



YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce

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ymcaowensound.on.ca

Media Release

For immediate release

YMCA Canada Donates \$67,836.80 to Orange Shirt Society

Owen Sound, Ontario, September 30, 2021 — YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce stands with all Indigenous Peoples as we mark the very first National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, a new Federal holiday that recognizes and commemorates the tragic history and ongoing legacy of residential schools. Orange Shirt Day, which is also recognized on September 30, coincides with this holiday.

On this day in particular, we reflect on the cruelty of a system that continues to echo through the generations. 2021 has been especially difficult with the discovery of thousands of unmarked graves at former residential schools, a painful reminder for those who knew the truth, and a horrifying wake-up call for those who didn't.

As a charity committed to helping each person reach their potential, we know the residential school system robbed so many Indigenous children of theirs. At the YMCA, we are committed to continuing to learn the truth about the residential school system and recognizing how the impact still manifests itself in 2021. We also know learning the truth is the first step, but not the last. Everyone must take action for reconciliation to happen, including us. Watch this video of Peter Dinsdale, President & CEO, YMCA Canada as he reflects on Orange Shirt Day and National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

Through the YMCA Statement of Reconciliation, educational sessions for staff, opportunities to hear from Indigenous leaders, and reporting on YMCAs reconciliation efforts, YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce is committed to continuing to raise awareness and supporting others in the community as they take action. We reaffirm our commitment to continuing this work and finding new ways to do so.

If you haven't already, please find a list of local events and resources that we have compiled on our website: ymcaowensound.on.ca/truth-and-reconciliation

*Building healthy
communities*

Contact:

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YMCA Canada is pleased to announce that they are donating \$67,836.80 to the Orange Shirt Society on behalf of YMCAs in Canada.

This donation comes from the proceeds of sales of YMCA Orange Shirt Day t-shirts across the Canadian YMCA Federation. **YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce purchased 206 orange shirts for staff to contribute to the donation.** At many YMCAs today, including ours, staff will be wearing these t-shirts to raise awareness of Orange Shirt Day and all the pain and hope it represents. We are proud to have had the support of Phyllis Webstad and the Orange Shirt Society for this initiative. Follow us on social media to see photos of our staff proudly wearing orange today.

While today is a time for reflection, it is also a time to look forward and to consider where we are in our journey towards learning the truth. Like us, we hope you're also thinking about what you can do next. Together, we can become the Canada We Want – a country that acknowledges our past and present injustices, as well as our collective responsibility to persist in our commitment toward reconciliation.

Sincerely,

Sarah Cowley, Executive Director
YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce

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