

Leaders in Mathematical Thinking

Lisa Lunney Borden – Honouring and Embracing Indigenous Knowledge

>> Well, I think probably for a lot of parents out there, a lot of Canadians in general, you know, when I think about reconciliation, my goddaughter was an honorary youth witness at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. And she continues to work with Feathers of Hope. And so I talk to her a lot about kind of what she saw at the TRC. And it was about telling the truth and telling the stories. And I think all Canadians need to hear the stories, and need to hear the stories without judgment, like, really feel the stories and understand. You know, so often I talk about things like that, and I get the "Yes, but..." answers. No, it might not have been you that did it, and it might not have been your family members who took children away from their communities. But we as a nation have benefitted from that. You know, I live in a town where we have a walking trail that used to be an indigenous community, and nobody acknowledges it. And the reason that people don't live there anymore is because their kids were taken to residential school to force them off the land. And so for me, it really is about acknowledging that we all have a responsibility in reconciliation. So when you hear as a parent, or anyone, that your kids are learning about indigenous knowledge in your classroom, you should honour and embrace that. We're surrounded by indigenous knowledge every day. Yesterday I talked to you about all of the place names, and the events that happened around the places where I grew up that I didn't know about. Things that were deeply rooted in the indigenous communities in my area. I always tell people my soul lives in the Kennebecasis River. It's a place where I spent my summers as a kid. And I didn't know until I was in my late '20s that that was a Mi'kmaw word that meant, "Little Long Bay," and that it fitted prominently in the Mi'kmaw creation story. So for me, it is about learning about the place that you live. Like, if you look around you, all these place names, they're rooted in indigenous languages. And that carries with it indigenous knowledge. And so for me, those are the things that we should be embracing as a nation, because that's how we move towards reconciliation, is to honour and respect the things that were here before the settler population came.