

# EVERY CHILD MATTERS

## The Importance of Being an Indigenous Ally

Northern Gateway School Division resides on Treaty 6 and 8 Territory, the traditional meeting ground, gathering place, and traveling route to the Nakota Sioux, Cree, Saulteaux, Blackfoot, Dene and Metis. We acknowledge the many First Nations, Metis, and Inuit whose footsteps have marked these lands for generations. NGPS recognizes the need to support all school staff on the recommendations put forward by the [Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada](#). By better understanding the history, culture, context and realities of Indigenous learners, schools can move towards providing a more inclusive and supportive learning environment. Each school has a staff member designated as a First Nation, Metis and Inuit Advocate. They work alongside the FNMI lead from Division Office establishes relationships with Indigenous leaders. Advocates provide professional development and resources to build knowledge and confidence in all school staff.

### WHAT IS AN IDIGENOUS ALLY?

An Ally recognizes that every person has a basic right to human dignity, respect and equal access to resources. An Ally acknowledges that building relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people is work of the heart. It requires a certain humbling to allow our hearts to accept new and often changing information.

An ally speaks up, even when they are scared or uncomfortable. They plant seeds of truth in conversations with others. They believe and validate the stories they hear.

**Dr. Jennifer A. Tupper**, Faculty of Education University of Alberta, tells us that we can become Allies by:

- Committing to deepening our knowledge. Listening, self-reflection and education
- Learning about Treaties and The treaty relationship
- Understanding learning is ongoing and a journey
- Knowing what Treaty Territory we are in and who the Indigenous people of the Territory are
- Listening and learning from Indigenous people: in-person, podcasts, articles, blogs, films, etc.

### SUPPORT

National Residential School Crisis Line: [Call 1-866-925-4419](tel:1-866-925-4419)

Hope for Wellness Helpline: [Call 1-855-242-3310](tel:1-855-242-3310) Chat online: [www.hopeforwellness.ca](http://www.hopeforwellness.ca)

### RESOURCES:

[Orange Shirt Day Society](#), [National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#),

<https://calgaryfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/Ally-Toolkit-web.pdf>

<https://indigenoustourismalberta.ca/travel-stories/six-ways-non-indigenous-people-can-be-an-ally-to-indigenou-s-peoples/>

*This article was written by Tammy Charko BA, BSW, RSW. Tammy is Northern Gateway Public School's Student Support Facilitator. She is a support for schools, students, parents and caregivers to promote wellness and success in school. Tammy has been a Registered Social Worker for more than 23 years and is a mother to 4 children; 2 in high school and 2 in university.*