

Corner Brook Status of Women Council

NEWSLETTER - October 2021

How to Be a Better Indigenous Ally

Truthfully I feel grossly under qualified to write anything about Indigenous matters. I, like many others in Western Newfoundland have a complicated relationship with all things Indigenous as I was one of the thousands that were deemed not mi'kmaq enough. Despite this, I have been trying to learn more about our shared history that has been omitted from our text books and I have been asking how to become a better ally.

The tips below are not my own, but they are a compilation of the best tips and advice that I have found from private conversations and scouring the internet.



1. Read, read, read. If there is ever something you don't know, then chances are you can find answers in a book (you can also find great answers online but please be wary of the source and the purpose, both in books and online). The following have been suggested as great books offering true accounts of life at residential schools.

Seven Fallen Feathers: Racism, death and hard truths in a northern city, by Tanya Talaga

All Our Relations by Tanya Talaga

The Reason You Walk by Wab Kinew

21 Things You May Not Know About the Indian Act by Bob Joseph

Indian School Road by Chris Benjamin

For the children in your life **Phyllis's Orange Shirt** by Phyllis Webstad and **The Secret Path** by Gord Downey have been recommended.

2. Listen to the voices of indigenous leaders. When issues arise in your community what response are the elders giving? Are your elected officials in all levels of government listening?
3. Remember as an ally you are not the centre of this story. Your job is not to add your voice, your opinion or your world view. Your job is to amplify their voices.
4. Fact check. History is presented to us as children as factual. It is not. Our history books are written from an affluent white male settler perspective. Stories and events illustrated throughout are only accurate (I use the term mildly) from that one point of view.

These tips are not the answer but it's a good place to start.

Upcoming:

October is Breast Cancer Awareness month, Autism Awareness month and also Women's History month in Canada.

Saturday, October 2nd - International Day of Non-violence- Celebrated on Mahatma Gandhi's birthday, the day is recognized to reaffirm the universal relevance of the principle of non-violence and the desire to secure a culture of peace, tolerance, understanding and non-violence.

Monday, October 4th - World Habitat Day. This year's theme is Housing For All — Accelerating urban action for a carbon free world.

October 3rd to 8th - HPV Prevention Week - a series of events and initiatives to increase awareness of an infection that is estimated to affect more than 75% of sexually active people in their lifetime.

Sunday, October 10th -World Mental Health Day - The Day provides an opportunity for all stakeholders working on mental health issues to talk about their work, and what more needs to be done to make mental health care a reality for people worldwide.

Monday, October 11th - Day of the Girl This international observance recognizes the need to propel our equality efforts not only towards women, but also towards girls.

Monday, October 11th - Thanksgiving - We hope you all enjoy turkey and time with loved ones. Our office will be closed for the day on Monday, reopening Tuesday, October 12th.

Sunday, October 17th - International Day for the Eradication of Poverty - Presents an opportunity to acknowledge the effort and struggle of people living in poverty, a chance

for them to make their concerns heard, and a moment to recognize that poor people are the first ones to fight against poverty.

Monday, October 18th - Person's Day - Marks the day in 1929 when the historic decision to include women in the legal definition of "persons" was handed down by Canada's highest court of appeal. Check out our modernized video celebrating Person's Day here:

Sunday, October 31st - Halloween - Thousands of little fingers are crossed that Halloween will still go ahead this year. If not, treat your little ghost or goblin to "It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown" and they can commiserate with other halloweens that didn't go to plan.

The Final Word:

Abortion Doulas

Many people may have heard a birth doula – a support person who assists with comfort and care during the birthing process and following. An abortion doula plays much the same role, but for an individual who has chosen to terminate a pregnancy. There is still a lot of stigma in our community about the issue of abortion and there are many misconceptions about the procedure and about who and how abortion can be accessed. Abortion doulas provide information, support and can accompany an individual to appointments. They are not licensed to perform any medical procedures. All of the staff of the Corner Brook Status of Women Council are trained in trauma informed abortion doula support provided by Abortion Support Services Atlantic. Call us to find out more!