



## September 2023 Newsletter

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"I will love the light for it shows me the way, yet I will endure the darkness because it shows me the stars." — Og Mandino

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### September Holidays and Observances

We hope that everyone had a safe and happy Labour Day weekend and that all those experiencing the back-to-school rush are having a successful first week.

World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD) falls on September 10th each year to draw attention to the important public health issue of suicide globally and to disseminate the message that suicides are preventable. (More information on WSPD can be found below, including information on our own WSPD Livestream.)



The National Day for Truth and Reconciliation is held on September 30th. The day honours the children who never returned home and Survivors of residential schools, as well as their families and communities. Public commemoration of the tragic and painful history and ongoing impacts of residential schools is a vital component of the reconciliation process. (More information on this day can also be found below.)

September also includes Gender Equality Week, National Coffee Day, and more.

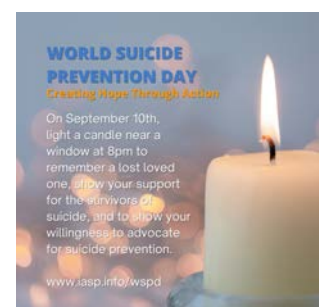
To see what other days of importance there are in September, [click here](#).

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### World Suicide Prevention Day: Creating Hope Through Action

Suicide is a major public health problem with far-reaching social, emotional and economic consequences. It is estimated that there are currently more than 700,000 suicides per year worldwide and we know that each suicide profoundly affects many more people.

World Suicide Prevention Day (WSPD) is observed every year on the 10th of September to draw attention to this important public health issue globally and to disseminate the message that suicides are preventable. This annual campaign lasts



until World Mental Health Day on October 10, but the message of awareness, support, and action is spread every day.

The theme for WSPD is “Creating Hope through Action”. By encouraging understanding, reaching in and sharing experiences, this theme gives people the confidence to take action. It highlights the fact that there is an alternative to suicide and aims to inspire confidence and light in all of us. By creating hope, we can reduce the stigma around suicide and foster a culture where people in need can easily seek help. Meaningful and safe conversations around suicide can also help spread the message that it is okay to talk about suicide. Through action, we can play a supportive role to people in crisis.

You can [learn more](#) by visiting the International Association for Suicide Prevention's webpage dedicated to WSPD.

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## What Is Suicide Grief?

Losing a loved one or someone close to you to suicide is one of the most challenging situations to navigate. The pain cannot be described, and the intensity of the loss cannot be measured in any way, shape, or form. Unfortunately, many individuals may give you advice after your loss. They may tell you that it is okay to move on or that you have to be strong for your family. These words of advice are often stated with encouragement and the best intentions in mind, but any unsolicited advice can cut deep into your current wound.



The death of a loved one from suicide will have a significant impact on every aspect of your life, and you will most likely experience intense feelings of guilt, sadness, confusion, anger, and grief. Suicide grief feels overwhelming and can leave you feeling isolated. As a suicide survivor, there is no right way to grieve, no right way to feel, and no right way to process your feelings.

[Read more...](#)

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## Raising awareness of and educating Canadians on the current state of reconciliation in Canada

Beginning with the Royal Proclamation of 1763 and the Treaty of Niagara, 1764 and for the next 259 years, Canada's First People's (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) have witnessed broken promises, treaties and agreements negotiated in good faith – “Nation-to-Nation” – but that have been systematically broken over the years. Confederation institutionalized the relationship under The Indian Act in 1876 and the “Indian” problem has been a reality ever since despite numerous attempts to alter the status quo and “promises” to address and fix the systemic barriers.



Indigenous Watchdog is a federally registered non-profit dedicated to monitoring and reporting on how reconciliation is advancing on the critical issues that are impacting the Indigenous world – including the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action. The TRC emphasized education as the foundation for raising awareness on what needs to happen to make true reconciliation a success. Indigenous Watchdog delivers answers to these and other questions that are easy to find, are transparent, comprehensive and real:

- What is the current status of each of the 94 Truth and Reconciliation

Commission Calls to Action and other critical Indigenous issues?

- What have federal, provincial and territory governments committed and with what specific actions and, when available, with what budget and timelines?
- How have the designated stakeholders accountable for addressing and resolving specific Calls to Action responded? With what actions? By when?
- How have the national Indigenous advocacy organizations responded to specific Calls to Action and stakeholder commitments?

Seven+ years after the release of the Truth and Reconciliation Summary Report in June 2015, "Reconciliation" has stalled. There is limited visibility from an Indigenous lens into what is happening that will keep the numerous issues current, visible and that will hold governments, associations and institutional stakeholders accountable.

[Learn more...](#)

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## Switched at Birth, Two Canadians Discover Their Roots at 67

"Richard Beauvais's identity began unraveling two years ago, after one of his daughters became interested in his ancestry. She wanted to learn more about his Indigenous roots — she was even considering getting an Indigenous tattoo — and urged him to take an at-home DNA test. Mr. Beauvais, then 65, had spent a lifetime describing himself as "half French, half Indian," or Métis, and he had grown up with his grandparents in a log house in a Métis settlement.



So when the test showed no Indigenous or French background but a mix of Ukrainian, Ashkenazi Jewish and Polish ancestry, he dismissed it as a mistake and went back to his life as a commercial fisherman and businessman in British Columbia.

But around the same time, in the province of Manitoba, an inquisitive young member of Eddy Ambrose's extended family had shattered the man's lifelong identity with the same genetic test. Mr. Ambrose had grown up listening to Ukrainian folk songs, attending Mass in Ukrainian and devouring pierogies, but, according to the test, he wasn't of Ukrainian descent at all.

He was Métis.

And so, after a first contact through the test's website, and months of emails, anguished phone calls and sleepless nights in both men's families, Mr. Beauvais and Mr. Ambrose came to the conclusion two years ago that they had been switched at birth."

[Continue reading...](#)

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## Updates from the Government of Ontario



### Ontario Preparing Students for Success

"The Ontario government is providing new student supports and updating curriculum for the 2023-24 school year. These actions will refocus school boards on the development of foundational skills in reading, writing and math, supported by almost \$700 million more in base education funding, \$109 million in a new strategy

to boost literacy rates, and the hiring of 2,000 more educators.

"Our government is delivering on our commitment to continue to raise the bar by boosting student success in the classroom with a focus on reading, writing, math, STEM disciplines, and learning about mental health literacy," said Stephen Lecce, Minister of Education. "Our students deserve a stable and enjoyable school year with the full school experience of extracurriculars, clubs and more that build real life and job skills that go beyond the classroom."

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## **Ontario Investing in a Stronger Public Health Sector**

"The Ontario government is taking an important step forward to deliver on Your Health: A Plan for Connected and Convenient Care by increasing provincial funding for public health agencies to build a robust public health sector that has the support and resources needed to connect people to faster, more convenient care in their communities.

Starting January 1, 2024, the province will restore \$47 million in provincial annual base funding for public health units, which is the level previously provided under the 75 per cent provincial / 25 per cent municipal cost-share ratio. The province is also providing local public health units an annual one per cent funding increase over the next, three years so they can more effectively plan ahead and prepare. This will also allow time for the province to collaborate with municipalities on a longer-term sustainable funding agreement that will not put any additional financial burden on municipalities."

[Learn more...](#)

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## **Ontario Honours the Outstanding Contributions of Volunteers**

"The Ontario government is recognizing over 3400 community volunteers through the 2023 Ontario Volunteer Service Awards. The Ontario Volunteer Service Awards recognizes adult and youth volunteers for their outstanding contributions and years of continuous service at organizations such as non-profits, schools, community centres, hospitals, libraries and community associations.

"Volunteers touch our lives in so many ways and help to make our province one of the greatest places to live," said Michael Ford, Minister of Citizenship and Multiculturalism. "We are proud to recognize their efforts through the Ontario Volunteer Service Awards and are grateful that Ontarians continue to step up to support their communities."

[Continue reading...](#)

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## **Ontario Supporting More Innovation in Cybersecurity**

"The Ontario government is investing up to \$5 million to help Canadian Cyber Threat Exchange (CCTX) launch the Ontario Cybersecurity Excellence Initiative that will help Ontario companies develop and adopt cybersecurity technologies that enhance data security and protect company assets from cyber threats and other advanced technologies. Developing and adopting critical technologies like cybersecurity will increase Ontario's competitiveness around the world and create highly skilled jobs in the province's growing tech sector.

"Ontario is one of the largest tech hubs in North America and critical technologies like cybersecurity fuel and drive made-in-Ontario innovation as companies include new technologies in their products," said Vic Fedeli, Minister of Economic Development, Job Creation and Trade. "Our government is proud to support CCTX's work to help businesses across the province develop and adopt new-generation cybersecurity technology so they can become more competitive, grow and create more good-paying jobs."

[Continue reading...](#)

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## News from and for our Member Centres

Join us for a live online event as we come together to light a candle in memory, share real-life experiences with suicidality and suicide loss, provide awareness on how to seek help if you are struggling with suicidal ideation, and close with a song of hope from Bill Withers. Event information can be found [here](#).



This month's SOV Webinar will be focused on responding to calls about suicide. Registration details will be sent out to Member leadership.

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## The Clyde Mental Health and Addictions Awareness Project

In honour of Clyde and his family, this month we have chosen to highlight the [International Association for Suicide Prevention](#).



"The International Association for Suicide Prevention is dedicated to preventing suicide and suicidal behaviour and alleviating its effects. IASP leads the global role in suicide prevention by strategically developing an effective forum that is proactive in creating strong collaborative partnerships and promoting evidence-based action in order to reduce the incidence of suicide and suicidal behaviour."

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## In other news...

### Truth and Reconciliation Week 2023

The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) has events planned for educators and the public throughout the week of September 25 - 30, 2023. The two programs being offered are as follows:



"TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION WEEK 2023 – Honouring Survivors – is a national week-long program open to all schools across Canada brought to you by the NCTR. This year, our theme is Honouring Survivors."

"The NCTR is offering a series of FREE virtual lunch and learn sessions throughout Truth and Reconciliation Week 2023 to facilitate learning for Canadians on topics related to Truth and Reconciliation. These daily lunch sessions (50min) will feature a range of speakers and will provide audience members with the opportunity to ask questions and engage in further conversations."

[Learn more...](#)

## Mentally Healthy Back to School Support Package

"Practical, evidence-informed resources to ensure Ontario school boards are well-equipped to support student mental health and well-being as we enter the 2023-24 school year."

[Explore resources...](#)



## DCO Updates

### Learning Forum Update

Important updates and refreshes continue with our Learning Forum content. We now have many new and updated modules uploaded to our website with more on the way very soon.



### Spirit of Volunteerism Committee

Monthly SOV webinars for volunteers and staff will continue this month. Information on September's webinar will be sent out to Member leadership.



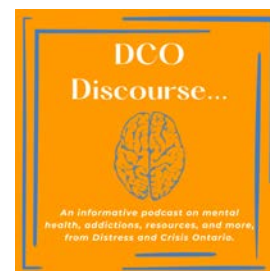
### Website

To learn more about Distress and Crisis Ontario, our member organizations, and current news and events, check out our website at [dcontario.org](http://dcontario.org). We are currently undergoing an update to our website to ensure we continue to provide the best services possible.



### Podcast

Our podcast, "DCO Discourse..." continues to feature a variety of mental health topics with new episodes being released every Monday. In August we explored topics related to getting ready for back-to-school, "mom guilt", supporting youth with eating disorders, and more.



Click our logo to the right to listen. If you have any feedback or requests for future content, please [click here](#).

### Becoming a Member

If you are interested in becoming a Member of the Ontario Association of Distress Centre, currently operating as Distress and Crisis Ontario, please [click here](#) to read our Member Benefits Package. Any questions can be sent to us by email at [info@dcontario.org](mailto:info@dcontario.org).



Thank you for supporting Distress and Crisis Ontario. [Click here](#) if you would like to donate through





CanadaHelps.org, or [click here](#) to purchase a Blue Jay Poster, as shown to the left, through ONTogether and support us that way.

## DCO Upcoming Events and Schedule of Meetings

### Board Meetings

Thursday Oct 12, 2023 at 10:00am EST

Friday Jan 12, 2024 at 10:00am EST

Friday Apr 19, 2024 at 10:00am EST

### Events

World Suicide Prevention Day Livestream

Sept 10, 2023 at 7:30pm EST -

<https://fb.me/e/AIDYgc05>

### SOV Webinars

Members-only lunch and learn webinars for staff and volunteer responders are held on the second Wednesday of every month at 12:00pm EST. Upcoming webinars are as follows:

September 13, 2023 - Responding to Calls About Suicide



## Distress And Crisis Ontario

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