



May 31, 2021

Dear friends, colleagues and allies,

RE: Honouring the 215 precious children found buried at Kamloops Residential School

I'm sure that you have now all received the devastating news about the remains of the precious little ones found at the site of the Kamloops Residential School this past week. I've received texts and emails from several of you asking what we will do in the wake of this shocking information.

As it makes sense to me that we come together, as we have always done in education, to support our children in coming to terms with the ever-unfolding history of the residential school system and to address the devastating impacts of the endless tragedies on families, communities and this country.

I have reached out to TRC Honourary Witness Cindy Blackstock suggesting that we jointly call upon educators across Canada to create heart gardens in their respective school yards to honour the 215 children found this week in the way that we did on June 3, 2015, at the closing ceremonies of the TRC. We recognize that many schools have created heart gardens in a variety of ways each year since the closing of the TRC but given the specific circumstances that have unfolded at Kamloops this week we feel that it is important to have the outward facing, highly visible message of love, caring, honour and memorial to these 215 children specifically.

We would encourage you to create 215 hearts designed with messages from the children in your schools, place them on garden stakes of some type and plant them in a highly visible location in front of your school this week (which is the 6<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the heart gardens planted at the close of the TRC).

We would also ask that you call upon families in the community to place similar hearts in their front yards and on their doorsteps to show their solidarity in remembering these children and their families.

To support learning now, you can visit <https://fncaringsociety.com/honouring-memories-planting-dreams> OR <https://projectofheart.ca/>

If you would like to amplify the messages of your students through social media please tag us on Twitter with images and messages and we will retweet @Bearhead\_C @cblackst @CaringSociety @CanGeo

Thank you all for your continued commitment to supporting students as agents of positive change.

Respectfully,

Charlene Bearhead  
Director of Reconciliation  
RCGS

Cindy Blackstock  
Executive Director  
FNCFCS