



Greetings everyone.

To continue the 4Directions group, we continue to share a weekly plan of resources to use on each unit.

You are all welcome to use it any day of the week as you see fit to ensure that all members of the group continue to feel the presence of their spiritual and cultural practices. Of course, in the spirit of reconciliation and community, neighbors and friends of the group members are also welcome to join to learn about Indigenous culture and life.

To preserve the intention of the 4Directions as a sharing circle, you can set up the people you support in small groups in the living room (maintaining the 6 feet/2 meter between people). Using the laptop, ipad or Smart TV along with reading the notes that follow, people can also be supported to explore the weekly program.

People can also work individually in their own room using their own devices if they choose that. When you begin, all you need to do is support people to read through the guide and pause to play the video links that are noted. Thank you.

Thank you for finding the courage to continue to share your gifts of caring and support with one another and your creativity to create meaningful experiences with people who you support.

Please touch base if you have any questions.

*Kind regards,
Andrew & Sheryll Ann*

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July 23 – The Secret Path

Gather everyone in a circle and welcome them with [this song](#).



STATEMENT BY GORD DOWNIE

Ogoki Post, Ontario

September 9, 2016

Mike Downie introduced me to Chanie Wenjack; he gave me the story from Ian Adam's Maclean's magazine story dating back to February 6, 1967, "The Lonely Death of Charlie Wenjack."

Chanie was a young boy who died on October 22, 1966, walking the railroad tracks, trying to escape from the Cecilia Jeffrey Indian Residential School to walk home. Chanie's home was 400 miles away. He didn't know that. He didn't know where it was, nor know how to find it, but, like so many kids - more than anyone will be able to imagine - he tried. I never knew Chanie, the child his teachers misnamed Charlie, but I will always love him.

Chanie haunts me. His story is Canada's story. This is about Canada. We are not the country we thought we were. History will be re-written. We are all accountable, but this begins in the late 1800s and goes to 1996. "White" Canada knew – on somebody's purpose – nothing about this. We weren't taught it; it was hardly ever mentioned.

All of those Governments, and all of those Churches, for all of those years, misused themselves. They hurt many children. They broke up many families. They erased entire communities. It will take seven generations to fix this. Seven. Seven is not arbitrary. This is far from over. Things up north have never been harder. Canada is not Canada. We are not the country we think we are.

I am trying in this small way to help spread what Murray Sinclair said, "This is not an aboriginal problem. This is a Canadian problem. Because at the same time that aboriginal people were being demeaned in the schools and their culture and language were being taken away from them and they were being told that they were inferior, they were pagans, that they were heathens and savages and that they were unworthy of being respected — that very same message was being given to the non-aboriginal children in the public

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schools as well...They need to know that history includes them.” (Murray Sinclair, *Ottawa Citizen*, May 24, 2015)

I have always wondered why, even as a kid, I never thought of Canada as a country – It’s not a popular thought; you keep it to yourself – I never wrote of it as so. The next hundred years are going to be painful as we come to know Chanie Wenjack and thousands like him – as we find out about ourselves, about all of us – but only when we do can we truly call ourselves, "Canada."

"Do we want to live in a haunted house the rest of our lives?" - Joseph Boyden

Activity: Watch the [video of Secret Path](#). This is a 2 hour 8 minutes video, so you can use this program plan within 2 weeks or any day you prefer. After the movie, draw an object (can be drawn in journal of the person you support) that symbolizes something for you or write an idea and discuss what can be a good symbol to represent it.

Sharing: Based on the information you just learned, what do you think The Stranger is about? Discuss the experience of having to put themselves in the shoes of Chanie Wenjack and imagine what it must have felt like to be taken away from your family and decide to run away. What types of things keep us going when we are having a hard time?

Secret path acknowledges a dark part of Canada’s history – the long suppressed mistreatment of Indigenous children and families by the residential school system – with the hope of starting our country on a road to reconciliation.

Watch this [video of students sharing their thoughts about the story of Chanie](#).

Closing: Hug your family, your friends and caregivers. Cherish each other and make memories as time is fleeting. Close the circle [with this song](#).

Meegwich,

Sheryll Ann

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