Metepenagiag Elder George Paul. A "Gi'nup" in our territory and culture is a spiritual being that is a healer and teacher.

During the summer of 2021, Gi'nup's traditional clothing was made by the Natoaganeg Sewing Club in Natoaganeg First Nation. Gi'nup's shirt says, Every Child Matters, in Mi'kmaq. M'sit Mijua'jj Mekite'tasit. Some of the actions that Gi'nup has helped our community facilitate include:

- **Indigenous Lives Matter walk:** Gi'nup participated in the Indigenous lives matter walk in the Metepenagiag First Nation. This walk was organized by the community when the 215 unmarked graves were found in Kamloops, BC.
- **Bear Witness Day:** On May 10, 2021 we hosted a social media contest. Trying spread the word on our new family member, and the meaning behind our Ambearrister. The contest was to send a picture of you and your favourite teddy bear doing an activity together. Many communities got involved, and Natoaganeg Grades 1 and 2 won the draw.
- **Every Child Matters walk:** We participated in the Every Child Matters community walk in Metepenagiag.
- **Online presentations:** Gi'nup helps teach people about Jordan's Principle and reconciliation. He loves working with Jordan's Principle Service Coordinators, to present information about Jordan's Principle to the province of New Brunswick, bringing more information and awareness to provincial staff.

Left: Gi'nup in some of his traditional clothing with Jordan's Principle service coordinators, Farrah and Brad; Below: Our staff with Gi'nup at the Every Child Matters community walk.



First Nations Child & Family Caring Society

Membership Information

If you would like to join the First Nations Child & Family Caring Society as a Member under one of the following categories:

Individual Membership: \$75

Student Membership with ID or Elder: \$5

Small FNCFC Agency Membership (1-50 employees): \$500

Large FNCFC Agency Membership (50+ employees): \$1,000

Small Associate Membership (Organizations with 1-50 employees): \$500

Large Associate Membership (Organizations with 50+ employees): \$1,000

Walk the Talk in Spirit Bear's New Socks!

First Nations children have the right to grow up safely at home, get a good education, be healthy, and feel proud of who they are. Spirit Bear's socks encourage people of all ages to take action for reconciliation everyday in the spirit of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Spirit Bear's socks are available online for \$20 each in youth and adult sizing. To purchase, please visit

fncaringsociety.com/shop. All proceeds go towards supporting equity for First Nations children, youth and families.

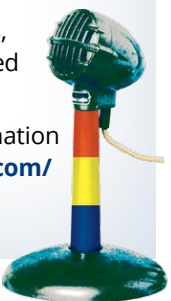


The Latest News on the Spirit Bear Podcast

Spirit Bear has been hard at work on his latest venture: his podcast! So far, Season 2 includes interviews with six experts with backgrounds ranging from law to economics, to social work, to pediatrics – a testament to the diverse forms of knowledge that contribute to the field of child wellbeing.

Each episode also has a corresponding information sheet that touches on key points from the episode and provides additional resources for further learning. Stay tuned for our next episodes, where experts will discuss topics including how agencies can "go 0 to 60" in prevention services, the evidence around birth alerts, what it means to provide trauma-informed and culturally relevant care, and more!

Episodes and their corresponding information sheets are available at fncaringsociety.com/spirit-bear-podcast.



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