

SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

2024

Come play at EarlyON today!



THIS MONTH

**SCHOOL
PREPARATION**

**SEPARATION
ANXIETY**

**RESIDENTIAL
SCHOOLS**

ORANGE SHIRT DAY

SINGING

HOOKED ON BOOKS

The EarlyON programs at Empower Simcoe are built on four foundations: Belonging, Well-being, Engagement and Expression, which promote the healthy development of children and provide parents and caregivers with support to ensure their child and family have the resources needed to raise healthy, thriving, resilient children.

To register for an EarlyON program with Empower Simcoe visit
[1]www.empowersimcoe.ca/earlyon-child-family-centres/



Michele Kapteyn Supports and Services Manager

September is a month that is typically associated with transitions. Summer activities wind down, and children return to school or begin school for the first time. There are so many wonderful resources available to prepare for transition to school. One of my favourites is a booklet published by Best Start Health Nexus: *Learning to Play and Playing to Learn: Getting Ready for School*. It is full of helpful, practical information to prepare for the upcoming transition.

[2]https://www.childdevelopmentprograms.ca/wpcontent/uploads/2019/05/school_readiness_english_fnl.pdf

I have observed over the years one area that parents are typically less prepared for is the separation anxiety their child may experience with this transition. As well, parents can be caught off by guard by their own emotional response to their child's new beginning. Although there is typically a lot of excitement and eager anticipation associated with beginning school there are also competing experiences such as sadness and loss. Separation anxiety is a natural response to being separated from the people the child feels most securely attached to. Moms and Dads or Grandmas and Grandpas or Aunties and Uncles are the people your little ones rely on, trust and lean on. Dr. Deborah MacNamara (2022) states "It is a compliment to your relationship when a child misses you -in fact- it was actually nature's intention."

How then do we prepare our little ones and ourselves for the upcoming transition? MacNamara (2022) offers four suggestions in her article *Starting School: Four Strategies for Helping with Separation Anxiety and Settling In*:

1. Invest Time in Matchmaking: this means helping your child connect with their teacher. It is important for your child to feel he or she can trust and rely on the adult who will be their primary caregiver for the hours they are at school. You can support this by helping them to smile and greet their teacher, point out commonalities such as "wow, your teacher Mr. Smith loves to read books out loud just like we do!"

2. Bridge the Gap: this means helping your child to feel connected to you when you are physically apart. You could include a picture of you together taped inside their lunch box or include a little note. When you say goodbye remind them of what you will do when you pick them up, like reading together when you get home or stopping at the park on the way home. You might develop a ritual like a special hug and kiss on each cheek when you say goodbye at drop off and use the same ritual when you greet each other.

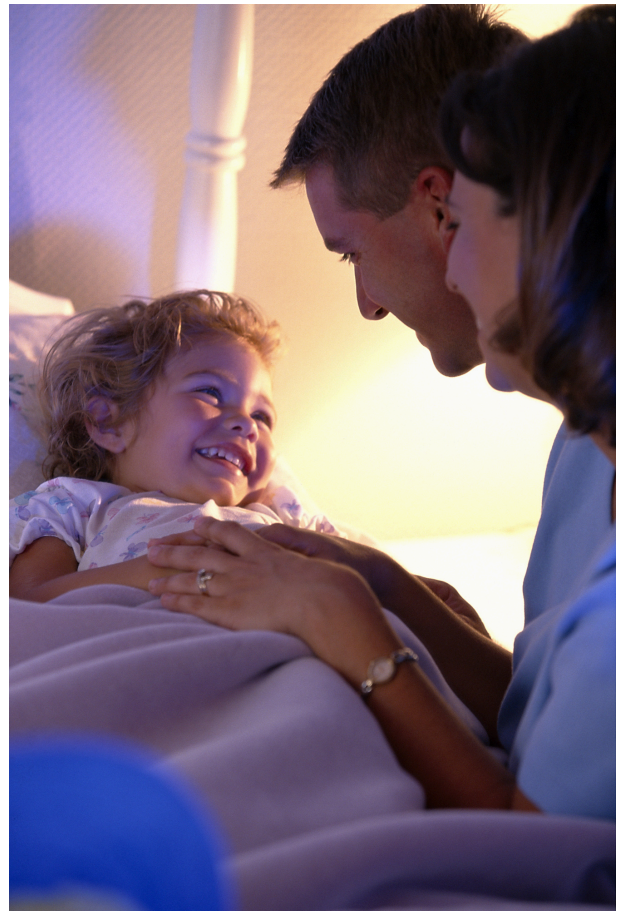


3. Deepen Your Attachment: MacNamara explains it is not about practicing separation it is about deepening the secure attachment that will help your child to better manage the separation. Each little connection equips our children to be more confident when they are separate from us. Rituals really help to strengthen attachment, maybe it is bedtime ritual such as sharing a special song, prayer or story together, something that you both delight in strengthens the relationship.

4. Watch and Wait: keep your eyes open for signs of elevated anxiety, frustration, over reliance on peers, a dislike of their teacher or less communication about what is bothering them. If you notice these signs reach out for help. EarlyON Program Facilitators can assist you with connecting to resources in your community to support both your child's and your mental health.

If you are looking for more information on supporting ongoing healthy, secure attachment relationships between you and your child check out this wonderful, classic book by Gordon Neufeld and Gabor Mate, *Hold On to Your Kids: Why Parents Need to Matter More than Peers* (Knopf Canadian Publishing, Vintage Canada, 2013).

Each year your child grows and develops will bring new delights and new challenges. When your child feels safe, protected and secure they will be better equipped to face challenges and manage the stress that change can provoke.





Angelia Brooks

EarlyON Indigenous Coordinator

Do you have questions? Email Angelia at indigenous@empowersimcoe.ca

Tell Me About Residential Schools

How Were The Schools Created?

In 1884, the amendments to the Indian Act of 1876 were adopted and provided for the creation of Indian residential schools. The Indian residential schools in Canada were predominately funded and operated by the Government of Canada and the Roman Catholic, Anglican, Methodist, Presbyterian and United Churches.

In 1920, amendments to the Indian Act make it mandatory for every Indian child between the ages of seven and sixteen years, to attend Indian residential school. In 1933, legal guardianship of the Indian children attending Indian residential school was assumed by the principals of those Indian residential schools, upon the forcible surrender of legal custody by parents.

How Many Children Attended the Schools?

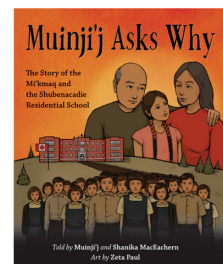
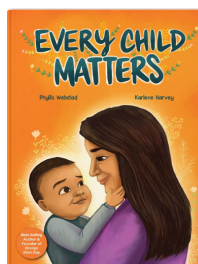
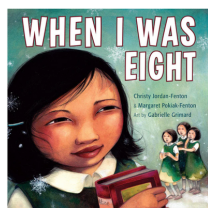
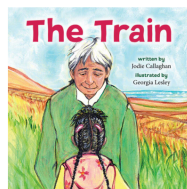
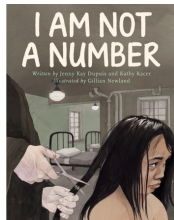
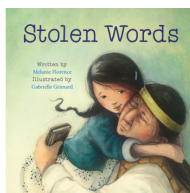
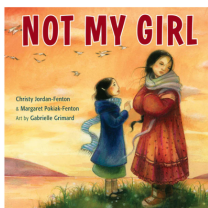
It is estimated that over 150, 000 First Nations, Inuit and Metis children, between the ages of 4 and 16 years, attended in Canada.

How Many Schools Were There?

There are 139 Indian residential schools identified within the Indian Residential School (IRS) Settlement Agreement. 17 residential schools were located in Ontario.

[3] <https://www.anishinabek.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/An-Overview-of-the-IRS-System-Booklet.pdf>

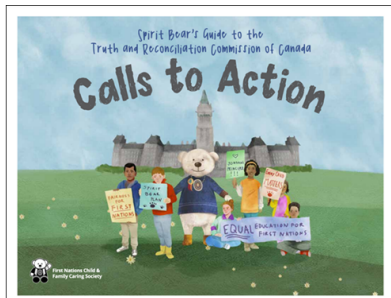
If you would like to learn more about Orange Shirt Day and Residential Schools, try reading:



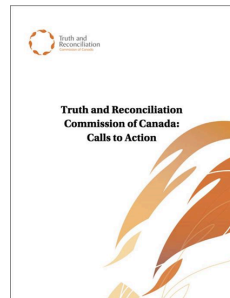
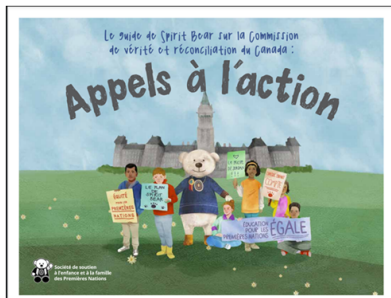
The Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement began to be implemented in 2007. One of the elements of the agreement was the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada to facilitate reconciliation among former students, their families, their communities and all Canadians.

In June 2015, the TRC presented the executive summary of the findings in a final report, which included 94 "calls to action" (or recommendations) to further reconciliation between Canadians and Indigenous Peoples. [4] <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1450124405592/1529106060525>

Check out the following documents for more information about the TRC's 94 Calls to Action:



[5] <https://fncaringociety.com/publications/spirit-bears-guide-truth-and-reconciliation-commission-canada-calls-action>



[6] <https://nctr.ca/records/reports/>



Here are three examples from the 94 Calls to Action:

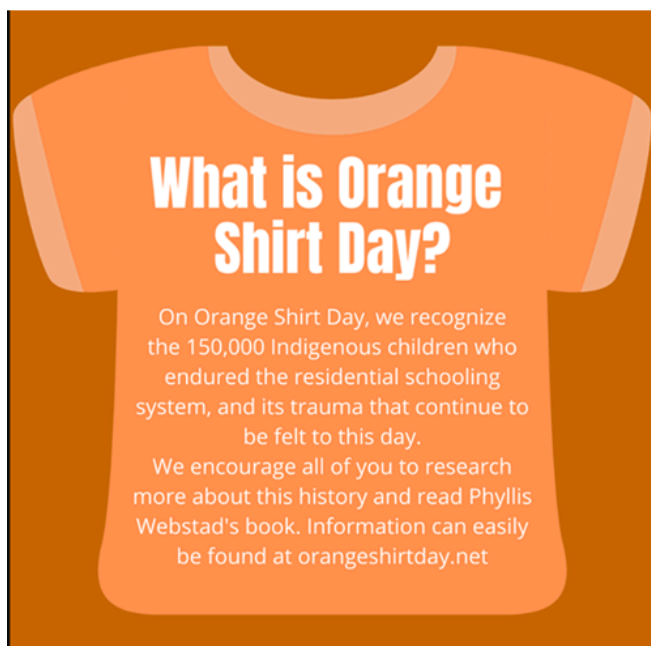
As addressed in the TRC principle of Reconciliation

#10: "Reconciliation requires sustained public education and dialogue, including youth engagement, about the history and legacy of residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal rights, as well as the historical and contemporary contributions of Aboriginal peoples to Canadian society."

[7] <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/cfe29bee35c54a70b9621349f19a3db2>

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC) includes Calls to Actions (2015) that impact educator, including: **Call to Action #62: Make age-appropriate curriculum on Indian residential schools, Treaties and Aboriginal peoples' historical and contemporary contributions to Canada a mandatory requirement for Kindergarten to Grade Twelve students.**

[8] <https://orangeshirtday.org.lightningbasecdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/BBDF-OSD-ACTIVITY-GUIDE-FINAL-COLOUR.pdf>



One of the Orange Shirt Society's objectives is to **amplify public engagement and promote awareness surrounding Indian Residential Schools**. Their goal is to paint Canada Orange and enhance the visual landscape. So they are encouraging participants to paint Every Child Matters Orange Crosswalks. This aligns with **Call to Action #79: We call on Canada to work with residential school survivors, other Aboriginal people, and artists to plan for remembering residential schools and celebrating Aboriginal people and cultures.**

[9] <https://orangeshirtday.org/programs/>





Amy St John

Early Literacy Specialist

Do you have questions? Email Amy at earlyliteracy@empowersimcoe.ca

Supporting Early Literacy Development Through Singing

YOU make a difference in your child's early literacy development. Every Child Ready to Read (2024) identified five practices you can do with your child preparing them to enter school ready to learn to read. **Singing**, talking, playing, reading and writing equip children with the skills they need to become a reader. This month we will explore how singing supports your child's development and ways to incorporate daily singing.



Music is about being, playing, and growing TOGETHER. Be sure to have fun, get silly and sing!

Singing develops language skills. It slows down language so your child can hear the different sounds in words. Singing also introduces new words and ideas.



Remember_ Music is for everyone, not just those with beautiful voices or trained musicians.



It is never too early to start singing, exploring sounds, dancing, and playing. In their first 24 hours, babies are already listening and responding. Include lullabies and soft singing right from birth.



Try This At Home



Own the music. Add your child's name, invent new verses, and change the words to reflect who you are and where you live.

Take music with you. Use sound and singing as part of soothing and reassuring on the bus, the subway, and in the car.

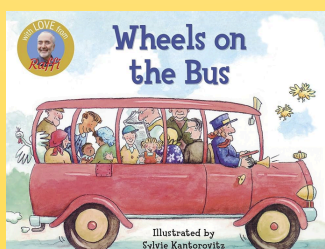
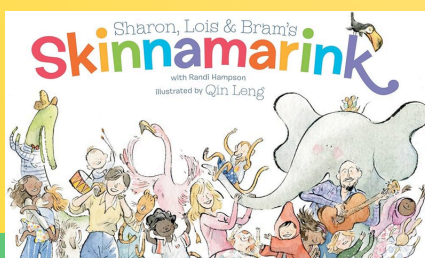
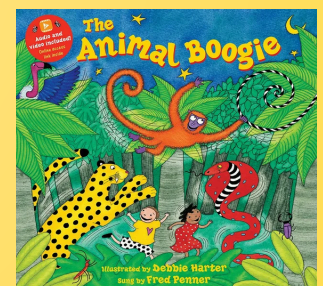
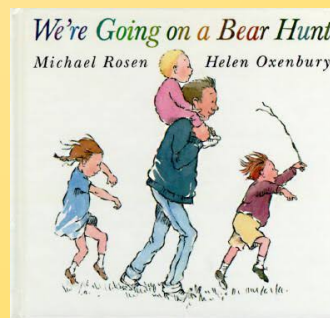
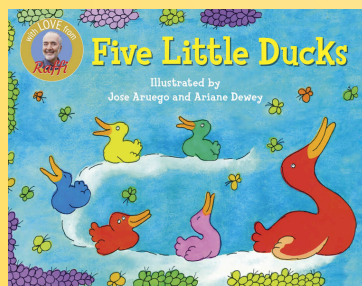
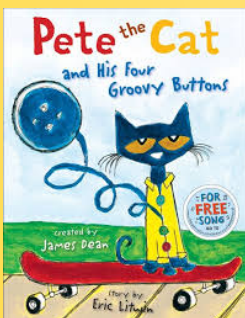
Pass on the songs from your childhood. Get grandparents and elders to share the traditional songs they know.

Add songs to daily routines. Play a specific song every time you brush your child's teeth. Or try singing "This is the way we wash our hands, wash our hands, wash our hands. This is the way we wash our hands at our home today." *Substitute any task for 'wash our hands'

Make household instruments from pots, pans, and cans. Join the band. Allow the noise and have fun!



Hooked on Books Books You Can Sing





**Empower
Simcoe**

BE • BELONG • THRIVE

SNOEZELN ROOM RENTALS

For children 6 years and younger

WHY

These multisensory spaces provide community partners with access to developmentally appropriate materials and equipment.



WHEN

Bookings are available Monday afternoons and Friday mornings in Barrie. Thursday afternoons and Friday mornings will be available in Bradford

WHERE

EarlyON Child and Family Centre
129 Ferris Lane, Barrie

EarlyON Child and Family Centre
118 Bradford Street, Bradford



**COMING
SOON**



PRICING

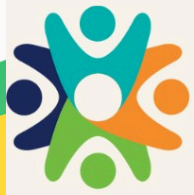
\$25.00 - 30-minute bookings
\$225.00 - Ten 30-minute bookings

ORIENTATION

An orientation is required and will be provided by program facilitators who are familiar with the equipment.



For pictures of the space or to book the Snoezelen Room visit:
www.empowersimcoe.ca
Questions? Contact us at:
ffs-129Ferris@empowersimcoe.ca



**Empower
Simcoe**
FOUNDATION

Hooray

FOR OUTDOOR

PLAY!

EarlyON

Child and Family Centre

Support the Hooray for Outdoor Play campaign and help build a new, accessible playground at the EarlyON Child and Family Centre, 129 Ferris Lane, Barrie. With a \$300,000 goal, this initiative aims to create a recreational and outdoor learning space, expanding the EarlyON Programming.

Your donation today directly contributes to constructing this vital playground,

fostering holistic child development through social interaction, physical activity, and imaginative play. The playground is under construction, set to be ready later this year, providing a safe space for children to build friendships and have fun. Make a difference – donate now to create lasting memories for families like yours at Empower Simcoe's EarlyON Child and Family Centre in Barrie.

**TO DONATE, VISIT
EMPOWERSIMCOE.CA**



Links

- [1] www.empowersimcoe.ca/earlyon-child-family-centres/
- [2] https://www.childdevelopmentprograms.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/school_readiness_english_fnl.pdf
- [3] <https://www.anishinabek.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/An-Overview-of-the-IRS-System-Booklet.pdf>
- [4] <https://www.rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca/eng/1450124405592/1529106060525>
- [5] <https://fncaringociety.com/publications/spirit-bears-guide-truth-and-reconciliation-commission-canada-calls-action>
- [6] <https://nctr.ca/records/reports/>
- [7] <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/cfe29bee35c54a70b9621349f19a3db2>
- [8] <https://orangeshirtdayorg.lightningbasecdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/BBDF-OSD-ACTIVITY-GUIDE-FINAL-COLOUR.pdf>
- [9] <https://orangeshirtday.org/programs/>

References

- Every Child Ready to Read. (2024). "The Five Practices and The Early Literacy Components Support Each Other". <http://everychildreadytoread.org/about/>
- MacNamara, Deborah. (2022) "Starting School: Four Strategies for Helping with Separation Anxiety and Settling In". <https://macnamara.ca/portfolio/transitioning-to-school/>