



## Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc.

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For immediate release  
February 24, 2021

### **MKO Statement on Pink Shirt Day**

**Treaty Five Territory, Thompson, MB** – Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak Inc. (MKO) is issuing this statement in support of Pink Shirt Day, which takes place every year on February 24, 2021.

**Grand Chief Garrison Settee states:**

“Pink Shirt Day was originally created as a response to bullying. This is a good day to remind ourselves about the importance of kindness. The focus for this year’s Pink Shirt Day is the importance of working together and treating others with dignity and respect.

Today I want to share a message for the young people in MKO communities. I know this pandemic has been very hard on most of you as it has had a significant impact on your daily routines. Many of you haven’t been able to go to school or take part in your sports or hobbies that you normally enjoy. Many of you are missing your friends and extended family members. I know the lock down is hard on you and I want to send you encouragement to hang in there.

On Pink Shirt Day, let’s think about the different ways we can work to share kindness with one another. Although we are limited by the pandemic, we also have things we can do to spread kindness. Call someone on the phone, draw a picture or make a card for them and send it in the mail or drop it into their mailbox. Use your talents to spread kindness—if you are a musician, write a song or perform one for someone. If you like cooking or baking, consider making and sharing your creative talents with someone. Compliment and encourage others who do things that make you laugh or make you feel happy. Reach out to others to share some funny stories or jokes with them—everyone loves to laugh and it feels good to share that with others.

If you are feeling down, I am asking you to please hang in there and ask for help. You are the leaders of tomorrow and your presence is a gift. If you are struggling, reach out to a caring adult. This could be a parent, a teacher, or even someone who works at your nursing station. Tell others that you are struggling so they know what you are going through. They can help you find resources. You can also call the Kids Help Phone 24 hours a day, 7 days a week if you need to talk to someone anonymously. Their number is free to call and it’s at 1-800-668-6868.”

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