



ORANGE HEART CLUB

Reconciliation through Education Resources for children, teachers, and communities

2023

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ABOUT ORANGE HEART CLUB

Where reconciliation is a daily conversation

A reconciliation-based education initiative by Finding our Power Together

Orange Heart Club (OHC) is an educational program developed by Finding Our Power Together, an Indigenous-led national charity. OHC seeks to foster ongoing and meaningful dialogues about Indigenous Peoples, settler-colonialism, and reconciliation among children, educators, and communities. By participating in age-appropriate activities, children develop deeper understandings of social justice and Indigenous worldviews, which enhances their capacity to be engaged allies. Developed by experts in Indigenous Studies and education, the program prioritizes Indigenous perspectives of colonialism while facilitating high-quality learning opportunities informed by ministry educational standards. OHC offers after school and day programs; in-school activities; and professional development workshops.

Program Objectives

OHC seeks to meet the growing need for educational opportunities about reconciliation that center the lived realities of Indigenous peoples. Our program is designed to meet the following objectives:

Objective	Activities to Meet Objective	Intended Outcomes
To enhance children's understanding of Indigenous peoples, settler-colonialism, and reconciliation.	Program activities are designed to engage children in educational and participatory activities that inspire children to be self-advocates for reconciliation.	Children are able to describe colonialism and its impacts on Indigenous peoples in Canada Children see themselves as active participants in reconciliation and social justice advocacy.
To promote respectful and reconciliatory relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples.	Indigenous and non-Indigenous children learn together through interactive activities that allow for a shared understanding of Indigenous history, cultures, and perspectives Children are taught methods for active engagement in reconciliatory practices such as truth telling, decolonizing language use, and respectful discourse on topics related to Indigenous peoples.	Children develop meaningful relationships with each other, Indigenous community members, and the land.

<p>To create educational activities and resources that center Indigenous experiences and knowledge.</p>	<p>Children are exposed to Indigenous cultures, belief systems, and experiences through experiential and knowledge-based activities</p> <p>OHC team designs, facilitates, and promotes the sharing of educational resources that foster understanding and connection between Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous people. We help create meaningful connections with Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and other community members that can be further strengthened through activities such as storytelling, outdoor excursions, art projects, traditional language classes, cultural programs, land acknowledgements, and more.</p>	<p>Children understand Indigenous cultures and experiences and feel comfortable engaging in these practices</p> <p>Communities are exposed to Indigenous cultures and educational methods and can promote ongoing and deepening discussions about reconciliation at home and beyond.</p>
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Our Principles

We support Indigenous and non-Indigenous young people through our integrative approach called [Wiingushk Okaadinige \(Sweetgrass Braid\)](#) that is informed by the best standards in youth care practices and Indigenous healing approaches. The Sweetgrass Braid approach is informed by the following principles:

- We promote **culture** by incorporating Indigenous teachings, values, and languages into our programs
- We encourage **interconnection** by welcoming relationships with land, ancestors, and spirit into our practices and programs
- We foster caring, reciprocal, and respectful **relationships** with individuals and communities in order to nurture the connections we have with all things in creation
- We support youth to practice **self-discovery and determination** in order to better understand themselves, their emotions, and their reactions to make wise choices on their own behalf
- We support **wholism** through honouring individuals in all facets of the self and promoting self-acceptance
- We encourage the exploration of **balanced living** through reflection and practice of care within all aspects of the self
- We actively acknowledge environmental and historical factors that have and continue to impact each individual and their lived-reality and adapt to suit the **specific needs** of individuals and communities

OUR TEAM

Finding Our Power Together is an Indigenous-led non-profit organization supporting Indigenous youth to access support and relationships that enable them to thrive. Our [interdisciplinary team](#) of Indigenous and allied professionals (social workers, youth workers, mental health providers, educators, and traditional practitioners) are eager to support your community. We hold expertise in individual and group mental health education and support, research and training in a variety of areas, cultural practices and ceremonies to promote healing, and recreational activities to promote relationship and skill building.

For more information about us, please visit: <https://findingourpowertogether.com/>

Pedagogical Designers

OHC is collaboratively designed by Indigenous and allied individuals with a range of expertise in health, education, and social services. Our pedagogical designers have a deep knowledge of Indigenous histories, cultures, and ways of being, as well as experience in pedagogical design. Drawing on this expertise, our team helps to design educational activities that align with the unique needs of each child in our programs. We are committed to designing programs that center the lived experiences of Indigenous people in order to promote deeper and more meaningful connections between Canadian children and Indigenous peoples.

Nicole Ineese-Nash (MA)

Executive Director - Pedagogical Advisor



Nicole Ineese-Nash is an Indigenous researcher, educator, and community worker with over 10 years of experience working with Indigenous children, youth, and communities. Born and raised in Toronto, Nicole is a member of Constance Lake First Nation in Treaty 9 territory and holds relation to the lands, waters, and people along the English and Kabikagomi Rivers. With a PhD in Social Justice Education and a Master's in Early Childhood studies, she is passionate about supporting Indigenous self-determination and cultural resurgence, particularly in the context of childhood and youth. Nicole's various research and practice interests reflect her lived experience as an Indigenous

person on a path of cultural reconnection and learning.

As an Assistant Professor cross-appointed between the schools of Early Childhood Studies and Child and Youth Care at Toronto Metropolitan University, Nicole leads innovative community-based research on the topics of Indigenous disability, early learning, land-based education and youth mental health. Her research with Indigenous young people spurred the foundation of her national charitable organization called Finding Our Power Together, which offers mental health coaching, group psychoeducation, and cultural healing to Indigenous youth

across Canada. Nicole's skills in community-based research, social justice education, and Indigenous cultural practices have allowed her to work with Indigenous communities both in and out of the academy, informing her research, writing, teaching and practice.

Jieun Park (MA)
Program Coordinator



Ji Eun (she/her) is a settler woman in Tkaronto, and her ethnic background is Korean. She has a master's degree in Educational Leadership and Policy from the University of Toronto and an undergraduate degree in Early Childhood Studies.

Ji Eun has worked with children and families as an educator and in leadership roles for over nine years. She has a passion for early childhood education as she recognizes that a child's early years experiences are the foundations for their development and learning. She has extensive experience working with children

0-12 years old in the early learning and child care sector. She is interested in research emphasizing the importance of early years as they are essential to a child's future. Additionally, she would like to contribute to the early years sector, becoming more inclusive and affordable for parents.

Facilitators

Jasmine Ehret (MSW)
Lead Facilitator



Jasmine has worked within the school district as an Aboriginal education worker in British Columbia where she assisted youth with their education needs and provided social support. She has her undergraduate and Masters of Social Work degrees from Toronto Metropolitan University in Toronto.

Jasmine comes from a family of educators and mental health providers and is proud to continue the family tradition. Jasmine is working toward becoming a clinical therapist specializing in Indigenous participants. She researched Indigenous ways of knowing and traditional healing practices within counselling as

her Master's research thesis. Jasmine believes culture is key when assisting Indigenous participants on their wellness journeys. At Finding Our Power Together, Jasmine is an integral part of the mentorship team and facilitates our Orange Heart Club program.

Nyle Johnston
Cultural Facilitator



Nyle is an Anishnaabe artist, storyteller and Oshkaabewis (Traditional Helper) from Chippewas of Nawash Unceded First Nation. His art depicts the interconnectedness of all living things and incorporates teachings based on traditional knowledge. Nyle has worked on numerous projects supporting community organizations such as Anishnawbe Health Toronto, 7th Generation Image Makers, Chippewas of Nawash Health Centre, TakingITGlobal, Canadian Roots Exchange, Lower Simcoe Underpass Mural Project, Bold Realities Project, Sketch Toronto and Inkdigenous Tattoo Studio and Gallery. His work draws inspiration from woodland painters, Storytellers and the traditions

of his Anishnaabe culture.

Students and Volunteers



OHC is privileged to be staffed by a passionate group of staff, placement students, and volunteers! Our OHC team consists of two staff facilitators and 2 to 4 undergraduate placement students or volunteers who have expertise in early childhood education, youth work, and social work. Students and volunteers help to design and facilitate program activities under the advisement of pedagogical experts and staff.

WHAT WE DO

The OHC Team is pleased to offer a number of exciting educational opportunities for children, educators, and communities. Each of these programs is focused on providing educational and experiential opportunities designed around 12 program modules:

Module 1	Indigenizing Canada: Acknowledging and Situating (Land Acknowledgements & Introduction to Indigenous Peoples in Canada)
Module 2	Who We Are: Exploring our Identities (Relationship Building & Social Location)
Module 3	Being Together: Treaties and Relational Ethics (Relational Effectiveness Skills & Introduction to Treaty Agreements)
Module 4	Being Canadian: Exploring Diversity in Canadian Identity (Introduction to Colonialism & Social Justice)
Module 5	Children Like Us: Indigenous Experiences of Colonialism (Introduction to Residential Schools)
Module 6	Being our Whole Selves: The Medicine Wheel (Personal Reflection/ Meaning Making/ Indigenous Teachings)
Module 7	Honouring Our Gifts: Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (Introduction to Indigenous Concepts of Collectivity & Community Orientations)
Module 8	My Family, Your Family: Understanding the Concept of Family (Introduction to 60s Scoop & Indigenous Concepts of Childhood and Family)
Module 9	Being a Good Relative: Land Relationships, Stewardship, and Responsibilities (Introduction to Indigenous Ecological Knowledge)
Module 10	Have an Orange Heart: Allyship and Awareness (Introduction to Orange Shirt Day, Theories of Allyship, and Advocacy)
Module 11	Coming to the Roundance: Celebrating Indigenous Culture and Knowledge (Introduction to Indigenous Ceremonies, Games, and Rituals)
Module 12	Reconciliation: Walking the Good Path Forward Together (Introduction to Reconciliation Frameworks & Decolonization)

Please see below for a description of our current program offerings.

In-House Programs

The OHC runs a number of children's programs from our office located in the heart of the annex! Join us for after-school programs, PA day camps, March Break and Summer Day camps and more!

Orange Heart Club: After School Program

Elementary school children (aged 6 to 12) are invited to join the Orange Heart Club After School Program. This 12 week program supports Indigenous and non-Indigenous children to learn about colonialism, Indigenous peoples, and pathways toward reconciliation. Through once-weekly sessions, club members participate in sharing circles, smudging ceremonies, storytelling circles, art and music based activities, and more. Club members are introduced to Indigenous experiences of colonialism, traditional Indigenous practices, stories, and games, and are supported to learn how to be an agent of change in their communities. After school offerings occur one afternoon per week during the school year. Snacks and school pickup is provided. Parents are also encouraged to keep the discussions going with their children and receive a monthly newsletter with resources and suggested activities based on their child's experiences in the program.

Orange Heart Club Camp: PA Day, March Break, and Summer Camp Program

Students looking for an even more intensive experience will enjoy our PA Day, March Break, and Summer Camp Programs. These programs allow club members to explore traditional Indigenous teachings and practice through stories, games, field trips, cultural ceremonies and more. The camp is offered in several sessions throughout the year: PA Days during the September to June school year; March Break; and a week-long Summer Camp program in July and August. These programs build from the afterschool program to provide club members with even more opportunities to engage with club content. In particular, all camps incorporate land-based and ceremonial activities to expose participants to Indigenous culture and worldview.

For more information or to register, please visit Orangeheartclub.ca/register. Please note that financial aid may be available for families who require it.

External Programs

OHC is pleased to partner with local and external organizations to enhance reconciliation-based discussions within society at large. We offer the following programs externally that may be of interest:

1. **In-class/in-program activities for children:** Let us bring Orange Heart Club to you! Our team is available to facilitate educational activities for all children around the program modules listed above. We come prepared with all the materials necessary for an entire module lesson, which may include: traditional storytelling, smudging, experiential activities and games, Indigenous literature, art activities, worksheets, and more!
2. **Professional Development and Training:** We know now more than ever that educators and communities are looking for support in doing reconciliation work the right way. We are happy to work with you and your community to offer a variety of training and professional development opportunities. We have experience in running workshops for parents, community members, and teachers on a variety of topics and would love to

work with you to meet your organization's needs. Choose from one of our content modules, or select one of the following professional development topics:

- Reconciliation and decolonization resources
- Navigating conversations about social justice with children
- Traditional teachings and stories
- Entering reconciliation relationships
- How to be an authentic ally
- Engaging in cultural safety

We can also work to develop new professional development training to fit the specific needs and contexts requested! Please get in touch with us at info@findingoutpowertogether.com for more details!

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We look forward to working with you to create meaningful and respectful connections between children and communities. Our programming is designed to foster a connection and respect for the knowledge, values and language of Indigenous peoples. Through our programming, we hope to empower all children with the skills they need to be conscious and just citizens. Thank you for your support in helping to make a difference in the path toward reconciliation.